



The Talon

Gripping News



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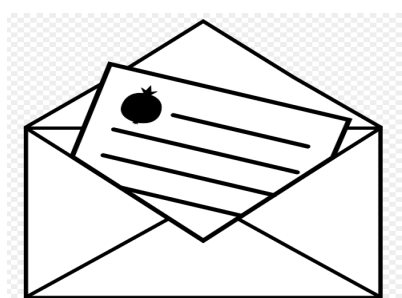
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Onteora Students Respond to the Russia-Ukraine War

By Iris Koester

As the Russia-Ukraine War moves full speed ahead, many of us are getting an up-close look at the devastation. It initially seemed as though everything was under control, but we are now left wondering exactly what caused this situation and what will happen next.

The students of Onteora are now speculating how this foreign conflict will affect us in Boiceville, NY. While the answers to many of these questions are still unknown, taking a look at history can provide us with an accurate understanding of what is happening in Ukraine and why.

Ukraine is a small, democratic country on the Russian border. Up until 1991—when Ukraine regained its independence—it had been a member of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (U.S.S.R., or as it's more commonly called, the Soviet Union).

Formed in 1922, the Soviet Union was a socialist state that sought to establish a communist-based society; it spanned Eurasia from 1922 to 1991 and included countries such as Ukraine, Russia, Latvia, Armenia, and Uzbekistan.

The Russian President Vladimir Putin—also known as dictator and former intelligence officer for Russia, who has held political power in Russia since 2000—is attempting to overthrow the Ukrainian government and take

Ukraine into Russia's arms. His alleged goal in doing this is to obtain complete control of and reunify the Soviet Empire.

On February 21st, 2022, Putin declared the start of what he called a "special military operation" in Russia, which resulted in a full-scale invasion of Ukraine. In response, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky

Although the results of these peace talks have been unsuccessful, they have led to the agreement that there will be corridors through which Ukrainian refugees can flee. Regardless, Russia failed to honor this agreement, leaving millions of Ukrainians with no way to escape.

At this point, there are around one million Ukrainian refugees who

tries are taking serious measures to help Ukraine by providing them with economic support and weapons shipments. The United States and the countries in The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), an alliance formed by 28 European and two North American countries after World War II, have also issued economic sanctions against Russia. In doing so, Russia and its citizens have seen many facets of their economy begin to collapse.

Many Onteora students have heard about this war through various social media outlets. This is the first war documented on newer social media platforms, like TikTok. Many Ukrainian people have posted first-hand accounts on TikTok of the devastation to their country, and many soldiers have posted updates as new military efforts develop each day.

Although the war is not affecting us directly here at Onteora in the same way that it's affecting high school students in Ukraine and Russia, most of us have been keeping a close eye on this situation as we receive new developments by the hour.

No matter the outcome, this event will have a profound impact on high school students from across the world as we witness humanitarian devastation in real-time and fear that we could be next.



Protest in support of Ukraine in Woodstock, Courtesy of HV1 and Dion Ogust

announced a 30-day state of emergency. Zelensky also declared that he will be fighting alongside his fellow Ukrainians to combat Russia's aggressive and unjustified invasion.

Since the invasion began, Russia, a world superpower with nuclear weapons, has taken control of Kherson, a major Ukrainian city.

Russian and Ukrainian officials have also met twice in Belarus for peace talks—formal discussion between nations to resolve conflict.

have successfully escaped to neighboring countries like Poland or Romania.

On March 3rd, the Russian military seized and bombed a nuclear power plant in Ukraine—the largest of its kind in Europe. The fire at the nuclear site was extinguished without damaging any nuclear reactors; if this had happened and the nuclear site had blown up, the results could have been even more catastrophic than Chernobyl—the worst nuclear disaster in history.

Many European coun-

That's why we collected responses from Onteora students to the question:

What was your first thought when you heard about Russia invading Ukraine?

Gianna Tisch, Junior: "I wasn't surprised. It's kind of hard for people our age to be surprised by things like this anymore, but it's very sad."

Kira Stone, Junior: "Wow, thousands of lives are going to be taken because of Putin's power-hungry efforts."

Gavin Stoudt, Senior: "Ukraine is probably the proudest country to ever fight for its people."

Marena Quick, Junior: "I don't understand why this had to happen in the first place. I'm afraid that World War III is going to happen because Putin won't take responsibility for his actions."

Sophia Wentland, Senior: "It just made me immediately think about the thousands of civilian lives that will be lost because of basically one person's desire for more power and the threat to natural resources."

Auden Stellavato, Junior: "I felt that I should've been expecting it, but still felt surprised because the consequences could be potentially so severe for everyone involved. I didn't think Russia would actually make a move; I saw it as intimidation and fear-mongering before the invasion, but now I don't really see a clear end."

Bitcoin: Taking Over Bit by Bit

By EJ Schackne-Martello

If you've been on Twitter lately, or anywhere other than under a rock, you've probably been hearing news about cryptocurrency and NFTs. Bitcoin, Dogecoin, and Ethereum are digital currencies that are supposedly more secure than other types of currency.

Cryptocurrency relies on blockchain technology, which is a system of recording information that is seemingly unhackable. The main reason for the recent gain in traction is the rising concern in regards to the dollar.

The USD is a fiat currency, meaning that it is not backed in gold, assets, or any physical commodity. What gives the dollar its value is the value we all place on it. Because of this, the value of the dollar fluctuates and can inflate.

Cryptocurrencies act as a way of diversifying one's portfolio, as they have a more constant rate. Unfortunately, over the years, Bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies have crashed, so they are not completely foolproof. Online currencies also present a new issue, such as forgetting the password to your account.

NFTs—also known as non-fungible tokens, or those weird cartoon monkeys you may be seeing online—are most commonly digital files such as photos, videos, or audio files. In a way, they're kind of like waiting in line for hours to



Courtesy of Tahlula Potter

have your book signed by your favorite author. In contrast, finding a copy of the book with a

printed signature is similar to screenshotting NFTs, rather than buying them for hundreds or thousands of dollars. This being said, while they can seem completely useless or even wasteful, they do bring up interesting conversations surrounding intellectual property rights.

NFTs use a process called minting, which is turning a digital item into an asset on the blockchain. Anyone can make an NFT, but making one for an asset you don't own could get you into some trouble.

So, whether you're investing in Bitcoin, the stock market, or just a cool drawing of a cartoon monkey, nothing will save you from the inevitable crash of the dollar. Truthfully, we should just enjoy our current buying power while it lasts.

Some food for thought: after the World Economic Forum, Warren Buffet (referencing the impending new economic system) stated that in the future, "You'll own nothing. And you'll be happy."

Book Bans Surge Across the Country

By Augie Luttinger

Recently, many Boards of Education in Texas have opted to ban certain controversial books from their schools. Some of the recently banned books address topics like the Holocaust, racism, LGBTQ+ issues, and the immorality of authoritarianism. Such books that have been



Courtesy of Creative Commons

banned include *Maus*, *1984*, *Brave New World*, and *The Handmaid's Tale*.

These book bannings follow a trend of removing controversial and provocative topics in schools. One of the main reasons as to why these books have been banned is due to parents attempting to shift their children's education away from ideas that challenge their own. This is just one part of a multi-state effort by parents to control children's education by pressuring schools to alter their curriculum so that it more so reflects their own conservative views.

The increasingly partisan attitude towards progressivism in the classroom has made some American families wary of topics such as comprehensive sex-ed, LGBTQ+ history, and the history of slavery being taught in schools.

One topic that has particularly made parents object to the current curricula in schools is the genocide of Native Americans and the brutality

of slavery in the states. Many families feel like such topics that expose America's less favorable history get an inordinate amount of coverage in their children's education, which, in their eyes, gives their children a warped view of our country.

However, book banning is just one method used to control what children learn in school, and in many cases, parents have taken these issues to the extreme. For instance, some parents have placed pressure on schools to install cameras in classrooms to monitor teacher activity.

While these rash book bans will ostensibly have a negative effect on students, book banning efforts are continuing to spread across the country. Judging by the growing support to ban books that address controversial issues, more in the education system is likely to change.

A Guide to All Things Compost

By EJ Schackne-Martello

I'd like to think of my fellow students as my family. Siblings even. Whether that's more of a commentary on my being an only child, or a delusional sense of optimism, it all ended a few short months ago.

After a year of struggling to coordinate and contrive our Environmental Club's compost cogitation, COVID canceled it. However, we were finally able to add two compost bins to our trash can lineup this year: one in the kitchen for vegetable waste created during the cooking process, and one for students to dump their salads and other compostable goods.

For the past several months I've been expecting to see a mountain of leafy greens, a tree's worth of orange peels, a few paper towels, anything. However, inevitably it seems, I've been let down. Instead, our compost bin has seen a number of things: macaroni salad, vegetables hiding inside of plastic bags, plastic utensils, and chip bags. Meanwhile, the kitchen staff has had no shortage of veggies to contribute to the monster pile in the courtyard.

So, this being said, I will give the student body the benefit of the doubt, as I am nothing if not understanding. Here is a refresher on what can and cannot go in our school's compost!



Courtesy of Creative Commons

Say Good-bye to No. 2 Pencils: The SAT Will Go Fully Digital By 2024

By Shane Stackpole

I received the same text from my best friend three times a month in the spring of 2020: “My SAT got cancelled again.” She, along with millions of other students across the country, had spent the first half of her junior year practicing difficult algebra problems and mastering tedious grammar rules. But when COVID-19 hit in March of 2020, trying to find an open SAT testing center proved to be far more difficult than solving a logarithmic equation.

When most SAT/ACT testing centers shut down due to COVID-19, colleges across the country responded by implementing a temporary test-optional policy for the class of 2021. Recognizing the enduring effects that COVID-19 has had on students’ ability to take and prepare for the exam, many colleges chose to extend their test-optional policy to the current senior class and beyond. Harvard College, for example, announced on December 21, 2021 that they would allow students to apply for admission without requiring SAT or ACT scores for the next four years.

This widespread extension of test-optional policies has made standardized tests ostensibly less important in the admissions decision, inevitably leading to a significant decline in the number of students taking the SAT and/or ACT. To put it into perspective, there were approximately 2.2 million SAT takers from the class of 2020; in 2021, that number dropped to 1.5 million SAT takers.

Evidently, this is not an ideal situation for the College Board—or as many would call it, the money-hungry, soul-sucking empire that develops and administers the SAT. So what can the College Board possibly do to ensure that they don’t lose any more money, or as they like to put it, “make the test more relevant”?

On Tuesday, January 25th, the College Board announced their answer to this question: the SAT will move to a fully digital exam by 2024. Commenting on this ending to the 60-year, paper-administered SAT era, vice president of college readiness assessments for the College Board Priscilla Rodriguez said that “submitting a score is optional for every type of college, and we want the SAT to be the best possible option for students.”

Now that we understand the rationale as to why the SAT is being changed to an exclusively electronic test, let’s examine what exactly this change actually entails:

save students’ work in the event of lost internet connection or other technological problems.

The Test’s Adaptive Nature

Remember those online reading and math tests (they were called MAP Assessments) that we had to take in elementary and middle school? The new SAT, just like those MAP Assessments, is adaptive in nature, meaning that the difficulty of questions will change based on the student’s performance on the previous question. This change to the SAT is being implemented to ensure testing security and better cater to students’ academic abilities.

passages, just because it was a lot easier to read and easier to stay focused.” Wang also mentioned that “[she] felt less drained at the end [of the digital test].”

Calculator Allowed For the Entire Math Section

Now I know, I know—I too was shocked to hear that the SAT will no longer test students’ ability to become a walking calculator over their ability to solve algebraic equations. But let it be known: calculators will be allowed for the *entire* math portion of the exam. The College Board’s testing platform will also have a built-in graphing calculator, but like the paper version of the exam, students will be allowed to bring their own graphing calculator.

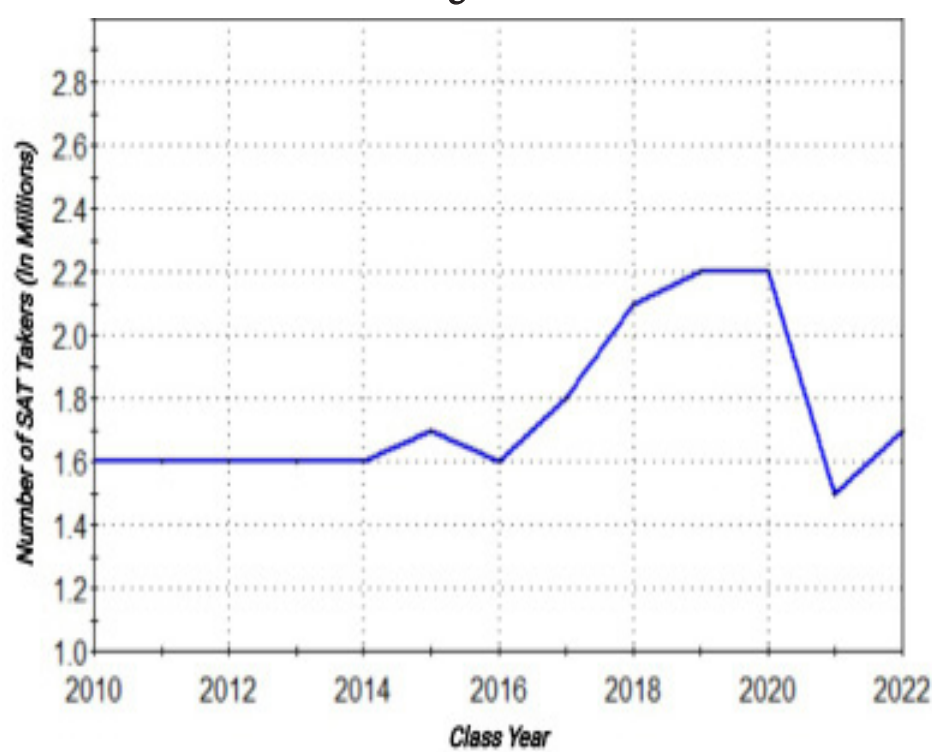
Expedited Test Scores

It typically takes weeks for students to receive their SAT score after taking the exam, but with these new changes, it’s likely that students will receive their scores in a matter of days. This will be particularly beneficial for a student who’s taking the SAT close to their college application deadline.

With two years of online school and quite a few digital AP exams under my belt, I can definitely say that I’m well-accustomed to online exams. However, after taking the current version of the SAT last year, I can definitely say that I’d much rather take the test on paper if given the option.

Time will tell if this is the general consensus among high school students or if moving digital will improve the number of students annually taking the standardized test. But until then, it seems as though the SAT’s popularity will continue to dwindle as universities expand their test-optional policies and the test remains on paper in a widely digital world.

Decline in Students Taking the SAT From 2010 to 2022



Courtesy of Shane Stackpole

An Entirely Digital Platform

Although the new SAT will be administered digitally, students will still take the exam at a testing center. The College Board attempted to create an at-home SAT in 2020, but a myriad of complications led them to scrap it later that year. Testers will be allowed to take the fully-digital SAT on their personal computer, school-issued computer, or on a computer provided by the testing center. Moreover, the College Board has developed a testing platform that will automatically

Where’d the Other Hour Go?

While the original paper SAT was a three-hour-long exam, the new and improved SAT will be reduced to an only two-hour-long test. This change is primarily a result of the reading passages being significantly reduced in length and only one or two questions being asked in response to each passage.

Christal Wang, a junior at Thomas Jefferson High School who participated in a trials of the digital SAT, said that “[she] definitely preferred that format with the shorter

Although the shift from a paper SAT to a digital SAT is undoubtedly advantageous for the College Board, what’s in it for us? For one, after a trial run of the digital SAT last fall, 80% percent of students who participated said that they found the 2-hour digital version to be much less stressful than the original, 3-hour paper one. Beyond this, however, it’s not easy to delineate specific benefits or drawbacks of the SAT’s going electronic, for the merit in testing on a digital platform is quite subjective to the student and greatly depends on their personal abilities.

So, I asked a couple Onteora students—some who have taken the paper SAT and others who have not—whether they would prefer to take the standardized test on paper or on the computer screen.

Here are their responses:

Bella McHugh, Senior: “I’d rather take the original version because I like paper tests a lot more than ones online. They’re just easier to navigate and take notes on.”

Joni Huber, Sophomore: “I’d rather take the SAT as a three hour long, paper test because I prefer paper to a screen, and the digital SAT exam reduces the amount of time supplied.”

Tahula Potter, Senior: “The 3-hour length of the paper exam was always the worst part for me when I took it, so I’d much rather take the two-hour-long, digital exam.”

Jett Conti, Junior: “Although I won’t be able to, I would rather take the digital SAT. I think that shortening the reading passages and allowing the calculator to be used for the entire math section will make taking and studying for it a much less stressful situation—which should be the case now that most colleges no longer require it.”

A Deep Dive Into Oteora High School's Musical

By Maddy Taylor

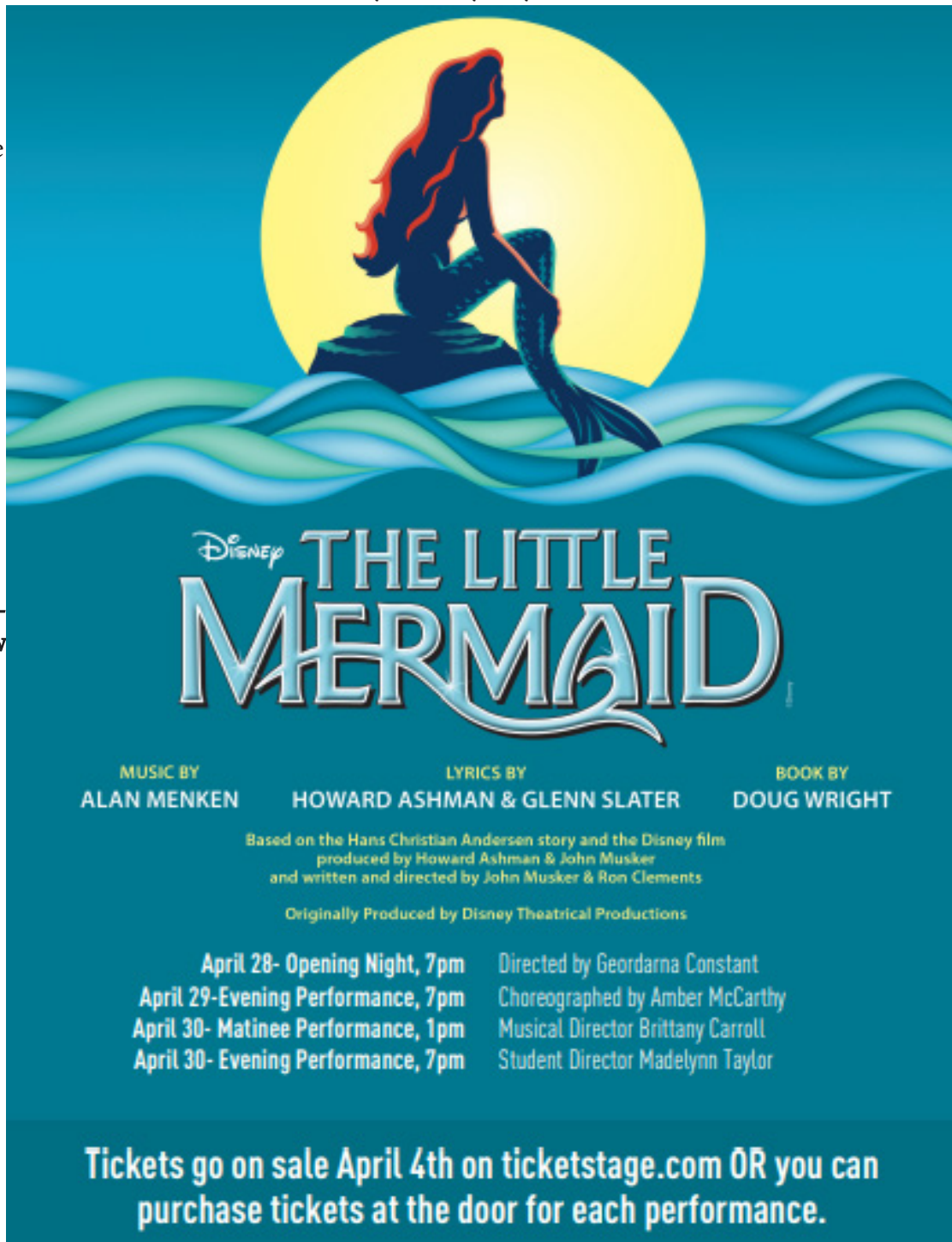
After two years without an in-person musical, the Oteora Drama Department is back with a production of Disney's *The Little Mermaid*. A large bump in the road for this year's show has been working around COVID-19 restrictions and the uncertainty of the COVID-19 guidelines come April. A couple weeks ago, I interviewed Oteora's Chorus Teacher and Music Director Brittany Carroll to get her perspective on this year's show and how the pandemic has affected Oteora's Music and Drama Departments.

How do you think the music department has changed now that quarantine is over?

"I think that being quarantined and having to do social distancing forced us to do things that weren't necessarily ensemble-based, and so we lost a lot of time with our ensembles. Quarantine really hit us hard, and even being back in school this year, we still have social distancing guidelines that we had to follow, so it's made it difficult for ear training, or for just learning how to sing or how to play an instrument. We've lost a lot of ground with music in general."

How has COVID-19 affected this year's show?

"A lot of students that usually do the musical had made other commitments; in the past couple of years we haven't been able to have a spring musical, so they filled their time with other clubs that were able to meet. I think that really affected our enrollment for the show. But as far as actually putting on a show, having to wear a mask and socially distance have presented a lot of challenges, but I think that we're working through them pretty well."



Courtesy of Brittany Carroll

With that in mind, in what way have COVID-19 restrictions changed how the show can and will run this year?

"Well just in general, if you think about *The Little Mermaid*, we have 'Kiss The Girl,' and you can't actually have any kissing, so we're going to have to be really inventive with how we block something like that. We've had to be really inventive with how we choreograph, spread out our cast on the stage, and present people with masks on. We've been getting clear masks and things like that so we can still see facial expressions. It's been a challenge, for sure."

And to wrap it up with a fun question, what's your favorite part of the show so far? What's your favorite experience this year putting together the musical?

"I always get that question, and I never know how to answer it. I think it's being able to see all these kids who have never done a show before, or have never been on stage before, for that matter, attempt it for the first time. I'm really

enjoying being a part of the show and being able to see their passion evolve. It's been fun."

The show stars junior Olivia Weiss as Ariel, senior Sean Foster as Prince Eric, junior Madelynn Taylor as Ursula, sophomore Ada Helm as Sebastian, and freshman Anna Johnson as Flounder. The show is directed by 7th grade English teacher Mrs. Constant, musically directed by Mrs. Carroll, and choreographed by Amber McCarthy. Tickets are on sale now.



Tech Crew's First Meeting



Rehearsal for "Kiss the Girl"



Pit Rehearsal, Courtesy of The Talon Staff

The Harmful ‘Don’t Say Gay’ Bill

By Elijah Salazar-Garris

The ‘Don’t Say Gay’ bill, formally called the Parental Rights in Education Bill, seeks to prohibit the discussion of all LGBTQ+ topics in Florida schools. If a teacher were to discuss topics such as gender and sexuality, a parent would, under the bill’s jurisdiction, have the right to sue the school for discussing “non-age appropriate topics.”

On February 24th, the bill passed the Florida House of Representatives by a 69-47 vote. On Monday, March 28th, Florida Governor Ron DeSantis signed the ‘Don’t Say Gay’ Bill into law. It will be implemented during the 2022-2023 school year.

At one point, there was an amendment proposed that would have forced teachers to out their students if they identified as anything other than straight or cisgender. For those who don’t know, cisgender means identifying with the gender to which one was assigned at birth. Or simply put, not transgender or nonbinary. Fortunately, this section of the original bill was removed from the version that was passed.

This bill will harm queer students throughout Florida by erasing the discussion of issues that directly affect them. Under this bill, students just like us would not be allowed to talk about their LGBTQ+ friends, family, events, or even themselves in a school setting.

Imagine if we weren’t allowed to talk about these topics at Onteora. We would have to silence ourselves or risk being punished in the pursuit of being true to ourselves.

This is just one of several anti-LGBTQ+ bills being passed around

the country. Last year, there were a total of 280 anti-LGBTQ+ bills introduced, and 25 of them passed. All of these violate the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment, attacking individuals’ rights based on sexuality and gender, both of which are constitutionally protected.

DeSantis deems discussion of LGBTQ+ topics “entirely inappropriate.” This bill goes in tandem with DeSantis’ bigoted agenda of erasing queer-ness in the classroom.

DeSantis is also against the educational model of Critical Race Theory in the classrooms, claiming that it’s racist and teaches students to hate America. However, in reality, CTR plans to not teach only the white parts of history in order to have a better understanding of America’s past. It aims to show that we were far from an equal country in the past and address our country’s mistakes. Working to undo these mistakes is what we should be doing.

What’s more is that companies that claim to be allied with the LGBTQ+ community are funding the same politicians who are trying to take away our rights. Companies that turn their logos rainbow for Pride month, such as Duke Energy, AT&T, and Walgreens, have

donated thousands of dollars each to these politicians. These politicians are against LGBTQ+ students’ rights, and companies that claim to be on our side are against our rights, as well.

Amidst this effort to silence our existence, my heart goes out to all of the LGBTQ+ students in Florida. I hope one day we can live in a truly equal country.



Courtesy of Grok Nation

A Recap of This Year’s I[c]onic Science Olympiad Season

By Shane Stackpole

It’s 7:00 a.m. on one frigid Sunday morning in the dead of February; anticipation fills the room as half-awake students frantically flip through their chemistry notes for a last minute study; running through the halls, students scramble to find the room in which the device they spent the past 48 hours perfecting will be impounded; students adjust their safety goggles and sharpen their pencils to a point, nervously preparing for the start of their first event—this is the typical morning of a Science Olympiad competition.

After four months of studying the nervous system, building bridge structures, and mastering bird calls, the Onteora High School Science Olympiad Team competed at the Mid-Hudson Regional Competition on February 6th—their first in-person competition in two years.

Having been a member of the team since 2019, I can attest to how incredible it was to have an in-person competition again and be surrounded by hundreds of students from across the region who all share the same love of science. On the event, Onteora coach Bryan Keenan said that “[he was] absolutely honored to bring such an awesome, dedicated group of students, who performed so well despite the adversity many incurred due to this past year.”

During the 7-hour-long competition, students competed in a variety of STEM based events, each

of which tested students on material that extends far beyond typical high school curricula.

While the Omicron variant and an ice storm on the weekend of the competition tried to take the team down, Onteora’s olympians proved their resilience, taking home a total of 18 awards and winning 9th place out of 32 teams overall.

The following Olympians won an award in their respective event:

Shane Stackpole and Joey Driscoll won 1st Place in Environmental Chemistry; this event entailed a written test that required students to apply chemistry to environmental problems—such as freshwater contamination and the use of harmful pesticides.

Nicholas Drucquer and Frederick Luttinger won 2nd Place in Gravity Vehicle; this event required students to build a vehicle prior to the competition that uses gravitational potential energy as a sole means of propulsion to reach a specific target.

Sophia Grinberg and Ari Green won 4th Place in It’s About Time; this event required students to build a non-electrical device prior to the competition that can measure time intervals between 10 and 300 seconds. Students also took a written exam on the physics and history of time.

Sydnee Schilling and Joey Driscoll won 4th Place in Rock and Minerals; this event tested students’



Courtesy of Joey Driscoll

ability to identify and classify rocks and minerals based on their specific characteristics—such as texture, hardness, and color.

Auden Stellavato and EJ Schackne-Martello won 4th Place in Write It-Do It; in this hands-on event, one student was given a structure made out of miscellaneous objects and was expected to write a description outlining how to build it. The second student was then given the individual objects and was challenged to rebuild the structure using their partner’s description.

Zoe Gabriel and Charlie Weisz-Hoolihan won 6th Place in Ornithology; this event assessed students’ knowledge of North American birds and required them to identify birds by listening to a recording of their individual call.

Jett Conti and Amelie Belfiore won 7th Place in Cell Biology; this event required students to take a written test on the biological processes that occur inside a cell, placing a strong emphasis on cellular organelles, metabolic processes, and the cell cycle.

Sophia Grinberg and Shane Stackpole won 8th Place in Forensics; in this lab-based event, students applied chemistry and biology to analyze forensic evidence and solve a crime.

Sydnee Schilling and Sophia Grinberg won 8th Place in Anatomy and Physiology; this year’s event assessed students’ knowledge on the anatomy and physiology of the nervous, sense organs, and endocrine systems.

Onteora Takes Harvard Model Congress by Storm

By The Talon Staff

During the last weekend in February, Onteora High School's Harvard Model Congress delegation attended the conference in Boston, Massachusetts. Harvard Model Congress is a congressional simulation where students are assigned the role of a real life congressperson, senator, or other government official. They debate, pass legislation, and connect with students from around the world, all while learning about modern politics and the inner workings of government.

The 2021 conference was virtual. However, through safety measures like a vaccine and mask mandate, the 2022 in-person conference was a huge success. Notably, Onteora senior Joey Driscoll won a Best Delegate award.

For those who had attended the 2020 in-person conference, it was a thrill to return—and for those who had attended virtually last year or joined this year, it was an exciting look into HMC and current politics. For anyone interested in politics, government, or current events, consider joining the Harvard Model Congress team next year. See High School Advisor Alicia Curlew for details.



Students in Committee Session, Courtesy of Alicia Curlew

How I Unlearned Pandemic Polarization

By Sophie Frank

Walking into school on the first day without a mask mandate felt, for the briefest of seconds, like entering before March 2020. For a moment, I felt as though I'd been transported back to those carefree days when I couldn't imagine a pandemic turning my life upside down. But within seconds, the anxiety and paranoia I'd been carrying for the past two years returned.

As I watched the first day without masks unfold, I feared feeling this way forever. Would I ever feel fully safe again? Would I ever be able to see my family without fear of exposing them? Would I ever stop seeing a stark, political division between the masked and the unmasked? Would our society ever recover from the extreme politicization of masks during the early months of the pandemic?

By the second day with no mask mandate, I felt remarkably unaffected.

One's stance on masks had once marked them as belonging to a certain political ideology. But now, within the confines of our school, people's motivations have shifted. Motives are now as diverse as simply being tired of wearing one, wanting to protect high-risk relatives, a desire to return to normalcy, or even a lack of confidence in one's physical appearance. The decision is still tainted by politics, but perhaps we are really and truly beginning to move into a safer world.

I expect the politicization of the pandemic to be a catalyst for conversations about political divisiveness for years to come. But as the school decides how to proceed in a mask-optional world, I find myself turning to science over politics more so than ever before.

I will not deny that my strident pandemic safety policies were influenced in part by my politics. But we now find ourselves in a place where everyone must decide where their boundaries are during an uncharted point in the pandemic. We are no longer bound by a government policy, but only our trust in science and our own safety measures. I find myself turning away from resenting the "other side," and instead, simply contemplating my own safety.

Masked, vaccinated, and boosted, making my own choices in a mandate-free world, I feel

for the first time that my safety is in my own hands, instead of the selfish claws of politicians making decisions about our safety for their own purposes.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, I was the relentless watcher, scanning each room to see who was wearing their mask incorrectly, who was coughing, who was espousing anti-COVID conspiracy theories in the check-out line.

But now, I can envision a day when the actions of others warrant less attention. With everyone focused on "moving on" and a burgeoning sense that life may start to feel more normal,



Courtesy of Flickr

I am seeing our situation as it should be—beyond politics. I am focusing more on protecting myself and constantly updating my safety rules than side-eyeing others. I am choosing where to go based on what is safe and not how it will be seen by others. I am noticing the "to mask or not to mask" decisions of others less, and evaluating my own more.

After being conditioned for the past two years to flinch when I hear someone cough or roll my eyes when I see someone wearing a mask below their nose, viewing the world in this radically different—and more positive—light is... weird.

I spent months alone in my room and pictured never feeling safe again. Then I came back to school, apoplectic with rage at how difficult the transition from virtual to in-person was, at how normalcy felt miles away from the school

environment I so longed to return to.

I was starting to think that life might simply never be normal again; I thought of how I'd whooped with glee upon discovering that school was canceled for two weeks and felt a little sick at my own naivete.

Despite the darkness that overshadowed our lives for the past two years, I now feel as though I'm blinking in the bright sun, shocked by my newfound positivity.

I am attempting to acquire a sense of safety, though this mission was thrust upon me before I was ready. Before anyone was ready, I would argue, as I was stridently against repealing the school mask mandate. Since it has been repealed, I have attempted to separate safety from the tumultuous political melee I found myself steeped in for over a year.

While politics and activism have long since been an important part of my life, never were political issues easier to see than during the pandemic. I saw social conflict play out not just on TV but in the discussions of my own neighbors; mask mandate and vaccine tensions existed in my own backyard.

I have spent the past two years angry at how the pandemic became a political tool—at how vaccines turned into chess pieces to advance an agenda, masks as signifiers of one's political ideology. It's only recently that I've come to an important realization: if I continue to wear my mask and judge others, or give in to the doomsday feeling of never being safe again, I am being manipulated by politics just like anyone else. I am allowing the side of the political aisle that I so vehemently clung to dictate my choices more than the science I urge others to listen to.

Ironically, it was the school's decision on masks to which I was firmly opposed that led to this tremendous clarity. While I'll be watching the news with baited breath, I am finally prepared to embrace the return to normalcy that I've been craving for so long.

I may not be ready to take off my mask quite yet. But I am ready to leave judgment and despair behind in the long, dreary winter of 2022.

Envisioning the Future of Boiceville

By Abilene Adelman, Isabella Hamilton, and Sophia Odato

The future of Boiceville is bright, filled with fun interactive activities, classes, and more. Utilizing four vacant lots of land in Boiceville, we—Sophia Odato, Abilene Adelman, and Isabella Hamilton—are working with local land designing experts from KaN Landscaping to bring this vision to fruition.

At the end of the 2020-2021 school year, students were approached with the opportunity to join a program committed to creating uses for four vacant lots of land around our school. This program is dedicated to honoring the community and our town’s past, while also working to increase community involvement and enhance the beauty of Boiceville.

While we joined the program at the beginning of this school year, it has been in the works for years. The plots of land are all part of the flood buyout program, meaning they were purchased by the town after the previous owners became frustrated with the consistent flood

damage to their properties.

We have named the four lots the Willow Lot, the Picnic Lot, the Small Lot, and the Creek Lot. The Willow Lot is the lot closest to the school, located in front of HealthQuest. The Picnic Lot is on the same side of Route 28 as the Willow Lot, on the other side of HealthQuest. The Creek Lot is by Boiceville Market, where the SEW building is, and it is our only lot with an entrance to Esopus creek. Our last lot, the Small Lot, is located behind the Boiceville Market. The Willow Lot is our largest lot, and the Picnic Lot our smallest lot.

Each of these lots hold sentimental value. One of our goals in this program is to honor the memories of the families that used to own these properties and the cultures that surround our town.

To accomplish this goal, we first met with different community groups—such as local Native Americans of the Mohawk, Wappinger, Singing Rain and Mahican tribes; watershed experts and DEP personnel.

After we had a grasp of the diverse, rich history of our town, we hosted a webinar to get an idea of what locals were hoping to see added to their town. The webinar questions were centered around drawing people into Boiceville and making it a destination as opposed to a drive-by town.

After the webinar, we moved into the design phase of the program. This step was dedicated to brainstorming possibilities for the vacant lots without using any permanent structures or businesses, which is unfortunately one of the stipulations of working in a floodplain.

In addition to this, two of us also worked to create a video and survey to acquire feedback from the students of Onteora as to what they want to see on the vacant sites. Some of the ideas in which most people were interested



included a space to host outdoor movies, an ice skating rink, a place for markets or food trucks, and some sort of elevated boardwalk with a creek overlook. Within the next month, we will be finalizing a design in order to present our plan to the community members and the town board sometime in March.

The next time you are driving through Boiceville, take a look at these empty parcels of land and think about what you would like to see happening in your town. With your help, we will bring Boiceville to its full potential.



Courtesy of Abilene Adelman



Clawsnaps



The remnants of Valentine’s Day have left one discussion looming in the halls of Onteora: whether soulmates are real or not. To further examine this gripping topic we asked you, the people of Onteora:

Do you believe in soulmates? Why or why not?

Kelly Wen, Sophomore

“Due to the amount of sorrow I’ve experienced in my life, I do not have a definite answer.”

Clara Mead, Senior

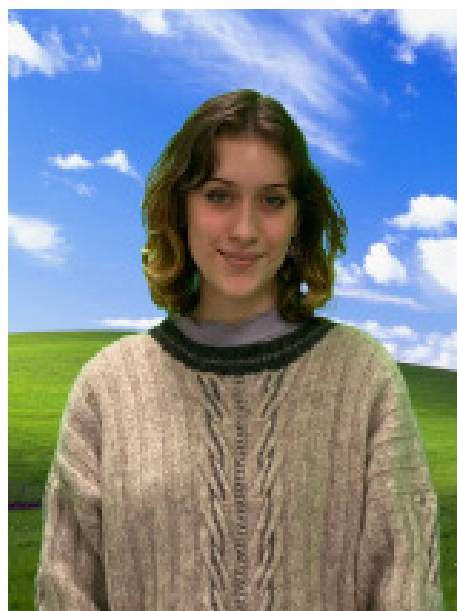
“Even if soulmates were real, there are too many people for them to even be relevant.”

Mercedez Cecelia-Storey, Junior

“I do believe in soulmates, but not just in a romantic way—I think soulmates can be platonic, too.”

Sean Foster, Senior

“I don’t think they exist; to me, soulmates are made—you find people you like and you stick with them.”



Courtesy of The Talon Staff

A Senior's Honest Take on College Applications

By Sophia Wentland

For years I narrowly avoided the infamous “college talk” with my family. Questions like “what are you going to major in?” and “where do you want to go to school?” plagued me throughout high school. I had some ideas, but none of them were concrete. I was jealous of my friends who had known what career path they wanted since sixth grade.

Freshman year of high school came and went. COVID-19 came out of nowhere when I was a sophomore, guiding me through junior year like an old friend. Twelfth grade came just like it was scheduled to. I was still baffled that I actually had to start thinking about college, as if I hadn't been doing that throughout all of high school.

For a long time, I didn't even know how to search for colleges. Eventually, I figured out how to use websites like the College Board, Naviance, and Google to search for colleges in certain cities; I also used Niche to find out which colleges had no application fee.

Some advice: even though their website is horrible, the College Board has a section called Big Future, which helps you search for colleges based off of your stats. It matches you with schools that are on par with your qualifications, and it helped me find a lot of the schools I applied to.

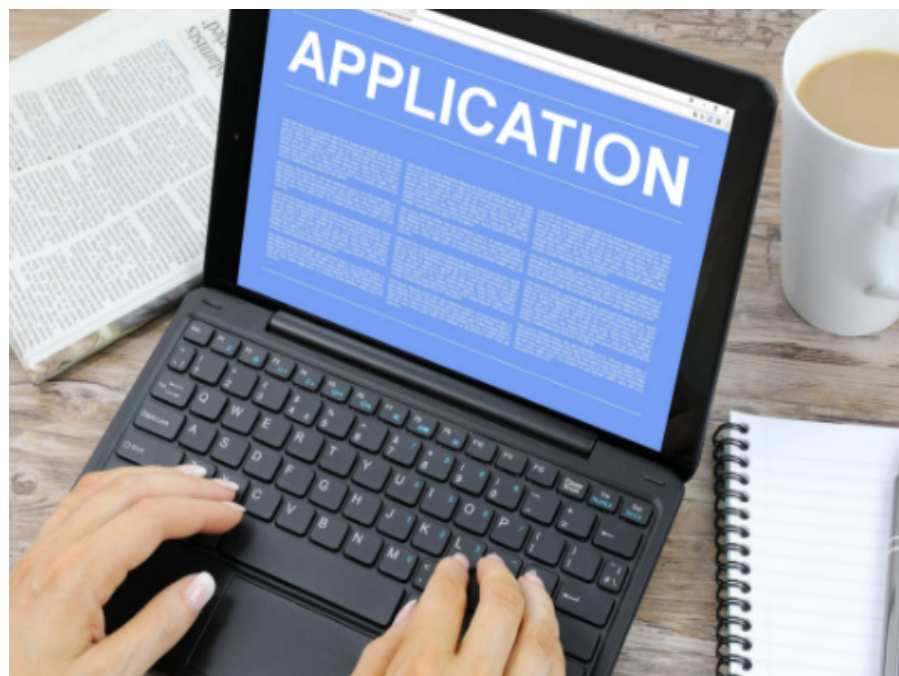
I have heard from countless students in older grades that applying to college isn't “that bad,” even

during the pandemic. But from my experience, is that bad, or at least it was for me. It was boring and repetitive, and, quite frankly, I felt like I was just a face in the crowd. Thousands of kids were also applying to the schools that I was, so what would make those schools want me as a future student?

I think part of the reason as to why applying was so hard was because I'm a procrastinator. I honestly did not start looking at colleges until the summer right before senior year, and I don't think I finished my personal essay until early November. It wasn't perfected until late December. For most of my colleges, I waited until 9 p.m. on the deadline to submit my application. The earliest I ever handed in an application was two weeks early. I still have not worked on any scholarship essays.

I'm going to tell you right now: do not do what I did. I know that it's easier said than done, especially if you work well under pressure like me. But it will make life a lot easier if you get started on everything as early as possible.

I eventually ended up applying to fifteen colleges, trying to apply to an equal amount of reach schools, match schools and safety schools. For those who don't know, reach schools are ones where your academic qualifications are below that of the average accepted student; match schools are ones where your academic qualifications



mirror that of the average accepted student; and safety schools are ones where your academic qualifications exceed that of the average accepted student.

While I was told not to apply to as many as I did, my stubbornness led me to do so anyway. Looking back, however, I would recommend not applying to this many schools, especially if they each have separate supplemental essays, doing so can become overwhelming very quickly.

I wish I had a concrete point of this article. I wish I could wrap it up in a bow and end it with sunshine and rainbows, but that's not life. What I learned while applying to college is that it is a grueling and repetitive process. It was awful, but it definitely gave me a look at what college was really going to be like,

Courtesy of The Blue Diamond Gallery and that it wasn't going to be easy. I also learned that my normal habits of procrastinating were not going to fly for much longer.

College is not something to sugarcoat, and neither is the admissions and application process. The process of applying is very individualized and isolated, but it brings me comfort knowing that a lot of my classmates and fellow seniors are feeling the same.

If you are feeling overwhelmed, stuck, indecisive, or impatient about college, you are not alone. It is an exciting time, but if applying to college was not what you were expecting, that's okay.

Good luck to everyone who is applying or has applied to college this year. I'm excited to see where life takes all of us.

Journaling for Joy

By Maxine Sprague and Arely Tapia

I first began journaling when I was going through a tough time and needed to express how I felt about certain situations in a healthy way. I wanted to have an outlet to write about anything, no matter how personal, and have a sense of it being secure and protected from anyone else's eyes. I love picking out a journal or notebook and customizing it for my pleasure, picking out my favorite stickers, having my own drawings—practically anything. However, finding a journal that fully satisfies you can take a while.

Writing out what I'm thinking and feeling is easier than keeping it in my mind and letting it weigh me down. Sometimes I write short thoughts and ideas I have throughout the day, and other times I can sit and write multiple pages about something that is bothering me or something good that is happening.

Journaling can sometimes be messy, but it shows my thought process and how my brain puts those ideas onto paper. You don't necessarily need to be a confident writer to journal—it is personal to you, and you can make it anything you want. You can choose to share your writing or not; either is perfectly fine. Only you have control over what you do or don't write about, and no one can judge you for it.

Journaling is very different from writing a school assignment or a college essay. There are no guidelines you have to follow or limits to your writing. I feel very free when I am journaling because I make it my own. I also journal so that when I am older I can look back at what my life was like in the past or even just within the month. It is a fantastic way to reflect on my actions and experiences over both short and long periods of time.



Courtesy of Tahlula Potter

Onteora Launches Into the Stratosphere

By Sophie Frank

The Onteora High School Rocket Club re-launched after virtual learning with a bang—literally. The Rocket Club builds rockets, and launches them on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Saturdays. Reach out to Faculty Advisor Rich DeRuvo or ninth grader Gavin Rice if you are interested in joining this club and sending Onteora High School into the stratosphere.



Courtesy of Pixabay

Nobody Wants to Talk About Race

By Ella Williams

Race is an issue that's often awkward to talk about. Whether it's your politically ambiguous uncle or old-fashioned grandparent, someone is always avoiding these conversations. I'm sure that even your reading this is at least mildly uncomfortable whenever racial issues get brought into conversations. These heavily avoided conversations are typically about the larger racial issues such as police brutality or overt discrimination. Let's face it, nobody wants to talk about race. Listen, I get it. The idea of having to live in a Black person's shoes as a White person is probably appalling to you, given that you've never had to deal with racial discrimination a day in your life.

But, I'm here to tell you about an issue you probably haven't put any thought into. Now I know you already face issues, like a poor test grade or the lunch being anything but appetizing. But, those are more minor inconveniences rather than prolonged issues that are heavier than the bulky chromebook in your backpack. You don't have the back pain from lugging around the issues that come with being Black in a predominantly White school.

So just please, listen to me for five minutes so I can explain what issues I have to deal with everyday.

Now the issues I've dealt with are probably not the ones you're thinking about. They're not the n-word echoing through the halls out of the mouths of White people. They're not the awkward stares when slavery is mentioned in class. They're not even the times I've been told I don't count as a Black person because I'm mixed. The issues that I face constitute the type of racism that most non-Black people engage in, whether intentionally or not. They engage in the type of racism that typically flies under the radar.

I'm talking about microaggressions.

Let's begin with what a microaggression is: A microaggression is a statement or action with an

underlying racist connotation. At Onteora, I've experienced microaggressions from just about every type of person I know. These people range from those I expect, my friends, or even teachers.

A common example of microaggressive behavior that I've experienced is when I'm compared to other Black people. Whether it's getting me confused for another Black student, thinking I'm siblings with them, or comparing me to Black celebrities I look nothing like, I can't escape this particular microaggression. It reduces my identity to my race, when I am so much more than just the color of my skin.

When these comparisons happen, no one ever bats an eye. It shows just how normalized this behavior is when it's actually microaggressive. White people don't acknowledge what they're doing—they just brush it off as an "honest mistake." It's an "honest mistake" despite its habitual behavior. It's an "honest mistake" even though I look nothing like the person I'm being compared to. If it truly was an "honest mistake," it wouldn't be as common a part of my life as brushing my teeth.

But don't worry. I haven't just been compared to other Black people—but also to animals. That's right, literal animals. For instance, when I once wore my hair out, it only took 42 minutes before someone compared me to a gorilla. I wasn't surprised by the person who said it, but rather that it was even said at all. I have been no stranger to being compared to Black slaves and other Black students—but animals? That one was definitely new for me.

If being compared to an animal wasn't bad enough, I get treated like one at least once a week. I've been treated this way for as long as I can remember. I walk through the halls and feel tugs on my curls. I wait in line for lunch and feel someone petting me. I wear my hair in a bun, but that doesn't stop anyone. I go into class and my teacher treats me like a pet, too. Yes, some-

one who is literally not supposed to touch students touches my hair frequently. Calling that behavior demeaning would be an understatement. I constantly have people's grimy fingers buried in my hair without my permission, no matter how many times I ask them to stop.

I doubt it ever will.

Another microaggression I've experienced is when White people use African American Vernacular English (AAVE) while talking to me. It's something that always catches me off guard, considering I rarely use AAVE at school. It's uncomfortable when the only other Black person in the room and I are called "sis" or "sister." It's strange when I'm explaining a racial issue to a teacher and they adopt AAVE while they're supposedly denouncing racism.

At this point in my life, I expect to be pet by others and compared to animals. I've learned that many of the people I'm surrounded by are not racially aware enough to recognize their microaggressive behavior and its enduring effects. But that nowhere near serves as an excuse for such implicit behavior. I've attended Onteora my whole life, and it's a bit disheartening that after 12 years I still feel uncomfortable because of casual racism.

So please, make your POC peers a little more comfortable and evaluate your behavior.

Editor's Note

Since this article, originally titled "Dear White People," was first submitted for publication to the February issue of *The Talon*, there have been several content adjustments. After reading the original article, administration had several meetings with this writer which resulted in the implementation of initiatives that may help to mitigate some of what this writer has experienced: Mykee Fowlin, a renowned anti-bullying speaker, addressed the entire high school, and the district implemented "Anonymous Alerts," a bullying prevention alert system.

The Return of Mykee Fowlin

The Talon Staff

In February and March, Mykee Fowlin returned to Onteora for the first time since 2016. Fowlin is a psychologist, performer, and motivational speaker. From his website: "His mission is to create an atmosphere of worldwide inclusion, not just tolerance, towards all people." Fowlin spoke to Onteora students about using pain they have experienced as a gift that can be used to change the world. He believes in the power of one person's story, and believes everyone can rise up and become stronger than what has held them back.



Courtesy of Lisa Casey

Onteora's Booster Club Reimagined

By The Talon Staff

The below flier provides information regarding the newly reestablished Booster Club! If you are looking to fundraise for a club or team, the Booster Club would love to plan an event with you. They also plan to be active on social media, posting about the accomplishments of any and all students, so send in submissions! According to the club's website (which can be found at the bottom of the flier), the non-for-profit organization is open to all "parents, family members, administrators, faculty staff, and alumni" for membership. Scan the QR code to register as a member. If you're an Onteora student, the Booster Club wants to help you reach your goals!

ONTEORA BOOSTER CLUB'S MISSION

Support all secondary students and extra-curricular programs

Promote school spirit

Foster high standards for scholarship, integrity, and good sportsmanship in all activities

SHORT TERM GOALS

Raise funds for school spirit-building events and prizes, team/club 'wish list' items such as team gear/warm-ups, and extra training or experiences

Recognition of Scholar Athletes and Artists

LONG TERM GOAL

Purchase a food truck or concession stand

To register with a direct link, visit our website.

MEMBERSHIP REGISTRATION

Please use this QR code to register for membership



MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO:

THE ONTEORA BOOSTER CLUB

PO BOX 137, BOICEVILLE, NY 12412

OR VIA VENMO @ONTEORABOOSTERCLUB

A Reseller's Take on the Benefits of Reselling

By Kelly Wen

Thrift shopping has been on the rise in recent years. As a reseller, I often hear criticisms against reselling. With the issue of fast fashion and overproduction, thrifting is considerably one of the most sustainable ways to help aid the problem. However, many people do not feel like spending time trying to find good pieces in a second-hand shop. That's where resellers come in.

A reseller spends hours looking through second-hand clothing (commonly found at thrift stores, yard and estate sales, or elsewhere). They then purchase specific clothes that cater to a certain aesthetic or



demographic and upsell the items, becoming curated items, as opposed to someone's giveaways at a thrift store.

This creates a job opportunity for those who may be struggling economically, or it can just simply provide an individual with some extra income. Some may say this is easy money, but in reality, there is a lot more to it. Not only do resellers have to spend hours in stores, but we also have to clean, photograph, and advertise the clothing. With reseller shops largely being online, we are constantly managing and negotiating with buyers who are interested in the items.

Furthermore, the overflow of donations to thrift shops will eventually end up as waste, which is nothing but harmful to the environment. Picking up unique pieces that have not been seen is rescuing them from the landfill.

My only problem with reselling is when resellers mark their items at an insane price. I think it betrays the purpose. From my experience selling on Depop, I have seen fellow

resellers overprice poor quality clothing. Reselling should be generally affordable to the public.

That being said, if you purchased a high-end item at full price, or if it is an item that is considerably hard to find, it is understandable to set the item at a price reflecting these factors.

Overall, thrifting is an environmentally friendly activity, and resellers, along with their customers, should be considerate and reasonable with each other when reselling pieces online.



Courtesy of Kelly Wen

Ode to the Onteora Orchestra

By Joey Driscoll

When it was announced that Onteora would be transferring to a remote model in 2020, I had a laundry list of questions, much like everyone else. I wondered about how I would see my friends or how I'd be able to stay motivated without being in person. As a musician, one of my primary concerns was how I was going to handle my loss of orchestra and the chamber ensemble.

Playing music was my primary outlet for socialization, as many of my best friends at the time were through chamber.

Expressively, I find it more meaningful to say certain things to myself in notes rather than words, as well. Playing my emotions out loud was (and is) my therapy of choice. Music is one of the core pillars of my mental health, and is both something I enjoy doing and something I take pride in. Needless to say, the loss of in-person orchestra was difficult.

Virtual orchestra was

as rewarding as it could've been. We still played almost every day in class, had lessons, and even did virtual NYSSMA-Onteora Orchestra teacher Erica Boyer did a really great job of making everything as close to normal as possible.

I was distraught by the

loss of what it was before COVID hit.

Having worked in-person with our orchestra since this September, though, I can safely say that I had absolutely nothing to be concerned about. In my opinion, our orchestra this year is actually more motivated as

It's evident through our recent concert, the first since December 2019, that those efforts are paying off in a big way.

I genuinely believe that this incredible dedication and work ethic speaks to the importance of music in everyone's lives. Many of us are struggling with certain subjects after having spent so long online, and it's difficult to attain the self-motivation that we had before lockdown. The outlier to this phenomenon, though, seems to be with music.

After losing it for so long, our orchestra came back stronger, and it makes me so happy to actually

make music as a group again. So, to everyone in the Onteora High School Orchestra, consider this a letter of appreciation to the time and effort you put into our little ensemble. It means the world to me, Mrs. Boyer, and hopefully to all of you, too. Thank you for giving me such a valuable last year with our orchestra!



Courtesy of Erica Boyer

loss of chamber, though, as there was no feasible way that could work in a remote setting. As lovely as our orchestra meets were, I missed being in the classroom with everyone making music, and I was concerned that after so long without in-person lessons, rehearsals, or concerts, the motivation in our orchestra wouldn't

a group than it ever was.

I have the really special opportunity of teaching and conducting a piece that I wrote myself this year, and working with everyone from that angle has already become one of my most rewarding musical experiences. I can see and hear the effort that every musician in our orchestra puts in.

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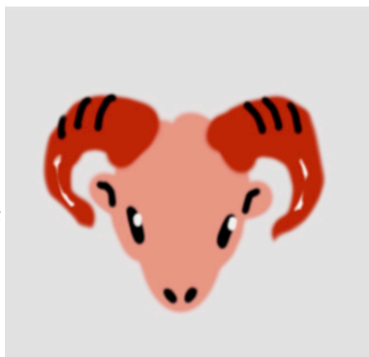
April Horoscopes

By Auden Stellavato

Here are your next round of horoscopes! Enjoy the walk down fate's path. This newspaper is but a harbinger for my powerful fortune telling and knowledge of astrology.

Aries:

This month take a chill pill! Take a step back! I hate to break it to you all, but as of late you've been seizing the moment a little too much. We can all be controlling but you've been really pushing it recently. But no worries, letting others take the lead is far from a bad thing. Your personal growth now will come from indulging the endeavors of others. Also, if you are considering committing any major crimes this month, consider the role of a get-away driver.



Leo:

Do not go looking for problems, you might discover ones that were not there initially. Not every dark corner needs to be explored. While introspection is important for you here, be careful not to get lost in it because presence in your external environment will be just as important. And remember: look out for broken glass on the floor.



Sagittarius: You may feel like it is time for something to change, but do not sit and wait for a change to happen, follow your whims and incite it. The stronger your foundation, the more you can give yourself and in turn give to the world.



Taurus:

Individualism has its time and place, and that time and place is with you. This is a time to trust yourself, be sure of your instincts, and steadfast in your actions. Now is a time where you are at risk of self-doubt and insecurity diluting your thoughts. Work against this or you will end up taking more steps backwards than you do forward. Avoid consideration of any careers revolving around optometry for the next extended period of time.

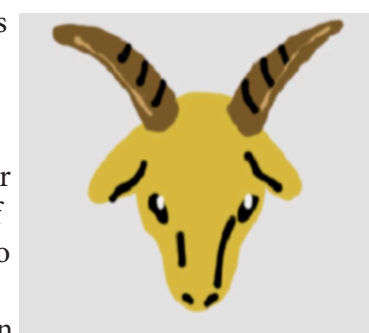


Virgo:

Do not lose yourself in the stresses of others, accept that some things need to be allowed to take their course—both good and bad. There are tasks that need to be accomplished this month and they may feel overwhelming, but they will be more easily handled than you think. Only buy coffins from credible sources.



Capricorn: There is a lot of happiness that can be had in the present moment and found for you individually. If you feel the need to take time for yourself, then indulge in your own contemplativeness. Letting go of the pressure you feel to be a light in the dark for others will help you more now than ever.



Gemini:

Your sword in the stone awaits. Your leadership is needed in whatever capacity arises. While Aries needs to step back, it's time for you to step up! Any reservations you have over standing your ground should be abandoned. It may feel like chaos surrounds you, but do not get lost in it. The calm you provide for others can be used to benefit you as well. You would also do well to remember that your ideal weapon of choice in the upcoming weeks is the battle axe.



Libra:

You may be growing tired of the seemingly never-ending dramatics that entered your life and seem keen not to leave, but be patient. This will end soon and the opportunity for you to explore new ventures will arise. Even if they seem trivial and unimportant, allow yourself to indulge in the things you gravitate towards naturally.



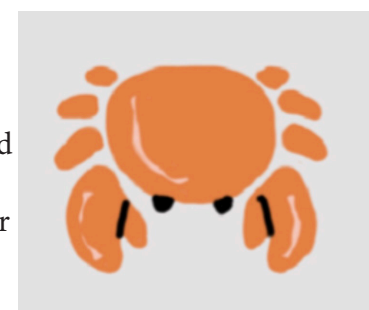
Aquarius:

You may feel like you are continually being dragged into a maelstrom of chaos, but take solace in the fact that you can be the voice of reason as opposed to getting dragged down in this madness. You do not have to be consumed by the whirlwind of things happening around you, be calm.



Cancer:

Right now you may feel that life is dragging its feet and keeping you down, but do not lose your optimism. Remain open to any possibilities, and do not be suspicious if your fortune suddenly begins to turn for the better. As the plants begin to grow again this March (both indoors and outdoors) make sure you never forget to water them.



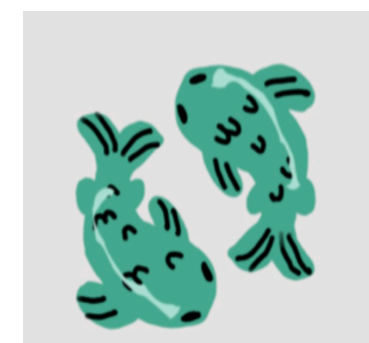
Scorpio:

You cannot fight fire with fire (you're a water sign), even as you find yourself spending more time alone, some inconveniences may need to be dealt with. But do not respond frustratedly or with aggression, that will only exacerbate the situation. Let things take their course.



Pisces:

You're probably very restless right now, which is understandable. With spring slow to arrive the world is still hibernating. It's frustrating to feel trapped but remember that you cannot force your way out of anything, at least not now. Accept that things take time but they do shift.

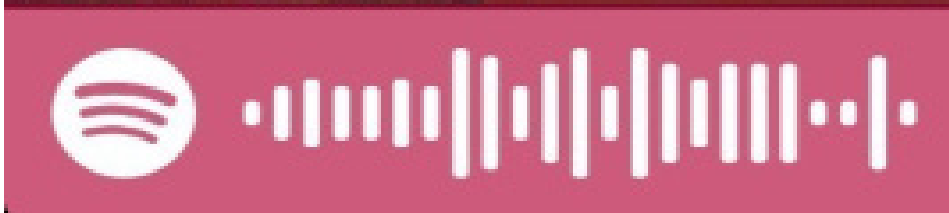


Courtesy of Tahlula Potter

Spring Playlist

By Sophia Wentland

Here's my spring playlist! I opted for a chill vibe this time. Follow me on Apple Music @sophiawentland.



Flower Word Search

By Shane Stackpole

X D B E F I D T U N M A R I G O L D E C
 T F I P R U F O G H A N G D Y V H A C X
 X J W Z Z U S I G Y C H A M O M I L E R
 T U L I P Q V O I H Q V S M R U E D I Q
 D A I S Y S N H V G G E G C D L F I Z Q
 S I O R C H I D F V M H T W A O R Y R U
 P E T U N I A C A R N A T I O N X C T C
 Q D E I P Y W R D C R O C U S A N H R S
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 N T D R V J B M Y L P F Y E D N M T A N
 O Y X V A O W L G K P O E N P U N H Y L
 W Q M S J N U Y N E W J P P D X Z E L V
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 R G H Y L R R E J L R E K T Y O U U L Y
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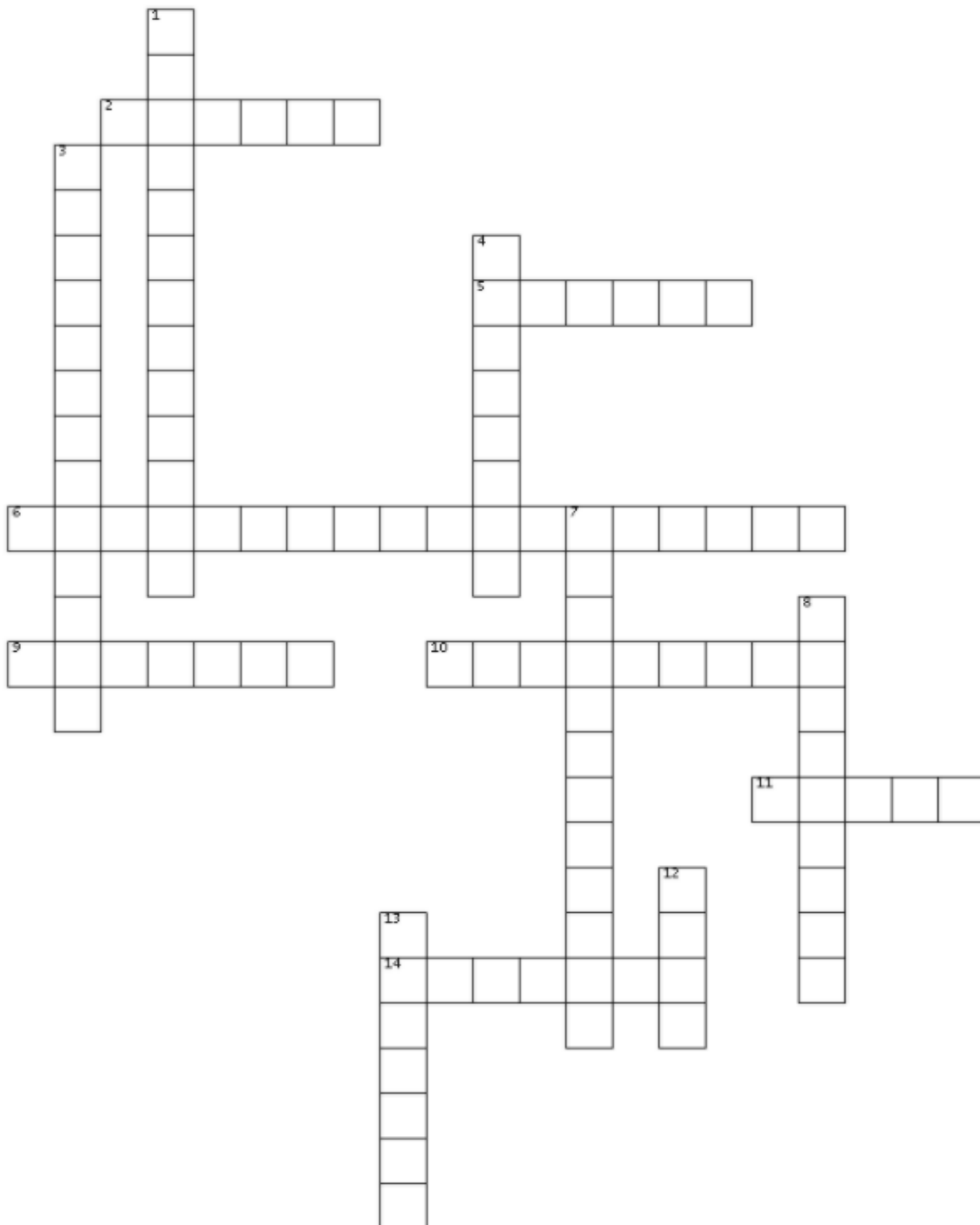
Chrysanthemum
 Daffodil
 Petunia
 Poppy
 Rose
 Hydrangea
 Snowdrop

Daylily
 Peony
 Iris
 Chamomile
 Marigold
 Crocus
 Lilac

Carnation
 Orchid
 Tulip
 Daisy

Fun Food Crossword

By Kelly Wen



Courtesy of Pixabay

CROSSWORD CLUES:

ACROSS

- 2. The name of this Swiss dipping dish directly translates to "melted".
- 5. The caesar salad originated from _.
- 6. The fear of peanut butter getting stuck on the roof of your mouth.
- 9. McDonald's fries were cooked in _ until they eventually switched to vegetable oil.
- 10. This cake got its name from the 1:1 ratio of ingredients in its recipe.
- 11. The gelatin dessert "Jello" started in 1897 in __, New York.
- 14. The German chocolate cake originated from this country.

DOWN

- 1. This Midwestern salad consists of rice, pineapple, and whipped cream.
- 3. The famous "nutty noodle" from the Onteora cafeteria is made with noodles and _ butter.
- 4. Popcorn chicken in the Onteora cafeteria is often paired with the word _.
- 7. This state of America is also known as the "mushroom capital of the world".
- 8. This US president popularized macaroni and cheese in the United States.
- 12. This luncheon became popular worldwide after its use during World War II.
- 13. Risotto alla milanese gets its golden color from this spice.