

the
TALON

DECEMBER



2020 VISION

A sneak peek at the presidential candidates.

TIKTOK FAMOUS

SPHS students who have gone viral.

NICE ON THE ICE





Ice hockey hopes to heal last season's heartbreak.

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TALK TO US

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COVER PHOTO

Although social media has many positive aspects, negative features appear as well. For years it has been used to post photos and connect with people, but there are risks that come with over-sharing on social media. "Don't post things that are unkind, inappropriate, illegal or anything that creates a negative perception of yourself," senior Rosslyn Scott said. Graphic by KC Galloway and Hunter Brittell.



Every year, high school athletes attend National Signing Day to officially commit to their colleges. Last spring, senior Camryn Chew committed to Loyola University Maryland for women's lacrosse. "It was exciting to officially become a Loyola Greyhound in front of all my friends and family," Chew said. Photo courtesy of Evan Lewis.

What's Happening This Month?

- Dec. 2:** RnR Safe Harbor Meeting
- Dec. 2 - Dec. 5:** Mock Interviews
Library Closed
- Dec. 5:** Unity Day (Wear Orange)
- Dec. 5:** Two-Hour Early Dismissal
- Dec. 8:** Boys Basketball v. Indian Creek
- Dec. 6:** Improv Night
Boys Basketball v. South River
Girls Basketball v. South River
- Dec. 9:** Boys Basketball v. Patapsco
- Dec. 11:** Talon Fundraiser at Chipotle
Winter Dance Concert
- Dec. 12:** Ice Hockey v. Kent Island
Winter Dance Concert
- Dec. 13:** Boys Basketball v. Broadneck
Girls Basketball v. Broadneck
- Dec. 16:** Boys Basketball v. St. Mary's
Girls Basketball v. St. Mary's
- Dec. 18:** Boys Basketball v. Howard
Girls Basketball v. Howard
Music Department Winter Concert
- Dec. 20:** School Assembly (Holiday Concert)
- Dec. 22:** First Night of Hanukkah
- Dec. 23 - Jan. 2:** Winter Break
- Dec. 30:** Last Night of Hanukkah
- COMING IN JANUARY**
Jan. 3: Club Picture Day
- Jan. 10:** One Acts

2020 Vision

The 2020 presidential election is less than a year away— here are the top candidates.

The 2020 presidential election is fast approaching, with Maryland primaries this April. While not all SPHS students will be eligible to vote in this election, it is important for everyone to stay up to date on the candidates and their platforms. Here are the frontrunners as of December 2019:

by Carey Cameron | News Editor



Donald Trump

President Trump is running on a similar platform to 2016. He wants to reduce illegal immigration, repeal Obamacare and ease tensions toward foreign adversaries such as China and Russia. He is also running on his successes from the past four years, especially the booming economy. His approval rating is low amongst some voters, but his successful debating techniques and strong base will be challenging to beat. "I'll probably vote for Donald Trump in 2020 because out of all the candidates, his views align with mine the most," senior Connor Garmey said.

Joe Biden

Former Vice President to Barack Obama, Biden is leading the crowded Democratic primary race. According to a Washington Post survey, Biden is polling at 28 percent. Since

his days in the Senate, Biden has become significantly more liberal in his views. He has reversed his position on the Hyde amendment (prohibiting federal funding for abortion) and mass incarceration. Although his experience and more moderate views make him popular amongst older voters, younger voters tend to dislike Biden, in part because of his controversial "touchy" nature, along with his age and more centrist positions.

Bernie Sanders

Despite being the oldest candidate in the race, Sanders is coming back stronger than ever this election. Running on the most liberal platform, his key positions from 2016 have not changed. He supports free college, government-sub-

sidized health care and the Green New Deal to address climate change. Some Democrats worry that Sanders's left-leaning policies only attract younger voters who do not turn out in numbers as high as older voters. There is also concern over the realism of his proposed policies.

Elizabeth Warren

The current junior senator from Massachusetts has recently surged in popularity, raising Warren to the third spot in the race. This uptick is no accident; her detailed plans and her debate performances are reflected in the polls. She plans to increase taxes on the wealthy, work towards a Medicare-for-all health insurance system and supports teachers' rights such as better pay and smaller classes. "I like her ideas of reducing interest rates on student loans, her healthcare plan and prison reform ideas," senior Rosslyn Scott said.

Many SPHS students are making decisions about which candidate to vote for in the next election cycle. Senior Rosslyn Scott made her decision to support Democrat candidate Elizabeth Warren. "I like her ideas of reducing interest rates on student loans, her healthcare plan and prison reform ideas," Scott said. Graphic by Kiley Clements.

iSpy

Do colleges actually review applicants' social media?

by Greer Long | Editor-in-Chief

Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter: these social media platforms are the most popular among teenagers and young adults. Because of social media's vast scope and lack of privacy, people can obtain information about others at the click of a button. Although there are options like private accounts and blocking people, these do not guarantee protection from unwanted guests being able to see your posts.

These unwanted guests may not only include your grandmother and middle school soccer coach, but also possibly college admissions officers. According to a 2018 Kaplan Test Prep survey, about 25 percent of college admissions officers review applicants' social media profiles. This number, however, has diminished from a high of 40 percent in 2015 due to social media users' increased privacy precautions. Although the extent to which colleges examine applicants' social media will never be known for sure, there may be a higher chance of it being reviewed by more prestigious schools.

"It's usually competitive schools or smaller schools who talk about having looked at people's social media," College and Career Center specialist

Nancy Jackson said.

There are also cases, such as athletic scholarships, when colleges are more likely to monitor a student's presence on social media.

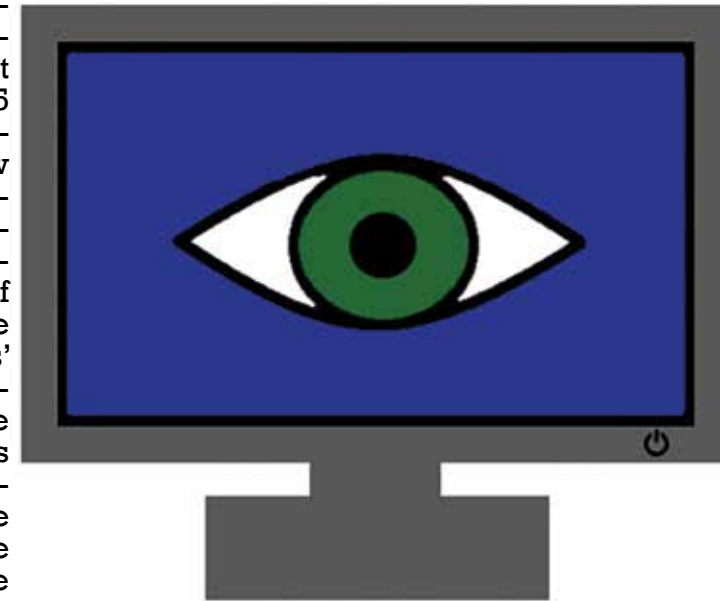
"When I was in middle school, a high school senior who had an athletic scholarship to a Division 1 school posted a picture that was highly insensitive to members of my community. The university took away her scholarship and almost decommitted her for her sport," senior Rosslyn Scott said. Whether the post was meant to be offensive

or not, colleges are extremely careful when it comes to controversy. "They look for anything that could be illegal or harmful towards other groups of people or yourself," Scott said.

Although social media at times fosters negativity, colleges often use these platforms in a positive way to get a feel for applicants' lives. "There's a misconception where kids think admissions are trying to deny them, but they're really trying to find out if you're a good fit for the school... they're trying to find ways to admit you," Jackson said. Additionally, admissions officers may check students' social media profiles if they were alluded to in the application, which is another way the Internet can impact the college admissions process.

It is better to be safe than sorry in today's world of social media. "Don't post things that are unkind, inappropriate, illegal or anything that creates a negative perception of yourself," Scott said. No matter how many followers you have or how private your account is, always think

before you post, because one small mistake can leave a large impact. "If it's something that your grandmother doesn't want to see, then don't post it," senior Wes Winkler said.



Social media is a useful way for colleges to get to know applicants, but it can come with a price. According to a Kaplan Test Prep survey, about 25 percent of college admissions officers reviewed applicants' social media profiles in 2018. "If it's something that your grandmother doesn't want to see, then don't post it," senior Wes Winkler said. Graphic by Matt Mangano.

Exclusive Interview with Steuart Pittman

The county executive discusses issues important to students.

by Connor Killeen | Editor-in-Chief



PRIOR TO BEING COUNTY EXECUTIVE YOU REHABILITATED HORSES ON YOUR FARM IN SOUTH COUNTY. WHY DID YOU SWITCH TO POLITICS AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT THAT STUDENTS BE ACTIVE IN LOCAL AND NATIONAL POLITICS?

I had been involved straight out of college as a community organizer for 10 years,

County Executive Steuart Pittman composes at his computer in his Annapolis office. Pittman was elected in 2018, running on a progressive platform that included increasing funding for public education. "It's a good old fashioned way of government, to have progressive taxes, it's not new, it's not radical, it's FDR and JFK," Pittman said. Photo by Connor Killeen.

trying to empower low and moderate income people to engage in politics and have more influence on what goes on. It seems that folks with the money are the ones calling the shots. Politics for me is like coming back to those issues, which I knew inside I always would. I try

to use the power of the office to make the world a better place. Students should get involved in the issues first, there's nothing worse than a person running for an office just because they want the power of the office. It works much better if they're doing it because they want to

solve a problem; they want to fix something. My advice to students is that they should put in time working on the issues, so they know what they are talking about.

IS YOUR ADMINISTRATION PROPOSING ANY LEGISLATION TO CURB CARBON EMISSIONS AND PREVENT SEA LEVEL RISE?

Absolutely. We have 535 miles of coast, and there's going to be a lot of people whose lives will be impacted in ways we haven't even measured. This county is going to lose a lot of land. To combat this, we have created a new position, the Environmental Policy Director. Part of that person's job is to get county government to use more renewables, be more energy efficient and to help achieve goals that move the county towards renewables for electricity. Additionally, the Forest Conservation Bill will try to drive development into areas that do not have trees. Anne Arundel County has clear cut more than any other county in the state of Maryland since 2010. We are responsible for more than 40 percent of all the tree loss in the state, but represent less than five percent of the land mass. We are going to make it much more expensive for developers to build where there are trees. They will either have to replant as many trees as they cut down or they will have to pay fees that are prohibitively expensive. The current fees are quite low and we are going to raise them.

IN A SURVEY BY THE SARAH T. HUGHES FIELD POLITICS CENTER CONDUCTED SEPT. 13 TO SEPT. 18, 2019, 74 PERCENT

OF MARYLANDERS SAID THEY WOULD SUPPORT AN INCREASE IN TAXES TO IMPROVE PUBLIC EDUCATION. ARE YOU TAKING STEPS TO INCREASE THE FUNDING OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY? WHERE IS THIS MONEY COMING FROM?

Our first budget when I came into office increased funding for public schools a lot. We hired 140 new teachers, 35 new counselors, and 50 new special ed teachers. We also instituted step-raises for teachers. It was expensive, so we raised both property taxes and income taxes. I hope we don't have to do that again, but if we have to we will. I think that's right that people are willing to raise taxes to have better schools. Unfortunately, the income tax in Maryland is a flat rate (formerly 2.5 percent) and we increased it to 2.8 percent. We are trying to get the state to pass a bill that allows counties the authority to tax progressively, so there's a higher rate for higher income people. Since 1980 and the Reagan election, the tax bracket for the top income people dropped from 70 percent to 35 percent. A tax rate of 70 percent or above for the wealthiest Americans creates the middle class. It's a good old fashioned way of government, to have progressive taxes, it's not new, it's not radical, it's FDR and JFK.

STUDENTS LOVE TO GO TO THE BEACH. WHAT IS YOUR PROPOSAL FOR ANOTHER SPAN OF THE BAY BRIDGE? OUR COUNTY BEARS THE BRUNT OF THE TRAFFIC PROBLEMS

AS DRIVERS ATTEMPT TO CROSS THE BAY. WHAT BENEFITS DOES ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY RECEIVE FROM THIS? WHERE DOES THE REVENUE FOR THE BRIDGE GO?

Traffic should be reduced with more public transportation and implementing all-electronic tolling so people aren't slowing down to get through those booths.

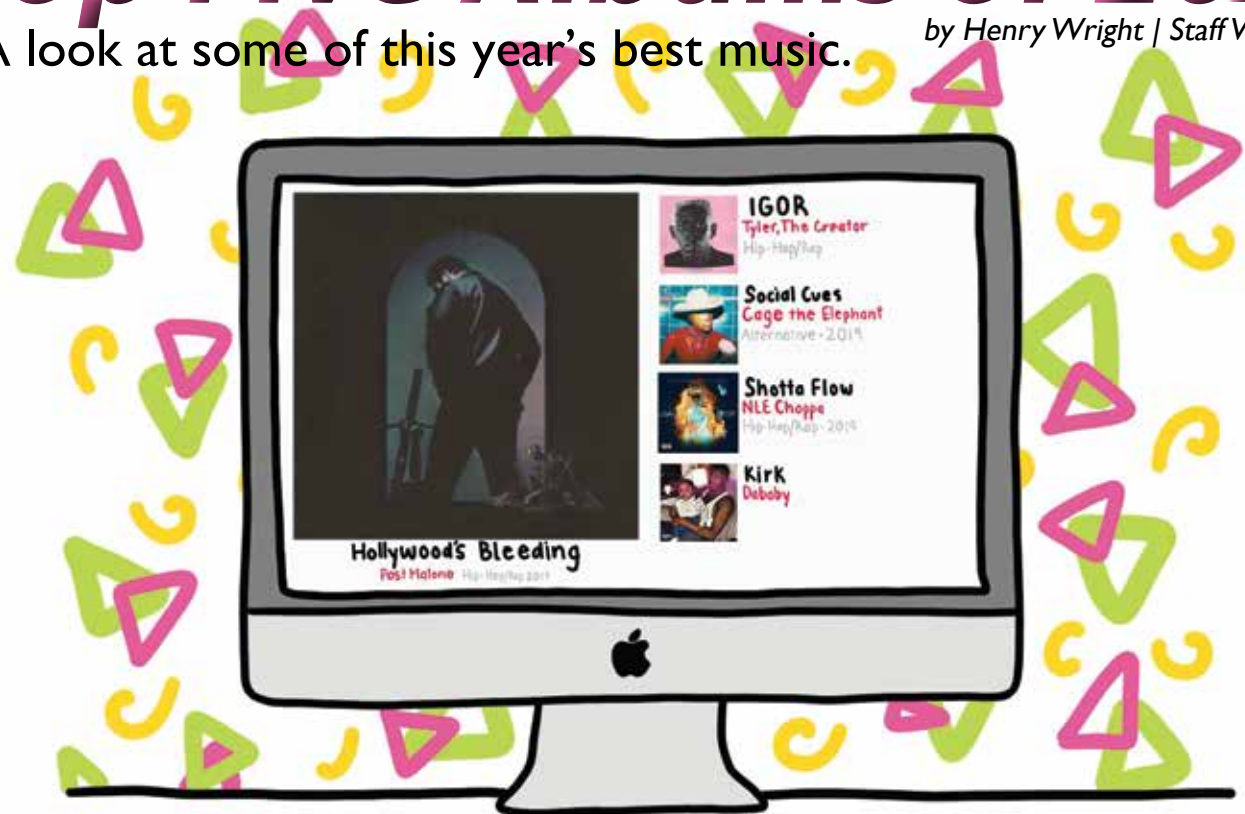
Zero. The Bay Bridge is a state road and none of the tolls from the bridge are collected by Anne Arundel County. In fact, the governor has recently cut the toll rate that goes to bridge upkeep. This governor is committed to a third span. The third highway is a way to get cars to sprawl development on the Eastern Shore, it will not decrease traffic on the Bay Bridge.

DUE TO RECENT MASS SHOOTINGS, THE MAJORITY OF AMERICANS SUPPORT STRICTER BACKGROUND CHECKS AND LAWS CONCERNING WHO CAN OWN GUNS. WHAT STEPS IS YOUR ADMINISTRATION TAKING TO PREVENT MASS SCHOOL SHOOTINGS IN ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY?

We have convened a gun violence prevention taskforce that will do a preliminary report on Dec. 15 (in time for the legislative session). I believe that we need to strengthen state and federal laws too and we will lobby for those changes. 78 percent of residents support a bill that puts the same regulations on handguns as rifles. But we can do more on closing background check loopholes.

Top Five Albums of 2019

A look at some of this year's best music. *by Henry Wright | Staff Writer*



Many students are enjoying the great music released this year. 2019 brought many new albums such as Post Malone's "Hollywood's Bleeding." "There is not one song on that album that I wouldn't bop to," freshman Lainey Ordakowski said. Graphic by Lily Jarvis.

There has been countless releases from artists in various genres in 2019. With albums from earlier in the year and some released just days ago, this top five list includes meaningful, fun songs from the past 12 months.

Post Malone's new album, "Hollywood's Bleeding," takes the number one spot on the list with praise from people of all ages. "Definitely my favorite album from him. There is not one song on that album that I wouldn't bop to," freshman Lainey Ordakowski said. Released on Sept. 6, standout songs "Circles" and "Hollywood's Bleeding" have already become two of the artist's most

played songs on Apple Music.

Released on May 17, Tyler the Creator's new album "Igor" has solidified itself into one of the best albums of 2019. "Igor" is loved by many and has quickly become an anthem for students everywhere. "I don't normally listen to Tyler but I immediately fell in love with the album as soon as I listened to it," junior Molly Beirsto said.

Released a month earlier on April 19, Cage the Elephant's new album "Social Cues" follows "Igor" for best album of 2019. "Always good. I love Cage the Elephant and Social Cues just made me love them even more. 'Ready to Let

Go' is one of my favorite songs from the album. It's such an upbeat and happy song," Beirsto said.

NLE Choppa's "Shotta Flow" and DaBaby's "Kirk" finish off the list. "[Shotta Flow] is a hype album. I always listen to a few of its songs whenever I need to get pumped up for something," sophomore Ryan Laughlin said. Up-and-coming rapper DaBaby has released two albums this year, with "Kirk" being his most recent, released on Sept. 27. "Kirk has some great songs to just vibe to. I hadn't even heard about it until the day it came out," Laughlin said.

Get Chopt

Everything you need to know about Annapolis's newest salad restaurant.

by Caroline Murphy | Guest Writer

In the Festival at Riva Shopping Center, a new salad restaurant called Chopt is now open to the public. Chopt is a build-your-own style restaurant that offers a wide variety of salad toppings, ranging from avocado to wild-caught shrimp. Customers can select a pre-made salad with no added charges for the toppings, or they can create their own. For the make-your-own salads, customers are allowed four add-ins and charged 79 cents for each additional topping. Each salad with four add-ins starts at \$8.29, but this does not include any proteins. Added proteins like shrimp, chicken and avocado range from \$1.99 to \$4.49, so the final cost can be pricey compared to the starting rate. For the best deal, consider buying the pre-made salad combinations because everything is included in the price. Each salad is served with a complimentary piece of bread made fresh at a local bakery.

Chopt accommodates for people with special diet restrictions. There are vegan options noted by a small leaf next to them on the menu. Chopt also has a menu full of salads that are all under 400 calories for those who want a light, low-calorie meal. The light salads do not lack the variety of toppings as one might expect. For instance, the Asian crunch salad contains all sorts of vegetables like carrots, broccoli and



The new restaurant, Chopt, has everything to accommodate any salad lover. It opened a few weeks ago in the Festival at Riva Shopping Center. Photos by Greer Long.

pickled onions, and comes with crispy shallots, grilled chicken and sesame ginger dressing.

Salads are not the only thing on the menu, as Chopt also serve wraps and warm grain bowls. The wraps include all of the ingredients from the salad menu, but the customer can ask to wrap it up. This is a great alternative for those who don't want a salad by itself. Warm grain bowls are another alternative to salads; they consist of a mixture of warm grains with the same add-ins used in the salads.

Chopt has hundreds of delicious salad combinations to satisfy any salad lover, however the customer service is subpar. As expected, the restaurant be-

comes extremely busy around lunchtime, yet the employees did not seem to be focused on moving the line faster. Some employees did not pay close attention to customers' orders and even missed important parts of orders. At one point, an employee did not hear a gluten-free customer ask for no bread, so it was added to the order anyway.

Although Chopt could work on its customer service, it is a great new restaurant for anyone who likes salads or wants to try something new in the Annapolis area. Go try Chopt for a healthy meal full of both nutrients and flavor.

This Holiday Season...

An inside look at students' holiday celebrations.

by Amanda Vu | Opinions Editor

Graphics by Olivia Unger

All Darkness Becomes Light on Diwali

On Oct. 27, junior Mudit Mathur celebrated Diwali, or the "Festival of Lights," which praises clarity in returning home by the lighting of candles and "diyas," or oil lamps. Dating back over 2,500 years ago, Diwali continues to be one of the largest religious observances in the world. "It's special to me because my family and I have done it for a very long time, so it's not only a religious celebration, but a traditional one as well," Mathur said. Welcoming the return of Lord Rama, a beloved ruler, after his 14 years in exile, the people of Ayodhya illuminated the capital and burned fireworks. Traditionally, families will keep candles and lights on for the entirety of the day and take part in "puja," or nightly prayers. "The candles and lights serve as a way to light the path and guide them back, so we keep them on in our home the whole day." After prayer, Mathur and his family eat Dodha barfi, an indulgent treat made from milk, heavy cream, sugar, nuts and ghee.



The Menorah is Lit During Hanukkah

This year, Hanukkah is observed from Dec. 22 to Dec. 30. Hanukkah celebrates the triumph of the people of Israel after the defeat of their oppressive Syrian-Greek rulers during the second century B.C. The main festivity is the lighting of the menorah. There are nine candles total, including the attendant, or "shamash," candle in Hebrew, which is used to light one candle each of the eight nights. Hanukkah Gelt, chocolate coins used during the game of Dreidel, is something senior Caroline Farrell looks forward to every year. "We use them when we're playing Dreidel and also for currency," Farrell said. Farrell's family also gives back during Hanukkah. "My temple has a winter relief program where they take in homeless people during the holidays. We come to make food, eat it with them and prepare their lunch for the next day." In addition, Farrell helps prepare traditional Jewish foods like challah, a special braided bread, as well as latkes, fried pancakes which are made of shredded potatoes. "Those are really good with applesauce," Farrell said.

Families Gather for Chinese New Year

Chinese New Year, or Lunar New Year as referred to globally, is a celebration of the beginning of a new year on the Lunar Calendar. Senior Victor Lee takes part in the celebration by preparing the Hot Pot, a Chinese cooking method with a large pot of soup in the middle of the table and surrounding it, raw food is ready to be cooked. "We all gather around a large table with the hot pot in the center and a bunch of different foods like dumplings and seafood," Lee said. Another custom during the New Year is to thoroughly clean the house and decorate it with red lanterns and red couplets, or banner-like scrolls, that praise themes of health, fortune and happiness. "A lot of my extended family comes over to celebrate the New Year and it's really fun catching up with them," Lee said. Typically, kids receive red envelopes with money inside. This year, the Chinese New Year will start on Feb. 5.



A Savory Treat is Prepared for Mawlid

Mawlid is an Islamic holiday that celebrates the birth of the Islamic Prophet, Muhammed. Sophomore Mohamed Harizi and his family prepare Assidat Zgougou, a Tunisian dish made from pine nuts, to celebrate the holiday. Since there is a variety of cultures that celebrate Mawlid, it has different festivities depending on the country. "The food changes between Arabic countries, but for my country, Tunisia, we make Assidat Zgougou," Harizi said. The celebration of Mawlid follows the Islamic calendar, beginning on Nov. 9 and ending on Nov. 10 this year. Celebrated in most Islamic countries, Mawlid festivals are carnival-like celebrations with a multitude of street processions and events.



Games are Played on Three Kings Day

For many Christians with roots in Latin American or Spain, the holiday season ends on Jan. 6, which is Three Kings Day. Every year, senior Nicole Noguera celebrates Three Kings Day with her family and organizes activities for children in her family. Alongside her grandmother, Noguera helps bake Roscas de Reyes, a Spanish pastry-like bread that symbolizes the king's crown. In fact, "Rosca" means wreath and "reyes" means kings. "We make tons of these loaves and hide one porcelain baby Jesus figure in one of them. It's a traditional game where whoever finds the figure first has good luck for the rest of the year," Noguera said. Another tradition is for adults to fill shoeboxes with small gifts for children and leave them under their beds. "My parents would give us toys and books when we were younger and as we grew up, our gifts became gift cards and larger items," senior Leah Rodriguez said. Other food items that are prepared include tamales and flan, a decadent creme caramel dessert from Spain.



Got Recipes?

Satisfy your sweet tooth and savory appetite by trying these delicious recipes.

by Amanda Vu | Opinions Editor

Savory Latkes

Serving size: 12

Ingredients:

- 1 lb potatoes
- 1/2 cup finely chopped onion
- 1 large egg, lightly beaten
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/2 cup olive oil

Optional: sour cream and applesauce

Recipe courtesy of Caroline Farrell

1. Preheat oven to 250 degrees. Peel potatoes and grate by hand.
2. Transfer the potatoes to a large bowl of cold water as they are grated.
3. Soak 1 to 2 minutes after the last batch is added to water, then drain well in a colander.
4. Spread the grated potatoes and chopped onion on a kitchen towel or cheesecloth and roll it up into a tight bunch. Twist towel tightly to wring out as much liquid as possible.
5. Transfer the potato-onion mix into a bowl and stir in egg and salt.
6. Heat 1/4 cup olive oil in a 12-inch nonstick skillet over moderately high heat.

7. Spoon 2 tablespoons of the potato mixture into skillet, spreading it into 3-inch rounds with a fork. Work in batches of 4 latkes at a time.
8. Reduce heat to moderate and cook until both sides are golden-brown (about 5 minutes each side).
9. Transfer to paper towels to drain and season with salt. Add more oil to skillet as needed.
10. Keep latkes warm on a wire rack in oven.
11. Serve with applesauce or sour cream on the side.

Sweet Flan

Serving size: 8

Ingredients:

- 3 eggs
- 1 cup white sugar
- 1 can sweetened condensed milk (14 oz)
- 1 (12 fluid oz) can evaporated milk
- 1 tbsp vanilla extract

Recipe courtesy of Nicole Noguera

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. In a medium saucepan over low heat, melt the sugar until liquefied and golden-brown in color. Carefully pour the hot syrup into a medium-sized round glass baking dish. Rotate the dish to evenly coat the bottom and sides. Set aside.
3. In a large bowl, beat the eggs. Slowly pour in the condensed milk, evaporated milk and vanilla and mix until smooth. Pour the egg mixture into baking dish. Cover with aluminum foil.
4. Bake in the oven for 60 minutes. Let cool completely.
5. To serve, carefully invert on serving plate.

WE'D LOVE TO SEE YOU TRY THESE RECIPES - SEND PHOTOS TO OUR INSTAGRAM (@THESPTALON) TO BE FEATURED

Drumming Up a Storm

Marching band: a hidden gem of SPHS.

by Nick Ivey | Staff Writer



The marching band performs on the field at every football game during halftime. Performing with their bandmates like this has created an unbreakable friendship and bond between them. "My favorite part about marching band is playing our music and being able to know that I'm a part of a group," junior Colson Jones said. Photo by Molly Beirsto.

Ever since the University of Illinois' Fighting Illini played the first-ever halftime show in 1907, marching bands have been a staple at collegiate and high school football games across the country. These bands evolved from military bands after musicians became less important in directing troop movements on the battlefield. A more ceremonial tone was taken to their performances and now, 112 years later, the SPHS marching band is tearing it up in competitions across Maryland.

Seldom talked about outside of halftime shows at the football games, the SPHS marching band is comprised of dozens of students whose talents often go unsung. Their dedication to the halftime performance at home games is evident through hours of practice every week. "We meet about three times a week for rehearsal, where we put in our best

work for two hours," junior Sydney Astle said.

One might be thinking: why practice so much if the band just performs for a few minutes at halftime? This is because they also participate in a series of competitions called USBands Maryland State Championships. Every Saturday from mid-August to early November, the band travels to various high schools around Maryland to perform a show that consists of different songs that normally revolve around a theme, for example a popular movie or Broadway show. After performing three or four songs, which are called movements, the band is judged and given a score out of 100. This year, their show is comprised of songs from the critically-acclaimed musical, "The Greatest Showman," featuring songs like "Come Alive" and "A Million Dreams."

About 70 students participate in marching band and each one has a special role to

fulfill. "It's a huge building year for us because we have more new members than returning members," junior Lauren Hong said.

The marching band is so much more than just the music it plays. They also sell their famous Band Subs to support music programs here at the high school. These subs are packaged and bagged by the students in the band and personally delivered by them as well. Having been sold for 50 years now, these subs have garnered a fantastic reputation for themselves as "fresh and fantastic," according to local Kurt Ivey.

The SPHS marching band is filled with incredibly dedicated students working tirelessly to perform complex shows with choreography and music that excites the crowd at games. So next time you think about leaving the football stands during halftime, take a seat; you'll see an incredible show.

FEATURES

Famous TikTokers

SPHS students who have gone viral on the new app.



by Sophie Krejci | Staff Writer

TikTok

Senior Erin Kearney is one of the few SPHS students who is TikTok famous. She has posted videos that have received over 425,000 likes. "I started in middle school with Musical.ly as a joke, and now I'm famous," Kearney said. Graphic by Greer Long.

For many years, social media apps have been widely used by students, from middle school to college. Instagram and Snapchat have long been platforms to share pictures, videos and experiences with friends, but this past year, a different type of social media app has been on the rise: TikTok.

TikTok, owned by the Chinese company ByteDance, was launched Aug. 2, 2018 and has increased in popularity ever since. App users can make videos lasting anywhere from three seconds to one minute with a soundtrack or song of their choosing. Topics include just about everything from videos of people dancing to someone jumping off a roof into a swimming pool. Many of the

videos found on TikTok are comedic, whereas content found on other social media apps feature shared experiences. "It's the best form of social media because it combines Twitter's jokes, Instagram's visuals and videos and YouTube's originality," senior Annabelle Cotton said.

At SPHS, there are a handful of students who have already gone viral. Junior Jack Guerrisi went viral by posting a video of his friend doing a magic trick at lunch. "Right now it has 6.1 million views," Guerrisi said. This is not his only viral video; another post comparing his friend to Baljeet, a character from the popular cartoon "Phineas and Ferb" has 76,600 likes. "All I want is to be like Jack Guerrisi," junior Kalyssa McNutt said.

Senior Erin Kearney is another famous Tik Toker at SPHS. Her famous videos include a parody of a commercial, fake tattoos and what she thinks about while reading. Although she does not always create TikToks, Kearney uses the app everyday. "The dry humor TikToks are really funny," Kearney said.

Some people, however, are not as fortunate. Senior Annabelle Cotton cannot seem to get famous no matter how hard she tries. "I should be TikTok famous, I have original content," Cotton said. Moreover, Cotton claims that TikTok is a huge time sink. She uses it after school, when she's bored and as a background noise. "It's bigger than college at this point, it's my next career," Cotton said.



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SPGB is Back

After last year's record of 16-7, girls basketball is preparing for another successful season.

by Colin DeFeo | Sports Editor



Kaila Stasulli ('21) | Photo by Sam Sullivan



Micayla Sloat ('20) | Photo by Colin DeFeo

After last season finished with a 16-7 record, the girls basketball team unfortunately lost to Meade in the second round of playoffs. "It was sad when the game over because we knew that was going to be the last game we played with those seniors," senior Jessica Albert said.

The team didn't make it as far as they had hoped, but they still had a fantastic season with great achievements such as beating Old Mill, their biggest basketball rival for the third year in a row. This season may look a little different with the

loss of impactful contributors. "We lost four senior players and two managers, all of whom had a large role on our team last season and will be deeply missed," head coach Kris Dean said.

Although there was a loss of seniors and managers, that will not stop the team from succeeding this year. "We did lose some key players and leaders last year, so we will need to step it up more, but we have a lot of talent this year and are definitely capable of succeeding," senior Lena McLaughlin said.

Much of this year's talent

was learned from watching the previous seniors play and through a great deal of practice. "We had a strong bench last year that will be able to step up and replace our seniors. I believe that we will be very successful this year," junior Kaila Stasulli said.

The off-season is a crucial time for players to recover from the previous season and excel athletically. "The off-season is the time to get better and push yourself as much as you can. I practice every day and especially train for tryouts," senior Camryn Chew said. The off-season is also a great time

for the team to come together and improve its chemistry. "During the off-season we had a summer and fall league, and we also held practices to be able to prepare for the season," senior Micayla Sloat said.

The upcoming season looks promising, as other teams in the county have lost just as many talented players. "Like us, many schools in the county lost a lot of seniors last year, so the county may have different teams who will be the ones to beat. I believe when we start practicing together as a team, we will get back into our groove from last year and become a threat," Albert said.

Coming out this season strong and playing well as a team must root from working on specific skills. "I think we have the potential to go farther than we did last year, we just have to work hard from the beginning and work specifically on teamwork, talking and staying big on defense," junior Hailey Betch said.

With the upperclassmen coming up through the program, memories from previous seasons stick with them. "My favorite memory as an SP basketball player was beating Old Mill my freshman year, even though I didn't play that much, it was fun to watch and support my team," Stasulli said.

The team has a variety of goals for this season but their main focus is winning the big games. "Our goal this season is to win the county championship. I don't think SPGB has ever done that before," Chew said.



This season, the girls basketball team is hoping to do even better than last year. Last season, the team ended with a winning record of 16-7. "We want to get better every day. If we can do that then this team could do great things," head coach Kris Dean said. Photo by Sam Sullivan.

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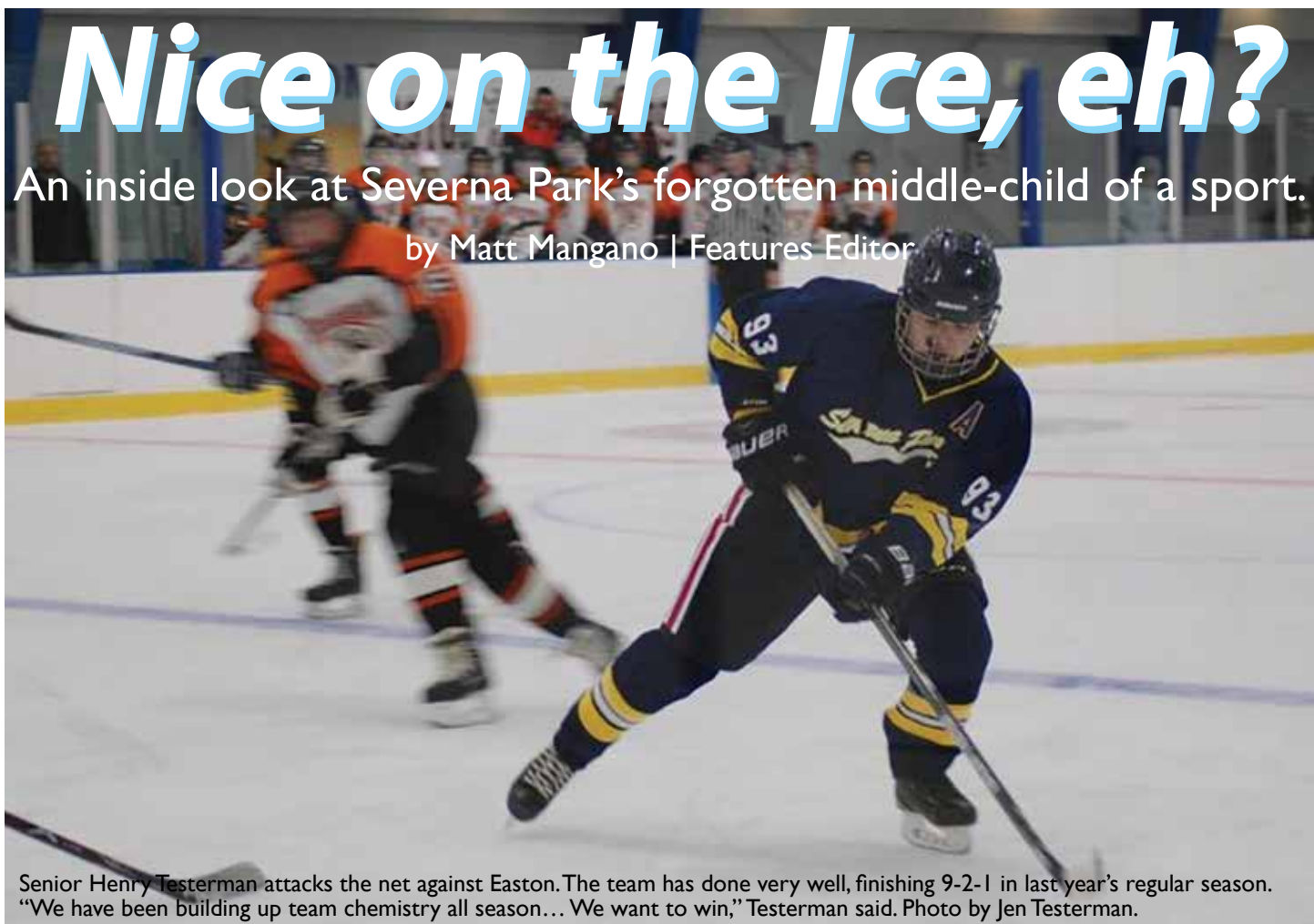
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Nice on the Ice, eh?

An inside look at Severna Park's forgotten middle-child of a sport.

by Matt Mangano | Features Editor



Senior Henry Testerman attacks the net against Easton. The team has done very well, finishing 9-2-1 in last year's regular season. "We have been building up team chemistry all season... We want to win," Testerman said. Photo by Jen Testerman.

The puck drops on the ice and the opposing players take a mad swing at it to start the game. The crowd roars. It is the intense sport known for speed, violence, technique and frigid temperatures: ice hockey. Despite it being one of the school's lesser-known sports, the Severna Park ice hockey team is a force to be reckoned with when they step onto the ice. "We get so hyped for the season. We are really looking good this year," senior Connor McGrath said.

The ice hockey team has been around since 1980, but it has never been official-

ly recognized by SPHS as anything other than a club. It is a very expensive sport; ice time and transportation are very costly, so players and coaches self-transport from Aberdeen to Bowie to be able to practice twice a week. "It is a club sport. Club sports do not have an affiliation with the school system. Therefore, there is no connection to the school in regards to financing, rules, facilities, schedules, etc.," Athletic Director Kevin Rutledge said. However, by being a club sport, the team is free to make their own policies and has leeway in those decisions that would normally be controlled

by the school system. Ice hockey will likely not become an officially recognized sport because its high cost makes it impractical to support at all 12 county schools.

Led by senior captain Benjamin Hunt, and assistant captains Henry Testerman and Nicolas Howland, the preparation for redemption from last season has already begun. "Our team bond is so strong and we are definitely states bound this year," junior Tommy Kondracki said.

The hockey games themselves are electrifying. The energy in the rink excites the players and fans alike. "It



Aiden Byrd ('21), Tommy Kondracki ('21) and Leah St. Lawrence ('21)



Henry Testerman ('20) and Josh Testerman ('22)



Durham Butcher ('21)

SPHS ice hockey displays their dominance in 14-4 rout against Queen Anne's. The team is off to a very good start and is looking forward to the rest of the season. "I love watching our team skate around kids and sauce the puck into the net," junior Tommy Kondracki said. Photos by Jen Testerman.

is a really fun sport to watch, especially watching hits and seeing people get blown up, get shmacked, get their clock cleaned," McGrath said. Because of this intense environment, players get amped up for games by blasting music in the locker room, typically from McGrath's playlist. "We listen to Lil Uzi Vert; Travis Scott is always fire," McGrath said.

As the hockey season approaches its halfway mark, the team is undefeated and already looking forward to playoffs with eager hopes to not relive last season's disappointment. The team was disqualified before an elimination

game against Carroll County because they broke a rule regarding the playing time of a player who was pulled up to varsity for playoffs. However, they took this experience and have used it to fuel them. "We want to win a lot more, and we want to prove that we can win no matter what and kick everyone's butt," Testerman said.

The team has gone through much together and have some unique traditions that bring the team together at the start of the season. One rite of passage is that every freshman and one senior has to wear their full uniform, pads and all, to school on the day of the first

game. "I still remember struggling to make it up the stairs in my goalie pads," senior Ethan Meyer said. "Mrs. Doucette eventually made me change, but it was worth it." Other traditions include the team dinner and bonfire, and the alumni game, when the JV team plays the varsity team. These rituals help bring the team together, which is needed more than ever this season.

For updates on the Severna Park Ice Hockey team's game schedule, results and standings, visit sptalon.com. Home games are held at Piney Orchard and Bowie Ice Rink and are open to the public.

SMART

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