



The Talon

Gripping News



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Onteora High School

Boiceville, NY 12412

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New Assistant Principal—a Familiar Face

By Shelby Buryk, Senior

As we ease back into the routine of school, it's important to recognize a new face within the administrative department—one that we're actually familiar with already. Ms. Turck, previously the Director of School Counseling, has filled the position of Assistant Principal in place of last year's retiree, Mr. S. Though many of us may have an existing connection with Ms. Turck, this interview provides insight and understanding of her thoughts on this transition.

Now that the school year is underway, how has it been so far?

It is hectic. It is a new pace. I feel like, as an analogy, you know when you're jogging on the treadmill, and you're getting comfortable and you're really good at a speed of 5.0? But suddenly you're running at 7.0 and you're like, oh my gosh, is this how it's going to pan out? That's what it feels like. It's an adjustment.

The beginning of the year is even more complicated because I'm still doing the Director of School Counseling role. So to start off the year, we have all the master scheduling stuff to set up, grade books, composite grading, teacher rooms, where the TA is going, and all of the intricacies of the master schedule. I was still doing all that while trying to learn a completely new position. It has leveled off and now it's more manageable, but now I'm worried about establishing the testing procedures for the PSAT. And then after that, I have to start collecting things for the AP exams. So, yeah—I have my feet in two worlds.

Is it what you expected, or have there been any surprises?

It's very similar to what I expected. There have been a few surprises moving from a counseling perspective where my main focus is eliminating barriers to student success. Now, I'm still concerned about the students and eliminating barriers, but I'm in a position where I also have to uphold consequences.

There's a code of conduct, and if you behave a certain way, it's codified that you have to have consequences. You're going to have ISS, or OSS, or maybe lunch detention. It has been interesting doing these things for the first time.

It's a challenge. When it's new, it's always intimidating; I'm thinking, "Am I going to mess this up?" But, after you do it, you're like, oh, that's just how it happens—not so big of a deal!

Was it a smooth transition from counseling to the administrative department?



I think it's a smooth transition because from the school counseling perspective, I've been involved. I understand the discipline, but I also understand the master schedule, and I know all the personalities, I know all the teachers, I know the students, I know the parents. So that's been a leg up. Making this switch from counseling to administrative, I'm trying really hard to still be kind, but be firm.

How does this shift affect your relationship with students?

I can see some students look at me a little differently, or students that I haven't had a relationship with are shocked that I know their name. What they don't realize is I've been doing schedules, Regents, exam orders, proctoring lists. I know all the names from the counseling perspective, and now I'm putting faces to the names—sometimes for good reasons. I'm practicing students' faces and names on the lunch line. It's just like a fun game for me.

But then, when they come into my office, they're shocked when

they give me their first name and I know their last name. It's kind of fun, definitely a shift. But I'm still very focused on a guiding principle, which is that they don't care what you know until they know that you care. I am not going to get any student to pay any attention to me when I'm trying to teach

sessed with goals. I always have been. Throughout my whole life, it was very clear: get a bachelor's degree, get married, have children, get a master's degree, get a job, get tenured, build a house. I have reached a lot of my goals, and this was a long term one for me to have. I would love to see where this goes in moving up, maybe to principal.

This is new, it's stimulating. I'm challenged in new ways. I'm learning new tasks. As a student, you want to be a lifelong learner as an adult, and that's totally what I am. I want to learn new things and I don't want to get bored. We'll see what happens. I do hope to retire before I hit 60, maybe in ten years, but I have kids going to college and, you know, I don't want to make any promises.

At the end of last year, I interviewed Mr. S regarding his retirement. I asked if he had any insight to pass on to you, and he responded, "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." How could you apply this advice as you familiarize yourself with the role of assistant principal?

So, I'm going to go back to this: they don't care what you know until they know that you care. I'm definitely using his advice, although that's not the advice he gave me when I asked him. He just said to ignore the noise because there's a lot—however I want to interpret it. Yeah, there is a lot of chatter, there are people that have opinions on how it should be done and they want to tell you what to do. There is a lot of politics.

There's chatter in the community and in the building. Hearing that was great for me to recognize, like, okay, it is just noise, and I can't fix that. It's not my role to fix that. I should stay in my lane, listen to what I can handle within my scope of control, and worry about the kids. Number one is to worry about the kids.

Is there anything I didn't cover that you wish to add?

I wish that it was clear and simpler that rules exist to keep people safe. They're not to be obnoxious, not to control you, not to suppress you. They're in place to keep you safe. And I think I'll end on that!

them or discipline them on what's important unless they know that I actually care about who they are, what their life is like, what's troubling them, or why they are stressed out.

What is your philosophy of discipline, and are you now able to implement it more directly?

This is a loaded question. My philosophy of discipline, and I think I joked about this in my interview, is kind of a little Captain von Trapp and a little bit Mary Poppins. That's just a parenting philosophy that I think bleeds into a disciplinary role.

I want to have fun. I want to engage with students. I want to be like Mary Poppins and make it fun and enjoyable, but, at the same time, make sure everyone steps in line. Don't block the hallway. Why are you slapping each other? Keep your hands to yourself. There's that balance.

What are some long term goals or plans for yourself and the district?

As a school counselor, I'm ob-

Three 2025 Albums You Need To Check Out

By Yana Bennett, Junior

As we near the end of 2025, I've been spending my time looking back on what this year has had to offer in terms of music. This is a yearly tradition I have. But I'm not one of those people that spends all their time on mainstream music, the kind that is well known and popular.

This doesn't mean that mainstream music is necessarily bad, there are just other albums that don't get as much attention as they deserve. In my opinion, they are much better than what's popular in the mainstream. I wouldn't call these albums underrated, as they're quite legendary and well-respected in some of the internet communities I reside in, but if you're *not* in these communities, you might have missed these. Here's a few you should definitely give a chance.



Jane Remover - *Revengeseekerz*

Jane Remover has been a very prominent artist in the hyperpop scene for years. They're considered a legend since they helped bring the genre further into the mainstream in the early 2020s. One of the reasons Jane is so loved is that their style is different and more experimental than other artists. They don't stick to just hyperpop, either. Their major label debut, *Frailty*, was not considered hyperpop. It was mostly glitchy indietronica.

Their 2023 album *Census Designated*, which came out not even two years after *Frailty*, was entirely shoegaze and rock based. But their 2025 effort *Revengeseekerz*, which directly succeeds *Census Designated*, is completely different from anything else they've made. It's absolute chaos in audio form, and it's brilliant. It's almost impossible to describe genre-wise; it's like a mix of EDM, rage, hardstyle, hyperpop, and hip hop.

Revengeseekerz doesn't hold back for a second. It doesn't try to ease you in, it just throws you into this abrasive, noisy world and keeps you engaged for its entire 49-minute runtime. There's multiple samples from video games, such as Pokémon and Wii Sports.

The lyrics are witty and smart, and the entire thing is super fun and danceable. In my opinion there's no other album like it. If you like high-energy music or want something you can dance to, check this one out.

Personal Favorite Tracks: Psychoboost, Dreamflasher, Dancing With Your Eyes Closed, Professional Vengeance, and JRJRJR.



Quadeca - *Vanisher, Horizon Scaper*

If Quadeca's name is familiar to you, don't be surprised. Before making music, Quadeca made soccer and FIFA related content on YouTube. He had a feud with mega-influencer KSI in 2018, and wrote a disstrack on him that made its rounds. He's also the son of venture capitalist Mitch Lasky.

Quadeca originally started moving away from his YouTube career in 2019, with the release of his debut album *Voice Memos*. Since then, he's released *From Me To You* (2021), *I Didn't Mean To Haunt You* (2022), and his highly acclaimed mixtape *Scrapyard* in 2024. But *Vanisher, Horizon Scaper* is, in my opinion, his greatest effort yet. It's shown how much of a star he's grown into.

It's a concept album that tells the story of a sailor lost at sea, with only an empty bottle he found in the water for company. The album's genres are insanely varied, from the bossa nova-esque *Godstained* to the chaotic industrial hip hop track *Thundrrr*, from the baroque *Forgone* going right into the noise rock epic *Casper*, which closes the album. The last minute of *Casper* has heavy distortion on it, which is meant to give the allusion of waves crashing. The music gets more and more muffled until it fades, which is meant to represent drowning.

For me, *Vanisher, Horizon Scaper* is a masterpiece that shows that anyone can achieve great things, no matter their roots or how unlikely it may seem. I highly recommend it.

Personal Favorite Tracks: *Godstained*, *At A*

Time Like This, *Monday*, *Thundrrr*, *Forgone*, and *Casper*.



Maruja - *Pain to Power*

It's funny that I'm bringing these guys up, because they were featured on the closing track of the aforementioned *Vanisher, Horizon Scaper*. Maruja is a band that comes straight from the windmill scene, a British movement following post-punk and post-rock music. Think Black Country, New Road; Black Midi—bands like those.

I've been following Maruja since early 2024, as their music has always appealed to me more than other bands in the scene. They've released three absolutely astronomical EPs since 2023, and *Pain to Power* is their first full-length album. And it's everything I could've asked for and more from an LP of theirs.

In times as grim as these, *Pain to Power* is the exact kind of album we need. It's one of the most hopeful and bright albums I've ever listened to. The album has heavy themes of politics, war, government, pacifism, and authoritarianism—all of which on paper makes it sound like a pretty grim album—but it's actually genius.

Pain to Power's overall message is that we should all put our differences aside and unite, push back, and hope for a better future in times like these. Better days are coming, and we should never give up.

The overall sound of the album switches between raw aggression and to then more bright and uplifting, which is a perfect way to contrast the anger towards the government and the hope that things will improve. Despite the windmill scene being one of my favorites in music, I truly haven't heard an album like this one, and that's a good thing here. It's a beautiful album with a powerful message, and it's definitely worth a listen.

Personal Favorite Tracks: *Look Down On Us*, *Break The Tension*, and *Reconcile*.

Mythology

By Brooklyn Foley, Sophomore

Greek mythology is everywhere, even if you don't actively notice it. If you're a freshman in Earth Science right now, Greek mythology will come up a lot more than you think it may.

Do you like planets? Astronomy? Earth? They're all related to Greco-Roman mythology. Greek mythology is thought to be the most well-known and adapted mythology in the world. I'm sure you've all heard of titles such as Percy Jackson, God of War, Blood of Zeus, maybe even The Song of Achilles. Speaking of Achilles, one of our body parts is literally named after the Greek hero; the achilles heel/tendon. Along with Achilles, the myth of the "Trojan horse" is a figure of speech used to describe something that seems harmless and kind, but hides ill intent. Ever heard

of Cupid? The baby in the diaper who carries a bow and arrow to make people fall in love? Cupid is the Roman version of the Greek god Eros, son of Aphrodite. Not only is Eros the son of Aphrodite, he is one of the original gods. He was created with Chaos, the first primordial God. Eros (love), Tartarus (a place under the Earth), and Gaia (the Earth herself), these were the first primordial Gods that shaped the rest of the Greek pantheon and the world. Confusing, right?

Now that the basics are aside, Earth Science begins to come in. Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune, even Pluto. All of those names stem from Greek mythology. Mercury is the Roman name of Hermes, god of speed, trickery, and messages. Ever heard the saying:

“Venus, planet of love”? That may be because Venus is the Roman name for Aphrodite, goddess of love and passion. Mars is the Roman name for Ares, god of war and bloodshed. Jupiter is the Roman name for Zeus, king of the gods and sky. Saturn is the Roman equivalent of Kronos, father of Zeus and the king who was then overthrown by Zeus. Have you ever watched Spongebob? Does "King Neptune" ring a bell? Neptune is the Roman version of Poseidon, god of the seas. Lastly, Pluto, the Roman version of the god Hades, king of the underworld (and often the most mischaracterized God.)

While on the subject of Hades, it is important to mention that the Greek Underworld is not even close to being an equivalent of Hell. Hell is a place for eternal suffering, a bad place of fire and torture. People often fail to realize that the Underworld isn't just one place. The Underworld has a place for heroes, normal people, and, of course, the bad. Calling the Underworld “Hell” is not only incorrect but also makes no sense. There is an equivalent of hell inside of the Underworld,

but you should not generalize the whole place as “Hell”.

Ever heard of the Fields of Elysium? This is a place in the Underworld where heroes go on to live their afterlives peacefully and with great reward for the good deeds they did while alive. The Meadows of Asphodel is where normal people go. You were good, you were bad, just an average person with not a big influence on the world. Lastly, there's Tartarus, where the worst of the worst go.

Ever heard the word heliocentric? If not, heliocentric refers to a model that has the sun in the center of our solar system. What if I told you that the Greek Titan of the Sun was named Helios? Before the

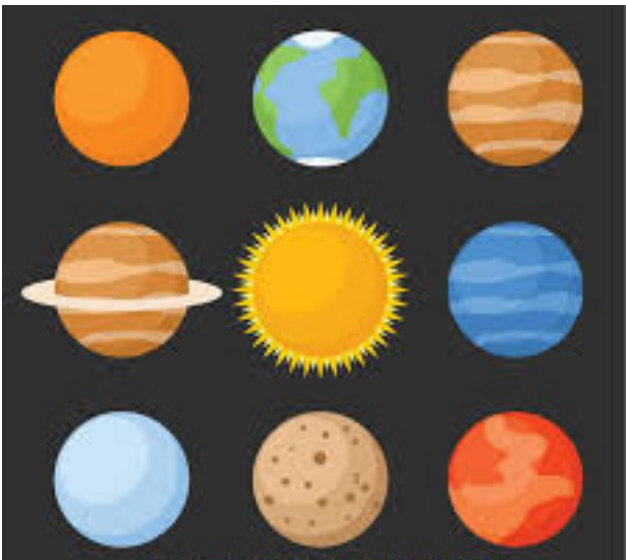
Olympians took over, it was Helios's job to ride his carriage to raise the sun in the morning. Although, this job was soon informally taken by Apollo, when people began to recognize him as the sun God.

Both the words solar and lunar also have Roman roots. Helios's Roman name was 'Sol', and his sister, Selene, was named Lunar. Selene was the Titan goddess of the moon. If you're taking Spanish and/or speak it, you'll recognize that the word “sol” means sun in Spanish.

Finally, the cross country team. Are you a part of it, have a friend on the team, or just have seen any of the Onteora Cross Country memorabilia? Then you've seen the winged sandal that is plastered

on the uniforms and signs. This is the Talaria, symbol of Hermes. Remember when I said he's the god of speed? Hermes is able to travel from Mount Olympus to Earth to the Underworld faster than any other god on the pantheon. A quick fun fact about Hermes: he's the one who guides souls to the Underworld after they die.

After reading this, I hope you're able to see these little things everywhere. Making connections and noticing these things is a fun skill to have. If you are interested in learning more about Greek mythology, then pick up a Percy Jackson book. Now, don't go into the series thinking that it's accurate, because it isn't. Reading modern adaptations of mythology is a great way to learn names, brief bios, and helpful introductions to characters and stories. Jumping into mythology without any prior knowledge is hard. Remembering names, families, myths—it's all super challenging. But fun adaptations of myths can be a gateway into going deeper and having a better understanding of it all.



Mythological Matching



- | | |
|------------|-----------------|
| A. Mercury | _____ Hades |
| B. Venus | _____ Poseidon |
| C. Mars | _____ Aphrodite |
| D. Jupiter | _____ Kronos |
| E. Saturn | _____ Ares |
| F. Neptune | _____ Hermes |
| G. Pluto | _____ Zeus |



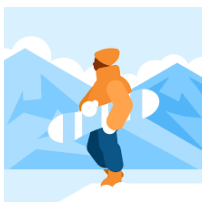
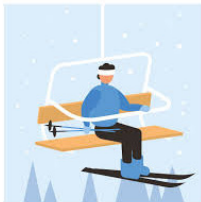
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J I P E D I T N G Z G Z G H K E V U Q V
G B A S K E T B A L L O W Y N Q R Z G E

Winter Sports Word Search

By Evan Pizer, Junior



1. Basketball
2. Indoor Track
3. Skiing
4. Wrestling
5. Ice Skating
6. Slalom
7. Snowboarding
8. Hockey
9. Bobsledding
10. Snowshoeing
11. Toboggan
12. Ice Dancing
13. Curling



President Green Addresses the Student Body

Dear constituents of Onteora,

Hello! I’m the Senior Class President, Fiona Green. I’ve been serving as President for almost two years now. Along with hosting fundraisers in student council, I’m a captain of the Cross Country and Track teams, a member of Science Olympiad, a delegate of Harvard Model Congress, and a founding member of Onteora’s up and coming Debate Club! I also love to paint, draw, and journal in my spare time.

For the 2025-2026 school year, the student government is working to boost student mental health, put more feminine hygienic products in the bathrooms, add festive decorations to the hallways, and improve the gym dress code.

The senior student council also will be hosting a Valentine’s Day dance later to liven the month of February, so stay tuned to find out more!

If you have any questions, requests, or ideas, feel free to contact myself or any other member of the senior student government: Adam Grady (Vice President), Shelby Buryk (Treasurer), Nico Stackpole (Secretary), and Delilah Lieberman (Student Representative).

ATTENTION SENIORS! Make sure to fill out your merchandise forms, they are due December 1st! Along with the merch forms, please remain attentive to any future fundraisers. We are looking to have more restaurant events after the success at Chipotle in October. Feel free to suggest any fundraisers or ask any questions!

As we enter the holiday season, I wish you all a happy and festive end to 2025. To seniors, good luck with college applications, and to the rest of you, good luck in school and try to have some fun!!

Until next time,

Fiona Green



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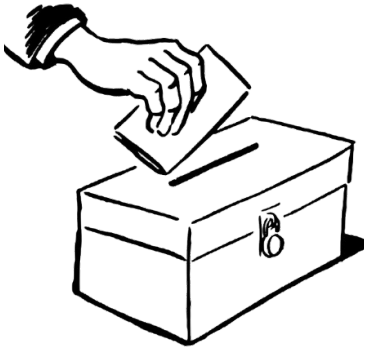
Off-Year Election Victories Favor Democrats

By Lucia McDonagh, Senior

Right on the other side of the river, in Dutchess County, Democrats flipped five seats in the legislature, successfully turning it blue for the first time since 2008. In legislature races, Trevor Redl, Emma Arnoff, Anna Shah, Alix Winsby, and Eric Alexander all defeated their Republican opposition, and they will take office in 2026. Kara Gerry defeated Republican incumbent Judge McLoughlin 40,964 to 32,209 votes in the County Court Judge race, securing the position for a ten-year term. Dan Amyar-Blair defeated Will Truitt 40,358 to 32,997 votes for the countywide role of Comptroller. The Comptroller oversees the county’s finances and budget.

In Virginia, Democrat Abigail Spanberger flipped the Governor's office by an insane margin, taking her place as the first woman to be elected to this position. Her main issues that she has highlighted in her campaign are: jobs in Virginia and the cost of living. She has also shown her support on abortion rights issues.

A little closer to home in New Jersey, moderate Democrat Mikie Sherrill kept the state governor's office blue. Her main focuses center around electricity rates and mental health in schools. She is New Jersey’s second female governor, and is a former Navy helicopter pilot.



Student Editorial: Mamdani As Mayor

By Foster Knoche, Junior

On November 4, 2025 democratic-socialist Zohran Mamdani won the NYC mayoral election with 50.4% of the vote, beating out Cuomo and Sliwa holding 41.6% and 7.1% respectively. NYC utilizes ranked-choice voting, meaning that if no candidate receives a majority in the first round, the second-choices on the ballots are tallied. Despite the race not being at the national level, it certainly has implications for the nation as a whole. Mamdani represents something new for

the Democrats—or perhaps it’s a return to the party’s tradition as one of the working class.

“I wish Andrew Cuomo only the best in private life. But let tonight be the final time I utter his name, as we turn the page on a politics that abandons the many and answers only to the few. New York, tonight you have delivered. A mandate for change. A mandate for a new kind of politics. A mandate for a city we can afford. And a mandate for a government that delivers exactly that.” -Mamdani
Mamdani has focused almost

exclusively on economic policy instead of cultural issues, a welcomed change for most people. Those whose concerns lie in the day-to-day and who find the Democrats “wokeness” over the top were particularly attracted to the campaign, with these sorts of folks often being more independently oriented. Most within the independent demographic aren’t pure centrists, generally supporting specific left-wing economic policies, while opposing the Democrat’s social/cultural views. This strategy has clearly been successful.

Mamdani has a few main policies that he wants to implement—free and fast buses, free childcare, the opening of five state-run affordable grocery stores, a rent freeze on rent-controlled units, and an increase of the minimum wage to \$30 an hour, over time. Despite the potentially scary label of “democratic-socialist”, these policies are nothing to be afraid of, most of them existing in numerous places where they aren’t seen as radical. These policies are at the bedrock of Mamdani’s success, although his skills as an orator and strategist certainly buttressed his campaign.

Voters are tired of nothing more than platitudes and promises. This sort of style-focused, substance-devoid form of politics that most voters detest is exemplified in Cuomo; while Mamdani ran on concrete, tangible policy, Cuomo failed to offer a solidified vision for the future. No matter your beliefs, remember that policy—not aesthetics—should be the basis of politics, and that, perhaps, the culture war should be set aside.



Courtesy of Creative Commons

Movie Review: Superman — Overloaded?

By Jade Belfiore, Junior

Hollywood churns out huge, action-packed movies with loads of special effects, and *Superman* is no exception. I’ve always leaned toward slower movies that feel moving and create an emotional effect so it probably comes as no surprise that I’m not a huge fan of superhero movies. They’re overstuffed with various themes and characters, and I find it hard to focus on the story’s message amid the background noise. *Superman* tries to do a lot at once, with themes of identity, hope, and belonging. Throughout the movie the title character, Superman, experiences a relationship shift with his love interest, Lois Lane, creating conflict all on its own. Superman also struggles with his sense of identity and grapples with his role as an alien from an-

other planet. The filmmakers incorporate a huge cast of characters, each with their own unique story and background. Superman’s dog, Krypto, is a fun and humorous sidekick throughout the story. His friends at Metropolis, where he works his day job as a journalist, give us insight into his daily life. All of these fun characters are what make the comic books and other movies so exciting to watch and read about, but fitting them all into one movie makes it unfocused and



Courtesy of Creative Commons

leaves me feeling unsatisfied. While *Superman* has a convoluted plotline, the characters are relatable and complex. Historically, female characters often don't play a significant role in male-focused superhero movies, but I was impressed that Lois Lane, played by Rachel Brenahan, was given a large degree of autonomy and power. Instead of Superman protecting her, Lois actually saves him. Superman, played by David Corenswet, was also given more

complexity in this adaptation. When he learns that his parents sent him to Earth with hidden intentions, he struggles to accept that his family may not have been as perfect as he once believed. It’s less about him “saving the day,” and more about his flaws and internal struggles. While the movie has fun and relatable aspects, too much is going on at once. The filmmakers pile on themes, subplots, and flashy action without giving them much room to breathe. With technology and social media more prominent today than ever, it leaves me to wonder; is this overstuffed, action-packed type of movie an exception, or an overall trend in movie culture? I, for one, hope that it is an exception.

Book Review: Cloud Cuckoo Land

By Rama Gabriel, Sophomore

Many novels are set around one specific story, one plot, one perspective. The reader sees things through one lens of one person. *Cloud Cuckoo Land*, a fiction novel by Anthony Doerr, explores the idea of intertwining plots, multiple perspectives, and different time periods. Thus, the reader is able to spectate things from an outside perspective and absorb many concepts that exceed the scope of the average book. Looking at how one story can affect so many people years apart allows the reader to truly grasp the importance of the concepts covered. *Cloud Cuckoo Land*, by Anthony Doerr, starts off in what the book calls “Mission Year 65,” set in the “not so distant” future. Konstance, a young girl riding on a ship called “The Argos”, is the first of five characters whose perspective is shown. She sits in a vault collecting knowledge from the past, through various records of history she now has access to. She finds scraps of the story of Aethon, a tale of one who longs to be turned into a bird so that he can fly to a utopian

paradise in the sky. The reader is then taken to the fifteenth century, within the walls of Constantinople, where an orphan named Anna resides. In a city so famous for its libraries, she learns to read, and discovers Aethon’s story as well. While she sits behind the walls, outside in a more rural area is Omeir, a boy who suffers ridicule, harsh labor, and resource scarcity, eventually crossing paths with Anna. In the present day, Zeno, a man of many decades rehearses a play adaptation of the old story of Aethon, in which children play the roles of the characters. While they rehearse in the town’s library, Seymour, a troubled teenager, plants a bomb amongst the books. While these perspectives seem wildly different and out of touch with one another, Doerr manages to connect them all with the story of Aethon. How one concept can connect so many people, across so many different times, is truly wonderful. In addition, each time period has their own story separate from the overarching

theme, bringing intrigue and wonder throughout it all. I was personally more captured by the present day perspectives, and admired the description of the warm, quiet library in the cold snowy weather. The idea of a peaceful room filled with books, and children rehearsing a story told over generations sounded absolutely magical. I very much enjoyed reading this part of the story, but was not as interested in the other ones. Konstance’s perspective in the future was interesting because I was curious to see a different take on what society’s future might hold. The past perspectives felt much like historical fiction, losing some of the magical elements of the story. Overall, I did enjoy *Cloud Cuckoo Land* by Anthony Doerr, but some parts of the story were better than others. I feel that if I were to read it again, I could enjoy it much more, seeing the intricate details intertwining the characters and their stories in a new light.

Coconut-Coated Thumbprint Cookies

By Talula Kirschner, Senior

Fresh berries picked in the summer make delicious jams, which make perfect gifts for the holidays. But now what to use all this jam for? One of my favorite bakers, Ina Garten, puts a spin on the traditional thumbprint cookie by adding shredded coconut to the outside with an eggwash. This small adjustment makes them look and taste like something way more elaborate than they are. The mix of the soft, thick cookie and the flakey coconut, balanced by the refreshing jam makes them so tasty and addicting. And, a perfect way to use jam from the summer to make cookies for the holidays. In a standing mixer, cream together your butter, sugar, and vanilla. On low speed, add the dry ingredients until its fully combined.

Wrap the dough in plastic wrap and let sit in the fridge for 30 minutes. In the meantime, preheat your oven to 350° and line your baking trays with parchment paper. Make your egg wash by whisking the egg and water together in a bowl. In another bowl, have your coconut flakes ready. Roll the dough into small even balls. Dip them in the egg wash and then roll them in the coconut. Once on the tray, use your thumb or a spoon to make a sizable indentation and fill that in with your jam of choice. Bake for around 15 minutes until they're golden brown. These pair well with tea or coffee and are a perfect treat no matter the occasion. Enjoy!

Ingredients:

- 1 1/2 cup (3 sticks) unsalted butter, at room temperature
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 3 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 egg beaten (for egg wash)
- 1 tablespoon water (for egg wash)
- 7 ounces sweetened flaked coconut
- Jam of choice



Basketball's Harkinsanity Run

By Evan Pizer, Junior

2002 — that is the year Onteora last won any team Sectional Championship. The last time Girls' Basketball brought home the chip was even longer ago in 1998. This year, everyone in the basketball program at Onteora knows: It's time. It's a new era for Onteora Basketball.

Over the past two years, we have conducted a reconstruction of the basketball program with both Girls' and Boys' Varsity teams undergoing a head coach position change, along with supporting coaching staff like Modified and JV coaches. The change worked well on the boys' side when last year the Varsity Basketball team, with new head coach Mark Wilens, turned the program around earning a home playoff game for the first time in two decades.

Coach Brandon Harkin was a big part of that Wilensanity run. Harkin was the lead analyst, tactician and game-film scavenger (he could find game-film even when the opposing coach tried to vaporize the film off the face of the internet.) Harkin was always the calm face for players to turn to on the bench for advice in the heat of the game. Harkin was also the JV coach at the time so he would coach his boys from three to five and then stay for the Varsity practice from five to seven. He also volunteered as a coach for girls and boys AAU travel basketball to cultivate player improvement.

Harkin's hard work and dedication which contributed to the boys' success last year was rewarded when he was offered the role of Girls' Varsity head coach when the position opened up. However, for Harkin who put so much into the boys program, the job offer created a tough choice. Harkin says: "It was an incredibly hard decision. We had so much success on the boys side...When I heard that Coach Occhi was stepping down, it took many conversations and long nights to make the decision. The current group of boys has so much potential and has fully bought into becoming better; it was hard to leave what we had started. ...So overall it was a lot of excitement mixed with some sadness of leaving behind a really great program." Although coaching Girls' Basketball is new to Coach Harkin, he has coached many of the girls before, as he also coaches Girls' Varsity Soccer and is already loved by many of the players. Harkin is always ready for a fun time and fosters team chemistry like no other coach in Onteora history (although Coach Guest and his Burger King runs even after losses is a close second). When asked about how he will continue his proficiency in team chemistry that leads his teams to suc-

cess, Harkin says: "Team chemistry is culture and that will be central to what we do everyday. A huge part of performance comes from energy and how you lift up others. The girls have always done this well and I hope to continue to foster that same mentality. I will also try to keep the tradition of Saturday morning bagels for the team after practice."

This year Harkin is coming for it all. When asked about his goals for this season he says: "Ultimately, like any coach, we want to win the sectional championship. ...But from a day to day perspective,



I want to make an impact on the team's culture. If we can create a positive, winning culture, that will create long term success.

I want everyone in the program from Varsity to Modified to have a growth mindset. If they can learn from a mistake or from a failure, we as a team will be better."

Maybe you haven't thought much about attending girls' games this year. That's okay, because you haven't been enlightened yet. But after hearing Coach Harkin describe the team's playstyle this year, you'll be jumping to get a spot in the student section. "Pace! We are focusing on playing as fast as we can. We want to score easy baskets before the other team is ready. Over the years, the girls have always played some aggres-

sive defense and I want to continue that but we will be focusing a lot on the offensive side. I want players who can create and make reads and not be so focused on running an exact play perfectly. Basketball is chaotic and we are going to plan for that. I hope we average 45 points a game with a large chunk coming from transition. We also have some players that can shoot the ball. I will be pushing and encouraging them to take those open shots more often."

That kind of fast paced, high energy game-play is Must-See-TV. But to pull off a flashy game plan like that, you need an elite crew. And Onteora sure has one. Here is Coach Harkin's take on the players roles this year: "I think everyone will have an important impact and a specific role on the team. Two players last year were nominated to the BCANY (Basketball Coaches Association of New York) Top 50 from our section. I think both of those players will continue to lead the team on and off the court."

Junior Julia Young and sophomore Vivienne Lamb are two young players who can shoot the three ball with Caitlin Clark-like range; both were nominated to the All Section BCANY team last year. Senior veterans include Alexa Hull, who can push the pace and hustle similar to students trying to get past Mr. Pretzman on Mac-N-Cheese day; Sophia Somerstein, who is a lockdown defender and is every ballhandler's nightmare; and Ellie Kothe, whose shiftiness once required an opposing defender to ask for ankle braces in the middle of the game. With a Young Lamb and crew commanding the Hull of the ship, the team looks ready to reclaim land lost since 1998.

We know Harkin is going to do his best to cultivate the most success for the girls team, but the students still need to lock in. It should be agonizing for opposing teams to play in the Onteora nest. In order to defend the nest, this is what Harkin wants to tell the students: "This team is good. There will be ups and downs throughout the season but come the end of February we will be a force. I hope the community will support the basketball program and all winter programs - as we all have been successful!"

Don't take Harkin's word for it. As an athlete in the basketball program and having been coached by Harkin for years, I know him and the Girls Basketball team has the potential to take it home for Onteora this year — and you don't want to miss it. The Harkinsanity run is coming soon and will be legendary.

A Reflection on The Boys' Varsity Soccer Team

By Archie Popp, Junior

At the end of last season, our boys soccer team was in a state of panic. The roster was made up of majority seniors and their coach decided to step down from his position. As a result, the team was left in shambles, with almost no seniority and no idea who would take the coaching position. What would happen to the future of our boys soccer team?

When faced with hardship, our Eagles flew high. Mr. Calinda, our school's beloved track Coach and history teacher, decided to take charge and lead our soccer team to a new peak. He had high aspirations for what our team could do and that manifested within training.

The team had undergone a renovation, with our star attack-

ers off at college, the weight of the team fell to the feet of the defense. Luca Makowski, Samuel Storch, and Emmett and Roy Stellavato came back from the previous year on the defensive line and with one of our team captains, Luc Mil-lenson-Wilens in goal, they were set up for success. With a strong defensive line our Eagles yearned to shut the game down before it

even began, however, like with any team, things don't always go as planned, no matter how much training is undergone.

The season started off with four losses and two draws which was not the result they were looking for. Despite incredible defensive play and goal line clearances, the Eagles struggled on the offensive side.

With a strong defensive line, the offense was left outnumbered and had a very difficult time breaking through the opponents; Coach Calinda decided to make a change. He moved one of the defensive players, Roy Stellavato, to the striker position and had Maks Paynter take his place on the defensive line.

With Roy in the front, he could work together with his midfielders, Captain Asher Cohen and Alex Zapata, and his wingers, Leroi Lewis, and Captain Julian Roeckl. But would this new decision change anything? We would shortly come to find out it would.

On homecoming, our Eagles blew our expectations out of the water, beating Tri-Valley 12-0 and revitalizing the team spirit. The Eagles took this momentum and soared, continuing to win the next four games. The

plan worked and our offense was significantly stronger as a result without losing too much structure

on defense. At the end of the season, Captain Asher Cohen said “Our confidence

was high going into the last three games, but we knew they weren’t going to be easy.” The matches unfortunately ended with two losses and a win. Despite this, the team qualified for Sectionals and were ready for redemption. The Eagles were put up against Spackenkill in the first round, a team they had failed to defeat before and a blight to all Onteora sports teams. In the finale, Spackenkill ended the season in the first round of Sectionals, but with so much against them, our team made it a long way. Seniors on the team, Marvin Umana, Everett James, Jeremy Hubert, Maks Paynter, and Captain Luc Millenson Willins had a great final season and were great leaders on the team. Thanks to them our Boys Soccer team will reach even higher heights next season.



Varstiy Football Closes Out Spectacular Season 5-3

By Alexandra Young, Senior and Evan Pizer, Junior

Onteora football has had a season for the ages. They finished with a 5-3 record. This is incredible as Onteora football has had only 6 wins in the past three seasons combined. It's undisputed that Onteora Football is elite and here to stay.

After each season, Onteora football leaves behind a unique story. That story is written by the players. The heart of the team is each individual player and the dedication, culture and impact they leave behind. In this article we will focus on anecdotes from players so you can hear the story of this remarkable season first hand from the men in the arena.

A great coach can be the driving force behind a team's successful season. Here is Coach Liverani on what he attributes this season's success to:

Football is like life in many ways. There are victories and losses, obstacles and adversities. Unlike any group I have coached over the years, this team knew how to handle adversity. Playing every game with just 14 players, they were grossly outnumbered at every turn. They fought through pain and weariness in their bodies, and outlasted every team on our schedule. At the end of the day, every team has talent, but this particular group has a faith like no other. A faith in something so much bigger than themselves as individuals. They all carried that faith and belief into every game and showed that when you trust in the plan, the outcome takes care of itself, and you can truly play perfect. This team was so special, they were strong and never gave up, and in the end, their work was rewarded.

Team Captain Chase Matteson was an absolute beast on the defensive and offensive end. He served primarily as the teams QB1 and was just as much of a threat on defense, leading the team with an unholy amount of tackles. The mere thought of Chase's hit stick was fear-inducing to opponents. We had to get his take on the season. When asked about the team's success Chase said:

The middle of April last year was when football practices started, our mindset was let's put in the work and have a successful season. At the beginning of the season we didn't even think we would have a team because we only had 14 players. After our first game we realized that it was not about how many kids we had, we won 60-0. Our coaches this year

have stepped up the game and made it a new kind of Onteora football, with new plays and blocking assignments, which made a huge impact.



Courtesy of Simon Circe

You can't do anything if you don't have good blocks. So the main reasons are; new coaching plays and plans, our team as a family, and our heart, how much we all love this game and push ourselves to fight through everything that's going on.

Kyle Berryann can be described as a tall Tyreek Hill. He is speedy with a catching ability that makes it seem like he has glue on his gloves. As a team captain, he played a key role in the team's achievements this season. When questioned about this year's success Team Captain Kyle Berryann said

This team has definitely come a long way. We began practices in April of last year; we started in the weight room getting stronger mentally and physically. We eventually went up to the field and started putting in the new playbook for the season. We had 13 people going into the first game of the season and quickly realized it isn't the amount of people, but rather, it's the heart and the mentality of this new Onteora football team.

We went into the next game with 14 people, same outcome. This team has made its mark and made it known that we are all heart and no quit. We went toe-to-toe with the best two teams in the league and gave them the hardest games of their seasons and came really close to beating them. This season has been a dream come true for this entire team and I think all the seniors can agree that this was the way they wanted to go out. I can't say enough about this team, and the brotherhood and family that we have built within this team, and it has never been stronger. I give this season's success to the mindset we have, to the physical and mental improvements we made throughout last year, and to the family that we have created on and off the football field.

Connor Avery is a starting guard who is a veteran. He is the guy younger players ask questions to and look up to. He is also a Team Captain. Here is what what Connor says about the season.

I attribute this year's team's success to the family that we made. It all comes back to last year. We were a very young team, and because of that, there was room for us all to grow together. Every hardship the team has had we went through together.

Con. next page

The football team also has many young stars like Jameer Maize, Jayden Thiel, Marty Berhman, Dante Guido and Will Barron along with many more. This football season has been incredible and there are many years of prosperity to come. The future is bright for Onteora Football.



2025 Onteora Roster

- 70 Conner Avery
- 7 Will Barron
- 52 Marty Berhman
- 8 Kyle Berryann
- 4 Donald Bloomer
- 14 Julian Bovee
- 64 Johnny Davis
- 10 Henry Fox
- 54 Connor Gierloff
- 5 Dante Guido
- 24 Jameer Maize

- 13 Chase Matteson
- 55 River Raymond
- 33 Josh Otis
- 11 Jayden Thiel



Student Editorial: How Did We Get Here?

By Foster Knoche, Junior

People may say the world is more prosperous than ever, that abundance is the defining feature of today. This optimism is a distortion of reality. The poorer half of the world possesses around 1% of the world's assets, while the top 1% possesses roughly half. Just eight people possess more wealth than the bottom half. We are told these people deserve their wealth, that their “entrepreneurial spirit” can’t be replicated by us peasants. Even the notion that maybe, just maybe, business owners aren’t the creators of value within society, and that perhaps workers who get paid scraps are, is seen as extremist.

If you have the conception that billionaires are uniquely talented, ask yourself: is the labor of eight people worth that of four billion? With that much wealth, you might wonder what billionaires do with it. Some think it just sits there, which isn’t true, but it also doesn’t all go into productive investments. Billionaires often utilize firms like Black Rock or Vanguard to manage their wealth; much of it ends up going into investments that inflate asset prices instead of helping society through loans to small businesses.

Housing prices—adjusted for inflation—have doubled the past 50 years. The average US home costs \$650,000. The largest contributor to this trend is the deregulation of mortgage markets starting in the ‘80s, meaning banks can give out mortgages with fewer requirements. This increases competition, raising house prices. More vacant homes exist than homeless people

in the US, yet this surplus isn’t utilized the way it should be for the public good.

You might think the housing issue is exaggerated and wages have grown to match the cost. Well they haven’t. Real wages have declined in the US for a while, and it doesn’t seem like it’s going to improve. With ease billionaires can move their factories around in the 21st century, and unions—which protect workers wages—are becoming less powerful. Don’t like getting treated like fodder? Too bad! Billionaires can pack up shop and move their factories to Indonesia or Bangladesh.

How did this happen? The main reason is the change in economic policy starting in the ‘80s. Reagan usually gets blamed due to his policies like tax cuts and deregulation favoring the wealthy, but the issue goes beyond him. Democrats wasted no time abandoning their values and conceding their economic platform to the wealthy. When Bill Clinton was elected, all guise of the Democrats helping working people disappeared.

Obama is one instance of a Democratic president's fiscal policy going against workers’ interests. Despite the narrative of him “getting us out of the recession,” he actually prolonged it. The amount of money injected into the economy

was around \$700 billion, but the common amount proposed by economists was \$1.5 trillion. This would have led to a faster economic recovery. Obama also played into the narrative that our government is “going broke,” a meaningless statement only reducing support of programs that might help people.

You might be doubtful of my claim that Democrats and Republicans have the same basic economic



Courtesy of Creative Commons

platform, but to understand their similarity—you must look at their policies from the mid-20th century. US top marginal income tax rate never dipped below 79% from 1936–1963, with a peak at 94%. The current-day Democratic party would never dare to advocate for even the bottom rung of that range.

Republicans of this era supported similar tax rates; under Eisenhower, the tax rate was lowered by 1%, from 92% to 91%. Our two parties are infinitely closer to each other in economic policy today than 60 years ago. The points on which they do vary economically are mostly talk, usually with little action.

Money infiltrates poli-

tics through direct lobbying, as well as PACs which support campaign advertising, but also by indirect means such as the funding of borderline pseudo-science “economist” think tanks, whose framework is based upon assumptions made in the 1800s. Not all of economics should be thrown out of course, but the neoclassical school which has dominated since the 1980s needs dire reform.

The ideology is based upon privatization and deregulation of businesses, leading to an outflow of capital and jobs to countries with cheaper labor/lower taxes, and in some extreme cases, basic services such as the legal system to be privatized.

If both parties are complacent, what do you do? There are multiple proposals to attempt to change this situation, usually revolving around the creation of external political organizations. Solutions undoubtedly require abandonment of our current political sphere, and a recognition of the desperate state we’re in.

Most people that recognize these issues are Sander-adjacent Democrats, which makes sense considering the mainstream alternatives. Even though it might not immediately seem this way, a large portion of Trump supporters

also recognize these economic issues. The solution to the housing crisis from the Right’s perspective is deportations, and many left-wingers neglect to recognize this component of anti-immigration sentiment.

The populist right/MAGA argue undocumented immigrants increase demand for housing—which boosts prices—and depreciate wages by working for sub-minimum wage. Recognizing this doesn’t mean you have to concede the point of immigration. We don’t need to force people out to make space for cheaper housing; there are better methods of lowering housing prices.

Since mainstream Democrats don’t recognize our dire economic situation, space is left for right-wing populism to take over. If you want to look into potential solutions for the housing crisis, examine the policies of countries with the highest homeowner-ship rate. The only way our current economy will solve housing prices is through the same mechanism that occurred during the Great Recession—a massive housing crash with disastrous economic implications.

This article may make me sound hopeless, but hopelessness doesn’t do anything. Pure hopelessness, without a belief in an alternative system, just supports the current orthodoxy robbing us of our futures. If people are hopeless, nothing will change, but in the other direction—holding a sense of unbridled optimism—the world will worsen as you sit by and ignore those who suffer from its faults.

Love Despite it All

By Jenny Albright, Senior

In a world not only plagued, but defined by violence and rage, there has to be a radical movement of the opposite: love, care, community, and most importantly, hope. Under all other contexts, hope would not be “radical” but a given—something that is inherent within a person and a society. But, as one could very well argue, we are not within a “normal” context: the ability to see handheld death in real time, followed by the selling of yet another product one definitely does not need, followed by something so utterly stupid one cannot help but laugh, creates a reality far beyond what we as humans are accustomed to. We no longer live within a “normal” context, and that has made even the basic feelings of love, hope, and care, into radical sensations.

Of course it must be stated that this is a cynical opinion to hold; there is still good in the world even though we more often see the bad, but, so as to not let this bubble of cynicism become reality, radical care must be implemented by us all. How can we do this? How do we, as both parts and wholes, spread such actions and messages between one another?

There are two main avenues:

online and offline. Most of us have seen the “hopecore” reels on Instagram or TikTok, the 30 second snippets of serene nature and loved ones meeting after years apart, but these are temporary moments within hours and days. Photos of sleeping cats and friends together with black and white text pasted atop them, while they cannot be completely dismissed, are merely just performative. They are, well,... useless! Their good intentions rarely inspire actions beyond the screens. So, while online platforms can be a place for hope to be fostered, this article will not touch on online communities, and instead focus on what is tangible: the real world.

Step One: Log off. There is a world outside of the rectangle within your hand, pocket, or bag. Turn it off and put it away; place it where you’ll forget it. (Within logic—if you are going far or going outside, bring it).

Step Two: Get out of your home, whether it be physically or with your actions. Whether this means baking for a community event or volunteering one’s time, any action performed for others—meaning besides yourself and your immediate family—is bringing that

care and hope back into the community in great amounts. It does not have to be a grand action—no millions of dollars donated or kittens saved from fires—it’s the intentions behind it that matters: if the intent is to bring love, it is love that will be felt.

Step Three: Repeat. This is the key step. Do not let these actions be once in a blue moon. For there to be hope within a community, and thus hope within oneself, these must be consistent. Like previously stated, they do not have to be grand actions—but small, consistent, and intentional. Donating a million dollars once means less than donating 10 dollars a month, over hundreds of months.

Step Four: Do not forget yourself, though. Remember that you are also human, also deserving of this care and hope. Do not let burnout suck every ounce of kindness from your marrow. Within the community, and the love that comes with it, there is always time for an individual to focus on maintaining themselves while not completely disconnecting from their surroundings. This is not seen often, with many people and their peers fostering an environment of working until you drop, but

it should be. Good communities have places and time for people to recharge, so to speak. Eat well, sleep well, and most importantly, know when it is your time to pass the torch to another person and take up a smaller activity. It is not failure to take something off one’s plate, merely lightening the load.

The crux of community is having a hand to catch you when you fall. Right now, that hand has slowly moved away and been replaced by a glare. There are still people in the world that bring hope, love, and care—making it so radical it becomes a crucial part of themselves, and we can all become one of those people. The first step is to show up, and that is always the hardest part. So do it scared; do it shaking and and trembling. All that matters is that you do it, and the rest takes you from there.



Food Myths Debunked

By Azahrax Tehrani, Junior

Listening to people talk makes me cry! Tears stream down my face when I hear the lack of critical thinking that goes into most people's nutrition advice. I don't see any way that this is getting better, so I am going to debunk some of the most well publicized health myths.

Contrary to popular belief, spreading bad nutrition information did not start with Instagram, Facebook, or Twitter. This is a tale as old as time. I can just picture a lady in a colorful 90s jumpsuit telling the world that carbs are bad and they will make you fat. Don't fall for shams like this. Science says: carbs are a wonderful part of any well-balanced diet. Carbohydrates give you energy, store water in your body, and fill up your muscles.

Carbohydrates are an essential macronutrient. However, the statement that carbs will make you fat is not entirely wrong— an excess of anything with calories will cause you to gain

weight. This is why we need to think critically about what we hear because if your diet consists of a moderate amount of carbs, it will be extremely beneficial, and making overgeneralised statements that have only an ounce of truth in them is hurting people and making the spouter of this hogwash look like an imbecile.

“WHEN I STOPPED EATING SEED OILS I LOST 50LBS!” Seed oils are probably the single most unjustly demonized food out there. If you turn on your brain for about 1 millisecond and look at the scientific literature you will see a grand total of 0 studies, 0 meta analysis, and 0 of any other kind of evidence that seed oils are more harmful than animal derived fats such as butter, or beef tallow.

Shut out the noise. According to the multitudes of papers, studies, and meta-analyses, seed oils, when compared to animal derived fats, lessen inflammation, blood pressure, and LDL cholesterol. If you don't believe me please go to Pubmed and look for yourself. It is imperative that we stop demonizing normal foods, and that we stop spreading misinformation.

Energy drinks are near and dear to my heart, and I'm often told by kids and adults alike that my heart is going to explode. The response that usually comes to my head is “shut up, stupid” but that's mean and it's not their fault that they don't know the facts. Caffeine is a drug with numerous benefits like increased focus, increased

alertness, and appetite suppression. I feel obligated to say that water is always a better choice to drink, and that you should not consume too much caffeine in a day because it can hurt your sleep and have other adverse side effects.

“If you can't pronounce it you shouldn't eat it.” This statement single handedly made me lose faith in humanity's ability to think critically. According to this logic, chemists can eat whatever they want and you and I can eat arsenic. Sometimes chemicals are in our food, and a lot of them are fine for human consumption. If you want to know if a chemical in something is dangerous look up what it is and what the safe dose is (everything has a safe and unsafe dose, be it water, kale or maltodextrin).

Now, there are some things in our food products that can have adverse affects; some we can pronounce and some we can't. This is another reason why when you hear or read advice like this you need to stop and think for a second.

We can do better. We will do better. Critical thinking is in short supply nowadays, and I hope I have helped you sort though a little bit of poppycock today. I encourage you to look up anything that you need to check in this article. (Make sure it's on a reliable site, like PubMed). If you are trying to change your body though dieting my intent in this article was to make it easier.



By Jack Goodman, Sophomore

Q: What is the best Thanksgiving food?



Destiny Parker, Sophomore
“Stuffing, because I enjoy it.”



Katie Ostrander, Sophomore
“Turkey, because my dad makes it on the grill, and it's really really good. He seasons it really well.”



Henry Fox, Sophomore
“Sweet potato casserole. It’s warm and sweet with marshmallows. And, there’s always enough of it.”



Jade Stanley, Freshman
“Mashed potatoes, because they taste really good.”



Alana Walker, Freshman
“Mashed potatoes. I just really like mashed potatoes.”



Alex Burgenn, Freshman
“Stuffing. The flavor melts on my tongue.”



Jesper Peacock, Sophomore
“Turkey. It’s the first thing that came to mind.”



Nyah Grusell, Sophomore
“Irish sodabread. My grandparents are Irish so we use a family recipe.”

Abigail Leach, Sophomore
“The best Thanksgiving food is mashed potatoes. I stand by that. If I could eat any food for the rest of my life it would be potatoes. ”

Vanessa Flores, Sophomore
“Mashed Potatoes”
“I’m just a big fan of mashed potatoes.”

Maceo Brown, Sophomore
“Mashed Potatoes and gravy. I don't know, something about it tastes really good.”

Scholastic Art and Writing Awards: What To Know

By Jack Goodman, Sophomore

With an opportunity of winning prestigious scholarships, students are eligible to submit their own art and show off their writing skills in this year’s Scholastic Art and Writing Awards.

The Scholastic Art and Writing Awards is a reputable program for students in the nation who thrive creatively. Since 1923, the Scholastic Art and Writing Awards has sustainably been the oldest and most distinguished writing and art rewards for 7-12 grade students in the United States and Canada. It consists of 28 divided art and literature categories. Some of these categories consist of photography genres, short stories, painting, and digital art.

Highly rated professionals work on a judging panel, viewing nearly 340,000 works each year. Deadlines vary, depending on the region. For Onteora Central School District, the deadline for art categories is

January 6th, and December 8th for writing categories. Entries begin October 1st of 2025, so be sure to work diligently for a chance to win up to \$12,500 in scholarship money .

Money isn’t the only prize, however. Winning a prize at the Scholastic Art and Writing Awards can grant you national recognition. The awards consist of different levels, starting regional, the highest award you can achieve would be the Gold Key, which is the highest regional honor. Then, the Silver Key, and an Honorable Mention. The national awards consist of the Gold Medal, Silver Medal with distinction, and lastly the Silver Medal.

If you are looking to win a good reputation in creative fields and submit your work, you would need to create an account within The Scholastic Awards portal. You can create this account on the Scholastic Art and Writing Awards website,

by linking to a school. From there on you would need to upload your work, each category has specific qualifications, so make sure you know exactly what your category requires. Each entry has a small fee of \$10 per individual, and \$30 per portfolio. However, if an entry fee isn’t accessible to you, you have the option to select a “Fee Waiver” option. If you are in the position to pay, it is encouraged that you do to further help support the program, and ensure its longevity.

What can you do to help ensure you have a chance at winning these awards?:

1. Create original work. Centering your work on an original concept and perspective can demonstrate to the judging panels that you have individuality and creativity within your work. This can help show your artistic approach.

2. Don’t be afraid to ask for feedback. Be open to advice from mentors and teachers. Teachers

may know what the judging panel is looking for, and can further check for grammatical mishaps or errors you may have encountered.

3. Double check it. It is important to look over your piece for mistakes. Even recreating your piece a second time is a good tool to use to capture anything you might have missed originally. Be sure to check if your piece properly fits the criteria.

4. Most importantly, use your own voice when creating your masterpiece. Create a piece that resonates with you, and don’t be afraid to show emotion.

If you’re looking for a future within creative fields, the Scholastic Art and Writing Awards is a great place to start. With a national reputation of skill, talent, and expertise, you’ll gain a valuable insight you would not want to miss.

Horror-Scopes

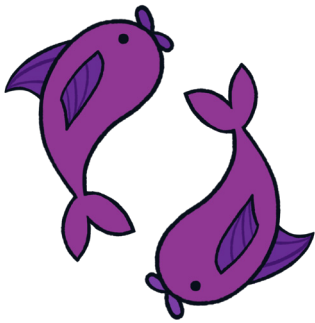
By Delilah Lieberman, Senior



Capricorn (December 22 – January 19)
Capricorn, you're humor is amusing
Anyone who doubted your comedic self is losing
Keep cracking those jokes, because they're landing great
But please arrive to school on time, stop being late.



Aquarius (January 20 – February 18)
Aquarius, stay away from frozen food for a while
I know those pepperoni pizzas are kind of your style
But one of them is going to do you oh so wrong
And the repercussions you receive will be annoying and long.



Pisces (February 19 – March 20)
Pisces, you're always looking stylish and swell
Your outfits are worth strutting the halls between each bell
But stop gatekeeping the outlets for the pieces you buy
The least you can do is share your fashion, no need to lie!



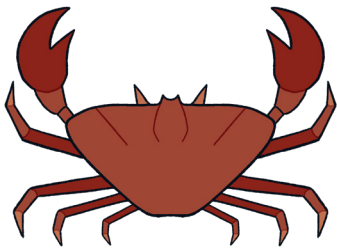
Aries (March 21 – April 19)
Aries, it's time to invest in a wallet
If your ID gets lost, there's no number to call it
You must get better at keeping track of your things
"Please get a wallet!" Everyone sings.



Taurus (April 20 – May 20)
Taurus, you've knocked it out of the park
You've emerged from your shell, climbed out from the dark
Now it's time to make your voice heard
Because your effort is as beautiful as a colorful bird!



Gemini (May 21 – June 20)
Gemini, you must appreciate what you possess
Find comfort in relaxing, take a nap, destress
Notice the little things around you that make you smile
Because the road to success may take quite a while.



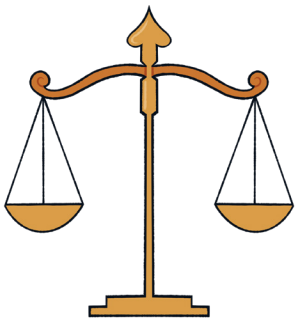
Cancer (June 21 – July 22)
Cancer, I know you want to go out and have fun
So do it! Take a bath underneath the sun
And let those rays glow on your skin
You've done so much, you deserve a win!



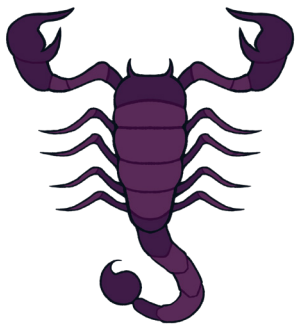
Leo (July 23 – August 22)
Leo, I've been looking at the history on your google doc
I'm not sure how you used AI, I thought it was blocked
But it's time to lock in; do the work yourself
Intelligence is what will bring you wealth!



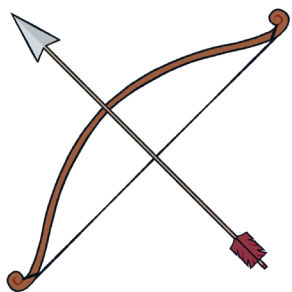
Virgo (August 23 – September 22)
Virgo, don't give up, you're almost there
You've taken the steps, you've changed your hair
Your healing journey has progressed a bunch
So treat yourself to an amazing lunch.



Libra (September 23 – October 22)
Libra, you always know just what to do
But you must let others around you discover something new
When you answer every question with your gift of a brain
It'll keep others from the knowledge that they've yet to attain.



Scorpio (October 23 – November 21)
Scorpio, don't be discouraged from your past
It's okay to take things slow, to come in last
Because you're trying your best, and that's all that matters.
You don't have to climb without help, try using a ladder.



Sagittarius (November 22 – December 21)
Sagittarius, it's been quite a year.
But even though school is tough, you are still here
I'm proud of the accomplishments that you have made
So live in the moment because eventually, it will fade.

Jammin'

By Shelby Buryk, Senior

By Milo Lieberman, Senior



Loading Dock Entrance—still under construction. Check back in for updates next issue!



Freshly painted crosswalk at the West End Entrance.



New drop-off lane at the West End. Complete and functional.

Welcome Back To Austin's Safety Corner!

By Austin Otis, Sophomore

The Titanic sank on April 14th, 1912. People said it could never sink...but it did. Due to lack of safety practices, the Titan Expeditionary Sub imploded on June 18th, 2023. These deadly accidents were from people thinking a disaster couldn't happen to them and a lack of safety practices. We may not be going on the ocean often, but we are sailing on the internet every day and people are not careful enough. Pressing on links that look too good to be true, or claim that you will get free stuff, are suspicious. Now, how does this tie into Titanic and Titan Sub Disasters? Well, you see, both the Titanic and the Titan engineers and crew displayed a lack of care for safety. Titanic Captain Edward John Smith ignored multiple iceberg warnings, while Titan Expeditionary Sub Captain Stockton Rush ignored safety concerns. Online Safety is the practice of being safe online. This includes protecting accounts, not sharing personal information, and reporting unsafe, suspicious, or illegal behavior you see online. Some of these behaviors are refund scams, social security scams, tax scams, Microsoft Hack Scams, or credit card scams.

- Tips to help you out:**
- Know what website you are on
 - Do not give personal information either on the phone or online
 - If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is. This includes "Free Robux", "Free Items", "Free Money", "Doubling Robux"
 - Sometimes people or bots will falsely claim that they are homeless or are donating to someone. This is often not true. These types of scams can take place on platforms like Roblox and on Roblox experiences.

Thank you for listening, and stay safe!

