

THE COURIER

VOLUME 95, NUMBER 3

WHITE PLAINS, NEW YORK 10605

April 2019

The longest running middle school newspaper in the United States!

Thoroughly Modern Millie - Thoroughly Marvelous

By: Colleen Cave

Flappers! Bob cut! Probation! That was America in the 1920s and in Highlands during the performance of *Thoroughly Modern Millie Jr.* The cast practiced into the night for months in order to make the musical come to life. Through singing and dancing, the students tell the story of Millie, played by Sophia Emmert. Sophia did an amazing job interpreting Millie, a young woman who travels to The Big Apple from Kansas in hopes of making a life for herself.

The 1920s was an era of change for America. Women were wearing straight, bodiless dresses in order to rid the world of corsets and promote women's suffrage. Automobiles (cars) were becoming widespread throughout the country. The characters in the play called this a "modern" time and whoever embraced the change was called "a modern".

Millie strived to become a modern by bobbing her hair, changing her style, and even planned to marry her boss! She said that in modern times women marry for comfort and that love had nothing to do with it. In her mind, her plan was flawless. However, the plan crumbled when Millie's boss, Mr. Graydon portrayed by Kharan Cidambi, falls for her new best friend. Karan's performance left no mistake in the audience's mind that Mr. Graydon was in love with Miss Dorothy, played by Madison Bogart. Madison brilliantly played a young woman who is desperate to find out what life is like on the "other side." In other words, life of the working class. With her boss smitten with her curious friend, Millie elects to find another suitable bachelor, until she meets Jimmy Smith. Jimmy, a young man portrayed by Michael Caridi, is a man of many trades. Both Sophia and Michael carried us along with

Millie and Jimmy's whirlwind romance through brilliantly performed numbers. Unfortunately, their story is complicated by Mrs. Meer's, played by Georgia Maitland. Georgie's stage presence transforms Mrs. Meers into a force to be reckoned with when she starts kidnapping young orphaned girls! Mrs. Meers is aided by the comic relief of the show, two Chinese siblings working to have their old, ailing mother brought to America. They are named Ching Ho and Bun Foo played by Patrick Stanton and Jacob Lee. Through mispronunciations of English and sibling fights, these two actors steal all the laughs. Mrs. Meers and her team are doing well in the kidnapping business, they have already kidnapped a newly orphaned woman named Ethel Peas, whose fear, and surprise was well performed by Malisa Trueblood. Ethel was one of the Pricilla Girls played by Savannah Pomeroy, Nuala Stanghellini, Aieshia Cortez, Zoe Gopoian, and Victoria Brice. All are residents of the Hotel Priscilla, a hotel that Millie and Dorothy stay in owned by Mrs. Meers. The girls do a marvelous job portraying these supportive, bubbly young women. However, unbeknownst to them, they are in danger. Miss Dorothy suddenly goes missing! But she is saved thanks to her secret admirer Ching Ho and her own private investigation team consisting of Mr. Graydon, Millie, Jimmy, and Mr. Graydon's secretary named Miss Flannery played by Mia Caridi. Mia captures this modern hating, tap dancing character. In the end, Millie gives up her plan of marrying her well off boss in hopes of true love by marrying the poor Jimmy Smith. Alas! Nothing is what it seems. Both Miss Dorothy and Jimmy are siblings and are the only two children of the CEO of a very influen-

tial company! Not only that, but the two Chinese siblings finally realize Meers will never bring their mother over to America, so they help in arresting Meers and Ching Ho plans on starting a life with Miss Dorothy.

This comical, twisting plot was aided and improved by the ensemble of the show consisting of Ryan Appel, Angela Barriga, Noah Brick, Cassidy Votta-Staple, Colleen Cave, Adriana Dapozzo, Sean Dubois, Daysha Johnson, Maya Jokhadze, Liam Keene, Kaelyn Lalla-Cappa, Matthew Meyer, Gabrielle Moravec, Keegan Murrey, Gianna Priore, Benny Rosas, Angel Rojas, Zoey Tutein, and Chris Quito.

Furthermore, this show would not have been possible without the stage crew: Christopher Amello, Rashel De La Rosa, Antonella Dapozzo, Stephanie Gomez, Amaya Hernandez, Santiago Nino Pinzon, Shayla Ospina, Jhansi Springer, Ronan Staab, Milla Telesmanic, Gabriella Tenezaca, Valentina Valencia, and Nadav Wigdosky. In addition to all the stage crew mentioned here are also many teachers who had a big part in running putting together the show. Such as Mrs. Irlen who was the director, Ms. Hart who did all the costumes and ran stage crew, Ms. Grossman who did choreography, Mr. Hauser who made the sets, and so many others who had a hand in putting together this performance.

In the end, the time everyone put in for rehearsals and set work really paid off. Everyone did an astounding job and set the bar high for next year's show.



The news of the past had blared out of the several televisions my father was watching in the basement. I wasn't allowed in, but I could hear the noise of it, as I was in the kitchen. As I opened the fridge, I saw that we were out of food as usual, so I went to one of the cattle we keep indoor, and started chopping. My mother was outside getting water in a air conditioned suit. It was dangerous to go outside without one, since it was 156 Fahrenheit outside. As I returned inside to put the meat in the fridge, I heard the sound of the booming sound of the door opening. Then another boom of that door closing. Then two more loud sounds of the next door opening and closing. There are two doors to get inside of the house, in order to make sure none of the hot air gets inside.

"I got water," my mother yelled trying to grab everyone's attention. "Here take this," she commanded as she handed me two metal bucket filled with water. "Put it in the freezer. It's boiling hot," my dad suggested coming out of the basement. "The last time you forgot to, and I ended up burning my tongue,"

"It happened to me too," I interjected. "Okay, well I'm leaving. I don't know why I bother. Every time I go I don't find anyone," my dad mumbled. "Why don't you try to contact someone on a radio?" I pondered.

"That's what I do every time I go down to the basement," my dad mumbled in a depressing voice, while staring at the parts of the cow meat I left on the kitchen counter. "Okay, well I'm heading out. Madison, let's go. Come on, hustle," my dad commanded, while clapping his hands.

My sister, Madison ran down the stairs hurrying with a melancholy expression in her face. Her red hair seeming to be brighter than normal.

"Hey, can I come too? I've never been outside before," I murmured already knowing the answer. I was not allowed to go outside, because it was dangerous according to my parents. In our household my job was to raise the cattle, make the food and learn how to use our transporter. Our transporter was very advanced and would take years to master.

"Jax, we've talked about this before. You're just not ready," my mother confessed. After a few minutes of continuous begging, my father eventually let me come with them. I was unaware of the outside world, because I've never been outside before, and our house had no windows. I've tried to go outside, but the two doors lock both from the inside and the outside. The exact moment I exited my home for the first time I only saw destruction.

"Oh my god. This is horrific," I said. "It smells horrible." "It's probably just your breath wafting back into your face," my sister chortled. "At least I have a good face," I responded. "Hey, zip it cover of douche weekly," my sister barked. "Hey, language!" My father spat out finally intervening in our conversation. The outside was a mess. There were collapsed buildings, crushed rocks, shattered glass, and ruptured streets. The streets were filled with cracks, but you could hardly see it because the ground was covered with tiny pieces of gravel. The glaring sun was blinding, but it was still comforting at the same time. It was the only color you could see for miles except for the yellow in our air conditioned suits.

"Why does it look like this? The world looked much better in the TV," I inquired. "The TV? I knew you were dumb, but I didn't know you were that thick," exasperated my sister.

"I'm sorry who invited Molly Ringwald to come here, because we could've done this without you," I jested. "Excuse me! I come every time. You're the newcomer," Madison smirked. "Hey both of you stop talking!" My dad yelled while firing a flare gun. "Well Jax. That's a great question. Due to global warming and overuse of farming pesticides the insect population has decreased rapidly."

"Well, why is it so broken down here?" I puzzled. "Without humans rebuilding and fixing everything, the rain broke down everything," my dad clarified. "How?" I questioned. "I'll tell you later," My dad responded.

Then I saw a small brown creature with six legs on my suit. A creature I recognized in the back of my head, but then my reflexes took the best of me. I swapped the things off my suit without realizing it until I figured out what it was. A bug.

By: Lucas Rhode

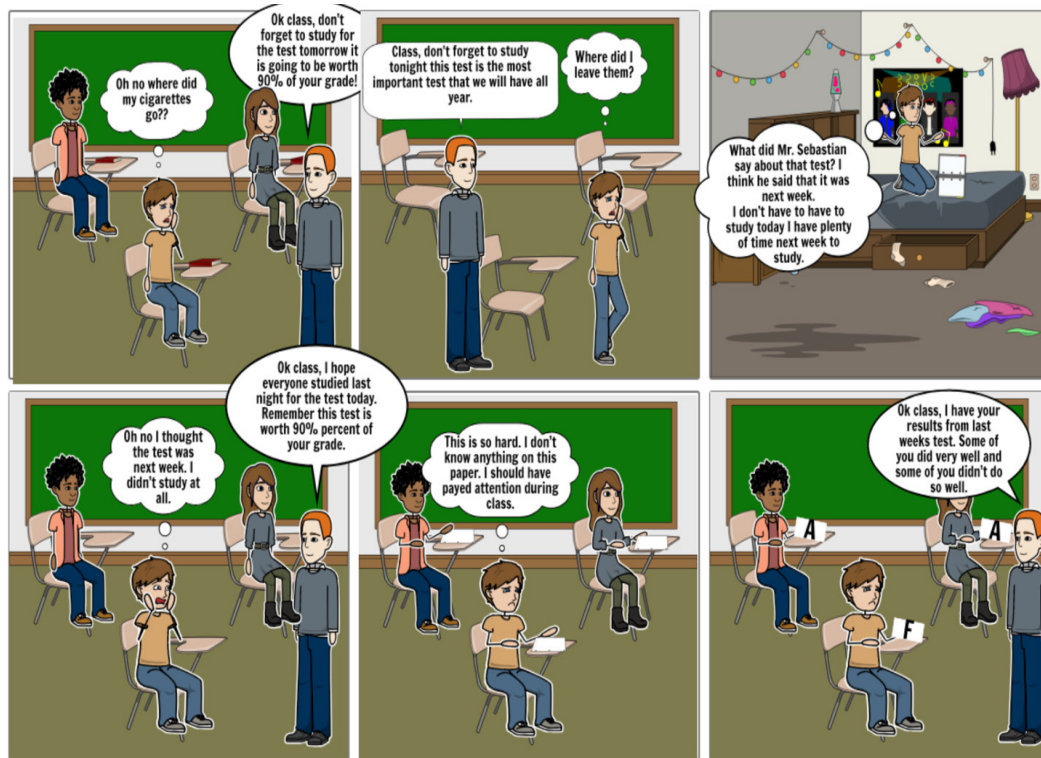
By: Jackson Philip Bourgeois

For my example of social commentary I drew a picture that shows how people don't care about animals environments and are pollute it. This social commentary message is trying to show how people are not thinking about animals environments and littering and polluting which is harming animals and the environments. Also it demonstrates how people don't care about the world be live on and it is going to have a impact. I choose to use this message because I feel that there is a solution to this and that it is not only affecting us and the world we live in but is also affecting other species on our earth. Also in the text "11 facts about pollution" it says, "Over 1 million seabirds and 100,000 sea mammals are killed by pollution every year." This shows how this is a big problem and it is affect animals and will eventually kill a majority of the earths population. Also in the text "Plastic pollution Affects Sea Life Throughout The Ocean", it says, "Scientists estimate that 60 percent of all seabird species have eaten pieces of plastic, a figure they predict will rise to 99 percent by 2050." This shows how it is a huge problem and that number us estimated to rise 39% in 31

years. In conclusion I choose this problem because I viewed it as a big problem and I problem that is not only affecting us, but the earth and many other species of animals.



By: Julianna Ida Novello



As my example of social commentary I created a story board that shows house young adolescents are getting addicted to drugs and they are only think about their drugs. The social commentary claim it is making is that young kids worry about drugs more than they worry about passing a class which could effect them in the future. Let's say an adolescent wants to become a doctor when they are older. They probably won't be successful in getting into a college if they have failing graded. Especially through high school. I hope that my storyboard will in courage young adolescents to stop focusing on their drugs and focus on what really matters and what is going to effect them in the future.

By Busi Ncube

It eats you up,
Till you can't get back up,
You don't feel it at first,
Until you think your cursed,
What started out as a pure thing,
Turns out to be a ruined thing.
Now you're acting all businesslike
And now your workers go on strike,
You wonder why,
Because you think your fly,
Then you realize,
what you've become.

You want it to end,
You want to jump into bed, sleep and just forget,
Until you realize,
This is now widespread.

It acts like a deadly disease,
Spreads like a breeze,
And now It feels like fleas.
You ask yourself, will it ever end?
You ask yourself, is this the end?
You ask yourself, this is what we've become?
Is this the outcome?
Are we this dumb?
Are we really this numb?

Numb to the pain,
Numb to the suffering,
Numb to the sadness,
Numb to all the effects,
Of a deadly disease,
called greed.

By: Kerri- Anne Janelle Davis

I don't get the homophobic or transphobic people. I don't. They are willing to shut a person out of their live just cause they are gay? What sense does that make? I don't get the people who use the bible as an excuse! What gives them enjoyment once they realize that something that they said had made a person commit suicide? As beautifully written in one of my favorite songs, "One page of the bible isn't worth a life." It's true. Something that had been said in the bible against LGBTQ+ people doesn't really matter anymore once someone ends up dead- no killed! By themselves. There are more important things to worry about than worrying if someone is gay or lesbian or bi or trans or queer, intersexual, asexual and getting their "germs" and it passing on to you! That's not even realistic!

Be realistic
Be kind
Be loving
Be you

I wrote this because I feel everyone has a right to be anyone or love anyone. I feel strongly about this topic. This explains how people don't have a reasoning to put people down for being themselves. People don't need to worry about if someone isn't cisgender or straight, it doesn't matter!

1 Commentary

Unchangeable

By Colleen Cave

"Move out of the way weirdo." The girl sneered at me as she pushed me over, stealing the soccer ball from under my feet.

"Go back to jump roping." A different girl said.

"Go be a boy." Stated another. I slowed to halt as the girls raced ahead, continuing their game of soccer without me. I groaned in annoyance. Every, single, time. This happened every single time. I walked off the field, mopping. The boys sitting under tress laughing and gossiping watched me walk towards them. Their thoughts clear on their disgusted faces; they don't want anything to do with the pants wearing, sports loving, pink hating boy. It had always been that way, I was used to the comments and gossip behind my back. I was used to getting glares when I tried out for a sports team, or wore a bandana instead of a bright, sparkly headband. I continued to feel their stares as I pulled a rubber ball out of my pocket and started throwing it against the school, playing my own game of wall ball. However, I didn't get very far before my curly, dark brown hair fell into my eyes. Frowning, I glanced around at my feet, looking for my hair tie. Not seeing it, I realized it must've snapped on the field. I felt around on my wrist, finding nothing I grunted before turning my head upwards, staring at the clear, blue sky. I closed my eyes, feeling the golden, warm sunlight on my face. My eyes clenched tightly I wished to disappear, for this day to be over.

The door of my house opened with a creak, the air conditioned room was a great contrast to the summer heat. I greeted my mom halfheartedly and rushed to the

stairs, but I didn't get very far before my mom's shrill voice called me back over. With a groan I slowly walked back to her.

"I signed you up for sewing lessons." She said with a grin.

"Seriously mom!? I hate sewing! Sitting still is not my forte." I protested.

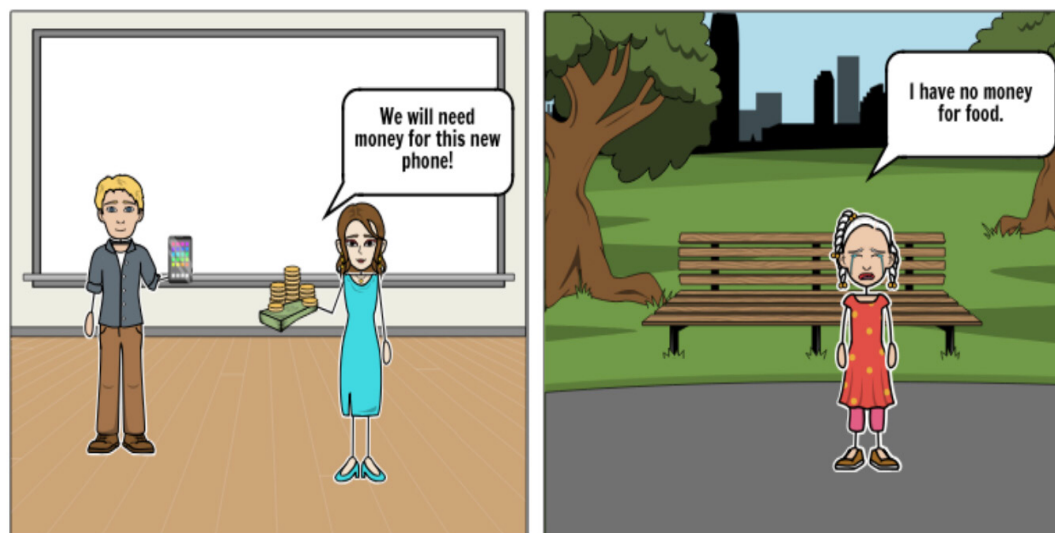
Her grin fell, "With Spring approaching and you having no activities--" she started explaining, but I cut her off.

"I do have an activity, baseball." She frowned, annoyed.

"You're a boy, I told you to forget that foolish nonsense."

"But I love baseball--"

"You're not a girl! Remember that!" I blanched. I never considered myself a girl. I still looked at cute girls, I still felt confident wearing dresses and earrings, all the typical boy stuff. I just found some things boring or impractical. For example, gossiping and hand games. Why would I sit giggling and talking when I could be playing a fast paced sport? And it wasn't my fault I hated pink, it was hideous! All of these opinions set me apart from the other boys, but I never wanted to be anything other than me. I was a boy who had different likes, and I couldn't that. I only wanted a voice, to be treated as equal and not irrelevant because of my gender. To not be expected to depend on a woman for a life, and be able to support myself. But I couldn't say this, she wouldn't understand or even listen. Fuming I turned on my heel and stomped upstairs, still without a say and without a voice.



By: Alisha Ahmed

For my social commentary, I drew a storyboard which shows two people and their need for money. The social commentary is that people spend money to make new technology while there are people starving out there and they don't have money for food. Research says that tech companies spend 2.6 trillion dollars on new technology. We could help so many countries that don't have food with that amount of money. Research also says that only 30% of money goes to help poor countries compared to the amount of money we use for technology that is just insane. We never think of the people who need the money for something good, we always want something better for us. I chose to make my social commentary about this topic because I want people to know what we're actually like and how selfish we are. I want people to know how we only care about ourselves and we don't care about other people. I hope this storyboard makes people be a bit nicer and help the people of need.

A Short Story About Suicide

By: Anthony Orzuna

There was a boy named Tommy. Tommy loved going to school and being with his friends and family, who were his mom and dad. He had no other family members, but he was always an A+ student in school and had so many good friends. He invited all his friends to his birthday party, but on his birthday nobody showed up to his party. So many hours passed by and poor little Tommy was waiting patiently for his friends and his mother, who was at work as a police officer. After a couple of hours passed and the house phone was ringing, Tommy's father came out of his room to answer the phone. Tommy's father never really liked Tommy and always called him a disappointment. So, Tommy's father told him that his mother died while she was trying to stop an armed bank robbery. At that point Tommy felt heartbroken and went to his room crying. Meanwhile Tommy's father didn't really care because he was drunk and now knew that he could use all the money Tommy's mom earned and waste it on more drugs and alcohol. The next day Tommy had to go to school but since his mother died Tommy didn't really care about education anymore and started skipping school and started to deal with drugs since his father does it. Tommy was influenced by his dad and wanted to try it out. Later that evening when Tommy went home Tommy's dad received a phone call about how many times Tommy didn't arrive at school. His father started to yell at him and hit him hard on his back. So, Tommy couldn't handle it anymore and started cursing at his father then after Tommy said I want to die. Many weeks later, Tommy continued his routine of skipping school, doing drugs, and not giving any more importance to school and mostly his life. Tommy came back from the streets very late at night. Of course, his father was drunk and lying on the living room floor while Tommy's had come home drunk. He saw his dad and headed straight up to his room. He locked the door and began crying and punching the wall. Eventually all the crying made him fall asleep. Morning came and his father had gone out and saw Tommy on the counter table with his father's drugs. Tommy had an urge to take them since he didn't want to live anymore. He took them and went to his room and laid on the floor crying and hesitating if he should take it in. All his thinking eventually leads him to not do it. He hadn't gone to school again. His father came home and drunk again at 3:00 AM. Tommy had crept down stairs to see his dad. His dad yelled at

him saying he just disturbs his time to be happy and only was a disturbance to him. Tommy felt unwanted and went crying up to his room and locked the door. He cried and had deep thoughts if he should live. He asked himself many questions, why am I here, why am I still living, my dad doesn't want me, I should just die! He got his dad's drugs and took them and fell to the floor. It was 7:30 a.m. and his dad started yelling Tommy! Come down here now! Do you have my drugs! Since Tommy didn't come down, he went up angrily to Tommy's room. Once he opened the door, he saw his son on the floor unconscious and with the drugs scattered on the floor. Since it was his son, he started screaming and crying, WHY TOMMY! and immediately called the ambulance. The doctor informed Tommy's dad that his son is okay since he hadn't consumed too much of the drugs, but it was enough to leave him unconscious. But he can go home tomorrow. Tommy's father was so grateful and went to talk to Tommy. "Why did you do it Tommy?" Tommy responded with his voice trembling, "You always told me I was a disturbance and I never made you happy. I thought to make you happy, I should just get out of your life." "I never realized what my drinking and drug addiction has done to me and what my actions had on you" "I'm so sorry son, but I promise we both are going to get help from a therapist." Tommy's father hadn't realized that his wife's death had a huge impact on Tommy, and his alcohol and drug addiction. He didn't realize he wasn't there to help Tommy get through his mother's death. Later that night Tommy's father started to realize what a bad parent he was and the influence he had on his son. As soon as Tommy was given the right to get out of the hospital, he went home with his dad. They got home and Tommy's dad told Tommy, "We have an appointment to go to therapy. You can get through your mother's death, and myself for my drug and alcohol addiction and to be a better father for my son." A few months past and Tommy and his father finally got help and felt like they have a stronger connection together now and are a happy family and now Tommy's friends are thrilled that Tommy is feeling great. In the end Tommy learned a lesson "Suicide is never the answer"

Q and A with the WPHS Valedictorian

By: Nadiya Jones and Eva Mandelbaum

Have you ever wondered what it entails to be ranked number one in your class? Kalsoom Rashid, valedictorian of the WPHS class of 2019 would know a thing or two about being at the top of her class. We interviewed the senior student and she walked us through her experiences and what it takes to become number one.

Q: What in school gave you the hardest time?

A: Freshman year was the worst for me, maybe because I had no idea what gpa meant. I struggled to get through, but my gpa after freshman year was the worst of all the years in high school..

Q: What was your average GPA all throughout high school?

A: I think my average throughout the years was a little over 5.0.

Q: What are some of your studying methods?

A: I try my best not to procrastinate, but sometimes it's just impossible to avoid. I think the best advice is to start with a plan. Decide how you are going to manage your time because it is crucial. You have to set your priorities, and work according to your schedule- know which class is the most important. So, as I mentioned earlier, time management comes in handy, and you have to set your priorities because too much of distraction prevents you from focusing on anything. I get distracted very easily, so I tried my best to not have any unnecessary conversations with my classmates. In addition, I did not spend time on social media, which I think was the biggest advantage for me.

Q: What motivated you to get good grades?

A: My parents and brothers motivated me. I want to

make my parents proud and make them feel that their efforts for us (me and my brothers) are successful. They came here for our future, and I do not want to let them down. When I was in elementary school (in Pakistan), I wasn't the best of students. My brothers did extremely well, but I didn't.

Q: What is it like transitioning from middle school to high school?

A: High School was not that different from Highlands for me. The workload was just a little more, but overall, there was no drastic change in the amount of homework. Even with a little more workload, I personally thought that the classes were a little easier in high school, with the exception of living environment.

Q: Do you have a role model/inspiration you look up to? If so who?

A: My parents are my role models because they have shown me that life is not about what you get, rather it's about what you give and share. They have always supported me and provided me with guidance; they have given me and my brothers far more than what I deserved or what was part of their responsibility.

Q: How does it feel to become valedictorian?

A: I am grateful to God and all those who helped me become the Valedictorian, but I still don't know how I feel about it.

Q: What is your dream school?

A: I don't have a dream school. I want to attend a religious school as I want to do a PhD in Islamic Studies and Arabic language, but the admissions for those kinds of schools start in June. Therefore, I won't know where I am going until June/July.

Q: What extracurriculars do you participate in?

A: Currently, I am the Vice President for the Wonder Women Club and a member of the Science Research Club. In addition, I take Qur'an classes from Monday to Friday, where I memorize Qur'an, and I attend the Islamic School of Upper Westchester on Saturdays, where we learn about Islamic History.

Q: Do you play an instrument?

A: I do not play an instrument.

Q: Do you participate in any volunteer work/ internships?

A: I tutor students for Spanish and I work as an office helper for my guidance counselor. Over the past summer, I worked as an intern in New York Medical College for my research project titled "The Effect of Caffeine on the Behavior and Dopaminergic Neurons in Drosophila Models Developing Symptoms of Parkinson's Disease".

Q: What is your advice for incoming freshman?

A: My advice for incoming Freshmen is to try and not slack off and participate in as many extracurricular activities as possible. In addition, start preparing for the SAT or ACT as soon as you can, because they are crucial for your future studies.

As you can see, being valedictorian takes a lot of experience and hard work, but it is all about balance. As shown from Kalsoom's experiences, it is possible to become number 1 in your class with much hard work and effort, all starting in middle school.

An Interview with Mr. Eaton, Assistant Principal

By: Alisha McIver, Aliyah McIver and Myla Morris



1) What do you feel is your biggest strength in your professional field?

I think my biggest strengths are relating to children and being able to help them in situations that may not always deal with school.

2) What colleges did you attend before becoming a teacher?

I started at Westchester Community College then graduated from Lehman College and also receive two masters degrees from Lehman College.

3) How did your father's job in the White Plains school district influence your decision to become a teacher?

My father was a tremendous influence on my decision to go into education. I started in education when I was 19 years old as a teacher assistant at White Plains High School and learned many different ways

to help children inside and outside the classroom from my father. My father was able to teach me that students need to look at you as someone they can relate to.

4) What advice might you give to a student struggling in school?

When a student may be struggling in school I try to help them create short term goals that they can reach in order to see success. After the student is able to reach success they have the capability of meeting long-term goals and seeing something bright for their own future

5) Are you married or have any kids?

I am married to my beautiful wife with two wonderful daughters. They inspire me to work hard every day. I have to be a role model to them and teach them that life is hard but with hard work, you can get through any mountain you need to climb.

6) If your dreams of becoming an assistant principal didn't work out, what job would you have?

If I could choose any job besides being an assistant principal, I would have loved to pursue my coaching career. I have coached many different levels and many different sports and always found enjoyment being with children in that capacity.

7) What are your top three hobbies?

As a kid my top three hobbies would be, basketball first, next, I always loved riding my bike and finally, I was a big fan of swimming during the summer time.

8) What is your favorite song?

I am not a big fan of the new music that is playing nowadays I have always been into old-school hip-hop and R&B. I can always turn on Biggie Smalls and be happy with anything I hear.

9) If the school was to fund you with a trip anywhere in the world, where would you go?

if the school funded me with one dream vacation I think I would want to go to Australia with all the different wildlife that I could see.

10) How do you balance school and your time at home?

The balance between family and work has been the hardest change in my life. I love to be with my family, but the demands of my new job have taken away time from my family. To give my family the time they need and deserve I need to learn that when I am home, I need to focus on my family and leave my work back at school. I am sure, as I become more experienced in my job the balance will come easier.

11) How can you describe the transition between being a teacher and becoming an Assistant Principal?

The transition from being a teacher to assistant principal has been a smooth transition because of the relationships I was able to make as a teacher. I think the previous relationships I have built trust between me and the staff and I.

12) Do you plan to follow your father's legacy?

I don't know if I plan to follow in my father's footsteps but my father definitely had an impact on my decision to become an assistant principal.

13) How has the transition to assistant principal changed your relationship with students?

I do not think the transition to assistant principal has changed relationships with former students I think I have built a trust with students and I know that they can still trust me

14) Have you ever wanted to give up?

There has been plenty times in my life that I felt like giving up but with a strong family and support I was able to fight through whatever the obstacle may have been but life is not easy but if you continue to work you can get through anything you want

15) What do you like to do in your free time?

I enjoy playing basketball in my free time as well as spending time with my children and taking them out to have fun.

Favorite sport - basketball

Favorite color - Blue

Favorite food- Chicken Scarpello

Favorite movie- *Road to Perdition*

Favorite day of the week- Friday, the work week is over

Favorite memories- all the times that I was able to work with my father at White Plains high school

Social Butterfly

By: Eva Mandlebaum

Consumed with fear
 Here comes another tear
 Falling falling down
 Meant to give you a voice
 Yet out comes no sound
 Gives you no choice
 What to do now?
 All alone
 All the people gone
 But where did they go?
 Their mind lost, all in the world of a screen
 Mixing up reality and what is really there
 People don't stop to share
 Yet they do stop and stare
 At all the flaws of people
 Rather than the flaws of society
 Would rather give people anxiety
 And let your society continue to suffer quietly
 All in their own world
 Away from all the people
 Tapping away
 At a screen
 How could society be so mean
 someone in need of saving
 And yet we look the other way
 And let another one slip away
 Just keep on scrolling
 As if just strolling
 But no,
 This is different
 What has happened to our generation
 We are handling it as if it's all our imagination
 Trying to be found
 In a place that's bound
 From the reality of the world
 Your actions flip around
 They backfire
 Can never go away
 Your life taken over
 All in your control
 Though hard to patrol
 But no matter how hard you try,
 At the tap of a screen,
 Everything can change,
 Just like a butterfly

Mumbai Under Seige: The 26/11 Terror Attacks

By Saumya Sawant

Many people know about 9/11, a terrible tragedy in which the twin towers were knocked down by terrorists on September 11th, 2001. However, many people don't know about the horrific 2008 Mumbai attacks, executed by a Islamic terrorist group called Lakshar-e-Taiba. The attacks lasted from November 26th, 2008 to November 29th, 2008. The sites hit were the Leopold Cafe, Chattrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus, The Taj Mahal Hotel, Oberoi Trident, Cama Hospital, and Nariman House.

A group of men in their mid-twenties was responsible for the attacks. They received training at in a special camp and were brainwashed to fuel their hatred towards India and Indians. They also learned combat, survival training, and commando training. Ten students were finally selected, and armed with guns and blueprints of the places they were attacking, they set out on a rampage.

The local police force was not equipped or ready to deal with the attacks. Usually, their work involved subduing gangsters and thefts. The attacks were unexpected and the Mumbai police were caught by surprise. When the terrorists got to the hospital, the staff acted quickly and locked all the patient wards. The staff on duty and even common civilians tried to protect the victims, risking their own lives in the process. When the Chattrapthi Shivaji Maharaj Terminus was attacked, one announcer, Vishnu Zende, learning of the attacks, warned everyone "to stay out of the station." The ill-equipped Mumbai Anti Terrorist Squad, meanwhile, pursued the attackers and lost numerous brave officers in the pursuit of the terrorists.

The famous Taj Hotel, which was being occupied by numerous members of the European Parliament of International Trade was in the Taj Hotel when the attack commenced. None of them were injured. The hotel staff put the safety of the guests before themselves. The inspiring staff chose to stay and protect their guests, and, according to reports, stood in front of bullets so their guests could make it out safely.

These acts of true bravery allowed most of the guests to make it out alive.

After watching the movie, Hotel Mumbai, based on the 26/11 attacks, one survivor said that it was just like being back when the incident had taken place. The film portrays the attacks very realistically, showing the terror that the guests and staff felt. Indian chef, Hemant Oberoi of the Taj Hotel, helped rescue many people during the attacks. "You suddenly see in front of

your eyes that all the things that have been recreated, and all the faces come back to you," says Oberoi in an interview with NBC News. "And you remember that these people are no more in your life." Mr. Oberoi was also a consultant for the film and was pleased with the way it turned out.

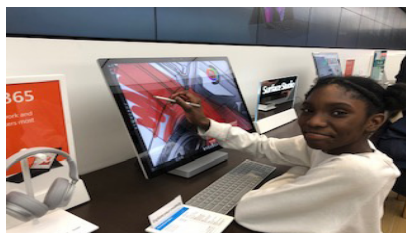
Much like the 9/11 attacks, the 26/11 attacks caused great outrage throughout the world. The attacks were found to be plotted by a Pakistani based operator. Tensions rose between the two countries as even Pakistan admitted to the attacks. However, Mumbai has recovered from the attacks admirably. "Initially it was panic, like, how could it happen? In Mumbai, the financial capital of India? And people were questioning, 'Why was it taking so long for the commandos to act and catch the attackers?'" One anonymous source says. "But it led to some good changes like there was growing patriotism and people took more pride in our country (India). And the commandos, who were in New Delhi, now have become stationed in sensitive cities, such as Mumbai for a faster response. Eventually, panic was taken over by patriotism."

As a reporter, I, too, have learned something from this-be very careful with the information you receive and choose to share. The attacks, reported on the news, were also watched by the terrorists, and due to the negligence of the media, many innocent lives were lost as the attackers discovered the strategies being used.

Mumbai will never be the same after these terror acts, but it's built itself back to its former glory. Stronger then ever, the Taj Hotel was reopened on December 21st and Hillary Clinton stayed there during her trip to Mumbai. She was saddened by the attacks but praised the response of India. Barack Obama gave a speech in which he said, "the Taj has been the symbol of the strength and the resilience of the Indian people."

These attacks were meant to weaken the resolve of the Indian people. Instead, they did the opposite-India is stronger than ever and ready to face any challenges that the rest of the world may throw at it. The Taj Hotel employees proved that they embodied what *sanathan dharma* (the religion of India), stood for, *attithi devo bhav* (Guest is God). Putting the guests before themselves, they lost their lives to save others.

Sources: Vinay Sawant, Indian citizen, now living in New York, Swapnil Rane, a Indian Citizen living in India, and Hotel Mumbai, a film based on the attack on the Taj Hotel.



Microsoft Trip

By: Brandon Joel Reyes

The Programming Club and the Digital Media Club went to a trip to the Microsoft Store. We learned about different career opportunities and got to explore and learn about the store. It was a fun experience because it taught us lots of things and got us thinking about the future. We saw a pair of Microsoft googles that engineers used to make buildings. Those googles cost \$5000 each! The googles let you create something, and then see it right in front of you. This can help engineers by letting them see what they built right in front of them. There was also a VR machine that allowed you to play games by sensing the movements that your hands and body made. One of the store officials gave us a

tour, and we watched a presentation on different job opportunities at Microsoft, like product manager or sales advisor. We saw all the new technologies that Microsoft was coming out with and got to test some of the products. We got to entertain ourselves for a little while by using the consoles and the machines. Over all, the experience was great, and I recommend visiting the store to learn more.



By Omar McKenzie

The experience at the Microsoft store in the Westchester was a great experience because we learned the technical feeling of the store. And, we got to have a tour of the store and products which was exciting, we also got to try out some of the products. It was a lot of fun and also we got to play on the Xboxes and learn about career options. In conclusion overall the trip was a GREAT experience.



THE COURIER

White Plains Middle School

EDITORIAL BOARD AND STAFF

Editor-in-Chief
Nadav Wigodsky

Managing Editor
Sophia Alexandrou

Layout Editor
Saumya Sawant

Office Manager
Nadiya Jones

Associate Editor
Sophie Ginsberg

Sports Editor
Myla Morris

Circulation Editors
Eva Mandlebaum
Aryan Mehra

Webmaster
Ms. Goudreau

Photography Editors
Matthew Selinger

Copyeditor
Lucas Rhode

Staff and Contributors

Alisha Ahmed, Jackson Bourgeois, Colleen Cave, Kerri- Anne Davis, Adriano Malpartida, Omar McKenzie, Julianna Novello, Busi Ncube, Anthony Orzuna, Brandon Reyes

Advisor
Clare Smith

Editorial Policy

Editorials reflect the opinion of the editorial board and, unless otherwise noted, are written by members of

the staff. The editorial board solicits responsible commentaries and letters-to-the-editor, but reserves the right to edit for style, grammar, or space limitations. Letters and commentaries containing obscenity or libelous comments will not be published. All letters must be signed or they will not be published, however your name can be withheld upon request.

HIGHLANDS' GOT TALENT!



Jessica dances to "This is Me"



Nathan and Cassidy sing "The Green Gentlemen"



Bianca, Ari and Kevin dance to "Power"



Miguel plays "Float"



Nuala sings "Requiem"

By Lucas Rhode

Exhilarating. Sensational. Phenomenal. These are words that many people would call the 2019 Highlands Talent Show. A talent show often take place in order for students to inform their peers of their talent, and to perform their talents in front of an audience for amusing entertainment. Well, amusing would be an understatement for what occurred at the show. In the show there was a vast variety of talents, varying from comedic acts, to voices that may be mistaken as angels. Commencing the talent shows was Mr. Veeter and the Jazz Band playing the pop song "Havana." After the admirable performance, the hosts of the Talent Show introduce themselves by dancing and frolicking to the theme song of the play station "Wii." The first real performance made by one student was Miguel O'Hara playing bass guitar. Following his vivid act was three Highlands students dancing to Justin Bieber's "Power" in the game "Just Dance" with the prominent White Plains tiger mascot. Afterwards was Nuala Stanghellini magnificently singing to a song that has a name that I do not know. Subsequently, was Jessica Bellantoni gracefully ribbon dancing to "This is me" from "The Greatest Showman." Next up was an eight grader doing a humorous comedy act. Following his hilarious act was a rap made by a Highlands student. Afterwards was Nathan DaSilva and Cassidy Votta-Staple singing a song by "Panic at the Disco." Following the duet, was another hysterical and amusing comedy act. Next up, was the cast of "Thoroughly Modern Millie" cast singing "Forget the Boy" remarkably. Then a singing act occurred with the music "Happier" by Marshmello. Next was an eight grader named Praia doing a traditional Indian dance. Following her dance, was a drum solo by Matthew Welling. Zoey Tutein then excellently sang "Far From Home" by Five Finger Death Punch. The hosts of the shows then introduced a competition consisting of four Highlands students, where they would see who could pull tissues out of a tissue box the fastest. Afterwards was Lauren playing "Sunflower" on the ukulele. Next off was Danny performing a song by Ed Sheeran amazing and amusing the audience around him. The select choir then sang "Attention" by Charlie Puth with high school senior, Alex Sanchez beatboxing. Afterwards, was Lily singing "Set Fire to the Rain" by Adele phenomenally. The next singer was Keegan Murray admirably singing and playing the piano. Finally, was Georgia singing, while taking our breath away. Ending it all was every participant in the Talent Show dancing together with high spirit, making the Highlands Talent Show 2019. An overall success.



Menzy rapping



Cynthia singing "Happier"

Priya dances a traditional Indian dance



The Emcees - Shariya, Shanida, Abby, Jack, Sean, Mia and Maddie



SPRING WORD SEARCH

By Nadav Wigodsky



- WOODPECKER
- BUTTERFLY
- DAFFODIL
- ROBIN
- BIRDS
- TULIP
- CROCUS
- APRIL
- MARCH
- DAISY
- MAY
- BLOSSOM
- FLOWER
- WARM
- WEATHER

B M R J G C A F V M W Q E H R H H H B Q W S T F L T
 J B N U U V I N O R R D E F H K M P C I T U C K X M
 F Z E S P N E T E A G U J Z S T C A C Q V U X Y Q B
 N N L O I U P H J L H B L S N R M W N D O H A R A A
 Y G D L J W T V S A D Y S I A D C E Y X N B X B N Z
 T W I U U A U L Q C O E B L I D O F F A D P U X U D
 B X T O E R Y H T X K O J E I T H S M C W H U B E C
 L R M W W M U Y L J R H P O M C X Y L F B Z K X E Y
 O I W G M O O P J J Z Y X A Y F H I D U E Q H X M O
 S M F H V D L Y H Z U J R A L C R H O Y R N J Y A M
 S E H N D R G U P J M C S H M P G F F O U Y P L P M
 O F S U C O R C C J H K Q R A R C D S J H Q C V I P
 M O E Z C N N D Q M F Z L J Y J K F V U Z G Q Y E M
 V W V P O P H Y N F C J Y T I I B B F E O R P T R N
 G N D C B Z Y J L B M E O D C O T R H D F C I N D I
 Y J K K O B T O Q F P X J Z L J V H Z E W V L B G A
 S Q M I Q Z W K N Q R N R E K C E P D O O W U Y P G
 Q B E V L E F K X H E E T W B B C W J Y A I T T L W
 N V H S R K W S D R I B T N A T A D Z A T A D O N L
 W L W Y C S D T W J K J X T R S X F C E N Z O T E U
 Q L U V M K O M Y M R U F K U X I Z J X J O O L K W
 F L O M V F W Q E R F Q U F V B B Z N M Q E A Q I B
 M B Y C F V T H Q B Z L I F U I M Y V H D L C Z X M
 V K Y I S M I S C C S T Q G V V G B C R R U A N W L
 J N R G T C W X B S N A R C G L I W N O X M V X N G

PHYSICS FACTS

By: Lucas Rhode

10. Hydrogen Atoms
The most common atom in the universe is the hydrogen atom. 75% of all atoms are hydrogen atoms.
9. All objects fall at the same speed
Some people think that heavier things fall faster than lighter things. You probably know for a fact that a bowling ball drops more quickly than a feather. While this is true it has nothing to do with gravity. The only reason this occurs is because the earth's atmosphere provides resistance.
8. The Universe used to be as big as an atom
The Universe is increasing in size. That means that it used to be smaller. Well about 13.8 billions years ago it used to be the size of an atom.
7. Light Saturn
If you put the planet Saturn in an everlasting pool, it would float. The planet is so light that the water is heavier than it, if it were the same size.
6. Atom Quarks
Some people think that protons and neutrons are the smallest things there are, but they are made of even smaller things called quarks. Protons and neutrons each contain three quarks. A proton is composed of two up quarks and one down quark while neutrons are composed of one up quark and two down quarks.
5. Average-sized star

- Most people think that the sun is the biggest star there is, but it is actually an average-sized star. The biggest star in size is VY Canis Majoris, which is about 2,000 times wider than our sun. You can fit 9.3 billion of our suns into VY Canis Majoris.
4. Black holes aren't black
They're very dark, but they aren't black. They glow, slightly, giving off light across the whole spectrum, including visible light.
3. Speed of light
If you traveled at the speed of light, time would slow down. A person traveling at the speed of light in something like a space-ship would age much slower than somebody traveling at normal speeds.
2. Hot Ice Planet
There is a Neptune-sized planet very distant from the solar system, called GJ 436b. The planet orbits very close to its star, so it's about 476.33 Fahrenheit. The water there is frozen because of the pressure, but it's hot.
1. Extinction
This is more of an ecology fact, but 99.9% of every species that has ever lived are now extinct. In fact, species extinction is happening 1,000 times faster because of humans. This should give us a sign and a warning of the consequences of our actions.

THE VIOLA

By: Matthew Selinger

There is pretty much no question that violas are better than violins. But someone I know who shall remain unnamed thinks the opposite. I told a violinist Lucas my point of view and he responded by saying "Violas are an insult to string instruments and shouldn't even be considered one." Violas also can play more notes than violins because they have the C string also they have all the other violin strings except the E string but violas can shift to play the E string notes and sometimes higher. A student in the newspaper club who shall remain nameless "Violins are better than violas and anyone who thinks otherwise is a nutter butter." I will excuse his language (nutter butter) to those of you who have proper judgement and favor violas over violins. Also how is a violin and a lawsuit similar. People are happy when the case is closed. That was a little joke but it's also very true. A viola also is an improved version of the violin otherwise why else would it have been made. I know you might say that I have a bit of a biased because I am a violist and yes I do. Some violinist may argue that violins get all the melody even though that is not always necessarily the truth, sometimes violas

WEIRD FACTS #2

By: Aryan Mehra

- You cannot throw or make snowballs in Kansas.
- In Maryland, you can't swear or curse while driving.
- It is illegal to dance on Sundays in South Carolina.
- Pickles in Connecticut have to bounce. If they don't, it is illegal to sell them.
- In Kansas, hitting a vending machine that stole your money is illegal.
- In Minnesota, airplanes may not be landed in city parks.
- Firefighters in Nova Scotia opened a broken fire hydrant and discovered a dozen or so fish clogging up the pipe. Have you heard about the pet rock? It made 15 million dollars in the first couple of months!
- Pringles aren't made of thinly-sliced potatoes, they're made of dehydrated potato flakes pressed into their arch-like shape.
- King Pepi II, who ruled for ancient Egypt, thought so highly of himself that when he insects flew around him, he would command that one of his slaves to be covered in honey to get the flies away from him.
- Tornadoes can cause "fish rain" Fish Rain is regular rain, but with fish! Fish and other small aquatic animals (frogs, small tadpoles) are picked up by torna-

- does, and sent into clouds. Then, when it rains, people get free fish!
- Jupiter and Saturn rain diamonds. There is plenty of carbon in the two planets' atmosphere. When the carbon gets hit by lightning, it becomes graphite. Then, the pressure of the atmosphere, makes the graphite into diamond!
- The slime of a frog in India can destroy the flu virus.
- "Albert Einstein" and "Ten Elite Brains" both have the exact same letters, just rearranged.
- The most expensive car in the world is the 1962 Ferrari 250 GTO. It's worth 52 MILLION DOLLARS!
- Weirdly named towns in the U.S.: Oatmeal, Texas. Sandwich, Massachusetts. Pie Town, New Mexico. Burnt Corn, Alabama. Chicken, Alaska. Cookietown, Oklahoma.
- Myanmar (Burma), Liberia, and the U.S. are the only countries that have not adopted the Metric System.
- Octopi have three hearts and nine brains.
- The Cookie Monster has a real name, he's called Sid.
- The blob of toothpaste that sits on your toothbrush has a name! It's called a "nurdle."

get the melody. Some people may argue that the violin is higher than the viola which is true but higher is not always better and some of the highest notes of violins are very scratchy unless perfected. Some other people might also say that the violin is better because it weighs less, and that is true. Even so having an instrument that weighs less is not always better because from playing a heavier instrument you can build some muscle to play your instrument better. A recent study shows that playing a violin for an hour can burn 175 calories so I think that playing a heavier instrument would benefit you even more. Also a violinist in the school also agrees with my topic that violins are worse than violas. An online site where experts post articles called Quora also provides us with some not need clarification about my point it says "It has a darker, deeper, richer sound than the violin without sounding as huge as the cello. It can go into treble clef and sound as high as a violin while the violin can't reach the viola's low notes. Because everyone wants to play the violin or cello, getting a good spot in an orchestra is easier for a violist."