



The Dispatch

"A beacon of truth."

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Huntington High School

Oakwood and McKay Roads Huntington, NY 11743

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» news in short

> Three Huntington High School football players have earned a spot on *Newsday's* All-Long Island second team. The group of Blue Devils includes quarterback Ben Kocis and running backs/linebackers Levar Butts and Troy Greene.

>The Huntington Town Board honored Greta Farrell for her remarkable work with Long Island Harvest, the sprawling hunger relief organization.

> Seniors Christian Jamison and Naomi Medina-Jaudes were honored by the Suffolk Zone of the New York State Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance during a recent dinner at the Hyatt Regency Wind Watch in Hauppauge.

An Epic Role Reversal

Parent Academy Helps Adults Better Prepare Their Children

By Brian McConnell

Thanks to the High School and District Administrations and eager teacher-volunteers, an opportunity was created on the night of Wednesday, December 11th to welcome Huntington High School's "First Annual Parent Academy." From 6:00 to 8:45 pm, our school was alive and running in the evening, filled with parents who sought to improve their understanding of their children's experiences.

These parents registered online by selecting which "courses" they were interested in taking. The "courses," taught generally by HHS teachers but additionally by many outside professionals, were 35-minute prepared presentations in which the presenter(s) explained a topic or outlined a procedure that would potentially be beneficial to parents.

Mr. Schwendemann described the presentation as a "microcosm," as he was to "do in 35 minutes what would normally be done in 3-5 days," with his students. Classes included four presentations in Spanish and 19 in English regarding things from student

anxiety to conflict resolution to maximizing resources and, very popularly, to understanding the Common Core.



The evening began with a gathering in the Heritage Room, where Mr. Polansky, Dr. Leonardi, and Mr. Cusack introduced themselves and the administration to their guests, explaining how excited they were for the event and what good it can bring to our school community. A point heavily stressed was that they truly wanted each parent to fill out an evaluation sheet before

departing at the end of the night, as these sheets could be instrumental in providing constructive feedback on the success of the night.

At 6:20, the fifty-or-so parents who were gathered in the Heritage Room split up for their various first sessions, guided by 9th and 10th graders who had been called on for help and to increase their community service hours. From 6:20 to 6:55, parents stayed in these classrooms in mostly small groups while each class viewed a presentation.

For example, Mr. Jason Giachetti hosted one woman in his first presentation of "Beyond Academics," in which he explained

the importance of electives and how they incite a higher level of learning and development in students. As the event was not attended by the masses, the intimate setting provided for a more personalized presentation.

Between 7:00 and 7:25 there was a break for refreshments in the cafeteria, complete with excellently prepared baked

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Purple Ribbons and Happy Hearts

GSA Brings Transgender Awareness Day to Huntington High School

By BRENDAN WIRTH

Transgender Awareness Day is an event that takes place on November 20th every year. Founded in 1998, by Trans woman Gwendolyn Ann Smith, Transgender Awareness Day raises mindfulness of the struggles transgender individuals face on a daily basis. Transgender individuals are people who are born anatomically one sex, and identify with the opposite. This means that a person could be born anatomically female, and identifies as male, and vice versa.

Within the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender) community, transgender individuals

face the most harassment, and are the least protected under state and federal law. Only in 17 states (NY not being one of them) and the District of Columbia, are transgender individuals protected from being fired based on their gender identity. In schools, only 19 states (including NY) and D.C. have safe school laws protecting Transgender students. Lastly, only 15 states and D.C. protect transgender indi-



viduals from hate crimes,

der person were to be as-

saulted because of their gender identity, the assault crime would be charged as a hate crime.

To combat these statistics, GSAs, or Gay-Straight Alliances, hosted various events across the country. In Huntington High School, the GSA hosted our first ever Transgender Awareness Week from November 18th until November 22nd, emphasizing Transgender Awareness Day itself on November 20th. Run by Ms.

Cooper, the GSA handed out purple ribbons on November 22nd, the last day of Transgender Awareness Week, to faculty and club members to show support of their transgender peers and the LGBT community.

"Transgender discrimination is a current issue that, unfortunately, doesn't get much attention. This form of discrimination is often overlooked and not properly dealt with or is just allowed to continue happening, making any transgender person feel alone or out of place. However, on Transgender Awareness Day, the GSA handed out purple ribbons to the faculty and members of the

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Huntington's Cultural Crossover

A Look Back on the Life-Changing Chinese Journey

By KATIE DUVAL

Since the mid-1970s, Huntington High School has pioneered programs and relationships with China. Partially out of the curiosity of seeing what such an entirely different government and way of life (especially in terms of civil liberties and transparency) does to the human psyche Huntington has in one way or another worked to deepen our understanding of this country so foreign to us. Chief among them was the Chinese foreign language program, which has been discontinued for quite some time. This program helped to broaden the school's entire language department, and offered an option to study a language completely removed from the romance languages in almost every way. There is significant hope that this program will come back and continue to help Huntington students experience a way of speaking so completely different from English and appreciate the nuances of Chinese culture.

However, outside of the language program, Huntington has continued to develop a relationship with this mystic and mysterious country. In the last few years, a foreign exchange program has been set up between Huntington High School and the Chinese high school Tianjin No. 1, one of the most prominent high schools in the country. In 2012, students from Tianjin were welcomed to Huntington to experience what life for the American teenager is like. While there was the aspect of sight seeing and day trips to places like New York City, the real emphasis of the program was placed

on finding the common humanity between Chinese teenagers and American teenagers. Workshops that helped to break down

"While it was a significant culture shock at first, the advisers on the trip were amazed at how quickly the students were able to relax in their new surroundings and understand the culture around them."

the walls of students from both countries were instrumental in this pursuit. It is perhaps fair to say that they benefited the Chinese students more, as they arrived in a completely new land carrying their culture that teaches them to be humble and reserved.

With the first leg in the foreign exchange program proving to be a success, Huntington High School students were invited to spend just under two weeks with host families in Tianjin this past summer. While it was a significant culture shock at first, the advisers on the trip were amazed at how quickly the students were able to relax in their

new surroundings and understand the culture around them. While again there were the elements of sight seeing and tourism, it was the experience of staying with host families and completely assimilating oneself to a new land that proved to be the most beneficial aspect. Communicating with the students of Tianjin, who were still in a school session during the summer, allowed for the realization that our common humanity cannot be separated by oceans or thousands of years culture or such diametrically opposed governments; it flows through the years and the natural barriers and makes us want the same things for ourselves, our families, and our countries. The only difference is the way in which cultures choose to pursue these desires. American teenagers and Chinese teenagers, it turns out, both stress about schoolwork, have problems with parents and friends, and try to figure out who exactly they are through it all. There is a human essence that cannot be adulterated or manipulated through any external forces, and it is this truth that people tend to forget until they cross an ocean and have it proven to them. Now with both legs of the foreign exchange program successfully completed, there is the question of where to go with our relationship with China from here. The reintroduction of Chinese as a language elective is a promising proposal. Mr. Leavy, who lived in Taiwan for some time and has been essential to building this relationship with China, is excited for the language program to be brought back to our school. In addition, there are possible exchange programs with schools in Beijing and

Taiwan in the works now. Especially interesting is the possibility of a program with Taiwan, as it is quite separate from mainland China both geographically and culturally. Being more democratic and having a stronger emphasis on civil liberties than mainland China, Taiwan offers the same kind drastically different social and cultural experience while having a more politically welcoming environment. There are dozens of families in Huntington excited about

phy. He was writing across a massive expanse of paper with a brush that was the size of a mop. Moving from the end of the paper back to the top over and over again, he patiently inscribed his word. However, his medium was not ink or paint, but rather water. After only a few moments of laying down his work, it would dry and disappear. This idea of devoting so much time and energy into something that will not last simply to enjoy the present nature

of it is a very Eastern idea, and one that is scoffed at in America, with our break-neck pace and our belief in working hard for long term goals. To work hard for something that will not last is a foreign idea, and one that most of us would not expend such time for. And this is why the

being part of this connection to China and who hope to participate in the exchange program by either going to stay in China or being a host family to a Chinese student. Again, while the exchange program is important in highlighting the differences in our cultures and promoting tolerance of these dissimilar aspects, its true strength lies in revealing how much we all truly have in common. By going to another country to experience the way of life of its people, students earn something that cannot be taught within the confines of a classroom. To illustrate this point, Mr. Leavy described one morning that he and Huntington High School's Sam Yanuck shared. While running the Temple of Heaven in Beijing, they came across a man writing a poem in Chinese calligraphy.

continuation of the exchange program is so vital to all of us as a community. Perhaps this other culture, so different and yet so similar, can teach us to slow down and appreciate what is before us, even if it is only temporary. After all, everything ends. But if something is truly understood and experienced, it stays with us forever. The lessons learned by both Huntington High School Students and the students of Tianjin will stay with them forever, even though their time in one another's countries came to a close. They learned something so profound—that everywhere in the world you can find evidence of our common humanity—and that will never disappear.



Photo Credits to Jesus Bruno



A Strong Plan for the Future

State Grants Enable Huntington High School to Grow

by LILY MORRIS

On Wednesday October 23rd, the state Education department announced that they would be awarding more than 3 million dollars in grants as part of the Strengthening Teacher and Leader Effectiveness programs. The purpose of this program is to help schools create a more concise and effective way of recruiting and

development of teachers.

Of this 3 million dollars, Huntington High School will receive 544,400 dollars. Our school was chosen in the second round of a competitive grant program. The funds are aimed at schools where at least 25% of the



students that attend belong to low-income families. This money will help

create a better educational atmosphere and a more effective learning system for our school. As a result, the teachers of Huntington High School will become stronger and more efficient.

The Huntington School District is excited to put this money to use and help our students and teachers. The teachers at our school already do an amazing job, so just imagine how great they will be after this! Other schools that were chosen include North Babylon, South Huntington, Southampton, and West Hempstead.

Un Plan Fuerte Para el Futuro

Estado subvenciones permiten Huntington High School para crecer

by LILY MORRIS

El miércoles 23 de octubre, el Departamento de Educación del estado anunció que otorgaría más de 3 millones de dólares en donaciones como parte de los programas Líder Maestro Fortalecimiento para maestros y líderes.

El propósito de este programa es ayudar a las escuelas a crear una forma más concisa y eficaz de

reclutamiento y desarrollo del personal docente. De estos, 3.000.000 de dólares, Huntington High School recibirá 544.400 dólares.

Nuestra escuela fue elegida en la segunda ronda de un programa competitivo de donaciones.

Los fondos están dirigidos a escuelas en las

que al menos el 25 % de los estudiantes que asisten pertenecen a familias de bajos ingresos.

Este dinero ayudará a crear un ambiente educativo mejor y un sistema de aprendizaje más efectivo para nuestra escuela.

Como resultado, los maestros de la Escuela Secundaria de Huntington

se harán más fuertes y más eficientes. El Distrito Escolar de Huntington se complace en poner este dinero para su uso y ayudar a nuestros estudiantes y profesores. Los profesores de nuestra escuela ya hacen un trabajo increíble, así que imagina lo grande que serán después de esto!

Otras escuelas

seleccionadas incluyen North Babylon, South Huntington, Southampton y West Hempstead.



Transgender Day Increases Blue Devil Awareness

club wore them in order to advocate the fact that transgender individuals are not alone and are in a safe and secure environment," said Jason Stickell, a GSA club member.

Lead by the club officers, the GSA constructed a bulletin board in the science hallway in the weeks prior to the event to raise awareness for the cause.

"Transgender individuals face violence and discrimination daily," said Anna Garfinkel, one of the secretaries of the club. "This prejudice stems from ignorance; whether it's a lack of knowledge on the subject or a lack of wisdom on how to help. If we can educate people, we can secure further basic rights for transgender individuals. That's why Transgender Awareness Day is so crucial."

On Wednesday, November 20th, Transgender Awareness Day itself, the

GSA hosted a presentation on what it means to be transgender and legislation that impacts the LGBT community.



The logo of Transgender Awareness that is used in campaigns, such as the one at Huntington.

"Honestly, I wasn't all too shocked about the facts revealed by the presentation. I knew that some states in certain areas aren't that supportive of the LGBT community. The laws in many states are just not up to date," stated Alanna Harvey, a sophomore in HHS's Gay-Straight Alliance.

Transgender Awareness Day is an important event in the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender community. It's a day to commemorate the victims of transphobic harassment, as well as give hope to a brighter and more equal future.

The GSA anticipates continuing this new tradition for years to come, handing out purple ribbons and helping to make the student body of Huntington High School aware of the struggles their transgender peers face on a regular basis.

The Revolutionary World of Bitcoins

Money out of thin air?

By JOE SAGINAW

In today's modern world of computing, almost everything can be executed digitally. Every device is now connected to the Internet and computers have become faster and faster, enabling them to perform more processes in less time.

Back in 2009, a relatively unknown program known as the Bitcoin system had been completed and released, developed by either a researcher or a group of researchers that went by the name of Satoshi Nakamoto. The system operates like any other currency: managing transactions, preventing fraud, and issuing the money. The only major difference is that most of these processes are completed on every user's computer. A notable vendor who accepts Bitcoins is Reddit, who began allowing users to pay for their Gold Membership in Bitcoins.

To prevent fraud, every computer that is running Bitcoin software (a Bitcoin mining program) verifies every transaction in the system. In other words, a computer in New York could verify a transaction of Bitcoins between a customer in Thailand and a vendor in Russia. About

Users also receive fractional amounts of Bitcoins, measured in millicoins, microcoins, and satoshis, proportional to the amount of computational work their computer has done for the system, paid out from the coinbase, an imaginary treasury where all the Bitcoins are stored.

During the first few years of its existence, when not many users were donating their computing power, the system's users were frequently receiving Bitcoins, which was purposely done by the creators to reward early adopters of the system. This is not the case anymore, as mining is now being done commercially, with

every 10 minutes, these transactions are grouped into a digital object called a "block," and the user's computer who last verified the last transaction "mines" this "block" and receives 25 Bitcoins as a reward, today valued around \$8,443 (however these figures are subject to change).

small individual users being "outmined" by larger corporations running mining programs. Mining speeds are measured in hashes per second, with a hash being a compressed form of a number that is used to identify it. Each trans-

action carries this "hash value," or identification number, and each computer must create a hash value in an attempt to match that of the transaction. The computer identifies that hash number (the user who last verified the transaction) by randomly generating a number that has a specific number of zeros. This computer then mines the block and gets the Bitcoin payout.

The whole Bitcoin system is very complex and can be difficult to

prices can fluctuate greatly within seconds. Recently, a website known as The Silk Road, a major acceptor of Bitcoins, was shut down by the FBI. The website exists in a portion of the Internet called the "deep web," which is only accessible through software that renders a user untraceable. The Silk Road sold illegal items, and Bitcoins were the major currency of choice because they are mostly anonymous and are very hard to track. The website had 1.5% of

all Bitcoins in existence, which are now under the control of the FBI.

Each year, Bitcoins become more valuable, as the amount of Bitcoins created every four years is halved until the total amount of Bitcoins reaches 21



understand, making potential users wary of investment. It is also a very volatile currency, and

2140 comes around, Bitcoins will only be able to be traded, and their production will soon cease.



App of the Month: Mystery Room Review

By CHARLES BEERS

Ever since I got my first Apple device, I have constantly been searching for the perfect mystery game. There was always a Cut the Rope puzzle and a Temple Run action game to download, but I could never find a mystery game that focuses on incorporating all the best elements of a Saturday morning Scooby-Doo cartoon.

Then, on June 27, 2013, Layton Brothers: Mystery Room was released on the App Store, receiving mixed reviews from critics but general praise from its players. Having heard of the Professor Layton series of puzzle games, I downloaded the app and played the entire game through, including the case files you have to purchase later on in the story. The mystery is: Is The Mystery Room the perfect detective app we've been waiting for?

Let's start with the

story. You play the role of Lucy Baker, a hotheaded private investigator who has been assigned to a new office, the appropriately titled Mystery Room. There, she meets her new partner: Alfendi Layton. This Professor Layton, unlike the protagonist in the original series, is a gifted intellectual who suffers from multiple personality disorder. In one moment, Layton is a resolved but determined private detective who uses his wits before using his fists. In another, he is borderline psychopathic, almost enjoying the work of the criminals and killers you are trying to bring to justice. The relationship between Layton and Baker is the best part of the game, as you grow to

enjoy both of the characters as they bond over mysteries and more of Layton's dark past is brought to light. In addition, the entire case is story-driven, so every mystery involved drives the central plot in some way, thereby making each case seem worthwhile.



The gameplay is exactly what mystery fans are looking for. Using a unique concept of replicating the crime scene, the player is able to observe the area and look for important clues. Once enough clues have been gathered, the play-

er begins a series of deductions that eventually lead to narrowing down to the killer's identity. This system does have a downside, however, since each region with potential clues is clearly labeled and doesn't give the player a sense of satisfaction when the clues are actually discovered. While this system may seem repetitive, the game does plenty to spice things up for the player: throwing in plot twists and making the player question if he really made the right choices throughout the case. In addition, the witty dialogue between the detectives and the jazzy soundtrack keep the player interested throughout the game. In the end, The Mystery Room is a fantastic mystery game

that keeps the player invested from start to finish. Despite being linear and lacking a sense of self-discovery, the game perfectly emulates the feeling of detective work by putting you in the shoes of two extremely likable protagonists. I won't dare spoil the ending: but the final battle and the reveal of the game's true villain, as well as finally facing Layton's darker side, could be one of the most satisfying conclusions to any game I've ever played. So, the evidence points in one direction and the case is officially closed: Anyone who enjoys a good mystery, or just a polished puzzle game in general, should download The Mystery Room, which is clearly one of 2013's finest apps.

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SPOTLIGHT

SEÑORA LORANDINI

Huntington's New Spanish Teacher is Making Her Mark on the Blue Devil Community

By Keti Tsotskolauri

Students in Spanish 11 Honors were very concerned when they found out about Ms. Medina's maternity leave. I, among others, worried about getting a new teacher, but as it turned out, I had nothing to fear. Ms. Lorandini managed to successfully continue the course and gain the love of the students. I decided to interview her in order to get to know her better and as I found out, she's not only a great teacher, but an amazing person as well. Q: What do you think about Huntington High School? A: I think Huntington High

School has a very warm and friendly environment. It's also very diverse and I enjoy being exposed to many different cultures. It's interesting getting to know students with unique cultural backgrounds. Q: What's the best part of teaching at HHS? A: I love the rewarding feeling I get when I see the growth in the students. It's amazing to know that I am making an impact on their lives. All my students are very de-



Señora Lorandini is working hard to make her Spanish classes both entertaining and enriching. (Photo by Keti Tsotskolauri)

is your favorite store? A: I don't really have one particular fashion icon. I love shopping and coming up with a style of my own instead of following the trends. Also, I really think that clothing makes a huge difference at work; that's why I always try to look as professional as possible. My favorite store is Bloomingdales, they have the nicest outfits. Q: What will you miss the

most about HHS? A: I will definitely miss my students. In the short amount of time I've had them, I grew to love all of them. I've come across so many different personalities; working with each student has been intriguing. I will really miss being able to call them my students. With her kindness and knowledge, Ms. Lorandini has become an important part of the Huntington family. We wish her "Buena suerte" in her new position and hope that many amazing memories will be made during her time as a Blue Devil.

termined and I am lucky to be able to call myself their teacher even for a short time period. Q: You are always dressed really well. Who's your fashion inspiration? Which

Q: What will you miss the

Parent Academy Shines in its Debut

goods and even catered heroes and salads. Parents, teachers, and student volunteers all gathered to have a snack and socialize while raffle winners were drawn for the gift baskets provided by the PTSA. After this break, classes resumed from 7:30 to 8:05, and then a third and final round of workshops occurring from 8:10 to 8:45.

During this time, parents could have selected the workshop, "Tools to Help your Student be a Better Writer," led by Ms. Victoria Lombardi and Mr. Michael Schwendemann, with a focus on depicting for parents the process that a student must take to formulate a proper piece of scholastic writing. The second session of this workshop was well attended. This larger group raised many pertinent questions that well utilized the teachers' knowledge to benefit students.

At this event that was designed for teachers to teach parents, the tone was positive and there is much hope of the Second Annual "Academy." Though not as widely attended as originally hoped, and sometimes seemingly rushed, Huntington's first event has room to grow and blossom into a wonderfully helpful experience for both parents and students alike. On more than one occasion, parents asked, "Would it be possible to repeat this event for the other schools in the district?" Hopefully in the future, we will see numerous opportunities to assist parents in the new trends in education. addressed sooner rather than later. "CrossFit is a great op-

portunity for us to provide positive workouts to our students in the relatively short time we see them," said Mr. Fishlow. Due to the health benefits alone, there

these students, to have them actually perform the challenges CrossFit provides instead of just going through the motions. He assures that the students who

while the other will be a cluster of students playing knockout. CrossFit encourages all students to challenge themselves in a way that allows everyone to

those looking to get their CrossFit fix, Mr. Fishlow posts updated at-home workouts on his eBoard that is linked to the HUFSD website. The CrossFit website (www.crossfit.com) also has free information and videos, which students can use as a guide for proper technique or for inspiration for a new workout. For the students who are CrossFit fanatics, there's also a CrossFit Limitless gym in Huntington Village. Though these sessions do have a price, there are student discounts, and people who sign up get the attention they need to get the most out of their workout.



Even though it's new, Mr. Fishlow feels that "CrossFit is here to stay, it's not going anywhere." In fact, Mr. Fishlow is looking to further encourage students to up their efforts by possibly hosting a "Huntington CrossFit Games" this June. For those who are perhaps

has been a lot of administrative support for CrossFit.

Students, on the other hand, have not been quite so supportive of this intense fitness program. "With anything new, it takes time for everyone to get used to things," Mr. Fishlow reasoned. He said that some students aren't used to pushing themselves, because they don't think they're capable of overcoming certain obstacles. Mr. Fishlow stressed that one of his main goals is to motivate

truly push themselves will start to see results as they tone, lose weight, or just feel better in general, which will aid in motivating them even further.

"CrossFit is an opportunity for everybody to be active, not just the people who play a sport," Mr. Fishlow emphasized. Too often those who are seen as "athletes" are the only ones who are competitive in gym. Think of the typical gym-class basketball games—one court will be full of running, pushing, and strategy,

build on his or her own personal best. "If you can accomplish any of these things, it will carry over into your life," Mr. Fishlow explained. Students can walk away from their gym class feeling proud of themselves and capable of improvement.

CrossFit is also great because the students who are motivated can continue to do the workouts outside of school. "It can be done anywhere, anytime, often with little to no equipment," said Mr. Fishlow. For

more artistic than active, Mr. Fishlow is looking for submissions to a "Blue Devil CrossFit" T-shirt design contest. Be sure to see Mr. Fishlow if you're interested! Hopefully reluctant students will begin to see all the things they can benefit from by giving their full participation in CrossFit, as they will gain in both strength and confidence over time—not to mention that the healthy workout habits CrossFit promotes will likely continue on into college life and adulthood.

Midterm Advice

How to Take All of Your Mid-Year Exams With Confidence

By Caitlin Knowles

It's that time of year again! As students return from two long weeks of holiday festivities and relaxation, transitioning back to the rigors of school and homework is often difficult. This condition is only worsened by one major source of stress: midterms. Throughout the month of January, students of all grades can be seen studying more than ever for these exams, whether the test is for Global History or AP Physics. Some students start reviewing early, while others procrastinate and cram the night before. Diligent students and slackers alike experience at least some anxiety over midterms. In order to minimize stress over tests, it's important to have a sufficient plan for effectively reviewing several months' worth of material from multiple classes. Here are some tips to get the most out of studying this season.

1. Make flash cards. This is a great way to quickly summarize a lot of information. Not only will making flash cards force you to review your notes or the textbook, but it will also allow you to find the main ideas of each chapter or section and determine where you need to focus your studying. A good suggestion is to color code cards by topic or chapter so that you'll be able to associate similar pieces of information with the section they came from.

2. Use multiple methods of study or memorization. If simply scanning through your notes to study usually results in you zoning out and having a low retention of what you've read, try a more interactive approach.

Try reading your notes out loud or drawing a picture to illustrate a concept. Have a friend or parent quiz you on a particular section. Most often, studying something more than one way will give you a better chance of retaining the information you need to review.

3. Form a study group. As long as you can find friends who are willing to concentrate on studying for the exam and not on telling you about that great movie they saw Saturday night, study groups are a great resource.

If you're not getting the way a teacher explains a topic, it could be helpful to hear about it from someone with a similar perspective to yours. If you find that you need to help a friend in a study group, making relevant analogies to form a memorable connection between a concept and something the friend already understands is a very useful method.

4. Don't spend too much or too little time on topics you already know. If you feel comfortable with

certain types of math problems but shaky on the next set, it goes without saying that you should focus more of your efforts on the material that you don't know as well. However, you should not entirely overlook a topic in your studying just because you think you remember it. Every student has been in

so that you can be most prepared for the test you have at the start of the week, since you will have more days to study for a test on Friday than a test on Tuesday.

8. Go to extra help. If you are still struggling in a class despite all of your efforts to study, GO TO EXTRA HELP. There is no better resource than your teacher when it comes to understanding a subject, since he or she is the one who taught you the material and he or she is making the test. However clueless you may think they are, teachers are actually really qualified for their jobs, since they voluntarily went through the process of getting a college education and additional degrees to learn how to teach you. If you go to extra help with friends, they might have some questions for the teacher that you didn't even think of that could improve your comprehension of the subject and possibly pop up on the test.

6. Know the format of the exam. Knowing how you will be tested gives you a better idea of how you should review. For example, if your test has one multiple choice section

and two essays but you've only studied multiple choice questions, chances are you won't do as well as you could have on the essays. Ask your teacher if the question style will be based on past Regents or AP exams, as this may give you an idea of what types of questions you should be studying. Review books are a great source of practice questions. If you don't want to buy your own, several are available for use in the school library.

7. Don't procrastinate.

Whether you're distracted by your phone while reviewing or you simply put off studying until the night before, procrastination is not your friend. By the midterm, you will have five months' worth of information to remember, and this cannot be relearned within a couple hours. You must plan ahead to ensure adequate time for review, and when you are reviewing, eliminate any potential distractions. Find a quiet room where you won't be disturbed by friends or family. Again, the library is a great resource for this. Although it might be challenging, you can turn off your phone for one hour. It won't kill you. I promise.

If you follow these tips, you can be sure to improve not only your study habits, but also your grade on your midterm exams!



TOP 10 NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

With New Year's Eve comes several traditions. One of the more popular of these traditions is New Year's Resolutions. Since it may sometimes feel overwhelming to go from a couch potato on December 31st to incredibly fit on January 1st, it may be easier to think of these resolutions as "goals." This

way it is easier to accomplish these resolutions by spacing them out and at the end of the year. Then, we can all look back with a feeling of accomplishment.

Now, if you're at a loss for ideas and can't think of any resolutions or "goals" for the upcoming New Year, see if this Top

10 list inspires you to make some changes in your life.

1. Eat healthy and exercise regularly
2. Learn something new and exciting
3. Volunteer in the community or at home
4. Save Money
5. Get organized and prepared for January

6. Read more
7. Finish a project and ditch the procrastination
8. Spend less time on Facebook and more time interacting with friends
9. Eat out less
10. Redecorate the house or help your family with chores

By Kevin McConnell



Walt Whitman Mall

Dramatic Changes Reinigorates Seasonal Shopping

By Kaitlin Dayton
and Alyssa Devoe

Most of you are probably familiar with the renovations going on at the Walt Whitman Mall, but what's really going on behind those cranes and tarps? The mall is getting a makeover but it may be too soon to tell if it is for the better or the worse. SIMON property group has confirmed their plans to build the mall outward and upward with an estimated ground level area of 42,000 sq feet and an upper level of 30,000sq feet. For all you people who aren't so good at math, that's huge! In addition to expanding the mall, renovators will be improving the visual appeal as well. Hard wooden benches will be replaced with comfy sofas, and a color theme will be incorporated throughout the mall. An eight-foot statue of Walt Whitman himself is currently being built outside the mall entrance. The result is going to be a cleaner, more cohesive, urban looking mall.

Well-loved stores such as Claire's, the Children's Place, and Sweets From Heaven are being replaced with high-end stores such as Anthropologie, Urban Outfitters, and Free People. Among the stores that will be leaving are Gym-boree, Gap, and Sabarro. In their place will be Lululemon, Lush, Pottery Barn, C. Wonder, Kate Spade New York, Hugo Boss, Lucky Brand Jeans, Henri Bendel, Vera Bradley, P.F. Chang's, and Zinburger. Department stores are changing as well. Lord and Taylor have redesigned their shoe sections and are currently working on their handbags. Bloomingdale's has

completely refurbished their first floors to better accompany the brand names they carry, which include Burberry, Fendi, and Ferragamo.

While many fashion conscious people are delighted, high school stu-

dents, like us, may have reason to be concerned with these new changes. It seems that SIMON Property Group is targeting a very specific clientele: the wealthy. When asked to describe the changes occurring in the mall, manager Deborah Weber replied, "I call it 'smart' growth- adding categories of business that our customers were asking for, like restaurants, and presenting a look that was interesting, beautiful, and inviting." The change has been gradual, but as the grand opening of the mall approaches, the extreme price changes are becoming more noticeable. Swarovski jewelers have replaced Claire's



used to be, can always be counted on for

where will we go? Students will have to drive farther to shop at the stores they can afford, or else reach farther into their wallets.

However, there are some tricks to saving money and shopping smart. Remember to check out the sales rack in the back first, so you can find cute items without falling in love with that \$80 sweater in the front. Always pack your own lunch or snacks so that money you would normally spend on food can now go towards accessories. Never pass up free food samples! Teavana, located where Talbots used to be, can always be counted on for

unlimited free tea samples. Don't forget to sign up for emails from your favorite stores; you can receive coupons and sometimes even discounts on your birthday.

Finally, one last piece of information that will have common white girls everywhere running to the mall, Uggs and all, is the matter of Starbucks' renovations. No longer a small kiosk in the center, Starbucks now has a storefront and a larger menu. Just in time for the end of pumpkin spice latte season!

Though still a work in progress, Walt Whitman Mall, soon to be Walt Whitman Shops, is looking very promising. Says a source, "I haven't been inside, but the curb appeal is much better." Improved storefronts along the roadside may increase business and the five hundred jobs that have been opened as a result of the expansion will surely aide the economy. So do Huntington, and yourself a favor and shop at the Walt Whitman Shops, opening November 23rd.

Winter Vacation Ideas

By Leah Butz

This year, Huntington students will enjoy a full two weeks of time off during the December holidays, but this isn't always a blessing. Many people, students and teachers alike, will experience sixteen days of boredom rather than holiday cheer. Fortunately, there are always things to do when you're home alone, and remember--idle hands do the devil's work.

The winter holidays are supposed to be times of family bonding, so why not try it? Pick up a board game or a deck of cards and play with your family. Not only will your parents appreciate your willingness to spend time with them, but you will also have a blast. Good family games include LIFE, Apples to Apples, and rummy.

A great way to keep busy is to write out a to-do list and attempt to accomplish everything on it. Whether your list has on it "clean room" or "learn fluent Russian," once you get started it will be hard to stop. Remember, the hardest part of accomplishing a chore is getting yourself to start it. Once you've begun, continuing will be much easier. So walk the dog, finish your algebra homework, or teach yourself how to play the saxophone. With so much time, you'll be able to do it all.

Exercise is a great way to pass time and feel great too. Go out on a jog, try some cardio, or even just put on your favorite song and dance like nobody is watching. Exercise feels great, and it can really up your spirits during such a cold season. In addition, working out can help you focus on your goals and achieve them.

Don't forget to stay in touch with friends. While a 7-hour marathon of your favorite show may seem enticing, school friends may feel left out if you don't try to stay in contact. With technology, it's super easy to plan a fun get-together with friends. Go out to a movie, have a sleepover, or just hang out--being a hermit for sixteen days will not benefit you!

Make winter break count with some of these fun and useful suggestions. These ideas are just the beginning; use your imagination and you'll have a fun-filled winter break. Don't forget to get some rest, catch up on schoolwork, and get ready for 2014!

A Glimpse into the Business

Newsday Guest Speaker Enlightens Journalism Classes

By Veronica Tonissen

On November 7th Ms. Anne Michaud of Long Island's Newsday arrived to give a special presentation to Mrs. Antonino's journalism classes. Giving a description of her path through professional journalism and responding to questions posed by students, Ms. Michaud was able to give the students a glimpse into real writing.

The classes had prepared for the columnist's visit for a number of days. They were assigned a variety of the writer's opinion columns to read and analyze for the discussion later in the week and developed questions to ask regarding her professional career.

One highlight of fourth period was the heated discussion over Michaud's article entitled, "How U.S. can get really serious about school." Students eagerly shared their opinions on the importance of access to sports programs in Huntington High School on a daily basis. Sophomore Cassie

Berwick stated, "Students relying on sports to get them into college can propel them into good schools and shortly after, a professional field." Brendan Wirth, a junior in the class felt differently, "Sure, sports are important. I'm not

I'm not going to get much interest from the readers. I used to write an unsigned editorial but now I write signed with my name and picture, and yeah, it can be tricky figuring out how strong to be with my opinions."



Standing in front of the class, Michaud also outlined her personal path through journalism. She described her stint in the Peace Corp and her love for writing, stating that among her many exciting

occupations she found that writing for a political magazine based in New York City was the most stimulating. Michaud recalls, "I got to meet many interesting characters, and I really enjoyed being able to go home and write about it." However, the commute and deadlines soon made this business impractical for the new mother of two.

Michaud also described what her current work in Newsday was like, from the daily round table in which writers and editors get together to discuss what they want to write, of which she says, "They've given me a lot of freedom to write about what I want to write about and I really couldn't ask for much more." to the deadlines that have the potential to become stressful, students in periods two and four felt the passion for writing that Michaud possessed.

While taking a course geared toward a specific profession in the future students were engaged in this special guest and asked a variety of questions. Ranging from ideas for topics, research needed to write an educated article, and how to meet deadlines students developed a genuine interest in the real life application of the information they were learning in class. Perhaps Huntington High School may produce a few up and coming journalists in the near future.

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The Dispatch is Huntington High School's official student publication. Written for over 1200 students attending HHS, The Dispatch is distributed to all students, staff and school community members at the school free of charge.

The Editorial Board is the newspaper's decision-making body, organizing and directing its operation. The Dispatch staff has adopted the following editorial policy to express the rights, responsibilities and philosophy of the newspaper for the 2012-2013 school year.

The Dispatch of Huntington High School is a public forum, with its student editorial board making all decisions concerning its content. Unsigned editorials express the views of the majority of the editorial board.

Letters to the editor are welcomed and will be published as space allows. Letters are preferred signed, but may be published by request. The Editorial Board reserves the right to edit letters for grammar and clarity, and all letters are subject to laws governing obscenity, libel, privacy, and disruption of the school process, as are all contents of the paper. Questions, comments, and letters to the editor should be sent electronically to hhsdispatch@gmail.com or submitted to The Dispatch mailbox located in the main office.

Opinions in letters are not necessarily those of the staff, nor should any opinion expressed in a public forum be construed as the opinion of the administration, unless so attributed.

The Dispatch's goal is to provide readers with interesting content in a wide variety of areas. Such areas include the news coverage of school and community events, as well as features on relevant topics. In addition, The Dispatch will provide opinionated editorials on controversial topics, as well as provide previews and reviews for upcoming school and professional sports seasons and other forms of entertainment.

The Dispatch accepts advertisements from local businesses and student organizations. The basic rate for advertisements can be provided on request to any interested organization. Requests for specific pricing, and examples of past advertising may be requested via e-mail through hhsdispatch@gmail.com. The Editorial Board reserves the right to refuse any advertisement deemed inappropriate, specifically those that reference illegal or controlled substances, products, services and/or paraphernalia.

A Question of Honor

Regents, Honors, Advanced Placement; all are course level options for students at Huntington High School, each more challenging than the last. AP classes sit dauntingly at the top of this level hierarchy, reserved for students that have the willpower and command of the subject to receive college level education in that field.

AP classes are offered in a variety of subjects here at the high school there are APs offered in two different English courses, four Social Studies, four Sciences, two math courses, and about two different languages.

That's a lot of potential college credit, granted one holds a strong command of the subject's material, applies to a college that accepts AP high school courses, and receives at least a three or four on the AP exam in May. One would think these courses would be among the most difficult to get into, a minimum grade in that specific subject as well as an overall GPA are required to receive AP education in that course, but each year peers and faculty are noticing that more and more students are being placed into these demanding courses. Mr. Donovan, the AP United States History teacher educates four classes of about thirty children on a daily basis for that one course. The reason? There is no honors

level U.S History course offered in the high school.

Therefore, understandably the majority of students that are at a higher level than the Regents courses but not yet specifically capable of the AP curriculum are placed in this AP course. Huntington High School is basically forcing all the children that fit nicely into that Honors middle ground, in which students can learn at a higher level than the Regents course, into the intense and fast paced world of the AP courses. For students that have not yet tested the waters of the Honors world, this dive into the APs can come as a shock. Advanced Placement courses are structured much differently than Regents courses and it may seem unfair to place students that have not yet been given the opportunity to learn in an Honors course the jump across a giant gap from Regents to AP.

The number of classes as well as magnitude of students that are being enrolled in AP courses causes a detrimental effect for all. Teachers are unable to effectively educate and prepare students for the AP exam in May and students are quickly incapable of creating a comfortable bond with the teacher due to the large class sizes. The difference in learning abilities also poses a problem; what is to

become of those who cannot handle the rigor of an AP course but by no means are capable only of work on a Regents level? Are they expected to work on material that is either too easy or too difficult?

This is where the ability to have an honors course for every AP course may come in handy. Students that nicely march the middle ground between Regents and AP are given a course that is comfortable for them, and students that can handle the independence and rigor of the AP course are able to receive the higher level learning that they crave on an individual level.

Lastly, it cannot be forgotten that the teachers may also find an improvement to their teaching when they are no longer swamped with papers to be graded and instead can focus on ways in which to engage the class to their intellectual needs, be it Regents, Honors, or an AP level course. These improvements will not come about lightly however, as the trend does seem to be leaning toward an increase in AP classes and a decrease in Honors, therefore the challenge may be given to the student body who must call for a change so that their education is centered around them in a fashion which is comfortable for all.



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Contact Mr. Florea, Ms. Antorino, or one of The Dispatch's editors if you wish to place an ad in the paper.

Fighting Bullying With Brushstrokes

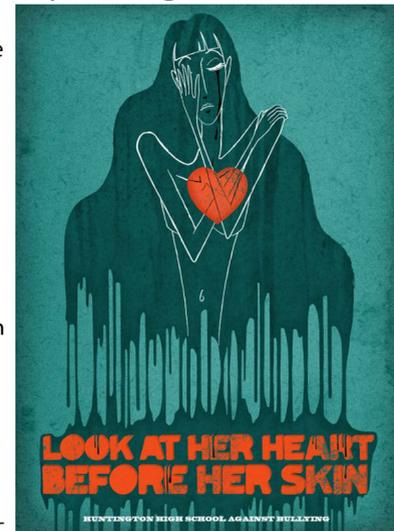
Huntington's Advanced Computer Graphics class was inspired to create an anti-bullying campaign at the request of Huntington's PTA. Their wish is to print selected posters and place them throughout the district.

The class normally has a poster design project, but this year's request presented a unique opportunity.

The students' work was inspired by the animated film To this Day based on the poetry of Shane Koyczan. The Art

Honor Society has offered to split the cost of printing with the Huntington PTA.

In the end, there were four winners to the art competition that accompanied the project. Justin Martinolich, Aaron Feltman, Meelod Wafajow, and Justin Meyer all produced artwork that is both creative and impactful on an emotion-



al level.

Hopefully, this competition inspires high school students across the island to use their creativity to express their feelings and help fight back against bullies.

In more ways than one, the brush is mightier than the sword. With the help of the Art Honor Society, hopefully both the bullies and the victims can learn from these poignant works of art.

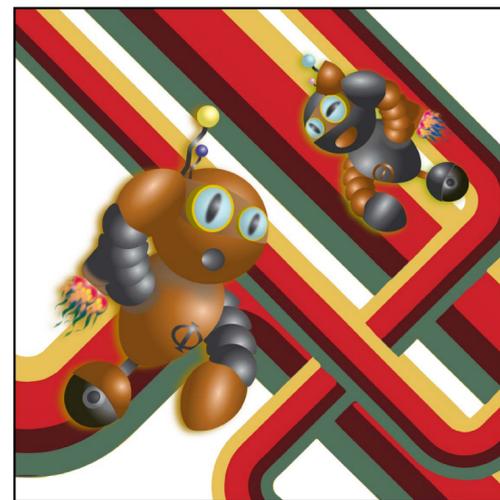
More information on the program can be found at <http://tothisday-project.com>. This website features inspirational poems and works on anti-bullying.

The rest of the anti-bullying poster submissions can be seen on the school website at <http://hufsd.edu/assets/galleries/arts.html>. There you can browse all of the Blue Devil artwork and let us know which ones you connect with the most.

By Charles Beers

ARTIST SPOTLIGHT

From this issue forward, the Dispatch will spotlight the talent of Huntington's artists by featuring a piece of their artwork in the new Art section. If you would like to submit a piece, contact Ms. Mohanty and email the PDF file to hhsdispatch@gmail.com, along with a brief artist statement that features your name, grade, and inspiration for the piece.



TOMMY DAYTON

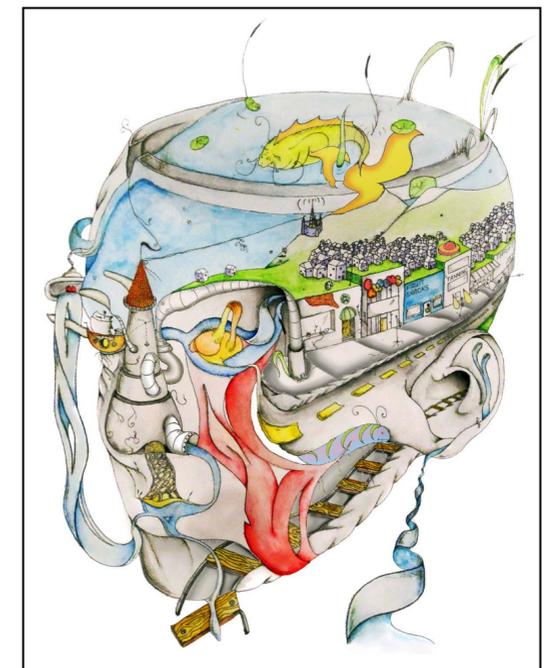
Tommy Dayton is a tenth grader currently enrolled in Mrs. Mohanty's Computer Graphics class.

One of the biggest reasons Tommy loves creating art is because there is less right and wrong when compared to other pursuits. He finds that kind of freedom liberating.

Tommy's robots were partially inspired by steampunk. The presence of the second robot was inspired by a good friend of his who previously took

Computer Graphics.

The background of the piece was originally going to be a stormy sky, but was switched after reconsidering the overall look of the piece and in Tommy's opinion fits the picture better.



EKATERINA KOULAKOVA

Ekaterina Koulakova is a tenth grader who is currently taking drawing and painting two and computer graphics. Ekaterina believes art is about allowing one's imagination to be viewed by the public and this generally lures the viewer in. She often likes to play with the boundaries found in reality. Her piece titled The Face exploits this concept and highlights the intricate forms found on a face whilst incorporating aspects from her everyday life. She found it enter-

taining to bend the cheek's form to construct a road and a tunnel supplemented by a train track, played with unfamiliar dimensions in space to communicate a sense of confusion and an appreciation for the everyday figure.

When asked to describe her work in one sentence she stated, "My work is absolutely incomprehensible and is therefore accompanied by profound significance."

The Cookie Corner

As the holiday season rolls around, the weather gets colder and we all could use a warm cookie. Everybody knows that there are never enough desserts on the dessert table after a festive feast (say *that* three times fast). However, regular chocolate chip cookies from King Kullen aren't quite up to par. Plus, making your own cookies gives you bragging rights: "I see that you are enjoying the cookies. Well, I just wanted to say that I was the amazing and talented baker that made these" - give them a smug smile and feel good about yourself. Then eat another cookie. Anyways, whatever way you put it, baking cookies is good and it gives the house a scent that Febreeze can't quite match. These are 2 recipes that I found both easy and simple. Enjoy!

Goopy Amazing Sugar Cookies

These take less than an hour to make and are incredibly good!

1 pack of Golden Butter cake mix from Duncan Hines (You can also use yellow cake mix from another brand)

4 oz Softened Cream Cheese (about half the pack)

1/4 cup of Softened UNSALTED butter

1 Medium egg (not too large or else it might ruin the batter)

1/8 tsp. Vanilla extract

1/8 tsp. Salt

1/4 cup Powdered sugar (to coat the cookies)

Makes about 20 cookies

Preheat oven to 350
Combine the butter and the cream cheese until it is smooth and incorporated. Add the egg, the salt and the vanilla. By now it should be a yellow-ish soup. Slowly add the entire cake mix

pack to the batter while on high. The batter should be fluffy and have the consistency of yellow frosting. Fill a separate small bowl with the powdered sugar. Scoop out balls of the dough about 1 inch in diameter (you can also use a tablespoon measuring spoon) and drop it into the sugar. Coat them in the sweet powder by rolling them around and then drop them onto a lightly greased pan about 1 1/2 inches apart. These cookies really expand and fluff up while baking, so keep this in mind when spacing them out. Bake the cookies for about 11 minutes or until they start becoming brown. Pull out of the oven, they will be REALLY hot, and let them cool for 5 minutes. They should shrink down a little bit, so no worries. Gently pull the cookies off of the pan and enjoy the goopy goodness that's to come.

Golden Cinammon Cookies

These great cookies are simple and taste great after dinner.

1 cup of Sugar
1 cup of Softened UNSALTED butter (2 sticks)
1 large egg
2 1/4 cups All-purpose flour, sifted
3 tsp. Cinnamon (to coat the cookies)

2tbsp. Sugar (to coat the cookies)

Makes about 18 cookies
Preheat oven to 350
Combine sugar and butter until light and fluffy. Make sure there are no clumps. Add the egg and blend until incorporated. Slowly mix in the flour and 1 teaspoon of the cinnamon. Mix well. Cover the bowl with



plastic wrap and refrigerate for 1 hour for easier handling. In a small bowl, combine the remaining cinnamon and the 2 tablespoons of sugar to make a coating. After an hour, scoop out the dough into 1 1/2 inch balls. Coat them in that cinnamon mixture and place them 2 inches apart on a greased baking sheet. Flatten out each cookie a little and bake for 11-15 minutes at 350.

When they become firm to the touch, take them out and immediately remove from the pan to cool on wire racks. After they cool for about 5 minutes, proceed to eat them.

Recipes by Michelle D'Alessandro

Book Review: Fool's Puzzle

A Realistic and Relatable Mystery Worth Solving

By Asar Nadi

The one thing that aggravates people when reading a novel is the information the author uses. Sometimes it can be totally off and useless, while other times it can be relatable.

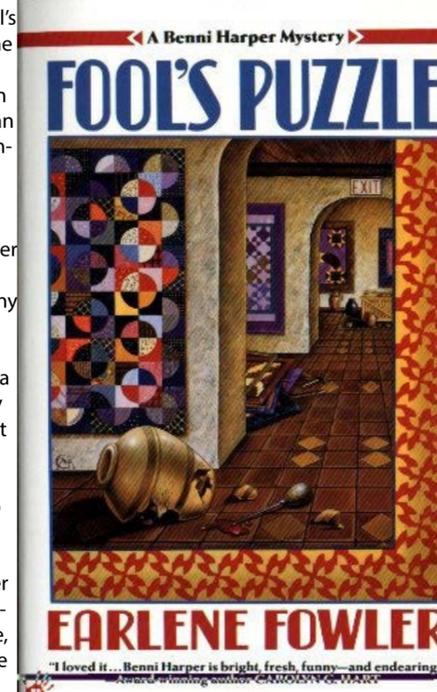
Many mystery novelists try to write about things that they do not necessarily know about. For instance, they always have the main character hide something about their shady past and make it clouded in mystery. In addition, the main character would seem as if they lived in a fantasy world.

Also, when the author decides to write about a specific place or region of the world, it is blatantly obvious that they have never really experienced that place before.

Fool's Puzzle defies this trend by establishing relatable

characters in a realistic environment.

In Fool's Puzzle, Earlene Fowler portrays her main character as an ordinary woman. Although a perfect life is hard to achieve, Fowler creates a lifestyle that many people can relate to. She brings about a life that many people do not want to go through because it is too emotionally tormenting. By making her story as realistic as possible, she is still able to keep her plot coherent and engaging.



Fowler, in addition,

that she has been to and creates her character

as much detail. In some ways it can seem an-

people. Instead of writing about a place that she is not familiar with, Fowler uses her time to write the stores and museums she knows by heart. She is able to excite the reader by using places that she has always been a part of her life and makes the reader feel as if they're experiencing the journey with her.

In some parts of the novel, Fowler keeps descriptions short and does not add

noying but on the other hand it keeps the reader on their toes and forces them to keep reading onward to finish the novel entirely. While the actual novel was a bit of a let down by not living up to its gripping preview on the back cover, Fowler still figures out a way to keep it as interesting as it can possibly be.

Fool's Puzzle is not an ordinary novel. It is the first in its series and it is not a widely praised best seller. It is a book that would be on sale in Barnes & Nobles and at first seems boring. However, when the reader actually starts flipping through its pages, it is not as bad as most people would think. Fowler knows how to write a strong mystery novel with touches of comedy, making Fool's Puzzle a story worth discovering.

Anne of Green Gables Review

Huntington Drama Club Shines in their Fall Performance

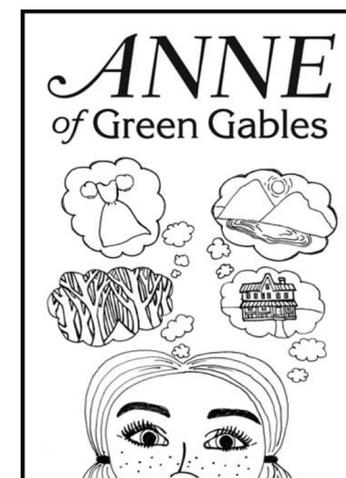
By Bailey Riordan

On November 8th and 9th, the Huntington High School Drama Club presented Anne Of Green Gables, a play based off of the work of Lucy Maud Montgomery. The comedic play was about an orphan girl named Anne Shirley (Kat Gerdes). Anne has a huge imagination and is always trying to help her friends. The story revolves around her journey as she moves to a house called Green Gables and lives there with her foster parents Marilla and



Matthew Cuthbert (Monica Owen and Patrick Lombardi). The play goes on to explain some experiences she has growing up at Green Gables, such as being called mean names at school, putting freckle remover on a pig, and even almost drowning! Overall, the

play was very executed on Mr. Schwendemann's part, and the sets were



due to its fantastic writing and the way it engaged the audience. There was

even a splash zone where people could get spit on in the first act, which was definitely one of the highlights of the performance! Job well done to the entire cast and crew; the show was a huge hit! If this play was any indication, the

beautiful thanks to Mr. Gilbert, Ms. Freed and the rest of the stage crew. The play was very funny

spring musical, on April 4th and 5th, is sure to be a classic!

An Appetizing Adventure

The Best Ways to Enjoy Huntington's Indian Cuisine

By Gabe Smith

If there was one country's food that I would have to eat everyday for every meal for the rest of my life it would without a doubt be Indian food.

Now if that was the case I'd probably have a heart attack and a stroke by my 25th birthday given how much fat and clarified butter can be found in the food of this south Asian country.

The only drawback to India's food is that it will clog your arteries faster than a Big Mac, but that's not the point. The fact of the matter is that the food is incredibly savory and delicious, right down to the last bite.

In my seasoned

opinion the best way to start off any Indian meal is to begin with samosas (my favorite dish in the world). Samosas are a fairly simple appetizer; what they are is a deep fried crispy, doughy exterior enveloping butter-drenched potatoes, peas and other vegetables. You get the nice crunch of the outer shell along with the soft butter-



heaven that awaits you

on the interior, with every chomp of the triangular-shaped pouch of heaven.

Once you've reluctantly finished your order of

samosas you have to move on to an entree. In this section of the menu things

can get confusing and very spicy (that can be ordered to personal taste, though). My two personal favorites are chicken tikka masala and chicken murgh curry. When it comes to Indian food it's all about the chicken dishes. The tikka masala is chicken covered in a thick, bright orange tikka sauce, which is loaded with spices

and curry. Just like the samosas it is rich in clarified butter, which in India is

called ghee.

The combination of the sauce with the chicken cubes and some basmati rice is unbeatable as it melts together perfectly in your mouth that's impossible to put into words. The murgh curry is remotely similar but this time the sauce is greenish-brown and is a lot more curry-heavy. This one is especially spicy and usually is served on a sizzling platter. Again, this food is obscenely rich.

Now, you might be wondering if there is desert; and there is. It is simply unnecessary and you won't even want it, just go home and take a nap.

CRITIC'S CORNER

Movie Review: Catching Fire

Is a spark ignited or do all the tributes fall?

By CHARLES BEERS

On March 2nd 2014, the Academy Awards will give out their annual trophies to some of the most innovative and unique movies of the past year. In order to prepare for these big festivities, we must examine a possible Oscar-worthy film that has caught fire all across the country. The Hunger Games: Catching Fire is one of the biggest titles to hit the big screen this year, opening to widespread critical acclaim and becoming a box-office powerhouse.

That being said, two questions remain: Is Catching Fire a good movie that surpasses the original and what are its chances when the Oscars come around?

The second story in the trilogy features Katniss Everdeen, one of the two winners of last year's Hunger Games, fresh off of her victory with images of the dead tributes still in her mind. While all she wants to do is settle down and try and forget the past, the other abused districts of their dystopian future view her as a symbol of rebellion against the oppressive Capitol, which forces each district to send a boy and girl to slaughter one another each year to assure their dominance.

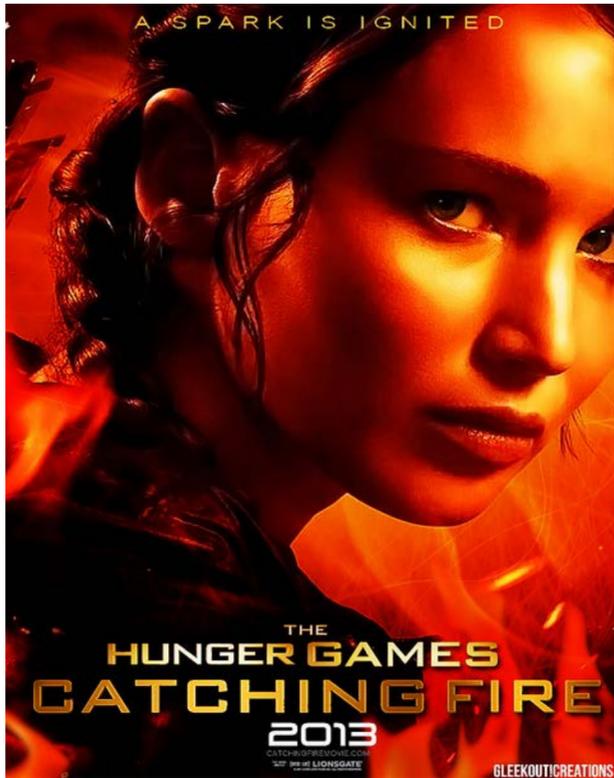
President Snow, the leader of the Capitol, decides to hold a special Hunger Games to end all threats of rebellion, one in which past victors are brought back into the arena to prove that no one is safe from the Capitol's punishment. Once again, Katniss has to survive a brutal fight to the death. However, you can feel how this tournament is different, since all the participants are trained killers

who have experienced the bloodshed firsthand, some of them even enjoying it. In the end, Katniss not only must save herself from President Snow's rage, but also save Peeta,

However, she endures, and audiences around the world have a female protagonist that serves as both a strong role model for teens and also a prime example of an emotionally

is given more complexity, as you can see her realization of how wrong the Hunger Games really are.

Although the action is fast-paced and the actual Games can be occasionally



difficult to follow, the death of each tribute is perfectly scripted and shocking, and many tears will be shed throughout the movie. As Katniss makes new allies, such as fan-favorite, trident-wielding Finnick Odair, it makes it even harder to cope with when these

who she swore to protect at all costs.

To put it simply, Catching Fire is better than the original Hunger Games in almost every single way. Jennifer Lawrence is a flawless Katniss Everdeen who must stand strong as a symbol of hope for the people of the dilapidated districts but also try and cope with her own paranoia and nightmares resulting from the first Games. She is forced to endure both physical and emotional pain that is staggering, and you can see in her facial expressions that all she wants to do is end the suffering.

complex character, despite how hard she tries to bury those emotions within herself.

The supporting cast also shines. Josh Hutchinson turns in another fantastic performance as Peeta, who struggles with his relationship with Katniss and tries to determine if she truthfully returns his affections. Woody Harrelson plays the fatherly drunk Haymitch Abernathy with ease. Even Effie Trinket, the eccentric escort for Katniss and Peeta in the last movie who cared more about their dessert privileges than their chances of survival,

friends are tragically killed in combat. Although I read the book and knew what to expect, each death came to me as a slap in the face and caused old wounds to be opened once more.

On top of that, some of the problems in the original movie were tweaked and perfected in the sequel. The use of a shaky camera during action sequences, which caused many unnecessary headaches, has been removed while keeping the scenes intense and powerful. Also, the minor characters are fleshed out more, such as Prim, who

was practically nonexistent in the first movie and has now evolved into a strong-willed sister with a talent for medicine. By getting a renewed view of life in District 12, we better understand how much Katniss has to lose.

That isn't to say the new movie isn't without its faults. The first 20 minutes of the movie is extremely fast-paced and it doesn't give you a lot of time to take in Katniss's desperate situation. Also, Katniss' status as a role model is damaged by her "Bellafication." By putting her in a love triangle that almost takes precedence over the true conflict in the novel against the Capitol, she appears more like Bella from the Twilight franchise rather than an independent heroine.

These flaws are minuscule, however, when you see the finished product. Catching Fire is an exceptional adaptation of the source material, as well as a testament to Jennifer Lawrence, who can safely be declared the best actress in Hollywood at the moment. While some moments are weaker than others, Catching Fire is an emotional rollercoaster that sucks you in and never lets you go. If Oscar voters do the movie justice, Catching Fire will walk with an Oscar for Best Visual Effects and Costume Design, as well as a Best Actress nomination for Lawrence. Clearly, the odds are in their favor.



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CRITIC'S CORNER

Movie Review: 12 Years a Slave

A Poignant and Powerful Vision of America's Darkest Hours

By KATIE DUVAL

Steve McQueen's 12 Years a Slave brings us a way to perceive slavery that cuts deep into the core of our common humanity. In this world of a "post-racial America", difficult topics when it comes to race are often closed neatly into a book with the comforting thought that those tragedies in our history are all in the past.

12 Years a Slave forces us to recognize that the past never really ends. The characters we meet are as relevant as any people we would know in our modern world. The heartbreak, suffering, and unjust treatment inflicted on these characters garner the same reactions from people in the past that they would from people today. The viewer walks away from the movie with the understanding that characters from history were human in the exact same way that they are.

This beautifully shot film makes skin color irrelevant. What does it mean to be white or black when the color and texture of dozens of lash marks is universal? McQueen offers us a framework through which to view slavery. It is alive and tangible and the true horror of that institution is felt with every blow, epithet,

and plea for mercy.

There is no sugar-coating the tragedy of these peoples' lives, there is no argument that slaves were protected by their masters, there is no vision

It comes to us in subtle ways: when the slaves leave the plantation, they have to wear a tag, when they are up for sale, their teeth are inspected. When one thinks

more powerful.

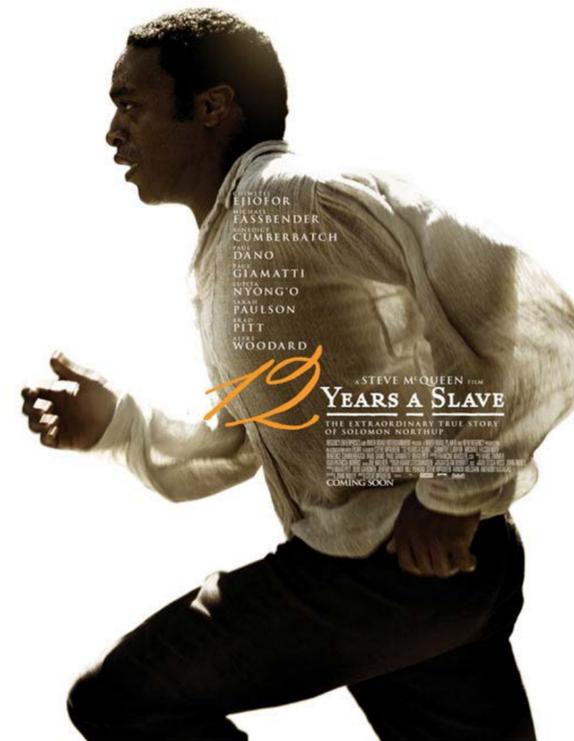
The intensity of every situation builds and builds without ever giving a minute to catch your breath. Chiwetel Ejiofor and Michael Fassbender are amazing in their roles. Never once is there a question as to what these characters stand for, but they still manage to bring nuance to the roles. Ejiofor makes us feel his genuine despair over the prospect of never seeing his family again, but we understand completely his acceptance of his new standing in life, with only fleeting attempts at freedom. And with Fassbender, we get to see what pure hate looks like, but we also see what

despair and insecurity can do to the human psyche.

The film does not shy away from brutality. McQueen will hold a shot for what feels like an eternity as we look on to see a slave hanging from a tree or the torn back of a girl that has just been whipped for wanting a bar of soap.

Perhaps that is to the film's downfall, coming across occasionally as being heavy handed. But for the most part, the gruesome violence serves as a dichotomy to the only part of the slaves' lives that has a semblance of happiness: song. When there are scenes of slaves singing, the only hope that they have of not being completely crushed by this horrific system is visible.

12 Years a Slave is an exercise in experiencing something that is completely foreign to us. While it is a masterfully made movie, it resonates on a much deeper level. It is a story of the human struggle against an oppressive world, and it brings to us the knowledge that that struggle is never over.



of a content slave family that can make it through because they have one another. There is only the reality of what losing one's freedom really means.

about the workings of it, of course these things were needed. But to see them taken for granted and recognized as a fact of life makes the film all the

stance of his new standing in life, with only fleeting attempts at freedom. And with Fassbender, we get to see what pure hate looks like, but we also see what



What Other Critics Are Saying

"The acting is outstanding, the direction assured if straightforward. 12 Years a Slave is a history lesson of the best type. It's brilliant. But, more crucially, it's important. It's brutal truth that demands to be seen." -Bill Goodykoontz, *Arizona Republic*

"Brutal yet elegant, 12 Years a Slave is a beautifully rendered punch to the gut about the most shameful chapter in American history." -Steve Davis, *Austin Chronicle*

"McQueen has made a film comparable to 'Schindler's List' — art that may be hard to watch, but which is an essential look at man's inhumanity to man. It is wrenching, but 12 Years a Slave earns its tears in a way few films ever do." -Joe Neumaier, *New York Daily News*

Scan this QR Code to watch the trailer



Varsity Football Shocks Suffolk

they were wrong and that the Huntington Blue Devils was for real and should be recognized as one of the powerhouses of the County.

After Sayville, the Blue Devils faced the Nassau County Champion of the Lawrence Golden Tornadoes in the Long Island Championship. It was a long fought battle between the two champions but the Golden Tornadoes ended up defeating Huntington by a score of 41-32 at Stony Brook which ended Huntington's magical run.

Even though the Blue Devils lost in the Long Island Championship, their season was very successful and brought a lot of excitement to the town of Huntington, the parents of the players and the



Huntington alumni.

The Huntington Blue Devils received a Suffolk County Championship plaque and a Long Island Championship runner up plaque that will be held in the trophy case outside the gymnasium along with the rest of Huntington's

achievements in football and the rest of the sports. The Blue Devils will also receive banners that will say Suffolk County Division III Champions and Big Four Champions of 2013 which will be held in the gymnasium along-

side of the various other banners won by different sports in Huntington's rich history of success.

Individual awards were also given to the Huntington players including All Division Players' Tim Mattiace, Nick Arleo, Christian Gonzalez, Jimmie Nelson,

Davonte Evans, and Infinite Tucker.

All County Players who were also All Division as well were Ben Kocis, Christian Jamison, Levar Butts, and Troy Greene. Kocis was also awarded the Boomer Esiason for best Quarterback of Suffolk County and Christian Jamison received the LaBue award for being the top football scholar-athlete in the county.

The Huntington Blue Devils will be defending their County Championship next year and they will need the current juniors and sophomores to lead Huntington back to the Long Island Championship to repeat as County Champions and win a second Long Island Championship in school history.

The 2014 Winter Olympics USA Champions Are Back to Bring Home the Gold

By Howie Schiman

Get ready! Put on your hats, coats, and gloves everyone! Winter is here, and so are the 2014 Winter Olympic Games! The International Olympic Committee selected Sochi, Russia to host the extravaganza, beating out South Korea and Austria.

Sochi is well known in Russia as a tourists' vacation destination located in Southwest Asia, on the coast of the Black Sea and at the foot of the Caucasus Mountains.

This mountain range, with a peak elevation of 18,500 feet, is part of the Europe-Asia divider. Sochi's climate is subtropical, which is considered unique for a Winter Olympics' host city.

Even in mid-winter, the temperature rarely drops below 40 degrees Fahrenheit during the night. With a population of 344,000, similar to Tampa, Florida, the city has many spectacular ski resorts, numerous parks and gardens, historical museums, and renowned Stalinist architecture, making it a perfect place for the events.

These 22nd Winter Olympics have been undergoing colossal preparations since 2007 when it was chosen as the host city. It has been typical for previous countries to spend single digit billions to build Olympic venue. China wowed the world when it spent 43 billion dollars to host the 2008 Summer Games in Beijing.

Russia, however, will break that record as it invested over 51 billion dollars to make the 2014 games a memorable experience. 3 billion dollars alone were spent upgrading the city's electrical power system to bring it into the 21st century. That figure alone is more than Canada spent to host the entire 2010 Winter Games in Vancouver.

Other enormous projects include the addition of over 225 miles of roadways and construction of a light metro rail train expected to be

completed by opening ceremony.

There will be 11 newly built venues constructed for the games: 6 in the coastal city's Olympic village and 5 in the nearby Krasnaya Polyana Mountain Cluster where ski and snowboard events will take place. Perhaps

as figure and speed skating events.

Team U.S.A is ready to get back into action after breaking the record for winning the most medals (37) during the Winter Olympic Games at Vancouver in 2010.

A favorite among many, Shaun White is returning to the Winter Games for the third time after taking gold medals in both Turin in 2006 and Vancouver in 2010. He has also earned an additional 17 medals while participating in the Winter X Games. Competing in 2014's Men's Half-pipe, White's snow-

boarding performance is sure to make a viewer gasp in awe. Also returning this year will be Lindsey Vonn, who suffered a knee injury while skiing last February. After winning the gold medal in 2010's Women's Alpine Skiing at Vancouver, she will be fighting to hold onto her title in



the most impressive new addition will be the grand Fisht Olympic Stadium with seating for 40,000.

This is the grand arena where the opening and closing ceremonies will be held. Even The Bolshoy Ice Dome looks impressive, as it will seat 12,000 spectators during the hockey games, as well

The Unbelievable Season Looking Back on a Red Sox Victory and the End of an Era

By Will Harris

The 2013 Major League Baseball season has ended after 8 months, 162 regular season games, and exciting post-season play. It's hard for me to say this but the Boston Red Sox have won the World Series. They defeated the

St. Louis Cardinals in six games, in the typical best-of-7 format.

The Red Sox were in last place under their manager Bobby Valentine and finished 69-93 during the 2012 season. The Red Sox began their transformations immediately by firing Valentine and hiring former Toronto Blue Jays manager John Farrell. Also, two key players, Jarrod Saltalamacchia and Mike Napoli were signed during free agency last offseason following Boston's let down in the 2012 season. Mike Napoli is a good hitter and an integral part of the Boston lineup with a lot of power at the plate; he played first base to give David Ortiz some rest during the regular season.

Speaking of David Ortiz, he batted .688 throughout the World

Series with two home runs and 11 hits in 16 at-bats. His incredible

been many other great stories in the league this year. Mariano Rivera, the



New York Yankees' closer, was named American League Comeback Player

of the Year. The Yankee legend suffered an ACL tear that took him out of the whole 2012 season. Mariano had an outstanding come-

back season with a 6-2 record with 44 saves with a 2.11 earned run average. This season was very special for Mariano, also known as Mo. Mariano was named the Most Valuable Player of the 2013 All Star Game and also was given a gift from every

team he faced because he was retiring after the season, ending a 19-year Hall of Fame career. Mo completed his career as the all-time saves leader with 652 saves, standing alone as the greatest closer in the history of baseball. In one touching moment of gratitude, the Minnesota Twins gave him a special gift that was a rocking chair made out of all the broken bats that the Twins used when Mo was pitching, serving as a reminder of the way he could baffle any hitter he faced.

In his final appearance, Mariano was taken out by his teammates

legends won multiple World Series together and were key figures of the Yankees for the past 17 years.

Another great story in the league was the start of the Matt Harvey era in Queens. He was the first Met to start the All-Star Game since Dwight Gooden in 1988. Also, the emergence of powerhouse Chris Davis of the Baltimore Orioles surprised the league with an unbelievable 53 home runs. Meanwhile, defending AL MVP and Triple Crown winner Miguel Cabrera finished another spectacular season with a

.348 batting average, 44 home runs and 137 runs batted in.

The 2013 season was filled with a lot of excitement and intense games. It brought an end to the Mariano Rivera era but lay the foundation for many new stars including Matt Harvey and Chris Davis. The



countdown now starts for March 1, 2014 for the start of spring training and the 2014 MLB season. As this incredible season comes to a close, a brand new season begins, promising plenty of action, memorable moments, and a whole lot of fun.

Why CrossFit is Ruining Project Adventure

By Ryan Goldsmith and China Celestin

Many Project Adventure students have been outraged with what has been occurring in their gym classes this year.

CrossFit has now been incorporated in every Project Adventure class. Usually when you sign up for Project Adventure, you are promised fun activities every gym class.

Everything

changed this year. New changes in gym class include having Project Adventure two times every other week. Not only are you always getting changed now, but also sweating throughout the day.

Here are what some students had to say about the new system we have.

"It's lame. People who want to exercise will exercise on their own. If you force kids to get undressed at 8:00 in the morning to do CrossFit, it's not going to work. And it doesn't. I'm not trying to sweat in the middle of my day." - Sam Carroll

"I think it's unfair that we have to do CrossFit because we signed up for Project Adventure. Since we signed up for Project Adventure we should at least have it three days a week and CrossFit for only twice." - Fiona Geier

"I understand that they're incorporating CrossFit into all 'gym' classes but I think that since Project Adventure is a different type of class we should at least be able to do that three times a week." - Natalie Lanzisero

SPORTS

The Road to the Show

The Varsity Football Team Becomes a Huntington Legend

By Will Harris

For the first time since 2005, the Huntington Blue Devils Varsity football team has won the Suffolk County Division III Championship. They beat their rival and three-time defending champion, the Sayville Golden Flashes by a score of 26-18 at Stony Brook University's LaValle Stadium.

Quarterback and Captain Ben Kocis led the Blue Devils from a 12-0 early deficit with snow falling and sticking onto the Stony Brook turf which made it very difficult with the ball being very hard to hold. Kocis, along with his fellow captains and seniors Levar Butts and Troy Greene led

the team to victory with the two running backs

the game after the first 12 in the opening minutes

off the clock on the Stony Brook scoreboard, Hun-



tington celebrated its championship with the Huntington fans including alumni who have once played with the Blue Devil uniform on.

The team celebrated through the streets of Huntington Village with a Huntington Fire Truck escorting them along the way. Ever since the first days of two a days or even team workouts in July and throughout

the summer have all paid off by giving the Blue Devils yet another County title to its already impressive football program lead by Head Coach Steve Muller and assistants Todd Jamison,

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Ron Wilson, Jimmy McCabe, Jimmy Byrnes, Tim Madden, and Finely Middle School coaches William Harris, Phil Lowe, and Mike Bifulco.

In order to get to Stony Brook, the Blue Devils finished the regular season at 5-3 to clinch the fourth seed and were announced as Big 4 Champions which means that they are one of the best four teams in the County. Huntington won games against Harborfields, Bellport, Comeswogue, Amityville and West Hampton. In the playoffs, Huntington defeated both Hauppauge and Bellport in order to reach the finals. Even with the higher seed against Hauppauge, Bellport, and Sayville as well. Huntington was constantly picked to lose those games by both MSG Varsity and Newsday, but the Blue Devils delivered and showed the experts that

combining for 121 rushing yards and two touchdowns.

The Blue devil defense even with the harsh conditions completely shut down the Sayville offense that scored only 6 more points the rest of

↓ The varsity team poses after their incredible Suffolk county championship victory. (hufsd.edu)

of the game. The Blue Devils held star running back, Matt Selts and the rest of the ground game of the Golden Flashes to only 106 yards. With the final seconds ticking away

Why Huntington's Winter Sports are Heating Up

By GABE SMITH

As the sun sets on one season for Huntington sports, dawn breaks on another one. It's a new day as the calendar approaches the time of the year that is the winter sports' season. Players and coaches alike have high goals and expectations in mind for their teams in the next few months of competition.

Both boys' and girls' track are not only looking to improve but win championships this winter season. Boys' track will be headed by Coach Ron Wilson who will be assisted by Eli Acosta and Shawn Anderson. "We're a young team looking to be competitive," Wilson said of this year's squad.

Senior Y'Majesty Allen, who made it to the state championships last year, will return as one of Suffolk County's top 300 meter runners. In addition, the team's high jumping efforts will be lead by returning junior Sody Jean-Baptiste. Shot-put will be anchored by juniors Matteo McNeill and Jimmie Nelson. McNeill won the sophomore county shot put in 2012 while Nelson finished fourth.

Last year the team as a whole finished third in League IV competition behind Kings

Park and Eastport South Manor. They also finished third in county-wide action.

Over on the girls' side of things it's very much a brand new year for head coach Debra Cheskes and her team. This year the team will be competing in a new league after moving from League IV to III. "A lot of unknowns competing against schools we've never competed against," Cheskes said of the league change.

Despite the uncertainty returning talent is abundant. Junior Suzie Petryk will be the top 1500 meter and 3000 meter distance runner, senior Christine Simpson will be among the team's top 1500 meter race walkers and senior Hayley Drace comes back as the top triple jumper and 55 meter hurdler.

Down on the hardwood a promising season lays ahead for both the girls and boys. "We're planning on

winning leagues and we plan on going to counties. Winning leagues is very realistic and counties is a stretch, but possible," said point guard Katie Nugent of the girls' team's prospects.



In addition to Nugent a plethora of talent will be returning: juniors; center Heather Forster and shooting guards Sam Lynch and Lindsay Sullivan, seniors coming back for a final go at it are power forward Joellen Ceide and guard Emma Hughes. The team's main challenges will come from Bellport and rivals Deer Park.

For the boys, things are looking up after they made

a surprise run deep in to the Suffolk County playoffs last season. "We should be a pretty solid squad, we have a lot of young players, but we also have a lot of young players who will help lead the team," says junior guard Kenny McCarthy.

While they did lose a lot of quality talent in graduates Pat Reilly, Kiernan McGovern and Devon Nelson there will be newcomers to fill their shoes. Seniors Lee Reiver, Alex Castillo, and Kevin Montefusco are some of the players that will do just that. The team's goal for the year is to equal or better 2012's results.

For one of Long Island's most successful wrestling programs, this year seems as if it will be an extraordinary one for the Blue Devils. They enter this season ranked first in the county as team and six individual wrestlers are ranked as well. Those individuals are Kyle Mock,

Johnny Arceri, J.P. Puca, Corey Jamison, Brandon Mendez and Anthony Puca. Despite a coaching change at the top (Travis Smith is the new head coach) an exceptionally promising season lays ahead. "Our team is looking really good this year, we have high expectations for the season," Mendez noted.

Under the direction of Coach Alan Kuver the fencing team looks to improve upon a stellar 2012 season. Kuver said of the nearing 2013 season, "Our goal is to be top three in the county, last year the girls were third and the boys were fourth, they just missed." He says they'll receive tough competition from Half-Hollow Hills, Commack and especially Ward-Melville who has dominated Suffolk County for several years now. A lot of talent from last year will be returning to face these difficult foes; four girl seniors and seven boy seniors are coming back to guide this year's team in the right direction.

Overall, the Blue Devils' winter lineup is packed with talent and is sure to feature some incredible action. Be sure to support all of the winter teams as they try to find a place among Huntington's finest.