



Northern Light



Relay For Life Field Day at NMS

By Eric Lu

On Friday May 17th, the students of NMS participated in Relay for Life Field Day. The purpose of this event was to have fun and to raise money for cancer. The whole day was filled with special events and fun. NMS actually raised \$2000 to donate to the American Cancer Society! The activities offered were a bouncy castle, boxball (or four-square) on the tennis courts, volleyball but with a gigantic ball (which caused lots of chaos), the Frisbee toss, Cornhole (the game where you try to toss bean bags into a hole on a board), and of course the classic obstacle course 🚩. Everyone had to participate in the activities, which some were definitely not happy with.

The Actual Event***

*** (I am writing from a 6th grader’s perspective, so all times and names listed here are for the 6th grade. The 7th and 8th grade schedules were very much similar).

To start things off, all 6th graders were called down to the auditorium for an assembly that took one period (3rd). During this assembly, the principal Dr. Cozine stepped up and talked about being strong and how every donation counts, and at the end, Mrs. Weissman, the social studies teacher of Team Adventure, came up and made an inspirational speech. After the speech was over and the bell rang to end 3rd period, the teachers started dismissing the students to go out and begin the activities. Walking around the NMS track three times, the students could talk to their friends before being separated from them. The activities started at around 10:45 a.m. Students were asked to return to their homeroom teachers. Everyone rotated around the activities and by 11:25 the students were pumped up and ready to see the teachers get dunked and pied.

Pie-ing and Dunking Teachers!

The students gathered around the dunk tank to see the teachers get dunked and pied. The first on the list was NMS’s very own principal, Dr. Cozine! Dr. Cozine pulled out a raffle ticket and read “Myrto”. Everyone started cheering and the lucky girl (Myrto) came up and got ready to dunk. Dr. Cozine sat on the board, and Myrto threw the balls at the target. Splash! Dr. Cozine went into the dunk tank. Mrs. Nagle, the next teacher, pulled out her raffle ticket and said: “Vincennnt Yu!” Cheering began again and Vincent dunked Mrs. Nagle. Pie-ing was next and Mrs. Rodriguez (the math teacher of Team Adventure), pulled out her ticket and said “Myrto” for the second time. Man, was she lucky! So Myrto pied Mrs. Rodriguez. Then, Mr. Dalton called for his ticket “Jaccccccccccob Brown!” This was a big deal because Jacob had Mr. Dalton as a teacher. Jacob pied him and Mr. Dalton said “I will give you an F!” sarcastically which I confirmed when Jacob told me on the bus. The event was then over, but everyone had had a blast and didn’t want to leave.

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School News



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Advice for Next Year's Eighth Graders

by Noah Nerayoff

Going into eighth grade may be scary, but it's not that bad! Many eighth graders may have scared you into thinking eighth grade is a hard, intense grade with a lot of work, but it's not that difficult. From seventh to eighth grade, there *is* an increased workload, but it's mostly an increase in studying for each class, as a lot of material is covered.

This leads to the scariest topic . . . earth science. In earth science, you will learn all about the earth and its many functions. You will have a test at the end of each quarter, covering all material so far, along with tests and quizzes assigned regularly.

At the end of the fourth quarter, you will take the Earth Science Regents Exam. A Regents Exam is a state-mandated test that you have to take, and pass, to continue onto high school. If you fail the test, or the class, you have to go to summer school. This may seem very scary, but this class is designed for you to pass. Your teachers are there to help you, and there is a lot of review for the regents, in and out of the classroom. I recommend getting the Barron's Earth Science Review book. It's a physical book with tons of review and info and test taking tips for the earth science regent, including past regents and study sheets.

Besides the Earth Science Regents, anyone going into Algebra I next year will be taking the Algebra I Math Regents, which is very similar to the Earth Science Regents. Algebra I is a very advanced, high school-level math class, but with studying and hard work, it's possible to do well. My biggest eighth grade tip is to talk to your teachers. If you don't understand something, go to or schedule extra help. If you did badly on a test and wish to improve for the future, talk to your teacher. If you need extra credit or an extension, talk to your teacher. Although, some teachers may not give an extension without a real reason why you need it. Poor planning and poor time management skills are usually not grounds for an extension.

But for now, enjoy your time in the seventh grade, and don't stress out about eighth grade too much.

8th Grade Trip to Camp Coleman

By Noah Nerayoff

On Wednesday, May 29th, the 8th graders at Great Neck North Middle school went on a field trip to Camp Coleman. All 8th graders signed a consent form with money, over a month prior to the trip. In their homerooms, the 8th graders were given a paper to write the names of 5 friends they have on their team they wish to go on the field trip with.

The morning of Wednesday, May 29th, students were told to come to school at 7:15. Students arrived at 7:15, and were loaded onto buses at 8:30. They traveled for roughly an hour before arriving at Camp Coleman. All 6 buses were separated into 12 groups, which went first to some benches to have the day's layout explained. We would have a few periods, lunch, then free time. Each group was assigned two counselors. Each group would go to an activity.

Activities included: soccer, volleyball, basketball, rock wall climbing, and boating. After the groups had completed these activities, they went to lunch, where they were given the options of baked ziti, grilled cheese, pizza, watermelon, pasta, salad, and a soda. After eating, plans changed. Instead of free time, where you got to choose who you travel with, and what activities you participate in, there were more group activities. Students continued to do one or two more activities with their group. The students then went back to the lunch benches and had a choice of a few different ice creams / popsicles. The students then left over half an hour early, and made it back to school before 4:00.



School News

BE *VICTORIOUS*!!!!

By Jacob Baires



Victor Yang

age 12 | grade 6

ScholarSkills for STARS

New Windsor, New York

[view speller slide](#)

Victor, a student in 6th grade, participated in the Scripps National Spelling Bee. He was excited, his strategy was to ask for all the information and get as much info as possible. He was number 146. In round 1 he spelled the word *ginglymus* correctly. In round 2, the word was *mendacious*. In round 3, he spelled *boongary*. His word for round 4 was *rivel*. When he got out he was a little disappointed, but then he recovered. When he was going back to school he was happy and proud to be a part of a great community. A quote from Victor Yang is “if you want to accomplish a goal you have to work hard.” That’s all, be Victorious!!

No iPad Day at NMS

By Jett Gao

In this era, technology is ever-present and helps people’s lives in many places. People rely on this technology to have an easier and joyful life. In our school, students use an iPad to learn and play. But if we suddenly travel back ten years, what would happen?

On April 17th, the school decided to experiment with this concept and held a “No iPad Day.” The students couldn’t take their iPad to school or use it throughout the day. It was special and fun for the children, who could see what the school looked like in the past.

Some might be thinking, *How is it possible to not use an iPad the whole school day?* We use iPads to read books, write notes, listen to music, and play video games, but during this day, school was still able to teach students. Teachers brought printed paper and pencils to the classroom; however, a lot of students didn’t bring pencils to school because they always write on a screen with an Apple Pencil or their fingers. Magically, people in the class were more focused on the teacher, and no one played video games during class.

During the lunch period, students were more likely to go outside to play sports and have a fun time with friends, as opposed to friends constantly staring at screens on other days. Exercise under the sunshine is better for the body — first, you can learn teamwork, and you can improve physical fitness to help you grow. You can grow tall more quickly and your body may be stronger. If you are sad, going outside in the sun is a good way to ease your mood. (People who stay inside in the dark are more prone to depression.)

Have you noticed that more and more students around school are getting glasses? This is almost wholly due to increased screen usage. I will say, when I first got glasses, it was hard to adapt to putting heavy glasses on my nose, and I had to take off the glasses to rest every few hours. When I took them off, I felt like the world was blurry. I couldn’t even see text that’s a few meters away from me. And the eyes are not like other parts of the body — they cannot self-repair back to normal. If you lose your vision now, you’ll lose it forever. You can say it is the inevitable harmful result that everyone has to face--because we can’t live without the phone, computer and iPad--but there are ways to reduce the damage to your eyes. For example, you can watch less screens, exercise more, sit further away from your TV, and not use screens in dark rooms late at night. Therefore, the school’s “No iPad Day” is also good for students’ eyes.

Technology is very convenient, but we have to know how to use it in a healthy way. I hope the school will continue advocating for students to protect their eyes and minds. This day is a significant special change, as everyone can remember to take breaks from their screens, go outside, and protect their eyes.

Happy No iPad Day!

The Spring Concert (Seventh and Eighth Grade)

by Lila Halpert

On Tuesday, May 14th, 2024, North Middle held its seventh and eighth grade Spring Concert in the Daniel J. Tomaselli Auditorium. As has been the case in previous years, the concert consisted of separate orchestra, band, and chorus performances. This spring's music selection was centered around pop music from various eras: The orchestra played "Stairway to Heaven" by Led Zeppelin, Mozart's "Eine Kleine Nachtmusik," and "Sweet Child O' Mine" by Guns 'n' Roses, while the band played "Let It Be" by the Beatles and the Beach Boys' "God Only Knows," and the chorus sang "I'll Be There For You" (the theme song from *Friends*), "Count on Me" by Bruno Mars, and a medley of some of ABBA's greatest hits. Additionally, the Treble Blazers sang the titular song from *Little Shop of Horrors*, and the band and chorus performed Coldplay's "Viva La Vida" together. Before playing each piece, student speakers provided a plethora of facts about the song's background and legacy.

Earlier this year, because of the auditorium construction, the Winter Concert was held at North High School two months later than usual. Due to this, the students had less time to prepare for this Spring Concert than in years past — but they worked hard, practiced, and managed to put on an extremely entertaining and memorable show in a completely full, newly renovated auditorium.

Mr. Trinkwald, conductor of both the band and orchestra, is proud of how the concert turned out. "The Spring Concert is always a nice culmination of the whole year," he says, "and it was incredible to see that many people in the audience."

Ms. Murdocco, chorus conductor, agrees with that sentiment. "It was a big improvement over the first concert, and that's the point, to get better as the year progresses," she says.

Both teachers were happy with the modern music collection this year, mostly comprised of hits from the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. "I liked doing 'Viva La Vida,' since it was a big joint piece again," Ms. Murdocco says.

Mr. Trinkwald also enjoyed playing more recent songs. "I think the audience appreciates music that they know, and the students get excited to play pieces they're familiar with."

The 2024 Spring Concert was a return to form in many ways, as there was once again a joint song and the performing groups made a return to North Middle's own auditorium. It also brought something new to the table, experimenting with a more modern and familiar collection of songs. One thing stayed the same, however — the seventh and eighth grade band, orchestra, and chorus all succeeded in creating a memorable night which showcased their many talents. "It's a lot of work, and then the night of the concert is like a blur," Mr. Trinkwald says. "It goes by in the blink of an eye."

NMS 6th Grade Spring Concert

By Dylan Chen

On May 15th, 2024, the 6th graders of North Middle performed in the auditorium for a crowd of parents and siblings. There was a theme of pop songs in the concert. Note that a teacher (either Mr. Denise or Mrs. Murdocco) introduced each song.

First, the orchestra performed. They performed three songs: "Fun, Fun, Fun", "Over the Rainbow", and "Rolling in the Deep".

After the orchestra performed, a small chorus group called the "Treble Blazers" who met once a week performed "Little Shop of Horrors".

After that, the 6th grade chorus came on, and performed three songs: "Haru Ga Kita", "Jabberwocky", and "Never Enough".

After the chorus played these songs, the band was now in action. Once again, they played three songs, "Firework," "Shake it Off," and "Eye of the Tiger." All four groups performed their songs near-perfectly.



Saying Goodbye to Dr. Cozine

Journalists Amelia Chang and Kylie Deng Interview Dr. Cozine about his Retirement

The principal of Great Neck North Middle School has announced that it is his last year serving the students and staff of this school— Dr. Cozine is taking his leave gracefully along with the graduating eighth graders of 2024. Many kind gestures have been made towards Dr. Cozine, and both the students and staff have expressed how thankful they are towards him.

On March 26, 2024, during the Quality of Life Awards ceremony, the assistant principals of NMS, Ms. Gunning and Mr. Nelson, presented a Quality of Life Award to Dr. Cozine, honoring his years of work at North Middle. This time, instead of Dr. Cozine sharing his words of wisdom and quotes, Dr. Cozine received some loving words and an inspirational quote for himself. As Mr. Nelson sent Dr. Cozine off with some words of wisdom, he received a standing ovation from both the students, their parents, and teachers present at the Board Meeting where the awards were being presented. Even in a humble award ceremony such as this one— the Great Neck Board and Schools are still immensely saddened at the thought of Dr. Cozine retiring. Here is an interview below with the soon to be retired principal of Great Neck North Middle School.

In your years being a principal at North Middle, what is something that you'll take away with you from this experience?

This my ninth year working here, and I will take away the fact that everyone in our school building from our cafeteria workers to our paraprofessionals to our custodians to our teachers to even building administration; that we have an ability to make a difference in the lives of our students every single day, and to me that matters the most, because we can't ever disregard that feeling— we can't say that it's a bad day. I know we all have bad days, but to me the most important thing is that everyone understands that they are so impactful to the students. And just the same, the kids listen to us, and they could make our day. And the best part of my day is dealing with the kids.

Did NMS make an impact on you as a person? If so, how has NMS changed your life, or changed you as a person?

It actually did. It was my first true principal job, so I had an opportunity to become a building leader and it allowed me to realize that I had abilities that had never been tested before. Along the way I think I've been able to grow those abilities and strengthen those abilities, but I've also gained an understanding that we are all only as good as a family when we look to help each other. And that's never been more prevalent in my life than being in North Middle School--from the parents to the students, to all the staff— that if we're working together, we're taking care of each other.

Could you please explain what your job as a principal is, and what part of this job will you likely miss the most?

Being the principal is a really hard job. A building's principal does a lot. The word principal means teacher— so I'm supposed to be the leading teacher of the building. As we've moved away from the single room schoolhouse back in the *Little House on the Prairie* days, I do much more than that now. The principal is charged with doing budget, supervision, bus duty, field trips— there's so much that entails our job, and then COVID stretched us to all new limitations that we didn't know existed. The best part of my job has always been, from the time I started teaching thirty three years ago, working with the students. If I'm having a bad day, I'll walk out of my office and walk in the hallways, because then I get to see kids learn, I get to see kids horsing around, I get to see them laughing, and it's all there for me to realize that's why we're here: for them to enjoy themselves and to feel safe and comfortable and to learn.

I'm sure you've developed very close relationships with staff, colleagues, and students alike. Everyone can also see how open you are to everyone, visiting the classrooms, etc. When you first began this job, was it hard to "fit in?"

It was in a way, because I didn't know the north side of the town as well as the S\outh side of the town— I was at South Middle School for eight years prior, so I did know a lot of the teachers here, and that helped me tremendously because I know what Great Neck expects of its leaders, and along the way I've developed amazing relationships. I guess the most important thing we can do with any relationship is developing trust, and I think the parents trust me, the students hopefully trust me, I think the staff trusts me, and once you have that trust, you can really start to create roads to working better together.

When did you first realize that you wanted to go into teaching, and how did you become a principal?

I had amazing English teachers in high school. And, actually, in middle school, as well. From middle school through high school, I had amazing English teachers, and English was something that came naturally to me, so I went to college and I wasn't sure what I could do with that. I had an undergraduate degree in English and a minor in theater, and then there was the law school round, and there was advertising, but I just knew that I connect with kids. It's something that I think I do well. So, I had to go back to school after that and do my student teaching, and then on my first day of student teaching, I knew I'd made the right choice. Since then, the vast majority of my career has been working with middle school students, and I love it. I love middle school students, I love the fact that everyday is unpredictable, but everyday is exciting.

School News

Saying Goodbye to Dr. Cozine Continued...

When you became the principal of this school, what goals did you hope to achieve for this school? Were your goals fulfilled over your years as the principal of NMS?

Really for North Middle to be highlighted as a school of distinction in the district. North Middle has an incredible staff that's so committed to its students, and the goal was then to make sure everyone else in the community knew how good North Middle could be. So, even something as silly as Facebook, to promote what's going on in our schools, our competitions that our kids have been winning, those things, and our musical. It's for the community to realize that we have the most amazing students and staff and community that supports what we do. That's always been my goal— to highlight that— and not that I'm trying to brag about it, but I think it's nice to be recognized when you do something really well, and North Middle School does so much so well. And, with COVID came along making sure that we always took care of our students' mental health. That's always been a huge part of it— it's important that kids learn, but the most important thing is that a student feels they belong at North Middle School. Then, once they feel that way, we can go from there.

After your retirement, what do you plan to do?

Not really sure yet! I know there's a next chapter for me, and I know I want to continue working, but I'm not sure whether it's going to be in education or consulting, or for my brother's pool company— he owns a pool company in the Hamptons. So, whatever I do, I'm sure I'll give it the same enthusiasm and commitment that I've given to North Middle School, and I look forward to that chapter, whatever it may be.



School News

The One Acts

By Sophia McLaughlin

Every year, North Middle School has its very own One Acts, a small scale production that consists of a series of short skits. The One Acts are usually in the fall, around November, but this year it is in the spring, due to auditorium renovations. The spring can be a very stressful time, with finals and sports, especially for 8th graders taking their multiple regents in June. This was probably the main reason why numbers for this year's show dropped, with only twelve people auditioning. Even with the small number of students, the show is still happening, and skits are now composed of smaller groups and have shorter run times.

The One Acts had weekly rehearsals for about three weeks before the start of tech week. Each skit had its own weekday to rehearse, and students worked hard practicing lines and how to deliver them best. After regular rehearsals, tech week started on May 29, in the auditorium. Just like during the musical, tech week is a very intense time, and on most days, students are rehearsing till 8pm, practicing blocking with props and working with the stage crew.

On June 6, at 7pm, the day of the show finally came. The call time was 6pm, and everyone had hair, makeup and costumes ready. Microphones were put on and everyone was ready. The show lasted for about an hour, and while the audience was small, it still felt like a full audience on stage. Throughout many of the skits, numerous audience members were laughing or recording the show. After everyone bowed together, marking the end of the show, the eight graders made speeches thanking Ms. Brendal, Ms. Dove, and Ms. Andreacchi for their help to make the show happen.



NMS Art Show

By Catherine Wang

On the 14th of May, NMS held its annual Art Show alongside the respective 7th and 8th grade band, orchestra, and chorus concerts. This school year's [2023-2024] Spring Art Show had quite a bit of added pizzazz with it being paired with a newly renovated auditorium.

NMS's Art Show features the works of 6th, 7th, and 8th graders. 8th grade students who take Photo and Art as their elective have their digital pieces of art printed out and displayed whilst 8th graders who were selected for Art 9 as their elective have their own section dedicated to all the projects they have done over the course of the year.

NMS's Art Show is largely arranged by the Art department and the Art teachers: Ms. Kirleis, Ms. Haase & Ms. Teich; and as artwork is created throughout the year, they collect and store the artwork. When the Art Show comes around, the artwork is mounted onto a piece of black paper as well as a piece of white paper, which act as the frame, and displayed on the walls of the exhibit. The exhibit is purposefully put at the lobby entrance of the bus platform where parents walk in and get to see the artwork in addition to them being here for the musical concerts.

Moreover, NMS's Art Show showcases the various mediums art students at NMS are given the opportunity to undertake in their artistic ventures. You would have seen glazed clay pieces, mixed media works, charcoal drawings, graphite still lifes, oil pastel portraits, sharpie studies, watercolor paintings, and more in the displays even if you had not recognized the various art mediums at the time.

Additionally, NMS's Art Show is representative of the artwork the students were able to create along with their artistic ventures as they level up throughout their time at Middle School. With each year's Art Show, new artists are welcomed along with their creative pieces as others continue their art journey through High School.

School News

NMS's Beloved Retirees

Journalist Elizabeth Guan interviews Mrs. Levergne and Mrs. Nagle

Here at North Middle, we are lucky to have so many amazing and beloved staff members that work hard to create a welcoming and supportive environment. However, two of our teachers, on top of Dr. Cozine, are retiring this year — Mrs. Levergne and Mrs. Nagle. Here are interview transcripts with them with minor adjustments for clarity.

Elizabeth Guan: Can you give a brief description of what you do here at North Middle?

Robin Levergne: I am a special education teacher. I've co-taught with other teachers and I've worked in small classes for social studies, English, and math.

Elizabeth Guan: How long have you been working here?

Robin Levergne: 22 years.

Elizabeth Guan: Did you work anywhere else before coming here?

Robin Levergne: Yes, I worked in New York City for the New York City Board of Ed.

Elizabeth Guan: Why did you choose to become a teacher? Did anything inspire you?

Robin Levergne: I've always loved working with children, but the one person in particular that inspired me the most was my biology teacher, who I loved.

Elizabeth Guan: What is your favorite part about working here?

Robin Levergne: Everything! The students, the administration, the teachers, the community.

Elizabeth Guan: What do you think was your greatest accomplishment?

Robin Levergne: Building strong relationships with my students.

Elizabeth Guan: What is the most challenging part of working here?

Robin Levergne: I haven't really had a challenging part of working here but I foresee leaving the school when I retire as a challenge.

Elizabeth Guan: What struggles have you faced and how did you overcome them?

Robin Levergne: A struggle I've faced is learning a new curriculum and I overcame it by taking extra courses and learning from other teachers in their classes.

Elizabeth Guan: What are your goals and aspirations that you are looking forward to after retiring?

Robin Levergne: I want to spend more time with my three baby grandchildren, travel more, and just not wake up at 5 o'clock in the morning.

Elizabeth Guan: Is there something in particular that you will miss after retiring?

Robin Levergne: To be honest, I'm going to miss everything about North Middle School.

Elizabeth Guan: What advice would you give to someone who wants to become a teacher one day?

Robin Levergne: I would say to make sure to remember that everyday in teaching becomes a new day. If you're having a bad day, just remember that tomorrow is a brand new day and you can start all over.

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Continued from page 9

Elizabeth Guan: Can you give a brief description of what you do here at North Middle?

Norine Nagle: I am a member of the sixth grade team. I am a full time social studies teacher but I also have one class that is team taught. Also, I am part of the social studies department, so there's activities involved in that.

Elizabeth Guan: How long have you been working here?

Norine Nagle: This is the end of my 25th year and I am retiring this year.

Elizabeth Guan: Did you work anywhere else before coming here?

Norine Nagle: I did. I worked in a private school for about two years, I did some subbing, and then I magically landed here in Great Neck.

Elizabeth Guan: Why did you choose to become a teacher? Did anything inspire you?

Norine Nagle: Yeah, so that's actually a backwards question for me. I have two sisters, two brothers, and two parents. They all are somehow involved in education, and I was going to be the only one who wasn't. But then when my oldest child went to first grade, he got stacks of worksheets and they were crooked, they were dull, and I just said "I can do better than that; I've got to go do this".

Elizabeth Guan: What is your favorite part about working here?

Norine Nagle: The people — I have learned so much from them. Also, just having casual friends and students, it's just been a wonderful environment.

Elizabeth Guan: Is there a specific memory that you remember and cherish?

Norine Nagle: The first year I was teaching here was the year 2000 so we had an election. I told my students "Don't worry, you'll know the election results by Wednesday morning," and they came in the following Monday, when they came back to school and said "You told us we'd know," but that was an election that had to be decided by the Supreme Court. Since then, I had never told anyone "you'll know tomorrow" or "you'll know by 5 o'clock".

Elizabeth Guan: What do you think was your greatest accomplishment?

Norine Nagle: I think I've grown as a person. I've tried to find different ways of doing things. Also, I've really got into how you learn, what do we need to add, what would make this more interesting because not everybody loves social studies and it's a complicated story.

Elizabeth Guan: What struggles have you faced and how did you overcome them?

Norine Nagle: Some of the struggles are feeling that it is my fault if students don't understand something and then being like "what am I doing wrong?" And a way I've overcome this is by turning to other teachers for help just the way they turn to me. It's like a safe space to say "I'm stuck."

Elizabeth Guan: What are your goals and aspirations that you are looking forward to after retiring?

Norine Nagle: You know, I think the first thing is after spending 12 years in school working from September through May or June, and then 25 years here, I'm going to have to learn how not to work on a daily basis. My husband is already retired and there's a few places I'd like to visit and things I'd like to do socially or creatively that I have not made time for previously.

Elizabeth Guan: Is there something in particular that you will miss after retiring?

Norine Nagle: I'll miss the structure of the days but more importantly I'll miss the people and the interaction with people that I've known anywhere from one to twenty five years. It's like you're losing track of them. And all the students too — I figure it's around 100 a year so that's 2500 students in total. Some of them are really grown ups now. My first class had students who were 11 in 2000, that means they're 35 or 36 years old now — pretty impressive to me.

Elizabeth Guan: What advice would you give to someone who wants to become a teacher one day?

Norine Nagle: I think you have to find yourself as a teacher and realize that there's things you've seen and liked a lot from other teachers and things you didn't like. Then you have to figure out how you can make it your own and how you can make it interesting to the people you're working with. It's an easy job to see after all the years you've spent learning and you'd think you understand it but it's more complicated. I would even suggest having another career before you teach because maybe you're going to find other skills too that will make you a better teacher.

Advice from Miss Know-It-All

Dear Miss Know-It-All,

Lately, it feels like everything in my life is falling apart. My parents fight all the time and it seems as if they don't even know I'm there, and as a result, my focus is terrible and my grades are quickly dropping. Nothing is going my way — it feels like there's an immense weight on my back, and I can't let it go. Do you have any advice for me?

Sincerely,

Saddened in Saddle Rock

Dear Saddened,

What you've just described sounds absolutely awful, and I can only imagine what you're going through right now.

Luckily, I do have a few suggestions.

You can try speaking to your parents about how their constant fighting is making you feel. I doubt their intention is to make you feel neglected, and they might not realize the effect this is having on you.

For your grades, you can talk to your teachers about any advice they may have. I'll always recommend extra help, since it's a free, easy way to get some extra studying in. You also might want to rethink your current study habits — is it working the way it is now? If not, you might want to make some adjustments. If you haven't already, techniques like meditation or deep breathing could help improve your focus.

Most of all, I'd recommend continuing to talk about your troubles with others, whether they're peers or trusted adults. Good luck.

— Miss Know-It-All

Dear Miss Know-It-All,

I have a sneaking suspicion that all of my friends secretly hate me, and that they're only pretending to like me. I know it's nonsensical, but I just can't shake the feeling that I'm completely alone. What should I do?

From,

Crestfallen in Kings Point

Dear Crestfallen,

Let me start by answering that with a question of my own: Have these people ever given any cold hard proof that they despise you, or is it all just assumptions you've made on your own? At a certain point, it can be difficult to discern what's real and what's just imaginary; and from there, thoughts can spiral out of control. I think if you take a step back and examine the situation, you'll find that most of this supposed "hatred" isn't as severe as it seems.

If you're still doubtful, I suggest speaking about your feelings with a trusted confidant who can also give you advice. If you feel comfortable, you can also try talking it out with your friends, who will be able to set the record straight and answer any remaining queries you may have.

To conclude, I just want to say you won't be alone, no matter what. Even if it doesn't feel like it, there's always someone in your corner — trust me.

— Miss Know-It-All



I'm just finishing up seventh grade, and I'm already so nervous about next year. Everything I've heard from my older friends and family makes eighth grade seem like the hardest thing in the world. I did fine academically in seventh grade, but I'm worried if I'll continue to do so next year. Do you have any tips?

Yours Truly,

Concerned in Kensington

Dear Concerned,

Speaking as an eighth grader myself, I remember how apprehensive I was last summer as I, just like you, was imagining all the ways my last year of middle school could go wrong. However, to my surprise and delight, none of my musings ever became reality, and I'm absolutely certain yours won't either.

The workload gradually increases throughout the year, but as long as you stay on top of things, do all your assignments, and prepare for each test, you'll do just as well as you did in seventh grade. As always, I recommend extra help, good study habits, and, above all, a healthy sleep schedule.

While it is important to place an emphasis on your grades, it's also crucial to make sure you're in a good place mentally throughout the year. If you get overwhelmed by the work, you can try some deep breathing exercises, or other relaxing techniques you enjoy, to recenter yourself. I also find it helpful to just go for a stroll or take a break for a few minutes. Focus is key, so be careful not to burn yourself out!

So don't worry, you're going to do great in eighth grade. Congrats on making it through seventh grade, and I wish you the best of luck next year and beyond.

— Miss Know-It-All

Laufey Surprise Concert

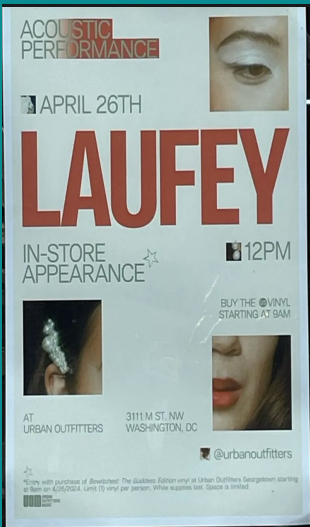
By Danai Bezerianou

On April 23, a poster said that in honor of Laufey’s new album, *Bewitched: The Goddess Edition*, she was going to perform an acoustic performance at the local Urban Outfitters, in Washington D.C. on April 26th. The only ticket you had to buy was a vinyl of her new album. Upon seeing this, I knew I had to go. So I waited until April 26th. The time the vinyl sale started was 9am. I arrived at 8:30, and the line was HUGE. We waited for at least an hour before we finally got the vinyls, but the line was pretty fast moving for the amount of people that were lined up. We paid for the vinyls and headed back home, as the concert officially started at 12.

At 11:30, we arrived again, and the line was just as big. Some people had stayed the whole time, and so they were some of the first people to go in. As soon as everyone was filed in (very efficiently I might add), we waited a few minutes until Laufey came out. I must say it took longer than expected.

When she finally came out, Laufey was so sweet, and she performed four songs. This included her famous song, *From The Start*, *Promise*, and a couple of her new ones, like *Bored*, and *Trouble*. To be honest, for the amount of time we had to wait, I would have expected more, but then again, she had her concerts tonight as well, so I don’t blame her.

Overall, Laufey was the sweetest, and she sang beautifully. I would definitely recommend going to any of her longer concerts if you had the chance, as it's a once in a lifetime opportunity.



Summer

Word Search Challenge

Name: _____ Date: _____

Find 21 summer words in the puzzle using the first letters as clues.
Write each word in its blank when you find it in the puzzle.
An example has been done for you.



A	_____	LEMONADE	S	_____
B	_____	P	S	_____
B	_____	P	S	_____
B	_____	P	S	_____
H	_____	R	T	_____
J	_____	S	T	_____
J	_____	S	V	_____

Album Review: *The Tortured Poets Department*

By Lila Halpert and Sophia McLaughlin

At midnight on April 19th, Taylor Swift released her eleventh studio album, *The Tortured Poets Department*. Two hours later, she released a second part, entitled *The Anthology*, which combines with the *Department* to create a thirty-one-song behemoth — and one of Swift’s most captivating works yet.

The Tortured Poets Department is unlike anything Swift has released before — on it, she sings about heartbreak, love, pain, betrayal, and grief through an older, more mature lens. She reveals her pent-up anger with the public and the media, deconstructs her persona, paints herself in a new light, and more. The album spans genres, with catchy pop songs like “imgonnagetyouback” and “Fortnight (ft. Post Malone),” heart-wrenching ballads such as “How Did It End?” and “Chloe or Sam or Sophia or Marcus,” and even experiments with a country sound reminiscent of her Nashville roots on “thanK you aMee” and “The Bolter.” Especially on some *Anthology* songs, such as “The Albatross,” “The Prophecy,” and “Cassandra,” the sound drifts more towards the acoustic, minimalistic production reminiscent of Swift’s 2020 albums *Folklore* and *Evermore*. Some tracks, such as “The Black Dog” and the retrospective “So Long, London,” are about Swift’s recent breakup with her boyfriend of six years, Joe Alwyn, while others are suspected to be about her month long rebound with Matty Healy, like the scathing “The Smallest Man Who Ever Lived” and the album’s title track. Swift’s new boyfriend, Travis Kelce, is also the subject of two songs. *The Tortured Poets Department* isn’t only about breakups and new love, however — for instance, Swift sings about wanting to get away from it all on “I Hate It Here,” how she yearns for a change of scenery on “Florida!!! (ft. Florence + the Machine),” and protecting the innocence of a child on “Robin.” The album’s two-hour timespan gives it plenty of time to cover all of these topics without seeming rushed or too crowded.

Star Songs

loml

The Tortured Poets Department is full of breakup songs, but “loml” is a fan favorite, and one of the most sad songs Taylor has ever written. The song starts with a somber piano, which plays throughout the whole song, with little variation. The song’s title seems to be an abbreviation for *Love of my life*, but towards the end it is revealed to really mean *Loss of my life*. The song details false promises her ex-boyfriend made to her. Similarly to “You’re Losing Me,” a song off of *Midnights*, “loml” is a vulnerable song, where Taylor reveals the true nature of her six-year relationship.

So High School

The Tortured Poets Department is seen by most as a breakup album, so I was surprised to hear a song about Travis Kelce. Taylor started openly dating Travis around September of 2023, fans were eager to hear love songs about their relationship. The song is happy and upbeat, like Taylor’s early songs that she made while she was in high school. This most likely reflects how she feels in her new relationship, and she even mentions things that he does that makes her happy, like holding the car door open for her. “So High School” is also one of the seven songs from *The Tortured Poets Department* that she sings at the Eras Tour.

Clara Bow

Clara Bow was a very famous movie actress in the 1920’s, and was considered the first “It” girl. She had a very troubled childhood, and she was a very underpaid actress, even though she was one of the most famous of her time. In the second verse, Taylor mentions Stevie Nicks, a popular singer during the seventies and eighties. In the song, she talks about the pressures of being famous, especially for females. In the bridge, she specifically mentions the struggles of maintaining her looks as a pop star, and how difficult it is. The whole premise of the song is so special to me because Taylor has never made a song like this before, and I don’t think enough people talk about the downsides of a life in the spotlight.

Entertainment Pages

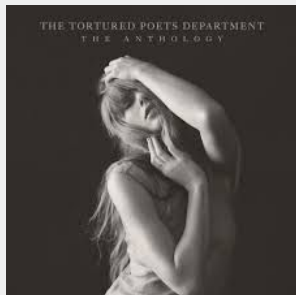
Reviews, Fashion, Trends & MORE

Continued from page 11

I Can Do It With a Broken Heart

Many of Taylor Swift's songs have deep, meaningful lyrics disguised under happy tunes and melodies. "I Can Do It With a Broken Heart" is a perfect example of that. The first verse starts off slow, and the pace quickly picks up for the chorus. If you listen to the lyrics, Taylor talks about performing her Eras Tour, even after her recent breakup with ex Joe Alwyn. She talks about how she can put on an amazing show, even with a broken heart. The song also highlights how she is tough and can get through difficult situations with a smile on her face.

In short, Taylor Swift has once again proved that she deserves her fame with another wonderfully written, thought-provoking release. Together, *The Tortured Poets Department* and *The Anthology* make up an album that crosses through several genres, topics, and sounds, and somehow manages to get better with each new listen.



Creative Corner

Feverish Slumps

By Catherine Wang

Quizzing and fizzing,
Sugar is up,
As the high tide climbs.

Lollis and cookies,
Fervor on the rise,
Don't fear not being handy,
For no one's holding you their vigil.

Strands of tassel,
Momentous as they can finally drop.

But what exactly is everyone peering into
this,
Creator filled corner for?
Why –
The glass jar placed at eye level may provide
some answers,
With its promised fantasies if only you
provide it with some words.
And everyone here,
Has conformed to the summer fables,
Buzzing in All About summer excitement.

Entertainment Pages

Reviews, Fashion, Trends & MORE (cont'd)

Things to Do in Great Neck

By Noah Nerayoff

In Great Neck, there aren't a lot of things to do, but here are some hidden gems I found, and some new stores that have recently opened in Great Neck.

One store that's been around for a while is Muddworks. Muddworks is a fun, warm place to paint some premade pottery, with other activities such as candle making, and you can even host a party here. Although pricey, Muddworks is a great place to spend a while painting. You then come back around a week later to pick up your completed piece.

Another fun, free activity is to go to one of Great Neck's many parks. There is Allenwood Park, Lakeville Park, Great Neck Estates Park, Steppingstone Park, Village Green Park, Cutter Mill Park, Firefighters Park, Manor Park, and more. The parks are a great place to play, or enjoy a nice picnic. Every park is filled with its own Great-Neckians, with their own suggestions for how to spend a nice day out.

Another popular attraction is the Andrew Stergiopoulos Ice Rink, open twelve months a year, for public skating sessions, skate school, and ice hockey.

Along with the old stores of Great Neck come new ones. Recently, many shops have opened. Tiger Sushi is a new, fun, sushi restaurant with seated, delivery, and takeout options. Grandpa Chen Char Siu Bao is a new restaurant with Dim Sum, coffee and tea, and a bakery with a warm interior and great reviews. Ji Bei Chuan is another new Chinese restaurant with primarily noodles and soup, with some delicious sides. In the past year many new boba shops have opened, including Tsaoaa, Yaaas Tea, and Kung Fu Tea. There is also a new hotpot restaurant, Kiko Ramen. It's a fun restaurant with a lot of good food, and even their own bubble tea.

These are just some of the new restaurants and activities in Great Neck, if you want to have fun and go to some new or old places around our town.

COMIC STRIP by Haley Szeto



Artificial Education

By Gavin Zhao

4000 years ago, humans invented the primitive idea of education, immersing affluent children in art, architecture, mathematics, philosophy, and combat. Over time, the focus of education has shifted towards more modern subjects, valuing corporate enterprise traits over personal progression. Even with all this change, the general format of educating a child has remained constant through the centuries. An 800 by 1000 walled-in room, grid-patterned desks, thick mundane books, and a teacher. The latter is the most important, a gateway for students to comprehend material in books, yet also inherently a human being. While the rest of society turns to artificial intelligence for its efficiency and accuracy, schools have remained stagnant, discouraging their students from absorbing this new technology. What many are now advocating is a shift from this outdated outlook, and instead embracing a possibly better form of education.

Pew Research Center found in a study of 2,531 public school teachers, that a minority of 6-7% thought AI could be better than human teachers in classrooms, the rest opted either for “Equal benefit as harm,” “Not sure,” and “More harm than benefit.” However, what harm could these teachers be signaling towards? HighSchool Insider finds the increased dependence of students on AI would wreak havoc on child growth and critical thinking skills. Further, teachers who rely on AI to accelerate learning plan development and possible test grading would lack rigorous completion, instead merely completing a task to its simplest requirements. Identifying talent in a child, areas in need of improvement, and identifying personal guidance are regions where only human teachers can administer complete satisfaction. Then the most important aspect is real human interaction. An AI can offer insightful and likely better information than a human teacher, but cannot by any means understand a student. 1s and 0s cannot comprehend pre-test anxiety, childhood struggles, adolescent worries, and empathy between humans. Remember that extra credit assignment you asked for to bump up your grade in just one letter? Artificial intelligence doesn't understand the fear of going back home to angry parents, offering sympathy assignments that are not recognized by any system, only a cold-hearted machine churning out assignments.

But what about the benefits? The list goes on and on but generally resides in spotting technical issues almost instantaneously. Grammatical, mathematical, conceptual, and logical problems can be flagged by an AI, and a correct interpretation of a problem is provided. Further, likely the most practical and immediate benefit of AI would be providing access to quality education in poorer areas globally. Countries like South Sudan, Mali, and other areas in poverty would drastically improve literacy rates with Artificial Intelligence. But even with these benefits, the same problem emerges, students, especially young children, require human interaction.

There is a solution, many international entities have promoted the idea of gradually merging Artificial Intelligence into schools while retaining teachers as supervisors. Many blueprints for integration exist, almost none of which are applied in a genuine school setting. The benefits of this format exceed all other individual structures. Harvard.edu proclaims estimates suggest that up to a staggering 40 percent of educators' days are spent on activities like lesson planning, grading, and maintaining student records. Thus if this 40% was lowered to instead 20% for managing AI, the other half could be dedicated to a student's learning experience or a teacher's rest. The human interaction between humans and students would be retained while still accelerating course materials and tedious tasks of grading and lesson plans. But whichever option is chosen, it's clear some form of AI integration is plausible and advantageous compared to the current outdated architecture.



Girls Track

By Danai Bezerianou

On March 25th, track tryouts started. Around 30 people were trying out this season, and around five were going to be cut. I interviewed some girls who have made the team to describe their time on the team.

Phoebe Hoffman, 7th grader stated, “I would describe my time on the girls track team as both fun and exciting and a bit stressful during meets when it was my turn to run. However, I felt as though I got good exercise every day even if it was a bit much sometimes. Each day we did something different and we always warmed up to keep ourselves from injuries. Both coaches, Coach Kasdorf and Coach Bruno were nice and fun. Overall, I enjoyed track and feel like it helped me get good exercise and gain good running habits and stamina.”

Another 7th grader, Ellen Ng said, “It was very fun, and you get to make new friends. However, it was very stressful and tiring at times.”

A student who also participated in Winter Track, responded by saying, “I’ll say that my time on the track team overall was a lot of fun and memorable. Since this wasn’t my first time doing track I felt like I was able to enjoy the time a lot more. My time on the team was full of tiredness and stress, but it caused me to have a lot of motivation and to try my best. At each meet, I made sure to try my best even if I was nervous or if my leg hurt. Track allowed me to gain more skill and stamina while running, which I hope I can continue to build on. In the end, I was glad I joined the team again because I was able to improve and make a lot of memories.”

Ultimately, being part of a team like this is fun, and definitely something people should experience.

NBA Playoffs

By Richard Yi

NBA playoffs, the most exciting, breathtaking, energetic part of basketball. The top 16 teams with the best record in the regular season take part in the NBA playoffs every year (sadly, the Warriors did not make it.)

In the first round, the Timberwolves and Ant shocked the Suns, who had championship dreams in the regular season. Kevin Durant said, “Nobody Can Guard Us.” However, even with Durant, Booker, and Beal, it was not enough to stop Edwards as they got swept. Edwards put up 43 in Game 4 as he waved goodbye to the Suns. The Thunder, led by SGA, swept the Pelicans easily. The Celtics, being the favorite to win the championship, beat the Heat 4-1 and the Knicks beat the Sixers 4-2. Brunson was putting up 40 almost every night; he looked like MJ. The Nuggets beat the Lakers 4-1, with Murray hitting a buzzer beater in Game 2 and a game winner in Game 5 to seal the series. The Mavericks vs Clippers was a very fun series to watch. Kyrie and Luka led the Mavericks and the Clippers were led by PG13, The Claw, The Beard, and Russel Westbrook. Kyrie and Luka got the job done in six games and moved on to play against the Thunder.

In the second round, Boston easily beat Donovan Mitchell and the Cavaliers 4-1. The Mavericks, led by Luka, beat the Thunder in six games. The Knicks and the Pacers all came down to game seven, where the Knicks would get blown out by almost 30. The Nuggets and the Timberwolves had a very intense round. The Wolves took home game one and game two. The Nuggets then won three straight games in a row but the Timberwolves bounced back for Game 6. It all came down to game seven. The Nuggets held a 15 point lead in the second quarter but with a lot of hustle on defense, the Wolves managed to come back and win the series. It was a huge upset for the Nuggets but in my opinion, it was because they were so soft on defense.

Let’s have a recap of the best players on each team so far. On the Wolves, it’s Anthony Edwards carrying the team to the Conference finals. On the Pacers, Tyrese has been making some big plays against the Knicks, but got injured against the Celtics in Game 2. On the Mavericks, Kylie has been a stellar point guard but Luka is scoring more and getting more rebounds. And finally on the Celtics, Jayson Tatum and Jaylen Brown have been carrying the team but Jaylen Brown has been going off.

In the Conference Finals, Tatum and Brown swept the Pacers 4-0, with Jaylen Brown scoring 40 and hitting the game tying shot in Game 2.

Sports Pages

NY Knicks

By Noah Hourizadeh

From the perspective of a dedicated New York Knicks fan, this year's playoff journey has been an exhilarating ride fueled by the determination of our standout stars. With players like Jalen Brunson, Donte DiVincenzo, Josh Hart, OG Anunoby, Isaiah Hartenstein, and Miles McBride leading the charge, the Knicks embraced the postseason with an unwavering belief in their abilities.

Throughout the playoffs, these stars showcased their talent on the court, electrifying fans with their dynamic performances. Whether it was Brunson's clutch scoring, DiVincenzo's relentless hustle, Hart's rebounding skills, Anunoby's versatility, Hartenstein's interior presence, or McBride's fearless playmaking, each player left an indelible mark on the playoff stage.

As the postseason unfolded, every game became a test of resilience and character, with the Knicks refusing to back down against even the toughest of opponents. The energy in Madison Square Garden was greater than ever, with fans rallying behind their team with support larger than imaginable. Though the playoff journey may have ended sooner than anticipated, the great efforts of these stars have reignited the passion and pride of Knicks fans everywhere, leaving us eagerly anticipating the promise of what the future holds for our beloved team.



Have a beautiful summer!
See you in September....

