

Don't Drink the Water Takes the Stage

By Morgan Levy '15

The talented actors of Livingston High School's fall comedy *Don't Drink the Water* wowed crowds on December 5, 6, and 7 in the auditorium. The cast and crew kept audiences entertained with numerous laughs throughout the production. The Woody Allen comedy was the first LHS production directed by Mrs. Leibowitz, who skillfully organized the play in a mere six weeks.

The dynamic cast was led by junior Josh Young as Axel Magee, who is left in charge when his father, the Ambassador (played by junior Sam Thor), must leave for a business trip. Assisting Magee is Mr. Kilroy, played by freshman Jared Kirsch. Magee receives a stern warning from his father to not cause any trouble while his father is gone.

But Magee is soon put to the test when a family of American tourists stumbles into the embassy. Unfortunately, Magee makes the first of many mistakes by convincing Communist leader Krojack, played by senior David Anderson, that the family members are American spies.

The wacky Hollander family is forced to remain in the Embassy until a safe escape can be plotted. Walter Hollander, played by senior

Jason Silberman, is outraged that the family vacation has turned into an international disaster. Walter's wife Marion, played by senior Ilana Saltzman, constantly antagonizes Walter over his anxiety. Saltzman describes her character as "goofy,

years at the Embassy after taking asylum where he has worked on a variety of magic tricks. Throughout the show, he continues to tell characters to pick a card, which often have hidden messages. Another character is the Chef, played by sophomore



The cast takes a bow after another successful performance on Saturday. From left to right: Josh Young, Ilana Saltzman, Jason Silberman, Rachael Richard, David Anderson, Jordan Cohen, Natalie Kahn, Grace Shin. Image source: Miranda Dambrot.

sarcastic, over dramatic, moody at times, and sentimental." The Hollander's daughter Susan, played by junior Rachael Richard, apologizes to Magee for her crazy parents.

While at the Embassy, we meet the cast of characters who live there. Father Drobney, played by junior Jordan Cohen, has spent six

Natalie Kahn, who has very little cooking knowledge and a humorous disposition. Another of Magee's assistants, Ms. Burns, played by freshman Melana Odegova, tries to help keep the Embassy under control.

In the face of danger Magee must also entertain the Sultan of Bashir, played by freshman Ryan

Healy, knowing that this visit is imperative to securing an oil deal. Unfortunately, the Hollanders proceed to insult the Sultan, which causes Kilroy to throw a lavish party in an attempt to salvage the relationship. Magee also falls in love with Susan Hollander; unfortunately, Susan will be getting married soon.

The party allows the Hollanders to concoct a complicated plan to leave the Embassy where they will pose as party guests. While mingling at the affair, the Hollanders meet the Countess Bordini, played by sophomore Grace Shin, and Kasnar, played by sophomore Brian Miseo.

Unfortunately, while escaping, Walter Hollander twice misfires the gun he has been given for the escape, managing to shoot both Kilroy and the Ambassador. As Krojack crashes the party, the Hollanders don't escape that night. But the next day, the Hollanders finally escape dressed as the Sultan and his wife. Susan escapes with Magee, being given diplomatic immunity as his new wife.

The play also shines as result of technical director Mr. Megaro, stage manager Samantha Brown, and

continued on page 2

LHS Selected to Test Driving Simulator

By Ty Josloff '16

Livingston High School was recently named as one of a mere three schools in the nation to be selected to test a new driving simulator. This simulator is a 3-D interactive technology that aims to teach students to be more aware and avoid the many hazards of driving.

According to an article published by the *New York Times*, the risk of motor-vehicle crashes is higher among 16- to 19-year-olds than any other age group due to their lack of experience behind the wheel. The simulator has the potential to reduce the risk of crashes by exposing students to an array of different driving scenarios in many different environments such as rural and urban roads.

Sophomore Paul Jojy praised the simulator, saying that its "myriad of different road scenarios such as changing lanes, making turns, passing vehicles, stopping at stop signs, yielding to pedestrians and other ve-

hicles, and driving through uncontrolled intersections on both rural and urban roads allow students to not only learn how to be alert and avoid hazards, but also teaches them how to be defensive drivers."

There is no denying that the simulator still has flaws, however. Sophomore Jesse Del Buono argued, "I found it somewhat frustrating that the simulator would constantly repeat the same situation several times and that on occasion I would be put in the worst driving case scenario that made the simulator feel a tad unrealistic to me."

As an example, he said, "While on the driving simulator, you often encounter people who would simply stand on the side walk, waiting for your car to approach, then, just as you were about to pass them, begin walking into the street and straight into the path of your vehicle, which is fairly unlikely to occur in real life." *continued on page 2*

A Mover and Shaker: Remembering Nelson Mandela

By Joan Shira '14

Nobel Peace Prize winner, activist, president, lawyer, father, prisoner: Nelson Mandela.

Mandela, the main proponent against apartheid in South Africa, died on December 5th, 2013. Prior to his death, Mandela had battled lung infections and was coming in and out of hospitals for months.

Apartheid was the legal racial segregation and discrimination of white supremacy; the white minority ruled over the political, economic, and social status of the black minority. For those in South Africa, he didn't only change the social system, but he also helped ease the nation's transition into peace.

After being convicted of conspiracy against the government, Mandela was imprisoned with a life sentence. During those years, the National Party in power banned photographs and writings from

Mandela. Eventually, Mandela was released at the age of 71, and even after spending 27 years in prison, he held no bitterness or resentment. He fought to end apartheid and suffrage for blacks, and in Mandela's greatest milestone, South Africa passed a new constitution that guaranteed full rights of black citizens.

While Mandela hoped for peace, people still wanted revenge. The country was desperate for bloodshed. Many didn't realize how close South Africa was to a full-blown civil war.

In 1994, Nelson Mandela won the first all-race election and became South Africa's first black president. "Our nation now teeters on the brink of disaster," Mandela said, "Take your guys, your knives, and throw them into the sea." He led a bloodthirsty nation, who imprisoned him, to peace and reconciliation. *continued on page 2*

4 & 5

New Teacher Interviews

6 & 7

2013: A Year in Review

9

Garden State Goes Gay

News 1 & 2

Features 3, 4, 5

Holiday Spread 6 & 7

Opinion 8 & 9

Entertainment 10

Sports 11 & 12

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If you have any comments or suggestions, e-mail us at:
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From the Desk of the Editors-in-Chief

On Saturday, December 14, news of yet another school shooting made headlines as violence occurred at Arapahoe High School in Centennial, Colorado. The suspected gunman, Karl Pierson, was a student at Arapahoe when he shot and severely injured seventeen-year-old Claire Davis just before shooting himself.

Pierson’s classmates point to a number of possible causes of his rash and violent behavior. Many of them accredited the shooting to *The Anarchist Cookbook*, a book that Pierson was fascinated with and had been reading since his sophomore year. Included in the book were instructions for readers on bomb making.

Others say that he was further provoked by long-standing animosity between himself and Arapahoe librarian and debate teacher Tracy Murphy. A classmate describes that Pierson was devastated when he was not allowed to participate in an upcoming debate. His unhappiness resulted in an argument between himself and

Mrs. Murphy which escalated to death threats.

On Friday of that week, Pierson intended to follow through on his malicious remarks when he headed for the school library armed with a pump-action shotgun, ammunition, and a machete with clear motives of harming Mrs. Murphy.

Although harm to students and faculty in this recent act of violence was fortunately limited to only Pierson and Davis, this event follows the continuous pattern of shootings that have frequently been occurring since Newtown, exactly a year ago.

As a result of these recurring and unpredictable shootings, students of all ages across the country are led to contemplate their safety in their school environment. Now, the question that everyone must ask is, “Can anyone prevent this from happening yet again?”

While many schools, including Livingston High School, are protected with cameras and security, who’s to say that this would

stop an armed individual from entering the school with the intention of harming students and faculty? Whether it be a student, such as in this recent shooting in Colorado, or an outsider, such as the shooting in Newtown, the unfortunate conclusion that we must come to is that the odds of stopping a dangerous and armed individual are slim.

Because of this, it is critical that Livingston High School and all educational institutions across the country make a considerable effort to cultivate a school environment that makes students the advocates for their own safety and the safety of their peers. All students and faculty need to keep this idea of community safety at the forefront in order to ensure a safe and stable school.

By doing so, this could instill a level of trust that has the potential to prevent violence better than any security camera can.

Crystal and Rachel

Don’t Drink the Water, page 1

... production manager Shay Weiser-Schlesinger, who all ensured that the show ran smoothly with its excellently designed sets. Additionally, the costume designer, Mrs. Ackermann, created creative and historically accurate costumes for each and every character. Sophomore Natalie Kahn reflects that “it was great to work with such a talented and amazing cast and crew on this incredible production!”

The entire cast and crew of *Don’t Drink the Water* excelled in creating a vivid, well-acted production of the play. So go ahead, pick a card.

Remembering Nelson Mandela, page 1

He unified a black and white country where every individual has the opportunity to succeed no matter their race.

Mandela initialized truth and reconciliation hearings, where blacks and whites were encouraged to admit their crimes they had committed to each other without being prosecuted.

After his death was announced on public television around midnight, a crowd went to his house and started singing and stomping their feet to a praise song. “Nelson Mandela, there is no one like you.” Their voices rang through

the midnight sky.

To the country of South Africa, he was their everything. “Our nation has lost its greatest son, our people have lost a father,” South African President Zuma said. To the world, Mandela was an unapologetic radical who inspired and will continue to inspire millions.

His legacy continues to grow everyday. He taught the world to forgive. He taught the world that words have greater power than war. To the greatest advocate of peace, may Nelson Mandela rest in peace.

“The greatest glory of living lies not in never falling, but in rising every time you fall.”

Driving Simulator, page 1

Sophomore Brandon Liu speculated on the lack of a sense of speed, stating, “On the simulator you could drive as fast as seventy miles per hour on certain rural roads yet the driver would still feel as if he or she was traveling at say thirty miles per hour due to the strange lack of adjustment to speed by the simulator.”

No matter how many miles per hour a student is traveling, he or she would still arrive at the destination in the same amount of time as a student traveling half the speed. Though the simulator has many perks, it is far from perfect.

In spite of the simulator’s minor flaws, the program’s benefits outweigh the problems found in the simulator. Thanks to the simulator, Livingston High School students now have the benefit of being able to gain a superior understanding of how to conduct themselves on the road and react to different real life scenarios that driving poses. Says one Livingston High School senior, “I wish more New Jersey drivers had access to these kinds of helpful resources.”

Chris Christie Re-Elected Governor



New Jersey governor Chris Christie won a landslide victory against challenger Barbara Buono. Image source: ABC News.

By Andrew Peng ‘17

Livingston High School graduate Governor Chris Christie was re-elected on November 5, beating out Democratic challenger Barbara Buono.

Christie received 60.5 percent of the vote, compared to Buono’s 38 percent. The incumbent was noted for his wide support from whites, independents, moderates, voters over 40, and Republicans opposing the Affordable Care Act. He also performed well among typically Democratic groups, carrying a majority of women and splitting the

Hispanic vote with Buono. Christie also gained an additional ten percent of the African-American vote compared with the 2009 election.

Rudy Fernandez, Democrat and mayor of Livingston, identifies one of the many so-called “Christiecrats,” saying, “I know that he cares about Livingston and the unique issues that we face—not as Democrats, not as Republicans, and not as Independents, but as someone who believes in government that works for all its citizens.”

Christie became the Republicans’ biggest winner on a

night in which the GOP was to lose the gubernatorial election in Virginia, which featured Tea-Party backed firebrand conservative Ken Cuccinelli. Christie, by contrast, portrayed himself as a pragmatic leader who worked with Democrats to get the job done.

Democratic opponent Barbara Buono ran on a platform of liberal values that include support for gay marriage and abortion rights, while Christie opposes both.

Christie’s bipartisan appeal did not sit well with hard-line conservatives, who make up the Republican Party’s most vocal supporters. However, when asked if he was a moderate, Christie bluntly stated, “I’m a conservative. I’ve governed as a conservative in this state, and I think that’s led to some people disagreeing with me in our state. The difference has been is I haven’t tried to hide it or mask it as something different.”

The Governor’s re-election has ushered in a new era for New Jersey, although it is unclear what accomplishments he has in mind for his second term.

features

LANCER CLUB UPDATES

Key Club

By Zach Hubert '14

Key Club is the oldest and largest student-led service program for high school students. The Livingston Key Club has over 260 compassionate and competent leaders who volunteer year-round. The club's core values include caring, character building, inclusiveness, and leadership.

Since the 2013-2014 school year began, volunteers from Key Club have already made an impact on the community. The Key Club has participated in a handful of events, including the annual Miracle Walk, events for the Livingston Advisory Committee for Disabilities, bingo sessions at the CareOne Center of Livingston, the Livingston 5K annual Health and Wellness Run, and senior citizen technology classes. In addition, the club participated in the district's Regional Training Conference, a bi-annual training session for all board members in Key Clubs all across New Jersey, held at Livingston High School.

In addition to community service, volunteers fundraise for The Eliminate Project. This cause is Kiwanis International and UNICEF's joint force to eliminate maternal and neonatal tetanus. Virtually unimaginable numbers of babies worldwide have fallen prey to neonatal tetanus

and a significant number of women have died due to maternal tetanus as well. Throughout the year, the club runs many fundraisers including car washes, bi-monthly bake sales, drawstring bag sales, restaurant fundraisers, the Kiwanis Kar-nival, and more.

Over the next year, the Livingston Key Club plans to keep up their volunteerism efforts around the community and serve in the best way possible. The Key Club is always looking for more people to join, so if you or anyone you know is interested in joining, please have them contact the president, Lindsey Wu (lindseywu712@gmail.com), or one of the advisors, Mr. Ladolcetta (Room E285) or Ms. Riggi (Room E284).

Future Physicians and Nurses Club

By Carly Taylor '15

The Future Physicians and Nurses Club is one of the newest extracurricular opportunities at LHS. If you are interested in medical school or the medical field as a whole, this club educates members about medicine and various occupations within it.

Club members will learn more about medical professions by listening to firsthand accounts from guest speakers who have

excelled in the medical world. The Future Nurses and Physicians plans to fundraise throughout the year to attend field trips to further broaden knowledge and fulfill curiosity about the extensive wonders of medicine and the body.

The ultimate goal of the fundraising: a field trip to observe a live surgery being performed. This opportunity will provide members a direct opportunity to experience medicine. Another possibility for a field trip would be to visit Bodies: The Exhibition in New York City, where students would get the chance to choose from over 200 actual human bodies and specimens to view and explore.

If you have any questions or suggestions, contact Sami Mindlin and Maggie Werner at lhsfuturephysicianurses@aol.com. The club is planning to meet on most Wednesdays. Your medical future awaits, and we hope to see you there!

Do Something Club

By Vihan Khanna '15

The Do Something Club is a part of the national organization dosomething.org, the largest volunteer organization for teens in the country with more than 2.3 million members.

For our first campaign of the year, we took part in one of the

many campaigns offered by the national organization, making birthday cards for children living in shelters. We had our many members come together to make a total of 41 cards. We also took part in running a money-saving workshop at one of our meetings, helping kids to start spending smart early.

For our next project, we are partnering with the Filipino Club on relief efforts for the recent disaster. The club is also planning a potluck for veterans where our members will serve a variety of foods. Another project is putting together an anti-bullying documentary. We know that while we may not always see bullying or hear about it, bullying still happens and it can affect some children. The documentary will spread awareness about bullying in our schools.

We are also planning some projects that we will do each year, such as writing letters to soldiers and wearing signs around our necks to let people know that human trafficking still exists in our world today. Every year we have many people participate in these two campaigns.

People are always excited for new and old campaigns with the Do Something Club. Stay tuned for upcoming projects, and feel free to join us in D163.

ROVING REPORTER: What would you do for a Gertrude Hawk bar?

By Jackson Rynar '17

“Lie about twerking.”

Danielle Ditono

“Pay as much as they ask.”

Aaron Kargman

“Pay double.”

Kerry Zak

“Chase the seller around school.”

Sydney Becker

“Nothing special.”

Ryan Demaio

“Pay 100 pennies.”

E.J. Okopie

“Steal one.”

Chris Bae

Gertrude Hawk Sales Satisfy Livingston Sweet Tooth

By Sami Spencer '15

If you saw large crowds gathering, waving dollar bills around brown cardboard boxes, then hopefully you joined in and purchased one of the delectable Gertrude Hawk chocolate bars sold by Ms. Cornell's Global Business class. You will not regret purchasing any of these flavors that support the Global Business course.

Global Business students have recently completed their second annual Gertrude Hawk chocolate sales. The sales started the second week of October and the class sold over 68 boxes with a grand total of 3,264 chocolate bars sold.

The incentive of this fundraiser was to raise \$12,000 for the class to attend the International Trade Fair in New York City where over 100 schools from across the world are represented.

The sale was so popular that senior Sarra Son sold out four boxes within the first week. “I think the



Gertrude Hawk chocolate flavors sold by Global Business students include milk chocolate, milk chocolate peanut butter, crispy milk chocolate, and caramel.

chocolate sales were a really good idea because they were really easy to sell, and everyone loves chocolate,” said senior Nidhi Shah.

The chocolate sale excited students including junior Mary Zhou, who said, “I looked forward going to school just so I could buy more caramel chocolates.” Whenever students saw the brown boxes stamped with two words, “Ger-

trude Hawk”, students flocked and got their chocolate fix for the day.

“The chocolate bars were all I bought for a whole week. I basically went broke from buying them,” said junior Christine Lee.

The chocolate sales spread happiness throughout the school. “As someone who knows that chocolate can brighten your day,” junior Matt Brown said, “I took solace in

the fact that I could purchase and indulge in a bar after a long test.”

The Global Business class has a virtual online business called Ltown Accessories, accessible at www.ltown.us. The class interacts with other businesses from countries like China, and Germany, as well as throughout the United States.

The class is divided into departments which students may apply to receive their desired job. An interview process is conducted by Mrs. Cornell, along with guest interviewers like Mr. Stern. Students can apply to be in Marketing, Finance, Information Technology, Human Resources, and Purchasing departments. Mrs. Cornell is enthusiastic about this course because it is “not your typical class... we learn by doing.”

The Global Business class had an open house on December 16, processing countless orders from interested Livingston High School students.

features

MEET THE NEW TEACHERS OF LHS: PART 2



FCS teacher Ms. Stacey Aneson.
Image source: Miranda Dambrot.



Math teacher Mr. Daniel Brill.
Image source: Miranda Dambrot.



Business teacher Mr. Merle Gehman.
Image source: Miranda Dambrot.



Science teacher Mrs. Jenna McCarthy.
Image source: Miranda Dambrot.

Ms. Stacey Aneson

By Gabby Watson '15

Dressed in a sweater, jeans, and a pair of tall boots, Ms. Stacey Aneson sits comfortably behind a desk at the end of B-Hall, flashing a wide smile at everyone who passes by. Her expression breeds content, familiarity, happiness, and a sense of belonging; in a way, it feels as if this new Family Consumer Science teacher has been a part of the school forever.

“It’s like I never left,” Ms. Aneson, a native of Edison, New Jersey, responded nostalgically when asked about her own high school experiences. “I always stayed after school, got involved in the Family Consumer Science club, made lots of friends, and took part in community service.”

Like now, home economics was then a big part of who Ms. Aneson was in high school. For one thing, it introduced her to a woman who would open up new doors within her life.

“My Family Consumer Science teacher inspired me to teach,” Ms. Aneson said with a smile. “I was shy and she broke me out of my shell. Plus, I liked my fashion class.” It was in this fashion class that a young Aneson developed a love for sewing, a favorite pastime. For formal events and proms, Ms. Aneson designed her own dresses and business outfits.

However, sewing is not the only thing she does in her free time. When she’s not in her classroom, this Family Consumer Science teacher can be found spending quality time with loved ones. “They are a huge influence and a great support system,” Ms. Aneson says proudly of her family.

Ten years from now, Ms. Aneson sees herself “married with children. She also wishes to become “a better teacher, an advisor of a nice strong afterschool Family Consumer Science program, and (hopefully) still here.”

“I love that every day is different at Livingston High School,”

she mused. Each student is creative and I like working with them and seeing what they make.”

Right now, Ms. Aneson has big dreams and words of advice for the students of Livingston High School. To the classes of 2014 and 2015, she advises students to “go visit any college you can. If you get the feeling that you feel at home, it might be right for you.”

To all classes, she encourages “having fun and making the best of everything.” Ms. Aneson concluded her interview with the words of Henry Ford: “Whether you think you can or you think you can’t, you’re right.”

Mr. Daniel Brill

By Jackson Rynar '17

From LHS student to LHS teacher, Mr. Brill is back in town teaching Algebra 1 and the College Math Seminar.

Mr. Brill graduated from Livingston High School in 2009, and the College of New Jersey in 2013. He feels that the greatest challenges of being a math teacher are trying to get students to do well and want to learn. Additionally, Mr. Brill aims to present information in an engaging manner. Mr. Brill describes himself as driven, dedicated, and loving.

When he is not teaching, Mr. Brill enjoys hanging out with friends and family, and exercising. He coaches wrestling and enjoys watching wrestling. Mr. Brill is also a New York Yankees fan, and enjoys country music, chicken burritos from Chipotle, and the color green.

When asked about his high school days, Mr. Brill responded that not only was he a good, respectful student but that he also had fun at the same time. One thing many people don’t know about Mr. Brill is that he has wanted to work at LHS since his junior year because he “wanted to give back to a community that gave so much to [him].”

Mr. Brill looks forward to making an impact on the LHS community.

Mr. Merle Gehman

By Sydney Becker '16 and Annie Werner '15

Principal Mark Stern and Mrs. Monica Cohen expanded Livingston High School’s business department this year with the hiring of finance enthusiast Merle Gehman, a veteran in product management at prestigious firms including J.P. Morgan, Chase, and Morgan Stanley.

As a boy, Mr. Gehman’s dream was to be a journalist. His career path changed, however, over the course of his high school career and attendance at Eisenhower College and under the influence of his economics professors. Mr. Gehman emphasized that he “liked jobs where you do something and you see a result.” Though he had been very successful in major corporations and businesses, Mr. Gehman ultimately decided to share his knowledge with eager students as a Marketing and AP Economics teacher, bringing his past experiences to his teaching.

Although Mr. Gehman frequently met success in his careers, there were points in his life where he felt discouraged. One of his first struggles occurred when he failed to pass an exam during his second stage of training to become a Chase banker. Eventually, he completed his training despite this obstacle. Though it brought down his morale, Mr. Gehman learned that in difficult times, it is imperative to “pull yourself together.”

Mr. Gehman reflected on how over the entirety of his professional career, his family has served as an inspiration. Mr. Gehman firmly believes that he “must recognize that not all students are the same”, much like his own children. This recognition motivates Mr. Gehman to teach supportively, allowing him to appeal to all different types of students.

Mr. Gehman hopes to teach his students self-empowerment and emphasizes that he is not the kind of teacher that wants to align his student’s interests with his own. Rather, he seeks to “inspire them to do what they want to do.”

Mrs. Jenna McCarthy

By FalyN Stempler '16

Mrs. Jenna McCarthy transferred to Livingston High School to teach freshmen biology. After college, Mrs. McCarthy taught at a smaller school with a vastly different schedule than that of Livingston High School; like all LHS students, she had to adapt to the new routine.

Growing up in an environment where education was valued, Mrs. McCarthy’s success is no surprise. Her parents always supported her and encouraged her to push herself and thrive in academics.

This lifestyle greatly affected her view of teaching and her belief that students should be motivated. An additional factor was the heavy influence of her high school AP Biology teacher, who inspired her to teach.

Now living in Florham Park with her husband Dan and her three cats, she feels blessed with her current lifestyle. In her free time, Mrs. McCarthy likes to ride a bike around her neighborhood or watch television.

Mrs. McCarthy enjoys teaching biology, particularly because the curriculum mirrors available at her previous school. She stated that her students strive to succeed in her class and take an interest in the subject. From the start of Mrs. McCarthy’s education she knew that she wanted to study biology because she “likes being able to understand how stuff works.” With this passion and tenacity, she earned a bachelor degree from the University of Richmond and a degree in Cellular Biology in graduate school at Emory University.

Mrs. McCarthy is now living her dream of improving the minds of children and teaching them the intricate topic of biology. She wants to show her students that science is not as complicated as they think it is. Mrs. McCarthy thrives in this environment where she can impact the lives of her students.

features



English teacher Mrs. Amy Roter.
Image source: Miranda Dambrot.

Mrs. Amy Roter

By Rebecca Schneider '15 and Shelby Shankman '14

Mrs. Roter, a returning English teacher at Livingston High School, clearly has a passion for teaching and enjoys helping students grow both intellectually and emotionally.

“Adolescence is hard,” says Mrs. Roter, who teaches freshmen and senior classes. “I like helping teenagers and I think literature is a good way to do it.” With her senior class, she discusses more mature topics, as they will soon be graduating and on their way to becoming independent adults. Mrs. Roter feels that “they can relate to more, and you don’t have to sugarcoat things for them.”

Mrs. Roter has two sons. One is two years old, while the other is five and just starting at Burnet Hill Elementary School. They are very silly and playful, she says: “I am lucky to have them, because they are awesome.” The hardest part about teaching is balancing her professional and personal life, making sure that both remain priorities. On the weekends, she spends her free time with her family.

Mrs. Roter warns seniors that “college is harder emotionally than it seems and you don’t need to know everything about your future right away. I’m still figuring that out now. It takes a while to find yourself.” If Mrs. Roter were not a teacher, she would pursue a career in psychology and therapy. “I am actually in school getting my counseling degree,” she said. “I’d love to do that.”

To write a good paper, Mrs. Roter recommends planning ahead. “That’s the best advice I could give. It really helps.”

Mrs. Roter graduated from the University of Maryland; however, Mrs. Roter found the school to be a little too big. Despite this, she has no regrets, living by the quote “what doesn’t kill you makes you stronger,” an inspiring message that reminds us all that we can always learn from our experiences. Mrs. Roter looks forward to passing on life lessons like these to her students.



English teacher Mrs. Jill Friedman.
Image source: Miranda Dambrot.

Mrs. Jill Friedman

By Nikita Maheshwari '16

Editor’s Note: Mrs. Friedman will be resigning this month. We wish the best of luck to Mrs. Friedman in her future endeavors.

As a new teacher at Livingston High School, Mrs. Friedman already has roots in the school district as a former LHS student herself.

The English teacher graduated from LHS, taught in three other school districts, and aspired to teach since “playing school in [her] basement in elementary school” with stuffed animals.

Her passion for literature developed in tenth grade. “I fell in love with the subject when I was reading *The Scarlet Letter* and *Macbeth*,” she explained. “When it finally clicked, and I first understood Shakespeare, it was like it opened a whole door to literature.

“It was in one of these rooms right in B Hall,” she added. “It was because of the teachers; they just inspired me because they loved literature. They were so passionate.”

Clearly, this revelation has impacted Mrs. Friedman’s teaching style, as she strives to find ways to get her students engaged and passionate about literature and writing. Though keeping students involved can be challenging, one of Mrs. Friedman’s favorite aspects of teaching high school students is “the sophistication of discussions and the fact that [students] can conduct very intelligent conversations in a mature way.”

Mrs. Friedman also appreciates the independence of high school students, as well as the incorporation of technology into lessons to keep students engaged.

Mrs. Friedman’s two young daughters also provide insight into the minds of her students. With her love for literature and teaching, Mrs. Friedman inspires her students to continue to learn and engage in their classes at Livingston High School, both through her presence and the lessons she will leave behind.

Senior Given Student Achievement Award from Rutgers University

By Rachel Geffner '14

In the midst of college applications, a heavy course load, and various extracurriculars, Livingston High School senior Ankush Rakhit has found his niche in cancer research. For his breakthrough findings, Rakhit received a Student Achievement Award when he presented his conclusions at an Endocrinology workshop at Rutgers University in September 2013. This prestigious award is usually given to Rutgers graduate students; however, Rakhit’s exceptional research made him the only high school student to earn the award.

Always having had a “natural predilection” towards science, it was clear that he would pursue his interest through the Science Research program at Livingston High School, thus beginning his research on colorectal cancer. In the early stages

of his project, Ankush was required to learn a whole new jargon of scientific terms that were necessary for the progression of his research. However, in later stages he was rewarded for his hard work with the opportunity to share his interesting findings.

When asked to describe, in layman terms, how the cancer treatment works, Rakhit explained that he focused his research on a molecule called the Beta Endorphin which has anti-tumorigenic qualities. With more knowledge about how this molecule functions, it has the potential to be used as a widespread treatment for malignant tumors.

While this treatment is in the early stages of development and can be used as a supplement rather than a cure, Rakhit is optimistic that more can be learned about the molecules that can potentially be a cure for this form of cancer.

Junior Named 2014 National YoungArts Finalist

By Oriana Tang '15

Junior Christina Qiu was recently named one of twenty-three 2014 Writing Finalists by the National YoungArts Foundation, an organization that nominates high school students for talent-based scholarships up to \$10,000 in various areas of the arts, including dance, vocals, cinematography, visual arts, and writing. Out of over 10,000 submissions, approximately 700 winners were chosen in total, with 170 Finalists distributed across the disciplines.

On her writing, Christina said, “Something that I really want other people to hear about is an Asian American voice. Right now, inside the Asian American community, there are some identity issues that American history has perpetuated and we as a society have never attempted to mend. And one of the ways we definitely can mend it is through education about minority groups other than women and African Americans, and I want my writing to be a part of that educating force.”

Christina’s nomination was based on two short stories, “The Miseducation of We” and “Lucy at Home,” that she submitted in October as a portfolio.

“The Miseducation of We” features a protagonist who watches her older sister reject her heritage while beginning to realize how little she herself knows about Asian American history. “Without education about an individual’s history, it’s really difficult to make a bridge between the gaps in the world of Asian and the world of American, so some people push away the world of Asian entirely,” Christina explained.

“That story was really looking at the effect of education, especially historical education, on minority groups and the molding of identity.”

By contrast, “Lucy at Home” is about a woman who worked as a nurse during the Vietnam War and, because of her experiences in the war, must deal with a sense of disillusionment upon her return to the United States. Based on the documentary *Lucy Comes Home*, the story examines the oft-overlooked racism that Asian Americans who served in the war had to deal with. “If we can look at these kinds of events through different eyes, we can look at [...] what it means to be a human more inclusively,” the author explained.

Christina, who started out in seventh grade writing humorous stories before turning to more serious writing, cites the writer and poet Sandra Cisneros and the singer Lauryn Hill as two of her biggest inspirations. “Cisneros was one of the first writers whose writing I felt was truly powerful and breathtakingly beautiful, so I spent the majority of my early writing trying to emulate her,” Christina said. “[And] I’ve been trying to infuse some parts of [Lauryn Hill’s] art that I really enjoy into my writing ... [and] trying to create this sense of warmth and humanity and social consciousness.”

For other writers, Christina advised, “Read a lot, have fun and experiment, respect other people’s work because they’re probably better than you—that’s what I do—and if you want to say something, say it, because it’s probably important.”

Christina will be attending YoungArts Week in Miami, FL next January.

Happy Holidays

WestJet Airlines Surprise Passengers with Christmas Gifts

By Melinda Hu '16

The holiday season is all about having happiness and cheer, spending time with loved ones, giving gifts, and doing other warm and fuzzy things. Holiday travel, on the other hand, is known to be a stressful obstacle— hearing flights delayed or cancelled, rushing to gates, being shoved around through jam-packed airports and train stations.

This November, however, WestJet Airlines, based in Calgary, Canada, decided to delight two flights of weary passengers coming in from the Hamilton and Toronto International Airports in southern Ontario with some special surprises. As passengers scanned their boarding passes at virtual kiosks, a video stream of a WestJet Santa Claus appeared on the TV screen, asking what they wanted for the holidays.

“An Android Tablet,” an elementary student stated.

“New socks and underwear,” a fatigued father said with a chuckle.

“A choo-choo train,” a young toddler replied. When Santa asked his parents about what they desired, they jokingly responded, “A big TV.”

One by one, kids, adults, and seniors alike visited the kiosks, re-

vealing what they wished for most this Christmas. Little did these 250 passengers know that hidden cameras were secretly recording their

later at the Calgary International Airport.

Santa greeted the unsuspecting crowd, and soon enough,



An overjoyed passenger exclaims in shock as he opens his new Android Tablet.
Image source: Vancouver Sun.

replies.

As the flights took off, WestJet volunteers in Calgary immediately jumped into their cars and scrambled to toy stores, Best-Buy, sports stores, and more to purchase all the items requested by the passengers. The over 150 helpers bought, wrapped, and delivered the presents in time for them to fall out of the luggage carousel when the passengers arrived four hours

confused looks quickly turned into bright smiles as passengers discovered that the packages were for them! Screams of delight mixed with disbelief were heard as they grabbed and opened their desired gifts of electronics, toys, and clothes. Many broke into tears of joy upon receiving a snowboard, a large plasma-screened TV, or a smartphone.

This wasn't the first time

WestJet Airlines pulled off a “Christmas Miracle.” Last year’s holiday flash mob had been such a success that WestJet decided to spread the Christmas cheer once more.

With the help of over a dozen hidden cameras, footage from this exciting event was edited into a YouTube video. According to the airlines, once the video hits 200,000 views on YouTube, it will start giving out free flights to families in need through its partnership with Ronald McDonald House Charities. As of December 10, 2013, the video has well over 2 million views, greatly surpassing the goal.

When asked about the recent “Christmas Miracle,” vice president of communications and community relations Richard Bartrem said, “This year, we wanted to turn our holiday campaign into a tradition by doing something that’s never been done before. Inspired by the notion of real-time giving, we wanted to surprise our guests with meaningful, personalized gifts when they least expected them. Being able to show our guests how much we care with gift-giving, a tried and true holiday tradition, resonates with WestJetters as much as our guests.”

Shedding the Materialism of the Holiday Season

By Natalie Kahn '16

The day after the holidays can be somewhat of a schoolwide competition of wearing the nicest, most expensive new clothing and accessories, and spotting those with new tablet computers or iPhones. Walking down the halls of the school can feel like a scavenger hunt of spotting friends’ new items. It is not uncommon to hear shouts of “cool new scarf!” and “loving those new sneakers!” echoing through the halls.

However, at times like these, it is extremely easy to get caught up in a frenzy of Beats headphones and iPads and forget the true meaning of the holidays:

“Ideally, this should be the other way around; spending time with family should come first, and gifts should come second.”

Even a holiday like Thanksgiving, a day to spend with family to reflect and be thankful, is often clouded by the impending “Black Friday” sales that, in many cases, start that very night. For a great deal of Americans, it is worth skipping some time with family for a low price on the hottest new flat screen television.

selves surrounded by text messages, emails, and newspaper and magazine advertisements, as well as radio and TV commercials from companies detailing the advantages of their products and prices. The most joyous and celebratory time of the year has a strong tendency to make Americans feel like they are stuck behind an impenetrable wall of advertising.

Sometimes, gifts have implications as well. Family gift exchanges can frequently turn into a contest of which family member bought a specific person the best and most expensive gift, which completely opposes the jovial, kind holiday spirit. Thus, quality family time can only be had when everyone is content with their spoils, therefore in a good mood to celebrate with family.

Ideally, this should be the other way around; spending time with family should come first and gifts should come second.

The “holiday spirit” is frequently depicted in TV commercials with happy, dancing people in the snow with their new BMWs, wearing silk scarves and white cashmere mittens. These commercials promote happiness stemming from material items, when, really, the true beauty of the season is rooted in quality family time.

Holiday Fun!

By Sami Spencer '15 and Joan Shira '14

F D U B K U H K F H P J V E M
D N C E Q P L L O P U Z E H I
H A K K U V I G S K N A H T S
S C H Z L G T R I T Z S B D T
K L A O H H A S N O W L A W L
A Z L T M E S T N E S E R P E
E S S E Y E P K H T R I A N T
R C E W B S A A W B U G T O O
B E E K E E N L R A B H N I E
R N E V T U L E O U N Z A T J
E T L D K A G G Q N F Z S A J
T E R K N N L N N W E C A C L
N K A E I I C H R I S T M A S
I H U G E T E M Q N J K C V E
W Y E K R U T R U D O L P H A

CHRISTMAS ELVES GINGERBREAD HANUKKAH
HOMEALONE JINGLEBELLS KWANZAA LATKES
LIGHTS MISTLETOE NEWYEARS PRESENTS
REINDEER RUDOLPH SANTA SLEIGH
SNOW THANKSGIVUKKAH TREE TURKEY
VACATION WINTERBREAK

2013 In Review

JANUARY



Second inauguration of President Barack Obama.

FEBRUARY



Baltimore Ravens win Super Bowl XLVII over San Francisco 49ers.

MARCH



Pope Benedict resigns, Francis appointed.

APRIL



Boston Marathon bombing kills 5, injures 280.

MAY



Bombing and protests in Syria and Lebanon.

JUNE



Edward Snowden accused of leaking mass U.S. government surveillance.

JULY



Former Egyptian president Mohammed Morsi deposed.

AUGUST



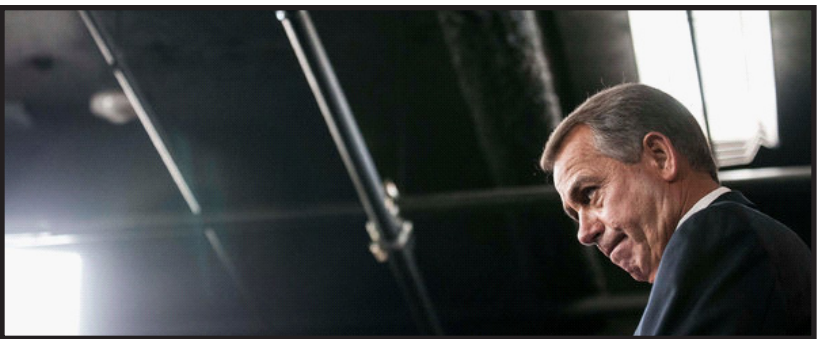
World's first bovine stem cell lab-grown hamburger eaten.

SEPTEMBER



United Nations confirms Syrian use of chemical weapons.

OCTOBER



U.S. federal government shuts down after healthcare debate ends in impasse.

NOVEMBER



Typhoon Haiyan kills over 6,000 in Philippines.

DECEMBER



Former South African President Nelson Mandela dies at 95.

opinion

Affirmative Action: A Flawed Foundation

By Amanda Glatt '15

Select your identified race or ethnicity.

We've all seen this statement on the SAT, AP exams, college forms, even job applications. We've all filled in the proper bubble corresponding to Hispanic/Latino, American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian, Black/African American, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, or White. But we, as teenagers, have rarely stopped and asked ourselves, "Why is this question here?" More importantly, we've never asked, "Should this question be here?"

With new court cases and controversies emerging, Americans, and especially teenagers, are beginning to scrutinize the long-contentious policy known as affirmative action. Affirmative action refers to measures and regulations that many public and private institutions have been obligated to put into effect to prevent racial, gender, and class discrimination.

Universities offer the perfect case study of the effects of affirmative action, as these institutions regularly engage in outreach campaigns and targeted recruitment to enroll students that would have otherwise never have been accepted due to discrimination or socioeconomic factors. Although affirmative action applies to gender and class,

most universities tailor their policies to curb racial discrimination. Hence, the ubiquitous "Select your identified race or ethnicity."

This all sounds very civilized and ethical in a country still simmering with racial bias. Why the controversy? The Supreme Court is currently considering a case involving the constitutionality of the 2006 referendum in Michigan that has explicitly prohibited affirmative action in the state. In fact, the court's decision could have far-reaching consequences as California, Washington, and Nebraska also ban the practice.

It's a no-brainer, right? These bans are clearly unconstitutional in that they promote racial discrimination and ban a successful policy, right? Wrong.

Affirmative action, originally meant to uplift talented minority students discriminated against by admissions personnel or without the means to apply to higher educational institutions, has failed. Universities have lost sight of its true purpose—equal opportunity for equal talent—and have used it to further self-serving goals, such as portraying themselves as bastions of equality and freedom.

The truth is affirmative action, with its newly narrowed focus on race, has been even further narrowed to disproportionately

benefit middle- to upper-class Hispanic and African Americans, leaving other minorities, such as Asian and European Americans, to fend for themselves. Even lower-class Hispanics and African Americans are often missed by affirmative action's too-narrow assistance. After all, racial affirmative action is very different from socioeconomic affirmative action.

Here are some of the actual effects of affirmative action:

A 2005 Princeton study researched the advantages that race conferred on SAT scores (on the original 1600 scale) for applications to three top universities. African Americans received a benefit of 230 points and Hispanics 185 points; however, Asian Americans had 50 points deducted from their scores.

A follow-up 2009 study demonstrated that Asian Americans on average need a 1550 (on the old 1600-point scale) to be competitive with whites who receive a 1410 and African Americans who receive a 1100. Controlling for factors such as grades and legacy, the study concluded that African Americans, Hispanics, and whites, are fifteen, six, and three times as likely, respectively, to get accepted to a university as an Asian American.

We like to laud affirmative action as a civil rights victory.

We focus, to be fair, on the significant number of success stories that have ensued from its implementation. Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor has argued that she would have not have been able to attend Princeton University had it not been for affirmative action. We concentrate on this. After all, affirmative action has an extremely noble purpose.

Unfortunately, though the intent is right, the execution is awful and, frankly, unethical. Universities used to practice a quota policy until that was ruled unconstitutional in 2003. Now, universities often blindly accept many unqualified students based on minority, ignoring qualified students of other minorities or even qualified students of the same minority but of a different socioeconomic class.

Affirmative action should not be banned outright because America, the so-called land of freedom and opportunity, is still filled with bigotry and discrimination. But affirmative action is the best policy America has to offer right now, and that is the real crime. Politicians should take a serious look at reforming the current affirmative action policy, or else talented and brilliant individuals will continue to fall through the cracks and remain mired in poverty, all in the name of fairness.

In Today's Wired World, Is a College Education Worth It?

By Andrew Peng '17

A longstanding belief continues to be pounded into America's promising high-school seniors by our society: Go to college, and get a job while you're at it.

All your life, your parents, teachers, and guidance counselors have constantly drilled the idea into your head that you must go to college. It is a common idea that if you fail to rack up satisfactory grades and attend at least a four-year college, the rest of your life will be a dismal failure.

At a glance, a college education may seem worth it. The four percent unemployment rate for those who hold college diplomas today is significantly lower than the eight percent unemployment rate for those who do not. Additionally, a college education, especially at an Ivy League school, may be a sign of success and higher intelligence.

It is well-known that the path of college is an extremely risky one. Tuition costs are at an all-time high, and continue to skyrocket at a frightening pace. The average American college student now has approximately \$26,000 or more in debt as they head into today's uncertain job market, and costs are expected to continue on an unpredictable trajectory. To put



Many college graduates experience struggle nowadays in an uncertain job market, even with expensive degrees. Image source: In The Capital.

it plainly, education is getting too expensive. Without a restructuring of the system to offer more affordable options, many students will not be able to reach their full potential.

College-educated graduates are not faring well in the job market. According to economist Andrew Sum of Northeastern University, more than 44 percent of college graduates under age twenty-five with degrees in area studies were most likely to be unemployed, or working in a job that did not require their degree.

In today's self-directed world, learning is easier than ever before. A rise in Internet resources and web-based college courses has allowed students to learn the skills

needed to succeed. Not only are a majority of these resources free, but they are accessible to anyone, nearly anywhere in the world.

Entire college courses can now be watched online. With the help of educational resources like Khan Academy, MIT Open Courseware, and Coursera, a student can grasp whole subjects without the burden of crushing, unforgivable debt.

This generation as a whole believes that with a college degree comes the security of a job and the skills to do it. Sadly, we have also come to believe that the price to get that degree is bearable. This was not the reality in your parents' or your grandparents' world. Now we see

students paralyzed in debt, coming out of college to find a job that they don't want.

Deybootcamp, a nine-week online course, teaches novices how to program for \$12,200, considerably less than a normal college degree. Yet return on investment is incredibly, almost shockingly, high. Three months after completing the course, over ninety percent of graduates found jobs, many with starting salaries as high as \$80,000.

The reason this happens is because the curriculum doesn't focus on "well-roundedness," which translates to "more classes." Instead, it focuses on "extreme employability," which aligns the curriculum with job incentives, benefiting employers seeking specific job descriptions.

You have the flexibility to choose your own education and your own life. We need to see getting a college education as a choice, not a pressure or an expensive requirement.

The rules of today are being rewritten, and most colleges aren't taking action to adapt to changing trends. In fact, they aren't even taking notice. It's time we take charge of our educations, and free ourselves from the crushing weight of debt—taking charge of our lives as empowered individuals.

opinion

The Battle Over Same-Sex Marriage

By Annie Rishty '14

On October 21, 2013, New Jersey became the 14th state in the nation to legalize gay marriage. Governor Chris Christie vetoed a gay marriage bill last year, creating unequal marriage rights for thousands of homosexual couples within the Garden State. However, a unanimous New Jersey Supreme Court decision on October 18, 2013 forced Governor Chris Christie to drop his opposing opinion, and legalize gay marriage within the state.

Christie wanted to appeal, but the Supreme Court denied Christie's attempt to put the decision on hold. However, he decided that it would be almost impossible to appeal the decision; unsure of his next step, Christie followed through by passing the law.

Homosexual couples across the state received valid applications for marriage licenses throughout the day on October 21, and mayors began officiating at

weddings at midnight that evening.

However, as word spread about the law, critics of same-sex marriage condemned Christie's decision to give up on his values, and warned that social conservatives across the country would hold the decision against him if he ran in the presidential election in 2016. Social conservatives claim that Christie should have continuously fought with the court referendum.

Nevertheless, Christie said that the issue should be decided in a national referendum or by popular vote. His victory in November's governor election has caused him to be considered a strong contender in the upcoming presidential election.

In response to Christie's proposal, a national survey composed by Gallup Poll in July 2013 found that 52% of Americans would vote in favor of same-sex marriage throughout the nation, while 43% would vote against the law. Yet, in

New Jersey on October 21, 2013, Rutgers-Eagelton Poll found that 61% of the population supports the legalizing of same-sex marriage, while 27% of the population is against the decision.

In all honesty, I think that this battle over same-sex marriage is ridiculous; it should clearly be a law based on the popular vote, like Christie said. Though Christie obviously made the wise decision, it is upsetting to see fellow conservatives turning against him based on the final, positive decision. Why should Christie lose the presidential primaries solely on the fact that his state legalized gay marriage?

Christie claims that he ran for re-election of governor because he wanted to finish what he had started. He wants the public to recognize that he has accomplished a lot since he was first elected as governor, but he still has a long way to go, enhancing New Jersey's economic policies and unemployment rate. One of his

accomplishments was giving all citizens in the Garden State equal marital opportunity, allowing everyone's rights to be exactly the same.

No governor or presidential candidate should be looked down upon because he or she did not perform the most "conservative" action, but should, rather, be admired because he or she made the most beneficial decision for the population as a whole.

Same-sex marriage is an issue that we should all support, and praise our governor for passing a law he was previously opposed to. Christie should try to support what is fair, instead of trying to impress his fellow conservatives.

There will be years of state-by-state battles of legalizing same-sex marriage, but as New Jersey citizens, we should be proud to say that we have won the battle, and that all citizens are free to love and marry whomever they choose.

“I’m Shmacked”: Better Than a Campus Tour

By Lily Rodino '17

The series of “I’m Shmacked” viral videos targeted at high school and college students truly sets out to show the other side of academia. I wouldn’t only recommend taking the typical tour with your parents anymore, since these videos seem to be the reason why kids do and don’t enroll at certain schools. They give viewers a rare glimpse into the social life and culture present at any given school with shots of the campuses, arenas and stadiums, and of course the partying.

The founders of the “I’m Shmacked” videos, Jeffrie Ray and Arya Toufanian, have produced more than 20 videos, all intended to show college life. More than 20% of polled students reported that these videos are the reason why they attended a certain school or the reason why they didn’t.

Watching these videos helps students narrow down their options. For some students, the depiction of campus party life may play a large role in these decisions. Yet what a potential college student should be asking is how authentic the party scene is, knowing that it was being filmed for a video about to go viral.

Regardless, the impact of these videos is immediate. After watching an amazing party, kids laughing, and tons of fun, who wouldn’t want to go to that school?

These videos make the college selection process a little easier. So log off Facebook, Twitter, or whatever social media site you’re on, and go find the “I’m Shmacked” video of your number one school.

Smartwatches: Are They Worth Your Time?

By Cobe Agbayani '17

Intelligent watches are already a staple in the world of fictional espionage, where every spy worth his weight in salt has a wrist-mounted communication device. Recently, however, the once science-fiction smartwatch has started to make its way into the real world. Samsung’s Galaxy Gear Smartwatch, the Kickstarter-fueled Pebble, and Sony’s SmartWatch 2 are some of the first examples of these new smart devices.

Samsung’s new Galaxy Gear Smartwatch seems like an excellent product. However, many early adopters are saying that the Smartwatch isn’t exactly what it seems to be at first glance. “Samsung may be one of the first major companies to offer a smartwatch, but the Galaxy Gear performs like a prototype rather than a product ready for prime time,” said Justin Rubio of IGN. Until a better alternative arrives for consumers, “it’s best that you save your \$299 for a cheaper alternative,” Rubio suggests.

And while the Galaxy Gear feels more like a watch than a toy on your wrist, Samsung’s contender is not as versatile as competitors’ smartwatches due to limitations in its functions. The app store for Samsung’s SmartWatch is bare, with its marketplace tallying just 50 apps total. On top of this, the battery life is said to be extremely poor. According to James Trew of Engadget, battery life came out to only two to three days of serious usage.

Sony’s SmartWatch 2, in stark contrast, was lauded by critics across the Internet for being more useful than Samsung’s offering, and, as Engadget stated in their review of the watch, “Sony made sure the

SmartWatch 2 functioned well as a proper watch – crazy, we know.”

However, even for Sony it wasn’t all hunky-dory. “This is also a third-generation device for Sony. That’s two more cracks of the whip than Samsung, yet still the software can be buggy, and the performance is not as smooth as you’d hope,” said Trew. And then there are the apps. A bulging library to choose from is one thing, but in reality, there aren’t many more useful apps here than you’d find on Samsung’s offering, which has been out for just a month. In either case, however, we’d encourage you to question your need for a smartwatch. Unlike a phone, what you want to get from a watch will differ greatly from person to person.”

And then there’s the Pebble, which is somewhat of an underdog. Pebble, unlike the first two smartwatches, was fully funded through Kickstarter, an Internet-based crowdsourced funding service. “The utility of the pebble is only fully realized after day-to-day use, and now, it’s part of my day-to-day routine,” says Scott Lowe of IGN. “It’s by no means perfect, but it’s a solid investment for anyone interested in the smartwatch space.”

Like the aforementioned smartwatches, the Pebble is capable of pairing with any Android and iOS devices that run anything above Gingerbread or iOS 5. When not paired, it functions like a regular watch. The Pebble is compatible with anything on your phone that supports notifications, and the side-mounted buttons allow you to play, pause or change tracks. You can also answer or reject calls with a press of a button. Lowe, like many others, is “excited for the future of the

Pebble and the smartwatch category as a whole.”

As smartwatch technology advances further as time passes, these three smartwatches could indeed find themselves with some serious competition.

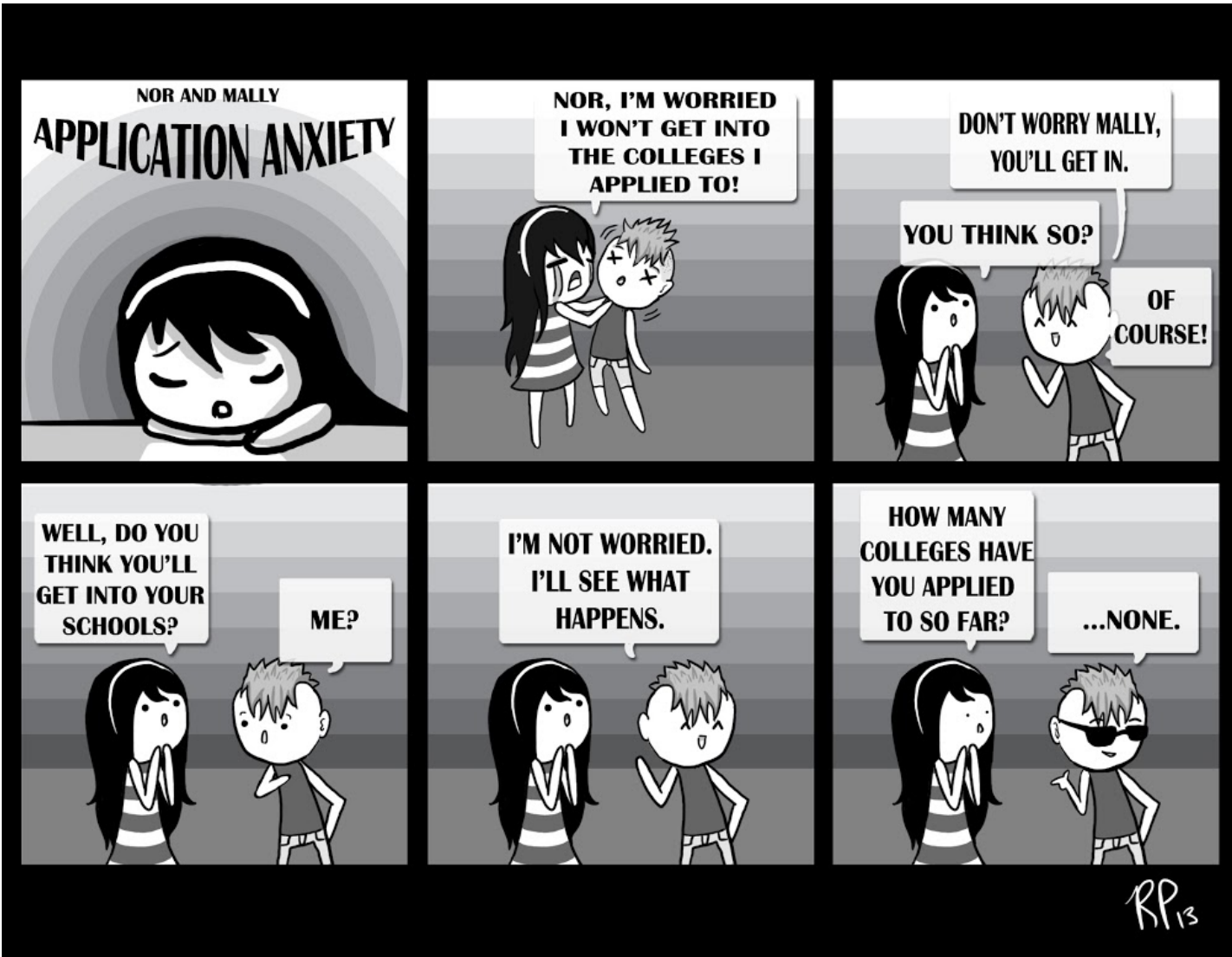


Galaxy Gear (Samsung), SmartWatch 2 (Sony), Pebble. Image sources: The Mirror, LaptopMag.com, and Time.

entertainment

Senior Perspective

By Rebecca Popper '14

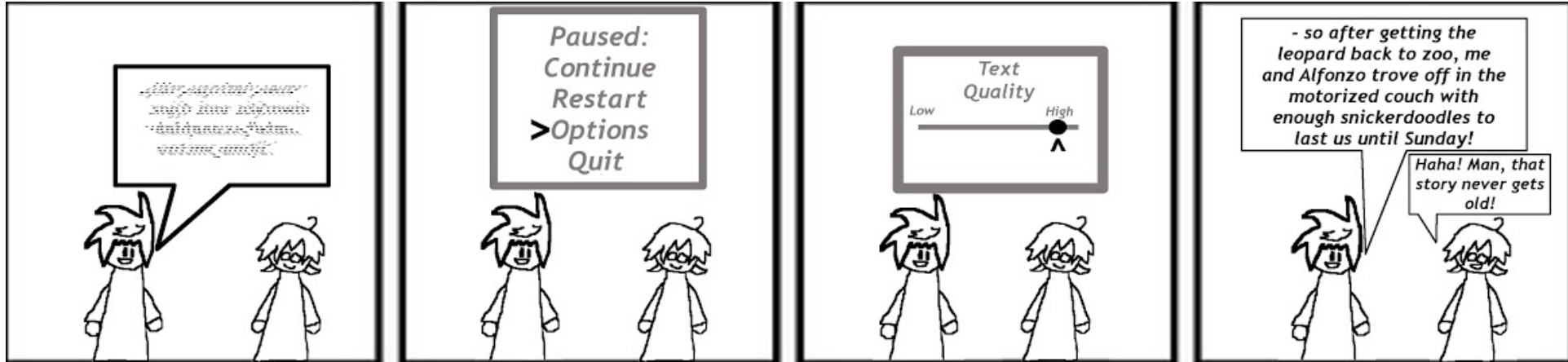


Editor's Mix Best of 2013

- A World Alone
Lorde
- On Sight
Kanye West
- Youth
Daughter
- We Sink
CHVRCHES
- Say Something
A Great Big World
feat. Christina Aguilera
- Counting Stars
OneRepublic
- Goodbye Yellow Brick Road
Elton John (40th Anniversary
Rerelease)
- Royals
Lorde
- She Keeps Me Warm
Mary Lambert
- Unbelievers
Vampire Weekend

Life's a Game

By John Lanigan '16

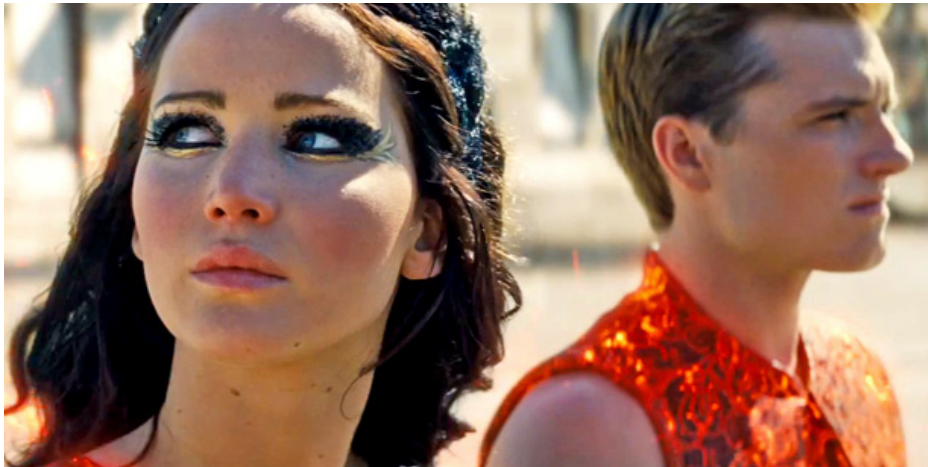


From the Girl on Fire to the Mockingjay: Catching Fire Sizzles

By Michelle Bao '14

Last year, in the silver screen version of *The Hunger Games*, we saw Katniss Everdeen (Jennifer Lawrence) triumph in a Battle Royale-esque fight-to-the-death all while ensnaring herself in a complicated love triangle with Peeta Mellark (Josh Hutcherson) and Gale Hawthorne (Liam Hemsworth). By the start of the second installment, *Catching Fire*, Katniss has involuntarily become the symbol and hope of the people's rebellion. President Snow (Donald Sutherland), in an attempt to nip Katniss—and the rebellion—in the bud, initiates the Quarter Quell, a special edition of the Games. This year's twist? The competitors will be chosen from past winners.

After the whirlwind success of the first film, Jennifer Lawrence, Josh Hutcherson, and Liam Hemsworth have been catapulted into the spotlight, their celebrity only heightening the general anticipation of the film's premiere. For most of the film, Academy Award win-



Katniss Everdeen (Lawrence) and Peeta Mellark (Hutcherson) take on twenty-two experienced victors in the Quarter Quell. Image source: Entertainment Weekly.

ner Jennifer Lawrence overshadows her male counterparts; she is magnetically watchable, drawing the viewer's eyes to her as she delivers a powerful yet nuanced performance. But we already knew she could act.

Perhaps the more exciting performances are found in the film's secondary characters. Hollywood veterans Elizabeth Banks, Stanley Tucci, and Woody Harrelson reprise their roles as

Effie Trinket, Caesar Flickerman, and Haymitch Abernathy, and they do not disappoint. However, newcomers Jena Malone and Sam Claflin (playing Johanna Mason and Finnick Odair respectively) are not lost in the shuffle. Malone delivers her lines with snarky charm while Claflin captures Finnick's charisma (plus, he's easy on the eyes)—indicating two promising careers.

In this film, Francis Law-

rence takes the directorial reins from Gary Ross, bringing a slightly darker sustained verve and less sentimental feel to the film. Although parts of the film lack suspense and the film develops slowly, *Catching Fire* is more energized than its predecessor, and its script remains true to the novel, bringing fully realized versions of the Capitol and the Arena to life. With director Lawrence officially signed on for the remainder of the series, we can expect a consistency and stability that has been lacking in many recent book-to-film adaptations.

Catching Fire has something for everybody, from a complicated romance to ruthlessly gripping action. It may not be a work of art and most likely won't be nominated for Best Picture at the upcoming Academy Awards, but it successfully realizes what it set out to do: create one of the year's biggest blockbusters and a worthwhile piece of entertainment.

sports

Word of Wisdom for A-Rod: Get Over Yourself

By Brett Weiser-Schlesinger '14

There's no doubt in any baseball fan's mind anymore.

Alex Rodriguez used steroids, has used them as recently as the 2012 postseason, and has repeatedly lied about his usage of them throughout his Major League career.

After the lies spanning from his original confession in 2009 to the controversy over the Biogenesis leaks in 2013, it has become clear that Rodriguez's usage of performance-enhancing drugs was not just a one-time event. Playing for the most popular sports franchise in America, the scandal over A-Rod's usage of steroids and alleged forthcoming suspension made up the overwhelming majority of the New York Yankees' media coverage during the 2013 season. Finishing at third place in the AL East with an 85-77 record with uncountable big-name injuries to their name (including A-Rod himself), most of this year's media-generated drama for the Bombers has been over him.

The controversy overshadowed stories that would have dominated headlines in any other year. A year characterized by stories like the retirement of Mariano Rivera, the long-term injury of Derek Jeter, the expiring contract of Robinson Cano, the pitching struggles of C.C. Sabathia—no, no one would even come close to the media coverage Rodriguez would receive over the course of the season.



A-Rod facing charges of steroid use. Image credit: Rich Schultz.

The soap opera really began on August 5, 2013, when after months of speculation, Major League Baseball announced the suspension of thirteen players around the league for connections with performance-enhancing drugs, provided by the shuttered Biogenesis anti-aging clinic in Florida. While twelve of those players accepted their punishments without a fight, the one player to refuse his discipline was, of course, A-Rod. Rodriguez was due to be suspended for the last 49 games of the season in addition to the entire 162 games of the 2014 campaign, including any Yankees postseason games for either year. However, Rodriguez immediately appealed, and under the league-wide drug agreement was still eligible to play while the appeals process took place. He played out the rest of

the 2013 season, returning from a hip injury on the day his suspension was announced, to a resounding chorus of boos from Yankee and non-Yankee fans alike.

While the fans of the other 29 teams wanted justice for Rodriguez because of his status as 'most notorious steroid user in modern baseball,' many Yankees fans were praying for a speedy suspension too. Any suspension for A-Rod would put the Yankees off the hook for at least part of the \$114 million owed in the last 5 years of his contract, opening up a great deal of contract space for the Yankees to be a major player in free agency—something they arguably haven't participated in on a Steinbrenner-like scale since the 2010 preseason.

A-Rod's response to all of this? Denial. In a November 20 interview with New York sports

pundit Mike Francesa, Rodriguez denied all of the MLB's current allegations against him, including using performance-enhancing drugs in the first place. Despite all the evidence stacked up against him, Rodriguez insists that he possesses evidence that "backs [him] up 100 percent."

What Rodriguez needs to do is own up to his mistakes. Every other player caught in the Biogenesis debacle accepted his suspensions immediately and admitted to his failure. Lately, Rodriguez has appeared to hardly care about what fans think. So why is he still attempting to convince the public that he is not guilty?

Rodriguez knows he's unpopular. He's heard the jeers of the crowd, the critique of the Yankees organization, and the criticism of the press. He has to stop acting as if anyone still believes his story, and accept the punishment that he so clearly deserves. Or, if he's so keen on keeping the "bad guy" image, he should embrace his suspension, admit to using steroids, and even brag about how much doing it helped him.

Regardless, if A-Rod wants to save the little dignity he has left, he needs to accept the punishment handed down by the commissioner. What kind of legacy would he rather have: one of screwing up and never admitting to his mistakes, or one of screwing up and at least accepting the consequences he obviously deserves?

Lancer Sports Updates

By Bob Towey '16

Boys Cross Country

The Livingston Lancers boys varsity cross country team holds a 2-6-0 Super Essex Conference record. They won against West Orange High School 31-25 and Millburn High School 29-28, and were defeated by Montclair Kimberly Academy 40-21. The team came in third place at both the SEC American Division Championship and at the Greystone Invitational, in first place at the Lancer Invitational, and in fifth place at the Essex County Championships.

The boys cross country team's record was assisted by great races from Mark Battista, TJ Herman, Josh Kaltman, Ryan Lindsey, Steve Shein, and James Sullivan. There were also remarkable performances from freshman twins Jalon and Nahshon Robinson, who, on September 17th, broke an old course record at Newark's Branch Brook Park for the freshman/novice two-mile race. The Robinson twins finished neck and neck and setting the new record at 11:30. Coaches Dave Czeizinger, Keith Chaudruc, and James Memory "wish to express our appreciation for the help and support we received for our running program."

Girls Cross Country

This year's Livingston Lady Lancers varsity girls cross country team holds a 4-4-0 Super Essex Conference record. Their victories came against Montclair High School, 30-27, Newark Academy, 32-25, Millburn High School, 41-18, and Mount Saint Dominic Academy, 36-26. They were defeated 38-18 by Belleville High School, 30-27 by West Essex High School, 50-15 by Irvington High School, and 31-24 by West Orange High School.

In addition, the team came in fifth place at both the Roxbury Invitational and at the SEC's American Division Championship, second place at the Greystone Invitational, and in sixth place at the Essex County Championship.

At the Lancer Invitational, Gina Riccardi broke the old course record time of 19:12 with a time of 19:05, smashing the old record by seven seconds. The Lady Lancers record is aided by tremendous performances by Kristi Kwok, Dana Levenback, Peyton Mendez, Grace Ming, Sara Navi, Gina Riccardi, Tammy Vu, and Dana Weiss, who put up great numbers so far this season.

Field Hockey

The Lancer field hockey ended their season with a 4-13-2 record. They defeated Mount Saint Dominic Academy 3-1 at their annual Play 4 the Cure game, Governor Livingston High School 2-1, Union High School 3-0, and Watchung Hills Regional High School 3-1. They lost 7-0 to Summit High School, 4-0 to Kent Place, 2-1 and 1-0 consecutively to Millburn High School, 5-0 Arthur L. Johnson High School, 8-1 to Montclair Kimberly Academy, 2-0 to Glen Ridge High School, and 8-2 to Montclair High School.

The Lancer field hockey team tied both Columbia and Westfield High Schools 0-0, making this season the first time that Livingston has not been defeated by Westfield High School. The field hockey team was led by senior captains Clara Berkeley, Jenna Davis, Amanda Katz, Sam Leshinsky, Marisa Parnes, Marina Roos, Rachel Roth, and Sam Waldenberg, and was sustained in goal by junior Olivia Cordero.

Coach Abby Palatucci said this year's field hockey team was "the most cohesive team that I've had both on and off the field."

Football

The Livingston Lancers varsity football team ended its season with a 4-5-0 record. Although they lost in their season opener to the Lincoln Lions 54-7, the Lancers defeated the Millburn Millers 21-14, avenging last season's devastating 32-0 loss, and defeated Columbia High School, beating the Cougars 17-7. However, Livingston's two game win streak was broken when the Lancers faced the Montclair Mounties, and lost 49-7. In their following matches, the Lancers defeated the Nutley Maroon Raiders 10-7, the Bloomfield Bengals 30-17 at the homecoming game, and lost 28-16 against the East Orange Bengals, 42-0 to the Seton Hall Pirates, and 21-0 to West Orange Mountaineers.

The Lancers performances on the field were supported by Ian Bambrick, Will Cardona, Brandon Cohen, Chase Everett, Matt Gibbon, Greg Glassman, Aidan Kelly, Zach Marini, Llewe Rocha, Jake Rosenbaum, Jonny Schreiber, and Mark Silvestri. Coach Barry Kostibos is proud of the effort that the Lancers put in, and says that the Lancer football team "improved with every game" this season.

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NFL Playoff Preview and Predictions

By Jack Spiegler '16

NFC

1. West: Seattle Seahawks

(Projected Record: 13-3)
The Seattle Seahawks are the best team in the NFC and one of the best teams in the league. The Seahawks dominate both in the passing and rushing game, with quarterback Russell Wilson and running back Marshawn Lynch running their offensive line. And the Seahawks have not only have one of the best offenses in the league, but also one of the best defenses. Cornerback Richard Sherman and free safety Earl Thomas make quarterbacks fearful of throwing the ball downfield.

2. South: New Orleans Saints

(Projected Record: 12-4)
The New Orleans Saints have bounced back after a tough year without Coach Sean Payton amid bounty allegations. In 2012, the Saints' record was 7-9 and their defense gave up the most yardage in NFL history. This year, the Saints defense has improved, and is one of the middle-tier defenses in the league.
Drew Brees is stellar this year, similar to the rest of his years as the quarterback of the Saints. However, running backs Darren Sproles, Pierre Thomas, and Mark Ingram need to step up their game in order to have a chance at the Lombardi Trophy.

3. North: Detroit Lions

(Projected Record: 10-6)
Calvin Johnson is by far the best wide receiver in the game, and is even more of a threat with the strong arm of Matthew Stafford, the fastest player ever to throw 16,000 receiving yards. Along with the fantastic aerial attack, Lions running back Reggie Bush is having a fantastic season and makes the Lions a dual threat.
With Ndamukong Suh leading the defense, the Lions are a triple threat team that could be dangerous in the playoffs.



Marshawn Lynch stiff-arms a Cowboy defender.
Image source: The News Tribune.

4. East: Dallas Cowboys

(Projected Record: 10-6)
Sorry, Giants fans. The Giants truthfully had an awful season, and the Dallas Cowboys should have the edge in the NFC to make the playoffs. Tony Romo is getting the job done in Dallas, with the help of running back Demarco Murray, and with linebacker Sean Lee emerging to be one of the best linebackers in the league.

5. WC1: San Francisco 49ers

(Projected Record: 11-5)
The 49ers may not have met the high expectations many had, but San Francisco is still a force to be reckoned with, led by mobile quarterback Colin Kaepernick and running back Frank Gore. Despite being one of the wild card teams, the 49ers skill level deserves better, but being in the same division as the Seattle Seahawks (NFC West) lowers their playoff seeding.

6. WC2: Carolina Panthers

(Projected Record: 11-5)
Yes, Cam Newton and the Carolina Panthers have shown that they are a playoff—and possibly Super Bowl—contender. Cam Newton looks like he has finally woken up from his previous year of mediocrity and is now playing at an elite level. The Panthers are my upset pick to make some noise in the

playoffs. Watch out, Seahawks and Saints!

AFC:

1. West: Denver Broncos

(Projected Record: 14-2)
Who knew that the oldest quarterback in the NFL could be leading the league in passing touchdowns and passing yards? Peyton Manning, at age 37, is having one of the best years of his career, and is playing like he didn't just have neck surgery that kept him out for all of last season. Manning's wide receivers are some of the best in football, and running backs Knowshon Moreno and Montee Ball are also playing at a high level. Look for the Broncos to make a long run in the playoffs.

2. East: New England Patriots

(Projected Record: 12-4)
Tom Brady has been one of the best quarterbacks in football, and is certainly playing like it, despite playing on a team where running back Stevan Ridley continues to fumble the ball and inexperienced wide receivers like Kemberell Thompkins and Aaron Dobson struggle to stay consistent. However, Brady still will have to rely heavily on his rookie receivers with the long-term absence of Rob Gronkowski if they still want to play in February.

3. South: Indianapolis Colts

(Projected Record: 11-5)
Indianapolis Colts quarterback Andrew Luck has shown that while he is not perfect, he still has the potential to be one of the best quarterbacks in the league. Luck does not have much help on offense, with T.Y. Hilton as his best receiver and Donald Brown now as his top running back with recently acquired Trent Richardson getting benched. Despite these weaknesses, Luck is still talented enough to win games.

4. North: Cincinnati Bengals

(Projected Record: 10-6)
HBO's "Hard Knocks" has made the Cincinnati Bengals one of the more likable teams in the NFL, except if you're a fan of another AFC North team. Wide receiver A.J. Green is putting up stellar numbers, even with a struggling quarterback in Andy Dalton. Running backs Giovani Bernard and BenJarvus Green-Ellis are also helping the Bengals win games, but Dalton needs to bring his level of play up for the postseason.

5. WC1: Kansas City Chiefs

(Projected Record: 12-4)
From worst to first, The Kansas City Chiefs—yes, the Chiefs—are one of the best teams in football after having the worst record in the NFL the year before. Under coach Andy Reid, former Heisman-winning quarterback Alex Smith and Pro Bowl running back Jamaal Charles, the Chiefs are deserving of a better seed, but are unfortunately placed in a division with the AFC-best Broncos.

6. WC2: Baltimore Ravens

(Projected Record: 10-6)
The Baltimore Ravens won the Super Bowl last year, but are not playing up to par. The second wild card slot for the AFC is wide open due to the awful AFC records among teams outside of playoff spots, and could just as easily be awarded to a team like the Tennessee Titans.

Key Lancer Games to Watch

Fri, January 3:

4:30 Boys and Girls Fencing
vs. Millburn High School

Mon, January 6:

4:00 Boys Varsity Basketball
vs. Montclair Kimberly Academy

Thu, January 9:

3:30 Boys and Girls Swimming
vs. Newark Academy

Fri, January 10:

7:00 Boys Varsity Wrestling
vs. Bloomfield High School

Fri, January 10:

6:45 Boys Ice Hockey
vs. Watchung Hills High School

Fri, January ?:

4:30 Boys and Girls Fencing
vs. Millburn High School



The Lancer hockey team hits the ice. Image source: Livingston High School.