



# The Talon

Gripping News



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Onteora High School

Boiceville, NY 12412

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## Meet the New Middle School Principal!

By Melanie Milla

When I was speaking to Mr. DiDonna in early January, I learned many things about him as a person and not just as an administrator. Mr. DiDonna was very personable and happily shared details about himself that I think everyone would be interested to know.

### *So where are you from?*

I am originally from Kingston. I went to Kingston High School, graduated a long time ago, and I still live in Hurley with my wife and two kids. *What was your previous job before you started working here?*

Before here? Well, I've been a principal in three other schools, Germantown, Pine Plains, and assistant principal in Ellenville. Before that, I was an elementary teacher in Kingston, and before that I worked on Wall Street as a trader. Before that I was a school teacher in the Bronx. So I've been around for a little bit.

### *How did you decide you wanted to work here?*

I've always liked Onteora. I'm very familiar with the district. It's always had a great reputation. I had the opportunity to move this summer. Get closer to home and get back on the same schedule as my family. So it was just a perfect opportunity. I have spent a lot of time up here since I was a kid and it's just a great area to work.

### *Was it a difficult transition to start working here?*

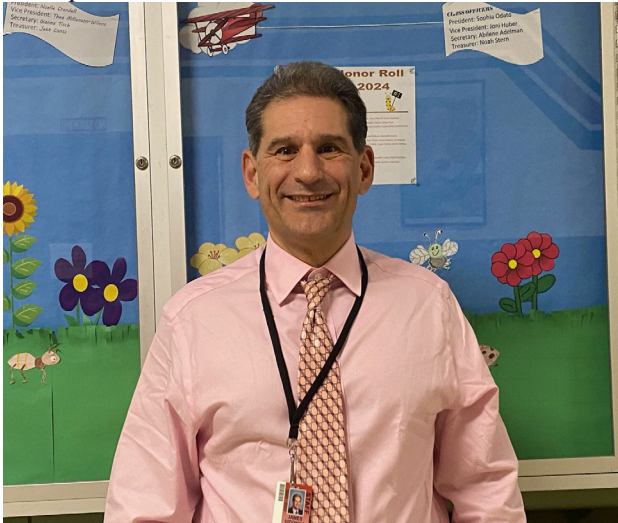
No, surprisingly smooth. I mean, Jen O'Connor was here for the first month that I was here so it was a really nice transition. She worked with me, showed me around and showed me all the processes. I got to meet everybody so I wasn't overwhelmed. I was really happy that the Board of ED allowed me to have Jen here for a month as I transitioned in.

### *Is there anyone who has helped or inspired you on your path to where you are right now?*

I've had lots of great, great mentors throughout my life, you know, starting when I was at Ellen-

ville. I actually had three really good mentors at Ellenville who were my principals. So, I gotta say all three of them did a great job teaching me the ropes and, you know, working, collaboration and what's important, what you need to be doing as a school leader. So those three gentlemen really helped create the type of leader that I am today. So, absolutely, people have always helped me along the way, and I think, I hopefully have helped other people along the way as well, and it's kind of a symbiotic relationship. Everybody's kind of helping everybody.

### *What are the tenants of your belief about leadership?*



Well, I mean, first thing, I believe a leader has to be visible. That's why I'm in the hall all the time, in and out of classrooms a lot. The kids need to see me. The teachers and staff need to see me. I am here to support the students and the staff so that they can perform at their best. So really, my role is to be a cheerleader, to be a coach, to help kids do the best they can, and to make sure teachers have every tool they need so the students are successful.

### *Did you enjoy your experience at college?*

Yeah. I mean, college is a great place. Really good to open up your horizons, broaden your

horizons. You meet a lot of different people and you get to see what the rest of the world is like. It's really a great experience for those that can do it. But, you can also do that locally. Don't pigeonhole yourself into one group—try to have as many friends and acquaintances as possible. *Did you have a favorite subject in school?* You know, I liked all the subjects. Really, I was one of those kids that liked going to school. I really liked coming every day and being part of learning every day. I still like to learn new things. I always loved history and I was really good at math. So, I would say in high school and college history and math were some of my favorite subjects.

### *How do you feel about school sports?*

I'm a proponent of school sports. I played football, basketball, and track in high school. It's important. Sometimes it's a great way to keep kids in school. It also allows kids to stay in shape and be active which I also think is really important. Especially in those days where we were locked in our house for a couple of years because of covid. So, I think it's even more important now that kids are out and active whatever sport it may be or whatever activity it may be.

### *Were you in any clubs in school or college?*

I worked. So, I didn't have a lot of time because I did sports and I worked all through high school and college. A lot of my time was spent trying to make money to get to the next day. So, other than that, no, I wasn't too involved in clubs.

### *Is there anything else you would like to share with our readers?*

No, I mean, I think they know that I'm approachable and always available here and I'd love for people to reach out whenever they have an issue or idea that they'd like to share with the school.

## Behind the Speaker of the House Election

By Ben Cox

In the early hours of January 7th, Representative Kevin McCarthy of California, a Republican, triumphantly held the speaker gavel as he was named the 55th Speaker of the House. Unfortunately for McCarthy, his victory has been overshadowed by a days long party infight that temporarily thwarted his ability to become Speaker, the first of its kind since 1923.

In the house, a majority of the members present need to vote for a named candidate for them to become Speaker, meaning of the 434 total members he had to reach 218 votes. This number changes based on if any members vote present because they are abstaining from the vote. Present votes lower the threshold for how many members are needed to get a majority.

A rebellion of 20 house republicans led by Representative Matt Gaetz of Florida caused McCarthy to fall short of the 218 votes needed to win the speakership, and from that his Speakership bid fell into limbo. As per house rules, the house cannot accomplish anything until a Speaker is chosen, so the next few days were nothing but continuous votes for the Speaker. A party infight was widely speculated after the Republican party had gained far fewer seats than expected during the midterms last november. The party was expected to gain 15 or so seats; however, they were only able to net nine seats leaving the party with a narrow 222 seats and Democrats with 213, only five seats short of a majority. That was the same

number of seats that the Democrats held in the previous 117th congress, but differing views on where to take the party forward led to the harsh leadership fight.

The group of 20 defectors seemed to be in different places, some wanted various compromises, and some seemed to want nothing more than for McCarthy's bid for Speaker to come to a fiery end. As the week went on, deals were made, and most of the defectors came back to McCarthy, but six members held out. These six members only voted present for the threshold to go down for McCarthy after a tense discourse the night before a speaker was chosen. In footage of the House between the 14th vote and 15th vote—the final vote—McCarthy and his right-hand man Patrick McHenry could be seen discussing with Gaetz and fellow defector Lauren Boehbert. After a series of mind bending twists such as Representative Mike Rogers of Alabama seemingly being restrained by security after moving toward Gaetz, and McCarthy being seen in his first negotiation that was not behind closed doors, a compromise was reached, and McCarthy was elected Speaker. Many of the compromises are still unknown, but one known compromise is one vote threshold for a motion to vacate to be called, if said motion reaches 218 votes, McCarthy will be removed from the speakership, a rule that was canned when Nancy Pelosi was Speaker. The next two years will be unpredictable, but if the last few days have proved anything, it is that it will be interesting.

# New York's First Female Governor

By Suzette King

Many have taken notice of the lack of women in charge in our country. Although this may feel disheartening, New York State made history and shined a light for impressionable women around the world.

Let's rewind: On August 24, 2021, Lieutenant Governor Kathy Hochul became New York's first female governor. At that time, Governor Cuomo was facing sexual harassment allegations. To fully avoid a complicated impeachment battle, he handed in his letter of resignation to the State Assembly and Senate, and his journey came to a shameful end.

Then, on November 8, 2022, Hochul became the first woman elected to the position of governor of New York State. As confetti dropped and cheers rose, Hochul pointed out that "I'm not here to make history. I'm here to make a difference." She defeated her opponent, Zeldin, with over 52% of the vote. Although Zeldin managed to perform well in the suburbs and in a few conservative parts of New York City, he was unable to defeat Democrats' massive registration advantage.

Despite the underrepresentation of women in politics, New York is showing the world other women in powerful positions as well. Influential women, such as Chief Judge Difiore, Attorney General Letitia James, and State Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins hold high level posi-



tions too. Hochul is now met with the great pressure of tackling voters' concerns. Issues with the economy and crime are only a few of the

many problems that need to be addressed. Her platforms address some sensitive topics, such as some state's decreasing abortion rights and worries over the democratic process. In addition to this she made a promise, vowing to keep New Yorkers safe by decreasing gun violence. Overall, when Hocul won this election she climbed a major obstacle and although she will encounter more mountains that seem too high to climb, she and many women like her will continue to forge ahead.

Her agenda includes a focus on women's rights and making New York safer for us all, and her efforts do not go unnoticed. For example, in May 2022, ten shoppers were killed when a shooter opened fire in a Buffalo supermarket. In response to this, Hochul signed a comprehensive bill that closes critical gun law loopholes and she signed bills that heightened our use of New York's red flag laws.

Hochul's success is a harbinger of what the future in politics is beginning to look like, and to me, it looks like the future is female.

# A Take on Bill McKibben's Criticism of Geoengineering

By Caleb Frank

Geoengineering, the direct manipulation of central climate processes with the intention of environmental benefit, is a major climate solution that has been proposed and discussed by leading scientists. A New Yorker article published in the November 22, 2022, issue by Bill McKibben, a leading environmental journalist, focused on the drawbacks of geoengineering. McKibben argued that geoengineering is a desperate attempt to solve a problem that can be better addressed with the more familiar technology: renewable energy. He states that geoengineering, specifically strategic aerosol injection (SAI), has the potential to cause climate inequality by negatively impacting some communities while benefiting others. Additionally, it could serve as an excuse for fossil fuel companies to avoid making needed changes. Though his claims wisely seek to limit over-engineered attempts to tame nature, he disregards the potential of geoengineering.

Geoengineering is a general term that encompasses many different technologies, with strategic aerosol injection being one major example. SAI works by introducing aerosols into the stratosphere to promote global dimming (minimizing the radiant energy received by the planet) and increased albedo (reflectivity). The idea behind the concept is that the aerosols will reflect sunlight back into space, resulting in global cooling. McKibben lists all of the potential negative side effects of such a large scale and heavily engineered undertaking, including unequal climate effects.

However, there is another less-intrusive form of geoengineering: phytoplankton farming. It works by adding iron and other nutrients to the ocean to encourage phytoplankton blooms. Since phytoplankton absorbs carbon dioxide and traps the gas when the plant dies, this form of geoengineering has the potential to sequester large amounts of carbon dioxide. But McKibben did not focus on this less-engineered and less intrusive technology. By exclusively using SAI as an example, he paints geoengineering as dangerous with likely negative side effects, while ignoring potentially less problematic technologies such as phytoplankton farming. Even these less invasive, and potentially less harmful, geoengineering technologies still do not work to address the underlying causes of climate change. A capitalist drive for maximum profits over human safety or planetary wellbeing and consumerist pressure to seek out new products to buy are the true reasons that force us to consider such radical action. It could be argued that skipping over those root causes to address the symptoms will prolong this problem, perhaps forever.

Fossil fuel companies could also use these technologies in a manipu-

lative way to postpone the effects of climate change and appear 'climate conscious' while avoiding actually changing their business model to truly end these issues.

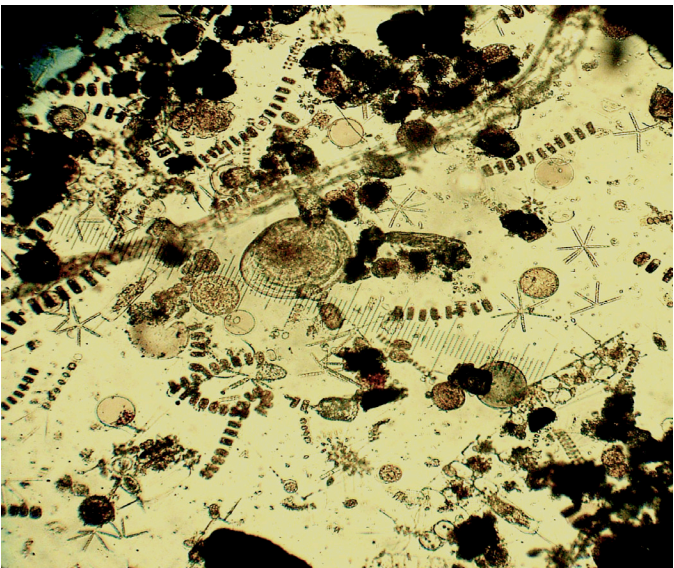
These flaws of geoengineering help affirm McKibben's point that relying on renewable energy more closely attacks the heart of climate change and is thus the best solution.

However, that line of reasoning is flawed due to the inertia of climate destruction. No climate activist or scientist is making the claim that geoengineering is an optimal solution or that renewable energy should be put on the back burner. What is being asserted is that even with radical action toward renewable energy sourcing, the effects will still be too great for human safety or even existence. We need all available approaches and technologies, including geoengineering in order to protect and heal the planet. To preclude radical geoengineering technologies with a transition to renewable energy in their stead is to underestimate the magnitude of the climate crisis.

Renewable energy and other such solutions are essential as the foundation for climate reparation. However, that is likely insufficient, resulting in the need for geoengineering—hopefully with the implementation of the least invasive technologies first, such as phytoplankton farming.

The issue of geoengineering is complicated and no one, including the scientists pioneering its technology, believe it is an optimal or entirely positive solution. That being said, by using the most invasive example of geoengineering in his article, McKibben dooms the invention to failure.

In a world with global climate change on a completely unprecedented scale, rushing into a new and highly engineered technology could potentially lead us to a far worse future than the one we are looking at now. However, radical solutions may be our only option to avoid a future decimated by the effects



# Will the Supreme Court Reverse Affirmative Action in College Admissions?

By Iris Koester

Affirmative action, the consideration of a student's racial background as a factor when deciding what applicants to admit to a college, has been heavily debated since the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s. There have been many Supreme Court cases surrounding the topic of affirmative action, like the original 1978 case and the cases in 2003, 2013, and 2016. And now the most recent Supreme Court case on October 31, 2022, will determine the legality of affirmative action in college decisions.

Affirmative action was famously argued in a court case called Regents of the University of California V. Bakke in 1978 to give non-white students higher chances of getting into top schools. It allowed for race to be one of many factors considered when students were applying to schools. The case also ruled that schools have a "compelling interest" to have a diverse student body. Race and ethnicity can be considered a plus for an applicant.

Since the 1978 decision, affirmative action policies have been very controversial and challenged in courts repeatedly. Conservatives argue that affirmative action constitutes "reverse discrimination" by establishing quotas for the number of students of each race allowed to attend a particular school. They have tried to overturn affirmative action in cases before the

Supreme Court in 2003, 2013, and 2016.

In each of these instances, affirmative action was upheld by a slim majority. The difference between the past cases and the current case is that the "super majority" of the Supreme Court is now conservative. And because the court has issued a string of rulings undoing previous precedents, including most notably a woman's right to abortion, many are worried that the court will overturn affirmative action as well.

In October of 2022, the Supreme Court heard oral arguments on two disputed cases against the University of North Carolina and Harvard University. The case against Harvard claimed that the universities were using racial balancing to limit the number of Asian-American students being admitted to the school. The District Court—the court that hears the case before the Supreme Court—ruled that there was no evidence of Harvard intentionally discriminating or using racial balancing. The case against UNC claimed that university admissions prefer students of a minority rather than students of white or Asian-American descent. In this case the district court had a similar ruling to that of the Harvard case. A Supreme Court ruling has yet to be made for both cases as the court generally releases its decisions in mid-June.

Should the court rule against the schools and get rid of affirmative action it will only be in these two schools to start with but others will likely follow. Nine U.S. states already have laws against affirmative action. This has proven detrimental to minority attendance at elite universities.

For example, at the University of Michigan Black undergraduate enrollment was 7% in 2006—the year the state banned affirmative action. Black enrollment has since dropped to 4%. Additionally, African American enrollment fell significantly at top schools in California after they repealed affirmative action. Before the ban, UCLA had 7% black students, but by the fall of 2006, the freshman class had only 96 black students out of nearly 5,000. A similar change is likely to occur if affirmative action is banned by the Supreme Court.

This court case is very important because if overturned it will affect the opportunities for minorities to get accepted into top schools. College acceptances could be reversed back to accepting a majority of Asian and white middle-class students and not offering an opportunity for students who come from racially diverse and minority backgrounds to get into these schools.

## Marg Bar Diktator: Death to the Dictator

By Oscar Espinoza

The armed men drag you into a van, where you are severely beaten by those who preach God's word. They spit words of hatred as your vision begins to fade. Eventually, you reach the detention center, but you are soon rushed to the hospital in critical condition and placed into a coma. It is unclear exactly what happened, considering that the Morality Police's official statement claims that you suffered a heart attack and brain seizure. However, tired of being silenced, many witnesses speak up to reveal the truth. You are Mahsa Amini, who was killed for the heinous crime of "inappropriate attire".

Since September, protests have erupted in cities across Iran after the death of Mahsa Amini on September 16, 2022, while being detained by the "Morality Police" for improperly wearing her hijab. Countless protesters, largely women and young adults, have made demonstrations such as refusing to wear their headscarves and cutting off their hair to counter Iran's conservative laws, especially the hijab mandate for women. A radical chant of "Marg Bar Diktator," or "Death to the Dictator," has become the slogan of these protests and refers to Ali Khamenei, the Supreme Leader. However, "Death" is symbolic of the end of strict Islamic Law and the undemocratic processes that have shaped the Iranian government.

It was in the 1970s when the secular monarchy of Iran, acting as a dictatorship, allowed their experienced significant economic growth which transformed their economy to an industrialized and modern one. However, political suppression grew unbearable after economic hardships emerged. Under the leadership of Khamenei, the monarchy was overthrown in turn for an Islamic republic. This regime increased its domestic security and resulted in the creation of the Morality Police, which is the primary enforcer of Islamic Law. But the process is heavily undemocratic since its only legislative branch is controlled by the superior branches and they often select their own candidates and veto bills. This series of events is known as the Islamic Revolution and gives insight into how the Iranian government currently works in relation to the people.

A main concern with the Morality Police is their inconsistent measure of "proper attire." Many consider Amini to have followed the law, and yet her fate, and thousands of others, was decided by the judgment of a select few. In a nation of 87 million people, there is variation among what is considered modest, and even for some Islamic sects the hijab is not necessary. It is also important to note that the men who form the religious police force are extremists, along with most of the government, and they

are neither representative of the entire nation nor of the distinct sectors of Islam. Yet it is evident that rampant corruption has given these extremists their positions and they will do anything to cling to their power.

When the protests first began, the government shut down the country's internet. However, this only fueled the outrage, and armed forces began brutally suppressing protests. Armed forces have beaten, mass-arrested, and openly fired on groups of protestors. The U.N. has condemned Iran's lethal suppression of peaceful protests, estimating that more than 500 deaths have occurred. Roughly 14,000 people have been arrested for speaking out, including activists, journalists, and even Voria Ghafouri, an Iranian soccer player who, along with his team, has criticized the government and refused to sing the national anthem at the World Cup. He was sentenced to death.

Iranian authorities have begun publicly executing protesters, including a 23-year-old man who was hanged from a construction crane. The hangings, which were the first of their kind, have sparked outrage from the public and the U.N., as well as criticism from some within Iran's clerical establishment who have questioned the religious validity of the death sentences. The public executions are being seen as a last-ditch effort by the government to suppress the hangings have also sparked widespread fury and may further fuel the unrest rather than contain it. The trials that preceded these executions lasted less than a week and depended upon forced confessions and shaky evidence. As of now, four protestors have been executed and it is likely that this number will grow.

The younger population has pushed for change against the theocratic regime. Now, the Supreme Leader must act. If he does not offer his citizens the chance for change, the protests will continue, but if he does, it could be seen as a sign of weakness and encourage the protesters even further. The protests have already caused changes in the relationship between the government and society. There is disagreement within the ruling elite on how to handle the situation, with some officials proposing the abolition of the Morality Police and others suggesting it just be used as a temporary tactic to restore order. The protest movement has not yet reached critical mass, but there are indications that a significant portion of Iranian society is questioning the sustainability of its current regime. It remains to be seen how the situation will play out, but the protesters' determination and the regime's hesitation to make concessions suggest that the death of a dictator may be on the horizon.



# The Ticketmaster Scandal: A Devastating Tragedy for the Swifties

By Oliver Roy

Swifties have been without any concerts from the blonde popstar for four years. In 2018, she hosted the Reputation Stadium Tour, and she intended to host Loverfest in 2020. However, she was forced to cancel the show due to the unexpected COVID-19 pandemic. Swift's long hiatus from performing, coupled with nonstop releases of new projects, has built up a historic level of hype for her next tour. With the much anticipated release of her latest album, *Midnights*, fans were hoping that their long wait for a concert would finally be over. Their prayers were answered when her team, Taylor Nation, announced the Eras Tour, which would combine all her works from the pandemic and the past into one huge concert. Unfortunately, this dream scenario would turn into a nightmare for many.

When someone with a fanbase like Taylor Swift wants to perform, the main concerns that arise are having enough spots for people to attend, as well as making sure that the tickets get into the right hands. There are many, many people who want to see her, but sadly, there are not nearly enough tickets. Sometimes, not even a stadium is enough room for all the fans. Such demand for tickets leads scalpers on Ticketmaster to do whatever they can to buy up all the tickets, just to resell them at a super-inflated cost to cash out on the excitement and FOMO.

Swift's team attempted to get tickets into the rightful hands of fans by hosting presales. You could register for a chance to be in an exclusive, earlier purchase date, with your chances of being selected being boosted by buying merch. Around three million presale codes were emailed out to fans. Then, the day of the presale came, and the controversy began immediately.

Ticketmaster did not require people who were going into the presale line to use their presale code before getting into the queue. Instead, buyers were only required to enter their presale code when it was their turn. So, millions more people than the anticipated three million codes that were sent out were now in line for tickets and slowed down the website. Fans who were

buying tickets reported crashing, getting kicked out of line, and having tickets removed from their cart before they could be purchased. This was obviously devastating for many people because this was the first opportunity to see Swift live in roughly five years, and their chances were now slipping away. While plenty of fans got tickets, plenty did not. Not even an hour after the presale, people already saw tickets from every



section up for resale. Scalpers still managed to buy tickets.

The next course of action for people who wanted tickets was to wait for the general sale. However, the general sale never came. Ticketmaster messed up and put all the tickets available into the presale. So when the tickets sold out in the presale, that meant all the tickets were now gone. Everyone who did not get a presale code or did not get tickets now had no options, except to buy the price-gouged tickets.

The failures of Ticketmaster in undertaking the Eras Tour has prompted the response of angry fans on Twitter. Even the U.S. Government responded. Fans pressured Ticketmaster and Taylor Swift into issuing public apologies. Ticketmaster said they would work in the future to make their technology more capable and easier to purchase from. Swift said how she would try to find out ways to correct these issues moving forward and how she tried to make sure many times that the site could handle the type of demand they would receive. The U.S. Department of Justice is now investigating Ticketmaster's parent company to potentially break up the monopoly they have had over this industry and to outlaw their predatory secondary selling and dynamic pricing methods.

This story is not all bad news, however. Just recently, Swift's team was able to gather as many tickets as they could to give more fans a second chance to buy tickets. It's not much, but it appears as though Swift and her team are trying their best once again to get at least a few more fans tickets for the tour. It does prove that Swift is trying her best to make the situation right, however she can..

The events of the Eras Tour show a glaring issue in the entertainment and live music industry. Ticketmaster has too much power in ticket sales in America, which allows rampant exploitation of music fans. In countries like Australia, the resale of tickets is capped at an additional 10% of the original cost. This makes it so tickets can still be sold at a profit, but not an absurd one. Ticketmaster allows resellers way too much freedom in setting their prices. It should be up to the artist to establish prices based on how much they think their performance is worth. Taylor Swift is amazing, but not \$50,000-pit-tickets amazing. As a live music fan, I hope that the Eras Tour fiasco can end the unfairness in pricing now that it is on blast like never before. Even though I got tickets.

## Exposé on the Vast Split of Men and Women in College

By Nico Stackpole

Over the past few years, it has become more likely that women will be enrolled in and graduate with a four-year degree from college than men. According to a report published by Statista, 542,000 female students will earn a Master's degree in the United States, while only 334,000 male students will. Why is there such a vast split?

For one, increasingly more men than women have begun to deem earning a degree unworth the cost because of the economic strain that going to college causes. College tuition fees have surged over the past few decades, especially after Covid. For example, at a private college the average annual tuition cost was about \$10,000 in the 1980s and now it is around \$80,000. While many students get scholarships, others stay in debt for years after graduating. As a result of this, many males found it wouldn't be worth it to be put in this position. Experts have suggested that because of economic strains due to the pandemic, many young men felt encouraged to prioritize their income rather than attending a higher education.

But why does this pertain particularly to men more so than women? Gender inequality in the workforce plays a big role. Men are taken more seriously in the workforce and therefore do not need to depend on a college degree to the extent that women do. In contrast, women have to prove themselves by earning a college degree in order to be respected in many workplaces. Because of this, men feel they can drop out of college with less of an impact on their career, but for women earning a college degree will ensure them a successful career.

While there is a decrease in men attending college, there's an increase in women attending. Is this because more women are applying or simply being accepted? There are more women applying to college than men. But also many male-only institutions became co-ed since the 70s, causing women to have a higher chance of being accepted. As we know, the years following 2019 have only further exasperated this desire for colleges to accept more people regardless of their race, sex, gender, etc. So, more women have gotten opportunities for higher education.

The implications of this gap may change colleges' policies. As strange as it sounds, schools may purposely advertise towards men in specific cases because they want an equal distribution of gender across campus. Well, some schools have already started to do that. Because there are more women, schools have thought that a solution to this would be to accept more men. For example, The Hechinger Report published information that, at Brandeis, if a male and female student had similar applications, the male student would be accepted and the female would be waitlisted in the attempt of equaling out gender distribution. So, with this new approach and moving forward, it will be much harder for females to get accepted into colleges. This could affect women's perspectives when they apply as they may feel discouraged knowing there is less of a chance for acceptance.

In coming years, more theories may be confirmed, but for now, there will be more women at college graduations in 2022.

# Artificial Turf and the Rise of ACL Injuries

By David Troeger

Super Bowl 56: all eyes are on SoFi stadium in Inglewood, California. The AFC champion Cincinnati Bengals look to win their first franchise super bowl against the NFC champion Los Angeles Rams. The Rams had made a push for a superbowl by signing star quarterback Matthew Stafford and star receiver Odell Beckham Jr. to enhance their roster that already contained stars Cooper Kupp and Jalen Ramsey. The Bengals were a young team that had just drafted rookie star Ja'marr Chase out of LSU to compliment young quarterback Joe Burrow. The stage was set for an action-packed game of back and forth action on offense. With the ball and a chance to take a 20-10 lead before halftime, Beckham was running a crossing route to the right, but caught his foot in the turf and fell to the ground, clutching his left leg. He was helped off the field and brought to the medical tent on the side of the field. It was later confirmed that he had suffered an ACL tear.

The Rams went on to win the super bowl, with Cooper Kupp catching a touchdown pass to put the Rams up 23-20 for the win. It's been 10 months since the Super Bowl, and Beckham's ACL still hasn't healed fully. He did not sign a new contract with the Rams, and is currently looking for the highest bidder. The ACL, or anterior cruciate ligament, is a cruciate ligament that is needed for stability in the knee. Its most important function is to keep your tibia (shin) in place on the femur (thigh). If torn, it will be unable to keep the knee in place and stop it from turning too far in either direc-



tion. Many types of turf don't have enough give, and when planting feet or shifting, they hold the foot in place. If the player is not in control at this time, it's easy to twist the knee around, tearing the ACL. Most ACL tears take more than a season to heal, and it is incredibly rare to see a player return before the next season. A plethora of non-contact injuries have been occurring in both the NFL and college, most of which are traced back to turf. The on-the-field turf that is being used by most teams is more durable and needs less maintenance than grass, making it cheaper over long periods of time. From the 2015 season to 2019, 281 ACL tears have been sustained during play. This is causing many players to protest against the use of this turf in the NFL. And it's not just football players; the turf can be a threat in many sports with common positions including wide receiver and corner in football, middle or outfielders in baseball, forwards in field hockey and mostly everyone on the field in soccer. Overall, soccer and football account for most. There are examples here at Onteora, and while neither occurred on turf fields, both Bryce Buntyn (soccer) and Joe Christophora (football) unfortunately sustained ACL tears over the fall season. The turf injuries keep stacking up, and athletes aren't happy about it. Due to the cost benefits, many colleges and even high schools have converted to turf fields, and due to this, non-contact injuries are more common than ever.

## “Zan, Zendagi, Azadi!” a Chant for Women’s Freedom

By Coco Asada

Some would argue that sports should remain strictly as entertainment, but when associated with global events like The World Cup, nations cannot hide from politics. The death of 22-year-old Mahsa Amini has sparked intense controversy regarding the strict hijab regulations of the Iranian regime. Many Iranian citizens believe that women should be allowed the choice of how, and if, to wear their hijab.

Mahsa Amini was detained and killed on September 16, 2022, by the morality police for not properly wearing her hijab. Iran's Ministry of Interior has denied all connections between the morality police and Mahsa Amini's death. Enraged, the people of Iran took to the streets to protest.

Given a huge social platform, Iranian soccer fans were able to bring this issue to light and to ridicule to the unjust actions of the Iranian regime. The clash of sports with politics has always been an issue during the World Cup, but how does the world still celebrate sports while a grand-scale attack on the rights of Muslim women is underway?

The love for soccer is shared globally, and the World Cup has become a hub for people of all nationalities to connect. In many ways, the World Cup brought awareness regarding the protests that have coursed through Iran in the past months, but the Islamic Republic was also able to manipulate that publicity in their favor.

Rather than roaring for their nation's anthem, as most countries would, many fans protested the Iranian national anthem during Iran's first game against England at Khalifa International Stadium on November 21. The Iranian national anthem, adopted in 1990, is very patriotic to the Islamic Republic and symbolizes the authority held by the regime. The players themselves pulled their own stunt in opposition to the Islamic Republic by staying silent during the national anthem. With pressure from both FIFA and the government, this was the extent of their opposition. The chant, “Zan, Zendagi, Azadi!” (“Woman, Life, Freedom!”), however, was very popular and rang throughout the stadiums of Doha in support of the protests back in Iran. Fans wore t-shirts and brought banners to show their support for those protesting in Iran.

At this year's World Cup, the Iranian national football team and its fans are not only fighting for a golden trophy and the title of FIFA Champion, but for the freedom of Iranian women. The Islamic Republic has imprisoned, beaten, and murdered those resisting the Regime's brutality, but today's media allows anyone, anywhere in the world to share their voice. Soccer is a beautiful medley of passion, unity, victory, and defeat which brings people together when support is most needed.



## Onteora Varsity Wrestling

By Logan Storey

On December 3 and 4, 2022, the Onteora Varsity Wrestling Team attended the annual Bethlehem Round Robin Wrestling Tournament. The wrestling team sent the best student athletes in the weight classes for 126, 138, 145, 152, 160, 172, 189, and finally 215 with Coach Eric Pezzello and Assistant Coach Zack Chartand. The tournament brought schools from all over New York, including Arlington, Bethlehem, New Paltz, Port Jervis, South Glens Falls, Revena, and Wallkill. Our team departed bright and early from Onteora at 6:30 a.m. on Saturday and 6:00 a.m. on Sunday.

After a 90 minute bus ride, the team reached the school where all their time was going to be spent for the next two days. The wrestlers went to the gymnasium, unloaded their bags, grabbed

their uniforms, and went into the locker rooms to be certified for the weight classes. While the coaches from every school participating were finalizing who wrestles who, the Onteora team took their chance to calm down, eat breakfast, or warm up for the matches. Around 8:45 a.m. on Saturday the sheets of information were finally taped up on the wall showing who is wrestling who and for what days. Some weight classes were as small as seven people while others had 20 kids being split up into two classes known as A and B (ex. 138 A and 138 B).

Overall the Onteora team's performance was respectable. This was a round-robin style tournament that gave everyone a chance to wrestle everyone in their own weight classes, as opposed to a sectionals where you're out after two

losses. For me this meant I had seven matches and obtained five wins and two losses resulting in 3rd place. In the end, out of 11 kids who were qualified to wrestle at Bethlehem, only two athletes were able to be placed on the podium: Thomas Shields (138) and me, Logan Storey (215), both of us earning a respectable 3rd place.

Thomas later said to me, “I think that everyone grew from the tournament and that it was a learning curve from our experience. My personal experience, it was good competition there and I think I did well in the competition” As for me, I just want to say that the people were good and I was excited for the experience and can't wait for more competition like it during the season.

# Catch Up with Girls Varsity Basketball!

By Thea Millenson-Wilens

This year’s Onteora Girls Varsity Basketball team stands proud at ten wins and eight losses, making for a team that is likely heading to sectionals. This varsity team has eleven phenomenal players ranging from sophomores to seniors, 5’2” to 5’10”. The head Coach is Coach Occhi, who has been coaching high school basketball since 1999, and assistant Coach Wilens, who has been coaching since 2017. The eleven members of the varsity team are Paige Matteson, Lucienne Leonard, Gianna Tisch, Thea Millenson-Wilens, Maxine Sprague, Ava Lamb, Hailey Peck, Grace Young, Alexia Melendez, Riley Fitzgerald, and Natalie Hastie.

The season has been going well so far, with wins over divisional rival Ellenville as well as success in many league matches. To make Sectionals, the team will need to be 0.500 in their division, which means winning at least half of their divisional games or having a 0.500 record overall. The team made it to the section semi-finals last year, and will no doubt accomplish even greater feats this year.

Paige Matteson, senior and co-captain of the Onteora Varsity team, said, “Our communication with each other is really good, on and off the court. We have a good team dynamic. Our strengths on the court are our defense and our hard work and effort.”

Maxine Sprague, starting guard, added “I think we work really well with each other. Everyone is a good teammate.”

Be sure to show up to games and support our team!

# The Harlem Wizards Game at Onteora

By Raina Bickel

On Thursday, December 1, 2022, Onteora’s community crowded in the high school gym to watch the Harlem Wizards play against the all-mighty Onteora staff. The high school’s Belleayre Bash Club, headed by Rebecca Scherer and Katie Klercker, partnered with the S.A.D.D Club, also headed by Rebecca Sherer, to host the event. S.A.D.D is the Students Against Destructive Decisions club and Belleayre Bash is a senior-run club for a celebration after graduation to prevent drunk driving. The Wizards game raised money for both clubs to keep them alive for future classes.

The event began at 7 p.m. on Thursday night, and the line was out the door as people came in to buy tickets and get checked-in with their pre-bought tickets at 6 p.m. Both teams began warming up as families trickled into the gym. The score was supervised by the lovely Ms. Casey, the senior class’ advisor. The Wizard’s personal DJ called the names of each team’s players. The Onteora staff was called first and our teachers made their mark with their moves as they ran out. Onteora’s team consisted of teachers from our local schools including Mr. Harkin (HS), Ms. Constant (MS), Katie Klercker (HS), Ms. Frandino (MS), Ms. Scherer (HS), Mark Wilens (HS coach), Mr. Buono (Bennett), Mr. Blank (Bennett), Ms. Warren (Bennett), Ms. Erlwein (Bennett), Ms. Allison (HS), Ms. Occhi (Bennett), and Mr. McDonough (Bennett). The Wizards team consisted of Live Action, King Arthur, Big J, Smooth, Road Runner, Jet, and Top Flight. They ran out from the boy’s locker room and began immediately interacting with the crowd. Big J grabbed one of the parents and began dancing with him. The crowd ate it up, loving every minute. The Wizards knew how to entertain. They picked students from the crowd to dance and play games. One had the students dress in shoes and clothes much too large for their feet and dribble a basketball down the court and back to where they started.

Then began the game against the staff, the starting lineup for Onteora included Mr. Harkin, Ms. Frandino, Ms. Scherer, and Mark Wilens. The Wizards played Live Action, King Arthur, Road Runner, Jet, and Smooth. Tom Sharon, the school’s SRO, and Gino Sorbellini refereed the game. The team played each other for two 15-minute quarters and during the other two, the Wizards put on a show for the Onteora students.

The game ended with the Wizards defeating the mighty Onteora Eagles. At the end, the Wizards called all the students, by grade, to join them on the gym floor to dance. The students were overjoyed. This fundraiser was a success as it brought the community together and raised heaps of money for our school’s clubs!



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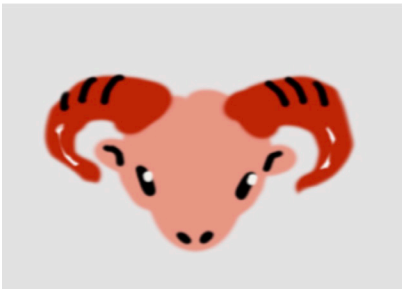
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By Auden Stellavato



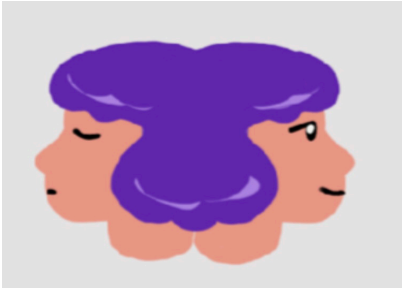
**Aries:** Truth be told, if the road seems rough for Capricorns during this time, then unfortunately their fate is about to

seem like a walk in the park compared to your near future. This is the way of the world, paths overgrown with thorns must be traversed. But as you walk it, so too do those who may betray you. Watch out for those you hold dear, lest one stab you in the back when you turn away. Now on the bright side, your path will soon end, on the less bright side, that will be because it will be ravaged by a tornado. Consider if you have an accessible basement nearby, it may come in handy. Also it may be Winter, but the sun blazes on, scorching its enemies (you). What you did to incur the wrath of the sun gods is beyond me, but I'm sure that deep down, you know. Maybe it's the same thing making that tornado chase you.



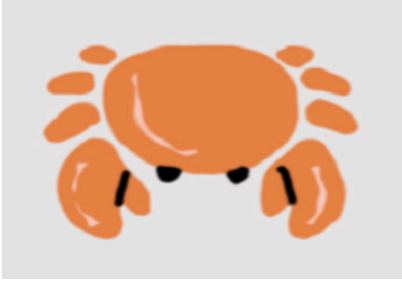
**Taurus:** You might start balding this month, don't freak out—it's just a phase. You know what else should be a phase? Any de-

sire you might have to go near cliffs. Why? Because you like many of the signs this month are about to fall prey to a horrible and near constant bout of embarrassing clumsiness. You will take many a tumble, so it's best to make sure that said tumble won't be down a jagged rock face. Best of luck! Also, invest in a new cook book. Your dinners are becoming boring.



**Gemini:** You may be about to enter a period of intense financial ruin. Not that anyone here is condoning illegality, but

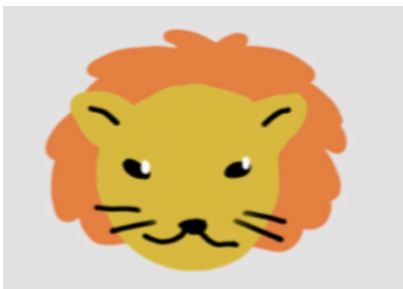
robbing a bank may —technically speaking—be in your best interest here. There was once a time in the U.S where you could walk into a bank and give them a sum, then demand they give you that amount in gold. This doesn't help you because it's not an option anymore, unfortunately, though stashing up on gold bars would've been your best bet.



**Cancer:** In the coming months, it's important that you find something to occupy a racing mind. Maybe origami. Just

make sure it isn't an outdoor activity. Lately, your mere presence causes violent and unrelenting storms, it almost feels personal—maybe reflect on that too. Also be careful because somewhere out there, deep in the wild, there is someone gunning to steal all of your pants. Seriously, look out. If you do not watch your back

there is a very likely reality where you are caught alone, outside in a huge thunderstorm with no pants and a waterlogged phone.



**Leo:** Crabs. They're coming, and it will not be pretty. Your latest propensity for arrogance has finally come back to bite

you, or rather pinch you. Everyday when you wake, go to your window and stare at the horizon—and wait. Wait with trepidation, with fear in your heart. For they have traveled far and wide to reach you, but are no less bloodthirsty than they were in the depths of the sea. Beware the crabs, they are mighty in numbers, and in spirit. Tremble before your fate, and then accept it, or it will never be overcome.



**Virgo:** Oh how the mighty have fallen... your mighty enemies that is. You have waged a valiant war against the forces of evil, a valiant war for a

valiant zodiac, and now for your perseverance, there lies a great reward ahead. Nemeses vanquished, you walk towards a prosperous path. Good tidings and wealth come rushing your way, and they are well earned. Your affluence comes naturally, all you need to do is accept it and the rivers around you will run gold.



**Libra:** Try not to drown this month. Both literally and figuratively. Figuratively speaking, make sure to take a step back

and invite some relaxation into your life! Don't overwork yourself. On a much more literal level though, you do need to be wary of drowning. They say you can drown in a teaspoon of water, which is normally an urban myth, but in this case I wouldn't chance it. Don't even boil water this month, it isn't worth the risk—which is significant. Your best bet is to invest in some arm floaties and cross your fingers. And to run far away at even the mention of a body of water. Also, you may become a plant mom this month!



**Scorpio:** Your favorite sports team is going to lose a lot. Seriously if you have a fantasy football thing going on then now is the time

to delete that app and get a more interesting hobby. There are a lot of options out there. There are so many things to be doing that aren't related to fantasy football, and yet here we are. Spare yourself and everyone around you the pain and

embarrassment of not only having an app like that, but then watching your ride or die team tank. Also avoid mashed potatoes this February. You have enough mush in your life.



**Sagittarius:** Consider dying your hair a completely different color than it is now. Seriously, it is the greatest disguise—you will

really need it in the coming months. As Winter fades away, so too will your enemies thaw. But do not fear, you can keep them off your tail. The shadows are your friends. Your foes will hide in plain sight; do not make it easier for them to track you down. Think rationally for once. I believe in you. Your end's not near, not this time at least. Also, if anyone invites you to paintball in the near future, decline with aggression and avoid them for a long time to come. It's for the best.



**Capricorn:** What have you got going for you right now? Sometimes life just doesn't go your way, and this is one of

those times. You may find yourself more prone to small really annoying injuries, like a paper cut but on all of your fingers. The world is tripping you up (literally—get ready for that! You'll be falling a lot and it will be embarrassing). But look to the future! The good news is that there's nowhere to go but up! And down, too, you will trip a lot. Be on the lookout for concussions. Also this month pink is definitely your color! Just go for it!



**Aquarius:** In many, many moons, you will look back upon this time and wonder: "what was I thinking?" but this is vital

for your journey. Avoid the following: surface level sarcasm, baby carrots, dress shoes. Do NOT avoid the following: paint can openers, Ethel Cain, the speed limit.



**Pisces:** Highways—perhaps consider not making any road-trips this month, lest your inevitable soir  e into objectively

poor driving cause a traffic jam on the Mass turnpike. Use extra cumin in your cooking this month, but avoid oregano. Actually, avoid oregano in general.

# The Pressure of Christmas

By Delilah Lieberman

I can admit that Christmas is a fun holiday. The idea of creeping down the stairs to the sight of presents under a decorated tree is an exciting thought. I like the traditions relating to Santa Claus, like leaving milk and cookies out or writing little wishlists addressed with his name. I have never done any of these things because I was born into a Jewish family who celebrates holidays like Hanukkah and Passover. I have always been open about my experiences with religion, and I have never been afraid to share about my Hanukkah presents or explain how the holidays work to my peers and teachers. So there is absolutely no reason why individuals identifying with Christian faith cannot do the same. However, there are certain times when the assumption of holidays like Christmas are placed onto Jewish people like me.

In elementary school, I can confidently say that I had never gone through a winter without a teacher coming up with assignments like making ornaments for trees or going around a circle and saying what we want under them. By the age of twelve, I knew how to navigate my way through these activities, and I always tried to alter the question to fit my own idea of the holidays or make ornaments dedicated to be hung on my fridge, as I did not have a tree to display them on.

I remember attending online class during the peak of covid. It was the week before Christmas break, and our exit ticket to log off the Google meet was to unmute and tell everyone what you wish you could receive for Christmas. I remember thinking this was odd, as not everyone celebrates this holiday. So, when it was my turn I clicked the unmute button and announced that, “Although I don’t celebrate Christmas, I do want presents for Hanukkah,” and then went on to say whatever twelve-year-old me wanted for the holidays. What bothered me was the assumption that everyone in our class observes these festivities. Now, I am not saying that Christmas cannot be talked about, because like I said, it is an exciting holiday for those who celebrate it. However, I wish there could be more inclusion in school with all religions and all the holidays that come along with them.

In the future, it would be gratifying to see my peers and teachers give a voice to other holidays in other religions, as they give a voice to their own. Don’t get me wrong, I do enjoy engaging in Christmas activities at school when it gets closer to the date, but during them, it would be nice to see some representation of other people’s holidays, as well as mine.



# Testing, a Failure of the Education System

By Serena Ratcliff

I found a simple way to ace every test you will take in school: memorization. If you memorize how to spell all your Spanish vocabulary words, you will ace the test. However, you’re not learning Spanish. Sure, you’ll get a great grade, but if you go to a Spanish-speaking place you can’t communicate through spelling out every word. In class, students learn to memorize. They can’t learn the material because of the way this system is built. It’s built on test after test. The way to succeed in school is learning the way of memorization.

To put it simply, the education system puts an emphasis on grades and as long as your tests look good, you look good. This makes the environment of school more stressful as many students think it’s better to learn for the test instead of for the class. Many classes, such as Spanish or Earth Science, are useful for adulthood but with the emphasis on testing students would rather learn what’s needed for the test instead of what’s needed for outside life. Just because it’s not on the test doesn’t mean it’s not important.

Memorization also creates a divide in knowledge. I am only interested in what’s on the test. Is this fact necessary for the test or unnecessary for the test? I only need to memorize the necessary information, so that’s the only information I will “learn.” Once that test is over, I’m interested in what’s on the next test. This makes it so I only know about things I will be tested on, and then I forget them once I am done with the test. In the end, this leaves me with no real knowledge.

School is an endless cycle of multiple choice and short answer questions. But in life there are no multiple choice or short answer questions. We are supposed to know so many things but we just don’t because we learned to the test not to the topic. In life we will be unprepared because we don’t know how to use the knowledge we are given. We know how to

memorize and test. If you memorized it, how can you just forget it? You didn’t learn it. With memorization you just know the facts, without truly understanding. With learning you get to understand the knowledge. With tests you are showing you know what the facts are, not if you understand them. I understand how to memorize but otherwise I don’t understand the material given because I don’t have to. I can get perfectly good grades while not absorbing the subject matter. If it won’t earn me a grade, it’s a waste of time. My GPA won’t say “This student knows what the Calvin cycle is,” it will say what grade I earned in Living Environment. I learn what I have to do so I can get through the class. Not what can get me through life. I know what I memorized but I don’t know how to apply it. Through life you won’t get multiple choice questions, you will have to take the knowledge you learned in school and apply it.

Memorization is needed in school but it’s not the most effective way of learning. Project based learning is a way of applying knowledge you learned and it teaches you to put past and present knowledge together. This is useful in life because instead of just knowing facts, you know how to put them together. Many schools in New York like Bard College and Columbia University are moving towards the future with test-optional applications. With this move, they are showing that a test won’t show your depth as a student. Instead, they are focusing on essays and extracurriculars, two things that emphasize projects and critical thinking. I think Onteora should follow them in the future to put less pressure on memorization and more focus on learning.

# Talula’s Banana Bread Recipe

By Talula Kirschner

**Ingredients:**

- 3–4 ripe bananas
- ¼ cup melted butter
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 ½ cups flour
- ¼ tsp salt
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1 egg
- 1 cup chocolate chips (optional)



**Directions:**

- Preheat the oven to 350 degrees and grease a loaf pan.
- Mash up your bananas in a mixer or with a fork. Then add your cooled, melted butter and all the other ingredients and mix until well combined.
- If you like chocolate, add chocolate chips (as many as you’d like!).
- Bake for 40 minutes until the loaf is brown, but more importantly, until a knife or toothpick comes out clean from the center.

This banana bread is moist and not too sweet. It’s a great gift, and everybody always loves it!

## Booster Club News

The Onteora Booster Club is visible and active in the community and on our campus! They just finished up their “Community Night” during the last week of January which included concessions, raffles, prizes, and recognition of youth sports programs and recognitions for our community first responders. Here’s a few highlights of their activity so far this year:

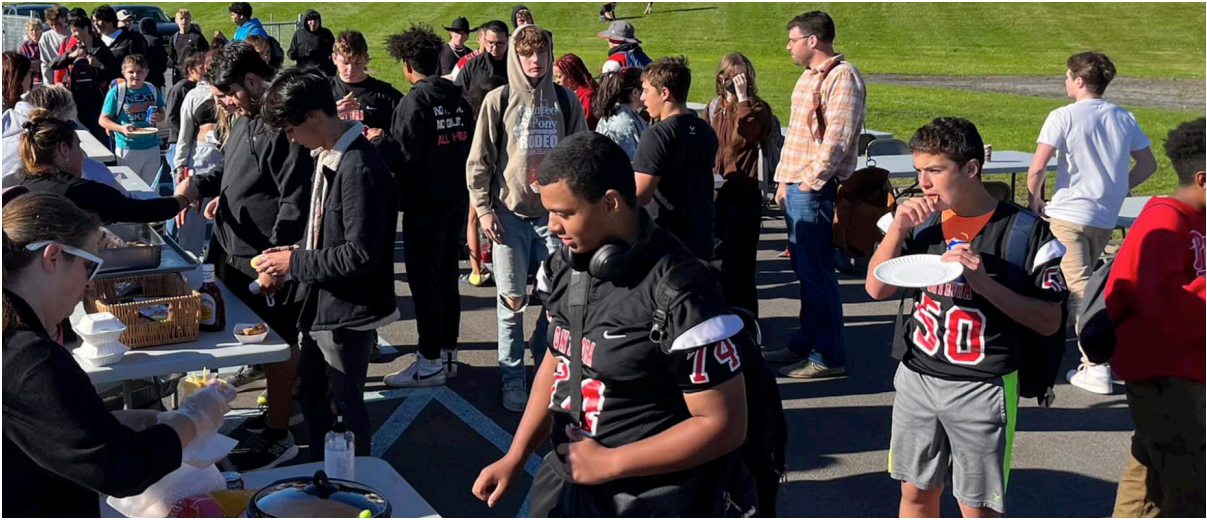
Booster Club connected with community members at their Olive Day table and received donations for our clubs and teams. They hosted the Homecoming Tailgate and sent spirit packages to the Golf and Swim Teams. And they were spotted providing Homecoming Concessions to students and tossing spirit merchandise to spectators!

Additionally, they donated senior banners for fall athletes and coordinated plans to donate senior banners for winter and spring athletes, as well as for senior members of the music department! They donated a coffee and treats table for the MS/HS Open House and coordinated a delivered dinner fundraiser for faculty and staff.

Booster parents and community members hosted MS/HS Winter Concert Reception with complimentary coffee and cocoa, complimentary raffle drawings with donated prizes, and a concessions/merchandise table AND they donated Candy Graham Shout Outs for audience members to send to cast members after the performance each night. The Booster Club provided concessions for the Wizards Basketball event, partnered with teams/clubs to provide concession at some sporting events, and added new merchandise to sales, such as Bucket Hats, Custom PJ Pants, and Onteora O hoodies and t-shirts.

The Booster Club has grown to 46 members—and is always looking for new members, too! They are visible on social media and happily anticipate the upcoming events: Spaghetti Dinner (March), Chicago Musical Concession, Flower Sales (with pre-orders), Candy Graham Shout Outs (April), Spring Concert Reception (May) Spirit Week BBQ, and War of the Classes (May).

Go to [www.onteoraboosterclub.com](http://www.onteoraboosterclub.com) to learn about upcoming events.



## Art Club Field Trip

On Saturday December 10th, the High School Art Club left Onteora and took off on a field trip to the famous Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art, known more commonly as Mass MOCA. Traditionally, Art Club has gone on field trips annually; however, due to the Covid-19 pandemic the club has not gone on one since the 2018–2019 school year.

With much excitement, the group hopped on the bus and reached Mass MOCA where they went on a guided tour of the new exhibitions held by this world-class museum. After the tour they ate at Lickety Split, the Museum’s personal cafe and then had a fantastic time as they explored the rest of the contemporary art section. The students viewed unique pieces about current topics and themes such as student debt, climate change, and personal identity. It was both an interactive and visual treat for all students, expanding their knowledge on many different artistic endeavors.

## Science Olympiad CompetitIONS

After months of preparation, the Onteora High School Science Olympiad competed in their first invitational tournament against 15 other schools this year. They embarked on January 7 towards Columbia High School at 6:30 a.m. and returned over twelve hours later at 7:00 p.m with three teams having medaled in three different events. Ari Green and Takemi Sono-Knowles placed 4th in Trajectory, Jefferson Voelker and Caleb Frank placed 3rd in Flight, and Connor Geirloff placed 3rd in Scrambler.

Then, on February 4, the team joined over 30 teams at the Regional MidHudson Competition at John Jay High School in East Fishkill. Sami Sheikh placed 8th in the Bridge Building event, Virginia Potter and Oscar Espinoza placed 8th in Environmental Chemistry, Virginia Potter and Jefferson Voelker placed 7th in Chemistry Lab, Jefferson Voelker and Caleb Frank placed 6th in Flight, and Takemi Sono-Knowles and Ari Green placed 4th in Trajectory. Congratulations to everyone!



## An Update from the Student Government

Greetings constituents!

Recently in student government we have set our initiatives for the year based on our goals. We would like to revisit and finalize the Condom Initiative, which aims to promote sexual education as well as make condom distribution accessible through our school nurses. Our chairs for that committee are Treasurer Jett Conti (senior) and Treasurer Noah Stern (junior); feel free to reach out to them with any questions you may have! Next, we implemented a committee focused on student mental health. This committee is not specifically tasked, but more so here to address any concerns throughout the school year and hopefully to hold some fun events, so stay tuned! The chair for the mental health initiative is Secretary Gianna Tisch (senior). As for our Outside Initiative, we are currently in the process of selecting furniture that will be the best fit for

our courtyard classrooms. Our chair for that committee is Vice President Thea Millenson-Wilens (senior).

An ongoing goal in student government is to promote an environment where students feel heard and involved, and we are dedicated to that idea in theory and in practice. We plan to update our web page frequently to encourage students to educate themselves on what is going on in their government and get involved. Any student that wishes to speak publicly during our meetings may do so by signing up with me or Brian Connolly, the Student Government advisor. I look forward to bringing these initiatives to fruition!

Best,  
President Noelle Crandell



# Clawsnaps



What was your worst memory from 2022?

“When I fell up the stairs and someone ran over me.” Anabell Sorbellini (Grade 11)

“When I dropped my food on the street and had no money left.” Oscar Espinoza (Grade 11)

“I threw a water bottle at my sister because she broke my Lego roller coaster.” Maxine Sprague (Grade 11)

“I got covid in January.” Hudson Turba (Grade 12)

“Getting caught in the rain.” Ari Green (Grade 12)



“The first day of 9th grade, I came from a very small school so it was stressful.” Navah McElroy (Grade 9)

“Getting my braces back on, that was pretty terrible.” Ruby Gahagan (Grade 9)

“My worst moment of 2022 was when I went to my friend's Friendsgiving Dinner and I ate pesto pasta my friend made but it had cashews and I had an allergic reaction. Then when my same friend who made the pasta was driving me home she hit a parked car in the parking lot and had to call the police.” Thea Millenson-Wilens (Grade 12)

“I forgot about Science Olympiad until the week before.” Oskar Baron (Grade 9)



“I don't even remember.” Noelle Crandell (Grade 12)

“The ice storm.” Olivia Weiss (Grade 12)

“I got shocked when I was pulling out my hair dryer.” Fiona Green (Grade 9)



“I flushed my AirPods down the toilet.” Alexis Neilsen (Grade 10)

“A girl working at Brandy Melville scammed me five dollars.” Scarlett Andretta (Grade 10)

“The numerous times that I cried in my chemistry tests.” Kelly Wen (Grade 11)

“The first soccer game, we were down 6-0 and I scored an own goal that made it 7-0.” James Lynch (Grade 11)

“I fell down the stairs of the bus and the person behind me made fun of me.” Lily McNamera (Grade 10)

## An Appreciation for Old Movies

By Cole McMenemy

One thing that is important to remember is that no story is truly original, it can especially be seen on the silver screen. Every single movie is inspired by some other story that likely came from someplace else. It is important to examine what happened before our time, in this case, let's look back at the pictures of the past. The movies of old can be very unappealing to the modern eyes because they are all in black and white. These movies come from a time where color movies were just an idea. They also come from a time where nobody had ever seen pictures move. The filmmakers and the audience were trying to figure out what was happening. Although these movies are primitive by today's standards, they took the viewers at the time on

a trip through worlds and wars. One movie even took the viewer to the Moon, fifty years before it actually happened. These old films can make us remember where we came from and how much we can improve.



# Murder Mystery at the Glass Onion

By Ada Helm

Everyone loves a good mystery. It draws us in, challenges our brains, and keeps us guessing at every twist and turn. And every good mystery has layers, much like an onion. In this case, I’m talking about a glass one.

Glass Onion: A Knives Out Mystery is a thrilling 2022 film that has critics raving, myself included. The first Knives Out film was released in 2019, and since then it has had the world waiting for its sequel. And now it’s finally here. Directed by Rian Johnson, Glass Onion is led by Daniel Craig, who is reprising his role as the fan-favorite detective, Benoit Blanc. This film also features a star-studded ensemble with Ed Norton, Janelle Monae, Kathryn Hahn, and Leslie Odom Jr. among them. Like any successful mystery, it’s riddled with hidden clues and puzzles. In fact, our film opens on a series of elaborate puzzle boxes, all sent to seemingly random people from varying backgrounds. But the thing these people have in common is one man: Miles Bron, a tech billionaire looking to whisk his friends away to his private island for a murder mystery dinner. But when a real murder is committed, it’s up to Benoit to

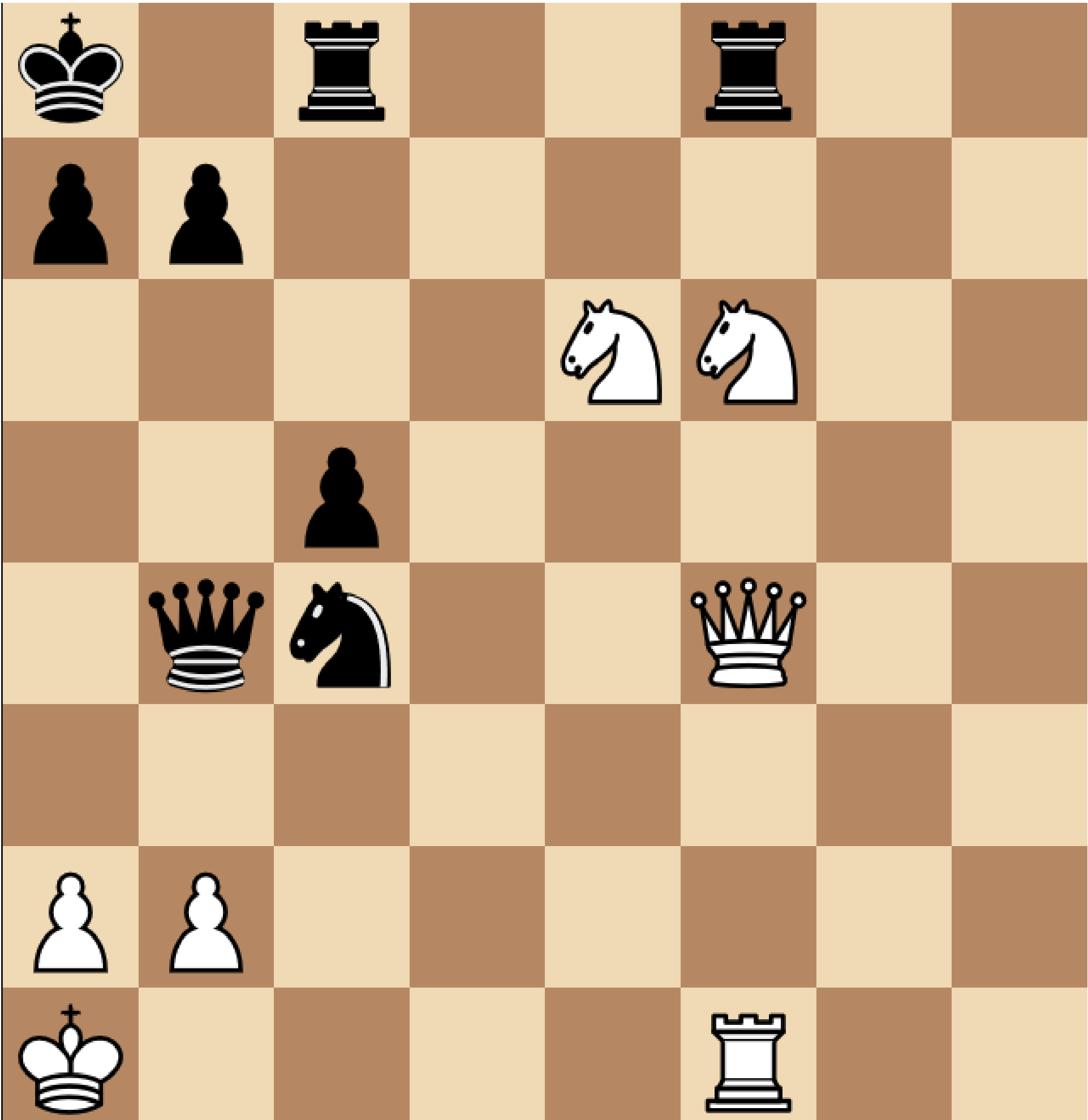
solve it. As more secrets are revealed and more obstacles fall into Benoit’s path, the audience begins to wonder: Will he solve it? Or will the murderer among these dysfunctional suspects beat him at his own game?

Without giving anything away, this movie is a wild ride. Despite feeling a little laggy in the middle, Glass Onion still managed to keep me on my toes. It’s beautiful to look at, has a masterful score, and is, of course, perfectly cast. As off-putting as Ed Norton’s bright blue eyes are, every member’s looks were well-crafted with each of their unique roles. If not for the wonderful chemistry between the main characters, this movie would have fallen flat. Rian Johnson is undoubtedly a master of suspense, as was made clear all the way back in 2019. While Glass Onion admittedly doesn’t fully live up to its predecessor, this film has bolder twists, as well as flashier cinematography and more grandiose performances. The mystery and suspense of the first film will forever be legendary, but its sequel was undoubtedly much more fun. Bigger, but not necessarily better. So if you enjoy a quirky, captivating romp of a mystery, then I highly recommend peeling back the layers of this glass onion.



## Chess Puzzle

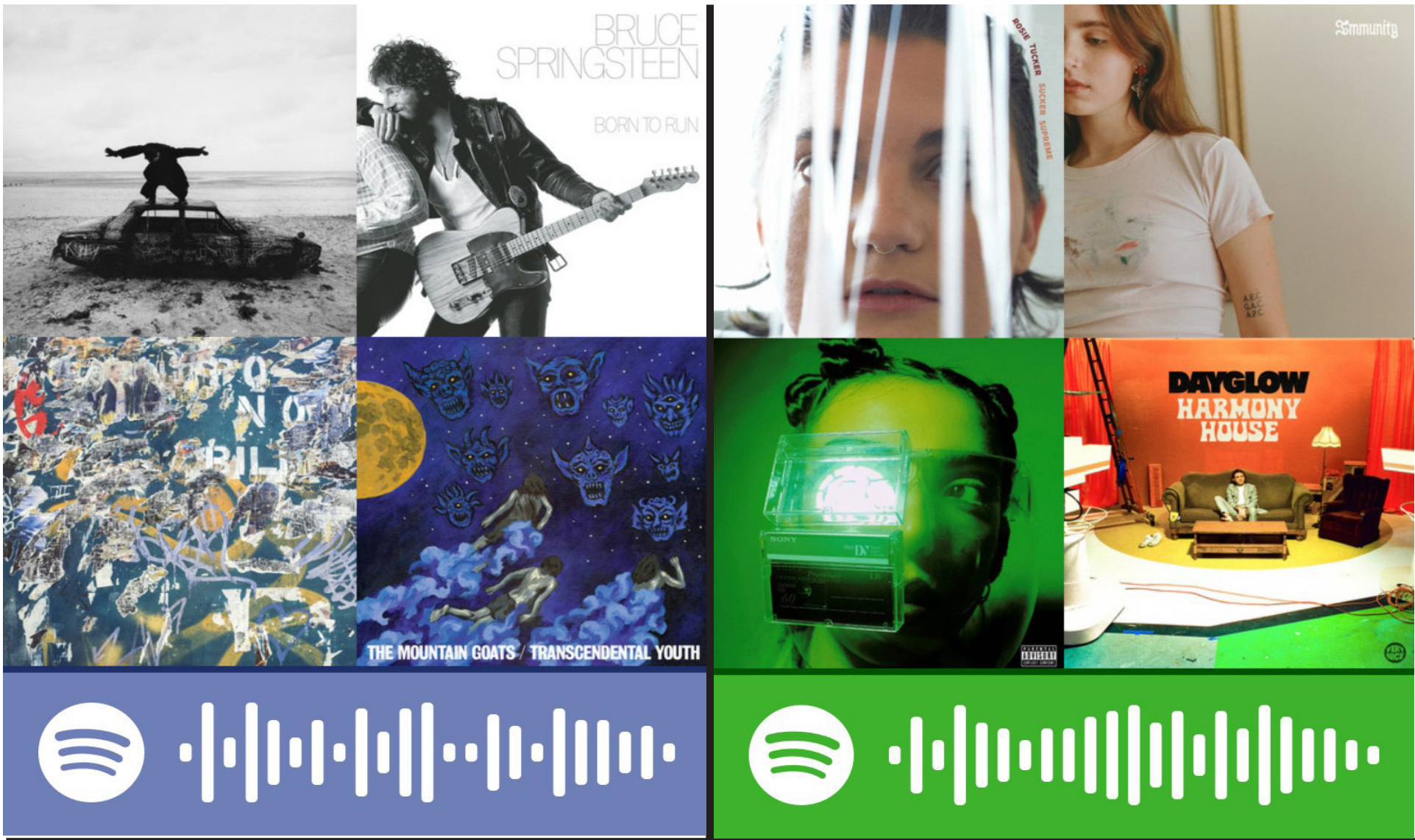
By Liam Bertheaud



Hint: white to move, checkmate in five turns

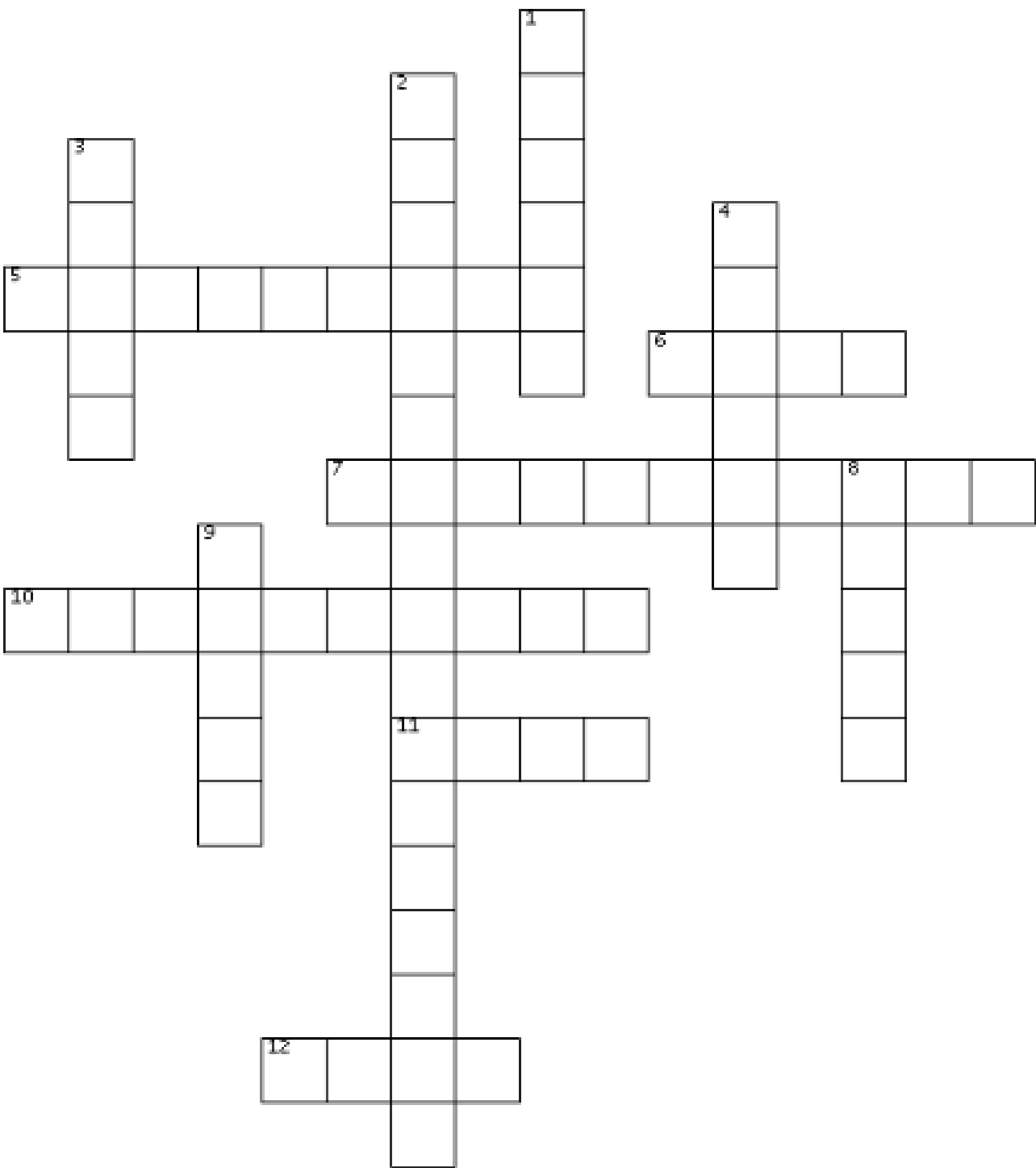
Winter Playlists

By Ada Helm



Crossword Puzzle

By Kelly Wen



Clues

- ACROSS
- 5. Greek goddess of love.
  - 6. The death of Masha Amini ignited protests from which nation?
  - 7. The first female governor of NY
  - 10. Valentine was derived from which Latin word?
  - 11. Which Taylor Swift tour created the “Ticketmaster controversy”?
  - 12. Greek God of love and desire.

- DOWN
- 1. Valentine’s Day was mentioned in which Shakespeare play?
  - 2. What was argued in the 1978 case, Regents of the University of California v. Bakke?
  - 3. Roman God of love.
  - 4. What is the genre of the 2001 movie, “Valentine”?
  - 8. What symbol is illuminated on the Empire State Building on Valentine’s Day?
  - 9. Roman Goddess of love and beauty.