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FERGUSON DIVIDED



NO INDICTMENT—Ferguson Grand Jury rules not to indict officer Darren Wilson for the shooting death of unarmed Michael Brown. See editorial page 4.

Photo/Tribune News Service

School board finalizes new Tawanka super-school

By **Becca Choi and Gillian McGoldrick**
Literary Editor and Editor-in-Chief

The Neshaminy School Board hosted two Act 34 Public Hearings on Dec. 5 and 6 to present the community with in-depth information regarding the proposed “super-school” to be built at the current Tawanka elementary school location.

The “mega-school” will be two stories with five sectioned-off hallways, referred to as pods. Grades K through two will be housed downstairs, while grades three and four will be taught on the second level. The new school will have many new features including air conditioning, heating, bus loops, larger parking lots for night events, a cafetorium, a gymnasium, an art room, and two music rooms.

The school, designed to fit 900 elementary students, will take the place of three currently-standing elementary schools. These schools were decided in the Oct. 28 Resolution passed by the Neshaminy school board; they are Oliver Heckman, Samuel Everitt and Lower Southampton elementary schools. These schools are chosen because they “do not meet current needs,” Superintendent

Robert Copeland said in the Dec. 4 Public Hearing in Neshaminy High School’s auditorium.

To fund the construction of this super school, the district would buy bonds and take advantage of interest rates that are currently low. The project would cost \$30.5 million dollars and repayment would occur over 20 years. Different consolidation plans have been considered since 2007, but have recently sped up due to declining enrollment projections.

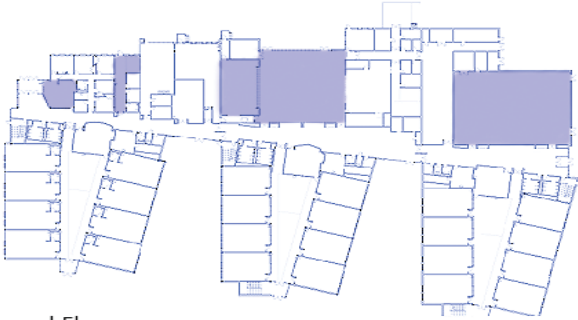
The purpose of an Act 34 Public Hearing is to present to taxpayers the proposed construction or deconstruction of a building within the district and to give the community a chance to voice their opinions on the proposal. Since an Act 34 Hearing is not a public board meeting, no dialogue may be shared between the committee and the public, and no motions may be made.

This “super school” is only the next step of consolidation, as full-day kindergarten will begin next school-year and elementary schools will shift to a K-4 model and middle schools will install a 5-8 school model. An overwhelming majority of the community expressed concerns regarding the negative effects of

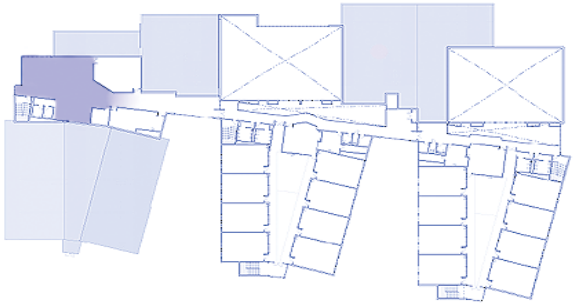
eliminating community schools, inequality between the new “super-school” and existing schools and the far-reaching consequences monetarily of pulling through with the proposal. The community has requested a referendum on many accounts over the past year.

Jessica Millward, Langhorne resident, told her story at the Dec. 4 hearing. “I don’t oppose consolidation out of nostalgia for a school I never attended,” Millward said, “I oppose closing Oliver Heckman because academic research has shown conclusively that smaller schools have better teacher and parental satisfaction rates... better attendance rates, fewer discipline problems.”

First Floor



Second Floor

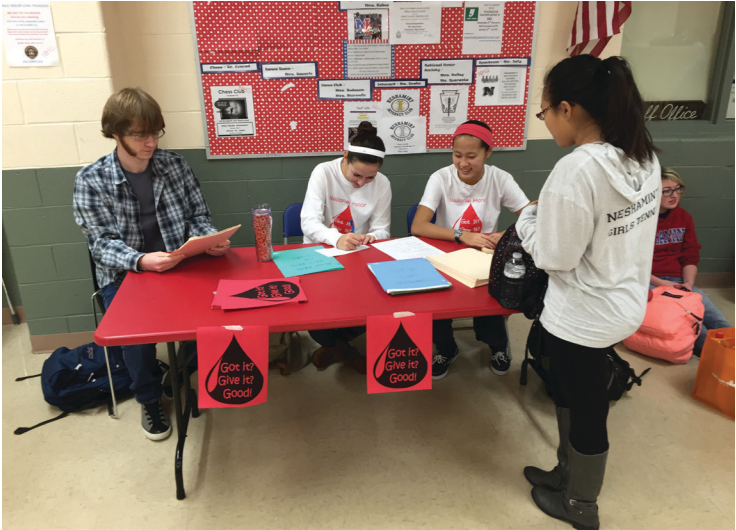


LAYOUT—Neshaminy School District proposes a new “super-school” to take the place of 3 elementary schools.

Photo/Neshaminy School District

Student body donates blood to help Red Cross

By Rachita Singh
Office Manager



BLOOD DRIVE - Honor Society seniors Matthew Gormley, students, but Nicole Nisivoccia, and Jaime Renman walk Yoonjung Kim even teachers and through the donation process. This school year’s first administrators blood drive will occur throughout the school day on Dec. 19 in Gym One. *Photo/Emily Fithian*

The annual winter blood drive hosted by Neshaminy’s National Honor Society is set to return on Friday, Dec. 19 in Gym One.

The blood drive is one of two blood drives hosted by the National Honor Society every year. Students over the age of 16 are eligible to donate blood; however, other health prerequisites also apply. In addition to student donors, members of the National Honor Society volunteer at the blood drive by checking-in donors, comforting them, and providing donors with any other assistance that is needed.

Honor Society President and senior, Jenny Pan, said that on average there are at least 20-25 volunteers every period including the officers who are present at the event all day. “It’s around the holidays, which is a time for giving, and I think it’s really powerful how our student body can come together and help make a difference

in the lives of others,” she said. Senior and National Honor Society member, Terry Warner, who donated and also volunteered at last year’s blood drive, described his experience as “a wonderful one.” “It was just a good feeling knowing that you could help someone by doing something so simple and giving something that you create daily,” he said.

Not only McGee, who donates blood every year, said he does it because, “It’s a way to help and service others. Donating money or time to those in need is important but blood can’t be bought or acquired with volunteering your time. It only takes 15 minutes to save a life.”

Between 250-300 students sign up for the blood drive every year but the actual number of donors lowers as many people do not meet requirements during pre-screening.

“Our goal is 300 students. We are one of the largest groups of donors around here,” English teacher and NHS adviser Kim Kelley said. She also hopes that there would be a better turn out this year than last year, when not a large number of donors participated as the blood drive was held on a half-day for Keystones.

According to the American Red Cross, the organization behind the blood drive, a blood transfusion is needed every

two seconds and less than only 38 percent of the population is eligible to donate blood. A car accident victim may require as many as 50 blood transfusions and each transfusion consists of approximately three pints. Only a pint of blood is donated by a donor during each visit. Blood transfusions are also required by cancer patients as well as people suffering from other life-threatening diseases.

To sign-up for the blood drive, students can obtain a consent form from tables set up by National Honor Society in Main Street before homeroom and in

the cafeteria during lunch periods. Donors are then allotted a time to report to Gym 1 to donate blood. The entire process could take as long as an hour, while the actual donation only lasts between eight to 12 minutes for regular donors. The donation could take longer for double red cell donors, who need to pass more health requirements. American Red Cross suggests drinking a lot of fluid and having a well-balanced meal before donating so that the blood could flow out quicker, and the donor does not feel discomfort. Snacks are also served for donors after donation.

SUPER-SCHOOL: continued from 1

Her son, Owen Millward, is a second grader at Heckman and has Asperger Syndrome. When he first began elementary school, he required special needs. For kindergarten and first grade, he was bused to Herbert Hoover for those needs. the attention he needed for the initial transition into school at Hoover, Owen began to excel and was ready to join a normal education classroom.

His parents didn’t believe that a transition to his neighborhood school Heckman, was the best plan considering children with Aspergers struggle with transitions. “Neshaminy’s own people services insisted that Owen change schools and attend Heckman, because, as they explained to us, the benefits of being in a neighborhood school were significant enough to make the transition worthwhile,” Millward said. At the hearing on Dec. 4. “And you know what—they were right.”

Some proposed alternative solutions by community members include closing one school in lieu of closing three, improvements to already existing schools, or no action at all. Taxpayer and Langhorne resident, Douglas Hanisch voiced his opinion at the Dec. 4 Public Hearing. “Neshaminy residents would be much better served by making improvements to existing facilities,” he said.

“The mega-school... is a \$70 million gamble,” Hanisch said during public comment. “But that’s not the worst of it: new buildings don’t improve educational outcomes... there’s no evidence to suggest that all of this money, and all of this labor, and all of this suffering will benefit our children educationally.”

Some attendees were very strong on their stance, including taxpayer Chad Pindarwho who said he moved back to the area to specifically live in the Neshaminy School District with his family, but would move out of the district if the proposed construction is approved.

Board members are not unanimous on the new 5-8 middle school models or the consolidation of elementary schools. A vote of 6-3 passed the new middle school model last month and the same sixboard members passed the Oct. 28 resolution to instate the Act 34 meeting to present the construction plans.

According to an article by the Philadelphia Inquirer, school board president Scott Congdon and supporter of the new super school said that the benefit in acting swiftly is to take advantage of low interest rates. Congdon also stressed the need to consolidate and said, “I couldn’t sleep at night if we did nothing.”

Obama delivers controversial immigration executive order

By Solomiya Syvyk
News Editor

After the House of Representatives failed to pass an immigration bill, President Barack Obama took executive action on Nov. 20 regarding illegal immigrants in the United States. According to his nationwide address, five million unauthorized immigrants, regardless of race and ethnicity, will be spared from deportation. To be eligible to stay and work in this country, an immigrant must have arrived from their origin five or more years ago, be willing to register and pass a legal background check, pay a fair share of taxes, and have children who are American citizens or legal residents.

As Obama said, “this is not amnesty”; although Social Security cards will be distributed after ten years of work, this proposal does not guarantee citizenship or offer the same benefits of citizens, only Congress holds the authority for such measures. “It’s very beneficial for the

children of the immigrants because they did not have much say about being in this country; if parents are deported, it really isn’t fair,” said junior Natalia Bastida.

While most Democrats praised his decision, Republicans deemed it as “unconstitutional, even imperial overreach”, wrote Brian Knowlton from the New York Times. “Obama is not bypassing Congress by making a new law, he is just changing how a current law is being implemented,” said senior David Kim.

After taking several months, with aid from advisers and secretary of Homeland Security Jeh C. Johnson, during his live State of the Union address, to conclude the extent of the president’s powers, Mr. Obama responded with, “The actions I’m taking are not only lawful, they’re the kinds of actions taken by every single Republican president and every Democratic president for the past half- century.” Agitated with years of congressional stalemate, he added, “To

those members of Congress who question my authority to make our immigration system work better, or question the wisdom of me acting where Congress has failed, I have one answer. Pass a bill. I want to work with both parties to pass a more permanent legislative solution.”

Besides shielding approximately half of America’s undocumented immigrants, the fifteen minute announcement included several other portions of the President’s agenda. Mr. Obama plans to direct federal agencies to place a focus on immigrants who are gang members and criminals rather than hardworking family members and present an easier and faster path for high skilled immigrants to stay in the United States. Also, additional resources are to be provided to build on progress at the southern border and to eventually cease the illegal flow.

According to Lindsey Cook from US News, “Removals- the government’s term for deportation- are up by 75 percent at the border,” since 2008. Yet, according to a Gallup survey from June, more Americans figured it is more important to deal with immigrants in the United



IMMIGRATION SPEECH-On Nov. 20, President Barack Obama presented a nationwide address regarding his change in the immigration policy. *Photo/Tribune News Service*

States illegally than to halt the flow of the current crossings; the results showed 53 to 41 percent, with 6 percent having no opinion. With this televised speech, Obama managed to intertwine factual evidence in support of his previous decisions in order to assure the audience of the positive future outcomes from his current stance. “He is still not doing enough. At this point he has nothing to lose, therefore he might as well go through with it,” added Kim.

He began with stating that everyone knows the immigration system is broken, continued with the knowledge that this decision will help grow the economy and shrink the deficits, and ended with, “What makes us Americans is our shared commitment to an idea: that all of us are created equal and all of us have the chance to make of our lives what we will.”

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Family, leg lamp, another year of tradition

By Monica Dinh
Entertainment Editor

Every year since 2008, the Hughes household in Fairless Hills has held their comical and spectacular annual leg lamp lighting ceremony. Once a year on Black Friday night when many are out scrambling through stores, masses of friends, family members, firefighters from different departments and the occasional stranger, instead, gather in masses upon the Hughes’ front lawn.

Inspired by the 1983 film, “A Christmas Story” where Ralphie’s father receives a “scandalous” leg lamp in a box labeled “fragile,” and proceeds to light it up in the family’s front window – the Hughes family decided to make that scene a part of their holiday tradition. “Watching ‘A Christmas Story’ has always been

something we’ve done every year for Christmas,” seventeen-year- old Sarah Hughes said.

In December 2004, a man named Brian Jones purchased the “Christmas Story” house in Cleveland, Ohio and recreated the home to look exactly as it did in the film. Jones also started selling replicas of the iconic leg lamp out of the house.

This is when Elizabeth Hughes, Sarah Hughes mother, decided to purchase a leg lamp for her husband just in time for the 2005 Christmas season. Soon enough, the leg lamp started appearing in their front window year after year. Then in 2006, James Hughes had a few friends over just as he pulled the leg lamp out of its fragile box. Curious and finding the lamp hilarious, Hughes’ friends came back every single year.

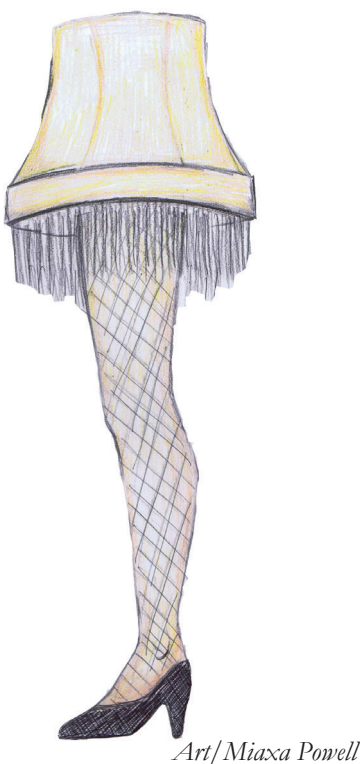
“Overtime my family invited more friends and more family. Somehow in

some way we went from having seven people on our front lawn to more than 80. How that happened, I have absolutely no idea,” Sarah Hughes said.

As of Nov. 2008, the Hughes family has made the leg lamp lighting ceremony a formal gathering and quite a spectacle. This year, the 7th annual lighting, was no exception.

Each and every year, Mr. Hughes gives a toast to the lamp and never fails to mention and give gratitude to the seven “charter members” of the leg lamp lighting ceremony. “Thank you to everyone who has stuck around since the beginning,” Hughes said in his speech this year.

“It’s funny because people come to see a leg being put up in our front window,” Sarah Hughes said with a laugh. As far as holiday traditions go, this one is sure to stick around for the long run.



Art/ Miaxa Powell

Gym Night: Captains announced, dance plans begin

By Gauri Mangala
Special Features editor

The 2015 Gym Night captains have been announced to the Neshaminy students. Regardless of who won and lost, the Neshaminy community is excited for another season of Neshaminy’s famous tradition: Gym Night. Gym Night captains are excited to get started and win for their team. Forms for Gym Night participation are due Dec. 19. The competition will take place on Friday, Feb. 27, and Saturday Feb. 28.



“Even if we lose, even if we win, we had a great time and made a great dance,” Junior blue co-captain Isaiah Rodriguez said.



“It’s always about having a fun. Winning is fun too, but as long as everyone gets along. We always have a good time,” Red color captain Maggie Oswald said.

Blue		
Color Captain	Madison Dierolf	Cale Kitchenman
Senior Captain	Melissa Carson	Dan Dogba
Senior Co-Captain	Shannon Fisher	Luke Hellyer
Junior Captains	Abigail Bedesem	Kyle Aubel
Junior Co-Captains	Rebecca Allen	Kyle Denis
Sophomore Captains	Megan Campbell	Connor Gibson
Sophomore Co-Captains	Tessa Kane	Zach Boop
Freshman Captains	Emma Gilbert	David Hahn
Freshman Co-Captains	Mary Brookshaw	Samantha Helstrom



“Make sure you’re ready for our dance this year! Get ready to have fun and pull out another blue team win,” Sophomore blue captain Megan Campbell said.



“Don’t worry about losing or winning, just try to have fun,” Freshman blue captain David Hahn said.

Red		
Color Captain	Maggie Oswald	Ben Matzke
Senior Captain	Maddie Murray	Kyle Skeels
Senior Co-Captain	Sarah Spanudis	Tim Walter
Junior Captains	Emma Noe	DJ Pierson
Junior Co-Captains	Olivia Zaino	Isaiah Rodriguez
Sophomore Captains	Rachel Sufrin	Chad Wiatrowski
Sophomore Co-Captains	Alexandra Monaco	Brett Sheplock
Freshman Captains	Nicole Palmer	Joel Stills
Freshman Co-Captains	Lexi Russell	Ryan Murray

Photos/ Gauri Mangala

Chemistry teacher leads school programs, clubs

Academics leader goes beyond job requirements

Teacher of the Issue

By Stephanie Harvey
Business Editor

Neshaminy science teacher, Lisa Krieger, does more than just teach. In fact, even though she only teaches three periods a day she does some of her best work during the periods she has off. During her periods off, Krieger is involved in Neshaminy’s Student Assistance Program (SAP) where there are many different groups for students to join based on the stresses and struggles in their lives.

“SAP is designed to help remove any barriers to learning including academic and behavioral,” Krieger said. “We run a variety of support groups throughout the year including but not limited to; Bereavement, Pregnancy/Parenting, Anger Management, Stress Management and Healthy Relationships.”

A new group started by Krieger in

the beginning of this year is a cancer support group, Straight Talk About Cancer (STAC). Once a month, Krieger gives up her break periods to hold meetings for the support group. The group provides invaluable encouragement and assistance to students whose lives are affected by cancer. Thanks to Krieger and STAC, students with extremely difficult circumstances can find support at school. Running STAC is nowhere in her job description, but Krieger chooses to make a positive difference beyond what she is required to do.

In the classroom, Krieger is a praiseworthy teacher. She was a chemical engineer for over ten years before becoming a teacher so she is more than qualified to teach chemistry. Both her high academic standards and her willingness to help students, Krieger can be seen during her senior lab periods giving students advice on what major to pick and what career to go into based on students’

interests in school.

“I am excited to be teaching all seniors for the first time. I am enjoying the maturity level of my students and the “drama free” environment that goes along with their age,” Krieger said. “I am looking forward to the challenge of keeping them motivated and working hard as senioritis sets in. But since Chemistry and I are so awesome, I am sure I will have no trouble!”

The combination of helping her students during the classes she teaches and helping other students through SAP is extremely helpful in having students succeed.

Kumar Mangala
Founder + CEO



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CROSSFIRE

Are Obama’s immigration reforms doing more harm than good?

Executive action presents a humane, economically sound course of action



By Jackson Haines
Managing Editor

President Obama took bold executive action to reform the U.S. immigration system, and on Nov. 20, he outlined his plan. From the red carpet of the White House East Room, the president laid out his plan of immigration reform to be brought forth through executive action. Though his speech was just 15 minutes, the ensuing debate is ongoing. The changes are controversial: illegal immigrants that are parents of legal U.S. resident children may apply for legal status themselves if they have been living in the U.S. since Jan.

1, 2010. This, if carried out to its fullest extent, could give legal status to 4.4 million undocumented aliens, preventing them from being deported. The plan, however, has been decried—perhaps denigrated—by Republicans, livid over the so-called amnesty presented by the policy, and outraged at what they call an unconstitutional, imperial use of executive power.

It is clear there was and still is an immigration crisis in this nation. Obama, responding to the inaction of an inert and inept Congress, had to make a move; waiting was no option. The president made his choice, and it was the right one, as far as temporary fixes go. The amassing of immigrants within our borders presented an economic and humanitarian crisis. With his executive action, Obama addressed both issues, taking a two-pronged approach to temporarily solve the problem.

Those residents that had previously lived and worked illegally in this country could now participate in legal labor. They can pay taxes, they can receive

fair wages, and their employers will now participate in fair labor practices. Many favor deportation because illegal immigrants, besides having come here unlawfully, take American jobs at illegal, under-the-table wages. Yet through this new policy, many immigrants will now be documented; therefore, their work, too, will be documented.

These immigrants will be now be forced into paying their taxes; thus the policy goes so far as to aid, however minutely, in the fiscal crisis. At the same time, they will now be paid on an equal playing field with legal residents. The policy may not be the panacea of immigration, but it certainly does act as a short-term relief. Yet, the question looms, why not deport this same demographic?

A policy of deporting would not work. While the threat of deportation is real and tangible for all those affected by the policy, the capability of the government to deport this entire demographic is not there; it simply cannot happen. If we as a nation chose to deport, not only would we

not succeed, but that entire demographic would still be working illegally, and thus the problem would be worse.

Instead, Obama has struck a humane balance. “Mass amnesty would be unfair. Mass deportation would be both impossible and contrary to our character.” Instead of separating children from their parents and creating a humanitarian crisis, we are letting them stay. Is it in our national ethos to separate parent from child? Is our government to deport parents of children, leaving the children virtually abandoned, and the parents childless in another land? We can do something else. We can strike a deal: that in exchange for safety and family these immigrants shall obey the law and work legally. In the meantime, this government may fix a problem, and keep its humanity.

Though this crisis will not be solved until Congress acts, Obama’s policy does attack the problems at hand, without discrimination, without deportation.



By Anthony Murray
Copy Editor

Something needs to be done about the immigration crisis in America; that much is certain. On Thursday Nov. 20, President Obama gave a 15-minute speech announcing his plans to do, well... something. Unfortunately, the solution that he proposed will only exacerbate the immigration crisis. Obama declared that he would issue an Executive Order to suspend deportations and offer legal residency, with benefits such as work permits, for approximately five of the 11 million illegal immigrants currently residing in our country. This plan is unjust, counterproductive and, by

Obama’s own admission, unconstitutional. On the simplest level, it is unjust because it ignores immigration laws and fails to punish illegal immigrants for their illegal actions. The policy is also unjust to the many people who have abided by the law. There are many immigrants who entered the country legally, spending time and money to follow the law. Many other people are waiting to enter the country or have been unable to enter because they don’t have the means to go through the immigration process. Why is Obama giving legal residency to illegal immigrants who broke the law, while law-abiding foreigners are forced to wait? Rewarding those who break the law is unjust to those who follow it.

Not only is his plan unjust, but it will worsen the very problem it claims to address. Common sense and human experience clearly tell us that rules are broken more when they are enforced less. Traffic laws provide a perfect example. Almost everyone speeds by at least a few miles per hour because the speed limit is

not usually enforced within five miles per hour. However, much fewer people run red lights, even if there is no one in sight, because that law is much more strictly enforced. The same principle applies to immigration laws. Even though Obama’s reprieve does not apply to recent or future illegal border crossings, the precedent of nonenforcement will encourage more illegal immigration. History proves this as well. With the support of President Reagan, Congress passed a law in 1986 giving amnesty to three million immigrants, claiming that it was a one-time solution to illegal immigration that would enable the government to secure the borders in the future, solving the immigration crisis. That plan failed. The plan merely passed the crisis to future generations and now there are 11 million immigrants living in America. Obama’s so-called solution is to repeat this mistake even though history tells us that this plan is counterproductive. It will increase illegal immigration, decrease our border security and burden future generations with the

same crisis we face today.

Even if this plan were not unjust or counterproductive, it would still be illegal and unconstitutional. Obama said this in March 2011, “With respect to the notion that I can just suspend deportations through executive order, that’s just not the case... for me to simply through executive order ignore those congressional mandates [immigration laws] would not conform with my appropriate role as President.” The immigration laws have not changed, yet Obama now believes that he can ignore the law and suspend deportations through executive order. Two years later, in Feb. 2013, Obama was asked another question about immigration and he maintained his stance by commenting, “I’m the president of the United States, I’m not the emperor of the United States. My job is to execute laws that are passed.” Obama has disregarded his previous statements, ignored his Constitutional duty to execute the laws, and usurped the legislative power that is constitutionally reserved for Congress.

Red Cross continues to ban gay men from blood donation

By Austin Bucci
Staff Writer

The halls of Neshaminy High School are buzzing with anticipation as the annual blood drive, hosted by the National Honor Society, approaches. On December 19th, many students, aged 16 and older, have the opportunity to donate life giving blood to someone in desperate need. It’s a great opportunity “for all,” as stated by the National Honor Society, to give back and save a life—all except for men who men.

As an FDA regulation, the American Red Cross defers all men who have had sex with other men from donating blood indefinitely.

The policy was first implemented in 1982 after the outbreak of HIV and AIDS among the homosexual community. While still discriminatory, the policy was introduced because not much was known about the disease and there was no way to properly screen for it. However, blood tests were introduced that accurately detect HIV or AIDS after just two weeks of contraction in 1985. Despite this, the FDA has neglected to abolish or even modify their harsh and permanent restriction on gay and bisexual men.

Upon preparing for blood donation, participants are required to fill out an eligibility form with a series of questions that inquire about the volunteer’s “high risk activities” and “history of disease.” The American Red Cross has a responsibility to “ensure the safety and wellbeing of their blood recipients,” which includes excluding those who participate in “high risk” activities including sharing needles, having sex with multiple partners for money and men who have sex with other men.

“HIV and AIDS is a problem with straight people as well, and there are plenty of gay men who practice safe sex and take the necessary precautions. They understand how to track the disease, and they test the blood anyway, so I don’t see the point in this ban,” said Junior Maya Ermocida.

The FDA stigmatizes queer men, giving them a lifelong ban from donating blood after admitting their sexual practices. Before the questionnaire asks participants if they have had male to male sex, it specifically asks them if they have ever contracted HIV or AIDS in their lifetime. Only to defer them after, because male on male sex is considered a high risk behavior by the FDA.

The American Red Cross has stated recently that they are low on blood giving participants, yet they exclude an entire group of people from donating perfectly healthy blood just because of their sexual orientation. Men who have been in completely monogamous relationships for years are still deferred from donating because they live a “high risk lifestyle” being happily together.

A possible shift in the policy was suggested to the FDA in 2010 that is being reevaluated, to allow gay and bisexual men who are HIV negative and have been abstinent for a year to donate, but did not lead to any transition yet. This policy, while technically more inclusive, still excludes a large percent of the homosexual male population, including men who have been in strictly monogamous partnerships for years.

The FDA claims they don’t specifically discriminate because of a potential donor’s sexual orientation, just the sexual habits of the potential participant. However, it is hard to claim the policy is non-discriminatory when it blatantly excludes an entire group of people based on dated stigmas.

Winter teams prepare for domination

Today 12/17	This week 12/18-12/21		Next week 12/22-12/28	Over the break 12/29-1/5
<p>Varsity Bowling travels to Council Rock High School for a 3:30 p.m. game.</p> <p>Swim team takes on Springfield Township in the Poquessing Middle School pool at 3:30 p.m.</p> <p>Varsity Wrestling travels to Abington Senior High School for a 7:00 p.m. meet.</p> <p>Neshaminy Ice Hockey plays Central Bucks South at 8:40 p.m. tonight.</p>	<p>The Girls' and Boys' Winter Track teams will travel to Lehigh University this week to compete. Girls compete Friday, Dec. 19 at 6:30 p.m. and boys compete Saturday., Dec. 20 at 12:00 p.m.</p> <p>The Bowling team will compete in the annual Snowroller tournament this Saturday, Dec. 20 at 10:00 a.m.</p> <p>Varsity Ice Hockey team will take on CR North Thursday, Dec. 18 at 7:00 p.m. at Warwick Arena.</p>	 <p>PRACTICE—Neshaminy's wrestling team works hard in preparation for their meet tonight.</p> <p><i>Photo/Liam Krimmel</i></p>	<p>Boys' and girls' varsity basketball prepare for a double header Monday, at Council Rock High School. The girls will play first at 5:45 p.m. and then the boys will play at 7:15 p.m.</p> <p>The varsity bowling team will face the Pennsbury Falcons on Monday, Dec. 22 at 3:30.</p> <p>The girls varsity basketball team will compete in the Wildwood Holiday Tournament Sunday, Dec. 28 at 10:00 a.m.</p>	<p>Wrestling will participate in the Governor Mifflin Holiday Tournament on Dec. 29.</p> <p>On Dec. 29 at 7:30 p.m. and Dec. 30 at 10:00 am Boys' Basketball will host the Deby Recupido Holiday Tournament.</p> <p>Neshaminy Ice Hockey will oppose William Tennent Jan. 2 at 8:55 p.m. at Bucks County Ice Sports Center located in Warminster, Pa.</p>

SPORTORIAL

Professional athletes salary disproportionate to contribution made to society

By Alli Kaufman
Sports Editor

Scoring my first goal at age 5 in an intramural soccer game, I decided I was going to be a professional soccer player when I grew up. Three years later as I rounded third plate and headed for home base, I knew it was my destiny to play softball for the rest of my life. It wasn't until I was 13 that my aspirations reached an all-time high—claiming I would be taking home gold medals from the 2016 Olympics in both swimming and field hockey.

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NESHAMINY ATHLETE OF THE ISSUE

Track and Field:sprinter commits to Penn State University

By Liam Krimmel
Sports Editor

Dave Marrington has already associated his name with success, and put himself into the Neshaminy records. Now famed around the state, Marrington has become a quintessential member of Neshaminy's Track and Field team. Marrington specializes in the 300 meter, 110 meter and 400 meter hurdles. He also excels in the 4x400 meter relay, frequently scoring points for the team in all four events.

This athlete isn't just a sprinter. During the fall Marrington also makes a great contribution to the Cross Country team, scoring points at dual meets and competing at many invitational meets.

As a senior, Marrington is taking on the responsibility of leading the team as captain. "This season I hope to continue improving my times and bring our 4x400 relay team to states," Marrington said.

Marrington has made many accomplishments during his career at Neshaminy. During the past four years Marrington has set two school records and competed at the Pennsylvania State Championships four times and also taking fourth place in the 400 meter hurdles at the Penn Relays. Marrington recently committed to run at Penn State main campus, a Division I school, next year. There, Marrington will be competing alongside the best sprinters and hurdlers in the country.

"I am very excited to have committed to Penn State, it was my first choice school throughout the recruiting process," Marrington said. "To be able to run for them is a dream come true."

The Neshaminy High School 4x400 meter relay won the Suburban One League Championship meet in 2014 and qualified for districts and states. Marrington, along with other runners like Sean Conway, Ben Matzke, and Anthony Murray, is hoping to lead the 4x400 meter relay and win at the PIAA State Championship meet next year in late May.

The senior track star plans to focus on the 400m dash and 110m hurdles in college. He is ecstatic to run on the collegiate level, especially in a prestigious conference like the Big Ten.

But for now, he plans to continue his domination in high school.



HIGH HOPES—Senior Dave Marrington plans to continue his track career at the collegiate level.

Photo/ Alli Kaufman

a couple years of a sport they loved and call it a day—retiring with a nice couple of million dollars at the ripe age of 30.

Why become a teacher, doctor or firefighter when there was fame, free Gatorade, and an endorsement by Wheaties with the career of a professional athlete? It is this mentality that most children have and grow up with that is showing us one thing: professional athletes are being paid too much.

According to Sports Interaction, the average NBA player makes \$5.15 million a year; the average MLB player makes \$3.2 million a year; the average NHL player makes \$2.4 million a year; and the average NFL player makes \$1.7 million a year. In 2012 Sidney Crosby made \$600,000 for every goal he scored; Alex Rodriguez made \$253,968 per hit.

In 2012-2013 the average starting salary for a teacher in the United States was \$36,141.

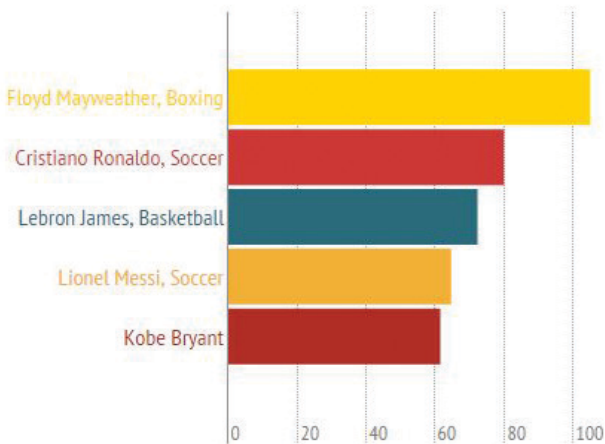
We are living in a country where a man who can throw a football in front of 40,000 people is getting paid 47 times more than the person that is teaching our children. Sports and athletics are being valued more than education. This astronomical difference in salaries is teaching children to value their education less than Sidney Crosby's goals as well. The education of the youth of the United States, their ability to read and write, their futures, are being put second to the 2014 Super Bowl.

It is not only teachers; most doctors, lawyers, firefighters and police officers are paid less than someone who can shoot a ball into a circular hole, an ability we all learned when we were two years old—the sphere goes in the circle hole, the cube goes in the square hole and so on.

Now while it may seem I am diminishing the accomplishments of professional athletes, I am not. These men and women work hard for what they do and that should not be looked upon lightly. However, their skills and abilities are no more important or valuable than those of the men and women that defend the innocent (and guilty), that teach our children, or protect our communities and therefore it is unnecessary to shower them in salaries of millions of dollars.

We are living in a society where the ability to throw a ball is valued more than the ability to save a life and that is unacceptable.

HIGHEST PAID ATHLETES (IN MILLIONS)



U.S. Dollars (in millions)

Source: Forbes.com

HOLIDAY TRADITIONS

By Ashley Reiss
Features Editor

Q: Why is Christmas so special and dear to people’s hearts?

A: I think that Christmas is a very special time because the season is beautiful with lights, and cold weather. It happens once a year, and it’s a time where everyone can take a break from stressful things like work and school.

Q: Do you think some people get caught up in the receiving and not the giving?

A: I think some do. Sadly enough, even when it is an amazing time of the year, people forget what the holidays are truly about. To some selfish people, or people that don’t really understand the meaning of Christmas, it’s just a holiday where they get toys and presents they want. Personally, I think it’s pretty sad, but you’re always going to have people like that.

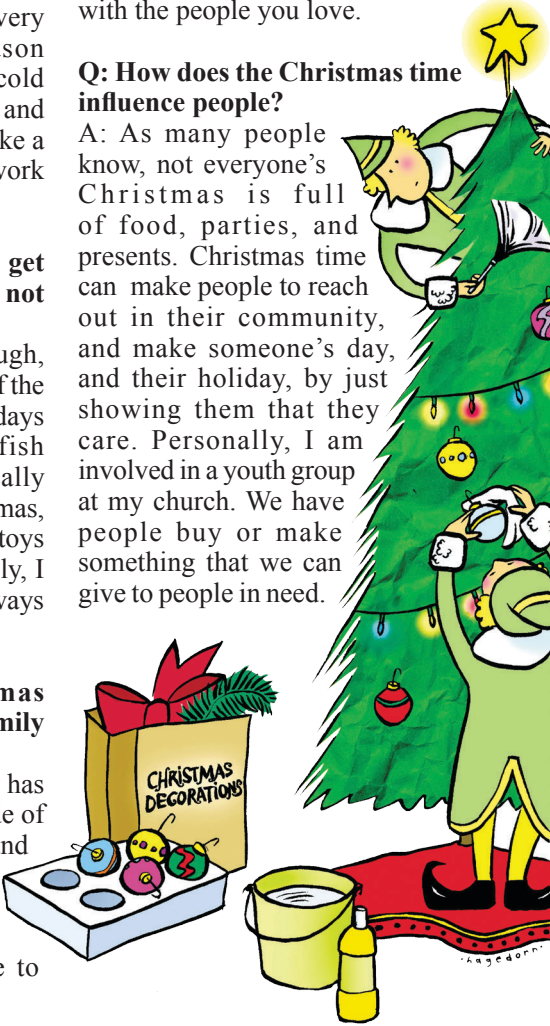
Q: What are some Christmas traditions that you and your family participate in?

A: Around Christmas, my family has many traditions. On my dad’s side of the family, we all get together and go and cut down our Christmas tree. Afterwards, we go to lunch together. Also, we host a Christmas brunch at our house to

have a get together with lots of friends and family, which is really fun! Lastly, we visit our grandparents with all of our family on Christmas Eve night, as well as Christmas. It’s a way to really enjoy spending time with the people you love.

Q: How does the Christmas time influence people?

A: As many people know, not everyone’s Christmas is full of food, parties, and presents. Christmas time can make people to reach out in their community, and make someone’s day, and their holiday, by just showing them that they care. Personally, I am involved in a youth group at my church. We have people buy or make something that we can give to people in need.



By Gauri Mangala
Features Editor

Most students of Neshaminy have some traditions that they celebrate over winter break; whether it is family rituals or their yearly movie marathons.

Sophomore, Craig Klevan celebrates an important holiday in the Jewish faith, Hanukkah. Hanukkah is the celebration of the oil in the candles in the Jerusalem Temple lasting eight days. To celebrate, Klevan lights candles every night in order to remember this, along with saying nightly prayers with his family.

“My favorite part is giving and exchanging presents with my family,” Klevan said.

With eight nights of Hanukkah, a lot of candles are lit. The first day of Hanukkah, two are lit. The next day, three are lit. Every day one extra candle is added to the amount that is lit.

High schoolers of Neshaminy may remember eating latkehs, a fried potato treat, and playing with dreidels in

elementary school holiday parties.



How to Play Dreidel:

Each player starts with an equal amount of pieces: pennies, gold coin, candy, etc. They also all place one piece in a pot in the middle. The four sides of a dreidel are nun, gimmel, hey, and shin.

Nun: If a player is to roll a nun, they do nothing.

Gimmel: If a player is to roll a gimmel, they gain everything in the pot.

Hey: If a player is to roll a hey, they gain half of the pot.

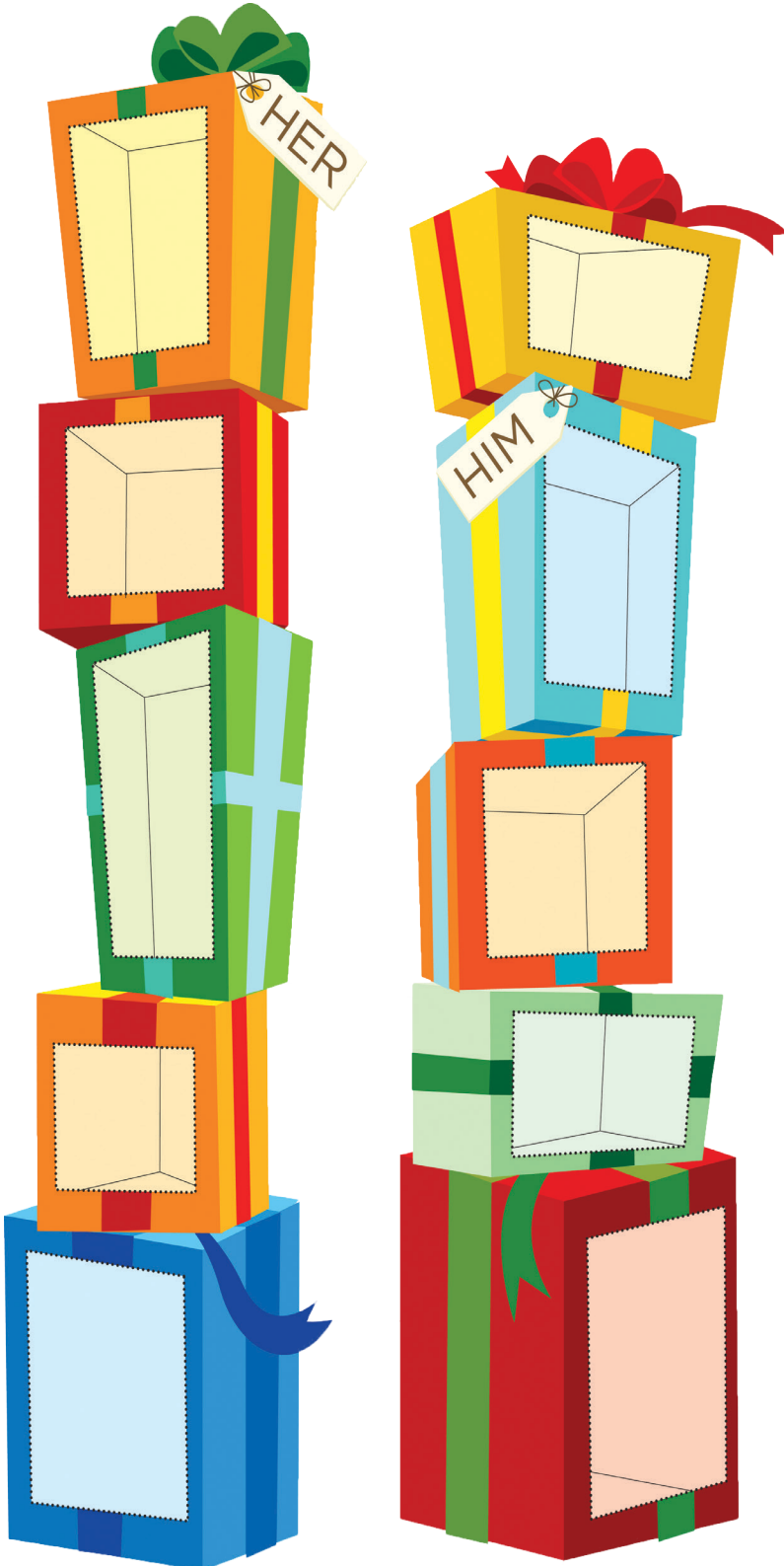
Shin: If a player is to roll a shin, they add one piece to the pot.

The game ends when one player has all the pieces.

24 festive things for students to do over the 12 day holiday break

By Stephanie Harvey and Ashley Reiss
Business Editor and Features Editor

1. Volunteer at a **local food bank** and give back to those less fortunate
2. Drink hot cocoa and watch your favorite movie with your **friends and family**, it will help you stay in touch with those who matter
3. Go **go-kart racing** with your family and hold a friendly competition
4. Read a **book** and up the United States literacy rate
5. Have a holiday **cookie baking day** with your friends
6. Walk around **LOVE Park’s** Christmas Village
7. Make a **list** of things you have to do and actually do them
8. Light a fire and **play board games** with your family
9. **Visit** your favorite major city like Philadelphia or New York
10. **Redecorate** your room
11. Drink copious amounts of **eggnog**
12. Go **laser tagging**
13. Go to the **movies**
14. Visit your local **ice skating** rink with friends
15. Watch **“Frozen”**
16. Go **caroling** and keep count of how many people slam doors in your face
17. Catch up on the **sleep** that will soon be a distant memory of the past once you come back from break
19. Eat all the **food** in your friend’s fridge because free and food are always a good combination
18. Visit Shady Brooke’s **light show**
20. Play you favorite **music** and sing as loud as humanly possible
21. Have a **snow-ball Battle Royale** and reenact a war from history
22. Make a New Year’s **resolution**
23. Cry about how short this break is
24. Figure out the **meaning of life** and let us know when you figure it out



Graphics/Tribune News Service

CIRCA X SURVIVE

Circa 1999 student creates lasting music career

By Tom Collins
Staff Writer

Colin Frangicetto is not your average Neshaminy graduate.

Frangicetto, Class of 1999, has spent the past decade touring, releasing albums and pleasing fans as one of the guitarists in Circa Survive, a successful Doylestown band, which also features Anthony Green on vocals, Brendan Ekstrom on guitar, Nick Beard on bass and Steve Clifford on drums.

Their unique sound has been described as everything from progressive rock to indie rock to post-hardcore, but, regardless of their genre, there's no denying that, even after a decade, their success isn't showing any signs of slowing down.

"I feel the same energy walking off stage now that I felt walking off stage 10 years ago on our first tour," remarked Frangicetto, describing the intensity of the last dates of Circa's summer leg of shows.

After being friends for many years, Frangicetto and Green formed Circa in 2004, and since then have released 3 EPs, a split 7-inch single with revered emo band Sunny Day Real Estate, a live DVD and five studio albums. Their 2012 album, "Violent Waves", was completely self-released by the band.

While the album sold the least out of all their releases, it still debuted at #15 on the Billboard Top 200 without any support or financial backing from a record label, a feat unheard of in the music industry.

"We had the least amount of records sold out of all of our albums," Frangicetto explained, "but we had the biggest reaction, press-wise, and then, the biggest increase in live sales."

For their new record, they originally planned to go the same self-released route, only this time securing a distribution deal in order to get the album into more stores. However, their plans quickly changed once many record labels began to want to sign a full deal with the band. After months of weighing their options, the group finally made a decision.

On Aug. 15, Circa Survive announced that they were signing with Sumerian Records to release their live DVD, "Live at the Shrine", reissue "Violent Waves" and release their fifth album, "Descensus", which came out on Nov. 24.

"Descensus" is the group's most ambitious work yet, combining the distinct style the band has been crafting on their first four records with even more new influences.

The core of the Circa sound is there—the soaring vocals of Green, the intricate, twisting, melodic guitar lines of Frangicetto and Ekstrom and the tight, locking, grooves from the rhythm section of Beard and Clifford—but there is something more.

The evolution and maturation of the band, both as people and musicians, greatly influenced the album. While discussing one of the songs on the album, "Child of the Desert", Frangicetto explained, "I don't think we could have the juxtaposition of two really different musical sections like that in one song successfully until now. On every album we get a little more comfortable

with ourselves."

While Circa has been his main focus, Frangicetto's music career does not begin and end there. He has released a remix version of Anthony Green's debut solo album titled "Avalon Remix", an album of solo material on which he played all the instruments under the name Psychic Babble, titled "My Brother's Ears/My Sister's Eyes" and has scored various independent films.

Even while growing up, music was always a part of Frangicetto's life. Most of his free time outside of school was spent playing in bands and working, "to get money to buy records," he recalled.

Like many high school students, he didn't always have the best experiences during his time at Neshaminy, but music was always there.

"I was obsessed with punk rock and hardcore," Frangicetto remembered, "the music scene, the underground music scene was the only thing that really made me feel accepted back then."

His music taste went across the genre spectrum, including lots of punk and hardcore like Fugazi, Bad Brains and Minor Threat, as well as classic rock like Led Zeppelin, Yes and Queen. He even enjoyed pop music, including Michael Jackson and Hall & Oates.

"It's always been a split of insanely infectious pop stuff with the weirdest, most noisy, most experimental stuff I could find," he said, "I think that explains where a lot of Circa's music comes from, because that's where all of our interests meet, our love for the extremely happy and the extremely weird."

He played drums in several bands, most notably, This Day Forward, a hard core band which also featured fellow Circa Survive guitarist Brendan Ekstrom. This Day Forward signed to an independent

label while Frangicetto was still attending school, and went on to record several albums and tour the country, which was the first time he ever saw music as a career option. Looking back, he also strongly believes it was a catalyst in the eventual formation of Circa Survive.

"Playing in a hard core band just never, in my mind, seemed like a viable way to make a living," he said, "and

the end of This Day Forward, without a doubt, 100 percent led to the signing of Circa."

As a student, Frangicetto was a staff writer for the Playwickian, and eventually became the Photography Editor for the 1998 and 1999 school years. Even though he wasn't involved with any in-school music programs, his love for music still found its way into his education.

He remembered a particular time where Mr. O'Brien, adviser to the Playwickian, had made him and some of his friends fake press passes, so they could try and get an interview with Fugazi, a band known for barely ever speaking to any sort of publication or journalist. The fake passes worked, and they got their interview. The experience stuck with Frangicetto.

"That was such a confidence booster, of just being able to meet the people you never think you could meet," he explained. For the young Frangicetto and his friends, the confidence quickly turned into something else.

"We had a couple other cool interviews with people, but at that point I think we definitely got cocky," he added with a laugh.

In addition to working as a musician, Frangicetto is also an established artist. He has designed countless show posters for many bands and t-shirts for Miles To Go clothing, sells his paintings and prints through his website and has been featured in many galleries. He discovered his passion for art later in high school. He began attending Bucks County Community College for art after his graduation, but he quickly realized it wasn't what he was looking for.

"When I went to community college as an art major, it just really didn't work for me," he remembered, "I didn't really have much encouragement from my professors at Bucks, but it was true I really did need to rethink things."

Even as a senior in Neshaminy, Frangicetto was not sure what he wanted. Like many students now, Frangicetto clearly remembered being terrified by what loomed after graduation. He offered several pieces of advice for current students struggling with similar issues.

He recalled, "There were people back then who seemed to have their whole life figured out, and that scared the s--- out of me. I remember thinking, 'How in the world am I supposed to know what I want to be doing ten years from now, right now?' That's crazy."

"Hard work, taking chances and enjoying life will add up to a lot of good things. Don't feel you always have to go the safe route," Frangicetto suggested, "I know a lot of people will tell you that's what you're supposed to do, or what you have to do. Don't think that that's the truth. For some people, it might be, but it's not for everyone."

"There are many, many roads in life that can lead you to a life free of suffering," Frangicetto added, "because I had such a tough time, I feel this kind of weird duty to send that message to everyone at Neshaminy now. Try to find your way and be patient, and at the same time know it's really important just to enjoy life."



FUNNY FACE-- Guitarist Colin Frangicetto of Circa Survive flashes a goofy face for the camera.

Photo/Keeyatah Lewis



BLINDING LIGHT-- Energy radiates off the stage as Frangicetto strums a chord during one of Circa Survive's past performances.

Photo/Jasmine Safaeian

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