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Mr. S Sails into Retirement!

By Shelby Buryk, Junior

Our assistant principal, Mr. Schimmelpfennig, generally known as Mr. S, is retiring after fourteen thorough years at Onteora. In consideration of his impact on the school as a whole, an interview regarding his time here seems a perfect way to show we'll miss him. The following are five reflective questions we asked in order to gain insight into Mr. S's thoughts during his concluding year at Onteora.

What are your fondest Onteora memories?

Working with kids, good or bad. Just having a conversation with them, listening to them. I've had to manage some confusing times with kids, but I find when I listen to them, they get to talk, which relieves half the anxiety they're experiencing.

What is the most impactful lesson you have learned during your time here?

Be incredibly patient. I find it better to have discussions than have kids find their own way to their own solutions.

Considering Ms. Turck will be taking over your position next year, what is your best advice or insight to pass on to her?

The best thing is to create meaningful relationships with students, and try to understand where they're coming from. It's important to really know people.

What is the craziest situation you have ever been involved in at Onteora?

By far, running after a student on Route 28. It was actually a situation that was occurring in the middle school principal's office, and the principal called me. So, I went in, and the kid was in total crisis. I was standing right in the door frame. He looked at me, stood across from me eye to eye, then punched the wall next to me and just walked right through me. I said, "We can go to my office, we can talk," but he just walked right up to '28 and started running. At some point he ran into the woods, but by then around five police cars were there because I'd called it in. I mean, that was pretty wild. I've had fight situations where I have to stop kids from fighting, but I've had a lot of those, so they're not memorable. But I really thought, "Huh, I'm running after a kid on '28."

Are you planning any adventurous experiences after retirement?

When I met my wife, there was another woman in our group who I ended up being best friends with, and she actually ended up marrying a guy I knew years before she knew him, from when I used to do Himalayan climbing. So, we've just been in touch for the last 40 years, and they ended up building the largest catamaran ever built in Germany, and they have been sailing through the Medi-

terranean and the Caribbean, just offering people different tours. I helped build their boat, so I've been to it numerous times. They've had this plan of circumnavigating the world over a six or seven-year period. They are contracted by this Swiss university to do this new form of reef research where you listen to the sound of reefs—the more sound a reef makes, the healthier it is, which makes sense—so they planned to do that.

They called me up, and they said, "Listen, you're dive-master certified, you know the boat, we know you; would you like to come?" I said, "Well, I'm retiring so I've got a lot of time." So, on the 27th of June, I'll fly down there, and then I'll be gone until mid-October. We will be doing this research in the Marquesas Island, the Society Island/Leeward Island French Polynesia region, the Cook Islands, Tonga and the Great Barrier Reef

Additional comments

I started out as a teacher at Roosevelt High School, and in my sixth or seventh year, the principal came to me and told me about an opening for dean of students. So, I got that job, and then I just started moving around. I went to Wappingers, John Jay High School, then I went down to Webutuck, and from there to Westchester, and then I came up here. Nothing's perfect, of course, but Onteora is just a great, great school. I thank all the kids, faculty, teachers, and really just all the folks that work here; they make my time here great and I really appreciate it.





Image of the catamaran to be sailed, provided by Mr. S.

Find Your Inner Potential

By Riley Peer, Sophomore

The ordinary person will not live up to their full potential, and often times people miss out on the opportunities that could set their drive for the rest of their lives. Everybody in this world is called to do something special, become someone, and do something big in their future. It could be as simple as teaching, perhaps as significant as being president. But everyone on Earth is called, and should answer.

Say you sit in your bed at 10:00 P.M. knowing you have that test tomorrow. You lie there contemplating if you should study tonight or just pray before your test. The longer you procrastinate, the more tired you get and you end up falling asleep. You walk into class the next day and realize- shoot, I didn't study. You look around to try and figure out how you're going to either cheat on this test or say your stomach hurts and go to the nurse. Obviously, though, the tests got handed out already, and the teacher says, "Eyes down, no talking." You accept that you will fail.

Does that story remind you of

someone? Or yourself? You are not alone. Many students and even adults procrastinate, saying, "I'll just do it tomorrow," and then the work never gets done. Saying you're going to do something and actually doing it are two completely different things. This could go with anything, like committing to a relationship, doing your homework, or going to the gym. But why do people procrastinate?

Experts define procrastination

as a self-defeating pattern behavior. We may think that procrastination is just "putting off" tasks for later. This is true, but procrastination is more. People who procrastinate often suffer from anxiety, ADHD, and/or low self-esteem. Most people who procrastinate do it so they delay action with the idea that they will feel better in the short term.

So how does procrastination affect your potential? Everyday

we are supposed to be better than the day before, we are supposed to make our past selves jealous of who we become. As a student with both anxiety and ADHD, I find myself procrastinating almost everyday with homework and cleaning my room. I find myself not studying for a test until the last minute, or putting off cleaning my room until it becomes a disaster. I feel that if I hadn't procrastinated, I would be a better version of myself.

So what if society didn't procrastinate? Would we have a solution to world hunger, a cure to cancer? Do you believe our society would be better as a whole without procrastination, and can society ever work up to its full potential?

To all students or teens in general: get up and enjoy life. Not only do we procrastinate, therefore delaying our potential, but we also forget to live life to the fullest. Scrolling on social media and staying inside is not going to make you a better person. It will only hold you back from all you are capable of doing.



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Gender Equality: The Struggle Continues

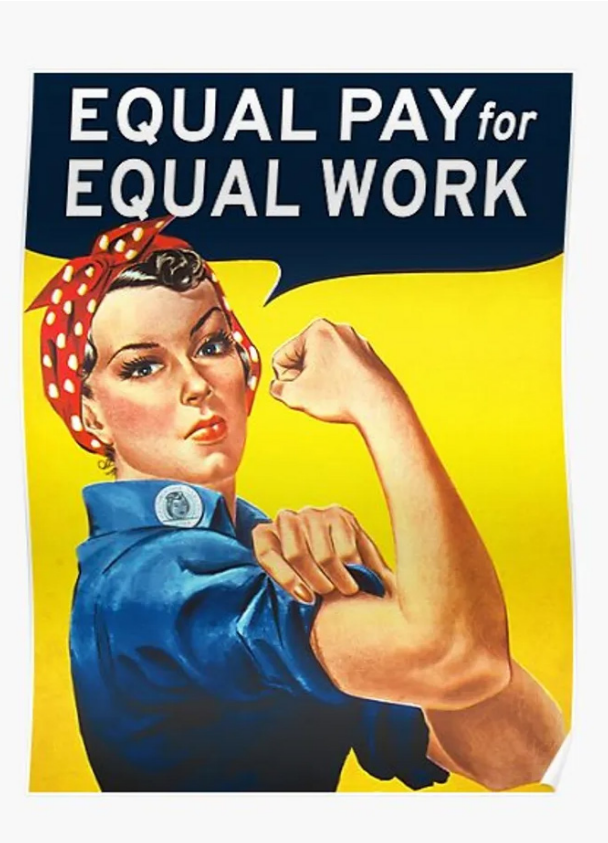
By Rama Gabriel, Freshman

Two years ago in gym class my friend and I ran past two boys moving at a slower pace than us. There should be no shame in this, but they both muttered, "I can't believe we just got passed by a couple of girls" has stuck with me to this day. Why should it be demeaning to be passed by girls? Why do I now feel at fault for being physically active and a girl?

Sexism towards women is unfortunately a common practice in our society. It is rooted in years of history, and has been inherited over generations of people. Believing in the inferiority of women to men, even in the slightest of ways, is so incredibly normalized, and sexism is embedded into what we view as humorous, as well. This is one way that sexism is overlooked, all while destroying the self-esteem of girls and women.

Our society is stuck with the mindset that there should be rules based on your gender. As a woman, you are often expected to be dainty, quiet, and conventionally attractive. The image we see in movies and media is often women with no leg hair, no mustache, no acne, no fat, not too much muscle—because that will "intimidate a man"—perfectly plucked eyebrows, and makeup—but not too much, because then you are "trying too hard" or seeking attention. You miss one, you will be ridiculed. You are told, "You will never have a boyfriend," or worse, "You are not even a woman," just for having leg hair.

In addition, there is the overall attitude that women are physically weaker than men. While



Courtesy of Creative Commons

biologically this is sometimes technically correct, I'll bet all of us can think of a fair amount of women that are far stronger than some men. This is unfortunately a common theme in our world. That boys are raised in the mindset that they have to be stronger than girls. That girls

need protection. That they must be treated with the assumption that they cannot do what men can. Women have to prove that they are capable, while men can just take each other's word for it.

This widespread issue is not only a problem in the real world, but within the environment of schools as well. Students fall into social groups and stereotypes, leading to personality traits assumed by gender, therefore limiting their self expression within the school's social environment. This issue can cause teenagers to become even more self-conscious about their appearance, a trait teenagers already possess enough of. Girls feel as if they have to always look picture ready. For example, coming to school with messy hair might feel demeaning, when it absolutely should not.

Boys are pressured to be perfectly athletic, and are often harshly judged by their performance in gym class—a class that has little to no meaning outside of a school setting. Comparing themselves to their peers, as well as being influenced by the media, can often be soul crushing.

Seeing people primarily through gender is a toxic factor that negatively affects both men and women, and society often uses one's gender as a description of someone as a whole. Together, over time, we can remove gender bias, hopefully moving towards a more functional society. We should be mature enough as a society to see this as a collective concern. All people should be working together to fix this.

The Magical World of *The Boy and the Heron*

By Jade Belfiore, Sophomore

As a lifelong fan of Hayao Miyazaki’s films, a couple of years ago I was excited to hear that he had a new film coming out, *The Boy and the Heron*. I’ve always loved his Studio Ghibli movies for 5children such as *Kiki’s Delivery Service*. When I went to Japan at 9 years old, after watching the movie *My Neighbor Totoro* a million times, the first thing I wanted to do was purchase a Totoro stuffed animal. Now that I’m getting older, I’m starting to appreciate his darker movies too, like *Princess Mononoke*. *The Boy and the Heron* is definitely geared toward an older audience, though it features young protagonists.

Exploring themes of coping with a world filled with chaos and loss, the coming of age story follows a young boy named Mahito Maki, who moves to the country after the death of his mother. Taking place during World War II, the narrative begins with his mother dying in the firebombing of Tokyo. Mahito struggles with these changes, finding it difficult to cope with his grief. When he meets a peculiar grey heron, he’s led to a tower, transporting him to a magical world in between life and death.

Like most of Miyazaki’s films, this oceanic, surreal world offers its characters an escape from pain. The film emphasizes the continuity and circle of life, through fire spirits and bubble-like creatures known as the Warawaras, who fly to be born in the real world. Ultimately, this journey guides Mahito toward acceptance and

the importance of facing reality rather than hiding from it.

Something I’ve always admired about Miyazaki’s films is the strong female characters he creates. When Mahito first enters through the tower into this magical world, he meets Kiriko, a young and powerful woman. She guides him on her boat and teaches him how this strange world functions. Himi is another determined, smart young woman, who has the gift of fire magic, and later saves Mahito from enormous and threatening parakeets.

If I have one small critique, I’d say that the film has a lot of convoluted plot twists and can sometimes be difficult to follow. These complex storylines can be confusing for the younger people who make up much of Miyazaki’s audience, but the fanciful animation keeps viewers like me engaged and lightens up some of the darker themes in his stories.

As in many of his previous films, *The Boy and the Heron* also has many positive messages to impart, particularly free will and acceptance that the world is imperfect. *The Boy and the Heron* was supposed to be Miyazaki’s last film, but at 83 years old he’s rumored to be working on another. I can’t wait to see what comes next!



Courtesy of Creative Commons

Review of *The O.C.*

By Harsimran Kaur, Junior

With summer just around the corner, a good binge-worthy show is essential for calming down after a long day out in the sun. And trust me, I have a good one for you. Allow me to welcome you to *The O.C.*, a mixture of *Gossip Girl* with its high-society rich teen drama, and *One Tree Hill* with its emphasis on found family and heartwarming moments. Set on the beautiful shores of Orange County, California, where the heat of the sun never seems to set, the show perfectly encapsulates the feelings of summer.

Right off the bat, you’re thrown into the hard life and struggles of Ryan Atwood, a troubled teen from a rough neighborhood who is taken in by a wealthy family in the affluent community of Newport Beach, California. As he’s introduced to this new world of privilege, Ryan makes his feelings clear with the line, “You know what I like about rich kids? Nothing.” That moment sets the tone for the show, highlighting the class divide and emotional challenges Ryan will face. Navigating his way through this new class of society, Ryan manages to form meaningful, complex connections with his foster family and the

extremely privileged teens of Newport. My favorite part was how the show juxtaposed the personalities of Ryan Atwood and Seth Cohen, his foster brother. I enjoyed how, despite their differences in personalities and upbringings, they clicked instantly with one another and helped each other become a better version of themselves. *The O.C.* has become one of my favorite shows. It is genuinely capable of having one entranced for hours. It definitely had me! The comedic nature and complex themes that run throughout really captured me. Additionally, it has one of the best TV show soundtracks and an extremely catchy opening song that will probably forever be engraved in my head. *The O.C.* has it all, beaches, drama, and one unforgettable soundtrack to entrap your summer!



Courtesy of Creative Commons

Dear fellow Eagles,

It has been a pleasure to have served as your President, but I have full faith that Fiona Green will make next year even better.

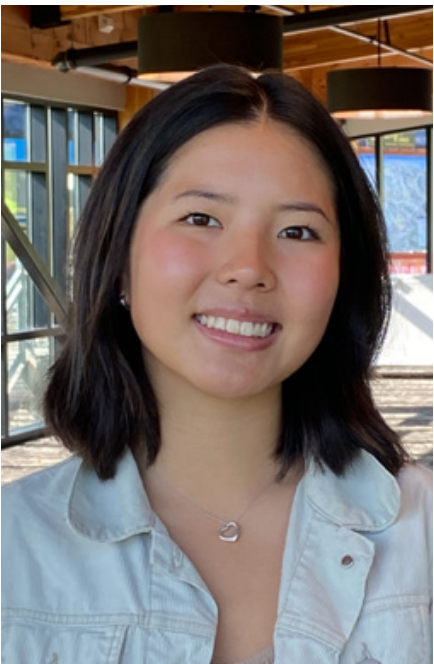
Student government has reformed our gym make-up class policy which will be put into place next school year. We also collaborated with NYSPHSAA and National Honor Society in decorating the high school lockers with kind post-it note messages for Mental Health Awareness Week!

Underclassmen! Don't forget to vote in your upcoming student government elections!

Seniors! Check the Class of 2025 Counseling Google Classroom for graduation and end-of-year information!

With our last few days of school approaching, I hope you all have a great summer!

President Coco, signing out



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Hope For Debate Club at Onteora

By Lucia McDonagh, Junior

High school students **Fiona Green, Delilah Lieberman, Lucia McDonagh and Nico Stackpole** are seeking to start a debate club at Onteora in order to sharpen their public speaking and debating skills. A debate club could provide that and more! They hope to start a debate club in order to diversify students' outlook on topics and improve their on-the-spot thinking and speaking skills.



Courtesy of Creative Commons

From topics such as the use of AI in schools, to the superior condiment, these students hope to tackle a range of questions with well-informed and monitored debate. A debate club would provide the opportunity for students to challenge each other in friendly competition and to learn skills for public speaking and debating that are necessary for success!

A Friendly Visit from a Local Author

By Harsimran Kaur, Junior

In Ms. Maltese's AP English Language and Composition class, we were assigned to read a horror novel set locally. *The Fisherman* by John Langan turned out to be a deep, unsettling dive into the history of the Ashokan Reservoir, layered with eerie paranormal elements that shaped the entire story. After finishing the novel, we had the chance to meet Langan in person and ask him our questions. The whole event was very casual and low-key.

Honestly, Langan wasn't at all

what you'd expect from a horror writer. He was funny, lighthearted, and had this way of turning every moment into a joke, keeping us guessing at what he'd say next. But underneath that humor, his answers were incredibly insightful. He had this kind of surprising talent, at least in my opinion, for taking even the most basic questions and spinning them into thoughtful, meaningful discussions.

He answered everything with genuine enthusiasm, and you could tell he really cared about the

conversation. He talked about the writers who influenced him, like Stephen King, Herman Melville (Moby-Dick), Shirley Jackson (*The Haunting of Hill House*), and others. He also shared a bit about his own writing process. He said he often doesn't know exactly how things will end while he's writing. For *The Fisherman* in particular, he explained how the novel's deep themes of grief were heavily influenced by his own experience with the loss of his father.

It was honestly pretty eye-open-

ing to talk directly with the author of a book you just finished reading. Suddenly, all the confusing or ambiguous parts of the story start to make sense. And some things I had totally overthought while reading turned out to be way simpler than I expected. Like the part where Helen, the monstrous undead woman, says something cryptic to another character. It turned out to be a straightforward reference to their inevitable death. Nothing crazy or symbolic, just pure simplicity.



Horoscopes

By Delilah Lieberman, Junior



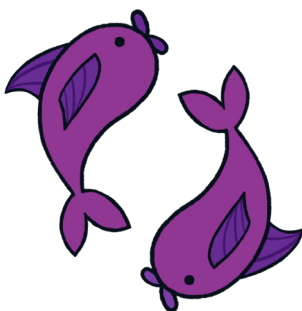
Capricorn (December 22 - January 19)

Capricorns, you really need to unwind
Go to your favorite restaurant
and sit there to dine
Because if you don't take time to relax
You'll become very stressed,
and reach your max.



Aquarius (January 20 - February 18)

Aquarius, remember to apply your sun lotion
I see a bad sunburn that'll cause a commotion
You'll go to the store for some aloe gel
But they'll be sold out, and you'll say "oh
well..."



Pisces (February 19 - March 20)

Pisces, you have to be your best authentic self
Because money doesn't make up your status
or wealth
What makes you shine bright is your true colors
And you're a rainbow; you're like no other!



Aries (March 21 - April 19)

Aries, look into the future and see
A summer of fun and feeling free
You've made it this far, you're almost there
To feeling that nice warm breeze on your hair!



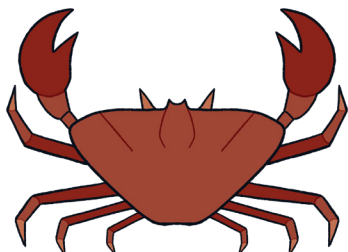
Taurus (April 20 - May 20)

Taurus oh Taurus, you know what to do
Like a baby bird from its nest, you flew
Now it's time for you to do this alone
You must step out of your comfort zone!



Gemini (May 21 - June 20)

Gemini, now it is all fun and games
You're chasing that bag, and getting that fame
But be careful about how you deal with this power
Or it'll all come tumbling down like a tower.



Cancer (June 21 - July 22)

Cancers, sheesh you've done it again
You've successfully broken the scale of one to ten
I see the commitment you've put into your work
But please stay away from uncooked pork.



Leo (July 23 - August 22)

Leos, you're rocking that new look
You tried something new, and I really am shook
Don't listen to anyone that tells you differently
Find peace in avoiding their negativity!



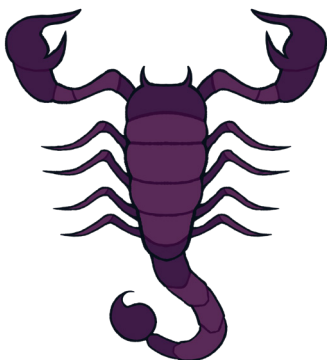
Virgo (August 23 - September 22)

Virgos. I'm a little scared to be real
You might want to take a step back and heal
So before making decisions extremely fast
Think about whether or not their impacts
will last.



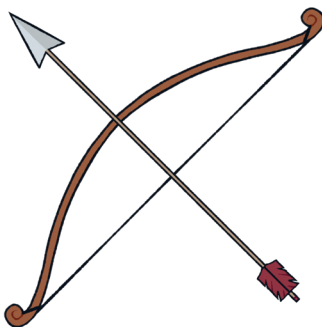
Libra (September 23 - October 22)

Libras, your dedication this year has been
inspiring
You put in so much effort, which must be tiring
But please, don't forget to take a few breaks
And fix that sleep; eight hours before you wake!



Scorpio (October 23 - November 21)

Scorpios, you have so much to look forward to
Pigs go oink, and cows go moo
So why don't you do what your supposed to do
And lock in so you can feel relieved and go
"woooo"!



Sagittarius (November 22 - December 21)

Your screen time is slightly concerning
But you still come to school, ready for learning
Pat yourself on the back for your effort and
success
Because even if it's hard, you're trying your best!

Where is the class of 2025

① SUNY Ulster — Carla Alvarez-Umana, Kaydence Christian, Tamar Garcia, Daxhane Kawane Guy, Karina Hicks, Cody Hillard, Jacob Holt, Noah Kowalsky, Protus Mayunga, Julian Morton, Nico Paynter, Brianna Potter, Luca Roefs, Adam Rose, Lucas Smith, Harold Stange, Arthur Yang, Aidan Wiacek, Aneska Zindulka

② SUNY New Paltz — Landry Mack, Willem Naughton, Corbin Smith

③ SUNY Delhi — David Cabrera Lopez, Alex Umana

④ SUNY Oneonta — Rhylee Berhman, Lilyana DeGondea-Heaney

⑤ University at Albany — Kelsey Gray

⑥ SUNY Purchase — Dahlia Boiardi, Denise Gordon, Finn McLean, Rayne Nguyen

⑦ SUNY Dutchess — Bryce Buntyn

⑧ University at Buffalo — Kai Caswell

⑨ Fashion Institute of Technology — Ferun Mayer, Alexis Nielson

⑩ St John's University — Jaelyn Ostling

⑪ Wesleyan University — Lily McNamara

⑫ Onodaga Community College — Lilykate Brosnan

⑬ Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute — Gavin Rice

⑭ University of New Hampshire — Riley Fitzgerald

⑮ SUNY Cortland — Brenden Thompson

⑯ Marist College — David Troger

⑰ SUNY Oswego — Kylie Osterhoudt

⑱ Hamilton College — Sara Metawee

⑲ Smith College — Lila Metawee

⑳ Hudson Valley Community College — B. Burgher, Natalie Hastie, Payton Kothe, C. Matteson, Emma Proper

㉑ Conservatory of Recording Arts & Science — H. Beck

㉒ New York University — Scarlett Andret

㉓ Vassar College — Sarah Caloro, Anna Jol

㉔ Hartwick College — Keegan Burkhardt, Danielle Payne

㉕ Central Connecticut State University — Grace

㉖ Northeastern University — Olivia McHu Henry Swasey, Milo Turba

㉗ Rochester Institute of Technology — Vin Christofora, Elias Sheldon, Daniel Tomono

㉘ SUNY Brockport — Abby Zeh

㉙ The Cooper Union — Eve Batista

㉚ SUNY Cobleskill — Ian Luborsky, Sur McNabb-Perry, Joey Reese

㉛ New Jersey City University — Jillian T

㉜ UMass Amherst — Harrison Hughes

Employment/Other

Lily Anna, Kylie Becker, Anthony DeLaura, Veronica Flores, Elias Formont, Brendon Jackson, Lucinda Jennings, Ava Jones, Shawn Kenly, Keen Kinney, Juan Martinez, Ryan Moxham, Patrick Neher, Amie Salinas Peralta, Danica Potter, Sparrow Weiss, Amelie Watts

Military Service

• Army Infantry — Austin Fatum
• US Air Force — Ahna Fusc

Made by Lily Stoudt

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Tyler

- 33 Sarah Lawrence College - Jasper Siegel-Lariviere, Hazel Storch, Lily Stoudt
- 34 The George Washington University - Coco Asada, Lily Pizer
- 35 Pratt Institute - Yogi Johansen
- 36 Muhlenberg College - Abby Taylor
- 37 Saint Michael's College - Waylon Brown
- 38 Virginia Tech - Melanie Milla
- 39 Ithaca College - Jack O'Neill
- 40 Molloy University - Emmalyn Robles
- 41 University of Rhode Island - Rylan Reynolds
- 42 LIU Brooklyn - Miles Barron-Blumberg
- 43 SUNY Geneseo - Griffin VanDreason
- 44 Endicott College - Chloe Schropfer
- 45 Clarkson University - Max Reimondo
- 46 SUNY Binghamton - Alexia Melendez
- 47 Siena College - Ava Fox
- 48 NorthEast Lineman School - Jacob Wood



• University of Bristol - Ellie Wyman



Clawsnaps

Compiled by Talon staff

Q: “What’s one piece of advice about high school to give to underclassmen?”



Ellie Wyman- “Do NOT procrastinate!”

Abby Taylor- “Try and have as much fun as you can!”

Jasper Siegel-Lariviere- “Start thinking about college earlier than you’d expect.”



Ian Luborsky (right)- “Pay attention in class.”

Cole Matteson (left)- “Want and do the best for yourself because this is where it starts.”



Gavin Rice- “Don't drink coffee before a test.”

Rhylee Berhman- “Just get through it because it sucks.”



Lily McNamara (far right)- “Life gets better when you get off the bus.”

Eve Batista (inner right)- “Don’t use AI.”

Hazel Storch (far left)- “Do your homework!”



Harrison Hughes- “Studying is doubting your potential.”

Lucy Jennings- “Graduate early.”

2025 Belleayre Senior Summit



The Deficit Doesn't Matter

By Foster Knoche, Sophomore

I'm guessing that the government deficit isn't a very interesting topic to you, but it *is* deeply connected to the concerns that you may have. If you have any interest in politics, or broader social issues, the deficit will likely eventually come up in some way. It's used as a justification for many actions—such as preventing the creation/expansion of public services, fighting against investment into climate initiatives, or if you're on the more conservative side, it can be used to advocate against reducing taxes on the middle class.

If you don't know what a government deficit is, you aren't alone. Many

Americans have some idea of what the deficit is, but it is often conceptualized inaccurately. A government deficit occurs when tax revenues in a given year are less than the total amount of money spent by the government in the same span. All that this means is more money is introduced into the economy than taken out. This does have consequences, such as potential inflation, but it would be impossible for the U.S. government to run out of money.

People often assume that this "overspending" has to be made up for by some dire consequence, but this simply isn't true.

The reason why running out of money is an issue for a person is because of the consequences that go along with it, such as having your assets seized through foreclosure. These consequences, however, do not and cannot apply/be applied to a government such as the U.S. The U.S. government's backing and issuing of the dollar gives it its value, and there's no authority above it which can administer consequences for "running out of money." Money is used in order to allocate resources, and if the government decides to spend some extra, all that means is someone else is getting paid. New money is constantly being introduced into the economy, and that's fine. Most money is in the form of numbers on the screen, with its utility only coming from the societal decision to give it meaning.

The only reason why the deficit has become such a ubiquitous topic within American politics is because it's easily used as an excuse by politicians in order to sit around and do nothing all day. If you can convince the populace

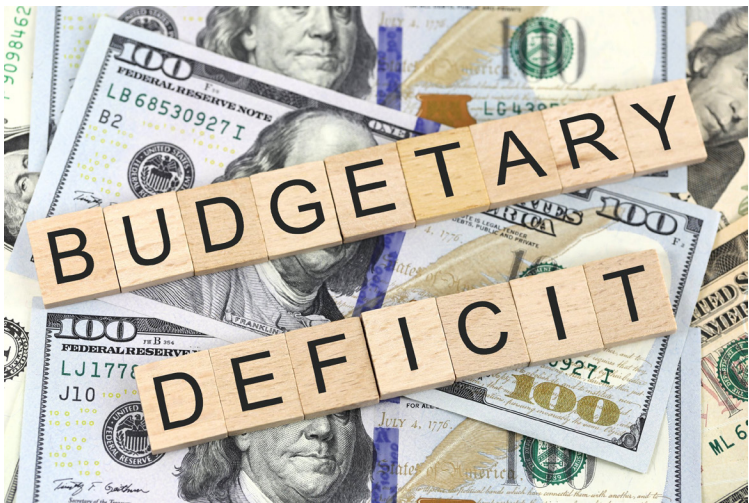
an increase in government spending is inherently bad, and taxes will have to go up in order to finance spending—it's very easy to argue against passing legislation. The only form of spending exempt from this critique is that related to the military, which of course has nothing to do with the millions of dollars those in D.C. receive from defense contractors.

The deficit is tactically brought up to discredit programs which might actually help someone (already quite rare in the U.S.), but not when the legislation is supported by corporate/moneyed interests. If the deficit genuinely mattered to the senators and representatives who claim it does, the defense budget wouldn't be \$850 billion.

I will admit that this title is a bit clickbait-y, and the impact the deficit/government spending can have on inflation has to be taken into account. A link between an expanded money supply and inflation has been established, but the takeaway shouldn't be to cut government spending as much as possible as

people like Milton Friedman concluded. If you don't know who Milton Friedman is, he was an economist with a very large role in influencing Reagan's rhetoric and policies.

Cuts to social programs cause massive amounts of societal harm, and aren't worth the possible benefit of making a number decrease by a little bit. Inflation has many factors, making it a very difficult phenomenon to control. Too much spending can be a thing, but it's only an issue if other societal consequences caused by the spending are visible. The misunderstanding of the deficit holds back what's possible within American society. Without the artificial constraints on government spending, services which genuinely benefit Americans would be passable instead of being shot down by politicians demanding a way to pay for it. Infrastructure projects, various healthcare policies, extensive research programs—it would all finally be possible.



Courtesy of Creative Commons

We Gotta Pay People in Geriatrics

By Val Albright, Junior

One day you will be dead. If only it were as simple as that. Death is not a moment, nor an instant; it is a long, drawn out process that can last for years. Death ebbs and flows, both for those experiencing it, and for those watching from the outside. Hospice, palliative, geriatric - these are words connoted with fear. But, this fear is uniquely American: no other countries fear dying like America, and no other countries neglect our old like we do. There is a crisis in our nursing homes, and it's not the record skipping or the oxygen tanks running out: our old outnumber our young, and we do not have enough professionals to care for them.

Hospice care and geriatric medicine are fields that, if you were to ask any prospecting medical student what they wanted to do, would not be the answer. Nobody wants to spend the near \$300,000 to be harassed by the elderly or slowly watch them die—nurses and doctors put up with a lot, yes, and they are caring people, yes, but the idea of willingly going into a field that will be so emotionally and mentally taxing as hospice or geriatrics is utterly boggling to many. Why not become a pediatrician? Or a NICU nurse? These jobs are equally as taxing, yet they have more allure and less negativity surrounding them. The price tag is one of the main factors in this as well: the price of a house?

To what? Sit around with some geezer for hours on end? These notions may sound harsh—they are—but they lay in the back of everyone's mind, whether they know it or not. The field of geriatrics is unappealing when the price tag, experience, and horror stories have been summed up.

The solution lies in the dollars. If we begin offering medical schooling at a reduced price for anyone going into the field of geriatrics or hospice care, we will see an uptick in the profession. Of course this comes with questions: Where will the money to afford this come from? What about people simply taking advantage of the free schooling? The former is for someone who is in economics to debate, while the latter can be answered quite simply. Nobody would go through the hell that is medical school and the following specialized training just because it was free. Nobody in their right mind would go through the pre-medical process, begin the four grueling years of classes, the internships and the residencies—nobody would do that just because the price tag was slashed or entirely gone. What will happen, though, is an increase in interest for the field, and a subsequent boom in the number of practicing geriatricians and hospice care workers. Though that is an assumption, and it can be stated that just because the cost goes down does not mean that the interest

will react in the opposite direction, there is a chance, and that is what matters.

With the population of America steadily reaching an older average age, the change that matters on paper is one that needs to be seen in the real world. Policies such as the previously stated reduction in the cost of medical schooling, in the long run, will only help us—all of us. When you are growing old, and your body does not function as it used to, any money that had flown from your pockets in taxes or the like will be paying you back: there will be people available to aid you. Without these changes, our elder years will look much the same as those of the current generation: rotting nursing homes, poor care, and untimely yet dragging deaths. Without the change toward creating more geriatricians and hospice workers, the only thing we will do in the future is kick ourselves: if we are even able to do that.



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The Secrets to Achieving Your Goals

By Azarax Tehrani, Sophomore

Imagine looking in the mirror and thinking “DAMN—I look good!” We all want to, but most people don't want to train like Rocky Balboa. Well, let me let you in on a little secret: Rocky did it wrong. Training too hard is unsustainable. The key to training is consistency. Often, someone who impulsively decides to change their body wakes up at 5:00 a.m. and drinks raw eggs and runs 10 miles, just once. This is much less effective than going to the gym twice a week regularly. If you want to change your life, body, and mental health (without training as if you are clinically insane), read on!

Diet tips

My first tip is a precursor to this whole article: don't judge yourself by the number on the scale; it does not define you. You don't have to lose or gain weight because of any societal norms, or because of what anybody says. The only reason that you should ever change your body should originate from your own volition. Obesity and other weight related medical conditions can be bad for your health. However, you cannot change yourself unless you really want to. So before you start implementing these tips in your daily life, make sure you want this.

My first “real” diet tip is this: The most important thing when wanting to change your body/weight is your diet. Your body is a system, and as thermodynamics tells us, the energy of a system is equal to energy in, minus energy out. In body terms, this means that if you eat less calories than you burn you will lose weight, and vice versa. If you are really dedicated and want to lose weight consistently use a calorie tracking app. I personally track my calories daily.

It's fast and easy. I recommend using the app Track. It has a free barcode scanner and displays your macros (macronutrients) in a very user-friendly way.

My next tip is slightly controversial. Start drinking diet soda. If you drink soda regularly, and switch out to diet soda, you can easily reduce your daily caloric intake by 100s of calories without even eating less. On the other hand, if you don't drink soda, diet soda can still be a good addition. It can replace certain sweeter foods in your diet, and this in turn can help you cut out more calories. If you spend some time on the Internet you will definitely see articles and posts that say diet sodas give you cancer. This is because some diet sodas contain an artificial sweetener called Aspartame. Aspartame can have some adverse health effects. However, these adverse health effects come from drinking upwards of 14 cans of diet soda a day (drinking 13 cans of Diet Coke would be roughly 600 mg of caffeine, which could cause heart palpitations and other adverse effects.) Diet soda—in moderate doses—is completely fine for your health, and can even be beneficial.

Don't try to overcompensate for excessive calorie intake with exercise. There are many reasons why you shouldn't do this. The first is the amount of time and effort it takes. The second reason is that it doesn't work as well as you think.

Imagine walking or running on a treadmill and it says you burned 100 calories. The fact is that your body makes up for this expenditure of calories by decreasing your N.E.A.T. (non-exercise activity thermogenesis) or the calories you burn just by existing day-to-day. You end up burning roughly 70 calories. So if you end up eating a little extra, don't stress and spend five hours at the gym. You can just subtract it from tomorrow's calories—or just forget about it. In the grand scheme of things, one small excess will not really change your

progress. Just forget about it and make sure to stick to your calories from then on.

Cheat meals are stupid. They encourage restricting, then gorging yourself, and

do not account for the nuance of calorie burning. If you want to have a chocolate chip cookie or a slice of cake or pizza, just fit that to your daily calories so that you don't exceed your limit.

Exercise tips

This segment will go a little bit more in depth. It is only applicable if you are actively trying to use exercise to increase cardio capabilities or increase muscular strength or muscular size.

My first exercise tip is this: a little is better than too much. Media has created a false depiction of “getting healthy.” Back to Rocky Balboa: waking up at 5:00 a.m., drinking raw eggs, then running 20 miles, and doing one arm push-ups at the end of it. Hollywood lies.

Realistically, you will never stick to this. (If you can, please prove me wrong. I would love to see that.) Just go to the gym two days a week, or go on a walk most days of the week and try some push-ups at home. Every little bit you can do is better than doing too much and burning out.

Don't worry about being judged. If fear of being judged is what's holding you back from getting a gym membership, let me assuage your anxiety. 50% of people in that gym won't even know you're there. Of the other 50%, only about 1% of them will judge you, and the truth about that 1% is that they have much bigger problems going on. It's nothing personal. They judge everyone. And if you are a member of a gym don't judge people, unless they're doing something reckless or stupid like taking their shirt off in the middle of the gym. Then you may judge them *silently*.

Always use the full range of motion (R.O.M.). Whenever you're doing an exercise like push-ups, pull-ups, sit-ups, or any exercise for that matter. Go all the way up and then go all the way back down (or vice-versa if it's a pressing movement). Doing half reps grows two things: your ego and your chance of injury. Using full R.O.M., you increase your muscle building potential, your strength gaining potential, and respect.

I hope you use these tips to achieve a happier and healthier lifestyle by your own choice. The first time I stepped in a gym I hated it, but after three years, you can't keep me away. I hope if you read this you were not offended by anything I said. I meant it all with the best intentions, and I hope that you



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Fully Digital AP Exam Review

By Talula Kirschner, Junior

After taking six AP exams (two paper tests, one hybrid [with both paper and digital parts] and three fully online), I have enough experience to give my honest and humble review. While no exam is a walk in the park, the different versions each have pros and cons that add to their difficulty level and likeableness.

Starting with the OG standard paper tests which we all know and love (do we though?). For the tests with large writing sections, some people prefer being able to handwrite them, but others find it easier to type. For one, many claim to get hand cramps while writing vigorously—as one has to do when trying to write a six-paragraph essay in twenty minutes after procrastinating for about 75 minutes. It's also a bit distracting when you have your teachers voice in your mind saying, "No chicken scratch! These poor test graders shouldn't have to struggle to decipher your writing." Overall, the paper exams are pretty standard and what we're used to, but there are some things that needed to be upgraded.

One of many reasons as to why the College Board has decided to make this transition is due to the fact that making these paper exams is incredibly wasteful, time-consuming, and expensive. Making them online cuts the cost—and fewer trees.

That moves us on to the next part: the new digital exams. The prob-

lem mentioned earlier (messy handwriting) can't occur if you are typing, but then other issues arise. It's much easier to make a spelling or grammar mistakes when typing, and there's no spell-check on the test. Using the tools such as highlighting and notes can also be frustrating. As well, the test-taking process is much simpler when all you have to do is log in, unlike before when there were about 100 different places to sign and stickers to attach. On that note, though not everyone enjoys it, it is helpful for some to see the countdown timer.

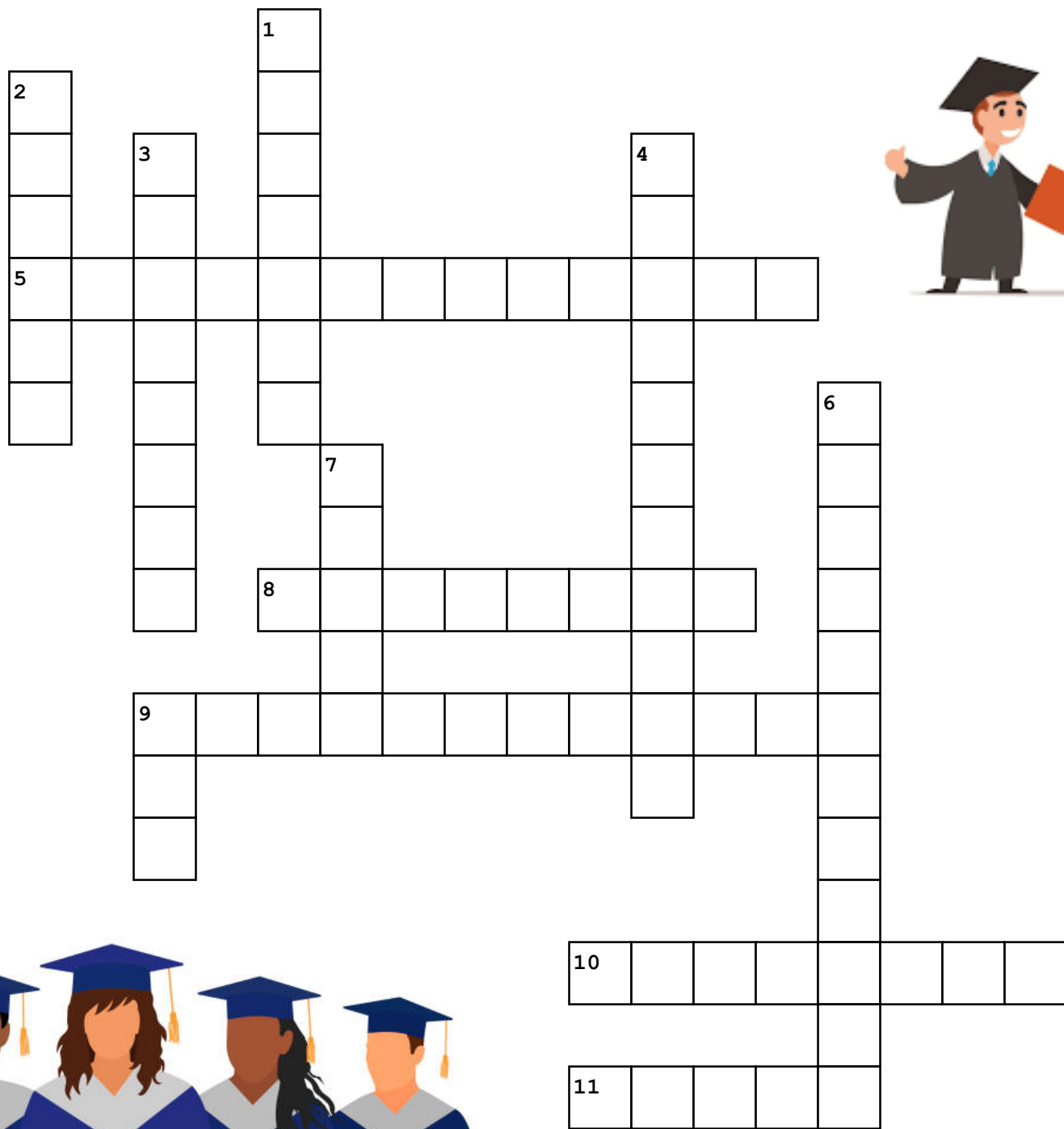
And then comes the most obvious setback: technical difficulties. Some students found it more difficult than others to log in, or to remember to charge their computers, resulting in many visits from the tech personnel. WiFi connection and the AP Digital Classroom sometimes decided to act up resulting in panic and minor setbacks.

In conclusion, though the first year was a little rough, I'm sure tweaks will be made to ensure the best test-taking experience possible. While both have beneficial and detrimental aspects, the digital exams are here to stay—so we'll just have to get used to them.



By Talula Kirschner, Junior

Class of 2025 College Decisions



Down

1. Queens college known for its Red Storm
2. Poughkeepsie college founded in 1861
3. In the same town as 4-down
4. Ms. Sniffen's alma mater
5. City where the city is your campus (abbr.)
6. Top research institute in VA
7. City-based institute known for its visual arts
8. City where the city is your campus (abbr.)
9. University where the city is your campus (abbr.)



Playlists

By Shelby Buryk, Junior

By Lucinda Jennings, Senior



Message from Lucinda Jennings, an Up-and-Coming Musician Here at Onteora

Hey guys, thanks for checking out my playlist on the back page of The Talon. The first track is an original song of mine that just came out on Spotify and all other platforms, as well as a few other songs I've been listening to recently. Have a listen and stay tuned for more original music coming soon...

Letter From Your Editor-in-Chief

This year has been a learning experience for all of us as we navigated some uncharted waters and tried new things we've never done before.

For this year of the paper, I had the privilege to hold the position of Editor-in-Chief, as a junior. For the past seven years the editor of this paper, like most other high school newspapers, has always been a senior. And I see why. Junior year is notoriously very challenging and rigourous, and mine was no exception. Trying to balance this club with other clubs, four AP classes, sports, work, and all sorts of other commitments was no easy task.

I am infinitely grateful to Ms. Sniffen for keeping everything together and faithfully upholding me and this club throughout the year. Her support, whether it being fetching us ice cream on a hot day or holding meetings in my absense, has been a godsend.

Through the support of the en-

tire club, we were able to produce four issues this year, some of which were made in very small windows of time. This forced us to have to stay after school multiple times a week. I would even come in during my lunch period and any other free spots to cram in as much time in layout as I possibly could.

As well I'd like to thank every member of the club and people outside of it for showing up and contributing, and of course everyone who reads our paper. It's thanks to them and the community here at Onteora that encourages us to keep writing and reporting. And a special thanks to senior Lily Stoudt for beautifully illustrating our paper time and time again, and all of the other seniors who have contributed to our cause. We will miss you.

As the year comes to a conclusion and we're doing final read-throughs of the fourth issue, I get nostalgic thinking back to the fall

when we made our first paper. The very first issue was a bit of a mess, but now I can look back and confidently say we have evidently improved immensely since then. At the time, I had no idea what I was doing, and even less of a clue as to how the year was going to unfold.

I am pleased to say that I, as a writer, leader, and student, have strenghtened my skills this year tremendously, mostly due to this club. But what's even better than seeing my own self-improvement is seeing others come out of their shells and grow at the newspaper.

As always, our club is open to any and all high school students, and we deeply appreciate those who come to meetings and contribute their time and writing skills.

I encourage each and everyone of you to write for your school newspaper at least once, as a way to put yourself out there and solidify your name in your school's history.

This is only a temporary good-



bye, as I'll be back in fall for my senior year and to continue as the editor of The Talon. I hope everyone enjoys their summer break, and again thank you all for your help and dedication, and for supporting the paper.

Sincerely, Talula Kirschner

Welcome to Austin's Safety Corner, an Onteora Talon special report on ways we can all enjoy a safer experience at school.

Today, I would like to discuss Hallway Safety, specifically "running in the hallway." This behavior is very unsafe and could cause injuries like sprained ankles, collisions, or head injuries.

Here are a few suggestions to sort this issue out:

- Let students pack up 2 minutes before the end of class.
- Have students walk along the sides of hallways, instead of the middle of the hallway so they do not block the hallway.
- By not running, it will help with the noise level in the hallways.

Hopefully, the examples I have given you, can be implemented into the school rules. Not as a way to prevent freedom, but as a way to enforce safety in the Onteora Central School District.

Thank you, and be safe out there!
Austin Otis, Freshman



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