

# VOYAGE SPECTATOR

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## Maintaining Your Faith During the Summer

By OLIVIA STRUCK

As the school year comes to a close, oftentimes students find themselves with more free time than usual. Summer is the season of distractions and it is easy to lose sight of the important things that ground your life. With all of your free time, a new addition to include in your summer schedule should definitely involve some activities in building your faith. By maintaining your faith into the summer months, you will see a positive change in your daily life both through a development in your relationship with God and an increase in your spiritual growth.

Ensuring that you keep your faith as a central part of your life will make it much easier to keep yourself productive and focused during the distractions that the summer brings. But if you are not at liberty to do this, then focus on the fulfillment of your weekly obligation. One major part of the faith is attending Mass weekly. You can enhance this aspect of your faith by attending daily mass once a week in addition to Sunday Mass. During the school year, we are fortunate in the fact that daily mass is offered in the chapel during the school day by our own pastor, Fr. Kuchinski; however, this practice can easily continue into your summer routine. The tranquility that the sacrifice of the Mass offers is a wonder that should never be avoided. Listening to the word of God and joining in his praise offers so much to the development of your relationship with God. Those who do not frequently attend Mass will be surprised by the change one hour can make!

A major part of summer plans are vacations: beach getaways, weekend adventures, or road trips. These plans are what get us through the obstacles that the school year can bring: we can look ahead to these times of relaxation and have the motivation to finish the school year off strong. When choosing the location of your vacation, you can always choose a spot that also allows you to grow deeper in your faith. The Marian apparitions are wonderful places to visit. The Sanctuary of Our Lady of Lourdes is the spot where Bernadette, a young teenage girl, saw a series of visions of Mary, and the springs by the sanctuary are also known for their healing properties. By visiting this holy place over the summer, you can revive your faith because seeing the wonders that Mary did firsthand can only affect you positively. That being said, there are multiple locations of Marian apparitions, so do a little research and pick an apparition that means something to you. It is a great way to revive your interest in the faith this summer.

During the school year, students live a rather structured life. The routine that they follow remains the same throughout the year; however, once school lets out, this structure falls apart. Oftentimes, students are left to navigate the days without

any goals set for themselves. So, in order to remain in a faithful mindset this summer, it is important to set some goals for yourself. They can involve big and small plans, but the important thing is that they are catered to your faith. Small-scale goals can revolve around a focus on prayer or reading scripture. Small goals allow for the essential structure that your life needs and they are also reasonable and attainable; however, larger goals could involve organizing a prayer group or a bible study. This would take more effort, but the reward would make up for the work. By growing in faith in a group, you are able to build a support system where you can trust your friends to keep you on track. These goals hold you accountable for your faith and allow you to grow more connected with God and your friends.

Take the time to pray the rosary- this doesn't have to be by yourself either. Many local parishes have youth groups that can be highly beneficial in cultivating your faith in a fun and engaging manner. The fellowship that it offers allows you to form relationships and connections with people of your own age based on shared belief. Faith can be difficult to maintain in the turbulent times of the modern world. Youth groups make it easier to sustain a consistent relationship with God that is true to your values and strengthened in a community of like-minded individuals with a common purpose; the faith is meant to be shared.

Attend confession once a month at least. We are called to seek out forgiveness, something essential to a strong relationship with God. He so graciously offers mercy to us so we have a duty to seek Him out when we do wrong rather than hide in shame. As we get older and more mature this summer, we are called to approach this concept of responsibility and own up to our identity as Catholics.

Start your service hours early. Moreover, we should be coming to an age where we have the desire to do good for others for the good of others. We should begin to seek out the wellbeing of a community and the individuals within and recognize that God can be seen in every act we do for others- we are doing that act for Him. We as humans are made to love and serve God through love and service for our fellow people.

By maintaining a focus on your faith, you will not get caught up in the diversions of summer. Students need to recognize the importance of faith, so they can avoid falling away from God. The summer months should not be a time absent of faith; rather, it should be a time of rebirth so that your faith will carry on into the next school year. Take this opportunity to become more connected with yourself, and thus, get to know God better.

## Should SAT Scores Be Mandatory?

By ABBY GEHRING

Our high school years have been filled with plenty of stressful things, but since the first day of freshman year, one singular test has claimed to be the one thing that will determine what happens when we leave these walls, the SAT. Our entire college career and arguably our future itself is determined by a four-digit number- no pressure. But why should our entire future be determined by the way we perform on one day? Is that really the best representation of who you are as a student?

The fact is, some people are just not good at taking tests. They may perform perfectly well in a classroom setting but even avid test takers are phased by three hours of close to two hundred multiple choice questions. On top of that, scores can be affected by a number of different factors including the comfort level of the testing room, the student's level of sleep prior to the test, and whether or not the student had breakfast. For the majority of students, their performance on one singular day is not an accurate representation of their academic abilities. Because of this, many universities have become "test-optional" meaning they do not require students to submit test scores. According to CommonWealth Magazine, 80% of American schools are now considered test-optional; however, many colleges admit that students who do submit scores are much more likely to be accepted, so for all of the passionate and ambitious students out there, there is nothing optional about it.

Colleges claim that personality and ethics are taken into account almost equally to academics during the admissions process. If this is true, the SAT has no purpose in the overall college admissions process. High school transcripts show how a student has performed across the entirety of their high school career. It can show how they have improved in subjects that they struggle in and their commitment to hard work and good grades. That arguably speaks more to a student's work ethic than the SAT does; moreover, the SAT gives no representation of who students are as individuals or how they work in a social setting. York Catholic guidance counselor, Mrs. Loughman, says that she "hopes schools stay test-optional because standardized test scores do not always indicate if a student is going to be successful in college." Most colleges require essays and letters of recommendation to achieve this profile of a student. Surely personal statements from people who have worked with a student, or writing from the student themselves is more reliable in determining a person's character than a three hour standardized test.

Ultimately, the SAT fails to predict how successful a student will be in college. The test does not even test all of the main subjects. College success is determined by a number of factors that do not involve skills used on the SAT. These can include things like a student's ability to work well both independently and with a team, along with their ability to communicate effectively and operate well in a diverse environment. They also look at a student's community involvement, critical and creative thinking skills, and their overall commitment to learning. So although a good SAT score can be a great indication of a student's abilities in English and math, it serves no purpose in accounting for the actual qualities that a college looks for. There is nothing that an admissions officer can learn from a student's SAT results that they cannot learn from their transcripts and countless other resources that are provided with an application.

However, standardized testing has become an essential part of our academic world. According to The College Board, SAT school day participation has increased more than 18% over the past year. Taking the SAT can "give someone that edge just by taking that initiative" says Mr. Butler. Moreover, it is still important that every student take it, no matter their perception of its inaccuracy in measuring academic worth. "Every student should take the SAT at least twice," says Mrs. Loughman. Students need that "experience taking a standardized test," says Mrs. McShane; colleges look for students to seek out these means of testing their academic abilities and acquiring the ability to improve in terms of standardized testing. Everyone should take the chance to improve in this field because whether we like it or not, it is integrated into the current day college search and will likely remain so for a while.

So for all of you rising juniors getting ready to face this foreboding step in your high school career, take some comfort in the fact that everyone who applied to college before you has felt the same way, and they still got into college.



Artwork by Miranda Kovach

# MEGAROCKETS *TO THE* MOON

By ETHAN ANDREWS

Men on the moon: perhaps the greatest achievement of mankind to date. Yet, one may be inclined to wonder, "Why hasn't there been a moon landing since 1972 and are moon landings a thing of the past?" Thanks to some intelligent minds working in the world's space agencies and in the private space sector, the next moon landing should be coming within the decade. Today in the U.S., both NASA and SpaceX are making giant leaps (pun definitely intended) toward achieving this goal in their development of the megarockets of the future.

This past fall, on November 16, 2022, NASA's new moonrocket, the Space Launch System (SLS), launched its first test flight to the moon on a mission entitled Artemis 1. In Greek mythology, Artemis is Apollo's twin and the goddess of the moon. The Artemis Program, in turn, is meant to parallel the Apollo program of the 60s and early 70s and also to land the first women and African Americans on the moon.

This specific mission, however, was simply an unmanned test flight. The launch occurred at 1:47 am (I should know, I watched the livestream while writing an essay for Mrs. Henson), and it was a truly surreal experience to see the 322 foot tall rocket release a fireball of exhaust against the black of night and ascend into the dark sky en route for the lunar orbit, knowing that NASA's long awaited return to the moon is finally coming to fruition. Artemis 1 completed a 25 day mission to test the craft's systems around the moon and splashed down in the Pacific off the coast of Baja California on December 11, 2022 with a mission successfully completed.

The SLS is designed to be a much safer version of the Saturn V, the workhorse of the Apollo program, by utilizing twenty-first century technologies. At the same time, NASA is trying to save costs with SLS by using already-proven technologies from the Space Shuttle. The rocket consists of a massive "core stage" with four RS-25 engines, the same that were of the Space Shuttle orbiter, to propel the craft nearly to orbit around the Earth. It also uses the same Solid Rocket Boosters (SRB) as the Space Shuttle for extra thrust at liftoff as well as a second stage derived from the already existing Delta IV rocket.

To develop the spacecraft, NASA partnered with the European Space Agency (ESA) to build Orion, a vehicle which bears resemblance to the Apollo spacecraft but with modern computer interfaces and systems to accommodate four astronauts. Meanwhile, the ESA built the craft's service module with solar panels for electric power and engines to control the craft's trajectory. Orion will fly again with Artemis 2, a manned test flight of SLS around the moon. The crew has already been selected and begun training and the launch is currently scheduled for November of 2024.

However, a mission to the moon is nothing without a landing craft to bring the crew safely to the surface and back, and for this, NASA is looking to the private sector. NASA has currently made a contract with SpaceX to design and build a new landing system for the Artemis Program which will dock with Orion in lunar orbit and bring astronauts to the surface.

The new lander will likely also work in tandem with SpaceX's own megarocket which has been in development for some time now, called Starship. After the massive success of SpaceX's Falcon 9 rocket and its self-landing reusable first stage,

SpaceX is going all in on reusability with an ambitious design which promises massive payloads and 100% reusability.

Starship stands at an astounding 394 feet tall and consists of two parts: a "Super Heavy Booster" and the actual Starship spacecraft. While Falcon 9 recovered its first stage by extending legs and touching down on a landing pad, not so with Starship, which boasts seemingly crazy flight plans. The Super Heavy Booster will hover close to the ground after separation and will be literally caught out of the sky by two giant boom arms attached to a tower. Starship will perform a "belly flop" maneuver, falling on its side from space only to flip at the last second and touch down softly.

SpaceX has been flight testing full Starship prototypes since 2020, which, due to SpaceX's design philosophy of quickly testing many different design iterations, has led to a plethora of spectacular explosions followed by a series of impressive landings. Recently, on April 20 of this year, SpaceX launched the first fully stacked prototype of the Starship rocket for an orbital test flight at its launch range in Boca Chica, Texas. The rocket had several engines fail and began to tumble uncontrollably before stage separation which caused an automated self-destruction and a huge fireball. SpaceX still has much to learn from the autopsy of the flight and improvements to make to Starship's design and flight profile.

We live in an exciting time for space exploration with two megarockets co-existing, and I can't wait for the next launch nor to one day live during a time when [wo]men walk on the moon.



Artwork by Mitchell Kilgore

## Best Dressed at the Met

By MIRANDA KOVACH

I always look forward to the Met Gala each year and the 2023 Met did in no way disappoint. However, this year the theme was highly controversial, and for good reason- Karl Lagerfeld has definitely said some questionable stuff; however, this in no way diminishes the quality of the extraordinary outfits worn on the red carpet that night. Therefore, below are my rankings of the top 10 outfits of Met 2023; they were judged based on creativity, style, and if I would actually wear them to the gala if given the chance.

- Halle Berry  
Creativity: 5/5  
Style: 5/5  
Would I actually wear it to the Met Gala: Yes
- Rita Ora  
Creativity: 4.5/5  
Style: 5/5  
Would I actually wear it to the Met Gala: Yes
- Dua Lipa  
Creativity: 4/5  
Style: 4.75/5  
Would I actually wear it to the Met Gala: Yes
- Jeremy Pope  
Creativity: 5/5  
Style: 4.5/5  
Would I actually wear it to the Met Gala: Probably
- Salma Hayek  
Creativity: 4/5  
Style: 4.75/5  
Would I actually wear it to the Met Gala: Yes
- Conan Gray  
Creativity: 4/5  
Style: 4/5  
Would I actually wear it to the Met Gala: No
- Liu Wen  
Creativity: 3.75/5  
Style: 4/5  
Would I actually wear it to the Met Gala: Probably
- Jenna Ortega  
Creativity: 4/5  
Style: 3.75/5  
Would I actually wear it to the Met Gala: Probably not
- Sydney Sweeney  
Creativity: 3/5  
Style: 3/5  
Would I actually wear it to the Met Gala: No
- Suki Waterhouse  
Creativity: 2/5  
Style: 3.5/5  
Would I actually wear it to the Met Gala: Maybe

I asked some York Catholic students what their favorite outfits were as well. Sophie Fraser (12) said that Anne Hathaway "slayed." Abby Gehring (11) was a personal fan of Sydney Sweeney's red carpet-look. Dakota Engel's (11) favorite was Dua Lipa's dress because "it has pockets."

Also, I would like to close this article with a special shoutout to Doja Cat's feline outfit and the heroic dedication it must have taken for her to meow instead of speaking words at all her interviews (see her interview with Emma Chamberlain).



Artwork by Fahra Gwynn

## Dole Whip Popsicles

By ABBY GEHRING

Inspired by the dole whip soft serve from Disney World  
Yields: 8  
Prep Time: 10 minutes

Materials Needed:  
20 ounces crushed pineapple (can be fresh or canned but if you used canned do not drain the juice)  
5 - 10 ounces heavy whipping cream depending on how creamy you want it to taste (make sure to taste the mixture before you freeze)  
3 teaspoons lime juice  
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract  
Popsicle molds  
Popsicle sticks (most molds come with these included)

Instructions:  
1. Blend all ingredients together in a blender, food processor, or stick blender, until smooth.  
2. Pour into popsicle molds leaving about 1/4" of space left at the top of the mold.  
3. Place a popsicle stick in each slot.  
4. Freeze for 4 hours or until completely hardened.  
5. When you are ready to serve them, run the mold over cold water for a couple of seconds and carefully remove them from the molds.

# How to Make Your Bedroom More Boujee

By MIRANDA KOVACH

As somebody who is currently employed at a home decor store, I see myself as quite knowledgeable when it comes to taking a room to the next level visually. Our generation specifically puts emphasis on creating the kind of bedroom that one would find on the Pinterest boards of teenage girls across the nation, eager to fulfill the aesthetic bestowed upon them by none other than BuzzFeed. So with summer approaching and thus days with too many free hours to count, here are some ways to upgrade your room:

**Dried flowers:** Most people have no idea how easy it is to press your own flowers for framing, allowing you to preserve the flowers you receive after a show, on a date, at a dance, and therefore allowing that memory to live on your walls. All you do is open a book to about the middle and lay out a piece of parchment on top. Then place your flowers on the parchment, keeping them contained to one half of the book. Close the book gently over the parchment-sandwiched flowers, and pile heavy books and/or weights on top (I'm talking the thickest books on your shelf). Wait a couple of weeks and your flowers will be ready for framing.

**Pillows and throws:** These make or break your room. Woven blankets add a bohemian aura to your room and vintage pillows can make your room have a retro feel. I personally got most of my pillows from Anthropology but Urban Outfitters can also have great options. Target is a good place to get cute throws or even any home decor store. Although some decor stores can be expensive, there are definitely cheaper options available for both these items (Walmart, for example).

**Wall shelves:** This is the perfect way to declutter your floor while adding style to your room. At places like Hobby Lobby, you can find affordable shelves to hold your favorite pictures or objects that you want safely on display. As someone who shares a room with her eighty-pound dog, a wall shelf might be a necessity for your more breakable items.

**Bulletin boards:** These are adorable ways to create Polaroid collages of your favorite people, moments, or places. Personally, I have two boards stuffed to the edges with my favorite memories and even childhood pictures of my brothers and I. Layered with patches I have acquired from different athletic events or activities, the picture montage feels very me. I also post little reminders that look very aesthetic (despite me never actually listening to them).

**Potted plants:** To be frank, I have around twenty-five plants total in my room alone. Although this may appear to the naive eye as an obsession, it makes my room feel a little less stuffy; I've even heard that the extra oxygen is good for you. I, for one, think it makes the room a little fresher- that is if you can keep them alive. Not to mention, pots are adorable— think about hanging pots with the cute designs tied into the rope, or the ones painted to resemble objects that they definitely are not.

With so many decor options, you have no reason to deny yourself the bedroom that is perfectly "you."

## EXTRA! EXTRA! **STRAIGHT FROM THE EXECS**

By DAKOTA ENGEL

With the 2022-2023 school year quickly coming to a close, what can you expect from the newly elected 2023-2024 Student Council Executive Board? President Meredith Smith, Vice President Grace Rapp, Secretary Olivia Struck, and Treasurer Abby Sheldon are excited to reveal what they have in store for the student body in the upcoming year. YC would not be YC without Spirit Shirt Fridays, Christmas candy cane fundraisers, and Homecoming spirit weeks but what new additions can one expect?

Next year the executive board would like to get more input from the student body for new holiday fundraisers and what the themes should be for spirit week— start brainstorming ideas because the board is ready to hear all the ideas the student body has to offer. Although there are many new events in the making, they are still in the works and will not yet ready to be shared with the rest of the school, but the executive board has promised to make it the best year it can possibly be.

This coming school year the executive board plans on bringing back old events that everyone misses and once loved so much. The main priority of all the new executive board members is to listen to the thoughts and opinions of the student body more and truly incorporate the ideas into the events during the year. They value the opinions of the student body and are excited to hear what the student body has to offer. It is very important to President Meredith Smith (11) and Vice President Grace Rapp (11) that more of the student body is involved in the events and that the events are more enjoyable and interesting to everyone. In particular, our vice president wants to see what can truly raise the bar on school spirit. Secretary Olivia Struck (11) and Treasurer Abby Sheldon (11) are eager to improve MiniTHON fundraising and get the numbers back up. Of course they plan on keeping MOD Pizza night and Handel's night, but everyone can also expect the addition of many new fundraisers for the coming year. Olivia Struck specifically mentioned that she plans on weeding out the less exciting events and pinpointing what YC loves most.

In order for the goals of the executive board to be possible the student body must be ready to participate and encourage what the executive board brings to their attention. The year can only be the best it can be through the help and support of all of the student body. The executive board is extremely excited to kick off next year and are ready to be the leaders of the 2023-2024 school year with the help of all of the student body cheering them on. As Secretary Olivia Struck said, "We can't wait to see what next year brings with such a great group of people."

## An Introduction to Solarpunk: A Sci-Fi Subgenre & Social Movement

By ALLISON PATERA

The glaciers are melting, the forests are burning, bees are dying out, and the earth is warming up dangerously. Humans must save the planet and fix the problems we are causing for any possibility of life continuing as normal, and yet this endeavor is causing hopelessness and despair as many people have burnt themselves out on looking for change and seeing none in sight; some believe that on a larger scale, people seem unable to effectively work together for good. Amid this crisis, solarpunk brings hope, whether as a genre of speculative fiction or as a plan of action in the real world.

The idea of solarpunk originated in Brazil and stemmed from the steampunk genre. However, rather than depicting a fantasy view that builds from Victorian technology and aesthetics, solarpunk emphasizes a bright future where people live closely in community and are surrounded by nature and technology that work together in tandem rather than against one another. The movement grew quickly from a small magazine published in 2008 until in 2019 the Solarpunk Manifesto was published online and has become the most official definition of the community, explaining its basic goals and inspirations that the community has built upon, eventually including both fiction, art, fashion, and larger activism.

Aside from fiction and history however, there is a larger reason why solarpunk has grown so much in the past decade. On the more activist side of the movement, solarpunk emphasizes not only that a positive future can be achievable, but creates a community of thinkers that share ideas and hard work in ways that make a better future attainable.

Many environmental movements such as zero-waste can cause harm alongside their positive goals and intentions, creating only token catchphrases or meaningless moral superiority. For example, zero-waste tends to tell people that they should strive for the ultimately unattainable goal of creating a zero-waste home, leading to hopelessness or burn out in the long run, and in doing so it shifts responsibility for the planet into the hands of individuals working alone. Solarpunk however focuses on achievable goals, no matter how small, whether it is creating a system of mutual aid among neighbors to share supplies and necessities, or in building gardens of native plants and fruits and vegetables. The solarpunk movement acknowledges that most responsibility for negative effects on the planet lie with companies rather than individuals, and encourages activism or political action in order to combat this, rather than depression or guilt.

The movement builds hope by sharing stories such as that of Tim Wong, who successfully repopulated a very endangered butterfly by planting his backyard full of the native plants that these butterflies required, and shows that even small actions can have large positive effects.

Build, plant, speak, or create, rather than "saving the world," solarpunk argues that it is our responsibility to simply get involved and work for a better one, one step at a time.

## How To Go From TROUBLED TO TRANQUIL: Travel Edition

By TAYLOR THOMAS

The weather is warmer, days are longer, last minute projects and tests are being flung at us, so that can only mean one thing : IT'S ALMOST SUMMER! And while the happiness of freedom should be the only thing on my mind, I can't get past the ominous feeling that packing a travel bag has left looming over my head. Now, I recognize not everyone spends 2 hours pondering whether or not they should bring 4 different pairs of shoes just in case they get pulled into a secret jungle heist, but that is besides the point. Still, whether you are an overthinker or not, curating the perfect bag for your travels can start to feel like an impossible task.

### Where are you going?

The first thing I do when packing a bag is figuring out where I'm going. I know, I know, this sounds like a rudimentary and obvious step, but really, take some time to scroll through the weather app so you are not caught by surprise. Try checking a few different weather sites to get the best estimate possible of the weather. Also understand the climate of your destination. You really do not want to be that person who is walking around with wet, squeaky flip flops because you didn't know that a tropical place often calls for healthy doses of rain. So, just take some time to determine the weather so you do not end up having to buy a whole new wardrobe because you refused to listen to the daily forecast.

### Make an agenda

The best way that I have halted myself from packing my entire closet has been to make an agenda for my vacation. Think about some main activities you know you will be participating in - swimming, hiking, boating, riding amusement park rides - and use those activities to determine the type of clothes you should pack, and it should also deter you from packing a fleece lined coat for a swimming pool. Making an agenda for your vacation will also help you to know how many clothes you should pack, and since we are not Sharpay Evans, we will not be packing a month's worth of clothes for a simple 3-day adventure.

### How to fit it all?

Roll your clothes! I might sound crazy, but the basic two-crease clothing fold that we learned as elementary kids will not help us now. By rolling your clothes you give yourself a little extra space for the slight overthinking that I know you let slide and makes things easier to access when you are looking for clothes during the trip. As for shoes, pick one pair that is versatile for just about anything that you could be doing, especially walking, and maybe 2 more pairs that you just like or would be useful like sandals or flip flops for the beach. And then, you are easily fitting everything into your travel bag.

### Fun Size

Now for the finishing touches of your travel bag, some travel sized items would be helpful. If you do not want to spend the extra money on travel size items, most stores will have travel size containers and bottles to place shampoo, hairspray, conditioner, etc. into. Places like Target are the perfect place to find caboodles and small bags to hold necessities such as toiletries. And finally, you can not forget phone chargers, earbuds, or a good summer book to read on the way to your destination.

### Pack It Up

With these short and easy tips and tricks I hope your next trip can be worry free as you push the stress of packing a bag to the side and your days of overthinking are in the past. So this year, forget something at home: your stress.

# The Great Decibel War: A Memoir

By CHANDLER MILTSCH

It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man or woman in possession of literally any format of musical entertainment, must be in want of a louder way to represent that passion.

Well, I'd say this introduction says a lot about me already. But for those who don't know me: you know those times when it's peaceful and quiet outside, but then there's suddenly a wave of noise that crashes harder than the stock market in 1929? Yeah, that's me. The name's Chandler Miltsch, perhaps better known on the road as the guy in the SAAB who seems to have lost his hearing. "Does the volume-down button mean anything to you?!"

Maybe this is too negative of a viewpoint. A little background: I've been a part of the York Catholic Marching Band since 2018. In specific, the crash cymbals you've heard at football games and around the halls? It's all been me for these past few years. I won't lie, I myself didn't like how loud they were when I first started playing in the Pit; now I'm the only one who doesn't wear hearing protection and must constantly stop the cymbals from inverting.

Now that this short little preface has been, well, prefaced, it's time to explain my greatest hobby on the road that isn't excessive speeding: the Decibel War.

For those of you who are uneducated with such criminally advanced terminology: decibels are the unit of measuring the intensity of sound. Couple this with my background as a hardcore percussionist, and you can probably guess where this is going. I used to be quite moderate about how loud I allowed my music to be while in the car, and for that matter, I was mostly listening to Elvis Presley and Frank Sinatra, so the volume dial never needed to be cranked way up high for such casual jazz songs. But my dissatisfaction grew when I started driving with my windows down, as decibels from atrocious rap songs would resonate in my chest from cars a couple lanes away. Quite frankly, it made me go down with the sickness.

It was time, then, to stand up and fight back. And so began the Decibel War.

Nowadays, I am a massive metalhead. Call it causation with correlation, I suppose, because the thrill of thrash and heavy metal was too alluring for me not to turn the volume up by one... by one again... okay, I can't hear the drums and bass enough, just a little bit more...

It should be doubly obvious to see where this is going. Coupled with the fact that I probably lost some of my hearing playing the crash cymbals for years on end, it was unsurprising to see that my volume levels had doubled from ten to twenty when the guitars became aggressive, the drums started pounding faster than my heartbeat, and the singers started screaming into the mic. For reference, my car speakers max out at sixty—don't ask me how I know that, now it's causation without correlation—so I've made substantial progress in this war on awful rap music.

But these volume levels continued to get higher and higher as I curated my metal playlist even more, and now I consistently reach average volume levels of thirty—levels that make my rear-view mirror shake with such rigor that I have to turn down the music to see the cars behind me on the highway. This is all still coming from the guy who listens to Catholic radio on the more moderate volume levels of seven through ten, for crying out loud.

So what's the point of this Decibel War? Is it to annoy other drivers as vengeance for the bleeding ears I've gotten, or is there another motive?

Well, the answer isn't easy, because as much as I'd like to say it's a form of spreading my marvelously metallic music across the otherwise dull roads of Pennsylvania, I am also on a two-time streak of making people roll up their windows due to how loud my music was during traffic stops. But that's besides the point—the Decibel War has been waged to test my speakers and to pump the greatest of songs into the ears of others. Mostly. I think.

To be fair, I have become significantly more passionate about my musical tastes since October. What if this writing is too inadequate to properly convey the literary and rhetorical mastery I have gained as an AP student with a deeply intricate mindset while properly encapsulating my grandest potential, optimization, and feelings?!

...eh, I dunno. I guess I'd just go in my car, crank the volume up to sixty, put my foot on the pedal, and start listening to babymetal with the windows down and let the music speak my thoughts and feelings for itself.

## Time To Go From HairDON'Ts to HairDOs

By LOGAN STAHL

Ah, summer... the sun sets later, the days get longer- and so does your hair. With less than a month of school left, many of the guys at York Catholic are finally growing their hair out, awaiting the freedom of three months of hair over the ears, the eyebrows, or their shirt collars.

Student Ryan Oathout (11) plans to try new hairstyles, as he is looking for a new look over the summer into the fall of senior year; he also plans on growing a goatee. Another student, Lukas Creisher (11) plans on growing his hair out by "not touching it and letting it flow." However, Bobby Gilbert (11) claims to maybe even go shorter or the "same clean cut" because it'll be warmer. Andrew Schuler (11) says that he will honestly consider doing the same; he only kept it long this year "to be a rebel."

Luke Gertsen (11) says he is going for "massive flow" or a mullet. Jacob McKnight advises that the guys "let the luscious locks flow" and John Kelchaw (11) wants to braid his hair.

Even a couple of the girls are trying something new. Allie Patera (11) plans to dye her hair green.

With summer right around the corner, we can expect the guys to soon be unrecognizable under the disguise of the long-awaited luscious locks they've waited to grow. And looking ahead to the dreaded return to the 2023-2024 school year, we can expect a school-wide identity crisis.



Pictured above: Ray Corcoran (12)

## Spring Coffeehouse Recap

By FAHRA GWYNN



Pictured above: Jaiden Newcomer (12)

It's that time of year again- Spring Coffee House! This is the time when York Catholic's high school students comes together to showcase their talents through various different acts, ranging from singing, reciting poetry, to instrumental music.

Kicking off the event was our Jazz Combo, comprised of Andy Gisselbach (10), Abby Gehring (11), Ethan Andrews (11), Taylor Thomas (11), Miranda Kovach (11), Fahra Gwynn (11), Chris Gick (12), Kevin Hand (12), and Jaiden Newcomer (12), playing "The Pink Panther" and "Moon River." A staple tradition for Coffeehouse, these performers started off the night with an amazing show, with a trumpet solo by Ethan Andrews and piano solo by Miranda Kovach in "Moon River," as well as an alto saxophone solo by Chris Gick in "The Pink Panther."

Following Jazz Combo was Mert Bozdogan's (10) performance of "Enter Sandman" and other notable riffs on electric guitar, a demonstration of the wide range of musical abilities our concert band instrumentalists have to offer. Next up was Maggie Motter (12), who sang "Stick Season" by Noah Kahan and played the accompaniment on piano, our first glimpse into the talents of our senior musicians. Succeeding Maggie's performance was a vocal duet of "I See The Light" from *Tangled*, performed by Chris Gick (12) and Abi Pautz (12). Grace Oakhem (10) took the Coffee House by storm with her vocal performance of "In the Bedroom Down the Hall" from *Dear Evan Hansen*, an unreleased song from the musical.

Teacher performances are always a nice inclusion to Coffeehouse, with our own York Catholic Band and Choral Director, the amazing Ms. Mezza, performing two songs- a violin accompaniment of "Yesterday" by The Beatles and "The Angel in You," a song she wrote herself in 2007 when she first began teaching at York Catholic. While both of her performances were spectacular, her original song brought many members of the audience to tears, as she sang about the happiness she experienced and still experiences while teaching the subject she loves to so many different students- music.

Both of our hosts, Max and Luke, temporarily left their positions to join Taylor, Chris, Jaiden, Ethan, and I in performing Samba de Loves You, an orchestral piece that combined their talents for a fun, upbeat song. Changing the samba mood of the evening was a religious poem recited by Olivia Heath (12) called "It Is Finished" by Gloria Umanah, the first performance of its kind in Coffeehouse history.

After Olivia's poem came Miranda's amazing singing and piano accompaniment of the song "Life on Mars?" by David Bowie, with her vibrato filling the room and showcasing her diversified talents and skillful piano playing to those in the audience. Joining Miranda for the next act was Abby Gehring and Ashley Patterson (11), singing "Super Trouper" from *Mamma Mia!*, a beautiful blending of these three girls' vocals that brought the audience joy, as well as their color-coordinated outfits and accessories. Succeeding this upbeat performance was a solo act by Ashley who sang an original song called "Ocean Blue," a heartwarming piece about her dreams, happiness, and how these two concepts can peacefully coexist in her life, as well as those around her.

For the next performance, Max left his hosting post to join Ethan, Jaiden, and Luke Campbell (11) to perform "The Walking Bass" by John Clayton, with Max on the trombone, Ethan on the bass, Jaiden on the drumset, and Luke on the trumpet. Our second teacher performance of the evening was Mr. G playing acoustic guitar and singing "On the Road" by Keane and "Scars" by James Day. Next was Addie Seufert (12) joined by Mrs. Seufert on the piano for a performance of "On My Own" from *Les Misérables* and "Heart of Stone" from *Six the Musical*. Addie also performed another solo piece of "Waving Through the Window" from *Dear Evan Hansen*.

Ray Corcoran (12) followed this performance with singing and playing "Lady Maye" by Tyler Childers on acoustic guitar, an indie song that captivated the audience. Ryan Tully's (12) widely favored beatboxing of 5 original songs came after, named "Sail With Me," "You Could," "Bassline," "Get Low," and "Shut Down." Second to last was Kevin Hand's (12) performance on acoustic guitar and vocals of a song by Noah Kahan, followed by an interactive piece he also gave at a previous Coffeehouse performance known as "The Unicorn Song," which encouraged the audience to dance along with the song's fun lyrics. Last but not least was Jaiden's performance of "Bridge Over Troubled Water" by Simon and Garfunkel, a song that brought bittersweet smiles to those in the audience, as well as their phone flashlights and light waves that ensued.

With such a diversified number of individuals and performances, the Coffeehouse continues to attract incredibly talented individuals of the student body to perform for their classmates in a smaller scale setting that only enhances the comfort and support at the event. Although the musical talents of our seniors will be missed, the hope is that more underclassmen will continue their legacy of making the Coffeehouse a successful sharing in everyone's abilities. It continues to be an amazing showcase of everything YC has to offer in the artistic and musical departments that often go unintentionally forgotten.