

Sports

Kendo: The Exploration of An Ancient Art

Jamie Lim
staff writer

The “way of the sword” can describe only one sport. Kendo, a modern Japanese martial art, is a sport that promotes sportsmanship, courtesy, and respect. The word “kendo” is constructed from the character “ken” (tsurugi) and the character “do” (michi). The first means “sword” and the second means “path.” Combined, these two characters represent Kendo, or “way of



Junior Michelle Kwon performs her Kendo routine.

the sword.” This sport descends from swordsmanship and features the use of bamboo swords and protective armor. Similar to all traditional martial arts, the development of this discipline has spanned several centuries. Unlike modern sports, it has incorporated many different influences, many of which have developed long before modern times. The concept of Kendo is to discipline the human character through the application of the principles of the Katana (sword). Fortunately, Ridgewood High School is versatile enough to have many talented students who have pursued martial arts throughout their lives, including Kendo. Junior Michelle Kwon is one student whose life as a high school student includes not only academics, but the unique art of Kendo. Kwon first started Kendo when she was just six years old. She started with Kendo for six years, before switching gears to Kumdo. Kumdo is a modern Korean martial art that originates from Kendo. When asked why she first chose to start the unique sport, Kwon answered, “All of my siblings were doing it, and I thought the sport itself was so cool. In the beginning, however, I hated the physical labor”. In addition to any other sport, Kendo and Kumdo both require vigorous physical training. In fact, the sports link both physical and spiritual development. In comparison

to other martial arts, Kendo has a system of ranks. These are referred to as Kyu, Dan, and Shogo. In Kumdo, practitioners begin at the lowest level called 10th geup. While in Kendo, the Kyu are the beginner levels, and the Dan are equivalent to black belt and above. There are six Kyu in all, and ten Dan levels. Therefore, the testing gets harder as the kendoka, or person who practices Kendo, moves on to the next Dan level. According to many, Kendo is not just a typical sport. It is a symbol of their hard work and dedication. Michelle admits that her view of Kendo has changed over the years. She stated, “When I first started, it was more of my parents forcing me into doing it. Now, it’s my pride, and something I can say I’m good at.” However, with sports comes competition. In Kendo, a match is held in a square area from 9 to 11 meters a side. According to Kwon, “Actually doing the sport is tiring, but the feeling of winning justifies the effort.” As for the future, Michelle hopes to keep this sport a major part of life. When she attends college, she hopes that there will be a Kendo/Kumdo club or team that she can join. If she attends a Canadian college, there will likely be a Kendo/Kumdo team available to join. At an American college, she hopes there will be a club involving this sport to participate in. All in all, Michelle has dedicated a



RHS Junior Michelle Kwon stands with her father after her Kendo competition.

significant portion of her high school career to practicing and perfecting this unique art of Kendo/Kumdo.

Girls Basketball Looks Forward To Change This Season

Jamie Inlander & Megan Collier
staff writer and sports editor

The Ridgewood Girls Basketball team is optimistic about a fresh start this season. With a new coaching staff and the addition of many underclassmen, the Varsity team will definitely be experiencing change. Senior captains Maddie Phillips and Kathryn Lenihan intend to guide the many first-year Varsity players toward overall success on the basketball court. This year, almost half of the team consists of underclassmen. Many of these players are multi-sport athletes, which adds a great amount of versatility to their athletic capabilities. Four current seniors have replaced the four seniors who graduated in June last year. One specific player who has been exhibiting great potential is Mia Barbara, a junior. As a first-year Varsity player, Barbara is predicted to aid the Maroons with her excellent shooting skills. The coaching staff has also been rearranged for this upcoming season. Meaghan Palmer has remained the head coach. She began coaching the Maroons in 2009, after acting as assistant coach for a few years prior. Palmer was a member of the Notre Dame women’s basketball team during 2001, when the team won the NCAA Division I Championship. Her experience as a basketball player herself brings great knowledge to the team. Previously the assistant coach, Karen Keyes has also stepped up to coach the girls. She offers additional expertise to the team as the former leading scorer at Notre Dame. This impressive coaching staff will provide the girls with loads of wisdom and knowledge. Despite the few adjustments to their standard team arrangement, the girls are still confident about how they will perform throughout the 2014-2015 season. They hope to be over 500, meaning that they would like to win over half of their games. They accomplished this last year, so they expect to do so again this year. Another major goal is to defeat Northern

Highlands, one of the most powerful teams in the league. The Maroons are also expecting to use their overall speed to their advantage as they face their opponents. They hope that their quickness will make up for their overall lack of height. Senior Casey Skinner notes, “I think we’re going to do pretty well this year because we have a lot of girls who are fast. We’re a small team, but we’re fast.” Casey states that her most prominent personal goal of the season is to beat Northern Highlands, since she has yet to beat them in her four

years at RHS. Additionally, she is excited about uniting the team despite its new formation. She says, “With a completely new coaching staff and almost new team, we are expecting that things may not go as smoothly, but through the doubt we will rise above and our potential has caused us to grow in all aspects of the game.” As a whole, the Ridgewood Girls Basketball team is looking forward to reaching their goals both on and off the court. On the court, they intend to use their greatest strengths, agility and youth, to their advantage.

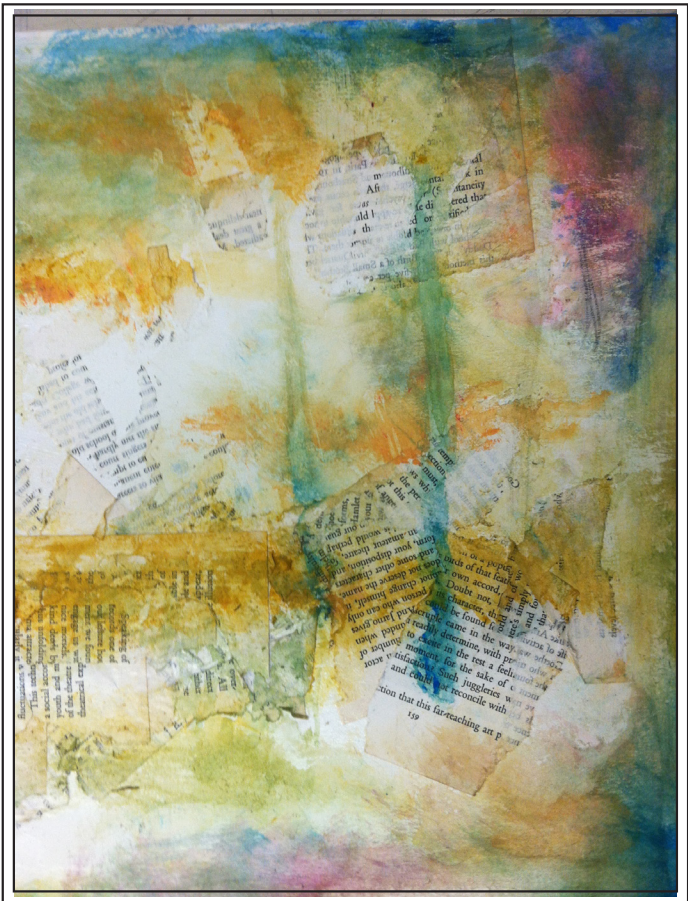
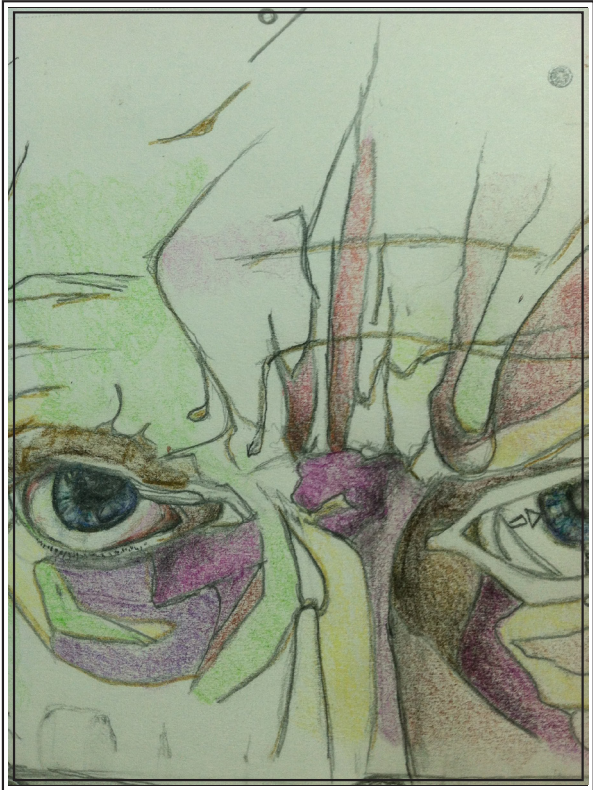
Off of the court, the girls hope to connect and bond despite the wide range of ages. Their first game will be just before Christmas break on Friday, December 19 against Ramapo High School. They will also be playing Paramus, Indian Hills, Northern Highlands, Hackensack, Tenafly, North Bergen, Teaneck, Pascack Valley, Paramus Catholic, and Holy Angels as their season progresses. The students of Ridgewood High School are looking forward to hearing about their future success.



The Ridgewood Girls Varsity Basketball team of 2014-2015 pose in a triangle formation in Gym 1 of Ridgewood High School.



Elle Rothermich



“My existence is characterized by multitasking - it is a rare day when there are not fifteen or so ideas running through my head at one time. Thus drawing and painting for me is akin to meditation. It allows me to relax for more than a moment and allow my imagination to run free.”

- Elle Rothermich



News

All About Principal Gorman

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After college Dr. Gorman headed worked in marketing in the business field. The skills he developed from marketing taught him how to work with people as he taught his clients how to analyze information. Those skills transitioned well into teaching students.

While working for Listerine Mouthwash, he took part in a discussion concerning why people buy name brand mouthwash over store brand and why people are willing to pay more, but while this conversation was taking place, Dr. Gorman’s mind was not on the topic at hand. In fact, he could not care less about labels and brands. He knew that he could do something better and without hesitation, he left marketing. His love for interaction with people led him towards his true passion, working in a school environment where he would be able to improve the lives of many students.

However, the transformation from business to education was not easy. Rather than having to go through school again, he took the alternate education route, where one gives his resumé, takes a teaching exam, takes classes and gets a teaching license. But, even to this day he believes that it was “absolutely worth it. There is not a

day that I don’t miss teaching,” said Dr. Gorman of his time working as a history teacher at Ramapo High School.

Being principal is not easy, and Dr. Gorman is consistently hard at work. He is either visiting classrooms, replying to emails and professionals associating with the school, making phone calls, reading paperwork, or dealing with student and faculty members. After hours, he attends school events such as plays, banquets, band, choir and orchestra performances.

Not only does he deal with issues inside the school, but also with external issues. Dr. Gorman not only receives pressure from the Ridgewood community, but also the state as well. Society wants more accountability in schools. Dr. Gorman mentions how in order to maintain the school’s quality, he must make constant decisions as the state requirements create even more tensions for teachers and students. He wishes that they would alleviate their demands, believing mandates to assist school systems gradually, would be better instead of trying to improve them instantly.

Nevertheless, no matter how difficult his school day may appear to be, Dr. Gorman never stops loving his job. He is proud and thankful of everyone who contributes to make RHS a better place for students.



Dr. Gorman interacting with many of his students.

Cuba

Krishna Rao
news editor

In late December, the media reported that President Obama, the dictator of Cuba, Raul Castro, and the Pope were involved in secret talks over a prisoner swap. After a call between Obama and Castro, it was announced that diplomatic ties would be established between the US and Cuba for the first time after more than half a century. This may prove to be a landmark post-cold war foreign policy decision, but Cuban-Americans have mixed reactions over the decision.

The history between the US and Cuba is troubled. Cuba was an important hub for American investment, particularly in the sugarcane industry. Gradually, American influence turned into economic and political domination. In the 1950s, the US supported the government of Fulgencio Batista, but was a dictator and ruled the country undemocratically. In 1959, Fidel Castro, a revolutionary, rebelled against Batista and forcibly took control of the island. Then, in 1961, a CIA-backed paramilitary group made up of Cuban exiles failed to recapture the island, and the situation heightened tensions between the US and Cuba. Next, President Kennedy banned all trade between the two countries. Political tensions reached a climax during the 13-day Cuban Missile Crisis, when it was discovered that Cuba, in collaboration with the Soviet Union, was building a missile base.

Cuban-Americans have a unique place in this history. Many Cubans have lived in the US from the early 20th century, from when relations between the countries were better. 125,000 Cubans came to the US in the 1980s, when Castro allowed people who did not want to remain in Cuba to leave. While many Cuban Americans celebrate the gestures made by Castro and Obama, some criticize the approach.

Republican Senator Marco Rubio, the son of Cuban Immigrants, denounced the initiative because he believes it gives legitimacy and power to Raul Castro. Whatever the sentiment, this deal is sure to be a pivotal moment in history.

P.R.E.P.

Sumita Rajpurohit
editor-in-chief

Recently, the S.A.I.L. Program has been changed to P.R.E.P. (Practical, Real-Life Education and Preparation) with the stated goal of providing each student with an academic, everyday approach to learning.

Since 2009, the S.A.I.L. (Strategic Actions and Innovations for Learning) Program has pursued its goal of “maximizing the potential of every learner” through a specialized set of courses for students in grades 9 through 12. The S.A.I.L. curriculum emphasizes the practical applications of what is taught in the classroom, allowing students to gain experience in a wide variety of subjects to prepare them for work beyond high school.

As part of the program, juniors and seniors enrolled in the 21st Century Work Skills class are able to gain first-hand experience in a working environment through participation in an internship in a community workplace. S.A.I.L. students also gain experience with technology through integrated lessons in many subjects, including biology, chemistry, and environmental science & sustainable energy. These courses discuss current issues in science, including resource conservation, climate change, and investigative research about forms of life. With all of these classes, members of the program gain experience in vital skills to continue to engage in the community.

P.R.E.P.’s goals remain the same, striving to connect with the students at a personal and social level, with an emphasis on occupational and real-life skills. As before, the program satisfies the New Jersey core content standards and students will also be able to participate in local internships that are integrated into the classroom activities and lessons. One big change is that the new program no longer includes courses for freshmen, and the official curriculum begins during sophomore year.

In the final year, the curriculum promotes a more global approach, and hopes to create for students an identity as citizens, not just of one community or place, but of the world.

Ridgewood Students Gain Nationwide Recognition



Gabriel Voorhis-Allen with Dr. Gorman, Mr. Cook, and Ms. Riordan.

Elizabeth O’Keefe
news editor

Ridgewood High School senior Gabriel Voorhis-Allen was one of two New Jersey students elected to represent the state at the United States Senate Youth Program. The event, which will take place in Washington DC this March, will allow the students to experience their national government first

hand. Acceptance to the program includes a \$5,000 undergraduate scholarship, and encouragement to pursue history and political science studies.

Two of the highest achieving students from each state, DC and the Department of Defense educational system overseas, are selected for the program. Admission to the program is based upon a highly competi-



Jason Son with Congressman Scott Garrett.

tive merit based process that takes place at Departments of Education.

Another Ridgewood High School senior, Jason Son, was also nationally recognized when he was awarded with the Congressional Award for Volunteerism. The award was well deserved due to Son’s extensive volunteer work. The initiative that gained Son this recognition was

the founding of an after school program in a neighboring town in which he taught violin lessons to children.

The award itself was created in 1979, as a means of recognizing the philanthropic actions of American youth. Son was specifically awarded with the Silver Medal for his 200 hours of service. The award was presented by Congressman Scott Garret.

Arts & Entertainment

RHS Marching Band: Marching to Victory

Courtney Wright
staff writer

The Ridgewood High School Marching Band has had a phenomenal season this year, winning numerous awards at various competitions they were involved in. They recently came in second place out of seventeen participating teams at the U.S. Bands National Championships in Allentown, PA. The Marching Band earned an outstanding score of 96.050 in the Group IVA competition and The Cadets Award of Excellence for its accomplishments in creativity, performance, and overall effect. Additionally, the band also came in first place this September at Pequannock High School where it won the award for Best Music. At JP Stevens High School, it came in first place with awards for Best Music, Best Visual, and Best Overall Effect.

As the year goes on, the Marching Band is continuing to win awards. They placed first at Jackson Memorial's "Showcase of Champions" in October, and they won the caption awards for both Best Music and Best Overall Effect, and the Esprit de Corps award. In the same month, the Marching Band performed at Rutgers University for the U.S. Bands NJ State Championships, coming in third out of thirteen bands and winning the caption award for Best Visual. Furthermore, the Marching Band won third place against thirteen bands for the U.S. Bands Yamaha Cup at Metlife Stadium this past November. They scored a 91.413, winning the caption award for Best Color Guard with a score of 398/400. Last year,



The Ridgewood High School Marching Band practices its 2014 routine.

the Band placed fifth out of twenty-five at nationals, compared to second out of sixteen this year at nationals. Brooke Maskin, who plays a large role in the Ridgewood High School Marching Band as the Field Captain, explained her job and her experiences. "This season, I was the Field Captain of the marching band. This position is the sidekick to the Drum Major. Field Captains look up to the Drum Majors to learn how to lead the band correctly. It is a job that requires a lot of time in the fall to be in charge of leading the band to victory. Although most people think that the Field Captain and Drum Major only conduct, there is an enormous amount of behind the scenes jobs that are their responsibilities. It is an honor to be in a position of lead-

ership, and I look forward to following the footsteps of many successful Drum Majors in Ridgewood history." The Marching Band had a particularly outstanding season, allowing a great experience for all of the members. Brooke noted, "After winning so many awards and captions at the competitions, I felt tremendously proud of the entire marching band for putting in countless hours of rehearsal, both on the field and on their own time. Our scores increased as we moved from one competition to the next, which shows how hard the Marching Band worked to improve our performance. Mr. Luckenbill, the band director, is an inspiration to us all, and everyone loves his constant enthusiasm and impressive dedication. I know that everyone in the

band was happy to see that we ranked high against other bands, and reflecting back on this season, it was an incredible experience to walk confidently onto the competition fields, knowing that I was a member of the Ridgewood High School Marching Band." This past season there were ninety-six members of the Marching Band, all of whom put in over two hundred hours of practice to learn drills, music, and marching techniques. The amount of time, effort, and dedication it takes to put on a show is absolutely astonishing. Many RHS Marching Band members attended band camp this summer, and spent about twelve hours a day learning countless pages of drills, doing basics, and rehearsing music. At RHS, the members rehearse five to seven days a week so that they can perform more confidently at competitions.

Many members enjoy being in the Marching Band because they are surrounded by people who share a passion for music. Everybody who joins the Marching Band immediately becomes friends with students from all grades, creating inseparable bonds with other members. The effort and talent of the Marching Band demonstrates how hard work and dedication can result in success. Looking back on all of the triumphs the RHS Marching Band has had this year, it is clear that they have a very bright future ahead of them. All members consistently dedicate hours of practice and time. There is no question that these dedicated band members are bound to continue to accomplish their goals and succeed in their upcoming season next fall.

Choir Concert

Tatiana Mehos
staff writer

In preparation for the winter concert, Mr. Bourque required his classes to review the music for a particularly difficult piece. The song, *O Fortuna* is sung in Latin, which was a particular challenge for the choir. However, with practice each day, the choir's execution of the piece improved. The concert went extremely well. While singing beautifully, the singers demonstrated how well they knew the lyrics. However, there were a few times during the concert when the alto section was overruled by the volume of the other three sections. The altos

Everyone could feel the excitement that was expressed by each individual member of the choir.

were somewhat hesitant at first, but Mr. Bourque encouraged them. He told them that he would rather have them sing out and be wrong than for them to be quiet and be right. Although there were a few things that the choir did struggle with during the concert, everyone could feel the excitement that was expressed by each individual member of the choir. Not only was their enthusiasm noticeable in their sound, but it was also evident in the smiles on their faces. Music has an effect on people, especially during the holidays and it seems that a choir performance simply brings real energy to the audience. The choir here at Ridgewood High School certainly brought and showed off that energy as they sang their winter concert.

The Best Medicine for the Winter Blues

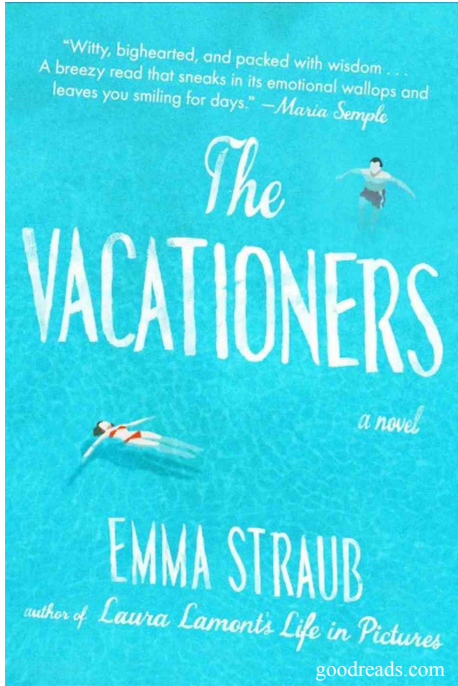
Ana McDade
staff writer

Oftentimes during the winter season in New Jersey, many people find themselves deadlocked into a routine that is not interesting and unenjoyable. With midterms and countless other sources of stress in students' lives, it is difficult to find time to feel inspired and to take a break. Here are some suggestions that might help cure those "winter blues." An advantage of living so close to New York is that tons of priceless artwork is only a short train ride away. Anyone who is even slightly interested in art or art history should definitely check out Henri Matisse's "The Cut-Outs" exhibit at Museum of Modern Art. Towards the end of his life, Matisse was often on bed rest, but his urge to create art never ceased. The Cut-Outs were the products of his determination to continue his artwork. Giant shapes and scenes created from yards of bright paper now grace the walls of MoMA, but the exhibit is only open until February 8. Everyone who visits is sure to leave inspired to grab some cardboard paper and a pair of scissors when they get home. Student tickets are only \$14, which makes this an affordable and fun way to be inspired by art. Books are capable of taking the reader on a journey, which is exactly what most people need during a boring winter. *The Vacationers* by Emma Straub is the perfect book to read during these stressful winter months. It is easy to start daydreaming about summer while studying for tests and wondering what will be on the history midterm. Most importantly, this book fulfills that longing for summer. Emma

Straub allows the reader to take a trip with a dysfunctional group of characters to Majorca, an island in the Mediterranean off the coast of Spain. The Posts, a family from Manhattan, are going on this summer vacation for a few reasons; they are trying to ignore a failing marriage, reconnect with a son, and have one last family trip before the daughter goes to college. This novel is excellently written, and the author takes a witty approach to the complex and humorous plot. Although it will only increase the desire to hop on a plane to a sunny island when everything in Ridgewood is covered in a layer of slush, it will also definitely excite student and wake them up from schoolwork that never seems to end. Another perfect cure for boredom has always been a good movie. *The Princess Bride* is practically guaranteed to put anyone who watches it in a better mood. This film is a classic, and it usually makes viewers daydream about going on quests in the Middle Ages. Such quests are overly romanticized in the film, but this is ultimately harmless. For those who have not seen this movie, think *Monty Python* and *The Holy Grail* meet *The Notebook* and *Andre the Giant*. It is an acclaimed fairy tale with swords, royalty, and monsters, and it is bound to reinvigorate your energy. During the winter months, many students' lives are filled with stress, from tests and papers to SAT tutoring and college applications. With so many things going on in the winter, no one can help getting a case of the winter blues. However, these fun ideas are the perfect medicine and can help cure those blues in no time.



Icarus 1946 by Henri Matisse



The Vacationers by Emma Straub

Arts & Entertainment

Golden Globe Awards will be on January 11, 2015

Spencer Muhlstock
entertainment editor

The Golden Globe Awards is an award show that recognizes excellence in film and television, both domestic and foreign. The annual ceremony and dinner at which the awards are presented is a major part of the film industry’s award season as it usually greatly affects the Academy Awards later in the season. The event is aired on television and is a time for actors and filmmakers to be honored for their achievements over the past year. This year’s Golden Globe Awards will be presented on January 11, 2015 in Beverly Hills, California. This year, it is sure to be a very close and interesting event. Don’t forget to tune in! The nominees are...

- Best Motion Picture (Drama)**
Boyhood
Foxcatcher
The Imitation Game
Selma
The Theory of Everything
- Best Actress in a Drama**
Julianne Moore (Still Alice)
Rosamund Pike (Gone Girl)
Reese Witherspoon (Wild)
Felicity Jones (Theory of Everything)
Jennifer Aniston (Cake)
- Best Actor in a Drama**
Eddie Redmayne (Theory of Everything)
Steve Carell (Foxcatcher)
Benedict Cumberbatch (Imitation Game)
David Oyelowo (Selma)
Jake Gyllenhaal (Nightcrawler)
- Best Motion Picture (Musical or Comedy)**
Into The Woods
Birdman
The Grand Budapest Hotel
St. Vincent
Pride
- Best Actress in a Musical or Comedy**
Julianne Moore (Maps To The Stars)
Amy Adams (Big Eyes)
Emily Blunt (Into The Woods)
Helen Mirren (The Hundred Foot Journey)
Quvenzhané Wallis (Annie)



A picture from last year’s Golden Globe Awards ceremony in Beverly Hills.

- Best Actor in a Musical or Comedy**
Michael Keaton (Birdman)
Bill Murray (St. Vincent)
Ralph Fiennes (The Grand Budapest Hotel)
Christoph Waltz (Big Eyes)
Joaquin Phoenix (Inherent Vice)
- Best Supporting Actress in a Motion Picture**
Jessica Chastain (A Most Violent Year)
Keira Knightley (Imitation Game)
Patricia Arquette (Boyhood)
Meryl Streep (Into The Woods)
Emma Stone (Birdman)
- Best Supporting Actor in a Motion Picture**
Ethan Hawke (Boyhood)
Robert Duvall (The Judge)
Edward Norton (Birdman)
J.K. Simmons (Whiplash)
Mark Ruffalo (Foxcatcher)
- Best Director - Motion Picture**
Ava DuVernay (Selma)
Wes Anderson (Grand Budapest Hotel)
Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu (Birdman)
David Fincher (Gone Girl)
Richard Linklater (Boyhood)
- Best Screenplay - Motion Picture**
Wes Anderson (Grand Budapest Hotel)
Gillian Flynn (Gone Girl)
Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu (Birdman)
Richard Linklater (Boyhood)
Graham Moore (Imitation Game)
- Best Original Score - Motion Picture**
The Imitation Game (Alexandre Desplat)
The Theory of Everything (Johan Johannsson)
Gone Girl (Trent Reznor, Atticus Ross)
Birdman (Antonio Sanchez)
Interstellar (Hans Zimmer)
- Best TV Series (Drama)**
Downton Abbey
The Affair
Game of Thrones
House of Cards
The Good Wife
- Best Actress in a Drama Series**
Viola Davis (How to Get Away With Murder)
Claire Danes (Homeland)
Julianna Margulies (The Good Wife)
Robin Wright (House of Cards)
Ruth Wilson (The Affair)
- Best Actor in a Drama Series**
Kevin Spacey (House of Cards)
Clive Owen (The Knick)
James Spader (The Blacklist)
Dominic West (The Affair)
Liev Schreiber (Ray Donovan)
- Best TV Series (Musical or Comedy)**
Orange is the New Black
Girls
Jane the Virgin
Transparent
Silicon Valley

- Best Actress in a Musical or Comedy Series**
Julia Louis-Dreyfus (Veep)
Edie Falco (Nurse Jackie)
Gina Rodriguez (Jane The Virgin)
Lena Dunham (Girls)
Taylor Schilling (Orange is The New Black)
- Best Actor in a Musical or Comedy Series**
Don Cheadle (House of Lies)
William H. Macy (Shameless)
Ricky Gervais (Derek)
Jeffrey Tambor (Transparent)
Louie C.K. (Louie)
- Best TV Movie or Mini-Series**
Olive Kitteridge
 Fargo
The Missing
True Detective
The Normal Heart
- Best Actress in a TV Movie or Mini-Series**
Jessica Lange (American Horror Story)
Maggie Gyllenhaal (The Honorable Woman)
Frances McDormand (Olive Kitteridge)
Allison Tolman (Fargo)
Frances O’Connor (The Missing)
- Best Actor in a TV Movie or Mini-Series**
Martin Freeman (Fargo)
Matthew McConaughey (True Detective)
Woody Harrelson (True Detective)
Billy Bob Thornton (Fargo)
Mark Ruffalo (The Normal Heart)
- Best Supporting Actress in a TV Movie, Series, or Mini-Series**
Kathy Bates (American Horror Story)
Uzo Aduba (Orange is the New Black)
Joanne Froggatt (Downton Abbey)
Michelle Monaghan (True Detective)
Allison Janney (Mom)
- Best Supporting Actor in a TV Movie, Series, or Mini-Series**
Bill Murray (Olive Kitteridge)
Jon Voight (Ray Donovan)
Matt Bomer (The Normal Heart)
Alan Cumming (The Good Wife)
Colin Hanks (Fargo)
- Best Animated Feature Film**
The Lego Movie
How To Train Your Dragon 2
Big Hero 6
The Book of Life
The Boxtrolls

New Players in Concert 2015 is Bound to be a Hit

Cathy Campo
staff writer

On January 15 at 7 p.m., 16 and 17 at 8 p.m., and 18 at 7 p.m., New Players will gather on the Little Theatre stage to perform their ever-popular *New Players in Concert 2015*. The event will be stage-managed by New Players alumni, Julianna Peacock (RHS Class of 2013) and Morgan Knight (RHS Class of 2010). This season’s *Concert* will include four senior-

directed Broadway musical excerpts, some which have been retired and others that are still performed today. Nina Farley, Katy Feldhahn, Troy Frey, and Aidan Trevisan will direct the circus-inspired *Pippin*. The musical features an acrobatic troupe of performers, led by the charismatic Leading Player. An ensemble-heavy show, the chorus relays the story of the prince Pippin who longs to find passion and adventure in his life. His interesting and dazzling adventures from going to war, regretfully killing his father, to

falling in love with Catherine leave the audience enchanted and wanting more. Cormac Bohan, Samantha McCarthy, and Seamus McCooe will direct *Nine to Five* adapted from the famous 1980 Dolly Parton film of the same name. A feminist musical with upbeat tunes, the show follows three women, an overworked office manager, a jilted wife, and an objectified secretary, as they conspire to depose their smarmy boss and begin making woman-friendly changes in the workplace. Wesley Dunn and Kayla Kirk will direct *Carrie the Musical* based on the Stephen King novel, *Carrie*. It focuses on an awkward teenage girl, Carrie, with telekinetic powers whose lonely life is dominated by an oppressive, religious-fanatic mother. When Carrie is humiliated by her classmates at the high school prom, she wreaks havoc on everyone and everything in her path. The show’s music is killer, just like Carrie herself. Sara Cantor, Andrea Grassano, and Allison Hellman will direct the hilarious *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*. The comedy centers around a spelling bee set in a geographically ambiguous Putnam Valley Middle School. Six quirky adolescents compete in the Bee, run by three equally quirky grown-ups. George Hajjar, Kyla Perlman, and Hayes Walsh will direct the com-

edy-horror-rock musical, *Little Shop of Horrors*, based on the 1960s film with the same title. The show follows a hapless florist shop worker and pariah, Seymour Krelbourn, who raises a plant, Audrey II, named after Seymour’s secret crush, that feeds on human blood and flesh. The strangely interesting musical shows us the story of how Seymour is brought to fame with the help of Audrey II and how she ends up turning on him. Daniel Brennan, Julia Goodgold, and Jeffrey Lampiasi will direct *Godspell*. The structure of the musical is that of a series of parables, mostly based on the Gospel of Matthew (three of the featured parables are recorded only in the Gospel of Luke). The parables are interspersed with a variety of modern music set primarily to lyrics from traditional hymns, with the passion of Christ treated briefly near the end of the performance. *New Players in Concert*, the company’s most popular annual event, draws a lot of attention for the fact that it welcomes all individuals who are even slightly interested in theatre - not just the “typical,” experienced New Players. The company is excited to see a lot of fresh new faces enjoying their debuts on the stage. With six fantastic shows with superb directors, the production, as always, is bound to be a hit.



A photo from last year’s New Players in Concert. Students flood the Little Theater while fans enjoy a 360 degree view.

Features

STEM of the Future

Ashley Sohn
staff writer

It is inevitable that we are a technology-driven nation. It pervades almost every aspect of our lives. Furthermore, scientific and technological innovations have become increasingly important as globalization and a knowledge-based economy become more prominent. Scientists believe that in today's rapidly innovating society, it is crucial for students to develop their knowledge and capabilities in STEM fields, to an extent much beyond what was considered acceptable in the past. As the workplace changes, STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) skills become more important for a variety of careers.

However, according to the National Science Foundation, there is a growing gender imbalance in these fields that poses a great concern. Women account for only 11 percent of the engineering industry; meanwhile, the fastest growing jobs are in technology and engineering. Studies suggest that girls tend to steer away from science and mathematics careers not because of a lack of ability or interest, but because of social pressures and gender stereotypes. Some arguments blame the media for creating an image that scientists and mathematicians are careers suitable for men while others blame educators and even parents for directing girls towards traditionally "womanly" jobs such as teaching and nursing. Members of the scientific community believe that the future of the United States' economy will depend on the development of expertise in the STEM fields and that thus, it is important to

confront and obliterate gender stereotypes. Without these efforts, we limit the potential of our youth as well as the potential of our country's innovation.

Luckily, studies show that we are on the right track. Although young women still make up less than 20 percent of engineering majors, there are many other STEM disciplines, such as biomedical and environmental engineering, in which women make up almost half of their degrees. Why are more women enrolling and pursuing relatively newer fields? Professionals believe it is because their successful shows the relevance of science and engineering to everyday life and the world around us, whereas more established fields such as physics and mechanical engineering carry heavier social pressures. When young women understand the impact they can have on society as engineers, scientists, and mathematicians, many more choose to pursue the path with hopes of bettering the future.

This year several new clubs have sprouted at Ridgewood High School that expose students to fields in science and engineering, including our very own STEM Club, where members engage in exciting projects and tasks that require critical thinking and scientific experimentation. Similarly, Girls Who Code encourages RHS students to learn the basics of computer programming, which is deemed the core skill of the twenty-first century due to its versatility and relevance to almost every field. Exposing students to STEM disciplines and encouraging them to pursue their passions will help advance the fields and ensure a promising future driven by innovation and unveiling of knowledge.

RAHP Attack

Ester Choi
staff writer

Ridgewood Academy for Health Professions, otherwise known as RAHP, is an academic college preparatory program designed to help expose various fields in the healthcare area to students. Students can apply during the middle of their freshman year, and the three year program starts when they are sophomores. Since 2005, over 250 people have graduated from the RAHP program and some of them have taken the path to the medical field to become doctors. RAHP students are selected by a board of teachers, and the program accepts around forty to forty-five new students each year. The students are divided into take English and Science classes together, which have increased focus on integrating medical studies into their core curricula.

A highlight of the RAHP program is the regular visits to the Valley Hospital. Starting with the exploration year when they are sophomores, students go to the hospital to take tours and learn what goes on in the hospital. Following the exploration year comes the internship year for juniors, where they are selected to rotate in different departments to experience the work in the medical field. Finally, the third year of the program is a mentorship year for seniors, and they are given the opportunity to deepen their understanding for the health fields by working with a mentor. At the end of the mentorship year, seniors will present a capstone project at a seminar symposium which concludes their career as a RAHP student. The project is meant to let student

apply the knowledge they have gained over their internships and get a chance to make a change in their local communities. When asked to describe his own capstone, senior RAHP student Krishna Rao explained, "through my capstone I'm going to advocate for paramedics to receive more training with the video laryngoscope." This device is a safer instrument to use for intubations than the manual blade.

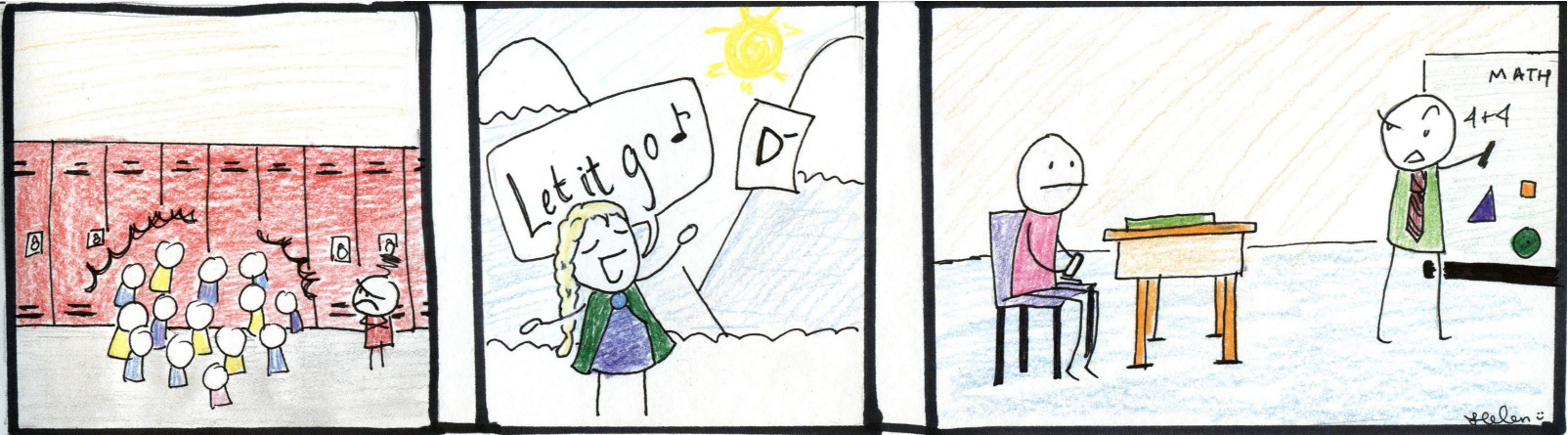
Joining RAHP was one of the best decisions of my high school career. On top of gaining a well rounded perspective of the healthcare field, I benefitted from the support of a community of like minded peers and caring teachers."

Something to keep in mind as a RAHP student is that there will be life changing experiences but also some dull experiences. The program is designed so that a student can find out whether or not they are interested in medical fields. Not all explorations are fast paced, but most are interesting and eye opening. There has been a countless number of students that have complained about their internship programs and many others that genuinely found it captivating. Nonetheless, the program will aid students in finding their aptitude for the health and medicine field. The medical field holds opportunities for people of all personalities, skills, and interests, making RAHP a program that can benefit anyone who joins.

Hallways are actually very narrow. Sometimes, you just have to let it go. Texting without looking becomes almost second nature.

Lessons Learned in High School

by Helen Cho



English Curriculum Diversifies: Stories and Seminars

Emily Kopec
features editor

Along with the several freedoms of senior year comes the choice of courses; with less required classes and more room in schedules, there is more time to fit in interesting, alternative classes. After a long three years of chosen courses, students often anticipate a change to their studies and the new areas of studies they are offered. However, with all these new possibilities, students are not sure what to choose.

Mrs. Gronau, the head of the Ridgewood High School English Department, outlined several of the new initiatives and options offered at RHS since the 2014-2015 school year. While RHS has a predominantly traditional curriculum, the English teachers have been modifying reading lists to incorporate multicultural books as well literature written by women authors. Specifically in the junior and senior classes, teachers have been focusing on diversifying their lesson plans. Ms. Karten has introduced The Help into her class; Ms. Richards ex-

posed her RAHP students to Henrietta Lacks this year. Additionally, teachers use creative methods to introduce these modern ideologies. Ms. Armando highlights these unique texts in book clubs, while Ms. Pinches' class reads The House On Mango Street all together. Nevertheless, educators must still abide to the state requirements by analyzing supplemental core books in their classes. Most of the time, teachers' suggestions are approved by the Board of Education. Books are approved if they are within reason, well read, and educational.

Another addition to the English department in recent years, has been the changes and additions in the classes offered. English 12 has changed to become more exciting, therefore, more appealing to senior students. With the immense amount of English electives offered, many students overlook the College Prep, Honors, and AP level options for the traditional English 12 class. Some seniors also decide to take a seminar class. This class is typically composed of a small number of students who use a discussion based learning style to learn about written

works, and ways to improve their own writing. Two of the newer electives are "Humor in Literature" and "The Beat Generation." Both of these classes come with either college prep or honors level credit. In The Beat Generation students investigate an alternative type of poetry. The class examines literature by authors who have responded to society post World War II. In addition, "The Beat Generation" addresses historical conflicts such as equality in gender, race, class, and ethnic difference. Students read and write poetry as well as use music and art to portray ideas of the time.

Many other English elective classes can be found at Ridgewood High School. Freshman through seniors looking for semester courses can consider "Acting I" and "Advanced Acting." Juniors and seniors find courses that cater to their personal preferences. For instance, According to the RHS course catalog, "Crime and Mystery Fiction" is offered to those that question "human motivation, good and evil, and law and justice." Over ten other English electives are offered to a encom-

pass a variety of students' interests.

Since some courses are more popular than others, the students really determine whether or not a class runs for the year. If there are not enough students to form a reasonably sized class, two similar courses will either combine, or be excluded from the classes that operate in a year.

One particularly popular course is "Myth, Legend and the Bible." Once taught by the beloved Mr. McKeon, Mr. Lee currently teaches the class. His students are compelled by the challenging work, and interesting subject matter. Because it is typically taught in a religious context, examining the Bible from an academic perspective provides students with new views on the commonly read text. Mr. McKeon occasionally returns to tell stories and meet with National Honors Society members.

Everyone can find an English course that interests them, and fits in their schedule. Examining literature, and incorporating twenty-first century novels with traditional works are all part of the countless English courses at Ridgewood High School.

Features

All ‘Bout ‘HLISA

CJ Jerkovich
staff writer

AHLISA, or American History and Literature Integrated with the Study of Arts, is a two-year, honors level program for aspiring artists. The program has opportunities unique to other multi-year courses such as RAHP and AmStud. AHLISA students reenact scenes from books they read, and participate in trimonthly art supplements. The method in which the program satisfies artistic needs is through incorporating the arts with English and History curriculums. The members of the course vary greatly in terms of artistic field. Aspiring actors, singers, fine artists, dancers, photographers, filmmakers, stand-up comedians, and designers have all found home in AHLISA. The program is diverse in the education it provides, and is flexible to meet the artistic needs of every type of student. Mr. Yannone teaches American History for sophomores and juniors. In his class, students are instructed to create a colonial war poster using their fine art and designing abilities. Mrs. Aromando teaches English, where students analyze literature including *The Scarlet Letter*, *The Great Gatsby*, *All Quiet on the Western Front*, and *The Crucible*. Students apply their acting skills to the literature they read when they perform scene from various books for their upper or lower level AHLISA peers.

Mr. Cronk enhances students’ potential in the Fine Arts. His course takes place during either a History or English period three times a month. The course emphasizes the fine art that corresponds with the American History and Literature that the students are currently studying. In addition, Mr. Cronk educates students on various fine artists and photographers, as well as the history behind them. Dance with Mrs. Landa meets once every quarter and focuses on time period dances, specifically those from eras in American history. Throughout the school year there are numerous AHLISA events, especially during the holiday season. One of the program’s holiday traditions is a Secret Santa gift exchange between the first and second year students and the AHLISA staff. Members bond with their peers through the exchange, all while getting into the holiday spirit. Another AHLISA excursion is the Metropolitan Museum of Art field trip. On December 15, students took a bus to the Met for a city day at the galleries. The AHLISA students were also encouraged to complete the Met’s “Museum Selfie Project.” In the project, students incorporated modern technology with historical pieces. AHLISA is a unique experience that caters to the young artists of RHS, and any honors-level freshman interested in pursuing the arts should consider applying. The springtime application process is somewhat rigorous; nevertheless, the work is worth it, and

HS: Prepping For the Future

Kavi Patel
staff writer

While students view schoolwork as an annoyance to their daily lives, it is more beneficial than they realize. It is not just the material being taught in classes that educates students, but good work ethic and stamina, which will undoubtedly be valuable throughout their lives. Additionally, detailed assignments and thought provoking lessons strengthen their intellectual minds. The word “prepare” often precedes statements such as “...for the SATs”, “...for college”, and, most significantly, “...for the real world.” Everyone seems to be obsessed with the concept of success in the real world, but, in reality, there is no strict definition. Some say it means getting good grades, or always being on time. Others say achieving happiness is the only true means of achieving success. However, there is no guarantee of surviving in the world, as it is only full of people trying to learn from their own mistakes. Grades are not meant to be obsessed over, teachers are not meant be scary, and the “meaning of life” is not meant to suddenly appear in high school. However, mistakes are inevitable. High school is the first environment one encounters that does not always state the rules outright, as was done

in elementary school. In high school, freedom is given with the price of potential failure, which is what frightens students the most. High schoolers tend to transform into perfectionists with no mercy for errors. However, senior Steven Lee says, “Mistakes are what mold you and spur individual academic growth.” The difficulties of high school are falsely interpreted as unnecessary methods to torture students, but under the all the stress and failures, it is actually a blessing in disguise. High school often seen as a tough and daunting place because it demands failure in order to make students better people. Struggling through it is all part of the process of acknowledging mistakes and proceeding to fix them. Failure will come countless times in life, and high school is just an introduction to teach students and teachers alike to cope and adapt with their gained knowledge. Perhaps the next time an error arises when translating Spanish sentences or citing sources correctly, take a breath and be real. Realize that “real people” in the “real world” make mistakes and move forward by fixing them. Although many struggle through high school, the mistakes made are lessons to learn from. Although high schoolers will not remember everything they learn in their classes, they will use their improved work ethic to succeed in all future aspects of their lives.

You can stay up forever. What is sleep? Trying makes a difference. It’s a little corny, but a conscious effort really can improve almost anything. High school is full of opportunities, in and out of the classroom. So take a moment, and appreciate everything you learn here.



An In-Depth Look at American Studies

Charlie Koontz
staff writer

An enthralling blend of American literature, history, and primary documents, with a lecture debate style, American Studies is perfect for an aspiring scholar, or the honors student hoping to miss a couple days of school. While much of the subject matter is rigorous, and occasionally arduous, a lot of time is spent enjoying fun and games. Field trips balance note taking with free time to explore historical landmarks, visit interesting restaurants, and spending time with friends.



AmStud students gather to take a picture.

Classes are often filled with humor, due to students wandering in from morning classes, funny observations made by students and teachers, as well as the prolonged debates. Classes are small, so peer bonding is near effortless, with morning and afternoon classes coming to resemble something of a family. American Studies is chock full of tradition, whether it be the bulletin board with field trip pictures, the closet doors with sophomore self portraits, Secret-Santa, or the daily deliverance of packets by Ms. Hans. Although AP seems to be a very attractive option to incoming sophomores, AmStud offers the same amount, if not more, advantages, with many juniors scoring in the 4 to 5 range on the U.S. History AP test, while at the same time developing the note taking and retentive skills needed for a higher education. The teachers are one of the aspects that make the course so great. Ms. Riordan, the history teacher, and Ms. Hans, the English teacher, are two incredibly wise people, with banks of knowledge on practically any subject matter. Being involved in a program such as American Studies also guarantees that tests and quizzes in English and History will rarely occur on the

same day, largely due to the collaboration between teachers, who are constantly talking and debating over the best course of action in both scheduling and administering their lessons. While there are countless positive aspects to AmStud, it is still a challenging course. For instance, the work is at a highly advanced level, especially for only being an honors class. Students need to study hard in order to be successful on tests and quizzes, and they must go above and beyond in order to squeeze into the A or B range on DBQs or essays. Also, there is a lot of assigned reading. Analyzing primary documents and connecting major his-

torical events are important parts of this challenging curriculum. Something to consider is that the program is a combination of two history classes, while incorporating literary ideas. Therefore, liking history is a must. Participation is also a large portion of the grade, so class discussions are often incorporated in the curriculum. American Studies is essentially a unique, educational, and exciting experience. Taking AmStud is a smart decision for one’s academic career. This course is a great decision for those interesting in enhancing their academic career, and being around similarly motivated peers.



Sophomore AmStud students take a group photo in Philadelphia on their latest trip.

Opinion

An Artistic Statement Regarding a Global Epidemic

Thria Bernabe
staff writer

Art is a reflection of human nature. It evokes emotions, sparks controversy and, most importantly, exposes the truth about humanity as a whole. Art can also serve as a catalyst for social justice movements, such as the one that started recently, with a student from Columbia University.

A senior, Emma Sulkowicz uses performance art as a way to expose the very dark topic of rape. Early in September last year, Sulkowicz began carrying around a navy blue, extra-long twin sized mattress around campus as a way to protest her rapist's lack of expulsion. This piece has not only captivated the attention of fellow Columbia students, but also the rest of the country. Many other Columbia students have since joined Sulkowicz's performance protest, and even began carrying their own mattresses to show

support.

Sulkowicz, who was allegedly raped in August 2012 by Jean-Paul Nungesser, reported the incident to the university in April 2013, but when faced with inaction, she reported the incident to the New York Police Department again in May 2014, again to no avail. To this day, her rapist freely continues his education and life at Columbia University. Sulkowicz's rapist is not the only one who walks free; in fact, only six percent of rapists actually serve jail time, due to the relationship between the rapist and the victim. Thirty-eight percent of rapists are either friends or acquaintances of the victims, while twenty-three percent have intimate relationships with the victim. In cases where the victims are familiar with their rapists, the likelihood of reporting the incident decreases dramatically, despite the number of rape incidents reported being already a staggeringly low thirty-nine percent.

The issue lies partly in the lack

of legal action. Women simply do not want to report the incident to the police because they know that the police will not do anything to help. The police can be largely ineffective in the context of rape and sexual assault. In the case of Sulkowicz, the police dismissed her story upon discovering that Sulkowicz and Nungesser had previously had consensual sex. However, a history of consensual sex does not guarantee permanent consent. Sulkowicz clearly did not consent to being hit, choked or sodomized, but the police officer who handled her case did not care. The police treated Sulkowicz as if she was the criminal, spurring Sulkowicz to claim that, "The rapists are innocent until guilty but the survivors are guilty until proven innocent." Her experience with the NYPD further supported her statement when the officer refused to believe her on the unfounded belief that ninety percent of reported cases of rape did not actually occur.

This lack of official assistance ul-

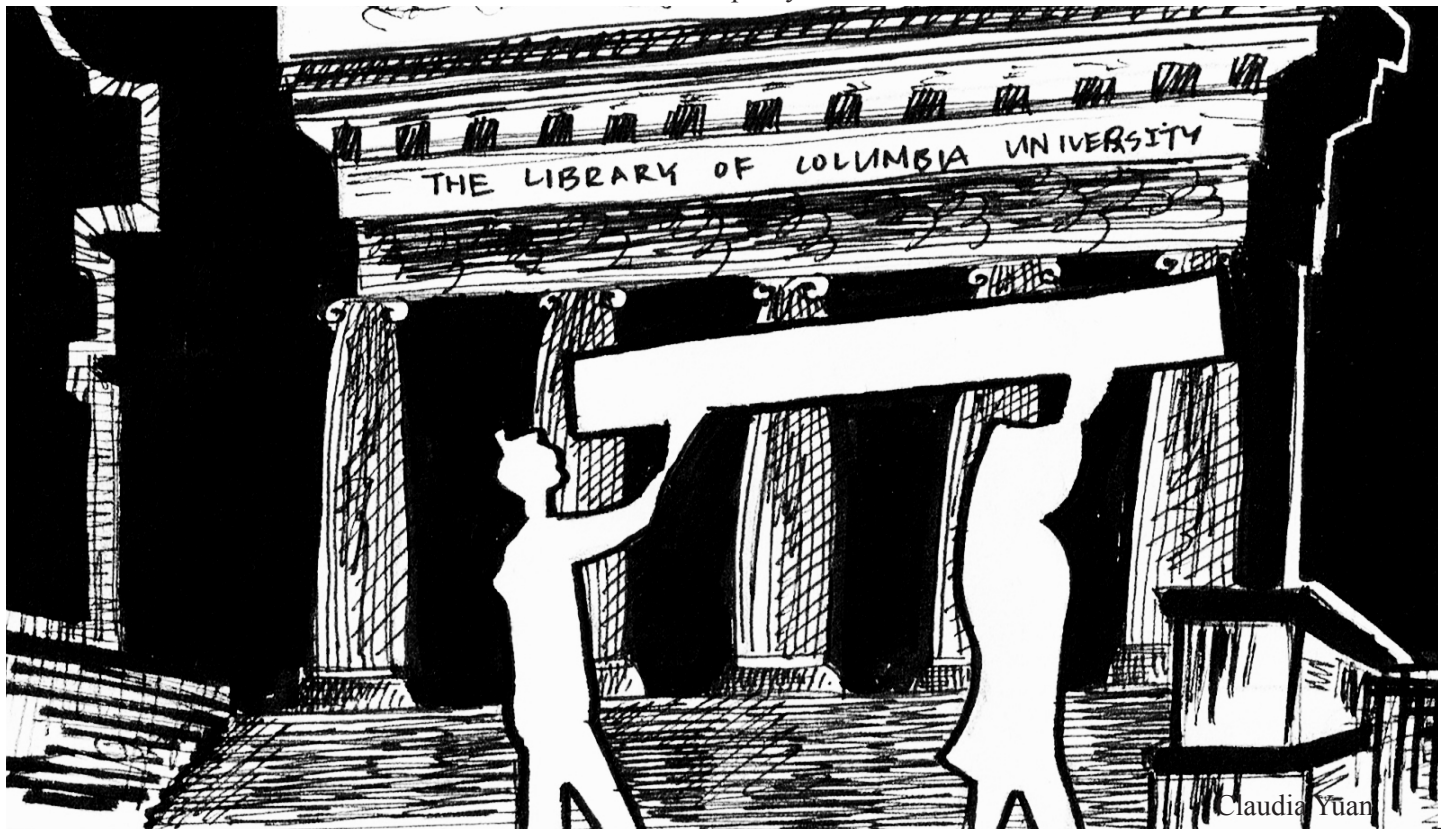
timately discourages women from reporting their cases to the police, further obstructing desperately needed progressive reforms.

Fortunately, after Sulkowicz's incident, Columbia University implemented a new sexual assault adjudication policy and even added a second Rape Crisis/Anti-Violence Support Center. This is a step forward that other universities should take and integrate into their policies as well, since rape is an epidemic that has infected colleges across the country. But rape has not only reached epic proportions in American colleges, but in the United States overall, with many Americans failing to realize the true gravity of the situation. In fact, one in six American women and one in thirty-three American men are victims of an attempted or completed rape. On the global scale, a staggering thirty-five percent of women have experienced physical and or sexual violence. One in ten girls worldwide has been raped at some point in their lives and countries such as India, Argentina, and Germany experience exorbitant rates of rape.

The toxic and sexist views that plague our patriarchal society are detrimental to both men and women. Although men are statistically less likely to get raped in America, we still should not forget them. They suffer a different angle of the same issue and are often ridiculed for "not enjoying it" or "not being manly enough to fight off the rapist."

Rape is an issue that spans across the world and transcends gender because rape is not about sex, but about rather domination and power. This controversy demands that we provide survivors with the proper emotional, medical, and legal support, and that we justly imprison the offenders. We need to address this issue not only within our nation, but across the world as well.

Activists such as Sulkowicz play the important role of bringing the topic to light, and it is now our duty to work together to end rape culture.



Obama Properly Tackles Immigration Reform

Desiree Bottiglieri
staff writer

Obama's new immigration plan benefits millions of people, including legal and illegal immigrants as well as natural-born citizens. The plan allows immigrants with children who are U.S. citizens who have been in the country for over five years to gain political independence. It also gives working permits to those who have high-tech abilities, along with many other advantages. This new plan assures the safety of Americans while keeping families together and improving the technological and agricultural businesses of America.

Additionally, a part of Obama's new immigration plan states that the government will focus on deporting those who are deemed a threat to the security of America. Not only will this increase the safety of the nation, but will allow hardworking families to have a sense of protection. The goal is not only to help innocent families who are looking for a fresh start, but to keep communities safe from external threatening forces. Thankfully, Obama's new policy has the ability to do this.

Overall, the immigration plan focuses on keeping families together. For most, this means not having to worry about whether their mother is going to be deported or if their father has been caught and is on his way back over the border. Children should be able to live worry-free when it comes to seeing their family as a whole when coming

home from school or waking up the next morning. Therefore, Obama's plan gives people the ability to remain in their present state of life, and helps them forget the past they once left behind.

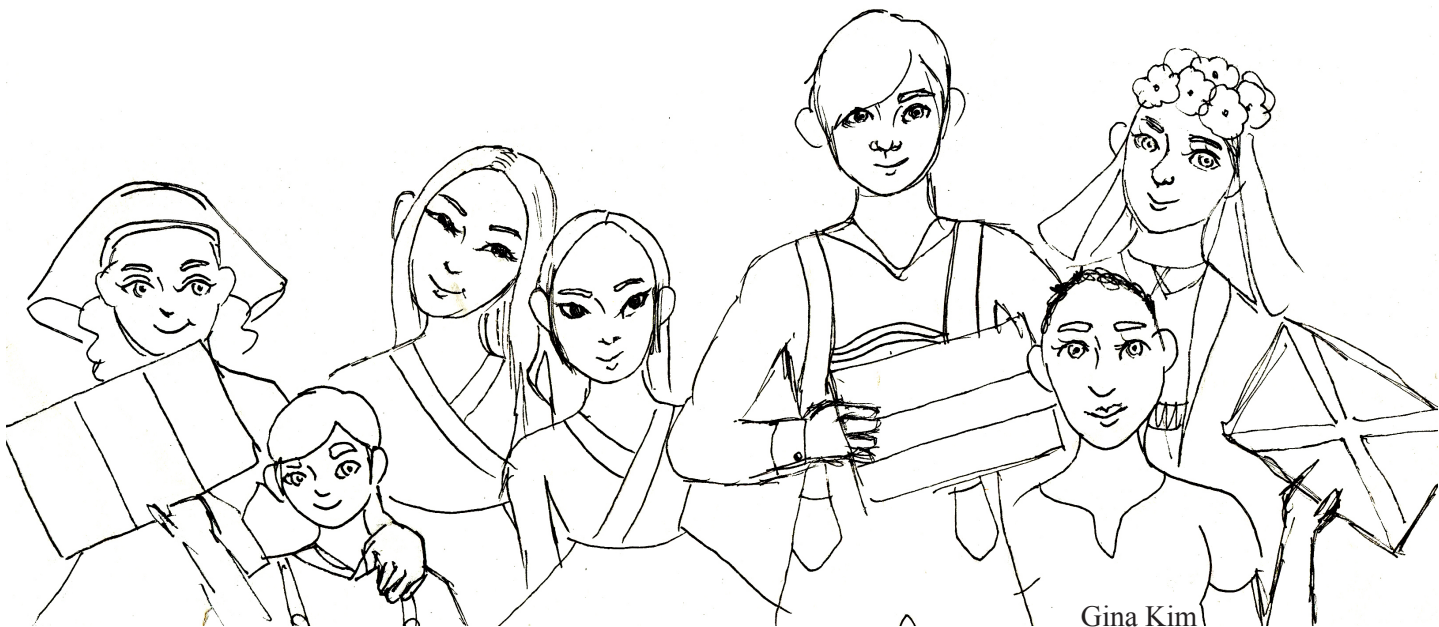
Along with keeping the country safe and freeing American households from worry, the plan provides working permits to immigrants who have high-tech abilities. This will not only help the United States' technological industries develop, but will also promote the agriculture business. As immigrants make up 25% of the United States' science and technology business, the working permits are an economical reassurance for the technology business.

Although it may appear the exact opposite, immigration reform is actually overall favored by most Americans.

The technology business also encompasses the security section of businesses. This section reinforces the solidity of American businesses, as well as protecting their incomes. While looking at the agricultural aspect, approximately 80% of fields workers are illegal immigrants. Without the president's approach, the country's agricultural business would plummet, causing the entire nation to suffer. For instance, famine could break out due to the loss of manpower in the fields and the inability to keep up with demand. As a

whole, Obama's plan reinforces the stability of the nation's agricultural industry, while preventing the possibility of a self-implemented food crisis.

Obama's new immigration plan has not only benefitted immigrants, but also American society as a whole. By cracking down on serious criminals and those who wish to harm the nation, Obama is making America more secure. The plan also provides citizenship for many who have families, providing peace of mind for the children and spouses. Lastly, the working permits provided to those with high-tech abilities keeps the technology and agriculture industries stable.



Opinion



Admission Fee Horrors and Other Costs of Colleges

Shrea Mitra
opinion editor

As we all know, college is really expensive. Tuition costs upwards of \$40,000 and is likely to continue rising in many schools. Despite subsidization of state schools, many in-state students still have to pay around \$20,000, hardly a budge from the previous figure. Aside from tuition, there are also room and board costs which include expensive dining plans, housing, and the like. On top of all that, one must pay for each class which are usually hundreds of dollars per semester, not to mention the still enormous textbook fees. As a whole, colleges are extremely costly and selective. Every student has nightmares, questioning whether or not they are capable enough or not of being able to attend their dream school. While all these deadening costs do contribute to the college experience, the application fee simply seems unnecessarily expensive.

Students should not be competing for colleges, colleges should be competing for students. So when applying, colleges should let you fill out forms and write essays for every university of your dreams. But what really happens is you end up applying to schools where you have the greatest chances of acceptance, otherwise, the application fee of \$75 will just be a waste. For instance, NYU requires an application fee of \$70, and in 2011 its student body totaled at over 42,000 students,

giving them an application income of \$2,940,000. Just from fees, one can see how much colleges rip-off their applicants. Instead, why not attend a college that leaves you most financially stable and as debt free as possible? Also, going to a college that provides you with the most scholarship money can look much better when applying for job interviews in the future, showing hard work and commitment. Nevertheless, if you still want to go to your dream school, nothing should stop you; just remember that there will always be other opportunities in this world. Not going to your ideal school will not be the end of your life because in the end, it's a person's abilities and potential that matters the most, not where they came from.

In the meantime, it doesn't hurt to save some money sometimes. When it comes to saving, don't indulge yourself in all modern "necessities" that seems to be trendy because they will go out of style before you know it. Genuinely, nobody cares what items you have, so go sell your iPhone and jewelry you never wear anymore. Also, stop spending so much money on your Louboutins and Jordans. Go for less expensive items that you won't find the same exact thing at Vineyard Vines for 80 bucks rather than at a Kmart for 80 cents. In ten years from now, no one will remember what brands you wore, what car you drove, or who you sat with at lunch back in high school because the only future everyone will focusing on is their own.

Children are Heroes

Minha Lee
opinion editor

In the literary sense, the child archetype is viewed as an individual who is still learning and frequently makes mistakes. In the real world, not much is different. Opinions of children are always the last to be considered or taken seriously. One Google search of "kid fails" will result in thousands of news articles about the blunders of children, both cute or serious. Although it is not as if children are being oppressed, there exists a strict distinction in which adulthood is separated from childhood, with each their own set of defining characteristics unable to cross over into one another; why do you think people still find adults acting childish funny and vice versa?

But as the decades of progression have shown, that boundary is deteriorating and shifting from its fixed space in the ages eighteen to twenty. Sure, child prodigies have dotted written history from greats like musical prodigy Wolfgang Mozart, to lesser known ones like child novelist Barbara Follett, but a combination of greater connectivity and greater resources that balances the playing field in terms of opportunities, recent developments show clearly that almost any child can handle as much brunt of the world as an adult.

A quick run through of international news reveals teenage icons all over the world making greater change than their adulthood counterparts. Malala Yousafzai, is a Nobel Peace Prize laureate because of her humanitarian work with global reach. Joshua Wong, leads protests in Hong Kong even though he is just a student. Lorde, an eighteen year old pop culture icon dominating the musical scene and so many more influential

young people are slowly carving into the adult's share of power and prestige, bringing them back to light the way for other aspiring young people.

This cycle makes people aware of the influential power children hold globally. Innovation giants like Google and Microsoft have expanded exponentially. Even in these large industries, young people have the opportunity to showcase their full potential with initiatives like Google Science Fair and Hour of Code. Due to these outreach programs, the world has been graced with products such as banana skin infused biodegradable plastics, all stemming from the power of youthful creative thinking matched with the proper resources and motivation.

The advent of the kid revolution has also brought about different thoughts about what children should be exposed to. This creates an entire reevaluation of how we should raise our children. Progressive companies are already promoting healthier mind sets for every child, a focus directed binary of children's toys, fiercely divided between gender. GoldieBlox building kits are aimed at girls to potentially increase the number of women in the field of computer science and engineering. Easy bake ovens aimed at boys to reject stereotypes are only the beginning of toys that not only advance intellectually but aids in the early developmental stages of children. Surely, the world is catching onto the potential capability children have.

Children are truly incredible. Whether it is because I grew up thinking children had limited capacities stunted my expectations, or because I genuinely compare the exceptional ones to the average adult, it doesn't change the fact that the world is now in the hands of our youths.



Driver Pull Down the Partition Between Men and Women

Katie Johnston
staff writer

Beyoncé is known as one of the most powerful women throughout the world. Her empowering music provides great success after millions of fans adore her: they buy her albums, go to her concerts, and follow her on Instagram. But do these supporters actually understand all that she stands for? Beyoncé is one of the few celebrities in pop culture today that takes courageous steps towards helping the people whose voices are too small to be heard. Specifically, men and women struggling to fight for gender equality around the world.

To begin, what is feminism?

Feminism is the advocacy of women's rights on the grounds of political, social, and economic equality to men. In school, we've all learned about different women fighting for gender equality like Maya Angelou, for example, who inspired African American women to overcome gender and race discrimination through her literature and public speeches. For the most part, however, not many of us are able to recognize that Beyoncé takes a great deal in this situation as many overlook her music abilities that conceal her true values in feminism. Through countless song lyrics, music videos, and performances, she has taken her talents to a new level unlike

any artist before. She has transformed her talents into something that is not only art, but also intellectual. By recreating her powerful words into music, Beyoncé has grabbed the attention of an entirely different generation. Feminism is being brought to the attention of teens and young adults through her music, which people as entertainment, yet carries valuable messages. This is ground-breaking, for it is now the incoming generations who are forming opinions for themselves and who are being alerted of these very present, but often unnoticed issues. It is the adolescents, the future generations of this world, who need to pay attention to feminism so that this social crisis may be fixed sooner rather than later. In modern society, younger people are focusing their attention on feminism, as it is now a more realistic goal than it has ever been before.

Making current events applicable to teenagers' everyday lives is not the only way Beyoncé has become such a powerful leader in this cause. Beyoncé has brought the attention to women's rights through multiple performances on award shows, live concerts, and artistic styled music videos. Her hit song *Girls*, which she performed at the

Billboard Music Awards in 2011, left an everlasting impact in the argument on whether women are treated unfairly compared to men. Later in 2014, she released *Partition*, where she expressed her belief that a woman's sexuality is nothing that should be condemned.

Through her many self-made videos on YouTube and music on her website, Beyoncé has expressed herself by speaking out about the many difficulties that women face everyday in environments such as work, school, and just walking down the street. Even though she receives criticism for taking a stance, she refuses to listen to them, no matter what they have to say. She has not only increased the confidence of women across the globe, but has also made significant contribution in the fight for gender equality.

There is no doubt that Beyoncé is a leading feminist in our world today. She does not only make music to express herself, she makes music to take a stand on overlooked issues. She is not afraid to fight for what she believes in instead of hiding behind fake lyrics, which others write for her. She is someone who I believe is not only an artist, but demonstrates to be a true inspiration in the world today.



Sports

RHS Swim Team Dives Into The New Season

Megan Collier
sports editor

The Ridgewood High School swim team has just begun its first few swim meets before the start of the new year. After enduring a tough preseason, the athletes have prepared themselves to strive for success during their season. Beginning in October, they have been practicing both in-pool and on dryland in order to build muscle and endurance to enhance their motor skills as a whole. Throughout the season, their pool practices take place at Passaic County Technical Institute in Wayne, which is thirty minutes away by bus. Practices are typically an hour long, but the bus ride contributes an additional hour to the trip. Training at PCTI sufficiently strengthened the team for its first meet against Don Bosco and Mount Saint Dominic’s on Tuesday December 2. Both the Ridgewood boys and girls teams dominated and returned with a win. Ridgewood also exited Bergen Community College on Thursday, December 4, with a victory. Here, they conquered the Paramus High School swim team. These two successful meets have set the stage for what is to come this season.

The captains of the girls’ team include Katie Allard and Stephanie Strickland. The boys’ team captains are Cavan Sheridan and Nolan O’Shea. These four dedicated swimmers are key contributors to the morale and spirit of the team. According to junior Priyanka Narayan, “Our captains are always encouraging us

and making practices fun.” This year, the swim team includes some very promising athletes who are expected to perform well throughout the season. For the boys, senior Joe Hilditch and Santiago Rivero are suspected to gain many victories for the Maroons. Both of these swimmers compete in multiple events, but most prominently the individual medley, also known as the 2IM. With a total of eight laps, swimmers must perform two laps of each stroke. For the girls, sophomore Jessica Cho and junior Charlotte Samuels will be key competitors as well. Jessica’s main event is the 100 fly, which is four laps of the butterfly stroke. Charlotte Samuels competes in the longest races available due to her talent as a long distance swimmer. Her primary event is the 500, which is a twenty lap swim. When she competes on her club team in the off season, longer races are available. These preeminent athletes and their teammates have composed a team with great potential for the 2014-2015 season.

Priyanka Narayan is optimistic about the prospects of this season. The team is “looking forward to having Coach Cook back and growing as a team,” according to Priyanka. She recalls that their biggest rival will be Northern Highlands, one of the strongest teams in the league. This particular meet will take place on Tuesday, December 23 at the Wyckoff YMCA. Until then, the Maroons will compete in two more meets against to further prepare themselves. Their peers at Ridgewood High School wish the



Several members of the girls swim team gather at their swim meet before racing.

A Glimpse into Winter Track

Jessi Schlicht
staff writer

The winter track season is officially in full swing. The season began last month, training rain or shine at the Benjamin Franklin Middle School track. This year, the winter track team is exceptionally larger than the years previous. The team’s first meet will be Monday, December 22. Athletes are excited to see where Ridgewood stands and set the stage for their performance over the course of the season. There are three main coaches in charge of the team; Coach Joshua Saladino is the head coach, and Coach Steve “O” and Coach Erica Chigalini are the sprinting coaches.

Winter track is a sport that involves a great deal of both physical and mental endurance. This difficulty arises because while exercising outside, runners have to face whatever the weather brings. This sport obviously requires each participant to run, but also lift and exercise daily. Along with being physically athletic, track athletes have to make sure that they eat healthy and maintain a consistent diet.

Winter track involves distance running sprinting, hurdling, jumping, vertical jumping, shot put, and occasionally pole vault. Distance runners typically run three to six miles after school each day. Sprinters run to the B.F. track as their warm-up and perform a track workout once they arrive. Occasionally, jumpers and hurdlers train at B.F. along with the sprinters. While at B.F., the workouts are never the same. The team usually alternates between working on either sprints or endurance. Instead of running, the team sometimes uses the weight lifting facility at RHS to strengthen their bodies.

Unlike other Ridgewood sports, practices are co-ed, allowing boys and girls to bond as teammates and compare their strengths. “This means we run and lift with the boys. I feel like working out with boys by our side really drives us to do better and reach our full potential. This sport is so rewarding because everyday I know I am giving my all, and enjoying myself during the process,” junior Riley Alvaro explained when questioned about her winter track experience so far. Ridgewood High School wishes the entire winter track team the best of luck in their 2014-2015 season.

Ridgewood Bowling Season Kicks Off

Charles Sheu
staff writer

As winter sports start kicking off, Men’s Bowling, one of the less heard of, yet not any less important sports, starts off its season under the helm of Coach Dick Bennett, a former gym teacher at Ridgewood High School. Coming off of a strong season last year, the team members seek to improve upon their previous third place spot in the division this year. The team includes four Varsity boys while the six others are placed on the junior varsity squad.

However, members of the junior varsity team may step up for a Varsity player if the member they are replacing is struggling. Unluckily, the team started off the season with a loss on December 1, in which they faced an extremely strong Paramus team, which had won their last two matches, and overcame Ridgewood by ninety pins. Despite initial setbacks, the captains of the team have continued to emphasize support and teamwork as keys to success. Ridgewood bounced back resiliently in their match on December 3 with a win against Ramapo with the help of some promising rookies. They continued the winning streak against Hackensack on December 9. Up next, they suffered a loss against Indian Hills. They put this loss behind them as they bowled their way to another win on December 15 against Ramapo. At the first tournament at Farleigh Dickinson University, John Rispoli did fairly well. The particular oil pattern at this tournament made it extremely difficult to knock down their pins, as it was unforgiving unless their throws were consistent and accurate.

The veterans of the team have started the year by trying to create some team morale among the underclassmen. Passing by the weight lifting room after school, one could find the bowling team in the side room working hard perfecting their throws.

A typical bowling practice takes place on mats where the team starts with “kneel-downs” and then progresses to the “one-step drill” before finally bowling normally with the full approach. “Kneel-downs” are drills that help improve the release and follow through technique of the bowlers, while the “one-step drill” further incorporates the push away of the ball with the player in a standing stance. Returning veteran, Anthony Rispoli, a team leader both on and off the lanes, looks to promote team unity and bonding early in the season. The senior spoke optimistically about their team chemistry: “The rookies have made bowling more enjoyable. They are always giving us veterans support and never fail to make us smile. They work hard and are very dedicated.”

On the girls bowling team, a hefty obstacle that they face is a very inexperienced team. This is because the girls team is composed of mostly young members with only two members returning from last year’s Varsity team. Bryn VanCaugherty and Justine Umali have been behind the youngsters and have shown improvement that could lead the team to quickly become a formidable opponent in their upcoming matches. These team members, along with others, are confident about how they will perform as the season progresses. As the Ridgewood Bowlers get comfortable with their new teammates, they look forward to success throughout the new year.

RHS Athletes Carry Their Sports Career To College

On December 17, 2014, several RHS student athletes were honored by their chosen college. These dedicated players eagerly signed commitment documents to confirm their attendance the following year.

- Baker Earl: Lacrosse at Holy Cross College
- Colin Keating: Lacrosse at Providence College
- Thomas Tarleton: Lacrosse at St. Joseph’s University
- Paul Tornatore: Lacrosse at St. John’s University
- Jordan Ford: Lacrosse at James Madison University
- Yurina Harada: Gymnastics at George Washington University
- Matt Donovan: Lacrosse at Colgate University



Matt Donovan will attend Colgate University and play on the lacrosse team.



Jordan Ford is headed to James Madison University to join the lacrosse team.



Yurina Harada will join the gymnastics team at George Washington University.

Sports

Kendo: The Exploration of An Ancient Art

Jamie Lim
staff writer

The “way of the sword” can describe only one sport. Kendo, a modern Japanese martial art, is a sport that promotes sportsmanship, courtesy, and respect. The word “kendo” is constructed from the character “ken” (tsurugi) and the character “do” (michi). The first means “sword” and the second means “path.” Combined, these two characters represent Kendo, or “way of



Junior Michelle Kwon performs her Kendo routine.

the sword.” This sport descends from swordsmanship and features the use of bamboo swords and protective armor. Similar to all traditional martial arts, the development of this discipline has spanned several centuries. Unlike modern sports, it has incorporated many different influences, many of which have developed long before modern times. The concept of Kendo is to discipline the human character through the application of the principles of the Katana (sword). Fortunately, Ridgewood High School is versatile enough to have many talented students who have pursued martial arts throughout their lives, including Kendo. Junior Michelle Kwon is one student whose life as a high school student includes not only academics, but the unique art of Kendo. Kwon first started Kendo when she was just six years old. She started with Kendo for six years, before switching gears to Kumdo. Kumdo is a modern Korean martial art that originates from Kendo. When asked why she first chose to start the unique sport, Kwon answered, “All of my siblings were doing it, and I thought the sport itself was so cool. In the beginning, however, I hated the physical labor”. In addition to any other sport, Kendo and Kumdo both require vigorous physical training. In fact, the sports link both physical and spiritual development. In comparison

to other martial arts, Kendo has a system of ranks. These are referred to as Kyu, Dan, and Shogo. In Kumdo, practitioners begin at the lowest level called 10th geup. While in Kendo, the Kyu are the beginner levels, and the Dan are equivalent to black belt and above. There are six Kyu in all, and ten Dan levels. Therefore, the testing gets harder as the kendoka, or person who practices Kendo, moves on to the next Dan level. According to many, Kendo is not just a typical sport. It is a symbol of their hard work and dedication. Michelle admits that her view of Kendo has changed over the years. She stated, “When I first started, it was more of my parents forcing me into doing it. Now, it’s my pride, and something I can say I’m good at.” However, with sports comes competition. In Kendo, a match is held in a square area from 9 to 11 meters a side. According to Kwon, “Actually doing the sport is tiring, but the feeling of winning justifies the effort.” As for the future, Michelle hopes to keep this sport a major part of life. When she attends college, she hopes that there will be a Kendo/Kumdo club or team that she can join. If she attends a Canadian college, there will likely be a Kendo/Kumdo team available to join. At an American college, she hopes there will be a club involving this sport to participate in. All in all, Michelle has dedicated a



RHS Junior Michelle Kwon stands with her father after her Kendo competition.

significant portion of her high school career to practicing and perfecting this unique art of Kendo/Kumdo.

Girls Basketball Looks Forward To Change This Season

Jamie Inlander & Megan Collier
staff writer and sports editor

The Ridgewood Girls Basketball team is optimistic about a fresh start this season. With a new coaching staff and the addition of many underclassmen, the Varsity team will definitely be experiencing change. Senior captains Maddie Phillips and Kathryn Lenihan intend to guide the many first-year Varsity players toward overall success on the basketball court. This year, almost half of the team consists of underclassmen. Many of these players are multi-sport athletes, which adds a great amount of versatility to their athletic capabilities. Four current seniors have replaced the four seniors who graduated in June last year. One specific player who has been exhibiting great potential is Mia Barbara, a junior. As a first-year Varsity player, Barbara is predicted to aid the Maroons with her excellent shooting skills. The coaching staff has also been rearranged for this upcoming season. Meaghan Palmer has remained the head coach. She began coaching the Maroons in 2009, after acting as assistant coach for a few years prior. Palmer was a member of the Notre Dame women’s basketball team during 2001, when the team won the NCAA Division I Championship. Her experience as a basketball player herself brings great knowledge to the team. Previously the assistant coach, Karen Keyes has also stepped up to coach the girls. She offers additional expertise to the team as the former leading scorer at Notre Dame. This impressive coaching staff will provide the girls with loads of wisdom and knowledge. Despite the few adjustments to their standard team arrangement, the girls are still confident about how they will perform throughout the 2014-2015 season. They hope to be over 500, meaning that they would like to win over half of their games. They accomplished this last year, so they expect to do so again this year. Another major goal is to defeat Northern

Highlands, one of the most powerful teams in the league. The Maroons are also expecting to use their overall speed to their advantage as they face their opponents. They hope that their quickness will make up for their overall lack of height. Senior Casey Skinner notes, “I think we’re going to do pretty well this year because we have a lot of girls who are fast. We’re a small team, but we’re fast.” Casey states that her most prominent personal goal of the season is to beat Northern Highlands, since she has yet to beat them in her four

years at RHS. Additionally, she is excited about uniting the team despite its new formation. She says, “With a completely new coaching staff and almost new team, we are expecting that things may not go as smoothly, but through the doubt we will rise above and our potential has caused us to grow in all aspects of the game.” As a whole, the Ridgewood Girls Basketball team is looking forward to reaching their goals both on and off the court. On the court, they intend to use their greatest strengths, agility and youth, to their advantage.

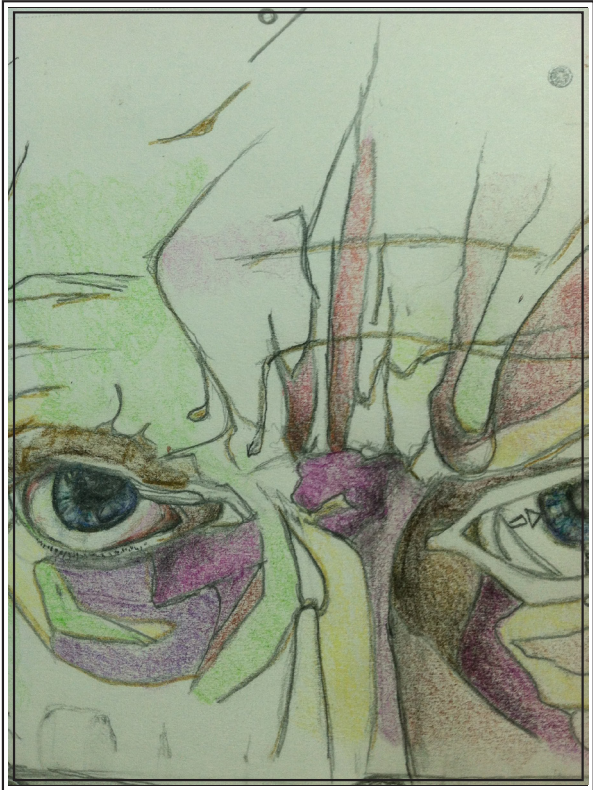
Off of the court, the girls hope to connect and bond despite the wide range of ages. Their first game will be just before Christmas break on Friday, December 19 against Ramapo High School. They will also be playing Paramus, Indian Hills, Northern Highlands, Hackensack, Tenafly, North Bergen, Teaneck, Pascack Valley, Paramus Catholic, and Holy Angels as their season progresses. The students of Ridgewood High School are looking forward to hearing about their future success.



The Ridgewood Girls Varsity Basketball team of 2014-2015 pose in a triangle formation in Gym 1 of Ridgewood High School.



Elle Rothermich



“My existence is characterized by multitasking - it is a rare day when there are not fifteen or so ideas running through my head at one time. Thus drawing and painting for me is akin to meditation. It allows me to relax for more than a moment and allow my imagination to run free.”

- Elle Rothermich

