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The High Times

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Students May Lose Parking Spots

Ridgewood Village to take a vote on Heermance parking

Jackson Stone-Esposito
news editor

The Ridgewood Board of Education has taken steps toward closing off Heermance Place parking to RHS students. The spots, which are currently available to students and faculty alike on a first-come-first-serve basis, would, under the proposed agreement, be given to RHS faculty through a permit system.

This proposal comes after months of talks of taking such an action, beginning with a proposal in early February of 2012 that suggested a permit system be implemented. The proposal arose out of a need to compensate for a lack of faculty parking spots close to the school. At the time, however, no action was taken, as backlash from Ridgewood residents prevented

the idea from coming to fruition.

The Heermance issue has recently resurfaced at Board of Education

the meeting took place.) Mayor Paul Aronsohn recommended that high school students attend the meeting in



Students and teachers are currently competing for parking spots on Heermance.

meetings, and a vote was held on February 13 at Town Hall. (This edition of *The High Times* was published after

order to provide board members with feedback, a component of the decision-making process that was largely

neglected when the parking proposal was discussed last year. By taking this route, the Board hopes to gauge how valued the spots are to RHS students, if, in fact, they are even valued at all.

Parking has long been an issue at RHS, as student drivers and faculty have competed for a finite number of spots. Former student Steve Libenson, writing for a February 1988 edition of *The High Times*, cites one possible reason for why the problem persists today. Students formerly were allowed to park on Brookside Avenue, but complaints by residents of “littering, dangerous driving, and blocking of driveways,” he writes, ultimately caused the spots to be shut off to RHS students. It will be interesting to see how the Heermance issue today will play out, and how the Board will attempt to solve the apparent lack of spots around RHS.

Pancake Dinner at RHS

Margot Kaiser
staff writer

On Thursday January 10, breakfast was served for dinner in the Ridgewood High School cafeteria. High school students involved in Project Interact organized a delicious pancake dinner to raise money for victims of Hurricane

the former NFL star, Michael Strahan.

Back in October, Sandy left thousands of people throughout New Jersey devastated and in need of resources to rebuild their homes, towns, and lives. Syrup for Sandy’s goal was to raise money for the American Red Cross Sandy Relief fund, which helps Sandy victims who are still suffering today. The proceeds from the fundraiser



Students enjoy pancakes at a fundraiser for Hurricane Sandy victims in January.

Sandy. They named the event, “Syrup for Sandy” and invited the school and town to buy tickets for five dollars. From 5 to 8 p.m. students, teachers, and families flowed into the cafeteria to enjoy a pancake and sausage meal together. Parents and Project Interact students cooked up batch after batch of delicious pancakes using The Daily Treat’s pancake batter, which was donated for the cause. Stop & Shop, Rotary AM, and Pomptonian also contributed many treats to the fundraiser. In addition to the meal, two raffles were held at the event. One lucky guest won three VIP tickets to see Live! With Kelly and Michael. The winner of the other raffle was awarded with a football signed by

will assist the Red Cross in providing meals, supplies, health services, and shelter to Sandy survivors as well as helping to continue the cleanup and rebuilding of destroyed areas.

Project Interact member and RHS sophomore, Deborah Frank says, “It felt really good to know that by serving friends and family pancakes, I was giving back to my community at the beach. It’s amazing how big of a difference high schoolers can make if we get people to come together for one act of kindness.” Pancakes make for a sweet dinner, but at Syrup for Sandy, it was helping others rebuild their lives that made the night so sweet, no matter how much syrup was on the pancakes.

Recycling Bins

Elizabeth Kopec
editor-in-chief

The Students for Environmental Action club is making it easier than ever to recycle by bringing recycling bins to every classroom. Currently, only some classrooms have recycling bins, leading many students to place recyclables in garbage bins. “The new recycling bins will encourage people to recycle more,” co-president of SEA Sarah Davis said. The new bins will be the same style as the bins already in the school. SEA hopes to buy garbage carts with separate compartments to help janitors ensure that the recyclables are properly disposed of.

Every Friday after school the members of SEA go to each room in the school as part of their Recycle Cycle. Junior Tatiana Rhonda, a member of SEA, said that “during Recycle Cycle SEA has been determining the amount of recycling bins the school has, and there was a surprising lack of bins in the school.” The number of bins in each room is counted so that the number of new recycling bins needed to buy can be calculated. If there are any items placed in the wrong crate, they are moved to the correct one with rubber gloves.

The club will buy the bins with their own funds and through fundraising. SEA is selling water bottles and club t-shirts. The water bottles are aluminum and grey and cost ten dollars. The t-shirts are five dollars. The water bottles and t-shirts can be bought during SEA meetings, which take place Thursdays at lunch. Anyone interested in SEA can come to the meetings in room 202.

DECA Results

Sumita Rajpurohit
news editor

In early December, 192 RHS students participated in the first half of the most recent regional DECA tournament by taking a 100 question online business and marketing test. DECA is a national business competition aimed at giving high school students the opportunity to experience real-world business scenarios. Students must be enrolled in a business or finance course in order to be eligible to participate in DECA that academic year.

On January 3, 188 students went to Ramapo College to compete in the second part of the competition, which involves responding to an impromptu response to a real-life scenario through a 10 minute conversation with the judge about the subject. Each student or pair was able to choose 1 of 25 different subject areas in which they wanted to compete.

The RHS team performed very well at the regional tournament, with 77 students placing high enough to move on the state competition in February. Students in the top 17 for individuals, or top 9 can move on to States. Both Mrs. Mendez and Mr. Kase, the heads of the DECA team, are “very proud of the students who competed in the original competition” and “hopeful that a large majority of the students will be recognized as finalists or top 3 winners at the state level” in the February competition.

The upcoming State tournament is in Cherry Hill, NJ from February 27 to March 1. The team hopes to do well and advance to nationals in Anaheim.

News

Joyce Kwon
editor-in-chief

Students at Ridgewood High School experienced a change during midterms this year, with a new schedule. There have been many speculations about the reasons behind these adjustments. However, many of these assumptions had no validity. This being his first year at RHS, Dr. Gorman was presented with new ideas.

Based off of student and teacher surveys, he proposed to administrators a shift to an earlier start time. The administrators saw no problem in the idea, hoping to get students out of school earlier and having a more favorable time for make-ups. One problem administrators were hoping to resolve was the disruption of student’s typical lunch period caused by the second test of the original midterm schedule. This issue was settled with the earlier start time and the shortened break.

Dr. Gorman states that the break was shortened because he felt that an hour break was simply too long. Of all of the schools he has been to, the breaks ranged from fifteen to thirty minutes. He had never encountered a school with such a long break in between exams.

Typically, one day would be composed of a period from the morning

Midterm Schedule Altered at RHS

and a period from the afternoon. Instead, the new schedule took two periods a day in order. Dr. Gorman states that there was no real reason behind the original period order other than to take classes from both the morning and the afternoon. The new order was proposed to make the sched-



Students diligently working to complete their midterms.

ule cleaner and easier to remember. Dr. Gorman received feedback from both students and teachers. Many teachers were enthused with the time allotted to lunch and appreciated the time

in the afternoon for grading and administering tests. Many students were also content with getting out of school earlier. One student stated, “I liked it because I had more time to study after school.”

However, many scrutinized the schedule for the earlier start time and especially the shortened break. Students usually enjoyed sleeping before exams, a privilege which was lost this year. Furthermore, many students valued the hour-long break in between exams. Laura Weisberger

disliked that “we didn’t have enough time to eat, study, or relax in between exams.” Students feel that they need an hour of down time. Furthermore, this time is essential for some special need students who need extra time.

Over the course of many years, the schedule has been altered many times numerous reasons. All changes have been to determine the perfect schedule for both the teachers and students. Dr. Gorman states, “It doesn’t matter which schedule we decide on. I just want to determine the best option for all members. That’s the problem though. It is difficult to please everyone.”

The schedule is yet to be determined for finals this year. There will be a meeting to review the data and determine the most suitable and beneficial schedule.

There had been rumors circulating about mandatory senior finals. At the time of this interview Dr. Gorman was unaware that some seniors at RHS do not take finals, and said that there had been no discussions concerning this issue. The rumor was determined to be unfounded.

Dr. Gorman concludes that midterms at RHS were “very well run and students did a nice job.” Though the system still needs improvement, with any luck the schedule will be settled by June in time for finals.

RHS Global Classroom Hosts Foreign Exchange Students

Victoria Seremetis
staff writer

On January 7, six Global Learning Classroom students from Scotland, the Shetland Islands, and Germany got of their plane and stepped onto American soil. They are now staying with high school student hosts in Ridgewood and will stay here for 5 weeks. Over the course of their year long trip, the students will travel to 9 schools in 8 countries to conduct research on an assigned topic: student needs and how schools meet those needs. There are a total of 6 international students involved in the Global Learning Classroom: 4 researchers and 2 coordinators. The researching students are responsible for collecting information relevant to their topic. They combine data collected from all 9 schools and will present it to the teachers at RHS in charge of the program. The presentation consists of a Powerpoint and a video documenting their experience in Ridgewood. The coordinators take care of logistics and the supervision of the learning adventure, as well as helping the researching students carry out their investigations.

Before coming to Ridgewood, the students travelled to Aberdeen, Scot-



Foreign exchange students from Scotland left to right Lisa Adamson, Ashley Manson, Annie McKee.

land, the Shetland Islands in Scotland, the Czech Republic, and Sweden. When the students were asked to describe Ridgewood they said it was “amazing,” “opportunistic,” and more suburban. “There is no language barrier, so it is beneficial to most of us, and we can enjoy interacting with other students here,” says Ross, a researcher. Another student, Clara, enjoys being so close to New York City because it gives her, as well as the

other students, the opportunity to see the Broadway shows. For some of the Global Learning Classroom students, this is their first time traveling to the United States. For Clara and Karla, 19 and 17 respectively, it is not. Clara stayed in New York for 4 days in the

“We can enjoy interacting with the students here.”

-Ross Sinclair

past, while Karla has been to both Florida and Chicago. Both girls agreed that Ridgewood is much more suburban, peaceful, and quaint. During their first days in Ridgewood, the GLC students spent their time walking through downtown Ridgewood and shopping at the Garden State Plaza, or arranging trips with their host families over the weekends. The students are now settled and ready to research.

Chinese New Year



The Chinese Club held a luncheon to celebrate Chinese New Year.

February 10th, 2013 marked the start of the Chinese New Year which will continue until January 30th of 2014 . Chinese New Year is also known as Spring Festival, a time in which Chinese families all around the world celebrate the start of the new year with various activities and family gatherings. 2013 is the Year of the Snake, according to the Chinese calendar is a year meant to be a year of progress and attention to detail. Those born in the Year of the Snake are considered to be thoughtful and wise, as well as logical and rational .

627 E. Ridgewood Ave. Ridgewood, NJ 07450		February 2013						
Staff Advisor...	Adam Brunner	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Editors-in-Chief...	Elizabeth Kopec Joyce Kwon Curran McSwigan						1 -2nd Quarter Ends	2
News Editors...	Sumita Rajpurohit Jackson Stone-Esposito	3 -Faculty Course Recs. Due	4 -Skyward Course Scheduling Open	5	6 -Jazz Ensemble/ Vocal Jazz Concert	7 -Maroon & White Art Show	8	9 -Region 1 Choir Concert
Op-Ed Editors...	Connor Anovick Sarah Sandler	10 -RHS Band Fruit Sale	11 -Small Ensemble Concert	12 -Senior Citizens Valentine’s Day Dance	13 -Grade 11 Parent Meeting	14 -Valentine’s Day	15	16
Arts and Ent. Editors...	Bradley Alsop Ethan Sapienza	17	18 -School closed -President’s Day	19 -School closed	20 -School closed	21 -School closed	22 -School closed	23
Sports Editor...	Laura Weisberger							
Art and Photo Editor...	Theo Hong	24	25 -Last Day to Drop 2nd Semester Courses	26	27 -Alternate Schedule	28 -DECA State Competition		

World News

Gun Control Controversy After School Shooting

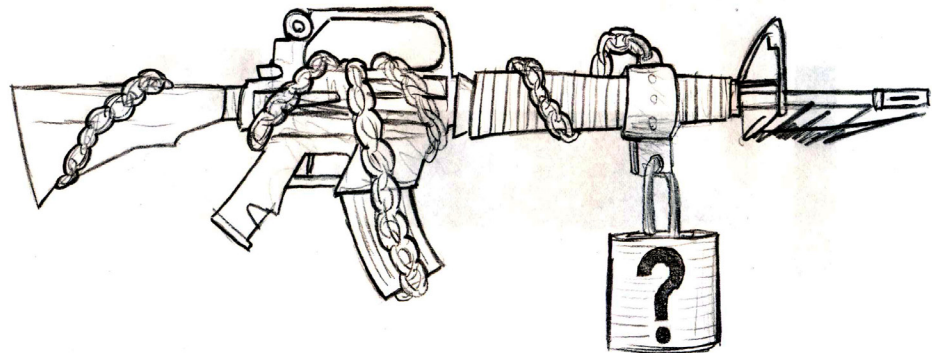
Karen Noh
staff writer

On December 14th, 2012, a tragic act of violence rattled the nation, reopening the debate regarding gun control. Adam Lanza, age 20, opened fire on Sandy Hook Elementary School using a Bushmaster AR-15 rifle and two handguns, a Glock 10 mm and a Big Sauer 9 mm. This incident is just one of many other fatal shootings. In addition to highly publicized shootings, an average of 31,224 people die each year from gun-related incidents. Gun control has always been a controversial issue in the United States, and the loss of twenty young children and the adults protecting them has caused an uproar throughout the nation--an uproar that cries for new limitations on guns.

Over the course of a week, students at RHS were asked if they think should be done about gun control in the United States in order to gauge how students feel about gun control. Out of one hundred students at Ridgewood High School, 71 students responded “yes”, 19 responded “no”, and 10 had “no opinion”. While most students agree that something needs to be done about the pressing issue of gun control, they disagreed about exactly what should be done. Shortly after responding to the question, one student said, “I think something does have to be done, but not in the way it’s being approached right now”. This is a statement that echoes the opinions of many

other students who were surveyed. The debate on gun control is multifaceted and very complicated. Among many potential solutions, the best way to approach this issue is to first discuss the practicality of having a military-grade assault weapon. Do common citizens really need a military style weapon

to protect their families? Do hunters need military style weapons to hunt? The answer is a resounding no. One common argument against gun control is that gun control takes away the right to bear arms declared in the Second Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. One proposed solution lies in the reinstatement of the Assault Weapons Ban, which originally expired in 2004. U.S. citizens would still have the right to bear arms, but not to keep the dan-



Art by: Chris Autura

gerous weapons like those owned by Adam Lanza’s mother. In addition to reinstating the Assault Weapons Ban, the government could create a stricter definition of assault weapon. Many weapons manufacturers exploit ambiguous terms to force their guns through the loosely worded ban against assault

weapons. By clearly defining, classifying, and perhaps even examining, each gun to be released and on a case-by-case basis, the government can prevent gun manufacturers from purposely mislabeling an assault weapon as a less dangerous weapon to increase sales. The second approach would require a stricter license to acquire guns. There would also be several levels of licenses, so that a person that may be qualified to use a handgun will have a license spe-

cifically for handguns. However, such a license would be useless if acquiring it is relatively easy. Instead of allowing anyone to apply for a gun license, the government would develop a more difficult pathway to obtaining a gun license. For example, a criminal record check and psychological exam are two requirements that would make it significantly more difficult for mentally unstable or violent people to obtain guns.

Guns are undoubtedly dangerous. Many people seek a solution that will make it absolutely impossible for men such as Adam Lanza to obtain a gun, and they refuse to accept anything less. In reality, it is impossible to completely prevent such incidents from happening again. No matter how many laws are passed in the name of gun control, there will be some unfortunate events. The goal of the government should be to eliminate such instances. Because this is so difficult, they should attempt to at least reduce the number of such unfortunate incidents. My heart breaks for the twenty beautiful children and seven brave faculty members who lost their lives in the Sandy Hook Elementary shooting. The memory of this incident should forever resonate in our minds as an indicator of the changes our nation desperately needs to make. The government must find an immediate solution to this senseless violence, and prevent such events from happening in the future, in order to preserve and protect the safety of our schools.

The Origins of Language

Krishna Rao
staff writer

Language is a key characteristic of humanity. Everybody speaks at least one. It is so common that we never give it a second thought. Rarely does one stop to consider how such an ingenious system of communication formed, though it is essential to almost all interactions we have with one another.

The field of linguistics- the study of languages- delves into history, sometimes uncovering interesting new insights into fundamental questions, including the origin and development of languages and the relation between them. Some people may assume that all languages are interrelated if humans acquired the ability to speak around



the same time. However, this is not the case, as there are several distinct language families, each derived from a common language. This is one of the mysteries of linguistics, because no link has been established to suggest that all languages share a common ancestor.

English is based on the Germanic and Romance branches of the Indo European language family. Germanic languages and Latin are both related. This means that English is somewhat of a composite language entirely within one family.

Of the foreign languages taught at RHS, Chinese is a Sino Tibetan language, while Spanish, French, Latin, and German are all Indo European.

The original Indo-European lan-

guage, called Proto Indo European (PIE), has been reconstructed from its various descendant languages. The result is that many languages share common root words. For example, *tri* is the word for “three” in PIE, and most Indo European languages have similar words for three. In English we say, “three”, and in Spanish, it’s *tres*. In the Assamese language of eastern India, the farthest outpost of Indo European languages, the word for three is *tini*.

The Korean language is a linguistic anomaly, known as a language isolate. This usually occurs when all the languages in a family die out except one, leaving that it with no “relatives.” Many theories exist relating Korean to Mongolic, Turkic, or even South Indian Dravidian languages, though none have solid evidence.

Languages are extremely dynamic. Even today, speech changes through generations. It is easy to notice the different speech of an elderly person, who does not use expressions like “cool,” “OMG,” or “LOL”.

This is the ultimate reason why languages diverge to form completely new languages, a process comparable to evolution. Two groups of people speaking the same language often start developing different pronunciations or adding new words. Many factors could influence this change, including physical separation of the two groups, or interactions with other languages.

Languages can be used for anything from basic communication to complex codes. During World War II, the Navajo language of the Dené family was used as a code by the Allies. Due to Navajo’s complex and unique sentence structure, the Axis intelligence was unable to understand intercepted radio transmissions of their enemies.

The RHS language program allows students to widen their demographic. Students continue the human legacy and learn to appreciate language itself.

“Learning another language,” says RHS Spanish teacher Señora Lopez “helps you to understand your own native language.”

Pope Benedict XVI Resigns

Jaesung Son
staff writer

Pope Benedict XVI, the successor to John Paul II, recently announced that he would resign on February 28, 2013 becoming the first Pope to resign in nearly six centuries. His holiness spoke in Latin to a small gathering of cardinals in Vatican City this past week. He spoke with an air of great dignity, concentration, and understanding of the moment’s significance. “I have come to the certainty that my strengths, due to an advanced age, are no longer suited to an adequate exercise,” he said, speaking not just to the assembled cardinals, but to the 1.2 billion Catho-



Pope Benedict XVI shocked the world when he announced his resignation on February 28th.

lics around the world. The Pope’s abdication came as a surprise, as even members of his inner circle were unaware of his plans to step down.

At the beginning of his papacy, Pope Benedict was a shy, but determined theologian. His time as head of the Catholic Church has been surrounded by child sexual abuse scandals that have tainted the reputation of the Catholic Church. Many outspoken critics of the pope have come from those most closely associated with the victims of the clerical abuse, and believe that his failures in controlling the sexual misconduct of certain priests were equivalent to a moral failing on the part of the Holy Father. However, the Pope has said that his

decision to resign is not due to the difficulties of the Papacy, although some people speculate the troubles surrounding the Catholic Church may have indeed prompted this resignation.

Currently, Pope Benedict XVI, age 85, has been becoming progressively frail in the eyes of the public, frequently needing assistance from those around him to walk. Being one of the oldest popes ever elected in 2005, at age 78, Pope Benedict has had his fair share of health issues in his past, ranging from a stroke in 1991 to ongoing arthritis.

Father Lombardi, current director of the Holy Sea Press Office, said that the Pope would, as announced, continue his duties until February 28 at 8 p.m., and a successor will likely be elected by Easter. Furthermore, Father Lombardi said that the Pope would first retire to his summer home in the hill outside Rome, Castel Gandolfo, and later to a monastery in Vatican City.

Pope Benedict’s decision to resign comes from his feeling that he is too worn down to continue doing his expected duties to their fullest potential. Although a shocking decision, many commend his choice, as he made the decision to not jeopardize his health, while also giving a new and healthier Pope the opportunity to the duties he felt he was too weak to fulfill.

Potential candidates for his successor are Ghana’s Cardinal Peter Turkson, Nigeria’s Cardinal Francis Arinze, Canada’s Cardinal Marc Ouellet and Italy’s Angelo Scola.

Pope Benedict says he wishes to continue to serve the Catholic church upon his stepping down from the position, “through a life dedicated to prayer.” He will return to his former title of Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, according to the church of England.

Pope Benedict has always been a well-respected world leader. On February 11, President Obama said “I have appreciated our work together over the last four years... and I wish the best to those who will soon gather to choose His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI’s successor.”

New Morning HSPA Prep Program for Juniors

Elizabeth Kopec
editor-in-chief

This month there are morning prep sessions for the HSAs to help prepare juniors for them. The morning preparation sessions are from 7:00 to 7:45 in the morning and Dr. Gorman hopes that they will “give every kid the opportunity to review concepts they haven’t done in a while.” Juniors need to pass the High School Proficiency Assessments in order to graduate. There are three

“Dr. Gorman hopes that these activities will ‘provide the best opportunities for students’”

levels of achievement, and it is a personal achievement to reach the advanced proficient level. The HSAs are March 12, 13, and 14. On the mornings of the HSPA exams, juniors will be given the opportunity to do some light exercise and eat breakfast at school. Healthy snacks, like yogurt, granola bars, and

fruit, will be served to students. Students will also be given the opportunity to walk around the track, weight lift, and do yoga. The exercise will not be too strenuous, just “15 to 20 minutes to get the blood flowing” according to Dr. Gorman. This exercise “goes hand in hand with what students are being taught in wellness class.” Dr. Gorman hopes that these activities will “provide the best opportunities for students to succeed on the test.” The school highly encourages students getting a good night’s sleep which, along with exercise, will relieve anxiety and stress about the coming exams. Freshman Robert Schablik said that this program “is a good idea because people are always rushing to school anyway, and it would be a great relaxed environment for students to get ready for the test.” Meanwhile, junior David Marchionni, who will be taking the HSAs this year, said that “it seems silly because I would wake up at six anyway and do those things at home and have a better breakfast.” Although one cannot isolate exercise and breakfast leading to better test scores, Dr. Gorman said that “lots of research and studies have proved that sleep, proper nutrition and exercise prior to the test increases scores.” Sophomore Carleen Jeffers does not entirely believe the correlation and said that “just because you are going to exercise, doesn’t



Juniors can come in early to stretch and eat breakfast before HSAs.

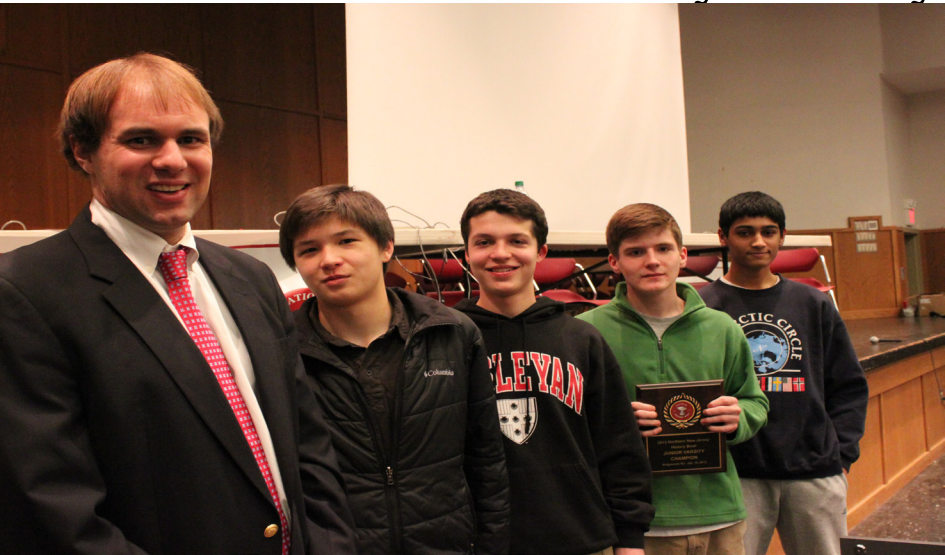
mean you will have a better score.” Some students are very supportive of the new program. Senior Zach Flicker said “it will make the school score better and look better. I am completely for it.” Junior Edward Prettyman agreed and thinks “it is a good idea because students will be mentally prepared.” Some students think that they will benefit more from ten minutes extra sleep than from extra exercise. In response Dr. Gorman said that those extra minutes of exercise will make students feel a lot better and

more awake than extra sleep would. In Dr. Gorman’s previous district, they had a similar approach to the HSAs. The physical education teachers suggested the morning exercise and breakfast program and other teachers backed the idea up with research. Approximately 60% of juniors participated, and the school saw an increase in scores. An email with more information has been sent out to all parents with more information before the HSAs.

RHS Hosts Northern New Jersey History Bowl

Sumita Rajpurohit
news editor

Ridgewood High School hosted the annual northern New Jersey regional History Bee and Bowl tournament on Saturday, January 19th. A total of 50 Varsity teams and 15 Junior Varsity teams from high schools in the area entered, making this one of the largest competitions this year. 12 teams entered from RHS, 5 of them competing on the JV level. Of those 5 teams, one was the Junior Varsity Champion of the Northern New Jersey History Bowl. The Varsity title went to a team from St. Joseph High School in Metuchen. From Ridgewood, Ben Bechtold came in second in the JV division of the Bee (individual competition), and Sanjana Rajagopal, Kara Vo, and Esther Sun made the semi-finals in the varsity division. Additionally, 3 varsity teams and 1 junior varsity team have already qualified for the National Championships in April in Arlington, VA.



Members of Ridgewood’s winning JV team pose with History Bowl founder David Madden.

History Bowl is a specific form of Quiz Bowl that focuses on a wide range of eras throughout history. Teams consist of 4 students, and are also allowed to have a fifth alternate member, in which case 1 member must

sit out each quarter. Any member of a team can buzz in at any point to answer the question, and correct answers result in an opportunity for a bonus question. From this regional competition, teams can qualify for the State tournament and eventually the National tournament. History Bee is essentially the same, except that students compete individually instead of in teams. The National History Bee and Bowl was founded in 2010 by former Ridgewood High School student David Madden and has recently been expanded to the Middle School level as well. Madden is the second longest-winning contestant on Jeopardy!, setting records for number of games and amount of money won that are only exceeded by Ken Jennings. Both Mrs. Fleming, the teacher in charge of History Bowl at RHS, and the students involved are looking forward to and optimistic about the upcoming State tournament in Princeton, which will take place on February 23-

Senior Citizens Valentine’s Day Dance

Joyce Kwon
editor-in-chief

Mary Albano will be turning ninety-nine years old this Saturday, February 16, 2013. But on Tuesday, February 12, she joined other members of the senior community and student council for the 2013 Senior Citizens Valentine’s Day Dance. The event was organized by Mr. Pizzuto, Mr. Yannone, RHS President, John Byon, and other members of student council. It was an evening filled with food, games, dances, and reminiscent conversations. Stores in downtown Ridgewood charitably donated a total of fourteen prizes for the games. Every year, students are given the opportunity to interact with knowledgeable members of the Ridgewood community. Matt Casale said, “It is great to see all the senior citizens come out. They’re genuinely happy to be here.” This was a very valuable and rewarding experience for both the attending seniors and to the students at the event.

The annual Senior Citizens Valentine’s Day Dance has been a traditions at Ridgewood High School for many years. Mr. Pizzuto stated, “this dance has been running since long before I started working at RHS in 1998.” As a long-lasting tradition of the school, it is eagerly anticipated every year.



The remarkable Mary Albano, will turn 99 years old this Saturday.

Ms. Albano has memories of attending this event ever since its establishment. As a great-grandmother of sixteen, she has seen numerous family members graduate from Ridgewood

High School. Her great-grandson Joseph Albano is currently still attending RHS. Ms. Albano discussed her family with a lot of pride, showing pictures of her grandson who was recently featured in the Ridgewood News. At nearly a century old, she does not get to participate in many activities anymore, though she has always enjoyed being engaged and entertained. It was clear that she truly appreciates this annual event. After enjoying conversations and a meal with her peers, it could be seen that Mary Albano is a strong representation of those who have lived a fulfilling lifetime of valuable lessons, present in our community. Among the other attendees was Tom McCabe who said he was “very impressed with the event.” There were tables lined with food and music played by a lounge-stlye keyboardist who himself has been attending the dance for sixteen years. While he played the guests gathered in the center of the floor for lively dancing. Marie

Charo, a resident of Ridgewood, stated that her favorite part of the event was “watching the dancing.” She has



Jenn Martin enjoys a conversation with members of the senior community.

been attending the Senior Citizens Valentine’s Day Dance for four years. The event turned out to be a great success. The senior citizens enjoyed a night out, and the members of student council appreciated the exchanges they had with the men and women as well.

Opinion

Students Respond to Canceled Ridgewood Dance

Sarah Sandler
staff writer

When I got the Facebook invitation, I could only groan and be filled with certain sense of dread. *Another school dance? The last one was only two months ago!* Then I saw that the theme of the dance was “Superbowl.” It is not that I have anything against football or the Superbowl, but not only did I not even know the names of the teams playing in this year’s Superbowl game, but I had not watched any professional football all season. I was not excited.

It was not always like this. During my freshman year, I used to highly anticipate school dances. I remember, I was not able to go to the Halloween Dance that year and was jealous when I heard my friends’ stories the following Monday. As high school progressed, however, my excitement for school dances quickly diminished. As I went to dances that entailed a night of nothing more than wandering the dance floor and getting my feet stepped on by rowdy males, I decided I would much rather spend my Saturday nights elsewhere.

You may ask, *if you hate these dances so much, why don’t you just not go?* I agree that is a feasible option,

but I would probably succumb to the peer pressure if all my friends decided to go. I know the proceeds from dances go to good causes for Ridgewood High School students, but I am just not willing to spend \$10 to be bored in the Campus Center for three hours. Obviously, a large majority of Ridgewood High School students share my sentiments. Out of all the juniors and



seniors, only about fifteen students bought tickets to the most recent dance, less than 2%. Members of student government patrolled the campus center and cafeteria, begging students to buy tickets, but with less than 100 tickets bought, the dance was cancelled.

I would try to offer suggestions on how to improve these dances to attract more attendance, but there’s not much that can be done. Many students aren’t interested in having their every move be watched by staff on a Saturday night, and many would argue that not much fun can be had on school grounds.

Connor Anovick
staff writer

Over the last four years Ridgewood high school has been on a mission to raise school spirit. Initiatives such as spirit weeks, pep rallies, and more frequent dances have all been put forth as a way to accomplish this loft goal. How-



Window by the band room broken by angry student.

ever, RHS students still lack enthusiasm and pride for their school and especially the school run events.

A Junior-Senior dance scheduled for the first day of February was canceled due to a general lack of interest by the junior and senior classes. As

a Senior I am upset to see one of my few remaining dances canceled. Senior Michael Daniels said, “I was really looking forward to the dance.” The demand for dances is still here, but Ridgewood High school is failing to provide events that attract students. Students want to return to all school dances that attract a much larger portion of the student body. Dances used to be a more fun, now they are over moderated and controlled, deterring students from attending them. Despite this effort by the school to minimize the rowdiness of dances, rowdy students still attend. At the Homecoming dance in December a glass door was broken demonstrating the inappropriate behavior of some students. It is impossible to control the actions of hundreds of teens at a dance, accidents happen, but the vast majority of students should not be punished for the actions of a few.

Regardless of the reforms that need to be made by the school, students should not waste these events. RHS only has a few dances each year and they should be taken advantage of. As a student body we need to have more pride and spirit for our school. Under twenty students purchased tickets for this last dance, regardless of its weak theme and flaws, this demonstrates an alarming lack of spirit by RHS students.

Congress Spends for Sandy

Betty Chen
staff writer

Hurricane Sandy left the East Coast completely devastated and residents shocked with thousands of residents now homeless and without the means to rebuild. The damage caused by Hurricane Sandy to the tri-state area is estimated to add up to over \$50 billion. Lawmakers from New York and New Jersey urged The United States Congress to quickly address the issue of disaster relief aid for their desperate citizens in need.

Congress was asked for a total of \$60 billion, but they only agreed to send \$9.7 billion dollars to help the victims of Superstorm Sandy. Per-

some funding for projects that were not even directly related to Sandy relief, such as a \$4 million repair job at the Kennedy Space center in Florida. The bill also included another \$150 million dollars for fishing disasters in states such as Alaska and Mississippi. The victims of Sandy should receive help immediately, but \$60 billion is way too much to ask. Ritwick Katiyar a senior at Ridgewood made the comment, “I am actually grateful for the fact that Congress didn’t spend more than \$9.7 billion dollars for the Sandy Aid Relief. The government is already in huge debt and should focus more on trying to improve the economy.”

Although there is no way to put a price tag on human life, it is hard to



The devastation caused by Hurricane Sandy has left thousands of New Jersey and New York residents without homes.

sonally, I agree that many people in the Northeast are in trouble, but I am also concerned about the growing debt that we as a nation are facing. This asked for amount is no small price tag and our country’s growing debt is a great burden to the economy.

With the looming fiscal cliff and poor economic climate, the United States is facing a \$110 billion dollar budget cuts in 2013, alone. Peter Coti, a junior here at Ridgewood High School said, “I do not feel that the government should be the one to help people get back on their feet. There are many benefits available from the Red Cross, so why should we make the federal government accumulate more debt now?” The bill put forth by Congress also included

justify spending such a vast amount of money on projects that have no direct correlation to the effects of Hurricane Sandy. Our country will need to find some sort of middle ground between relief and debt management. Congress should send money and aid in order to ensure that all residents hurt by the storm are given what they need to rebuild, but a full \$60 billions dollars is too much. Congress needs to strike a balance between providing the aid that is direly needed, and not overextending their already dwindling funds. This amount of tax payers’ money is an unnecessary burden on the already overwhelmed US economy. We have to do the right thing for the entirety of the US population.

Shootings Prompt Stricter Security

Madeline Morsch
staff writer

Ever since the horrific events of the elementary school shooting in , Connecticut, there have been a considerable number of debates over gun control in the United States.

According to a poll from Quinnipiac University, the majority of Virginia citizens support the security of having armed police officers in schools, with approximately sixty-six percent of the Virginians that voted being in favor of the stationing of armed police officers in every school, however twenty-nine percent of Virginia voters opposed the idea. This illustrates the growing controversy throughout the nation about the role of guns in modern day society. Some people are pushing for action to regulate and control the sale and distribution of guns, while others believe that it is not the guns themselves that kill people, it is people who perpetrate these murders.

In our very own “Garden State,” we have made changes since the Connecticut shooting. For instance, Marlboro, New Jersey now has armed police officers patrolling the schools to protect the students and prevent incidents like the one our country has most recently seen in places like Sandy Hook. The mayor of Marlboro, Jon Hornik, made a very controversial decision, and he defends his decision as the right one. The mayor told CBS 2 News, “I believe that having an armed police officer, a law enforcement official, present in our schools will give our students comfort; our town, our community comfort; and will have anybody think twice about coming into Marlboro schools.”

However, many parents in the town of Marlboro disagree with the mayor and believe that the move is a waste of time and money. Other residents agree with the mayor and think that he is doing the right thing by taking the necessary measures to ensure the students’ safety. Governor Chris Christie has already stated that he is not a supporter of armed officers in New Jersey schools.

In Ridgewood High School, This reporter surveyed 30 random students to find out what the opinion of the RHS student body was on armed police officers in schools and if it would

be beneficial to have one in our school. The majority of students thought that we should not have armed police officers in our school because they saw it as an unnecessary measure. Most of the students reasoned that Ridgewood is a safe town and the presence of an armed officer would seem threatening in the learning environment. On the other side of the argument Sarah Vellis, a junior at RHS, strongly favors the notion of armed protection in our schools. “I feel like this could prevent any violent incident from happening and even if something did happen, the situation would be able to be controlled a lot faster with an officer on site. Lives could be saved during the

“I believe that further steps to increase the safety of students are a necessity”

time it would normally take for law enforcement to arrive at the school.”

I believe that further steps to increase the safety of students are a necessity. Maybe not an armed police officer, but perhaps access to school buildings only through the use of ID passes. Extreme action is impractical as it is costly and hard to execute. But small changes in security, such as ID’s, more organized sign in of visitors, locked doors during school hours and more may make a big difference in the long run. Any action of increased security is preferred to no action as simply arguing for gun control isn’t going to be the only answer to the problem at hand.

The Daily Treat

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177 East Ridgewood Avenue

The Inside Scoop

Everything to know about the RHS Library Renovation

Liam Berry
staff writer

It is truly challenging to recall a summer break during which the students of RHS were not barred from one part of the campus or another due to a “renovation.” While most of these changes

are students in the school (counting repeat customers, of course). In other words, over 1,700 people trying to sit down, do work, or much to Mrs. Capetola’s chagrin, socialize, all in a single day. With numbers like those it is no surprising that students often struggle to find seating, a computer,

for more group discussion spaces. This is just one example of the committee’s labile and modern attitude. The Board’s willingness to accept constructive criticism, however, should not invite skepticism from those worried about unprofessional or unrealistic planning. According to HSA president,

ence materials in a number of ways, which according to teen library expert David Loertscher, saves space while promoting productivity and efficiency. There has been a big push to advertise and prompt the merits of the new library. Promotional videos like the ones produced by RHS students Hayes Walsh



A projected image of the new Learning Commons.

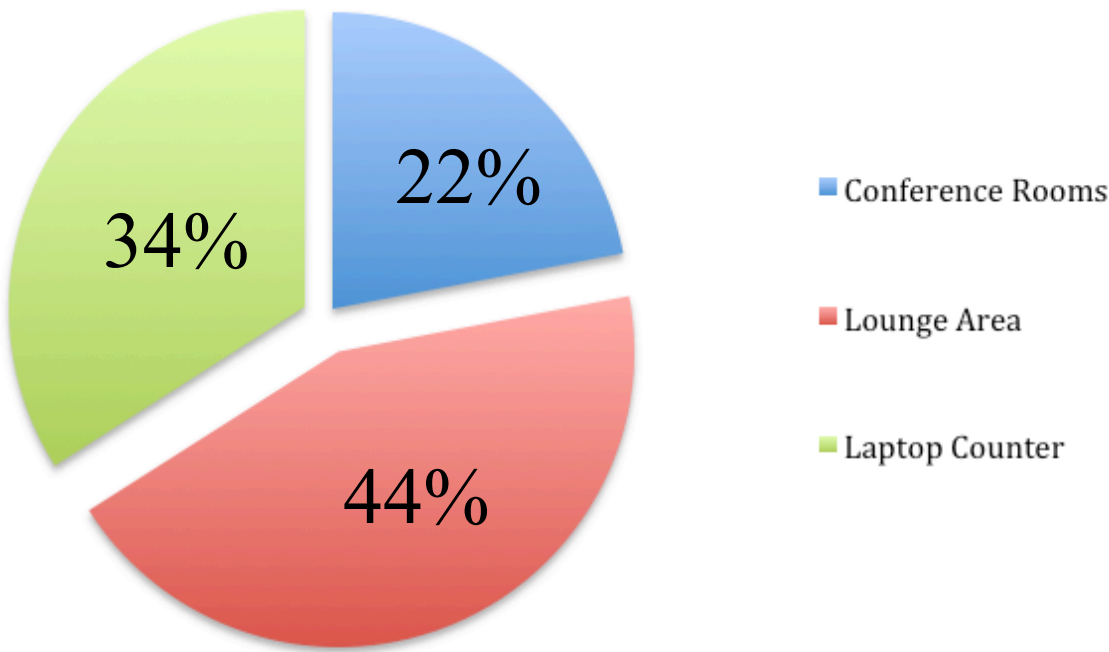
are easier heard about than experienced, one new project’s impact will be a bit more palpable than the others. The Learning Commons Project, a library overhaul plan devised and promoted in combination by the RHS Home and School Association and Board of Education, aims to do a

or a place to work either individually or in as a group project. The library was constructed nearly 50 years ago for a student body that numbered less than half the size of today’s. The Learning Commons project plans to double the library’s current capacity to eliminate seating

Lori Weil, the revised plans take into account national trends in library composition along with the guidance offered by design experts, including the advice of the professionals at Soyka Smith Design Studios in Montclair. Arguably the most important change to the “Library Media Center”

and Spencer Muhlstock (also known by their online alias SpatPro), have demonstrated, in a humorous and unique way, the problems and solutions posed by the Learning Commons project. Projects like the new Learning Commons, headed by passionate people who care about their school and their town, are the reason Ridgewood High School gets to claim a “tradition of excellence.” So, fellow students, before releasing an aggravated sigh on your potential inability to access your locker over summer break, think about everything we will be gaining: increased capacity, upgraded technology and furniture, more conference rooms. The only question left unanswered by the Learning Commons project is how our beloved librarian Mrs. Capetola will deal with the increased capacity.

What Students are Excited About...



lot more than just “renovate” Ridgewood High School’s antiquated reference center. With stated goals, such as bringing students a “state of the art research center” and providing a “multi-purpose space for both quiet time and group interaction” the project appears to have its finger on the pulse of student life; a characteristic whose importance should not be ignored. The current library is met with more visitors every day than there

issues, and build more group discussion rooms, like the currently sought-after and often exclusive “conference room.” This is a result of a more nuanced and responsive approach taken by the planning committee. For example, many students and parents scoffed at the idea of a café taking up library space, but despite the merits of this idea, the planning committee responded by replacing the coffee dispensary with plans

will be its emphasis on the word *media*. The desperately needed and necessary update to the library’s limited technological offerings. The upgrades currently being considered reflect the changing needs of students and teachers. These upgrades include the addition of Smart Boards, more laptops, netbooks and eReaders, online newspaper subscriptions, and a high-quality sound system. This means students will be able to access a greater volume of online refer-

High Times Poll

How many custodians do you think work at RHS?

6-15

16-25

26-35

36-45

more than 45

*submit your response to the librarian or email it to rhshtimes@gmail.com

Features

48 Year Old School Library to be Renovated

Zion Chang
staff writer

A school as old as Ridgewood High School must be, of course, subject to constant change as time goes by, in order to meet the needs of the constantly evolving world, and this is something that RHS has always historically done very well with. Even recently, as of November 16 2012, Ridgewood High School initiated a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) program to collaborate with its advanced educational program with the current advancing technology trends. However, even this will seem like old news when the new Learning Commons renovation, which should be completed over the summer, is finished. The Ridgewood Home & School Association and the Board of Education have been planning to rebuild the library to expand and renovate its facilities.

The new library, or “Learning Commons,” according to a statement by the Board, “will not only serve as a reading room and a multimedia center, but also as a study hall, group study venue, movie theater and home for students, staff, and parents to meet.” The design of the new library was created by the district’s in-house architect LAN Associates, and there will be three to four conference rooms and nearly 170 seats for students (including 20 overstuffed armchairs in the lounge area). The new commons promises plenty of outlets and charging stations to accommodate the school’s new Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) initiative.

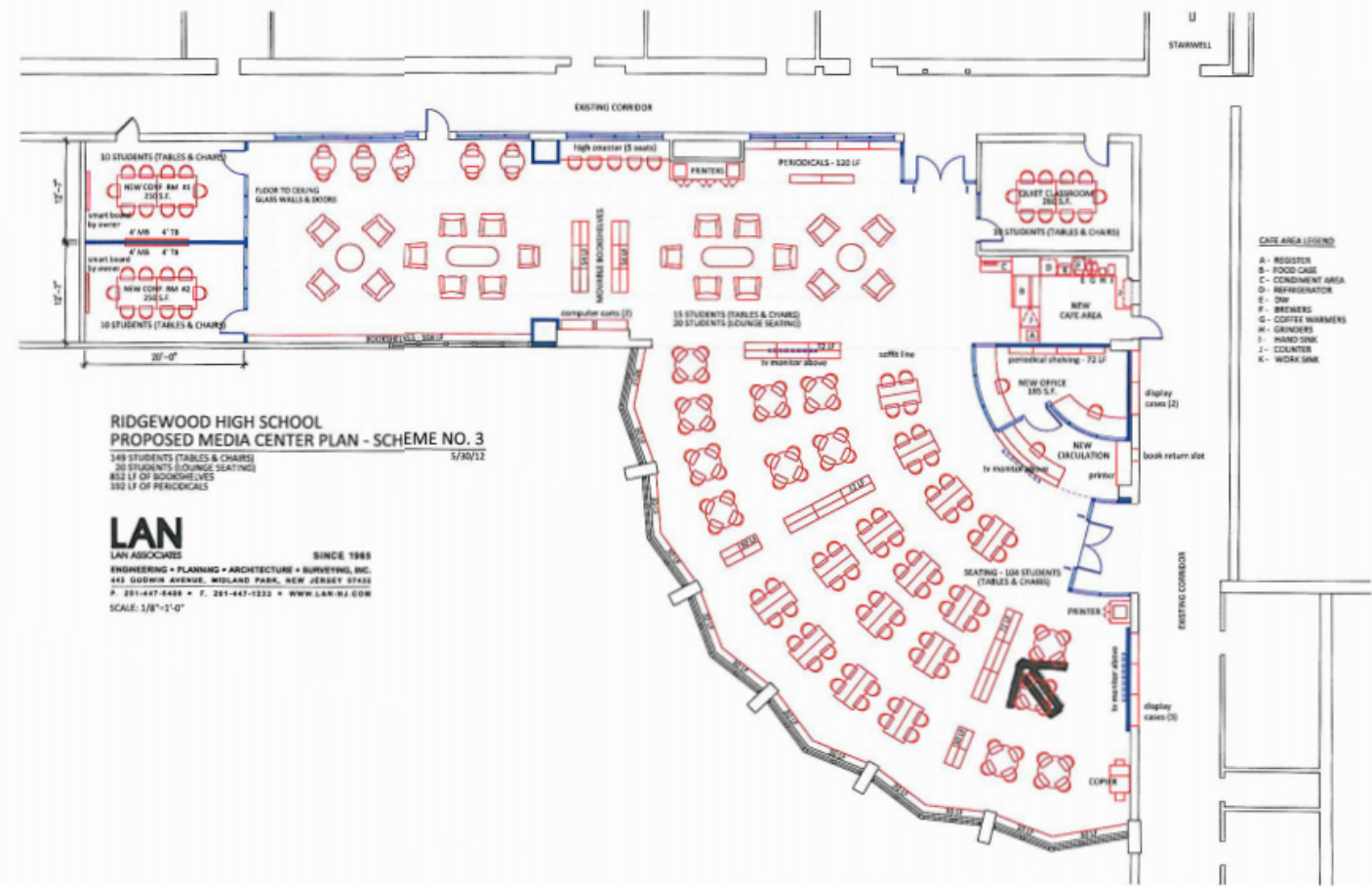
The main purpose for this renovation is to promote student interac-

tion and learning with one another in the library space. The current library, dating back to 1964, is also in need of new shelving, furniture, and fixtures. The renovation will ideally take place during July and August of 2013 and will become available for use before students return to school in September. The Ridgewood High School Home & School Association has been fundrais-

ing for the cause of transforming our library into a modern learning commons. So far, the committee has raised closed to a millions dollars, which has surpassed their original goal of \$850,000, but the Home & School Association is currently pushing for additional funding for technological improvements.

Not only should the students support this cause, but they should also

participate in any projects that allow the high school to adapt to new technology and ideas that will move the school forward. This new library will be a high-tech multi-purpose space that will become the center of academic activities and scholastic life. The library renovation will surely mark yet another milestone among many for Ridgewood High School and its students.



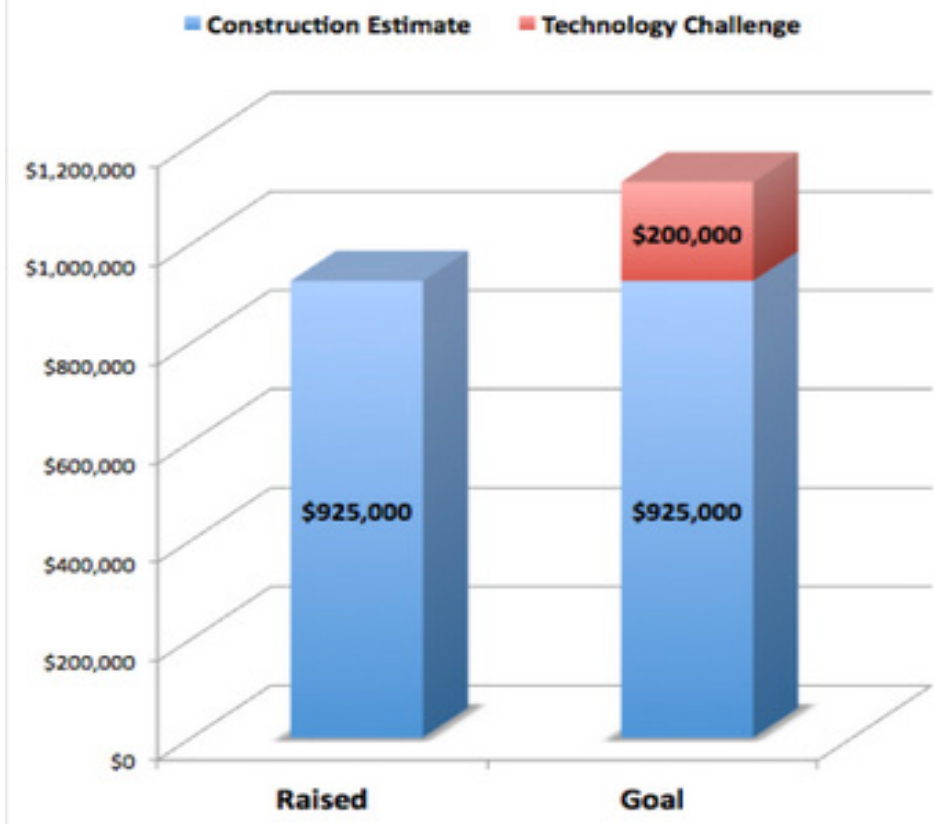
Librarian’s Perspective on the Renovations

Joyce Kwon
editor-in-chief

Upon hearing about the coming library renovations, many are eager to hear the opinions of the students. Yet the most utilized room in the high school is not only used by students. There has been little curiosity concerning the thoughts of the librarians, who will be spending the most time in this new space. Their outlook is critical to a successful renovation, and it is worth noting the extent of their participation in the project, as well as what aspect of the Learning Commons they are looking forward too.

Diana Capetola, the head librarian, has been anticipating the new conference rooms. She has observed a high demand for the conference room from students, but unfortunately, Ridgewood High School currently only has one. Ms. Capetola sees these rooms potentially being used for “big groups, small groups, and even rehearsing plays and filming movies.” She has learned that many students state that they desperately need a quiet place to study. Nevertheless, the new design is intended to serve double the students, so “we have to remember to be considerate.”

The Learning Commons has been



Learning Commons budget as of 1/14/13.

considered to be a large leap in technological advancements for RHS. Ms. Capetola is very “happy about what’s

going to happen.” She hopes that the planned amount of technology is achieved. However, Ms. Capetola is

very happy that RHS has books. The new shift to technology has left many schools with few, if any books. Ms. Capetola, though, is determined to never neglect the knowledge in literature.

The current plan is for the Learning Commons to be open at the start of the 2013-2014 school year. However, Ms. Capetola feels that “it is a little unrealistic to open by then.” Hoping to meet this deadline and remaining optimistic, demolitions will begin as soon as school ends.

According to Ms. Capetola, the Ridgewood High School Home and School Association has been “very professional and admirable. They have been asking teachers and students for expectations, especially for the internal designs, in order to make that all of effort is efficiently used.” The library desperately needs to be updated. It has not been renovated since 1964 when all furniture was replaced. The only improvements since then have been the installment of air conditioning eight to ten years ago. Ms. Capetola states, “I’m really excited and happy to be here at the helm. It is my seventeenth year at Ridgewood and this is the first time I can oversee a new facility, so I’m very excited. I think the students and teachers will benefit a lot.

Facts

- The Learning Commons is Scheduled to begin construction in June 2013.
- Hope to finish construction in September, 2013.
- Have already raised the original fundraising goal of \$850,000.
- The “Board” has set a new financial goal of \$925,000, which they have also reached.
- Currently, the commission hopes to raise another \$200,000 to cover technology costs.

To learn more or donate to the cause, visit rhslearningcommons.com

Features

- “A state-of-the-art research center.”
- “Multi-purpose space for teaching and group study.” (Three Conference Rooms)
- “Comfortable and inviting areas for individual and quiet study.”
- (Meaning couches and laptop ports)
- “Many opportunities for creativity and collaboration.” (That’s up to your own interpretation)
- “Offer community meeting space open to students, staff and parents.”
- “Create a haven for students at the beginning and end of every school day.”

Arts and Entertainment

The Often Forgotten, But Compelling Award

Bradley Alsop
entertainment editor

The Academy Awards is fast approaching, with the presenting of the golden statues taking place on Sunday, February 24, 2013. This year, there is a diverse set of movies is up for Best Picture, with *Lincoln* sweeping the nominations with 12 nods for different categories across the board, including everything from acting to sound mixing. In many categories, the expectations and system with which the academy chooses the winner is relatively cut-and-dry. As an example, *Best Picture* is decided based on the movie that grabbed the viewer's hearts, as well as having an extreme cultural impact on the way films are perceived and executed. The winners are seen as those movies that are true spectacles, both visually and emotionally. In short a *Best Picture* winner defines the year in film. The *Best Actor* and *Best Actress* are the tour de force performances, the natural and brilliant demonstrations of what it means to assume the role of someone else, and become that person with utter conviction. In certain respects, the Academy Awards follows a formula where *Best Picture*, *Best Actor* and *Best Actress* can be safely predicted before the ceremony. The Director's Guild Academy has predicted the *Best Picture* winner for the past decade or so; if all goes as planned, and the Ben Affleck-helmed historical thriller *Argo* will take

the top prize at the end of the night. But categories such as *Best Supporting Actor* and *Best Supporting Actress*, are beasts unto themselves that are almost entirely different. These categories are fascinating in their unpredictable nature. The Academy fluctuates in what it expects of supporting actors and actresses due to the fact that there are seemingly no templates for this award. Because there are no set guidelines by which the academy has



Tommy Lee Jones as Thaddeus Stevens in *Lincoln*.

historically judged the winners of this award, the *Best Supporting Actor* and *Best Supporting Actress* awards showcase not only the central characters of a film, but the actor and actress who best captures and holds the viewer's attention for an allotted period of time, leaving the audience in awe and asking for more. This category tends to follow no certain path, due mostly to the

specificity of what is occurring in the film, in that it dictates the course of what the actor or actress does. Consider Alan Arkin, the curmudgeon, blisteringly funny grandfather from *Little Miss Sunshine*; although not even remotely the central character of the film, he emanates a comedic control and timing that was unparalleled in the year in film of 2004. Another recipient of the award was Javier Bardem for his role in 2007's *No Country for Old Men*.

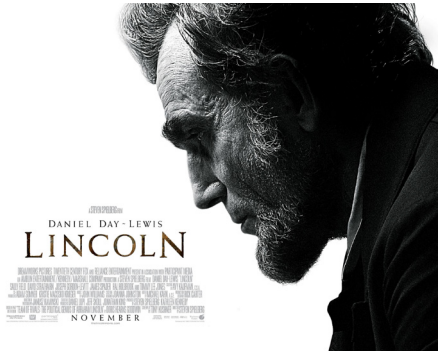
ures in a movie, still captivates something more. They suspend reality to make the viewer genuinely care about the plight of this character who graces the film's presence for, in some cases, one scene. For instance, Fiona Davis' harrowing performance in *Doubt* was merely eleven minutes long, yet it was one of the most talked about scenes in 2008.

The *Best Supporting Actor/Actress* awards provide a level of interest to the Oscar ceremony. There is never a clear winner, because the performances are usually five brilliant portrayals of the human spirit and condition, conveyed in five entirely different ways. Although some of the portrayals are short in length, they are the ones that tend to stay with the viewer after the film is over. This year, I expect Tommy Lee Jones' piercing and vibrant performance as radical Republican Thaddeus Stevens in *Lincoln* to get the nod. It is a truly brilliant, organic depiction of a man who is so tirelessly driven that he has spent his entire life on one cause, all to see his dream finally come true. I also expect Anne Hathaway's beautiful performance as Fontaine in *Les Misérables* to take home the Golden Statue. The grace with which she embraced the difficulty of a pre-dominantly singing role is exemplified brilliantly in her few but shining moments in the film. Overall, I am very excited for this year's awards, but what I am more excited to do is dive in and examine the supporting roles of each film from 2012.

Ethan Sapienza
entertainment editor

Regardless of whatever Tom Hooper, Ben Affleck, Kathryn Bigelow, Michael Haneke or David O. Russell may be hoping for, there is almost no chance for their respective films to be winners after the Academy Awards occur on February 24th, 2013. None of the listed directors will win best picture or director for their films. The simple fact that they were nominated is almost comical, if not mocking. The Academy Awards is in its 85th year, and by this point, the winners for each category have become depressingly predictable. The one film that manages to sweep all of the awards is almost always high budgeted, packed with an all-star cast, has a rather well known director, highly, if not overly emotional, and seemingly forgotten within a few years due to lack of originality. Though there have been a few movies that have broken this tradition in the past, the tradition is continuously restored. The biopic *Lincoln* appears to be the film that will win almost all of its award. Though, by all standards, it is a good movie, it is severely lacking in multiple

The Predictable Academy Awards



The theatrical poster for *Lincoln*.

departments. Numerous scenes drag on for too long, as a whole the script writing and interaction between characters is rather uninteresting, and the film is shot in an entirely plain fashion that provides almost no artistic value concerning the framing of scenes. The film is also extremely biased, painting Lincoln as a God among men. The music as well detracts from the film, often breaking the gravity of a scene with an incredibly poorly placed, comical renditions of bizarre folk songs. This being said, *Lincoln* will still win in almost all of its categories. The movie covers a moderately controversial person, one both revered and hated

by people hailing from the very same country. This aspect that undoubtedly helped accumulate the cast, director and publicity it received. Steven Spielberg, Daniel Day-Lewis, Joseph Gordon-Levitt, Tommy Lee Jones, and Sally Field ensured that the caliber of the film's production value and acting would be of the highest possible. The hype built around the film was enormous as well, which was comically met with a moderate response, both by critics and moviegoers. The movie was simply made to win awards, to gain all of the attention it did for the time being, and then be forgotten. A film that is strikingly similar to *Lincoln* recently won the Best Picture award as well, that being *The King's Speech*. It dealt with a leader who came into power via controversial matters and persevered through sheer will. Both are inspiring stories of seemingly ordinary men who achieve greatness against all odds. Both feature a juggernaut cast and plain style of cinematography. Both are flawed, somewhat boring, but nonetheless emotional enough to win the hearts of those who vote for the winners of the Academy Awards. Despite their lack of significance to today or true level of quality, these

types of films have and will plague the Awards ceremonies for years. These films are bold enough to get publicity and praise, yet conservative enough to never risk failure. They are awarded for their lack of creativity, and have become utterly monotonous in their story arcs of triumph to greatness. The films that should go home with the Golden Award are those that do take risks and succeed for doing so, at least critically. These risks do pay off, as they are the films that are remembered. Possibly the best example of such a film is the movie that was the most serious contender to *The King's Speech* for Best Picture: *The Social Network*. It dealt with a troubled young man who rose to stardom through pure genius and a lack of sympathy for his challengers, all the while dealing with a subject matter relevant to today. It did what most Best Picture contending films do not, aggressively tell the tale of a topic still present during the time of its filming. Even more so, it succeeded in providing an unbiased presentation of the topic, one that allowed for the audience to debate and think over the characters and their actions. It was precarious, artistic and incredibly well done, but failed to win the awards for which it was nominated.

Maroon and White

Gillian Highet, soprano singer, (below) and Kathryn Leung, clarinet, (left) perform on stage as part of the monthly Ridgewood High School Maroon and White Recital and Art Exhibit on February 4, 2013.



On February 7, the RHS Visual and Performing Arts Department held the February Maroon and White Recital and Art Exhibit. The concert in the campus center began with clarinetist Kathryn Leung, who played a piece by Mozart. Gordon Rowan then performed a Mozart piece on the piano. Following these instrumentalists, Gillian Highet, a soprano, sang various songs,

including a song from *Little Women*. Nick Borghoff played selections from Bach on the viola. Zachary Flicker performed a piece on the euphonium. The last performer in the concert was alto saxophonist Emmett Rapaport. Following the concert, Zoe Blecher-Cohen, Shelby Bourke, Hannah Park and Vidushi Sharma exhibited their art in the Carroll Art Gallery.

Arts and Entertainment

Singers Shine in Choir Concert

Elizabeth O’ Keefe
staff writer

The choirs of RHS have been praised for many years as a dedicated group of impressive vocalists. Faculty members have been known to praise all three choirs: chorale, concert, and chamber. Some of the appraisals have been about their professional sound and the consistently high attendance at concerts. The most recent concert was held on December 19, and featured some other groups in addition to the three choirs. Three curricular vocal ensembles performed: the Ridgewood Voices, the Maroon Men, and the Acabellas. All who attended and participated in the concert agree that it was a great success!

The chorale was the first group to take the stage. Chorale consists of girls in the freshmen class. The first song performed by the group was *The Blessing* by Celtic Woman. The group communicated the loving nature of the song effectively. The group also sang *Give Us Hope* by Jim Papoulis. The chorale had a great attitude on stage during this song and it looked as if the entire group was having a great time singing.

The concert choir followed with three songs. One of the songs the group performed was *Shut De Do* by Randy Stonehill. It was an entertaining and uplifting song, performed with undying energy from the singers. Another song beautifully performed by the concert choir was *In Flanders Fields* by John McCrae, who was a Lieutenant in World War I. The group expertly communicated the sensitivity of the song with blending and dynamics. The last song the group performed was *Tun-*

garre, an exciting piece by Stephen Leek. The song was both sensitive and thrilling, making it a favorite for many.

Chamber wrapped up the night with three great songs, the first being *House Song To the East* by A. Grove Day. The chamber choir brilliantly executed the challenging dynamics presented in the piece. Their second song, *Amor de mi Alma* by Z. Randall Stroope was extremely difficult as it was performed in its original language, Spanish. Despite this, the chamber choir managed to communicate the emotion of this love song without the audience understanding a word of the text. The final song Chamber sang alone was *Zion’s Walls* by Aaron Copland. Chamber choir remained upbeat, and effectively communicated the joyful nature of the song, despite its difficulty level.

In the final piece, *Balleilakka*, by A.R. Rahman, all three choirs participated. The piece was performed in Tamil, an Indian dialect, at a very fast pace, making it an extremely challenging piece. The groups performed it well, despite rehearsing it as a group less than five times. All who participated in the song appeared to be having fun performing. They were able to convey the upbeat nature of the song with a surprising level of prowess and ease.

Overall, the choir concert showed a great deal of effort. Together, Mr. Bourque and all of the participating students put on a fantastic show. All groups showed the skills that they have learned and improved upon over the last few months. It was a spectacular performance overall. But now that the concert is over, there is nothing to do but start looking forward to the next one!

A True Musical Experience

Carly Ayukawa
staff writer

This year for New Players in Concert, three to four scenes from eight different shows were directed and performed exclusively by Ridgewood High School students. The students performed ten to fifteen minute segments from the musicals *Hercules*, *Spamalot*, *Next to Normal*, *The Sound of Music*, *Bombay Dreams*, *Once on this Island*, *A Very*

New Players production, every year. The concert is special because it is a welcoming experience for freshmen and first time New Players alike. Due to the fact that these are segments directed by students themselves, everyone who auditions gets cast. “Concert is the highlight of most New Players year because everyone gets to perform together and it’s our largest cast,” said Samantha McCarthy, a sophomore who played the Lady of the Lake in



The cast of *Once On This Island*.

Potter Musical, and *The Wedding Singer*. These pieces were all chosen and directed by New Players. The seniors had the opportunities to either direct a scene or be cast in tone. In addition, the show’s choreography, costuming, music, and all other important tasks were also organized solely by the senior class.

First time New Player and senior Taylor Cronk who performed in *Hercules* said, “It’s been a great experience meeting new people, and I encourage others to do [the new Players Concert] also.” The four performances of the concert sold out quickly as the performance is a popular

Spamalot. Another sophomore, Nina Farley of *Once on this Island* said “It’s fun for anyone who does it; You don’t have to want to do theater for the rest of your life and you don’t have to be super good at singing and dancing.” Perhaps most touching is the fact that the entire cast from all the participating segments, opened and closed the show with big musical numbers. The New Player seniors appropriately performed “Hello!” from the *Book of Mormon*, as an opening number, and closed the show with “Seize the Day” from *Newsies*. The concert was a true highlight of the New Players season.

Flawed But Entertaining: Les Mis

Carter Hartmann
staff writer

‘Les Miserables’ is a timeless classic and a story that defines an era in French history, which made turning this tale into a movie a tremendous undertaking of cinematic making. People have had very high expectations for *Les Mis*, as turning a classic novel into a feature length film is always a hot bed for criticism, doubly so with the success of the Broadway production.

When this reporter went to go see this classic-turned-major-motion-picture, I was unsure of what to think. The beginning scene is certainly a solid attention-getter, as it shows off director Tom Hooper’s impressive use of special effects, depicting poor French prisoners struggling to haul in a ship of titanic proportions. Almost immediately the audience gets to see what they came for: the powerful face-off between two muscular actors that we don’t usually see as singers: Hugh

the scene much more powerful, but this technique did not work for every song. The effect gets so worn down that when Hooper uses it for the seventh or eighth time one loses interest. Every song just can’t be a dramatic climax; it lessens those that truly deserve to be highlighted. Hooper spends much of the movie exposing the emotions of love and human sensations that the center of the plot goes by unnoticed. We watch the young law student Marius sing to his new love, Cosette, for 10 minutes in a passionate declaration; However, only two words of dialogue were exchanged before the next song. The plot gets lost amongst all the excitement of the characters; which is a shame because the plot is vibrant and exciting.

The rag tag group of boys and their ensuing rebellion was a gratifying touch, varying from the sadness and depression that comprised the rest of the movie. The final showdown between Valjean and Javert is a dominant showcase of talent. Russell Crowe’s song before his death is well sung and



A scene of rebelling in the streets of Paris in the film *Les Mis*.

Jackman and Russell Crowe. They were a perfect contrast for each other, providing an even match up for the two main characters. The movie begins strong and dramatic, getting off to a good start with the intense portrayal of emotions by Jean Valjean, the protagonist portrayed by Jackman, and establishing the coming rivalry between Valjean and Javert, the unbending French soldier portrayed by Crowe. The movie fasts forward eight years into the future, where Valjean has established himself as a successful and godly businessman under an alias after breaking his parole for stealing a loaf of bread.

Next the audience encounters Anne Hathaway, the female protagonist Fantine, who give one of the true standout performances of this film. She takes us through an extremely emotional half hour, showcasing all her struggles; leading up to the heart breaking decision to sell her body for her daughter’s benefit. The emotion that Hathaway puts into her performance gives all her appearances a sense of true grief and loss. One of the highlights of the entire movie is her rendition of “I Dreamed a Dream”. The camera stays on a close up of her face the entire time, which is a great artistic move for this song. It also helps the audience see the real passion that is involved in her every word. The actors sang all the songs live, instead of being prerecorded as is typical in most Hollywood musicals. This provided the movie with a true edge for the all the best scenes containing emotionally riveting, tear jerking moments.

The solos were all shot with dramatic close ups, with every actor sobbing while they belted out their personal sorrows. In the huge dramatic sequences of “I Dreamed a Dream” and Hugh Jackman’s opening song, especially, these effects work to make

interesting. The way his character is seen at the end of the film, with morality and a heart, is an interesting move. Crowe effectively showed that even the ruthless, cold hearted jailer had another side, which is seen clearly in his finale. Then the movie begins to come together. As we near the conclusion, the pinnacle of all the separate plots reconnect, as Jean Valjean saves his daughter’s

“The emotion that Hathaway puts into her performance give all her appearances a sense of true grief and loss.”

ter’s love, and the hilarious Sascha Baron Cohen and Helen-Bonham Carter, the Thernadiers, crash the wedding. These scenes make for an interesting conclusion and a perfect transition into the last scene, when everything comes together, and all the stars, living or dead sing while Jean Valjean dies. This is where the passion of the movie reaches its full potential. It is a problem that the movie only starts to get engaging 15 minutes from its end, but at least the movie ends well, with the final number being truly memorable.

The pace of this movie was uneven. Certain scenes were engaging, but at other points the repetitive nature of the film dragged on. Overall, the movie did not reach the high expectations and precedents it set. Yet parts of it were extremely well executed, providing a very inconsistent viewing experience.

Sports

Bright Horizons for Wrestling Team

Michael Antosiewicz
staff writer

The Ridgewood High School wrestling team is in a great position this year to make the state tournament, a difficult goal which last year's team also achieved. The varsity wrestling has retained a majority of the varsity regulars from last season. However, there are some glaring holes which need to be filled if the team is to exceed or even match last year's success. Finishing with fifteen wins and eight losses and also making the state tournament, last year's team was one of the best in RHS's recent wrestling history.

The senior class of 2012 was highly prestigious and held many experienced wrestlers. The most notable of the graduates were Brandon Giovanetti, Justin Gramaglia, Josh Lay and Aaron Bess. The most successful wrestler of this group was Brandon Giovanetti, who was the all-time win-leader in Maroons' history, with a victory over his opponent in the Hawthorne match. Not only the all-time leader, he graduated with multiple district championships, and state-tournament appearances. Gramaglia, was also a regular on varsity for three seasons, before winning a district

championship his senior year. Aaron Bess, one of the best defensive players in the football program's history, took fourth at counties last season. And lastly, Josh Lay made varsity appearances his ju-



Junior Joe Oliva pins down an opponent from Northern Highlands.

nior year before becoming a regular starter his senior season. All of these wrestlers left an indelible imprint on the program.

This year's team contains a few burgeoning stars of its own as well. Joe Oliva is undeniably the most elite wrestler on the team, and perhaps in the entire state. In his freshman and sophomore seasons, he

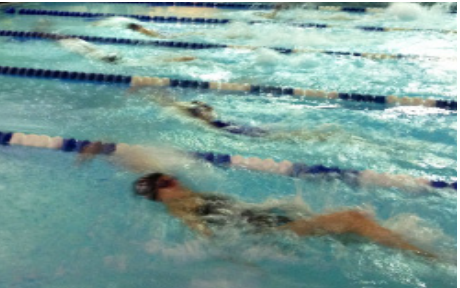
wrestler had won since Tyler Flatt in 2003. Stephen Gerdner and Nick Saglimbeni are two of the lighter weights that are getting better every practice, and both placed in counties. Sukmin Yoon and Andrew Moras, both football players, are at the top of the line-up at 220 and 195 weight classes. Fortunately for both, they have the physical capabilities to drastically improve even more. The middle of the line-up boasts two more football players, Austin Purritano and Aaron Martinez. At 160 and 152 weight classes, these two lineman show enough heart and talent on the football field that, if translated to the mat, can become infinitely better wrestlers. Also in this weight class is sophomore Robert Rigiloso, a football player whose physical shape and wrestling skills are both on the rise. Two other seniors on varsity are Matt Calton and Kenny Hayes, both of which are ready to come into their own in their last season.

The Captains of this year's team are Joe Oliva, Austin Purritano, Kenny Hayes and Matt Calton. With these leaders, the Maroons are ready to go far, and perhaps farther than they have ever gone in the history of the RHS wrestling program.

Maroons Overtake Hackensack

Elise Chelak
staff writer

On January 8, the Ridgewood boys and girls swimming teams beat out the Hackensack Comets in a Big North Freedom Division dual meet. The boys advanced to 5 wins and 1 loss in the season (their only loss coming from St. Peter's), thanks to wins in all three relays and individual victories. The meet for the boys began solidly and smooth sailing



Stephanie Strickland leading off one of the Ridgewood relays with backstroke.

after the first event where Ridgewood placed first and second in the 200-medley relay. With wins in individual events from Kim (200 free), Hilditch (50 free), Park (100 fly), Kevin Hoem (500 free), and Evan Westcott (100 back), the final score for the boys came out to be a whopping 114-53. Just as triumphant as the boys were, the girls that emerged with a 99-77 win that helped boost

their season to a ranking of three wins and two losses. The quartet for the 200-medley relay, including Liz Graham, Effie Angus, Cali Bird, and Meg Shigeta, placed first to start out the meet confidently for the Maroons. Not only did the meet start optimistically, but it also ended on a positive note with a first place finish in the last event, the 400 free relay, as a result of Shigeta, Julia Granski, Camille Vasquez, and Angus. Liz Graham, a junior at RHS who also swam the 200 IM and 100 back events, says that the team "felt pretty confident going into the meet. There was definitely not as much pressure as there had been in last week's meet against Northern Highlands. The captains encouraged everyone to have fun." With an impressive win against the Comets for both the boys and girls teams, the Ridgewood swimming program as a whole has much to anticipate, including big meets approaching such as Leagues, County Championships, the Bergen Invitational, and Sectionals. When asked about how the swim team is doing currently and what the goals for the team are, Graham responds, "the season is challenging for the team because we lost a ton of really fast swimmers who graduated last year. But everyone has been training hard and a lot of swimmers are really stepping up. We hope to continue to improve!"

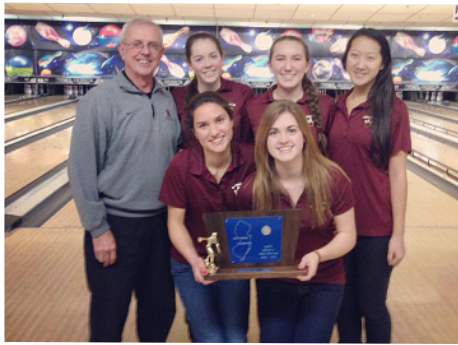
Rolling to Victory

Leslie Lam
staff writer

This year for the Ridgewood High School girls' bowling team would prove to be difficult after a very successful season last year. The 2012 team won first place at Counties, came in second at Groups and went on to compete hard in the state finals. This year, although the Maroons had a rocky start after losing to a lower seed during Counties, the girls varsity bowling team came back stronger at the next tournament, winning for Group 4 and even coming in second place for the entire tournament. The team competed on Monday the eleventh in the State Finals. This year, two starting seniors will graduate and their positions will need to be filled to make sure the team of 2014 will be just as strong as it has been in the past two years. When asked about next season and the potential for similar success, JV team member Kimberly Lam said, "We will just have to see how things go, it will be a surprise for everyone

I think the team will step up and realize that if everyone does their part and tries their best, we can be just as good as last year, even with the graduating seniors leaving gaps in the framework of the varsity squad." Although two seniors are graduating, three year varsity starter Kelly Skettini will be leading the team again for her final year next season when she is a senior, and hopefully the team will see just as

much success as the past. Juniors Zoe Singer and Leslie Lam are also strong Varsity bowlers that will be joining the RHS team for one more year. Senior Jen Schablik says, "I am really going to miss the bowling team because it is an integral part of my high school experience. Many of my best memories involve being with my friends on the bowling team, and especially winning Counties last year." Keep up the bowling team to see this unconventional sport make it to the big leagues of high school varsity competition.



The girls' varsity bowling team after winning Sectionals with Coach Bennett at far left, Kelly Skettini, Zoe Singer, and Leslie Lam. In bottom row, seniors Natalie DeCandia and Jen Schablick.

Girls' And Boys' Track Teams Are Sectional Champions

Laura Weisberger
sports editor

On Monday February 11, the boys' and girls' winter track teams drove down to Toms River New Jersey to compete in the North 1 Group 4 State Sectional Championships, and left with two first place trophies. The boys and girls teams from the same school both coming in first place in this meet has never been done before.

Important team points were scored by runners in every event. For the distance runners, Nick Salamone came

in first place in both the one mile and two mile races, senior Storm Dublirer placed second in the one mile, junior



The RHS track teams after winning Sectionals.

Laura Weisberger placed second in the one mile and sixth in the two mile, and sophomore Kelly Cleary came in first place in the mile and second place in the two mile. In the 4x400 relays, the girls team of Micaela McPadden, Anna Caffrey, Amanda Muccio, and Sirai Ramirez placed second, and the boys relay team of Jake Sabatini, Teddy Migliorelli, Macky Schoff, and Kevin Chung came in first place. Senior Micaela McPadden had a great meet and scored important points for the Maroons, also placing first in the 400 meters and second in the 800 meters.

Last year, the girls came in first place and the boys came in second, and the Maroons proved to be able to keep up their legacy even with important seniors graduating and leaving holes in the team. All the athletes who placed in the top six in their races qualified for Groups, which is on Saturday, February 16th. Sophomore Kelly Cleary said, "I'm really happy with the teams' performance and I know Coach Saladino is proud too. I'm glad that I was able to place well and even got a new personal record in the two mile. It was a good meet for everyone."

Sports

Coaches vs. Cancer

Joyce Kwon
editor-in-chief

On Saturday, February 2, 2013, RHS hosted the second annual Coaches vs. Cancer Classic. The boy’s basketball team played St. Anthony’s, the national defending champions who is ranked fourth in the nation. The freshmen played at 2:00 p.m., followed by the JV team at 3:30 p.m. The event ended with the varsity team playing at 5:00 p.m. Tickets were sold to students for ten dollars, and they were sold to the general public for fifteen dollars. In addition to the game, free souvenir tee shirts were offered to all attendants. Coach Troy organized this event last year, after being inspired by many people in his life. He stated he was strongly influenced by a student he coached in 2009, Timmy Sayles, and his brother, who passed away from cancer last year. Coach Troy said “He was an extended member of the basketball family, so this was a nice way to give back.” Coach Troy was also affected by cancer personally. “My father was diagnosed and is a two time survivor, so from a personal standpoint, I wanted to do something.” The game had a “great atmo-

sphere” according to Coach Troy. “The gym was packed.” By the first half of the varsity game, RHS was down by six points with two minutes to go. However, by the end of the game, the other team pulled away. The game ended with St. Anthony’s winning with a score of 82-43. However, Coach Troy said “the kids showed a lot of class and character, and walked out with their heads high. They were competing with and against the very best.” Despite the score, Coach Troy commented that “we raised awareness and the game was secondary to the cause.” The event resulted in an exceptional outcome. Last year, the event raised over \$4000 dollars. This year yielded even better results, raising more than \$8500 dollars in one night. There is still money coming in from the fundraiser. Mr. Scerbo stated that the event was a “great success, earning more than double the money from last year.” All profits will be donated to the American Cancer Society. There are plans for a third annual Coaches vs. Cancer, with hopes to raise even more money. Mr. Scerbo disclosed that St. Anthony’s has agreed to come back for another year to join the fight against cancer.

Ridgewood at the Brink

Mike Antociewicz
sports writer

After a shaky beginning to the season for the Ridgewood High School wrestling team, the Maroons find themselves on the brink of a second-consecutive state tournament appearance. Similar to their position last year, the Maroons are right on the margin of qualification. After a series of unfortunate losses, the Maroons managed to secure a spot in the state tournament last season. Unfortunately, the Maroons lost in a match against Clifton at their opponent’s gym, and with it forfeited their hopes of the state championship. This season, in familiar territory, the Maroons are hoping to squeeze into the tournament. The biggest matches of the Maroons’ season this far have undoubtedly been against Clifton and North Ber-

wrestled tough in every bout, they nonetheless could not handle Don Bosco, losing by a 20 point margin. Even though it was a disappointing week in terms of record for the Maroons, they did manage to acquire power points to help them in qualification due to the slightness of the final score. The week afterwards, the Maroons were handed a golden opportunity to exact revenge on Clifton. Giving up no pins to Clifton, and pinning a few kids themselves, the score was very close leading up to the final bout. The success of the Maroons resided in the result by the 145 pound wrestler Stephen Gerdner. Gerdner wrestled aggressively from the first whistle, and physically tired his opponent to a defeat, and Ridgewood took home the victory. That next Friday, the Maroons once again had to give their best against a traditionally tough North



Aaron Martinez wrestles his way to victory against Northern Highlands.

gen, matches which were held within the same week. Coming off of one of the more difficult weeks in Ridgewood wrestling history, the Maroons needed to gain momentum and go on a roll. The week earlier, the Maroons were handed the daunting task of wrestling Northern Highlands and Don Bosco in the same week. After a very competitive show, the Maroons suffered a significant blow at the hands of a Northern Highlands program, which has traditionally been one of the best public programs in Northern Jersey. That Friday, the Maroons were pitted against Don Bosco. The Bosco wrestling team, beginning to come into its own competitive force in the area, provided the Maroons with competition. Although the Maroons

Bergen program. North Bergen, who was defeated by Clifton, came into the match with a mentality embodying the significance of the result. The Maroons and North Bergen split the bouts seven to seven, and the match was therefore decided on bonus points. Due to North Bergen pinning Ridgewood more than Ridgewood pinned North Bergen, they earned the victory. This loss was especially hard for the Maroons, who put 5 North Bergen kids on their backs, but did not wind up with the pin. In sum, after splitting a very important week, Ridgewood remains on the brink of qualifying for the state tournament.

Athletes College Bound

Curran McSwigan
editor-in-chief

On February 11, nine Ridgewood athletes committed to college. At the reception in the campus center, the athletes signed the contracts for their future schools. Cake and cannoli were served at a celebration with family and friends. Local news attended the event, documenting the athletic successes of

Dan McKenna will attend High Point University, Lauren Beausoleil will go to Lehigh University and Maura Fee-ney will attend George Washington University. Maggie Carver will attend Lafayette College for basketball, and Younghoe Kuo will go to Georgia Southern University for football. Cormac McCooe says that he is “really looking forward to a higher level of lacrosse and academics for the next four



The athletes pose for a photo.

the students. For lacrosse, Cormac McCooe and Billy Maltz will go to Lafayette College, Noah Pounds will attend Naval Academy, Conor Kubikowski will attend St. Joseph’s University,

years.” These nine students have demonstrated the strength of RHS sports and will continue their careers as both students and athletes at college.

Coach Watson’s 100th Victory

Elizabeth Kopec
editor-in-chief

Coach Watson is very honored to have achieved 100 victories. As a wrestling coach, he “feels even more special because while it has taken a tremendous amount of hard work, dedication, and longevity, it has also taken the time, effort, and commitment of so many people to achieve.” Coach Watson is looking forward to many more accomplishments for him and his wrestling team. He hopes “to see our team continue to achieve things that have never been achieved in the history of Ridgewood High School wrestling.” These plans include “qualifying for the team state sectional tournament (which we have only done 4 times in our schools history and 3 times in the last 4 years), advancing in the team state sectional tournament, and winning the team title at the District 6 tournament.” Coach Watson expects “to continue to gain confidence through our current success.” By improving RHS can “attain our daily goal of putting our best level of production out on the mat each time we compete. If we continue to do that thee way we have so far this season we will continue to experience success along the way.” Mr. Watson would like to thank, the “many people that had a hand in the process of our success.” The wrestlers “have been committed, consistent, and dedicated to our pro-

gram that have believed in me as a coach and our staff that had a large part in us reaching this milestone.” Coach Watson gives special thanks to Dave Tashian, Mike Rooney, Joe

“It has taken a tremendous amount of hard work, dedication, and longevity.”

-Coach Watson

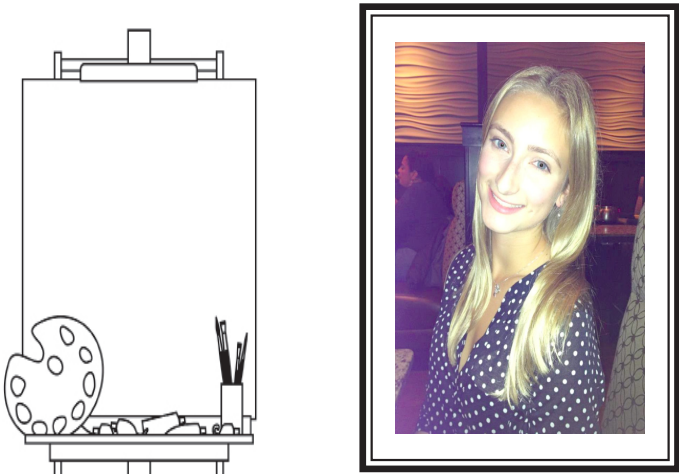
Gyulay, Mike Karcher (RHS Class of ‘02), Avon Morgan (RHS Class of ‘02), Eric Jensen (RHS Class of ‘06), Jashan Lalwani (RHS Class of ‘08), and Dylan Campanello (RHS Class of ‘10). “All of these men have devoted time, effort, & mentorship to all of our wrestlers during their time as coaches in the program that has also assisted us in achieving the success we have.” Coach Watson also wants to acknowledge the wrestlers’ families who support the program. Coach Watson will be taking the role of assistant athletic director of RHS in the near future.



Coach Watson and his family celebrate his 100th victory.

Art and Photography

Artist of the Month:
Elise Chelak



“Personally, art gives me the ability to put my feelings and thoughts on display. Everyone can interpret art differently, which makes it so unique and special. I love being able to create something, and have friends and family connect to it in different ways. Art is a way for me to relate to people through doing something I love.”
-The Revered Ms. Chelak circa 2013

