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AUDITIONS



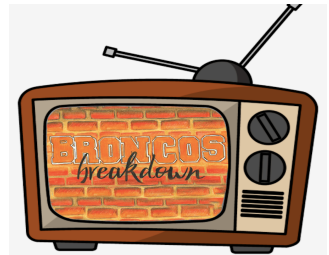
**District continues search for permanent superintendent**  
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SPIDERVERSE

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By Jordana Brief



THE SANTA CLAUSE

# Room 245: Santa's workshop

Hills students play Santa Claus through the holiday spirit they spread whilst participating in Project Paterson

By: Scianna Scott

Santa's workshop is especially busy this time of year. Scott Calvin in the hit trilogy *The Santa Clause*, spends his time ensuring that Christmas day is perfect for every child celebrating the holiday. Santa Claus is known for his endless giving, joyous personality, and affable character. This time of year, the students at Pascack Hills get their own chance to play the starring role of Santa Claus when participating in Project Paterson.

Project Paterson is a community service club where students help to benefit a non-profit organization in Paterson that is focused on community development. The club's advisor and Hills teacher, Kaitlyn Mahaffey has been involved in the club's service for the past 14 years, and has constantly advocated for the children in Paterson who need our help, as well as rallied students to contribute to donations and service opportunities surrounding the organization.

Mahaffey's favorite Project Paterson event is the Toy Drive. "I think it is great how the community comes together to support such a great cause, and it is awesome to see the students step up and really take ownership of the event," Mahaffey explains. "We typically get to visit the organization we work with in Paterson and we participate in a wrapathon--we wrap the gifts that we collected and box them up for families in need — The wrapathon was always the coolest event and it was always so much fun."

Project Paterson has dozens of participants at Hills, and the student's care and dedication for the cause is evident through their adoration for the organization

Hills senior Kira Quigley has been involved in Project Paterson since her sophomore year. She loves watching the process of the toy drive unfold, and notes that her favorite part of the annual toy drive is seeing "how many children and families we are helping on Christmas."

For Hills students, one of the greatest elements of Project Paterson is watching "our community come together and step up to the occasion. That's what Hills Pride is all about." says Quigley.



Hills is a primary donor at the Project Paterson Toy Drive. Over the years we have donated thousands of toys to children whose parents may not be able to afford gifts for their family's this Christmas.

"Initially when the toy drive started we were thrilled to collect 200 toys, but you can see how that number has grown tremendously. ... we are able to participate in almost every aspect of the toy drive, and we get to see who our donations go to. Not all families can afford to buy their kids gifts for the holidays and if we have the opportunity to give back, why wouldn't we," said Mahaffey.

The qualities of Hills students during this season emulate those of Santa Claus during the Holiday Season. The winter months especially are known as the season of giving, and the Hills community certainly does that title justice. In the past 3 years, we have donated over 4,000 toys to this organization, and to families in need.

**Mr. Pascack Hills will make its triumphant return in 2022!**

Mr. Pascack Hills has been a beloved bi-annual tradition at Pascack for over 10 years.



Mr. Pascack Hills is a contest for junior and senior boys as well as male faculty members. The three categories that determine the winner are "freshness", talent, and trivia". Previous winners, Frank Scott and Ryan Dore will be assisting in judging the event, and passing down their coveted crowns and "Mr. Pascack Hills Blazers".

Students, community members, and faculty are able to attend the event and cheer on their friends and peers. Tickets will be available for purchase on January 3! Don't miss your chance to watch Hills history take place!



AUDITIONS

# District continues to search for permanent superintendent

By Briana Keenan

In April, the Pascack Valley Regional District Board of Education approved former superintendent Erik Gundersen’s resignation to work in the Suffern Central High School District. To fill his place, the BOE approved Daniel Fishbein as the interim superintendent for the 2021-22 school year until a permanent one is found.

On Nov. 15, the BOE announced the search firm that is now helping them find a permanent superintendent, Strategic Educational Advance LLC. Fishbein discussed how they are helping the BOE in this process.

“We are currently working on a survey that will be sent out to the community. There will also be public input sessions which will be offered, and the consultants will be present to orchestrate those sessions. [They] will include students, staff, administrators, the school community, wider community, and sending districts,” Fishbein said.

The community received an email with the anonymous survey on Dec. 10, which consists of 18 questions that ask about qualities of the possible permanent superintendent and how important they are to the community. Options for answer choices descend from most important, important, neutral, not too important, and least important.

Principal Tim Wieland discussed how he has been involved in the search so far.

“Although the BOE has been working on the search process for a while, I only recently became involved through the community survey and a focus group that included building administration and supervisors from Pascack Hills and Pascack Valley. It is early on in the process, but I think we have a detailed process that will hopefully find us someone great,” he said.

One Hills student commented on characteristics they would like to see in a superintendent.

“I’d like to see someone that has some experience in managing a district but not someone that has outdated views and policies on how a school should run. It seems like the administration has made big strides with diversity and inclusion so it would be a shame to see someone come in and go against that,” said senior Aaron Solomon.

Wieland also stated qualities he’d like to see in the permanent superintendent.

“I hope that we find someone passionate about education who is open to learn about the great parts of Hills... I think it is also important that the individual always looks through the lens of what is best for our students,” he said.

When a superintendent is selected, Fishbein gave a brief outline of what will follow.



Fishbein (right) with BOE president Joseph Blundo (center) and BOE secretary Yas Usami

“Once a superintendent is chosen, that person will have to provide their district with notice. In NJ the minimum is 60 days. During that time, I will work with that person and the BOE towards a smooth transition,” he said.

Wieland said that he hopes to collaborate with whoever is chosen to work towards the future of the district.

“My hope is that they see me as a partner in education. I would like to have someone that I can go to when problems arise. My hope is that the new superintendent will work with all of our supervisors and administrators to collaboratively develop the plans for the future of Hills and Valley,” he said.

THE SOCIAL NETWORK

# Colleges see who is naughty and nice

By Saya Ross

The Social Network, directed by David Fincher, hit the big screen on Oct. 1st, 2010, and remained the number one movie for two weeks after its initial release. The film, starring Jesse Eisenberg, Andrew Garfield, and Justin Timberlake, tells the true story of Mark Zuckerberg and his Harvard University peers as they developed the social media platform Facebook.

As the story goes, the group of students initially created the website to rate the attractiveness of women on the Harvard campus. Today, it is apparent that Facebook has taken on an entirely new meaning, especially for students.

This particular generation was taught at a young age to be careful of what they post online. The reason? College. While it is a familiar cautionary tale to students, it is veritable that colleges surf prospective students’ internet presences in order to vet them for admissions.

The American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers conducted a survey of various college admissions officers, in which 11% of the surveyed officers said they denied students admission to their university based on social media content.

The reason for this recent addition to the college admissions process is simple: colleges will no longer settle for just good academic standing, they are looking for students with good character, who represent the values and morals the institution upholds. Colleges and universities are looking for good contributors to their community, and social media accounts provide a perfect glimpse into the character of an individual.

The social media accounts of all Pascack Hills students could potentially be subject to scrutinization, as 25% of colleges have admitted to reviewing prospective students’ online presences.

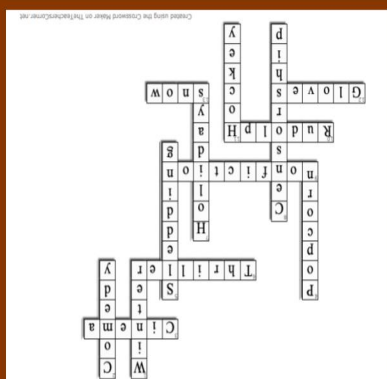
This platform, that had initially been created by college students for college students, has deviated from that initial purpose, and cozier up to colleges instead. The question: will social media platforms continue to serve as a place of expression for the youth, or just become another part of our lives transformed by the ever-competitive college admissions race?

GAME SOLUTIONS

Sudoku answers (pg. 8)

5	2	3	1	9	8	6	7	4
7	6	8	3	2	4	9	5	1
1	9	4	5	7	6	2	3	8
4	3	5	9	6	2	8	1	7
9	7	6	8	3	1	5	4	2
8	1	2	4	5	7	3	9	6
3	4	1	6	8	9	7	2	5
2	8	9	7	4	5	1	6	3
6	5	7	2	1	3	4	8	9

Crossword answers (pg. 8)





### The Mighty Ducks

## Yulianna Krol, Pascack Hockey's first female goalie

By Kira Zizzo, Shaan Dalal, and Aidan Berson

The Mighty Ducks is one of the classic coming-of-age sports films in cinema history. This movie series even resulted in the creation of a new NHL team: the Anaheim Ducks. The themes of friendship, teamwork, and the importance of a positive outlook through difficulties are all displayed in the film.

Many students aren't aware that Hills has sports that are combined programs with Valley; these sports sometimes go completely unnoticed by students.

One of these sports is ice hockey. Hills, Valley, and Park Ridge all combine to create one Pascack Hockey team. Since Pascack Hockey practices and plays games off campus, it is rare that students attend games to see these athletes in action.

Although the plotline of the "The Mighty Ducks" is hard to relate to Pascack Hockey, one of the characters, Julie "the cat" Gaffney, is comparable to a current player in the Valley hockey program. Julie's reputation as "The Cat" was cemented when she stopped a shot to give the Ducks the championship in the Junior Goodwill Games. She is one of the reasons the Ducks won their final games. Her personality is feisty yet friendly, for she wants the team to win and she wants to be taken seriously as a female goalie.

Which brings us to Pascack Hills' own Yulianna Krol. Krol, a freshman, plays goalie for the JV Hockey team, is currently the only girl on the team, and is its first female goalie. Not many people are aware that hockey is a co-ed sport.

**“Don't let anyone stop you from doing what you love. If a girl wants to play hockey, so be it!”**

When asked if Hills and Valley should advertise the option of playing hockey to more female athletes, Krol said, "Don't let anyone stop you from doing what you love. If a girl wants to play



[Photographer]  
Hills freshman, Yulianna Krol, in goal playing hockey

hockey, so be it. Hills/Valley should encourage more girls to play. It's not just a 'boys' sport!"

Yulianna continued: "My coaches and teammates just treat me as another player, which is definitely a cool feeling. Playing the sport as a girl is just as fun as it is for a guy. I'm not judged at all."

Krol is not the first female player to play for the Pascack Hockey team; however, she is the first female goalie.

"I got into hockey just because I was in a phase of trying sports and my dad wanted me to try hockey. It was definitely comforting knowing that there were girls before me who played for the team," Krol said.

Hills has other co-ed sports that are perceived as 'boys' sports,' such as football and wrestling, but has had little female participation in these sports. Krol hopes that she can bring attention to women in male-dominated sports and encourage other female athletes to participate in them.

"I hope that the number of girl hockey players on the team will increase. It would be really cool to someday watch a game and see at least 40% of the team be girls." Said Krol, "There have been

several girls before me. Even my own coach was on the team. But I am the first female goalie."

Girls are often skeptical of joining male-dominated sports because of the misconception that they would be made fun of and not welcome to the team. Krol emphasises exactly how far from the truth this is.

"I'm not judged and lots of people think it's pretty cool. But playing the sport as a girl is just as fun and normal as it is for a boy," said Krol. "The only struggle I go through is thinking that I'm not good enough to be on the team. But, [my teammates] reassure me and make sure I know that I belong on the team."

For those who are interested in attending a game, visit The Trailblazer website for more information on schedules for the Pascack Valley Regional sports teams.



### Senior athletic commitments

By Dylan Cochin

This year, numerous Pascack Hills Students have decided to further their athletic careers in college. Listed below are the senior athlete commits of the class of 2022:

**Nikki DiCaprio** officially committed to Colgate University for women's soccer. She plans on playing the position of defender and attending the university on a pre-med track.

**Ava Borowski** committed to the University of Tampa in order to further her athletic career in swimming. While at the University of Tampa, Borowski looks forward to majoring in nursing.

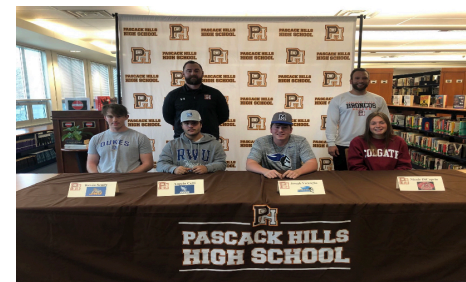
**Katie Yoo** also committed to college for swimming, but plans on furthering her athletic career at American University. At American University, Yoo plans to major in international relations.

**Alexis Mayer** plans on attending Hamilton College as a softball commit. While at school, Mayer plans on furthering her interests in biology.

**Angelo Celli** committed to Roger Williams University for baseball. At this university, Celli plans to major in international business.

**Joe Vernaglia** also committed to college for baseball, but at Mount Saint Mary College. In order to further his academic studies, Vernaglia plans on majoring in business.

**Kevin Scully** also committed to James Madison University for baseball.



### Sports

**Be sure to support both Hills and PVRHSD teams this winter!**

**Scan the QR code below to find complete game schedules for all sports teams this winter season!**



SCAN ME



## INTO THE SPIDERVERSE

# Bronco's Breakdown: a new era of school news

*Starting the school year out with a bang, video production teacher, Elizabeth Manzella, speaks highly of the new monthly school news show- the Broncos Breakdown.*

*By Jordana Brief*

The Broncos Breakdown, the new Pascaack Hills broadcast show, produces monthly videos informing Hills students of news on clubs, sports, and classes with a light, comedic tone. Teaching this class for the first time this school year. Elizabeth Manzella, video production and graphic design teacher, is grateful to help produce the school news again at Hills after a long 2 years, bringing light back to Hills.

The show is completely put together by a class of four committed students that Manzella has taught in previous years. She said that due to Covid-19, she was unable to help produce the show last year. However, the Trailblazer took over by creating monthly news videos towards the end of the year which were filmed over Zoom, starring anchors and Trailblazer editors Riley Solomon and Scianna Scott, produced by Justine Marinkovic and Sabrina Moe, and edited by Lauren Eusebio and Ben Hoffman.

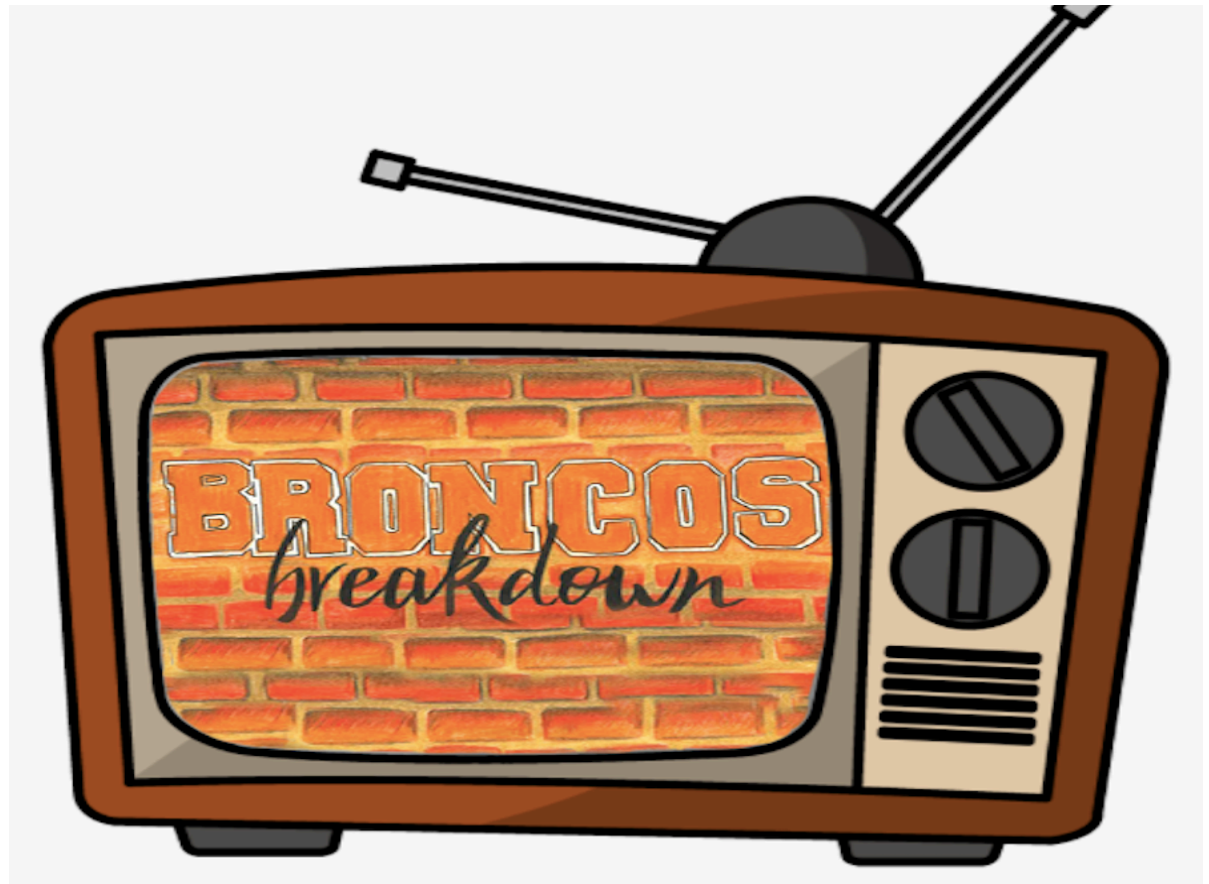
"In the past, we ... always filming over the Pascaack Period," Manzella explained. In previous years, seniors would sign up and audition to anchor the show. This was a positive because they had a "long chunk of time" to film. However, she "always had to track down the kids that were going to film it and make sure they were available."

This year, however, Manzella loves that "there is a designated class just for doing the segments [which she] sees almost every day." Every period seven, Manzella feels a sense of relief knowing that her second- and third-year video students, who signed up to take on the school news, will efficiently get the job done in order to put out the monthly segments.

While Manzella does love the new broadcast class, she emphasizes how the effects of Covid-19 often take away from the overall message of the news. She stressed the difficulty in filming with masks, and prefers that for the anchor segments to be filmed outside in order to maintain that emotional connection with the audience without masks.

Manzella receives lots of positive feedback from the faculty, students, parents, and even Hills alumni that the Broncos Breakdown has had a great impact on them. Many have also told her that they look forward to the monthly school-wide email announcing the next episode, bringing the Hills community together.

"The only thing that I would change is seeing everyone's faces!" said Manzella.



*Designed by Catie McGuire & Dream Maywether*

## TEACHER SPOTLIGHT: MRS. MANZELLA

"I have been in the district for 18 years. I teach video production, graphic design, tech design, and more. In the beginning, I was a swing teacher in between Valley and Hills for a few years. Then I became a permanent teacher at Valley for a few years, and then became a permanent teacher at hills for about 10 years.

"When I started at Valley, I did not start off teaching video, I started in classes like engineering. Phil Bernardi was the video teacher at Hills who took me under his wing and taught me a lot about production so I could start the production club at Valley.

[The production of the show has changed a lot over the years]. We used to [film] the school news show [by] working [closely] with [the] journalism class, sitting at the desk, and reporting news. It has [since] become more media- based and changed into light segments that are fun to watch.

My advice for anyone who wants to go into the field is that you really have to love it. There are a lot of avenues, so you don't just have to be an editor or producer. You can be a set designer, camera operator, or screenwriter- you do not necessarily have to be behind the camera. You can be involved in several different things. The industry is constantly changing and you just have to keep up and change with it."

## Staff Members:

**Jordana Brief:** Edits intro segments and club highlights.

**Jordan Kass:** Edits classroom highlights.

**Nick Rakocy:** Interviews and co-edits for the *Nick & Nick on the Run* segments.

**Nick Priore:** Films and co-edits the *Nick & Nick on the Run* segments.

Scan here to view the first few episodes of the Broncos Breakdown!





## Rachel Zegler: from small stage to stardom

By Riley Solomon

**WEST SIDE STORY**

On Thursday, Dec. 9, the highly anticipated remake of one of the most iconic Broadway musicals of all time, West Side Story, directed by Steven Spielberg, opened in theaters. Starring as the young, Peurtorican, and beautiful Maria, was 20-year-old Rachel Zegler.

Unlike her costars, Ansel Elgort, Ariana Debose, Rita Moreno, Mike Faist, or David Alvarez, Zegler has not been on Broadway, she has not won a Tony award, and she has never even been in a movie before West Side Story. In fact, only a few years ago, she was in a similar place as many Pascack Hills Students.

Zegler grew up in Clifton, New Jersey, only 20 miles away from Pascack Hills. She attended Immaculate Conception High School, where she participated in her school's theater program. While there, she was nominated four times for a Helen Hayes Youth Theater Metro Award - competing in the same years as Hills students, Yemie Woo, Julia Schwartz, Riley Solomon, and Ellie Falanga - and never once won. At a glance, Zegler seemed like any other high school theater kid.

Everything changed in October of 2018, when Zegler posted a video to her growing Youtube account of her singing the song "Shallow," from the movie, A Star is Born in response to a shooting at a synagogue in Pittsburgh. She urged her followers to vote and engage in activism.

Not long after, Zegler saw a casting call on Twitter looking for a Latina actress to play Maria, in Spielberg's upcoming remake of West Side Story. She took her shot, and within months of posting her "Shallow," and a taxing audition process, was selected from a pool of 30,000 young actresses.

18-years-old at the time of filming, Colombian-American Zegler is in staunch comparison to the original West Side Story movie's original Maria - Natalie Wood, who is not a Latina and was 23 at the time of filming. Spielberg was very firm in his efforts to have every single member of the Peurtorican gang, "The Sharks," in the new movie to be of Latino/a descent, including Zegler, who has now paved the way for young Latina actresses and aspiring young students.

Aspiring actor and Hills junior, Jacob Levin, commented on Zegler's incredible abilities; "As a teenage actress pulled straight out of high school, she exhibits talent and technique beyond her years. I have no doubt that this will not be the last time I will be blown away by her performance."

Three years ago, Zegler was on her high school stage, trying to find her way as an actress, and now she has attended the Met Gala and has been nominated for a Golden Globe (with lots of Oscar buzz as well!). It just goes to show that a high school theater kid from Jersey can do just about anything.

Photos courtesy  
of Revelations  
Film (left)

Link to the  
Revelations  
Linktree (right)



Photo provided by Revelations Film

**REVELATIONS**

## Hills alum takes to the big screen

By Scianna Scott

Frank Scott, Pascack Hills class of 2019 alum, is onto big things this year! Graduating Quinnipiac University with his BA '22 in Film, Television, and Media Arts, and his MA '23 in Cinematic Production Management next May, Scott is currently working on his senior capstone project. He is producing a short film titled Revelations, and working hard to prepare for his masters degree as well as life after graduation.

Revelations follows the story of a priest named Edgar having to make difficult decisions in terms of following his faith, or supporting his family. Crafting this story has been no easy task.

Scott has found a majority of his struggles to be "working on such an ambitious project with people [he's] so close to... and raising the funds to put this production together."

Scott as well as the other Quinnipiac students taking part in this project have been doing all that is in their power to share information about their film with their community through sharing social media posts, and personally reaching out to individuals asking for their help. Despite the work that they have put in thus far, they still have a significant amount of money to raise in less than a month.

With a goal of \$17,000, generating the funds to produce a film of such a caliber is no easy feat. Scott and his team are relying on their communities to contribute to their success and their film's success in any way possible through the use of their donation website (scan the QR code)!

He is greatly looking forward to showing his film at film festivals, as well as spending time on set watching his creation come to life. Not only is he producing this film but he has written the script as well. His heart and soul have been poured into this film, and it's success would mean the world to him as well as his team.

Frank Scott is a name at Hills that nobody has forgotten, and it doesn't seem to be leaving the halls any time soon. In terms of his success, Scott doesn't think he's achieved "success" just yet, but he certainly is close. He wants any Hills student interested in any career path to know that "despite whatever your parents or teachers say, you can succeed."

He noted that, "if you tell an adult you want to be a doctor, you'll get nods of approval and pats on the back. But if you say you want to go into theater, fashion, art, or, like me, movies, you'll be faced with a lousy, 'good luck, kid,' and a sigh before the conversation shifts to another topic... [He's] been in Connecticut for three years and [he's] already worked on a Disney movie and been asked to help out with the Hulu Series Only Murders in the Building."

No matter what your personal goal is, Scott wants "every Hills student to know that, if you put your mind to it and hustle like it's nobody's business, you can do it. And, if nobody else will believe in you right now, know that the only person who really needs to believe in you is you. Also, if it helps at all, I believe in you too. Now get out there and make something awesome!"



Rachel Zegler in her high school's performance of Shrek (top)  
and as Maria in West Side Story (bottom)



# The bitter impact of winter months

By Julia Bang

As late autumn comes to a close, leaves dance through the first gusts of bitter air that introduce the winter season. As the bitterness of the air chases out the warmth of the fall season, it brings harsher weather, lengthy darkness, and shorter days.

The transition from vibrant fall to a bare winter is something we all know well. Environmental changes often affect the mental health of individuals as the season progresses.

According to research, "Sunlight and darkness trigger the release of hormones in your brain. Exposure to sunlight is thought to increase the brain's release of a hormone called serotonin. Serotonin is associated with boosting mood and helping a person feel calm and focused."

Hills placed a heavy emphasis on the environmental factors of winter. Many feel that the collective, unexplained sense of downcast makes everything feel like a task, with no end, and no reward.

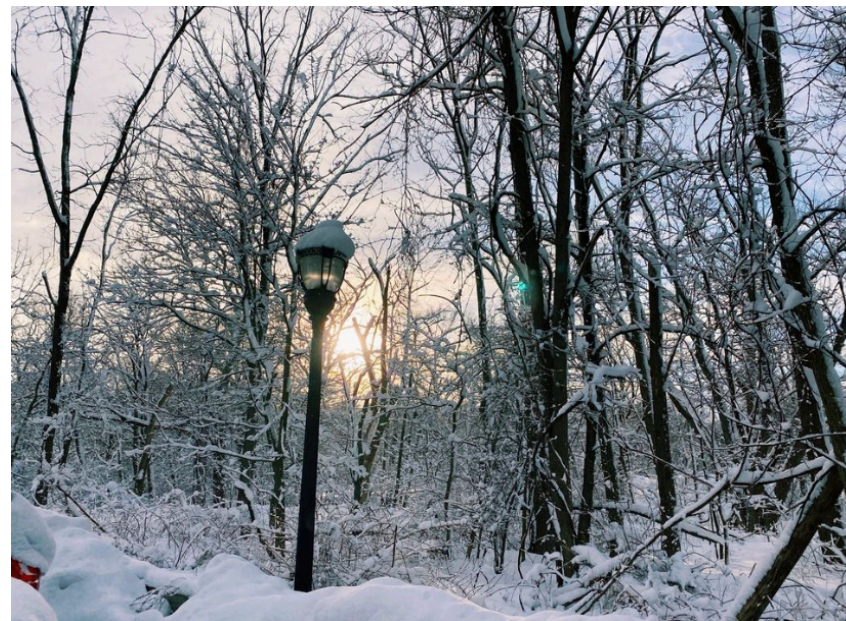
When Pascaack Hills was asked what their opinions were on the subject of winter and depression, 32% of responders felt that winter's impact was positive, while 78% felt it was negative.

Hills sophomore Allie Tonuzi said, "Everything outside is dead, and the sun goes down so early; it honestly really depresses me just because it's all kind of bleak. It's beautiful sometimes, but most of the time it just makes me sad."

The seasonal dullness we tend to see in wintertime speaks to Ebenezer Scrooge, the fictional character of the iconic A Christmas Carol. This famous animated retelling of Charles Dickens's classic novel tells the story of one's upbringing and self-redemption. Although in a far more extreme sense, Scrooge is a callous, greedy man that despises the entire idea of Christmas.

Scrooge's bitter existence towards the winter season, and approaching holiday season, might be a bit dramatized compared to Hills, but it brings up an important topic in how greatly an environment can play a role in someone's well being.

In essence, the transition through seasons is a change that affects several individuals within the Hills community. It has been proven that a person's environment shapes both themselves and their perception of life. Wintertime is a distinct chapter different from the rest of the year, and with that comes potentially damaging, but also potentially tranquil effects.



[Photographer] Justine Marinkovic

Weather fluctuations from global warming are also destroying animals' habitats. The Australian wildfires during 2020 were a destructive event that exemplifies one of the many ways global warming is affecting nature. Billions of animals suffered from these fires, and acres of habitats were devastated.

The Lorax presents a similar scenario that humanity is presently grappling with. One major theme the movie contains is how human actions led to the destruction of a habitat for many animals. It emphasized the damage to humans by showing people living in a completely artificial, closed-off area from the outside world.

Even though not explicitly mentioned, The Lorax has parallels to the current climate crisis. After all the trees were cut down in the movie, the animals had to flee to another area of the world to survive. In the real world, species of plants and animals are suffering from both deforestation and global warming, leading many to their extinction.

Balani emphasized how "there are ways to keep many endangered animals from going extinct. It just has to come from the decision of prioritizing biodiversity and balance in ecosystems over economic gain."

Global warming is affecting animals and humans alike, and the consequences of it will continue arising.

## Endangered species due to global warming

By: Sabrina Moe

THE LORAX

Animals have lived on Earth for thousands of years. Millions of different species have walked this planet, but now they are slowly disappearing.

This past September, the United States announced that the ivory-billed woodpecker is extinct. Currently, a total of 902 species globally have been declared extinct, with global warming having one of the greatest influences on their extinction.

Global warming is the increase of the temperature of the Earth based on the activities of humans. While the changes in weather patterns is one of the most obvious effects of global warming, many species are also victims of these impacts.

Environmental club co-president Sonia Balani commented how global warming is "one of the most identifiable reasons of extinction is habitat loss, whether it be directly from human activity, or inadvertently from the increase in temperature and sea level."

Unfortunately, many species are unable to adapt to the changing weather. For example, the gradual rising temperature is causing certain plants to change their blooming patterns or location. In turn, animals have to quickly find new ways to scavenge for food.

Invasive species are also becoming more prevalent amongst habitats. Species that are able to live in warmer areas are able to go to habitats they did not enter before. More competition occurs within a habitat as these species invade, making surviving increasingly difficult.

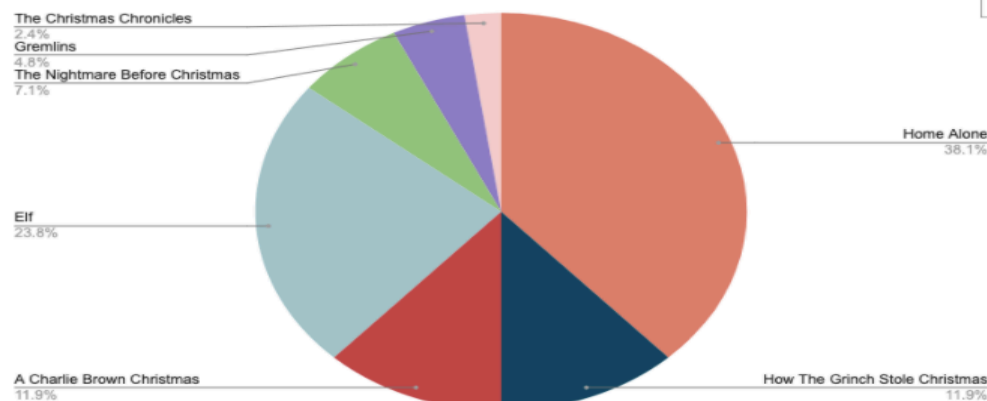
## Hills holiday flicks

By: Kaitlyn Verde

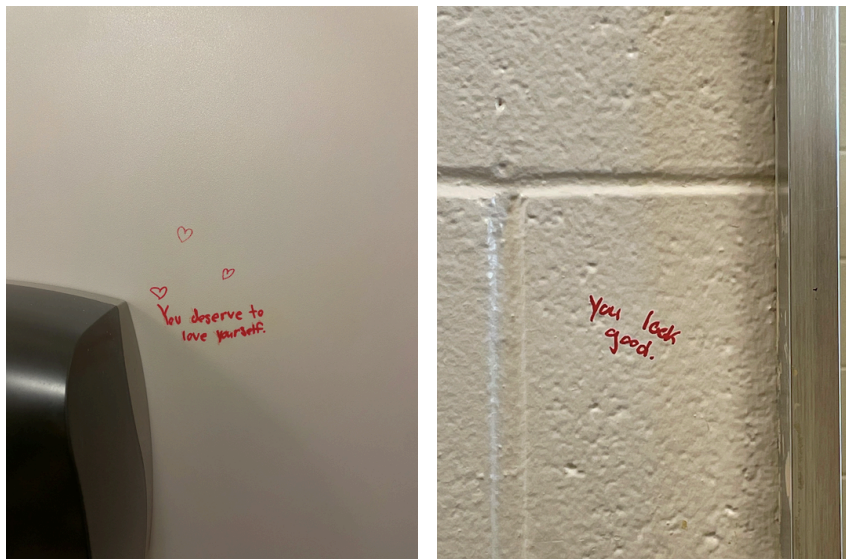
DISNEY FASTPLAY

It's that time of year again! As the holidays are quickly approaching, all you want to do is relax on the couch with a cup of hot chocolate and binge watch festive movies. It can be tricky, however, to choose a single one among thousands that puts you in the holiday spirit. Over time, Christmas movies have dominated the cinematic industry due to their compelling themes and relatable characters - many are on peoples' holiday must-watch list.

A survey was sent out via email including the following films to reveal the most loved movies within the Hills community. CONTINUED ON PAGE 8







Some of the messages written in the girls' bathroom at Hills (Photo Credits: Stephanie Ye).

## 101 DALMATIANS

### The ugly truth of fast fashion

By Rebecca Lovett

The fashion industry has followed a similar journey as the villain, Cruella de Vil, in their creation of clothing. Fast fashion is the exploitation of the planet, animals, and people in order to produce large amounts of clothing quickly for a cheap price. Cruella de Vil similarly abuses animals in her creation of fashion. Unlike Cruella de Vil, clothing companies hide their abuse of power behind world-class models and stylish clothing.

Fast fashion became immensely popular because it allows clothing to be sold for a low price. Low prices cause consumers to impulse buy clothing that they do not need or necessarily like because they believe that they are getting a great deal on clothing. This causes the consumption rate to go up, thus the production of clothing and the popularity of fast fashion brands.

In order to quickly produce clothing, 60% of garments made by fast fashion companies are made from synthetic fossil fuel fibers, so that when these garments end up in landfills, they will not decay. Buying clothing that was only bought because it was cheap, has a higher chance of ending up in a landfill, which will increase the amount of fossil fuels in the environment.

Clothing companies are also able to profit immensely by producing their garments in Bangladesh. Bangladesh does not have factory and worker regulations, so people work long hours in sweatshops, for little money. In 2013, there were extremely poor working conditions, such that a garment factory collapsed and killed 1,134 people. Fashion companies want to continue increasing their profit, so they do not put money into providing a safe working space for their employees.

Buying secondhand clothing can help prevent the expansion of fast fashion because it is a way to repurpose old clothing instead of letting it remain in landfills for hundreds of years. Thrift shops sell lightly used garments of all styles and sizes, so all shoppers are able to find clothing while helping the planet. Upcycling and making something old into

something new will also help limit the rate of clothing going into landfills and limit the production of fast fashion.

Fashion design teacher at Hills, Claire Mazan, said "it takes over several hundred years for clothing to break down and it is harmful to the planet."

In Mazan's fashion design class, she educates her students about fast fashion and the harm it has on the planet. Students taking fashion design have the opportunity to complete an upcycling project, where students will bring in an old clothing item and turn it into something new.

Cruella de Vil's abuse of animals was taken down by the teamwork of the dalmatians' owners, just like the popularity of fast fashion is being taken down by consumers teaming up in order to expose and educate the general public. Villains always get defeated by the good at the end of a movie and that is no different than the fashion industry's use of fast fashion.

### Hills holiday flicks (continued)

by Kaitlyn Verde

"Even though I don't celebrate Christmas, I love home alone because I find it entertaining and enjoyable," stated Hills junior Gillian Barcus about the most popular film. "I watch it every year over Christmas break because it gets me in the holiday spirit." Multiple students expressed their love of always watching movies around the holidays as a simple, yet fun and memorable, tradition.

While only gaining a few votes, The Nightmare Before Christmas sparked some interesting commentary. Freshman Ethan Miller explained, "I have loved this movie since the first time I saw it. The use of stop-motion works very well with the vibe of the movie. Everything about this movie is perfect."

students can agree on the importance of such heartwarming, humorous, and overall enjoyable films. Hopefully, you can take inspiration from this list while enjoying a future winter movie session with family and friends. Happy Holidays, Hills!



(Photo credits: Amazon)

## LEMONADE MOUTH

### Graffiti: expression or vandalism?

By Justine Marinkovic

Pascack Hills students have risen to the stage this past year like the rebel band members of Lemonade Mouth. The band members proudly advocated for causes they believed in contrary to the censorship of authority.

Over the past year, graffiti has struck school walls and bathroom stalls within the Hills community. Individuals have debated, for years, whether graffiti in schools is free expression or vandalism. Several students within the community have raised the same question of whether symbols such as positive quotes on a bathroom stall qualify as expression or vandalism.

Currently, several girls' bathrooms on campus have quotes written which are typically based on body positivity and empowerment. Similar actions have been taken at Montclair State University where students are putting up stickers having to do with feminist empowerment.

An anonymous Hills student said, "I believe that students should be able to express themselves, however I do not think that regulations on graffiti should be lifted completely. Student- opinion- based flyers should be allowed around the school if they are not related to hate speech. I also think some graffiti should be allowed if it is not hateful. I think Hills does a good job of welcoming the rights of expression, but I do think they could make more exceptions as long as it is not harmful."

Within schools, administrations are obligated to abridge the constitutional rights of students to maintain order within the learning environment. If school administrations view a case of graffiti as disruptive to the learning environment, whether it be positive or hateful, they are obligated to remove the presence of it completely.

While some may argue that the legality of the artwork or phrase depends on whether or not it qualifies as disruptive, others argue that it should be viewed as vandalism in all cases.

Senior Michael Blackford said, "I do not support graffiti whether it be positive or negative in schools because I believe it damages the learning environment. It is destruction of state-funded property and I think that there are other ways that students can express their opinions that are not as destructive to the environment."

Others argue that something positive such as quotes on body image are not disruptive, but empowering. In instances that are not about body image but are about other positive, appropriate topics, are not vandalism and should be allowed.

Senior Catie McGuire said, "If it's positive I like it and it's a good influence on the students. If it is hateful, it brings down my day and makes me not want to be in school. Sometimes there's graffiti in the bathroom and it can be funny but it's destruction to the school property, and it's not doing anything good for anybody. Not to mention, the janitors who are stuck cleaning it up."

There is a common negative connotation associated with vandalism which is not associated with positive writings that are being seen in bathrooms on campus. If the speech presented is appropriate, positive, and non- disruptive, most individuals do not argue against its presence. However, there are some who argue the legality of the ability to write quotes directly on school property which can be justified as well.



(Photo Credit: Stephanie Ye).



# Saved by the (senior) bell

SAVED BY THE BELL

By Madison Saks

Let's paint a picture. The final bell of the school day rings. It's 2:53 in the afternoon. Seniors sprint through the hallways in order to beat the after school traffic. Traffic that can take up to 20 minutes out of a busy student's day. Every car in the Pascack Hills parking lot is funneled out of one singular exit. A rush between parents and students that has caused fender benders in the past, making it a danger to the new drivers who just want to get out of school.

The only solution that is easy enough and doesn't require much problem solving is a senior bell.

Other solutions have been posed. Building another exit out of the parking lot, which would surely decrease the traffic, stress, and time, but would require a permit. Along with a permit, it either wouldn't happen right away, or if it did, it would end up blocking parts of the parking lot with its construction, and therefore creating another problem.

Another solution is having all underclassmen who are not currently a part of a sport taking the bus home. This would reduce the amount of cars in the lot and therefore the traffic, but this would require more buses and it is extremely hard (and costly) to force students to take the bus, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Still, releasing seniors from class just a few minutes early will help ease the cars out of the parking lot in shifts instead of all at once. By the time the bell releases the rest of the students, many seniors will have already been able to exit the school and the parking lot will already be emptying out.

Senior Idhant Khosla said, "If we just had an extra two minutes to get out of the school, the time saved in the long run is more than any class content we will miss. Plus, it's the end of the period, most teachers are wrapping up the class by then and not still teaching."

The problem that this poses is classes with mixed grade levels. Should the teacher stop teaching a couple minutes early because students have left the class? Will some teachers prevent seniors from leaving early because they do not want to stop teaching? Or will seniors be set back because of three minutes of missed information?

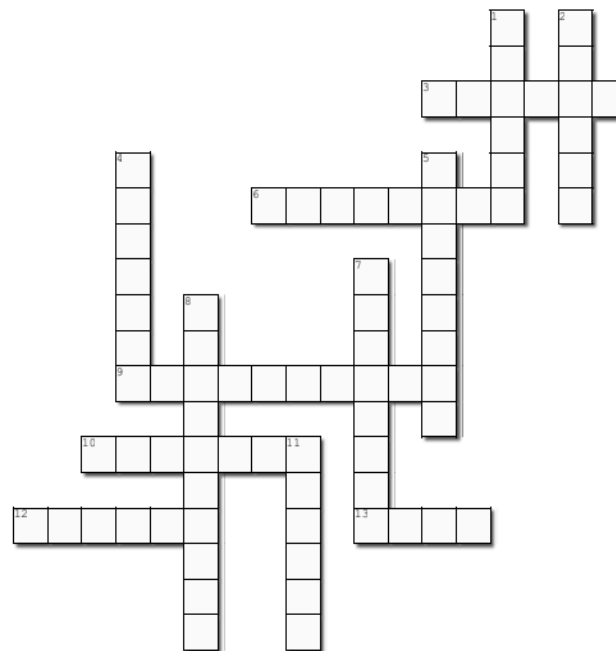
It is clear that all of these questions don't have definite answers because they are based on the class and teacher, but all are avoidable and easy to solve. A couple minutes in a day doesn't make a drastic difference on the content students are able to learn in the class, but those minutes could potentially make a drastic difference on the traffic in the parking lot and whether or not a senior gets into an accident.

In theory, the senior bell is beneficial for students, but if all seniors get out at the same time, will it really reduce the traffic or just give students a head start over the parents?

Senior Sean Haizen said, "I feel like a senior bell will just make the line longer for the parents because two minutes isn't enough time for cars to actually leave. And, if every senior gets out at the same time we will still race through the hallway to beat each other."

This is a valid point. The bell will not stop people from running down the hall, and traffic will still be present. Most of the parking lot is the seniors, so, realistically, it will still take a long time to get out. Although this is true, it may still save time because if just the seniors are leaving, underclassmen will not get in their way as they walk to their car. And, a percentage of the parking lot is still parents and teachers who will leave after their head start. The hope is that this head start will get a portion of the seniors out before the parents and teachers even turn to leave.

Many seniors would be in favor of this positive change, and hope to see it implemented before it's too late. Hopefully, the seniors are saved by the bell and are granted the extra time to escape before the traffic becomes unbearable each day.



Created using the Crossword Maker on TheTeachersCorner.net

**Across**

- 3. Public place to watch movies
- 6. Movie genre that often induces suspense, excitement, and fear
- 9. Movie genre representing accurate, real events
- 10. Ninth of Santa Claus's reindeer, and is most known for a unique physical feature
- 12. Article of clothing used to keep your hands warm while in cold weather
- 13. White flakes that fall from the sky

**Down**

- 1. Season from December through March
- 2. Movie genre that is made to be humorous and amusing
- 4. Traditional movie snack
- 5. Common winter activity involving sliding down a hill
- 7. Time for festive celebrations
- 8. The suppression of public speech or other forms of communication, and is also the focus of the movie 'Lemonade Mouth'
- 11. A sport that can be a field or ice sport and uses a puck

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To keep up with the latest Hills news, scan the code to access the official Trailblazer website!



A glimpse of the Hills parking lot after school hours. (Photo Credit: Madison Saks).

**Dear reader,**

Thank you for reading our December print edition. Going into 2022, it is our hope to continue to be the eyes, ears and voice of the Pascack Hills student body and broader community. If you enjoyed our stories, please consider following @phstrailblazer on Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter. Our website, phstrailblazer.org, will continue to be updated with the latest news (and whatever 2022 has in store). Stay safe, and have a happy new year!

**-TRAILBLAZER STAFF**