

CHRONICLE

APCSD BUDGET PASSES

The residents of Averill Park passed a \$61.4 million budget for the 2021-22 school year on May 18, resulting in a tax levy increase of 0.95%. The final vote results were 576 in support, with 299 votes opposed.



There was also a bus and equipment purchase proposition, which also passed 578 to 297. The school will be purchasing nine school buses and a truck.

There were two Board of Education seats voted on, won by Jessica Zweig with 681 votes and Jackie Geraci with 625.

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TWO FACULTY TO RETIRE REPRESENTING 53 TOTAL YEARS AT APHS

It's that time of year when Averill Park High School says goodbye to staff who are retiring. This year, two long-time members of the AP community, Ms. Boulay and Mrs. Smith, are leaving, and they will be greatly missed.

Ms. Boulay has been teaching Biology and Horticulture (and one stint at Chemistry) at Averill Park High School for 30 years.

"I loved working here," she said. "I've had such a good time, and the

community has been so supportive of me."

Boulay, originally from Windsor, Connecticut, and now living near Hudson, plans on continuing in some

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TECHNOLOGY SEEN AS INTRUSIVE CONCERNS RAISED OVER SURVEILLANCE

by Alex Gaboury

It is no secret that digital technology has made many re-examine education and re-assess the tools being used. In the past year, as the Averill Park School District transferred to an unprecedented learning model, new technologies emerged. New security cameras were installed in the district, and GoGuardian, which monitors and manages student computers, was implemented at

Averill Park in the middle school, and was recently offered in the high school.



The funding for both new cameras and GoGuardian

came from similar sources: federal funds streamlined into certain areas of focus. The cameras were a security measure and something that, as language teacher Mr. Brown said, "will make it easier for administration to review the files to know if there were code of conduct infractions in the hallways. It allows the administration to get a clearer picture of the situation."

Students are largely

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RETIREES (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

form of education after retirement. Her desire is to work with youth in her local area, especially as the place is undergoing change as people move up from New York City. She sees diversity issues as important, and said "I want to get a job volunteering, or for a not-for-profit," she said, "still working with kids...just maybe in a less academic focus." She is open to working with students of all ages, not just at the high school level.

Boulay already does work outside of school which she hopes to continue, working for the Blue Star Farm. On Saturdays she helps sell their produce at a farmer's market. She also plans on getting a puppy (through Mrs. Engel), as she hasn't had the time for one due to teaching.

Reflecting on Averill Park, Boulay said, "I think it's a great district; the community is really lucky. I think the district has really served this community in many great ways...there's something for everyone here."

Boulay wanted to make sure to compliment the people working for the Averill Park School District. "I think teachers go above and beyond to develop relationships with students and facilitate their growth," she said, "and find their potential."

While she's been here for 30 years, "COVID has made it easier to leave, because it's not that much fun. Virtual relationships are just not my gig."

Many will miss Ms. Boulay once she retires. "Vicki embodies love and excitement for Biology and Science - especially plants," said Mrs. Burger, a fellow science teacher. "She shares this love and excitement with her lucky students. Her spirit will be

greatly missed."

"Ms. Boulay was Miss Frizzle before the Magic School Bus," said Mr. Minkler, who also teaches science, pointing out her "passion for biology and everything in nature. She loved what she taught. Students were lucky to have her, she will always be one of the greatest at AP and be missed immensely by all."

"She's a bee-keeping, gardening, biological force of a teacher and she will be greatly missed," said Mrs. Oldendorf, another science teacher. "When I first started here, I remember Mr. Kaedy asking me if I had met Ms. Boulay yet...that she was the BEST! And I very quickly found out how right he was. An endlessly young-at-heart spirit. She even taught me how to have a green thumb. She's an inspiration to all of us, and her inner drive and curiosity sure ain't killin' that cat!! That cat is ready to chase down some voles after she leaves here."

High school principal Mr. Quiles said that, "Ms. Boulay has been an incredible asset to all of us at APHS over the years. Her passion and love for the field of Biology, especially the area of Horticulture, has left our school community with an unparalleled greenhouse program which I am certain will thrive for decades to come. She has truly left a legacy in this area, but also in the hundreds of student lives she has so wonderfully impacted with her positive energy and engaging hands-on and real world instructional practices."

Mrs. Smith has been working for 23 years full time at Averill Park, and in many capacities. Originally from Saranac Lake in northern New York, Smith moved south to this area and initially substitute taught in Troy and Green Island. She then worked as a substitute teacher in Averill Park elementary schools for five years, before moving on to a teacher's assistant position at George

Washington Elementary. She moved to the high school as the first Bridges teacher (an alternative education-type program), a position she held for 13 years, before transitioning to a "combination of pushing into classes and supporting students in a resource room environment, while also teaching English classes," she said. At one point, she was simultaneously teaching algebra, three levels of English, social studies, and pushing in (working within another teacher's class) with her students to science classes.

"It was really important for me to work in a country school," Smith said about coming to Averill Park, "because the people are down to earth and friendly." She describes Averill Park as "a wonderful school to work in...the students are great and the staff are great."

Smith and her husband live in Averill Park (where they raised their two children, both APHS graduates), but they don't plan on staying for long. In retirement, "we are moving to Texas," Smith said. With her husband who retired last year, Smith plans on traveling in their small camper. "For the first year or so, (we plan on) a lot of US traveling using our daughter's house in San Antonio as a home base." In addition, Smith said, I'm looking forward to painting, taking pictures of our travels, riding my bike and reading lots of books.

Smith will be missed by many at the school upon her retirement. "I am so grateful that I was given the privilege of teaching classes with Mindy and being able to learn from her," said Mrs. Agnew, a math teacher. "I have immense respect for Mindy, not just as a teacher, but also as a wonderful person. Averill Park is losing a treasure and we will miss her dearly."

"Mindy is a veteran member of the high school special education department,"

said Kate Dorgan, the Director of Teacher and Student Support. "She has helped guide many young adults towards adulthood. Her knowledge and positivity will be missed."

"Those that have been around long enough remember that APHS had a program called "Bridges," said special education teacher Mrs. Marrufo. "Well, just before the turn of the century, Mindy was THE "bridge." APHS hand-picked the most challenging kids, and instead of out-placing them, gave them to Mindy, a one-woman show, in the tiny room next to the faculty room.

"My favorite memory of Mindy will always be from one of my first years here at the high school. I received a surprise gift (candle) in my mailbox. Mindy was thanking me for being so kind. I will never forget how wonderful that made me feel. That was so kind of her," said Mrs. Rohl, a special education teacher. "I wish her all the best on her new adventure which I am sure will have a lot of bicycling! Make sure you post all of your pictures on Facebook"

"Mrs. Smith is definitely one of those teachers students will not forget. Her relentless commitment to the success of each of her students is something truly special," said Quiles. "Over the years, she has always done whatever it took to find a pathway for every student with whom she has worked. I have seen so many times, with my own eyes, the impact that she had on the lives of her students, and the great transitional choices they make as they leave high school. She has been a hero to many."

Quiles summed up the thoughts of many on the retirement of these two. "Both of these teachers will be greatly missed by all of us, but we are also excited for them as they move to do new and exciting things!"

GRADUATION PLANS FINALIZED

A TRUE CELEBRATION FOR THE CLASS OF 2021

by Sarah Wallace

This school year has been nothing but roadblock after roadblock, especially for the Class of 2021. Fortunately, it is with great pleasure that Averill Park High School's Class of 2021 gets to close out their journey the right way, with an official graduation ceremony.

Hosted at the Times Union Center in Albany, the Class of 2021 will graduate as a whole. So mark your calendars because Thursday, June 24 at 6:30 everyone gets to say their final farewells to our seniors.

A class that has overcome more adversity than ever thought possible gets to finally commence as one, all together, something they have not been able to do all year long.

But it does not end there. The Class of 2021 not only gets to graduate together, but each student is allowed four guests, something

There are some restrictions, as each graduate and guest must demonstrate proof of vaccination or obtain a negative COVID

expected, this year has been very difficult for us all and planning a graduation was nothing short of easy but I know how much we lost out on," said Paris. "Graduation, as a whole class, was our ultimate goal and I am so happy to say that we have accomplished that. I'm so grateful and proud of this class and wish them all nothing but the best."

The Class of 2021 has missed out on a lot: a prom, their entire senior year in school, a regular sports season, pep rally, homecoming, traditional senior activities and so much more. But it is with joy that they get to be sent off the right way, all together, with one final hoorah. Congratulations to the Averill Park Class of 2021!



that seemed impossible months ago. Additionally, this thrilling, exciting moment will be captured on livestream for all friends and family to see.

Currently, there is no further information regarding ticketing and pricing but more will be revealed as the date nears.

test. It seems like a small price to pay for such a rewarding experience after the last year.

Senior class president Lauren Paris knows just how difficult this year was, especially while trying to ensure her classmates got the best of the best. "As

REOPENING PLAN STILL UNDETERMINED

UNMASKING THE UPCOMING SCHOOL YEAR

by Simone SchwarzEise

As this school year is coming to a close, many families have been wondering what the Averill Park School District's plans are for the upcoming 2021-2022 school year. I interviewed the principal of Averill Park High School, Heath Quiles, to get an inside scoop on the district's plans.

Quiles said that even though the CDC may have approved going maskless outdoors and going

completely maskless for the vaccinated population, this doesn't mean that students



and teachers can go without masks just yet. In order for the district to allow this, sug-

gestions made by the CDC must first be approved by the state and government agencies.

Quiles said it is still a possibility the mask mandate in school will change before the fall term starts. At various points over the next months, the federal government will issue decisions, followed by the state government. Based on those decisions, the Department of Education will give regulations on what schools are able to do.

No changes will be made for this present school year. It was noted how well the

Averill Park district has been doing over the past few months.

Quiles stressed that there are a lot of unknowns when looking into the coming school year, and wasn't able to provide much information about what school is likely to be like next year. Administration will be on the lookout in the next few months for more information on this topic.

Based on the great success of the Mental Health Day held this year, Quiles said that the district will be

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INTRUSIVE (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

agreeing with the video cameras. “New security cameras at the high school will help make the high school a safer place,” said junior Sydney Ferguson. Emily Walsh, a junior, agreed, seeing them as helpful against threats in an age of increased school shootings and school dangers.

Brown added that security cameras are not too different from the reality of an increasingly technologically innovative and surveillant world. “Students and teachers can’t expect complete privacy in the hallways the same way they can’t expect privacy walking through a store,” he said. “Have you ever seen how many surveillance cameras are in an average grocery store?”

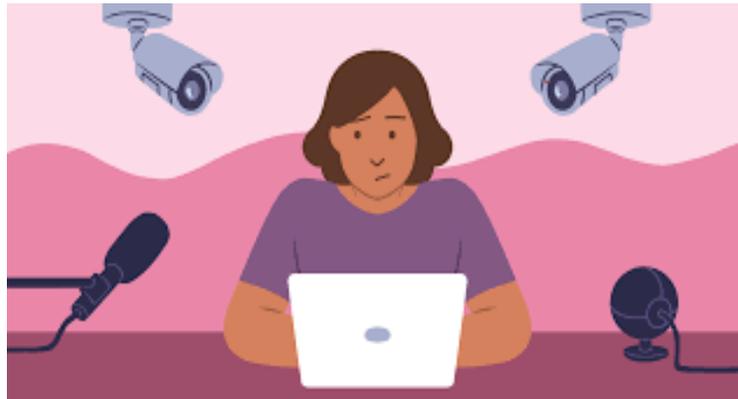
However, student reactions to the addition of GoGuardian are less enthusiastic and more complicated, their problems with it founded on the basis of its usage. While cameras offer surveillance in terms of safety, GoGuardian offers monitoring, something, which unlike cameras, is not a practice found elsewhere in life after high school.

GoGuardian, a technology released in 2014, is mostly used as an anti-cheating measure, offered to teachers as an optional tool of monitoring students’ digital traffic. Teachers can use it to detect cheating during online tests and to see if students are on the correct tab or area during assignments on their school computers and help navigate some of the technological frustration of learning on computers.

“The GoGuardian message, in my opinion, is that school personnel have the right (if they choose to exercise it) to know what students are looking at when

they are on school-issued devices,” said Brown, who decided not to implement the software in his classroom.

When activated, a small icon pops up in the corner of a student’s Chromebook. That is the only indication from the school that this new measure has been implemented, which comes across to some high schoolers as a



breach of privacy. Particularly troublesome is the lack of communication between administration and students, with students like Ferguson wondering why there were no emails or news shared on this latest installment and why students like her had to learn about it through its usage in class.

Entering high school, students are told these four years are crucial for college and career readiness, something constantly filling the minds of those figuring out plans for the future. With many students being asked now and at graduation to make their own life choices and decisions, and to move to a different sort of independence and self-reliability than they currently have or do, each step and tool is pivotal in what that readiness is. Ferguson pointed out that GoGuardian, “being administered to high school students contradicts the idea of freedom and taking on more responsibilities for high schoolers as they prepare for col-

lege.”

This balance between allowing enough freedom to prepare for adulthood and fostering a digital environment to improve life skills, as senior Sarah Wallace said, creates a situation that high school principal Mr. Quiles summarized as “not simple” when applied to a high school setting.

While GoGuardian has been used on the middle school level as an optional measure taken by many teachers, at the high school this paradox is seemingly of a greater magnitude, taking away the digital opportunity to self-manage. “Given the fact that students at home have access to more materials [such as notes not on screen] than in-person students,” said Ferguson, “it [the use of GoGuardian] can potentially level the playing field on tests for students.”

The possible usage of GoGuardian in high school is causing mixed reactions in students. “I understand and totally agree with the basic principle of wanting to keep everyone safe and focused,” said Wallace, “but to me, GoGuardian can be interpreted as an invasion of privacy.”

“It feels like an invasion of privacy especially since we are high schoolers,” echoed junior Sonja Kaye. The surveillance aspect of this

endeavor had Kaye and Wallace agreeing that such a move feels like a breach of trust.

However, a move towards virtual monitoring is not being adapted by all teachers. Some, like Brown, say it does not fit their teaching style. “I choose to use my instructional time to present information and to solicit feedback from my students,” Brown added. “Personally, I don’t know how I would fit surveillance of a student’s device into my lesson plan.”

Which brings up the changing classroom, something that has been discussed several times during the COVID-19 pandemic. After going from a “normal” school setting to at-home asynchronous learning, educators, administration and governmental organizations have pondered what the classroom will look like when it’s safe to take the masks off, resume close hands-on activities and return to a now unfamiliar “normal”.

GoGuardian is a bit of a “double-edged sword,” Quiles said when asked about the matter. The program brings up questions on security, privacy, and trust, but the biggest hit to the students seem to be the lack of communication to the population on the matter. Ferguson said that GoGuardian “reflects behaviors of students that perhaps needs to be monitored in this age of virtual learning.” She added, “But the fact that students and parents are not alerted to this and it is not an optional thing will cause some backlash of students and/or parents against the school/staff.”

“When will there be an email fully explaining GoGuardian and what it does? Will the students get

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EXAMINING THE NUMBERS AT AVERILL PARK

REVIEWING COVID-19 CASES OVER THE PAST YEAR

by Carly Antolick

The 2020-2021 school year has certainly been one to remember. It was the first year with masks, hand sanitizer, and social distancing, and the year with the most prominent technology issues. The COVID-19 pandemic has affected each and every member of the school community. This is especially true for students, who had to choose between learning in a hybrid or virtual manner.

This year, the Averill Park School community had 149 positive cases of the coronavirus according to the emails sent out by the district. Out of these 149 cases, 36 were staff members, 52 were hybrid students, and 61 were fully virtual students. Out of the 113 positive cases in students, 54% of those students were fully virtual.

Most of the cases came from students who were not actually on the school's campus, which

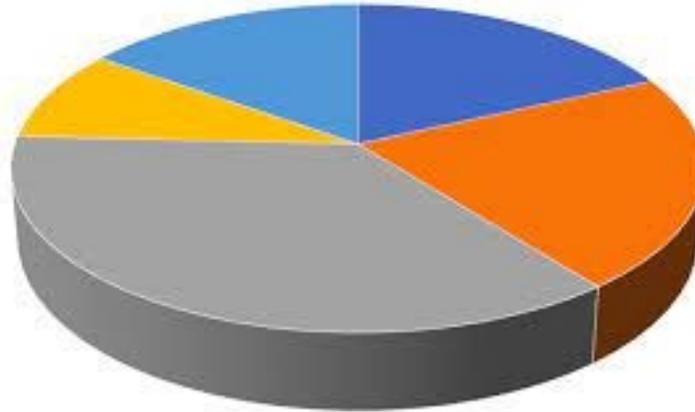
a family member who was an essential worker, or because they or a family member were immunocompromised. The

students simply didn't want to go into school, or if they were just more prone to contracting COVID.

If students were legitimately concerned about the health of themselves or a family member, they likely would have taken every precaution to assure their safety from the virus. What does it say about our school community that 41% of the overall coronavirus cases we saw this year were from these fully virtual students?

The COVID-19 pandemic is a scary thing, and it has affected everyone. All we can do now is continue to follow government and CDC guidelines, continue to wear masks, and to sign up for a vaccine appointment.

The coronavirus hit the Averill Park school community especially hard this year, but if we all do our part, we can hope for a safe return to normalcy next school year.



could raise the question of whether students were abusing their privilege of being fully virtual. Most students who chose to learn online this year did so because they had

fact that 61 of these positive cases come from fully virtual students is especially disconcerting when this is taken into account. It also makes one wonder if some online

INTRUSIVE (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4)

an explanation?" asked Walsh.

"I think it's reasonable to be used if teachers tell us beforehand, but only during tests or other assessments," said Kaye, "because when we are doing our classwork we shouldn't need to be monitored, since we are learning and preparing for life outside of high school." Ferguson said that the use of GoGuardian is a "positive addition. If the purpose of GoGuardian is to monitor students' Chromebooks, improve technology, and filter searches on the Internet, I don't see a huge harm to the school community with the use of it."

Walsh countered with, "I am personally not a

fan of GoGuardian," believing it unnecessary for high schoolers, and Wallace overall described her feelings as "mixed."

Quiles stated that at the end of June, Averill Park students, faculty, parents, and community will be asked about the topic and future services, but the overall future of GoGuardian looks unclear. Due to so many uncertainties, he said future planning means currently "preparing for 15 realities," as decisions this fall have to incorporate the impact of vaccinations and what new guidance could dictate, among other things.

According to Quiles, GoGuardian was originally brought to admin-

istration by teachers and the costly program was initially purchased in reaction to the combination of hybrid and remote learning. When the high school faculty was polled, Quiles stated the general teacher population had mixed feelings on the matter, a broad spectrum much like student thoughts and opinions. But an application purchased in the face of COVID and remote learning is something that thus far Quiles, "has no commitment to fund next year."

By the time school begins to return to pre-pandemic conditions, the GoGuardian issue may even be null with classroom preferences ruling out the option even more. "Once everybody

is back in the classroom, I wouldn't expect my students to spend much time on a Chromebook anyway," said Brown. "We will use textbooks, workbooks, and packets as the basis of instruction."

Whatever capacity this program continues in is thus far dependent on faculty and administrative feedback at the end of June, the demand of it by teachers, student reactions and thoughts, and what next year will entail. Whatever the case, GoGuardian remains a controversial subject, a simple web application which brings up concerns on student-school interactions and relationships, as much as individual and student rights.

STATE OFFERING LIMITED REGENTS TESTS

ONLY FOUR SUBJECTS AVAILABLE, AND ALL ARE OPTIONAL

by Sam Hart

Like many other things that have been affected by the coronavirus pandemic, the Regents exams are no exception. This year the tests will be much different compared to previous years. Unlike the 2019-20 school year, there are still some exams taking place, however not all are occurring. The exams that are still being offered are the Living Environment, Earth Science, Algebra I, and English. Another aspect of this year's Regents that is dissimilar to previous years is they are optional. Even if students choose to take the exam, they can choose to have the grade not appear on their transcript, just as if they hadn't taken the exam in the first place.

Due to this fact, some students saw no downside to taking the test. Cavan Hicks, a freshman who chose to take the Living Environment Regents, said, "Honestly it was just that I didn't see any reason not to take it, and I figured that since the score is optional, if I get a good score, it might help me get into college, and if I get a bad score, it could just not be shown." Students who decided to take the Regents thought that it couldn't possibly be detrimental to

them, so there was no risk involved.

However, other students didn't think this way. In fact, assistant principal Mrs Leach, who was put in charge of this year's Regents, revealed that only 17 students are taking the English exam, 39 are taking the

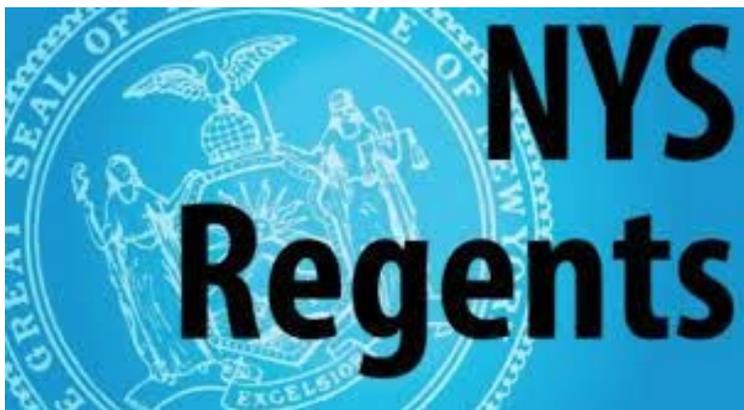
Algebra I or Geometry Regents will be ready to take the Regents required at the end of their junior year, though she also said having no Regents in her class allows everyone to calm down and may be more fair because it is harder to learn virtually.

While many students may have strong opinions one way or another, teachers seem to understand the drawbacks and advantages of both op-

Algebra I or Geometry Regents will be ready to take the Regents required at the end of their junior year, though she also said having no Regents in her class allows everyone to calm down and may be more fair because it is harder to learn virtually.

Biology teacher Ms. Boulay said, "I teach honors students, and I think it's important for them to know how much information they have been able to understand, and assimilate into their reality." The Regents helps students know what information they have retained from the course. However, Boulay also thinks that it may put too much pressure on teachers, and that students may think they did badly in the class if they score badly on the exam, even though it could be due to the unique challenges this year.

The Regents almost seem completely alien this year, and there are indeed many freshmen and sophomores who have not yet taken a Regents exam, and many more who still will have not after the end of this year's testing. Just like most things this year, there's no perfect solution, but whether or not a student takes the Regents, there are positive and negative facets.



Living Environment exam, 20 are taking the Algebra I exam, and 18 are taking the Earth Science exam out of the about 200 students enrolled in each class. The remaining students thought that there was no upside to taking the Regents exam.

Kevin Cooper, a freshman who chose not to take the Living Environment Regents, stated, "For one thing, it's safer. With the pandemic I was worried about having so many kids in one room. Also, it's just extra work with no benefit." Stu-

tions. For example, Ms. Freeman, who teaches Geometry, a class that normally has a Regents but was cancelled this year, said, "Officially finding out so late in the year made it so we still had to teach at the pace required to complete the curriculum by a specific deadline. Had I known earlier - I would have taken advantage of the change and tried to be more creative with lessons and taught ideas at deeper more meaningful levels."

Freeman is also worried about whether her students, who haven't taken the

REOPENING (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3)

focusing on mental health, as well as social and emotional learning programs in the upcoming school year. This will be even more important since most students will need to be re-acclimated to the full seven-hour school day.

The school district has already posted two new positions to manage and supervise specific social and emotional learning topics, as evidence of this dedication.

Quiles would like families to know that the district as a whole, and each

school within the district, has planned over ten different reopening plans. Quiles has been very busy building configurations for many scenarios, which include three foot spacing, six foot spacing, everyone back, some students back, and some students virtual.

Now it's just a waiting game to see which plan will happen, and regardless of the plan, there will be more students and more time in school, which will be a reason to celebrate for administrators, teachers, and students alike.

THE JUNIOR PROM IS...DELAYED!

POPULAR EVENT WILL BE HELD, BUT MOVED TO THIS COMING FALL

by Dani Lapier

Over this past school year, many sacrifices have been made for the sake of safety due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and social events were no exception. These effects were felt by every class; however, one of the most disappointing losses was the Junior Prom.

Prom is a rite of passage for high schoolers, a night full of memories. Averill Park's Prom, originally scheduled for May 8, was canceled. It would have been a joint prom, with both the junior and senior class, whose prom had also been canceled last year due to the pandemic. But, due to safety concerns and social distancing restrictions, the

Averill Park School District made the decision to reschedule it.

2021. It will take place at the Albany Marriott from 6-10 pm. The school Prom

The prom will be for the class of 2022 alone, as the current senior class will have graduated. As of now, masks will be required per guidelines requiring masks at schools and school events, regardless of vaccinations. It is unknown currently whether attendees will need to be COVID tested before the dance, but as the date gets closer, the school district will know more about how the dance will run.

Hopefully, by the time September rolls around, life will be returning to normal and our juniors will be able to have their Junior Prom, in all its glory. If any juniors wish to join the 2022 Prom Committee to help plan the memorable night, please contact Mrs. Yost by email (yostj@apcsd.org) or see her



The date for the Junior Prom has now been changed to September 25,

Committee is currently in the process of planning and picking a theme for the dance.

MORNING ATHLETIC TESTING PROCEDURES CLOSE MONITORING ALLOWS ATHLETES TO PLAY

by Elizabeth Aiossa

This time last year everything had been cancelled, including athletics. This year, to ensure that athletes get a chance at their season, many safety precautions were put in place. One of these procedures was weekly COVID testing for winter and the second fall season sports.

Once a week, all athletes on Averill Park athletic teams were tested in the morning before school, and in roughly 20 minutes students knew if they were going to have practice that night or not.

"No news is good



news," stated Coach Keegan meaning if a student didn't get a call from the Averill Park School District, then everyone would proceed to

practice later that day.

"The whole process was easy and made us feel safe about who we were wrestling," said sophomore Colin

Brunelle, a member of the wrestling team.

Averill Park athletes wanted their season to happen. If this was the way they were going to be able to play, then they were willing to get tested. The Averill Park school nurses and athletic staff also greatly contributed, making the entire process of helping our athletes play safely possible.

Even though this spring's sports didn't look exactly like they normally do, everyone was glad to have some kind of a season this year after waiting anxiously for good news.

HELP IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER

TECHNOLOGY HELP DESK PROVIDES INVALUABLE SERVICE

by Tyler Michaels

As society has grown more dependent on technology, the responsibility to reflect this change fell upon the school district. Averill Park has seen many changes in the past few years that have shifted us to a more technology-based education, including giving all students school-issued Chromebooks. With this influx of devices came a drastic increase in the number of technological issues and repairs that were needed around the district.

The Averill Park Peer Support Suite was formed two years ago to help take the pressure off the technology department by providing services fixing broken Chromebooks and helping staff whenever an issue arose.

The APPS Suite (also known as the Help Desk) is run like a business, and students there are considered the staff of the company. This unique environment allows staff members to work largely independently, whether it is helping a teacher, fixing a Chromebook, or going to the technology department to pick up materials for repairs. After this work, students will often have time to experiment with the technology around the school which includes drones, Sphero robots, and coding.

“My favorite part is that this is a relaxed class with little stress,” commented senior staff member Jason Strickland, who has been with the Help Desk since its creation. Strickland noted that the workload can fluctuate, and while some days you

will be burdened with tasks, staff will often have time to relax.

While the staff enjoy the relaxed yet working environment, Mrs. Sector, who supervises the students at the Help Desk, loves to help others and aid the district with their technology problems.

“My favorite part about the Help Desk is being able to help peo-

“Students will ask for help if their device isn’t charging, and we have found multiple different strategies for dealing with these issues,” commented Strick-

we can do a better job educating the students on how to troubleshoot common problems, such as updating the computer and keeping them charged,” said Sector.

Since its inception, the Help Desk has adapted to the technology issues facing the district, and as staff members become more experienced, they are able to take on more complicated tasks.

“We started with very simple repairs and now we are becoming capable of more and more complex repairs, and that is exciting too,” said Sector. “I’ve found it has become easier, I started learning right along with anyone else. I feel that I have grown more comfortable as time goes on and I am able to share it more easily.”

As the Help Desk develops, there are plenty of opportunities for it to change into something else entirely. Looking at the future, Strickland hopes for it to become completely student led. “As of right now the most experienced staff members have had about two years of experience. I think it would be really cool if in a couple of years those who have returned to the class get to choose the direction that the class goes in and can reflect on what skills helped them the most or what was the most fun.”

Sector also noted that as staff members become more fluent in their tasks, there are many options for the Help Desk to grow further.

In the past two years, the APPS Suite has grown to help many students and staff. With roughly 3,000 devices throughout the district it is sure to become more popular as people acknowledge the help it can provide.

land. “That being said, I have seen countless different issues, each with their own challenges and obstacles. Each job is unique and can be used to grow your knowledge of the devices.”

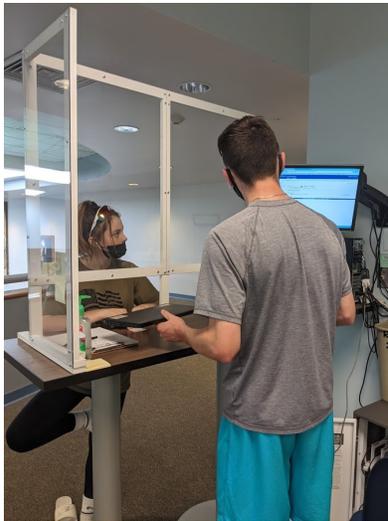
Seeing this, Strickland noted that one way the Help Desk can improve is in raising awareness of the services they offer. More students have begun to come for help, but there are still complaints about damaged Chromebooks that the Help Desk can easily fix.

Instead of bringing students to the Help Desk,

ple,” said Sector, who has run the Help Desk since its formation, “both with their technology issues and with the staff helping them learn how to solve problems and repair computers.”

The Help Desk deals with many different kinds of issues; however, the most common is repairing basic damage on student computers, including replacing screens or batteries.

Sector offers a different approach. She believes it would be best to teach students how to deal with these issues themselves. “I think



EDITORIAL PAGES

RUMINATIONS ON "FITTING IN"

by Bella Bernstein

As I was growing up, I always pondered the thought "Am I normal?" I would wake up every day and put on clothes from the same stores as everyone else. Back then, this meant Justice, The Children's Place, and Forever 21. I would then walk downstairs and eat a "normal American breakfast" consisting of a bowl of cereal. As I left to go to school I would put on my white Adidas shoes that had the 3 black stripes on the side. I felt that I needed to fit in so badly that I spent my own 80 dollars the weekend before buying them.

As I look back now, I do not regret the way I acted; however I do regret buying those shoes. They are just so ugly. I don't resent my third grade self for acting this

way; if I never went through this I would not possess the same strong-willed personality that I currently hold. I have learned to advocate for myself and do what I want to do,



not what everyone else does. That's because we only grow as a character through the actions we have taken in the past.

I also think a lot about, "What made me so brainwashed at such a young age that to be normal I had to be like everyone else?" Was it because I live in a small town? Was it because of the television shows I watched? I remember vaguely in popular television shows there would be a new girl in school and someone would walk around pointing out all the weird kids and tell the audience what's unique about them. They also turned the popular kids into the stupid kids who liked to party, and the weird, smart kids into those in the band. About twenty minutes ago as I sat on a plane back to New York, I was furiously flipping the pages to the novel *Normal People* by Sally Rooney. Then

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- Emma Hanlon (Features)
- Dani Lapier (News)
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- Owen Perala (Features)
- Sarah Wallace (Sports/Reviews)

Advisor: Mr. Strich

WHAT IS THAT SOUND...?

by Julie Hale

Noises can either mean everything or absolutely nothing. If an alarm goes off, or a child cries, you immediately know something is wrong. However, the smaller and less noticeable noises are those that tend to be missed the most. No one would miss waking up to an alarm, I'm sure... but everyone misses that bell at the end of the day, right?

Now how about the little things we miss during the day? Many students have been going back

and forth from fully virtual to hybrid throughout the year, and a few have stayed



virtual the whole year. That's pretty rough consid-

ering you're home 24/7, doing schoolwork while your family is in the next room. But family time is wonderful, right?!!! ...Okay, maybe just every so often, but not daily. However, to play the devil's advocate, it can be uplifting to socialize after being distanced for so long – even though it might be loud and agonizing.

I'll go out on a limb and say that you miss the deadly silence – those weird awkward breaks in classes where there's nothing happening. We thought nothing of them before, but now those moments are filled

with "Oh no! Did my meet crash?" while the rest of the class doesn't notice. Of course, when it's just the opposite of this – people could be laughing and yelling – it can bring a bit of comfort and inclusiveness to those practically isolated at home.

Perhaps you think silence is overrated and actually enjoy the loud noise of a classroom. Well, in that case, you must miss the drama and gossip; that's revered as well, right?

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REVIEWS

MAY CONCERT DELIGHTS AND ENTERTAINS BAND, ORCHESTRA AND CHOIR PRESENT LIVE MUSIC, WITH “CONDITIONS”

by Caroline Nero

The Averill Park High School Music Department was thrilled to hold a concert on May 27. Band, Orchestra, Jazz and Choir students were able to perform a night full of music on the football field.

While the event was held on one night, the concert was better interpreted as five mini-concerts, rather than a full one. Each ensemble

had their own performance time with their own audience, and students were not allowed to stay after their performance to watch the other ensembles. Averill Park musicians were excited for this opportunity, especially the Choir students, who were not able to perform in March.

This concert was very similar to that one held in March, yet there were differences that set this apart. The concert in March included only Band, Jazz Band and Orchestra, while this concert included the Choir as well, and was on the football field rather than in the parking lot. All the ensembles had more pieces prepared than in March, making this concert an even more exciting event.

The students' hard work certainly paid off. All the

ensembles sounded great, and it was wonderful to be able to hear the many students in the Music Department perform. The Choir showcased many talented

performers, and the numerous musicians were able to

but only when they were at their assigned spot on the football field; audience members had to remain masked at all times and were seated as families.

Both temperature checks and a health screening form were required to ensure this concert ran as safely as possible.

Leading up to the previous concert in March, the high school had been on and off be-

tween hybrid and fully-remote learning. Since Averill Park is now hybrid, the ensembles were able to rehearse more and prepare more pieces.

Mrs. Christy and Mr. Blostein, along with members of the Averill Park High School Music Department, were ecstatic to be able to perform. Due to the pandemic, the May concert unfortunately was not held last year, so it was thrilling for the students to finally be able to perform a May concert. As stated by Blostein prior to the concert, "We get to perform! That's always exciting!"

This was the last concert for the seniors, so it was also a way to say farewell to them and celebrate their musical successes over the past four years.

Both students and teachers had a huge a-

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solists, and had a variety of voices that blended together very well. The Orchestra had beautiful pieces performed by the string musicians, and was pleasing to listen to. Lovely voices all came together to create angelic music during the performance from the Treble Choir. The Band presented a wide range of pieces, with instruments mixing together to generate a cohesive sound. And skilled soloists were able to show off

produce delightful music.

As for safety precautions, this concert was run



with strict guidelines approved by the Rensselaer

County Department of Health and the school. Performers were 12 feet apart at all times, except for string and percussion students, who were 6 feet apart.

Performers could remove their masks while performing,



their talent during the Jazz Band performance, present-

REVIEWS

SENIORS HOST 2021 MR. AP EXTRAVAGANZA AUGUST JOHNSON TAKES THIS YEAR'S CROWN

by Katie Armlin

The show must go on! A classic phrase and one very characteristic of the process that finally brought the cast of Mr. AP on stage this past April. After months of rehearsals and considering many different performance options, this annual senior class fundraiser took place on an outdoor stage on the football field.

The show was attended by an in-person audience consisting of members of the senior class along with parents of the performers. In addition to this, there was a live stream for anyone else who wanted to watch. Overall, this night filled with talent, dances, formal wear, and a bit of friendly competition was a great success.

As usual, this pageant-like competition for the title of "Mr. AP" consisted of many fun acts and performances, with a few changes to fit COVID restrictions. For instance, the contestants, Ethan Basos, Alex Heap, August Johnson, Dom Marrochello, Carter Maxon, Henry Powers, Joey Richter and Aidan Willsie, were judged on their costumes worn during spirit week, dance moves, sports wear, talents, and formal wear. In addition, this year's performance included a career-wear section and a video of the contestants and escorts presenting roses to their family members in their formal wear, instead of walking out into the audience.

Since many of the contestants and escorts



were new to performing, several of them described this as a very new and fun experience. Contestant Joey Richter, who played an electric guitar solo for his talent, told us, "My favorite part of the show was performing my talent on stage. I had never performed in front of anyone, much less a stage with professional audio and it was so much fun."

As usual, this fundraiser also contained a volunteer aspect, where members of the cast went out to support our community by taking part in community service. This year, the cast made fleece blankets for the Ronald McDonald house.



This was a great creative activity, as it allowed the show to support our community without the cast having

a large gathering outside of school during a winter of COVID -19.

However, there was still one major issue. Since productions like these usually require an audience which wasn't fitting with the early spring



COVID-19 guidelines, the group had to get creative with ideas on how to present the show, and had to remain flexible with each step they took in creating the performance.

"Right from the beginning we didn't know how the show was going to be seen, whether in-person or online; we had no idea," explained student director and escort Erin Pendergast. "We were extremely happy to be able to put a show on in-person, but we didn't have that stage to practice on until the day of. Even though we practiced in the auditorium and it was similar, I still give so much credit to the contestants and escorts for making it look so good for never being on that stage."

Luckily, all of that flexibility and hard work paid off at the April 24 outdoor performance. This event created a very special experience for the senior class, since this has been the only event they have been allowed to have as a full class.

Since the class is split into two different cohort days, for some this may have been the first time they saw some of their classmates in-person this year. Senior and audience member Maddy Murray expressed how happy she was that the school was able to put on this event for students, "The best part was getting to see my friends who I haven't seen in a while."

At the show's closing it was time to announce the winner of the 2021 Mr. AP competition — August Johnson. Johnson told us, "I'm honored to have been chosen to be Mr. AP, and I'm happy to wear the mantle! I would like to say however that all the contestants worked hard to put on the show and would be equally deserving of the title." Johnson also expressed that, "Additionally, I'd like to work to open up the competition to be non-gendered. Hopefully I can make that possible for future shows."

This year posed many challenges to this school-wide tradition. It helped the project grow and change to create a slightly different, but fun and exciting, event for students, teachers, and parents alike. I think we can all agree that we look forward to seeing how this tradition continues to change and grow with coming years and new senior classes.

REVIEWS

AN OBP FIRST: *ROBIN HOOD* OUTDOORS

by Mara Little

The coronavirus has made this past year a challenging one for us all. New methods of teaching were introduced, sports were limited, and social interaction was few and far between. Gatherings and clubs were pushed into a virtual atmosphere, including the aspects of performance and theater.

For the duration that COVID has been present in our area, the Averill Park High School's Theater Club, Off Broadway Players (OBP), was forced to hold all their shows online. The fall production was done in a movie-style fashion, as was the Cabaret sing-a-long held in February. The usual student directed one acts performed each December and January were not held at all. Due to the looming, deadly virus, live audiences and crowds of any kind were thought to be a thing of the past.

However, as restrictions begin to loosen up and more and more people were getting vaccinated, the Averill Park Off Broadway Players were finally able to hold their Spring Production in front of a live audience, on May 14 and 15, for the first time in over a year.

This year's spring show was *The Trials of Robin Hood*, a play debating the character of Robin Hood himself; is he a lusty hero, hopeless lover, or evil criminal?

The story was told from three different perspectives, one from Robin Hood, played by junior Wolfy Balga, another from Maid Marian, played by junior Julia Skiba,

and the last from Prince John, played by senior Emma Parker. The show had three different endings, leaving it up to the audience to decide



which telling of Robin Hood is the truth.

The level of audience participation needed for the show was a perfect fit, since both cast and crowd were excited just to be able to hold an in person performance.

While the play was a live event, it looked much different then it has in years past. For starters, this is the first time that an Averill Park school production has taken place outside. The play was held in the Averill Park High School junior parking lot, near the greenhouse. The show was done outside following COVID and social distancing guidelines.

Much of the cast and crew said that, while it is not traditional, an outside production was definitely a fun experience. "The only thing I would miss is probably

getting to do a show outside! I think that's such a cool way to do a show," said Emily Consula, a senior on crew. "It's not very practical as the shows that go on in the auditorium have a lot less sound issues and weather issues, but it was a super cool experience."

Erin Shultz, a junior and cast member, agreed, stating, "Although Covid style OBP is not ideal, I thought it was really fun to perform outside in the fresh air. We were lucky and had really nice weather all weekend, so I definitely think they should consider doing more outside shows."

Although the show experience was enjoyable for many to do outdoors, it



also brought up a significant amount of complications that cast and crew members alike never before had to face. For example, Sonja Kaye, a jun-

ior on crew, said that during both rehearsal and the shows, "there was a lot of wind which led to feedback in the mics. The weather can really mess with tech and audio and the open air makes the acoustics nonexistent." Kaye also said that because a real stage could not be used this year, crew and cast "had to create a movable set that could be used outdoors in order to reduce risks of COVID spreading."

"It was a lot more prep for the show than actually being involved during the actual performance," said senior Emily Consula. "We did a lot of setting up the actual stage which we obviously never would do in a normal year and painting the set pieces. Painting is something we always do, but we never have to paint the actual stage or posts to hold the structure up so it was a decent amount of work."

Skiba brought up the point that "Rain was definitely our biggest issue. We were so fortunate to have had two perfect days for the show. There were a few rainy rehearsals, but we just worked around it!" With the show being outside, and using a makeshift stage and scenery, Skiba said there was no backstage area for the cast members to change costumes or get props.

Therefore, "we had to practice staying in character even when we were not on the

(continued on page 13)

REVIEWS

ROBIN HOOD (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13)

stage.”

Costume manager and cast member Emily Walsh’s solution to this issue was having cast members wear upwards of four layers of clothing, so they could easily switch costumes in a time efficient manner. In addition, crew members set up prop bins on either side of the stage for the actors to get any necessary materials for their next scene.

Chairs were also placed on both sides of the stage for the actors to sit in while they awaited their next “on stage” moment, although, even if they weren’t directly on stage, the actors could not break character until the show was over.

Even with these new challenges, everyone who was a part of *The Trials of Robin Hood* said that overall they



were just happy to be back on stage, no matter the circumstances of the performance. Many described the spring

show as OBP’s first steps toward normalcy.

“I was so happy with the amount of people that showed interest in wanting to see our show. For all of the cast, crew, advisors, etc. it meant so much to us and really made us realize what an impact we have on the community and that this is something people really enjoy seeing,” said Shultz. “The entire cast and everyone involved put so much work into this show; a lot of us had to

play multiple roles just so each character was portrayed. It was so much work, but it was so worth it to finally bring some normalcy back into the school and club.”

Skiba summed up the spring production, and OBP as well, by saying, “This show was such a challenge to everyone involved and I am so proud of how it turned out. The fact that we were allowed to have a show in person was amazing — we couldn’t have done it without our teachers and amazing audiences. I am so excited to get back on the stage next year. We will see you then!”

RUMINATIONS (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9)

this thought hit my mind, clicking as fast as you put on your seatbelt when you are late: There are three types of people in life: the ones who believe they need to be normal, those who think they are too cool to be normal, and lastly the outsiders who are just themselves.

The first group are usually followers who can’t think for themselves, and have a lot of social anxiety. The people who see themselves as cooler than normal often possess an inflated ego that is extremely noticeable. The last group just notices everything about how everyone tries so hard to fit in. They are superior; they understand that fitting in is just wasting time and hurting yourself.

Every time you try to fit in you are throwing your true personality in a locked box and putting on customs. You are only going to hurt yourself.

Who even gets to decide what’s normal? It isn’t like one person has all that power to say “You can’t go out with that shirt on, it’s not normal.” In the school hallways there are cliques of all different people: you have the sporty dudes, the nerds, the math kids, the goth kids, the girls that think they’re too cool for school, and then you have the rest of us, whose anxiety is eating us alive. We just try to get in and out of school as quickly as possible.

But what I noticed about these cliques is that they believe they are normal

in their own groups, while to the rest of us they are weird, boring low-lives that care about high school popularity. That’s where my regret comes in, and that is where all the dots connect. Growing up, I watched all these shows where everyone wanted to be the popular girl or guy, and at such a young age I was brainwashed to believe I needed to be in that group.

Why did I try so hard to be normal when I will never be normal? At best I will just be normal to one clique and boring to the rest. Instead of trying to fit in so badly, wear the clothes you want, take the electives you want, post whatever you want to on Instagram. Stop waiting for approval by society.

No matter what you

do, you will never be appreciated or accepted by everyone. Soon enough, high school will be done, we will be off to college and there will be more cliques there, normal within but odd to spectators. Stop trying to be normal to fit in and you will find true friends without even having to try. I made so many new friends this year and I had no intention for it to happen. I started taking the honors classes I wanted and began succeeding. I felt normal in my own way with my own people.

Do what you want, do not live in the footprints of others; you will not get anywhere and end a pile of regret. WE ALL DIE AT THE END — NO MATTER HOW “COOL” YOU WERE.

REVIEWS

A CONVENIENT PLACE FOR COFFEE

by Simone SchwarzEise

Gipfel Coffee House, located across from Averill Park High School, is a must when you're in need of a delicious pick-me-up. The owner, Christine Kehn, sells a variety of drinks from iced lattes to delicious blood orange hibiscus teas.

Gipfel first started as a wholesale roasting company. Kehn used to work at a local coffee shop in Averill Park called Liquid Assets Coffee, where she fell in love with coffee. She moved to California after college, but in the back of her head she always wanted to learn how to roast coffee and always had a passion for it. When she moved back home to Averill Park, she spoke with her former boss from Liquid Assets and said she wanted to learn how to roast. Ever since then Kehn has been roasting on top of Taborton Mountain, otherwise known as the Gipfel (summit in German) of Taborton, hence the coffee shop's name.

Opening Gipfel was a somewhat spontaneous idea. On her commute to work everyday, Kehn would drive by the high school. When she noticed that a particular building was no longer occupied, she hopped onto the idea of

opening her own coffee shop.

While the shop has been very busy, Kehn still finds time to roast every weekend. Even though her



business has only been open for a few months, Gipfel has already gained regular cus-



tomers who come in every day for their usual cup of coffee.

Currently, Gipfel has

a spring menu of drinks which come either hot or cold. Some of their most popular include a Lavender Latte, Raspberry Mocha Lat-

te, and a Blood Orange Hibiscus tea. Additionally, they even make their own breakfast pastries, which make the place smell phenomenal in the morning. Personally, I have bought drinks from Gipfel many times over the past few weeks, and I have to say the only thing that I would change is their lack of space, which I fully recognize is not possible. The building is very

small; when you walk in the doors on a busy day there are lines and people filling up the entire building. Something that could really help with the congestion would be a few arrows on the floor showing customers the traffic pattern and making it obvious where to order, where to wait, and where the line forms. We've unfortunately become used to directional arrows and stickers on floors during this past year thanks to COVID, so it could help.

All in all, if you're looking for a great pit stop on your way into West Sand Lake from Taborton, or on your way to work or school in the morning, I definitely recommend this cute little coffee shop that calls Averill Park home.



Check out their Instagram and webpage @gipfelcoffee and gipfelcoffee.com. Stop in on Mondays through Fridays from 6 am to 3 pm and get my personal favorite, an iced latte with hazelnut. I'll see you there.

CONCERT (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10)

mount of enthusiasm for the May concert. The Averill Park High School Music Department couldn't wait to perform

for a live audience, and were more than ready to demonstrate their skills. Not only was this concert completely

safe, it was also an enjoyable event for families to watch the musicians perform. Members of the Music Department

were grateful for this opportunity, and ecstatic to perform on May 27 for their families.

HUMOR

WASHINGTON TRIP SEEMED “DIFFERENT”

by Sam Bonesteel

In previous years at Averill Park High School, the junior class has taken an annual field trip to the capital of our wonderful country, Washington, D.C. The whole place has an aura of freedom and passion that can be seen throughout the whole of the United States. Anyways, this year the trip was quite obviously canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. America did a great job containing the spread of the virus compared to other countries, but our intuitive leaders knew we still needed to hunker down and wait at least until July 3 before lifting all restrictions.

So the junior class trip was sadly canceled this past year, along with many other things because of the pandemic.

My friends and I are in the class of 2023, so we would theoretically be going on the school field trip next year. But there’s no time like the present, and with the end of 2020 we felt a strong surge of patriotism.

The intense victory over the coronavirus with the creation of three functional vaccines gave me faith in our country’s scientists. The fact that our previous president survived two impeachments and the virus itself shows the man’s strength as a leader and gives me faith in those fine members in the Senate who acquitted him not once, but twice, because...why not? This shows the power and balance of the American gov-

ernment and people as a whole, and made me and my friends desperately want to see the glory ourselves. So despite the pandemic, in early January we decided to head to the Capital and see the sites early in the new year.

Washington, D.C. was not how we expected it to be, however; there seemed to



be a lot going on when we visited at the start of the year. For one thing, it was extremely hard to get a place to stay in the city. We called countless hotels but many of them were all booked in advance, although we weren’t sure why. However, it seemed apparent that there was some excitement in the Capital that week.

“Who would’ve known that D.C. would be so crowded in January? It’s not even warm yet” said Hayden Kiehl, a sophomore at Averill Park High School who accompanied me on the trip.

The first day after spending the night was normal, although there were large crowds of tourists enjoying the cold air. They seemed

good natured, though, and we tagged along with one group to see the Washington Monument. A nicer group of people I have yet to meet, because these guys gave my friend a free NRA baseball cap, and even donated their masks to the homeless by taking them off and throwing them on the sidewalk. A couple of these

people were pretty good at street art, and they brought some spray paint to share their talents with the “less vibrant” parts of the city.

“Also, almost all of them were wearing patriotic clothing, I wish I brought my Trump hat from home” commented Kiehl.

It was really nice to just breathe the freedom and liberty in without the hassle of masks (which we had donated earlier). It was cold, but with the company of our new friends we were able to enjoy an exciting day touring the city, and returned to our hotel room satisfied. We would never have known it, but the next day was going to be a blast!

In the morning we woke up early to go and see more of the city, starting with the White House. However, we encountered a problem. As we got closer to the White House we were stopped by throngs of people gathering in huge crowds. It was almost impossible to get any closer

so we decided to wait and see what all the commotion was for. It turned out that the President of the United States, Donald Trump, was speaking, and we were there to witness it!

“The crowds were wild and we had no idea what was going on, until we saw the president talking!” said Kiehl. “We’d only ever seen him on tv; I try to watch most of his speeches”.

We couldn’t hear what he was saying very

clearly because there must’ve been hundreds or thousands of people in front of us. There were young and old people, men and women, dressed in crazy outfits! It was like a parade, there were people with flags, and crazy hats. Some even carried baseball bats and flagpoles! I saw a man with a Viking costume in the crowd, wearing a fur vest and a helmet with horns. People started chanting “Fight for Trump, fight for Trump” and we all started walking towards the Capitol building.

We were planning to visit the Capitol later

(continued on page 16)

HUMOR

WASHINGTON (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15)

during our stay, but figured that we might as well see it as part of the parade; it was much more exciting than we had planned. I don't know what kind of parade it was, because many people were holding Confederate flags, but it seemed like a great way to celebrate our nation, with a display of true patriotism towards our own president.

We were yelling "Fight for Trump", and there were men and women dressed up like cheerleaders waving "Make America Great Again" banners, and people dressed up as Vikings and wearing animal skins. My friends and I all thought it was very chaotic, but also exciting to be part of such an event. At one point I stepped over a napping Uncle Sam, but I don't know why he was trying to sleep right in the middle of the street.

We ran up the hill to the Capitol, a wonderful building, and people were climbing through broken windows and scrambling up walls to get into the building.

A couple of times I heard fireworks go off, but I honestly wasn't sure if they were legal in the city. I saw a bald eagle in a red, white and blue suit hitting a door with a bat; he must have never



learned good Halloween etiquette.

"I didn't know if we were supposed to go inside... It seemed pretty sketch" commented Tyler Michaels, a fellow sophomore at Averill Park who also made the trip.

Glass shattered down on us as we debated whether to go inside or not.

I started to climb into a window to see what was going on, but I cut my hand on a piece of glass, so I came back down. It was bleeding, so we said farewell to the nice guy in the Viking cos-

tume who was waving a flag-pole, and started heading back.

The streets were strewn with banners, flags and debris, and police were scrambling around, but I wasn't sure what they were doing. It was mid-afternoon, and we'd had the time of our lives in the exciting parade.

"The parade was so

much fun, really like nothing I've ever done before, but we decided it was just time to go," added Michaels.

There were still some MAGA hats on the sidewalk and we found one for each of us so we could keep the spirit of America close at hand. We got back to the hotel room, and were going to go out to dinner but were told there was a curfew in the city that night.

The next few days were very chaotic, so I thought we should leave the city a few days early and get back to Averill Park for classes.

Overall, I thought the trip was well worth it. I imagine it must have been more exciting than any junior trip over the years. We got to meet some nice, eccentric people, saw the President speak, and were even part of a surprise parade that toured the Capitol! We learned a lot about American society from our trip, and I can't help but wonder if this good-natured patriotism will reach farther than Washington, D.C.

SOUND (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9)

Before, we might have gotten annoyed by the "gossip girls" in the room who could talk and talk about the most random "news." However, we might oddly miss it now. Instead of hearing the gossip on the news, we would much rather hear gossip that is

more "relevant" to our social group.

Evidently, sounds are heard differently and mean slightly different things, but this brief piece is intended to put it out there and glaze over how just a few noises can make different yet specific scenarios for those

at home vs. those at school.

Going off on a tangent, what about food? We can eat whenever we want at home, but it's restricted to only lunch at school (or at least it should be...). SO, if you're eating, please be polite and pay attention to how you're

heard. Keep those cameras off at home so in-person students aren't getting hungry and with no available chips for those in person, or else everybody might want to take yours...).

"Thanks a bunch!" - Headphone users

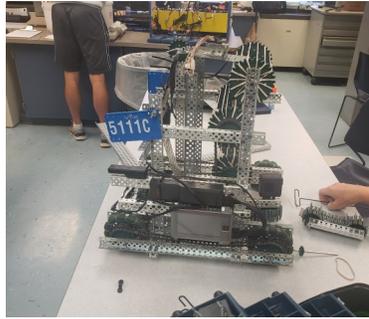
ROBOTICS CLUB PERSEVERES DESPITE A PANDEMIC, CLUB HAS A FULFILLING YEAR

by Owen Perala

This year has been a year like no other. Nearly everything we do has to be adapted and changed in some way. Our academic lives have changed immensely, with many activities and events being cancelled, disappointing many people. However, there were those who refused to let COVID get in the way of the things they loved. The Averill Park Robotics Club was one of them.

For those in the club, robotics is something pretty special, and something that many members of the club would have been disappointed to miss this year. With this in mind, the club's advisors, Mr. Duff and Ms. Lambricht, set out to make sure it could happen. They, along with the club's leadership team of president Lucas Abate, vice president Matthew Harmer, treasurer Ben Campbell, and secretary August Johnson, all of them seniors, devel-

oped a plan for the year and made arrangements with the school to ensure the club could meet.



"We just wanted to build some working robots," said Duff. "That was our goal from the start of the year, and we want to make it happen."

In a normal year, the club meets everyday before school at 7:00 am to work on bots. This would remain true this year, except students would only be able to go into school on the day

of their cohort. The cohort structure also made communication, and coordination between team members more difficult.

In addition to this, quarantines and the school moving to virtual teaching kept the club from actually being able to work on their robots. And finally, the hope of having a competitive season was dashed as events and match-



es were all cancelled. Still, the club's members held the intention of finishing their robots.

"Yes, it's been slow and we have only had a fraction of the time we normally do, but no other club has done as much as we have," said Duff.

Right now, all five of the teams in the club are still meeting before school to work on bots. The club also has an in-house competition date set for June 17.

"I'm impressed we are still going; everyone is determined to finish and not let our work go to waste" said Abate.

The club's passion for what they do is certainly admirable. The dedication of the teams, leaders, and advisors to the club is certainly exemplary of our school's determination to keep going when times get tough. We wish the robotics club luck in their following weeks as they finish up the year.

SMART COOKIES! MASTERMINDS CLUB DOES BATTLE WITH THEIR MINDS

by Alex Gaboury

Trivia and factual knowledge have always been an interesting and important part of society. It is the basis for independent thoughts to be built upon and opinions to be made; it is by knowing things that people are able to think and speak about things. Here at Averill Park High School, there is a club which focuses on just that, learning trivia through a competitive game.

Masterminds meets virtually every Friday with advisor Mr. Fairchild to practice various questions in prep-

aration for upcoming trivia games with other Masterminds clubs in local schools. The games themselves usual-



ly last about 45 minutes and all have been moved to the virtual setting this year, with some added virtual rules such as hands in view of camera

during team bonuses to prevent rapid speed Googling.

The game features two types of questions, toss-ups, which are "buzzed in" questions, and bonuses, which are received if the teammate answered the toss-up correctly. But the game evens out, with teammates collectively rounding out knowledge and with eight questions per half, giving ample opportunity.

"You don't always know the answers to the

questions you get, but that's okay," said freshman participant Chris McLaren.

At the core of the club, it is "an interscholastic academic trivia competition" said Fairchild, but as McLaren added, it never feels "intensely competitive." The club is an "opportunity for kids who are intellectually curious but also a bit competitive to excel at something that is a key goal of school — to know things," said Fairchild.

"Masterminds has been a fun way to practice memorization and a great way

(continued on page 21)

AN EARTH UPRISING IN TROY

LOCAL YOUTH BRING AWARENESS TO CLIMATE CHANGE

by Carly Antolick and Emma Hanlon

If you're a youth climate activist looking for a local organization which is both making a difference in its community and accepting new members, then the Troy branch of Earth Uprising is for you. Earth Uprising is a youth-led organization consisting of many smaller chapters, committed to educating the public on climate issues and to encouraging youth to make their voices heard.

This local branch encompasses Troy, Albany, and Averill Park, as there are no alternate branches nearby. Earth Uprising Troy, or EUT, was founded by Averill Park sophomore and climate conservation enthusiast Isabelle Relyea.

"I wanted to be involved in my community and make a difference," Relyea said. "My chapter of

Earth Uprising has provided me with just that: the ability to interact with local activists and youth in order to



transform and motivate our society, resulting in a better future for all of us, around the world."

Earth Uprising Troy currently has 15 members, with ages ranging from 9 to 16. These mem-

bers include not only Averill Park students, but one student from Lasalle Institute and one from Albany Academy. These

students, Daniel Hunter and Ethan Reid, said that they enjoy being productive and helpful towards their community, and that this was a major reason they joined Earth Uprising.

Recently, members of Earth Uprising Troy volunteered to pick up trash along Route 2, near the Brunswick Library. During the month of May specifically, these members volunteered with the city of Troy during their recycling drive. They met hundreds of people from the Troy community, and

assisted the city with collecting electronics, paper and tires. These materials were then properly recycled. Also, if you attend the local Troy Farmers Market this month, you'll likely see members of Earth Uprising holding posters to bring attention to the climate crisis.

The pride that members take in their impact on the local Troy community can be pretty well summed up with a quote from member and Averill Park sophomore Tyler Michaels: "Seeing the bags of trash you picked up or the end result of projects after hours of work is extremely rewarding, and inspires me to do what I can in our community."

If you are interested in joining the ranks of Earth Uprising Troy, you can contact the organization through Instagram (@earthuprising_troy) and through Twitter (@EU_Troy).

THE IMPORTANCE OF COMPUTER SCIENCE

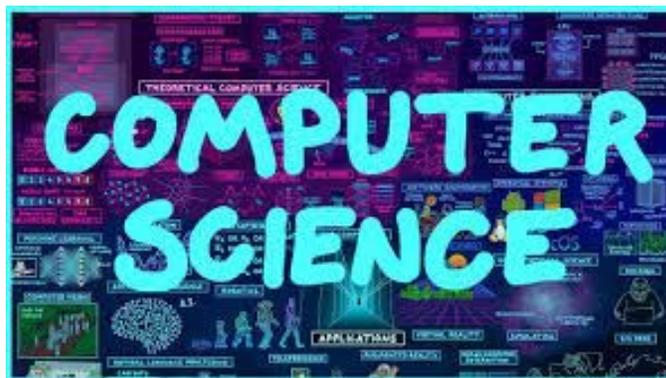
COURSE OFFERING ADDRESSES IMPORTANT NEED IN TODAY'S WORLD

by Owen Perala

The world we live in is made up of computers. Everywhere you look there is something that is, or is linked to, a computer. Nearly 60% of the world's population accesses the internet daily, and that number is still on the rise.

Computers are the future of our world and they are not going away. Due to this, there is a vast availability of jobs related to the computer field. Whether that is in manufacturing, software design or cyber security, the possibilities are endless. The jobs themselves pay well and

are also often flexible, making them a great way to provide



for oneself. Since everything in the computer world is connected, many jobs allow em-

ployees to work at home and set their own hours.

The demand for these jobs will not be going down anytime soon, and it is a

great idea to take a look into this field if you are interested. Averill Park High School has taken notice of this and offers an Intro to Computer Science class. This class is available to anyone who has successfully completed Geometry. It focuses on teaching students about computer science and computer programming while allowing students to show creativity and work at their own pace despite their understanding of the topic.

If you are at all interested in getting started in the computer field, this class is a great fit for you.

IT'S TIME TO MAKE THOSE SUMMER PLANS

STUDENTS SHARE A VARIETY OF FUN IDEAS

by Sydney Davey

Have you thought about your summer activities yet? COVID has caused a lot of changes to our plans for the summer. Despite this, many people at Averill Park have thought about what they are going to do. Between summer camps and vacations there is so much to do!

Since vaccinations are being made available to high school aged people and more of the population is beginning to get vaccinated, people can now do more things. To get a feel for student's summer plans I reached out to all of the grade levels at APHS. Some people don't know what to do for the summer but hopefully this article will give them some good ideas.

Governor Cuomo plans to fully reopen New York on July 1. Cuomo plans to "rebuild, reimagine and renew" New York state: "History has taught us that positive growth occurs not from fighting or even winning the war. Warfare only stops the evil. What must follow post war is the reconstruction: that is where growth occurs," he said about society's fight against the pandemic.

There are many things you can do this summer. Rachel Hudspath, a freshman said, "I will probably play a lot of videogames and work on my art."

Olivia Palmer, another freshman said, "I'm going on a family vacation and that's pretty much it."

I plan to relax and go up to Maine in July. I hope to go to the NASCAR race in New Hampshire, the Nubble lighthouse, Perkins Cove and my

favorite place in Maine, Mornings In Paris.

In the sophomore class, Ashlyn McGarry commented, "So far I really don't have much planned consid-



ering COVID, but so far my family is planning on going to Cape Cod. I might also take a tap class over the summer and will definitely hang out with friends if I can."

Ava Graziano said "This summer I am going to Texas and working at a pizza place." Campbell Federico commented "I'm working at an ice cream place and serving at weddings. I would say a fun activity I will do on the side is hiking in Averill Park, watching sunsets on the lake



and attending bonfires!"

Isla Multunas said, "I'm going to a summer camp for a few weeks, and if I'm lucky I'll get to go to my cousin's house on Saratoga Lake and go to my friend's lake house on Lake Placid.

That's all that I have planned right now but hopefully I'll get to do more fun stuff."

Moving into the juniors, Machara Malone said, "I am planning on lifeguarding at my local lake. I am also planning on swimming and hanging out with friends. I am looking forward to the warm weather." Mara Little, another junior, commented, "So far I don't have many plans set in stone yet. All I know is that I'm going to Maine with my family like I do every summer in July. (except for last year of course because of Covid) At the end of June my mom and I are



going to Cape Cod to visit some friends. In August my mom, her boyfriend and I are going to Aruba. We were supposed to go last year but we never got to because of the pandemic. Between all that I'm sure I'll have summer dance camps that I'll help teach and summer homework."

Rebecca Ware said, "I will be attending summer camp, the same camp I have been going to for the past 11 years. I will be in the leadership training program, called CILT: Campers in Leadership Training, which lasts for four

weeks. At the end I will become a counselor, and I will stay to work 1 or 2 weeks. Then, I will hopefully be going to the Dominican Republic for a mission trip where a group will be working at a camp so it can be open for underserved children in the country later in the summer. After that will probably be tennis practices for the school varsity fall season."

Seeing that it is the seniors final year at Averill Park, I was interested in learning what they plan to do. Olivia Flagg plans on "having friends over to go swimming, RV trips, kayaking/paddle boarding, tubing, getting ice cream, working at my job, going on walks, roasting s'mores, outdoor movie nights, sleepovers, shopping and going to Great Escape amusement parks." Another senior, Emily Walsh, said, "I'm not planning on doing much this

summer but my main focus will be college planning and visits. Of course I will also try to have a bit of fun too so hopefully I will get to visit one of my favorite places- Ramblewild. Ramblewild is a ropes course in the forest near Jiminy Peak that is SO much fun!"

As you can see, there are plenty of summer activities that Averill Park students can not wait to begin. For those still unsure of their summer plans, I hope this article helped give you ideas that you can carry over into your summer.

THE PATH TO BECOMING EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

CASEY SEILER PAYS A VISIT TO THE JOURNALISM CLUB

by Members of the AP Journalism Club

How does one end up holding the top position at a job? In Casey Seiler's case, hard work, desire, a bit of circumstance and some unconventional side trips led to his being named editor-in-chief of Albany's hometown newspaper, *The Times Union*. Seiler recently met with members of the Averill Park Journalism Club, answering questions about his life in journalism and giving advice for young writers. Seiler was open about his life as a journalist, and seemed excited to teach the club more about what he does.

Seiler lived in Buffalo and Charleston, West Virginia as child, but mostly grew up in Louisville, Kentucky, where his parents still live. His father worked for department stores, "back when department stores were the center of towns," he said, which is a role local newspapers also fulfill.

One wouldn't think Seiler's early beginnings would necessarily lead straight to being in charge of a large newspaper. "I was always a big reader of comic books when I was a kid," he said, and "the first things I ever wrote for a publication were movie reviews." Fortunately for him, he has always "lived in many different spots perpetrating journalism," including attending Northwestern University, a school known for having one of the best journalism programs in the nation. Interestingly, Seiler never took a single journalism class there. He did become active in a campus newspaper, however ("filled with great journalists...and me," he joked), and eventually took on roles as the art and entertainment

editor. His interest in the arts helped him get involved, and "from there figured out how to cover the arts like a beat (a specialized topic/genre)."

His path from focusing on the arts to gaining the top position at a newspaper was also not so direct. Just

we were happy doing whatever, they were just fine with it."

Believing that, "Sorry journalism, you're going to miss out on me - not the other way around," Seiler then planned on focusing his talents more on writing short

paper town - if you're a journalist - is a lot of fun!"

From Jackson Hole, Seiler then worked for *The Burlington Free Press* in Vermont, and then for *The Times Union* in Albany. And while he was more of an arts and entertainment writer when he began working professionally, his reach expanded. He held the position of entertainment editor in 2000, became *The Times Union* statehouse editor in 2008, and eventually was named editor-in-chief in 2020.

"I'm very glad I worked in smaller papers and then worked my way up," he said of his path to his present position, "because you bump into people you write about in the grocery store or in a bar." This interaction "reminds you that you're part of a community...there's really no better way than to start journalism than in a small paper."

In addition to his life story, Seiler gave the Journalism Club students advice pertaining to his craft, especially as it has changed over the years.

"It seems the internet has changed things all around now," he said. "Newspapers used to be a way to get people to read ads. But now we recognize that digital advertising is so ubiquitous...we're changing from making our money from advertising...to making it from our paid subscribers." And unlike *The Chronicle's* stories, which are written over the course of a month, turnaround for Seiler's paper is a few hours. While the actual writing may be done more quickly, it still involves some basic principles. "The story will always



after college, Seiler landed an unpaid internship with *Harper's Magazine*, but then went out Colorado with his brother and lived as a "ski bum" for a brief time, doing menial work. "Dead broke" from this detour, he returned home and sent out résumés, expecting that he'd easily get offers due to the name recognition of Northwestern and his internship, but he didn't hear from anyone. This was one of the few times Seiler ever second-guessed going into journalism as a career, though he said "My parents...were very supportive of all of us, and if

stories and novels. He also went back out west, to Jackson Hole, Wyoming, planning to ski some more while waiting tables or working as a lift attendant, but within a week he got a job at a local newspaper. He worked there for four years.

"It was like Columbia graduate school for me," he said of his employment, "and they were paying me." Seiler pointed out how there were two newspapers in Jackson Hole, and the competition between the two made everyone strive to be better. "A competitive news-

(continued on page 21)

SEILER (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 20)

be better the more you report it." Since *The Times Union* usually gets breaking news really quickly, their first story may be more brief and then they are able to build on it throughout the day or week. Seiler talked about starting with a foundation of the story and then adding more details and information as you accumulate it, and eventually that leads to a full article about what happened. "You want to make sure that the content is as relevant to the day as it can," he stressed. "You're responsible for your audience. And a tighter paper shows connections with the audience."

When it comes to career advice for a young journalist, Seiler stressed enjoying what you do. "If you wake up wanting to get better at what you choose to do, and it's meaningful to you, that is a good career for you. If you approach your career that way you'll be able to make a living out of it. Whether you're in journalism or anything else, if you wake up every day wanting to get better at it, you're going to succeed."

He also suggested your future location. "Find a place you always wanted to live," he said, "and then try to find a job there." As for his own location, "I've been at the *TU* for 21 years now, and if you work someplace for 21

years you'd better like it," which he assuredly does.

His advice for future journalists was "there's no better way to find out about the community than to be a journalist - I think." Seiler stressed how the internet is "completely revolutionizing the way we run our business," but added, "If you're passionate about journalism, there will always be jobs out there for you." He reminded the Averill Park journalists to be flexible with the types of media they may end up working in. "That type of media is what keeps it fresh and keeps it new."

When asked about young journalists, Seiler said, "I have great affection for, and great respect for high school journalists." He discussed the Hearst Fellowship Program, a two-year program where college graduates spend their first year at a smaller paper, and then move to a bigger one such as in Houston or San Francisco. One of the *TU*'s more recent hires was first a Hearst Fellow who worked in Albany, left for a bigger paper, and ended up returning to Albany.

He also said The Times Union does hire people right out of college. "We've had terrific young journalists come through our newsroom, and many - not all - of them are right out of college."

When asked about his favorite parts of his own job, Seiler couldn't name just

one. "I love a good political story. I love a good story out of a state Capitol. I think that's because I have a great interest and great horror in politics."

Another favorite is an investigative story. "A great investigative story is always good to edit. Often you're dealing with things that are potentially legally dangerous for the paper if you get them wrong." He mentioned how *The Times Union* has access to lawyers who help determine what presents a risk if published.

"Anything having to do with NXIVM had to get lawyered," Seiler said of the series of stories on the cult organization. "It was a very delicate process. It had to be very delicately framed."

"You're basically playing a high stakes game," he said, stressing the importance of assuring each part of a story is solid. "The better metaphor is like building a house," Seiler added, "you want that house to be as sturdy as possible."

Another issue Seiler pointed out involved "deindexing," which pertains to a person's presence on the internet. When a story involving names is released, any searches online may show

that person's name. Deindexing is a way to remove some of that connection. "In terms of hard choices, not a day goes by where hard choices aren't involved," he said.

Looking back on his own career in journalism, "it seems to have worked out," Seiler said, "because now I'm the editor of the *TU*. And it's never the same thing twice."

While Seiler mentioned political and investigative pieces as his favorites, in the end, "my favorite part of my job is one of our reporters getting a really good scoop, and the feeling of excitement when it goes online... and you know that's a story with a good impact."

Seiler sincerely seemed to care about his career and the impact journalists have. "All I've ever wanted to do is get better at my journalism," he said. "I do journalism because I don't know how the world works, but I want to." In this quest to find out, Seiler has accomplished quite a lot in the world of journalism.

Note - This article was written as a collaborative effort during a 30 minute virtual interview with Mr. Seiler during a Journalism Club meeting held on May 5.

MASTERMINDS (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17)

to learn new things," said McLaren. "It has meant that I can do something I enjoy, and learn things at the same time."

McLaren joined Masterminds after looking for a club that would be a good fit. "As it turns out, I was right," he said. "Masterminds has been a

really fun experience and I would definitely like to keep playing next year."

This would be beneficial for the team, as McLaren is a key member, along with seniors John Kelly, Noah Bonesteel and junior Alex Gaboury. Most recently, the team progressed from the six schools

in their league along with the Masterminds teams at Berlin and Berne-Knox-Westerlo to the Albany-area playoffs. In these games, Averill Park won four out of six games, advancing to the semifinals.

Now that the season has ended, the club is looking to the future for more interested potential mem-

bers, especially for the 2021-2022 school year. If interested students would like to come to practices and get a feel for the game, or plan for the upcoming school year, reach out to Fairchild or any members listed.

"Every kind of kid can play," said Fairchild, and every kind of kid is welcome.

TO EASE YOUR TRANSITION...

COORDINATOR HELPS PLACE GRADUATING STUDENTS

by Paula DeAndres

When you think about your future after graduating high school, you probably think about going to college, entering the workforce, or pursuing a specific trade. For special education students, it can be harder to get employed or get into a college if they so choose.

There are many people at the high school and beyond who work to improve the lives of special ed students. One of these people includes Lori Dunigan, a transition coordinator at Averill Park High School. Her job is to make sure that students make solid plans for after high school and are prepared for adulthood. She can help students and their families connect with community agencies outside of school, which can help find possible employers or give post secondary training.

When a special education student enters their junior year, Dunigan introduces her students to pre-employment services. She works closely with them in order to make a transition plan. "I prefer to work with students 1:1," she said. "Transition Counseling is very

individualized. Each student has a unique plan. My job is to help them set goals and give them the



resources to carry out the plan."

This approach ensures that each student has a plan that works for them. Working in groups is also helpful because Duni-

gan can discuss job development, college planning, and life skills with the students.

At the beginning of the year, Dunigan reaches out to parents through email to request a meeting. Then, she will meet with the student personally to discuss their future plans. Throughout the year, Dunigan continues to develop a plan for the student.

Dunigan works in two different schools. A typical day for her is pretty busy as she meets with students and their families both in person and virtually.

"I plan and schedule career exploration activities and teach in the classroom," she said. In the classroom, she focuses on life lessons and job-related activities. Her job is to educate students about life after high school and to guide them.

When asked if the process was stressful for students, Dunigan said it was quite the opposite. It can be reassuring to the students to know that someone from school is looking out for them. And as for the parents, post-secondary planning can ease their minds, knowing their child is prepared for what is to come. The students who have a plan and are prepared will most likely succeed as they move beyond high school. "The more they prepare, the less stressful the next chapter becomes," Dunigan stated.

Having such an impactful job has its effects on Dunigan as well. Since some students may not be able to get enough support solely from home, it makes her content to know that she has helped them and prepared them for success in their future. Perhaps Dunigan said it best: "If I can help a student get to college or learn about a trade school that they had never heard of, that makes me happy. I will do anything to help students be successful."

NEW CHRONICLE EDITORS SELECTED

AND WE BID FAREWELL TO TWO GRADUATES

by Mr. Strich

It is a bittersweet moment for The Chronicle and members of the Journalism Club, as two long-time editors are graduating. In their place, four new editors have been named for next year.

The Journalism Club wishes the best of luck to all of our graduating senior writers,

but especially to our two senior editors, Katie Armlin (Syracuse, where she'll study Creative Writing) and Sarah Wallace (New Paltz, where she'll study Communication Disorders for Speech Language Pathology). Thank you for your substantial contributions that directly made The Chronicle a paper the

school can be proud of. Your talents and efforts will be greatly missed!

Freshman Paula DeAndres and sophomores Carly Antolick, Emma Hanlon and Owen Perala were selected from a group of qualified candidates to take on these leadership positions for the next school year.

Their main responsibilities will include assisting student writers, editing stories as well as the newspaper, generating story ideas, helping run Journalism Club meetings and writing articles for the newspaper, all while upholding the integrity of the newspaper.

A MORE INCLUSIVE YOGA APPROACH

MRS. STERN FOCUSES ON BOTH THE MENTAL AND PHYSICAL

by Zareena Ansari

"I took a Pilates yoga class about 16 years ago, and I loved it."

As Mrs. Stern reminisced on her yoga classes, she recalled the individual memories as a blast from the past. No, I'm not talking about any obnoxious workout tapes or leg warmers, this was set in the 2000s. "I liked it because there was no memorizing. All you had to do was remember how to breathe, and the movements were slow so you could worry about perfecting your form instead of making it look right."

Piyo (Pilates yoga) requires minimum effort. The slow movement allows oneself to get lost in pleasant thoughts and organized headspace. This class made Stern sure that she wanted this in her future.

Her piyo zoom classes gave her peace, as well as community credits. Currently employed as an Averill Park teacher's aid, she started these classes in hopes of an elevated career in teaching. While she initially chose to teach these classes to improve her educational background, Stern has taken a great interest in this subject.

Stern described how yoga's reputation as a whole became tainted. "The most interesting aspect of the subject would be the westernization," she said, believing most people in general have the same low expectations for every yoga class, and tend to not even try it.

"People think you have to be flexible and have all these certain abilities," she stated. In this interview, she described all one needs to know is...how to breathe. According to Stern, yoga isn't about how flexible or "pretty" one can look, it's about improving your mental and physical state of being.

The most challenging part about teaching yoga would be meditation. It's so hard to take one's mind off worldly issues and focus on a

"The only thing I look for in my students is the willingness to try," she said. Stern stated if one is able to go into the variations and be



simple task such as breathing. "At the end of a class there's an ending stance where you usually do a slight meditation piece, and I do have a hard time quieting my mind," she acknowledged.

With an art form as delicate as yoga, there are several incredibly tricky skills to learn. Built in with minimal physical effort and maximum mental effort, yoga can be exhausting to the mind. Clearing every problem one has ever had can prove to be difficult. Meditation requires the studied enhancement of breathing, timing, and calm nerves.

happy no matter where they're at, they're striving. The process of seeking to better oneself is a challenge not everyone attempts to try, so seeing a new name on the attendance sheet is a good sign of determination.

When asked about critiques, she stated the obstacle of never seeming to know enough about the topic. "I wish I knew how to do different poses and to step out of my comfort zone," she said. Exploring different types of yoga requires an open mindset and a whole lot of patience with people, as well as yourself.

One thing Stern has done is, "I've also created an ABC yoga for elementary kids." As Stern describes her past experiences, she tells the tales of how fun it was and how she plans to do it again. She also plans to do a donation-based class in the park, not for her career. She elaborated, "This is a class that hopefully makes everybody feel comfortable with themselves, and acts as a safe space."

When asked about any breathing tips to help members here at APHS, she brought up a breathing exercise to quickly relieve stress. One would have to inhale into their belly for any amount of time they wanted, and then exhale for double the amount of time.

"Anybody can do yoga, no matter what type of limitation you think you have," she said. These encouraging words from Stern reflect on her class as a whole. Surrounded in a positive, judgement-free environment, anybody can discover abilities they didn't know they had. Her persona speaks volumes about the importance and practicality of perseverance, goals, and patience.

GET INVOLVED

Join the Averill Park Journalism Club!

The Averill Park Chronicle is looking for writers, editors and photographers. Meetings are held the first Wednesday of each month.

TEACHER TALENTS: OUTSIDE THE CLASS

FINDING OUT FACULTY DO MORE THAN JUST TEACH

by Emma Hanlon, Tyler Michaels, and Jason Strickland

Maybe to your surprise, the teachers and staff of Averill Park High School have many talents unrelated to their profession. Unique talents ranging from musical abilities to baking are scattered throughout our building, and you just might not know it yet.

Mr. Quiles

When Mr. Quiles was a principal at Coxsackie Athens, he was invited to join an environmental class that kept bees on school property. He was able to hang out with students one day while they were taking care of the hives, and this experience immediately sparked his interest in beekeeping.

"I left that day, and immediately went to set myself up to do the same thing at home," Quiles said. Within a few months, he had set up his own apiary (also known as a bee yard) at his home.

Now going into his fifth bee season, Quiles' apiary encompasses 3-5 colonies. At their peak, each colony houses more than 60,000 bees. These bees allow Quiles to walk away with more than 100 pounds of honey twice each year, as well as the ability to make various lip balms with excess wax. During the fall, his bees produce a dark fall-time honey, then a light spring-time honey during the spring.

The environmental benefits and meditative qualities of beekeeping are also appealing to beekeepers around the world. Regardless of how stressful your day was, you have to be slow and methodical when working with bees.

"It was nice to have an activity that sort of slows everything down," Quiles explained. Honeybees specifically are a large contributor to pollination of human food resources. A large part of Quiles' passion for beekeep-

To become a beekeeper, there are no licenses required to get started. That being said, it is crucial to spend time doing proper research and seeking guidance. There are countless groups to join, so you can

Ms. Boulay

Ms. Boulay, a science teacher at Averill Park High School, has always had musical talent. From a young child to now, musical instruments have always been a part of her life. She began playing guitar when she was around twelve years old, and continued on to play the fiddle in the early 90s. She started the banjo five years ago, which quickly became a talent she was passionate about. She currently plays southern, old time Appalachian music, but recently started playing in the bluegrass genre.

Boulay shares that playing both the fiddle and banjo mostly consists of improvising and interaction with other instruments in the ensemble. The banjo and the fiddle often perform with a call and response between them. In her group, the fiddle and bass keep rhythm, but the banjo is more melodic.

Many people begin to learn how to play the fiddle by listening to old recordings from the Liberty of Congress. It is a very unique instrument that requires a distinct learning style.

"It's all learned by ear. It's very rare to find good sheet music for old time music," said Boulay. "It's all about the rhythm of the bow. And you can't write that down."

According to Boulay, the best place to start is the festival of Black Creek at the Altamont Fair Grounds on Memorial Day Weekend. There, you can find many pockets of old time musicians who you can reach out to for advice.

To Boulay, playing music with her friends is more



ing stems from the large contribution his hives make to our local environment.

Getting bees through the winter is one of the largest challenges they face; honey bees are not native to North America, and come with many evolutionary problems. The unpredictable challenges of climate change or disease are also difficult to stay on top of and adapt to.

learn from others in the same field. Quiles continues his education with Cornell's Master Beekeeping program, a two year course designed to prepare students to become master beekeepers.

If you're interested in getting started, Quiles advises aspiring beekeepers to "do a lot of research, do their homework, and get a mentor."

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TEACHER TALENT (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 24)

about playing together, than rehearsing or competing with other groups. Her favorite part is the community atmosphere they create while playing music together. In the future, Boulay and her fellow musicians look forward to being able to cook, camp out, and play together now that more community members are getting vaccinated.

The enthusiasm throughout the music community is highlighted by Boulay's favorite part: "It's really fun when you lock in with other players and you just get a really awesome groove going. It's so much fun, it's kind of trancey."

Mr. Goodnow

Have you seen a man riding his bike down the halls? Chances are that he is Mr. Goodnow. Goodnow spends some of his free time working to repair bikes, or riding up and down on bike trails across the state. During his time in graduate school, Goodnow worked at a bike repair shop in Albany and stayed for seven years. There, he met a tight group of friends, honed his skills, and gained various experience working with bikes. He began mountain biking during his time in Colorado during the 90s.

Now, Goodnow goes out biking with friends 2-3 times a week. He says he prefers mountain biking for the adrenaline rush, going 4-8 miles on average, sometimes up to 10. He also works on bikes by himself in his free time. "The thing I like about fixing bikes is getting people back on their bicycles," he said.

Like an auto mechanic, Goodnow has an array of tools for a wide arrangement of problems that he might encounter. When he was in charge of

the New Horizons club, he would fix bikes to fundraise for the club; one year he fixed 26 bikes!

If anyone is interested in getting into biking, the number one thing Goodnow recommends is "if you're looking at buying a bicycle I say the number one most important thing is getting a bike

James, and they were both very competitive. Due to this rivalry, her skills greatly improved through the class. These skills helped her greatly in secondary school. She found herself with a temp job in many firms and other high end places. These jobs paid very well, and it was a skillset in high demand with very few

keyboards are much different than the traditional keyboard she used.

Outside of school, Engel also works to foster rescue puppies with Homeward Bound (and sometimes the puppies even get to come into class!). She and her husband Mr. Engel, who also works as a teacher at the High School, have fostered puppies together for the last six and a half years. As of May 7, they have helped foster 281 different puppies. She explained that Homeward Bound had an excellent year in 2020, giving over 800 different rescues a home due to the large trend in "quarantine puppies."

In years past, Mr. and Mrs. Engel brought puppies into school to visit students. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, they were unable to continue this during this school year, but hope to bring them back next fall. If anyone is interested in fostering or adopting, you can apply on the Homeward Bound website.

Mr. Engel

Mr. Engel was a musician for much of his life. In third grade, he began to learn the clarinet. In sixth grade, he transitioned to saxophone, playing mostly tenor saxophone, but dabbled in soprano. In high school he moved to baritone saxophone. He played through high school and into college where he joined a marching band until about two years ago.

"I don't think I

(continued on page 26)



that fits you correctly."

Goodnow also began playing drums last year with some buddies from college, playing everything except bluegrass.

Mrs. Engel

Mrs. Engel was taking a typing class in high school when her competitive side broke out. She was taking the class with her friend

people with the talent necessary to do the job well.

Seeing the help that it gave her, Engel is a strong advocate for a half-semester typing class to return to the course selection for future years. Her experience also helped her to absorb information better than alternatives such as talk-to-type. She also interestingly says that laptop

TEACHER TALENTS (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 25)

was that great at it, but I was really good at sight reading,” he said.

Many students may not know this, but Engel also sometimes serves as the DJ for many of the dances that the school puts on. Engel had experience with lighting and sound from a previous country band he was a part of in the 80’s. He began to DJ in 1989 and has been doing it ever since.

Engel also helps his mother garden and grows flowers. He grows his own produce and his favorite things to grow are flowers and tomatoes. He said that much of gardening is learning how to start a seed or cross planting them. He remembers learning the basics from his next door neighbor as a child.

Mr. Quinn

Like many of the teachers throughout the school, Mr. Quinn also has a talent that many people don’t know about. Quinn began baking when he was in high school, and earned an award in his cooking class for his strawberry rolls. He originally began his hobby after that cooking class, and quickly realized that baking was not too difficult.

“I think people who don’t get into cooking and baking assume it’s more complicated than it is: you got a recipe? Follow the recipe and you can’t go too far wrong,” commented Quinn.

While Quinn has baked many different recipes, his current favorite is the “Perfect Chocolate Chip Cookies” recipe he found on *The New York Times* cooking website. Baking has also helped teach Mr. Quinn multiple lessons. Quinn shared that once you really learn how to bake a certain dish well, you can start to improvise with the ingredients. For example, Quinn followed the recipe on

King Cake until he felt confident with it, at which point he tried using Nutella for the filling rather than the brown sugar and cinnamon that the recipe suggested.

When baking, you also need to ensure you are properly prepared. You don’t



want to realize that you are missing a key ingredient or tool when you are halfway through the process. It is also vital that you don’t panic upon making a mistake. Even if a dish does not look perfect, if it tastes fine it’s never wrong to eat your mistakes.

Perhaps the most important lesson that Quinn learned is that people truly enjoy receiving baked goods. “If they’re sad and you bake them something, they feel a little less so — and if they’re happy and you bring them scones or something, they’re that much happier. Can’t lose.”

Like many other bakers, Quinn’s favorite part about his hobby is being able to enjoy the finished product. While everything tastes better when it is homemade, cleaning up the dishes can be quite the toiling aftermath. Picking up the mess is Quinn’s least

favorite part about baking, which is why he tends to stay with easier dishes.

Mr. Strich

If you were in Mr. Strich’s English class, you may already know about his musical talent. For those of

“Even though I’m a teacher, I had to learn how to get up in front of people and play, so it gives me confidence,” explained Strich.

Throughout his musical career, Strich has found that like in many other hobbies, it all comes down to how much you practice. “If you enjoy it, you’re going to practice. If you don’t enjoy it, you don’t even try.” He continued to explain that if you truly enjoy a hobby, you will naturally want to do it and practice, which in turn will help you improve.

Strich also noted that he enjoys playing the bass because it can be a distraction. “It’s an escape from everything else going on, and it feels nice to fit in musically with someone else.” Strich is now in both an acoustic duo and a Motown funk band. He also owns ten different basses, including a p bass, a 5-string bass, a jazz bass, and two hollowbody basses. They all sound different, so Strich will try to rotate through them all when he goes to practice.

All through Averill Park High School, many teachers have talents that are not initially noticeable. It can be fascinating to learn more about these talents, and catch a glimpse of your teacher’s life outside of school. Some of these hobbies are shared by many students and staff; they can truly create bonds that make Averill Park the wonderful community that it is.

So next time your class ends a minute or two early, don’t be afraid to ask your teacher what else they are interested in. After all, most people have a hidden talent that they are happy to share.

you unaware, when Strich was in college he decided to buy a guitar. After playing it for a bit, Strich found himself enjoying the bass lines more than the guitar melodies themselves. Strich decided to trade the guitar in for a bass, and immediately found himself liking the bass far more than the guitar. Even with no formal instruction, he would enjoy going to a friend’s and just playing for hours.

After putting it away for twenty years, Strich’s son began playing bass in sixth grade. Seeing this caused Strich to pull out his old bass, and he quickly rediscovered his love for music.

Playing the bass has helped Strich meet many different people. It has also helped him develop more of a stage presence, and Strich learned how to grow more confident through it.

DRIVERS, START YOUR...TRACTORS!

ENERGY AND POWER'S ANNUAL TRACTOR RACE GOING TO VIDEO

by Sophia Maddalone

Since 2003, Mr. Dutcher's Energy and Power class has held an annual tractor racing event here at Averill Park High School. However, this year, there is no set date. Typically, the races are held around the middle of June, with spectators present. Due to the COVID-19 restrictions in place, however, Dutcher is planning on holding the events in his individual classes this year. He hopes to create a video montage to showcase the events to the school district.

Dutcher started the tractor races at APHS during his first full year of teaching. He has since continued the tradition, holding the races with his Energy and Power class every year. Last year though, the races were unable to occur due to the school's closure during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"It was very depressing, and a lot of our sophomores (who are now juniors) that were enrolled in the Energy and Power class were very disheartened," said Dutcher, "because they

were looking forward to the event all year."

Dutcher usually sees the three classes of



sixteen students participate in the races. He typically breaks each class into three groups, and three lawn mowers are made in each class. "But not

every team will make it," Dutcher said. "Sometimes their mower will break down, or their mower ends up not

working. That's the fun of it. It's a competition." This year, students began working on the lawnmowers right before the end of the second quarter. "We are allowing a couple of our Auto Tech students to help out the underclassmen that are working on their racing lawn mowers just because it's fun," said Dutcher. Unfortunately, some of the upperclassmen missed the races last year, but helping out the

underclassmen allows them to apply some of their lawnmower knowledge, and to give some tips to the Energy and Power students.

"There is nothing quite like going 25 to 30 miles per hour on a lawnmower. It's loads of fun," Dutcher added.

The Energy and Power teacher said he enjoys the good that comes out of the races. The winning students get the "street creds" of being able to say that they've won, and it's a fun experience for everyone overall.

Dutcher recommended Energy and Power as a course for all students. "You learn about electricity, alternative energy, house wiring, how to work on small engines, and read technical information," he said. "Then, we wrap up the class with rewiring lawn mowers to race them."

If you are interested in technology, or are an aspiring tractor racer, you should talk to your guidance counselor about signing up for Mr. Dutcher's Energy and Power class. Be sure to be on the lookout for this year's tractor races!

SUPREME COURT (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 28)

the coaches and the teammates. The school's rules say that student athletes must present themselves in a way that will not diminish the school's image.

When ruling, the Supreme Court will look at past cases, including the legal precedent set by the 1969 Supreme Court case of *Tinker v. Des Moines Independent School District*. The issue before the court during that case involved a group of students choosing to wear black

armbands to school to show their views against the Vietnam War. The Des Moines Independent School District suspended the group for their actions of wearing the black armbands. In that case, the court decided that punishing the students violated their First Amendment rights.

Another Supreme Court case that will be used is the 2007 *Morse v. Frederick* case. At a school event, a student held up a banner

that stated "Bong hits 4 Jesus." The school district suspended the student for the display of the banner. In that case, the Supreme Court justified the school's actions, stating that suspending the student was not a violation of the student's First Amendment rights.

While the Supreme Court hears the *Mahanoy Area School District v. B.L.* case, new questions are being raised. How will schools differentiate be-

tween speech that is used on-campus and speech that is used off-campus but during a remote school day? Can schools discipline students for cyberbullying?

The verdict is predicted to come out towards the end of June. When the court makes a decision there will be new rules that will determine how public schools in America can punish students for inappropriate speech.

HOW "FREE" IS STUDENT SPEECH? SUPREME COURT TO MAKE JUDGEMENT

by Sophia Maddalone

Do students need to be more conscious about what they say and post outside of school? A current Supreme Court case will decide whether students can be punished for off-campus speech.

In May of 2017, 14-year old Brandi Levy expressed her frustration on not making her high school varsity cheerleading team by posting on a popular social media app called Snapchat. She posted the Snapchat story on a weekend, and off of school property. The post consisted of profane words referring to cheerleading and the school. Her post was shared on Snapchat with 250 friends. The school

learned of the post from one of Levy's friends on Snapchat who was the cheer coach's daughter.

Levy's school district, the Mahanoy Area School District, punished her by prohibiting Levy from be-

ing on the cheerleading team for one year.

Levy's parents filed a lawsuit against the school district for violating Levy's First Amendment right of freedom of speech, enlisting the American Civil Liberties Union to represent Levy.

The U.S. Supreme Court began hearing arguments on April 26, 2021 for the Mahanoy Area School District v. B.L. case. The Mahanoy Area School District argued that Levy was suspended from cheerleading on both varsity and junior varsity cheer teams for a year, due to a violation of the school's and team's rules. The cheerleading team's rules state students must show respect for the school,



(continued on page 27)

FAVORITE

BOARD GAME

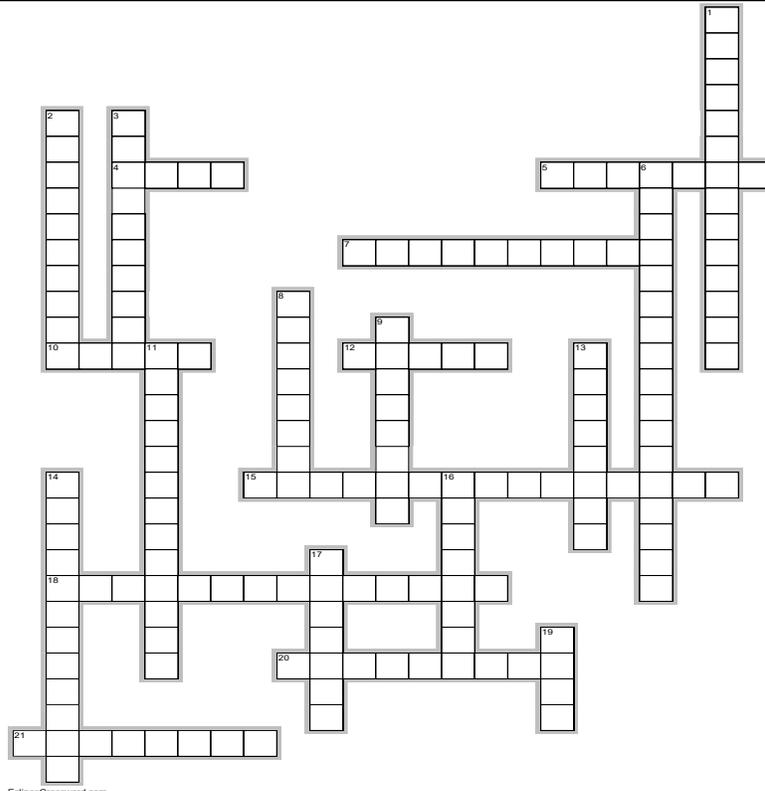
CROSSWORD

Match the STAFF MEMBERS
with their

FAVORITE BOARD GAMES

Note—don't skip spaces

- | | |
|---------------------|------------|
| APPLES TO APPLES | |
| ARKHAM HORROR | |
| BACKGAMMON | BATTLESHIP |
| CLUE | CRIBBAGE |
| DOMINOES | MANCALA |
| MONOPOLY | PARCHEESI |
| PENTE | PICTIONARY |
| QUIRKLE | RISK |
| RUN YOURSELF RAGGED | |
| SEQUENCE | |
| SETTLES OF CATAAN | |
| SCRABBLE | |
| SORRY | |
| TRIVIAL PURSUIT | |
| THE GAME OF LIFE | |



Down

1. Clark-Apelanz, Medici
2. Agnew
3. Caruso, McKeough, Otty
6. Gildersleeve
8. Dutcher M, Fox, Hale, Hotaling, Klepsch, Oldendorf, Perry, Schmidt, Stone
9. Engel B, Lambright, Malenfant, Miller, Minkler
11. Kimberling, Mein
13. Strich
14. Gierthy
16. Yost
17. Heilmann
19. Galcik

Across

4. Church, Ford, Gibbins, Pauly
5. Daviero
7. Marufo, Shupe
10. Quesnel
12. Freeman
15. Fairchild
18. Engel S
20. Ashline, Mackey
21. Rees