

# The High Times

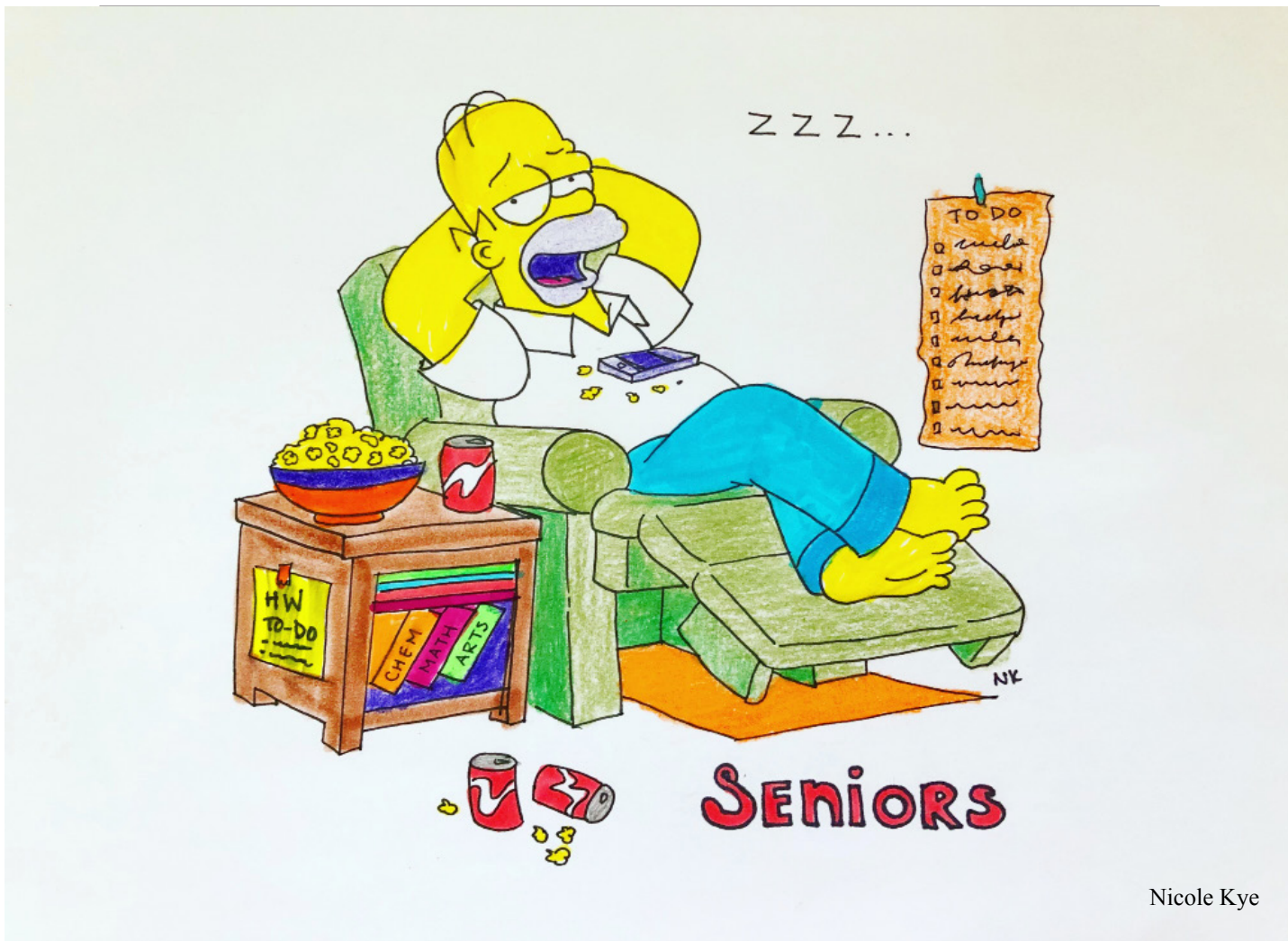
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RIDGEWOOD, February 2019

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## Senioritis: It's Contagious

*Due tomorrow? Do tomorrow.*



Nicole Kye

Grace McLaughlin  
news editor

### Are Gag-Awards Accurate?

Grace McLaughlin, Annie Probert,  
& Caroline Loscalzo  
news editors

“Teacher Look-Alike” and “Most Celebrity Obsessed” are among some of the most popular Gag-Awards that are featured in the 2019 Ridgewood High School senior yearbook. The Yearbook staff sent out a SurveyMonkey link on January 22nd with a list of about twenty-six Gag-Awards that seniors were able to nominate themselves or their friends. There were comical categories, such as “Most Likely To Win The Lottery and Lose the Ticket,” and students presumably



Amelia Chen

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“I’ve had senioritis since freshman year” is a common joke among many RHS students. Even freshmen feel as though they deserve relief from their schoolwork. Senioritis is somewhat of an epidemic that infects the graduating class during the second semester of their senior year. College acceptances and decisions are in, and seniors, even if they don’t know which school they are going to, have options and choices. For seniors who have worked nonstop for three and a half years, the idea of not having to work as hard because their goals were achieved and milestones were reached seems very inviting.

However, previous Ridgewood High School students that have graduated warn seniors to not have too much fun second semester, as they could risk getting an email from their college threatening to unenroll them if their grades drop any further. The chances of this happening are somewhat small, but there is a little voice in the back of most seniors’ heads reminding them that this year they could be the one kid who was kicked out of the college they were accepted into even before they begin their freshman year.

Early Action and Early Decision applicants heard back from their schools in mid-December or January. Early Action is a non-binding agreement where

students can submit an application by November 1st and hear back earlier than Regular Decision applicants, who find out in March. Early Decision is a binding contract and is only for students who are committed to one school and are positive they want to go there. Whether it be happy or upsetting news, most students are relieved they found out. “I was so worried about not getting into my Early Decision school,” confided a senior girl. “I just wanted to hear back. I didn’t get in, and honestly, it ended up being a huge relief and I’m just happy I don’t have to think about it anymore since I got into other schools.” Now, those Early Action and Early Decision applicants have a better idea of where they are going to spend the next few years. With the security of acceptances to schools, whether just one or multiple, seniors are finding it more difficult to summon the enthusiasm to work as hard as they did in the first half of the year. A senior who wishes to remain anonymous reaffirmed, “It’s hard to keep having motivation now that I’ve gotten into colleges.” Senioritis is difficult to become immune to, which is understandable considering the amount of work students are given as juniors, sophomores, and even freshmen.

The school offers a promising reward for those who don’t succumb to slacking off second semester.

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## DECA Districts

Aaron Friedman & Logan Richman  
staff writers

DECA districts were held in January and 223 students from RHS participated, out of which 57 qualified to advance to the state-wide competition. The district competition, held at Ramapo College in Mahwah, involved a field of 2,000 North Jersey competitors.

Each individual/pair had to perform a role-play in front of a judge based on a scenario they were given 10-30 minutes before presenting. The three highest-scoring students on both role-plays and qualification tests received awards. The top 15 students for solo events and top 10 for partner role-plays will advance to the statewide competition in March: a multi-day State Career Development Conference at Harrah’s Atlantic City resort.

Competitors at Districts were judged on their speaking ability, confidence, and knowledge, as well as improvisation in the various areas of competition. Competitive events fall into six different career clusters: Business Management & Administration, Entrepreneurship, Marketing, Finance, Hospitality & Tourism, and Personal Financial Literacy.

DECA promises to prepare “emerging leaders and entrepreneurs in marketing, finance, hospitality and management in high schools and colleges around the globe.” The aim of the organization is to help students advance their skills in business and networking, preparing them for successful careers in the corporate sector. Northern Region Vice President of NJ DECA and RHS senior Alex Ruhl explains: “Through DECA, I have developed my presentation and creative thinking skills which will be extremely valuable later on in life.”

DECA requires students to adhere to a strict dress code for all events. After all, DECA is a simulation not of the average office job, but of the top-most tier of the corporate world. Students don’t role-play as a day-to-day white collar worker or a middle manager,

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Sofia Lee

From left: Katie Hu, Victoria Lyakerman, D.J. Rick, Caroline Loscalzo, and Sasha Nadel

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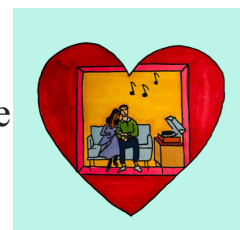
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# Are School Vacations Helpful or Harmful?

Katie Hu  
staff writer

School vacation—a high school student’s favorite phrase. In New Jersey, 180 days of student instruction are required for public schools, while private schools require even less. School vacations are based off of important events or seasons. At RHS we have Thanksgiving break, Christmas break, winter (February) break, spring break, and most importantly, summer vacation. School vacation is a great time for students to focus on life without school and relax. However, there are both advantages and disadvantages to missing school. One important advantage is more

time with family and friends. When school is in session, it almost becomes a job for high school students. Breaks give students time to bond with people they may not be able to see during the school year. Jaimie Douaihy, a junior, spent her winter break catching up with her family. “I was able to sleep in, but also go out. I went to the city with my family and cousins! Without these schools vacations, I wouldn’t be able to see them and spend time with them.” With more free time, students are also able to relax and do whatever they wish. Terrence Chun, a junior, explains how he spent the past break relaxing: “I was able to watch Netflix shows without thinking about what is due the next day. I was able to kick back and do whatever I wanted.” More-

over, some students sleep in, as they are not rudely awoken by an alarm clock. By being able to wake up freely and spend the day doing whatever they would like, students are happier. During school vacations, students are able to take matters into their own hands and explore. Travel, whether it’s abroad or just around the area, allows us to learn things we might not learn in the classroom. Additionally, summer break gives students time to discover their future and gain experiences. They can get a job, attend a camp, or simply try new things. By getting a job, students are able to gain experiences in the working world and earn some money. Many students attend camps - academic, religious, or just simply sleepaway. Academic camps can en-

hance a student’s focus and appreciation for a specific program or field. Lastly, traveling is a huge part of school vacations. Traveling allows us to go outside of our boundaries. Nicoletta Venizelos spent time in Greece over the summer and was able to see life from a different perspective. “It was just so beautiful. I was able to live life carefree and explore a new culture.” Exploration allows students to see life outside of the classroom. School vacations, like everything, also come with disadvantages. Although students have breaks, this does not necessarily mean that parents also have time off. This unavailability of parents is an issue for families with kids in elementary school, as school vacations do not always align with an adult’s work schedule. With these holidays, parents may need to hire babysitters to look after their children, adding on expenses. Unfortunately, adding on vacation days means ending school later. If some were taken away, school could end earlier for everyone. As it is the law for a school to be operating for 180 days, the time vacationing would be turned into the time learning - allowing us to leave school earlier. Schools in the South typically start earlier, therefore they are able to end earlier than most schools in the North. School becomes such a routine that an extensive amount of break could cause boredom. This typically occurs towards the middle to end of summer as some may feel like there is nothing left to do. Whether it is a few days or a few weeks, school vacations allow students to take a step back and live their life, using the free time to bond with family and friends, relax, and travel. How would we function without them?



Lia Vaynshteyn

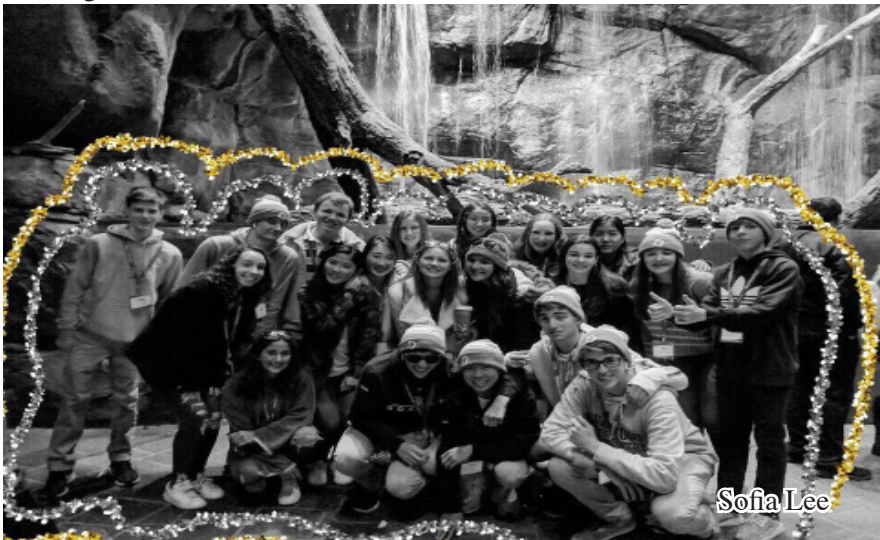
## DECA Recap

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but as a manager of a large institution or the VP of marketing at a firm. Only the crispest suits, skirts, and jackets are allowed while competing—no polos, open back tops, or boat shoes. The events at districts were broken down into separate time slots, and ran throughout the day. Because of the sheer amount of participants in certain events, it was exponentially more difficult to make it past the first round of competition. Ruhl shares that “districts this year was more difficult than usual because we faced tougher competition; however, many chapter members succeeded and we hope to bring around 115 people to states.” For students that did not make it to states on their role-play or did not enter a role-play competition, there are other ways to compete in Atlantic City. One option is to write a paper—because papers are not presented at Districts—which guarantees a ticket to SCDC. For example, students may choose to write an IBP or International Business Plan, researching an issue from across the

globe and then proposing a solution—the business surrounding this solution being the focal point of the paper. Students present their papers as part of a standalone competition at states, where judges evaluate competitors based on the quality of the presentation, the paper itself, the depth of research, and the ingenuity of the proposal. Students could also attend SCDC by writing ten pages about entrepreneurship. They were encouraged to do this so that even if they did not advance in their role-play, they could still have the states experience for their future in DECA. Furthermore, if their paper is exceptional there is a chance students will advance beyond Atlantic City. Moving on from Districts, the New Jersey state-wide competition later this year takes these same challenges and applies them at a higher level. Students who advanced can acquire additional accolades and move on to an even bigger stage: International Career Development Conference to be held in Orlando, Florida.



Sofia Lee

## Senioritis

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Seniors who have an A as a final grade in their class are exempt from the final exam. It is rare that a student would be able to maintain an A average while not putting in the work. This means that seniors have to study and not slack off until the second to last week in school, right before finals. Getting into college is a big accomplishment, and after working so hard to reach that goal for three and a half years, seniors should be able to enjoy other things besides schoolwork for their last semester. Maintaining a social life is a skill that students should have before going to college, and for some students second semester is when they meet people that they think should have been their friends all throughout high school. It may not be the end of the world if seniors are able to more evenly balance their schoolwork and non-academic endeavours after college acceptances. For seniors who have been studying uninterrupted since freshman year, the second semester is like a light at the end of the tunnel. All the difficult milestones will have already been reached, especially by May and June. Second semester is a well-deserved break for those who have dedicated so much time to their schoolwork. It is important to recognize that one has worked hard and seen it pay off, but going so far into the deep end, as mentioned before, can be harmful. Many students have been learning for the benefit of a good grade to reach the end goal of attending college, which is understandable considering the competitive academics it takes to get into college. But second semester gives seniors a chance to learn for themselves and not only for college.



# Single People Enjoy Valentine’s Day Too

Caroline Loscalzo & Annie Probert  
news editors

Valentine’s Day comes with mixed emotions for many students at RHS. Some hate it, others love it, and some feel completely indifferent about the holiday. What has come to be understood as a day of romance and affection, oftentimes complete with candy and flowers, did not begin as such. Valentine’s Day originated in the form of a Roman festival called Lupercalia, held in mid-February. Some traditions associated with this festival included fertility ceremonies and the pairing off of men and women by lottery. Today, Valentine’s Day is celebrated with gifts and cards exchanged between loved ones. At Ridgewood High School specifically, many students, including senior Grace McLaughlin, anticipate the singing candy grams by the acapella groups and other traditions with friends and family. One student always looks forward to Valentine’s Day so that he can “act like a four

year old in front of all of [his] friends in relationships.” Even for those not in relationships, the holiday can be an enjoyable reprieve from the long, cold winter months. Many use it as an opportunity

relationship, the holiday can serve as an unwanted reminder of your single status. The pressure and expectations of Valentine’s Day are largely due to social media. Seeing posts by friends or acquaintances can make you feel like you are the only one not in a relationship. Just as with many other holidays, it only amplifies the daily pressure to appear happy. The commercialization of Valentine’s Day is another reason why many people dislike the holiday. Big companies make sure to market their V-Day products to everyone, whether they are in a relationship or not. The aisles of stores are filled with heart-shaped boxes of chocolate, signs encouraging people to “get that special someone something special” and splurge on gifts for their loved ones. Singles are encouraged to “treat themselves” this Valentine’s Day and buy themselves a gift. However, despite the hyper-commercialization of the holiday and isolating feelings that critics say come with it, Valentine’s Day isn’t so bad. After all, a day dedicated to spreading affection and love could be just what the world needs right now.



Evie Cullen

to appreciate their friends and family and acknowledge all the love they have in their lives. However, some students do not share this same mindset. If you are not in a

## Are Gag-Awards Accurate?

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voted for their peers or chose themselves as a joke. But sometimes, for certain Gag-Awards like “Most Likely to Become President” or “Most Likely to Star in a Reality T.V. Show,” there’s a person in the grade who is a no-brainer nominee and winner. In some cases, students nominated for awards go on to fulfill the job or future that their peers predicted for them in high school. Gag-Awards can be exciting and comical for both Ridgewood High School students and graduates. Gag-Awards are meant to be somewhat like superlatives, but with less pressure and a more light-hearted intention. Students can nominate their friends as a joke; however, there could be some hidden truth behind it. Gag Awards are mostly meant for a good laugh, but there may be some students whose nominations come to be reality. Who knows, maybe someone in your class will fulfill the destiny predicted by a beloved Gag Award. American Studies history and sociology teacher Ms. Riordan commented on this, saying that Gag Awards can be “an ironic predictor of future successes.” She stated that there have been a few instances where standouts in high school lived up to the expectations of their peers later in life. Despite the fun that students have nominating their friends, there is a downside to the current process. Students are allotted only a day and a half to choose classmates for each category. According to some RHS staff members, the short voting window severely distracts from class time during the day. This does not give students time to consider who to nominate, since the categories are announced that same day. This could cause some stress and result in hastily made decisions. Some students will even be offended in the event of not receiving a nomination for a Gag-Award and work to ensure that they receive one. One strategy to get more votes is campaigning on social media accounts, especially

Snapchat. Students posts pictures of themselves, urging friends and peers to vote for them in a specific category. This is only the beginning of a long process of nominations. In a

few weeks, second round picks will be sent out and voted upon. Overall, Gag-Awards are a perfect way for the seniors to finish out high school on both an ambitious and comical note.



Erin Kim

# Starbucks Drive-Thru Dilemma

Caroline Loscalzo  
news editor

A quick run to the Starbucks drive thru in the center of town before school, during a free, or for an after school pick-me-up is seemingly a great way to get a caffeine boost efficiently. The drive thru eliminates the process of finding a parking spot, getting out of the car, and waiting in line. However, recently the experience has not been quite as blissful. During the past few weeks at the Starbucks drive thru, there have been increasing traffic issues. Since customers are not allowed to turn in from the left coming from the West Side of town, there have been accidents near the drive thru. The drive thru is a staple spot for many high school students and members of the Ridgewood community, and turning into the drive thru lane is no easy feat due to the traffic. A Starbucks partner at this location explains how the mayor of the Ridgewood, the Ridgewood police chief, and people high up in the Starbucks corporation, came to observe the employees. These people of power were investigating the baristas since they believed the traffic issues could have been a result of inefficient work. The employee

“...the problem lies within drivers not merging as directed by signs rather than the productivity of the baristas.”

explains that “the problem lies with the drivers not merging as directed by signs rather than the productivity of the baristas. [The baristas] operate on a timer and [their] output is consistently faster than most other stores.” After a few hours of observation, this became evident to the investigators. However, the set up of the drive thru and its location may just be the issue. According to one RHS senior, “Since the addition of the cones, I’ve had to drive all the way around the block to be able to make a legal turn into the Starbucks drive thru. It takes up vital time when I am rushing to school, defeating the purpose of the drive thru itself.” Some people are taking the approach of ignoring this rule, and driving right through the traffic cones. Something that is supposed to be a quick and convenient solution has become a source of stress for many Ridgewood residents. What can Starbucks itself as well as drivers do to mend this issue? Currently, the Starbucks corporation is continuing to investigate the issue and is searching for solutions. Despite it being inconvenient to drive around to the other side of the location, the cones and signs are there for safety reasons and Starbucks is not backing down. The corporation will continue to put up more signs instructing drivers on how to properly merge until the problems subside. Drivers will simply have to plan their trips to the drive thru with a few additional minutes spent to ensure their safety.



# SATs, ACTs, College, AND Homework? Deal With It.

Luca Richman  
staff writer

You’ve finally finished after hours of homework and studying. You’ve over-exerted your mind for the day. It’s time to rest, but you realize that the grind is far from over. You eye the SAT books atop your desk. You remember that you’ve got AP Exams coming up, and you haven’t started your college applications. Academic responsibilities largely fall outside of the daily school-work. A whole world of tests and college preparation consumes a student’s “free time” at all levels of high school, specifically for juniors and seniors. The fact that students will face standardized tests such as the ACT and SAT as well as the looming responsibility of college applications are immutable: they’re just the steps you take as you prepare for the transition from high school to college. All of these extra responsibilities beg the question of whether teachers should consider a student’s schedule before assigning work. Should national standardized test dates and deadlines set by private organizations take precedent over curriculum and schoolwork? It would be quite difficult to thrive in an academic environment where this is the case.

The ideal condition for students undergoing the stressful college process would be to have less school work in order to focus on tests and applications. If a student spends less time writing essays or studying for physics, that student can spend more time writing their college application essays or studying for the ACT. With more time to focus on bigger obligations, students can achieve better results and their stress levels can be lowered, but such an ide-

alistic outcome is quite complicated to achieve. Ridgewood High School must follow guidelines and requirements as directed by Ridgewood Public Schools as well as the state of New Jersey. Parents are paying thousands of tax dollars each year to fund the school system and put their kids through the rigorous academic setting on which RHS prides itself. And teachers cannot simply accommodate every student’s personal life before assigning work. What if half of a class will be taking the SAT on the weekend? Should the teacher lighten up the workload for those students, while maintaining a higher workload for the others? Should the whole class get a break because a number of students have to take a standardized test? What if the class is composed of some juniors but also sophomores and freshmen?

This scenario should not and will not ever happen. Students enrolled in a public American high school are expected to meet school obligations and make separate accommodations to tackle everything

else related to college or the incipient stages of adult life. Creating an environment in which the student has the power to alter a class would more or less defeat the purpose of teachers entirely; if the students can dictate when they get school work and how much work they must complete due to their own schedules, why not just declare that there should be no schoolwork?

It’s all about balance for a student, and a teacher cannot help a kid to manage a workload in terms of lessening the number of assignments the teacher assigns. The bonus is placed on the student to develop a plan that works for his or her schedule. The teacher should not have the responsibility to keep track of every student’s external obligations and plan accordingly; no academic progress should be able to take place simply because some students have hiccups in their schedules every week. As much as such a flexible world would greatly alleviate teenage stress, it would wreak havoc on teachers trying to implement their



Wednesday Hsu

lesson plans and yearly layout in the already-confusing rotating schedule.

And in some ways, students do not mind the daily high school grind in tandem with test and college preparations. It provides students with a sense of academic discipline. If left to their own devices as teachers mold them a personal schedule, students may feel less motivated to tackle college application work as they would lead a perceivably lazier existence. Additionally, the school can sometimes help with extra obligations. If one is struggling on the ACT math section and the school teacher is covering topics that will be on the ACT, test preparation can be achieved in a classroom; the only drawback is that not every class can give a student that dual preparation setting. But work ethic elements, as well as some academic rhetoric in school, greatly mimic the experience of teenage stressors outside of the school environment.

Teachers should not consider student schedules when assigning work; it is just too farcical to assume that each student can have his or her own unique schedule based on differing non-school commitments. And even though more schoolwork equates to more stress, some students may find solace in maintaining their academic skills and discipline as factors to carry over into life outside of RHS. We all wish we could talk to our teachers about our schedules and get less work in response, but with state requirements, taxpayer dollars, teacher salaries, and overall functionality of the school on the line, any student can reasonably assert that he or she must make the best of both the school and college preparation academic worlds without altering the framework of Ridgewood High School.

## Are YOU Addicted to Bubble Tea?

Karis Han  
staff writer

Lately, bubble tea has been on the rise and is making its way as a mainstream trend. Bubble tea, also known as boba, is a tea-based drink with tapioca pearls, or bubbles, that are placed at the bottom of each drink. Originating in Taiwan, these chewy black pearls soon became a sensation all across Asia. Not long after, bubble tea shops on the East and West coasts started opening in the US, and Americans were quick to hop on the trend. Nowadays, it’s completely normal to see people roaming the streets, sipping their tea while chewing on the tapioca pearls. But, the real question is, can you get addicted to bubble tea?

We all have had first or second-hand experience of coffee addiction. In fact, it’s almost strange not to know any caffeine addicts that can’t start their day without a sip of coffee. However, this addiction is understandable as coffee provides a sometimes essential energy boost. But can the same apply for bubble tea?

Most bubble tea lovers would say yes. After the first drink, there’s almost no going back to life before bubble tea. The variety in flavor and the distinctive bubbles make us boba-crazy fans want to try every possible combination. The absence of chewing boba in our mouths drives us wild, and the sweet taste of the tea is all the more reason to go buy some bubble tea. There’s a different tea flavor for every mood and every season. Soon

enough, every day becomes boba day.

Many bubble tea addicts can be found at RHS. With the Village Tea Shop within walking distance from campus, it is extremely convenient for students to go buy bubble tea during their free periods or right after school. The shop has comfortable seating and aesthetic interior design, attracting customers everywhere. Addicts soon start to find themselves unconsciously going to The Tea Shop to do homework instead of the public library. And while they’re at it, they buy some bubble tea, of course.

The drink itself is usually made of tea, fruit, condensed milk, and tapioca pearls. This also means that the tea itself is very sweet with about 36 grams of sugar! Though it contains a dangerous amount of sugar, the sweetness and chewiness of bubble tea leave everyone feeling a sense of pleasure and happiness. Before long, it is now the best way to treat yourself after a bad day. Friends buy each other bubble tea as a way to congratulate each other or pay each other back. Bets are made to see who’ll buy the next drink. We start to find every little excuse just to have a sip of the tea.

Drink after drink, it becomes harder to turn back, and every penny is spent on buying bubble tea. It has even become a form of currency among fans. If you go to the mall and say, “Wow, this shirt is worth six bubble tea drinks,” it’s a sign that you’re most likely addicted.

So, is bubble tea addiction really a thing? This is a definite yes, and soon, we might even begin seeing more bubble tea addicts than coffee addicts!



Nicole Kye

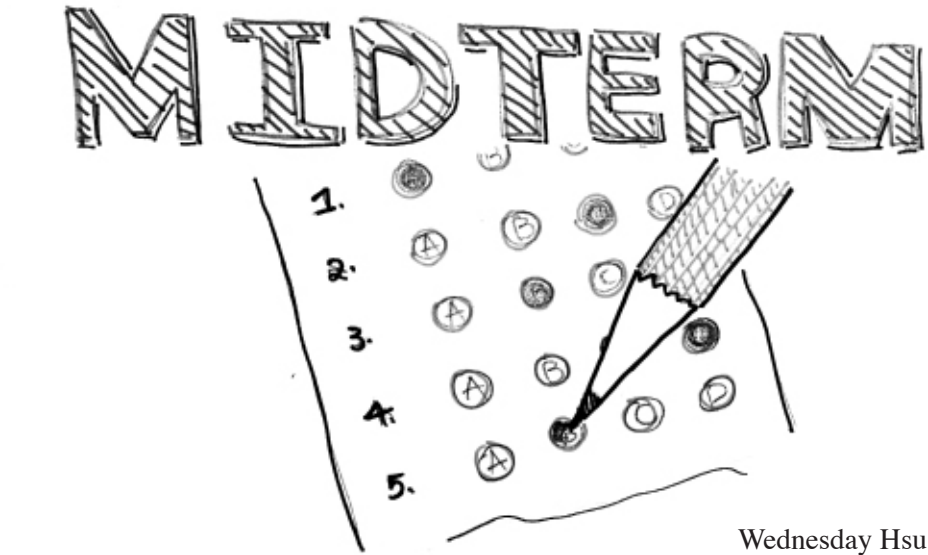


# Return of the Midterms: Is it Time?

**Daniel Son**  
staff writer

A pivotal part of a student’s learning experience is being tested on their knowledge. At Ridgewood High School, there is one critical exam that makes up twenty percent of the fourth quarter: the final exam. But, there also used to be a midterm. In recent years, Ridgewood High School decided that it would be beneficial to get rid of this mid-year test in order to alleviate student pressure. However, was getting rid of the midterms really worth it?

How would having the midterms change things? It would give teachers an opportunity to test students on material learned throughout the first semester. In essence, it’s a ‘final exam’ for the first semester. The midterm gives teachers an opportunity to view not only their progress in teaching but the student’s progress in absorbing the material. This benefits both the students and the teachers, making it easier to find any important material to review instead of cramming the last month



Wednesday Hsu

for review. Let’s be honest, not many people review notes from the beginning of the year until it comes to that time of the year when final exams are around the corner, and it can be hard to remember what Shay’s Rebellion was or what the equation is for ground-to-ground projectiles. Due to the absence of a final exam, some teachers have

even resorted to making every test or quiz cumulative in order to encourage students to review all the material. By having these cumulative assessments, it is filling the void of where the midterm once stood. Every test and quiz is now a review for the final exam, but these also have their downsides. Making such assessments cumulative

can make the learning experience superficial in that only the general concepts are reviewed instead of specific material. By skimming over a giant stack of paper, it is likely that it may not be as efficient as narrowing down your focus to one specific chapter.

Instead of having one giant final that covers the entirety of the school year or taking cumulative assessments, having the midterm can benefit students so that the material is evenly partitioned. For example, the “midterm” can be considered a final for the first semester, and the actual final exam can cover the material learned during the second semester. This method would lighten the load the students need to review for the final, but ensure that the student’s knowledge of all the material is still assessed. The mid-year assessment could also give an idea of how much studying should be done for the final. In addition, dividing the year into two sections can allow teachers to test students on more specific topics that were taught throughout the year.

## The Death of Chivalry



Evie Cullen

**Janus Kwong**  
opinion editor

It’s the 21st century. No longer are woman groomed to sit and sew as suitors dream to save their damsels in distress from tall towers and dangerous dragons. Across from you, your date sweats as he stares at the large bill for the tenth time this week. He’s also shivering from the snow building outside on the patio of a five-star restaurant because he gave you his only jacket and is left with a thin T-shirt. It’s polite and kind, yes. But you’re already layered in four sweaters and am doing fine at the new job. You can pay and dress for yourself.

Valentine’s Day is approaching, and romance is stirring in the air. But for the new year, maybe it is time we think of what to change about century-old customs in a developing world. Chivalry is great and all, but there shouldn’t have to be a name for kindness — it’s not exactly a privilege. It should be a simple matter of manners. In fact, I could dare make a claim that chivalry only upholds meaningless gender norms about who should be pulling out whose chair.

Back in the Middle Ages, chivalry was a ‘code of conduct’ for knights, illustrating how one should act and behave in a way that would embody courage, courtesy, and piety. At the time, knights’ ability to fight would allow women to rely on them as protection

from other men. Modern chivalry has been reduced to a gentleman holding a door out, paying the bill, and lifting heavy objects for a lady. The intent is meant to be sweet and show courtesy.

However, to what extent is chivalry patronizing to a degree that it subtly exerts superiority? Most women in the 21st century can open their own doors, pay their own bills, and lift heavy things. And many men shouldn’t need to feel obligated to be kind to another human out of duty. If any person were to act kindly, I would expect that kindness to be genuine rather than an act of responsibility. If our generation is seeking to achieve gender equality, why don’t we start with small steps to even out the playing field?

Yet, this doesn’t imply that anyone should use this as an excuse to not help someone. If any person sees another struggling to carry something or open a door, the best response would not be to leave them there because “it’s the 21st century and you should be a strong, independent woman who can handle your own.” As Runjhun Noopur wrote on the Huffington Post in “Chivalry Isn’t What You Think It Is! A Woman Explains,” “needing help is not weak. And lending help is not a favor. There is a term for it — it is called humanity.”

So instead, I encourage everyone, regardless of your gender or past habits, to act not simply with chivalry, but with humanity. We all know we need that now more than ever.

## The Egg vs. Kylie Jenner: Battle for A World Record

**JT Cambria & Jason Zuckerman**  
staff writers

Who will win the battle for likes? An A-List celebrity or one eggy boy?

On January 9, the world set out on a quest to beat the most liked picture on Instagram. The egg won the battle by a massive margin. Originally intended to break Kylie Jenner’s 18 million like record, the egg destroyed Jenner’s picture of her newborn baby, Stormi Webster by racking up a total of over 50 million likes. Think about that: 1/10th of the United States population have liked a stock photo of an egg. The last time that many people gathered around something we had a revolution. That being said, there is a revolution coming our way. A meme revolution.

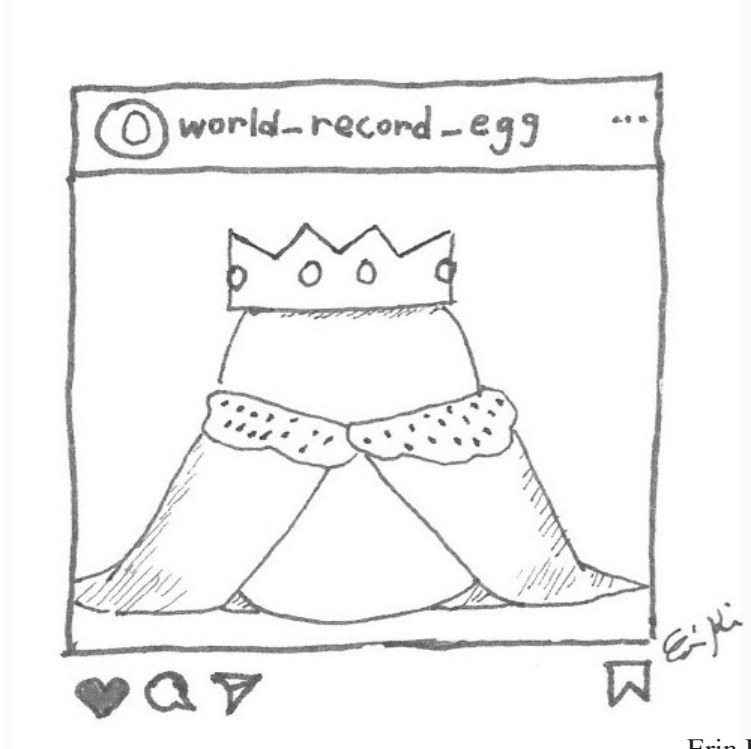
Think about 2019 memes. We started with Big Chungus, a relatively weak meme. But just months later, a random stock picture of an egg was making national news and receiving more attention than a member of one of America’s most famous families, the Kardashians. This is what we, as the meme generation, deserve. It is also why most of the RHS student body has joined the #EggGang. It’s simple and also just hilarious. Why? Who knows.

What makes a meme funny is not something that anyone can really examine, but all we know that it is comedy gold. If you disagree, there are 50 Million Egg Soldiers ready to take you on.

The egg has even gotten some celebrity attention. People like Ellen DeGeneres and Jimmy Fallon have voiced their support of the egg. It is probable that their support towards the egg was one of the main assets to its success. However, Kendall Jenner did not take the news too well as she posted a video of her cracking an egg on the hot pavement saying “Take that little egg.” Clearly someone doesn’t appreciate memes.

Despite already crushing their goal, the account, @world\_record\_egg, has continued to post pictures of the egg slowly cracking without any captions. The egg gang is a little confused as to what this means, but we are all excited to see what the future holds for this beautiful egg. Maybe the egg is hatching something...

Eggs represent the start of new life, and we here at the High Times believe that this egg will bring a new birth to meme culture. 2019 will only bring memes that are funny and relevant. Memes that of course, crack us up.



Erin Kim



Features

THE HISTORY OF  
BLACK HISTORY

Anna Meringolo  
staff writer

With Black History Month being integrated into Ridgewood’s educational system, we have always been accustomed to celebrating it. However, many may not know the history behind the celebration and why we continue to celebrate it every year.

It is important to take the month’s background into perspective when celebrating such important people in America’s history. Black History Month first began in 1926 when Carter G. Woodson, a well-respected African-American historian, scholar, publisher, and educator, established national Black History Week. Woodson’s goal was to educate children and expose them to Black history. Thanks to the Civil Rights Movement, the week became very popular, and by 1976, it turned into what is now recognized as Black History Month. The month of February was chosen because it coincides with the birthdays of both Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln: two well known activists that fought for African American equality. Black History Month is a way to acknowledge the accomplishments and contributions of African Americans in the United States. Other countries around the world, including Canada and the United Kingdom, have followed in America’s footsteps and by adopting a month to celebrate those of African descent. Schools across the country have organized local celebrations, created clubs based off of African history, and hosted performances and lectures to inform those on the history of Africans in America. However, it is also important that we constantly reconsider the importance of Black History Month and why we observe it annually.

It is indisputable that in America we have had immense racial progress. The federal government has made great strides for racial equality dating back to the Emancipation Proclamation. Without the steps of these impactful activists, we as a nation would not have elected Barack Obama, the first African American president.

Nonetheless, it seems America is forgetting the true meaning of Black History Month. This celebration must exist in order to advance the effort to provide what federal policies have not: the end of systemic racism. Currently, African American unemployment is twice that of white Americans, and the average wealth for black Americans is ten times less white citizens’. However, these systemic racial inequalities are not just the result of governmental policy but also of American character. While we teach our children the importance of celebrating the African presence in America, we are still turning our backs on the real issues of racism in our nation. In fact, many American citizens today believe that we as a country have not done enough to give African Americans the same opportunities and privileges as white Americans. We must take more time, especially during Black History Month, to listen to the famous words of the past abolitionists of our country: “Am I not a man and a brother?” Although we observe Black History Month as a nation, citizens need to step back and look at the bigger picture of the celebration.

The accomplishments of African Americans in this country need to be recognized and appreciated. Woodson conjectured that the celebration of Black History Month would be a proactive step made by the American government to “destroy the dividing prejudices of nationality and teach universal love without distinction of race, merit or rank.” And as a nation today, we must take Black History Month as a valuable opportunity to continue acknowledging the accomplishments of African Americans and venerate them as fellow builders of this country.

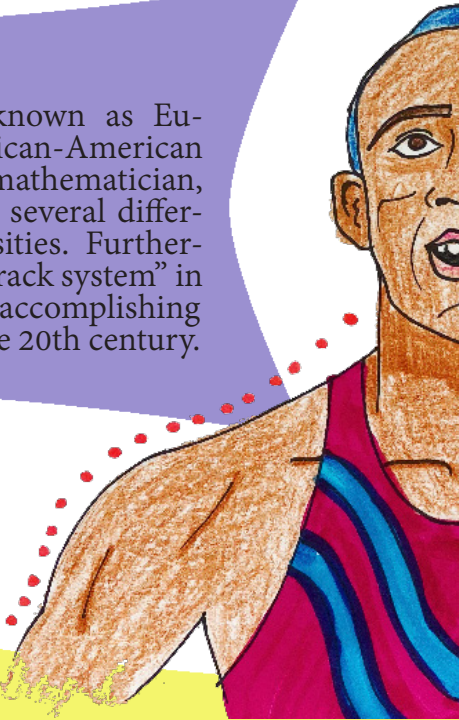
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NICOLE KYE

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BIOGRAPHIES:  
CHRISTY CHANG

BLACK HISTORY



Martha Euphemia Lofton Haynes, most commonly known as Euphemia Haynes, was a mathematician and the first African-American to earn a PhD in mathematics. In addition to being a mathematician, Haynes was also an accomplished educator that taught in several different schools ranging from elementary schools to universities. Furthermore, she fought successfully against segregation and the “track system” in schools. She left her mark on history by taking strides and accomplishing incredible feats for the black community academically in the 20th century.



As a four-time Olympic champion, Jesse Owens was known as one of the most famous athletes in the world. By setting three world records, he helped to change people’s perceptions of African Americans and succeeded in international sports.



W.E.B Du Bois was known as a social activist that changed the role of African-Americans in America. He fought for equal rights as a leader of a black civil rights organization, called the Niagara Movement. In addition to leading the Niagara Movement, Du Bois was also the founder and director of the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People).



# BLACK HISTORY MONTH

## HOW WE REMEMBER

Julia Zambito  
staff writer

In 1926, historian Carter G. Woodson announced that the second week of February would be dedicated to learning and reflecting upon the black community and its history. In 1976, Black History Week was lengthened to a whole month by President Gerald R Ford. Why do we celebrate Black History for a whole month? And how do teachers respond?

Celebrating those who have made significant contributions to our country and who have achieved greatness despite looming setbacks is vital to remind students of the progress that has been made and that still needs to be made. This month makes us more knowledgeable and grateful of activist efforts -- it serves as a platform for greater change in the current generation beyond the classroom.

It is evident that racial stigmas continue to exist in our country. The only way to overcome these racial barriers is to reflect on our past by confronting the bare truths head-on and avoiding the same mistakes that led America through oppressive laws, segregation, and other forms of public discrimination. By learning from the wrongdoings of our ancestors, we become more inclusive and enlightened by the harsh realities that bond us.

In schools, it is increasingly important to instill the truth in children and to learn about the history that makes up this evolving nation. Black History Month should promote an understanding and cause children to be more accepting and tolerant of one another. We should praise the struggles and sacrifices that came before us and the progress that has been made. But the need for change is not over. Children need to learn that there is still more work to be done regarding the inclusiveness and receptiveness of all races.

For this reason, it is imperative that today's teachers embrace Black History Month. We need to realize that the only way to fight political and societal injustices is by educating and teaching children. Learning about important figures, such as Katherine Johnson, Maya Angelou, Frederick Douglass, Nelson Mandela, The Tuskegee Airmen, Stokely Carmichael, George Washington Carver, Garrett Morgan, Martin Luther King Jr., and countless others can teach students about episodes of triumph in the face of ignorance. Through this newfound knowledge, students can learn that they themselves can be the change this society needs and the activists that people look up to.

In addition, teachers can inform their students about the Harlem Renaissance, which was an influential movement that greatly expanded the intellectual, social, and artistic world of black and American culture. The artistic surge lasted throughout the 1920s, when African Americans battled for their own rights by changing and reconstructing the American lifestyle. The Harlem Renaissance manifested itself through various artwork, music, literature, and theater. By learning about this specific juncture in history, students can celebrate the large impact that these individuals had on current American culture and intellectual thought.

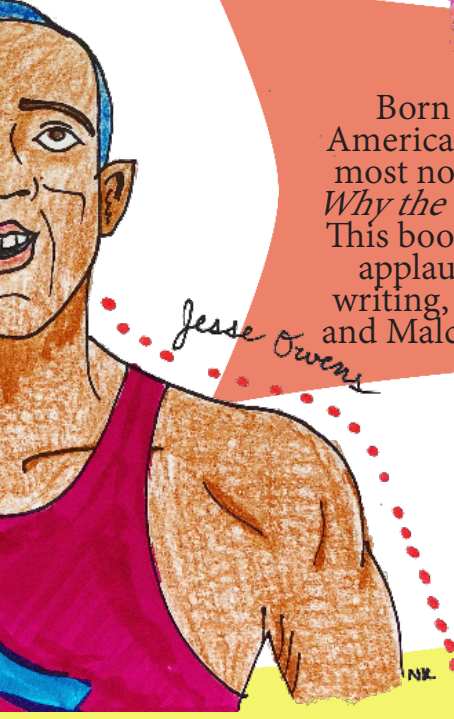
Within RHS, significant efforts have been made to extend the knowledge of Black History to students. US History I teacher Mrs. Saladino notes that teachers are given notices and flyers during the month of February to relay to their students. She speaks about how important it is "to recognize black history throughout the year" and that "it shouldn't just be confined to one month." Additionally, Mrs. Saladino describes how she and other teachers make it their mission to teach and make connections between American slavery and present-day racial injustice: "For me, and many other American history teachers, we make black history a theme for our courses. In US I, we look at slavery, in pretty much every single unit. We make sure to come back to slavery in order to make those bigger connections; we can't study American history or understand present-day American society without looking at this country's history of slavery and race relations."

Although awareness is present, she notes that it is sometimes difficult getting the point across when RHS moves at such a fast pace. Mrs. Saladino states, "It's easy for things to get lost along the way, everyone is busy, students, teachers, administrators; there's always so much going on in this community. You need to have people who are invested, people who will go out of their way to make learning about black history a priority." If the efforts are not made to educate students about Black History, the chance to absorb those stories will not be obtained and progress will cease to exist in society.

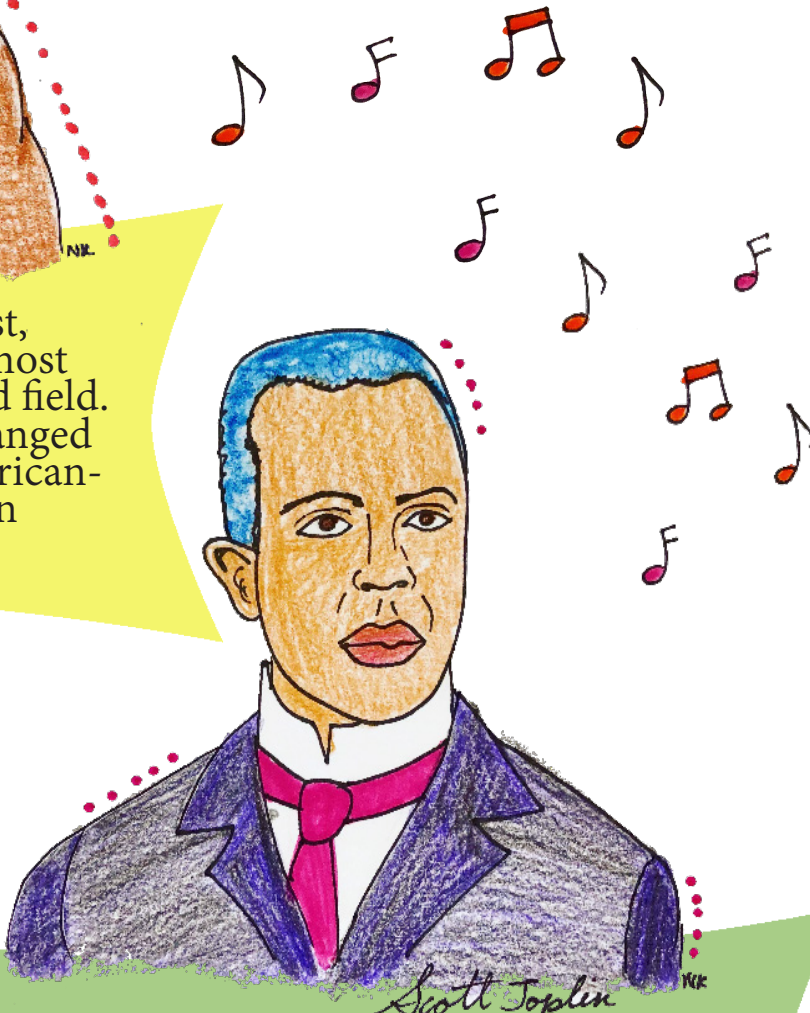
Today, it is becoming increasingly important to encourage our youth to try and fight the racial inequalities still present in our culture. Mrs. Saladino considers our present social climate and the importance of solving it through education: "There's so much division; there's so much conflict; American society struggles with racial and wealth inequality. If we don't take the time to learn about the past, we're never going to understand why we have the problems we have today or how we should go about trying to fix them."



Born in 1928, Maya Angelou was a famous African-American author and civil rights activist. One of Angelou's most notable works was her first autobiography, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, which was critically acclaimed. This book and her other works made her one of the most applauded contemporary black authors. In addition to writing, Angelou also worked with Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X to help further the civil rights movement.



Olympic gold medalist, known as one of the most famous athletes in the history of track and field. In 1936, Owens changed the perception of African Americans in the abilities of African Americans and successfully became an international star.



Scott Joplin was an African-American musician and composer. Joplin helped make ragtime music popular in the United States with the "Maple Leaf Rag" being one of his most well-known compositions. Thanks to the popularity of the "Maple Leaf Rag," he influenced various other composers and introduced many European-Americans to African-American dance music.



# Exploring Black History Month

Jacob Baskin  
staff writer

This February marks the 42nd Black History Month, a time to celebrate the innumerable achievements made by African Americans and their central role in United States history. African American culture is rich in history and influence—especially in the United States—and continues to grow as true equality comes closer into view. Black History Month is a nationwide celebration, so becoming involved in the action is easier than you think. In the art world, Black History Month offers the perfect opportunity to recognize the immense contributions made by African Americans to art, whether it be performing or visual. Mystic Vision Players is a non-profit theatre company dedicated to the growth and showcasing of all types of performing arts. The theatre is kicking off Black History Month this year with *Black History... Black Voices*, a cabaret celebrating the contributions of African-American performers in musical theater over the last century. The cabaret will be performing a wide range of songs, including both classic and modern musical hits, to showcase the black experience. Held at The Art House in Linden, NJ, this powerful performance is taking place right nearby. Another tribute to the African American experience in America is the movie *12 Years a Slave*, adopted from the 1853 slave narrative memoir.

The movie sheds light on the dreadful nature of slavery in America, drawing from the incredible true story of one man’s fight for survival and freedom. Every scene in *12 Years a Slave* conveys a grim truth about America’s biggest sin. An incredibly gripping piece, *12 Years A Slave* is one of the most eye-opening and insightful movie-going experiences out there. However, you do not need to attend a performance or movie showing to celebrate Black History Month. All around us, especially in New York City, historic monuments tell the same story. Throughout Manhattan, Brooklyn, and Queens, statues of notable African Americans serve to remind us of the ways in which African Americans have shaped America. These figures include Frederick Douglass, a leader of the abolitionist movement, as well as Harriet Tubman, conductor of the Underground Railroad. In addition, Jazz musician Duke Ellington and baseball player Jackie Robinson are also represented. It is a shame to see people overlook Black History Month because they don’t believe it “relates to them.” African American history has affected all of us, whether we are black, white, male, female, young, or old. The positive impact that African Americans have made on this country (in every area imaginable, especially art) is part of our collective consciousness. Figuring out the past can help to make our future clearer, and we can start by making our future happen now.



## Editor’s Picks: Valentine’s Day Flicks

Olivia Gondris  
staff writer

With Valentine’s Day approaching, people are scrambling to get their hands on the holiday’s must-haves: gifts, sweets, and countless romantic-comedies to binge watch. From heart-warming classics to recent releases, we have formulated a list of the best Valentine’s Day films for every type of viewer.

1. Crazy Stupid Love

A middle-aged man’s world is turned upside down after his wife unexpectedly asks for a divorce. This sweet and hilarious comedy, starring Ryan Gosling, Emma Stone, and Steve Carrell, is sure to keep you entertained.

2. Bridget Jones’s Diary

This all-time favorite British comedy centers on Bridget Jones, an awkward, inappropriately funny, and often drunken publicist who decides on New Year’s Day to finally get ahold of her life. Her diary contains her many strong opinions and experiences regarding a wide range of topics, from exercise to men and everything else in between.

3. How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days

Andie Anderson, editor for “Composure” magazine, pushes her boundaries when writing a step-by-step guide on “How to Lose a Guy in 10 days.” At the same time, advertising executive Benjamin Barry makes a bet that he can make any woman fall in love with him in ten days. When the two meet, both plans backfire.

4. When Harry Met Sally

Directed by Rob Reiner, this classic romcom stars Meg Ryan as Sally Albright and Billy Crystal as Harry Burns. Harry first meets Sally on a cross country road trip returning from college, sparking a decade-long friendship. As the two run into each other over the years, they begin to ask the question, can a man and woman simply be friends, or must they always be on the edge of something more?



5. You’ve Got Mail

Struggling boutique bookseller Kathleen Kelly (Meg Ryan) cannot stand Joe Fox (Tom Hanks), the owner of a chain book store that just moved in across the street. When they meet online, however, they dive into an intense Internet romance, completely oblivious to each other’s true identity. What will happen when Joe learns that this enchanting woman is actually his business rival? It’s only a matter of time until the truth is revealed.

6. Silver Lining Playbook

In this almost inappropriately hilarious movie about a dysfunctional couple, Pat Solitano (played by Bradley

Cooper) has just arrived home from a psychiatric institution after losing his job and wife. Tiffany (Jennifer Lawrence) is just as unstable as he is. Pat channels his mania into long jogs and rants about Hemingway, while Tiffany deals with depression with her growing list of one-night stands. Together, they attempt to find their own excelsior.

7. La La Land

A sure tear-jerker, this award winning (and almost Oscar winning) movie stars Ryan Gosling as Sebastian and Emma Stone as Mia. Sebastian, a pianist, and Mia, an actress, are drawn together by their equal passion and energy. However, they are soon faced with serious

decisions that jeopardize their relationship, and must choose between pursuing their occupational goals or love.

8. 10 Things I Hate About You

Kat Stratford (played by Julia Stiles) is a beautiful and smart young woman. However, her peers find her quite abrasive, and she does not attract many men. Unfortunately for her, Kat’s younger sister, Bianca, is not allowed to date until Kat has a boyfriend, so she begins match making and sets Kat up with Patrick Verona (played by Heath Ledger). Will Kat finally let her guard down enough to find love?

9. Romeo and Juliet

Leonardo Dicaprio. Need I say more?



# The Science Behind Love Songs

Tess Cundiff  
staff writer

Love songs have been around for centuries, expressing tones of passion, heartache and affection. From “Can’t Help Falling in Love” by Elvis in 1969 to “You Belong With Me” by Taylor Swift, love songs have modernized tremendously throughout the years, becoming more fresh and relevant. Most people don’t realize this, but there is actually a scientific history behind the timeless love songs that you’ll be hearing as February 14th approaches. There were, and still are, arguments about evolution being involved in the correlation of mating acts and love songs. In fact, the father of evolution himself, Charles Darwin, studied the mating patterns of birds, and wrote his observations in his book, *The Descent of Man*. It was scientifically proven that the melodies that the birds sang played an imperative role in their mating habits, but Darwin looked at those as almost the “prototype” as they evolved into more complex melodies. Darwin inferred that, like these birds, the earliest humans used their voices musically to attract mate before developing language using words. He said this music was powerful, and especially during courtship season expressed “various emotions such as love, jealousy, triumph,

and would have served as a challenge to rivals” to impress the opposite sex. This theory of Darwin’s was questioned and disagreed with by many. First of all, our primate-relatives don’t sing and howl instead. The modern day love song certainly does not sound like that. A second debunk is how when “love songs” were in the beginning of their music based time, they were performed in groups, rather than one person singing directly to another. For example, take a drum circle, a concept expressing group cohesion rather than romance. People thought that love songs started with this idea of uniting as whole, not as an intimacy act. An intimate expression between two people is obviously not to an entire group. There is much evidence of love songs through ancient history as well, including many religious lyrics and poetry. A remarkable ancient love song writer was a priestess who lived in Mesopotamia by the name of Enheduanna. She crafted a song directed at her Sumerian gods. Researchers have access to a block of lyrics that she wrote, saying, “I will lay out mighty love clothes, I know how exactly, I will look so fine, I will make you feel like a king,” Speed up those lyrics, put them into a rap soundtrack, and they would not sound out of place. Love songs, which will be heard a lot at this time of year, are a more



Evie Cullen

intimate derivative of this concept. About 40% of all pop songs are “love songs,” so even with a modernized and more techno spin, they still express love. This Valentine’s Day, don’t hesitate to consider how deeply we’re acting on biology when you’re jamming to your favorite love song, whether it’s Taylor or Elvis.

# The Importance of Black Panther

Emily Ertle  
staff writer

Black Panther is a 2018 Marvel movie which focuses on the world of Wakanda, a fictional nation in Africa. To the rest of the world, Wakanda is a small country which, as a result of escaping European colonization, is impoverished and untouched by development. The isolationist nation, however, is the most technologically-advanced in the world due to its discovery of the powerful and nearly indestructible metal vibranium. Aside from breaking numerous box office records, Coogler’s work on the film combined with its empowering message made Black Panther the highest grossing film of all time by a black director. The film’s concept originated from a comic of the same name created by Jack Kirby and Marvel Universe icon Stan Lee, who passed away last year. While the name “Black Panther” is unrelated to the Black Panther political party, which was formed several months following the character’s creation, Lee and Kirby had the same social issues in mind. The beauty of Black Panther lies in the power of representation. Representation is about creating role models which empower kids and adults, many of whom take cues from the characters they see on screen. This concept is not just speculation, it’s well-backed by research. According to Nicole Martins, an Associate Professor at Indiana University, “There’s this body of research and a term known as ‘symbolic annihilation,’ which is the idea that if you don’t see people like you in the media you consume, you must somehow be unimportant.” A 2011 study found that in media, portrayals of black males are often negative. This fuels stereotypes and spreads misconceptions to com-

munities with little to no black populations. These misconceptions can have serious implications, from “less attention from doctors to harsher sentencing by judges, lower likelihood of being hired for a job or admitted to school, lower odds of getting loans, and a higher likelihood of being shot by police.” Black Panther chooses instead to portray black people as powerful, spreading empowering messages to those who often get left behind. Letitia Wright plays Shuri, T’Challa’s 16-year-old sister and the innovative designer for all of Wakanda’s advanced technology. Shuri presents an important role model for young black girls, especially considering that black women earn 10 times fewer PhDs than their white fe-

male counterparts. The film also presents Wakanda as nation leaping ahead. Almost poetically, vibranium signifies Africa’s worth and importance beyond its stereotype as a third world society. Those connected to Wakanda, know something others don’t, much like how those with African heritage are in tune with the beauty of African culture. Black Panther makes a powerful statement about why being black should be a source of pride, not a disadvantage. Even before seeing the film, the idea of watching a movie packed with positive black role models was exciting in itself. When surprised with tickets to Black Panther, students at Ron Clark Academy, a predominantly black middle school in Atlanta, were

filmed ecstatically cheering and dancing on tables. Additionally, the words “Wakanda forever,” which could be seen all over social media not long after the film’s release, have taken on a life of their own. The phrase has become representative of African pride, signifying unity through a common thread of heritage which connects people from all over the world. Superheroes are more important than you may think; they inspire us to find meaning in pain to cope with adversity. We should all celebrate these movies, and especially those who are overlooked or under-represented. So if you haven’t seen Black Panther yet, February is the perfect time to get the full experience.



Erin Kim



# High School Athletes as Mentors?

**Grace Gluckow**  
staff writer

There is tremendous value in high school athletes teaching the skills of a particular sport to middle school and elementary school athletes. Young players learn better from someone closer in age and often view their high school peers as role models. Unlike adult coaches, high school students can provide younger athletes with valuable advice in terms that they understand. Veronica Domanska, a member of the ski team, shared how a high school captain taught her how to be a better skier in a way that no other coach had done before when she was in sixth grade. She stated, “I felt since it was a high schooler, and they were close to my age, I could understand them better and they could understand me more. Also, they knew my skill level and had an understanding of the expectations since they had once been in my position.” As involved high schoolers experience similar performance expectations themselves, they can give valuable or noteworthy pointers possibly regarding something they wish they had known at that age just a few years before. In this way, training can ease the nerves of playing in actual games to make it seem less intimidating. After all, athletes choose to play because they have a passion for the sport and this form of training can help them make the most of it and find their place on the team.

Training sessions can also prepare younger kids for the rigors of high school sports since the transition from middle school to high school can be overwhelming. In high school, teams practice everyday with a full



schedule of games on top of an immense workload of homework, and student athletes are expected to give one hundred percent to their teams. In contrast, middle school sports are not as competitive nor as much of a commitment. According to Coaches Insider, “many middle schools today espouse an athletic model that focuses on maximizing participation for all students and developing individual skills. A contrast to the competitive approach commonplace in high school athletic programs, this philosophy can create an atmosphere where students are expected to play more.” Without a doubt, a student-athlete mentorship system can help younger kids by giving them a little taste of a high school experience. In other words, it can build a bridge that effectively prepares individuals by exposing them to the realities their older peers face. It is essential to make this reality clear to the younger athletes, so they understand the level of playing that they will be expected to reach in the years to come.

Inevitably, high school athletes build bonds with the younger kids that look up to them while the child has fun. These relationships not only cause the younger athletes to develop as players, but it also makes them feel included in the high school community before they even get there. As they get to know each other by name, having a familiar face can make them feel welcomed once they reach high school, especially if they are future teammates. And of course, this experience is also worthwhile for high schoolers as they benefit from the value in helping others and can even learn a thing or two themselves.

# Tapping in to the Benefits of Yoga and Stress Management

**Luca Richman**  
staff writer

With the arrival of junior year stress, Yoga and Stress Management takes up one quarter of every Junior’s Wellness period in hopes of relieving these new stressors and encouraging physical activity throughout the day. Implemented into the RHS curriculum as a direct response to stressful junior obligations, (such as the SAT/ACT, AP Exams, college visits, etc.) the class is designed to aid juniors in successfully meeting all of their pressing requirements. And with students’ schedules further drawing time away time after school and on the weekends, such a class provides guidance to those with packed schedules.

Yoga and Stress Management is comprised of three different sectors during the four day rotation at RHS: a yoga day, a classroom day, and a run day. Yoga days feature about 30 to 40 minutes of yoga, including different poses and exercises utilizing multiple muscles and aspects of fitness, such as flexibility or balance. This is followed by a brief relaxation period during which students are able to rest on their mats, close their eyes, and dispel all thoughts in order to clear their mind. Classroom days take up the 80 minute period, and consist of discussions as well as notetaking regarding types of stress, stress responses, and ways to deal with stress. After most classroom days, each student must complete a written reflection on the topic covered in class which represents the majority of a student’s grade. Finally, the run day brings aerobic fitness into the mix for the last day of the rotation.

The constant switching between

activities presents a unique variety to students during the week, whereas in other wellness classes, the only rotation may be between a workout day and a run day. There is a focus on yoga and relaxation, learning in the classroom, and aerobic fitness in the form of running. Such daily alteration is appealing to some students with an otherwise fixed daily schedule. This variety also allows students to dabble in three different areas that can help relieve stress. Practicing relaxation techniques while simultaneously learning ways to respond to stress and also exercising on run days creates a well-rounded experience where students engage in scientifically proven ways to cope with stressful situations.

Many students have heard that the class is a regular gym class but with more work. The written reflections are quite numerous and take a bit of time to complete, and many feel that they should not be doing work in a “gym” class. When I took the class in Quarter Two of this year, I heard the occasional,

“Why am I getting more stress in ‘Stress Management?’” comments, and there is some truth to that. A class must have grades entered into Skyward, and the classroom element includes those reflections as a by-product. Some also complain about run days, as they do not believe that it is useful for them to cope with stress. However, the class is designed to present students with more of a hands-on learning experience.

Despite the seemingly unreasonable work expectation, the benefits are there. The assignments are not abundant simply to burden the student, but are necessary to bring about genuine reflections. In general, most have shared that they would not have been able to address their own stressors if the assignments were not so in depth. The classroom lessons also encourage healthy habits that may not have been thought of otherwise that can resolve the stressors of other classes. Varsity athlete Taylor Barnabic, a junior at RHS, commented on how the class has been of use to him with his packed

schedule: “I can’t say that the class has dramatically enhanced my schoolwork process, however it does help relieve some pressures,” he commented. “I always have yoga before I take tests in my AP elective this year and I think that is definitely beneficial before a stressful 80 minute test. Beyond being a relaxing period, I don’t see much enhancement, but I don’t think that I feel as much stress as the average student despite my commitment to my sport.” If even an athlete like Taylor finds that the class alleviates his schedule, anyone can find some form of a benefit.

The administration is making an effort to help the RHS student body by implementing a time during the day in which students can relax while equipping themselves with tools for the future. RHS values its students when it comes to stress and scheduling, and Yoga and Stress Management serves to provide solace in a crammed day as a guiding light for those navigating a large amount of work and unforgivingly packed schedules.





RHS Varsity Hockey

Game-Film: What is it?

**Katie Hu**  
staff writer

Ridgewood High School’s varsity hockey team, led by senior captains Liam Clark, Dylan Bronowich and Ben Reinke, has been working hard towards a successful season. This year, the team had a high winning streak of 4-0 during their pre-season, which took place throughout most of November, with their first official game on November 30th against Wayne. Out of the fifteen games they have competed in from the start of their season through mid-January, they have collected seven wins, seven losses, and one tie. After the Holiday Tournament, the team was ranked #9 in the state, and as of January 11th, they held second place in the Big North - Liberty Stars’ division.

When asked how the season is going so far, Davis Flusche, current junior, stated: “We’ve had a tough schedule, but we have held our own and come up with some quality wins.” Their practice schedule most often consists of an off-ice weightlifting practice, a day dedicated to watching game-film, and two ice practices that end around 6:45 PM. They typically have two games throughout the weekend, with their latest game having started at 9:00 PM.

Senior captain Liam Clark has enjoyed his last season while leading the varsity team, stating, “My favorite part of the season so far has to be Senior night. We won against Wayne, a team we lost to earlier in the season. I’m definitely looking forward to the state playoffs. We’ve worked hard all season and now is definitely the time to show it.”

Undoubtedly, their success would not be without the intense dedication of each member. One of the team’s most valuable players is Senior goalie Nate Loughlin. According to nj.com, he is promising contender of becoming one of the state’s top goalies. In his sophomore year alone, he had 233 saves.

Ridgewood’s last official game took place on February 2nd, but they will continue playing league, sectional, and group games. They look forward to competing in the League Championships in early February to capture the “Big North” title. The last team that was able to do so was in 2016.

If you would like to keep up with the hockey team, you can follow them on Instagram @rwoodhshockey for regular updates and reminders. The games are typically held at the Ice House in Hackensack and the Ice Vault Arena in Wayne for those looking to support the team.



**Claire Sullivan**  
staff writer

In today’s modern era, the increased use of technology in high schools is growing rapidly. As of recently, technology has stemmed far from the classroom and onto the sports field. Many high school sports teams are opting to go the extra mile and use the resources they have to film their games.

Although film study in professional and collegiate sports has been around for over fifty years, it is getting easier and easier for high school level sports to record and share film. Coaches can easily send out film to their players who can then review the footage. This exchange happens almost instantly, whereas just ten years ago this would have been a much slower process.

Game-film serves to show what does and does not work. Teams can view what went well and focus on building onto those aspects in the future. If a specific play is unsuccessful, the coaches and players can watch footage and determine the root cause. Then, they can make effective changes to improve upon that play.

Game film can also benefit players individually, in addition to the team as a whole. If a player is struggling with a certain part of their game, they can review the film to see what they are doing wrong, and then the coach can help them to fix their mistakes. Ultimately, seeing things from a different perspective rather

than in the moment gives players the chance to observe things they might not have noticed otherwise.

Teams can also review their opponent’s game films to see how they play to prepare them for future matches. This can provide insight on a range of topics from what play they ran, to what pitches they threw, or even how they set up their defense. Teams can also see who their opponent’s best players are and any recurring habits their rival has, so the coaches can strategize to counter the problems their team might encounter.

While game footage definitely helps teams in the moment, it can also help athletes secure a playing position in the future. Highlight reels have become very common tool for those looking to play at the next level in college. Dedicated players typically compile videos featuring their highlights, which they then upload onto recruiting websites. Then, coaches can view how the athlete performs in a game setting, something extremely valuable considering many coaches are not able to attend sporting events in person.

Overall, game-film serves as a necessary reflection that helps with communication, an essential part of any team sport, between the coaches and the players. It also provides players with the opportunity to identify the team’s and their own personal strengths and weaknesses. Once each player has recognized their role and what they can improve on, the team becomes very hard to defeat.



The Showdown of Winter Track vs. Spring Track

**Emily Sue**  
staff writer

Ridgewood High School is known for having one of the best sports programs in the state. The Track and Field team falls nothing short of that reputation as Ridgewood’s top winning program, delivering multiple titles for the school each year. Not only are track members some of the most hard working athletes known to the athletic program, but the coaching staff is also full of dedicated individuals who truly love their job. Coach O, one of Ridgewood’s running coaches, won “Coach of the Year” for his impeccable effort and devotion.

Given that the Track & Field team is consistent in their efforts, it is worthwhile to consider the differences between the two different seasons, one being indoor track which takes place during the winter and the other being outdoor track which is in the spring.

Athletes face the same requirements and schedule for both seasons: they are expected to practice six days a week and weight lift afterwards. However, practices are sometimes run inside, and winter track meets are always held indoors unlike spring track. Inevitably, the change in atmosphere brings a different feeling to competing since

“it is a different environment,” as stated by Ryan Goyenechea, a junior from Bergen Tech. “When you are competing outdoors, weather is a big factor in your success, whereas in indoor track, your only concern is yourself.” In addition, the indoor track team usually consists of a smaller team compared to

spring track, mainly due to the attitude students have regarding the weather and timing. However, the challenge of the colder weather and size does not impact the success of the indoor track team as they compete to the best of their abilities and consistently bring home awards for their amazing efforts.



Senior Will Baginski participating in an indoor winter track meet.

Spring track brings warmer weather, a larger number of participants, and higher intensity than the winter season. “For me, there is a lot more anticipation leading up to the spring season than the winter season,” shared sophomore Josie Maasarani. “The winter season is more like preparation for the spring season. The winter season is a chance to prepare yourself mentally and physically for the spring season, and making sure you are in the best shape right from the beginning of the spring season.” Although their reputation is not identical, the rigor of competition is still high and taken seriously among all athletes for winter track.

Both are often said to be a great way to make friends and meet new people as well. Another advantage each holds is the way that practices can put anyone in much better shape than when the season started, regardless of running abilities.

Despite the differences between indoor and outdoor track, one aspect remains the same: the welcoming track community continues to work incredibly well together towards their overarching goal. Although track & field is split up into two seasons, members of each are part of a dedicated group of athletes and coaches who truly love what they are doing.



# Spotlight: Senior Artists at RHS



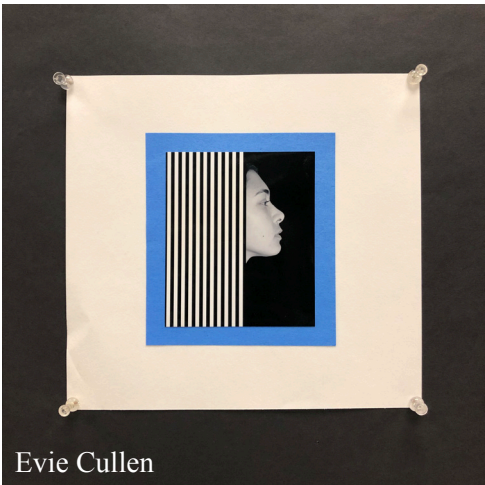
Emily Choi



Ciara Emmanuel



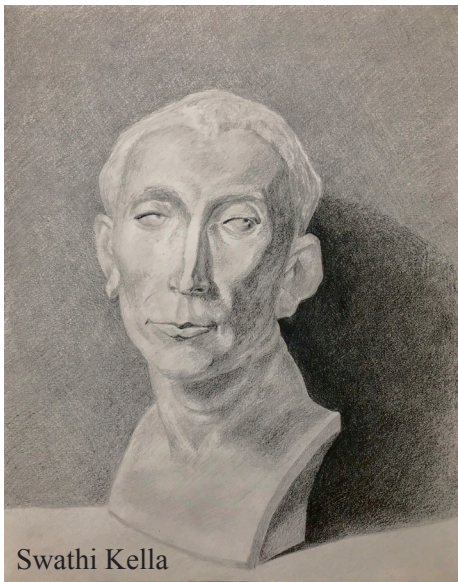
Lizzie Benjamin



Evie Cullen



Swathi Kella



Swathi Kella



Emily Choi



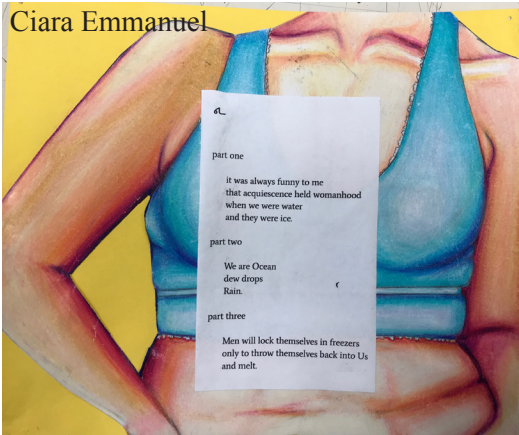
Swathi Kella



Evie Cullen



Sophie Juco



Ciara Emmanuel



Swathi Kella



Mary Skuthan



Evie Cullen