

The Shamrock

FRIDAY, APRIL 13, 2018

John F. Kennedy High School

VOLUME 47, ISSUE 4



ARMING TEACHERS

In order to keep students safe, should our teachers have access to guns in the classroom?

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MOST EMBARRASSING TEACHERS

Find out the most embarrassing moments of your favorite teachers.

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IB BOUNCES BACK

Thinking about IB? Learn about its benefits to see if this is the right pathway for you.

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DOMINIQUE LARSON

Copy Editor

As a result of the rampant gun violence nationwide, on March 14, students across the nation staged a walkout during class at 10 a.m. to protest the school shootings and advocate for gun restrictions. On March 24, there was an anti-gun violence, pro-student lives rally, March For Our Lives, as a way for parents and educators to join in. Just before the celebratory nature of prom, another walkout is scheduled for April 20 at 10 a.m., marking the ninth anniversary of the deadly Columbine High School shooting. It is clear there is much being done by students across the nation to protest gun violence.

While students at Kennedy were on spring break relaxing, students across the nation were peacefully protesting and showing their activist spirits. However, certain schools placed restrictions upon students and promised punishments, such as suspension, for those who walked out.

The issue is much more personal to some students than it is to others. For 16-year-old Kaylee Turner at Columbine High School, it is much more than just a protest. In 1999, 13 people were killed at Turner's high school in a mass shooting that devastated and horrified the nation.

"We have grown up watching more tragedies occur and continuously asking: Why? Why does this keep happening?" Turner said.

Students close to our community, like senior Roberto Villanueva from Millikan High School, experienced a lack of support and even a looming threat of punishment if he or other students were to participate in the walk out. Villanueva posted the email he received from superintendent Christopher Steinhauser on the subject on Twitter.

"Leaving campus during school hours

to participate in a political activity is not a safe and responsible way to work for change," Steinhauser said. "It's important to know that disorderly conduct that disrupts school operations is not acceptable."

"I believe it is important, especially at our age, to use our voice and aim for a better future," Villanueva said. "I am not against the Second Amendment, but I do believe it is important to better enforce the gun laws

that are already in place." Students at high schools all around America have shown their passion for activism and their desire for change through peaceful protests. Despite schools like South Plainfield High School threatening suspension, and vague promises of consequences at Millikan High School, students rallied for change and proved they were not to be silenced.



Courtesy of GOOGLE

Students participating in the March for Our Lives rally wield a poster showcasing the evident frustration shared by many across the nation.

RUN HIDE FIGHT

The jarring events that American history once regarded as foreign and frightening territory have now become regular dinner table conversation for families across the nation.

Mass shootings at schools in particular threaten the supposed safety that public facilities are meant to offer, and now students, parents, and faculty on site jeopardize their lives during educational hours.

The climate surrounding gun control and mental health have become increasingly emotional and polarizing. However, regardless of political feelings towards the topic, it is most important for students to be fully aware of what to do if ever threatened by an active shooter.

The overarching safety precaution as encouraged by every level of authority is to remain calm, and to "Run, Hide, Fight." Panic creates delusion, therefore eliminating clarity on the situation and stunting the ability to make logical, acute decisions.

RUN. As a rule, you should always be aware of your surroundings and make all attempts to evacuate the scene. Prioritize your life first and leave all belongings behind. A single moment of hesitation could be the difference between life or death.

"If you can get away from [the shooter], that is the best thing to do," criminal justice

WHAT TO DO IN A SCHOOL SHOOTING

JOY PARK

Video Editor

professor Pete Blair said.

In the process of evacuation do not stop to convince others to follow. Instead, prevent others who may not be aware of the danger inside from entering the scene. Once in a safe location away from the active shooter, call 911. Include the location of the event, the number and description of the shooter(s), and if possible, an approximate number of victims and a description of the weapon(s).

If escape is not an option, the next step should be to **HIDE**. Eliminate yourself from the shooter's range of vision. Find the nearest room or blockade possible entrances to create a barrier between you and the threat. Once inside a room, lock the door to prevent entry and proceed to create blockades in front of the door, any windows, and around yourself. Hide behind large objects to shield against potential attack and make as little noise as possible. Phones should be silent and lights should be turned off.

When you are faced with direct confrontation with the shooter, the last resort is to **FIGHT**. Many individuals may not be capable of taking on a shooter, so this

action should only be an option when the situation is life or death. Upon finding yourself trapped in a room with the threat — whether this be a classroom, bathroom, or any other closed space — your survival depends on your ability to disable the shooter. According to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, committing to your actions when defending yourself determines whether you will escape or not.

Once law enforcement arrives, it is a matter of maintaining composure and complying with the officers on site. Keeping the environment as calm as possible and avoiding making loud noises or asking excessive questions aids in a more effective and rapid evacuation of the scene. It is also important to note that once concealed and upon the arrival of law enforcement, you are in more safety than your panic will allow you to believe. Every classroom's first aid kit is designed to treat gunshot wounds, and the officers on site have utilities to ensure student and faculty safety.

"Every officer is equipped with tactical weapons," Captain Ron Wilkerson, a 22-year-veteran of the La Palma Police

Department, said. "Assault rifles and tools [including] bolt cutters which could get us into any classroom."

Both a hypothetical and frighteningly real event that has come to plague the nation and raid the news, mass shootings require the joint cooperation of a campus to work as one in minimizing chaos and to maximize survival.

All political leanings aside, the community's priority is the safety of its members. Knowing what to do in this situation will save lives. Coming together, united as one body, we must remember to **Run, Hide, Fight**.

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ENGAGE



EDUCATE



EMPOWER

STORMY WATERS FOR TRUMP

CHELSEA MARTIN
News Editor

On March 6, 2018, adult film star Stephanie Clifford, known to the media as Stormy Daniels, filed a lawsuit against President Donald Trump to nullify the non-disclosure agreement (NDA) requiring her to not speak about her alleged past relationship with the president.

According to Fox News, Daniels claims the NDA she signed was invalid as it was not signed by Trump himself, outlining that Trump's personal lawyer, Michael Cohen, had signed it instead.

Trump has continuously denied having an affair with Daniels, which allegedly dates all the way back to 2006.

On Oct. 27, 2016, just days before the presidential election, the amount of \$130,000 was wired to Daniels in return for signing the NDA. The money, which Trump claims to have no knowledge of, was sent from Cohen.

Daniels has since offered to return the \$130,000 that she previously accepted for her silence in exchange for getting out of the NDA.

"This case has already been won in arbitration," White House spokesperson Sarah Huckabee Sanders said. "There was no knowledge of any payments from the president, and he has denied all these allegations."

In response to the suit, Trump's attorneys, led by Cohen and Charles Harder, have filed to have the lawsuit moved to the

federal court.

According to CNN, Trump's attorneys claim that Daniels violated at least 20 provisions that were stated in her NDA. As Daniels agreed to pay one million per violation, she could owe up to \$20 million for speaking out about the alleged relationship.

Daniels' attorney, Michael Avenatti, has also spoken up about the case as well, tweeting a response to the Trump legal team.

"[Harder and Cohen] are now attempting to remove this case to federal court in order to increase their chances that the matter will be decided in private arbitration, thus hiding the truth from the public," Avenatti said.

Avenatti has claimed that his client was physically threatened in order to maintain her silence. In a tell-all interview with CBS's "60 Minutes" on March 25, Daniels revealed that she was approached in Las Vegas by a man who threatened future physical harm if she did not drop the story. During the interview she also expanded on the nature of her past relationship with Trump.

"I felt intimidated...honestly bullied. I didn't know what to do. And so I signed [the NDA]," Daniels said. "Even though I had repeatedly expressed that I wouldn't break the agreement, but I was not comfortable with lying."

The hearing will take place on July 12 in Los Angeles. It remains to be seen as to what the repercussions of the suit will be.

STEEL TARIFFS

ORLANDO CABALO
Staff Reporter

On March 2, 2018, President Donald Trump declared that he would create a 25 percent tariff on steel and a 10 percent tariff on aluminium in order to combat the cheaper production of raw materials in foreign industries. The measure is also aimed at protecting steel mills in the Midwest as well as boosting the sale of American made steel in the United States.

The set of new taxes is mainly aimed at America's main exporters like China, a nation that Trump has repeatedly targeted as being the main source of hardship for Americans due to the loss of manufacturing jobs. Although allies of the United States will receive some exemptions from the tariffs, trade treaties like the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) will be reconsidered in order to receive economic concessions from America's neighbors. Trump also announced that he would look toward exemptions for other allies like the European Union (EU) although they too need to give the United States trade concessions.

"We're going to be very fair, we're going to be very flexible," Trump said. "but we're going to protect the American worker — as I said I would do in my campaign."

According to the Washington Post, these new tariffs will help steel and aluminium producers in the United States, but critics claim that it will hurt other American workers that help import these goods such

as dockworkers and truck drivers who most likely will face layoffs. Many members of Trump's own party, as well as many economists, claim that the new tariffs will lead to an increase in prices of goods that require steel and aluminium, like cars which are claimed to rise in cost by more than \$300. Due to the new tariffs many Republicans in the House and in the Senate have openly ridiculed and opposed Trump's actions on trade in many press conferences.

"I disagree with this action and fear its unintended consequences," said Republican House Speaker Paul Ryan. "We will continue to urge the administration to narrow this policy so that it is focused only on those countries and practices that violate trade law."

Strangely, Democrats in the House and Senate have supported the new tariffs while most Republicans denounced the taxes that impose free trade. As a result, many corporate entities like the Koch Brothers, who have previously supported Trump, are expressing their dissatisfaction with Trump and the Republicans for supporting these new taxes.

"The people in the building have no idea what's about to happen," an anonymous Trump donor said in response to the tariffs.

Although these new tariffs may help American steel and aluminium companies in the United States, it will hinder the common dockworker and truck driver that bring goods into the nation because goods

SYRIAN CIVIL WAR

KARL HAYS
Assistant Video Editor

March 15, 2018 marked the seventh year of non-stop fighting and oppression within Syria. With the constant interchanging alliances of militant groups and associations, this seems to be a never ending fight for Syria.

Since March of 2011, rebel groups stood up in protest against the President of Syria, Bashar al-Assad. The first shots of the war were fired by Assad against peaceful Arab Spring protesters, who called for his removal from office.

The Arab Spring refers to the democratic uprising spread across the Middle East in 2011. This movement started in the country of Tunisia and quickly planted roots in many Arab nations such as Egypt, Libya, Yemen, and later Syria.

In July of 2011, the protesters started firing back, with some soldiers from the military defecting to start a militia called the Free Syrian Army. At this point, the uprising turned to civil war.

In the next year or so, after protesters started firing back, Jihadists and extremists groups started helping the rebel movement in Syria. This made it harder for the rebel cause to be backed by foreign governments due to the rebels association with these groups giving Assad the upper hand.

By 2013, the Kurds, a militant group associated with Assad, seceded from his rule to fight against both Assad and the rebels.

After this, multiple countries got involved to give aid to each side. Iran helped Assad's forces, while the Gulf States and Turkey sent aid to the rebel cause. This was mainly done to counter Iran's influence.

In August of 2013, Assad's government unleashed chemical weapons against its own people. This provoked condemnation around the world, with the US soon backing Syrian rebels with arms. By September of 2013, the US was now considered a participant in the Syrian Civil War.

In February of 2014, an Al-Qaeda affiliate based mostly in Iraq, disbands from the rebels and becomes the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, also known as ISIS, alter the war. They now fight against only militant factions in the war such as the Kurds, Al-Qaeda, and the Syrian rebels, but not against Assad. However, they are not associated with him.

By 2015, the US starts focusing its attacks on ISIS. This not only shows that the US is more opposed to ISIS than Assad, but that there is also no like-minded Syrian proxy forces on the ground in Syria.

Two years go by, and many lives in Syria are lost. By this time, Donald Trump is elected president of the United States and vows to not get tied up in Syria. However, in spring of 2017, Assad uses chemical weapons again, causing Trump to change his mind on backing down from Syria and within a few days launches a set of Tomahawk missiles which destroys one of As-

sad's air bases. This marks the first time the United States has directly attacked the Assad Regime.

"321,000 have been killed in the fighting, 145,000 persons reported missing, and an estimated 12 million have been displaced from their homes," a report from The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights says.

Recently, according to New York Times, Trump has been planning to pull troops out of Syria. However, he was strictly advised to not do so.

"Trump's decision-making on Syria is head-spinningly indecisive—he talks about withdrawal, but is not withdrawing," Aaron David Miller, a vice president at Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars who advised both parties on foreign policy said.

Now, seven years since the first shots were fired in the war, and with an extensive loss of life and complicated ties, there seems to be almost no end in sight for this tragic and bloody war.

The Shamrock
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NEW STAFF ON THE BLOCK

ANDY GALLEGOS
Assistant Video Editor

Frankie De Guzman, Kennedy High School's new Forensic Science and Criminal Justice Instructor, joined Kennedy back in November. She comes from a background of criminal justice and a life full of adventure. She is deeply passionate about her job and enjoys meeting new faces, acquainting herself with different people coming from diverse backgrounds.

De Guzman began her law enforcement training in 1984 while she trained as a security officer and Spanish translator for the 1984 Olympics, in the city of Los Angeles. She also went to the Orange County Reserve Sheriff Academy and graduated in 1995.

Ever since De Guzman came to Kennedy High School, she has been actively facing a daunting challenge. She does not have her own designated classroom, and has been forced to hold her classes in other teachers' classrooms.

Despite this challenge, De Guzman enjoys meeting students and gaining the opportunity to learn more about their dreams and aspirations. In addition, she has a vision for the future of Kennedy High School.

"I hope that the courses are able to obtain a dedicated room where it can be set up with a lab for forensics and tables for the criminal justice courses to emulate a police office," De Guzman said.

De Guzman left a message going out to



Courtesy of *The Shamrock*
Frankie De Guzman (left) and Seema Sidhu (right) pose together as a new staff of Kennedy.

the students of Kennedy High School.

"Don't be afraid to take a chance, acknowledge it, but have it take a seat," De Guzman said.

With De Guzman as the new Forensic Science and Criminal Justice Instructor, we can expect great things from her as she continues to form connections with her students and inspire them to get into police work as a career. As she continues to educate students, in time hopefully De Guzman will receive her own classroom so she may be able to share her passion.

Seema Sidhu, the new assistant principal of Kennedy High School and a new member of our campus' administrative family, enjoys the school culture and finds pleasure in aiding students, staff, and families. She believes that leaving a positive impact on our school will help to make it a better place for current generations, and future generations alike.

"I want to be able to make a difference in the lives of our students, where they love coming to school because of the relationships they have with staff members and

their peers," Sidhu said.

Before becoming an assistant principal for our school, she received her bachelor's and master's degree, along with her administrative credential. She is currently working hard to further her education by obtaining her very own doctorate degree.

Sidhu is loving her time on campus, and ever since her arrival, she has been warmly welcomed by students and staff. She has also developed numerous connections within the campus' community.

A challenge she faces is encouraging students to protect their campus and maintaining a connection with their school by getting involved in various activities.

With our new assistant principal as a part of our campus, the community can anticipate positive changes to come to our campus in the near future. Sidhu is a firm believer that students can make a difference on campus and express this to her students.

"Please make connections with students from every grade level who don't feel connected to the school and help them. Value the importance of the human connection and put down the cell phones once in a while," Sidhu said.

Assistant Principal Sidhu is an outstanding addition to the administration of Kennedy High School. Without a shadow of doubt, her contribution and passion toward our school will help to make it better for everyone, one day at a time.

Live Moore, Dance Moore

NAOMI SAN JOSE
Photo Editor

To continue the success of the Kennedy Singers program, they welcomed a new choreographer this year, Shantani Moore. As a Kennedy Alumni herself, she plays a crucial role in the program. She was given the responsibility of teaching dances, and became the new spokesperson for choir. Ending her first year as choreographer for Kennedy's choir, she gave insight on her experience.

"If I had to describe my interaction with this choir program in three words, I would use inspiring, energetic, and worthwhile," Moore said.

The program itself had undergone difficult changes due to substitute teachers within the classroom alternating throughout the school year. Amongst these hardships, Moore highlighted her personal struggles that aided her growth as a choreographer.

"Overall, the most challenging part of working here...is creating the content. We have a lot of shows that are filled with dancing, and to fill all of those gaps with content is sometimes difficult to put together in such a small amount of time," Moore said. "Getting the students to retain

it by show week is also a challenge I face."

Despite these inevitable obstacles she has faced, she does not fail to emphasize the most enjoyable aspects of working with the Kennedy Singers.

"I just feel like I am giving back to Kennedy High School because I started dancing here. It feels amazing to come back in a full circle, and teach the students here today," Moore said.

Regardless of the workload she endures, she also mentioned that being brought back to Kennedy High School is important to her in itself. Moore reflects on her high school experience at Kennedy.

"When I went to school here, I participated in our show choir. Out of the four years, I spent three in Harmonic Fusion. I also did cheer, became Varsity captain as a junior in high school. I tried to do it all," Moore said.

The Perfect Harmony Booster Club works closely with Moore to ensure the Kennedy Singers' quarterly performance is memorable. Choir president Kaenin Grommet explains Moore's contribution to the growing success of the choir program. As she closes her first complete year dancing at Kennedy, she looks forward to continuing her great work in the upcoming year.

SHAKING UP THE SHAMROCK

JALEN DUMPHORD
Sports Editor

The Shamrock Newspaper's team of writers and editors on campus are bright students with an eagerness to report on important matters around the school and the world. However, the class was not always around, and in order to revive the paper, it took an unlikely group of students.

Kris Johnson, track coach, football coach, and substitute teacher, took on the task of making the newspaper relevant again back in 2010. The class was not structured how it is today, in fact the class was on a hiatus for three years and he did not use students who were necessarily interested in journalism.

"I started writing articles for a school newspaper on my own, but when I realized I needed help I reached out to ASB," Johnson said.

With a group of seemingly busy yet productive students, the challenge was making sure that the students produced quality content and were not just throwing stories together. Luckily, Johnson took formal journalism classes and had some background in reporting and writing stories. However,

his knowledge was not recent because he had taken the class back in his youthful days as a high school student.

"I was on the student newspaper staff for two years," said Johnson. "I was the editor for the sports page, opinions page, and features."

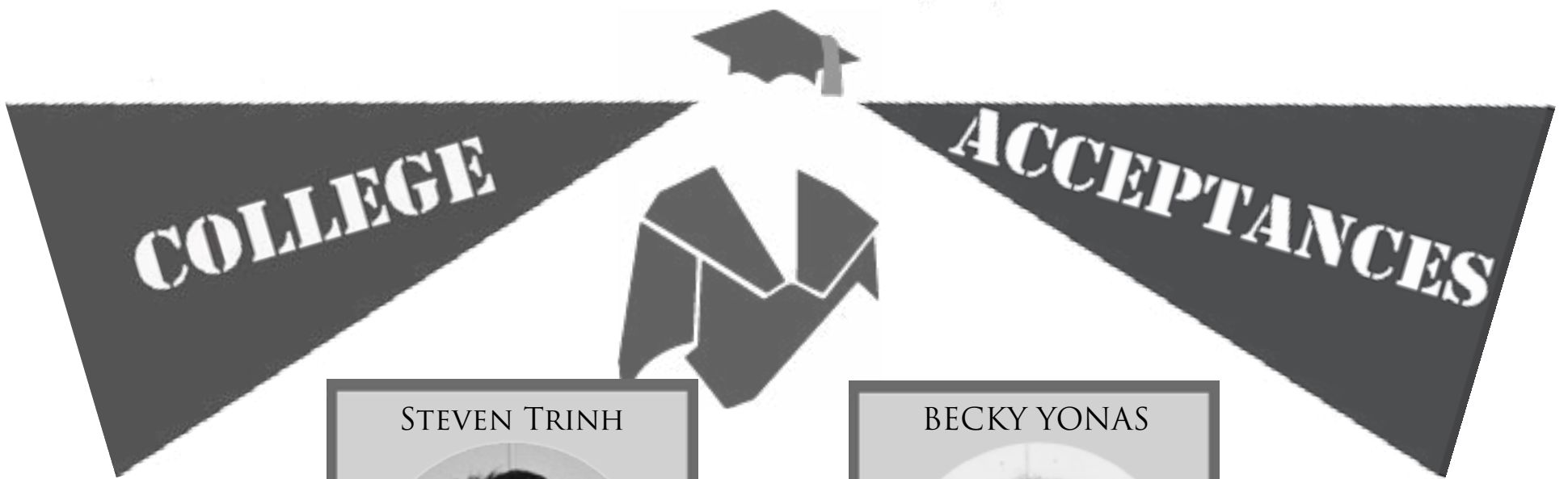
Using students who were frequently tasked with running school wide activities was most certainly an obstacle. Johnson was responsible for most of the work when it came to formatting pages and getting the newspaper printed.

"I basically took that knowledge that I had from my time as a student at Kennedy and used it to create the Irish Report so that students had a way of seeing the events at school and reading about their accomplishments," Johnson said.

The Shamrock started from humble beginnings and is still on the rise. The current staff and previous journalists are grateful that Johnson repaved the way for students to be able to share the news, express their opinions, and create a documentation of what goes on in the world today for all of our peers to see.



The Shamrock FEATURES



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STANFORD

BECKY YONAS

UC BERKELEY

CAROLYN TA

UCLA

ANH MAC

UCLA

TAYLOR LEE

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KAYLA YASUDA

UCSD

ISABEL CARDENAS

UCSD

CORY WELLIVER

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GINA KIM

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#ArmMeWith

Is Giving Guns to Teachers a Good Idea?



JAKE PACIOTTA
Sports Editor

PRO

Arming teachers has been the best idea that's come to fruition since President Donald Trump declared he was running for office.

In light of all of the tragic school shootings, it's only right that we give our nation's teachers firearms in case there's an emergency, and their assistance is needed. This is the best way to keep our children and students safe while at the same time keeping the Second Amendment safe as well.

As stated in the Constitution, "the right of the People to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed." Therefore, teachers should be given firearms, as our Second Amendment shall be protected, just as the lives of our children and students nationwide. Since teachers are adults, they would act responsibly with the weapon so nothing can go wrong. Trump has made himself clear on this matter, mentioning specifications and guidelines for the arming of teachers on Twitter.

"I never said 'give teachers guns' like was stated on Fake News," Trump said. "What I said was to look at the possibility of giving concealed guns to gun adept teachers with military or special training experience."

Students learn about the Constitution while simultaneously being protected, creating a positive learning experience, enhancing students' ability to become an adult, and fully understand the government and real world. If teachers are held responsible for teaching our children valuable life lessons, then they can surely be responsi-

ble for protecting their lives as well.

With proper training, there will be no need for security on any campus, as the teachers will have the skills capable to stop any shooting. Since these barbaric, horrendous shooters have committed their crimes with heavy duty assault rifles, our teachers should be equipped with the same, as that is the only way to combat these threats. Once alerted of any suspicious activity, our teachers will be able to strap up and be the hero that our children need.

Students will respect our strapped teachers, and every child will understand that these are dangerous weapons, and horseplay is not allowed.

Many students have been acting up, protesting that our precious Second Amendment be abolished, and our valuable firearms be taken away. They don't realize that they are children, and they don't know anything about the world. Why would a 17-year-old's opinion matter? Where will they be in a year or two? They obviously don't understand that this is a decision for the adults. Children get worked up easily, and they shouldn't be allowed to have such a strong opinion on stricter gun rights.

It is clear that arming teachers is the only way to combat school shootings and keep students safe. With the proper training, teachers will be a valuable asset to protecting our children, adding an extra blanket of safety that we all need today. Once these students see their teacher save lives when a godforbidden attack occurs, they will surely understand this was the right choice.



ORLANDO CABALO
Staff Reporter

CON

In a world that seems to be embroiled in the devastating reality of mass shootings that target the innocent, there have been ingenious solutions to stop this nightmare, but arming teachers is not one of them. Shootings in schools are especially heinous because they target people who don't even get a chance at life before it is stolen away from them.

Schools, a place of learning and friendship, has become a killing field where thousands of innocent souls have been traumatized from seeing their own classmates shot by another. And the best our representatives in power can come up with is arming our educators who are not trained in any way to protect students in an event of a shooting, and in many cases, may be mistaken as the killer.

In a debate in Alabama, soon after the Parkland school shooting, the state government came to a conclusion that instead of implementing various solutions on stopping individuals who are mentally unstable from obtaining firearms, they would allow teachers who are not well trained with weapons to carry guns.

Guns in schools according to the FBI's report on active shooter events from 2000 to 2013 shows that only about three percent of shooters were stopped by a civilian with a gun while almost thirteen percent of shooters were stopped by unarmed individuals.

On the issue of gun violence, evidence from The American Journal of Medicine showed that out of 22 other highly developed nations in the world, Americans are

25 times more likely to be attacked with a gun and ten times more likely to be killed with a gun than the other countries. Coupled with the U.S. gun ownership being the largest in the world, it is clear as day that to cut down on gun violence we must cut down on the amount of weapons being bought in America.

"No, I wouldn't trust my teachers with guns. They probably don't even know what they are doing with them," junior Adrian Preciado said.

The main reason that many students don't trust a teacher with a weapon is because they are not trained professionally and it is nerve-racking to have a person with a gun in your classroom while learning. Not only are the vast majority of students in the country against allowing an emergence of armed teachers, but many teachers themselves are opposed to the idea.

"Teachers are here for the education of our students and shouldn't be placed in a position where they have to choose between finding a safe place to hide and protect their students or going after a gunman," Parkland teacher Tammy Orilio said.

By now, it is obvious instead of having an army of gun packing, teachers there should be a set of laws limiting the purchase of guns since most school shooters use a gun they or their parents bought legally, and there should be a trained protective force like the police to help safeguard the civilians in the school. It's time to stop this everlasting nightmare, and the first step to do so is to remove these stupid "solutions."

LAND OF THE FREE, HOME OF THE NRA



JACKIE MARTINEZ
A&E Editor

America. Known to many as the land of the free and home of the brave, our star spangled banner has become symbolic of a government who loves guns more than the millions of children who once went to school everyday without fear of becoming another statistic.

Since the earliest gun-related tragedies on school campuses like Columbine and Virginia Tech, students and faculty continue to fear for their lives when every day they attend what could be their last day of school. As more and more students get their lives stolen from them in a place of education, much like the recent events at Stoneman Douglas High School, our senators and representatives would much rather keep these losses in their thoughts and

prayers, rather than enact policy to ensure the safety of American youth.

While at first well-intentioned, the over-used "thoughts and prayers" just seems like a way for our elected officials to pass off the issue as another tragedy by simply tweeting their condolences. Meanwhile, the families and loved ones of these victims are stuck suffering. The primary reason our lawmakers aren't making any laws to protect schoolchildren is the millions of dollars given to them by the right-winged National Rifle Association (NRA).

According to the NRA, they proudly establish themselves as defenders of history's patriots and diligent protectors of the Second Amendment.

The rifle club organization-turned-top political lobbying group is notorious for donating to popular Republican incumbents and their campaigns. Ironically, these congressmen are the same ones who turn a blind eye to the growing amount of young lives lost during mass shootings on campuses in their district. For example,

senator and former presidential candidate John McCain (R-AZ) has received over \$7.7 million in NRA donations throughout his career, while still making sure to keep the victims of the Parkland shooting in his thoughts and prayers.

Big names like McCain, Marco Rubio (\$1,012,980), Ted Cruz (\$77,450), and President Donald Trump (over \$11 million in his 2016 campaign alone), aren't the only ones receiving huge donations from the NRA. In California, 39th District representative Ed Royce, who represents some of our students here at John F. Kennedy, has accepted \$38,000 in NRA donations.

They propose ideas to combat gun violence with more guns, and make children feel as though they aren't able to do anything about it. Republicans have proposed to arm teachers in response to the rising fear of more schools being attacked.

Parkland survivor and gun control activist Emma Gonzalez, has flat out called the proposal "stupid."

"Douglas ran out of paper for, like, two

weeks in the school year," Gonzalez said. "Now all of a sudden they have \$400 million to pay for teachers to get trained to arm themselves?"

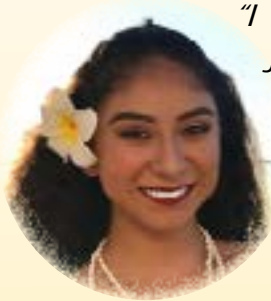
In a nation whose leaders align themselves religiously, the idea of saying "thoughts and prayers" after gun-related tragedies is mostly a way to comfort and console those who have been affected directly or indirectly by these circumstances. For anyone who trusts wholly in their faith, sending their prayers to a Christian god as a way to ask for mercy is the only thing that can be done.

But it isn't. There's no doubt that the possibility of some divine intervention can calm the minds of some, but to those who do not worship or practice Christian religion, the idea seems far-fetched.

The only way to mend the issues faced by the youth in the United States is to become educated and to make sure our representatives in Congress are representing us well enough that all our views are being tended to.



SECRET TALENTS

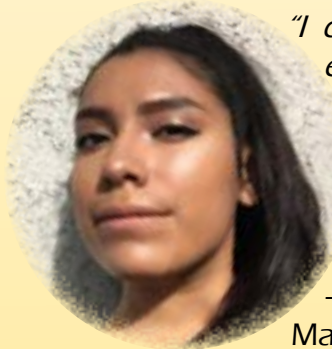


"I started dancing ballet, folklorico, and jazz when I was three and I've been dancing for about 14 years. My whole family dances, so they taught me and brought me up in dance, but now I'm a Polynesian dancer full time."

-Senior Bianca Escobar



"Honestly, I was pretty bored with my life and I've almost always liked blood and gore, so I just decided that I wanted to do special effects, and watching YouTube videos is what really helped me a lot and ever since then I've gotten a passion for it." -Senior Daniel Barragan



"I can shake my eyes. I'm the only person in my family that can. I'm freaking awesome."

-Senior Luz Maria Pena



"I can tell when people are lying because I lie most of the time, but sometimes depending on the person emotions I can sense it more."

-Senior Michelle Lunar Cruces



"For 10 years now, I have been doing Bollywood dancing. I get to make new friends and form a family environment with my group members. As the studio motto goes 'Live, Love, Dance.'"

-Junior Alisha Patel



"I can cry on command. Sometimes I use it if my eyes are feeling dry."

-Senior Chase Madison



"Death of a loved one brought me to create art in a way, I could represent him."

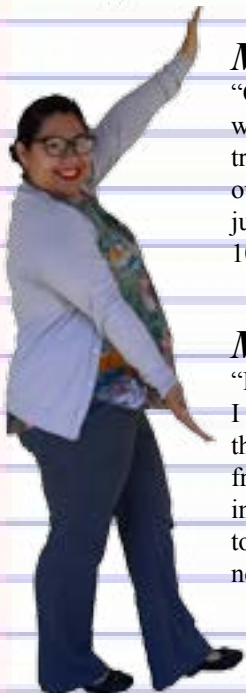
-Senior Andrea Mora



"I can make my tongue into different shapes, I'm onto my fourth different one."

Junior Kaitlyn Tarin

TEACHERS MOST EMBARRASSING MOMENTS



Mrs. Rosenberg:

"One time, when I was teaching, I was walking backwards because I didn't trust the class very much. I totally fell over my heels and fell on my back. I just layed there, on the floor for about 10 seconds, defeated."

Mr. Adair:

"I wore a new purple polo recently, and I thought I looked pretty stylish. Then the first of many comments I heard was from Mr. Jankowski who started singing the Barney theme song. Needless to say that purple shirt has found a new home, in the trash can."

Mrs. Villaseñor:

"The closest teacher bathrooms were both being used, but my conference period was about to end so I decided to just go to the girls' student (bathroom). Somebody comes in and they go in the stall next to me and I see this huge size 20 shoe. That's when I realized I was in the boys' -- student! -- bathroom. I was thinking 'How am I going to get out of here without them thinking I am some kind of pervert?' I had to wait until the kid left. The bell rang, and I was late to my class."

Mr. Johnson:

"A few years ago, I had an incident where I passed gas during class. It's something I try to refrain from, but every once in awhile they sneak out. Some kids caught wind of it -- literally -- and found out it was me."

Mrs. Holley:

"I was a new teacher, teaching in junior high. The school had a double lunch and had different bells for the lunches. I didn't know the bells because I was new, so when the bell rang for the first lunch I thought it was an earthquake drill. I made them duck and cover, and they sat like that for awhile."

Mr. Sabala:

"So this year at lunchtime I sent out a remind message to my sports medicine students using swipe texting. Instead of saying 'plus' it contained an inappropriate word that describes an anatomical part. I have never received so many responses to a remind I've sent out."



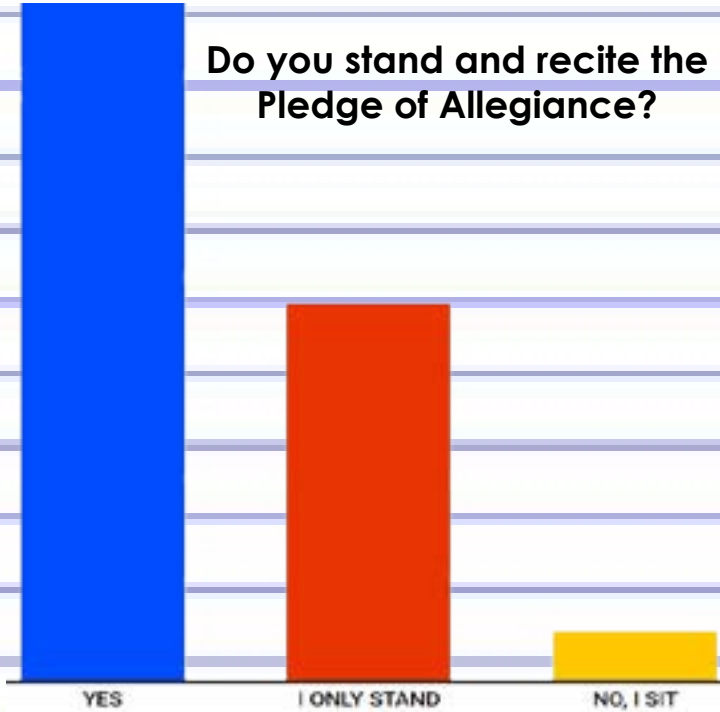
School Wide Polls

Best social media platform?



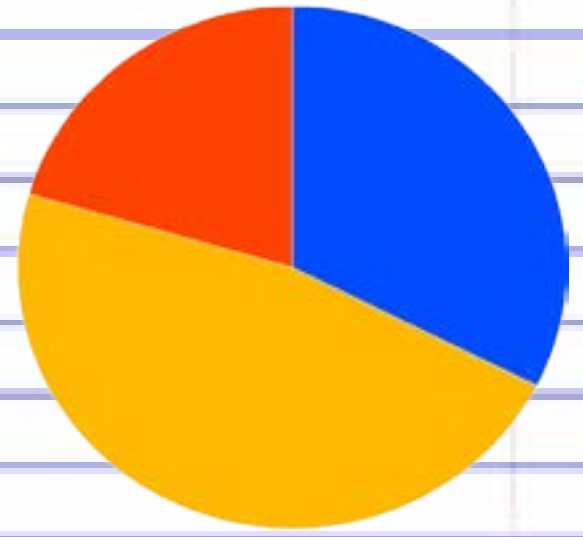
- Facebook
- Instagram
- Twitter
- Snapchat

Do you stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance?



- YES
- I ONLY STAND
- NO, I SIT

What do you identify as?



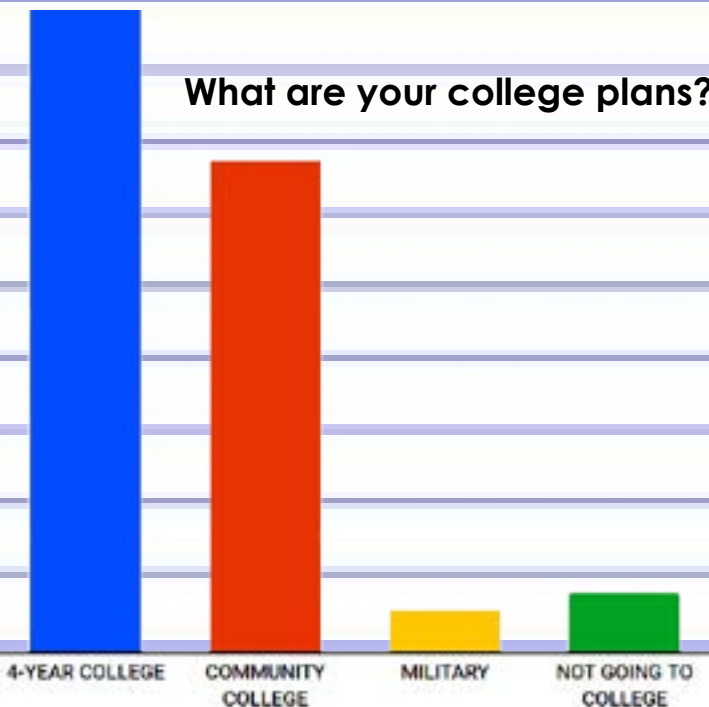
- Liberal
- Moderate
- Conservative

Best form of communication?



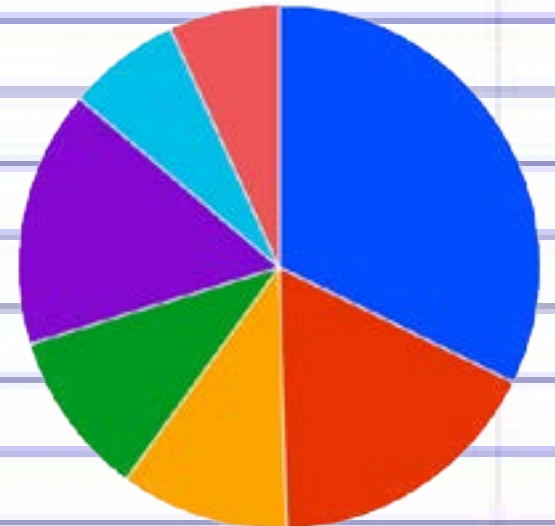
- Text
- Call
- DM
- Facetime
- Snap

What are your college plans?



- 4-YEAR COLLEGE
- COMMUNITY COLLEGE
- MILITARY
- NOT GOING TO COLLEGE

Favorite music genre?



- Hip hop
- Pop
- Alternative
- Rock
- R&B
- Country
- Indie

Summer Volunteer Opportunities

Children's Programming Teen Aide Buena Park Library District, 7150 La Palma Ave. Buena Park, CA 90620



The Buena Park Library is in search of teens to assist with the children's activities. It would include assisting storytimes, special programs, and the annual summer reading program. This volunteer opportunity is for teens ages 14 to 18 years of age.

We've Got Your Back Volunteer, Giving Children Hope, 8332 Commonwealth Ave. Buena Park, CA 90621

This organization believes that no one should be left hungry. They hold a food distribution service throughout the summer, to children in particular. A large amount of students rely on provided lunches throughout the school year, and as the summer approaches, they are still in need of meals. We've Got Your Back Volunteer is a solution to their needs.

Nothin' but Sand Beach Cleanup, Redondo Beach, George Freeth Way, Tower Ruby, Redondo Beach, CA 90277 Sat, July 21, 2018 10 AM - 12 PM



Heal the Bay is an environmental nonprofit focused on making the coastal waters and watersheds of Greater Los Angeles safe, healthy and clean. To fulfill this mission, they use science, education, community action, and advocacy.



Emerald Chain is Rank



AUBREY BELL

Opinions Editor

Every year at graduation, 20 hard-working juniors at John F. Kennedy High School are honored with the title of being in Emerald Chain. These 20 students consist of the academic top 10 boys and top 10 girls at Kennedy High School. However, this seemingly harmless tradition is sexist as it fails to give recognition to those that truly deserve it in efforts to have an equal amount of boys and girls.

While the idea to pick the top 10 boys and girls individually seems to be an effort towards gender equality because of the equal amount of recognition, instead it is the very opposite. Rather than judging the academic achievements of boys and girls equally, the tradition supports segregation of the genders. Because boys and girls are

being held to completely separate standards within their gender, it is inherently unequal.

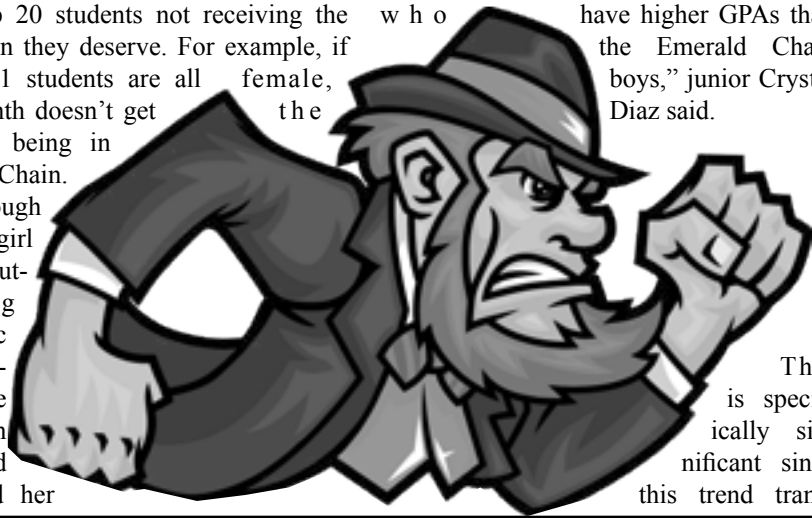
"It was obviously disappointing to see my efforts not get recognized although at the time I was within the top 20 students," senior Isabel Cardenas said.

This inequality leads to a portion of the actual top 20 students not receiving the recognition they deserve. For example, if the top 11 students are all female, the eleventh doesn't get the honor of being in Emerald Chain.

Even though this girl made an outstanding academic achievement, the system has failed to reward her

for it. In some instances multiple people who had the top 20 GPAs don't make it into Emerald Chain. While both genders can be unrepresented in this broken tradition, throughout Kennedy history, female students have been the ones to miss out on the representation they deserve.

"It is unfair to the unrecognized girls who have higher GPAs than the Emerald Chain boys," junior Crystal Diaz said.



This is specifically significant since this trend trans-

lates later in life. Missing out on the title of being in Emerald Chain is detrimental for students since it is an accomplishment that colleges recognize. Not only are hardworking students missing out on the awards and recognition they deserve, but it may also affect their future.

"All the hard work of maintaining my grades didn't even matter in the end," senior Chelsea Martin said. "I lost my faith in the system."

Helen Chan, the overseer of Emerald Chain, refused to comment on the subject.

As equality is becoming a more prevalent topic in today's society, our school should be taking the initiative to become more progressive in this day in age. A simple amendment to this tradition would be instead to recognize the overarching top 20 students at Kennedy. This ensures that only the top performing students will get the reward, instead of those lucky enough to make it simply because of their gender.

Pink is the New Tax



DOMINIQUE LARSON

Features Editor

In today's America, there is a lot of debate on whether or not systemic sexism still exists. Here is the easy answer: it does. People can all choose whether or not to practice or defend sexism, however, no one can choose whether or not to experience sexism.

An example of such ridiculous practices falls under the name: the pink tax. The pink tax includes taxes placed on women's hygiene or cosmetic products like razors, tampons, deodorant, etc. that are taxed as a luxury or priced higher than the male counterpart.

Meanwhile, men's same cosmetic and hygiene products are taxed as a necessity rather than a luxury. More specifically, the outrage focuses mostly on what is called: the tampon tax. The belief that using a pad or tampon is somehow a luxury and a man shaving his face is a necessity by comparison is, in fact, sexism.

Women and transgender men do not deserve to be taxed on necessities. There is, however, a large struggle between retailers and lawmakers on this topic. It really boils down to what is valued more, the money earned by retailers for the tax, or women who pay on average an extra \$84 annually on taxes all due to their menstrual cycle.

Associate director of Boxed.com (a website that sells hygiene and cosmetic products for men and women at the same price), Nitasha Mehta, commented on the ridiculousness of it all.

"We didn't understand why women

have to be charged up to 10 percent in sales tax for an item that's a necessity," Mehta said.

Some people believe that because of how a necessity satisfies the consumer, it must cost more. This logic can be fair when comparing luxury theaters with cheaper movie theaters, or a softer coat to a scratchier one. However, to believe that women or trans men deserve to pay for more their products because it makes them "happy" is fundamentally sexist. On the contrary, Hunter Georgeson from the Adam Smith Institute speaking on the topic proves that he still believes so.

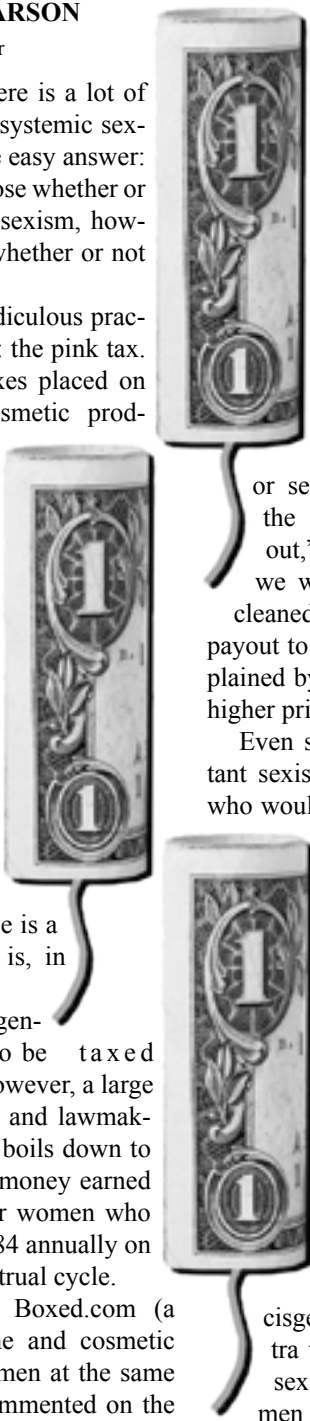
"The value of a product or service is only what it brings to the consumer, its emotional payout," Georgeson said. "In this vein, we would expect having a shirt dry cleaned to afford a greater emotional payout to women than to men - this is explained by their willingness to pay for the higher price in the first place."

Even students are outraged at the blatant sexism placed upon them by people who would rather make a quick buck than show women and trans men the respect they deserve. Junior Sofia Guzman spoke out on the topic, understanding that people are being treated unfairly.

"Our society, for the majority, has learned to understand the natural necessities and demands of a woman [or trans man] and [their] body," Guzman said. "It would be extremely disappointing if that progress was to come to a halt at the simple issue of taxing tampons as a necessity."

Believing that trans men and cisgender women deserve to pay extra taxes for their natural biology is sexist. The tax needs reform, and men and women alike deserve better.

Repealing this tax that affects tampons is a step in the direction of gender equality.



BIRTH CONTROL



ANNIE CHUN

Editor-in-Chief

As our society becomes more polarized, judgement is placed upon our younger generation for their usage of contraceptives, especially females. Many teenage girls are not able to get birth control due to parent restrictions or financial reasons. However, young girls should be able to always have access to birth control as the benefits outweigh the disadvantages.

Using birth control can decrease teenage pregnancy and hardships for students. According to the CDC, from 2007 to 2013, the teen pregnancy rates dropped by 36 percent due to contraceptives. Many people focus on how to prevent teens from engaging in sexual intercourse, but the only fail proof method is to be abstinent. Therefore, if teens want to have sex, they will most likely have to use a condom if they do not have access to birth control.

According to Planned Parenthood, a condom has an 85 percent success rate, whereas birth control pills have a 98 percent success rate. With birth control, they can avoid any more unwanted pregnancies.

"By definition, if teens are having the same amount of sex but getting pregnant less often, it's because of contraception," Guttmacher researcher, Laura Lindberg said.

Along with avoiding pregnancy, birth control has several other purposes. According to the Guttmacher Institute, 1.5 million women take birth control for medical conditions such as ovarian cancer, ovarian cysts, and acne.

Birth control is covered by most insurances, so students will most likely not have to pay out of pocket. Even without parental consent, students should have access to birth control for safety reasons. Taking pills is worth it if it means that you can avoid life altering circumstances and pro-

tect your health in the process.

However, many still object to teenage girls taking birth control due to their religion. There has been a great deal of controversy regarding birth control and simply the idea of sexual intercourse before marriage.

One's religion should always be respected, but when it comes down to it, not everyone will always abide by their religion's rules. For example, the Catholic Church deems any form of contraception to be a sin. However, these rules were made in a time before further studies proved the benefits of birth control. Amongst birth control users, 58 percent claimed that they consume the medication for reducing menstrual pain and acne.

It is important to take these rules into consideration with the context of that time period in mind. According to a study done at Stanford University, only about three percent of Americans wait until marriage to have sex. Every year, less people wait to have sex as in the 1950s, 11 percent remained abstinent. Declining to three percent shows the increase in people having sex today.

Many also argue that condoms are effective enough if used correctly and believe it is better than birth control in the sense that it protects against STDs, unlike birth control. Although this is true, birth control does more to prevent any pregnancies and according to Planned Parenthood, the combination of both birth control and condoms are more powerful.

Even the government supports birth control as the California Healthy Kids Act of 2016 states that students ranging from 12 to 18-years-old may have access to birth control during school and their parents will not be contacted.

When looking at things in the macro perspective, it is important to see what is at stake when sexually active teens are not taking birth control. Whether it is known to their parents or behind their backs, teens must be safe when engaging in such activ-



IB: Investigating the Truth

MIA GODOY
REBECCA RADILLO
ISABEL CARDENAS
Guest Columnists

Deemed “unnecessary,” “insignificant,” and “unneded,” John F. Kennedy’s International Baccalaureate (IB) Program has received backlash for its alleged inadequacy and ultimate purposelessness on campus. Recent criticisms have condemned the internationally recognized program, failing to portray its true nature and ultimately, damaging Kennedy and misleading future prospects.

Promoting the active, lifelong learner, the IB program is far from a mere boost to one’s GPA; it academically challenges students and strives to instill a broad range of interests that go beyond intellectual development.

IB allows individuals to apply their knowledge and motivation outside the classroom, as seen through notable alumni such as Black Panther star Lupita Nyong’o, Prime Minister of Canada Justin Trudeau, and pop-music icon Ke\$ha—and more locally, including previous mayor of La Palma and current council member Peter Kim.

“From what I remember, IB taught me to think critically, be challenged, and be able to balance and manage the workload from classes” Kim said. “I can confidently say it definitely helps you be more prepared for college and the real world. I would respectfully disagree with the characterization made in the February 23, 2018 opinion piece.”

Despite claims that IB lacks recognition, the program is held in high regard by colleges and universities.

“When we see an IB student’s application we light up, we are excited, we’re looking to see how a student has taken on



JALEN DUMPHORD / *The Shamrock*
Kimberly Weir (left) addresses International Baccalaureate students during class.

the IB,” Stanford Assistant Dean of Admissions Debra Von Bergen said.

Aside from the UCs and Cal-States, Harvard, Cornell, and the University of Chicago, all additionally give credit to IB diploma recipients; Duke University’s incoming freshman class is made up of around 25 percent IB students.

The distinct parts of the IB program foster not only skills crucial for college but a worldly-view. All IB students are required to submit Internal Assessments (IA) in the form of a research project or oral presentation and an Extended Essay consisting of 4,000 words, which includes self-guided research that will become a norm in undergraduate and graduate school.

Requiring students to learn a new language and enroll in the class Theory of Knowledge, IB aims to develop intercultural understanding. Through these studies, the IB community is encouraged to explore diversity and tackle global and local issues

people find happiness, and studies show that a strong correlation exists between religion and happiness.

According to Time magazine, a 2015 survey by researchers at the London School of Economics and the Erasmus University Medical Center in the Netherlands found that participating in a religious organization was the only activity that correlated with sustained happiness.

“Some experts think that believing in a religion gives you a greater sense of purpose and meaning in life than a secular viewpoint alone does,” sociologist Chaeyoon Lim of the University of Wisconsin said. “That can help carry you through the low periods and elevate the higher ones.”

Based on this evidence, Christians should be the happiest of all people.

According to the Holy Bible, God loved us so much, that He came down and died for all of the sins of humanity. Because He did so, we can have eternal life based solely upon His grace. Our happiness can lie in the fact that God loves us. With this fact, we can understand that all things happen for our good. Also, we can have the peace of mind that whatever happens, we have eternal life waiting for us in heaven.

However, many people do not think that a relationship with Jesus Christ is essential for happiness. When asked whether or not he thinks it is necessary, senior Rafael Valencia explained his thoughts.

to create lasting change, as seen through the Creativity-Action-Service (CAS) Project. The Kennedy Kloset, run by IB students Matthew Campos, Sophia Herrera, Midori Gonzales, and Gabriela Mejia, is just one example of the CAS Project on the Kennedy campus.

“The Kennedy Kloset made me realize that I don’t have to travel to a Third World country to make a change” Mejia said.

While some find the IB Program too time-consuming, choosing to partake in a wider variety of extra-curricular activities and electives, the IB coordinators, Julie Foy and Christine Helton, have worked relentlessly to prevent this sacrifice. Through their hands-on coordination, they have created classes for independent study and during zero-period, which allow many IB students to continue in their beloved electives.

“Balancing academics and extracurricular activities is difficult in general. Because

“I do not think that happiness comes only from religion, I think it can come from many places,” Valencia said.

People often think that the common goals we set for ourselves, such as fame or wealth, will bring us happiness, yet those who attain those goals seem to be even more unhappy. In 2006, Beyonce Knowles admitted even she was struggling with depression.

“I didn’t eat. I stayed in my room. I was in a really bad place in life,” Knowles said.

I am ASB President, District Ambassador, RSVP President and more, finding the time can become overwhelming” senior Lujain Altawah said. “But I am definitely not alone in any of it—my teachers and IB coordinators have taught me to push through anything I am apart of.”

The price of IB is often concerning to most interested students; however, the disparity among AP and IB fees is close to none. Costing \$119, the difference is a mere \$25. If students have difficulty affording these test fees, fee-waivers are easily available in the Career Center for qualifying families. For a few more dollars, the credits earned through an IB education can be applied to not solely universities in the United States but IB schools worldwide.

When considering the benefits of IB, it is crucial to understand that the will and motivation of the student is ultimately what will propel them in the direction of success. While IB is not the sole academic pathway that prompts academic success, Kennedy’s unique IB program challenges both intellectual and personal boundaries, unleashing potential to reach new heights.

CORRECTION

In Volume 47, Issue 3 of *The Shamrock*, the fees associated with IB registration and exams were erroneously reported as “initial registration fees include a \$168 payment and each IB subject test is \$121” (“IB: Investigating the Benefits”). The actual costs include a one-time registration fee of \$172 and \$119 per subject for the 2017-2018 school year.

“Going through that lonely period: ‘Who am I? Who are my friends?’”

As humans search for happiness, we are often distracted by small rewards. Money, fame, and prosperity are not end goals in life; those who achieve these things soon realize that their happiness is short lived. It is my belief that happiness is a byproduct of Christianity, not of our circumstances or possessions. When we reach out and accept God’s grace, we can find the long term joy and peace of mind that satisfies our souls.

the PURSUIT of HAPPINESS



JONATHAN RIZKALLA
Guest Columnist

In a world full of crime and hate, it can be tough to find a way to have long term joy. As we go to school or work, it is important to remember that the material things we gather along the way will not fulfill us. We need something to satisfy our souls. Having a relationship with Jesus Christ through Christianity is the way to finding true joy.

A basic human desire, one of the most sought after goals of the entire human race is happiness. Happiness is so important that our founding fathers wrote it into our Declaration of Independence. After over 200 years pursuing happiness as a country, it seems we have found nothing.

In fact, things are getting worse. America’s suicide rate has increased steadily in recent years from 11.27 per 100,000 people in 2007 to 13.42 suicides per 100,000 in 2016, according to the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP).

This can be counteracted by helping

The Shamrock

A Note on Guest Columnists

The articles presented on this page were produced by guest columnists. The content within are solely the opinions of the writer(s) and not necessarily those of *The Shamrock* staff, adviser, or the administration.

While not all of our stories reflect the opinions of all Kennedy High School students, *The Shamrock* strives to respect the unique and varied opinions and viewpoints of our diverse student population.

Our goal is to bring the students, parents, and staff of Kennedy High School, as well as the city and community of La Palma the most current and popular news from our city, state, and country. We encourage submissions and letters to the editor at all times, for any reason.

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns for these or any stories, photos, or columns, please feel free to contact us at thejfkshamrock@gmail.com.



VOLLEYBALL'S SMASHING SUCCESS

JOY PARK
Video Editor

The 2017 CIF-SS Division 4 boys volleyball champions are coming back to defend and uphold their title. After a glorious season, the fighting Irish were left with a gaping vacancy in back row players, or cornerstone assets to the team, with the graduation of seniors from the class of 2017. Their historic rise was imminently threatened and the team faces the task of compensating for the gaps in their lineup.

"We were fortunate to have all of our front row core players returning this year. ... It took a lot of hard work in the off season but we figured out a way to fill the gaps and maintain that high level of expectation that past players would expect of these current players," Coach Travis Warner said.

From off season practices in club volleyball to undying dedication, the boys continue to fight their way to the top, now ranked in Division 3. In a cut throat game against the number one team of their division, Downey High School, the Irish team took home a victory of 3-2.

"We came into the game expecting high intensity from the beginning because of last year's CIF final against Downey. We really wanted to win; we wanted to show everyone that we were number one," captain Jeremy Choi said.

As with any other sport, the program strives to succeed, and each player works their hardest in order to put themselves and their team in the best place to do so.

"We are preparing to continue the legacy by giving the most in out of practice. Volleyball isn't just a sport we play, but a lifestyle. We practice in and out of school to make us the best."

- Ralph Crane

The future of Kennedy's boys volleyball team, the Frosh/Soph and JV team, shows promising results with consecutive wins and the eventual championship of their home tournament. With a bright future ahead, loyal fans anticipate the next season of the sport. Until then, the boys continue to conquer rivals left and right, and pave the way for a legacy that goes down in Kennedy history.

"This program has a lot of pride, and accountability to succeed. The word rebuild is not part of our vocabulary, we reload," Warner said.



Courtesy of Sijun Hwang
The varsity team poses for a picture before their first win of the season

SHAQUEM GRIFFIN

UNSTOPPABLE, UNBROKEN, UNAFFECTED

JAKE PACIOTTA
Sports Editor

Football is arguably one of the hardest sports to ever be played. In order to succeed, one must have an insane amount of mental toughness, athletic ability, and extreme knowledge of the game. The game is hard enough with all body parts, but is even more challenging when playing with only one hand.

Shaquem Griffin, a linebacker who led the University of Central Florida to an undefeated 2017-2018 season, only has one hand, but that does not affect his performance on the field. This past season, Griffin totaled 74 tackles, seven sacks, an interception, and a fumble return for a touchdown as UCF had their breakout season. He was also the MVP of the 2018 Peach Bowl, where UCF upset the University of Auburn in a game that nobody thought could be won by UCF. The thought that it could not be done was not the first time Griffin was doubted, and it surely won't be the last.

Griffin was born with a birth defect, amniotic band syndrome, that affected the growth of his fingers in his left hand.

"I was four years old and I tried to cut my own fingers off with a kitchen knife because I was in constant pain ... I got my left hand amputated shortly after," Griffin said.

Despite the defect, Griffin and his twin brother Shaquill Griffin still did everything together, including tackle football from a young age. Before one game, an opposing coach tried to sit him out of the game because of his defect; because he thought football was a game for only two-handed players. Griffin intercepted a pass to win

the game for his team, showing the other coach what one-handed players could do.

"This was the first time I ever had to deal with somebody telling me I shouldn't — or couldn't — do something because of my hand," Griffin said. "And that was the moment I realized I was always going to have to prove people wrong."

Griffin went on to become a successful high school football player, receiving a scholarship to play football with his brother at UCF. Although Griffin was ready to play, he was redshirted, and had to watch from the sidelines.

One of his hardest

experiences was watching his twin brother play every Saturday while he sat in his dorm room, having to livestream the game because he wasn't always invited to travel with the team.

"I used to tell my mom all the time that college was a negative place for me," Griffin said. "I spent so much time those first three years in Orlando sitting in that room, wondering why I wasn't getting an opportunity to play on Saturdays."

This frustrating feeling continued for Griffin, as in the summer before his third season he was sent home, while others stayed and trained on campus -- his brother included.

Griffin returned to UCF, and the team went 0-12, disappointing to say the least. Coach Scott Frost would then enter his life and the UCF coaching staff, giving him the opportunity he was starving for. Griffin took advantage of this, and had two outstanding seasons in his final two years, receiving the American Athletic Conference Defensive Player of the Year award and the 2018 Peach Bowl MVP award.

The journey doesn't stop here for Griffin, though. He shocked everyone at the NFL combine, having an outstanding performance. He also ran a 4.38 second 40-yard dash, the fastest of all linebackers.

He also put up 20 reps of 225 pounds on bench, utilizing a prosthetic on his left hand and years of work with his dad's homemade workout tools.

Griffin's story is an incredible one, and is inspiring to many. Despite the doubters and his physical defect, Griffin remained strong, not allowing anybody's comments to affect him or his goals. Staying mentally strong, developing immense physical talent, and understanding the game make Griffin a complete football player, epitomizing everything the sport stands for.



Courtesy of GOOGLE

ATHLETES OF THE YEAR

Marcus Gonzalez

Q: What were the biggest problems you faced in soccer?

A: "Our biggest problem was scoring and it was tough losing in CIF. I wish it could have gone better."

Q: How has your hard work paid off?

A: "It was a rough experience at first, but this year we came all together and all the hard work in practice we put in every day paid off. It was nice to end my last year with a bang."



Elizabeth Silengo

Q: What adversities have you faced on your journey to this award?

A: "It's hard to push through injuries, but I was motivated because I want to be the best version of myself possible."

Q: How'd you react when you found out you earned the award?

A: "I was really happy... It meant that all of my hard work paid off and was actually acknowledged."



Scholar

Spencer Hirai

Q: How were you able to maintain a high GPA while playing both school and club sports?

A: "I used the calendars my teachers gave me and made sure I managed my time to so I can turn in my work on time."

Q: What drove you to do well in school?

A: "Winning CIF emphasized how important volleyball is to me, and I need to have good grades so I can play and succeed each week."



Athletes

Meryanna Hanna

Q: How were you able to manage your time?

A: "It was just school, practice, and then going home to finish homework."

Q: What pushed you to work so hard?

A: "My parents always stayed on me and pushed me to be my best. Without them, I wouldn't be at the state I am."

Q: Did you expect to receive the award?

A: "In all honesty, no. I didn't think anybody cared about tennis so it was nice to be recognized."



MOVIE REVIEWS



A WRINKLE IN TIME



NAOMI SAN JOSE
Photo Editor

The classic novel, “A Wrinkle In Time” released in theatres on March 9, 2018 as Disney’s next family friendly sci-fi movie. Starring iconic actors such as Oprah Winfrey, Reese Witherspoon, Mindy Kaling, Chris Pine, and Zach Galifianakis it was expected to be a breathtaking screenplay. Many fans focused their excitement on the diversity of the cast and the first African-American woman to direct a \$100 million movie. This elaborate live adaptation explored the complexity of our universe and its ability to connect all individuals despite distance. There was great potential for this film to portray an exciting concept on space, but their execution left the plot in a black hole.

Beginning with a modern day family completely interested in space, Disney created a genre approachable for all ages. Meg Murry, a middle school girl, serves as the protagonist and who travels through



All Images Courtesy of GOOGLE

multiple dimensions proving her parents’ hypothesis about time travel to save her father. Much of the plot was poetic and symbolic, but it seemed as if there were elements vital to the plot that would have been only understood by viewers that have read the book. If the concept of the space-time continuum and time travel was not confusing enough for the general public, the ideas included in Wrinkle were complex and not ideal for the audience that Disney targeted.

Furthermore, Meg Murry’s time travel throughout space was a very short adventure with the exposition and rising action toward the climax exceeded the anticipated conflict. Although the build up created a strong backstory to create a thematic meaning about family, it left the viewer exiting the theater desiring more from the climax. On the other hand, the movie successfully highlights a large amount of graceful scenes that convey the beauty in space due to its mystery.

READY PLAYER ONE

KARL HAYS
Assistant Video Editor

Directed by Steven Spielberg, “Ready Player One” is a science-fiction fantasy based on the novel by Ernest Cline. The story takes place in Columbus, Ohio in 2045, following the death of visionary video game developer and trillionaire Jim Halliday and creator of the Oasis, a virtual reality free-roam world where the possibilities are endless. Wade Watts and his friends go on a journey to find the hidden Easter egg. This Easter egg will grant the finder complete control of the Oasis system.

In order to find this Easter egg, the hunters, also called Gunters, must complete certain challenges and tasks. However, our heroes must also avoid running into the super-conglomerate Innovative Online Industries (IOI). IOI’s main goal is to take over the

Oasis before anyone else in order to capitalize off of its trillion dollar profits.

Between its 80s themed soundtrack and it’s knack for shouting out movie, gaming, and other pop culture references, “Ready Player One” delivers on an excellently crafted story and conflict that really drive the film home.

Another important thing to know before seeing this film is the references to classic films, video games, and more. Between watching the DeLorean from Back to the Future racing the sleek red motorbike from Akira, a classic anime, to Halo soldiers fighting alongside the Iron Giant and the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, it’s like watching a geek’s dream come true. All of this may seem excellent to some viewers, but to others who aren’t in the know about these references may put off a few due to a lot of the plot involving understanding these movies, video games, or songs.

Overall, “Ready Player One” is an excellent journey to hunt for the hidden Easter egg, great visuals, character interactions and great score and soundtrack. However a little disappointing on some much reliance on exposition dumping, “Ready Player One” deserves a solid 3.5 out of 5 stars.

PACIFIC RIM UPRISING

JACKIE MARTINEZ
A&E Editor

Coming off of a fresh Oscar win for his renowned science fiction drama “The Shape of Water,” Guillermo del Toro’s world of fantasy and adventure compliments a type of sci-fi moviegoers know and love. The motif of alien invaders threatening humanity only to be saved by giant man made robots is common, yet it is one that del Toro’s first installment of “Pacific Rim” had done beautifully in 2013.

Widely anticipated by fans of the original, “Pacific Rim: Uprising” hit theaters on March 23, 2018. The first film proved to be more of a prelude to the violent and exciting assault on humanity that “Uprising” provided. Taking place 10 years after his father sacrificed his life to save humanity against the Kaiju, Jake Pentecost (John Boyega) has abandoned his Jaeger pilot training to become part of the criminal underworld. The threat of sentient Kaiju remains looms over Pentecost and his new recruit, Amara Namari, since these remains have taken control of Pentecost’s former Jaeger suit, Obsidian Fury, and wreaked havoc among the new training facility. As the plot went on, you couldn’t help but

wonder when the action scenes would stop and you would get more of the story’s point of view. In comparison with the original, Uprising felt like it was begging to be the perfect sequel to the 2013 masterpiece.

The central conflict in the film, while obvious, is executed in such a way that is able to still keep audiences on the edge of their seats. The movie’s effects felt over-done for the genre, but were enough to keep it interesting in an action sci-fi sort of way. All in all, the film wouldn’t be worth watching if you weren’t fully immersed in watching its predecessor. The sequel definitely tried too hard to piggyback off of the success of the original “Pacific Rim.” Even though critics have rated the film poorly, it was still a fun movie for anyone looking for a little more depth in the alien invader genre.



THE OSCARS A 2018 RECAP

CHELSEA MARTIN
News Editor

After a controversial year filled with progress regarding diversity, women, and sexual harassment, The 90th Academy Awards, or Oscars, closed out the awards season on March 4, 2018 at the Dolby Theatre. Comedian and talk show host Jimmy Kimmel hosted the event for the second time, making him the first person to host the Oscars back-to-back since 1998.

Starting off the evening, Kimmel poked fun at the numerous issues that arose in Hollywood, including a joke at the expense of last year's Best Picture mistake.

"Some of you will be going home tonight with an Academy Award.

This year, when you hear your name called, don't get up right

away," Kimmel said.

Kimmel continued on with lightheartedness throughout the show and, in an act of appreciation, Kimmel visited the theater across the street to surprise movie-goers by shooting hot dogs into the audience. Kimmel was accompanied by some of the nominees and presenters of the night. To fully show the extent of his thanks, he even had one of the people in the audience introduce the show's next presenters, Tiffany Haddish and Maya Rudolph.

Throughout the evening, there were many standout moments showing the culmination of change that Hollywood has begun to make. One of the fan favorites of the night was Jordan Peele and his film "Get Out" which marked his directorial debut. The film garnered a total of four Academy Award nominations, including Best Original Screenplay for which it won, making Peele the first black writer to win in this category.

"I stopped writing this movie about

20 times because I thought it was impossible...I thought no one would ever make this movie," Peele said. "I kept coming back to it because I knew if someone let me make this movie, people would hear it and people would see it...What I wanted to point out with this film is that it's connected to the real, the deep horror of racism."

Later on in the show, Frances McDormand similarly brought acknowledgement to the hardwork and talent of the women in the audience during her acceptance speech after winning Best Actress in a Leading Role for her part in "Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri." McDormand asked all of the nominated women of the night to stand up in an act of celebration of women and their stories everywhere.

"Look around, ladies and gentlemen, because we all have stories to tell and projects we need financed," McDormand said. "Invite us into your office in a couple days, or you can come to ours, whatever suits you best, and we'll tell you all about them. I have two words to leave with you tonight, ladies and gentlemen: inclusion rider."

Closing out the night was the highly anticipated winner of Best Picture. It was a close race between the nominations "Call Me by Your Name," "Darkest Hour," "Dunkirk," "Get Out," "Lady Bird," "Phantom Thread," "The Post," "Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri," and "The Shape of Water." In the end, it was "The Shape of Water" that won, for a total of four wins. With the end of this awards season, hopefully so will the end sexually harassment, wage gaps, and lacks of diversity.



Pets Of Kennedy

