

# CHRONICLE

## STATE OPEN TO FLEXIBLE CALENDAR

by Ryan Gutheil

Averill Park and other school districts across New York State could see a change in their calendars. Policymakers in the State Education department are considering changing the existing 180-day



school year. These talks follow calls by superintendents for a more flexible schedule around New York.

Many school districts have requested to start classes in August. However, there is currently a state law that prevents schools from starting before September 1. The

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## LONG-TERM CAPITAL PROJECT ANNOUNCED

by Abby Vandenberg

It's time for a new Capital Project to get underway here at Averill Park Central School District, and based on the previous one, the improvements could be substantial. The APSCD School Board appointed a Long Range Planning Committee recently that will start planning for a new Capital Project, with a goal of breaking ground on the project by the summer of 2021.

Capital Projects may be more familiar to you than you think. They are primarily state funded endeavors that keep our school facilities up-to-date and complying with

building condition surveys. In the most recent project finalized by Averill Park's Long Range Planning Committee in 2015, district wide Wi-Fi technology was installed and the



high school auditorium was extensively renovated for the first time since 1950's. The main foyer was also redone, for a modern, security-tight entrance.

It included major technological, architectural,

and infrastructural betterments to not only the high school, but the whole district. The total cost was \$12.9 million dollars, according to Mr. Quimet, the Assistant Superintendent for Business who annually organizes APCSD's budget and government grants.

Capital Projects are ideally planned every five years. The preparation and proposals take years. The Long Range Planning Committee meets monthly to decide which areas of the district to focus on. The final capital project scope and cost is presented to the community through public meetings and is then voted on by district

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## MRS. KLEPSCH PUBLISHED BOOK OF POETRY AVAILABLE ON AMAZON

by Nick Maggio

Averill Park High School holds promise to many articulate creative writers, who practice their craft every day as much as they can. Writing is a perfect way to express one's inner self and create beautiful works of art loved by many. One of our own has dedicated her whole life to writing and literature, and has recently released a published book.



English teacher Mrs. Klepsch now has the accomplishment of having a published book. Klepsch has released a poetry book called *God Must Be a Boogie Man*, which touches on big themes of life, death and love with her first poem titled "What if I woke up one day and saw that I had died."

Growing up, Klepsch fell in love with the vast end-

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## NO MORE SNOW DAYS LEFT

While most students (and teachers) enjoy having snow days, the Averill Park Central School District only scheduled four into this year's calendar. And since state law requires school be open a certain number of days each school year, APSCD may run out if mother nature doesn't cooperate. And if that happens, one of two changes will have to be made.

As of February 12, APSCD had used up all four of its scheduled snow days. According to school superintendent Dr. Franchini, like in the past, in the event the district needed to use more than four snow days, the school board may need to reduce the number of days off during the April Break, scheduled this year for April 2-6.

If the school decides to use some of those days, then the board would eliminate April 6 from vacation (making it a regular day of instruction). If more days were needed, the next day swapped would be April 5, then April 4, and so on, moving back toward April 2 for each additional day needed.

An alternate plan the district is considering is making the presently scheduled March 16 conference day a regular student day for instruction, while making the vacation day presently scheduled for March 30 a conference day.

Any decisions made will be dependent on the weather, and will be announced by the superintendent's office as they become available.

## THIS IS ONLY A TEST... HEALTH TESTING MANDATED BY THE STATE

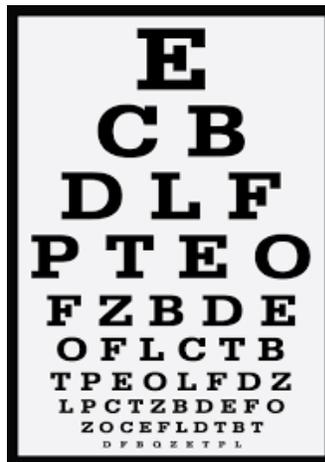
by Elizabeth BurrIDGE

Year after year, the Averill Park High School nurse conducts vision, hearing, and posture examinations on various students of each grade. Only a registered nurse can conduct these screenings. These tests are state mandated with ranging guidelines, and every school nurse in New York State must follow these general guidelines, although, the school district can add its own regulations. Each test has its own regulations, and all of the testing is done in one meeting with the nurse.

New York State Law requires all students to undergo a vision and hearing screening within six months of admission to a school, as well as in tenth grade, and whenever it seems necessary. The law also requires school nurses to hold posture screenings for every student between

ages eight and sixteen at least once a year.

The purpose of the vision examination is to screen for any vision impair-



ments a student may have. The test consists of looking into a machine called a titmus, and the nurse asks the student to read the bottom two lines of letters; each line of the lettering is smaller than

the one above. These lines are considered the 20/20 and 20/30 lines, allowing only for the misreading of one or two letters. If the student cannot read these lines at all he or she must read the 20/40 line; this is considered failing. For someone who cannot see or use the titmus machine, the nurse has him or her stand ten to twenty feet away from a wall chart and read it.

When a student fails the vision screening, the nurse notifies the student's parents. Within a week the nurse does a follow-up meeting with parents about a doctor's appointment. Within a month the nurse checks if the student has received glasses. If so, she does another screening.

This test is believed to be one of the most important because poor eye-

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### FLEXIBILITY (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

people pushing for this law to be eliminated say that not all schools would have to start earlier, but having this option could allow districts more flexibility. Averill Park may not see a change in their school year start. Superintendent Dr. Franchini said, "I don't think we have a need to." While some schools are going to benefit by this increased flexibility, it will not be of great benefit to Averill Park.

Another foreseeable change could be a switch to counting hours rather than days. Under the current system, only high school days over five hours and thirty minutes are counted towards the required 180 day total. This means that half days are not counted. The proposed plan is to require high schools to log 990 hours over the

course of a school year, which equals 180 five-and-a-half-hour days. While this change would alter school schedules across the state, Franchini said, "It's early in the thought process." A switch to hours would allow districts to focus on the year as a whole, rather than a week-by-week basis. According to Franchini, this change "allows you to bank hours," and "makes more sense." If implemented, this change would affect Averill Park, but it is important to remember that the State Education Department is "very much at the beginning of this process."

Part of this response from school districts comes because they did not log the full 180 days last year. They believed that half days also counted towards this total.

Districts that fall short of the required total put themselves at risk for losing a portion of their state aid. In addition, snowfall and school cancellations can put the 180 day total at risk, which is part of the reason why leaders want to revisit these issues.

Changing the system would cause at least a revisitation of teacher contract structure, which adds a layer of confusion to an already challenging situation. Franchini explained that this change would require extensive work by the school board to restructure the collectively bargained contracts. Whatever the decision that New York State comes to, Franchini assures that any change will "benefit the kids. Any change will benefit the students."

# GRACE UNDER PRESSURE... ...AND COMES BACK STRONG!

by Gabrielle Skiba

On the morning of September 15, sixteen-year-old Grace Powers was unexpectedly rushed to Albany Medical Center. Powers, a junior at Averill Park, later found out that she had had a hemorrhagic stroke, which was caused by an Arteriovenous Malformation (AVM). This is extremely rare; to put it in perspective, there are fewer than 200,000 cases recorded in the US per year, and fewer than 1% of the population is affected by AVM's in the brain.

The reason Powers was rushed to the hospital was because a vein had ruptured, causing there to be an overabundance of blood in her brain very quickly. And alarmingly, there is an 8% risk of complications or death that can occur in an AVM surgery.

Powers had an emergency surgery at Albany Med, where she spent three weeks, and for three of those days she was in a coma. She also had a second surgery to clear any additional blood from her brain during that time period.

She then spent two weeks at Sunnyview Rehabil-

tation Hospital where she got physical, occupational, and speech therapy every day. Following that, Powers spent another week at Albany Med



because of bad headaches, until returning to her home.

Powers said that she initially had double vision (when you see more than one of a single item), but wore special glasses to fix it.

At Sunnyview, the doctors said that Grace could come back to school towards the end of January, although it is now February and she still has to wait until her 504 plan is ready. A 504 plan, among other uses, can be for stu-

dents who have missed a lot of school for medical reasons, so when they return, there are several rules that have to be followed. For Powers, this

means there will be no timed tests (meaning she can have extra time on a test if she needs it), an aid will be with her in her classes, she gets a wheelchair, an elevator key, and she gets to leave five minutes before the bell rings to get to her next class. Powers said that she will be using some of these amenities, but others will she decline. She is still waiting for that plan to be finalized, and then she can return to school.

Powers said that her community and the people around her have really made a great impact on her throughout her journey. She realizes how supportive and caring the people in her community really are. She said that before this she laid low and didn't like much atten-

tion; now she is so grateful to have so many caring people around her.

"My church, school, volleyball team, and other people around the community were so caring to my family and me," she said. Powers got many visits from teachers, members of her church, her pastor, and friends - even one who lives close to New Jersey came to visit. Powers is surrounded by so many wonderful people in her life, and she made it very clear that she was very thankful for them.

During the preparation for this story, Powers said a very deep and meaningful statement: "Now, I don't care so much about the little things that used to bother me". She used the example of her hair and how it was shaved and it's now growing in straight up. She would have cared so much about this before everything had happened, but now she views life differently. She also said, "I had a stroke, and it could've been a lot worse." Powers is a truly incredible person who should be admired for her courage and strength throughout her journey, and we welcome her back to Averill Park.

## PROJECT (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

residents. The approved project is financed with 15-year bonds, with State Building Aid covering about seventy-five percent of the overall project cost. There are public referendums, budgets, and plenty of "hoops" to jump through before construction can begin. There are also the difficulties of working in the school during construction and renovation times.

Without Capital Projects, though, the school buildings would soon fall too

far out of service. Mr. Heffner, Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds, said,



"Buildings like schools that get so much use out of them year round, are constantly in need of updates and renovations."

When asked about

their initial "wish-list" items, many administrators responded. Heffner hoped they would "update some boilers." Principal Ms. Tsao would like to see "the creation and expansion of hands-on learning spaces [like the existing auto tech and construction classrooms] and STEM classrooms." Assistant principal Mr. Bishop would like "increased security measures" added to the project, while assistant principal Mrs. Mein would like to see a

"science lab strictly for college courses." Athletic director Mr. Bubniak thought a "fitness center that includes cardio equipment and weight equipment in one area" would be a nice addition.

What will the next Capital Project actually have in store for Averill Park Central School District? It could be boilers, roofs, bathrooms, sidewalks, speed bumps, or laptops - keep your eyes out for the Capital Project Proposal.

# NOT THE SAME-OLD, SAME-OLD

## FOURTEEN NEW COURSE OFFERINGS FOR NEXT YEAR

by Ruthann Flick

You may not have known, but there are many new classes that are really exciting that you can take next year. The added classes cover all the different subject areas, including theatre, science, foreign language and more. There are fourteen new classes that you can take next year. Be sure to ask about these classes when picking out your schedules for next year.

One promising new science class is The Human Brain, which is all about the basics of neuroscience and how the brain functions. Only a half year course, it's perfect to take opposite Health or any other course you are interested in fitting into your schedule. Another completely new and useful is that of Allied Science. This distance

learning course is for anyone wanting to pursue a career in



nursing or any other health service career. The objective of this course is to prepare those students for entrance exams into those specific programs that tend to be competitive.

Next come the math and computer classes, which are also bound to

spark an interest in some of you. Exploring Computer Programming goes right into the basics of programming, which is a really useful skill to have in the workplace. You will learn to make your own apps and websites alike. College Algebra is a distance learning course, which you can take for college credit from Schenectady County Community College. This is an alternate route to take after Geometry for those who do not want to take Algebra II.

Two other classes offered include Introduction to Computer Science and Project Lead The Way's Computer Science Principles.

If theatre is more your speed, you're in luck. There are new classes to

take in that department. If you are looking for something funny and far from the norm, take the new Comedy and Improv class next year. Or if you want to go a more classic route, take the new American Musical Theater class. This course will help with your performing skills to become a better singer and actor while also teaching you about all the classics.

In the music and art categories there are two new classes, Portfolio Prep for Art and Comprehensive Foundation in Music. The new art class is a stepping stone for juniors who want to consider AP Studio as an option their senior year. This option gives them time to work on pieces at the pace of AP Studio in preparation for the next step. Compre-

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## HEALTH TESTING (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2)

sight can lead to headaches and migraines which negatively affect a student's learning.

The hearing test is a bit different from the vision test. The nurse measures hearing in decibels and hertz. The student wears a set of large headphones that drowns out most outside noise. The machine beeps in one ear, then stops and alternates to the other ear in various patterns. Upon hearing a beep, the student points to that ear so that the nurse can measure hearing. You must hear the noise at 20 decibels, 1000, 2000, and 4000 hertz to pass.

A fail will result in follow-up questions with the nurse. She checks if the student has been sick or stuffy recently. If so, she waits until he or she is not sick to retest. If not, the

nurse checks any further problems, notifies parents and recommends seeing a doctor for evaluation.

The posture test is the simplest screening of them all. The nurse is testing for any curvatures in the spine, or scoliosis. For the screening, the nurse has a student touch his or her toes and examines the curve of the back. If there are any problems, the nurse will notify the student and parents. If it is believed to be serious, further examination from a primary doctor will be needed.

These screenings are required for many important reasons, but the main reason is the early detection of any health problems so the issue can be treated as soon as possible. The vision test is done because it is believed a student

who has vision problems will also struggle with physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development. The hearing test is conducted because problems can lead to social, intellectual, and emotional development problems, as well as interfere with speech and language development. The posture screening is done because any issues with the spine can lead to impairment of the body's motion range and endurance, and even back pain and harm other body functions when the scoliosis is advanced.

The current guidelines at Averill Park High School include the New York State Laws, but are more specific. Every new student and sophomore receives all screenings, every freshman receives the posture screening, and lastly, every athlete who receives a school physi-

cal will take every test. These guidelines are subject to change for the different grade levels for next year; specifics are unknown for now.

The nurse keeps records of all the results, passing or failing, on a computer medical charting program. Failing requires more paperwork, including the referral or letter sent home to parents informing them of the results and that a primary doctor is needed. Nurses often also make a call to the parents. Our school nurse, Mrs. Miller, truly believes these tests are crucial for our students and school. Miller stated, "These tests are important to keep kids health monitored. If you have a healthy kid, then you have a kid that can learn."

# APHS'S SUPERHEROES: THE HEATING CREW

## EXPLAINING THE SCHOOL HEATING SYSTEM

by the AP Chronicle Staff

When it starts getting cold outside, students are more aware of classroom heating situations than ever. "This room is freezing" or "why don't they make it more comfortable in here" are common refrains. Yet for every complaint about room temperatures, the majority of students don't even give it a passing thought. That's because generally the room temperatures are fine, and students can focus on everything else they should be doing in the classroom. But keeping room temperatures as an afterthought requires a dedicated crew and a lot of technical expertise, especially as the winter months are the "busy time," requiring the heating crew to even come in on some weekends.

Aaron Heffner, the Averill Park Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds who has worked for the district for 21 years, has heard his share of complaints. "It's part of the job," Heffner said. "I don't look at it as complaining, I look at it as concerns."

Heffner recently explained how the heating system works in the dis-

trict. The high school system relies on heated water sent through pipes, up to four inches in diameter, to each individual heater in the school. The heating system is a closed system, meaning the same water gets heated by a boiler to about 140 degrees, then sent around



the school and back to be reheated, where the process is started again.

Each classroom has a unit ventilator with a fan motor, which blows a mixture of heated and unheated air out into the classroom. Most teachers are unaware that the heaters are set at an average of 70 degrees during the day. The

temperature is controlled by a thermostat or sensor that communicates directly with maintenance office. Averill Park uses a DDC system for the high school. "DDC stands for Direct Digital Control, and it is located in the maintenance office," said Heffner. There is "an

health reasons or because physical therapy is done in the room. At the end of the school day the system reverts to "night mode or unoccupied mode (and) every temperature gets turned down lower," he added, which explains why the "morning is chillier."

"Should a teacher want the temperature of a room adjusted," according to Heffner, "we can look at the computer in the (maintenance) office and either reprogram the unit ventilator, or we may have to go in person to the room to check out why the problem occurred."

Common heater malfunctions are the blades tending to get stuck on rotating fans, but according to Heffner, December through February is the most stressful time of the year because "frozen pipes can rupture, causing significant damage." So how do they handle a ruptured pipe? "It's a fast scramble," said Heffner. "Frozen pipes happen sometimes, so we have to move quickly to fix them," starting with turning off water and locating the break. One time he remembered a weekend break where mainte-

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## NEW COURSES (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4)

hensive Foundation in Music is a class which will teach the basics of guitar, piano and music theory.

If you are looking for something a little less conventional, take the Social Justice in Latin America class. You will learn about important issues faced in these Spanish-speaking countries through music, film and art. Another option is AP

Economics, which is taught through distance learning but only before school. That would be an option as well for all those really dedicated students out there who want to challenge themselves.

Finally, both Writing Center I and II will be offered, as the school helps create classes that will assist others with writing help.

With all these new

classes to choose from, assembling your new schedule should be anything but boring. Take something that interests you. There is always room for something you are going to enjoy. So remember, there are choices - many in fact - to choose from. Make the most of this upcoming school year and take some of these super cool new classes that are being offered.

## **We Want Your IDEAS**

The Averill Park Chronicle wants your story ideas. Send them to any Journalism Club member, or to Mr. Strich, *The Chronicle's* advisor.

# IN CASE OF A LOCKDOWN...

## CHANGES MADE TO EMERGENCY RESPONSE GUIDES

by Adam Limoges

There have been recent changes to the Emergency Response Procedures that are posted in every APHS classroom. Students and teachers alike should take notice as they change what precautions or actions you take to ensure the safety of everyone.

The changes are for the lockdown procedure. Originally, lights and blinds were to be left as they were when a lockdown was called. Now, all lights are supposed to be turned off and the door must be covered. Blinds and windows should be left as they are.

Another change addressed what to do when you hear a fire alarm during a lockdown. According to the Emergency Response Guide, you should still be unrespon-

sive to P.A. announcements and the fire alarm, "unless imminent signs of a fire are

means necessary to protect yourself and students."

A new feature that



present."

Finally the last change made to the lockdown procedure is located at the bottom in bold. It states that teachers and students should, "Use **WHATEVER**

the school is using is a text alert, so teachers are notified as soon as a lockdown is called. This alert will continually show up until the alert is exited out of. This recently caused a false lockdown in a

class. The alert was never closed and a student saw the pop-up, not knowing it was from the previous week. There was never a safety threat that day, but situations like this help the school work out problems with the new technologies being used, and help improve them and subsequently our safety.

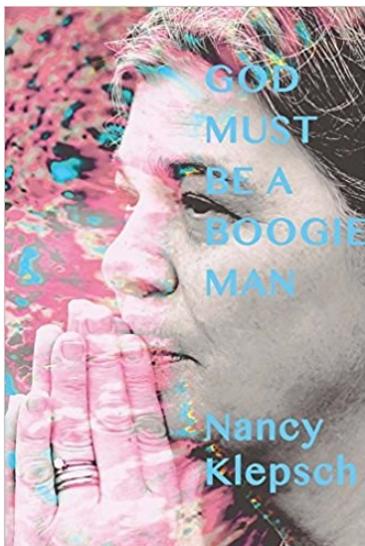
Another new feature is an automated message for lockdowns. This alleviates the need to make a P.A. announcement to enact a lockdown. This makes it easier and more efficient to broadcast a lockdown, and it is uniform so everyone knows what is happening.

Overall, these new updates and technologies will help make lockdowns more efficient and help make Averill Park a safer school for all of its students and teachers.

## KLEPSCH (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

less world of literature. She always wrote as a little girl and would write homemade cards for her family and friends on special occasions such as holidays and birthdays. Klepsch grew up on Long Island in a small town much like Averill Park, named Carle Place. It is similar to Averill Park because everyone knows each other. Klepsch said, "I love Averill Park, because it feels like it's my home just as where I grew up."

Around five years ago, Klepsch set a goal for herself that she would write a book but "would never dream of it becoming published." From the first day that she had started to write this book, she



planned to have it finished within a year, but to her own surprise she had it finished

cover to cover within 30 days.

Proud of her work and satisfied with her internal success, she sent out her book into the world hoping that one day it could be published. To add to her astonishment, a publisher contacted her three days later asking to publish her book. Publishing company Recto y Verso, located in Kingston, contacted Klepsch with great enthusiasm after reading her book.

Every day, Klepsch learns more and more about literature from her own studies and from her students. She believes that if she too has a growth mindset, she can expand her students' knowledge as well as her

own. She loves what she does and loves her students, adding "As Emily Dickinson, one of my most favorite inspirations, once said, 'My friends are my estate, and I believe that my students are my estate.'"

If you happen to see Klepsch, make sure to congratulate her on this monumental milestone in her life, whether it be while passing her in the hallway in school, or while running into her at the Troy Farmer's Market which she regularly attends. Your recognition of her accomplishments would be greatly appreciated as a friend, a colleague, and now a published writer.

# EDITORIAL PAGES

## THE WINTERTIME BLUES ARE HITTING ME HARD

by Lilly Kronau

Are you tired of waking up cold every day, with a congested runny nose and the realization that you are not actually on a beach, but about to get up for school? Yes, winter does mean leaving your amazing dream, and warm bed, for actual layers of clothes and the reality of school. If that's not enough, you have to wear the fattest coat known to man so that you look like the abominable snowman, forcing you to carry it around all day. I don't know about you, but I'm ready for winter to be over for many reasons.

Don't get me wrong, I love snow and waking up on a school day to a snow blizzard, but the last couple of

weeks have really made me despise winter. These below zero temperatures have to be the worst part, and with the



wind chill you can't even go outside. Also, forget walking your dog for longer than 15 minutes, because you'll both

freeze. Dogs everywhere can only go outside for minute amounts to go to the bathroom and then must go inside. Imagine the poor animals outside every day and night in the freezing weather. Winter is taking a large toll on other wildlife and parts of nature too.

Another reason I'm tired of winter is because I miss sitting on the beach and reading a good book. Swimming in the ocean and laying out in the sun are parts of spring and summer that I'm looking forward too. Unfortunately, this long winter is extending my wait for warm weather. With summer also comes fresh fruit and tantalizing salads. With winter all you get is an overabundance of

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- Kyle Reasor (Sports)
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## BODY SHAMING IS BEING TAUGHT EARLY

by Kylie Gavitt

Each year, many teenagers (both male and female) throughout the country suffer from anorexia and bulimia. About 1% of the population of the United States suffers from anorexia, while 4% suffer from bulimia. These disorders are caused when society seizes the minds of young children by advertising models of an unrealistic body type. Most models keep very unhealthy habits to maintain these body types, yet they are what children aspire to look like. For example, Barbie, a

classic children's doll, has this slim, unrealistic body. As children become teenagers, they realize that their body is



not similar and tend to view themselves as overweight and unattractive, although they are perfectly healthy. This is

all because of the 'perfect' image that has been thrown at them since childhood. This image is now being enforced through beauty pageants.

TLC created a show called *Toddlers and Tiaras*, which shows toddlers competing in beauty contests. These children are taught that they have to have the perfect teeth, so they get fake ones. They believe that they can only be pretty with fake eyelashes, fake tans, and fake hair. At such a young age, these girls

are being taught that they will never be naturally pretty. The girls who win the pageants do gain more confidence, but every other girl who doesn't win now has self-conscious ideas instilled in their heads regarding their beauty and self-worth.

The world of beauty pageants demonstrates unusual behavior at a young age. These children often have behavioral issues because they are taught to compete against other kids so vigorously. This level of competition should never be present-

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# EDITORIAL PAGES

## TAKE IT FROM A SENIOR...

by Sally Holden

My freshman year was a haze of "adjusting to the high school." The school day seemed so long since I entered all my classes as soon as the bell rang. I was convinced I had too much homework to join the stupid clubs offered at Averill Park. I remember watching the seniors mope around the school apathetically, not understanding why they were miserable.

Now I understand. It has taken four years for the excitement and love for learning to be squeezed out of me. I mope around the halls annoyed by underclassmen running to class as soon as the bell sounds. I am the senior strolling into the main foyer with my lanyard swinging around my fingers. I have become the student who forgets to write down when the

project is due. Not because I hate Averill Park or learning, but because practically nothing matters anymore. I am only going through the mo-



tions. I have been accepted into college, I have paid my deposit, and there's very little I could do to jeopardize that.

The only advice I have for freshmen is all the advice seniors gave to me when I was beginning high

school. All the advice I never listened to. JOIN CLUBS. Attending a meeting once every month for 40 minutes will not kill you, but writing

with your school days at AP because of this.

Please take classes you actually enjoy. I fell into the trap of enrolling in classes that looked good, but made my life miserable. Definitely challenge yourself, but also keep classes in your schedule that you look forward to going to.

Basically, no matter what I say, the outcome is inevitable. You, too, will watch a whole season on Netflix instead of starting your APGAP homework. You, too, will gradually text more in class, and will someday find yourself annoyed by the other underclassmen. I guess my general piece of advice is to just enjoy "pre-college stress" life as much as you can. Peace out because, as I now close all of my school papers, it is #seniorszn.

## HEATING (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5)

nance workers heard sloshing by the district office, and water started flowing all the way past the nurse's office. We had to "call a crew in, stop the water, shut off valves, start the clean-up" and, with his crew repairing the break and using fans and dehumidifiers to assist in the clean-up, students and staff came to school on Monday not even realizing what had happened.

Because of the threat of ruptures, "when it is this cold, it's serious and the teachers should not (just) email," said Heffner. "Calling by phone will be much more efficient since we don't know what we are dealing with."

The school's boilers use #2 fuel oil, obtained each year through a state contract. The high school alone uses roughly 50,000 gallons of fuel a year (out of a total of 170,000 for the entire district), but unlike private homes, the school doesn't pay taxes on the fuel. Fuel costs roughly "two dollars per gallon," said Heffner," so we save about 50 cents per gallon due to the tax exemption through the Main Care (this year's provider) service."

The school heating crew doesn't just fix the classroom heating systems, they also maintain humidifiers, dehumidifiers, and refrigera-

tion and air conditioning units, and work on all the school's plumbing and electrical issues. Heffner pointed out that his crew of four, including John Bruce, Mike Ernest, Bell Sansone and Cindy Ryan, are highly skilled and experienced and are to be commended for their service to the school. He also said the heating systems are in "very, very good" shape, with several boilers having been replaced recently, including at Miller Hill and the high school. He pointed out that each of the recent school district's capital projects has allowed the maintenance department to keep up with

technology. "The technology is unbelievable," said Heffner, referring to today's heating systems, and "you've got to keep up." Despite all the computer use involved, APHS should be grateful for a dedicated heating crew, because "sometimes you physically have to go out to fix things."

*Note - This article was written as a collaborative effort during a 15 minute interview session with Mr. Heffner during a Journalism Club meeting.*

# EDITORIAL PAGES

## VALENTINE'S DAY? MORE LIKE LONELY DAY

by Mackenzie Julien

Valentine's Day is usually a disappointment, whether you are in a relationship or you have been single for what feels like forever. This day of love and appreciation for a significant other or another loved one in your life can quickly turn into a minefield of awkward couples showing disgusting amounts of public affection for all to see. Not to mention the intense pressure to find a Valentine to share the day with.

People all around the world have celebrated Valentine's Day since the fifth century, when Pope Gelasius declared February 14 a day to honor St. Valentine. It wasn't until the Middle Ages when people started to associate the day with love. Sadly, since this association the day has only become more and more commercial. Last year on Valentine's Day, Americans spent almost 19 billion dollars on their lovers. As Averill Park graduate Sydney Julien said, "It's not about love anymore, it's all about capitalism."

Many people feel

pressured into getting into a relationship right before Valentine's Day. The relationships that are formed in the



days leading up to this holiday are forced and turn out to be disastrous, leaving both sides once again single. Once involved in these forced relationships, couples spend unnecessary amounts of money on each other, thus fulfilling the capitalist goal of Valentine's Day.

Even if someone is already in a relationship before this day, they feel pressured to display their love both to their partner and to their peers. In a truly committed relationship, a couple doesn't need a special occa-

sion to express their affection. Valentine's Day should not be an obligatory time for couples to buy each other gifts, or to go out on a fancy date. If this is the only day of the year that your so-called loved one truly tries to show affection then this brings into question the sincerity of the relationship.

Lastly, the amount of PDA shown on Valentine's Day should be illegal. Couples try to look their best for their dates only to have their faces squished together the whole time. "I really hate going out on Valentine's day because there's no escape from the couples making out," said sophomore Carley Salerno. "They're everywhere!"

Lots of people think that Valentine's Day should be marked as an event forever, by either proposing or

getting married on this day. It is already understood that the date February 14 is dedicated to showing your love for others, so why would someone decide to reduce the amount of celebrations of their love by making their anniversary on this day? If this unneeded holiday is here to stay, then people should not make their wedding anniversary, which is a celebration of their personal love, on this date.

Valentine's Day is a sad excuse for a holiday and should not be used as an excuse for couples to show PDA. This monstrosity of a holiday has grown so out of hand that it is no longer celebrated for its original purpose, but is now mostly a marketing strategy for chocolate, jewelry, and flower companies to exploit the public. The disgusting displays of so-called "love" between two strangers is forced upon society every February. However, if everything could go back to the joyous traditions of giving out Valentine's cards during the elementary years, I guess February 14 wouldn't be so bad after all.

## WINTER BLUES (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7)

dense lasagna and pot pies that make you feel like you've gained ten or more pounds.

Another upsetting part of winter is how dreary and depressed you feel from the rainfall and winter storms. During spring you can go hiking, play outside, play outdoor games, etc., but in winter you are forced to stay inside day-

dreaming and doing homework. Sophomore Carley Salerno said, "I love running and reading outside in the sun, but during the winter I have to run on a treadmill inside. It really puts a damper on my mood." I completely agree with that statement because running outside gives you a sense of fresh air, as if you

are "one with nature and wildlife." Comparing this to running inside shows just how boring it is with you going nowhere, seeing nothing new.

Now that you have read this article I bet you are more tired of winter than I am, but more importantly, ready for summer vacation. Warm weather, delicious

food, and fresh air should be just around the corner. I'm hoping that the groundhog, Punxsutawney Phil, does not steer us in the wrong direction. Six more weeks of winter is most definitely not in the plan. However, spring being on its way is something I think everyone is looking forward to.

# REVIEWS

## LOTE LIP SYNC A SUCCESS! EVENT RAISES OVER \$1000 FOR GRADUATING SENIORS

by Bella LaFreniere

On February 8, the Averill Park LOTE department hosted its 9th Annual Lip Sync Contest. Lip Sync is a competition among Levels 4 and 5 Spanish and French classes. Students must perform a dance while lip-syncing to a song in their language, complete with costumes. Proceeds go towards scholarships for students, and this year's contest raised over \$1,000.

The contest is actually a class assignment; it counts as a grade and students are quizzed about the lyrics in-class. There is very little time actually spent in class working on their songs. Students must pick their own songs and organize a time and place to rehearse.

This year, there were seven student performances, and, of course, an amazing teacher performance. In my opinion, each class had its own strengths. If it lacked in dance, it made up in creativity. Some of my favorites include "Soy Yo Bomba" (Spanish 4, Block 1) and "Ca m'énerve" (French 4, Block 1).

The audience loved the performances. They cheered on their friends and students; as well, some even made signs. I was very impressed by the turnout and their spirit.

There were awards given to classes, such as Best Costume, Best Lip Syncing, Best Choreography, and Best

Loca" (Spanish 4, Block 5) for their Shrek-themed costumes.

However, I am extremely disappointed in the fact "Soy Yo Bomba" received nothing. That group was very creative in routine, song choice, and props. They had

for Soy Yo!

However, I did not think there was one weak group. Each group shined in their own light. It was very interesting to see the difference between a group's early performances and show night. My advice for next year's lip syncers is to make sure they are always attending rehearsals! Not only can you tell show night which students did not go, you hurt the rest of your class.

As always, the teachers performed a hilarious and creative performance. "The 7th Element" was a creative song choice that had a fun vibe. I liked the use of props and routine. I thought their use of chairs was a smart way to combat teacher injuries. Well done!

Other winning groups included "Limbo" (Spanish 4, Block 8) for Best Choreography, "Ca m'énerve" (French 4 block 1) for Best Lip Syncing, and "Précieux" (French 5) for Best Overall.

I must shout out the student volunteers who helped out at this year's show. They dealt with a lot. Another piece of advice for next year is kindness towards the lights and sound people; they are taking time out of their days to help.

I recommend everyone attend future Lip Syncs. They are always a good time and can be a fun way to learn more about foreign languages, while helping to raise scholarship money. Overall, I rate this year's Lip Sync a 10/10!



Overall Performance. I agreed with most of the judges' picks, especially their choice of Best Costume which was awarded to "Livin' La Vida

I also saw several rehearsals and time after time this group was ready to go. In my opinion, I thought this group deserved Best Overall. Justice

records, beach balls, and a very engaging routine. Their performance set the fun and exciting tone for the night.

# REVIEWS

## A HARD ACT TO FOLLOW

### OBP SHOWCASES APHS PLAYWRIGHTS IN WINTER ONE ACTS

by Carley Salerno

The Averill Park Off-Broadway Players group (more commonly known as OBP) has brought us an abundance of great performances over the years, and this January's Winter One Acts was no exception. There was a perfect blend of sweetness and comedy evident in all of this year's one acts, causing the play to delight all those who attended. The performance was met with great success, both in the amount of attendees and in the amazing reviews that it received afterwards.

Winter One Acts has been a tradition at Averill Park for a number of years. Its main focus is aiding students in expressing their creativity by allowing them to take command of the winter produc-

tion. This performance is composed of "one-acts," which are essentially minia-



ture one-scene plays. All of these one-acts are written and directed by students.

"I think it's a pretty awesome idea to have students write their own plays" said sophomore Mackenzie

Julien, who attended Winter One Acts with her friends this January, "It always turns out amazing, and it just goes to show how much talent the students in OBP have."

Julien's opinion seems to be a popular one. Students always enjoy seeing their peers display their talent (both as actors and writers), but this January's Winter One Acts seems to have gone particularly well. "Out of all the different Winter One Acts I've been to so far, this year's was definitely my favorite," said sophomore Adam Limoges. Limoges attributed this to this year's great selec-

tion of skits. "They were all so funny, I seriously can't choose a favorite."

There was quite a variety among the favorite skits this year. One of the most notable of these was entitled "A Few Comments," written by sophomore and OBP officer Isabella LaFreniere. This skit centers on an author whose characters decide to give him a bit of feedback on his most recent novel - and ultimately wreak havoc in the process. LaFreniere is pleased that her one act had such an amazing reception. "It was really fun working with everyone and seeing 'A Few Comments' come to life," LaFreniere said. "And, of course, it was awesome to see it all

(continued on page 15)

## BODY SHAMING (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7)

ed at such a young age, especially about a topic as controversial as beauty. These pageants risk the health of the competitors. Young girls are expected to wear high heels, which are not meant for small feet. The heels will eventually cause a hunched posture and back problems. These heels, along with the rest of the outfit that the girls wear, often sexualize the contestants. Children should not be brought up to wear mini-skirts and backless dresses that are inappropriate for their age group. The beauty pageant world is making these girls look unrecognizable and forcing them to grow up way too fast.

I completely under-

stand the idea of children wanting to feel pretty at a young age. Everyone, regardless of their age, wants to be considered good looking. Maybe adding fake lashes boosts self-esteem a little bit, or walking across the stage all dressed up can get exciting. But at what point do we advocate this behavior? Is it really okay to raise a new generation with this type of mindset? I believe that it isn't, and that beauty pageants only serve to harm their participants.

Beauty pageants are only one piece of a bigger problem: sexism in America. Nowadays, women are protesting for their rights and stating that they are degraded and sexualized. Trying to

solve an issue like sexism, it becomes difficult because the idea of beauty pageants contradicts the entire mindset of feminism. While the feminist movement states that women are independent, strong, and naturally pretty, beauty pageants convey the opposite by expressing that girls need pounds of makeup to feel confident.

This concept also applies to participants in male beauty pageants. Society tells us that men do not necessarily have to be portrayed as overly muscular and masculine, but male models and pageants only show the men that have fake tans and big muscles. This is why sexism is such a difficult mental-

ty to battle. While there are many groups that are trying to change this in America, celebrities and big companies continue to support it by showing body expectations that are not realistic.

The concepts of sexism and eating disorders have a direct correlation with beauty pageants and today's standards of beauty. Society puts pressure on young children to look a way that is unhealthy and impossible. If you don't look like that, then you almost feel shameful and that's when the issue arises. Beauty pageants encourage negative behavior that will follow participants far into their adult life.

# REVIEWS

## TALENT SHOW BENEFITS NEW HORIZONS

by Ryan Gutheil

On December 15 the New Horizons Club at Averill Park High School hosted their second annual Talent Showcase. The event raised about \$900 from tickets, baked goods and pizza sales, among other things.

For the second year in a row, this show will have a significant effect on the function of our sister school in the Dominican Republic. Club President Jessica Liberty said, "The money raised will be incredibly important, especially now, as the community was hit hard by hurricanes this past year." For each dollar raised, one child will be able to go to school for one day to learn and be nourished.

The night began with sophomore Hannah Ryan and her brother, Zach (an eighth grader) singing "It's Time" by Imagine Dragons, followed by other student acts, including singing and dancing.

At the halfway point of the night, a video was projected.

The video displayed children from the New Horizons School

singing a song with one of their teachers. This, along with powerful images which were shown in the back-

singing "Brown Eyed Girl" by Van Morrison. MCs Adam Johnson and Krissi Schaefer provided smooth transitions

both in Averill Park and in the Dominican Republic, who are working to make a difference in these chil-



between acts. Many thanks go to the people from the Averill Park community who attended the event. Aid from this community will directly affect another in poverty. "It

dren's lives." The New Horizons Club would like to thank the members of all eleven acts for donating their time and energy to this great cause. The talent that Averill Park students possess is extraordinary, and the club was lucky to host an event with such impressive acts throughout the evening.



ground throughout the event, was important to show the attendees just what their donation was going towards. More acts followed, including a three piece blues act and a faculty all-star group.

Finally, the night was finished with the entire cast and crew



was amazing to see community members coming to support such a great cause," Liberty added. "It is important to recognize and thank all of the volunteers,

Overall, the second annual talent show was an outstanding event that will significantly help people in an impoverished community.

# A MONSTER OF A PROJECT

## COLLABORATIVE ART PROJECT SPANS TWO SCHOOL BUILDINGS

by Fiona Carroll

This coming spring, you may see some interesting pieces of art depicting fanciful monsters. These works of art are the result of the Averill Park version of the Monster Project.

So what is the Monster Project? The original Monster Project is a project in which elementary schoolers draw monsters, then adult professionals recreate these works of art in their own style. The rapidly growing project aims to help children recognize the power of their own imaginations and encourage them to pursue their creative potential. It occurs once a year and is free for participants.

“We are basing our projects on this... only we are not only having the older stu-

dents create the monsters based on the younger artists description, but the younger art students will be inspired by older art students as well,” said art teacher Mrs. Gregory, who is collaborating with Mrs. Thomlinson, the art teacher at Miller Hill Elementary school, to work on their version of the Monster Project.

Both high school studio art students and third graders filled out descriptions of their monster and ex-

changed them with a partner in the other grade. The correspondents are now drawing a rendition of their partner’s monster based on this written depiction. The students will, hopefully, record videos to help portray their monster and its story. These videos will be available through the use of an innovative app.

The art department decided to do this project since Thomlinson has a similar number of third grade students as Gregory has Stu-

dents, so it, “seemed like the perfect opportunity to explore this collaboration,” said Gregory.

“As art teachers, we are excited about the rich learning experiences surrounding art, literacy, and technology that are imbedded in this endeavor,” Mrs. Gregory added.

This is the first time the art department has undertaken their version of the Monster Project, so there is yet to be an official date for the exhibition. Gregory surmises, “We hope to have all the videos recorded for both levels and organized through the app in order to install the third grader’s pieces side by side with the high school works in the APHS foyer sometime this spring.”



# ART STUDENTS TRAVEL TO BOSTON



The APHS Art Department traveled to Boston with students to visit the Museum of Fine Arts and the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum. Students were exposed to vast works of art throughout history.

# INTERNSHIP CLASS PROVIDES STUDENTS WITH EXPERIENCE

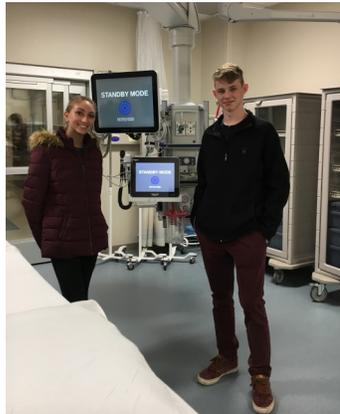
by Sally Holden

This year Averill Park High School offered its first internship-based class. Mrs. Ashline is the instructor; however, students are only in the actual building for the first and final quarters of the year. This class is only offered to seniors since for the other half of the year the students are responsible for providing their own transportation to internships across the Capital District.

During the first quarter of the school year, students explore their field of interest in depth. For instance, I first looked at pursuing a career as a Personal Trainer, and later found related options that fit my dream occupation more precisely. This class is ideal for students who have an idea of what field they want to go into, but also for students that do not.

Career Exploration allows you to shadow professionals from a variety of occupations. This hands-on experience allows you to look at the

day to day life of someone in your field. I interned at a local private gym as a personal trainer and shadowed a more clinical



approach to weight loss at a medical facility in Latham. This contrast helped me to pinpoint exactly what I am looking to do as a career.

Other students in my class have explored a variety of occupations, going to a forensics lab on one day, and a police ride-along the next. Ashline works with every student individually to ensure they are experiencing every occupation they

have an interest in.

In the first quarter students also completed online surveys to find their strengths. Watching videos, as well reading articles about success, happiness, and motivation, helped students see their future. I can say this is one of the only classes I have taken in high school that has truly prepared me for the real world.

has given me work experience before graduating high school. This gives me an upper hand on college applications, future internships, and job resumes.

These internships also create opportunities in your field of interests. Through the gym I interned at, I am now obtaining a certification in personal training and employment. Also, these



Many students leave even college with no work experience in their field, and this makes it difficult to get a job that requires expertise. Taking this class

experiences give you someone to write down as a reference in future job applications. As they say, "It's not what you know, it's who you know."

## GUMMING SOON: THE DENTIST'S OFFICE!

### NEW STRUCTURE REPLACES THE OLD OFFICE

by Hannah Ryan

When driving by Westfall Village as you leave the high school, students may have noticed the large construction site across the street. The site has been there for several months now, and you can currently see the wooden frame of a building. Soon enough, that framing will transform into a dentist office. The original office, Eastview Dental, is still in business near the site, and is run by Drs. Geoffrey Gama che, Rosanne



Sundstrom, and Robert Buckley. The current office has been there for decades, originally run by Dr. Robert Hill.

The plan for the new office is a relocation. Currently, the original building is quite small, according to patients. Additionally, there is a difficulty with parking at times when the office is busy. The new facility should be a significant improvement

from the present one with the addition of more space and a larger parking lot.

In terms of the old space, the intent is for it to be used as general offices, though nothing is set in stone. As the project progresses, there will be more information available about the new office and what will become of the old facility.

"Hopefully, it's going to look nicer and have wider hallways so it's less cramped," said sophomore patient Jason Meyer. Many other patients, as well as the staff, are curious to see how the new office will turn out.

## SURVEY SAYS: TWO TEACHERS, TWO INTERVIEWS



by Jessica Beskid

For this column, I sit down with two faculty members of different ages and subjects, and ask them the same set of questions. The two teachers that this prestigious and distinguished honor has been bestowed upon for this edition are Mrs. Rees (science) and Mrs. Engel (social studies)!

*If you had to teach another subject besides your own, which would you pick, and why?*

Rees: "Probably calculus. I like that. It really applies to physics, so it wouldn't be that big of a leap. It's very interesting."

Engel: "Art History is interesting."

*What hobbies and interests do you have outside of the classroom?*

Rees: "I love cross-country and downhill skiing. I love

to make jewelry. I love to sew. I love to play tennis and I'd love to join a league. I cannot get to doing that because I don't have enough time. And I'd love to do more hiking."

Engel: "I like to travel, I love rescuing dogs, and I like to kayak."

been in the high 90s."

Engel: "My grades were pretty nerdy, around the 95 to 96 range."

*Is there anything that your students have taught you?*

Rees: "They teach me every day; it's awesome. You guys

Engel: "Yes, I'm more patient and tolerant, and they taught me how to use Snapchat."

*What was the last good book you read?*

Rees: "I liked T.C. Boyle's, The Tortilla Curtain. That was good."

Engel: "Wonder, by R.J. Palacio."

*What character trait do you value most in a student?*

Rees: "Hard work, perseverance and grit."

Engel: "Probably work ethic and honesty."

*If you got to start over and be something other than a teacher, what would you be?*

Rees: "I would be a cheesemaker and I would live in Switzerland."

Engel: "If I had to start over, I would probably be doing urban planning or some sort of business improvement district work trying to renovate downtown areas."



*How were your grades in school?*

Rees: "I was definitely an excellent student. I went to two high schools. I was ranked 20th at Guilderland and I was ranked 4th at my other school in Westchester. I don't remember what my average was, but it must have

teach me a lot about humility and it's a good thing to be humble and not to think you know all the answers all the time, and I hope that I teach you guys that it's okay to make mistakes. I think these two things interact with each other, and you definitely need to learn to have fun with things."

## WINTER ONE ACTS (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11)

come together on the night of the show."

Another favorite this year included "Blacc Fridayyye," a parody of the craze and hecticness that usually accompanies Black Friday in America. "Karen and Eleanor," which depicted two elderly sisters looking after (or, more accurately, trying to deal with) their slightly petulant and annoying grandniece, also received a large amount of praise from the audience.



"Caramel Latte," written by sophomore and OBP officer Cylie Vanderwal, was also popular among the audience members. This skit was a parody of OBP's last

spring production, *Charlotte's Web*. "Purgatory," as implied by the title, was a fantasy-themed skit about the souls caught between heaven and earth.



These skits, along with the many others which were featured in the performance, were able to easily win the admiration of the audience members. Everyone that attended the performance seemed to have nothing but glowing reviews. The actors, writers, and stage crew members' diligence and talent were evident in this year's performance of the Winter One Acts. Now the ensemble sets their sights on OBP's next production, the spring play, which we'll all be waiting eagerly for!

## CASHEWS



by Bridget Mulligan

Have you ever had a cashew before? They are delicious, buttery and salty!

Did you know cashews are grown in an apple tree? That's right, not an apple that you eat, but it is a cashew apple.

The cashew tree is a tropical evergreen. It can grow as high as 46 feet but the dwarf cashew only grows up to 20 feet.

Since cashews require a frost free tropical climate, Florida, Hawaii and Puerto Rico are states in the US that they are grown.

Each ounce of cashews has 163 calories, which is only 16 to 18 cashew nuts, so it's easy to eat more than serving in one sitting if you aren't careful. Cashews are a healthy snack because they are full of vitamins, minerals and antioxidants. They have "good fats" which help prevent heart disease. They can also help you lose weight.

Some fun facts about cashews are that their shells are poisonous. Also, cashew resin is used to make brake liners and paint for your car.

## MACADAMIA



by Bethany Brechbill

Have you ever heard of macadamia nuts? These nuts are high in protein and fiber. They are also high in calories (962 calories per cup!). But be careful – did you know these nuts are poisonous to dogs?

They grow in Australia and Hawaii. The first macadamia tree was planted in Hawaii in 1882.

The trees are evergreen, and grow 7 - 40 feet tall. The trees are usually grown in volcanic soil and a warm climate. The nuts fall off the trees onto a tarp and then are picked up.

The United States eats more macadamia nuts than any other country. And, did you know that September 4th is National Macadamia Nut Day?

# ARE YOU (EDUCATED...

## ALMONDS



by Samantha Schroeder

Did you know that almonds are awesome? They are in the rose family and have been called "the queen of the rose family." Almond trees totally depend on bees for pollination.

Almonds are grown in California on almond trees. The growers use mechanical shakers that shake the nuts to the ground. They are harvested from August to October.

Almonds can be sweet or bitter. You can eat them raw or roasted. You can also make almond butter or almond milk.

Almonds have vitamin E in them. Almonds are among the lowest calorie nuts. They also have more calcium than any other nuts. Of all of the nuts, almonds have the most protein and fiber. If you want a healthy snack, go get some almonds!

## COCONUTS



by Brendan Garrow

Did you know that coconut is an actual nut? It is a fruit, a nut and a seed.

The coconut palm is grown in 80 countries. Coconuts are mainly grown in tropical Asia. Here in the US they are grown in Hawaii, southern and central Florida, and the US Virgin Islands.

Coconut trees can grow up to 75 coconuts per year. Coconuts are rich in fiber and packed with essential vitamins and minerals. Coconut milk is not the same as coconut water. Coconut water is low in calories, carbohydrates, sugars and is fat free. Coconut oil is a better saturated fat than all of the others. It has a fatty acid that helps boost metabolism and helps in fat loss.

The coconut tree is a member of the areceae family. It's the only one of its species of the genus cocos.

**PECANS**



by Katelynn Flick

Do you like pecans? Well then you are in luck because they are really good for you! Just a handful a day can lower "bad" cholesterol. They have 19 vitamins and minerals including A, B, E, Folic acid, calcium, magnesium, phosphorus, potassium and zinc. Pecans are full of fat, but they are good for losing weight because it is "good" fat.

A pecan comes from a tree. They have an outer husk. The tree can grow to be 66-131 ft.tall. It is a deciduous tree. There are 15 states in the U.S where they are grown.

Pecans are mostly consumed when they are made into pecan pie and other things, like bread. They are also good candied. They are made in a lot of different treats or you could use them to top something, or even eat them alone.

Here are some fun facts about pecans that you may not have known: The scientific name of the pecans is *carya illinoensis*. The U.S produces 80 percent of the pecan crops, and it is the symbol of Texas. These are all cool reasons and facts to try pecans!

**CHESTNUTS**



by Kyle Snyder

Guess which nut is the only nut that has vitamin C? It's the chestnut, and it has been grown for over 4,000 years. Chestnuts are high in vitamin C, D, E, B6 and in magnesium and copper, too.

Chestnuts grow on trees. American chestnut trees almost became extinct because of a blight. Some can still be found in the west. Most chestnuts are imported from China, Korea and Italy.

Chestnuts were originally found in prehistoric times. Chestnuts are a substitute for potatoes in Europe, Asia and Africa. Today roasted chestnuts are a Christmastime treat.

Even though Americans enjoy chestnuts for their taste and interesting history, only 1% of the world's population of chestnuts are grown in the USA. Chestnuts are unusual. Try one!

**...ABOUT) NUTS?**

**PISTACHIOS**



by Zephyrn Noble

Have you seen the commercial where the elephant is in the express check-out at a grocery store with cart full of pistachios? What's so great about pistachios?

Pistachios are the oldest edible nuts, cultivated as far back as 6000 BC, and were introduced to the Romans in 100 AD. They are available all year long. Sometimes they are dyed red. They are used to flavor pudding and ice cream.

Pistachios are good for the heart, and help with weight management, protection against diabetes and hypertension. They also improve digestion. They

(continued on next block)

Pistachios (continued from last block)

are high in protein and omega-3 fatty acids. Pistachios are a good source of phosphorus and vitamin B6, A, K,C, and E. One ounce of pistachios contain 160 calories.

Pistachios grow on trees, mostly in the United States, Australia, Turkey, and China. It takes a tree 10-12 years to produce a fruit. They are still harvested by hand which is why they are so expensive in stores. They have to be dried in processing machines so they do not spoil.

Pistachios have a very interesting history, are good for you, and taste great. No wonder that elephant was buying so many!

# LICENSE TO DRIVE

## MANAGING ONE OF LIFE'S MORE COMPLICATED TASKS

by Xander Michaels

You stare down at the paper in front of you. Across the top of the paper you see the words "Written Permit Test." It is your sixteenth birthday, and you rushed to the DMV as soon as possible in order to get your permit. Looking down at the exam, you begin to feel nervous, but the remembrance of your careful preparation calms you down. A short time later, you finish the test with a smile sprawled across your face; you know you aced it. But this test is only the beginning of your journey to a driver's license.

After one successfully completes their permit test and receives their learner's permit, they must prepare for their road test.

For a period of six months, the new driver may only drive with an adult who is 21 years or older in the car. During this time, the new driver will



take a pre-licensing course or driver's education. Through practice and instruction, the new driver will be ready to take their road test. After successfully completing their road test, the driver will receive a driver's license. Now, they are ready to drive alone.

Each step throughout this process takes a large amount of preparation. The first step is the written permit test, which students can prepare for through online practice exams. Sophomore Lilly Kronau said that the practice was helpful, and that "without it I would have been really anxious and probably wouldn't have known anything on the test."

Similarly, sophomore Lena Kiehl found the permit test to be easy due to her online preparation.

After receiving their permits, students must prepare for the second step of the process; their road test. This is done through a multitude of driving practice and the com-

pletion of either a pre-licensing course or driver's education. Kronau said that "while driver's ed is time consuming, it will definitely be helpful in the future." Similarly, sophomore Eric Schuman said that it is worthwhile to take driver's education because "you can get your full license immediately after you take the road test, rather than having to wait until you're 18." With an abundant amount of preparation, these students will finally be ready to take their road tests.

The process of receiving a driver's license is long. However, this length is necessary for drivers to understand safe driving and to be prepared when driving alone. Through practice and education, new drivers will inevitably receive their driver's licenses, and be prepared to drive for a lifetime.

# WHAT'S THE DEAL?

## EXPLAINING THE ADD/DROP POLICY

by Hannah Brisee

The first semester of the 2017-2018 school year has come to a close, and now the second semester has started. If you noticed problems with your schedule, you are most likely not the only one. However, to save yourself from the long line in the counseling center, here are the guidelines to course adjustments and changes found in the student handbook. Instead of scanning page after page in the actual handbook, use this simple, easy-to-follow summary of the sections.

Course selections should be made very carefully during the counseling center

appointments. The opportunity to change courses is very limited once the semester begins. This is due to the fact that the number of sections of

en year.

Once the semester has started, these are the only circumstances which are accepted for a course to be



each course is created by the number of students who sign up during the course selection time with their counselor the previous school year. All requests during that time are made final April 1 of that giv-

dropped: if you have failed the prerequisite course needed for the class you were put into, if you are repeating the course with the same teacher, if you have two courses assigned to

one time slot, for medical considerations, and to switch a class to take a required class needed to graduate.

The designated add/drop period is only two weeks, beginning the first day of a new semester. A student must initiate the drop consideration with his/her counselor. Then the student's parent/guardian, their teacher from that subject, their counselor and an administrator must have written input before the add/drop will be considered. Please be aware that for all dropped classes, a designation of "W" (withdrawal) will appear on a student's transcript.

(continued on page 20)

# STUDENT PRESENTS AT CORNELL UNIVERSITY

## ADAM LIMOGES CO-AUTHORS LAB WITH APHS TEACHER

by Lauren Harland

Traveling to an Ivy League University and presenting a self-designed biology lab seems like something that only someone with years of experience and higher education might have the opportunity to do. However, a student at Averill Park accomplished this as only a high school sophomore. Adam Limoges visited Cornell University last November 11. There, he presented a lab he co-authored with APHS science teacher Dr. Panzanaro called "Shedding New Light on Chlorophyll" to the Cornell Institute for Biology Teachers.

The whole process of designing this lab started when Dr. Panzanaro mentioned an article he had just read about biofluorescence to his biology class. Biofluorescence is defined as "the characteristic of living organisms to re-emit incoming wavelengths of light," Limoges explained. After class, Limoges, who was then just a freshman, talked to Panzanaro about how he had also just read an article about the same topic. Panzanaro said that this got him thinking, "Wouldn't it be really cool to have students involved in the creation of a lab?"

The next day, Panzanaro asked Limoges if he would like to co-author a lab, and Limoges said yes. Their first meeting was on December 1, 2017. In total, the two met eleven times to work on the lab and presentation. "There's so much that goes on behind a lab, like making the postlab, making a prelab, coming up

with questions, and doing the research for the background information," Limoges explained, "The process was a



lot more extensive than I originally thought but it was a really fun and fulfilling experience."

On the day of the presentation, Limoges, accompanied by his family and Panzanaro, admits he was very nervous. The nerves subsided once he met the



people he would be presenting to and realized that they were very open and excited to

hear what he presented.

"They all treated me as an equal, not really as a student, but instead as a peer and someone they could learn from too," explained Limoges. The presentation went extremely well and the audience at Cornell responded very positively towards the lab. When asked if they would ever use the lab activity in their classroom, one teacher

Limoges both agreed that this was an incredible opportunity. "I think that he got a chance to develop the skills of researching a topic, developing an activity associated with the topic, problem solving and some great 21st century skills like collaboration," Panzanaro explained. "I think these are skills that are going to extend beyond the high school experience and carry with him into college and then onto his career." Limoges added, "The knowledge I gained from this experience will help me if I want to create new labs in the future, especially when I get to college and have to do my own research or create my own research papers."

Panzanaro and Limoges continue to collaborate on future ideas and projects. They make a great team, shown by Limoges when he said, "Dr. P really worked as a mentor to me. He explained the processes to me but had me really do a lot of the work. He just guided me through it and was really great at helping me through problems."

Currently, they are focusing on possibly "finding a research opportunity this summer to work in a lab where Adam would be able to work with researchers that follow similar design processes," said Panzanaro. When asked if they would ever do a similar project again, both Limoges and Panzanaro answered affirmatively.

wrote, "This is not only a great interest-building lab, but could also be used as a jumping-off point for more personal investigations that they could design." Another teacher responded, "Yes, a great way to look at anything related to chlorophyll and plants." One teacher even answered, "Yes, and I will. Excited. Love it!" Panzanaro and Li-

# THE GUITAR MAN

## PETER ANNELLO IS ON HIS WAY UP

by Gabrielle Skiba

A seventeen year old singer-songwriter from Averill Park recently had the chance to record his very own songs on the radio station 97.7 WEXT. Peter Annello, a senior here at Averill Park, has been playing the guitar, singing, and songwriting for many years. He is in the AHS concert band, playing in percussion and is also in jazz band, playing the electric guitar. Annello wanted to take his music career to the next step so he contacted the DJ, Chris Wienk, of the station 97.7 on Facebook to get the chance to come in and record, and he did indeed get the chance. Annello said that it was a wonderful experience and he is glad that he gets to share his music with so many people in the 518 area.

While at the interview and recording, he got to talk with Chris Wienk about his music life and what inspired him to begin playing. He mentioned that the most influential guitarist for him is John Mayer, who is a singer-songwriter as well. Annello saw him in concert, which was something that he will never forget.

Annello recorded a total of five songs, all of which he wrote himself and were all recorded in one take. The five

songs were "What Comes Around," "Too Much To Take," "Weight Off My Shoulders," "One Walk Around My Head" and "Uncolored Walls." His



first song that he wrote, which was "What Comes Around," took the longest to write, said Annello. He also mentioned that it is his favorite one because he put the most time into it. Now songs come easy to him, and he writes them whenever he feels like it.

Annello's motivation for music is truly important to him and it makes it all the better when he has wonderful and supportive people around him. Annello's friends and family have really made his

journey as a musician wonderful. He also said the people on social media have really had a larger impact on his music life. He gets messages

that now teaches himself mostly everything he needs to learn. Although he hadn't started singing until a couple of years ago, for eight years music has had a huge impact on his life and still continues today.

When talking about his life and his music career, Annello felt very strongly about how music will always be in his life no matter what. He said, "Music is my passion, and I see it as my future because I put my heart and soul into it. Most things are just entertainment, but music for me is something much different, it's what keeps me going, it keeps me focused."

It's safe to say that Annello will always love and cherish music. It will always be a safe place for him to express his feelings and emotions. When asked if he will continue playing music throughout the rest of his life he responded with, "Yes, it's set in stone." Annello is an incredible musician and we are fortunate he will continue to share his amazing talent with so many people.

### ADD/DROP (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 18)

On the other hand, there are many reasons why an add or drop will *not* be honored: for a teacher preference, for requests that lower the total number of courses below the required minimum, for a choice of a particular time for a class or lunch, and for dropping a class that is required. These

are all reasons that will *not* be accepted.

Adding a course in place of a study hall will only be allowed if there is room in the course, if a class of the desired course takes place during the free time slot on a student's schedule, and if it does not interfere with other required classes.

Overall, the process to changing your schedule can be hectic, but I have some tips for you. First, take classes you know that you will like. There are required classes we all need to take, so fill the remaining spaces with classes you know you will enjoy taking. Next, when you receive your schedule, check

both semesters so you can address any errors early. Lastly, if you do not like a class the first day, give it a couple of days; you never know if you will end up having the time of your life or learning something you will never forget.

## MS. SMITH COMES TO AVERILL PARK MRS. WELLIVER'S REPLACEMENT DOESN'T MISS A BEAT

by Jessica Beskid

When Mrs. Welliver made plans to go on maternity leave, Averill Park had to find a replacement English teacher. Fortunately for APHS, Ms. Smith has stepped in and is doing a fine job taking over.

Smith said she is excited to be here at APHS. She loves seeing musicals and plays in her free time, and is especially excited to go to Proctors for the first time to see some of the upcoming productions.

Additionally, Smith enjoys exercising, and attends a cycling class in Albany two or three times every week.

Smith says that her students teach her a lot every day. "They have definitely taught me a lot of empathy, and learning about the world from different people," said

Smith. She highly values honesty in a student. Smith is of

When Smith was in high school she enjoyed



the opinion that "we all experience different struggles in our lives and if we are honest about them it makes life easier."

her history and English classes the most, and her grades reflected that. If Smith were to teach another subject besides her own

she would definitely choose history. She commented that "there are a lot of interesting things going on in history now that I would like to incorporate into my classroom." She believes it is important to be familiar with what is happening all over the world.

Smith did a lot of reading in graduate school and she really liked reading Anthony Doerr's *All the Light We Cannot See*, which has been awarded the Pulitzer Prize and the Carnegie Medal for Excellence. The plot of the story is set during WWII and follows the experiences of two children, one from France and the other from Germany. Smith found the book to be very fascinating.

Smith certainly fits in at APHS and her students are pleased to have a knowledgeable replacement while Welliver is away.

## HAVE A LITTLE FAITH STUDENT FUNDRAISER EXCEEDS ALL EXPECTATIONS

by Megan Hale

Averill Park student Faith Murray has been going to Camp Abilities, a week-long overnight sports camp for youth with visual impairments, since 2013. Last year Murray started to collect cans and bottles to raise money for Camp Abilities. When asked how much she would like to raise, she said, "My beginning goal was around 100 dollars." At this point in time, though, Murray has raised over \$6,000 for Camp Abilities.

Murray is only a sophomore and yet has done something that takes some people years to achieve. When asked why she wanted



to do this, she said, "Camp Abilities has done so much for me that I feel the need to give back."

Camp Abilities has many different sports such as beep baseball, goal ball, paddle boarding and many other sports that you might not expect someone with vision loss to be playing. Camp Abilities is in many different places, such as Texas, New York, Florida, Ireland, and Australia.

Like Murray, this reporter has a visual impairment as well, and I have been to Camp Abilities at Brockport and Saratoga many times. Camp Abilities is

one of the only places where youth with visual impairments can be free. They don't have to worry about being left on the sidelines, they don't have to worry about being made fun of, they can just be themselves.

Murray has set up collection cans at Averill Park High School, Algonquin Middle School, and at a daycare in Troy called A Child's Place. If anyone has any questions or wants to make a donation support Murray's Camp Abilities fundraiser, please contact her at [20murrayf@apcsd.org](mailto:20murrayf@apcsd.org) or by Facebook at Sharpefinnias Effects.

# LEARNING THE ROPES

## MR. ZEHNDER INTERNING AS AN ADMINISTRATOR

Kyle Reasor

Throughout high school, there is good chance that you will have or have had Mr. Zehnder as a math teacher. Teaching multiple courses and numerous blocks of math, Zehnder has a pivotal role in the education of students at Averill Park High School.

In addition to teaching, Zehnder has recently been involved in an educational leadership program with the school to explore a career as an administrator. He is currently about half-way through the program which began last spring and will end in July. Throughout the time he's been in the program, Zehnder has also had to balance a full schedule of classes. This program hasn't taken away from his teaching, but Zehnder has had to balance his extra time between the program and outside-of-class teaching duties.

It is important to note that Zehnder does not dislike teaching; instead he is just exploring other opportuni-

ties in education. When asked about why he is pursuing an administrative opportunity, Zehnder replied, "I really love



working in education and I care quite a bit about providing the best mathematics education for my students that I possibly can as a teacher."

"While teachers have a strong impact in working directly with students," he

said, "administrators are able to have a farther reaching impact on educational programs as well as positive changes in a school or in a school district."

Teaching and administration are two separate branches of education, but both are very important to the function of schools. When asked to discuss the pros and cons of both teaching and administration, Zehnder made it evident that he enjoys the two, and the opportunities they both bring to work with students. "As

a teacher, I am privileged to work with high school students and get to talk about math all day long, a pursuit which I fully enjoy," he said. "If I were an administrator, I would miss having the direct contact with students, but I might be able to help make

bigger decisions as to the best way to design and improve programs in order to impact even more students."

To Zehnder, this administrative opportunity is a perfect way to see the broader aspects of education. There is more to schooling than just the math classes he teaches, and this program is allowing him to see what goes on behind the scenes. This also provides him a new opportunity to impact more students, which is one of his main goals. Should Zehnder decide to pursue a career in administration, he would be able to make a difference on a much larger scale.

Regardless of the future path that Zehnder chooses to take, this administrative program is helping him learn more about all aspects of the education of students.

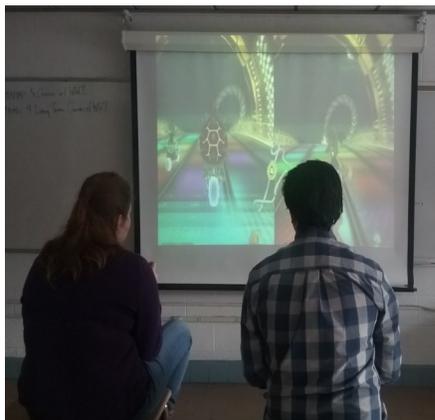
# INTERESTED IN GAMING?

## CLUB OPEN FOR ALL TO COMPETE AND HAVE FUN

by Emily Hubbard

If you're interested in gaming, then you should come to the next meeting of the Strategy and Gaming Club! The club meets in room 310 every second and fourth Wednesday of the month. Social Studies teacher Mr. Colbert is the club's advisor, and "every grade is allowed to come" said freshman Aiara Mohamed.

At the Strategy



and Gaming Club, students bring their own games and devices to use. They can use many different apps and downloads to use with puzzle, adventure, horror, fantasy, combat, and multiplayer games. They can also use digital art and design apps.

Students can also come to enjoy themselves and socialize with other gamers. If you're competitive, you could choose to play against your friends

and other members of the club. You can also hook up some devices to the projector so that your game is shown on the full screen.

Senior Sam Donato, one of the founders of the club, said "We had a club in the middle school and everyone loved it." Students knew "Mr. Colbert had a great love of video," so students approached him with the idea of forming the club.

(continued on page 23)

# CAN'T MANAGE WITHOUT THEM...

## STUDENT MANAGERS PLAY A VITAL ROLE IN TEAM SUCCESS

by Nick Ferlito

Sports are a staple in the Averill Park community. Games for all different sports draw great crowds and bring much attention to the high school. However, the players are the ones who get all of the glory. They are the ones who score the points, earn the runs and make the big plays. The unsung heroes of these teams are not the players, however, they are the managers. The managers are the glue that holds the teams together. They help the coaches and players perform at their absolute best in games and in practice.

Johnny Durocher is the manager of the Averill Park boys' varsity basketball team. Durocher's major role on the team is filming. Johnny has filmed all of the team's games and scrimmages since the beginning of the season started in November. As the



team plays two to three games a week, Durocher travels with them to all of the games and spends a lot of time with the players and

coaches. The team and Durocher are very close and are always hanging out before games. They even all went to watch a college basketball game recently. Durocher has had a great time as the manager of the team.

Basketball however is not the only team with a manager, or rather managers. The Averill Park varsity football team had a pair this past season. Freshman Madia Reiter and sophomore Caleb Kronau helped out the Warriors this fall. Reiter and Kronau

had many responsibilities as managers, whether it was carrying pads, keeping stats, helping all of the coaches during practice. They were even a part of the drill on

occasion.

Coach Earl knew Reiter and Kronau in middle school and asked them if they'd like to help out with the team. This past season was Kronau's second on varsity as a manager and Reiter's first. The team embraced the two and made them a part of the team. Reiter and Kronau helped the Averill Park varsity football team play this past season to their highest abilities.

The role of the manager in high school sports is very much overlooked. Their dedication to the team is just as strong as the players they help out on a daily basis. Durocher, Reiter and Kronau are all excellent examples of how high school sports can bring all different kinds of people together to work as a team.

### GAMING CLUB (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 22)

Because of the club, "I met a lot of people I never met before; it's a great way to make connections over similar interests," said Donato.

"It's a fun way to relax," said junior Alex Williams-Mitchell. "You get to play board games without organizing anything big." Nick



Spink, a junior, said, "It's relaxing to go to after a long day of school. I get to be with my friends; we play some interesting and unique games."

Colbert also makes for a good advisor, as "he's relaxed and friendly," said Williams-Mitchell. "He makes it fun,"

added Spink, and "he brings in games every once in a while."

If you are interested in coming, everyone is welcome, so bring your friends and join the Strategy and Gaming Club in room 310.

### MALENFANT (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 24)

state finals in 1986. His teammate, Mike McDowell was also a state finalist in his weight class of 215 lbs. Malenfant stated that there is a wrestling saying that "you are only as good as your wrestling partner." The fact that his wrestling partner was a great wrestler strongly influ-

enced Malenfant's run to the state championships. The teammates worked out together all the time during and outside of practice. McDowell eventually took second place in the state as well. This was a monumental success for Averill Park wrestling as it was the first time anyone had

placed in the state tournament, and both Malenfant and McDowell did it in the same year.

As Averill Park's current varsity wrestling coach, Malenfant believes that commitment is the most important aspect of wrestling if you want to experience

success. He said that the best part of coaching is that "hard work really does pay off. I really enjoy watching hard working kids experience success." Malenfant's hard work obviously paid off with success, taking him all the way to the state finals.

# WRESTLING COACH NEARLY WON IT ALL

## MALENFANT MADE IT TO STATE FINALS HIS SENIOR YEAR AT APHS

by Eric Schuman

Averill Park Varsity Wrestling Coach and Geometry teacher Mr. Malenfant was a former wrestler himself at Averill Park. In fact, in 1986, he got as far as the state finals.

Malenfant became interested in wrestling in his freshman year of high school, as he had many friends from his football team that competed in wrestling. He worked hard in the sport throughout high school, and by the time his senior year came around, he was a state finalist.

Malenfant stated that "it took quite a bit" of preparation to have such a successful season. Each night after practice he would run four to five miles. He also

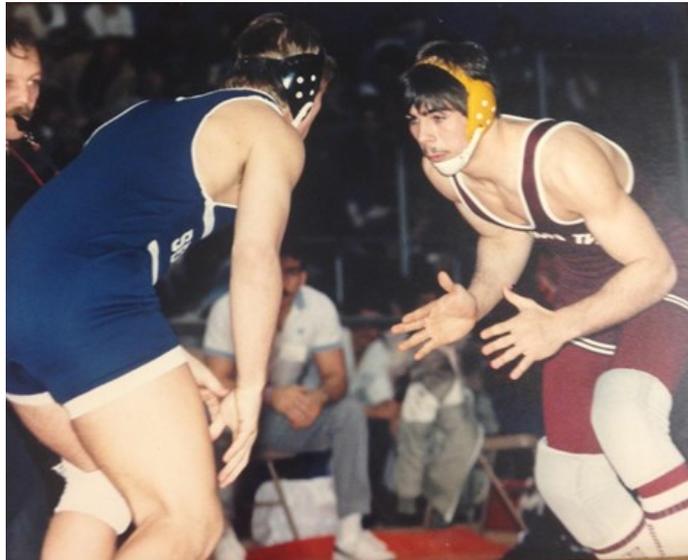
participated in several other workouts with friends on the team, and even trained when

there was no practice or when there was a holiday. Despite all of the

extra work, by the time the state tournament rolled around, Malenfant was not expected to make it to the finals. However, his coach always told him "If you are in it, you can win it" and to "Take it one step at a time." After winning three straight matches, he had reached the State Championships in his weight class of 155 lbs. Here, his incredible run fell short, as he lost to Rick Suhr from Spencerport High School.

Malenfant said that although there was pressure to be in the finals, he thought it was a very exciting experience to reach such a high level of wrestling.

Malenfant was not alone in making it to the



Mr. Malenfant wrestling for APHS in the New York State finals

(continued on page 23)

### FAVORITE

### CHILDHOOD

### VACATION SPOT

Match the STAFF MEMBERS

with their

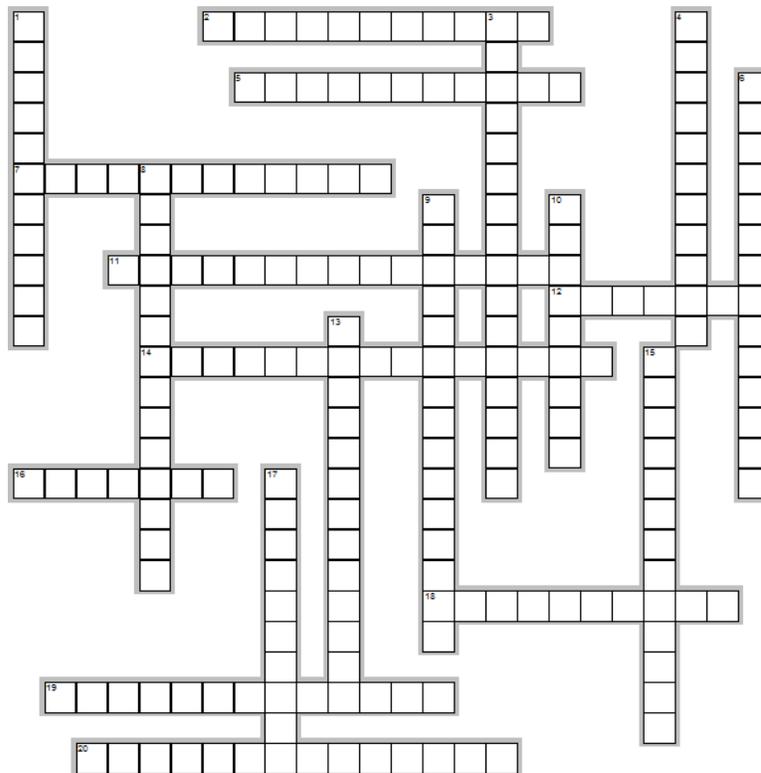
FAVORITE CHILDHOOD  
VACATION SPOTS

CHAMPLAIN ISLANDS  
FISH CREEK PONDS  
HERSHEY PARK  
LONG BEACH ISLAND  
THOUSAND ISLANDS  
WALT DISNEY WORLD

CAPE COD  
CORPUS CHRISTY  
GRAFTON  
INDIAN LAKE  
MYRTLE BEACH  
SHERWOOD ISLAND  
TUG HILL PLATEAU

CASSAYUNA LAKE  
BROWNS BEACH  
HAMPTON BEACH  
LAKE GEORGE  
WISCONSIN  
STONE HARBOR  
VIRGINIA BEACH

\* Note—Leave Out All Spaces In  
Puzzle



### Down

1. Bailey
3. McPartlin
4. Stone
6. Panzanaro
8. Brown
9. Bishop
10. M. Dutcher
13. Sorriento
15. Goodnow
17. Hotaling

### Across

2. B. Engel, Minkler
5. K. Clark
7. Oldendorf
11. Caballero
12. Ferlito
14. Ashline, S. Engel, Galcik
16. Rohl
18. Doyle, Emmons
19. Caruso, Klepsch
20. Hall