

# The High Times

SINCE 1933

RIDGEWOOD, December 2017

VOLUME LXXXIII No. 3

## No-Shave November

*The Story Behind the Fund-Razor*



**James Ellinghaus**  
staff writer

Every November since 2009, thousands of people have been participating in the social media phenomenon “No-Shave November.” Throughout the entire month, our Facebooks and Instagrams are flooded with pictures of bearded men and hairy-legged women, captioned “#NoShaveNovember #LetItGrow.” Most people are familiar with this trend, but do they know why they are doing it? It is not because they are lazy, or have superstitions about shaving; the movement has a much deeper meaning. No-Shave November is a web-based, nonprofit organization with the mission of “growing cancer awareness and raising funds to support cancer prevention, research, and education.”

The No-Shave November Organization was founded in 2009 by the Hill family in Chicago, after the family lost their loving father of eight, Matthew Hill, to colon cancer in 2007. To honor their father’s legacy, the Hills encourage others to stop spending money on razor blades and shaving cream for one month, and instead donate the money to the family’s cause. They urge all participants during No-Shave November to treasure their hair for the many cancer patients who have lost their hair while

undergoing chemotherapy. Started as a simple Facebook page for a few family and friends, it is now a nationwide movement embraced by Americans nationwide. Participants in the No-Shave November campaign have helped the family expand their organization and raise over two million dollars.

No-Shave November’s influence has spread across the country, but has it spread to Ridgewood High School students? Certain students were asked if they participated in No-Shave November. Mike Rego, a sophomore at RHS, said, “I personally do not need to shave, but I have not gotten a haircut yet. I have not donated any money to any organization.” Davis Flusche, also a sophomore, explains, “I have been participating in No-Shave November this year. I think it’s a great cause, but my family and I haven’t made a donation yet.” No-Shave November is not limited to only guys; girls can participate too. An RHS sophomore, Nora Donnelly, says that she has heard of No-Shave November, but is not participating in it this year. However, she notes that her family has made some donations to support the cause. It seems that while many RHS students have heard of No-Shave November,

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## De-Tweetful

**Annie Probert**  
staff writer

Nearly one year ago, 28 year-old Edgar Welch fired three shots with his AR-15 rifle into the Comet Ping Pong Pizzeria in an attempt to “self-investigate” the now-debunked Pizzagate Conspiracy. The theory gained popularity during the 2016 Presidential Elections, thanks to alt-right



Taylor Donovan

## French Exchange

**Derya Ekin**  
staff writer

At 10 PM on Friday, October 20th, twenty RHS students gathered at outside the school to pick up their newly arrived French Exchange Students. The students had arrived from Lille, a city in Northern France. Exhausted from a long trip yet excited to have arrived, the French students unpacked their bags and began to settle into the homes where would be staying for the next ten days. Each exchange student had been eager to visit the United States their whole lives. The group of French students were asked, “Who has traveled to America before?” and only one student responded “yes.” The exchange students were beyond excited to begin their stay in Ridgewood with their American student and learn about their daily lives.

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RHS French Students

Twitter accounts speculating that the Democratic Party was linked to a pedophilic human trafficking ring. Welch told officers that he had read the story online and was attempting to free the children involved in the scheme.

This incident is an example of a nearly tragic result of fake news. The Comet Ping Pong shooting demonstrated to many Americans that fake news has real consequences, calling into question the role of social networks: whether they are helping to spread the truth or dilute it. With social media’s immense popularity, it is important to consider how these sites affect your interpretation of the news.

Social media has become incredibly popular among American teens and adults today because the sites give people the ability to openly express what they want. Opinions run rampant on social media; moms can rant about their kid’s school’s unhealthy lunches to her Facebook friends, while teens can post about their social life on their finstas, or fake instagrams.

Fake news, of course, is a result of this free speech, because users can speak freely on their profiles; they can circulate distorted news easily without any repercussions.

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## Opinion

Pomptonian Takeover

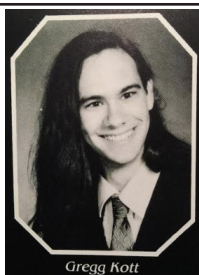
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See what your teachers looked like years ago!

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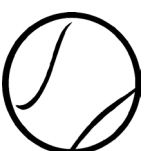
John Lennon’s Legacy

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## Sports

Check out the Girls Tennis Team’s Successes!



# The Simple Myth of Thanksgiving

Anika Tsapatsaris

Danielle Poole  
staff writer

We share Thanksgiving with family and friends, commemorating the holiday with parades and feasts of delicious food. While we enjoy these traditions annually, we hardly think about the history behind the celebration. Some scholars are uncertain as to whether the feast at Plymouth really constituted the first Thanksgiving. Historians have recorded similar ceremonies among European settlers in North America which predate the Pilgrims’ celebration. Many people imagine that Thanksgiving originated with the Mayflower crossing the Massachusetts Bay, where the “Pilgrims” established a village at Plymouth. They did not refer to them-

selves as Pilgrims; rather, they called themselves “Saints”. Early Americans applied the term “Pilgrims” to all of the early colonists; until the 20th century, it was not used solely to describe those who landed on Plymouth Rock, where there is no actual rock. In November of 1621, after the Pilgrims’ first corn harvest proved successful, Governor William Bradford organized a celebratory feast and may have invited a group of Native Americans who were “allies” of the fledgling colonies. Although the Pilgrims are thought to have been happily feasting away, they were in fact celebrating a successful harvest by shooting guns and cannons into the air. The Wampanoag chief and 90 warriors made their way to the settlement in full warrior regalia

in response to the gunfire. Scholars still question whether the Native Americans were invited or crashed the party. Many have heard the story of the friendly Native American Squanto who learned English from fishermen and later taught the Pilgrims how to plant corn and other vegetables. Most history books do not inform us that Squanto was kidnapped as a boy and sold into slavery in Spain. After several years, Squanto struggled to get back to Cape Cod, from where he was kidnapped. Upon returning, he discovered he was the only remaining member of his tribe; the rest were either killed in battle or died of disease. It is often believed that Squanto learned English solely to help the colonists, but it was a necessity to facili-

tate his escape in order to return home. Some Americans take issue with the way in which the Thanksgiving story is presented to the public, and especially to schoolchildren. In their view, the traditional narrative paints a deceptively sunny portrait of relations between the Pilgrims and the Wampanoag people, masking a long and bloody conflict that resulted in the deaths of millions. President Abraham Lincoln himself referenced the fantasy of the Pilgrims and ‘Indians’ eating happily together, to bring about American unity during the Civil War. In many American households nowadays, Thanksgiving has lost much of its original religious significance. It is now centered on cooking and sharing a bountiful meal with loved ones. Turkey, which is a Thanksgiving staple that has become ubiquitous in the celebrating of the holiday, may not have been what the Pilgrims actually ate in 1621. Sweet potatoes were not yet grown in North America and cranberries were not likely eaten for dessert because sugar was an unaffordable luxury. In society today, Thanksgiving is certainly a day to express gratitude. Annie Probert, a junior at RHS, spends Thanksgiving reflecting on the things for which she is thankful. “I’m grateful for my family, friends, and teachers for the nurturing environment they’ve provided me with,” says Probert. Despite the myths and controversies from which the holiday of Thanksgiving originates, it is a day filled with delicious food and acknowledgment of all that we appreciate.



Anika Tsapatsaris

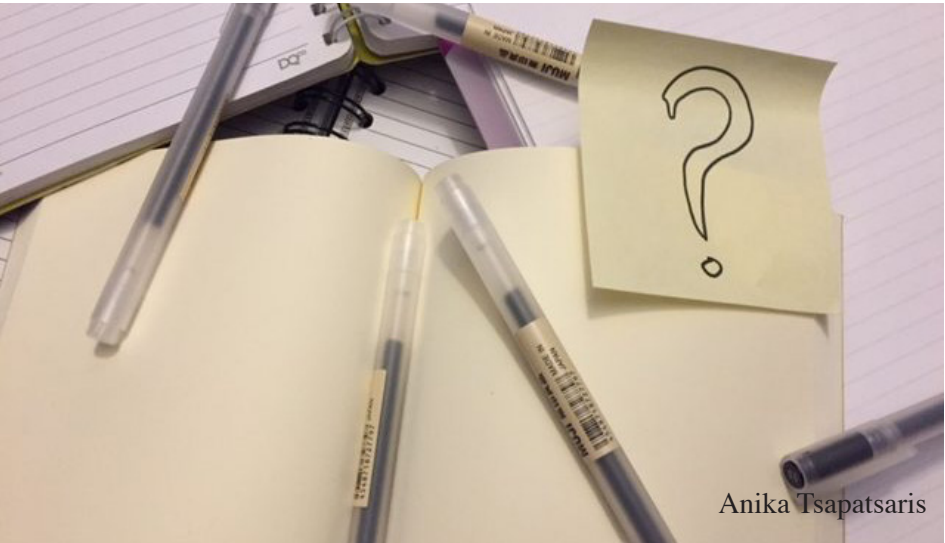
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## Deceitful Tweets

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Fake news was a topic for debate especially during the 2016 Presidential Election, with Facebook users sharing untrue articles with claims such as the Pope being a supporter of Donald Trump. Trump’s son Eric and campaign manager Kellyanne Conway shared fake news stories, showing that people in any position can spread fake news. It is important to question how social media sites allow this to happen. Isn’t there some way to control these counterfeit stories and more correctly inform all Americans? Social media sites like Facebook are taking baby steps to address the problem. In November of 2016, the founder of Facebook, Mark Zuckerberg, assured users that the social networking company would allow users to identify articles they perceived as misleading or full of false news. Facebook would then not only send these links to Snopes, a

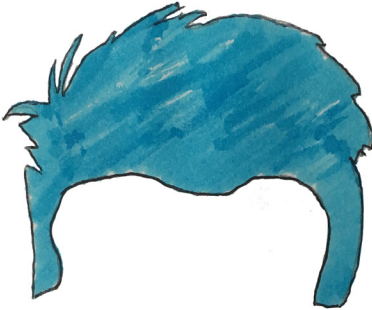
reputable fact-checking website, but also prevent them from popping up on user’s time lines. Although these seem like big steps to eliminate fake news, keep in mind that the Comet Ping Pong Pizzeria shooting occurred a few weeks after Zuckerberg claimed Facebook would be engaging in anti-fake-news actions. Fake news is a challenging conflict for social media companies to solve, because of technological and ethical reasons. They do not want to constrain the free speech their users deserve. It is also difficult for their staff to oversee the millions of articles shared on their sites daily. Although it may seem impossible to reverse the wide influence of fake news, false information can be detected easily using critical thinking and deductive reasoning. Next time you read an article from Facebook or Snapchat consider the author and the validity of the site. Is it fake news?



Anika Tsapatsaris

## Fund-Razor

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Daniel Greenman

only some of them are participating, and a few are giving donations to the cause. This year, the No-Shave November Organization is working with the Prevent Cancer Foundation, Fight Colorectal Cancer, and St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital to spread cancer awareness and raise donations. If you are interested in participating and donating, it is not too late. Making a contribution is easy; it is as simple as putting down your razor for a month. The No-Shave November website allows you to sign up and create your own personal fund raising page. Every single donation you make will go towards researching new treatments, bringing scientists one step closer to finding a cure for all cancers. Just put down the razors and let your hair grow!

# The Next Governor Sets the Stage

Talia Rosen  
news editor

In November, New Jersey citizens walked into the voting booths to place their vote for the governor following Chris Christie, who was ineligible for reelection after two terms. With 55.64% of the vote, Democratic candidate Philip D. Murphy was chosen over Republican Kim Guadagno. Alongside Lieutenant Governor Sheila Oliver, Murphy will lead New Jersey for at least the next four years.

As a former Wall Street banker, Phil Murphy has no experience in office. In relation to the current political scene, Murphy stands against President Trump’s policies, unlike Christie who supported Trump throughout his 2016 presidential campaign. Murphy’s victory was pivotal for the Democratic party, bringing an end to the reign of Governor Christie. After the election, New Jersey has become the seventh state in the nation where Democrats control the legislative and executive branches.

Like any other politician, it may be difficult for Murphy to deliver on his numerous promises. Mr. Murphy promotes liberal causes, including a \$15 dollar minimum wage and the legalization of marijuana. This will be a major

shift in New Jersey’s reputation, as they have elected moderate governors in the past. Murphy mentioned that, “this is the first major election since Donald Trump was elected.” He continued, saying that the state has sent a message to the country, “we are better than this,” in regards to the Trump administration. The next New Jersey governor will stand strong against the President while embracing unions, gun control, and raising taxes on the wealthy.

In connection to our own community of Ridgewood, a few summers ago, the State Board of Education made the PARCC tests a requirement for New Jersey graduation in public schools. As most RHS students are aware, the majority of eligible students refuse to take the test. Certain educational experts agree that tests such as the PARCC are not helpful for students and seem to be outdated. The test has been criticized for taking time away from valuable class lessons. During his campaign for governor, Governor-Elect Murphy stated, “High stakes, high stress standardized tests must end.” He plans on removing the graduation requirement of taking the PARCC test. Instead, Murphy wants to work with the state Department of Education and create a new assessment that



could meet the federal reporting requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act. Although Murphy believes these tests should not be eliminated altogether, he emphasizes the state should not be overly reliant on them.

“We don’t get New Jersey right unless we get our economy right, and we don’t get our economy right unless we get education right,” Murphy stated in relation to the importance of public schools, himself a graduate of public schooling. He concluded that the public schools of New Jersey are what

make the state great but has stressed that past state leaders spent money to help large corporations instead of students. Murphy wants to work with educators to use money in the correct way and create an education system that will help children succeed.

As the Democrats have reclaimed their spot in New Jersey government, citizens look forward to seeing how Phil Murphy will govern. We hope he will positively impact the education system and help each student recognize their full potential.

## French Students Visit RHS

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....Following the first day of adjusting to life in a new home, the French students in many of the Ridgewood families were taken to various places over the weekend. Some went to New York, others to the mall, the movies, or restaurants. Some RHS students wanted to show the French some American traditions by taking them apple picking or carving pumpkins, at the time around Halloween. This culture was unfamiliar to the exchange students and they were engaged in the new, exciting activities.

Early Monday morning, the exchange students arrived at school

to begin their week shadowing the RHS students to all their classes. Picture yourself in a foreign country, sitting in a classroom with teachers talking in a foreign language; these students were put in this situation. Many of the French students pointed out differences between their school in France and Ridgewood High School. They noted that, compared to their school in Lille, the Ridgewood classes focused more heavily on discussions and granted more freedom to the students. During the free periods, the exchange students were pleased to catch up with their fellow students from home to talk in their native language, but also learn more

from their American correspondents outside of class. When the French students were not with their correspondents at school, they gathered in the other French classes to share their experiences with lower-level French students. They were asked questions about their thoughts on America so far, and they taught the RHS students about life in France.

Outside of school, the French Exchange Students had the opportunity to visit New York on Wednesday and Thursday. They came back with plenty of stories about the city. One girl recounted how tall the buildings were and how wide the streets stretched. They were not accustomed to such open and vast city

scapes. It had been a dream of theirs to visit New York City, and now they could check that off their bucket list.

On the last day, all the RHS students brought their French correspondents to a French teacher’s house for a final potluck. Everyone mingled, laughed, and roasted marshmallows together. They reflected on their time in the US and said their last good byes.

There was a bittersweet feeling on everyone’s minds, knowing the French students would be departing for France the next day. RHS French students will have to wait to see their correspondents again until they take their trip to Lille over the April break.



French exchange students first arriving at Ridgewood High

Opinion

Pomptonian Takeover

JT Cambria and Danny Guinan  
staff writers

While it may sound like Poptropica, it’s Pomptonian; the seemingly evil food service provider robbing your parents, making them refill your account every other week because the Pomptonian prices are so astronomically high that only the top one percent of students can buy food. This isn’t democracy. This is tyranny.

However, as revealed in an interview with the head of Pomptonian here at RHS, Maureen DiChiara, although Pomptonian may seem like they are the villains, “[they] are here for YOU, the student, and we care!” Pomptonian is merely a puppet to a larger evil. This monster behind the curtain is someone you have known and dealt with every single day: the Ridgewood Public Schools Board of Education. They set the guidelines that direct what food gets sold and influences how expensive each item is. Many of us look to blame Pomptonian for tragic losses in food options, such as the “crispy” fries and churros. Students and staff, your anger is justified! However, anger directed at Pomptonian is not justified.

Rather, Pomptonian has done wonders for the school. Because the district is not a member of the National School Lunch Program, Pomptonian is allowed free reign on their portion sizes, as well as other variables of the food service. Luckily, they use this freedom for our benefit: would we really have as many options for sandwiches at the salad bar otherwise? Pomptonian’s

independence from the NSLP grants them the opportunity to appease us with their personal food choices, such as pizza from Renato’s.

On the other hand, that’s not to say Pomptonian has free reign over all food. The Board of Education still plays a significant role in choosing what we are presented with when we enter the line. Those delicious crispy friends gone from our trays, instead replaced with less appetizing mushy fries? Blame the Board. Thus, when students are enraged at the lack of healthy or unhealthy food options (depending on your opinion), it is important to acknowledge that Pomptonian has little control over what is served. How dare the Board of Ed. take away our churros after incredibly exhausting run days, or when we need comfort food after failing a third Marzloff lab!

The scariest part about this whole ordeal is the serious lack of recognition Pomptonian receives. Not only do they offer great options, but they are the ones who actually hunt for the chicken in our patties and the pizza from Renato’s. No other food service provider does that. Do you think Papa John hunts for all of the meat on his meat lovers pizza? We didn’t think so. And in the end, who’s baking our cookies: the Board of Education, or Pomptonian? Pomptonian workers are heroes who are constantly bashed on for the actions of a higher and greater power. If you want your churros back, if you want actual crispy fries (we, the writers, would bet that the Board only eats soggy fries), Pomptonian is not who you should blame.



Maraea Garcia

Shining the Light on Sexual Harassment

Julia Kim  
staff writer

For the past few weeks, the headlines of all news sources have been plastered with the latest sexual harassment scandal. Harvey Weinstein, Louis C.K, Ben Affleck, and countless other names of notoriety have been accused of numerous accounts of sexual harassment. With these accounts flooding the front pages of popular front pages, the public has now become numb to these allegations.

Much of this due to the ignorance of what sexual harassment is. It can range from unwanted comments on the streets to forced sexual advancements. The media is now much more open about covering stories related to the topic; in the past, sexual harassment, especially in the workplace, was something people just had to deal with on their own. Victim accounts were seen as a highly private subject matter that was not to be discussed in the press. Due to the fact that these inflictions were not publicized, it was seen as almost shameful to have experienced sexual harassment.

The subject became “out of sight, out of mind”. If it didn’t directly affect them, it did not matter. This mental-

ity forced people to keep their stories hidden or they would be ridiculed.

Many men and women face these issues everyday and are too afraid to say or do anything, remaining in the dark. However, the recent mass press coverage on sexual harassment has caused thousands of men and women to speak out against the issue and open up about their person experiences. “#MeToo” became wildly popular on Twitter and other social media outlets; this allowed for people all across the globe to connect and discuss the once muted topic. The hashtag became a rallying cry for those who went through similar experiences and wanted to be heard.

Sexual harassment and assault is also not something that just affects older people, it happens to all genders, ages, sexual orientations, etc. I remember being catcalled on the streets of NYC by a man in his thirties when I was just a 14 years old. No, it is not a compliment. And yes, catcalling is a form of sexual harassment. Catcalling is just one example of how people have become desensitized to sexual harassment. People argue that “they are just harmless remarks” or that “it should be flattering”; it is not recognized as an issue and people,

mostly women, have had to accept behavior that should not be tolerated.

Our culture today has been trained to put up with sexual harassment. Women have been taught to act a certain way to avoid evoking provocative behaviors by peers. The media periodically addresses the issue, but tends to brush over the topic when something more surprising comes along. It is difficult for victims to speak up and address the issue when role models in

society are engaging in offensive acts. From top directors in Hollywood to the President of the United States committing these crimes, it makes people wonder: how bad can this issue really be?

The epidemic of accepting to live with sexual harassment has taken over the nation. Progress has been made; however, the continuing release of new shocking accounts of sexual harassment all means that more work needs to be done.



Maraea Garcia



Anika Tsapatsaris

The Impact of Tragedies

Mary Skuthan  
staff writer

In recent years, it seems like there have been tragedies one after another. The news of bombings, mass shootings, and other similar forms of violence is constantly being broadcasted to the public, especially in the age of mass media, where it can feel like there is no escape from hearing of this violence. This raises the question: What effects does this constant exposure to negative news bring onto our lives?

In my eyes, the biggest and most substantial consequences are the normalization of mass violence and misplaced anger against others.

While many people’s initial reactions to the news of mass violence is still one of sadness, there is also the new trend of thinking that the event was “just another one.” This desensitization to the magnitude and severity of mass violence is a threat to our sense of humanity.

If we become numb to these terrible events, then it is feasible that we will begin to see something evil as normal. This altered perception of what is commonplace and what is not is extremely dangerous because when something becomes normalized, we become passive to it. And in this instance we cannot afford to be passive.

Another consequence just as severe is the scapegoating of a group that is falsely perceived as the reason for the attacks of mass violence.

In the wake of a disaster, we as humans have a natural inclination to blaming others. We do this in order to cope with our anger and in hope of understanding why an atrocity happens.

On these occasions, we tend to point our finger at those who are different from ourselves. This scenario creates a culture of hate. By holding on to hate, people prevent themselves from healing from the disaster and are unable to truly focus on the actual issue at hand.

During the period of tribulation that follows all of these attacks of mass violence, we need to come together to rally against those who truly are perpetrating the onslaughts. We need to show them that we are resilient and that we will stand united against them.

Even though there are actions we can take by ourselves to stay vigilant, the media also has a responsibility, as they are the ones who are reporting the events. In order for news organizations to properly convey facts, they must stop dramatizing every single detail of an investigation into an attack. When there is a detail that is extremely important, yet every detail is overemphasized, it becomes difficult to tell what to believe and what to ignore. Without the media to keep us properly informed with the truth, we are more likely to make up our own narrative and blindly place blame. By no means am I saying that the media should stop reporting the details, but caution must be taken in communicating the facts.

We cannot easily control acts of mass violence occurring thousands of miles away from where we live. However, we can control how we react to them; in that regard, we must ensure that our response is one that is productive and positive. We can either accept the negative effects, and become numb to destruction and terror. Or, we can fight to change them into effects that produce an aware, unified, and preventative population.

# Plot Twist: WWII Without Pearl Harbor

Alexander Melarti  
staff writer

As a result of World War II, the US' finances grew exponentially. The manufacturing power of a war-time economy continued well after the global conflict had ceased. This was one reason the US became one of two remaining superpowers, the other reason being that most other countries had suffered great damage from invasion and bombing. While the rest of the world expended resources on rebuilding their cities (in many cases, buying these resources from the US), we ascended with the Soviet Union as world superpowers in the Cold War.

The resulting power struggle shaped the second half of the century and the modern world. Capitalism and democracy found triumph and defeat in foreign lands. At the end of it all, America survived while the USSR collapsed, and American foreign policy almost single-handedly molded the world we know today.

But what if the US had never become the dominant force in the world. What if America had not been as successful in WWII? The reason the US became involved in it in the first place was because of Japan's surprise attack on Pearl Harbor in Hawaii on December 7, 1941. After, the US immediately declared war and subsequently had war declared on them by Germany. It stands to reason then, that if the attack on Pearl Harbor had not happened, then the US would not have entered the war so soon. This could have changed history as we know it.

At the outbreak of war in 1939, Hitler's Nazi Germany had invaded Poland despite warnings from the League of Nations, as did the Japanese Empire with China. In an attempt to dissuade Japan from furthering these imperialistic maneuvers, the United

States imposed economic sanctions against Japan, the most notable being an embargo on the sale of oil to the island nation. Suddenly, Japan found itself with an eighty percent reduction in fuel. It became much more difficult to continue invading and annexing China and the Pacific Islands.

Emperor Hirohito was faced with two military decisions. Japan could either attack the US and attempt to overwhelm America, or invade the Soviet Union and march right to their oil fields. Had he chosen to attack the Soviet Union, the USSR most likely wouldn't have been able to hold out with the Nazis pressing in from the West and Japanese from the East. Japan and Germany would have split the conquered lands and resources. This outcome would have meant certain doom for Europe

and Asia. Germany could have redirected troops out of the East and to Africa, or even to an invasion of Britain.

From this point, it is just speculation and guesswork. It is possible that the British could have held out against Germany from its island, or the Royal Family could have relocated to Canada. But England's dominion in Africa, Australia, and the Southeast Asia would have been destroyed. Even after this, there is no guarantee that America would have entered the war. In our reality, the US was not able to mobilize troops until after war was declared. In this alternate history, it is probable that the US would not have been able to build a large enough military to take on the Axis by itself. It is more than likely that Germany and Japan would have tried to invade North and South

America, or at least isolate the two continents from the rest of the world. Perhaps the United States would have been able to hold out on its own soil, but in the end, it would have been a single nation against a world of militarized, imperialistic enemies. The Axis would have gone on to conquer the rest of the world and impress institutions of misery upon the rest of humanity.

In an strange way, the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on that fateful December morning was a good thing. It kickstarted a patriotic movement to revitalize the American military, economy, and manufacturing industry; ultimately, this event was the force that allowed the Allies to win World War II and make the world an infinitely better place than what would have existed without.



# The Inevitable Effects of Stereotyping

Emily Kim  
staff writer

Like snowflakes, no two humans are exactly the same. Everyone is of a different race, religion, background, and status. We are taught as kids to accept everyone for who they are despite our differences. Yet, many fail to do so in the sense that they have a hard time avoiding putting labels on others.

It seems to be a human instinct to find differences in the people around us. This keeps us from understanding that we share a lot more than we think we do. Stereotypes have been an issue for all of human history; and whether people want to believe it or not, most of the time it is done as an involuntary action that can end up seriously harming one's lifestyle and success. It can be as simple as the stereotypes of males and females in the workplace.

As most people know and even remember, there used to be a time when women were not allowed to vote, or were limited in education because they were expected to stay home and work in the kitchen. The same kind of stereotype continues, even though we are in an age and a nation that supposedly allows everyone to have equal opportunities.

As research and articles surrounding this topic have shown, it is proven that gender stereotypes put women at a disadvantage when it comes to leadership jobs because they are less likely to be taken seriously. This type of scenario eventually leads to women receiving lower salaries than men, which could potentially get in the

way of a woman's successful career.

Another example of how stereotypes can negatively have an effect on one's success is shown through a study done by professors Marianne Bertrand and Sendhil Mullainathan from the University of Chicago. According to US News, they wanted to find out whether race had anything to do with the chances of an applicant for a job to get hired. In sending 5,000 resumes to 1,300 job ads found in newspapers,

with some resumes having fake "white-sounding names" like 'Emily Walsh' and 'Greg Baker', and then other resumes having fake "African-American sounding names" like 'Lakisha Washington' and 'Jamal Jones', the white resumes received 50% more responses than the black resumes - regardless of occupation, industry, and experience. It is clear that certain stereotypes and assumptions made about a specific group of people, regardless if they're even real

or not, can end up lowering their chances of success when it comes to jobs.

Labeling by gender, race, partisanship, and socioeconomic status harms people from all walks of life by not giving them an equal opportunity to express themselves. In the past decade, this topic has been more prevalent in the news; but until everyone can pursue success without obstacles, we must continue to address the issue in order to make a true age of equal opportunities.



# Throwback to the 1990’s

Janus Kwong  
staff writer

In today’s modern world of Netflix, Youtube, memes, chokers, fidget spinners, and Candy Crush, many forget the fun in playing tamagotchi, trading Pokemon cards, or watching the latest Disney movie. Nineties culture has been swept away in place of the new century, yet the influence of the decade of Spice Girls, grunge, the Star Wars prequels, Sonic the Hedgehog, and Furbies can still be seen today. Somehow, everyone can recall the nationwide obsession with the Backstreet Boys. When “Wannabe” or “Smells like Teen Spirit” is played, all heads turn to the speakers and start drumming to the familiar beat. Boy bands such as ‘N Sync, New Kids on the Block, and Backstreet Boys signaled a watershed moment for pop music in America, turning a cappella quartets into celebrated idols of the decade. New genres of music were introduced, including grunge, pop punk, and alternative rock. Associated with the grunge movement, grunge music presented renowned rock bands, such as Nirvana and Pearl Jam, that integrated punk rock and heavy metal in their music. Like any other time in American history, the 1990’s came with its own

unique fashion trends, marking a period of worn-in flannels and bleached blond hair. With popular television show, Friends, becoming a nationwide hit, Jennifer Aniston’s “The Rachel” hairstyle spread across the country as women took on the look of the decade. Likewise, after the release of Terminator 2, the “Curtained” haircut became fashionable amongst men. Bleached hair, tattoos, and piercings became the norm for the majority of youth culture. Flannels and jeans were iconic in the 1990’s for both genders, along with overalls and saggy pants, creating an aesthetic subculture in America and revolutionizing the fashion industry. Along with the highlight of nineties fashion, modern technology flourished in society, making its way into the daily lives of all Americans. Through movie theaters, household television, and handheld consoles, the evolution of entertainment through technology only continued to influence daily life for the American population. Pixar’s Toy Story, the first full CGI movie, along with a new stream of Disney movies, introduced children’s animation films to the world. The Disney Renaissance in the 1990’s became one of generation’s greatest influence for children around the world. The reintroduction of George Lucas’ Star

Wars film series in 1999 reinvigorated a global phenomenon within the film industry. In 1997, James Cameron’s Titanic remains an incredibly well-known as one of the greatest romances of the decade. Other films flying off the shelf at Blockbuster included The Matrix, featuring Keanu Reeves, and Steven Spielberg’s Jurassic Park. While these films changed the state of cinema from theaters for years to come, television influenced households around the country. Sitcoms, crime drama, medical drama, and adult animation come to life in the nineties with hit shows like “Friends” and “Grey’s Anatomy.” Americans were able to watch Chuck Norris in action and laugh with the Simpsons with the comfort of our home. Meanwhile, shows and movies from Japanese culture, such as Pokemon, Dragonball Z, Sailor Moon, Digimon, Totoro, and Akira, became increasingly popular among children as anime gained popularity. American cartoons soon followed suit with Spongebob, Batman, Superman, and Tiny Toons. The introduction of handheld consoles in America grew popular in less than a heartbeat as Sega and Nintendo competed in a fierce console war. Video games included Super Mario World, Donkey Kong Country, Pokemon, The

Legend of Zelda, Metal Gear Solid, and Sonic the Hedgehog. In 1994, PlayStation was also introduced, a gaming brand that thrives to this day. Along with the major impacts of culture in the 1990’s for the film, gaming, music, television, and fashion industries, the minor fads and toys of the decade remain a crucial part of entertainment and culture. Just as today’s generation has fidget spinners, The Dress, bottle flipping, Vine, and hoverboards, the nineties had its own quirks. Slap bracelets, Beanie Babies, Furbies, tamagotchi, ring pops, and pogs were only a few of many fads of the decade that entertained Americans at the time. The term rollerblades was established when the original quad skates went out of fashion, instead paving the way for inline skates. The modern phrase, “What’s up!” started with a particular Budweiser commercial where people started answering the phone with “Whassup!” The nineties was more than just another decade of moderate change that only served as a lead into the 21st century; it influenced the games that people played, the shows they watched, and the trends they followed. The introduction of new American culture along with the passing of unique fads made the decade all the more memorable.

## #TBTeachers



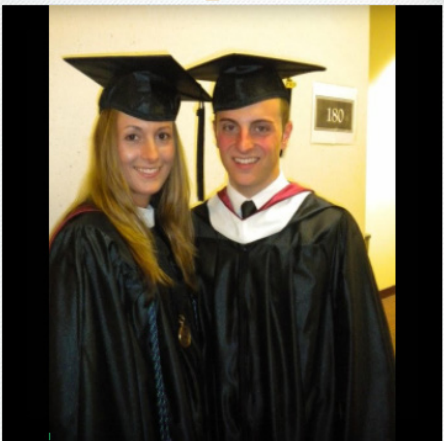
Congrats! Mr. Cullough at his RHS graduation



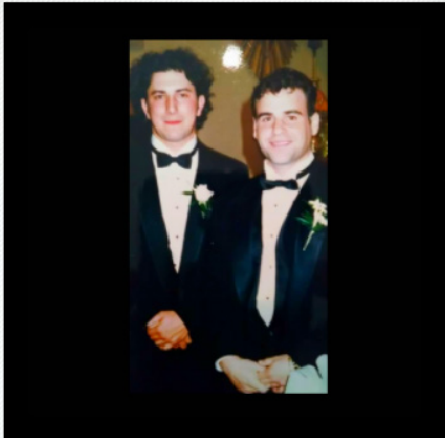
Mr. Kott sporting a long 'do in his 1993 high school photo



Mrs. DeTora looking dazzling with her date at prom



Mrs. Reeg and Mr. Saulpaugh at their 2010 college graduation



Mr. Giannantonio and a friend looking dapper in tuxedos



Doctor Lucci cheesing at his sister's high school graduation in 2005

Erin Kim  
staff writer

All responses are from the RHS Alumni Board

# RHS Throwback

## Favorite Teachers

**Favorites**

1984: Coach Jim Stroker  
1987: Mr. Doogan  
1989: Ms. Baker  
Mr. Doogan  
Coach Johnson  
Mr. J. Guy Morin  
1990: Coach Jim Stroker  
1991: Mr. Domville  
Mrs. Aslanides

## Popular Hangout Spots

- Mama Rosa's
- Smoker's circle
- The Breezeway
- Renato's

### Did You Know?

## Did You Know?

- Smoking was allowed in designated areas on campus
- A breezeway connected Gym 1 to the main building
- There were no restrictions on street parking
- The science wing, turf field, and weight room are newer additions to the school

## Annual Activities

- Friday night band and DJ in Gym 3
- Junior Prom
- Thanksgiving football games
- Soccer cheerleading
- Pudding wrestling
- Dances in Gym 2



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-CLASS OF 1907-

“Collaborate constantly, maintain communication after school ends” -Class of 1990

“Don’t forget where you come from. RHS is a blessing...to have an amazing education under you belt should give you a base for life. Always feel appreciative of this blessing and don’t squander it.” -Class of 1991

# The Sounds of Alumni Success

**Violet Maxwell**  
features editor

It's easy to perceive Ridgewood as an endless vortex of suburbia, between its manicured lawns and parade of Vineyard Vines apparel. That being said, Ridgewood is not without its undercurrent of art culture. Many accomplished musicians and artists cite Ridgewood as their hometown, if not as the greater inspiration behind their artistic endeavors. We can see these success stories reflected in the music industry from the dazzling lights of Broadway to the stage of American Idol to legendary record stores in Brooklyn. The impressive league of Ridgewood alumni musicians perform varying genres, but they all possess the ambition and drive typical of their hometown environment.

Ali Stroker, an outstanding Ridgewood alumna, has graced both the Broadway Stage in the deaf-west production of *Spring Awakening* and television screens across the country in the show *Glee*. Stroker has broken boundaries both on and off stage, becoming both the first actress in a wheelchair to graduate from NYU's Tisch School of the Arts, and the first actress in a wheelchair to perform on a Broadway stage. During her years at RHS, Stroker served as the senior class president and starred in many school musicals. Stro-

ker is also the daughter of former faculty member Jim Stroker and has frequented visits to Ben Franklin Middle School to perform and speak to the students. Despite her busy schedule, Stroker still makes time to return to BF Middle School to perform for the students.

Another popular Ridgewood star is Jordin Sparks, who won American Idol at the age of 17, making her the youngest winner of the show. Sparks grew up in Ridgewood while her father played for the New York Giants. Many remember Sparks with nostalgia for her fruity pop songs and various appearances on the Disney Channel. Because of hits like No Air and Battlefield, Sparks was truly an inescapable part of mid-2000's pop culture.

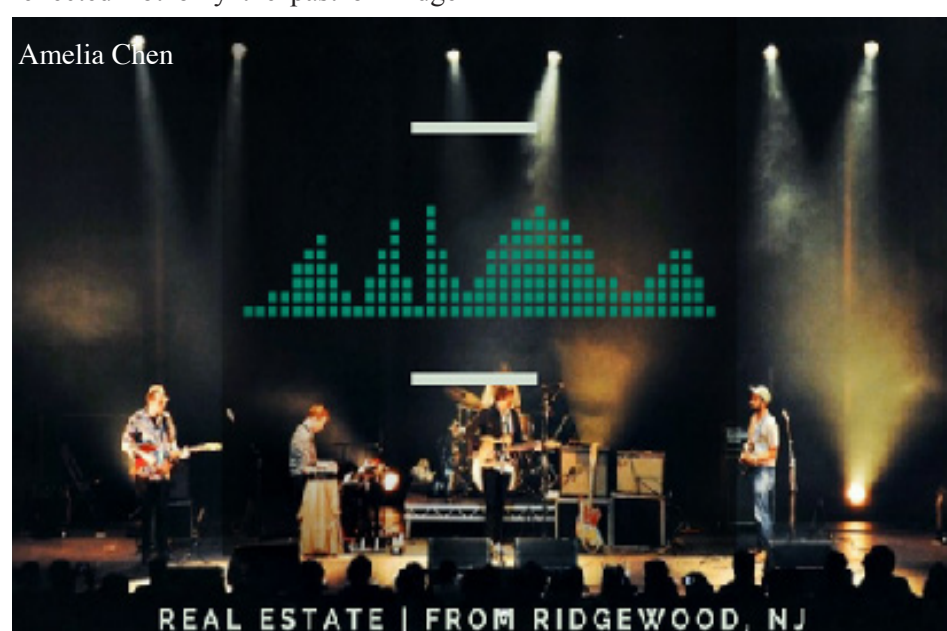
Real Estate is a successful indie rock band formed in 2009 that grew their influence in the underground music scene of northern New Jersey before branching out and becoming nationally renowned for their beachy, low-fi sound. But before bandmates Alex Bleeker, Matt Mondanile, and Martin Courtney were covered by Rolling Stone and planned tours promoting highly anticipated new albums, they walked the halls of RHS as students. Courtney and Bleeker both attended elementary school in Ridgewood and became close friends in third grade. At Ridgewood High School, Courtney met Mondanile, who was one grade above the

two friends. Courtney was a bassist for the Ridgewood High School Jazz band. The group of three honed in on their unique musicality through performances in local backyards and RHS Open Mike Nights. Thematically, the suburbs are not lost on Real Estate, as they sing wistfully about municipalities, wasted hours, and snow days. The vibe of their music is one that is greatly representative of their hometown, in both its easy disposition and the quiet boredom that so often comes with years spent growing up in a bedroom community.

In these success stories, we see reflected not only the past of Ridge-

wood, but the potential of those who join the greater network of Ridgewood High School alumni each year.

Between each opening night on Broadway or lucrative record deal are hours of dedication that begin at a grassroots level, passions nurtured in basements or school practice rooms. Although Ridgewood Alumni often find themselves in places of success they could have never possibly imagined, one could only hope that they carry memories of their origins with them as they reach unimaginable heights in their careers.



## Arts & Culture

# ARTBeat's Fall Fusion Creates and Inspires

**Peter Warren**  
staff writer

Everywhere we go, music envelops us and leaves a lasting impression. The sounds we hear are our motivation, our inspiration, and an outlet for our emotions. Music is the language of the heart that everybody understands, no matter where he or she is from. It is a method for people to reveal their inner self. Ridgewood ARTBeat Fall Fusion 2017 provided Ridgewood High School students with an exciting opportunity to perform and express themselves through performing and visual arts.

The courtyard was crowded with musicians and an audience consisting of people watching their friends, parents supporting their children, and those who just wanted to have a good time listening to the performers. This November, the theme was Fall Fusion.

ARTBeat brings people together to share the artistic talents of Ridgewood High School's students with the community. Founded by Sophia Swanson last year and run by the ARTBeat committee, their goal is to organize events throughout the year that exhibit the creativity of Ridgewood High School students.

The artists who performed Tuesday night were: Alana Bonfiglio, Formal Apology, Mason Skylar, Rachel and Sky, and Kate and Co. The night was filled with cheers and loud applause as the courtyard filled with various styles of music that all represent Fall Fusion.

The audience danced to the beat as the melody and harmony carried the musicians' emotions into the night. Surrounded by beautiful lights, one could see the colors move along with the melody.

I ask the musicians, "What inspires

them to perform?"

Rachel Fazylova of Rachel and Sky said that the "happiest I feel is when I'm performing." Happiness from the performance was a common theme of inspiration. A performer from Kate and Co. said, "The feeling of be-

ing on stage and playing it makes me feel like I can do anything." This feeling of happiness and enthusiasm can be a major motivation to perform. Other artists talked about how performing is a way to connect with different people and interact with different cultures. A musician said that "for musicians, it's the only way to express themselves."

Expressing ourselves artistically is a way for us to illustrate our thoughts and perspectives. Kate Landino of Kate and Co. said music is "a way for us to connect with people who we wouldn't have connected with otherwise." The relationships we are able to form with music, whether we are performing or simply listening, can last for years. Music can broaden our horizons. No matter who you are we can all come together to enjoy music. Musicians can connect with their audience by sending meaningful messages through their lyrics.

ARTBeat is an extraordinary event at Ridgewood High School where artists can demonstrate their talent to the Ridgewood Community. They have the opportunity to let their voices be heard through various songs and artwork.

Music is an immense part of our lives that is shared throughout the community. For students to have opportunities such as ARTBeat, which allows them to not only express themselves, but also to communicate and establish connections with others, is both unique and powerful. This event is not only a social gathering, but also a chance to have fun by entertaining others and convey one's message to an audience.



Maraea Garcia

## Reignition of Tradition in Ridgewood and Beyond

**Virginia Morley**  
staff writer

An event where, year after year, it brings residents near and far to downtown Ridgewood in the very beginning of December: you guessed it! The annual Ridgewood Christmas tree lighting. Preambled with live performances, and streets flooded with hot cocoa, food, and excitement, the celebration of the lighting of the Christmas tree ushers in holiday cheer and spirit to the town of Ridgewood.

However, have you ever wondered why we have such a massive celebration for the lighting of a Christmas tree? Every year, we shout out the big countdown- the "3, 2, 1...!"-in unison, and cheer loudly when those twinkling colorful lights illuminate the night. This event not only take place in Ridgewood, but across the globe! The question is: why do we do this? And why do we continue to do this?

The origin of lighting Christmas trees traces back to 16th century Germany. Devout Christians would decorate evergreen trees and display them in their homes, as they believed these trees to be a symbol for "life in the dead of winter," which is what Jesus was said to be. However, protestant reformer Martin Luther is credited to be the one who first added lights to the trees. The story is told that Martin Luther was walking on a starry December night, and was in awe from the brilliance of the stars in the night sky. Inspired by the night sky, he recreated it at home by decorating his Christmas tree with lit candles.

Placing candles on Christmas trees became a widespread tradition in Germany, but did not reach the United States until about 1830. German immigrants carried their traditions from their German homes overseas. The first recorded sight of a decorated and lit Christmas tree was in Pennsylvania

by German settlers, and this first sight was seen as eccentric, therefore, unaccepted.

However, many Americans later followed the footsteps of German settlers and began bringing decorated and lit Christmas trees into their homes. This was no easy task, however; people had to either hand tie candles to the branches of trees using string, pin the candles down, or melt wax and stick the candles on it. Moreover, if they were successful in attaching the candles, the trees were extremely flammable and a hazard to people's homes.

When 1882 came along, Edward Johnson, a friend of Thomas Edison and Vice President at his electric light company, invented the first strand of electric Christmas lights. At this point, each light was described to be about the size of a walnut, and required a generator to power. With years of work and experimentation, Johnson and Edison presented these lights to the public market in 1890. These lights grew ample attention from across the nation- especially when Grover Cleveland, the President of the United States, had them strung on the White House tree in 1895. However, it was difficult for the average American to get these on their trees at home, as, for one, many did not yet have electricity and two, it would cost a total of over \$300 (the equivalence of roughly \$7,600 today!) to get the generator, have them installed, get the lights themselves, etcetera.

However, over time, electricity became much more developed and common such that nearly almost every American home had it. The Christmas lights themselves, too, developed overtime- more notably in the year 1903. In this year, company GE created the "festoon," which was the first pre-wired string of Christmas lights with a plug for a wall socket presented to the public. They attempt to get a patent. However, it was rejected, leaving a large market open for competitors to

jump in. The Christmas tree light industry flourished, and became more affordable over time such that all Americans could afford a strand of twinkling lights to illuminate their homes and trees.

The Christmas light tradition continues to grow and develop in the ever changing modern world. In 2011, Americans spent roughly \$6 billion on

Christmas decorations, ranging from the conventional Christmas lights to light up inflatable Santa Clauses. Christmas light drive through, Christmas light shows, and mass Christmas tree lighting ceremonies have become ever so popular. It is astounding that such a simple practice in 16th century Germany transformed into such a prodigious and widespread tradition.



Brendam Keane

Lara Baskin  
staff writer

“What were you doing when John Lennon was shot?” This is a question every person who was alive on December 8, 1980 will know how to answer.

How could they not; stolen from the world on that gloomy Monday was an icon incapable of being replaced, and the shock that resulted was haunting and unforgettable. John Lennon’s death, 37 years ago, triggered an outburst of grief comparable to the assassinations of Martin Luther King Jr. and John F. Kennedy. The fact that the loss of a singer-songwriter elicited such an outpouring of emotion, speaks to Lennon’s immense influence. He was a Beatle, but his death signaled a shift more serious than the Beatles’ dissolution ever did.

Lennon’s legacy is strongly felt in, yet not at all limited to, the music industry. Prior to The Beatles, few musical groups played their own songs; The Beatles did both. Lennon’s unique sense of humor and intellectual keenness quickly revealed themselves in his lyrics; and his love of puns, wordplay, and storybook nonsense came to be one of the Beatles’ most prized traits. No modern songwriter has brought such an unaffected playfulness to pop lyrics.

John Lennon was also a key player in bringing certain techniques to the front of musical technology, and in the 1960’s the Beatles helped influ-

# John Lennon Still Lives

ence the way music was recorded. The band forever impacted the evolution of sound, inventing techniques such as audio feedback, sampling, Artificial Double Tracking, and the use of multitrack recording machines.

Lennon influenced nearly every musician that came after him, from Elton John, Bob Dylan, and The Rolling Stones, to Oasis, Ray Charles, and Radiohead. Lennon revolutionized the image of pop culture in the eyes of the public from being unimportant and childish to a social force to be reckoned with. His ironic comment, “We’re more popular than Jesus now,” was the first major acknowledgement of the power of pop culture and provoked a reaction from the governments of Mexico, Spain, and South Africa, as well as The Vatican itself.

Few songs are more influential than John Lennon’s “Imagine.” Released in the midst of the Vietnam War, the song was a powerful ode to unity and peace that captured the feelings of anti-war sentiment at the time. Some people go so far as to say Lennon’s activism stopped the war in Vietnam. Although this may not be true, Lennon’s move in the opposite direction — toward peaceful protest — did succeed in angering, bewildering, and ridiculing supporters of the war. In 1999, Broadcast Music Inc. named Lennon’s “Imagine” one of the top 100 most-performed songs of the 20th century, and in 2004 Rolling Stone Magazine placed the “enduring hymn of solace and promise” third on its list of “The 500 Greatest Songs of All

Time.” “Imagine” has undoubtedly become an international anthem of peace. The world seems to be in agreement that John Lennon’s legacy cannot, and will not, be forgotten.

In 2000, a number of events commemorated Lennon’s 60th birthday and the 20th anniversary of his death, including a major exhibition on Lennon and his work at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame & Museum.

In 2002, Lennon’s hometown renamed its airport Liverpool John Lennon Airport, and throughout the first

decade of the 2000’s several countries constructed monuments honoring Lennon. These monuments include a sculpture in the John Lennon Park in Havana, Cuba, and the Imagine Peace Tower in Reykjavík, Iceland.

John Lennon is a symbol of peace, hope, and progress. While in the Beatles, and as a solo artist, Lennon captured the hearts of millions worldwide. His legacy will continue to live on for as long as music exists and freedom of expression is valued.



# The Dilemma of A “Classic Remake”

Megan Schwenker  
staff writer

You hunker onto the couch with your friends ready to choose a classic movie for the night, but with so many options, how do you choose? Do you watch “The Parent Trap,” “Annie,” “Charlie and the Chocolate Factory,” “The Karate Kid,” or a different movie? Not only do you get to choose one of these beloved films, but you have the choice of watching the original or the remake. This could be a tough decision considering both movies have their own special qualities that make them uniquely enjoyable.

When a person of our generation is watching an older, classic film, there tends to be a different experience than watching the remake. Although they both may be of excellent quality, one has to take into consideration that the movie was made most likely between thirty to fifty years ago, which could affect how the movie is interpreted. This means that the quality may not be as pristine, the acting may not be as exceptional, and the actors or actresses may not be widely recognized in the 21st century.

The past generation grew up watching these movies and to them, the originals of these films are top notch and will always remain “classics.” Growing up in an innovative world can change one’s outlook tremendously, especially in terms of pop culture and entertainment. Many of us have probably not watched all the classics listed above. Is this because they are too “old” for us?

Millennials prefer to involve themselves in current pop culture. This goes for movies, too, which is why we are more likely to watch the remakes of

classics. With our advanced technology, stunts and special effects make movies more realistic, and therefore more entertaining.

The choice of actors and actresses may also have an effect on your movie choices. The “Parent Trap” features popular actress Lindsay Lohan. Her lead role in the remake of The Parent Trap most likely influences people of our generation to watch the movie because they are familiar with and like

the main actress.

This same goes for classic remakes that include Jamie Foxx in “Annie,” Johnny Depp in “Charlie and the Chocolate Factory,” and The Karate Kid, which features Jackie Chan and Jaden Smith. We are more familiar with these actors, therefore, we are more willing to watch the remakes.

“Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle,” is soon to be released on December 20. What should we expect from it? Will

the remake receive a higher rating than the original?

Considering that famous actors such as Dwayne Johnson and Kevin Hart are to star in the beloved and classic fantasy-action film, will their appearance make it a must-see? Either way, the next time you watch a movie, consider the difference between the original and the remake. The differences, and even the similarities, might just surprise you.



# Ridgewood Girls Tennis Achieves Despite Setbacks

Alana Bonfiglio  
staff writer

The beginning of the 2017 season threw several curveballs at the Ridgewood Girls Varsity Tennis team. The team graduated eight seniors in 2017 and was left with only five returning players this year. Also, after ten years as the varsity head coach, Coach Kirtane decided to take one year off to raise her first child. To make matters even worse, in late September, Captain Julia Yoon, a four year varsity singles starter, suffered a season-ending eye injury during practice. The injury occurred the week before the Bergen county tournament, forcing Ridgewood to forfeit the second singles spot.

Fortunately, the tournament consists of five individual brackets, one for each of the three singles spots and two doubles spots. Each singles player or doubles team earns a point for their school for every match that they win. The high school with the greatest sum of points becomes the county champion. Even though Ridgewood had to forfeit the second singles spot, the remainder of the team was able to compete. Still, without the crucial points from the second singles spot it would be impossible for the Maroons to win the country championship. Despite knowing this, the girls went into the tournament and gave it their all. The true motivation came from their captain. The girls played for the opportunity that Julia Yoon had lost.

The tournament turned out to be a huge success the rest of the team. Freshman Alana Kerner, who was a dynamic force at the first singles spot this year, pulled off an upset and made it to the quarterfinals of counties. Second doubles players Vanita Sharma and Alana Bonfiglio also made their



Former Captain of the Girls' Tennis Team Julia Yoon

ways to the quarterfinals. Sophia Swanson came in second to Northern Highlands at the third singles position. First doubles duo Sarah Casale and Kaelie Kerner lost in a third set marathon match to Northern Highlands, earning them a second place title as well.

After the county tournament and the injury, the lineup had to be adjusted to fill the second singles spot. Third singles junior Sophia Swanson, a year three varsity athlete who had played second singles the season before, stepped up and held her own at the second singles position. First doubles was forced to split, and junior Sarah Casale moved to third singles. Freshman Eunice Cha joined Kaelie Kerner at first doubles while the second doubles team remained the same.

In the next two weeks the team swept the first three rounds of the state tournament 5-0. The greatest team success came just a few days later when the team defeated Livingston in the sectional championship, the "Metlife" of tennis. With victories at first singles, third singles, as well as first and second doubles, the final score was 4-1. Sophia Swanson performed incredibly, but ultimately fell short in a tiebreaker by just two points. Just two days later the team traveled to Mercer County Park, where they unfortunately fell 2-3 to Montgomery High School, with victories at the third singles and second doubles positions.

The Ridgewood Girls Tennis Team handled every unexpected factor this season threw at them with grace, strength, and an undeniable desire to succeed. And succeed they did. Not only did the team come out of the season with a state title, but also with a newfound respect for their teammates and themselves after seeing what they were capable of.

# Widespread Domestic Violence in the NFL

Matt Gluckow  
staff writer

Over the past few years, the NFL has been plagued with a particular player behavioral issue. Many of the off field problems have to do with violence towards women. The most prominent incident was when Ray Rice assaulted his girlfriend and dragged her unconscious body out of an elevator. This sparked national awareness of the problem, as well as outrage amongst fans and critics of the NFL. Since then, many similar incidents have occurred, although not all of their violence has been towards women. In 2014 Adrian Peterson was charged with abusing his son. He was suspended for the whole NFL season, and much stricter punishments have been set for offenders after these two incidents.

Meanwhile, some believe that Roger Goodell, the commissioner of the NFL, has been unfair with his various punishments. They argue that it is unjust that players such as Josh Gordon, who abused various illicit substances, have much stricter punishments than those who perpetrate domestic violence.

Recently Ezekiel Elliott, the Dallas Cowboys star running back, was accused of abusing his girlfriend. He was given a six game suspension, which many thought was not enough. Elliott also pushed back the suspension for the majority of the season, and continued to play despite his actions. As

a result, many have begun to question the strictness of the NFL's policies when it comes to domestic violence. Roger Goodell has received much of the flak when it comes to the criticism of this issue, which has been prominent enough to gather national attention and has greatly damaged the NFL's reputation. This has led to many calling for a change in leadership. Jerry Jones, the owner of the Dallas Cowboys says that Goodell should not be given a contract extension, and that he has dealt with numerous domestic violence cases poorly. In addition, many players also have negative feelings towards the commissioner of the league.

Navorro Bowman, a player for the Oakland Raiders, said that Goodell's contract extension is a "slap in the face." Much of the negative attitude towards him has been due to his controversial handlings of the domestic violence cases.

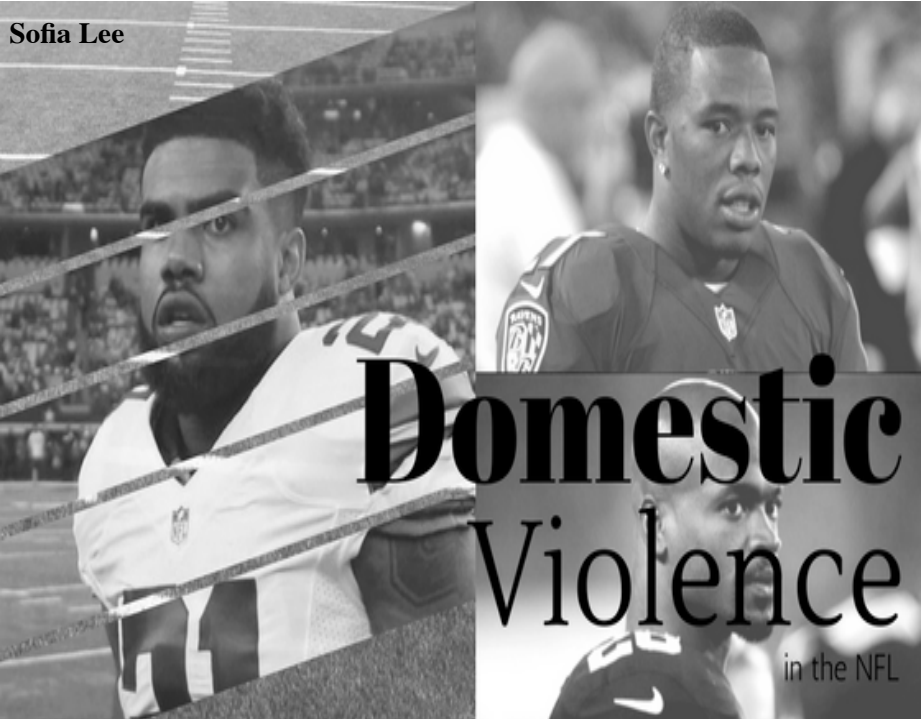
Many teams downplay the need for punishing those who commit the crimes. Joe Mixon, a rookie running

back on the Cincinnati Bengals, was recorded punching a woman and breaking multiple bones in her face. He was still selected in the second round of the NFL draft. After Adrian Peterson, the aforementioned player that abused his son, had his suspension ended, the Minnesota Vikings allowed him to come back into his starting role.

Similarly, the President of the Cowboys, Jerry Jones, defended Ezekiel Elliott after he was suspended. The teams do not punish their players strictly enough, and as a result, players are not deterred from violent action. If the teams were more strict, many of these incidents could be avoided and prevented from happening in the first place.

Some teams fail to recognize the underlying issue at hand. There is a need for better care for concussions in the NFL, college football, and even for younger players. Further on in life, those who suffered many concussions can develop CTE, or severe brain damage. This makes them more violent, and leads to murders and abuse.

Without proper care and treatment for the players, we will continue to see a trend of domestic abuse in the NFL. This means stricter punishments must be enacted and players must be taken out if they have head damage. If everyone works together to try to fix the problem, then the number of cases will substantially decrease, saving women and children around the US from domestic violence.

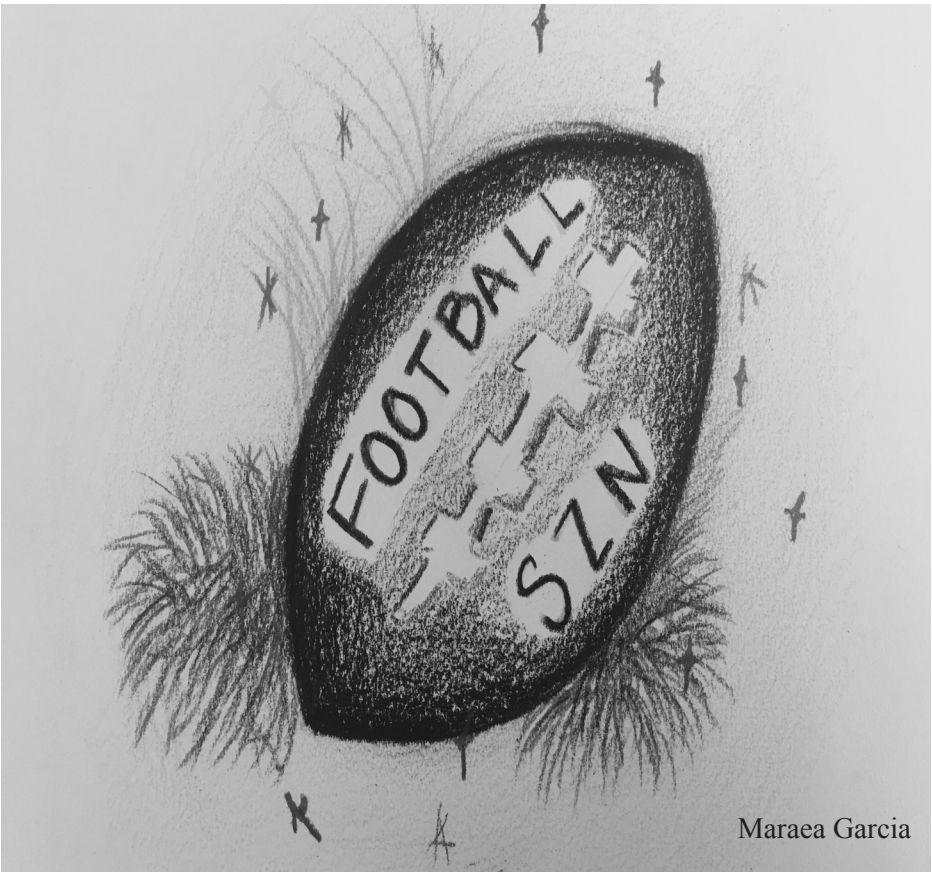


# Changes in the NCAA

Davis Weil  
staff writer

In 2014, the National Collegiate Athletic Association tried something different with college football, and it's safe to say that it has worked. The addition of the College Football Playoffs has not only brought a more conventional style of postseason play to college football, but it has also made the regular season much more meaningful. The basic premise of the College Football Playoff is to have the four best teams play in an elimination-style bracket for the championship, versus only two in the previous "bowl" format. Starting at the end of October, the "College Football Playoff Selection Committee" releases a list of its picks for the top twenty five teams. Following that first ranking, weekly rankings are released every Tuesday.

The College Football Playoff has been making the regular season much more interesting virtually every week. For example, take the marquee game from November 11th between Notre Dame, the third best team in the country at the time, and Miami, the seventh best. Because of the sheer magnitude of college football programs, it takes a nearly perfect resume to capture one of the four coveted spots



in the Playoff at the end of the year. Although Notre Dame and Miami have had only one loss on the year between

them coming into the game, a loss for either team would all but assure that the 2017 season would not include a

College Football Playoff berth for their programs. After a thirty three point loss for Notre Dame, that nightmare scenario became all but a reality. When the third set of rankings came out on November 14th, Notre Dame dropped to eighth in the country, virtually out of the running for the playoffs. On the same day, first ranked Georgia team also suffered a loss to tenth ranked Auburn Tigers. As a result, the former number one team dropped to seventh in the country, greatly lowering their chances for making the Playoffs.

The new playoff style has brought competition and high stakes to every game, but it has its imperfections. The main drawback is the purely arbitrary ranking system the Selection Committee uses to rank the teams. It is unknown how much they value all of the different variables that go into pitting teams against each other, like road wins, wins against top twenty-five teams, number of losses, improvement over the season, a conference championship, margin of victory, and so many others. Even with the controversy surrounding the selections for the top four, it is hard to argue against the fact that the College Football Playoffs have made regular season more entertaining on a weekly basis, and also the postseason has become an increasingly dramatic and surprising ordeal for fans to follow.

# How to Train During the Winter

Lexi Liu  
staff writer

Training during the winter can be difficult for those who wish to stay in shape during the cold months of the year. With inhibiting, low temperatures and snow covering the ground, options for exercising are limited. Many athletes depend upon particular skills to get them through the spring season, so it is critical to keep on top of said skills to increase their likelihood of being successful when their season begins.

As an athlete who participates in crew, it is impossible to practice at the river during the winter. Without continuous practice and exercise, my teammates and I would lose all of our strength and endurance. Through determination and unique workout methods, however, we still are able to return back to the water for the spring season stronger than ever.

With workouts such as erging, cycling and weightlifting, our fitness was not only maintained but built drastically upon. Erging, which is much like the motions of rowing, allowed for the team to stay comfortable with the movements of rowing, while also gaining strength and endurance. Another frequent workout was running up and down the three flights of stairs in the school multiple times, allowing us to keep up our agility. We also spent long periods of time running, but due to snow covering the ground, we frequently did this on treadmills. Occasionally, we would even run laps around the second floor of the school or run large laps around the cafeteria. Although it may not be practical, it was quite convenient and still allowed us to get the exercise we needed.

Heading into the season, it is essential to know what to invest in when putting money towards different training options. More specifically, many indoor facilities are available to train for a variety of sports such as soccer, lacrosse or baseball. Although these typically have a large price tag, such programs are offered for groups, in-



dividuals, or as classes. Acquiring a personal trainer is another smart investment; by having someone stay on top of the individual's fitness and provide the athlete with workout plans, one can make sure his or her fitness is properly monitored. Purchasing exercise equipment can also prove to be helpful. With the tools athletes need in their possession, they can exercise at any given time in the comfort of their own home in any type of weather.

Winter does not only have downsides; it provides athletes with the time to participate in activities not as convenient during other times of the year. In particular, skiing, snowboarding and ice skating are popular activities that are only available during the colder seasons. As sports that do not need previ-

ous experience to participate, individuals from any skill level can enjoy them.

Furthermore, it is beneficial to switch up the routine an athlete is used to. Winter provides the option to try out new activities that may not have been as prominent before, such as dance or yoga. Because most spent the warmer months practicing outdoors, being pushed indoors provides athletes with the perfect opportunity to go to a weight room. As most locations are situated inside, weightlifting is often ideal for those who are unable to practice in the cold.

Nonetheless, if the athlete decides to still exercise in the outdoors, it is essential to wear protective clothing in order to get a proper workout. Wearing layers is a convenient way to stay warm and remain comfort-

able. By being warm, athletes can get their blood flowing, which prevents the complications that arise when muscles become stiff due the cold.

The process of staying in shape can be simple, if an athlete or team creates a plan and sticks to it. By planning ahead, he or she can set their long term goals for the spring. As always, consistency is key. However, it is essential to mix up your routine to get the most out of their workout, meaning the athlete must find a variety of ways to exercise. With a creative mindset and dedication to staying fit, all are capable of maintaining their own fitness in any condition. As long as the individual keeps moving and stays active, maintaining fitness during the winter can be the same as any other season of the year.

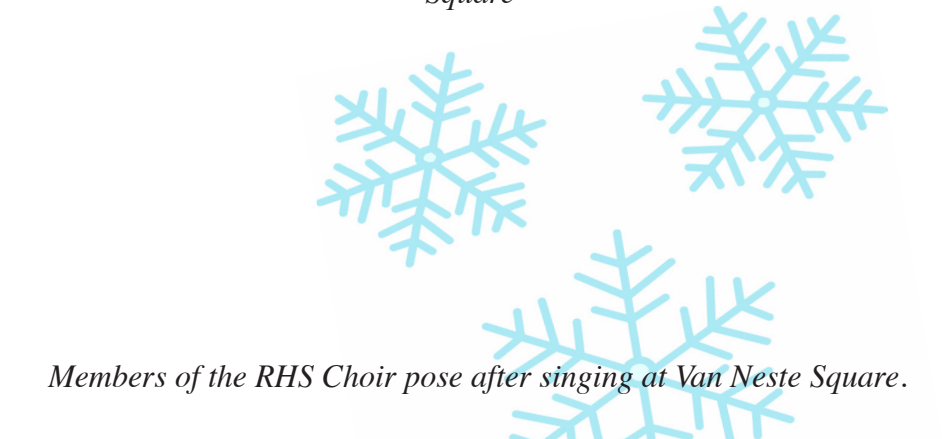


# Your Downtown for the Holidays



From Left to Right:  
Hanelle Seo (violin), Luca Richman (violin), CJ Lee (violin), Desiree Bottigliero (viola), Alec (bass), and Wednesday Hsu (viola)

Beatrice Davis and Maddie Gibson posing with Santa at Van Neste Square



Members of the RHS Choir pose after singing at Van Neste Square.



The RHS Maroon Men with Santa following their cheerful performance at Van Neste Square.



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"All aboard for the Ridgewood tree lighting!"