

THE PULSE

March 2024

THE HEARTBEAT OF SYOSSET

Holocaust Remembrance Day

Holocaust survivor Rosalie Simon comes to Syosset High School to share her story and spread awareness about antisemitism.

By: Emerson Schaefer

Photo By: Trish Sergi

On February 8, 2024, Holocaust survivor Rosalie Simon came to Syosset High School to share her story with the sophomore class. During periods three and four, students gathered in the auditorium to listen to Ms. Simon talk about her experiences during World War II.

At just 11 years old, Ms. Simon was expelled from her school in Czechoslovakia, just because she was Jewish. She was forced out of her home and into an attic where she lived with her five siblings, parents, and other family until they were brought to Auschwitz. One day, Rosalie went out for a walk when she was approached by a man she had never met. He knew she was Jewish due to the yellow star on her coat so he proceeded to grab her and cut off almost all of her hair before letting her return home. Sophomore Lila Yaris said, "I couldn't believe how horribly Jews were treated even outside of the concentration camps. They were treated like they were less than human." Before being taken to Auschwitz, Ms. Simon had already been a target of hate and discrimination.

Once she reached Auschwitz, Ms. Simon was separated from her sisters. She and her mother were directed to the left, where death in the gas chambers was waiting for them. Ms. Simon wanted to reunite with her family so she left her mom to go find her sisters. However, once she found them she realized it was too late. Her choice may have granted her life, but she never saw her mother again. "I thought it was unbelievable how she had to make life or death decisions at such a young age. I felt really bad that Rosalie saved herself but lost her mother," said Kylie Provenza.

At just 12 years old, Ms. Simon came closer to death than most people. Every day in Auschwitz was a fight for survival. Ms. Simon worked hard each day, but was barely fed. She and her sisters tried to protect one an-



other and stay close. One day, she and the other young women were examined by Dr. Mengele, the "angel of death." He decided that she was too skinny to work at a new camp, so she must go off to the gas chambers. Ms. Simon's sister tried to reason with him, but he would not change his decision. After coming to terms with her fate, Ms. Simon was saved. A young woman noticed the room filling up and decided to help, as her disappearance would not be too noticeable. The bravery of this woman set Ms. Simon free and she reunited with her sisters once again. "Rosalie was so close to death so many times. I can't even imagine how lucky she must have felt to make it out of Auschwitz alive," said Siena Cummo.

After Ms. Simon shared her story, students went to workshops to hear stories from second generation survivors. In light of recent antisemitism across the globe, these stories about the Holocaust are important to remember. Lindsey Keschner said, "These stories really emphasized the importance of the Holocaust. I was really amazed by Rosalie and her determination to survive." Students were largely impacted by Ms. Simon's story. Her resilience and strength during such difficult times was inspiring.

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Student Makes First Print

Syosset junior Johnny Xu debuts his novel *Foreseer's Hindsight*.

By: Larissa Mallen

Becoming a published author can take years and is often accomplished later on in life. However, Johnny Xu achieved this feat as a junior in high school. After 3 years of writing, Johnny held a book signing for his finished novel, *Foreseer's Hindsight*, on December 16, 2023.

Inspired by Asian culture and supernatural forces, the novel is written entirely in Mandarin Chinese. Johnny said, "It's like a Japanese anime, but instead, it's a novel. It talks about what courage, freedom, and fate mean. It is a world where superpower exists and it's about a group of adolescents fighting against a mafia...the main character is the interesting part because the main character is really smart and he's a maniac."

The experience of writing the book did pose some challenges. "Sometimes I get stuck for two months, and I go back to writing again. Ideas pop up in my head," said Johnny.

Despite publishing a book, Johnny didn't always like reading as a child. He said, "I only read those I really love, and most of the books I read I didn't finish. Only a few books inspired me. I like writing more than reading." When asked about his future, Johnny said, "Maybe a writer, maybe a manga artist. I want to continue writing after high school."

Johnny said, "When people ask how I became an author of a novel at this young age, I usually just reply that I'm nothing but a blessed son of light."



At his book signing in Queens, New York, Johnny Xu shows off a signed copy of his novel. The book, which is 200,000 Chinese characters long spanning 400 pages, took 3 years to write.

Photos provided by Johnny Xu



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Meet the Class of '24 Val and Sal

VALEDICTORIAN



GRIFFIN HON

Q: What have you reflected on throughout your journey in high school?

A: "I've realized how much every little thing really counts. My journey has been filled with so many events, conversations, tests, opportunities, competitions, decisions, moving past me in a continuous blur. I failed to realize that those little moments ARE the big things — they comprise our life's foundation and shape our true character."

Q: What are some important things you have learned through your achievements?

A: "They taught me that high school is, more than anything, a delicate balancing act between the myriad activities we pursue every day. It's often said that luck comes down to a combination of opportunity and preparation, but that's misleading — the ratio is more like 15% opportunity and 85% preparation. "Preparation" is the art of dividing your hours between studying, practice, learning from failures, and sleeping properly."

Q: How have you overcome challenges you might have faced in school?

A: "The Dunning-Kruger effect asserts that the worse someone is at something, the more likely they are to overestimate their abilities. Admitting to myself that I was horrible at more or less everything was the first step to becoming finally not-horrible at a few of them. I reached out for help, found valuable mentors within Syosset and beyond, and could not be more grateful today."

Q: What are some words of advice you want to offer to the upcoming graduating classes of Syosset?

A: "There is no greater advice cliché than "follow your dream." While you certainly should, it is important to note that beyond whatever you think your deepest and most profound dreams are right now, it will probably change. It could happen over these four years of high school, over a month, or even within the course of a single day. And that's okay. So be bold—but not reckless. The future may hold the exact dream you've imagined for years, or it may not. But the only person who can find that out is you."

SALUTATORIAN



SCOUT CHEN

Q: What are some important things you have learned through your achievements?

A: "Embrace your inner silliness. I definitely felt "sucked in" to the whole competitive environment, but I've since learned to step back and not take myself too seriously. We're all trying to be the best that we can be, but we also all deserve some fun in our lives. I guess just having a balance has been important. Look at me, I sound so profound!"

Q: What are your ambitions for the future?

A: "That's a really good, thought-provoking question. I'd tell you if I knew myself. I'd like to try mixing something between STEM and the arts and music. Still not really sure what exists out there for that, but I'll keep looking. Best case scenario? I get a job that's enough to support me and leave me free time for my hobbies. We'll see how this plays out, I guess."

Q: If you were to tell your younger self one thing, what would it be?

A: "Me as a toddler? Quicksand isn't going to kill you and earthquakes don't really happen in New York. Me as a high schooler? Please get some sleep. And maybe try showing some more school spirit by going to games and stuff. If I could do Spirit Week all over again and go all-out, I would."

Q: What are some words of advice you want to offer to the upcoming graduating classes of Syosset?

A: "Make sure to have fun. Easier said than done, I know, but your high school experience is really what you make of it. Surround yourself with people with whom you want to be around, people who share similar values to you. Don't try to be a fake version of yourself to fit in, especially if it comes at the expense of your mental health."

Trending Down the Runway

The annual fashion show treats audience members to a showcase of clothing from Mixology and Ask Alice.

By: Joanna Kanellopoulos & Angelina Kumar



Photos By: Pat Gesner

On February 9, the Fashion Club hosted their highly anticipated fashion show. The auditorium of Syosset High School was transformed into a runway filled with style and creativity. The evening event drew a large crowd of students, parents, and members of the Syosset community who came to support the club.

As guests entered the auditorium, they were greeted by tables with candy, fliers, and raffles. The raffles added an element of excitement to the event, with winners being called to the stage to claim their prizes. The raffle baskets were filled with enticing goodies such as gift cards, store credit, and vouchers for local restaurants. The night featured girls of mixed grade levels showcasing clothing from Mixology and Ask Alice. The models strutted down the stage showing a variety of styles ranging from cozy loungewear to elegant prom dresses. One of the most memorable moments of the night was when a group of male students escorted the girls, each dressed in sharp suits that complemented the elegance of their prom dresses. The event was used as fundraising for a good cause. Ms. Taylor Keil said, "This year, we decided to donate all the proceeds to Dress for Success [which] helps the less fortunate be able to go on interviews and still have business attire and look confident."

In addition to the fashion showcase, the event featured live music performances that added ex-

tra excitement and energy to the event. The DJ captivated the audience with a selection of upbeat and popular songs that accompanied the models as they walked across the stage. Another highlight of the night featured live music sung by the popular Syosset-known band Deep Fry. Some of the songs performed included: "Social Suicide" by Olivia Rodrigo, "Cant Get You Off My Mind" by Lenny Kravitz, "Love Song" by Sara Bareilles, and "Mamma Mia" by ABBA. The mix of newer pop music and classic hits appealed to audience members of all ages, adding to the overall enjoyment of the evening. "They not only did a great job with outfits, but also made it even better with live music from the band. It was so fun to watch!" said senior Sophie Bravo. Syosset's varsity kickline also wowed the audience with their incredible talent during their dance performance at the show.

Overall, the show was an extraordinary display of creativity and talent of students, but also brought the school community together in a celebration of style. The combination of fashion, live music performances, and engaging activities made for an unforgettable evening that left everyone looking forward to next year's fashion show.

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SYO Scientists Go to LISEF

Students participate in LISEF, a regional fair to secure a spot in the international science competition ISEF.

By: Aanika Shah

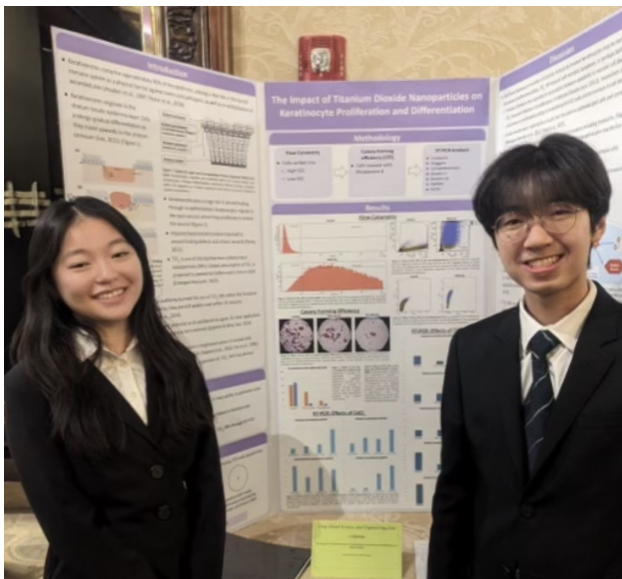


Photo Provided By: Ashley Huang

Syosset senior Ashley Huang and Wheatley senior Derek Zhang with their project, which investigates the effect of titanium dioxide nanoparticles on skin cells. Their category, Chemistry and Material Science, had 25 projects competing for limited spots at LISEF round 2.



Photo By: Vincent Huang

Senior Aryan Shah poses for a photo at the Crest Hollow Country Club, where LISEF took place. Aryan was one of the 14 Syosset students who competed at LISEF.

On January 31, 2024, research students across Long Island participated in the Long Island Science and Engineering Fair (LISEF). These students were selected by their schools to compete and their projects were judged by experts in the field. This fair allowed students to compete for a spot in the International Science and Engineering Fair to win awards, prizes, and an opportunity for their work to be recognized.

Students worked on a variety of important studies and there was a lot of thought and research rational that went behind the projects. Junior Auston Li, who studied protein interactions, said, "In light of COVID-19, there has been a proliferation of technology in the drug and vaccine development industry. It was imperative to develop a vaccine without negative side effects, so the modeling of protein interactions with the immune system was an important and relevant field I wished to investigate." Senior Alliyah Hamid said, "In Advanced Research 10, I initially wanted to investigate endocrine disruptors. However, due to COVID-19, the materials were backordered. Ms. Cange, my mentor at the time, helped me develop research questions about the potential harmfulness of disposable masks. Surgical

masks were ubiquitous during COVID-19, however, our collective consciousness has not thought much of the plastic pollution impacts of these masks. Billions of masks entered the aquatic environment. Since previous research has found that these masks easily release heavy metals and plasticizers, I wanted to investigate the neurotoxicity of the mask leachate in the model organism *C. elegans*. Individually, we know the toxicity of each of these chemicals, but we do not know their collective neurotoxicity."

Besides the prestigious awards and opportunities that can be achieved through LISEF, there were other things that excited students. Auston said, "I look forward to hearing the experiences of others, and also share the work I've done in this field." Similarly, Alliyah said, "I was most excited to learn about other people's projects. For example, the contestant next to me was doing research on redlining and its correlation with atmospheric nitrogen exposure amongst different racial demographics. Another person went diving near Fire Island to investigate aquatic botany."

Another Win for Syosset Forensics

The Speech and Debate team continues their tradition of excellence at tournaments.

By: Malk El-Abtah

Syosset High School recently participated in the Harvard Speech and Debate Invitational, a premier event that attracts schools from across the United States. Held from February 17 to 19, this invitational is renowned for its prestige, rigor, and competitive intensity, requiring students to engage in extensive preparation for weeks prior to the event. Participants from Syosset competed across a range of categories. Given that each event saw participation from over 200 competitors, advancing to the break rounds — where the top 50 students in each category are selected for further competition until the final round of six — is a significant accomplishment.

Syosset's team achieved remarkable success, with several students advancing to the later stages of the competition. In the Humorous Interpretation category, junior Katerina Paxinos progressed to the octo-finals, marking her among the top 50 in her event. Katerina said, "It was so nerve-wracking competing and seeing everyone who was so amazing and had obviously put

so much effort and work into their pieces. For me, after having worked so hard on my piece, it felt rewarding to get the opportunity to present my work."

In Original Oratory, three Syosset students succeeded in advancing. Senior Nathalia Guzman said "It felt like a culmination of all my hard work in the past few years. I was able to get the opportunity to see so many talented people compete and perform their speeches that they have worked so hard on perfecting. I believe that with continuous effort and self-improvement, one can achieve their aspirations in Speech and Debate."

Syosset's tradition of excellence in Forensic Speech and Debate competitions is long-standing. The school's consistent success, including top performances at prestigious events like the Harvard Speech and Debate Invitational, positions its Forensics members for high achievement at state levels and sets the stage for continued success at national competitions later in the year.

Snow Day with Asynchronous Learning

Coming back from winter break, students were given a snow day of asynchronous learning.

By: Ridyansh Agrawal

After winter recess, on the night of January 1, 2024, all instructors and alumni received an email about a malfunctioning heater. This caused a single day of "asynchronous learning" the day after on January 2, giving the students a day to ease back into school. While some received the news through their parents from a phone call, others heard it even faster from their friends' excited messages. Freshmen Juha Kim and Abigail Ho both shared their experiences.

There were no online video meetings for any of the classes, rather assignments for classwork and homework for the students to complete. Generally, students found it to be a more comfortable way to complete their work. While the amount of work varied, the distribution was very different than that of a normal day. Some harder classes gave more than an hour and a half of classwork and homework combined. Abigail, who is taking AP history class, found the asynchronous work to be twice as much as when in person.

While students were able to finish their work much more efficiently, and wake up a little later, they found it harder to get the guided experience from teachers, as they are normally able to in the classroom. Unlike the immersive experience of an in-person class, students didn't receive feedback from their teachers, and weren't able to contact them immediately with doubts or concerns.

As a result of this lack of supervision, there were not any restrictions on the use of mobile devices and other distractions. This, as well as other external disturbances, resulted in a completely different learning experience.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, students were well versed in home-based learning. With these previous skills, students adapted in their own ways, such as not using their home devices, and setting up in their room for a quiet environment. It was a much less socially connected setting, although some students used groups to study or express questions. Juha stated that for some of his subjects, he got together with a study group of 3-7 people. In a similar manner, Abigail used group messaging as a preliminary step before messaging her teachers.

Along with classes, people still had extracurriculars and work hours outside of school. Even though there were no class meetings online, clubs met via Zoom or other video call websites. Some clubs lost valuable time, which their participants felt could have impacted their overall performance in competitions. While asynchronous learning was a seemingly perfect way to ease back into school after a long break, students still encountered challenges and found common ground with classmates to overcome them.

Chained to the Rhythm

Talented young musicians gather at the annual All-County Performance of 2024.

By: Cody Cheng & Winston Zhou



The Division IV All County orchestra takes the stage at the Tilles Center for Performing Arts at LIU Post. They were one of the five All-County divisions which were split up by age, with Division I for elementary schoolers and Division V for the juniors and seniors.

The Nassau Music Educators Association (NMEA) organizes yearly in-person All-County concerts for talented young instrumentalists who have scored a perfect score on each annual NYSSMA festival. The concert is organized by divisions, where freshmen and sophomores are part of Division Four and juniors and seniors are part of Division Five. On Friday, January 12, this event was hosted at Tilles Center for the Performing Arts in Long Island University Post for the loved ones of the performers to attend.

All-County rehearsals began on the Monday of the week of the performance and took place at Syosset High School. The rehearsals included musicians from a variety of districts in Nassau County. Students were given the audition music prior to the week of rehearsal and went through auditions the day of the first rehearsal. "Although the songs were difficult at first, practicing with friends made it so much better and encouraged me to play to the fullest. The auditioning process was average, with the judges listening to your excerpt," said freshman violinist Russel Wong.

Besides just the music, students from different districts found learning opportunities from one another and made sure the teamwork for an accomplished concert was possible. During rehearsals for the Division Four symphony orchestra, string musicians offered one another bowings and fingerings to make the performance as unison as possible. Members of Syosset's



The Division IV symphony orchestra gathers for a standing ovation after their final performance. The All-County Music Festival was an annual event hosted by the Nassau Music Educators Association for students who achieve a perfect score on the NYSSMA Festival.

Tri-M organized the event and played a crucial role to make the rehearsals run as smoothly as possible. Tri-M President Spencer Galfunt said, "All our volunteers were on time for the setup portion of the festival which is, arguably, the hardest portion of our night as time is limited from after school to when people start to arrive. Not only were they on time, they were incredibly organized and they made sure everything was where it needed to be, when it needed to be there." The Tri-M members set up rehearsal chairs, took charge of food services, and even set up a snack bar for the musicians to enjoy. "During meal time, our members did an outstanding job handing out pizza and water to all the students that participated in the festival. Our members were very efficient in collecting the money and giving the right amount of change without holding the line up. The clean up was able to be completed quickly so that everything was back to normal for school the next day," said Spencer.

Besides making the performance as successful as possible, the musicians were able to learn and grow from the musicianship. Besides the music, the students were joined together by the efforts of teamwork and the music they played. "I had a great time during rehearsals and performing alongside my peers and friends from different schools. It was a wonderful experience," said Russel Wong.

Photos Provided By: Abigail Ho

The Pressures of Midterms

Syosset freshmen prepare for the first midterm week of their high school career.

By: Ridyansh Agrawal

Midterm week can be a nerve-racking point in a freshman's life, requiring demonstration of mastery over everything learned since the beginning of the school year. For freshmen who are just finding their way in high school, the concept of midterms can be a first.

Bryan Wan, a freshman, was initially very stressed, thinking "What if I don't pass?" His first midterm was Honors English, which started a little late in the day, allowing him to wake up later and prepare more. His test preparation strategy was to study in the order in which the tests were scheduled, while focusing more heavily on dense and fact-based subjects such as AP World History and Honors Biology. Even high-achieving students like Bryan, who started a month before the midterms, found it hard to make time with daily tests and homework, unless they were willing to compromise their sleep. The American Academy of Sleep Medicine says that teenagers should get 8-10 hours of sleep every night, which is something Bryan always kept in mind.

Other strategies Bryan found helpful in test preparation was creating flashcards and Quizlets to reinforce

vocabulary. The "aha!" moment came when he discovered Quizlet notes. With the premium version, he was able to take many tests and use them as a way to assess and drill in knowledge. For math, Bryan found it most helpful to study in groups at the library, where the group worked from the hardest to the easiest math problems.

Many students find it refreshing to study in groups, knowing they were in it together. There was a certain camaraderie in taking on a challenge together, and the emotional support of peers goes a long way in reducing stress.

Bryan overcame his self-doubt and anxiety by preparing as much as possible for the test. He tested himself using a lot of outside resources in addition to what was provided in class.

Some teachers provided guidance such as a breakdown of various topics, while others provided a lot of practice questions that were really helpful in surfacing areas of improvement. Bryan and the resounding majority of students felt that teachers prepared them well. He offered some advice for future freshmen—"Start studying 4+ weeks in advance of the midterm, and practice with questions in addition to reviewing notes."

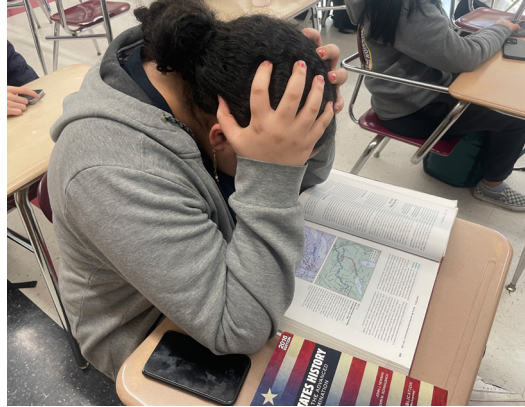


Photo By: Ben Harris

What's the MOOV?

Syosset introduces the new app, MOOV, meant to create opportunities for students to access school information.

By: Joanna Kanellopoulos & Angelina Kumar

Syosset High School recently introduced the newest app for students, Moov. The app has made its way to the Syosset student body with its goal to modernize how students access information.

The new app centralizes school information in one place, allowing for easy access and convenience for students. Moov's student-friendly interface allows students to do a multitude of things. Some of the features include easy access to extra help and sports schedules, updated schedules for shortened days, daily announcements, lunch menus, information about clubs and upcoming events, and more. Another feature allows students to scan their I.D. with a quick tap on their phone. For each tap, students can earn points that can get them prizes like merch, food, drinks, etc.



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Students welcomed the access and opportunity the new app provided at their fingertips. Junior Kimberly Guardado said, "I think it's really cool that everything you need for school is under one app. I'm definitely more aware of the things going on at school. I'm up to date on everything." Aminah Mohamed said, "I think the app is very helpful. One of my favorite features is seeing what events are coming up. For example, I didn't even know the Fashion Club was hosting their own fashion show."

Overall, it seems that students are embracing the new app and are looking forward to utilizing its features to stay connected and informed. With Moov, Syosset High School is moving towards a more digitized way of providing information to students.

Club Spotlight

Science Olympiad

By: Ridyansh Agrawal



Science Olympiad students pose with their medals and trophy after the award ceremony. Led by their coach, Ms. Mildred Castañeda, the Science Olympiad team won the entire competition.

Front Row: Emily Hong, Claire Li, Ariana Lye, Henry Zhang, Zachary Lim, Katherine Yi, Ethan Unger
Back Row: Catherine Yu, Grace Lu, Warren Zhao, Mildred Castañeda, Ian Lim, Aaditya Sahu, Terrence Ho, Matthew Kusnetz, Brandon Ho

When joining the Science Olympiad club in the beginning of this school year, Henry Zhang and Claire Li were attracted by the competitive nature of the club. Both had originally become members of this club at Harry B. Thompson Middle School, and both chose to join it again in high school. Upon joining, they found an open, welcoming nature and support from everyone. Science Olympiad is a rigorous competition in which numerous hours of studying must be dedicated. The event at Syracuse consisted of 17 schools which competed in 23 events. Every individual is required to do 2-4 events, ranging from study, build, hybrid, and lab events.

An intense passion for STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) is also necessary, which is where Henry and Claire see themselves in the future. Henry's events were Anatomy and Physiology, Fossils, Fermi Questions (Mathematical Estimation), and Tower. Claire found her place in Geologic Mapping, Dynamic Planet, Forensics, and Disease Detectives, and competed in Forensics and Geologic Mapping. Rankings were given based on the number of questions answered correctly, or in the case of a build event, based on a separate criterion. Due to the rigorous nature of the test, preparation was a critical factor in success. Two to three days before the test, partners got together to decide on test-taking strategies and covered knowledge gaps.

The students arrived by bus on November 30, and on the following day, they spent the entire

day studying for their events, some working to the early hours of the next morning. After the competition, everyone was nervous, especially on the bus ride there, and before the ceremony while awaiting for their results. That quickly subsided after a while when the ceremony began and medals were swiftly given to the Syosset team. Towards the middle to the end of the ceremony, it was clear that Syosset would place highly in the rankings. In the individual events, Claire won 3rd in Forensics and 1st in Geologic Mapping, and Henry won 1st in Anatomy & Physiology, as well as in Fossils, and 5th in Tower. Ultimately, Syosset took home first place with the most wins overall, further engraving their name in the history of the Science Olympiad.

Science Olympiad has helped Henry and Claire grow personally as well, stating that it helped with school, made many more friends, and motivated them to want to pursue careers in science. To anyone looking to join the Science Olympiad, they gave the following advice: "Be prepared, committed, take advantage of your resources, do research, communicate with your peers, captains, and any other upperclassmen, and most importantly, enjoy the experience." The Science Olympiad students are driven by a single word: "alacrity", meaning brisk and cheerful readiness, and were led by their coach, Ms. Mildred Castañeda who made everything possible. They learned from their mistakes, celebrated their victories, and made memories.

Chemistry Club

By: Winston Zhou

Syosset High School has a variety of clubs in various fields, such as math, physics, public health, and business. However, in the 2023-2024 school year, a chemistry club was introduced, offering educational and entertaining labs and lectures, as well as participation in the prestigious U.S. National Chemistry Olympiad (USNCO).

Chemistry club president Lisul Elvitigala said, "ACS chemistry club was built to inspire like minded chemistry enthusiasts to prosper in the field while winning grand awards at prestigious competitions. Not only do we rigorously prepare for the USNCO exam, we also do fun experiments with our lab members."

In preparation for the reputable USNCO competition, club members engaged in interactive lectures prepared by the officers. Head tutor Ryan Tao said, "Every other week we prepare slideshows with various topics and

practice questions on topics that show up on the exam. It's a great experience to learn about something you're interested in from more knowledgeable upperclassmen."

Club members are given the opportunity to participate in various practical educational activities such as labs, as well. "Recently, we did an ice cream lab with over 30 students from freshman to senior. Our goal is to create a captivating experience," said Lisul.



Photo By: Alex Benson

Breaking Borders

By: Nikhil Shah

In 2016, Syosset High School alumnus Jake Gould founded the interscholastic organization and club Breaking Borders. Following an impactful summer at a program called Seeds of Peace, Jake returned to Syosset with a vision for this club. Seeds of Peace is an international organization dedicated to engaging students from around the world in dialogue, community leadership, and action-taking based on topical global issues. The organization believes that the onus is on young individuals to take responsibility and create change. Jake felt that Seeds of Peace's mission and methods could benefit his community, so he endeavored to share his unique experiences with Syosset and the rest of Long Island.

Eight years later, Jake's vision continues to flourish in schools across Long Island. Under the new advisership of Ms. Michelle Rosenoff, Breaking Borders is connecting students of diverse backgrounds to work together to better local communities. "Everybody is very segregated. Our goal is to try and break down barriers and the stereotypes that exist in our school and other schools across Long Island," said Ms. Rosenoff. An effective way to accomplish this goal is through dialogue. Well-researched dialogue structures, which Jake brought from Seeds of Peace are used in every Breaking Borders meeting. Meetings start with a group discussion of general aspects of the topic at hand. As the conversation progresses, members break into smaller groups to delve deeper into the topic, often covering uncomfortable and sensitive issues. In order to promote a productive conversation, "first and foremost, the students need to feel safe, comfortable, and welcomed in the environment that we have created," said Ms. Rosenoff. To facilitate this, the club

uses "Norms of Conversation" to ensure that their discussions are civil and respectful. However, achieving the ideal environment for discussion is difficult. Ms. Rosenoff said, "That takes a lot of time and patience and practice and just really starting off with being kind and learning everybody's name and creating a sense of belonging."

To assemble students from many communities to engage in this dialogue, the club hosts multi-school meetings. In November of last year, Breaking Borders hosted its most recent multi-school meeting at Syosset High School, gathering students and teachers from Roslyn, Elmont, and Levittown. Students discussed their commonalities and differences in topics such as school demographics, privilege, and life as a teenager. Co-President of Syosset Breaking Borders Abigail Wechsler said, "We got to know our peers from across Long Island and share experiences to better understand the challenges we all face." After the meeting, members debriefed and reflected on their experiences. "We were able to share our message of inclusivity and that no matter what your background is, we all deal with the same teenage issues. Breaking Borders brought out my voice and made me less afraid to open up," said Abigail.

Breaking Borders' members are passionate about their work and attest to the ways in which they believe their organization better their school, community, and self. Co-President Neeka Oghli said, "Over the past four years, I believe Breaking Borders has helped me find my voice, in addition to teaching me how to effectively communicate my ideas." Abigail said, "Breaking Borders teaches their members conversational skills and how to interact with the broader community around them."

A Look Back Into Wonka

Focusing on origins, the new Wonka musical gives a new look at the well known story of Charlie and the Chocolate Factory.

By: Sarah Chen

Viewers globally are introduced to another movie centered around the Willy Wonka universe except this time it's a prequel. *Wonka* (2023) is a prequel to the famous *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. While this may not have been my top movie of the year, it certainly does a good job giving fans an inside view of Wonka's backstory. Not only does it showcase how he built his chocolate empire, it also surprisingly tackled heavier themes such as grief, exploitation, capitalism, and greed. Introducing Wonka's grief over his mother was important because seeing his familial relationships and how his love for his mother motivated him to achieve his dreams, makes viewers personally sympathize with him a lot more. *Wonka* is also able to portray a capitalistic society, but as the undertone of the movie, keeping the main plot and humor aspects of the movie the main show. Despite some criticism over the Timothée Chalamet casting, it was the right choice. He was able to portray the character's quirkiness well while also

showing the viewers that he is not as eccentric as he seemed to be when the events of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* took place. The movie was able to maintain a whimsical nature and really

capture how unique Wonka's creations are, including how his talents deeply contrast those of the other chocolate makers. His small shop was absolutely magical and it brought up feelings of nostalgia from watching the other films at a younger age.

Another thing to appreciate about the movie was how other characters had authentic storylines that didn't feel

redundant or made them seem like time fillers. It was easy to feel sympathy for Noodle and appreciate her endurance despite her hardships. Moreover, the musical element felt really natural, and they chose good time stamps of when to incorporate a song. While Timothée Chalamet may not be known for his singing, he was able to pull it off and give a good performance. Overall, the movie was a great watch and is definitely recommended.

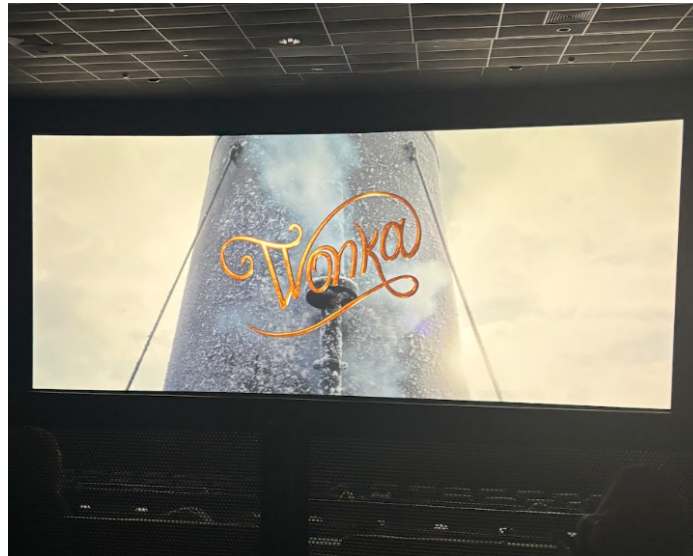


Photo Provided By: Sarah Chen

Film Snapshot Starring Timothée Chalamet



Photo: ABC News

Photo: The Hollywood Reporter

Photo: The Press Democrat

Scoring Big with Super Bowl Snacks

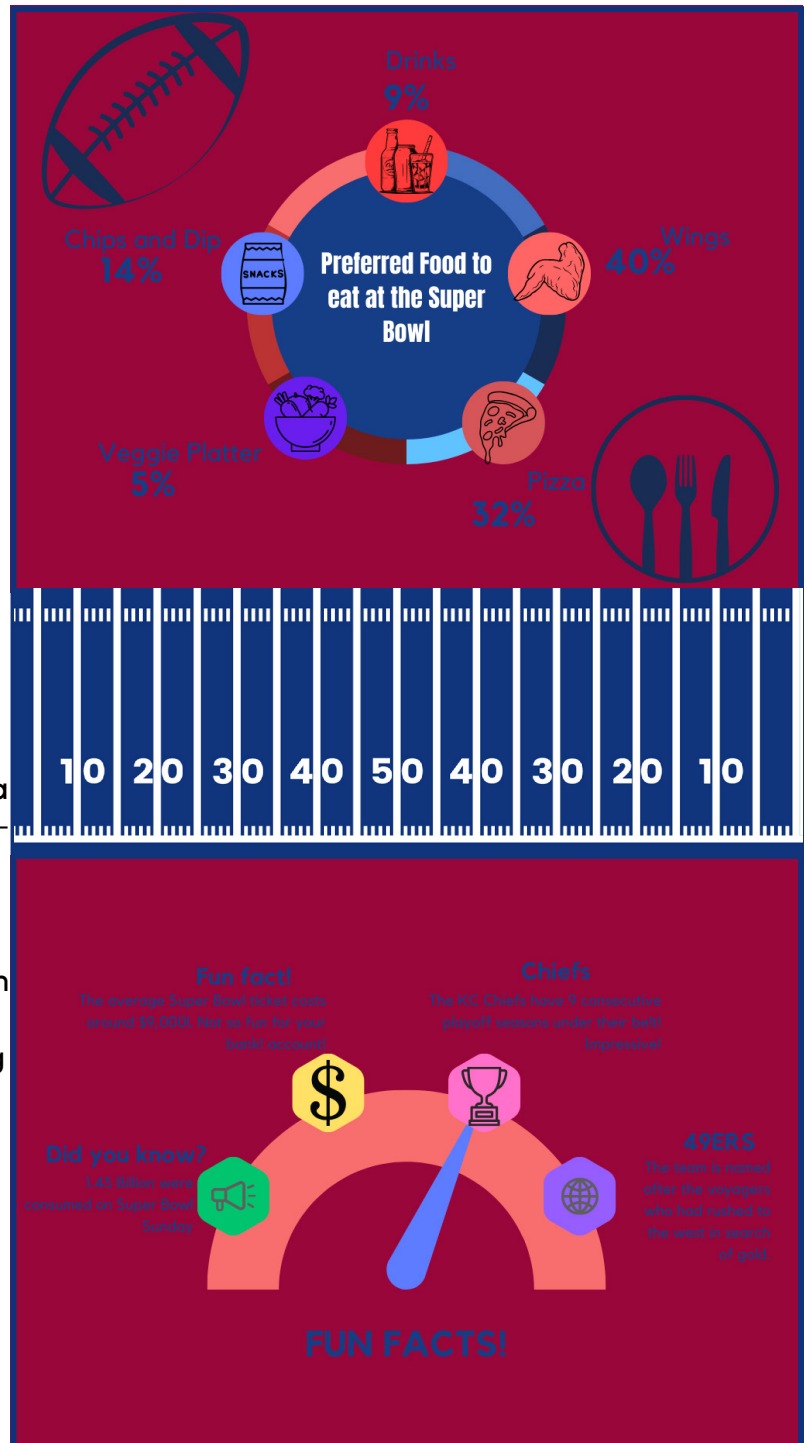
Football fans indulge in game-day bites that have everyone cheering.

By: Rachel Liu

The Super Bowl isn't just about the clash of titans on the field; it's also a celebration of camaraderie, competition, and of course, delicious snacks. As fans gear up for the big game, the choices for Super Bowl snacks are as diverse as the teams vying for victory. Whether you're a die-hard football fanatic or just there for the commercials, one thing is certain — snacks are a game day essential. Super Bowl Sunday is synonymous with a variety of classic game day snacks that have stood the test of time.

Wings, loaded nachos, and pizza remain perennial favorites. The irresistible combination of spicy, savory, and cheesy flavors ensure that these classics never go out of style. Buffalo wings, lathered in tangy hot sauce, are a staple at almost all Super Bowl parties, appealing to spice lovers and comfort food enthusiasts alike. Dips are also a crucial component of any Super Bowl spread, providing a variety of flavors to please every palate. Guacamole, salsa, queso, and spinach artichoke dip are popular choices, offering a spectrum of textures and tastes. The communal nature of dipping encourages socializing and adds an interactive element to the snack lineup.

In recent years, there has been a growing trend towards incorporating healthier options into the Super Bowl snack lineup. Veggie platters with hummus, yogurt-based dips, and air-fried snacks offer guilt-free alternatives without compromising flavor. Super Bowl snack preferences are as diverse as the fans themselves, ranging from timeless classics to innovative, health-conscious options. The game day experience has evolved into a culinary spectacle. So, whether you're cheering for a specific team or just in it for the halftime show, one thing is certain — the snacks are a crucial aspect of the Super Bowl celebration. Go gather your favorite munchies, settle into your seat, and get ready for a culinary journey as thrilling as the game itself.



Designed By: Sarah Naim

The Kite Runner: Timeless Tale, or Bookish Blunder?

Many of us know this popular novel, but does it actually deserve to be so popular?

By: Cody Cheng

The Kite Runner. Of course, this title should be familiar to most students. In recent years, it's become a well-read classic in sophomore English classes. It's cited to be the favorite book among all the books read, with its themes of friendship, betrayal, and the importance of redeeming oneself for one's mistakes. Along with its vivid and memorable scenes, *The Kite Runner* has exploded in popularity among sophomore English teachers.

Despite all this, the novel can be painful to read. The story starts out well: we're introduced to the picture-perfect Kabul, a charming Afghan village set right before Soviet intervention in Afghanistan in 1979. Khaled Hosseini's language here is magnificent, and thankfully, this is something that he keeps up throughout the entire novel. However, the first problems arise in the characters and the relationship that Hosseini introduces to us. Probably the most obvious is the relationship between Baba and Amir. Hosseini tries to craft a slightly tense relationship between Baba — a tough, no-nonsense, do-it-yourself Afghan man who once built an orphanage by himself — and Amir, who is everything opposite of Baba: he loves writing, telling stories, and likes to stay out of trouble. Baba confides in Rahim Khan, a close friend, expressing his disappointment in Amir (which Amir overhears), and the elements at play of wanting to redeem oneself and proving one's worth make the readers actually care about Amir. Amir sacrifices his innocence and his friendship with Hassan to bring home the prized kite from the kite running tournament, thus winning Baba's love. However, this is the first issue: how is that one accomplishment supposed to make up for a whole decade of not living up to his expectations? Are readers supposed to believe that kite running is held in that high regard (never mind the fact that this very competition is held every year), or that Baba is, for some reason, faking his newfound love for Amir? Baba's shift in mood is a crucial part of the story, but it's also difficult to understand, and it's something that readers are just supposed to take for granted as part of the story, which doesn't sit well.

At the same time, Amir juggles his many emotions in giving up his friendship with his longtime childhood friend. This was very well-written, but the change in attitude Amir has towards Hassan over that period of time becomes somewhat comically extreme. Amir ends up feeling no sympathy for Hassan, lacking significant nuance — again, maybe this is what Hosseini wanted, but this black-and-whiteness motivating the characters

makes it seem like Hosseini is trying to send a message rather than tell a truly compelling story. But if that's the case, then he might as well turn it into a short story to deliver that same message so he doesn't have to waste readers' time. Then, we're brought to a long section about Amir's journey to America. He endures a long journey from Kabul to Peshawar, witnesses many dramatic events, learns to be appreciative of the things he had lost, and so on...shoving in a whole new story arc that happens to have absolutely nothing to do with his childhood life or the last third of the book, which clouds up the real purpose of the book. Upon their arrival in California, Baba and Amir adjust nicely to life in Fremont,

California, but readers are then forced to watch Amir meet Soraya, his love interest, and settle down with her. This whole middle of the novel was painfully dragged-out, especially Amir's love saga, which frankly, could be taken out of the story and wouldn't even be noticeable. During this time, Amir endures little significant character development (finding a love interest is not character development), and, respectfully, throughout the whole section, nothing of actual substance was added to the story.

The culmination of the story with Amir's meeting with Rahim Khan, his return to Afghanistan, and the rematch with Assef (this time over Sohrab, Hassan's son and Amir's half-nephew) was, admittedly, a satisfying end to the novel to cap off the themes of revenge and redemption. However, it was far too rushed compared to the hundred-odd pages of nothing prior to it. Hosseini's messages are clear and there are a plethora of themes for English 10 teachers to wring from it, but the sequence of events are outlandish and random. There's a point where it becomes unbelievable — the ending is more likely to happen in a fever dream than in real life, which is bad, considering that *The Kite Runner* is supposed to be realistic fiction.

Overall, Hosseini's seminal novel is generally considered a literary masterpiece. There are many themes to touch upon: the conflict between Pashtuns and Hazaras and its effect on Amir, Assef's complete dominance over Amir and Hassan in their childhood, the irony that's found in every chapter — honestly, one could write another review just playing on those themes. *The Kite Runner* definitely deserves the recognition that it currently has. All in all, the book is definitely worth a read, but read it for its messages, not for its plot.

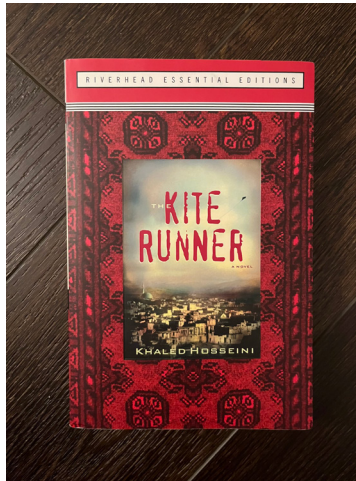


Photo By: Larissa Mallen

New Year, New Trends

By: Emerson Schaefer

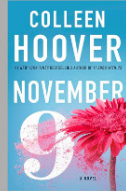
Music



Travis Scott's album *Utopia* was released during summer 2023 but is constantly playing on the airpods of Syosset students. Travis Scott recently went on his *Circus Maximus Tour* where he performed many of his new songs as well as his old, popular hits. This rap album features many popular artists including Drake, SZA, 21 Savage, and more!

Books

Colleen Hoover's novels are constantly in rotation for many high school students. This novel features Fallon and Ben who meet every year on November 9th. Over time they grow apart, but still meet every year on this special day.

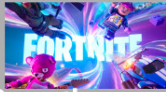


Food

Although not in Syosset, Miko in the Plainview shopping center is always full of Syosset High School students. This restaurant has Japanese food, sushi, and hibachi all at one destination. Make sure to book a reservation before you go because Miko always fills up quickly around dinner time, and for good reason!

Shows

This new show, streaming on Disney +, is bringing a new form of the popular Percy Jackson books. Although these books were already adapted into movies, the show, starring Walker Scobell, has been gaining popularity. This show is only set to contain eight episodes but if it does as well as expected, a new season may be filmed.



Games

Recently gamers have been getting back on the game Fortnite, which was trending during quarantine in 2020! Fortnite brought back their OG (original) season about a month ago, which brought back many players. On Fortnite, gamers can either play solo or with friends to get a victory.

Movie



Trending on social media and amongst high school students, the movie *Saltburn* is taking everyone by surprise. This movie features Barry Keoghan and Jacob Elordi while on break during college. This movie is full of plot twists and disturbing moments so be warned before watching!

Apps



An oldie but a goodie! Syosset students are always active on social media and we all love a good snap. Snapchat allows users to chat with friends, send pictures, and post to their stories. Most snapchat users are constantly posting to their stories where they can share funny moments with friends.

Celebs

Singer-songwriter Taylor Swift has become increasingly popular, especially with her Eras Tour. During these concerts, Taylor sang her favorite and most popular songs from each one of her albums, essentially taking fans "through the eras!" Taylor most recently attended the Golden Globes for her Eras Tour movie adaptation.



Memes



"This is me if you even care." The coquette trend has completely taken over Tik Tok and other social media platforms. People tie a bow on anything from french fries to their computers in order to make it "coquette." This trend gives people a way to share how they would be if they were different objects. Nobody really understands, but we are all playing along...

Drink

Students are constantly rolling up to school with a neon pink drink from Starbucks. This drink is Starbucks' strawberry acai refresher. This cold drink contains caffeine along with real strawberry juice and lemonade with dried strawberries. This drink is perfect for people who don't like the taste of coffee, but want the benefits of caffeine.



Designed By: Zoey Chiu & Victoria Lee

From Mayhem to Masterful Wins

Turning defense into offense, girls varsity basketball makes it to the Long Island Championship.

By: Lily Portnoy

The girls varsity basketball team's core strengths of experience and unselfish play has propelled them towards another strong winning season. The team had an overall record of 10-1 in conference play and won Counties. The players were laser focused on "finishing strong and securing the 2nd seed for the playoffs" according to Coach Michael Ferreira. Clinching a high playoff seed meant locking up home court advantage and the opportunity to host playoff games.

Coach Ferreira hoped to continue the winning tradition that the team has had as consecutive conference championships, starting in 2018 and continuing every year thereafter. Coach Ferreira attributed the sustained winning run to having a consistent roster of talented players who always commit to the program's core philosophies. On the court, Syosset and its coaches instill a team first defensive approach on the court referred to as "mayhem". Mayhem, by definition, means disorder or chaos — and that's exactly what the team was looking to create on the court with their suffocating, fast defensive approach. As Coach Ferreira said, "Our best offense comes from our defense, so we are always looking to press, trap, and force teams to play at a tempo that makes them uncomfortable. Our athletes have bought into this style of play, and it has benefited us on both ends of the court."



In terms of the individual players, Coach Ferreira said, "We've been fortunate to have some great athletes come through the program in recent years who have bought into our culture. When everyone's focused on the team's success rather than personal achievements, that's when winning happens." This year's team unquestionably had the right mix of talent and experience. Notably, some of the biggest wins

this year have come from different players each game, whether it was Victoria Fazzolari giving an MVP effort at the Petro Classic, or Carly Greenbaum, Mackenzie Zelenitz, and Kate Nemes shining at the Rose Classic Showcase in Brooklyn. What makes these performances all the more impressive is that they all came on the road. Having a diverse roster of playmakers resulted in a big advantage for the Syosset girls. "On any given night, we will have a different girl lead in points, [and for that] they are very difficult to prepare for," said Coach Ferreira.

The team this year battled some tough opponents and overcame injuries to key players. Despite these obstacles, Coach Ferreira had the highest praise for his players when he observed their response to adversity. Overall he was very confident about the future of the team and believes the earlier challenges have, in his words, "brought them even closer, and I'm confident it'll pay off big in the playoffs."

Designed By: Elizabeth Thomas

**Click the Play Button
to access additional
video coverage:**





1. The girls plan and strategize before their meet against Oyster Bay. The team eventually won the meet with a score of 20-7.
2. Junior foil Sophie Wang fencing against her opponent at Oyster Bay. Sophie received All-County Honors this season.
3. Alexa Lim, a second-year sabre, competes during a meet against Cold Spring Harbor. Alexa was recognized as All Long Island for her fencing success.
4. Autumn Trieu, a second year épée, sparring against a Wheatley opponent. The girls went on to win this meet 17-10.

Photos by Autumn Trieu

A Glimpse into Dominance

The Syosset fencing team continues to impress as one of the best on Long Island.

By: Elaine Liu

The girls' fencing team concluded their final regular-season match of their sixth season, ending with many outstanding achievements. Although the team was only formed in 2018, making it a fairly new sport at Syosset High School, it has already made a lasting mark on Syosset sports. Both the boys and the girls have been featured in *Newsday* as "one of the best fencing teams on Long Island." The girls' were a running contender for the Nassau I title. Last year, the girls were Conference Champions, having won all of their regular season meets. This season, numerous titles and recognitions were received, including Esha Nayak and Alexa Lim receiving All Long Island and All County titles for their respective events.

There are three different types of weapons used in fencing: épée, foil, and sabre. Sophomore Thea Chen said, "Starting with the foil, it is the lightest blade of the three types. The guard is round and flat, and it has two grips you can use. One is called a pistol grip and the other is a French grip. The blade itself is flexible, allowing for quick flicking and delicate bladework. You wear a silver jacket, like a vest, called a lamé, and you can only score points by hitting the metal portions of the jacket." In general, foils are considered middle ground, in that they are not as fast as sabre, but not as slow as an épée. The main objectives are to not get parried or countered, to attack, or dodge opponents attack by counterattacking. Thea said, "The sabre is a very lightweight blade. Unlike foil, there is no pistol grip, only a French grip. It is not flexible, and the top is like a little nib created by the bending of the blade. Because it is not heavy, you can use it to swiftly slash, attack, or ward off your opponent. Therefore, you can strike your opponent on the arms in addition to the torso and back. You can also win points by hitting the

side of your opponent's helmet. Sabre is the fastest of the three fencing types. Because of the fast speed, the movements of sabre are more simplified than foil, but quicker. The match will end very quickly in a sabre match as you get tired fast." Finally, the épée is the heaviest of the three weapon types. "Épée is a blade for poking where you can only score by hitting with the tip. Because the blade is heavy, many fencers would have less blade movement compared to foil. Épée is special because the target area is anywhere on the fencer's body, no restriction. You can aim for the legs, and even the feet. However, this makes some touches hard to tell since the epee could have touched the floor. Because of the large target range, epee fencers are extra careful when to strike, which is why epee also takes the longest," said Thea.

When asked about what she liked about the team, Autumn Trieu said, "I like the team because we are all super supportive of each other even when we lose or win. Everyone is super welcoming and at meets, we all have a really great time cheering each other on. It is definitely different from any other school sport team experience I've had." The fencing team is an opportunity for people, of various skill levels, to play the sport. Although some girls started off not knowing how to fence at all, through encouragement from their team members and regular practices, they were quickly able to improve and be successful in their matches.

The girls' fencing team, whether it be the épées, foils, or sabres, is worth watching with each member playing exceptionally. Though still a relatively newer sports team, Syosset fencing looks toward maintaining future success.

**Click the Play Button
to access additional
video coverage:**



Making School History

The girls' track and field team won the Nassau County Championships for the first time in Syosset history.

By: Elaine Liu

From on the track, running up to 5,000 meters — equivalent to a whopping twelve-and-a-half laps — to competing in relay races and field events like pole vaulting, long jump, triple jump, weight throw, and shot put, the girls on the track and field team have showcased remarkable talent and dedication this past winter season.

The girls competed in numerous prestigious meets, including the Yale Classic and the Armory Hispanic Games. Many of these athletes also qualified for Indoor States in their respective events, having accomplished personal and season bests. The girls were especially excited for the Yale Classic this season, after a four-year break. A total of 101 schools competed in this invitational event, encompassing schools in New York, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. During the three days of the event, the girls ran in 3,000 meter runs, as well as 4x200, 4x400, and 4x800 meter relays.

Before the championship season began, the girls were hard at work training every day for weeks, while also participating in league meets. Sophomore Gianna Affatato described an average training day for the team. She said, "Usually after school, we go to the locker rooms and change into our track clothes. After this, we all walk together to the track where we stretch and prepare to practice. Then, we do walking stretches together. I've been able to interact with and talk to so many new people during this time because people doing all different events, whether it be on the field or on the track, all have the opportunity to warm up with one another." Afterwards, the group separates and each event, like long distance, short distance, jumpers, throwers, and pole vaulters, all practice for upcoming meets. Practice usually lasts until 4:30 p.m., where girls embark on different workouts and runs.

After more than three weeks of intense training leading up to the County Championship, the girls prepared for their meet against 20 other schools in the area. The girls participated in the Section 8 Class A Championship

at St. Anthony's High School, where their hard work paid off to become Indoor County Champions for the first time ever. Gianna said, "It was really exciting to see how our practice sessions prepared us for this meet. In different categories and events, there were girls running and competing, while some cheered on the sidelines, making this an amazing experience." In this meet, many of the girls achieved some of their best results, including three girls, junior Jessica Alessi, senior Nicole Wang, and senior Tracy Freeman, gaining the title of County Champion in their respective events. Julie Shaughnessy, a sophomore, even achieved a school record with a time of 7.44 in the 55 meter race, earning her 5th place in her event. Even girls that did not run in the meet attended and went to cheer on their teammates, making the meet an exciting experience for all. "Everyone was very excited since it was a whole team effort. All the girls stayed until 10:30 p.m., but we were all very energized even at the end of the night. We even did a victory lap when we won," said sophomore Julianna Macaskill.

When asked about the overall experience of being on the team, Gianna said, "I really like how everyone, no matter what event, supports each other and cheers during meets. Being on this team has strengthened bonds with my teammates, while also allowing me to meet new people. Even outside of school, girls on the track team hang out and just a few weeks ago, we watched a movie together." Whether during practices or during meets, the girls' track team has certainly brought people together, while also giving girls various opportunities to compete. "Track is fun and I get to work hard with my teammates, while encouraging those around me. We're almost like a big family. We stretch together, we go on runs together, and we all push each other to work harder. We are all working towards the same goal: being the best runners we can be," said Julianna.



1. Junior Melissa Tanyeri, junior Jessica Alessi, sophomore Julie Shaughnessy, and junior Ashley Wong compete in the 4x800 meter relay. The girls placed 3rd in their heat during the invitational and headed to Nationals and States.
2. An anticipated event takes place at the Armory Hispanic Games at the Armory Track & Field Center in New York City. The team also ran on Coxe Cage, Yale University's indoor track, during the season.
3. The girls on the track at Saint Anthony's High School for league meets and counties. They participated in a variety of events, whether it be Weight Throw Nights, invitationals, or regular meets.

Photo 1 by Michael Spiteri, photos 2,3 by Gianna Affatato

Cheerleaders “Hit” Nationals

The Syosset varsity cheerleading team reaches new heights, literally and figuratively.

By: Rachel Liu



Posing outside, the cheer team shows off Nationals uniforms. There were more than 1,000 high schools from across the country competing this year.



Photos Provided By: Sophia Ponce

The cheerleaders do their lifts at the National High School Cheerleading Championships in Orlando, Florida. They took center stage to perform the last routine of their season.

The pinnacle of every high school cheer team's season is the end. The seniors finally say goodbye, and the season trickles to a halt. This year, however, Syosset's varsity cheerleaders extended their season into national competition. The team qualified for UCA Nationals in Orlando, Florida, where all of their hard work and dedication to the team was showcased on a stage in front of many schools and spectators.

Simply just making Nationals is a feat in itself, but this year, Syosset was represented in one of the largest and most competitive divisions at the competition. Junior Captain Sophia Ponce said, "Throughout both fall and winter season, the team has faced various injuries, often resulting in having to change our routine only a couple of days before a competition. However, throughout these changes, every girl has been willing to push themselves and work extremely hard for the team." Nevertheless, the girls worked harder than before, strengthening themselves and their connection with the team. Qualifying for Nation-

als marked a top moment for the Syosset varsity cheer Team. The anticipation and excitement reached a fever pitch as they prepared to represent our school on the national stage.

At Nationals, these athletes radiated confidence and enthusiasm, embodying the culmination of months of hard work and dedication. This competition proved to be a showcase of Syosset's excellence, with the team delivering a stellar performance. As the season came to an end, the girls reflected on an amazing few months that were filled with growth and perseverance, which ultimately landed them front and center on one of the biggest high school cheer competitions in the country. They proudly wore Syosset across their uniforms and displayed school spirit outside of our community. "We have seen amazing progress...and it wouldn't have been possible without the motivation and dedication of everyone on this team," said Sophia.

AP or SUPA: Opinion on College Courses

By: Charley Smouha

Trying to decide what classes to take throughout your time in high school can be stressful. Many students will go down the path of taking a college level course such as Advanced Placement (AP) or Syracuse University Project Advanced (SUPA), so which is the better option?

AP courses stand at a singular cost of \$80, and SUPA courses range from \$300-\$600. The difference is that SUPA courses guarantee college credit upon maintaining a C+ in the class. Meanwhile, you must perform well on the AP exam to get credit. Now, to be fair, there are some significant benefits to taking an AP class. For students who aren't interested in earning college credit, considering an AP could benefit your GPA weight. What I find to be the most admirable quality of SUPA is that they reflect an actual college course curriculum. For our school's SUPA courses, a Syracuse professor developed the course you would be taking. What better way to attain an education that reflects college rigor than from the source itself, an actual professor presently teaching at a university? These courses are successful in preparing you for college academia.

Drawing from my experience taking SUPA Economics with Mr. Bora this past semester, I was immersed in both macro and micro economics. Upon finishing this course, I received 3 college credits. Meanwhile, my friends in AP Economics classes learn either micro or macro economics

and will only receive credit if they earn a 3 or above on the AP test. SUPA allows you to connect with the professors involved in creating the syllabus unlike APs. The curriculum developed for AP courses are defined by standards set by the College Board. The curriculum of APs are matched to prepare you to take the AP test during the month of May, not to properly teach you about academia or prepare you for university. During the month of December, the professor who created the SUPA Economics program held a meeting with my class where he discussed his inspiration for the specific arrangement of the curriculum. We were able to ask him about his experience in the field of economics, his employment at Syracuse, and asked him for advice for college. AP courses are about learning information for the sake of being able to respond to specifically configured essay questions. APs do not prepare you for life nor college curriculum.

Additionally, the AP tests in May are completely unpredictable, ultimately making the route of studying throughout the year somewhat random. Think long and hard before you sign up for an AP because it's up to you to defy the odds and mentally prepare for the unknown AP test questions. Because SUPA courses are not offered to just any school district, it is a great opportunity to learn the collegiate level curriculum handed down from New York State University professors.

SuperBowl LVIII Moments, Mistakes, and Marvels

By: Bhoomi Jobanputra

In a historic moment that captivated over 123 million viewers across the United States, the 2024 Super Bowl saw the Kansas City Chiefs triumph over the San Francisco 49ers on February 11. With Mecole Hardman's game-winning touchdown catch in overtime, the Chiefs solidified their status as the reigning champions, leaving fans in awe of their remarkable feat. Yet, amidst the euphoria, it's impossible to ignore the glaring mistakes that cost the 49ers dearly.

Let's talk about that wild decision by the 49ers to take the ball first in overtime. Seriously, what were they thinking? Winning the coin toss should have been a golden opportunity, but instead, they squandered it by not realizing the new postseason rules. It's basic stuff, folks. Both teams get a shot regardless of who scores first. It's like they didn't even bother to read the rulebook. And to add insult to injury, it seems like half the players were clueless about the new rules too.

But wait, it gets better. Jake Moody's missed extra point attempt? That's the stuff nightmares are made of. With just over 11 minutes left in the fourth quarter, he

lines up for what should've been a routine kick to give the 49ers a comfortable lead. Sure, it might seem like just one measly point at the time, but in a game as tight as this, every point counts. And guess what? That missed kick ended up haunting them big time, sending the game into overtime when it could've been all over.

Now, let's address the elephant in the room: Kyle Shanahan's coaching prowess. Will he ever win a Super Bowl? It's the million-dollar question, isn't it? Sure, he's got talent and all, but if he keeps making foolish decisions like these, I wouldn't hold my breath. In a league where championships define legacies, Shanahan's got some serious soul-searching to do.

But hey, credit where credit's due. Patrick Mahomes and the Chiefs played their hearts out, and they deserved that Lombardi trophy. They seized the moment when it mattered most, while the 49ers stumbled and fumbled their way to defeat. At the end of the day, it's not just about talent; it's about who wants it more. And on that fateful night, the Chiefs wanted it bad enough to snatch victory from the jaws of defeat.