

THE HIGHLAND FLING

Northern Highlands Reginal High School | 298 Hillside Avenue, Allendale NJ 07401 | Volume 55, Issue 03 | November 2020



The American flag waving in a room 208, a powerful symbol of the nation.

Emily Cespedes '21

PHASE TWO?

Looking into it's progression

Julia Boydell '22

Before the two-week shutdown due to COVID-19 cases, the school aimed to move into Phase Two of the school's COVID-19 plan in November.

Principal Joseph Occino explained that the school did not go directly to phase two in order to ease back into the swing of things. The administration decided that it would be difficult to go from a fourteen day hiatus directly into something new.

When we eventually move into Phase Two, there will be, "half days until 12:29 every day. We would have four academic periods, and we still plan to rotate them by marking periods," Assistant Principal Michael Koth explained.

Koth also went on to describe how the white cohort will be split up so there are only two cohorts. Each will be in-person for two days, then stay home for two days.

It is difficult to estimate when Phase Two will begin, but again the administration remains cautiously optimistic that it will be sometime after the holidays. Their main focus is keeping students and staff as safe as possible. ■

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2020 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

What do the election results mean for the school?

Clare O'Connor '22

Recently, our country elected the 46th President and Vice President: Joe Biden and Kamala Harris. President-elect Biden boasts an extensive history in government, formerly serving as a United States Senator from 1973–2009 and as a Vice President from 2009–2017.

Dr. Jill Biden, his wife, is an English professor at Northern Virginia Community College, and plans to continue her job after moving into the White House. She will be the only First Lady to ever hold a paying position.

Vice President-elect

Harris also has experience in politics, serving as District Attorney of San Francisco, Attorney General for California, and a United States Senator.

"Biden's plan... seems like a step in the right direction"

Junior
Kristen Scro

This election marks various milestones in

American history. Kamala Harris will be the first female, first African American and first South Asian to hold the Vice Presidential office.

As a whole, voter turnout increased exponentially. Over 150 million votes were cast for all candidates. Especially in the middle of a pandemic, this level of participation is phenomenal. High voter turnout is one of the few aspects of elections that both parties celebrate.

So, what does the election mean for Northern Highlands? Assistant Principal Michael Koth explained that the school faculty have been trained and

educated in providing an appropriate and respectful forum for students to voice their thoughts.

Engaging in civil political discussion provides students with fundamental abilities needed for the future. Koth stressed the importance of respect; although they are occasional, instances of disrespect in regards to politics are swiftly dealt with.

Overall, the school encourages its students to be involved in political events in order to further their civic awareness and promote future participation in elections.

In terms of educational standards and funding, not

much is going to change. Principal Joseph Occhino discussed the limits the President has on public education and that any changes to the school would be from the state. To compare, Highlands did not see any changes under the Trump administration.

For education as a whole, Dr. Jill Biden, the future First Lady, has announced she plans to advocate for free community college for everyone. Students that may not have been able to attend college for financial reasons would then be able to take part in this learning experience.

INSIDE



Photos self-taken

Election Opinions

Hear Ryan Gottlieb, Luka Abuladze, and Liam Cassidy, three politically-passionate students, discuss the 2020 Election.

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Photo Courtesy of Jessica Xu

TikTok Hair?

Students share how TikTok has inspired their most recent hairdos.

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Photo Courtesy of Lars Photography

Athlete Achieves

Junior player Molly Bennett was recognized as NJ.com's Athlete of the Week for her outstanding efforts as a field hockey defender.

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HOT TAKES: NO NUANCE NOVEMBER

Mac and cheese, fork or spoon? Milk before or after cereal?



Photo courtesy of Chahat Arora '22

Chahat Arora '22

All of us have different ideas of what is normal versus what isn't. Some of us like eating mac and cheese with a fork, while others like eating it with a spoon. Some of us kick the ice under the fridge, while others pick it up. Small controversies like this always spark up the most interesting, yet fiery conversations.

Personally speaking, I believe that mac and cheese should be eaten with a fork because it is essentially a form of pasta, which is typ-

ically eaten with a fork. I also believe that when ice falls, it is better to pick it up rather than kicking it under the fridge because you'll be left with a pile of water that you most definitely won't want to clean up.

Another debate is whether or not a hot dog is a taco or a sandwich. After asking a bunch of my friends, the common consensus is that a hot dog is a sandwich. A sandwich is typically something between two pieces of bread. That's exactly what a hot dog. A taco, while the same shape, is most often in a corn shell, which is not the situation that a hot dog is in.

One controversy I have heard a lot about is 'Is water wet?' This is something that was heavily debated a few years back. According to what I learned in biology this year, water is wet be-

cause it is water molecules bonded to each other and when something is wet, it has water molecules bonded to it. I definitely stick to the belief that water is wet.

An additional hot topic is whether or not soup is a food or a drink. If we get technical, soup is usually something that we end up drinking, but often times soup is taken as a meal since it usually contains bits of food sufficient enough to fill us up. Due to this fact, I would have to say that soup is something I would think of as a food.

Lastly, the most common controversial topic that I have heard about is milk before cereal. To be honest, I used to put the milk before the cereal because I liked having the extra milk, but it made my cereal a little soggy, so now I believe that the correct way is cereal before milk,

making perfect proportions of both ingredients.

Obviously, there is

no right or wrong when it comes to these topics and it was purely based on my

opinion, but the real question is: do you agree? ■

THIS OR THAT:

MILK BEFORE OR AFTER CEREAL?

BEFORE ☐ AFTER ☐

WHAT DO YOU DO WITH YOUR ICE?

PICK UP ☐ KICK UNDER ☐

HOW DO YOU CLASSIFY A HOT DOG?

TACO ☐ SANDWICH ☐

SPOON OR FORK FOR MAC N' CHEESE

SPOON ☐ FORK ☐

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The views of the staff do not necessarily reflect the views of the administration. The administration has the right to review and alter an issue of the newspaper for five school days after it has been given to them by the staff. In the process of prior review, the original content of the paper may be changed or deleted. Regardless, the staff of *The Highland Fling* prides itself on delivering the most relevant and accurate reporting it can.

From the Desk of the Editors-in-Chief

We always knew Election Days were tense, but it turns out an Election Week is a whole new level of stress. We spent the school day distracted, refreshing *The New York Times* instead of paying attention in Calculus (sorry, Mr. Aldea and Mrs. Bradley!). After school, we sat glued to our TVs, clamoring for updates. Not even the Georgia and Nevada TikToks could provide enough comic relief for us to forget our underlying anxiety.

After a long five days, on November 7, 2020, Joe Biden was projected to be the 46th President of the United States. To us, it felt like people all around the world finally exhaled, and, for the first time in a while, we felt hopeful.

The Biden administration promises progress—a monumental leap has already been made simply through Kamala Harris' election—but also unity. American politics have been extremely polarized throughout our lives, but the Biden administration has said that they will make strides to work across party lines and bring the nation together. Only time will tell how successful they will be, but at least for now, that makes us optimistic about our future.

Perhaps what we are most excited about though is Harris, the first female, first Black, and first South-Asian Vice President-Elect in our country's history. Pause for applause. In true past-news-reporter fashion, we feel this calls for an interview.

Melissa: How do you feel about our soon-to-be Vice President?

Api: As a young Indian-American girl, I feel inspired. She is breaking the glass ceiling, and in doing so, opening up a whole new world of opportunity for women of color. If you had told me a year ago, or even 6 months ago, that we would have an Indian woman as Vice President-Elect of the United States, I would not have believed it. Her election is a testament to just how far we have come as a nation and I am so excited to see the example she sets. But enough from me, I imagine you are feeling pretty pumped too, right Melis?

Melissa: Unbelievably. As someone who eats, sleeps, and breathes Mock Trial from November to January and aspires to be an attorney one day, Vice President-Elect Harris' prosecutor past has shown me I can do anything. Like you said, she's an inspiration, and I'm looking forward to seeing her impact throughout her term.

Okay, we're back. As you can probably tell, Harris has become a role model, not just for us, but for young women across the nation. And while the first female Vice President-Elect is certainly a momentous occasion, as Harris herself put it, she "will not be the last."

If you are interested in joining *The Highland Fling* or have any questions, comments, or concerns, please contact fling.eic@gmail.com. If you are interetested in placing an ad or subscribing, please contact the email listed above.

National Alliance on Mental Illness:
1-800-950-6264

National Suicide Prevention Hotline:
1-800-273-TALK (8255) [24/7 hotline]
(Spanish) 1-888-628-9454

SHOWING GRATITUDE TO LOVED ONES

Remembering to stay thankful, even when times seem grim



Photo courtesy of Jamie Meyer '23

Jamie Meyer '23

With polarizing disagreements all around us in politics, depressing articles in the media, coronavirus yielding isolation, and the colder winter months coming, it's hard to find anything to be grateful for. This negativity can be overwhelming. That's why it's more important than ever to appreciate what we have.

The lockdown at the beginning of this year was difficult. It was like being thrust into a completely different world, with everyone unsure of how to take the next step. Going to school online felt like a weird dream that I couldn't get out of. When I looked closer, however, I realized that there was beauty in the mundane. The little things about this period of time were something to be grate-

ful for. Activities, sports, and clubs were canceled last year. This gave all of us a lot of free time that we didn't know what to do with. At the time, I was focused on missing out on seeing my friends and experiencing my freshman year. Now, looking back, I appreciate the time I had to explore new hobbies and projects. School was shorter, too, so I had more time to myself. I could call my friends, read books, learn new things, and more. So many new opportunities were opened to me when I had this extra time to explore what I was interested in. This was

They were the only people I saw for months, excluding people on zoom. We had dinners together, did projects together, talked, laughed, and simply spent more time with one another. It really brightened my days, and the same can be said for many other people. Quarantine has felt isolating and left many people feeling depressed and alone. However, spending time with family helped to alleviate these emotions for many people all around the world, including me. I am so grateful for the time I got to spend with them.

I also really appreciate my teachers. This year has

They had to adjust their curriculum and learn to navigate a new medium that, for many, was com-

ciate every single teacher that has logged online and did their best to teach all their students.

I really do appreciate every single teacher that has logged online and did their best to teach all their students.

pletely uncharted. It must have been really difficult to teach online, but they always came to class prepared with new information, trying their best to educate me and my classmates.

Many teachers also tried new things to make online learning seem fun and interesting. They gave us projects to do, games to play, and activities to engage in that made school exciting.

So many teachers tried their best, responding to emails and messages. They were understanding to students and helped us get through this difficult time together. I really do appre-

Along the same lines, Northern Highlands, its faculty, and its students all really came together this year. It was the little things that really mattered. Students reached out to each other and helped one another. People started new clubs and continued old ones. Zoom calls were created for people to come together.

For example, I joined a couple of clubs last year. Logging onto the meetings and seeing my friends' faces always made me smile. The activities we did together were always fun and I am so grateful for the work that the club advisors put in to keep these clubs

up and running.

Another thing that school did was have updates about COVID and other important announcements on Canvas. This was such a helpful thing. Being left in the dark in such a scary time was an awful experience. Being able to check in and know exactly what was going on made it easy to figure out what was happening and how the school was dealing with the pandemic.

Although the pandemic is still going on, Thanksgiving is right around the corner. With it comes fall festivities, football, and food. Most importantly, however, is gratitude. Even though things can seem grim, there is always something to be grateful for.

Think about all that has led us to where we are now. It has been a roller coaster of ups and downs.

In the end, though, we made it to where we are now. We can look back to what we were lucky enough to have and who we were lucky enough to meet. Now, it is time to look forward and be thankful for the opportunities that we have now and the ones we will have in the future. ■



Art by Nina Evans '21

definitely something to be grateful for.

I also had more time to spend with my family.

been so unusual. and all of the teachers at Northern Highlands had to adapt to this new environment.

HOW IS IT ALREADY DARK OUTSIDE!?

How daylight savings affects us, and what we can do to combat it



Photo courtesy of Flora Dedvukaj '21

Flora Dedvukaj '21

Every week, I look forward to my Sunday afternoon nap. At around 3:30 pm, I close my eyes and drift off into a peaceful slumber. Usually, my naps last around an hour

rest of my day.

However, on Sunday, November 7th, this whole dynamic was flipped upside down. Waking up from my nap was daunting, as I had awoken to a darkened house. Different thoughts were rushing through my head as I pondered what time it could really be. Thinking I had overslept, I scrambled to complete the myriad of assignments I had due that Sunday at 11:59 pm, until I realized it was only 5 o'clock pm. Alas, Daylight Savings Time had ended.

These changes make me feel as though I have completed something and makes me feel more productive for my future.

or two, so when I wake up, it is still light outside and I can get on with the

The next morning was different as well, as I had woken up for school to a

bright, sunny sky as opposed to a dreary, dark, night sky. Sunnier days always allow for me to have a more productive mindset, so I was excited for that to continue. Throughout the school day (although we were virtual), I felt much more focused in my classes and was able to participate with ease. Each class went by uber quickly and by the time 12:29 pm hit, I felt like I hadn't even gone to school at all!

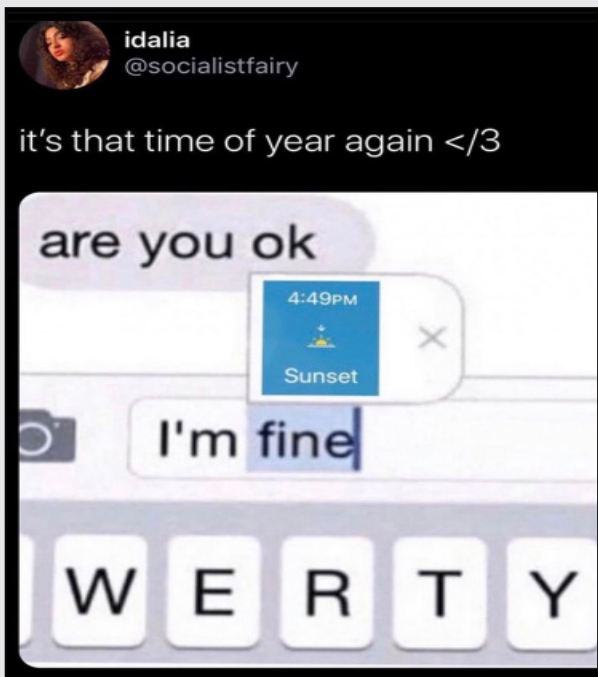
After school, I rest for a little while until I feel that the time is right to begin homework. I arise from my rest period and realize that it is dark outside! Now, that is disappointing.

To me, the summer has always been associated with long, sunny days. And winter has always been associated with short, gloomy days. Therefore, the Daylight Savings dynamic has always worked well with the season.

Because I grew up using that clock, I find myself much happier when

Daylight Savings Time begins. Days are longer, and I find myself to be more productive on those

signment and would much rather snuggle up in bed with a fall-scented candle lit watching *The Vampire*



Tweet courtesy of @socialistfairy

days.

In the summertime, I read more, write more, and clean my room much more often! On the other hand, in the winter, I find myself very exhausted most of the time and incredibly unproductive. I tend to procrastinate almost every as-

Diaries for the 5th time (it's a fall tradition).

Unfortunately, with the conclusion of Daylight Savings Time a little something called "seasonal depression" arrives. Usually occurring in the wintertime, 'seasonal depression' hits in a way that

causes me to withdraw from mostly everything occurring in my life. I halt my social life, academic life, and even familial life as I just sit in my room and complete virtually nothing. The wintertime has always made me feel weary as it is dark all of the time.

To combat this, however, I tend to try and spice up my life a bit. For me, this means rearranging my furniture, listening to new music, or buying new light strips for my room. These changes make me feel as though I have completed something and makes me feel more productive for my future.

Although daylight savings time and seasonal depression may be hitting us harder this year due to the pandemic, it's important to try and make the best of it by finding small things that can bring us joy. ■

THE 2020 ELECTION RESULTS

Students discuss opinions and the candidate they support



Photo courtesy of Ryan Gottlieb

Ryan Gottlieb '23

The 2020 election was undoubtedly a historical moment in time, and I'm so glad to have experienced it firsthand. It seems as though everyone has a strong opinion on it, and tensions have been—and are still—high. There's been a tremendous amount of discourse surrounding the election, and I just think it's more proof of how Donald Trump affected this country.

I'm ecstatic that Trump lost the election. If I could've voted in this election, I would've voted for Biden; however, that doesn't mean I necessarily support him. I simply think Trump was a danger to our country, and most alternatives to him would be better.

With that being said, I don't fully dislike Biden. In fact, his initial plan seems pretty promising. He wants to re-enact DACA (which grants illegal immigrants, who came to the US as children, a renewable 2 year period of deferred action from deportation), abolish the Muslim Ban, and rejoin the Paris Climate Accords. I'm really optimistic about these changes, and if the rest of Biden's presidency is similar to this, I could definitely see myself supporting him more.

In my ideal world,

Bernie Sanders would be the Democratic candidate but, unfortunately, he's not. I feel as though my views align more closely with him than Biden. Nevertheless, Biden won the Presidency, and we are going to obtain his policies.

One thing that I dislike about him is that he's very moderate. I'm definitely more left-leaning than he is, so I don't agree with the majority of his plan.

One of the most substantial things that separate us is his relationship with fracking. He doesn't intend on abolishing fracking even though it is very detrimental to the

reasons. I fundamentally disagree with Trump on every single thing he stands for, and on top of that, I think he's an immoral person, and it was a not so smart idea to let him represent the US for four years.

I didn't support his effect on the economy, his immigration policies, his tax policies, his environmental policies, how he treated foreign relations, how he treated the pandemic, and most importantly, how he managed to simply polarize and divide this country for 4 years.

This issue is important for us Highlanders to care about because we are the

If I could've voted in this election I would've voted for Biden; however, that doesn't mean I necessarily support him. I simply think Trump was a danger to our country, and most alternatives to him would be better.

environment. Not to mention in the debate, Trump ridiculed Biden for supporting the abolition of fracking and then Biden denied it very meticulously making it look like it was an insult.

I also wish his taxing plan was different, specifically higher taxes on the rich. In addition to this, I wish he was more assertive with his plans for the police. He's firmly stated that 'he won't defund the police,' while I wish he would.

I prefer Biden over Trump for a myriad of

next generation of voters. We directly choose who we want our president to be. We heavily influence the election, and we need to recognize the power we have. To prepare for this, it's in our best interest to become involved with politics now. It's in our best interest to educate ourselves. It's in our best interest to care about the future we create. ■



Photo courtesy of Luka Abuladze

Luka Abuladze '22

According to any politician, the election of 2020 was the most important election in modern history. However, the two candidates could be classified as the two least popular candidates in history.

Just as the "Vote Him Out" campaign began to take force, the other side of the political spectrum came to realize just how effective a President Trump has been.

Hence, the candidate I wholeheartedly support is Donald Trump. Whereas Joe Biden has been rather ineffective in his 47 long years of governance, Donald Trump has thrust our country forward towards equality, national security, and economic prosperity.

Some of his notable campaigns include the overwhelmingly bipartisan First Step Act, which, "overhauls certain federal sentencing laws, reducing mandatory minimum sentences for drug felonies and expanding early-release programs" (Business Insider).

This bill drastically reduced the amount of unjustified incarceration, and over 5,000 inmates were granted their parole (NPR). It's a step in the right direction for the reorganization of a prison system that encourages recidivism. It helps to rehabilitate former criminals and reintroduces them as contributing members of

society.

It also banned the shackling of pregnant inmates, limited solitary confinement, and mandated proximity of 500 miles between an inmate's incarceration site and their family. All of these provisions had been overlooked by previous presidents and should have been mandated a long time ago.

Another great accomplishment of President Trump was the US raid that led to the death of ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi in late October 2019. Al-Baghdadi was the world's most wanted terrorist up to that point and his death represented a major blow to the terrorist group (New York Times). And, shockingly, ISIS has been rather quiet since that point.

lands.

It seems many student's social media stories are composed of radical political comments or which party they support. It's an anomaly to see a friend group with differing political values.

This has led to the idea of compromise to be an idea neither party is willing to acknowledge, making a common ground non-existent. Politics among students is either spoken about as a joke or a claim, but never as the intent to have civil discourse.

Thankfully, I don't believe that the results will play a role in the political climate in our school; however, I do believe we need to put more emphasis on having a free and open marketplace of ideas for students to develop their

Donald Trump has thrust our country forward...

Some other accomplishments of President Trump include funding of clean water in Flint, Michigan, contributing over \$500 billion to historically black colleges and universities (CNBC) and the black community as a whole, reducing unemployment to a record low due to brilliant tax restructuring and job market expansion acts (BBC). In addition, he discussed peace negotiations in the Middle East that earned him a Nobel Peace Prize nomination.

One's preferred news station or the party one's parents support will ultimately determine a teenager's political outlook. Unfortunately, this has created a quite polarized environment in terms of politics at Northern High-

own opinions.

I can understand why people may dislike Trump. After all, he has made certain controversial claims, although these may often be taken completely out of context.

But the one thing that angers me with the "left" is that after completely bashing all conservatives by saying they were xenophobic, homophobic, racist, and much more, they are calling for unity.

Before I align with any political party, I am an American. I am optimistic about President and Vice-President Elect Joe Biden and Kamala Harris because instead of sticking it to the Republicans that didn't vote for them, they will work towards unifying the country. ■



Photo courtesy of Liam Cassidy

Liam Cassidy '21

The election sure was tumultuous. In a time where activism is need-

ed more than ever, people were confined to their homes, and the few that went out to the streets were seen as endangering the general population.

There is no doubt that this election has been one of the most divisive and important ones in recent times, but it felt cold and detached, partly due to the ideological situations enveloping both mainstream parties.

How does Trump fight

against the administration when he is the administration? How does the Democratic Party rally behind Biden when it's evident that younger Democrats wanted someone more left-wing and Republicans are increasingly hard to persuade?

On the brighter side, there was an increased push for younger voters to get registered and vote. The only major challenge was a brief period of time

during which mail-in voting was discouraged.

The increased youth turnout could be why Biden was elected, but it also poses great challenges for the future. Generation Z is perhaps the most politically polarized generation yet, and most obtain their news from social media, which can cause the spread of fake news and conspiracies.

If politics progress along the path that prior-

itizes issues that gain the most attention in the shortest amount of time, the issues of the complex world around us will only get worse.

Thankfully, Gen Z seems mostly united on issues like climate change and gay rights. As the earliest of Gen Z approaches college and long-term employment, perhaps they can form their own political constituencies that challenge the existing

two-party system and present a new option for those tired of cultural division who want to create change.

This could take root in our very own school, maybe in Model UN Club or debate. It's time we analyze how the ideologies of the two parties were composed and unite Gen Z to form their own ideologies. It's time we discover how politics truly operate on a philosophical and economic level together. ■

ARE THE SALES WORTH IT?

What Black Friday will look like this year

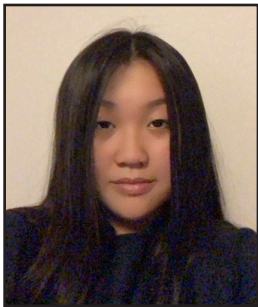


Photo courtesy of Mia Wang

Mia Wang '23

November. A time of giving and receiving thanks, family, turkeys, and shopping. More specifically, Black Friday shopping.

Black Friday is the informal name for the Friday after Thanksgiving, where hundreds of Americans crowd the malls and shops that have opened early in the morning. This American tradition can also be considered the start of Christmas shopping. Thousands of ads and discounts are posted everywhere we go, reminding us to snatch the deals as quickly as possible.

Companies such as Apple, Best Buy, Target, Walmart, and Amazon are all big participants for discounted items. In past years, citizens have swarmed big malls and outlets with huge waiting lines and overcrowding each store.

Due to COVID-19, will one of the most

of waking up at 5:00 am while having that last gulp of espresso and waiting to arrive at Garden State Plaza is just thrilling. I don't really think Black Friday is about getting discounted items for me, but more hanging out with family and friends and racing to buy items at the mall while laughing.

I remember when Black Friday of 2015 rolled around and while I passed Walmart, dozens of people camped outside the store in the freezing weather (with actual tents!) to get first pick the next morning. The freezing weather, hot coffee, numb fingers from carrying bags, and long car rides are all extremely nostalgic.

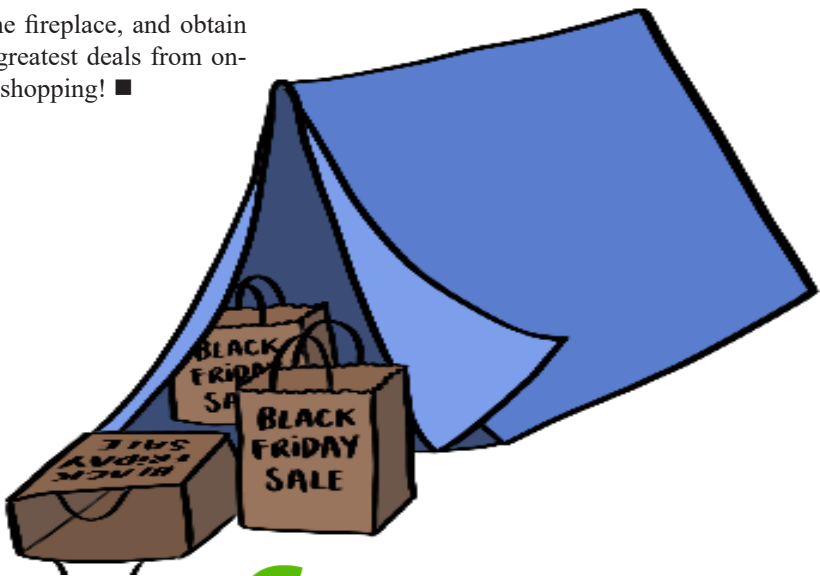
I like to use Black Friday to prepare for the holidays and do my annual Christmas shopping for family and friends. Although this holiday is important to people like me, it's crucial to acknowledge that this year I will not be

Cyber Monday includes having amazing deals online, with various coupon codes and rare online-purchases available to shoppers. Cyber Monday doesn't induce as much adrenaline rush as Black Friday, but if you find the right website, it can also be very competitive.

I think Black Friday will keep its traditional sales, or maybe even more discounts.

This year we should be considerate of the dangers of COVID, cuddle up next

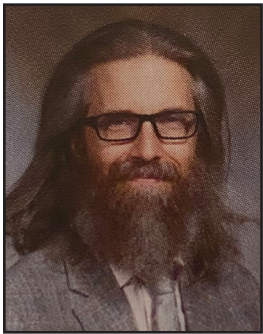
to the fireplace, and obtain the greatest deals from online shopping! ■



Art by Nina Evans '21

TEACHER'S CORNER:

Mr. Wodnick wonders about the War of the Worlds



Mr. Wodnick

Not sure what your Halloween was like—for me, the usual parade of trick-or-treaters was reduced to a trickle. I bought a lot of M&M's, but my doorbell only rang twice all night. Despite the low turnout, I thought it was nice to see a few local kids still keeping up the tradition of knocking on their neighbors' doors. In these frightening times, it can feel really important to share a treat with a stranger, despite the distance masks put between us. You may think this was one of the strangest Halloweens on record, but I think there's at least one competitor.

In 1938, in honor of Halloween, Orson Welles broadcast his now-famous radio drama "War of the Worlds." And what, for some, was an obvious science fiction fantasy was, for others, a frightening real world drama, one that led them to flee their homes or call their local news rooms accusing them of hiding the truth from them.

Why am I taking you back to this moment over eighty years ago? Because

I find "War of the Worlds" strangely relevant to today. In 1938, fascism was on the rise in Europe, the Great Depression was not yet tamed, and many Americans were mentally on edge. The new communications technology of radio made it easy to hear news from all over the world, and Orson Welles grasped that it also made people easy to manipulate if they weren't careful. He made it easy to believe, at least for a couple hours,

to open the door for them. What we believe about the dangers of the world will determine whether we are able to recognize some stories as frightening fantasies, or whether we end up being one of those hysterical people who called CBS radio demanding to know how to save themselves from the evil invaders.

You might think you're too smart to ever be fooled by stories of aliens dropping from the sky to

covering the Martian invasion.

Second, trust scientists and experts. There are thousands of people who know more than you do on every subject you can think of—but they tend not to be telling dramatic stories on the radio (or, today, on Tik Tok). If someone's telling you that all of the experts are being fooled, they're probably trying to fool you. Beware.

Lastly—honor complexity. The truth is difficult, messy, and complicated. People argue over how best to interpret it. If there's one simple story that's being told to explain exactly why an election turns out differently than you expected or why it's difficult to produce a vaccine to address a global pandemic, that simple story is probably cherry picking a few facts and turning them into a glossy but dangerous fantasy.

My hope is that you search for truth diligently, thoughtfully, and with an open mind. Check your sources, ask good questions, and remember—it's quite unlikely that aliens are invading us to destroy our way of life. Those scary people crowding around your door in masks? They're probably harmless neighbors in search of community (or M&M's!). Open your door, share a treat, and don't let yourself get tricked into thinking the world's going to end if you let some scary-looking facts challenge your assumptions.■

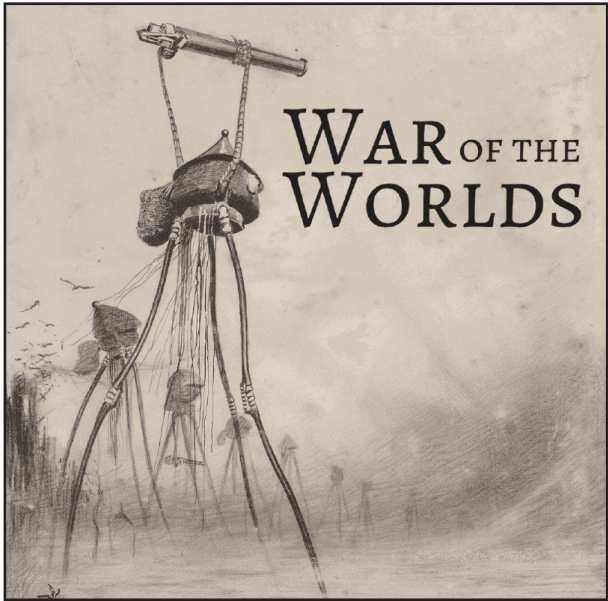


Photo courtesy of Project Gutenberg

Cover illustration to War of the Worlds by H.G. Wells.

The adrenaline of waking up at 5:00 am while having that last gulp of espresso and waiting to arrive at Garden State Plaza is just thrilling.

infamous holidays still be available for Americans? I believe that many malls and outlets will have to host their Black Friday sales online, due to the regulations put in place.

For example, Walmart will be spreading their Black Friday discounts over three weekends. No longer will men, women, and children charge into the store like a pack of high-speed zombies. There are single-file lines now at major chains such as Walmart.

Moreover, malls could also limit the number of people going in and out of stores and malls.

I personally take Black Friday as a sport as I am extremely competitive on this day. The adrenaline

participating in it.

The pandemic makes it difficult and risky to go to malls especially with the crowds we experienced in the past."Social distancing" has been the term of the year, which means that retailers won't be encouraging people to flock to their stores this year.

Fortunately, Cyber Monday, associate of Black Friday, will still be going strong.

CORONA HASN'T CANCELLED CLUBS

Why it's important for some clubs to be operating during hybrid learning

ACTIVE CLUBS

Clubs currently running this year

Sammy Lever '22

- Chess/Games
- Class Council
- DECA
- Environmental Awareness
- Fed Challenge
- French
- Freshman Literary Magazine
- Gender Sexuality Awareness
- Happy Homes
- Italian
- Literary Magazine
- Marching Band
- Mock Trial
- Model UN
- Highlands Belles
- Highlands Voices
- Jazz Ensemble
- Vocal Ensemble/Harmonics
- National Honor Society
- The Highland Fling
- Quiz BowSal/Academic Team
- Spanish
- STEM
- Stockmarket
- Student Council
- Virtual Film
- Yearbook
- Yoga

Sania Sadarangani '23

When school became completely virtual last March, all clubs, athletics, field trips, and activities were indefinitely canceled.

This year's hybrid schedule has allowed the school to explore different ways to keep clubs and sports running.

bring people together over a common cause—we've worked very hard to try to bring that to the forefront in a manner that is responsible."

The majority of clubs focused on fundraising are functioning virtually this year, while many service based clubs have not been able to run.

"We need to take advantage of any and all opportunities to bring people together over a common cause"

Vice Principal Michael Koth

When asked about the subject, Vice Principal Michael Koth said, "now more than ever, because of the nature of hybrid learning and the consideration that anyone has to quarantine for COVID-19, we need to take advantage of any and all opportunities to

President of Northern Highlands UNICEF club Vanessa Shoenholz said, "This has been a big adjustment for us because we are a fundraising club and usually have events totally in person at 90 minute lunches and things like that."

Given the circumstances, club leaders are now tasked with finding creative ways to host fundraisers and activities virtually. "It's definitely been a learning curve, but with every new meeting, I think everyone's adjusting well," said Shoenholz.

When discussing the lack of school activities last spring, Principal Joseph Occhino said "the social-emotional piece to what our students are feeling now.... It's hard for us to put our finger on it, but we do know people are struggling.

Even as an administrator, it was a struggle for us not to participate in all the other things we normally immerse ourselves in as a school community, so I can't imagine what it was like for the students."

Koth agreed with Occhino, adding that "often-times, when you come to school, it feels somewhat transactional—you come here, you do some work, you leave—but you need that pursuit, that sense of belonging and common in-

terest."

This is especially vital to freshmen, as they are new to Highlands and rely on building new relationships with students and staff.

"With freshmen, it's even more difficult because they aren't very familiar with Northern Highlands. Clubs, athletics, activities are a way for them to make connections with people in school.

Right now, that's been taken away, which is why we thought it was very important to at least maintain as many clubs as we could, within reason, so that students could develop those relationships," said Occhino.

The Principal continued to say that being immersed and clubs and activities are necessary for an authentic high school experience.

The administration agreed that continuing clubs and other school activities was a high priority in order to bring back a sense of normalcy to Highlands. ■

READY TO RUN AND HAVE SOME FUN

The French Club will be running a 5k to raise money for TEEEM

Rebecca Hoffer '23

This month, the French Club is holding a 5k fundraising event to help raise money for TEEEM.

TEEEM is an organization that helps feed and educate underprivileged children in third world countries.

TEEEM strives to "meet community needs worldwide through empathy and partnerships," as stated on the official website.

The foundation helps communities throughout five different continents.

In Bergen County, many schools participate in fundraising for this organization.

At Northern Highlands, Principal Joseph Occhino and Vice-Principal Michael Koth work directly with TEEEM to assist in collecting donations.

Occhino stated that "[TEEEM raises] a lot of money and they do a lot of things for kids who are less

fortunate.



Principal Joseph Occhino ready to run with his wife and dog.

For our students here to identify with this organization, you get a better understanding of the things we can do as a community."

Occhino further mentioned that it's a great way for kids to understand how fortunate they are.

The Highlands community has the opportunity to donate money to this event.

The club hopes to meet their goal of \$10,000 in donations.

The 5k is the first of the many events that the French Club is holding, but due to COVID-19 they are unable to hold some of their

usual events.

Throughout the school year, the French Club typically has small fundraising events such as the crepes during the 90 minute lunches or the candy grams for Valentine's Day.

Now, all of the French Club meetings are virtual, and the events are not set in stone for this school year.

Originally the 5k was supposed to end in early November, but it has since been extended to end by December 1.

Madame King is the French Club advisor and she encourages students to walk the 5k to help out.

Even a small donation can make a big difference in a community that isn't as fortunate as the Highlands community. \$10 can provide 50 meals for hungry children, \$50 can help treat 10 patients with life threatening illnesses, \$100 can start a sustainable business and a lifetime of healthy independence, and \$1,000 can fix and build wells so villages have access to clean and fresh drinking water for years to come. The link to donate to TEEEM is in the teeminc Instagram bio.

The 5k was extended



Junior Rachel Finkelshteyn runs with her family.

to help encourage more students to participate as they finish adjusting to the school year.

Participants will post pictures on their social media pages after they complete the 5k walk/run and can tag the TEEEM Instagram (@teeminc).

They will also use the hashtag #TEEEMFallFun. Anyone can donate money to TEEEM by using the link provided on the poster on the Canvas home page, not just participants.

Student participants also have the chance to win Visa gift cards just by posting their 5k picture on their Instagram page.

Participants don't have to run the full 5k, and some people choose to do the 5k with their friends to make the walk more enjoyable. ■



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STUDENTS ARE READY TO DECA DOMINATE

One of Highland’s most popular clubs is ready to adjust to the new virtual world

Chase Vitale ‘23

DECA, available to Sophomores, Juniors and Seniors who have taken a business class, is designed to help future entrepreneurs who work in marketing,

but this year DECA will be all virtual. This means no in-person conferences for Regional or State Competitions, and that participants won’t be able to engage in roleplays.

According to Jennifer

ducting online-testing for years.

Both DeVoe and Lederman are confident in student’s enthusiasm about the club starting, as they reached their goal for the number of participants this year.

“We had set a personal goal of maybe getting our membership to half of what it was in a normal year, and I think it’s safe to say that we’re going to exceed that goal,” Lederman and DeVoe said.

Although no physical Regional or State Competitions will take place, ICDC, formally known as

the International Career Development Conference, is currently planned to take place in a hybrid fashion in Anaheim, California, from April 24-27. It should be noted that anything could change from now until April.

While the news that DECA is starting is exciting, some students may feel nervous, as it will be their first time participating in the club.

Sophomore Aarna Arora has a mix of emotions. “I am quite excited to be participating in DECA this year, but I’m a little nervous because I don’t have

the best understanding of the process of the club,” Arora said.

According to DeVoe, these concerns should be alleviated as the club progresses. “Well, we have two great presidents, and we have a leadership team that really is set up to help new members, and all the advisors, so we’re going to take them through everything that we do every year, how to prepare and how to study for the test and how to do a roleplay,” DeVoe said.

Lederman agreed, and said that an online experience could be beneficial

to the club participants. “I think because our training can be online, as many kids that want to attend can attend, and even for the advisors we can offer more training sessions, because when you’re doing it virtually, at least for me I can be home when normally I’d have to pick my kids up from school. We have a little more to offer because our time is a little more flexible” Lederman said.

To all Highlanders in DECA this year, good luck, and to any other students who wish to join next year, it is highly recommended to do so. ■

“We had set a personal goal of getting our membership to half of what it was in a normal school year, and... we’re going to exceed that goal.”

DECA Advisor Jennifer Lederman

finance, hospitality, and management.

With almost 225,000 members and 5,500 advisors across the world, it would be an understatement to say that DECA is popular.

Students who participate in DECA compete in a wide array of business challenges including topics like Business Management and Administration, Entrepreneurship, Finance, Hospitality and Tourism, Marketing, and Personal Financial Literacy.

Normally physical conferences would take place,

Lederman, who has been a DECA advisor for nearly 18 years, this could be the biggest hurdle for participants. “The kids will only be given the opportunity to test and will not compete in the roleplay until the regional level, so advancing from regional to states will be solely based on their test score.”

Both Diane DeVoe, who has been a DECA advisor for seven years, and Lederman agreed that DECA being online, including testing, shouldn’t cause any problems, since Highlands has been con-



RELAY FOR LIFE IS READY TO ROCK

Members are as busy as ever raising funds for cancer foundations

Kaiden Canariato‘22

Relay for Life has become one of the most popular and reputable clubs that takes place at Highlands for years. The club works tirelessly to raise money for the American Cancer Society through various events and fundraisers. The question “who do you relay for?” is something used by members to remind them of the importance of raising money towards research to cure cancer, something that has affected almost all members personally in one way or another.

With the necessary restrictions that have been placed on schools due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many clubs at Highlands have been put on hold for the time being, but not Relay for Life. The club is as busy as ever, with monthly meetings and planned activities made virtual to ensure safety within the club, school, and community.

After speaking with

Isabella Marino, a junior who currently holds the role of Vice Tri-Leader for the club, it was obvious the amount of effort the club was putting in to keep the Relay for Life community strong at Highlands while raising money at the same time.

Marino explained how there are currently around 30 club members in all grade levels and that they hold two events every month. In this past month’s meeting, the club revealed its next four events for the months of November and December. These events include “I’m Relay grateful for...” led by Richard Golden, which is a campaign that promotes the club while also expressing gratitude towards something in your life by posting on social media and tagging @nhrelay on Instagram.

There is also a Hand Turkey IG Fundraiser led by Annie Kelly and Jordana Barteles, which is another campaign for the club that helps you raise money

for your personal Relay for Life fund. The premise is to post an image of a hand turkey on instagram while trying to fill up each finger, or feather, with a person who has donated towards your fund.

The goal is to fill up the entire turkey and raise as much money as possible for the organization. Next, there will be a Virtual Cooking Class led by Izzy Torriani and Isabella Marino with the help of volunteers Ms. Consalvo, Ms. Perlman, and Mrs. Mallow. You must first donate \$5 to Relay for Life in order to participate in the event.

Lastly, there will be a Teacher Turkey Costume event that will allow for students to nominate their favorite teachers to wear a turkey costume in support of the club. After nominations are made, students will be able to cast votes via Venmo to elect a teacher to wear the costume, but also raise money at the same time.

Aside from monthly

events, the club looks forward to their annual Relay for Life event that occurs at the end of every school year. The event involves students staying the night outside the school while being in groups. Leading up to the event, all participants must raise money for the organization in order to participate. Within groups, one team member must be walking around the track at all times. Other group members are able to participate in fun team events if they are not walking at the time.

Molly Bennett, junior and member of the club took the time to talk with me about her personal experience with this event. “I had so much fun at Relay for Life freshman year,” Bennett states. “My friends and I stayed up all night walking, playing tug-of-war, dancing to the music, singing karaoke and participating in so many more activities. Everyone played in the games, which made it so much easier and fun to

stay up the whole night.”

This event was sadly canceled this past year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. According to member Caroline Bodnar, whether the event will take place or not is still up in the air due to the uncertainty of the

pandemic.

The club plans to still hold this event for the school. This enthusiastic club’s determination will not be brought down by obstacles interfering with their plans and goals. ■



Hopey the Ghosty is a part of one of Relay’s many events.

Veronica Torriani '21

ELECTION RESULTS: OPTIMISM ENSUES

President-Elect Biden plans to rejoin the Paris Accords and the W.H.O.

Continued from cover

As for the school atmosphere, most would say there are many changes to come. To start, Biden has coordinated a Coronavirus task force and plans on implementing tighter mask regulations.

The President-elect has also announced that he will rejoin the World Health Organization to better combat the virus. With a seemingly comprehensive team, plans to align with an international health group, and recent news of a potential vaccine, the country could very well see the light at the end of

the tunnel sooner rather than later.

If all goes well, schools may be able to shift more students back to in-school instruction. Junior Ivanka Sikirić shared that she “hopes that the new task

participate in sports and activities.”

That being said, a spike in cases may cause a major shutdown again. Hopefully, Biden will be able to minimize the effects of the pandemic and institute pro-

“The world is celebrating and thinks good things are coming in the future.”

Junior Ivanka Sikirić

force will be able to control the virus so we can go back to school every day and

tolocs to benefit the greater good.

Around the world,

leaders rejoiced when Biden was announced President.

The United States’ reputation as a whole has been under fire in recent years. Seeing other countries celebrate a new President sent the message that others are just as wishful for our country to return to normalcy.

Sikirić added that she “thinks seeing worldwide celebrations is great because it means the world is celebrating and thinks good things are coming in the future.”

Climate change has become a highly apparent issue on the world stage. President Donald Trump

made a decision to pull the US out of the Paris Climate Accords, saying that it would undermine the US economy and put us at a permanent disadvantage. President-elect Biden plans on rejoining the climate change agreement to better mitigate its effects and lobby for greater international climate ambition.

Junior Kirsten Scro, a believes climate change is an important issue that will affect the environment globally.

“Biden’s plan to combat climate change and rejoin the Paris agreement seems like a step in the right direction,” Scroa not-

ed. Additionally, she hopes that “our country is able to mitigate the harmful effects of climate change so we, as students, can have a chance to succeed in the future.”

It is critical to emphasize the importance of looking forward and taking into account what will happen down the road.

While there will not be any curriculum changes or funding alterations with the Biden Administration, there is a new sense of hope amongst some students in the Highlands Community. ■

NO MORE COOKIES

The cafeteria is closed for the foreseeable future

Mitsuki Uehara ‘22

During a normal school year, the cafeteria is bustling with student activity. However, due to the pandemic and a decreased presence in the cafeteria, it was decided as of November 2, 2020, that the cafeteria would be shutting down for the school year.

With the rising number of COVID-19 cases, eliminating lunchtime will prevent further outbreaks. Several members of the community have expressed that they were not comfortable with doing a lunch period.

Instead, it was decided that the school would try a Grab-and-Go system at the end of the day. However, due to the lack of student participation and purchases made during the last few months, this has stopped.

Chef David Pretino noted that “it was not really met with a lot of success. We tried to generate some sales during the day, with beverages and snacks between classes, but with few students in the building, the participation just wasn’t there.”

At the moment, he does not “anticipate that sales would have grown significantly until Phase Two,” and that for now, “it is not a good decision to keep [the cafeteria] open.”

When the school moves to Phase Two, administrators will re-evaluate the situation, but as of now, the cafeteria will be shut down for the foreseeable future.

There were mixed feelings among students about the cafeteria shut down. Some were glad

that these safety measures were being implemented, while others expressed their longing for lunchtime.

During a normal school year, lunch periods allow students to converse with others with who they may not have classes.

Junior Allison Lee stated that “because the number of cases are rising currently, it’s best to take these safety precautions and not risk anyone getting sick.”

Junior Maya Resnick views this situation rather positively. “I enjoy ending earlier and being able to eat lunch at home,” Resnick said.

Not only will this affect all grade levels, it will also impact the freshmen body significantly. Unlike upperclassmen, they will be unable to have the “normal” freshmen experience of meeting new people and making new friends during lunchtime.

Junior Emma Hekemian says “Highlands lunch is exceptionally good and something that is really talked about to incoming freshmen. We were all so excited to go to lunch and get fries and wait on sandwich lines; not having all of those little things is really sad for them.”

Although it will be harder to communicate with other students because of the shortened school day and hybrid schedule, Lee says that she made many of her friends during classes rather than lunchtime. She expanded on that saying even though “it will affect them negatively in a sense, there are definitely ways that students can get involved in talking to their peers more,” outside of the cafeteria setting.

Hekemian states that “seeing those acquaintances and people who you’re not used to seeing on an everyday basis” is what she will miss the most.

Resnick says she will also miss “the sandwiches. I would always get those—ciabatta with turkey, guac, and mozzarella... it’s so good.”

Lee states that she will most likely miss the signature chocolate chip cookies the most.

Pretino would like to tell students at Highlands, the follo: “I miss you guys, seeing my crew, and getting out there and having fun with you guys. I want everything to get back to normal so I can get my people back. You guys are my home and I want to get back to it.”■



The once-lively main cafeteria is now vacant.

Veronica Torriani '21

STRONGER TOGETHER

Highlands partners with the JED foundation

Jessica Gao ‘23

This year the school was chosen as one of the JED Foundation’s pilot schools in a partnership that will last 18 months.

The JED Foundation is a non-profit organization that protects emotional health and prevents suicide for teens and young adults in the United States. They primarily partner with colleges to strengthen the mental health of students on campus.

Working mainly on a collegiate level, JED partners with more than 300 colleges and universities which represent 3.4 million students. Highlands will be one of the first high schools to partner with this guided program.

Dr. Jessica Verdicchio has been working closely with the foundation. She is the supervisor of wellness and special projects and was previously a social worker at Highlands for the past sixteen years. Additionally, she’s worked extensively with the counselors and the nurses within the school, which allows a keen insight into what to focus on in regards to the health of the student body.

As one of the main contributors towards this contract with JED, Verdicchio explains how “as a pilot high school, I feel like we are really lucky. We are the only public high school in New Jersey who is affiliated with JED for their program.”

The first step in this project has already been taken, which was for the school to put together a team, with people from the community to decide what types of programs North-

ern Highlands needs to better support its students.

The second part of this program is working with the University of Michigan’s Healthy Minds Study, which is a data collection project that started in 2012. Verdicchio explains how we hope to implement a survey for all students with parental consent, highlighting questions like, “What does it mean to be a Highlander?” and “What kind of support do you need at school?”

The foundations three primary areas of focus are evaluation, development of resources, and education. The evaluation with the University of Michigan itself can be done virtually; however, there are concerns over the logistics of the other two focuses within a virtual environment.

Joseph Occhino, Principal of Northern Highlands, addresses this by stating, “It’s like anything else that we’re experiencing as a school” in reference to how there should be no problem with zoom meetings as the primary vessel in which the programs are conducted.

Furthermore, JED has already adopted programs to be done in a hybrid or online environment. Verdicchio asserts that we will be looking to “the experts,” or the foundation in this case, on how we proceed with them.

Moreover, now, more than ever, it is a challenging time for faculty, students, and parents alike, especially in the middle of a pandemic and with extended periods of isolation. In regards to timing, both Verdicchio and Oc-

chino agree that the partnership is optimal right now.

He also states that “Timing is better now more than ever,” as not just in schools but in society, the isolation and the anxiety that the pandemic brings can lead to extreme distress and tragic cases that are preventable.

Occhino revealed that it has become increasingly difficult to identify students who are struggling and who are at risk. Thankfully, through JED, the school is hoping to create bonds and relationships where we don’t have to ask people if they’re okay, but rather they will reach out to us.

Verdicchio expands on this, touching upon how there is definitely a struggle within creating relationships through a screen, especially perhaps with the freshman class, as they have not met many of their peers face to face yet.

Encouraging a sense of belonging is a large goal of this project, as well as interpersonal connections. She affirms that “we need to help each other,” as sometimes it’s hard for students to ask for help, or for the school to know when a student is struggling.

The JED foundation pilot program is ultimately a tremendous way to actualize the need for a comprehensive, public health approach to promoting mental health and preventing suicide. Through the partnership, Northern Highlands hopes that we can continue to ensure that all students are given the environment they need to thrive.■

ALTERNATIVE THANKSGIVING PLANS

Students share their unique celebrations during this unique year

Ayana Amin '22

What comes to mind when you think of Thanksgiving? For many Americans across the country, we conjure images of fall, turkey, stuffing, pumpkin pie, family gatherings, and everything in between. Thanksgiving is the time to be with our loved ones, celebrate friendships, and express our gratitude. However, this year, with the pandemic on hand, many families may be reluctant to host or attend social events. The question is, how can

precaution? With this in mind, several Highlanders share what they are doing to accommodate Thanksgiving this year and why.

Immediate Family Celebrations

This year, Thanksgiving for Sophomore Satoka Shibasaki is going to be kept to a minimum. With the pandemic and family members who live across the world, she explains how a family gathering is not in the cards: "I keep in touch with my other [fami-

of Corona, and they are in Japan."

She goes on to explain how hosting a zoom meeting will also be difficult because her "grandparents don't know how to use computers [and they have limited] Wi-Fi in the first place." With so many different factors and safety precautions to accommodate, the family has decided to have a small celebration.

Stay at Home Festivities

For Junior Esther Park, this Thanksgiving looks like it is going to be spent at home with immediate family. Even though the day won't be spent at her aunt's house, for the Park family, the Thanksgiving spirit is still alive! During an interview, Park indicates, "We plan to have each family member make something of their own specialty. We

are looking forward to a family Thanksgiving—something we haven't done in years." Park and her family look forward to welcoming a new tradition and celebrating the day in the best way possible.

Although Park and family have accommodated the holiday, Park indicates how she is really going to miss the joy of seeing her whole family together:



Art by Nina Evans '21

"Every year, all of my extended family that live in the area come together and

commemorate [the day] with a big family picture. I think this is something I'll miss this year."

Thanksgiving over Zoom

Junior Michaela Powell and family have decided to celebrate Thanksgiving over the world's new communication network: zoom! There is nothing like face-to-face communication, and zoom gives us the perfect platform to connect with others and celebrate the holiday safely. After asking a series of questions, Powell indicates, "My Thanksgiving plans are mostly the same except my grandma is no longer coming to our house since she doesn't want to risk being exposed to COVID. We will probably do a zoom or something, unless she does a Friendsgiving with the people in her retirement community."

Powell explains how her family is trying to stay connected with their loved ones to maintain some normality and make the day as special as usual. However, even with the possibility of seeing her family over zoom, Powell indicates, "I'm going to miss being with the entire family and watching the Macy's day parade with my grandma."

Every fourth Thursday of November, Americans across the nation gather with their family and friends to celebrate Thanksgiving. For years, families have developed traditions to come together and honor the little things in life. Unfortunately, this year, many of these customs are not feasible, and all we can do is make the best of the situation and be grateful for what we can accommodate. After all, that is what Thanksgiving is all about. ■

How can we maintain the joy and celebration of Thanksgiving while also maintaining precaution?

we maintain the joy and celebration of Thanksgiving while also maintaining

ly members] by chatting on the phone...[but] we aren't seeing each other because

WHAT ARE YOU WATCHING?

Movie and TV show recommendations from the student body



Photo courtesy of Netflix

I AM NOT OKAY WITH THIS

"I really love the Netflix show *I Am Not Okay With This*. I think the characters and their struggles are really interesting and often heartbreaking. I just absolutely love this show so much."
-Katie McWilliams, 2024



Photo courtesy of IMDB

THE QUEEN'S GAMBIT

"*Queens Gambit* is high intensity and will keep you on the edge of your seat."
-Abby Lynch, 2021



Photo courtesy of Netflix

THE OLD GUARD

"I liked *The Old Guard*. [The protagonists have] been around for centuries trying to make the world a better place for us, and while they aren't good or bad, they fight for their cause."
-Stephen Duch, 2024



Photo courtesy of IMDB

STRANGER THINGS

"Personally, I enjoyed *Stranger Things*, as it is perfect for high school students and is fun, light-hearted, and entertaining to watch."
-Serena Dhupar, 2023



Photo courtesy of IMDB

GOTHAM, THE FLASH, ARROW

"I recommend a bunch of the DC shown including *Gotham*, *The Flash*, and *Arrow*. They are super addictive, and very popular."
-Antonia Bellapianta, 2024



Photo courtesy of Pop

SCHITT'S CREEK

"*Schitt's Creek* is my favorite show of all time! The thing I love about it is that it is genuinely a very heartwarming and wholesome show, which I think is a breath of fresh air in the world we live in."
-Rebecca Steinfink, 2022

Highlands at Home

Here at Highlands, we are fortunate enough to have options for the way we do school this year as a result of the pandemic. Students can choose either the hybrid or all virtual schedule. Being all virtual is a different experience than last year, since the teachers are in our classrooms this year. I spoke with three students to get their experiences of what it's like to be a part of the Highlands community while staying home full time.

There were a variety of reasons to stay home. Sid Bhatia, class of 2021, said he is all virtual because his parents are classified as high-risk for COVID-19. He said, "Although I may end up stable if I were to contract COVID-19, my parents may not." Shanzeh Malik, class of 2021, referred more to feelings toward the virus, saying "I chose to be all virtual because I was nervous about the virus and wasn't sure how it would go in school." Lexi Rodriguez, class of 2023, said, "I chose to go virtual because I sometimes get very distracted in class." Being in school can be anxiety producing in fear of contracting the virus, and staying home is a direct way to address that.

There were also varying mental health effects on the student. Bhatia acknowledged both feelings, saying "In some regards, it has benefited my mental health since I'm able to sleep more and wake up at a later time than usual. On the other hand, it has negatively impacted my mental health due to the isolation, sheer quantity of work, and exhaustion." Malik said, "My mental health has been in the middle. I get very stressed being away from school and learning this way but at the same time I don't feel like I have enough time to do everything within the half days." Rodriguez said she enjoyed all virtual more than in person, saying, "What I like about being all virtual is I have absolutely no distractions and I get to push myself more with no fear of other people judging me." There appears to be benefits to learning in a more comfortable environment.

They also reflected on the difficulties of virtual learning. Bhatia said, "One of the key difficulties of being all virtual is certainly retaining focus. Academics are already a struggle as they are. Coupled with technical difficulties, potential distractions, and body strain, online learning can be tough." This sentiment was echoed by Malik and Rodriguez. The students who are all virtual don't get the same opportunities as in person students to ask questions or just talk in class in general.

Overall, when asked if they would return, they all seemed optimistic. Malik said, "I would go back to school maybe when a vaccine is released. Maybe sooner than that if I feel comfortable but as of right now, I'll return when a vaccine arrives." Bhatia agreed, saying, "I would go in-person to school once the situation improves substantially. Specifically, once a vaccine is released and administered, the second wave dies, and/or cases and hospitalizations plateau for an extended period of time." While there is news of vaccine development frequently in the news, there is no information on when it could affect the general population yet. The "second wave" is also still growing, the US is hitting new record highs every day.

This year is like no other in Highlands history. With some of our student body staying home full time, it is important to check in and make sure they are doing ok too. We may not see them in person any more, but they are still a part of our community.

Layout by Noreen Hosny '21, Article by Sarah-Renee Bakal '21



Lexi Rodriguez '23



Shanzeh Malik '21



Sid Bhatia '21

WAIT...CAN BIRDS CARRY COVID?

Staying safe during a Thanksgiving that looks a little different this year

Serena Dhupar '23

During the pandemic, American holidays and traditions have been postponed, canceled, or accommodated to have proper COVID-19 safety regulations. However, people are trying not to lose their hope and spirit during these holidays and are coming up with creative ways to celebrate their favorite traditions while still staying safe and healthy.

As Thanksgiving rolls around, we found out how Highlanders are prioritizing their health and safety along with their families' by having small, reasonable celebrations. However, they are continuing to maintain Thanksgiving traditions and the atmosphere of warmth while doing so.

Sophomore Emilie Sodora said, "I am celebrating Thanksgiving this year with my family. Usually, we get together with our whole family at our house, but this year it's just going to be us staying at home." For many Highlanders, Thanksgiving is going to stay casual

and cozy this year.

Junior Ayana Amin stated, "I definitely think that Thanksgiving this

Thanksgiving holiday amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. Some are spending time with their

The CDC recommends remaining at home, limiting traveling, and keeping any small social gatherings outside to limit the spread of COVID-19.

year will be very different than what we are traditionally used to. Ever since I could remember I have spent Thanksgiving with my extended family, but I am not sure if that will be happening this year. Since many of my cousins are coming home from college and some of my family members are older, I do not know how safe a gathering would be." Although Thanksgiving is most likely going to be celebrated modestly this year, Highlanders are staying positive and making the most of the

immediate families to minimize risk and others with their extended families to connect with each other—hopefully being cautious.

Kaiden Canariato, a junior, said, "My family gathers at my aunt's house in Long Island every year. It always consists of my direct family, cousins, aunts and uncles, and grandparents."

But of course, it's never a true American holiday if there isn't delectable food involved. Sodora excitedly mentioned, "I really like Thanksgiv-

ing a lot because there's so much good food. I always look forward to having mashed potatoes and stuffing!" Similar to Sodora, many Highlanders look forward to Thanksgiving because of the delicious food such as turkey, mashed potatoes, gravy, stuffing, cranberry sauce, and pumpkin pie. Food has always been a staple in many holidays and traditions around the globe, acting as a common ground between people to help them connect despite their differences.

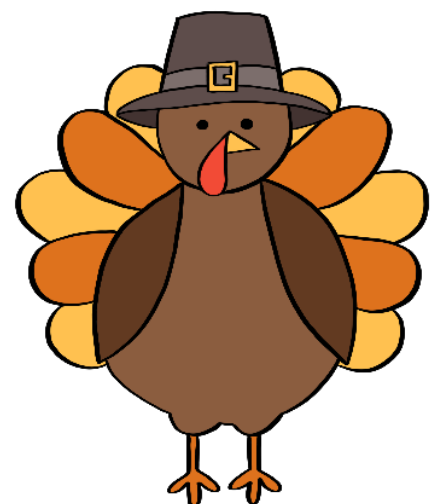
Canariato added, "Personally, I love Thanksgiving because it brings my family together every year and allows us to give thanks for all of our blessings in life." During Thanksgiving, she stays thankful and appreciates the little things. After all, that's what Thanksgiving is about, being grateful for what you have in life no matter how big or how small. During the pandemic, what we should be most thankful for is our health and that of our friends, families, and teachers.

As COVID-19 cas-

es are spiking this November, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, or the CDC, has urged Americans to celebrate Thanksgiving with only household members to ensure safety. They also highly recommend wearing face-coverings and distancing if you must partake in a social gathering. The CDC recommends remaining at home, limiting traveling, and keeping any small social gatherings outside to limit the spread of COVID-19. To stay entertained and maintain traditions during Thanksgiving while staying safe, many people are opting

for a Thanksgiving dinner with household members or virtual dinners with extended friends and family. They also may do some online shopping, baking, at-home outdoor activities, or enjoy sporting events, movies, and annual parades all from the comfort of their own homes.

Thanksgiving in 2020 is sure to be unique and different. However, people should not be discouraged as there is still room for creativity in continuing traditional Thanksgiving activities and, of course, a lot to stay thankful for. Have a Happy Thanksgiving! ■



Nina Evans '21

ARTIST SPOTLIGHT: RACHEL SHAMES

From marching band to wind ensemble, Shames is a dedicated musician

Simran Dhupar '23

Northern Highlands is home to numerous outstanding artists, and this month's artist spotlight is all about musician Rachel Shames, a senior member of Highlands' instrumental ensembles and notably the Highlands Regiment's drum major. Shames attributes her passion for music to her older sister, who was also a drum major.

"Now a senior in college, she is in their marching band, their choir, and plays the chimes in the clock tower. She is one of the biggest reasons that I developed such a strong love for music in the first place," Shames said.

Shames has been involved in music-related school clubs, classes, and activities outside of school since her freshman year. Through the band class offered in school, Shames "started out in symphonic band, and was also in the midst of transitioning from playing the trumpet to the french horn." She soon joined the Honors Wind Ensemble in her

sophomore year and took a trip to Chicago where they were able to have their playing "critiqued by a professional musician and had the incredible opportunity to perform at the Field Museum." This trip was especially important in furthering Shames' interest and skills in playing music and overcoming stage fright.

"That trip allowed us to perform for a large,

"Marching band is where I've met all of my closest friends."

Senior Rachel Shames

unfamiliar audience," she mentioned.

In the marching band, Shames plays the melophone. It has been one of her favorite activities since her freshman year. She notes, "Marching

band is where I've met all of my closest friends and it has taught me the importance of hard work."

Leading a section can be extremely difficult, and leading the entire band is a task like no other. Shames has taken on her role as drum major and has not looked back despite the fact that this position "has a lot of responsibilities."

She notes, "The role itself also has a lot of physical and mental work—you have to always keep a steady tempo and your hand movements have to be super distinct so the band can follow you at all times."

This year, the job description was different than in the past because there is little movement allowed on the field due to stringent rules regarding COVID-19 safety.

Despite the setbacks and responsibilities, Shames holds that "It's also super rewarding. You get to interact with all members of the band and watch them grow and improve from beginning to end." Unlike other march-

ing band positions, a drum major is able to engage with every musician or color guard member and unify all the sections.

To continue to further her skills as a musician and leader, Shames takes inspiration from her fellow musicians, especially her friends. "They are all super passionate about music and are incredibly talented people, whether it be playing their instruments, singing, or acting on stage. Together, we all motivate one another to be the best players and performers that we can be."

Shames loves to play music and could not have played without the support of the Highlands music program. She would recommend all incoming freshmen to take part in the program, as it is the place where she finds her own happiness and has found amazing friendships. "Whether it be symphonic band, choir, marching band, a capella, or anything else related to music, they're all great opportunities to develop your musical skills, ex-

perience new things and places, and meet people who will become your lifelong friends," she says. Not only is the music pro-

bands and concert ensembles so I can continue to perform my instrument in both of those settings. After college, I hope I



Shames has a lot to smile about!

Photo Courtesy of Rachel Shames '21

gram a warm environment for socialization, but has also improved Shames' mastery of instruments and music.

Looking into her future, becoming a full time musician may not be the path Shames would want to go on, however she does plan to continue playing music for the rest of her life.

"I specifically chose colleges with marching

get the chance to perform with an ensemble of some sort, whether that be on a local, regional, or national level," she explained.

As a drum major for the marching band, Shames has quite the expertise and experience with all kinds of music and instruments. Playing music is an integral part of who she is, and she would never want to give up her craft. ■

DINING IN A COVID WONDERLAND

What rises in cases might mean for outdoor dining in Bergen County

Nicole Natale '21

COVID-19 has drastically changed the restaurant industry--going from completely closed, to take-out only, to some now offering outdoor and indoor dining--restaurants have definitely been through a lot. Summer and warmer weather seemed to be the perfect solution for many restaurants nationwide. However, as the seasons change and the weather gets colder, many restaurants are faced with the challenge of remaining open while maintaining standard COVID-19 precautions. While warmer states may have more latitude regarding state requirements, colder states, especially in the northeast, have much greater challenges.

So far, restaurants nearby have adjusted quite nicely to the pandemic changes, and many towns have accommodated to the specific needs of each restaurant. One of the best examples of these changes would be Ridgewood, New Jersey, which has gone to great lengths to accommodate

its surplus of restaurants and cafés. Every Saturday and Sunday, Ridgewood's main street closes (as

it's undecided what the mandated rules will be for restaurants in the future. With the recent an-



Outdoor dining at a restaurant in Westwood.

well as some side streets) which allows for restaurants to reach a much higher capacity in regards to outdoor dining.

Many of these restaurants now have options for either outdoor or indoor dining, with some even allowed to reach near full capacity depending on their size. For instance, Bareburger in Ridgewood almost exclusively offers indoor dining now that the weather is getting chillier.

However, with colder temperatures looming,

announcement that New York City will likely be shutting down again and adding provisions following a spike of cases, New Jersey requirements regarding businesses are subject to change.

At the moment, Governor Murphy has not made any set decisions, but stated that there is the possibility of shutting down indoor dining depending on whether or not New Jersey has the same extreme increase in cases. Currently, Murphy has stated that all restaurants and bars must close

at 10 p.m., but made no further comment on the future of dining.

As for now, many restaurants all over the northeast, especially in Bergen County, have been preparing for the drastic upcoming changes in weather. Many are resorting to outdoor heaters, an adequate but very costly solution. Most outdoor heaters range from around \$200- \$1000 each and due to most restaurants being limited to 25% capacity indoors, many would be forced to buy several heaters to accommodate the rest of their clients sitting out-

money, especially after the financial difficulties they inevitably experienced over the course of the pandemic.

Other restaurants are taking a less costly approach, buying many wool blankets for guests.

Despite many restaurants' attempts to be precautionous while remaining open, it is still unsure what the reaction of the public will be to these new changes, especially if indoor dining is declared inadequate in these upcoming colder months.

Highlands senior Athina Georgiades is in favor of these indoor dining

ing lamps, I will go out to eat [there] as well. I'm not too worried about the changes when it comes to the weather."

Meanwhile, senior Luke Rotella had a slightly different opinion. He stated, "I'm definitely open to the possibility of more indoor dining, but I'm still concerned about the risks." To Rotella, indoor dining could create the same issues that an overpopulated school could, especially when customers are in a close proximity to one another. "The way I see it, indoor dining poses the same risks school does. People aren't as spread out, and because people are eating they aren't wearing any masks either. That could definitely lead to issues," he explained.

The feelings across the state are definitely mixed, but luckily with socially distanced indoor dining along with heat options for outdoor dining, restaurants seem to have many options available to them. Although things may not be back to the way they used to be, there is still hope for the restaurant industry. ■

"I'm definitely open to the possibility of more indoor dining, but I'm still concerned about the risks."

Senior Luke Rotella

side. Although important in the long run, many of these restaurants could potentially have issues spending that amount of

options, saying, "If there is indoor dining provided, I will gladly go out to eat, and as long as the outdoor seating has heat-

SINGING IN HARMONY!...VIRTUALLY

A cappella program plans to continue to run despite the difficult times

Isha Korgaonkar '24

A cappella has been an important part of Northern Highlands' activities for years. These talented students have brought joy to many with their voices, personalities and energy.

Highlands has three a cappella groups: Voices, Belles, and Harmonics. Highlands Voices is one of the top high school a cappella groups in the nation. It has been on Pitch Slapped in 2016, been a part of a PBS Special in Wisconsin, and has won many competitions, including the ICHSA Mid-Atlantic Championship (2011-15 & 2018).

Highlands Belles is an all-female a cappella group that has accolades including ICHSA quarterfinals and semi-finals (2019).

Highlands Harmonics is group that has also placed at Sing Strong, along with winning quarter finals and advancing to semifinals in the ICHSA competition (2019).

But this year, due to COVID-19, everything

has become a question of precautions, health, and safety. Students in a cap-

that "Competitions such as Varsity Vocals' ICHSA competition, which is



Highlands Voices performing in a show.

pella groups previously were asked how they felt about the uncertainties regarding a cappella this year, and what the program might look like.

Senior Riddhimaa Kothari said, "At the moment, it is very hard to determine what's going to happen. There are plans about having a cappella but not singing together and having to record separately."

Senior Thomas Finan thinks that a cappella this year will be much different from before, saying

usually hosted at Highlands, is now virtual. It greatly impacts groups because timing, dynamics, and choreography will not be as important [as] years past."

When asked how a cappella will run differently this year, Thomas Paster, who coaches Highlands Voices and is very active with the a cappella program, said, "As of now, the three groups will be more of recording ensemble[s] rather than live performance ensemble[s] like [they] usually [are]."

Paster added that this

year "competitions are by video...I think a lot of it will be virtual. We will rehearse together as conditions allow."

When asked why he decided to keep the program running during the pandemic, Paster attributed it to his love of the program. "I love running a cappella!" he explained. "I would run it no matter the circumstances. I wish it was a normal situation but it's not and we'll have to do the best we can."

Students in the a cappella groups spend a lot of time together, whether it is at rehearsals, competitions, trips before and after events, or just meeting up.

Kothari remarked, "You get so close with people and they basically become family."

Sophomore Satoka Shibasaki said that her favorite part of a cappella was the people. "You need to connect with everybody in the group to really sing in harmony, and so all of us were able to really get to know each other and spend a lot of

time together," she said.

A cappella has a place in many hearts. Many students are looking forward to it this year, even though it may be different.

Finan hopes to have a live performance, saying, "I just want to be able to give an audience a brief escape from their everyday lives just one last time."

Voices, will be featured in an upcoming (2021) film titled "Marry Me," which will star Jennifer Lopez and Owen Wilson. They will also be releasing an album called "All for Us" that highlights the a cappella group over the past two years, which can be streamed on Apple Music and Spotify.

Although a cappella

"It greatly impacts groups because timing, dynamics, and choreography will not be as important [as] years past."

Senior Thomas Finan

Shibasaki hopes she can enjoy her time in a cappella and "sing with people safely."

Despite the circumstances, the Highlands community can look forward to a couple of things involving Highlands Voices. In terms of Paster's group, the Highlands

this year is going to be different, students and teachers alike can still look forward to phenomenal performances, even if they may be virtual. If interested in trying out for a cappella this year, the materials can be found on Paster's webpage on the school website. ■

THE BUZZ ABOUT HAIR

Students share their new hairstyles inspired By TikTok trends

Simran Dhupar '23

Throughout quarantine, all teenagers can agree that boredom was the second pandemic in America. To cope, students looked to TikTok for entertainment and continue to be inspired by the constant changes

styling their hair is the perfect way to express themselves and showcase their new-found sense of identity. For numerous Highlanders, boredom during quarantine catapulted their desires to cut their own hair, style it differently, or even dye it.

hair to shoulder length was something that she really wanted to do, although she was not completely influenced by the trend. She was simply ready for the short style. “I knew that short hair was a trend at the time, and I guess you could say that I followed the trend a little, but that wasn’t the

frantically applied to the hair has opposite meanings for Highlanders who dyed their hair on their own or by a hairdresser. Sophomore Jamie Meyer dyed her hair because she “thought it would look really cool,” saying, “I love the colors I chose and saw it as a way of self expression.



Sophomore Jessica Xu dyed her hair blonde.

in hair trends seen on the app—especially what influencers such as Charli D’Amelio are doing. This time away from other people can create an avenue where people feel free to experiment with who they are and discover their personality, and

They were also inspired by Tiktok, where people were using the platform to show their new hair that they chopped on their own. And so the trend of cutting one’s own hair was born. For Sophomore Sydney Hogue, cutting her

“I recently bought more hair dye. I am going to dye my curtain bangs a golden brown.”

Sophomore Jessica Xu

main reason behind my deciding to cut it. I wanted to cut it anyway.” For Sophomore Caileigh Mapes, cutting her own hair was something she decided to do as a “spur of the moment” kind of thing. “I saw a lot of people on TikTok do both a good and bad job at cutting their own curtain bangs,” she says. “I was biased in part because I was driven only by the people who did a good job at cutting their hair when deciding to cut my own.” On Tiktok, curtain bangs have been an extremely popular trend for all kinds of people. As we have entered the holiday season, these bangs are perfect for the change

Currently, half my hair on the right is blonde and on the left it is black.” For Meyer, dying her hair is not only something that was fun, but it is how she shows her family and friends who she is. “Recently I followed the trend of a split dye, which is when you dye one side of your hair one color and the other side a different one. That one was pretty much inspired by Melanie Martinez,” Meyer added. For sophomore Jessica Xu, there was no specific reason to dye her hair other than for the trend and how it would look. “I didn’t really have inspiration. I’ve just al-

“It was a spur of the moment kind of thing.”

Sophomore Caileigh Mapes

in weather. This style is donned by popular influencers such as Madi Monroe, a former member of the Tiktok Hype House. The Hype House included a group of famous TikTok friends who resided in an LA “content house” and made videos together. Highlanders have not only sported fresh cuts this school year, but also dyed their hair as acts of self expression, or as a result of boredom. A splatter of dye delicately or

ways wanted to try blonde hair,” she said. Xu loves to follow trends because they are beautiful and fun to her, and her latest endeavor is going to be dying her curtain bangs. “I recently bought more hair dye. I am going to dye my curtain bangs a golden brown,” she enthusiastically explained. She already has plans for another hair dye trend she would like to attempt—Peek a Boo hair, when the bottom layer of hair is



Senior Michelle Bechtel dyed her hair pink

dyed a vibrant color. This was popularized by famous TikToker Charli D’amelio, who has a following of almost 100 million. “In the future I’ll probably dye the bottom layer of my hair a different color,” Xu said. She explained that she also loves curtain streaks as a trend, where the front few pieces of hair are dyed with a pop of color or

simply bleached blonde. This trend has been booming since the very beginning of lockdown and has become even more popular now. Regardless of what type of hair trend anyone is looking to try, the Highlands community is excited to see and discuss. As the seasons change, perhaps it’s time for a hairdo change, too! ■



Sophomore Jamie Meyers split dyed her hair black and blonde.



Sophomore Jillian Demilia dyed her front strands blonde.

THE BEAUTY OF AUTUMN

Students discuss their favorite spots to enjoy the fall foliage

Ayana Amin '22

It's that time of the year again: the air is getting crisper, the sun is setting earlier, and the leaves are changing colors. If we don't pause, look around, and take a moment to appreciate mother nature, we might miss the seasonal changes. That being said, let's explore the experiences of two Highlands

students who have commemorated this year's fall foliage by taking hikes. This fall season, junior Chahat Arora went on a hike in Haines Falls, NY. Haines Falls is a mountainous valley, located at the head of Kaaterskill Clove. The hike to Kaaterskill Falls, additionally, is only 1.4 miles round trip. While many visit the region to explore

its enchanting waterfalls and enjoy its serene environment, these are not its only attractions. Hikers, picnic-goers, adventure seekers, and locals also come to the Clove to reconnect with nature through the scenic views of the Hudson Valley. Regarding her experience, Arora said, "when you are on top of the mountain, all you can see are beautiful trees and

weeks of the fall season. For other students who might be interested, the trail is located about an hour and a half away. Likewise, Sophomore Serena Dhupar has taken in the fall foliage by hiking along the Saddle River Trail with her friends and family members. The Saddle River Trail is an extensive trail that is home to many plants, animals, and ecosystems. Visitors

of [the] leaves changing outside." She goes on to explain that she "loves admiring the beauty of nature and the planet." For Dhupar, it is the little things about each season that bring her pockets of joy, and in the fall season, there are numerous! During these unprecedented times, one of the best and most therapeutic things we can do is appreciate our planet. Since the fall foliage only lasts

a few weeks between late October and mid November, now is the time to go outside and enjoy the vibrant colors. Whether it be taking a walk through the Celery Farm, hiking through the Ramapo Reservation, biking on the Saddle River Trail, or even taking a scenic drive around town, let's all take some time to disconnect and appreciate the fall foliage while it lasts. ■



Trees with an array of different autumn colors.

Veronica Torriani '21

"All you can see are beautiful trees and mountains for miles."

Junior Chahat Arora

mountains for miles... It is really nice because you can disconnect from reality." Arora explained how the Clove is the perfect place to embrace nature's treasures and get a fresh breath of fall. She recommends this location to anyone who is looking for an exciting adventure and to soak up the remaining

can bike, walk, and hike through different regions of the 10.4 mile trail with the company of family, friends, and even dogs. When asked about the Saddle River Trail, Dhupar states that she enjoyed hiking there because it was "a great way to appreciate the beautiful fall nature and the colors



Fallen autumn leaves.

Veronica Torriani '21

YOU KNOW THAT TIKTOK SONG?

How popular social media app TikTok is impacting the music scene

Ryan Gottlieb '23

TikTok is a notoriously abstract social media platform, known for wacky trends and humor. But another unique aspect TikTok brings to the table is its impact on the music industry. The premise of TikTok is that videos are made for a certain purpose, whether it be comical or informational, with music playing in the background. This music could be whatever the creator chooses. It could be an extremely popular song or just a song that they like; there aren't rules. A lot of new emerging artists owe their popularity to the TikTok community and the variety of music they use. Chances are, if you watch the first 10 videos on your TikTok feed, you'll most likely hear a rap song, a pop song, a rock song, maybe some classical music, and maybe some music in a different language; you might even hear a song you've never heard before but you really like. The music on TikTok is exceptional-

ly diverse and there is no obvious pattern to the music that is being used. This is likely due to the fact that the TikTok community itself is diverse. There

ground goes viral. Many songs are also used for trends, which is probably the biggest way they gain traction. This happens when one TikTok initially

"[TikTok is] good at representing artists from the past."

Sophomore Mateo Sanchez

are people of all races, countries, and subcultures interacting with each other on the app, and because of that, different styles of music come together to create the more popular sounds on TikTok. Songs get popular on TikTok for a few different reasons. One way is if an extremely popular creator, like Charli D'Amelio, the app's most-followed user, uses the sound, which alone can cause the song to become really popular. A song could also easily gain popularity if a TikTok using it in the back-

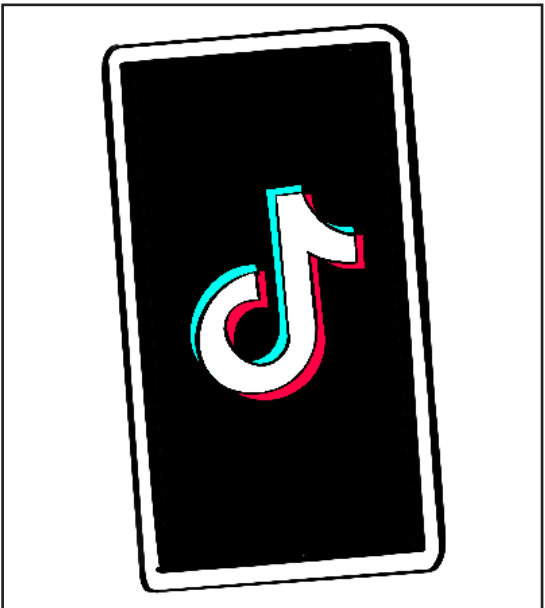
ground goes viral with that song. Then, a lot of TikToks will be made after that with the same song, making it even more popular. Another way is if an artist directly advertises their music on TikTok with an exciting snippet of the song; this is a strategy more artists have begun to do since they realize the impact TikTok has on the charts. To gain a better understanding of the music scene on TikTok, some Highlanders have been asked about their experience. Sophomore Isabel-la Levine says that she's

found countless songs on TikTok to the point where "a bunch of [her] playlist" included songs from TikTok. To name a few, she said "Prom Dress by Mxmttoon, Gimme Love by Joji, Stunnnin' by Curtis Waters, Chinese New Year by Sales and Out of My League by Fitz and the Tantrums." She also added that she "found the artist Phoebe Bridgers on TikTok and enjoy[s] her music." Levine thinks that TikTok is a great place for music, especially for up and coming artists.

Sophomore Mateo Sanchez says that he found the band Fleetwood Mac on TikTok and started to listen to their music. He said their song "Dreams" is what initially intrigued him. Mateo thinks TikTok is "good at representing artists from the past" and is glad that he came across Fleetwood Mac. Senior Vivien Jones says her favorite song found on TikTok is "Rhinestone Eyes" by Gorillaz. She even considers it "one of her favorite songs of all time." She thinks TikTok

is great in the way that it "enables you to build your music taste." As certain songs get more attention from TikTok, artists get more attention as well. Some examples of this are Ashnikko, Lil Nas X, BBno\$, Yung Gravy, Bennee, and Tiagz. TikTok is perfect for getting talented artists their big break, but it's also extremely good at giving new, independent artists a platform. There are several small artists who pro-

duce 100% of their music on peoples' feed. Advertising their music through TikTok is a very effective strategy. This way, people can discover some smaller artists and their music and add some of their songs to playlists to gain them streams on music platforms. TikTok provides so many opportunities for smaller artists and sets up a great community, setting TikTok apart from all other social media. ■



Popular entertainment app TikTok

Nina Evans '21

GIRLS SOCCER GO-GETTERS

How the team scored their ninth sectional title amidst the pandemic

Isabella Torriani '21

Although this year has seen many negatives, one positive note was the girls soccer team winning their ninth sectional title, this year facing off for the win on Sunday, November 22, against Millburn High School. Shutting the Millers out with a final score of 4-0, the Highlanders ended a strong 9-3-1 season.

Senior Reagan Klarman, who finished the season with ten goals and six assists, aided the Highlanders in victory with one goal and one assist against Millburn. Senior Carolyn Weinberger also got an assist, bringing her season total up to two goals and three assists. Kenna McGahren (senior, eight goals, three assists), Carly Riembauer (junior, seven goals, five assists), and Neha Anvar (sophomore, seven goals, four assists) rounded out the rest of the score with one goal each. Senior Anna Sciuto also impressed with four saves over the course of the game, bringing her season total to 71.

Spirits were high among the team following their win. Senior Michelle Bechtel said, "It felt incredible to win states following everything going on with sports being canceled. Honestly, while we were training over the summer, a

we had and played every game like it was our last."

The team has been taking more precautions than usual since the beginning of the season towards the start of the school year. Such regulations include trying not to go out as

ing form online stating that they aren't showing any symptoms and haven't been in contact with someone that has recently tested positive.

Bechtel also commented on the rigor the team went through in preparation for the game. "We worked so hard and deserved it more than anyone else, so I'm so grateful we were the ones that ended up on top," she stated. "Even when we closed for two weeks we had virtual practices. The night before every state game we had team bonding via Zoom. The captains and coaches made motivational videos. Honestly, everyone came together in the end when it was most important. Although this was definitely not the senior year I expected it to be, it's been more than I could have ever dreamed of. We did everything we could. Seriously, we did it all. States are as far as you can go."

Despite many ups and downs in the days leading up to the game, the team continued to give it their all, with Coach Nicko-

lette Driesse commenting, "While the staff knew it was going to be a challenging two weeks all-around, we also knew the job wasn't done. We still had a commitment and an obligation

to keep our players focused on the task at hand regardless of the circumstances or any adversity standing in the way of us reaching our goals." ■

"We still had a commitment and an obligation to keep our players focused on the task at hand regardless of the circumstances... standing in the way of us reaching our goals."

Coach Nickolette Driesse

part of me didn't think we were even going to have a season, so I think we were so lucky to have had the time together that we did. We took every opportunity

much to reduce exposure to COVID, wearing masks upon arrival, and temperatures checks. The team members also have to fill out a COVID-19 screen-



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FRESHMAN FIELDING FEAR

The impact of COVID-19 on Highlands' newest student athletes

Charlotte Riley '24

The bleachers at this season's games are usually packed with fans, but this season, they have been ominously empty. Not knowing if sports are going to get cancelled or delayed is a huge worry for some students. More so, however, students are struggling to balance the ever-changing virtual rigor of school with their athletic schedules. In YouTube

video titled "COVID-19's Impact on Students", a student-athlete named Reggs states, "I feel kind of numb with the whole situation. I just wake up everyday and look at all the online work I have to do...I missed out on my track season which was a huge opportunity, but I can't control it."

Coming into high school after leaving the familiarity of middle school in the middle of a pandemic makes for a difficult adjust-

ment for any student. Freshmen athletes are forced to balance this entirely new COVID environment with a dramatically more intense schoolwork schedule, and many are partnering this with an equally rigorous athletic schedule.

Before the two week break of sports and in-person school, worries about the fate of their seasons created a lot of stress amongst Highlands athletes. Though coaches and athletics pro-

gram are doing their best to make each sport have the best season possible, many freshmen are unable to form the same bonds with their new classmates and teammates that other students of previous years were able to do.

Despite the best efforts of teams to bond all of their players in outside school events such as socially distanced pasta parties and senior nights, the newest additions to Highlands have

Though coaches and athletics program are doing their best... many freshmen are unable to form the same bonds with their new classmates and teammates that other students of previous years were able to do.



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not had the same opportunities to make friends and bond with their teammates in a way that would be impactful on and off the field.

The inability for these new players to bond raises the question of how will this impact future sports seasons? It is unclear right now just how much of a role the early bonds that the team forms between players can have on the overall success of the team, an impact we might not even witness the full scope of until several seasons into

the future.

The only thing any of us can do right now is take whatever precautions we can to stop the spread to ensure a safer Highlands experience, regardless of how much it might have changed this year. ■

FALL SPORTS COME TO A PAUSE

Athletes forced to take a sudden two week break from sports

Emma Starr '23

Due to two positive coronavirus tests during a two week period in late October, Northern Highlands had a two week school shut down. This led to many changes at

Highlands, including fall sports completely stopping for the full period. Although numerous students, especially fall athletes, have been very unhappy by this sudden shutdown, it was deemed necessary to maintain the safety of our school and to keep the virus from spreading.

Northern

Highlands is one of many schools in our area that shut down for two weeks due to positive coronavirus tests. Some of the other high schools include Ramsey, Indian Hills, Pascack Hills, and Waldwick. What was once unthinkable back in March of last year is now the reality.

If an individual has the virus, it is necessary that that individual quarantines for two full weeks. This time frame is critical because it limits that individual's physical contact with other healthy individuals.

After this time period,

if the individual doesn't experience symptoms and tests negative for corona, he or she is healthy and can stop quarantining.

A two week shut down is not in any way ideal for sports teams. The fall athletes at Northern Highlands

beginning of the season and one of them was to never take anything for granted."

This message is truly important in these unprecedented times, even beyond the sports arenas.

Another captain of the field hockey team, Maggie

is very difficult, as it has never been done before in the past.

Coach Torres, the assistant of Northern Highlands Boys Varsity Soccer Team explained, "while it was a step back having to shut down, it didn't mean we as a team should work any less hard."

He continued by adding that, "as a coaching staff [they] are very proud of [their] guys." Boys' soccer hasn't fared as well as field hockey since their return to play, but they continue to work very hard and are looking to make their mark in the state tournament.

The constant uncertainty and changes of plans have been a huge hurdle for all athletes and coaches to overcome this fall season.

It is very difficult to prepare for sudden pauses in the season and to find field time for each team to practice safely. Although it has not been easy, the teams have maintained a positive attitude and continued to push, despite the circumstances.

While this season has been anything but ideal or perfect, athletes are very thankful to be able to play at all. The goalie for the

Northern Highlands Girls' Varsity Soccer Team, Anna Scuito, is "grateful to have had the opportunity to play [her] senior season with her teammates".

Despite the challenges this fall, it seems as if everyone agrees that playing this season, even with pauses and sudden changes, was preferable to not playing at all.

As fall sports wind down, there are still unanswered questions about

how the winter season will turn out. Final decisions are supposed to be made on or before November 20th regarding the guidelines for the upcoming winter season. ■

"While it was a step back having to shut down, it didn't mean we as a team should work any less hard."

Boys' Soccer Assistant Coach Torres

are all learning to battle through this together.

One of the four senior captains of the Northern Highlands Field Hockey Team, Shannon Flatt, noted that the team "lost their groove" a little bit during the shutdown. However, despite this, they "kept up the intensity and had positive attitudes" throughout it.

She continued by explaining that their coaches "set three goals at the be-

Batenhorst, explained that the team "made the best of it" and kept their heads up.

Clearly, the field hockey team has been doing something right; they have seemed to not miss a beat during their return to play, racking up four straight wins, including a victory in the first round of the state tournament.

Things weren't easy on the coaches this year either. Coaching and guiding their teams through a pandemic



Senior Captain Maggie Batenhorst plays in game after break.

Photo courtesy of NJ.com

SPORT-LIGHT: RANDI CONROY

Senior track and field star commits to Lehigh University

Kiki Riley '21

On October 26th, senior pole vaulter Randi Conroy verbally committed to Lehigh University to continue pursuing her pas-

just as competitive.

After watching a few YouTube videos and seeing how famous climbers have succeeded in pole vaulting, she knew she had to give it a try.

"I told my dad immediately after I received the word and we both started tearing up because I knew that all my hard work had paid off."

Senior Randi Conroy

sion for track and field for another four years.

Conroy's love for pole vaulting began in middle school as a competitive climber. Once she retired from this sport, she wanted to continue a similar activity in high school that was

After a few practices in her freshman year, Conroy stated that "I started pole vaulting during freshman year in the spring season. I had no idea what I was doing, but after a few practices I started to get more comfortable with it." Even

though she wasn't completely comfortable with pole vaulting at this time, this feeling definitely didn't last long.

When Conroy woke up that morning on October 26th, her years of competitive climbing and four more years on the Northern Highlands Track Team definitely paid off. "It was

such a relief to hear that the team had accepted me. I told my dad immediately after I received the word and we both started tearing up because I knew that all my hard work had paid off."

Lehigh University is an excellent school, and Conroy's years of hard work indeed did pay off. She is

very excited for her future at this university and cannot wait to meet her new teammates. Conroy speaks about what she is looking forward to in college: "Everyone is super committed to their events, and I am really excited to see the team come together. I am looking forward to competing against other colleges. I

can't wait to represent such an amazing school by doing what I love."

Conroy certainly deserves this huge accomplishment after all of the time and effort put into this goal. We all wish Conroy the best of luck! ■



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ON WEDNESDAYS WE RUN IN PINK

Field hockey participates in a breast cancer awareness run

Shannon Flatt '21

On October 28, 2020, the girls' field hockey program made the best of the two week shutdown period and did a program-wide "Run for Pink". Since the program couldn't compete in their annual "Play for Pink" game due to the two week schoolwide shutdown and COVID restrictions, head coach Jordan Paton came up with a fun and exciting alternative.

"Every year our Play for Pink game brings our team together to raise awareness about breast cancer," Paton begins. "In light of our two week shut down, it was so important for our team to stay connected even when we were apart. Our first ever Virtual Run for Pink honored the same theme of togetherness and breast cancer awareness."

The field hockey program was broken up into twelve teams of five and were instructed to each run a mile at their fastest pace and record their time using the app Map My Run. The goal for each team was to work together to record the fastest average mile time.

After all of the times were submitted, Paton cal-

culated the average mile time for each team.

Each team put forth amazing efforts in their times as well as wearing festive pink outfits and documenting their experiences via taking pictures and making videos to be featured on the teams Instagram page.

"I loved how decked out people got, especially the juniors!" says senior

"Coach Jordan made it fun for us by giving the top teams prizes," begins senior captain Maggie Batenhorst. "She also had us dress up in all pink and the most spirited people also got rewarded [with a time deduction]."

In total, 60 players and the coaching staff participated. Each of the three levels of the program competed in this special event.

"My mom was diagnosed with breast cancer back in 2018... She beat cancer and I ran the run for her!"

Sophomore Lauren Flatt

defender Nicole Garibaldi.

The pink attire encouraged players to spread breast cancer awareness.

With a goal of needing to get the fastest average mile time, each team was motivated by Paton's prize incentives. The top three teams that got the fastest average mile time received prizes and those who were the most spirited got thirty seconds deducted from their teams average overall time.

Freshman Ava Paparozzi states, "my favorite part about the run was definitely seeing pictures of everyone decked out in all pink from head to toe. It made things so much more fun and exciting."

Even the coaches were enthusiastic and engaged in the uplifting event. First year junior varsity coach Jamie Rehus explains, "my favorite part of the run was seeing everyone's pink spirit! And because of ev-

erything going on this year, I'm glad we were able to still have an event bringing awareness to this disease."

The run was not only a good way to bring the program together, but it also brought a new light to a long standing cause: breast cancer.

October is breast cancer awareness month and typically, the field hockey team has a "Play for Pink"

together to support a great cause. Also I truly love watching [the players] play the sport that each and everyone of [them] loves being a part of."

In many ways, the players and coaching staff have been affected by breast cancer. "In 2017, my grandma was diagnosed with breast cancer," begins freshman Maddi Petrow. "She survived and is now

Flatt explains, "my mom was diagnosed with breast cancer back in 2018. Throughout her treatments, she was at every one of my middle school field hockey games as well as the NHFH games my sister was playing in. She beat cancer and I ran the run for her!"

Breast cancer affects millions each year and it's truly amazing how the NHFH program, as well as many other fall sports teams at Highlands, raise awareness for the cause.

In the future, many players hope that they can showcase their appreciation towards those affected by the disease in the same way they have done in the past through the annual Play for Pink game, however the entire program had such an amazing experience with the Run for Pink.

"My favorite part about the Run for Pink was the motivation and spirit demonstrated by each athlete," Paton starts. "I was so impressed with how each athlete pushed themselves to complete the run and how each athlete sported pink gear as they ran around the Highlands district. Overall, our Run for Pink will always be a fun memory from our 2020 season!" ■



Junior Isabella Marino running all in pink.

game during this month.

Due to the two week shut down, the program was unable to compete in this game.

Freshman coach Sasha Duch says, "I enjoyed the run for pink, but I also like the annual play for pink game. My biggest reason is because we are together when we do it, which is a big part of breast cancer awareness month, coming

back to herself. My favorite part about the run was supporting my grandma and others who need it."

Rehus states, "when I was a freshman in high school my mom and her sister got diagnosed with breast cancer a month apart. Luckily we had such an amazing support system and they both won the fight!"

Sophomore Lauren

WHAT'S NEXT ON THE GAME PLAN?

Athletes and coaches offer input on what is to come this winter

Emma Hekemian '22

As we walk the halls of school this week many questions, relating to the uncertainty of the year, surround us. What clubs are meeting? Why isn't the caf isn't open anymore? When we are going to phase two?

Despite those questions, a common concern among students is whether or not the winter sports season will be happening.

The latest announcement made by our governor was not exactly the news that winter athletes were looking for.

However, all is not lost. Even after the recent limitation was placed on interstate competition, there is still hope that the winter season will happen. The question now becomes, what exactly is in store for the winter athletes?

When it comes to indoor competition, restrictions are numerous. Keeping consistent with classrooms, stores, and offices, there is a limit on how many people can occupy a space. The limitation affects not only spectators

but how many athletes can be in a room as well. For swimming, this is a major worry as junior Kathryn Horkan explains, "Our team usually thrives on the big, energetic atmosphere that comes from both the boys and girls since we are a really close team."

Swimming is one of the few teams at Highlands that competes as a coed unit. Due to occupancy restrictions, it has been discussed that the boys and girls teams might have to compete at different times this season.

Although this will save the vocal cords of many, the team will have to find a way to maintain the same energy they usually do with a smaller group on deck.

We all know that motivation is a key element to athletes' success during competition. However, staying driven is even more important during the training time that precedes the game, match, or meet.

"I have no worries about the team staying motivated," says junior hockey player Owen Roy. "We are coming in with a

chip on our shoulder after a tough loss in the State Tournament last year and everyone is ready to work hard for a redemption season this year," says Roy.

While limited ice time and stringent protocol surround every practice, hock-

"Given all the negatives, we look at the positives of being able to have a season."

*Girls' Basketball
Head Coach
Rich Micallef*

ey is able to keep concerns in check and focus on their training.

Athletes aren't the only ones with the challenge of this coming season in their minds. Girls' basketball head coach Rich Micallef shares his outlook on the situation. According to Micallef, returning athletes will play a crucial role this season.

"The older athletes need to be leaders, confi-

dent in their abilities and be mentors to their younger teammates," Micallef says. With limited time and methods of team-building activities, if returning players are able to form bonds with new ones quickly, it will ultimately help lead to a successful season.

We are fortunate that we are able to look to our coaches for guidance and perspective when we need it most. "Given all the negatives, we look at the positives of being able to have a season. Be thankful for each other and one day look back and remember they were a part of such a special, yet difficult year," adds Micallef.

With strict social distancing guidelines in place, spectators were limited during the fall sports season. For winter sports, teams may compete without any spectators at all. This would be a major change for athletes.

"There's nothing like hearing the roaring of the gymnasium as two wrestlers are on the mat," junior Brent Gunderson says. While many others share

this same sentiment, athletes feel confident that the encouragement they get from teammates will be the motivation they need.

"It just means that our already loud and supportive bench has to be ten-times louder this year. Which should be no problem at all," explains junior girls' basketball player Ava Abbatiello.

Conversely, some athletes feel that the lack of spectators may lead to greater focus and less of the typical pre-competition jitters. "No spectators equals no pressure," junior swimmer Taite Lee says.

While there is never a one size fits all formula, athletes agree that having someone--whether it be a coach, a teammate, or an embarrassingly excited family member--cheering us on helps sharpen the athletes' competitive edge.

Although predictions are mixed, all Highlanders are hoping for a season. Some teams, however, will have greater challenges working around guidelines and restrictions. "I believe we will have a season, and

a winning one at that," Roy says confidently about the hockey season.

On the flip side, wrestlers like Gunderson say otherwise, "Sadly, I'm not too optimistic about the season. Wrestling is under such extreme circumstances simply because there is no barrier between players."

For sports like wrestling, we wonder what precautions if any can be taken, as it is unquestionably the sport with the most contact between players.

If there's one thing that we've learned from the past few months, we should be guided by our opportunities, not our limitations.

With the extended duration of the pandemic, being hopeful is a true test. But if anyone is ready to take on the challenge and maintain the winning mindset, it's these athletes. Abbatiello explains it perfectly. "While we know nothing is guaranteed, we are all trying to stay positive and hoping we get to play together again this year, especially for our seniors." ■

NEW SCHOOLS & OLD FRIENDS

Sparago, Weinberger, and Klarmann officially commit

Vivien Jones '21

Commitment day is a new start for student athletes, as their celebration is shared with the entire Highlands community. However, with recent restrictions due to these unprecedented times, this rejoice has become more intimate.

On Wednesday November 11, three senior best friends since freshman year signed a paper that alters each of their futures.

Senior Lindsay Sparago had marked her commitment to play Division I women's lacrosse at the University of Cincinnati. She stated that she spent her whole life playing lacrosse and couldn't imagine her life without it.

Sparago could still recount her first memories of picking up a stick, and as the competition started heating up in her older years, she knew she couldn't live without the heat.

"I knew I wanted to play lacrosse on the collegiate level when I started playing club lacrosse in middle school," said Sparago, "and it started to get really competitive and I knew I wanted to try and play at the highest level."

It is rare for students to feel magic when they

make a decision on where they will be attending college, however, Sparago was swept off her feet with her soon to be school. "I fell in love with the campus, and how it is right outside of the city with so many things to do, and the sports facilities are very nice."

Sparago commented

she sought after.

Not only did Weinberger envision greatness in Fordham's athletics, but she finally found a match in terms of academics and geographics. The Tri-State area was a major appeal for this soccer star, as was the feel of a New York City campus.

Senior Reagan Klarmann

"To finally be able to embrace [my commitment] and enjoy the moment was awesome."

Senior Reagan Klarmann

on her visit to Cincinnati, while she also made note of the cordial nature of her future coaches.

Senior Carolyn Weinberger officially called herself a ram of Fordham University for Division I women's soccer. Much like Sparago, Weinberger stayed in her sport because of the rising intensity of the competition. Even though she has been playing soccer since second grade, her club experience in middle school is what made her find harmony in her craft.

This Highlands soccer player knew that Fordham soccer could give her the rigor and satisfaction that

mann chose a different path from her soccer teammate and became a stag of Fairfield University, also a Division I school. Like the others, she started young and her aspirations only blossomed. It was only a matter of which school would help further her athletic career, and Fairfield seemed to do the trick.

"I really loved the whole vibe at Fairfield. I loved the athletic facilities along with the coaches and all of the girls on the team," said Klarmann. She continues, "That is what stood out to me the most and made me realize that this is where I am going to end

up."

On signing day, we usually see the smiling faces due to the final result of a grueling process. For all three athletes, the commitment process was nothing as expected.

As Weinberger sums it up, "There were many ups and downs and different schools involved in the process." She urges for future prospective collegiate athletes to trust the process as well as "practicing and developing [skills]."

The pressure of keeping the secret of commitment is also a major concern within these athletes. Klarmann comments that it was relieving to go public with her announcement, since the entire process held a great deal of stress. "...To finally be able to embrace [my commitment] and enjoy the moment was awesome," Klarmann exclaimed.

Though the reveal to the public was rewarding for these three athletes, the intimate moment that they shared with each other was much greater.

Weinberger, who has been a teammate to Klarmann, and a friend to both, felt a great deal of sincerity in this moment. "I know how dedicated to our sport we are and I believe we all deserve the opportunity to

play at a Division I level," Weinberger states.

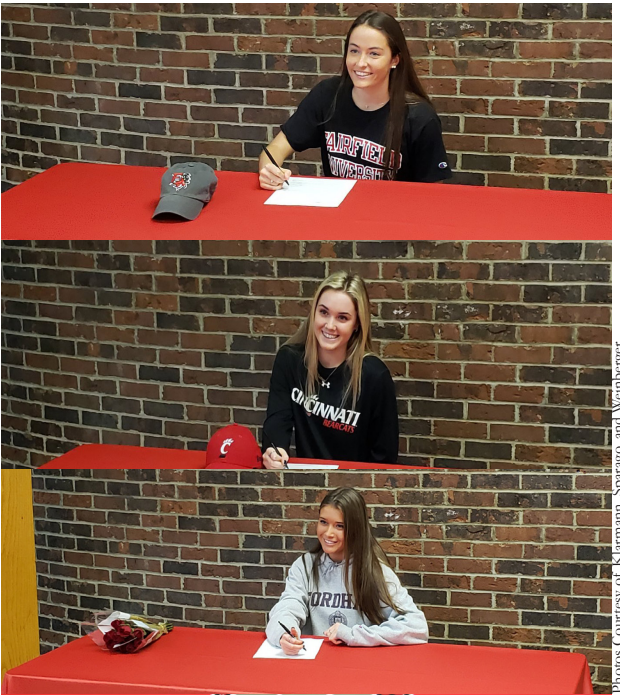
This year has proved to be tough for every high school student, however it has gone by on a whim. As the second marking period of their senior year has commenced, so do the thoughts of goodbyes. As they move on to the next chapter of their lives, they have nothing but well wishes and good advice for each other:

"I wish them the best of luck, to not to take anything for granted, to work hard, and have so much fun because they truly deserve it and I am so excited to see what they accomplish," Sparago says regarding her

friends.

"Advice I would give to them is to enjoy every moment and never change. Freshman year feels like yesterday and we have held onto our friendship with each other for these last four years. It goes by extremely fast," says Weinberger to her friends.

"The best years of your life are ahead of you, so enjoy it and keep working hard. Being a DI collegiate athlete is by no means easy, but if I know the two of you, and you will kill it. Keep pushing and keep working. You got this!" says Klarmann about her friends. ■



Klarmann, Sparago, and Weinberger smile for a picture.

STRIVING FOR SUCCESS THIS SEASON

NJ.com's Athlete of the Week: MOLLY BENNETT

Vivien Jones '21

In the midst of these cold, brisk fall months, there is light for junior field hockey player Molly Bennett. Her outstanding efforts as a defender on the field have had her coaches in awe, as Bennett was rightfully awarded as Field Hockey Defensive Player of the Week by NJ.com earlier this month.

Despite her role being defending the goal during games, she has had an impressive record in terms of assists. As a sophomore, she completed one assist during her season, and as a junior teammate, she has already topped her stats from previous years with two assists.

When asked to recall her best game from the year, she took a more positive approach, and answered with her favorite match she had played.

The notorious

Ramsey vs. Highlands games are always a fun lineup, for the players and especially the spectators. This rival game is tough competition every year, but with team spirit and "hype" the NHFH team was able to pull out a win.

Bennett was a key asset to the outcome of this game, for she aided her team in playing a fast and clean game.

Even though COVID-19 has had its fair share of impacts on all sports this year, the field hockey team's progress is moving full steam ahead.

Though the girls have an outstanding record thus far, Bennett says the team is looking at the bigger picture. As for future milestones that are coming up quick during this fall sports season, Bennett says she "can speak on behalf of the team when [she] says [the team's] goal for this year is to win the state sectional."

Jumping ahead to senior year and on the subject of her personal goals, she is striving for the same

Bennett was a key asset to the outcome of this game, for she aided her team in playing a fast and clean game.



Junior Molly Bennett is awarded Athelte of the Week.

goal. Bennett shoots for the stars when she states, "My goal for senior year is to be county and state champions."

As shown in the quotation above, Bennett has high expectations for her senior year, however, she expressed that she wants to hold on to her last moments with the team's current seniors. Specifically, she credits some of her success to soon-to-be collegiate athlete, Mikayla Walsh.

Bennett states that she looks up to Walsh on and off the field, and "watching her play has taught [Bennett] so much." She is sad to see such a motivation graduate, but she is excited to take on the task of leading underclassmen in upcoming seasons.

The odds are in their favor for the team this year, however, Bennett stresses that she doesn't want to jinx the upcoming games in the state tournament.

She keeps her head in the present as she looks "forward to [the] game against Montclair Kimberly Academy."

This particular game mentioned is crucial to the girls' success because they will move onto the secondary round in the state tournament. With the busy game schedule, it seems as if Bennett hasn't had the time to soak in her honor of being named field hockey player of the week.

All of the changes to this season due to unprecedented times, can make special players go unnoticed, so Bennett explains how grateful she is to receive this honor. "Being field hockey player of the week really showed me that all of my hard work on the field can get recognized," said Bennett when asked about her feeling towards this honor. ■

Albums that remind us of Autumn



Contra by Vampire Weekend
-Ryan Christensen, 2023

It's Hard to Imagine the Neighbourhood Ever Changing by The Neighbourhood

-Sienna Maguire, 2024



Hollywood's Bleeding by Post Malone, specifically "I'm Gonna Be"

-Haley Krell, 2021



Harry Styles by Harry Styles, specifically "Sweet Creature"

-Jana Dabbagh, 2024



Folklore by Taylor Swift

-Jan Alexa Portinto, 2021



Malibu by Anderson Paak
-Caleb Oehler, 2024

