

the Playwickian

The Students' Newspaper of Neshaminy High School
2001 Old Lincoln Highway Langhorne, Pa. 19047
www.playwickian.com

Era of championship coaches come to an end

By Stephanie Harvey
News Editor

The legacy of three Neshaminy coaches is coming to an end as Mark Schmidt, Rachel Clemens and Kate Livingstone all announced their resignation earlier this year. While many are saddened with this news, the lasting impression they left on players and the community is one that will not be forgotten.

Coach Schmidt led Neshaminy's football team for 20 years and has been a long time gym teacher before his February announcement to retire from coaching and teaching at Neshaminy High School. He has broken the school's record for the most total wins as a coach – his record 161-66 – and also led the team to a state championship title and countless other titles.

"It was an honor to play four years under Coach Schmidt. He was more than a coach, he was a mentor who truly cared about his players and coaching staff," Neshaminy running back and senior, Trokon Buesmaill, said. "I'm grateful for the countless lessons he taught me not only about football but about myself and I will always consider him family."

Coach Clemens also left her mark on Neshaminy when she led the girls' varsity soccer team in a 25-0 undefeated season last fall. The team "became the 2013 District 1 champions and 2013 PIAA state champions," said Clemens.

See COACHES: 2



After winning countless titles, Coach Mark Schmidt is resigning as Neshaminy's head coach and retiring as a gym teacher. His shocking news accompanied Coach Clemens and Coach Livingstone also announcing their resignation. Athletes, student and fans alike are saddened to see these coaches end their reign at Neshaminy, but thank them for their contribution to our school, our district and our community.
Photo/Corey LaQuay

Webb to run for State Representative

By Kerri Rafferty
Staff Writer

On Dec. 3, 2013, Ritchie Webb addressed the Neshaminy School Board for the last time, announcing his sudden resignation from his presidency, receiving a standing ovation from the meeting's attendees. Webb now faces a very different reaction, as he has formally announced his intention to run for State Representative.

While Webb's candidacy is surprising in and of itself, his decision to run as Democrat is confounding to most, since Webb has identified as a life-long Republican. Webb states that this is due to the Republican Party's lack of an open primary process. Multiple other sources say that Webb's choice was part of a strategic political move, as Republican Governor Tom Corbett has recently experienced a downturn in favorable opinions.

Incumbent Frank Farry addressed the announcement, stating he was "a little surprised" by Webb's decision, although the representative of five years seemed confident in his ability to win both the primary and general election once again.

"It's like being a freshman in high

school," Farry said, referring to entering the atmosphere in Harrisburg, "I'd like to think I've figured out the system as best as I can... Voters can see my track record; I've passed four bills in five years... I've brought government to the people... The votes will show in May, though, what people really think."

Meanwhile, Webb told LevittownNow.com, "It would be an easy win for [Farry]."

However, considering Lower Bucks' history of strong Democratic voting, Webb could potentially appeal to a multitude of voters in the November general election if he takes the Democratic nomination in May.

A familiar name on the ballot will also assist Webb's campaign. He was appointed to the school board in 2003 and was elected president in 2008 at the age of 54. Webb's community involvement is as well-known as his name.

He is credited with leading the district through the five-year contract crisis, in addition to overseeing potential school consolidations within the district. If elected to office, Webb plans to continue addressing related issues, such as pension problems and the new earned income tax in Middletown Township, to which he is

opposed.

"The budget is always a tough decision," Farry said, addressing the pension funds and associated challenges. In previous years, Farry has voted to increase spending on public schools and has voted in favor of reforming cyber charter school expenditures, saving public schools, including Neshaminy, large sums of money.

He also serves on the Board of Trustees at Bucks County Community College and acts as Fire Chief of 14 years at the Langhorne-Middletown Township Fire Company.

Farry plans to continue being actively involved with previous legislation. He intends to concentrate on a transportation funding bill, which would improve local infrastructure, while also addressing the pension crisis.

Despite the candidates' opposing views, both urged students 18 years or older to register and vote in the upcoming elections.

Only the votes counted on May 20 determine the decisive of the view of the public, with students being an influential portion of the electorate.

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Committee recommends to keep Miller open

By Ashley Reiss
Staff Writer

As news spread about the proposed closing of Walter Miller Elementary School, parents and community members alike were prepared to voice their opinion.

A meeting held at Maple Point Middle School in front of the school board was the deciding vote to continue on in a long

and uphill battle to see if Walter Miller is the right school to close.

However, the battle was halted on March 10 when a meeting was held by the Ad Hoc committee on the present topic of Walter Miller where parents were forced to stand in the back and the meeting room was anything but empty. Possibly closing the elementary school according to the Ad Hoc Committee vote, is losing steam



On March 10, the Facilities Ad Hoc committee voted for Walter Miller to stay open at least through the 2014-2015 school year. However, a school closure and 5th graders moving up to the middle schools is still possible. Photo/Neshaminy School District Website

SATs to dramatically change starting 2016

By Gillian McGoldrick
Editor-in-Chief and Entertainment Editor

In Spring of 2016, long-loathed standardized test that determines a students’ readiness for college will change drastically. The College Board has set up new requirements for test questions and changed the entire scale of the SAT to start in April of 2016.

The SAT announced on March 5 their blueprints and reasoning for the new ideas that the redesign of the SAT will be based around.

According to the College Board’s official website, the reasoning for the changes is: “The redesigned SAT will focus on the knowledge and skills that current research shows are

most essential for college and career readiness and success. The exam will reflect the best of classroom work.”

The College Board also provided the areas of study that the new test will be focusing on including problems grounded in real-world contexts, analysis in science and social studies, and an optional essay that is written based on analyzing a source. There also will no longer be a penalty for wrong answers – which was a one-quarter of a point deduction in the past.

Neshaminy’s freshman will be juniors at the time of the change to the SAT, which is the prime test-taking year. Most current sophomores, juniors, and seniors have expressed some hard feelings to the changes that are coming to a test that has caused them all so much frustration and hardship.

“It’s really unfortunate for our graduating class that we will have to take the more difficult test,” Junior Robert Clark said. “But at the same time the fact that the test is more difficult now looks better for us.”

The SAT is traditionally under a 2400 point scale: 800 possible points for reading, math, and writing. The new model of the SAT will work under a 1600 possible-point scale that now combines reading and writing in one section, makes the essay optional, and has a more focused math section. These changes will help relieve some of the stress that applying to colleges a student is bound to run into.

These changes may factor into many students leaving the SAT and taking the competing ACT that is much more content-based due to the lack of penalty for wrong answers, includes a science section, and is a much more reasonable test all-around. The ACT is around three hours and twenty-five minutes while the SAT is three hours and forty-five minutes.

The SAT has morphed into a futile test that students across the nation dread. These changes are proof of the SAT moving in the right path of making their lengthy and dreaded test much more manageable and relatable.

and giving parents a chance to take a breather. The vote was 3-0 to recommend to the school board at the March 17 public hearing that the proposed school closure be denied.

The results likely mean that Walter Miller Elementary School will not be closed come time for school again in the fall of 2014. The committee also voted on the idea of the fifth graders moving to the Neshaminy middle schools be further evaluated and analyzed.

A potential school closure is not off the table; Pirritano said at the meeting, it is still a possibility for the future. Superintendent Robert Copeland also expressed his opinion by saying he “rather not rush” into either plan.

The Ad Hoc committee which consists of three members, looked at the previous recommendation of the citizens panel to try and close Samuel Everett and looked at their reasons, “which were pretty much valid,” Stephen Pirritano school board member and Ad Hoc Committee member said.

The results of the school board’s vote was eight to one to plow ahead with the legal advertisement of public hearings, which purpose is to gather testimony on the closing of the school.

“The Ad Hoc committee recommended Miller, now the discussion process and the deliberation process is going to go forward and the school board as a whole which is nine members versus three members in the Ad Hoc committee

will consider that recommendation based upon all the evidence that we collect plus our administrations recommendation, then they will have to make a decision if it’s the right choice or not. Just because we recommended Miller does not mean that it’s the right choice,” Pirritano said.

The closing of Walter Miller is not the only issue; the school board has also proposed moving 5th graders to the middle schools making the format 5th grade to 8th grade. They got this idea from originally putting the 5th graders in a separate wing that connects the middle school and elementary schools.

“Miller is a wonderful school and community. I’m certain no principal would welcome the closing of his or her school. I also realize that NSD faces challenging decisions which affect the academic and social development of our students as well as resident tax payers. This is a highly complex decision for our board with input from our entire community,” Walter Miller Principal Paul Mahoney said through an email.

Granted, the next steps in the long process is school closure hearings; the first one is an initial school closure hearing where the school district will present its evidence and the district must provide certain criteria. There will also be a chance for the public to express their opinions. “So this is a long process it’s not something that is done overnight and there’s a lot of process that the state makes you follow and do it properly,” Pirritano said.

France/Spain trip in 2016

By Makenzie Mason
Staff Writer

Are you in love with France, Madrid or Morocco? If so, consider traveling with Neshaminy High School to these colorful places in the summer of 2016.

The trip will be about two weeks during the end of June into the beginning of July, so there will be plenty of opportunities for exploration, shopping and sightseeing throughout.

The cost of this trip will be \$3,800. This price includes round trip airfare, hotels, breakfast, dinner, a full time tour director, local city guides, entrance fees to museums and insurance.

There will be abundant fundraising opportunities coming up in the next few months into next year to help students pay for the trip. While this price may seem a bit hefty, it will certainly be justified by the vibrant experiences that will be endured on this trip.

“Traveling and seeing two countries in Europe, what is there not to gain? There will be many once in a lifetime experiences for example: seeing the Eiffel Tower, visiting the Louvre and Prado Museums, riding a camel in Morocco, crossing the Strait of Gibraltar

and so much more. I could go on for hours about the food, the culture, the architecture and the people that we will encounter,” said Senior Kain, the overseer of the trip.

Students who are interested in traveling are recommended to be in a language course. There will be one chaperone for every six students.

“This will not be a leisurely vacation,” Kain said at the informational meeting on Tuesday March 11. “We will be getting up and going, and not coming back to the hotel until late at night”.

Students will be doing a lot of walking and sight-seeing, taking public transportation, communicating with locals and being responsible for their luggage from the Philadelphia International airport, and back. The flight to France will be about eight to nine hours. “This trip sounds awesome,” said Megan Cleary, French teacher.

The first deposit is \$95.00 and payment plans will be available. Students are advised to listen to their language teachers, or the morning announcements for more information. This trip enables students to learn about the diverse world around them.

COACHES: (continued from pg. 1):

This “a first for the Neshaminy Girls Soccer program.” The team was only the second in history to make such an unprecedented feat.

Although Clemens is resigning as coach she will not fail to remember the wonderful fans supporting her team and the players that made up the historical team. “I tried to give you my best each day and I believe that all of you did the same. We all worked hard, every day, to achieve the level of success that we did. I am so proud to have been your coach and I thank you from the bottom of my heart for all the memories...I will always be one of your biggest fans,” Clemens stated.

Another change to Neshaminy sports comes from the girls’ volleyball team with

the resignation of Coach Livingstone after seven years. Livingstone looked back at the time with her team stating, “I loved coaching these kids, there just isn’t a better group of humans to work with. It’s hard to coach, teach and have a life outside of it all, but it’s great to end with a group like this.”

“[Livingstone] taught me personally everything I know and I can speak for everyone when I say that she was also an inspiration. Neshaminy volleyball won’t be the same without her,” senior, Molly MacDonald said.

Even though it is upsetting for many to see these three inspirational coaches are resigning from their positions, their legacy will always be in Neshaminy.

Changes coming to SAT

A redesigned SAT exam will be administered for the first time in spring 2016. Here are the major differences:

Changes	Current SAT	New SAT
Test format	Paper only	Paper and digital
Essay section	Required; no need to verify arguments made	Optional; judged based on analysis strength
Duration	3 hours, 45 minutes	3 hours Essay: Additional 50 minutes
Scoring scale	Up to 2,400	Up to 1,600; separate score for the essay
Point deductions	¼ point for each incorrect answer	No points taken away for wrong answers
Math section	Covers a range of high school-level math topics	Fewer topics; more focus on core math areas
Calculator use	Can be used in all parts of the math section	Permitted in portions of the math section
Reading and writing section	No need for students to cite evidence	Students will cite passages to support answers
Source documents	Students are unfamiliar with the passages before the exam The exam is not required to use scientific or historical sources	Familiar works, including the Declaration of Independence, will be used Source texts to include science, history and social studies
Vocabulary	Includes obscure words	Focuses on common words

Source: The College Board
Graphic: Chicago Tribune

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Many changes are going to be made to the SATs in 2016 including the scoring scale to be out of 1600 instead of 2400.

Photo/McClatchy-Tribune

Teacher of the Issue



NOberto, no problem



“Teacher of the Issue” Neal Oberto engages his first period chemistry class with a warm up equation.

Photo/Maddy Buffardi

By Maddy Buffardi
Managing and Student Life Editor

Chemistry teacher Neal Oberto —better known as the ‘silver fox’ or ‘NOberto’ — has perfected the art of making class enjoyable for his students while keeping it educational. Oberto is known for his interesting demonstrations and hands-on labs which help to involve his students in the curriculum. He shared that his favorite part of teaching are labs, his favorite being the one dealing with “hot-ice.”

For most of his pre-college career, Oberto was on the wrong side of the rivalry, attending Pennsubury up until his sophomore year when he switched to Neshaminy. Following graduation Oberto attended Temple University in Philadelphia. He worked as a coach for wrestling, football, and track at Neshaminy Middle before he was a teacher here at Neshaminy High School.

As odd as it may seem, teachers do have lives beyond the walls of the class room, in fact Oberto works two other jobs – one in roofing sales, and he also owns a landscaping company with physics teacher, Andrew Szymczak. Oberto is very close with multiple Neshaminy teachers, having once roomed with Hank Oppenheimer.

He is also married, with three little Obertos running around. Oberto is the father of two boys, Tyler, 3, and Drew,

1, as well as Adrianna, 4.

On top of everything else, Oberto said one of his hobbies is traveling – with an extensive list of places he’s been to show for it, which includes, Italy, Germany, Jamaica, and Mexico. Last year he ran the “Tough Mudder” run and is planning on running a half marathon March 30 with a few fellow teachers.

After having Brian Suter as a teacher when he was in high school and studying pre-med at Temple, Oberto decided he wanted to be a science teacher. Being a good teacher extends beyond the classroom, and beyond the regular seven-and-a-half hour day – it is one thing to teach, but an entirely different thing to be able to connect with your students, and do that. He shared that one of his favorite things about being a teacher is being involved in more than just the educational aspect of it, which is why he became the class adviser.

Oberto is the class advisor for the junior class, helping the class officers to carry out their duties and assisting with multiple school events, such as prom. It isn’t hard to see that Oberto loves his job and that he feels it’s important to get to know his students in order to better be able to educate them. It always positive for a student to feel comfortable in the classroom and a good relationship and respect for your teacher makes for a much better learning experience.

It’s been said time and time again by Oberto-chem-class-alumnus that they hated chemistry but loved going to Oberto’s class. With a witty sense of humor and the ability to make most any lesson at least a little bit entertaining, Oberto makes chem class bearable. It’s important to have teachers like this, because no matter how much a student may hate the subject, if they appreciate the class they are bound to learn more.

Oberto is known at Neshaminy for a few things, one important one being his sense of style. While Oberto denies being a fashionista , referring to his style as “boring” and “no-fun.” Though it’s hard to ignore his signature over-pocketed cargo pants, and sandals – for which Oberto has coined the term “mip-mops” rather than the traditional “man-dal.”

Neshaminy celebrates World Language Month

By Tim Cho
Student Life and Web Editor

March is World Language Month at Neshaminy and the World Languages Department is in full swing. The World Language Competition is the annual competition that encourages and promotes cultural diversity and understanding—this year it was held at William Tennent High School.

Various events were available for different levels of skill; students in the first and second tier of language participate in a culture, spelling, and grammar-related question-and-answer style of competition against teams from other competing schools.

Students in the third level are paired up with students from other schools and are given 15 minutes to prepare a presentation for judges that will critique them based on conservation skills, fluency and grammar.

The competitors in the fourth, fifth, and Advanced Placement level of world language are put on debate teams with students from other schools and must defend a topic given to them. With a certain amount of preparation time the teams must form and argue a defense to a group of judges.

The World Language Chairperson, Cara DeLorenzo-Palka, showed great enthusiasm for the competition and her students who participated. It offers

a setting where students are able push out of their comfort zones. As a result, “Students see for themselves that they are capable of much more than they thought and they did not let the fear stop them from putting themselves in that vulnerable position to speak Spanish or French in a competitive environment,” DeLorenzo-Palka said.

Sophomore Shelly Davidson took part in the Spanish two level competition and now feels more comfortable in class. “I think it helped me realize that maybe I don’t need to be so nervous to speak the language in class or outside of class because everyone makes mistakes,” she said.

The purpose of the competition is to promote diversity, understanding and passion for the world languages. Students entered the competition eager and left with more knowledge of their foreign language. “After students finish, they are so proud of their accomplishment and are able to see how well they can speak the language,” DeLorenzo-Palka said.

World Language Month at Neshaminy has reflected in students being excited for Spanish and French. Sophomore Nikol Davidson, partaker in the Spanish two competition, believes that, “You get to be proud of your achievements! Whether you win first place or third you always know you tried your best.”



Ninth Annual “Neshaminy’s Got Talent”
Black Box Theatre
April 10
8:00 am – 9:00 am

NHS Spring Vocal Concert
Theodore Kloos Auditorium
March 20
7:00 pm

NHS Jazz Festival
Theodore Kloos Auditorium
March 21
6:30 pm

Dancing with the Faculty
Theodore Kloos Auditorium
March 27
7:00 pm

Senior shares her love for stock numbers

By Colleen Harvery
Copy Editor

Senior Sam Eckert is known for her witty sense of humor. Outside of school, she works at Journey’s and does ballet.

Q: If you could trade places with one person in your grade, who would it be and why?

A: Samantha Kitchin because we have the same name and drive the same car.

Q: What is your life motto?
A: It’s Friday somewhere!

Q: If you could die and come back as a member of the Beatles who would it be and why?

A: Do you mean the bug or the band? If it’s the band, Paul McCartney because he’s still alive.

Q: Does Stacy’s mom really got it going on?
A: I would assume she does because there’s a song about her.

Q: At a movie theater, which arm rest is yours?
A: The left armrest is mine. I don’t know why.



Optimistic Sam Eckart shares her thoughts as she visits her locker.
Photo/Colleen Harley

Q: What’s your favorite thing about your job at Journeys?
A: My favorite part of working at Journey’s is being able to know stock numbers off the top of my head. Vans Authentic Lo Pros Black/Black are 499427.

Talented students receive recognition for their work

By Becca Choi
Staff Writer

On Saturday, March 22, seven Neshaminy students will have an opportunity to accept their Silver Key awards at The University of the Arts in Philadelphia.

The Scholastic Art and Writing Awards have taken notice of the unique and talented Steph Skrot, Kin Timbone, Molly MacDonald, Virginia Anselmi, Emily Later, Gina Kay, and Maddy MacDonald. The panelist who picks the artwork focuses on work that exhibits originality, skill and voice or vision.

They have picked an array of mediums including photography, portfolio, drawing, and digital art. Not only do these seven ladies get the awards, they have an opportunity to win scholarships and have their art displayed.

Another notable occasion for those in the artistic community is the 27th Annual PSEA Touch the Future Exhibit held at Arcadia University which has run since March 1 and will run until March 27.

Five pieces by five Neshaminy students will be displayed: Molly MacDonald’s charcoal drawing; Destinee Cichy’s acrylic painting; Bridgette Brodnyan’s 2D mixed media; Rachel Goldstein’s traditional silver print; Alison Buiochi, ceramics. Arcadia University is located in Glenside, PA. The art exhibit is held in the University Commons Building.



With the declining enrollment, under utilized schools and underlying financial issues, it is evident Neshaminy needs to take action.

The district seeks to add full-day kindergarten in all elementary schools, providing a head start to education and potentially saving parents thousands of dollars in half-day daycare.

With any improvement,

there will always be a price to pay. In Neshaminy’s case, where the funds for the full-day kindergarten will come from is the problem. The idea laid on the table is for Neshaminy to self-fund by cutting the means in other places.

Recently closing Walter Miller became that option. Closing a school is always heartbreaking to all, but when a facility is both under utilized and in disrepair, it is hard to find a better option.

Redistricting is just another complication of this process; students may be displaced and limiting displacement is a crucial factor in these decisions.

Now, Neshaminy School District has eight elementary schools and one Intermediate Unit (IU) facility. The locations of these schools are not exactly convenient, as some are scattered and students are forced to attend excessively distant schools. Over the past few years, Oliver Heckman, Lower Southampton and Walter Miller have been the

elementary schools named as possible closures. Just this past month, Walter Miller Elementary School was voted to be closed, as voted 8-1 on Feb. 25 by board members. Fortunately, at the March 10 Ad Hoc Committee meeting, a 3-0, vote put the decision to close Miller on hold.

Closing Walter Miller is certainly not the best option for Neshaminy School District. It would needlessly displace the schooling structure and would take years to straighten out the issues it would leave us with, whether it be redistricting or over-capacitating.

Currently, Tawanka is in use for the IU students. This facility would be the best option to lease out of the district. It is currently in the best standing condition of district schools. Its estimated maintenance comes to over \$3 million dollars. It is a large facility and is in a great location for any company.

Samuel Everett Elementary School is the best option for students usage by IU students. It is an under utilized school that is located almost directly

between Walter Miller and Albert Schweitzer. It currently has 325 enrolled students that could easily be redistricted between Schweitzer and Miller. Thus, we would solve the controversy of closing an elementary school, yet, still putting a facility to good use.

If the district were able to meet the funds for full-day kindergarten, we would still be left with one issue. The capacity of all elementary schools would go over by at least 5 percent, not including any possible students from private schools that may switch to Neshaminy. It is mathematically impossible to go around the over-capacity issue.

It has been suggested that the only reasonable way to solve this is to move 5th graders up to the middle schools. It is believed that 5th graders are not psychologically ready for the middle schools. “It just isn’t safe for 9 and 10 year old kids to be going to the middle schools; they already are growing up to fast,” said Colleen Finley, a teacher at Miller.

All editors who voted believe that, so long as it is possible to keep the 5th graders

in a format similar to elementary school, moving them would be acceptable, as it seems necessary, although it is not optimal. The transition may even be better. If they only switch teachers once or twice –similar to what they do already in 5th grade— they will adjust gradually to the change. Floor plans of the middle schools could prevent this from happening, so this plan could take years to perfect; schools could be correctly modified to fit the needs of these students. No matter the case, it can be agreed upon the most important aspect of this modification would be what best fits the students.

There is no easy answer. Closing a school is never the best option. Nobody wants the institution they attended and grew up as a child with to be closed; it is heartbreaking. Yet, no matter the case, for better opportunities there will be important aspects that we must give up, and complex factors to weigh in. Perhaps the aforementioned plan, too, could

The unsigned editorial represents the unanimous view of the Editorial Board.

Student opinion: Wolf right candidate for Pa.

By Jim Merk
Staff Writer

Tom Wolf is a democratic, self-made business man and a former secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Revenue who is already winning the Democratic Primary race.. Wolf seems like a strong political figure, but is he really right for Pennsylvania?

Wolf first announced his candidacy for governor during April of 2013 and retired from his building materials and cabinet supply company, the Wolf Organization, on January 1, 2014 so he could focus on his campaign. He has quite an impressive background, including two years in India with the Peace Corps and



Tom Wolf leads the Democratic primary by a wide margin and victory seems a sure thing.
Photo/tomwolfforpa.com

earning multiple college diplomas – one being a doctorate from MIT.

Since the race for Pa. State Governor first began in January, Wolf has gained more support than even current state governor Tom Corbett, clearly showing that many no longer support the incumbent.

Wolf’s commercials are effective, portraying his family values, background and even Wolf driving a Jeep

instead of a sports car like a “normal” man would.

The commercials really are the source behind his support thus far, but do people really want another millionaire running the state?

Wolf plans on putting at least \$10 million into the primary election and anticipates to collect another \$5 million from supporters. He has obviously made a very positive impact thus far, with a staggering 40 percent appeal to democratic voters in the state, according to a recent Harper Polling Poll.

Wolf’s agenda includes an interesting proposal in the “fresh start” policy plan, which will “create jobs, fix our broken education system, and build a stronger economy” as it says on his official website.

Another great proposal is his government reform. He wants to eliminate all “gifts” given to government officials that are over \$25, such as vacations or tickets to sporting events. He is literally putting state employees and officials on the same level as the middle class, something Corbett has yet to ever do. Wolf has also proposed to take full advantage of Pennsylvania’s natural resources and implement plans of equality and fairness, another two issues Corbett is yet to fix.

Overall, it’s time for Corbett to leave office and for Wolf to enter it. He’s proposed to fix the issues Corbett has long ignored. It’s time for a “fresh start” for Pennsylvania, and Wolf seems like the right man for the job.

The Playwickian

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The Playwickian refers to the “Associated Press Stylebook” on matters of grammar, punctuation, spelling, style and usage. Unsigned editorials express the views of the majority of the editorial board. Letters to the editors should not exceed 300 words. Letters must be signed and of appropriate subject matter. Guest opinions, 500 words or more, will be published as space allows.

The paper reserves the right to edit letters for grammar and clarity, and all letters are subject to laws governing obscenity, libel, privacy and disruption of the school’s educational process. Opinions in letters or commentaries are attributed to the author. Such views are not necessarily those of the staff, nor should any opinion expressed in a public forum be construed as the opinion or the policy of the adviser or administration, unless so attributed.

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Contact

www.playwickian.com
Neshaminy High School
2001 Old Lincoln Highway
Langhorne, PA 19047
215-809-6670

Honor Society Mini-THON: student-run charity event postponed

By Kayli McGlynn
Staff Writer

Many people have heard of Penn State’s THON, where students raise money for the Four Diamonds Fund by dancing for 46 hours straight—no sitting or sleeping allowed. This year Neshaminy’s National Honor Society had plans to create a “mini-THON,” where people would be able to fulfill their dream of participating in THON, but on a smaller scale, all while helping raise money for children with pediatric cancer. The school was ready for the challenge, but the plan came to a screeching halt.

All of the proceeds were to go to the Four Diamonds Fund, which helps families who have children with pediatric cancer. There were to be four different teams, all a different color, competing against each other to raise the most money.

The teams were meant to be different sets of knights, since Christopher Millard, the child whose parents set up this foundation after losing him to pediatric cancer, had created a story about a knight named Sir Millard who had to fight for the four diamonds of Courage, Wisdom, Honesty, and Strength. If he succeeded he would be free from the evil sorceress. Millard’s story showed what he believed could defeat cancer, so his parents named the fund after his story.

“THON was cancelled because the administrators were concerned about the scope of the event in a short period of time and they were concerned about having appropriate coverage from the staff,” National Honor Society Adviser Kim Kelley said.

The charity event was originally

supposed to be held in early January, but got pushed back due to scheduling conflict with the gym. Until recently, most of the National Honor Society believed mini-THON was just postponed, not cancelled. All of the National Honor Society was prepared to take on the task and sadly they will not be able to do that anymore.

“We pushed it back from January because we needed more time to do it right, however, we could have accomplished it this year,” Kelley said.

The National Honor Society has some of the top students in the school and there is no doubt that they could have accomplished this task in the time allotted. The Honor Society students were already put into various planning committees. These are not students that do things half-heartedly.

“Something like that requires a lot of planning and a lot of work,” said Caroline Crasnick, Neshaminy Graduate and Penn State freshman.

They had the ambition to attempt this large-scale event and it took courage and dedication to get it off the ground. Even getting it as far as it came was hard work. This event coming together would have been an excellent display of students’ ambition and drive.

“I was so excited to start something different for our school and to get involved with a charity that is so amazing,” said senior Jessica Vadaketh. Vadaketh was one of the leaders in bringing Mini-THON to Neshaminy.

“It could have definitely been possible,” National Honor Society Vice-President Jane Miglo said. “We just needed more support.”

Along with National Honor Society,

Neshaminy’s Interact Club was involved with organizing THON, adding another event to the long list of good deeds that they accomplish throughout the year.

Not only would hosting Mini-THON be beneficial to the children the money would go to, but it would be beneficial to Neshaminy as a whole. The charity event would have brought the community together to accomplish something worthwhile. Neshaminy tries to raise money, but nothing has ever been attempted on this scale.

Even if things did not go perfectly smooth, it would have still been a great accomplishment. Students would be having fun and raising money for charity.

“Penn State and the Four Diamonds Fund appreciate the support, no matter where it comes from,” Crasnick said.

The Four Diamonds Fund solely helps the families at Penn State Hershey Children’s Hospital in Hershey, Pa. Together with THON they have raised over \$101 million. To be a part of that is something that Neshaminy should try to do in the future, since it could not happen this year.

Four Diamonds is an amazing fund and it is a shame that Neshaminy will not be able to participate in the wonderful services that they provide. Hopefully in the future the National Honor Society can try again at bringing Mini-THON to our community.



Penn State’s famous THON raised upwards of \$13 million. A similar event in the works at Neshaminy was ultimately cancelled.

Photo/ The Daily Collegian

Letter to the Editor

Make education globally relevant

Dear Playwickian Editorial Staff,

I am writing to you regarding your opinion piece in the February issue of *The Playwickian*. The concept of “global society” and the data that proves that most of our students live in a bubble, boldly marked by the lines of the Neshaminy School District, can be interpreted as over-simplified. The problem is far more complex than “self-absorbed minds” or living in a “media-based society”. The problem cannot be limited to lack of knowledge about current events – it seems people no longer value general education as a complete package.

Current issues *should* be mandatory, as should a course about financial stability. There should be mandatory reading and writing classes to supplement the “normal” English curriculum in grades beginning in elementary school. Four years of math and science in addition to four years of English, social studies and physical education. And if there is a global society that students are ill prepared for, either through lack of interest or lack of *whatever* – shouldn’t the school district implement mandatory language classes starting in kindergarten or first grade?

I agree that rejecting global awareness is a short-sighted, almost negligent act. Teachers, administrators and, most importantly, students need to work together to make the scholastic experience globally relevant. As the editorial stated, students need to take the initiative to beat their apathy and start to learn again.

--Jessica Cohen
NHS English Teacher

Improvement plan presents new Neshaminy

By Jackson Haines
Op-Ed Editor

New Advanced Placement classes, a focus on efficient teaching, and extracurricular encouragement are only part of the new Neshaminy High School Improvement plan. And it is that plan which has restored hope—hope that Neshaminy is no longer willing to lag behind its neighbors, instead it is now striving for a higher degree of excellence with a thought-out plan for the future.

The plan, posted on the website by the Principal’s Office, at first seems disappointing. It includes five pleasing, yet rather vague steps to improve the school: “Consistent Implementation of effective instructional practices across all classrooms... promoting, enhancing and sustaining a shared vision of a positive and safe school culture and environment... ensuring students who are academically at risk are identified and supported via a system of academic interventions... ensure teachers and administrators meet regularly to analyze student progress and

program effectiveness [and] maintaining and expanding a broad, rigorous and engaging set of course offerings.” These five goals, though all great aims for achievement, are not the impressive part of the plan.

It was the smaller ideas for overcoming these broader “challenges” that portrayed an administration dedicated to improvement. Beneath each goal is a list of implementations and policies to support and achieve the aim; providing means to its ends, the school displayed its willingness to change for the better.

What is entailed in this plan? Well, most impressively, five new AP courses over the next two years-- AP Spanish, French, chemistry, human geography, and art. Several new science courses may be developed and there’s even a possibility of two more AP’s, all though those two would be added later on. Changes are coming for students not considering AP’s as well; Algebra 1 and 2 will now be taken consecutively in an effort to improve learning efficiency, and Neshaminy will expand online course options. It seems that Neshaminy is playing some much needed catch up with its neighbors; this plan will only increase the school’s academic reputation. But the plan goes beyond the walls of the classroom, as it now plans

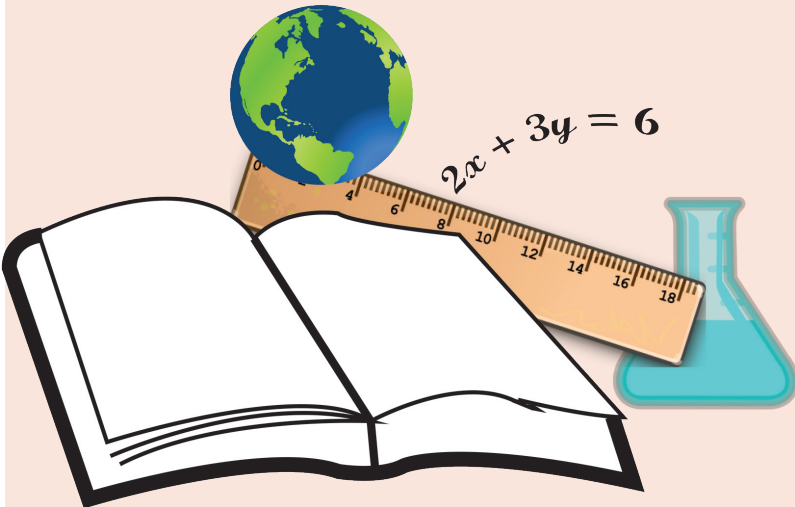
to expand the security measures of the school, developing smarter emergency plans, hiring a Head of Security-- even building a kiosk in the main lobby. The plan performs a balancing act, promoting security and safety while avoiding draconian measures.

This plan also supports a school beautification program, a system to test the efficiency of teaching methods, and the plan to expand the number of clubs at Neshaminy. This plan is all inclusive, it will simply make Neshaminy a better place.

Yet, it must be enforced. This document is idealistic and optimistic, but it must be followed strictly, truly, and efficiently if it is to work and become a document of realism. The school has improved, yet there is farther to go.

Council Rock North, continuously recognized for its academic excellence, offers 19 AP courses. Neshaminy currently offers 12, but after adding five, and perhaps two more, our AP totals will rival that of the Council Rock School District. The plan to to test classroom efficiency will ensure, or at least try to ensure, that every student is receiving a sound education. Neshaminy under this plan would gradually put itself higher up on the map of academic excellence, it is no longer content to remain ranked 76th in the Philadelphia Metropolitan area (as ranked by Philadelphia Magazine.)

This plan, in part, could improve Neshaminy greatly. It may not fix all of the school’s problems, but it most certainly is a job well-done. While we may not know the full extent of improvement the school will see, this “New Neshaminy” we graduate from will be better, safer, and more academically and aesthetically pleasing than the one in which we started.



SELF-HARM AWARENESS

Self-Harm: Why it goes unnoticed, untreated

By Shannon Byrne and Brianna Rayner
Special Features Editor and Staff Writer

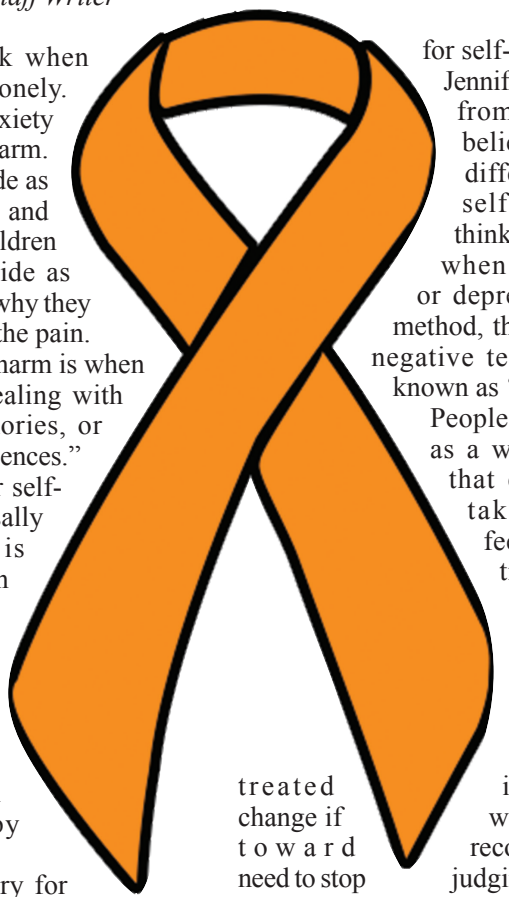
What does our society think when they hear the word self-harm? Lonely. Troubled. Freak. Depression and anxiety are often the root causes of self-harm. These are often labeled and set aside as a normal part of being a teenager and growing up. This is why these children are being ignored and thrown aside as over-dramatic teenagers and this is why they turn to drastic measures to relieve the pain.

According to Mind.org, “Self-harm is when you hurt yourself as a way of dealing with very difficult feelings, old memories, or overwhelming situations and experiences.” The orange ribbon is a symbol for self-harm prevention. The most universally recognized form of self-harm is cutting, however, the classification of self-harm is not limited to this method.

Many psychologists say that self-harm is a way for troubled individuals to feel in control of their emotional pain by causing physical pain. It draws attention away from the internal pain by bringing about physical pain.

People tend to confuse this cry for help as a cry for attention. For some self-harmers this may be true, but for others it’s the exact opposite. Most self-harmers are embarrassed and ashamed and don’t feel that they can receive help, or if they’re even worth the treatment. So they keep this part of their life extremely private and concealed.

Another common misconception is that self-harm is a suicide attempt. This isn’t always the case. It may be a way to express suicidal feelings, but the reasons



for self-harm can be endless.

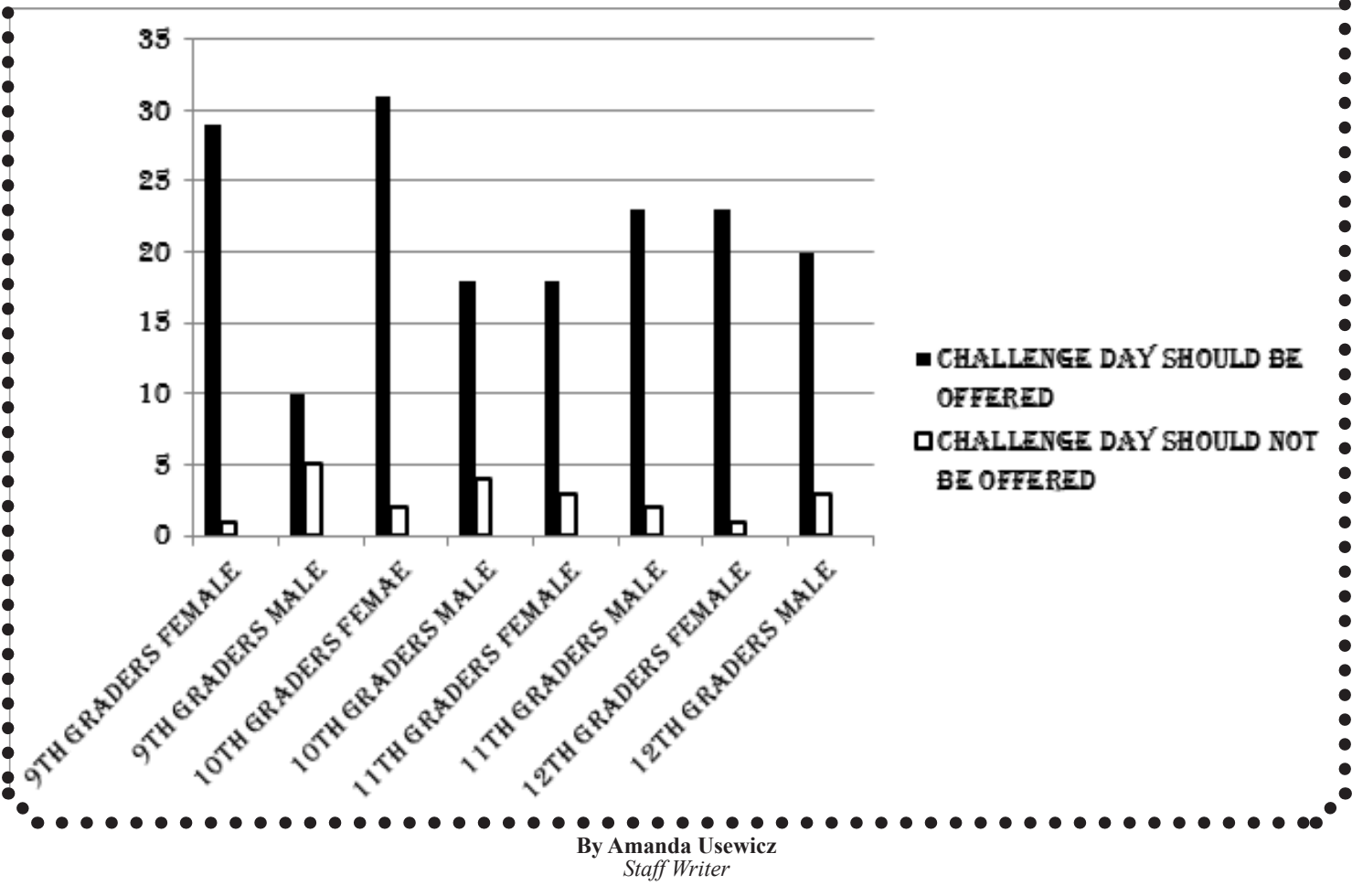
Jennifer Coe, a guidance counselor from Neshaminy high school believes that there are “many different reasons why people self-harm. But I personally think people self-harm because when someone is so stressed or depressed they need a coping method, this is considered one of the negative techniques of coping, also known as ‘maladaptive coping.’”

People have described self-harm as a way to express something that can’t be put into words, take away overwhelming feelings or thoughts, banish traumatic memories from their thoughts, to stop feeling disconnected or communicate that they’re experiencing severe stress.

The way self-harmers are in today’s society needs to change if we are going to take any steps toward recovery and improvement. We need to stop judging these people and calling them self-absorbed and attention-seeking. To stop making them feel alienated and alone and instead make them feel loved, cared for and safe.

Providing help to struggling teens is the only way to solve these problems, not ignoring them and pretending they don’t exist in the hope they’ll just disappear. They’re problems don’t disappear with ignorance and neither will ours.

Challenge Day Survey



Challenge Day at Neshaminy High School had been going on for a long time, but not this year. It had been a program that helped teens open up to their problems and get help if needed. Challenge Day was also supposed to reduce bullying and teasing in schools. It is an award-winning day-long program for middle and high school students. Last year was the first year that Challenge Day was offered to 8th graders for the middle schools in the Neshaminy School District. Above is a chart showing how many people would or would not like to have Challenge Day back from two Homerooms in each grade out of a pool of 200 students. As you can see from the chart, the majority of people believe that we should bring challenge day back.

Eyes wide shut at NHS

By Shealyn Miles
Special Features Editor

Consumed by an age in which emotional detachment is prevalent, the average teen may find solace in the notion that there is someone to reach out to in times of need. With suicide being the third leading cause of death among American youth, one would assume that the risks of self-harm would be spoken of regularly. Unfortunately, here at Neshaminy, it seems as though efforts to address these issues have been dwindling.

As a public institution, it is the responsibility of the staff to be aware of students’ needs beyond academics. It is impossible for a student to flourish intellectually at school if their personal needs are not being met at home. That being said, there should be an outlet for teens to rely upon to avoid further discontent beyond what may be going on at home.

Because victims of self-harm are not easily recognizable, their practices, more often than not, continue, unnoticed and untouched. Therefore, the school community should offer programs continually throughout a student’s entire high school career.

Currently, suicide-prevention is addressed in a required health class for students their sophomore year. While this is certainly beneficial, it is limited. A senior may have forgotten their health class that had taken place two years prior. When it comes to suicide and self-harm prevention, reinforcement of support is key.

Several of Neshaminy’s clubs and events that

had been favorable among students in past years have, regrettably, been taken away.

Neshaminy had been home to S.A.D.D. (Students Against Destructive Decisions.) Back in 2006, the club had implemented a yellow ribbon week (the yellow ribbon is symbolic for suicide prevention). During the week, students were given yellow ribbon cards to use or to give to a friend with the message that it is okay to ask for help. The program was established in response to the four suicides in Neshaminy’s class of 2006.

The club disbanded after the former adviser, Jessica Cohen, had resigned and no one volunteered for the position.

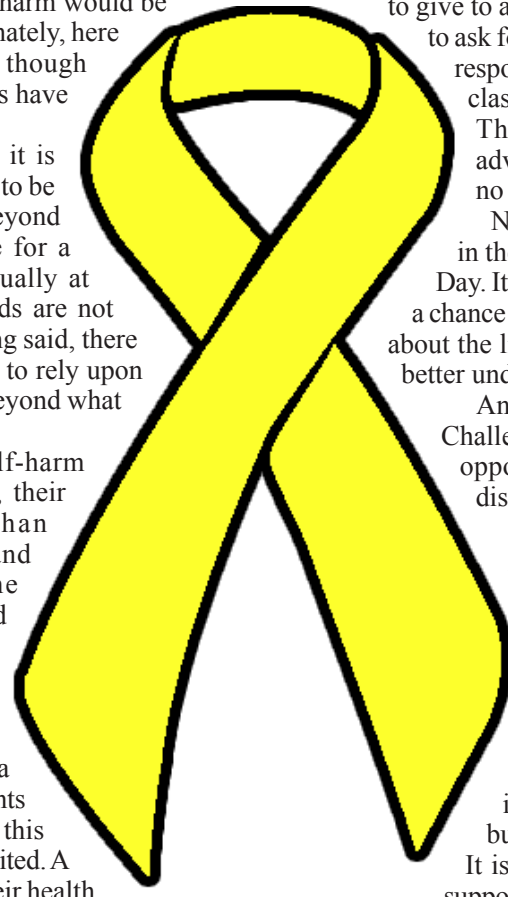
Neshaminy also had a very popular event in the month of March known as Challenge Day. It’s purpose was, not only to give students a chance to talk about their lives, but also to hear about the lives of their classmates, giving them a better understanding of one another.

An extension of Challenge Day, was the Challenge Day club. This gave students an opportunity to meet every two weeks to discuss the issues that they may be having.

“It was a chance to talk about what was going on in your life, and look at it in a positive way,” former adviser, Kate Livingstone said. Livingstone would make sure that every meeting would end on a positive note.

The club members were hoping to improve the club this year by inviting guest speakers to address specific issues such as anorexia, depression, etc., but funding had been cut.

It is clear that the high school’s efforts to support victims of self-harm are deteriorating. Self-harm is not something that is going to disappear, and incoming students should know that they are entering an environment that is going to offer them a place of peace, not a place of ignorance.



Semicolon Project: Fruition to fraud

By Julianne Miller
Circulation Editor

April 16 is widely known as the Semicolon Project Day. The project was a day in support of those suffering from depression, self-harm, anxiety, suicidal thoughts, or the loss of a loved one. Participants would draw a semicolon on their wrist to show their understanding and support for others. In writing, a semicolon is used when an author, “could have ended the sentence, but didn’t.” For this project, the semicolon represented one’s life and how important it is to not give up and to keep going.

“I feel that Project Semicolon is a great way to show support... It’s not about how big or small the situation is, but how you chose to keep going when you could have just given up,” senior Sam DiFrancesco said.

The alleged story is that Project Semicolon is now a scam. The original founder and rightful owner of Project Semicolon, Ron Sharpp, stepped down from being the front man to deal with “family distractions,” and left the project in the control of loyal volunteers.

Sharpp began working on the project in March, 2013 because it “hit close to home” and he wanted to “offer hope” to those in need of a positive resource.

During his absence, a teen from

the UK, Matt Wills, supposedly claimed the rights to the project and reached out to former co-founder, Amy Burg, to continue Sharpp’s work. Having “no reason not to trust him”, Burg agreed to the partnership and continued the project. “Matt got addicted to fame and was... not equipped...to run the organization,” Sharpp said.

Deceptively, Wills began to bully the staff because of his desire for fame, leading Burg to leave the project. Wills continued on to open up a clothing line through the project’s resources, but because he was not legally in control, all proceeds from the sales went directly to him, thus resulting in a scam to the buyers. Sharpp, unable to again claim rightful ownership because of other distractions, responded by saying Wills is “not a major threat to the movement... but a threat to individual lives,” and hopes to regain control of the project with the intent of including the Christian faith as a foundation.

The project is supposedly still in control of Wills and the volunteers. Sharpp is still focusing on himself with the hope of being able to access control once again, and Burg is no longer involved with Project Semicolon or in contact with Wills.

Matt Wills has not been able to be reached to neither confirm or deny these events.

PLACES FOR HELP...

***1-800-SUICIDE – Hotline for people contemplating suicide.**

***1-800-334-HELP – Self Injury Foundation’s 24-hour national crisis line**

***1-800-DON’T-CUT – More info on self-injury**

***<http://www.selfinjury.com> – Referrals for therapists and tips for how to stop.**

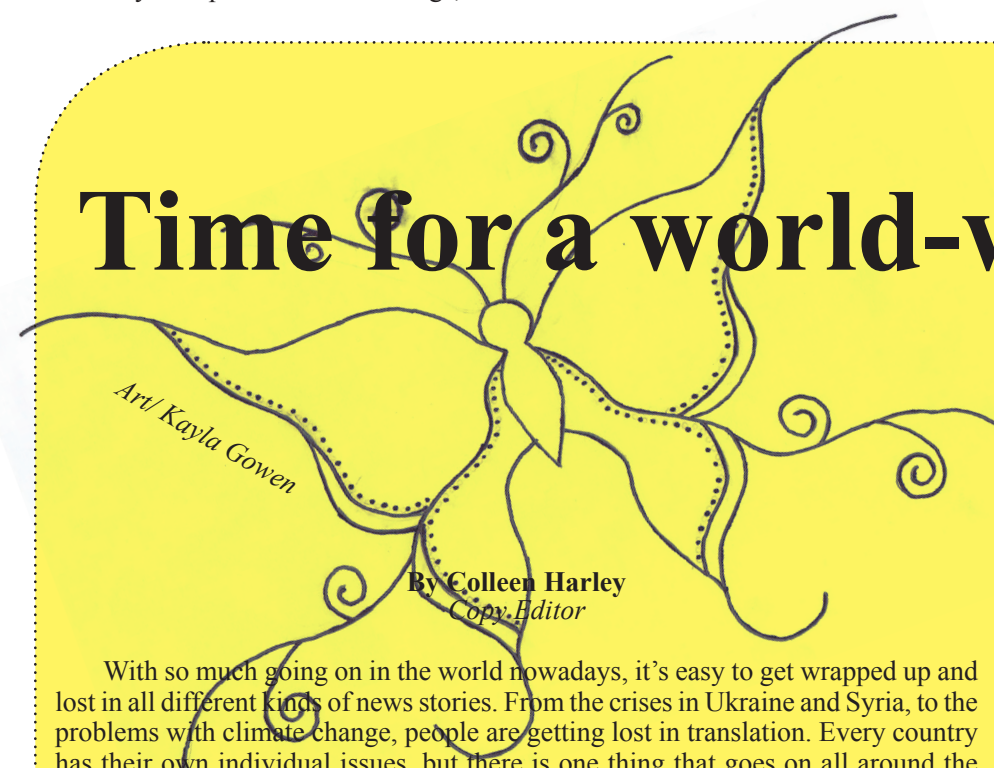
***1-800-273-TALK – A 24-hour crisis hotline if you’re about to self-harm or are in an emergency situation.**

***<http://www.kidshelp.com>.**

*** <https://twitter.com/ProjectBuddy-> twitter page to prevent suicide, self harm, and eating disorders.**

Ribbon Graphics/ Holly Muska

Time for a world-wide wake up call



With so much going on in the world nowadays, it’s easy to get wrapped up and lost in all different kinds of news stories. From the crises in Ukraine and Syria, to the problems with climate change, people are getting lost in translation. Every country has their own individual issues, but there is one thing that goes on all around the world that should never go unnoticed. Self-Harm and suicides are serious issues that take a backseat to so many others when it should be at the forefront.

Not everyone is ignoring the problem. One major awareness project is deemed “The Butterfly Project.” Started anonymously on the social media website, Tumblr, the project is aimed at helping people of all ages take the first steps toward recovery and a higher self-worth.

The way the Butterfly Project (butterfly-project.tumblr.com) works is self-harmers draw a butterfly on their wrist or anywhere else that you have previously self-harmed. The next step is, naming the butterfly, and it should be named after a lost loved one, or someone who wants you to get better. The butterfly has to fade on its own, there’s no scrubbing it off or you haven’t done the project correctly. Also,

if you harm yourself before the butterfly has faded, you have killed it. If you do not self-harm before it fades, it has survived and flown away. Even if you do not self-harm, show your support and draw one on yourself, it might just save someone’s life.

Another symbol of support for victims of self-harm is the orange ribbon. The orange ribbon is the universal symbol for self-harm awareness. March 1 is designated as Self-Injury Awareness Day, or abbreviated as SIAD worldwide. This day promotes people to be open in talking about their problems with themselves and what made them want to harm themselves physically. On this day every year people from different organizations meet with these victims of self-harm and talk to them about what they can do to help themselves from doing the action. But how many countries or places in the world really recognize it and use the day to make self-harmers not feel so alone?

Places all around the world are aware of people harming themselves due to depression, anxiety, stress, panic and all other sorts of problems going on in those individuals lives. This is an extremely relevant issue not only in Bucks County, but across the country and nations around the world that needs to be recognized further. There needs to be more publicity highlighting what causes self-injury and what people can do to help themselves and others. Also, there should be more publicity on highlighting that self-harmers are not alone and there is a “light at the end of the tunnel.”

More walks, and events need to be held in honor of stopping, or lowering the rate of stopping self-injury because nobody deserves to feel the pain that most of these people are going through. Also, more magazine and newspapers across the world need to be writing stories or articles on people who were previous self-harmers success stories about how they overcame their battles.

Art/ Luke Kujdych

Howler

~By Jim Merk Our Misconception

A beautiful world,
Turned from gold to rust,
A hollow child, born of dust
Desperation, a fear of trust
But what is not known
cannot be seen,
As your children ask,
"What were we meant to
be?"
And if we were set to fall
from the start,
Then why were we born
with beating hearts?

~Ahmed Mirza Freedom

The lion stood upon
the stage and scanned
the audience, a mixture of
haughtiness and indignation,
in its eyes. It wondered
what it had done to deserve
this fate. The pride of the
pride, the king of the jungle,
reduced to a mere circus
act. Humiliating.

For years it had ruled
justly over its empire in the
grasslands. And then the
humans arrived.

Abused and defeated, the lion had been taken to America, the so-called "Land of Freedom," only a year ago. It had been trained, no, forced to learn a plethora of trivial tricks, all at the crack of a whip. A cruel, black whip, which hurt its dignity more than its body.

"And now, ladies and gentlemen, for the final act, the lion will jump through...the flaming Hoop of Hell!"

The moment had arrived.

Flames burst up in front of the lion, accompanied by explosive heat. The lion knew that the whip would soon follow, held by Lucifer himself. It had rehearsed this act so many times before. The scars served as brutal memories of the fact. As the flames reflected in its eyes, the lion felt a strange sensation, an innate urge to resist, to retaliate in some manner. The trainer stood behind it before it lay Hell. The lion understood that if anything went wrong, the whip was not the worst fate that awaited. And yet, the psychological consequences of acquiescing to the oppressive humans would be much, much worse. Its dignity, its pride, its natural sense of royalty, would all be destroyed. Black leather cracked upon its back and sides repeatedly.

It would be so easy to just get it over with.

The lion made up its mind. Roaring, it turned its back on the inferno and attacked the trainer. Blood . Screaming. All it saw around it was a flurry of movement. All it saw before it was redemption. As it stared into the bewildered eyes of its former oppressor, it felt a sense of contentment swell within its heart. The bullet didn't even hurt.

~Nicholas Hoffman This is not a poem

Sometime last year,
I couldn't pick out a date if you asked me,
But sometime last year,
I lost the color blue.
It left without a trace,
Leaving me in cold dead arms.
I had striking blue eyes,
Brilliant if I wore blue,
Silver tinted if I wore gray,
But now they have dulled
to a gleamless gray,
Blue holds every human emotion within
itself that we cannot expect from others.
Blue has sympathy,
Intelligence,
A level head,
It has sadness,
but none
compared to gray.
Gray is the dull life of a man
who never enjoyed childhood.
Gray contains within it the desolate
landscape of a 1945 Japanese city,
And the lazed eyes of your favorite pet.
Gray doesn't carry sadness,
Gray carries depression,
But gray carries the wisdom of the past
as well.
"The man who is a pessimist before 48
knows too much, if he is an optimist after
it he knows too little"

NESHAMINY PRIDE

it encompasses...

**integrity, discipline, hard work, respect, compassion,
generosity and perserverance in the face of challenges.**

We support our Playwickian staff!

Frank Champine, Neshaminy School District teacher 1968 to 2003

Christine Champine, Neshaminy School District nurse 1989 to 2012

Neshaminy School District taxpayers since 1971

Winter Sports Wrap-Up

Boys’ Track

Neshaminy boys’ track season saw the arrival of a new coach, Syd White. While the season may have seemed to have a rough go of it with a new coach, White has been a teacher at Neshaminy in the art department for quite some time. Senior D’Andre Pollard placed third in the state meet with a new school record in the Triple Jump of 46’ 1/2”, and made third team all-state in that event. Sean Conway qualified for states in the 400 meter dash, and placed 26 out of 29 in the four by four hundred meter relay. Overall the boys’ winter track team achieved moderate success. As the spring season gets underway the team will be looking to build on that success through hard practice and determination.

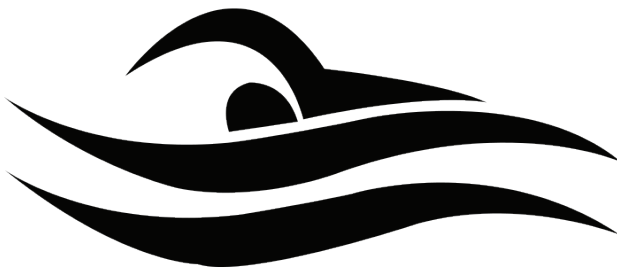


Girls’ Track

Neshaminy girls’ track had an incredible season; they qualified for Nationals in the 60 meter dash, 200 meter dash, 4x200 meter relay, 60 meter hurdles, and high jump. Dasia Pressley ended up ranking fifth in the nation in the 200 meter and is the current Pennsylvania State Champion in the 200 meter and earned third place in the 60 meter dash at the PA state meet, making first team USA Elite for both events. “It has been an honor to coach these girls and we have worked so hard throughout the season to get where we are today,” said head coach of the girls’ track team Margie Stefan. Pressley will be competing in both these events at SOL National Championships on May ninth and tenth, and in the four by two-hundred meter team which consists of, Cheyenne Oswald, Saloni Hebron, Alex Jackson, and Pressley running anchor also qualified for nationals. In the 60 meter hurdles Alyssa Zukowski qualified for state semi-finals, placed ninth overall, broke the school record and subsequently made second team USA Elite.

Boys’ Swimming

Brian Suter, head coach and science teacher, saw a record breaking season this winter. Senior Steve Keashon qualified for states, the first swimmer since 2006 to do so, and the first district medal winner since 2005. Keashon also broke two individual school records and was member of the 200 medley relay team that broke the record from 1977. Alongside Keashon were Bobby Winther, Rob Giannini, and David Kneiss who collectively achieved an automatic qualifying time and placed fifth at the state meet. Also, Keashon achieved district qualifying times and won the 200 freestyle and placed 3rd in the 500 freestyle. Rob Giannini placed fifth in the 100 meter, sixth in the 100 back and received District One consideration.



Girls’ Swimming

The relay team of Danielle Bizup, Rebecca Rodriguez, Helen Shekhterman, and Elizabeth Miller in the 200 freestyle placed second on March first broke the school record and achieved automatic district qualifying time. Elizabeth Miller also placed third in the 200 freestyle which was a district consideration time, and placed fourth in the 100 backstroke. Rebecca Rodriguez won the 50 freestyle, which was an automatic district qualifying time; also she placed second in the 100 freestyle with a district consideration time. Brian Suter’s success on both the girl and boys swimming squads was a result of a combination of experienced upperclassmen and talented underclassmen.

Boys’ Basketball

The Neshaminy boys’ basketball squad had a disappointing season this past winter. Ending the season with an overall record of three wins and nineteen losses, and a conference record of two wins and twelve losses the team had a rough winter. Leading the team was senior Jaylen Pickett, who led the team in points per game (PPG), points scored (PTS), and rebounds (REB). However, while Pickett may have had a successful season individually, the team did not, achieving a Pennsylvania state standing of a mediocre 413. In his eighth year as the boys’ varsity basketball coach Jerry Devine has a lot to build on in upcoming seasons. With the graduation of Jaylen Pickett and Juwan Lee this year, a gap will need to be filled.



Girls’ Basketball

The Neshaminy girls’ basketball team had a stellar season earning a Pennsylvania state rank of 64. Winning both rival conference games against Pennsbury, getting revenge for last season. They also are Neshaminy high school’s first team to win back-to-back conference titles. Head coach Joe Lally and the girls’ basketball squad ended the season with an overall record of sixteen wins, four losses and one tie. Giving them a conference record of thirteen wins and one loss, which allowed them to not have to compete for a seeded spot and win the Suburban One League national conference champions. But, with seniors Stephanie Donahue, Mckenna Mullin, Sarah Oliveria, and Megan Schafer graduating the team will be losing its captain and team leaders.

Boys’ and Girls’ Bowling

Ending the season with a 35-13 league record, and a 46.5-13.5 overall record the girls’ bowling team had a very successful season ending up in third place, and second place in pin totals right behind Pennsbury. The girls’ team placed seventh in the Snowroller Classic in which Kaeli McMaster won top bowler, and tenth in the Baker Tournament. The team also made it into the SOL National Division tournament. At nationals McMaster placed first, the team won a spot in Eastern Regionals, Maddie Danglo won second place in the handicapped division, and both McMaster and Beccah Edelman won spots to the singles at the Eastern Regional Championship. McMaster won 10th overall in singles at the Eastern Regional Bowling tournament and will be heading to Pittsburgh for the state singles championships. The boys bowling team ended the league season on a high note, finishing second in the SOL National Conference. On Sat. March 1 to boys team came in fourth place at regionals and will be heading to Pittsburgh for states in about two weeks.



Wrestling

This season saw the arrival of Tony Incollingo to the head coaching position of the Neshaminy wrestling program. Incollingo, who was formerly an assistant wrestling coach at Pennsbury and former wrestler at Pennsbury, began his first season at Neshaminy this year. The new assistant coaches are Jim Stewart a former Bensalem head coach, Mike Stewart a former Conwell-Egan head coach, Frank Bing a former PIAA Class AAA champion at Harry S. Truman and Joe Stablilito Sr who has coached wrestling for 43 years at Upper Dublin, William Tennent and Cardinal Dougherty. All from schools outside of the Neshaminy School District. All around the team performed well, but senior Cody Lupfer performed exceptionally well. After placing third in the regionals tournament, Lupfer will be going to the state championships in Pittsburgh, hopefully to bring back a medal.

SPORTORIAL

Philadelphia 76ers 'tanking' season

By Eric Rotteveel
Staff Writer



Sixers' Head Coach Brett Brown calls out plays on Feb. 21, against the Dallas Mavericks.
Photo Courtesy/McClatchy-Tribune

On Feb. 20 the Philadelphia 76ers traded three of their top players, Evan Turner, Spencer Hawes, and Lavoy Allen, in return for multiple second-round picks and relatively useless bench players.

With these trades, the Sixers front office assured fans of what they were thinking all along: the Sixers are losing on purpose. Many people call what the Sixers are doing 'tanking', which means they are attempting to lose as many games as possible in order to get a high pick in the draft.

With Turner and Hawes the Sixers were a bad team, but somewhat respectable. Now, they are a roster filled with inexperienced players and that have spent a majority of their career in the D-League (NBA minor league).

"If you're putting that roster on the floor, you're doing everything you can possibly do to try to lose," said former

NBA head coach Stan Van Gundy about the Sixers on a March 1, 2014 interview with nj.com.

Although the product on the floor is ugly, what the Sixers are doing is completely rational. The theory of 'tanking' is to get out of the middle of the pack in the NBA, which the Sixers have been in for years, and eventually become a title contender.

"I'd rather have the Sixers be a great team later and stink now," freshman Dan Raykovitz said. "It's better than having them be a mediocre team for a long time."

With all the top players the Sixers have traded away, as well as having the second worst record in the NBA, they have put themselves in position for not only a high-draft pick but also to have lots of money to spend on free-agents. In essence, they are sacrificing this season in hopes for major improvement in the future.

One of the main reasons that the Sixers decided to implement this strategy

is because this year's draft is one of the strongest drafts in years. Led by projected future all-stars Joel Embiid, Andrew Wiggins, Jabari Parker, and a host of strong NBA prospects, many teams believe they can get franchise-changing players from this draft.

With an almost guaranteed top-five pick, the Sixers will have to make a huge decision on draft night. Many people predict that the Sixers would take a wing player, likely Wiggins or Parker, since the point guard spot is in good hands with outstanding rookie Michael Carter-Williams and a rookie center in Nerlens Noel.

"There are a lot of players in this draft that will have successful NBA careers," freshman Nick Glicker said. "I would choose Andrew Wiggins because I think he has the most potential for the future." With likely two of the first 15 draft picks, the Sixers can bring in two more solid young players to complement Carter-Williams and Noel.

Although the season has been rough, Sixers fans at Neshaminy have lots to look forward to. With the outstanding draft class and lots of money to spend on free agents, expect a much different team on the court next year.

Dasia Pressley: Number one in state, qualifies for nationals

By Natalie Piertowski
Staff Writer

March 1 brings a new month and excitement for the much anticipated season of spring; but this year it produced unforgettable moments for the winter track team of 2014. Records were broken and dreams became reality at the Pennsylvania Track and Field Coaches Association (PTFCA) Indoor State Championships.

Neshaminy's Dasia Pressley ran the 200 meter dash and not only placed first, capturing the title of PA State Champion, but also qualified for nationals. With a record breaking time of 24.42 seconds, she is ranked fifth in the entire nation. It is the first time in Neshaminy history a sprinter has done this well.

"It's a great feeling and something I will never forget," Pressley said.

Pressure was high at state competition but Pressley kept calm and kept the faith. "I just prayed and remembered that I deserved to be here like every other girl. It still hasn't really hit me how serious this is," she said. Pressley also ran in the women's 60 meter dash and placed third. Her time of 7.66 seconds is currently the new Winter Track record. She also placed thirteenth in the nation for the 200 meter and a

It wasn't just the 200 meter champ who set new records on the track at Penn State; many other competitors gave it everything they had and left it all on the track that Saturday. High jumper Lisa Patterson finished fifteenth overall, with a total height of 1.52 meters. Patterson was just a few inches shy of beating the school record. Junior Alyssa Zukowski also finished the season nicely placing seventh overall in the 60 meter hurdles.

With a time of 9.15 seconds, Zukowski now holds the school record.

The 4x200 meter relay team made up of Pressley, Cheyenne Oswald, Alex Jackson and Saloni Hebron finished ninth overall with a time of 1 minute and 45.63 seconds.

Moving from ninth to fifth place in the nation in just one year takes as much motivation as it does dedication.

She admitted that when she got comfortable she wasn't working as hard as she wanted to. She decided to step things up and take it more seriously.

"Hard work beats talent when talent doesn't work hard," she said, explaining her motivation.

The sprinter is already planning to qualify for outdoor state championships and hopes to win big again. "Work hard, and never get comfortable because there is always someone out there trying to take your spot," Pressley said.



Pressley running the 200 meter at Lehigh on Dec. 20.

Photo/NHS Yearbook

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NESHAMINY ATHLETE OF THE ISSUE

By Reed Hennessy
Sports Editor



David Kneiss
Swimming

"I feel that this season went great, both for the team and myself, I broke a lot of personal records," sophomore swimmer David Kneiss said. In his second year on the Neshaminy swimming team, through hard work and determination Kneiss has certainly made a name for himself early on.

"As a sophomore, he has established himself as a strong competitor in all High School Events," said head coach of the swimming team and science teacher Brian Suter said. Kneiss has broken various records this year alone. Kneiss is a member of the 200 meter medley relay, in the freestyle anchor position, which broke the previous school record that was established in 1977.

Kneiss also broke the two minute barrier in the 200 meter freestyle, and the one minute barrier in the 100 meter butterfly. Overall the Neshaminy swimming team was stacked with great swimmers this year. Steve Keashon, senior at Neshaminy, is the first swimmer to qualify for states since 2006 and was also a member of the 200 meter medley relay.

"The older swimmers really make everyone feel confident and bring the energy level up," Kneiss said. Kneiss also attributes his success to the expert coaching and dedication of Suter.

"He is definitely a great coach, knows exactly what he's doing, he goes all over for us to seminars and meets, he really motivates us," Kneiss said.

"David is one of the hardest working swimmers on our team. He never backs down from a challenge in practice. He is one of the first people to arrive and last person to leave daily," Suter said.

Kneiss has already broke major ground in his two years at Neshaminy. Watching this young swimmer is certainly a spectacle to see.

Belle in blue takes home first Oscar

By Brianna Diodata
Staff Writer

Wowing critics and audiences by her breathtaking performance in “12 Years a Slave,” Academy Award winning newcomer Lupita Nyong’o has captivated everyone’s heart. Born in Mexico, but raised in Kenya, 31-year-old Yale School of Drama graduate, Nyong’o, has broken boundaries in Hollywood. Her dark flawless complexion and short haircut sets her apart from other actresses and shatters stereotypes on beauty.

During the 86th Annual Academy Awards, Nyong’o won Best Supporting Actress for her portrayal of Patsey in the film “12 Years a Slave.” She is only the sixth black actress in history to have won this award; she is also one of the few actors to receive an Oscar for her debut role.

Although this is her first feature film, Nyong’o has experience in the film industry. Before her debut role as Patsey in the award winning film “12 Years a Slave,” she directed and produced a documentary named “In My Genes” which explored albinism in Africa. She also was the lead in MTV’s drama series “Shuga” in Nov. of 2009.

Nyong’o gave a beautiful and meaningful acceptance speech: she expressed her thanks

for her new gold-man as she said, “No matter where you are from your dreams are valid.”

She also paid respect to the spirits of Patesy and other slaves while taking note that her joy had stemmed from another person’s pain. “She said everything she needed to say in that speech and she put it so eloquently,” junior Olivia Cruz said.

With societal norms and the images of beauty that society is bombarded with every day, she is helping change the definition of beautiful. A woman that looks like Lupita is not what many would normally see in mainstream advertising and magazines. With her being in the forefront of the film world, she is truly a breath of fresh air.

Model Alek Wek helped her see herself in a different light. “[Alek] was dark as night, she was on all of the runways and in every magazine and everyone was talking about how beautiful she was. Even Oprah called her beautiful and that made it a fact. I couldn’t believe that people were embracing a woman who looked so much like me as beautiful,” Nyong’o, at the Black Women in Hollywood luncheon, said. She also expressed her wants to inspire other darker skinned girls to believe in themselves.

Nyong’o will hopefully continue to inspire youths that want to get involved in the film



Lupita Nyong’o embraces “12 Years a Slave” movie director Steve McQueen at the 2014 Grammy Awards. Nyong’o won an award for “Best Supporting Actress” and motion picture “12 Years a Slave” won “Best Picture.”

Photo /McClatchy-Tribune

world that their appearance is a minute factor if a skill is there. “I remember a time when I felt unbeautiful. I put on the TV and only saw pale skin; I got teased and taunted about my night-shaded skin. And my one prayer to God, the miracle worker, was that I would wake up lighter-skinned,” Nyong’o said at the

Luncheon. “And so I hope that my presence on your screens and in the magazines may lead you... That you will feel the validation of your external beauty but also get to the deeper business of being beautiful inside. There is no shade in that beauty.”

Painter leaves her mark on Gym Night



By Heather White
Copy Editor/Archivist

Gym Night is a big event here at Neshaminy High School, and many students that participate and come to watch Gym Night tend to admire the enormous murals that hang on opposite sides of the gym. Something many of these onlookers might not know is that this year’s blue team mural was painted almost all by one person.

Senior Bridgette Brodnyan dedicated tons of time toward making the board game-themed mural. After the sketches were made and approved, she started putting her paintbrush to work during the winter break. Brodnyan painted at least five



Bridgette Brodnyan painted the majority of the mural that won all three nights of Gym Night for “Best Mural.” Her mural perfectly portrayed the 61st Gym Night theme of “Across the Board.”

Photo/Bridgette Brodnyan

hours a day during the week and around 10 hours a day on weekends.

In addition to spending so much time with the mural, Brodnyan also designed the blue team T-shirts and the programs. Outside of Gym Night, she makes sure art is a part of her daily routine, as she has been in the Advanced Art Program since

her freshman year. “Bridgette is not satisfied until she gets every little brush stroke or tone with the pencil just right, and in the end her artwork is just beautiful,” Mrs. O’Neill, Brodnyan’s art teacher, said.

Brodnyan also has many friends that are amazed with how talented she is. Alanna Parker,

a senior classmate of Brodnyan, shares Advanced Art three with her every morning.

“She is an amazing human being with an immense amount of talent that any artist should be jealous of,” Parker said.

Not only is Brodnyan’s artistic talent recognized here at Neshaminy, but she also has a painting called “Marilyn” in the 27th Annual PSEA Touch the Future Exhibit at Arcadia University, along with another painting to be featured in an art show at Bucks County Community College.

“I love art in any aspect, but I love it especially when I can take a photograph and recreate it almost exactly and with painting I can do that,” Brodnyan said. Even though she is not going to be an art major in college, Brodnyan is confident that she will definitely continue painting independently while majoring in business marketing.



Prom is a'comin

By Monica Dinh
Entertainment Editor

With prom season right around the corner, dresses are in high demand. Styles range from princess ball gowns and pastel colors to slim fit mermaids and corset dresses.



Photo/XO Formals

This year prom dress trends have taken

a turn towards seductive, yet still elegant. “I really like simplicity, I feel like a lot of girls try to show as much skin as possible and tack on thousands of jewels, but the prettiest dresses tend to be the classiest and cleaner ones,” junior Molly McDonald said.

Many retailers are offering the corset dress which has an illusion fabric that creates a see through panel in the center of the dress making it quite daring. Other trends include dresses



with soft, light, fluent qualities in colors like blush pink and striking navy. Black actually seems to be missing from action

this year as navy blue begins to dominate.

Prom dresses are available on a budget as well. Websites like Rent the Runway and Etsy are a couple of popular places known for good deals. Rent the Runway allows customers to rent high end designer apparel from four to eight days. Dress prices range from \$30 to over \$200. As an added bonus, a second size of the rented item will be sent to every customer free of charge. The site also rents jewelry, handbags, and shoes.

Etsy is a website known for vintage and handmade clothing created and curated by people all around the world. Since some sellers are making handmade dresses, this requires customers to send in personal measurements, which reduces time on the hassle of alterations later on. It can be a real benefit and time saver. On Etsy, the ability to find unique dresses is endless.



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Graphic/Corey LaQuay

Blue team monopolizes Gym Night

By Tim Cho

Student Life and Web Editor

Another year, another chapter to be added in the history books of Neshaminy. The 61st annual Gym Night was just as intensely exciting as any other. This year's theme of "Across the Board" took Neshaminy through the various board games that both participants and observers cherished throughout their lives. Despite the raging rivalry between the Blue Team, students with last names ranging A to K, and the Red Team, students with last names L to Z, Neshaminy pride mingled with student unity.

The eight teams, two per grade, performed their dance exhibition for the audience and judges hoping that they would triumph over the other team. The Blue freshmen, responsible for the board game of "Guess Who?" were led by Megan Campbell and Zach Boop against the victorious Rachel Sufrin, Chad Wiatrowski and the Red freshmen, in charge of "Mouse Trap." Power couple Abby Bedesem and Daulton Fox brought the Blue sophomores to victory against the Red sophomores, steered by Olivia Zaino and Eric Schaefer.

"Monopoly" was led by Madison Dierolf, Cale Kitchenman and the Blue juniors. They defeated the Red juniors, by a majority of two nights, with the theme of "Chess," led by Ben Matzke and Madison Murray. Lastly, the Blue seniors took on "Candy Land" with Ton Do-Ngyuen and Kylie Dumke, vanquishing the Red seniors' "Clue," led by Addie Sufrin and Nick Zaino as captains. The color captains, responsible for the overview of their respective team, were led by Danielle Donlon and Jeremy Diamond for the Blue Team; Calli Vasilarakis and Ryan Sheplock representing the Red Team.

Despite Blue's victory breaking the Red's two year streak, captains on both

teams had no hard feelings; they held only the highest respect for the students they led and the ones they competed against.

Red junior captain Matzke held no grudges even though he tasted defeat. "I don't mind that we lost, I had fun and I'm pretty sure everyone on my team did. We are a family," he said.

Nonetheless, Gym Night brings together Neshaminy students through competition, but by the end of Saturday night's performance, the only emotions felt were the ones felt by Blue sophomore captain Bedesem—"I was happy, sad, relived and especially tired!" Happy, because Gym Night is an unforgettable event that highlights the high school journey at Neshaminy. Sad, because participants and observers must wait another year until Gym Night returns.

The participants, especially the captains, felt relieved that the hard work needed to make Gym Night what it is over for now. The captains are sure to agree with Do-Ngyuen when he said, "It's so stressful but so rewarding at the same time, and in the end, I can say that it was such a huge part of what makes my high school experience so special."

While "Across the Board" rolled the dice in favor of Blue Team, every participant pulled through the late nights rehearsing their dances, through the exhausting after-school practices and through the final moment as they waited for the call to enter onto the gym floor regarding who the winning team was.

Neshaminy is one of the few schools in the region that has a school-wide event like Gym Night and Red Team color captain Calli Vasilarakis described it as, "one of if not the greatest experience I had in high school and I would not trade it for all the money in the world. It was so amazing and a lot of fun and I'm so grateful to have had the experience!"

Gym Night brings together students from any and every aspect of Neshaminy. For better and for the worse, Gym Night is guaranteed to exhibit the true meaning of Neshaminy pride among students, teachers, staff members, parents and community members.

The freshmen have just tasted what Gym Night offers, while seniors now only have an aftertaste of their "unforgettable" memories they shared with each other, as Matzke wistfully said.

Do-Ngyuen, known for his sensational version of Beyoncé's "Countdown," had a pearl of wisdom for the future Gym Night participants—"Just go out there and own the moment. Work it. What would Beyoncé do?"

To his fellow Red senior captains and color captains, he had a few parting words. "Dani, I love you so much and I'm so happy with what we were able to accomplish out there. Jeremy, you've been the perfect addition to our team and a perfect color captain. Calli and Ryan, it's been a fun ride with you guys!"

Gym Night may be over, but the memories it has and will forge has just begun for seniors and freshmen alike. Gym Night director Amy Geruc led yet another successful Gym Night and loved it. "I love the memories that are created," she said.

Geruc's last words to her seniors as Gym Night director are, "Never forget the memories. Gym Night is a unique event that many schools admire and want to duplicate."

All of the captains faced various obstacles, but produced another awe-inspiring year. To Vasilarakis, this year may have been the last one for her, but has no regrets of embarking upon a journey alongside her fellow seniors. "I'll always remember all the great times we had together."