

HOOFPRINTS

Sleepy Hollow High School's Student Newspaper

ISRAEL-PALESTINE: WHERE IT STANDS

by Ruby Kezur



The Israel-Palestine conflict has been a bloody background since the October 7th attack, and as the topic echoes through our classrooms, corridors, and community conversations at Sleepy Hollow, we must create an open discussion around the layers of this long-standing and deeply rooted geopolitical struggle. However, many lack a comprehensive understanding of the conflict's depth and complexity. Over the past fifteen years, five wars have erupted between Israel and Hamas, yet the roots of this discord reach far beyond that timeframe.

After World War I and the defeat of the Ottoman Empire, Britain took control of Palestine, which had been inhabited by a Jewish minority and Arab majority along with many smaller ethnic groups. Tensions between the two groups grew and Britain supported UN Efforts to establish a "national home" in Palestine for the

Jewish people (Balfour Declaration). After the Holocaust, the number of Jews in the region grew, the British withdrew, and Jewish leaders declared the creation of the state of Israel. Fighting between Jewish and Arab militias had been growing for months, and the day after Israel declared statehood, five Arab countries attacked the newly formed nation. Hundreds of thousands of Palestinians fled or were forced out of their homes and by the time a cease-fire was called Israel controlled most of the territory. Fighting between the two states has continued for decades.

But the question is: what is going on now? Hamas, a US-labeled terrorist organization, attacked Israel in October killing what is estimated to be about 1,200 innocent men, women, and children and kidnapping over 200 hostages. (continued on page 4)

MATH TEACHER, TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT CHAIR AND NOW AP- MR. LARKIN'S SHHS JOURNEY

By Kaia White

Q. What do you miss about being a math teacher?

A. I miss the daily interaction with students and trying to help them with what they're learning in class. I also miss teaching a lesson because it's almost like putting on a show. I enjoyed working with students in the classroom setting where I could work one on one with students and see their growth throughout the year. Once I reached a certain point in my career, I felt like I was making a strong impact on my students and their learning. I miss that interaction, but being an assistant principal means working with students in a different capacity.

Q. Can you explain why you wanted to transition from being a math teacher to becoming an assistant principal?

A. I have experience as the summer school principal for the district, and I really enjoyed what I was doing helping students that needed guidance, assistance with some of the challenges that they're facing, and also helping out the faculty. Being an assistant principal also allows me to implement changes and being in this position allows me to enact those changes and really push those changes that I think make us



more efficient, better functioning, and saves people time in the end.

Q. What do you hope your legacy will be, or what do you hope the students will remember most about you?

A. That's a really good question. That I cared, and I was fair and that I loved everybody that I worked with. I don't know if that always comes across every single time, but I do love all the students I work with and I care for them very deeply. I hope that comes across whether it's today or ten years from now when they think about it.

Q. What was your favorite subject in school?

A. Definitely math. It just came naturally to me. I liked problem solving, and I liked seeing how there's inefficiencies. With a math mind, you're always looking for logical outcomes and you're looking for what's the quickest way to get from point a to point b, or taking some kind of problem and then figuring out what is another way I can do this and get the exact same result but just differently. I like that kind of mindset in math.

Message from the Editor

Many thanks to all the contributors on this issue! Special thank you to staff writers, Dr. Brand and administration, and to our devoted advisors, Mr. Rogers and Ms. Langston. We can not produce work without your devotion! If you are interested in contributing to Hoofprints with writing, layout, or other creative endeavors, please reach out to Mr. Rogers, Ms. Langston, or Juliet Loffredo to join!

Q. What is your hidden talent?

A. That's a hard question. You know, I think I'm pretty good at everything that I'm doing at work. But I'll also say that I'm a great dad. There you go, that's my hidden talent. I bet a lot of people don't know that I have a child.

Q. Aww that's sweet, what's your kid's name?

A. Zaylee.

Q. That's a cute name. What is your biggest pet peeve?

A. Unnecessary emails. I get hundreds of emails a day and some of them don't pertain to me. So even the whatever 25 seconds that I have to read the email to realize that it's really not for me, it adds up. So that's my biggest pet peeve. Or like the people who "reply all" so that's something we need to get more efficient at.

Q. What are your thoughts on the Swiftie movement, and do you consider yourself a Swiftie?

A. Haha! I would say that I am not a Swiftie and I think that if that's what people love, then more power to them. If you're really into Taylor Swift and you're a big fan of hers, then absolutely. Go for it. But it's not for me.

Q. What is your favorite song?

A. Oh man, the hard hitting questions here. Maybe I'll go with "Empire State of Mind" by Jay-Z and Alicia Keys.

Ok, nice
I've never
heard that
one!

Thank you
for your time.



COMPOSTING: GETTING BACK TO THE EARTH

by Leo Mejia

How can we sustain life on earth? Countless empirical studies point to recycling and composting as means to reduce carbon emissions and save our environment. Many schools in the Tarrytown school district have already started participating in recycling programs at their buildings, but why not our high school?

Students from Sleepy Hollow High School's S.P.E.A.R. (Students Promoting Environmental Awareness & Responsibility) club recently visited John Paulding and saw first hand how kindergarten students were protecting our planet. At John Paulding, students were able to recycle and compost efficiently. By doing so, they were able to decrease the daily amount of trash a day, from ninety-nine pounds of waste to seven pounds, which is about a 71% reduction.

What can a single person at Sleepy Hollow High School do? It starts with bringing composting and recycling to our school, then we will need students to cooperate by composting and recycling daily. This will only take a few seconds every day, and by doing so, we can help save the environment for future generations.

If you would like to find out more about how you can reduce the amount of waste you produce and more ways to prevent the pollution of earth, join the S.P.E.A.R. club. If you would like to find out more about S.P.E.A.R., please contact the club advisor, Ms. Waczek, or student president, Maya Mendez.

BIG WINS FOR SLEEPY HOLLOW WRESTLING

by Quincy Newland

The Sleepy Hollow wrestling team has had a season for the record books. On December 20, 2023, the wrestling team won the sectional championship by defeating Pearl River. This monumental win is attributed to Ralphly Rodriguez, Silas Corveddu, and T.J. Kellas.

The success of the wrestling team also saw individual wrestlers qualify for states, such as Kelvin Jimenez and Dorian Hidalgo. Varsity wrestler Eddie Mahood attributes the winning season to “the hard work of everyone on the team, from the first-year wrestlers to the kids that have been doing this all their life.”

The wrestling team and its coaches know that



it takes tremendous work and determination to overcome the challenges players have to face with every match, and we look forward to their continued success. Congratulations, Sleepy Hollow Wrestling, for an incredible season.

ISRAEL-PALESTINE CONFLICT, *Continued from first page*

In response and under the leadership of right-wing prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, Israel declared a total war against Hamas. Because of the casualties on innocent lives since then, many have come to view this war as being against the people of Palestine. In Gaza, 1.6 million Palestinians were forced out of their homes, and food and essential supplies were cut off. According to sources from Gaza communicating to the United Nations, over 34,000 Palestinians, many of whom are children, have been killed and even more wounded.

Hamas has made it clear that its goal is the destruction of the state of Israel, and Israel is doing nothing to give any hope for a peaceful settlement. Currently, the world is easily caught up in the rights and wrongs of the conflict in the Middle East, but it is important to remember that we are in the midst of a humanitarian crisis. The world is not as black and white as this overload of information may seem. Lives are being lost, people are living in unlivable conditions, children are terrified and more hate is not the answer. Instead, dialogue is. At Sleepy Hollow, where diversity of thought and background is celebrated,

it is essential to approach discussions about the Israel-Palestine conflict with empathy, respect and an open mind. Engaging in informed conversations, seeking diverse perspectives, and questioning preconceptions can contribute to a more nuanced understanding of this issue.

Social studies teacher and department chair, Jessica Hunsberger, adds, “Now, more than ever, it is important for our students to develop the skills to engage in civic discourse. A true democracy requires that we have conversations about these complicated, sensitive realities. As teachers, we provide the tools to evaluate our sources and engage in the difficult conversations respectfully.”

As students, we have the opportunity and responsibility to contribute to a culture of informed discourse surrounding complex global issues like the Israel-Palestine conflict. By fostering understanding, empathy, and an appreciation for diverse perspectives, we can contribute to creating a future generation that actively seeks peaceful resolutions to long standing conflicts and advocates for a world built on tolerance and cooperation.



By: Glory Schillinger

As we all know, the sensation that is *Barbie* rocked the screens last summer, shining a new light on the struggles of women and the obliviousness of the rest of the world. The craze has since faded, and with Oscar season behind us, the controversy about *Barbie* still lingers. When Oscar nominees were announced, many were quick to point out that Ryan Gosling earned a spot among the nominations for best supporting actor, while Greta Gerwig and Margot Robbie, the women who wrote, directed, and produced the film, respectively, were absent.

The irony of Gosling's nomination contrasted against the absence of Gerwig and Robbie's was noticed, even by the Ken actor himself. As he wrote in a statement, "[But] there is no *Barbie* movie without Greta Gerwig and Margot Robbie, the two people most responsible for this history-making, globally-celebrated film. No recognition would be possible for anyone on the film without their talent, grit and genius." The actor added, "To say that I'm disappointed that they are not nominated... would be an understatement. They made us laugh, they broke our hearts, they pushed the culture and they made history. Their work should be recognized along with the other very deserving nominees."

Robbie and Gerwig are unfortunately not the first to experience this unfairness. Despite their undeniable talent and contribution to cinema, women continue to face barriers to recognition and opportunity. Gerwig attempted to call out the disparity via *Barbie* and succeeded, yet the systemic inequality within the film industry persists.

In the 95 years that the Oscars have been established, only three women have ever won for Best Director. These women were Kathryn Bigelow, the first woman to ever win in this category (in 2009), Chloé Zhao, the only woman of color to win, and Jane Campion. This year, there has only been one female nominee for Best Director. The nomination went to Justine Triet for directing *Anatomy of a Fall*.

Greta Gerwig wrote a film that not only made over 1 billion dollars, but was the best-selling movie of 2023. And despite breaking the record for the highest-grossing movie directed solely by a woman, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences has failed to present her with a nomination. The Oscars not only celebrate creativity, but also box office success, and *Barbie* has statistically surpassed all other films in the box office.

Continued on page 7

VIOLENCE IN ICE HOCKEY: WHEN IS IT TOO MUCH?

By Luke Weidner

If you were to ask someone who is unfamiliar with ice hockey to describe the game, they might tell you what they think it's about: fighting. While fighting is what ice hockey is infamous for, unlike boxing, it is not a sport solely centered on fighting. Opposed to a "fighting" sport such as MMA, the violence in hockey has rules against it. The penalties for fighting in hockey are not so much to prevent it from happening but discourage it. But the fighting happens nonetheless, and it is often expected by the crowd in the stands and the audience at home. However, hockey is a contact sport. The line between the contact and violence in hockey is difficult to understand since a lack of consistency with rule enforcement by league officials enables the players to decide what's allowed. This takes form in a set of unwritten rules that is followed by players. The punishment handed out for breaking these rules is regulated by the team who has been offended or disrespected. Recently, there was an example of how these "rules" can go too far.

On February 10th, 2024 the Toronto Maple Leafs faced the Ottawa Senators, their third matchup of the year. Fast forward to the end of the game, the Senators lead 4-3 and the Maple Leafs had possession of the puck with an empty net, having swapped the goalie for a forward or defender. Rookie Ridley Greig of the Senators blocked a shot from the blue line, and subsequently fired a slap shot into the empty net from about five feet out. This prompted a response from defenseman and assistant captain of the Maple Leafs, Morgan Rielly. Rielly skated up to Greig after the goal and cross checked the rookie in the face. As it does, a brawl broke out between the players on the ice after Rielly went after Greig. The game finished 5-3, but the



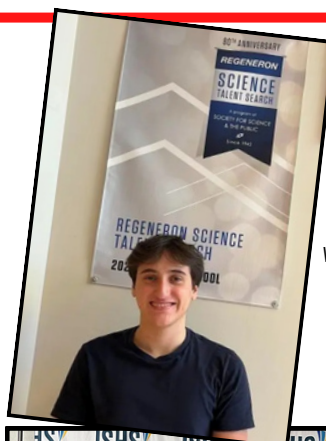
controversy surrounding Rielly's actions did not stop. Soon after the game, the NHL suspended Rielly for five games. When asked about the situation, teammate Ryan Reaves responded, "Make hockey violent again, get that tattooed on me." This comment flared up the fanbase, propelling the discussion of violence in hockey to the forefront of discussion surrounding the NHL.

Violence in hockey has been prevalent for over a century. Clips and compilations of hockey fights and injuries, old and new, are easily found on social media. This focus on violence is encouraged by the league themselves. During the 2020 NHL Stanley Cup Finals, the official NHL account on several social media platforms posted a slow motion montage of various brutal plays throughout past playoff games. The post read, "To hoist the Stanley Cup, there is a price to pay." This post exemplifies the NHL actively and openly celebrating violence, and along with it, the injuries players (and teams) sustain throughout the season. Fans have always had a split of opinions regarding violence in the NHL. Outside of the sport, violence is associated with negativity, and is a crime punishable with imprisonment. (continued on page 7)

SCIENCE RESEARCH STUDENTS SOAR

by Christa Bromfield

The time has come for our future Nobel Prize winners, also known as our senior science research students, to display the culmination of their three year independent studies. They have dedicated a tremendous amount of time and effort into the program and have recently presented their work at the Junior Science and Humanities Symposium (JSHS) and the Regeneron Westchester Science and Engineering fair. We are thrilled to announce the three students who won titles: Maya Batheja placed first locally in the Behavioral V category, Emily Clayton placed first locally in Animal & Plant Science, and our JSHS finalist Jai Weitzen placed 2nd overall in Biochemistry & Cell Molecular III. Jai advanced to JSHS at the University of Albany in February to compete against other finalists. Jai Weitzen has also been named a recipient of the prestigious Regeneron Science Talent Search competition award and has been presented as a top 300 scholar.



JAI WAS RECENTLY NAMED LOHUD'S FIRST STUDENT OF THE WEEK. "JAI WEITZEN IS A STUDENT WHO EXCELS ACADEMICALLY AND HAS AN INHERENT WILLINGNESS TO HELP PEOPLE," SAID SCIENCE RESEARCH TEACHER MS. ZELINSKY WHO NOMINATED JAI FOR THE HONOR.



VIOLENCE IN ICE HOCKEY: WHEN IS IT TOO MUCH?, CONTINUED

The justification for hockey's violence lies with the "code" of hockey. Any show of disrespect is met with retaliation in the form of hits, slashes, highsticks, and more. In most players' eyes, the code justifies these actions, despite knowing they are dangerous (and sometimes fatal) for any player. This code creates a divide between fans, with some advocating for the old style physical game, whereas some want the new version of hockey, where speed and skill takes precedence. This is a result of the league simultaneously promoting and punishing violence. The League's miscommunication makes it hard to know how much violence is too much. There is no easy answer, as any solution requires a compromise between the inherent physicality of hockey, and the inescapable fact that there can be dangerous consequences to playing "old school" hockey.

BARBIE, CONTINUED

However, Oscar nominations are voted by individuals and not a group activity, so there isn't one person to "blame" for how the nominations turn out. Despite this fact, the ironic comparison of *Barbie* to reality is hard to ignore.

A lack of equity and diversity is deep rooted in Hollywood culture. This has been reflected by the lack of racial diversity in nominees, namely in the infamous 2015 Oscars, which spurred the "Oscars so white" hashtag. Even looking at the members of the Academy, there is much to be desired. In 2022, 67% of the academy was male, and 81% was white. Going forward it should be ensured that awards and nominations reflect the diverse talent within the industry. This includes creating transparent selection processes and actively seeking out work by women and minorities for consideration.

SENIOR SPOTLIGHT

IZZY LUCIANO

As film club president, I hope to show people why film is interesting, and the intricacies that go into making a short film. Leading an artistic club allows students who are interested in film to have a platform to express that interest. I'd like to see this club continue after I graduate so students can explore the art of filmmaking with that same interest and passion. My favorite Sleepy memory was "Game Day" our sophomore year of Spirit Week. Due to quarantine, the festivities were outside. Although this change could have made the event worse, it actually made it a lot more fun to be there with friends. Next year, I am going to study filmmaking in college. I have always had this desire to create and it has motivated me to pursue the arts. Both of these interests culminated into me wanting to create short films for a living.



AARON BELL



This year has been my most successful season. I jumped 12 feet 6 inches at the pole vault, and I am the Sleepy Hollow Indoor Track pole vault record holder. I am also the league champion, Class B champion, county champion, Dendy champion and I came third at state qualifiers. I am very lucky to have these opportunities to compete and lucky to be a Horseman. My favorite Sleepy memory has to be Spirit Week because it gives me a chance to show my school spirit. It brings the whole grade together as one big team. I plan to go to college majoring in finance and minor in computer science. There is a lot of money in the field as well, and computers are the future, so learning to code can only help me.

GERALD NAVARRO

I've helped on several art projects relating to the school. During my sophomore, junior and senior years, I created the design for my grade's Spirit Week shirts, as well as participated in creating a mural on the bike shop window for Halloween this year. Also my work was in the Katonah Museum of Art for its student exhibition. I really enjoyed my senior year game night during Spirit Week. I really wanted to win this time, I was really energetic and hyped.

In college I intend to study art and graphic design. I would like to study in NYC because of its diverse nature and community. I want to pursue art because it's played a large part in how I express myself. It's also how I've met and bonded with people at the school over the years.



SAMANTHA POY



I have been involved in the chorus and orchestra programs for the past eight years. This year, I was chosen to be a part of the chamber orchestra by Mrs. Concia. We get to play more challenging pieces than the regular orchestra, while also enjoying new opportunities to perform outside of our school community. I started participating in the theater program at the high school last year, acting in "Bye Bye Birdie", "12 Angry Jurors", and "Cinderella". Some of my favorite memories come from the lunch periods. The best were the times we brought in weird foods and drinks to taste.

From questionably flavored ranch soda, to asking Mr. Larkin to try some thick water, lunch has been the subject of so many memories. While I haven't quite committed to any colleges, next year I plan on attending either Ithaca or Emerson College to study film. I was inspired to pursue this career in large part because of Mrs. Langston. After taking her class, I felt that it was something that I would like to continue doing through my life.



SUPERINTENDENTS STUDENTS OF DISTINCTION

ART

Glory Schillinger
Lana Boomgard-Ramos
Roxie Bloom
Sumiran Margolis

ENGLISH

Marlow Goldsmith
Shyam Manjanath
Matthew Mosca
Lucy Black
Shannon Klami

ENL

Damaris Lopez Huayllazaca
Saywa Cartuchi Quizhpe
Gabriela Pilamunga Cayambe
Yolenni Ramos

MATH

Lorena Lora Rodriguez
Abby Church
Christy Lopez
Scott Klami

MUSIC

Rachel Richardson
Nico Mayor
Ayaka Utsumi
Cynthia Pintado

PHYS ED/HEALTH

Marcus Spataro
Thaddeus Kromelis
Eddie Mahood
Callum Gallagher

SCIENCE

Luciana Carvalho
Yulenny Guzman
Elliot Bentley
Edwin Rojas Picon
Jai Weitzen

SOCIAL STUDIES

Genesis Figueroa
Sebastian Londono
Ellie Fox

Rosiris Rodriguez
Elijah Krajovan
Jorsely Soriano Gonzalez

Dexter Scheller

TECHNOLOGY

Marce Collins
Abigail Bartolacci
Lizbeth Patino
Ruby Wild-Arons

WORLD LANGUAGE

Katherine Alberca
Maya Mendez
Ashley Jarama