

YCSPECTATOR

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November 2022

VOLUME 5 ISSUE 3

WORLDWIDE AT YC

by JOHN WEISSER

Buenos dias and Guten Tag. Here within the ranks of YC students, there are awesome and brave students coming from both Germany and Spain. Did you know this about these amazing students?

As many of you know Johann Schlotthofer is from Germany, specifically the city of Leipzig in Eastern Germany. However, what many of you might not know is that Johann's brother was an exchange student in Canada, and after his inspirational trip Johann decided to try an exchange program to the US. Johann has noticed some differences between Germany and the US as you might expect. Johann also noted how school is a little stricter than his back at home due to the phone policies, uniform, or the fact that you can't leave the school during your free periods (a commonality in Germany). But although Johann has enjoyed his stay so far, he does admit that he greatly misses his friends and family whom he had to say goodbye to for months.

Ines Garcia is one of our two foreign exchange students from Asturias, Spain, a lush and beautiful region on the north west coast of Spain. Surprisingly, Ines was actually encouraged to take her trip to Pennsylvania by her friends. They wanted her to have the unique experience and specially recommended Pennsylvania due to its northeastern climate. For Ines she definitely noticed several differences between Spain and little old York, PA. Firstly, she comments on just how relaxed and friendly teachers in America seem to be; teachers in

Spain are generally more formal with instruction. Ines does note that there is less freedom in the US, in terms of less parties, and it is simply harder to get transportation from place to place. Ines's biggest worry when traveling to the US was something that a lot of us could probably relate to, fitting in. Luckily, Ines's anxieties were put to rest by an amazing host family who she really loves and a welcoming community at YC.

Now Gabriela Gonzalez Romero has also come to the US from Asturias, Spain, but for different reasons from Ines. Gabriela actually got introduced to

the idea of doing a foreign exchange program from seeing students on social media posting their amazing experiences. She added that there are small differences between Spain and the US such as the larger emphasis on fresh fruits and vegetables in the Spanish diet compared to the American diet. Gabriela's biggest challenge contrasts some of the others as she has found the stresses of both social pressure and the pressure to do well in school to compound and weigh upon her while she is here.

Nicole Shellenberg is our second exchange student from Germany, but rather than coming from eastern Germany she hails from Niedersachsen which is on the northwest border of Germany. Nicole has always been an adventurous person, and so the choice to exchange was one that both encompassed her love of travel and her desire for new experiences in an environment away from the same school she had been attending previously. Nicole noticed some differences in simply how consumerist the US is as her hometown only had 1 pizzeria while York may have 5 on the same street. Nicole shared similar fears of acceptance as Ines when she realized how many new people she would be meeting in our country, and especially after she has lived in a small village where most people know each other.

So if you see any of our international students around the school, be sure to say "Hi" because they're not just extremely friendly, but they also have amazing stories. For now, Chao and Tschüssi.



Shown left to right: Nicole Shellenberg, Johann Schlotthofer, Ines Garcia, and Gabriela Gonzalez Romero

York Catholic District Domination

by LUIS NGUYEN

Following the football team's district championship win against Upper Dauphin last year, eyes were on the other Fall sports teams this year, and many of them exceeded expectations. Almost every day during homeroom announcements, we heard of one win after another. Every time Mr. Miller read out that list of victories, I felt a huge sense of pride for all of our athletes. With the Fall 2022 season coming to an end, let's take a look at all of the teams that have gotten to districts so far and those still in the running.

Golf - Usually overlooked by the flashier sports, the golfers of York Catholic have gotten an opportunity to shine this year. York Catholic was represented in the golf postseason by Ian Sarosky (12), Elliot Evans (10), and Olivia Kury (10). In the two-day district championship, both Ian Sarosky and Olivia Kury made it past the first day elimination, making it to the top sixteen and top eight players in the district respectively. Olivia continued to become the YAIAA County Champion.

Mary Zelis (12) and I had the opportunity to see Ian in action on October 8th, walking and silently cheering him on for four of his eighteen holes that day. (I had the constant urge to silently clap whenever Ian hit, but seeing no one else clap, I reluctantly kept my hands apart). Although he and Olivia Kury were eliminated from the running that day, both played extremely well and should feel proud that they earned a spot in the tournament.

Girls' Tennis - Improving from last year's record, the girl's tennis team ended their regular season with an 11-2 record, managing to grab a spot in the postseason bracket. Starting with an 8-0 winning streak, the girls dominated the majority of their season. I was able to go to one of their regular season matches, and unlike the tennis matches you would see on television, five separate games would be going on at the same time. Unfortunately, thunder and lightning promptly ended my visit, but from what I saw, the girls deserved that winning record.

During the postseason, the York Catholic team fell during the first round at districts, but one astounding player, Carina Roberts (11), kept the flame going for York Catholic. Making it to the singles semifinals, Carina came fourth in the district. Alongside her sister Cydney Roberts (9), Carina played for the doubles crown taking the Districts Silver Medal. Carina was named the YAIAA Singles Champion.

Cross Country - Blazing past the competition, York Catholic's cross country teams have been on fire. With both teams winning all six of their meets, our runners are leading in the division. Having just completed the county championships with Madeline Murphy (10) finishing third for the girls and Mitchell Bradley (11) finishing fifteenth for the boys, the team is on course for districts and states. I calculated their speeds and Madeline and Mitchell were running at an average

speed of 10 and 11 miles per hour. Compare that to the average runner's pace of 6 mph. The girls have won the district title with Madeline Murphy blazing the way to first place.

Boys Soccer - Moving from individual sports into more cooperative ones, the boys' soccer team has been incredible this year. With a final record of 13-2-2, our York Catholic boys' soccer team is third in our division, completely erasing last year's record. Having been able to go to some of their games, I can say that our boys are amazing. Quick, talented, and persistent, these soccer players are an amazing spectacle. There is never a dull moment when watching one of these soccer games. Some of the most notable players I have noticed are Asher Clarke (12), Andrew Schuler (11), and Ryan Outhout (11). The tenacity that these three players have helped bring the team to where they are now. After a crushing defeat during the YAIAA championship tournament at the hands of Dallastown, the boys qualified for districts and performed amazingly as they went into overtime fighting for their place.

Girls Volleyball - Last but absolutely not least is the girls volleyball team. Starting their season with a 11-0 winning streak, the girls are destroying their competition. Currently ranked first in the division with a 17-1 record with their only loss against Delone Catholic in a close battle, the girls seem unstoppable.

With Reese Beck (12) and Beitris Boyreau-Millar (11) taking control as setters and Adeline Philips (12) and Avery Heist (12) being the lead scorer and blocker respectively, most teams dread to face our volleyball team head-on. Traumatized from the past two years' losses to Trinity in the district finals, York Catholic had something to prove— which they did. The girls volleyball team not only defeated Trinity, but also advanced to States!

The Thursday Night game was intense as the fans waited intently for the outcome for the match. Our girls were initially shaken in the first set as they took a loss due to the immense stress of the game. However, after they started to see the cracks in Trinity's defense it was a clean sweep of 3-1 from there. The excitement and Irish pride was palpable that night.

York Catholic athletes have shown the results of all of their work and effort. All of these victories and postseason achievements are just *Our District Champions get their trophy earned through our of training and work.*



Ways to Get Involved: Clubs at York Catholic

by MAGGIE MOTTER

Whether you're a freshman or a senior, finding a social group in high school can be daunting. Homework piles up, marking periods end far too quickly, and sports seasons come to a close. In the second quarter, many people find themselves in a difficult situation, wanting to get involved but not trying to get overwhelmed.

One of the best ways to branch out, get to know more people, and explore interests is by joining a club. The clubs at YC have shown up in force this year, ready to provide students with a place to grow closer together and find some new interests.

There are, of course, some old staples. The clubs that have been here since the beginning of time, such as Ping Pong Club and Stewards of the Earth have good reason to be standing today.

Shouts can be heard arising from the intense table tennis matches miles away, the people there are into competition, excitement, and having a good time. Many of the YC staff member are also very proficient at Ping Pong so whether you are a master at Ping Pong or a newbie, you can certainly find a challenge.

I have yet to find people more willing to work hard for a good cause than those in Stewards of the Earth. Their information and campus clean ups are unparalleled.

Also, if you can't muster the time to actually join the Stewards of the Earth Club they have some events that are open to anyone who wants to help, such as the aforementioned campus clean ups. Not to mention their campus clean ups are a large part of why YC continues to look so good all year round, so shoutout to them.

For people interested in language and culture, Spanish and German Clubs have been around for years and are still going strong today. Hosting opportunities to see, hear, and taste what makes each culture unique, the clubs provide an invaluable opportunity to get to know our world better.

In Spanish Club you can have an opportunity to test your knowledge of the Spanish language by reading and listening to Spanish content. But if that doesn't float your boat you can still enjoy the Spanish celebrations and bake sale.

German Club similarly gives an opportunity for students from every grade to meet and discuss, in German or not, how German has impacted their lives. They also hold celebrations of German holidays and similarly do interesting research on German history, all at the student's pace.

Creating new things and appreciating of hands-on work can be found in Stage and Costume Crew. Power tools, wood chips, and paintbrushes can be found surrounding the members of Stage Crew, as they come together to create beautiful set pieces.

What's even better is that these set pieces are seen

in the York Catholic Musical, giving the whole school a unique appreciation for your work.

Additionally, members of Stage Crew can also aid in the actual Musical production by moving pieces on and off the stage and learning some complex stage mechanics. This is all without mentioning that they get to dress down the day of Musical in all black!

Likewise, stitches, rolls of fabric, and fashion sketches adorn the members of Costume Crew. They have the privilege of creating the individual style and flare of every single cast member including the ensemble. The Musical would be nothing but a cheap imitation of Broadway if it weren't for our Costume Crew's intense attention to detail that allows the character's to come alive.

Art Club gives both students in Art and also individual artists the chance to share their talents with one another in the relaxed setting of a community without any expectations or grades. It also gives opportunities for students to even share some of their work with their fellow students through the jewelry sales that take place at lunches.

Poetry Club is a similarly relaxed and accepting environment where all opinions or views are accepted. You can be majorly into English class or you could simply be someone that appreciates how pretty poems are, either way you would love Poetry Club and its open debate.

Many more clubs are always growing and coming up, letting people create their own space. Three of these new clubs coming to YC are Service Club, Film Club, and D&D Club. Each of these clubs provides a new way to interact with our community and friends.

Led by Emily Schlosser (12), Service Club is a new addition. Great for people who love serving those around them, hanging out with friends, or just need more service hours, Service Club provides students with opportunities to interact with people in need.

New member Abi Pautz (12), is excited to join the club. She likes the service aspect because people, "don't know how much it impacts someone until its hands on." Directly seeing the consequence of service brings on "the sense of happiness" that is difficult to find elsewhere. She thinks that other people would love this club and want to join "once they see how much a small event can impact someone." Creating change at an individual level, the service that we do is one of the best ways to help change our community.

Service Club similarly provides many opportunities for service hours, and if you are that student that is consistently rushing to get those 16 hours at the end of the year, than Service Club can probably help you. Simply making service a routine and staple of your life can greatly change how you view not only requirements like service hours, but it can truly clue you into the immense help that service can provide to a world

where selfcenteredness is a social norm.

Much sought after, York Catholic finally has a Film Club. President Ashlyn Mulligan (12), is looking forward to getting to watch and discuss some of her favorite films. New member Scarlett McKeon (12) joined the club because of her love of movies. She finds that they are "the best way that [she] unwind[s]" after a hard week, providing an escape from the real world. She loves getting to see the security of recognizable stories play out, and feel like she's a part of their world.

Fellow cinema lovers can find their home at Film Club, meeting up to discuss their favorite stories and watch some amazing movies. A lot of movies have taken major effort to make in every capacity, and being able to examine what makes a film good is a very good skill. Films aren't nearly as cut and dry as we often imagine as they employ tricks that make us feel strongly connected to the story and message they are portraying. If this interests you, pull up some popcorn and head on over.

Danger, adventure, magic, and hilarity all come together in the tabletop roleplaying game, *Dungeons and Dragons*. Forming up their own campaign and playing together, the D&D Club meets to come together and escape into a fantastical reality. For people who have always wanted to be their own fantasy hero, D&D Club is for you. D&D Club doesn't necessitate that you know every rule of the game or come having your whole character planned out, rather you simply need to be open to the role playing piece as you can go anywhere and do nearly anything, within your DM's power.

So go out of your comfort zone, find a new place to explore your ideas, and join a York Catholic club. There truly is something for everyone, and new club ideas can always be explored. The best way to join clubs that interest you is to go down to the board in front of the guidance offices and join the club's google classroom. Clubs provide a great way to grow your friend group and get to understand yourself better.

Also Clubs are a wonderful opportunity that is unique to schools, and as such, while in this stage of life it can be very helpful to use these clubs to explore possible topics of interest for careers or simply what hobbies you may want to continue to explore in the future. Having a community that supports each other in these endeavors is truly priceless as they can encourage you through your anxieties to explore what you love without worry or regret.

So while you are at York Catholic, please take the opportunity presented to you and join a YC club that you feel will best represent you and fit your needs as an individual. If none of them do, you are always free to try and make your own as well, and their will always be a community to enjoy it.

Tears and Tofurkey

by SOPHIE FRASER

Becoming a vegetarian has come with its challenges, though none that I anticipated. I have no qualms with giving up meat, but having to begrudgingly give away sour patch watermelon kids and stop eating my daily marshmallow has been unanticipated and devastating.

The truly terrible reality to being a vegetarian however is one that completely slipped my mind: Thanksgiving. I'd rather eat cardboard than tell my Irish grandmother I won't be eating her turkey this year.

The truth of the matter is that even as it's becoming more and more popular, being a vegetarian has social repercussions. As much as I enjoy the grilled cheese I ate instead of the deli sandwiches provided on the retreat, it's slightly ostracizing. Inevitably, I stand out. Every meal at a restaurant is a battle between looking "normal" or sheepishly asking the waiter if there are any vegetarian options besides the side of fries (not that I mind just eating fries).

Scenarios like these are even worse on holidays. The symbolic communion between sharing the same meal is more prevalent than people might assume. While I'm perfectly happy eating around the turkey at the Thanksgiving buffet, my family feels uncomfortable knowing I can't eat what they eat, and it makes things awkward. It makes people feel like they're leaving someone out, even if that person doesn't feel left

out.

Beyond just the isolation aspect of the meal, for vegetarians looking for alternatives to turkey on Thanksgiving... Well, the options aren't great. Years before I was a vegetarian myself, I had heard of and cringed at the thought of the notorious tofurkey, aka the tofu turkey. First of all, it doesn't look like a turkey except for its shape. The actual texture is more like a weird meatloaf. It doesn't taste anything like a turkey either. It's sort of just a lump of tofu with some seasoning on it.

Most people, vegetarian or not, agree that the tofurkey is gross. Emily Raugh (12) says she's never had one, "but it sounds repulsive," and quite frankly I have to agree. Ellis Alas (8) has been a pescetarian for five years and "usually eats a fish dish or a meat alternative," not a tofurkey.

There's this stigma around vegetarian food that it has to resemble non-vegetarian foods. From the tofurkey to the impossible burger, there are so many replicas of animal foods for vegetarians that most of us don't really ask for. Don't get me wrong, having a vegetarian option at burger places is very nice, but that doesn't mean I want my diet to consist of watered down versions of foods without meat. I'd rather have a good chickpea salad which is packed with protein and nutrients than a fake chicken patty.

Aside from tofurkey, there are plenty of good vege-

tarian Thanksgiving options that won't repulse both parties. While they don't resemble turkeys, chickpeas have just as much protein and fit right in with the other fall foods. Just bake them until they're crispy and they'll fill the turkey shaped void in any vegetarian's heart.

Tofu is obviously an option, but its cooler and lesser known equivalent seitan has more Thanksgiving vibes, and I'd definitely recommend it. It's easy to find in a grocery store and moderately easy to prepare.

Another option (and my personal favorite) is the whole roasted butternut squash. It's delicious, autumnal, and satiating. Even if you're not a vegetarian I'd recommend trying it on the side.

Being a vegetarian isn't viable for everyone. It's terribly inconvenient, considering most entrees are literally centered around the inclusion of meat. I'm not promoting this diet to anyone, let alone recommending people give up turkey on Thanksgiving. However, the stigma around being a vegetarian is archaic and needs to go away. There's no reason to shame someone for what they like to eat, especially on a holiday which can be stressful enough as it is.

Unless someone is eating a tofurkey. That warrants a little bit of shame.

Making Time to Pray

by SOPHIE FRASER

Between homework, sports, family stuff, finding a job, and trying to keep up a social life, many students have trouble finding time to sleep, much less pray. Though essential to maintaining our relationship with God, prayer often gets shoved into the back of our lives.

Luckily, we are not alone in this struggle. Throughout history, the Saints have faced similar challenges and come up with ways to overcome the issue.

Many saints find that the first step to adding prayer into their lives begins with recognizing its importance. Ranking it alongside food, water, and shelter, St. John Vianney claims that, “He who does not pray deprives himself of what is indispensable for life.” The irony of the statement comes because living amid the French Revolution, embracing faith put his life in danger. Though prayer was life-threatening at the time, his words turned out to be true.

Through his persistence, he was able to completely turn around the attitude surrounding his faith and bring it back to the streets of France. His belief went so deep that he was miraculously healed from injuries and illness. Allowing prayer to take over his life, quite literally, saved it.

His story is nice for reaffirming what most people already believe about prayer; however, it doesn’t give us any ways to help modern people in a practical way. Much more applicable is the words of St. Paul when he said, “Pray without ceasing.” Though this seems like an impossible task, many take it to mean that anything we do can be a form of prayer. Taking five seconds to dedicate our current job to God can make something as simple as doing chores into praying.

One of the most important factors in creating a solid prayer life is having a set routine that gets followed. This truth is reflected in pretty much every Saint’s story. Though their lives boast of hours spent at kneelers, decades upon decades of daily rosaries, and deep dives into scripture, most did not start that way.

Something as simple as three Hail Marys in the morning and three Our Fathers at night can provide a solid foundation for prayer in a person’s life. A common theme seen throughout Saint stories is that prayer lives flourish one’s foundations.

For people looking for more time to pray, there is a solution that surrounds us every day. Going to York Catholic, we are constantly surrounded by prayer. It does not take any extra time to actually listen to the things being said throughout the day. Things can become so routine that we forget their importance. Just taking the time to really pray to the Angelus or listening to the morning announcements can add grace into a person’s life without eating up their time.

Another great resource that we have at our disposal is religious music, as St. Augustine said, “The one who sings prays twice.” This comes in handy for extremely busy days because the songs can play in the background while you are doing other tasks. This brings double the prayer into an otherwise normal situation. Bonus points for when religious songs get stuck in people’s heads, turning their thoughts back to God throughout the day.

Most often, the time prayer takes up can be salvaged from other points throughout the day. Little moments of dead space do add up over time. If you ask God for the opportunity to find these moments, He will give them to you.

God understands that we are busy people, He wants us to be busy with the goodness of the life He created for us, but it can’t override His goodness. A good practice could be to pray a prayer of thanksgiving to God after each day, recognizing the gifts God provided to you and how the busyness impacted you positively. However, in that same prayer you can also ask God to lift some of the bad busyness that seems to eat up our lives.

Another way to work time for God into our lives is to create a routine. While praying to our Lord shouldn’t simply be a routine, it is an excellent way to keep our minds thinking of God and having him present each day. We can start by giving a small 5 minute commitment to pray before and after bed, and slowly increase that time as our schedule allows.

If for some reason you feel your schedule doesn’t allow you to pray at the same capacity as it once did, this is absolutely no reason to skip prayer all together. Even a “Glory Be” as opposed to nothing makes all the difference in the world and on our hearts.

Similarly, if we are too burntout to repeat the words of a prayer we learned in grade school, a good form of prayer might be meditation. Resting in the Lord’s spirit can cleanse our soul and allow us to turn all our thoughts to him by clearing our minds of the gunk that fills our lives.

Also if you are extremely stressed due to your busy lifestyle and know you are going to have a late night, don’t let yourself become overwhelmed by that feeling, but instead come to the Lord. God can put everything in perspective if we simply fit him in before our school work with a little prayer. He wants you to be happy in all things and academics is no exception.

Life, especially now, is a dark difficult place that does not support people trying to find time for religion in their lives. Having too little time for too many good things is the first step to burnout. Taking the time to reset and place prayer into our routines forces people to re-evaluate the things they are doing and reprioritize their routines. This base idea creates a solid foundation for the future things we want to do in our lives. Though difficult, there are ways that we can add prayer into our daily schedule.

POLITICAL PERSPECTIVES

by JOHN WEISSER

Whether or not you consider yourself a political person, politics effect the lives of all American citizens— even teenagers. In recognition of this, John Weisser presents to you a glance at the national and global goings-on, and why these political activities might matter to you.

World Cup and Workers' Rights

Millions of football fans around the world are preparing for the unusually timed World Cup in Qatar this year starting in mid-November. However, despite excitement to see stars like Messi, Ronaldo, and Neymar Jr. play in their last World Cup, this world tournament harbors a depressing secret.

Because of the grand scale on which it is played, host countries pour billions of dollars into funding massive and complex stadiums that are used simply for the month-long tournament and afterward mostly left unused. Similarly, in 2014 when Brazil hosted the World Cup, obscene amounts of money were acquisitioned for the tournament which was an extreme economic burden on the country both socially and economically,

These burdens are especially detrimental for a country as small as Qatar but in efforts to complete construction, working conditions were hazardous and workers' rights were blatantly ignored. Wages are astoundingly low; there have been accusations of forced labor and borderline slavery, and reports of the Qatari government covering up deaths due to working conditions. Though there are not many solid statistics to quantify these violations, it is clear that in attempts to prepare for a global audience Qatar has abused its workers a majority of which are migrant workers.

Why Care?

Immediately, there should be changes made by FIFA to the system for host countries of the World Cup to make the system more sustainable and humane. For example, the next World Cup in North America will be hosted by the USA, Canada, and Mexico in collaboration to make the event less of an economic burden for host countries.

Continually, there is also discussion of holding the World Cup at a permanent location to prevent the waste of always building new and costly stadiums and prevent a political aspect to the World Cup (both the one in Russia and Qatar have been boycotted and questioned due to political concerns).

On a more general scale, the problems with the Qatar World Cup highlight the question of the cost of sports. Sports are a fundamental and arguably necessary part of society and entertainment. However, such inhumanity for the sake of sports must be called into question.

This type of sacrifice and waste is not limited simply to the FIFA World Cup but can be seen in the Olympics, and even individual sports teams who receive grants from the government that should be used for the betterment of the community. Is it really acceptable to sacrifice the well-being of society for our own sports entertainment?

Women's Rights Protests in Iran

Since September 13th, the date that Iranian woman Masha Amini was arrested and murdered by the Iranian morality police, women's rights protests have erupted across Iran. The morality police are a section of the Iranian police force responsible for enforcing the Islamic dress code. A couple of hundred protestors have already been killed including many children.

The protestors are fighting against Iranian regulations on dress for women including the enforced wearing of the hijab, or clothes that are deemed immodest by the Iranian government. The Iranian government has denied accusations that protestors have been harmed and has tried to suppress and underplay these demonstrations.

Why Care?

In the late 1970s, Iran went through a great political change with the institution of Ayatollah’s rule due to the Iranian Revolution. The Ayatollahs are religious leaders of the Shiite branch of Islam and since their takeover in the late 20th century, they have enforced strict Islamic conservatism. Less than a year after the revolution, Ayatollah Khomeini mandated that all women must wear hijabs in public. As such, the women of Iran have had to face increasing inequality and unfair treatment not only in the way they dress but in legal and professional representation as well.

These protests by Iranian women signify not just a fight for equality in dress, but for greater equality within the Iranian society which is oppressive to them. It is gravely important to recognize the inequality and discrimination still present in societies today. Despite the country’s distance from our country, social media has been majorly influential in supporting and spreading the women’s rights movements within Iran.

British PM resigns after only 45 Days

Elizabeth Truss was the successor of Boris Johnson who represented the British Conservative Party and came to office on September 6th. Since then she has had a disastrous few weeks in office in which the British pound plummeted, the British budget-roll out has failed, and there have been repeated repeals on policies.

Why Care?

Since Britain’s official departure from the EU in 2020, the country has been in a state of decline. The country’s GDP has dropped and the unemployment rate has grown. With continued economic troubles and struggling leadership especially following the death of Queen Elizabeth II, Great Britain is struggling. The resignation of Prime Minister Truss has left British politics in a confused state and it needs better political leadership.

Russians Flee their Country as Putin orders Draft

As the war in Ukraine has drawn to a standstill, President Vladimir Putin has called for a draft of 300,000 civilians to fight in Ukraine Despite having already enlisted over 200,000 soldiers, analysts suspect that this will do little to help the Russian military, not the least of the reasons being the back lash from the Russian public to the draft. Not only is morale low due to growing Russian defeats, but civilian dissent which has been evident since the beginning of the war has also had a negative impact on the Russian assault on Ukraine. Similarly, Russian supplies have been dwindling, so despite having more troops, such troops are undersupplied. In addition to the desperate ploy to revive Russia’s dying offensive, Putin has also threatened to use nuclear force against Ukraine. Both of these actions reflect the Russian military failures in Ukraine and Russian desperation.

Why Care?

Putin’s actions reflect the volatile nature of the war in Ukraine currently. Although Ukraine has slowly been pushing Russia out of its territory and Russia has been collapsing financially, they still pose a major threat not just to Ukraine, but to world politics as a whole. Putin claims that his threats to use nuclear weapons are not just a bluff that would cause damage not just to those in Ukraine, but across Europe and the world. This would be a landmark event in the history of nuclear weapons and threaten nuclear escalation. Thousands if not millions of civilians would be killed and governments around the world would be forced to get involved making the conflict even worse.

Fall Essentials for a Bookworm

by MAKENZI MICHAEL

As the trees begin to lose their colors, society starts to hide in the warmth of their own homes. Life can get very dull, being stuck at home with minimal social interactions. My go-to solution is to promote this further isolation by endlessly staying inside and reading books. No, I am not replacing my social interactions by merely conversing with fictional characters (as awesome as that would be). I am simply enjoying a good book in the colder darker months of the year.

As a bookworm, it is important to enhance this experience to make your time reading even more cozier and enjoyable. Now first you should designate a good reading nook. This can be your bed, on your floor, in an extremely aesthetic book corner with a chair that's older than you, rain is always a plus. Do not forget a cozy blanket to wrap yourself up in.

Now if you don't have a kettle I guess that's okay (though I highly recommend it) because you can boil water on the stove. A nice hot cup of tea is very important when reading a book in the fall season. I personally am biased toward the classic black British breakfast tea, but there are all kinds of flavors on the market. If you can't find a flavor that suits your liking I would be astonished- a quick shout out to Maggie Motter, my favorite tea enthusiast who can tell you where to get all the best tea.

This includes a good mug to hold the tea. It should have a strong, comfortable, and sturdy handle so the tea will not spill on you and your fingers won't hurt. It should be of a good size so you don't have to get up in the middle of reading to refill your mug. Optional but highly recommended qualifications for your mug are a cute color and design. This mug should be a representation of yourself, not some random bland mug you picked up from a yard sale. Some mugs have quippy phrases or cool works of art. You can even find mugs that reference quotes or scenes from your favorite book. Etsy is a great place to find mugs such as those.

Now back to the scene of your reading location. During the colder months of the year it is important to stay warm. If you have a fireplace, I would definitely recommend lighting the fire (safely with parental supervision) to add to the mood. Now not everyone has a fireplace and I have a solution for you! All you need is an electronic device like a Chromebook and a heater. Go to YouTube, look up fire crackling noises, and place the heater near your location and voilà: you have your own DIY fireplace. I doubt you would even notice a difference between the two. It sets the mood, of course.

Next up on the list of course is comfy clothes. You should not be uncomfortable when reading a book. Reading is relaxing and supposed to be enjoyable. It will not be either of those things if you are wearing a full-blown evening gown or tuxedo. My outfit of choice is

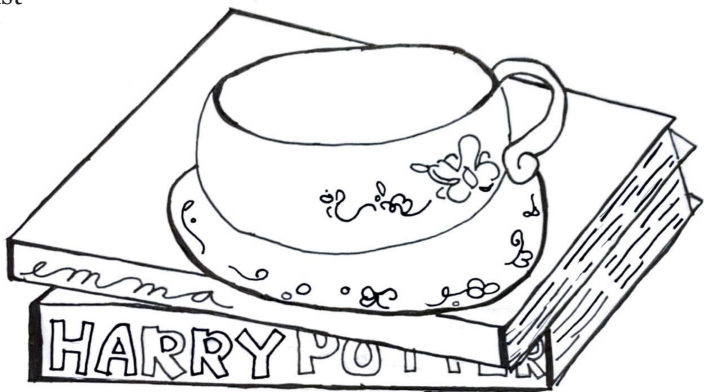
the first pair of sweatpants and a sweatshirt I can find with fuzzy socks or slippers.

Of course, what would be a perfect fall reading scene without a good fall book?! Of course, you have the classics such as Harry Potter and any book written by Jane Austen. I have some other personal favorite recommendations for this fall season. Recently, I read *The Nature of the Witches* by Rachel Griffin which is a fictional story about young girls who work with the seasons to maintain a healthy atmosphere. I also highly recommended *Daisy Jones and the Six* by Taylor Jenkins Reid for anyone who loves Fleetwood Mac.

Last but not least, I have no shame in recommending a cute, fluffy, and soft stuffed animal to cuddle with while reading. This will give you emotional support through sad scenes, something to take your rage out on in moments your characters are a little dumb, and something to hug when the author kills off an amazing character that has no reason to die.

And let's be honest, Teddy is definitely able to read and by reading with your stuffed animals you are giving them some much needed freedom from there eternal imprisonment in their fluffy husks.

I hope you enjoy your time reading in this fall weather with all these tips to enhance your reading experience.



Artwork by MAKENZI MICHAEL

THANKSGIVING, EH!

by NICK MOIR

I have been a part of Thanksgiving in both Canada and the United States, and I often face the question of what the difference is between the two. So, here is my long-awaited answer to this annual inquiry.

The main difference between the two is when they happen. Canadian Thanksgiving happens on the second Monday of October, almost a month and a half earlier than U.S. Thanksgiving. This was originally because Canada didn't want Thanksgiving and Remembrance Day to land on the same day. For context, Remembrance Day was established following the end of World War I as a means of honoring soldiers who died in the line of duty.

Another big reason why these two countries celebrate Thanksgiving differently is because of how much more popular it is here in the United States, than in Canada. Because I have lived both Thanksgivings, I can say that it is way more profitable here than it is in Canada. One of the reasons for that may be because of when Canadian Thanksgiving lands. As already alluded to, Canadian Thanksgiving takes place in October. Because of this, it is perfect weather to go on vacations and to hike, therefore pushing Canadians to do other things instead of celebrating. That's not saying that it isn't celebrated there. It is just not as celebrated as it is in the United States.

Canadian Thanksgiving lands on a Monday, and we all know how much people most definitely don't adore this day of the week. People tend to celebrate Thanksgiving in Canada on weekends though, because it seems more normal than on a Monday night. Also not everyone gets off on Thanksgiving in Canada because of the fact that it falls on a weekday.

The next reason why Thanksgiving is way more popular in the United States is the fact that the NFL has games on all day. As a sports fan myself, I can say that I look forward to watching the games on Thanksgiving; it makes me more excited for the day. Even people in Canada tune in to watch the NFL games on American Thanksgiving because of how popular and entertaining they are.

The last reason that makes Canadian Thanksgiving so much different than United States Thanksgiving is what happens after it. The United States has Black Friday and Cyber Monday, which are almost as big as Thanksgiving itself. They are filled with huge lines of people waiting to get into stores and purchase items; the reason why Canada doesn't have this is for the fact that it just wouldn't make sense for them. Since Christmas is so far away from Thanksgiving in Canada, it wouldn't make sense for them to have a day meant for buying gifts for a holiday several months away. Therefore, Canadians just don't dedicate a day to it, because people just buy their gifts later in the year as Christmas actually nears.

Being here in the United States, I can say Thanksgiving is bigger than I ever would have thought, and it's kind of crazy the amount of attention it gets. I remember my first time driving by a line and seeing it go out of the store all the way out and thinking of how crazy it was, I never experienced it before.

I was just thinking that people are really in those lines all night just to get into the stores and buy gifts for Christmas, an activity they could partake in literally any other day. In Canada, people do just that and don't have to wait in huge lines to do so. So the publicity these events draw is a reason Thanksgiving is so much more celebrated in America. Black Friday and Cyber Monday aren't even really related to Thanksgiving yet draw attention to it and make it culturally essential in the States.

Overzelis Advice: How to Organize Your Locker

by MARY ZELIS

A recent trend that seems to be permeating our culture has been that of decluttering. This decluttering means many different things, like cleaning and organizing rooms, working to improve one's mindfulness and organization, and even cutting out people that have become unhealthy for you to be around.

I personally think while this mindfulness is good, and detaching from the world to work on oneself can be beneficial and what not, but let's talk about decluttering everyone's messiest culprit: the locker.

If you might have guessed from how I portray myself, I am not the most organized. While my locker isn't completely trashed, many things don't have a home. I am definitely not any kind of role model for organizational advice, but one of my fellow writers, Megan Fisher, surely is. I went to Megan for some advice, and she offered me a few tips.

1. Don't have any abandoned papers just floating around your locker. This is definitely the thing I struggle the most with as I often remove papers to work on in other classes instead of just taking that extra binder with me. Let me just tell you, it leads to so many problems, the whole not-knowing-where-any-assignments-actually-are kind of thing. Ultimately this is my biggest folly and the one thing I know I need to change.

2. Stop hoarding empty water bottles. Although it is convenient to have an empty water bottle in your locker for any time you really need one, hoarding multiple bottles when the trash or recycling can is merely ten steps away is a bit ridiculous; it just ends up adding to the clutter.

3. Store textbooks on the top shelf. I recommend putting huge bulky textbooks that you rarely use up on the top shelf. It may be a bit inconvenient when you do need that textbook, but having it sit in the bottom of my locker with the potential to crush other books is a risk I am not willing to take.

4. Get a shelf. To help create more space in a locker, getting a shelf can work really well. This way you can maximize the open space at the bottom of the locker and have more room for all your materials.

5. Order your books. In the morning, or whenever you get the chance, you should put your items in class order, that way you can always just pick up the next set of books that you need for the next class.

6. Color code your classes. Color coding is Megan's favorite thing, and while it's not for everyone, it can definitely help keep materials that are for the same class all together in one place, and make a locker look more orderly (not to mention aesthetically pleasing).

7. Get magnets. Lastly, magnets can be helpful to keep extra pens, pencils and even a mirror on the door of your locker. I'd recommend strong ones that will cling to your locker no matter who bumps into it.

Reorganizing the mess of your locker might seem like a lot of work with little pay off, and if you are like me and barely remember study skills, it just doesn't seem worth it. I challenge you to keep your locker clean.

Organizing your locker prevents stuff from getting jammed in the doors or from dramatically tumbling out of your locker onto innocent pedestrians. It will help you keep on top of your assignments, make things easier to find, and basically lead to general increased efficiency and maybe a couple extra IQ points too.

A Swift Decline into Midnight Madness

by ASHLYN MULLIGAN

Doctor Taylor Swift released her 10th studio album, *Midnights*, on October 21--timed appropriately at midnight. While she is infamous for her relentlessly teasing album rollouts, this drop follows her surprise releases of *Folklore* and *Evermore*, which she had written during quarantine.

Midnights, however, returns back to her roots of very publicized and even cryptic rollouts, leaving endless easter eggs and breadcrumbs for her fanatic ‘Swifties’ before announcing anything certain.

Taylor first announced the new release while accepting the award for best music video for “All Too Well,” which she had directed. Her third win of the night, she hinted at the nocturnal themes of the album. Her chaotic reveal continued with ‘Midnight's Mayhem,’ periodically posted tiktoks where a bingo-ball roller determined which tracklist titles were announced.

While the rollout is widely popular among fans and certainly raises outrageous hype for the album, there are critics of the long, very leading rollout. Some say it ignores the actual music completely and instead urges dedicated fans to spend buckets of money on the merchandise. However, album rollouts like this bring a component of mystery and energy, perfectly accompanying the album’s themes of different personas for ourselves and the questions that we all face

when in the dark.

I stayed up until Midnight that fateful Thursday night, anticipating the mysterious album that Taylor had been endlessly teasing. Here are some of my thoughts on the album’s highlights:

Tracklist:

Track 1: *Lavender Haze*

Track one opens powerfully with a jazzy, moody feel. This sets the tone for the rest of the album, introducing themes of facing oneself with no distractions and finding those people who understand what we go through.

Track 3: *Anti-Hero*

This is the lead single off of the album, and it has pretty standard pop beat overlayed with Taylor singing about self-deprecation in the public light. She winds through self-comparisons, personal shortcomings, with the chorus consisting of repeated “It’s me, hi, I’m the problem, It’s me.” This song was accompanied by an 8 AM music video release--the first of a few “music movies” set to release the week afterward. This visualized the split persona she details in the song, and has a fun plot-divergence of a chaotic will-reading for herself.

Track 4: *Snow on the Beach* (ft. Lana Del Rey)

When the Midnight’s Madness ball rolled out this track, fans went crazy. Besides being the only collabo-

ration on the album, this featured none other than pop-icon Lana Del Rey. However, Lana barely gets any time on the song, instead performing as backing vocals, disappointing for such a powerful duo. The two did write the song together with shared producer, Jack Antonoff, and it results in a slow, atmospheric song, but still disappointing considering Lana’s diminished role.

Track 10: *Labyrinth*

The best song on the album, in my ever-so humble opinion. This song immediately hooks you in with the faint heartbeat as Taylor delicately sings that “it only hurts this much this now.” One of the more emotional and vulnerable lyrics on the album, it coincides with a whimsical yet entrancing backing. This song balances the fear of being immobile while figuring out how to accept happiness and others’ love despite lingering negativity.

Track 13: *Mastermind*

This was the first song that Taylor announced in her *Midnights Madness*, which suggests that she really is the ‘mastermind’ that all Swifties believe her to be. A fun bop, this ties up the thematic idea of self-exploration and finishes with a swirling beat.

Overall, I finished this album grateful for the catchy pop beats that stayed off any yawns and pleased with my insomniac episode with T.Swizzle.

The Forgotten Art

by JUSTIN MELHORN

When you write a story, there’s something most people overlook: the world the story is set in. *Game of Thrones* owes much of its success to the interesting kingdoms and continents of Westeros. *Lord of the Rings* possesses a very basic and archetypical premise without the incredibly detailed world of Middle-Earth. *Star Wars* has a very dull plot without taking place a long time ago in a galaxy far, far away.

A fascinating world imbues a story with color, perspective, and history; but it isn’t easy. As someone who writes their own projects outside of school--albeit for fun--I can tell you that it is indeed an art. For aspiring writers here in YC, or even a budding game master for *Dungeons and Dragons*, here’s some of my tips and tricks for the art of worldbuilding.

Let me emphasize that there are two distinct tools I believe produce the best results. Outlining is the first, and it’s absolutely vital to the worldbuilding process. It’s organized, it’s neat, and even if you try the other method, you’ll end up doing it anyway.

Outlining lets you keep track of all the events, places, time periods, and systems you’ll create if you’re making a world of your own. Why bother with all of these? A world should be consistent, realistic, and most importantly follow its own rules. Now I know the fantasy and science fiction writers out there are wondering how they’re gonna make it realistic, when their biggest draws are things like dragons and laser swords.

Here’s the thing: that doesn’t mean it has to be consistent with our reality, but rather, be realistic in the sense that the universe has a set of “laws” that it must follow. For example, in Stephen King’s *The Dark Tower*, it’s established that the Dark Tower itself is at the center of the universe. The other interdimensional towers surrounding it have beams that go towards it through all realities, and anything along those beams points the same direction.

King’s books are all set in the same universe, and as such--when something happens along those beams in his other works--he keeps that running trend. That’s good worldbuilding. But I’m getting a little off track. Outlines help a writer keep track of these things, because contradictions are what you want to avoid. By keeping things organized, it’s easier to check your notes and make sure you don’t forget anything.

As for the second biggest tool, it doesn’t work for everyone, but I do promise it makes things much more interesting when it does. Let the world write itself. That may sound weird, but it’s true. In my own experience, if you provide a baseline of traits for your historical figures, they’ll do the work of shaping the world for you.

I was writing once, and I thought to myself: what if this character did X instead of Y? At this point, I had enough of the world outlined that following this path would lead to significant rewrites. But I’m so glad I did. The way the world ended up was far better--and much more complex--than it had initially been. It affected politics to make the tension feel right, and it made the power dynamics actually make sense.

Doing this does often lead to the unexpected, but that’s what can make a story interesting. Wherever your imagination naturally takes things is almost always superior to what you can try and force yourself to put down. Will your work always turn out fantastic? No, absolutely not. I’ve put down to page some hot garbage before. But it’s really rewarding when it does work out, and if you’re like me and can’t draw, you get the chance to paint a marvel.

The Land of the Setting Sun

by REAGAN CHERAMIE

A haze of soft yellows overlapped by orange hues rests behind a sun of striking, angry red. Thus is the country of Japan, a mysterious gem tucked away across the Pacific Ocean. After living in this country for over three years, I have grown an appreciation for the unique culture expressed by the Japanese people.

Vastly different from America, Japan is one of the most frequently visited tourist destinations in the world. Where the U.S. is celebrated for its diversity, the Japanese population consists of 98.5 percent of Japanese people; this is attributed to the overarching mindset rooted in tradition across the country.

Furthermore, the life expectancy is much higher in Japan than in the United States. Japanese cuisine is quite healthy, consisting mainly of fish and vegetables due to their roots in fishing and agricultural life. On the same note, whenever I would go to a restaurant in Japan, I noticed how the portion sizes were significantly smaller than in America, probably another reason they are healthier. A similar traditional practice that explains why Japanese people are so successful in maintaining their health is that they frequently visit hot springs, called Onsens, that have helpful nutrients and even some healing properties.

Nature is considered precious to Japanese culture, and this stems from aspects of the Shinto religion. The majority of Japanese people who practice the faith believe that every part of nature intrinsically consists of its own spirit. As a result, the Japanese people greatly respect nature and do their part in taking care of the environment. Throughout my experience, I never saw a single person litter, and even the streets of Tokyo, a massive hub of commerce and tourism, were free of trash.

But even so, Japan is still an extremely traditional country, and Emperor Naruhito of Japan, the last emperor in the world, upholds the conservation of the Japanese throne. Like royalty in Great Britain, Emperor Naruhito plays a more symbolic than political role. Even so, he is adored by the Japanese people for sustaining a part of their history.

Being a foreigner, there are a lot of small details that I did not understand about Japanese culture at first. One of which was that noisily slurping your noodles is a sign of respect because it shows that you are enjoying your food. Another is that the widely known chocolate brand, Kit Kat, has taken a whole new spin in Japan. For example, instead of just chocolate Kit Kats, the Japanese enjoy green tea flavored Kit Kats. Edamame, wasabi, and ginger ale are also popular Kit Kat flavors in Japan, and you can even get some yourself if you order them second hand.

Most Japanese people do not celebrate Christmas, but they enjoy decorating for the holiday and even partaking in the traditional “KFC dinner” on Christmas Day. Yes, it is tradition in Japan to eat KFC on Christmas. The reason for this is that the Japanese people think that KFC stands for “Kournal for Christmas” instead of “Kentucky Fried Chicken.” Even though this seems strange, the Japanese KFC chains sell big Christmas themed buckets of fried chicken. I am happy to say that my family participated in this tradition one Christmas, and it was quite delicious.

Instead of relying on cars, the Japanese people in Tokyo predominantly use trains to get from one destination to another. With so many people using the trains, most Japanese railways operate at 199 percent overcapacity. As a result, people have to pack inside of the trains, some even smashing their faces against the windows in order to fit inside. Many times I was riding in a train during rush hour and it was so packed that I was pressed against strangers. In addition, “transit pushers” are hired in Tokyo to push or “pack” people into trains.

Japan is exceptionally safe. The murder rate in Japan is fifteen times less than in America. Even Tokyo, the most populated city in the world with 38 million people, has very little crime. Overall, Japan is actually the safest country in Asia.

Japanese children work exceptionally hard in both school and sports because success is a crucial part of Japanese culture. All students have to wear uniforms to school in Japan, and there are rules about the students’ hair styles and fingernail length. If a student’s hair is too long, then sometimes the teacher cuts it on the spot. If a student is caught cheating, their head is sometimes shaved and they are expelled. Failure is not seen as an option in Japan, and as such, the Japanese are incredibly hard on themselves, even from a young age.

Finally, Tokyo is home to some of the tallest skyscrapers in the world, each consisting of their own unique architectural design. For example, the Tokyo Tower is 333 meters tall, which is thirteen meters taller than the Eiffel Tower. Another example is the Shiodome City Center that is 216 meters tall and known for its outward curve, which adds more space to the interior of the tower, as well as makes the exterior of the tower more aesthetically appealing.

Known to natives as the Land of the Rising Sun, Japan is a vivacious country filled with wonders unbeknownst to the rest of the world until now. It is an incredible place everyone should experience.

Capitally Convenient

by SEAN WARREN

\$ What is love? Not only is that the question posed by Haddaway in his hit single, but it is also the very question I am obliged to ask myself when I walk by a convenience store. The truth is, I am very fond of convenience stores, with all their practical and generic glory, dare I say I may love convenience stores, but as you can see, I am still stuck on that question.

Although I can certainly say I appreciate convenience stores now, I cannot exactly say when this sentiment arose. I do believe, like most children on car rides, that convenience stores were a sort of respite for my younger self from the cramped middle seat of the 7 seater minivan on a 9 hour road trip to the beach. I remember stepping out of the van periodically to stretch my legs and walking into the gas station to note the differences from our prior stops as we traveled south.

Now we didn't often get too many things from the stores because my parents weren't keen on spoiling our appetites or having us make a mess in the van, but as a treat we would sometimes be allowed to get a big can of Arizona iced tea from the fridges in the back of the store--somehow those fridges are chilled to just the right temperature. Iced tea during this weather might not seem tantalizing, but believe me, in South Carolina during the summer with a van that had bad AC, this ice tea was our savior.

I am no Sigmund Freud, however, and I don't believe all my affection for these tiny stores is really because of my childhood. More realistically it is probably because I have been visiting them more frequently after school, usually to treat myself--yes, I know, I really am an old man.

Lately I have been enjoying going to the Rutters right at the bottom of my neighborhood after practice. I always get the same thing, an extra large salted caramel hot chocolate with hazelnut syrup and those little marshmallows, I really am a child. But from the time I drive into the parking lot to the time I drive up my hill and park by my house, every experience there is enjoyable.

When I walk in I don't feel like anyone can judge me for my sweat covered t-shirt or my disheveled hair, everything and everyone feels casual. When I am getting my food or beverage of choice I don't feel rushed, it's a very slow paced environment. Also, more often than not the cashier is some random teenager that will end up making small talk with you which would inevitably brighten anyone's day.

But more than just the experience, there are so many things you can do at the gas station. You can, well, get gas, fill your tires for free, and even clean your car with the kind of sketchy windshield squeegees they have in the murky blue liquid. So maybe convenience stores aren't the most bougie of places, but what they lack in quality, they make up for in selection.

In just about five measly aisles you can go from looking at different types of bread to picking out which brand of plunger you would like to take home, and of course, they stock everything in between. And speaking of stocking, somehow convenience stores are always stocked to the brim, no matter what time of day you go in. I have never in my life walked into a convenience store and not been able to find what I needed to buy.

But in addition to their normal selection, every convenience store has those

few staples that are unique to that store. Of course every store will have the prerequisite slushie machine, a necessity on any hot summer day if you are a kid and have a five dollar bill in your possession. Most convenience stores also have at least 4 flavors of slushie, and if you're lucky, some have 6 or 8, giving you the ability to mix every flavor into an arguably abominable concoction.

Some convenience stores also have the famed FReal Milkshake machines, a legend among kids who were usually too frugal to spend their earnings on such a meager milkshake. I personally was never a fan of these milkshakes, and I believe it stems from when I spent all my extra cash on one as a child and ended up being severely disappointed, naturally scarring me in the process. I do appreciate the sentiment of those machines, while ultimately disappointing, they represent the burning hope and passion that can fuel the heart of a small child as he patiently saves up to buy his very own milkshake.

Getting back on track, Sheetz has its own made to order menu and even now has hot breakfast sandwiches available to buy on little warming shelves. I will admit that the only reason I know this is because I have bought them before school, multiple times, after going to the dentist for some reason or another, but I am glad I know this nonetheless.

And who can forget Royal Farms chicken? I remember days of yore when my parents would bring back big bags of chicken and they would sit patiently on the table untouched as my parents seemingly waited hours before we would eat. The smell from those bags was simply intoxicating, and I am pretty sure if it was socially acceptable to smell like fried chicken I would do it

in a heartbeat, but I digress.

So clearly, convenience stores are both unique, and generic. They have fully stocked shelves with every item you would want, and food that is hot and ready to eat. They have drinks you can't really get anywhere else and they have oddly really good hot chocolate. They have all the basic essentials to even fix your car if you need it. The employees are so relaxed you don't even need to buy anything when you visit a convenience store.

I remember one day where I simply pulled over to a convenience store because I needed to check my oil. Of course no one questioned a thing and I successfully got my hands very oily all in the visit; I was easily back on my road trip without an obstacle.

Genuinely, there are so many things to love about convenience stores, and I think I will continue to love them for the rest of my life, but I think why I love them is not necessarily because they are convenient. I would argue that I like them because they can be inconvenient if you want them to be; you can spend as much time as you like just relaxing, sitting in your car, winding down from a long day while drinking your inexpensive and killer hot chocolate.

You see, not everything in life needs to be convenient, and some things like traffic or a power outage are super inconvenient, but they allow us to have down time with ourselves. As things get faster and more packed in our lives, it is all the more important to find the time to "waste" time. When push comes to shove, nothing matters if we aren't in tune with ourselves and our basic desires, even if that's just a \$2.95 gas station hot chocolate.

Lu's Game Reviews: Ticket To Ride

by LUIS NGUYEN

Hello dear reader, welcome back to the third installment of Lu's Board Game Reviews. This month, I am reviewing the hit game *Ticket to Ride*, created by Alan R. Moon and originally published by Days of Wonder in 2004. A much more relaxed and slow game compared to the previous games I have reviewed, *Ticket to Ride* lets you play as savvy railroad businessmen building tracks across 1800s America. Although there are no named characters or villains to play as or against, the game draws you in with its promise of strategy and risk. Just like a real entrepreneur finalizing major business decisions, you will have to plan your routes carefully, predicting the moves of other players and potentially cutting them off from their own lines. *Ticket to Ride* is deceptively competitive. With a range of 2-5 players being able to participate in one game, this game can be a one on one duel to see who can build the best railroad company or a light game to pull out with the family.

Currently running at \$47.99, *Ticket to Ride* is a bit pricey, but some of the smaller versions like *Ticket to Ride: New York* are priced at about \$20. Easy to learn but hard to master, *Ticket to Ride* has been said to be a great gateway game for potential board game enthusiasts, so let's see how good of a game this really is.

Style ★★☆☆☆

When looking at the box and game initially, it seemed like any other European-style board game: a simple little game with beautiful tranquil art. While *Ticket to Ride* may not break that stereotype, it had a bit of charm that *Settlers of Catan* and most other European games lacked. I was excited to build railroads and expand my railroad empire across the United States. In a sense, it felt like playing the *Oregon Trail*. I was playing through a moment in American history.

Unlike other more provocative games, *Ticket to Ride*'s main goal is gameplay, not flashy pictures or a video game or movie tie-in. As such, there really is nothing to be overly excited about in *Ticket to Ride*. There is no overarching story in the game. This game is just designed for people to play together, compete

against one another, and have fun. Although I find all of the little train cars that come with the game and the overall art style, I can only give *Ticket to Ride* two style stars for not having a compelling draw.

Coherence ★★★★★

Ticket to Ride is quite a simple game and is very easy to learn. With only three things a person can do and with a limit of one action per turn, new players can quickly get the grasp of what they need to do. By gathering resource cards and collecting the right combination of colors, players will be able to place down train cars on the game board, finishing their planned destinations.

Although explaining the game verbally is a bit difficult, when you watch someone play the game, you instantly recognize what is going on. Being able to play a few games during a family gathering, my little elementary school aged cousins were able to grasp the concept after a few minutes. You know a game is easy to learn and play when an unfocused 6 year old is beating his 17 year old cousin during his second ever game. For the ease of learning and the lack of confusing extra rules, *Ticket to Ride* gets four coherence stars.

Organization ★★★★★

Opening the box for the first time, I felt immediate relief when I saw that there were only two decks of cards and a set of train tokens for each player. I love European games because of their simplicity and sleekness, and *Ticket to Ride* does not disappoint in that department. Set-up took less than ten minutes, and clean up took even less time than that. There's nothing to complain about in the organization department, so I'm giving *Ticket to Ride* a complete five stars.

Replay Value ★★★★★

Competitive games are always fun to play over and over. When you have unpredictable humans influenc-

ing the game, it makes it that much harder to get bored. *Ticket to Ride* also adds in a few random factors to keep the game fresh. You don't always get the resource cards that you need, so sometimes you need to redo your strategy on the fly. The game also limits the amount of people that can build a track on routes, so if someone takes the route that you were planning on building, then you will need to do something else on your next turn.

Destination cards add extra points to players that can connect two specific cities, so with a few dozen different destination cards and players usually only having less than 6 destination cards a game, the variety in locations you build is great. There is a lot of replay value in *Ticket to Ride*, and I am still looking forward to the next game I play, so four replay stars.

Enjoyment ★★★★★

Overall, I really loved playing *Ticket to Ride*. Not having to read the rules every turn I play and the ability to have someone jump in and play really helped me play more of the game. The more I played this game with people, the more I realized how much fun I was having. Being able to mess around with the plans of other people while having my own plans foiled was so fun to experience. There really is nothing much to say here. The game is simple, and as a result this review is as well. Four stars for being a very fun game, but not being the very best.



Movie Sequels: Subpar or Stellar?

by REAGAN CHERAMIE

Why do popular movies have sequels decades later? And, more importantly, are they a success or a failure? Better or worse? Are they such a bust that they are disrespectful to their originals? Or, are they just trying too hard? A sequel should accentuate the original movie; making you remember what you loved so much about it in the first place. Ideally, a sequel released so far after the original should give the audience a feeling of nostalgia, like coming home after a long day. Here’s a list of three movies with sequels that came out way too late and their reviews. *Top Gun: Maverick* (4.5/5 stars):

The sequel to *Top Gun* came out 36 years later than the original movie. Tom Cruise returns as Pete “Maverick” Mitchell and comes back to TOPGUN, the United States Navy Strike Fighter Tactics Instructor program he was part of in the first movie. He has the job of training a group of flight school graduates for a mission, only to find that Bradley “Rooster” Bradshaw, the son of Maverick’s deceased best friend, is a part of the group. In addition, major characters like Penny Benjamin, Maverick’s girlfriend in the first movie, and “Iceman,” Maverick’s rival, appear in the sequel.

Even though it came out many years too late, I thought that *Top Gun: Maverick* was a wonderful sequel. It mixes the perfect amount of action, humor, and romance. The directors also did a good job of using famous scenes from the original *Top Gun*, and incorporating them into the sequel that gave the viewer a blended sense of nostalgia and novelty. Overall, I felt like *Top Gun: Maverick* was almost as

good as the original *Top Gun*. *Hocus Pocus 2* (3/5 stars):

The sequel to *Hocus Pocus* finally came out; only 29 years after the original! The Sanderson Sisters - Winnie, Sarah, and Mary - are back with another devious plot to gain power over Salem, Massachusetts. The zombie, Billy Butcherson, is back from the first movie, and some new characters are added as well.

The original *Hocus Pocus* and the sequel both involve teenagers trying to stop the witches. The dynamic in the first movie was brother-sister (and a love-interest), and the dynamic in the second movie consisted of a group of three friends. I enjoyed the dynamic in the first movie, and I also enjoyed the dynamic in the second movie. I also thought the banter and chemistry between the Sanderson Sisters was well done like the first movie, even though it had been a while since the actresses worked together.

I think *Hocus Pocus 2* was more funny than the original movie, but it was less scary. I felt like *Hocus Pocus 2* was trying a little too hard to give off a “cute” vibe, and it overshadowed any spookiness in the movie. I wanted more suspense, but instead I felt like I was watching a watered down version of the original. Basically, the original *Hocus Pocus* was better. *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* (3.5 stars)

This movie came out 32 years after the last star wars movie, *Star Wars: Return of the Jedi*. It is hard to meet the expectations of what is considered to be “a cinematic masterpiece,” and even harder when you have to cast new actors. Part of what made the original movies so good was the Luke, Leia, and Han Solo

trio. These characters still appeared in the sequel, but the main characters were made up of a new trio: Rey, Poe, and Finn. I enjoyed the friendship of the new trio and their humor, and even though they did not match up to the original group, the new dynamic was refreshing.

In addition, Rey introduced a new side of how women are portrayed in *Star Wars* movies. Her confidence and independence made her a likable protagonist, and she had personality traits that blended both Luke and Leia’s characters. Kylo Ren, the new antagonist, was supposed to be like Darth Vader, but I honestly thought he was a little “moody.” The “good side” had many complex characters, but the “dark side” felt a little bland to me. It did not feel like there was that much to “be scared of.”

That said, there was plenty of action in the movie, just like the original *Star Wars* movies. The parts that the original cast appeared in were very well done, and seeing them again was like putting on an old, cozy sweater. I feel like *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* would be a 5/5 movie if there weren't original movies to compare it to. But, unfortunately, it did not beat the original *Star Wars* movies.

In my opinion, sequels are meant to come out a year or two after the original movie. Any longer seems like the sequel is competing to replace the original. There is a reason why the original movies are so good, and if a sequel is to be made then it needs to be equivalent to the first. None of the movies reviewed were bad, in fact *Top Gun: Maverick* was amazing, but they will never replace the classics.

Leave the Shoes at the Door...

by JUSTIN MELHORN

If there’s one lesson from my grandmother that I’ll take with me to my grave, it’s that you should always leave your shoes by the door when entering the house. To this very day—be it in my own place or someone else’s—I always immediately remove my shoes the moment I step inside.

Why? It’s about respect, simple as that. My parents themselves raised me on those principles, but I credit the biggest influence to my grandmother, who raised me in those early formative years as a very small child because my parents both worked.

She grew up in an upper class family in Vietnam, but lost most of that wealth coming over to the US. She’s a very determined woman, and there was one thing she wanted to guarantee: her kids and grandkids would not have poor manners. Take your shoes off when you enter the house, use your silverware properly, greet people by their proper title, etc; these were the tenets of my young life. For example, I used to get scolded whenever I left my shoes on and walked into the house. Eventually, taking off my shoes became instinct.

My dad used to drill me on how to properly introduce myself: shake hands, look the individual in the eyes, say “Hi, I’m Justin.” I miss something, or don’t have the right tone, and we run it again. It seems like overkill, but it really has helped me make a good impression throughout interviews, first meetings, and my job.

Although these may seem like a lot of harsh standards, when you grow up on them they’re not that bad. And if I’m being honest, I’m glad that was the way I was raised. To me, there’s nothing more important than respect.

It’s benefitted me in my life inside and outside of school. Start emails with “dear,” or even just use a person’s proper name, and end it with something like “thank you for your time.” If greeting a superior or an adult, shake their hand and look them in the eyes the first time you meet. Be polite and respectful until you become well-enough acquainted to drop some of the formality.

Respect isn’t just manners though. It’s also how to treat others, their beliefs, their passions, their heritages, and their ideas. This is probably the biggest thing for me personally. Someone can forget all formality and as long as they respected my beliefs and culture, we’d be fine.

The problem with today’s culture is that respect is something that is often lost. People—in my experience—expect license to say whatever they please to whomever they wish. To a certain extent, they have the freedom to do so. But some people take it too far.

Once, I was debating with a peer who didn’t believe in tipping restaurant staff. He offered his perspective and I listened respectfully. I work in the restaurant industry and disagreed. When I responded, however, he stated that my rebuttal proved serving staff were greedy because I was trying to persuade him to give me handouts.

That assumption was incredibly rude, as I wasn’t trying to incline him towards one side over the other. Rather, I was stating my stance and the reasoning behind it. Attacking my character does nothing except present you as someone who can’t have an open dialogue.

People shouldn’t tear each other down over differing beliefs and backgrounds; the same goes for honest misconceptions or mistakes. While I may joke about people I disagree with, it is not my goal to uproot or change them in significant ways. For example, I have poked fun at fans of the *Twilight* series because unlike them I have taste; however, no matter how bad I think the series is, I would never actively go about with the intent to force someone into hating them.

For mistakes, they happen, and if it really is one I’m not going to get too upset over it. I have been called Italian and Latino enough times to know I don’t look very Asian. It can be aggravating, but it’s not worth fighting someone over. Most of the time, people who do this mean no offense in the world; jumping on them like a horde of piranha for losing a 50/50 gamble is cruel, and makes you the one in the wrong.

Today, though, being aggressive, obstinate and abrasive are increasingly common sentiments. Respect goes both ways. It’s very easy to get lost in keeping people respectful towards you, and in that process losing your own. Treat others how you want to be treated, because most things in life are give and take.

So start off small, with the little things. Check in with those around you, try to increase your knowledge of the world’s many cultures, customs, ideologies, and philosophies. And as my grandmother would say, “Don’t forget to leave your shoes at the door.”

For the Love of Lips

by MARY ZELIS

If you have ever had the pleasure, or displeasure of being near me in one of my classes, you may have occasionally heard me verbalize my need for ChapStick. About 4 times a day, or even a class on some days, I bother those around me in search of something to save me from my sorrow. Despite getting some flack from my fellow siblings about “my addiction” I proudly stick to this skincare product.

Because of my deep love, I also have many opinions, and at least eight years to form and change those opinions about various lip balms. I have taken it upon myself to rate them from worst to best, because lets face it, I’m right.

Eos: It’s like literally applying alcohol on your lips for a very high cost. The shape is fun at first but feels stupid after a while, and I don’t know if this happened for anyone else, but after a couple uses, it seemed to lose it’s flavor. 2/10

Aquaphor: It’s basically a knock of Vaseline in a little squeezey bottle. I have only briefly dabbled, but I also think that the design is poor and I always end up getting too much product on my lips. Then when you get to the end of the life of the product, it is built like a toothpaste bottle and it gets none of the product out. 7/10

Blistex: I’ve never really liked it, but they have fun scents and fun seasonal collections and additions. It's clever, but they don’t really have any traditional scents, or as much branding work, and also their formula always felt waxy to me. Not a bad product though. 7.5/10

Carmex: I used to really like Carmex but the scent is just too medicinal. Otherwise it is a good product and a fun design that takes away from the fact that you can’t get all the product out. I also think by limiting the amount of products they release they made it very classic and made it almost more reputable. 8/10

Vaseline: DESPITE its ridiculous packaging, I feel like there is so much recognition for this product. It is like smearing petroleum jelly on your lips, in fact it is literally smearing petroleum jelly on your lips. This product is literally one of the most questionable lip balms, yet it gets so much recognition. 9/10

Burt's Bees: I actually really like Burt's Bees, they have lots of fun flavors, but they have the classic mint that everyone still likes. A very reputable brand, the only qualm I have is that often the effects of the lip balm wear off quicker than other brands. 9.25/10

ChapStick: First is obviously the classic ChapStick, my personal favorite flavor of the standard pack is simply the cherry, but low-key, any of them really hit. Even the basic one has SPF, so it always feels a little bit more purpose-made than all the other fun flavors.

I also think that it almost feels a little bit more available to everyone, like it’s not as seemingly ‘girly’ as some of the other brands attempt to be and thus it has a wider audience, and it is always reliable. It is the franchise the product was named for, and it has so much more recognition than many of the other brands. 10/10

If you are feeling a little adventurous I would suggest going for a lip treatment or a balm that will have a few more benefits than a traditional lip balm, however I will say they are often like Burts Bees and they don't last as long as a traditional ChapStick.

Despite my deep love and knowledge for lip balms, I would honestly say don’t use them. If you haven’t fallen down the rabbit hole yet, spare yourself.

ChapStick is my perfect addiction, but it is simply another mark of first world problems, and despite my immense knowledge and love I don’t think it needs to proliferate other people’s lives.

YC’S WINTER WARRIORS

by COLIN FAUST

Wintertime is right around the corner, which means YC’s basketball is starting back up. Our Fighting Irish have been working in the gym—putting up shots throughout the off-season—preparing for a winning year. Last season York Catholic’s team finished 18-6, falling just short in districts and states; but they hope to shoot up to the next level this time.

With 9 returning seniors who were a part of their overall success last year, York Catholic’s key returners include Luke Forjan, John Forjan, Brady Walker, Quinn Brennan, and Joseph Mountain. This group of guys has been playing together for a very long time now and their chemistry increases more every year. For example Luke, John, and Brady have been playing varsity since their freshman year, and they’re planning to make this their best season yet.

Each player on the team has their own abilities that stretch out the gym floor, leaving teams defenseless. The general manager at the point guard position is Brady Walker, with the best handles and passing ability. John Forjan is capable of the best three-point shots on the team, and makes a solid perimeter defense. Luke Forjan is the team's top scorer who finds any way he can to put points up on the scoreboard. Quinn is a stretch facilitator that can do it all and play a great defense all game long. Joe owns the paint using his post moves to put up points and his athleticism to get those rebounds. These combined talents and skills make them a tough group to stop.

The Fighting Irish possess more than just their top seniors to help win games. This team lineup also includes Ryan Oathout, Jake Dallas, and Jacob Mountain—who all have some varsity experience to contribute to this team. One of the most important assets for a high school team is a strong underclass, allowing some flexibility and keeping the team from being senior-dependent. Hopefully even more underclassmen, along with some JV warriors from last year, will be able come up to varsity.

This team has a great relationship with each other, allowing them to succeed and have each others’ backs on the court. Even outside of basketball, you will find these guys hanging out with each other and having a good time.

I asked John Forjan (12) how preparations for the season have worked, and

he told me that “they have been playing a lot of pickup during the summer and scheduling open gyms.” You can never start practicing too early, and these long-standing preparations are only going to help them this year.

The Fighting Irish have high hopes for this season, John Forjan (12) told me; “the goals are to win a District championship and a County championship.” With the amount of varsity experience this team brings, both of these goals are certainly within their grasp.

They made it to the Giant Center last year for the district championship but lost against a very talented Columbia team. That team however graduated a lot of their top players which leaves a big opening for YC in Districts.

YC’s girl’s basketball is also beginning this time of year. Having seen success in years prior, they have won multiple district and state championships. Led by Coach Bankos—who has coached some of the best York Catholic girls basketball teams in school history—they are sure to have a great season.

Last year they made it to the Giant Center but unfortunately fell short against Trinity. The team was young then, but this year returning players are bringing a wealth of experience. Some key returners are senior Kathleen McKeague, Juniors Paige O’Brien, Amanda Reed and Meredith Smith, as well as Sophomore Katie Bullen. With the team still being relatively young but having experience in districts already, other schools will need to watch out this year.

I asked Page Obrien (11) how she thinks the season will go, and she told me “this season should be very successful and a lot of fun.” Nothing is more fun than winning games and playing something you love with your friends; this team certainly seems to understand that.

York Catholic’s girls team opens up against Camp Hill at home, and the boys will open up with an away game against Susquehannock, The boys’ first home game will be one to watch, against rival Lancaster Catholic.

YC basketball this year should be very fun to watch, creating an electric current of excitement that will have our Catholic Crazy’s hair standing on end. The last time the Fighting Irish put up a District championship banner was 2020, but I believe they have a good chance this year to hang up another.

Ready to Rumble!

by CARTER SCAPPA

One of the sports that isn’t recognized too much is the UFC, mainly because it lacks an official “season” and hosts a lot of violence. Participating in combat sports can be very life threatening—especially with some life-long MMA participants—and this leads to a lack of attention on them in most main-stream media outlets.

Current and future diehard UFC fans must always keep track of when there is a pay per view, and they often buy arena tickets early because they sell fast. With some of the most popular venues being the T-Mobile Arena in Las Vegas, Madison Square Garden in New York, and the Jeunesse arena in Brazil, it’s no wonder people have a hard time snagging good seats.

This isn’t a new occurrence, as the UFC has been around for a relatively decent stretch of time—dating back to 1993. Most pay per views host hefty price tags—especially buying and watching the events on ESPN+—but in the end it’s all worth it because even when sitting on your couch the sport is riveting to watch.

One of this year’s biggest events, UFC 281, is shaping up to be wild. Many sports analysts have even dubbed it: “the biggest UFC PPV ever.” The top matchup headlining the card is the 185 lb bout featuring world champion Israel Adesanya against Number 5 ranked Alex Pereira; both of which have squared off before in 2017. With the evolution of their combat techniques since then, it’s sure to be an entertaining match.

The other 2 huge bouts include a womens 115 lb bout for the championship title between reigning champion Carla Esparza and challenger Zhang Weili. Then, there’s a 3 round matchup at 145 lbs between the number 2 ranked Dustin Poirier and number 4 ranked Michael Chandler. All 3 headline matchups are on the UFC 281 card and they’ll bring in plenty of viewers from around the world.

On December 10th, UFC 282 makes its debut and potentially brings the same success as UFC 281. This fight card has at least 4-5 matchups that could definitely be considered some of the biggest matchups of all time. There’s a rematch between former 205 lb champion Glover Teixeira, who is 42 years old, and the current champion Jiri Prochazka, who is only 30. They had a matchup a long time ago back in June when Prochazka made a comeback after a rough start, winning in the 5th round.

Another interesting bout on the card is another 205 lb contest between a former champion Jan Blachowicz—ranked number 2 in this weight class globally—squaring off against a rising contender

from Dagestan, Russia named Magomed Ankalev who comes in at number 3. The winner of this contest could battle the winner of the championship bout in the future.

Other big name athletes on the card include one of the younger stars making their debut, Bo Nickal, who was a 3-time NCAA Division 1 National Champion in wrestling at Penn State University. He faces off against another upcoming star, Jamie Pickett, who has been in some tough bouts but always seems to make every matchup he’s in a real competition.

The last two big matchups from this pay per view is another 185 lb bout, this time between veteran fighter 13th ranked Dricus du Plessis and 9th ranked Darren Till. Both look to take a huge push as future contenders with a win. The last matchup hasn’t been confirmed yet, but rumors have it that two of the greatest heavyweights (265 lbs) will square off: former two time champion Stipe Miocic faces off with undefeated Jon Jones, a former champion at 205 lbs. This fight card should be just as good as 281, but we still have one more to cover.

UFC 283 is the first pay per view from the month of January and starts off 2023. The UFC hopes that 283 will bring just as much success as 281 and 282. It’s location is in Brazil, the home of MMA. There aren’t too many matchups announced on that card yet but the headliner is a tetralogy between former opponents for the 125 pound belt.

Champion Deiveson Figueiredo and Interim champion Brandon Moreno have each beaten one another once, even coming to a draw in one matchup. This matchup seeks to end their rivalry, giving new challengers some title chances.

Other than that the rest of the card seems average right now. The next best contest is a womens 125 lb bout between former title challengers Lauren Murphy and Jessica Andrade, who have each won their last matchups. The winner of this matchup could potentially have a rematch for the belt at 125 lbs in the near future.

I know a lot of people do not normally watch UFC in their free time because at times it can get pretty boring, but if you have some free time most days you’ll find them Saturdays on ESPN live TV. These cards are going to have some can’t miss action so make sure to tune into them, and if you haven’t already make sure to download the ESPN app so you won’t miss any of your favorite sports and can keep track of the action.

Jesmwork, Freamwork

by CARTER SCAPPA

Out of all tough, grueling and physical sports that we play, there's nothing I've seen that can be as tough as field hockey. YC doesn't have a school exclusive field hockey team, rather, we collaborate with York Tech and York Country Day. With a large pool of student athletes to pull from, this team is packing a wide array of talent. In order to discuss it, though, you need to have an understanding of the sport itself.

A lot of people don't understand field hockey, and the rules can be complicated. The players can only hit the ball with the flat sides of their stick. Playing with the round side of the stick, a player interfering with an opponent's sticks—which includes hooking, holding and not attempting to play the ball—and intentionally hitting the ball into an opponent all lead to fouls being called. The players also cannot charge, push or trip opponents.

Free hits happen when someone is fouled; they get a shot without defense from the spot they were fouled. Penalty strokes are like penalty kicks in soccer, wherein after the foul is called they take a shot at the goal with only the goalie defending.

It's a lot to manage, and the process before the field hockey season is equally difficult to prepare for, especially during summer workouts. Field hockey requires a lot of its players to be in fantastic condition, which means lots of endurance training like football and soccer.

The most important part about how field hockey is played is being able to cooperate with teammates. Any kind of hockey team is successful because of having a team full of great chemistry and connections. Being able to collaborate with other schools also means meeting plenty of new people and friends, leading to personal growth in tandem with an increase in player skill.

They also need to make sure they're eating nutritiously and making sure to get a great workout weekly, which includes lifting weights and running sprints. After all, field hockey can be a long sport, with multiple games played in a week and sometimes even just after one it can feel very tiring.

The field hockey team was in numerous close games during their season. While there were some games that didn't go in their favor, the team's resiliency let them stay in each game no matter what the outcome was. That resilience and teamwork led to two really great wins over Southern Huntingdon County.

YC has two representatives for field hockey talent including Megan Fisher (12) and Emily Schlosser (12), who have been playing field hockey for a long time. Although they may seem quiet and collected during the regular school day, when it's gameday the sticks are on the field and they aren't fooling around; they mean business.

When asking Megan Fisher (12) about how they got involved in high school field hockey she said “Emily asked me to, and then I fell in love with it.” She also mentioned that “Coach Glasmanaged to save the field hockey program; he recruited most of his basketball team to play, and they picked it up quickly.” Megan also mentioned that after she and Emily graduate, they hope more people from YC join the team to play field hockey.