Hey students, we have a huge surprise for you! So, make sure, you get your rears in gear and possibly your dancing shoes on. For the past 2 years, we have been under lockdown, just staring at our screens and isolating ourselves. As some activities transition back online, many after school clubs and sports are starting to open up. However, that’s not the only thing coming back to FHS. An exciting student event is returning on February 20, at Sportsman’s Hall, as we host our Winter Formal. This marks our first dance open to all students since Homecoming 2019 and Winter Formal 2020. This year’s winter formal isn’t sponsored by the school, but it's organized by our upperclassmen. Our upperclassmen are excited for this event since we haven’t had a dance in over two years! They have decided it’s a way to reconnect with one another, create a stress-free environment, and a reward for our hardworking students. Although Covid-19 is still present and cases are rising higher and higher, the dance is still proceeding. While the Omicron variant has infected many over the past few months, cases seem to be trending in the downward direction just in time for the dance. Still, many safety protocols will be in place to ensure that students can have a great time, all while remaining conscious of the latest pandemic developments. Safety protocols include the enforcement of a mask mandate as well as the requirement that all attendees show proof of vaccination (does not include a booster) or a negative test within two days of the event.

While most are excited to attend, some students are weary due to the Omicron variant. For other students, they don’t see the problem and see this is an opportunity to make some high school memories and have fun with friends. After all, our students deserve to have an event like this after being isolated from one another and in lockdown for a while.

Class of 2023 President Ricky Bridges, who assisted in the organization of the dance, is glad to see the plans proceed, even though he has some worries about the gathering. “I think it’s important to note that hosting a dance doesn’t mean automatic chaos and disorder, just like not having a dance doesn’t guarantee safety and order automatically,” Ricky says. “It’s all about doing what’s best for you and taking care of yourself.”

For most students, they are glad the upperclassmen are able to plan an event like this. After all, we haven’t had one since the 2019-2020 school year. “I feel pretty excited, and I’d be lying if I said I wasn’t nervous for obvious reasons,” Bridges noted. “But I think it'll be fun, and I hope people will have a good time.” Having this dance occur is a huge privilege since most of our students’ high school experiences have been cut short due to the lockdown. Even though the Winter Formal is not at Franklin, it’s nice to have an alternative from the homecoming we never got this year. Continued on page 2.
The Gazette

Covid vs. Winter Formal: Winter Formal is Back in Town

By Fiona Durante

While hosting the dance is a huge responsibility, it’s nice to have an event where we don’t feel depressed from Covid-19 and the new life that we had to adapt to. It gives our students some teen normalcy for once and the opportunity to make memories. “I’m really glad that students are planning a school dance because we were stuck inside for quite some time,” junior Bintu Bah says. “I think it sucks missing out on so much high school experiences because of Covid so having a dance is nice,” junior Stephanie Huynh added. “I hope it’s enjoyable and people stay safe.”

So, let’s thank our student leaders, seniors Logan Dubel and Alaina Hetrick and juniors Ricky Bridges and Keira Hardesty, along with all class officers, for creating this privilege for our students who haven’t been able to go to a dance since 2019. To ensure safety at the event, security guards will be present.

Ticket sales are now open to all FHS students. If you plan to buy tickets, which cost $30 each and include a snack, please go to the @franklinhigh2022 & @franklinhigh2023 Instagram accounts. If you plan to go, hopefully you have a great and safe time!

Ending Fighting at Franklin

By Ronald Edmund Jr.

On December 2nd, our 1st period was interrupted by recent news of violence in our school. Rumors swirled around about a potential stabbing or a massive brawl of many students, but it was reported to be a fight between two girls that resulted in one student being sent to the hospital with head trauma. The student was then escorted to the hospital via airlift.

“It was scary knowing that a student would actually harm another student like that,” junior Chiagozie Iyke-Azobogu reflected.

Things need to change within our school to help better deescalate tension between students and make it a safer place, but how would we act upon this? We asked junior Fiona Durante to explain how she feels about this unfortunate violence on campus.

“Students should be encouraged to go to a guidance counselor without punishment to mediate their grievances with another student,” she said. Additionally, having a school psychologist readily available to students to deescalate problems would stop lots of the anger-based violence in our school.

A realistic solution might include having a room where angry students can go to calm down. In this room, there could be calm music, magazines featuring stress management strategies, and most importantly, a trusted adult to talk to. Lots of times when students get angry it’s because they have bottled up all their emotions, causing them to explode. Having a place where they can decompress would allow them to cool down safely and effectively.

Lots of students have different viewpoints on stopping the fighting going on in our school. Sophomore Ibaad Abassi wants stricter punishments for those who choose violence. He explained, “Students will do what they are allowed to get away with so a zero-tolerance policy to violence with automatic suspension would set a strong tone. I am in favor of strict punishment, but we also need to ensure that we are tackling reforming efforts as well. We want to make sure students learn and grow so that they never commit these acts again.”

Expert Elizabet Fry, an English prison reformer, said, “Punishment is not for revenge, but to lessen crime and reform the criminal. This means that changing someone so they don’t choose violence as a first option, will make them better people, and will lessen the violence in their environment.” This is applicable to our school because when students are peaceful, our school environment will improve.

Stopping the violence within our school begins with how we as students interact and respect one another. Treat everyone the way you would wish to be treated, and we will see instant results of fewer altercations in our school.

Franklin High School is typically a safe place. Now, that reputation is under attack, and we’re looking for solutions.
Preparing for AP Exams at Franklin High School

By Aryaan Khan

Countless students at Franklin High School are taking multiple AP classes. Most of the students do so because it earns them college credit and demonstrates mastery of college-level material. Popular AP courses include United States History, Psychology, Environmental Science, English, and Computer Science.

Some of these courses are extremely challenging and most students must develop studying habits to do well in them. One of the most obvious ways to prepare for the upcoming AP exams is to simply study, but there are also some other methods students use to do extremely well and earn their college credit.

Junior Alec Nahum has a lot of experience taking AP exams and courses throughout high school. “If you don’t get the score you expected to get, don’t stress about it because you still gained the experience that you will need in college,” Alec reflected. He describes taking AP exams almost as a rollercoaster because if you are taking multiple tests, then you must study relentlessly and invest a lot of time in the process.

Some students are taking their first AP courses and AP Exams this year. For example, junior Hamaad Abbasi is taking his first three AP courses, totaling four different exams. “I’m taking AP Economics, which has two exams, AP Psychology, and AP English. My exams costs around $400, so I better pass them all!”

“I would recommend looking at each of your class syllabuses and review the material you will learn in preparation for the exam,” junior Chiagozie Iyke-Azobogu added.

Deadlines to register for AP Exams have already passed. Franklin High students can check to see if their AP Exams have been confirmed by accessing the college board website and clicking on their AP courses.
Lawyers In Action: Franklin’s Mock Trial Team
By Lindsay Adjei

Of Franklin’s wide variety of teams, Mock Trial is unique in its goal and competitions. In Mock Trial, members of the group stage a real-life scene with attorneys, witnesses, and a real judge presiding over the court. School teams go against each other from all around the world in tournaments to see which team has the best case, lawyers, and witnesses. Personally, I also have gotten the opportunity to be on the team and wanted to share the experiences I have had with fellow students.

Kicking off our first trial! The team smiles after their first victory against McDonough. You can see more pictures and updates like this on our Instagram @franklinacademyoflaw.

“Our team participates in a national competition in the fall and a state competition in the spring,” explained Ms. Amos, Mock Trial team coach. “On Wednesday, January 12, our varsity team began its state season as the Defense counsel versus a strong McDonough plaintiff team. We won the trial handily, and it was a fantastic way to start this season.” As a member of the team it was exciting to watch and learn from our first trial of the virtual season. “Every trial is fun and a great learning experience, but a ‘win’ makes it that much better. We hope to go undefeated in the regular season and continue on to the state playoffs in February,” Ms. Amos elaborated.

Past memories of previous trips. For in-person trials, the team travels to compete against other schools. This is an image from one of our past trips to Pennsylvania.

“Virtual trials are different mostly because you miss the ‘feel’ of a real courtroom. In a normal season, we go to the county courthouse in Towson to try our cases. It is much harder to get focused and ‘in the zone’ when we compete in virtual trials. Also, when the attorneys compete all from home independently, there is no opportunity for them to confer/discuss with one another as the case progresses. This makes it much more difficult.”

As a newer team member this makes it harder to understand real trials because many of the elements are lost in translation in a virtual format. Courtroom procedure has an entirely new approach and makes learning experiences very different. All the new members have become familiar with virtual along with in-person trials through past recordings but have yet to have the opportunity for an in-court trial.

Every year, try-outs are available for everyone in school to get an opportunity to be on the team and be able to be part of the experience. Ms. Amos even gave us some advice for those who are interested in joining next year.

“For anyone who wants to try out for the team next November, my advice would be to be very confident in yourself and who you are. We look for students that have personalities that really shine when giving a direct or cross examination of a witness, and personalities that shine when you are a witness on the stand. We look for dedication and hard work as well, because Mock Trial is a huge time commitment.”

The team looks forward to starting off the season with a win and all the new members looking to join next year.
You Like Jazz? Stay Tuned For Jazz Night!

By Laila Roodbari

Music, a great thing that can help us relax, focus, give us something to sing or dance to, or just simply enjoy listening to it. It’s such an amazing thing since it contains various genres, and everyone has their own preference, which is why FHS invites all music lovers out there to Jazz Night right here at school!

After nearly a year and a half of being virtual, members of jazz band will finally be able to perform for this night in person! Since the beginning of November students have been preparing for this event, which will take place on February 24th, at 7:00 PM in the auditorium.

Various songs will be performed by the hard-working members who play instruments such as saxophones, trumpets, guitars, and percussion. Not only will it just be FHS, but other communities as well! FHS will be combined with Franklin Middle and the Reisterstown Jazz Ensemble.

"Biggest thing I’m looking forward to is collaborating with the middle school and the Reisterstown Jazz Ensemble," said band teacher, Mr. Kessell.

This is an exciting time for our jazz band but at the same time very tense due to Covid and the impacts that it has had. Due to new Covid restrictions, practices have been reduced, making some students nervous for the upcoming night.

“I’m a little nervous because of Covid and the fact that it’s hard to get rehearsals,” said junior Bradley Flam.

“The only thing that’s nerve wracking is not having any rehearsals since before winter break, so hopefully we can get some more,” said Mr. Kessell.

Unfortunately, Covid has made the preparations for jazz night rough, but what’s most important is the hard work that has been put in so far for this concert. It’s not only just about putting on a concert, but also having fun with it. Students have said that jazz band is fun and gives them something extra to do.

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“This would be my second Jazz Night and the first time I play it in a high school concert,” junior Jonathan Young explained. “The nerves are there but I’m ready to put on a show and show what we as a band have been doing.”

Despite troubles with Covid, the band has put a lot of effort and time into this concert and hopes to see the community there. There is no cost; come on by and enjoy the music. We hope to see you there!
The Inside of the National Art Honor Society

By Mariana Noyola-Hernandez

Not everyone is a fan of creating art, but those who are form part of the National Art Honor Society or NAHS for short. This year there are about 20 to 30 students participating who enter in room 40 every 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month from 2 pm to 3 pm. Their first reunion started in September. In each of their gatherings their routine starts with an introduction given by Ms. Campbell and Ms. Shuman who are the teachers in charge. They guide, give tips, and participate in their activities that they plan. “Generally, we introduce the activity that we are doing for the day,” said Ms. Campbell. “It could be anything from designing stickers or painting a mural.” In the National Art Honor Society, students can decide to work in groups or individually. The club gives students a chance to socialize. “It is a space where you can share your passion with others while also making our school a beautiful artistic space,” said student president of the club, senior Fatima Noyola-Hernandez. Her role as president lets her participate and encourage other members. She makes sure that each member is in their Schoology group, helps plan activities, and comes up with ideas that could help the club, like a web page that she created as a prototype to potentially become a real thing in the future. The purpose of NAHS is to promote the art classes so students can become inspired to take one in the future. NAHS welcomes students who don’t have space for art classes in their schedule, so they can have an extra hour in their days to learn and create. Joining is not complicated; it is just a matter of walking in and showing your capabilities and interest for art as well as the school community.

What Students Want to Change for the New Year

By Desean Walker

Some say this year has been terrible, especially for our learning, so I asked a few students what they would like to change this year. The majority said go back to virtual life because they felt it was easier than waking up uncomfortable every morning.

Junior Jamari Lewis said what he wanted to change was to “make the class shorter times because with everything that’s going on most students can become overwhelmed with the amount of work and class time periods.”

While some may agree, most kids need more time for help and the longer class periods help teachers accomplish more. Sophomore Dontrell Hart said that he wanted the principal to allow us to go to restaurants at lunchtime because most of us do not eat school lunches a lot.
Admit It...You Are Procrastinating on an Assignment Right Now

By Rachael Harbus

Picture this: you come home from school around 5:30pm after a long day of school and sports practice. You plan to relax and watch TikTok for only 30 minutes. Instead, you fall asleep and wake up about 2 hours later. You decide to watch TikToks in order to wake up. The planned 30 minutes turns into 4 hours. It’s now 11:30pm. You still have 4 assignments you are now scrambling to complete before that 11:59 deadline. You are stressed out, overwhelmed, and fearful of getting points taken off for a late assignment.

This phenomenon is known as PROcrastination. It is harmful to your mental health, hurts your time management, and impacts academic performance.

Procrastination can happen in a classroom, too. When asked if students have a problem with procrastinating, social studies teacher Ms. Brantley stated:

“I do think that students have a problem with procrastinating. And you know some of that is because they can see the last time that an assignment is available to be submitted, and so they think of that as the deadline, and it discourages students from working in advance, unless they are like intrinsically motivated to do so. I think that generally, students also have a lot going on, and so you are constantly trying to decide what's most important and make choices, and that's a logical decision. So, procrastinating isn't all bad particularly if it is first about you making choices about what needs to be done first. Some procrastination is just total avoidance, and some is psychological. Most of us have procrastinated so there are real reasons to do it, and it's all about cost-benefit analysis, and sometimes social stuff is more important than school. Or one class is more important than another, and that's just reality.”

The most common reason for students’ procrastination is dislike of having to do the assignment. They are either uninterested or tired, leading to decreased motivation. This explains why some students will purposely procrastinate to increase their motivation the closer the deadline approaches. While this may work, mentally, it’s not the healthiest option.

Many students are anxious about getting an assignment wrong and getting a bad grade, so they procrastinate. But because they wait until the last minute, the work may not be the best, resulting in a bad grade. It becomes a vicious cycle when the main reason students get bad grades in the first place is because of procrastination.

A student’s homelife may also cause procrastination. There are many households that push their kids to get all A’s with little or no mistakes in their schoolwork, increasing a student’s anxiety to be perfect all the time. It can also lead to resentment towards school in general, making the student unwilling to complete schoolwork.

One of the best ways to prevent procrastination is to start an assignment the day you get it. If it is due in a few days, set a small amount each day. For example, if you have an assignment due in 4 days and you think that it will take you 4 hours, do an hour per day.

A great way to make sure that you have enough time to do your assignment is to overestimate the amount of time you think it will take. For example, if you think your science project is going to take 2 hours, double it. You may not need 4 hours, but there is nothing wrong with extra time.

In conclusion, procrastination is a very common enemy of a student’s school career, but the fight against this enemy is still the student’s choice.

A stressed high school student attempting to do an overabundance of schoolwork, which piled up from her long day at school and sports practice. Image from greatcollegeadvice.com.

When students wait until the last minute to do assignments, they end up rushing their work. When work is rushed, it is typically not their best work and would not get the best grade. This could lead to a student failing the course, or worse, dropping out.

Studies show that about 80%–95% of college students procrastinate to some degree. Research also shows that procrastination is common among middle and high school students.

When asked if they procrastinate, Franklin students answered affirmatively. “Sometimes I do, depending on the situation. If the work is a lot, then I end up procrastinating,” senior Natalie Lisitsa said. “Yes, because I don’t like doing schoolwork, and it makes me tired,” senior Danielle Shelter replied.
Importance of students mental health as schools reopened

By Genesis Iglesias

Students have had to do one and a half school years online. The reentry of school these past two quarters has affected students and their mental health both positively and negatively.

Freshmen of 2020 didn’t get to have the experience of being in high school for the very first time; they had to adapt to a new environment with new people, a new building, and many more responsibilities. “I’ve been really stressed because of school. School online was worse, but since I didn’t get to experience my freshman year, it’s even more difficult for me to keep up with everything,” sophomore Maya Goris says. The mental health of students is suffering because of the transition back to into school. “I feel like giving more time to turn in assignments and limiting the work we do receive would help because we have eight classes that all give us work in a limited amount of time, and this is stressful for students transitioning back into school after almost two years of virtual school that only had four classes each semester.” “I feel like less work may also benefit teachers because I understand that not only do they have eight class periods, but they also have thirty max students in each class that they have to grade work for,” sophomore Maya Goris explains.

Other students have had struggles, but overall a better experiences this new school year. “My mental health hasn’t been the best these past two quarters. I’ve had highs and lows, but so far first quarter has been the best for me mentally. I was more motivated during the first quarter, and had goals to achieve,” junior Trinity Hicks claims. “I was also happy with going back to school so I could socialize, but as school goes on I feel less motivation. I feel I am being overworked, especially since I have after school activities like dance and clubs. It seems like I never have a chance to take a break because I am constantly doing something.”

Students have been changing up their work ethic since first quarter. “I’ve seen a shift in my work ethic that I wish to improve by not being afraid to take mental health breaks, putting unrealistically high expectations on myself, and overfilling my plate,” Trinity Hicks explains. “I want to see a shift in my work ethic and set better goals for myself for the following quarters.”

If you or someone you know is struggling with their metal health, you can follow these tips to help improve your mental health. According to The Clay Center for Young Healthy Minds, “Teens and young adults today are more stressed, anxious, depressed and lonely than ever… Additional forces plaguing Gen Z and college-age millennials include worries about their future, from climate change to economic and job uncertainty; concerns about image; academic pressures to meet or exceed perfection; and being overscheduled with demands to ‘do it all’ — school, community service, sports, arts, family, and religious activities, etc.”

One of the tools the Clay Center for Young Healthy Minds suggests as a good way to deal with poor mental health is “carving out time.” This means making a schedule for yourself to follow and allow it to become a habit of getting things done. Meditation, exercise, and yoga are also tools you may use to calm your mind and can “promote relaxation while reducing anxiety, depression, and stress.”

You should be taking care of yourself. Not getting enough sleep can affect a person’s physical and emotional state. “Most young people need eight to nine hours of restful sleep to function at their best.”

Having creative expression and putting your phone down to focus on other activities can help clear your mind and bring happiness in doing something you love. Also, doing small things like “playing with a pet, meeting and communicating with friends, appreciating nature, or doing something for someone else,” can bring you joy, less stress, and may serve as a healthy distraction.

Graphic from www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org giving tips to deal with stress.
If you haven’t finished this assignment, it’s due by 11:59.” “This is due by 11:59 tonight.”

11:59 has been a trending topic for over two years as the only thing that motivates students to turn in work. But this has brought us to raise the question of are we learning or just submitting things by 11:59? Virtual school in 2020-2021 caused students to log out, lose focus, and cheat their work ethic.

“Turning in work can be a scare tactic because you’re just rushing to turn in work without actually trying your best. You just don’t want a missing in your grade book,” said freshman Imani Weaver.

Virtual and in-person school has been described as the light switch where students must adapt quickly in either situation. The dark side, known as virtual school, posed mental health struggles and new ways of learning. The 2020-2021 school year was virtual until March 2021. During the virtual year students were forced to log into the Google Meets, see their teacher lagging due to slow wifi, and not actually pick up on everything they were saying. The lessons were jammed packed into one semester for four classes and changed the way our students learn and process things.

“Virtual learning has effected the way that I learn,” freshman Imani Weaver explained. “Having to switch from doing a lot of work on paper to having to do everything on the computer. It makes it harder after doing all your work online and now going back to somewhat [using] paper.”

Grades suffered from students’ mental health struggle and not taking in information from the lessons. Virtual school has proven to not be as hands-on for every student as in-person learning is. Many students described the 2020-2021 school year as surviving and turning things in by 11:59 just to get good grades.

This school year as we are in person has not been fully going the way everyone wanted it to go. The light switch is turned back on and now are students are yet forced again to be thrown into lions’ mouth of school. Teachers are on students’ minds the first week of school. Not to mention our students have new ways of learning. “Some of my teachers rush the lessons,” said sophomore Sam Roemer. Some lessons haven’t been as thorough for students to fully take in and learn things; some students aren’t as motivated to do anything about it and to want to learn, so for those, everything has become about being due at 11:59.

In-person lessons have been described as a skim through what you should learn, but there isn’t much patience with the time students need. Some students describe it as harder to focus after switching back and forth because they aren’t used to the schedule. “Me personally, I’m just submitting work to just get good grades and to make my report card look nice,” elaborated Imani Weaver. “I don’t actually think I’m learning throughout the school year. It’s more of remembering what you learned that quarter to complete any test and then moving on to the next without ever looking at it again.”

Many students have gotten used to the idea of virtual learning and now aren’t fitting in to the standards of in-person learning. They describe it as overwhelming. Sam Roemer believes she learns much better virtually. “Now it is much harder to maintain good grades,” she says. Virtual school presents as the viable option for students concerning their health and safety. The reigning idea and perception to students is that they can just wake up and get on a Google Meet class which helps them learn better from their quiet home instead of the current situation with kids in the classroom.

People are torn because on one side virtual school poses risk to mental health, and in-person school poses risk to physical health with Covid.
Teen Relationships
By Dannah Tinio

Secret admirers, prom dates, homecoming dates, sneaking out to see your lover, and high school sweethearts are all parts of a teenager’s idealization of romance. Movies tend to incline a teen’s want for a relationship but now-adays social media has the ability to do this, too. Especially the infamous social media app, Tiktok.

Relationship videos are considerably popular on Tiktok, meaning they reach a good amount of viewers and could possibly affect them in a certain way.

“Sometimes, I wonder how people can find someone that fits them.” Not only did freshman Bea Montances explain how she was curious about people finding the perfect match, but she also wondered when it would be her turn.

Similar to Bea, junior Fiona Durante talked about how she could feel a sense of hope that love will come to her eventually, but in a way, the relationship-based Tiktoks make her feel lonely.

Because of how these Tiktoks made them feel, I also questioned if it made them want to be in a relationship now, whether or not it was something they’ve never majorly thought about before. “There are times where I have wanted a relationship, but at the same time I feel like I’m not ready for it. It never hurts to always reach out and try,” Bea disclosed.

Despite this, we should still be reminded that we are students in high school who shouldn’t be too focused on our love life. “It’s like a sense of them growing up and experimenting for themselves, so they know what they want in the future,” Fiona said when describing her thoughts about high school relationships. Bea showed an identical response explaining how she believes high school relationships can show you what you look for in a person later on in life.

It’s good to know that it’s okay to want or to admire being in a relationship, but it shouldn’t be a top priority or worry that it causes you to feel sad all the time simply because you aren’t in one.

Hashtags

#relationshipadvice
4.4B views

#relationshiptips
4.6B views

#relationshipcoach
223.9M views

With 4 billion views under relationship advice and relationship tip videos, we can assume just how much people enjoy and find this content useful.

The high school relationship we all idealized when we were younger! (Troy and Gabriella from Highschool Musical)
How Seasons Affect our Mood
By Naza Nnagbo

The "winter blues" feeling
“I feel worse during summer, but it was only recently I started to feel like that” freshman Kathy Velasquez says when being asked if she feels differently during summer and fall/winter.

Seasonal Affective Disorder or SAD is a mood depression related to changes in seasons and begins and ends at the same time each year. It usually affects people ages 18-30 and affects 4 times as many women than men. The mood changes are due to decreased sunlight and lack of vitamin D, which affects mood-balancing serotonin levels. SAD is also connected to an overproduction of melatonin, which causes sleepiness. Symptoms include anxious feelings, irritability, fatigue, decreased energy, and thoughts of death or suicide according to MentalHealth.gov.

Winter is linked with higher risks of suicide because of the fewer hours of daylight. The longer periods of daylight in summer months have been associated with increased mood, the University if Utah Health Department states in “The Scope.”

“I feel better now compared to summer time because coming out of virtual classes was a bit stressful and not as social as it usually is. My everyday routine was just repetitive and boring,” Sapphire Iregrader- beck responds to how different she feel now compared to summer.

Virtual school might have impacted how differently people felt in certain seasons, because now it’s winter time, less sunlight but more social interaction. During online school, it was warmer, sunny, but less time outdoors or socializing.

Foggy weather in my neighborhood January 1st that made me feel very sluggish and lazy.

December 31st still looking foggy

Common treatments of seasonal depression:
Light therapy can be combined with psychotherapy.
Exercise and spend more time outside to increase vitamin D levels.
Create social situations. Colder temperatures tend to make people stay at home which results in less social interaction. Socializing can lift your spirit.
The Importance of Giving Back to The Community
By Kylie Beveridge

"We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give." - Winston Churchill

Many people are selfish with their time and effort, but not freshman Alexi Beveridge. She cares about where she came from and devotes most her time and effort to make many people happy. People should care about and protect their communities. Three reasons giving back to her community is important are because her community has done so much for her, she takes so much pride in where she’s from, and because people need to see how wonderful the community is.

In case if you did not know, a community is a particular group of people living in the same place that have a certain characteristic in common. The lives of the people who live in communities are closely related and involved with one another. Giving back to the community, no matter how big or small or in what way, will improve lives, build, or re-store relationships, and provide personal growth.

There are many ways to give back to the community. A few of these ways include money, time, and attitude. Money is, of course, essential to living, therefore a huge amount of money would be helpful but giving money is not always necessary.

Alexi is a baker and a dog lover, so she decided one day in the summer that she was going to have a bake sale to give back to the dogs and collect money for the dogs who don’t have a home and who need food and just some more love! She also loves to volunteer at the dog shelter.

She said that “It’s a feel-good thing. Being an animal shelter volunteer at the CCSPCA makes you feel like you are doing the right thing. You are contributing to the solution, which makes you feel good about the work you are doing. After spending time with the animals, whether it’s taking them for a walk, giving them a bath or just showing them some love, their personalities come out and they start to shine. You can almost see the change in their behavior instantly. Now, that is something entirely rewarding.”

The Benefits of a College Education
By Ronald Edmund Jr.

From a young age, we are told that we must go to college so we can get a good job, but is this true? With other options like trade school, entering the workforce, and community college, why would students spend the extra money or put themselves in debt to pursue careers they could pursue elsewhere? The answer is to build connections and network, the college experience, and better immediate job opportunities and job security.

In college, whether you go to a big or small school, you are exposed to many different types of people from all around the world. You get to broaden your horizons and be exposed to new things preparing you to enter adulthood. Junior Bradley Flam said, “I am excited for college because it is your last few years to feel like a kid before adulthood.” You get to explore what you like and don’t like and find who you are as a person.

The dorm experience may not be for everyone, but you get to develop a bond with your roommates that will last for a lifetime and will leave college with a lifetime of stories to relay.

Through college you get to meet people who can offer you internships and connections to get a head start in your profession. Entrepreneurs and job recruiters are always looking for hard working college students who can help grow their companies. Junior Muhammad Wasay said, “I want to pursue computer science, and to get a good job, I will intern with a few startup companies for experience.”

Some alternative options to college could be going to trade school, then directly pursuing a career in a field in automotive, plumbing, or electrical work. Also, if you want to go to college but want less of a financial burden, you can go to community college for 2 years, then transfer to another college and get your degree from there. This allows you to not have to pay for expensive general education courses that have nothing to do with your major.

Although many skilled labor jobs or entry level office jobs don’t require college degrees for application, a college degree is still a big advantage. When two job applicants have identical qualifications, but one has a college degree and one is without one, the applicant with a degree will almost always get the job. This due to a higher level of education and more experience networking and working with diverse groups of people. College is a great experience and will help you grow as a person before adulthood and as a professional in the real world. If you have a chance to go, consider it seriously, because it could set you up socially and financially.
Many students at FHS grew up with the Indie horror game Five Nights at Freddy’s. I am one of those many kids. The game was created by Scott Cawthon. The first game was released on August 8, 2014. The game takes place in a Chuck-E-Cheese like pizzeria that has 4 animatronics. You take the role of a security guard, who stays static within the security office. There are two doors, one to your left, one to your right, lights on both doorways, and a security camera. Every night you receive a call from the phone guy, who gives details and insights into the restaurant’s tragic history. As the night progresses, the animatronics begin to move, trying to make their way into your office. You must prevent them from getting in using the doors, security cams, and flashlight while making sure you do not deplete the battery. You start at 12 am and must survive until 6 am. As you progress through each night, the animatronics move more frequently, and it becomes harder to survive. If you survive all 5 nights, you can do night 6, an ultra-hard night. The franchise would carry this structure throughout FNAF 1-8, with changes to the animatronics, the environments, and their mechanics.

The franchise has a total of 9 games, FNAF (Five Nights at Freddy’s), FNAF 2, FANF 3, FNAF 4, FNAF: Sister Location, Freddy Fazbears Pizzeria Simulator, Ultimate Custom Night, and the newest game that got released is FNAF Security Breach. Security Breach was released on December 16, 2021. With the new game came a huge new cast of characters such as Glamrock Freddy, Glamrock Chica, Montgomery Gator, Roxanne Wolf, Vanny, Vanessa, DJ Music Man, S.T.A.F.F. Bots, the Endoskeletons, Sundrop, and Moondrop. You play as Gregory, a kid who gets stuck within the Pizzaplex, and must survive until 6 am.

So far, I have only watched gameplay videos from youtuber Markiplier, and wow, the game is buggy. Steel Wool, the developers of Security Breach, stated that the game was released in an unfinished state, as the publisher would no longer allow Steel Wool to delay the game any longer. The merchandise had already been out for months, and fans were getting antsy. While the game was buggy, I enjoyed the map. There are so many details, and I enjoy how open and interactive it is. It’s a nice change from the other games where we just stay in the same room (minus Sister Location because you had to crawl through vents).

While the game is fun, there’s a lot of bugs, among other issues. There are many times when the animatronics would just appear behind you when they’re not supposed to or will stand right outside a hiding spot so that it is impossible to leave that hiding spot. In the daycare when Moondrop comes out, you can easily escape the daycare by climbing up some of the play structures and jumping over the net. The game file size is a whopping 80 gigabytes — 712 times the size of the first FNAF game. Most of the files are unused content, voice lines, animations, whole pieces and sections of the map completely cut, probably due to the rushed release date. Also, the game remains unoptimized, making running the game at high quality very difficult to do without an expensive machine or Playstation 5.

While the game does have its issues, it’s still a fun one to play! I do enjoy the big map and details. The character design for the animatronic is also quite nice, I like how all the animatronic designs are different but still go nicely together. I especially like Sun and Moon’s design; it fits nicely with the daycare. The game sure does bring back memories of the old games. For one mission, you had to run around in an office while checking the security cameras to make sure Roxanne and Monty don’t get into the office, using two doors that you can only keep closed for a limited amount of time. With 6 possible endings, the game not only brings a whole new playstyle to the franchise, but also clever and interesting references and easter eggs that connect Security Breach to the rest of the games.

If you would like to experience Security Breach for yourself it is available on Steam and PlayStation for $40!
A Flawed Film for the Fans

By Matt Luniewski

After Shang Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings was released, the Marvel Cinematic Universe had gone back into the same drought it was in before. The only project standing out from phase 4’s sea of mediocrity was Shang Chi, which set new standards for the MCU’s fight scenes. This was followed up by Eternals and Venom 2, which adversely set new lows for the MCU with their half-baked story and characters, likely being the worst received MCU movies yet. But this need for redemption only made up half of the stakes. The other half was that the next movie in line was Spiderman: No Way Home, which was set to have a massive scale for the movie and the entirety of the MCU. If the movie failed the same way Eternals and Venom 2 did, it would have lingering effects throughout the cinematic universe and disappoint yet again. Spiderman: No Way Home is on-par with the best of the MCU, successfully developing the main character to a degree that most MCU movies try and fail to do.

The acting in the movie is possibly the best in any MCU movie we’ve seen so far as the entire cast of A-list actors deliver adequately. Tom Holland doesn’t shy away from his leading role at all, giving his best performance as the character yet. His action is on par with previous performances as Spiderman but in this movie he reaches a peak in the movie’s more emotionally poignant portions with one scene even surpassing the iconic “Mr. Stark scene” at the end of Infinity War. He’s extremely energetic and works well with all of the cast, creating unlikely chemistry with previous characters that could have been haphazardly recycled. Alfred Molina and J.K. Simmons’ returns are both just as animated as in their first appearances years ago. Willem Dafoe’s Green Goblin is easily the best part of the movie, just like he was 17 years ago when he last played the role. He plays the main antagonist amongst the group of returning villains, challenging Peter’s moral code. Dafoe is similarly cartoonishly evil but is noticeably more brutal than before. The way he controls his voice and body language creates an unstable atmosphere where all his actions feel unpredictable, adding to his character. This, along with the fact that he is essentially playing two characters through his multiple personalities, illustrates the range Dafoe has as an actor.

MCU movies have a record of having formulaic and convoluted plots that feel more like a messy cluster of ideas rather than a flowing storyline with nuanced complexity. No Way Home strays from previous Spiderman movies which keeps things very simple by being just a Spiderman movie and not overcomplicating the story with characters from other parts of the MCU. No Way Home doesn’t do this, yet it doesn’t trample over itself in the process like some other cinematic universe movies do. The idea of a superhero movie where multiple parallel universes combining into one sounds like a disaster waiting to happen. But the writers don’t lose the main plot in other side plots and side characters. The movie never forgets about Spiderman’s development in the midst of all these new and old characters being introduced which is quite remarkable given the scale of the movie.

The story’s conflict is handled well and helps Peter Parker’s development as he deals with his infamy. At face value, you’d likely only think about how Peter’s identity being open to the public affects him, but the movie also explores how this affects the people around him. This concept isn’t perfect but ultimately feels more natural than it would with the plot just revolving around Peter. Instead, Peter is faced with the fact that he has the responsibility to help others before himself, which he had never been forced to realize until now. Peter sees the temptation of finding the easy way out and only helping himself, which effectively creates deeper sentiments to the way he thinks and acts. This is also seen through Dr. Strange acts as this voice of reason for Peter, telling him the most rational thing to do is let the villains who came to Peter’s dimension die. But Peter always acts with his heart rather than his head, making this conflict all the more realistic. Aunt May acts as the foil to Dr. Strange. She tells Peter to realize his responsibility as a superhero, even if it means helping those who wronged him. This duel of morality between reason and heart is what creates such a compelling concept for the story’s conflict. The ending was also very surprising and satisfying turn of events that feels logical for Peter’s development; it doesn’t aim to please everyone like the majority of the movie. It’s natural for its characters and has enough room to set up upcoming projects.

Review is continued on the next page.
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Arts & Entertainment

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The fights are well thought out and paced. While all the fights are mostly CGI with a side of practical effects, they're still weighted and important to the plot. A recurring problem in Marvel movies is that the writers realize that they've gone 30 minutes without a fight scene and think that their audience is bored. The fight scenes that are added for this reason end up feeling like a display of their high budget rather than a grounded plot point and are there without adding any actual meaning to the story. While there are a handful of issues with how the fights are structured on their own, they serve their purposes well in contributing to the plot as a whole.

While No Way Home is undoubtedly one of the MCU's best projects yet, there are a number of issues that are in every single MCU movie so far, most prominently being the occasional poor and at times, even lazy writing. Peter's best friend, Ned, and girlfriend, MJ, are very loosely connected to the story after the problem of their futures being destroyed for being close friends with Spiderman is solved in the first third of the movie. Because of the public's hatred of Spiderman, their future is dragged through the mud along with Peter's. When this is resolved for Ned and MJ, they have no reason to be in the story, and become another liability for Peter to risk without reward. They end up feeling like they're there just to make an occasional joke, which is always very hit or miss. During certain scenes where tension is clearly trying to be built for the audience, jokes are thrown out in hopes of sticking but end up being out of place and ruining the established pace. There is significantly more humor in this movie due to the writers wanting to balance out the darker tone the movie was taking, but it winds up being a mess from the writers spit-balling, almost as if they decided to cut none of their ideas. The jokes can land, yes, but the majority of the humor feels tacked on without much consideration.

Doc Ock and J. Jonah Jameson are in the same boat as Ned and MJ. They have purpose and are wonderful additions to the movie to please fans, it's just that there are not enough of them to give them reason to exist. J. Jonah Jameson is underutilized in how Spiderman's identity being revealed to the public and could have been used to create a more realistic conflict of anonymous and controversial figure's identity being revealed. Doc Ock is also a well-performed character yet is stripped from the story almost immediately after his Spiderman successfully helps him. He completely disappears from the story until he's needed again at the very end, which defeats the purpose of him coming back. He is barely an actual character and is basically just a cameo which is aggravating to the audience after they are shown the opportunity for this beloved character to come back, only to be immediately forced to the side. Similarly, Sandman and Lizard, two villains from previous Spiderman movies, don't have nearly any purpose at all. Sandman is distrustful for no reason at all as he learns to trust Spiderman in his last appearance. Lizard however, is the worst offender as he has no amount of impact on the plot at all. His character seems like an afterthought by the writers, quite literally trying to make the audience forget his existence by thoughtlessly excluding and crossing their fingers that no one will notice that he has no established motive for teaming up with other villains. This lack of purpose is an ongoing problem for all villains throughout the movie, but the fact that the movie still prioritizes villains that fans care about makes Sandman and Lizard's lack of focus less of an issue.

Lastly, issues of coincidences in the story have always been a problem in MCU movies and are even more prevalent in this movie. There are a plethora of conveniences in the story with Doc Ock coming to save Peter being just one of many. The biggest 'coincidence' comes during the last leg of the movie where Spiderman now magically has the solution to fixing the villains which were previously impossible to defeat. This abrupt solution ruins the idea of Peter working by his moral compass to help save the villains because the solution to his problem is served to him on a silver platter.

When you watch Spiderman: No Way Home, it's easy to miss its shortcomings and flaws because it's more of a spectacle than a movie that you would normally pick apart and analyze. You can argue this with most superhero movies, but with this movie in particular, they make it very clear that it was made for the fans. That is usually a point of criticism for movie series, but in this case, it's not. The movie doesn't feel overblown with references and doesn't overindulge in itself. It certainly had the opportunity to as they could have very easily sacrificed Peter's growth in the movie for more one-liners from previous Spiderman movies. While it's still factory-made like most other MCU projects, it successfully juggles appealing to both new and old fans fairly well.
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