



OP-Ed

Many elements of the LFA routine are out of the ordinary this year! Read staff writers' thoughts on daily advisory, virtual MM, and ASM.

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FEATURES

Eeeeeek! This edition is jam-packed, full of spookiness: scary stories about the LFA campus, opinions on Halloween changes, and more!

pages 4, 7, and 10



A&E

Looking for new music to keep inspired? Head over to A&E for our top picks of Fall 2020. The playlist has a variety of songs for any mood!

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The elephant in the room: A look inside the 2020 presidential election

By Tyler Watts
Managing Editor of Op-Ed

The events of many yesterdays have culminated to the state of everything we face today. Many issues feel binary, and the politicization of seemingly “everything” is a symptom of the issues and divisions created by modern society. With such an ideologically diverse state, presidential elections are big moments in our culture. Going out to vote in local and national elections is how we sustain democracy in the republican representative model of the country. Thus, the vote and election season become a big deal, as reflected by popular media.

This could be seen following the previous election with FX’s *American Horror Story: Cult*, centered around the 2016 election, playing up the fear and partisan tension across the country in a quirky, unsettling plot. This year, social media has been flooded with celebrity campaigns encouraging fans to vote, and for many Gen-Z young adults, this is

their first election. Voting has been made cool through figures such as Billie Eilish, Timothee Chalamet, and Zendaya. Voting early by casting absentee ballots in the mail has been a popular choice in the age of COVID-19, though many still anticipated casting the vote in person. Over 51 million eligible Americans had already voted by October, and in total, an impressive turnout of 154 million people were expected to cast a ballot by November (FiveThirtyEight). Currently, it is estimated that 2020 had a record-setting voter turnout of 67%, the highest since the year 1900 (Vox).

Perhaps this heightened enthusiasm surrounding the election can be attributed to the polarization of opinions on partisan issues through the media and the words of the candidates themselves. Various news outlets or social media accounts use the rhetoric of both candidates to advertise their leading ideology as superior to the opposition; however, the curated setup of apps, such as Twitter and Instagram, allow their

users to only seek out that which they are interested in. This convenience makes it so that many consumers only seek out information that agrees or aligns with our their beliefs, and it calcifies our sense of self-righteousness that grows--the topic in discussion becoming more contentious. The outcome of the election will impact both the immediate future and the social and environmental landscape of the United States far beyond this moment.

A quirk of this election is that final results were not known immediately following Tuesday night. Though the election is not technically being delayed, the many technicalities of counting different types of ballots takes more time to work through. In this tense limbo of political change, all that we can do is trust what is currently known of the situation.

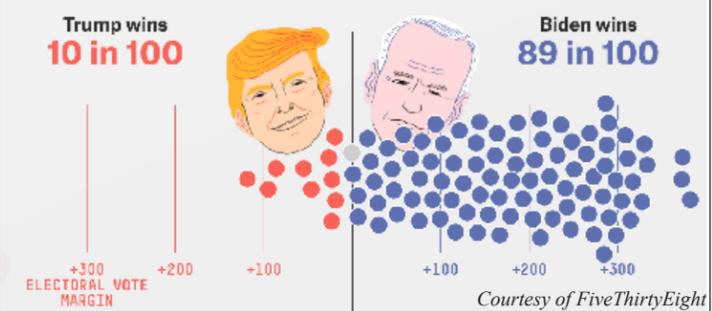
For some, elections are traumatic. The election results term to term have greater ramifications than raised taxes or party affiliation for marginalized populations targeted by the policies

and rhetoric of some candidates. Those who feel disenfranchised by the state question the legitimacy of democracy and the election process given the growing population of individuals who don’t feel visible or represented by elected officials. It is no longer simple to mitigate tension

by uniting around an American identity, which means something different to each voter. But as difference and division arrive with issues, the system is at work and history is being made.

Biden is favored to win the election

We simulate the election 40,000 times to see who wins most often. The sample of 100 outcomes below gives you a good idea of the range of scenarios our model thinks is possible.



Courtesy of FiveThirtyEight
The many calculations and polls conducted on the 2020 presidential race, predict that a Biden win is likely.

Heres a quick profile on both candidates:

Donald Trump (R):

- Running mate is current VP Mike Pence
- During presidency, achieved a tax cut mostly benefiting some wealthy populations and some businesses
- Was impeached by House but not removed from office (acquitted by Senate)
- Main initiatives/goals for time in office focused on undoing policies from Obama administration in relation to healthcare and immigration
- On the pandemic:** President Trump has consistently downplayed COVID-19 as non-threatening to public health. Trump himself tested positive and recovered from the virus. From this experience, however, the message he shared to supporters was to not fear the virus. As there are nearly nine million cases of the coronavirus in the United States and a death toll in the country rising over 228,000, Trump’s words may seem reasonable to some, but likely not those who have suffered from the illness in some way.

Joe Biden (D):

- Running mate is former presidential candidate Sen. Kamala Harris
- Experience as Vice President in the Obama administration (2009-2017)
- As VP, led economic recovery and relief initiatives following the recession of 2008, addressed by Obama’s administration
- Senator for Delaware from 1973-2009
- Has plans for a Green New Deal in regards to climate change and hopes to preserve and build upon the Affordable Care Act
- More of a centrist Democrat, but the party consolidated support to acknowledge him as strongest nominee for this race
- On the Pandemic:** Joe Biden has stood firm in his support of mask-wearing and social distancing policies. As president, he says that he would likely put in place an executive order of a mask mandate throughout the country (everywhere but your home). He is also dedicated to job recovery initiatives to help with the pandemic situation.

Sources used and consulted for this story: The New York Times, Associated Press, Twitter, Vox, and FiveThirtyEight.



Photo by Ramya Herman

Ramya Herman '21 (joined by her mom) is one of many first time voters in our generation this election!



Photo by Sajel Peters

A Chicagoan family heads to cast their ballots with two new voters.

HADLEY FAGAN:

We have received your voted ballot. However, no ballots are counted until Election Day when all ballot types are tallied.

Thank you for participating in our democracy. If you wish to vote by mail in a future election, please apply at cookcountyclerk.com/votebymail

Sincerely,

Cook County Clerk's Office
Mail Ballot Team

Photo by Hadley Fagan

Here is the confirmation received after casting an absentee ballot.

November assessments: What's different from the previous December final exams

By Garrison Sloan
Editor-in-Chief

With the return of in-person classes, Lake Forest Academy is now preparing for the return of in-person final exams. The assessments, which will take place in November, will come just under one year after the last set of exams, as finals for last year's spring semester were cancelled due to the transition to online learning. However, like most things this year, these exams are going to look a bit different from previous years.

Unlike in the past, this semester, final assessments will take place over a period of five days, rather than three. Additionally, the assessment period will run from Friday, November 20th to Tuesday, November 24th, utilizing the weekend for testing days.

"If we had come back to school in a non-COVID time, I think we would have had Saturday exams anyway," said Dean of Students Chris Tennyson, who was responsible for much of the planning regarding the modified exams. "It will allow the students to get out a day or two earlier. The main purpose was so that each department

could have its own separate day for exams."

Tennyson also noted that the weekend exams were also set so that the assessment period cut as little as possible into in-person class days, prior to LFA returning to online learning in late November.

Tennyson also strayed away from referring to these tests as "exams," stating that "assessments" were a more fitting name due to their differences from typical finals.

"The assessments will be no longer than 90 minutes, and will only account for between 10-15% of a student's semester grade," said Tennyson. "Each of the five days, there will be three 90-minute slots, which will also accommodate students with extra time, and each day will be for a different subject."

It's also important to note that not only will the format of the exams be modified this year, but the actual testing rooms will also look much different.

"In the past, some of you may remember us putting 100+ people in the gym for finals," said Tennyson. "That obviously can't happen this year because of the need for social distancing. Because of the way we've split up the testing blocks, most students will just test in a classroom."

Similar to past years, many teachers

may not have formal sit-down assessments. Instead, it's up to the teachers to decide whether or not to give a standard test, or something else, such as a paper, final project, or a lab for science students.

End-of-semester exams are always a point of stress, and in this particularly stressful year, many students are probably not looking forward to them.

However, Tennyson has encouraged students to look at these exams differently to help relieve some of that anxiety.

"There's always going to be stress around these major assessment periods," said Tennyson, "but if we can think of them as just a double-period test, as opposed to a two-and-a-half hour exam, I hope that will allow our students to not feel as anxious."

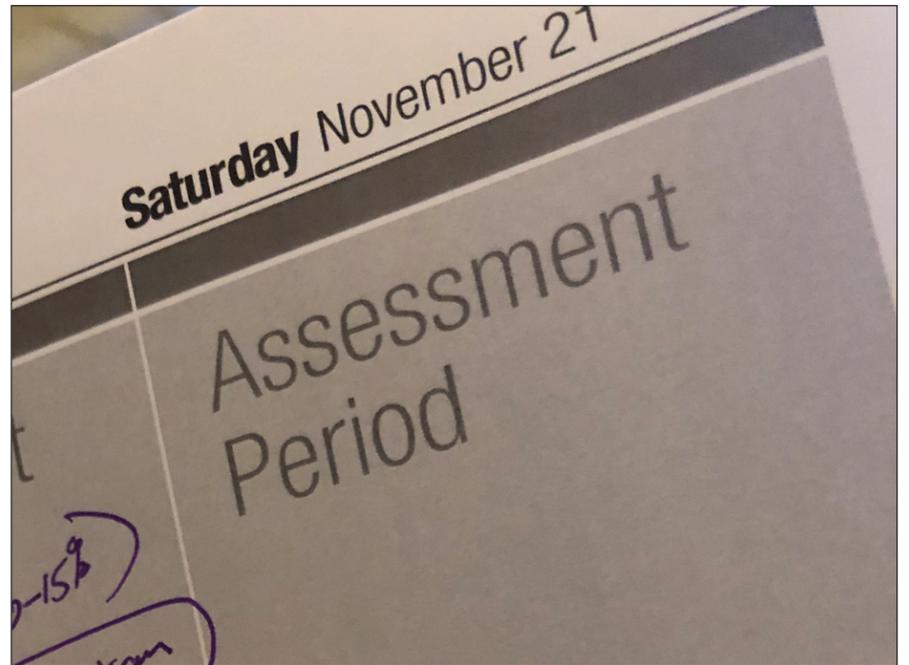


Photo by Mandy Krause

This year's assessment period stretches over the third weekend in November.

Reid basement haunted house canceled: COVID-19 regulations take away another popular LFA event

By Angie Cotton
Managing Editor of Features

A recently growing tradition at LFA, every Halloween season, a group of faculty and staff set up a haunted house in the Reid basement, an event that many students at LFA enjoy attending for a good scare. However, the event was cancelled this year due to the complications brought upon by required social distancing, (let's face it--you'd want to have a friend to hold on to when you're walking through a haunted house), as well as the increasing COVID-19 cases in Lake County. Nonetheless, it is still important to recognize what actually goes into setting up one of the most attended events at LFA.

Before going further, consider why the haunted house was cancelled last minute. The haunted house, originally having taken place in the Reid basement, did not seem to be able to comply with COVID regulations. This is because the Reid basement is such a small, confined, indoor space, without much ventilation. After deeming this location as one that wouldn't be able to support the event given the situation, the event's organizers decided to hold it outdoors in the Formal Gardens.

Despite that, they also reasoned that it would be inevitable to have kids holding onto one another while going through

the course, which is noncompliant to COVID guidelines. Along with that, they'd only be able to let students go in groups of two, allowing a mere 24 people to go in per hour. Compared to previous years' attendance in triple digits, allowing this low number of students in per hour would not be an efficient method.

But what actually goes into all this planning, whether there's a pandemic going on or not? Even though some thought is put into the event throughout the school year, the actual planning doesn't start until about a week before the event.

Part of the planning involves having "to find a path that would be safe for everyone, that no one can get hurt at any point. You have to make them feel trapped without actually being trapped," said Tyler Madeley, English teacher and organizer of the haunted house.

When it comes to actually setting up and building the set, Assistant Dean of Admission and one of the scarers, Emily Kalis, pointed out that "because it's been in the Reid basement, it's kind of creepy in itself, so not much actually needs to be done." Instead, most of the time and effort goes into each individual character's makeup.

Despite not being able to host the yearly event this time around, being able to see what goes into making it will definitely have the LFA community looking forward to the event next year!



Photo by Jennifer Madeley

Some of the scarers gather inside the Reid basement, where the 2019 LFA Haunted House took place.

Advisory a day keeps the Covid away

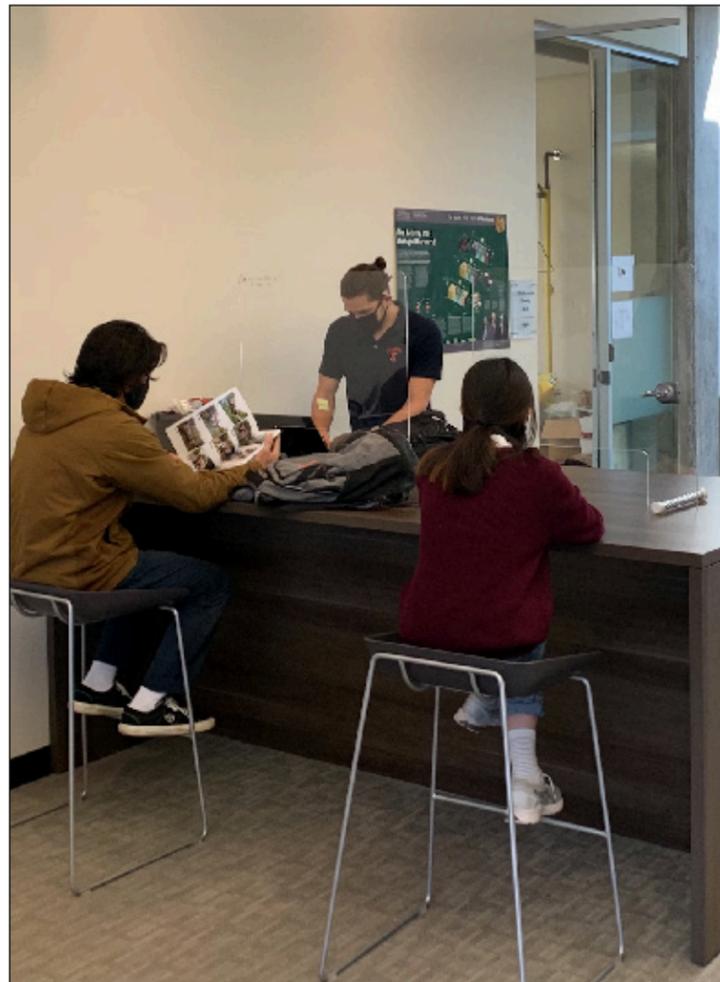


Photo by James Kuhns

Smaller advisories have moved to more COVID friendly areas which offer breathable space to talk.

By James Kuhns
Managing Editor of Podcasts

There have been many changes to our daily lives resulting from the spread of the Coronavirus pandemic, including closing schools and wearing masks, but while those precautions pull us farther apart, the emergence of daily advisory brings us closer together.

I have always seen advisory as a highlight of my day-- a time when I can relax or even study for an upcoming test. While I did enjoy the conversations I had with my peers and advisors, I felt we never had enough time to connect over the issues, or in some instances, the snacks we were discussing. While COVID-19 has brought negative changes to our lives, in terms of advisory at least, it also may be a blessing in disguise.

Checking every student's temperature has become mandatory for advisors at Lake Forest

Academy, and because of this, advisories now meet every morning before school begins. While checking students' temperatures can be done in a mere one to two minutes, advisory is still twenty minutes long, opening up time for students to connect with their peers and advisors.

Unfortunately, with advisory taking place every day, there tends to be a lack of announcements, leading to an occasional awkward silence or a slow conversation about the recent COVID updates. On top of this, advisory no longer takes place after 2nd period. Therefore, it does not provide a needed break from classes. Nevertheless, advisors work hard to keep their students occupied, whether through food or discussion of debatable topics.

As our calendar neared the election date, tensions tended to rise on campus. To combat this uneasiness, LFA gave advisors discussion topics as well as mock

voting ballots to educate students on the upcoming election and the problems our country faces. Though school may not seem like the place to bring up highly debatable or even controversial topics, such as climate change and various social movements, it is important that we learn to discuss these topics with our friends and peers in a respectful way. These discussions have also allowed us to better bond and understand those who we share the room with, leading to more personal conversations rather than the same chit-chat about grades and COVID updates every day.

In the end, while holding advisory sessions every day may be a nuisance to those who appreciated the timing of advisory in the past, the new times ensure safety through temperature checks while also providing students the opportunity to connect, which is something very important in a time that has torn us apart.

Cancellation of Morning Meetings makes modern solution

By Kirstin Palasz
Managing Photo Editor

Morning Meetings and All School Meetings are staples at Lake Forest Academy that students either love or hate. Some students appreciate the discussions and presentations, while others find them boring. With new COVID-19 regulations, the system has changed-- All School Meeting is no longer after 6th period on F-days and Morning Meetings are now just one day per week virtually.

With these new regulations, we can no longer have all students and faculty meet in Cressey, as no more than 50 people can be in a space at one time. For myself and most students, the loss of All School Meeting has had more of a positive effect than negative. After sitting through six long classes, the last thing students want to do is gather in Cressey for 45 minutes, which can feel like an extra "class period." It no longer adds an extra 15 minutes to the schedules, which is very helpful since we already end later this year. All School Meetings were draining, and the two periods that followed felt more mentally exhausting than normal. Most students would agree that this loss has not affected them in the least. However, the downside

to losing All School Meetings is that LFA no longer has the opportunity to gather the students and faculty in person to discuss important topics and issues, as well as hear from others with offerings of different points of view or performances.

Morning Meetings were originally every Wednesday and Friday in between second and third period in Cressey. As the same COVID-19 regulations apply, Morning Meetings no longer exist in-person. Without Morning Meetings, announcements are sent to the advisors and shared during advisory. This was a hard system since advisors were dependent on the email rather than in person. It made it difficult for advisors to ensure thorough information, let alone any connection. Thus, virtual Morning Meetings were created. Kim Graham, Coordinator of Student Leadership & Student Life and English teacher, as well as the creator of the virtual Morning Meetings, mentioned how this concept stemmed from the idea that our community needed to come together in some way to break up having advisory every morning. A Zoom call every Thursday during the scheduled "advisory time" is now dedicated to these announcements.

Virtual Morning Meetings are a

great idea, but they do not compare to having in-person Morning Meetings. The meetings allow us to see the announcements in person, but since they are all being read from the prefects, the idea of individual announcements no longer exist. As with All School Meetings, we still don't get to be with the community as a whole. On the other hand, the meetings are a great way to break up the advisory system to give students and advisors a break from doing the same routine every day.

Although the virtual Morning Meetings fall short, when com-

pared to a traditional one, it is a great attempt at trying to bring our community closer to our previous "normal." Graham mentioned how it is still very fluid and "things are subject to change every week." Some of the new ideas that could be a possibility in the future are guest speakers and allowing international/remote students to connect. Graham said, "the feedback has been happy [thus far]." This gives us hope that these meetings are set to continue throughout the year.

Changes have been made all across campus as COVID-19

continues to be a pressing issue. Even though we are not able to all gather in Cressey, the school has done its best at trying to keep our community connected. The discussions we had during these meetings will be missed, but the loss of All School Meetings has been fairly positive. It has been hard to create a system that will model what we are used to, but virtual Morning Meetings are the closest our community can get. Despite these challenges, everyone has done a great job at attempting to bring the community together.



Photo by Kirstin Palasz

Students watch a virtual Morning Meeting in advisory.

A canceled Halloween?

By Mimi Osborne
Managing Editor of A&E

"It's Halloween — everyone's entitled to a good scare" reads a line from the 1978 hit movie Halloween. However, in the midst of a global pandemic, young trick-or-treaters are not granted this opportunity. In a household where Halloween is treated with the utmost passion and effort, this is particularly disappointing to me.

A holiday that originates in ancient Ireland some 2,000 years ago, Samhain, more commonly referred to as Halloween, was originally believed to mark the transition from the world of the living to that of the dead. October 31st marked the one day each year where the souls of those passed could return to the living. The holiday transferred from the Celts to the Romans, and then migrated to the Americas, where it is the most widely celebrated. Though the reason for dressing up was never determined, it is by far the most iconic aspect of Halloween.

I could proudly say that many aspects of myself are shaped by this holiday: my favorite color is black, my favorite movie is *The Nightmare Before Christmas*, and my favorite time of the year is fall. Though I understand that most children cannot go trick-or-treating on physical doorsteps as it runs the risk of transmitting COVID-19, I strongly believe that there should be other alternatives present.

As cases of COVID-19 continue to rise in



Photo by Mandy Krause

Covid affects holiday traditions for all, even those like Rory, the four year-old daughter of faculty member, Mandy Krause. She normally would be trick-or-treating door-to-door.

Lake County, the already restricted Halloween has undergone more and more limitations. As of October 30th, no definitive announcements had been made regarding

the cancelation of Halloween; however, the stigma still stood. Many concerned families in the Forest-Bluff area stressed their concerns through the local groups on the

social media platform Facebook by posting various opinions on the risks of running a gathering during this time and how Halloween should be completely canceled to limit the potential spread. Despite this, it was inevitable that people would still gather. As much as I would have loved to be on the latter end, I agreed with the decision to stay home, as the safety of our surrounding communities and their citizens matters above everything else. However, it is still disappointing to witness such a spook-tacular holiday being skipped.

For those who still wanted to celebrate—and I don't blame you—I hope you refrained from going door to door for candy. Germs can reside on the candy wrappers, and the contact between candy-givers and candy-receivers can lead to an exponential increase in cases. But, this should not have prevented you from settling in with your family and bingeing those classic Halloween movies such as *Corpse Bride*, *Beetlejuice*, and *Hocus Pocus*. In addition to this, I hope you didn't resist dressing up in your iconic Halloween costume and strutting down the halls of your house. Above all, for the good of yourself and of the community, I hope that you stayed safe and indoors this Halloween, and keep such safety in mind with the holidays soon to come.

November horoscopes:

Happy scorpio and sagittarius seasons! Read for a message from the stars on how to make the most of this month.

By Tyler Watts
Managing Editor of Op-Ed, Staff Astrologer

Fire Signs:

Aries (Mar 21-Apr 20):
An effort you've been consistently working at will soon prove fruitful. Enjoy it!

Leo (Jul 23- Aug 22):
Read a new book. Perceive a completely different perspective.

Sagittarius (Nov 22-Dec 21):
Examine how a natural sense of balance appears in your life. Feel contentment.

Earth Signs:

Taurus (Apr 21-May 20):
There's a clear difference between who you find time for and who you make time for. Assess this distinction.

Capricorn (Dec 22-Jan 19):
Ya like jazz?

Virgo (Aug 23-Sep 21):
Remember that it is ok to want better than what is currently before you. Don't settle.

Water Signs:

Scorpio (Oct 23-Nov 21):
What are you holding on to? Will this grip lead it to escape?

Pisces (Feb 18-Mar 20):
Now is a completely perfect time to rest within your dreamlike state. Be still.

Cancer (Jun 21-Jul 22):
In order to successfully emerge from this transformative stage, make peace with yourself completely.

Air Signs:

Gemini (May 22-Jun 20):
Monotony can grow tiresome, but perfecting your daily routines will be fun and restorative self care.

Libra (Sep 22-Oct 22):
Avoid creating small conflicts to keep yourself entertained.

Aquarius (Jan 20-Feb 17):
Your contributions to the collective are appreciated. You are seen.



Photo by Briana Murphy

Both the freshman and senior retreats were partially held in LFA's very own formal gardens.

Editorial: Adaptation and Diversity: the changes within the freshman and senior retreats

The freshman retreat is a time for students to connect, being new to the school, and learn a little more about what the LFA experience will be. The freshman retreat began in 2017 with the class of 2021. It was to help students connect without the pressure of an academic setting. It usually spans over a couple of days and takes place off-campus as an overnight trip with several activities and discussions to go through in a safe space.

This year, things were a little different due to LFA's Covid restrictions, with the freshman retreat being only one day and taking place around campus near or within the formal gardens. Among other activities, the day consisted of three discussions that grappled with racism, homophobia, and inappropriate uses of social media. The full list of activities included four more informal activities and a lunch break. There was a mindfulness activity, an ancestor grid, and two other physical games. Despite the fun, there wasn't enough time for the class to interact with each other to network and bond organically. Students scrambled to find someone to sit with that they'd known before this event during the lunch break.

Many in the freshman class were a little disappointed by the rigid schedule of the retreat. Heavily based on discussion, the day felt long, and the hard-hitting topics made the new students feel awkward and afraid to speak up. The students felt intimidated by the gravity of the issues. It caused some students to be more closed-off because they were speaking about these hard-hitting issues with people they barely knew in an environment where they had thought they

would be able to make friends.

A few things that could've made the freshman retreat more engaging and enjoyable would have been giving groups a team name and having them compete against each other during the retreat or having more physical activities. The retreat could have been a little more relaxed, less discussion-based, and somewhere off-campus in a controlled environment outdoors like a rented park space. The retreat is a different experience for each class who is able to have it. This year the freshman were grateful to have a freshman retreat because they hadn't expected to have one at all. It had to be a different experience due to the need for social distancing and protecting the students, and that was one of the aspects of the retreat that were dealt with really well. There was always enough space for everyone to remain a safe distance apart. They continued to execute their activities, and the masking policy was strongly upheld by students and facilitators alike.

The senior retreat is something new that just began this year with the Class of 2021, which is also the class that the freshman retreat began with. Initially, the seniors were supposed to go to Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, and hang out together in a more relaxed way. Covid shut that plan down, but the situation was handled with grace. In order to continue the retreat, it was shortened to a single day and held in the formal gardens just like the freshman retreat.

There were multiple activities: one where students shared and retold the stories of others with respect and care, another where they reflected on themselves and

how far they've come since freshman year, writing out their worries and burning them in a fire pit to relieve stress, an activity where they wrote a secret about themselves on a notecard and it's shared anonymously, an activity where they discussed their legacy and left their plans for the future on the wall of the Student Center, and a more fun activity where they played a couple of athletic games with Mr. Mpofo. The activities all had their ups and downs, and it's no surprise that seniors favored the more physical activities where the larger goal was to have fun.

A retreat is supposed to be a quiet or secluded place in which one can rest and relax, but this retreat felt more like a workshop rather than a place for relaxation, especially for seniors who have the most to worry about in regards to their futures. The day was packed with activities that would normally pump everyone up, but the day being so filled only fueled the stress of seniors looking for time to finish college applications and catch up on work. Senior Brian Figueroa said, "Although the retreat did take up a valuable[workday]for the seniors during a busy time, it was a good way to bring the class together."

The retreat activity list was filled with discussions that were meant to teach lessons on how to be conducive citizens within society; however, these ideas have been circulating through the LFA curriculum since freshman year, and hearing the familiar advice and participating in discussions filled with topics and ideas that have already been gone over before felt redundant. Many of the ideas were fresh, but since it was similar to things that the

The Lake Forest

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EDITORIALS

Opinions of the staff are presented in the form of unsigned editorials. Personal views are bylined or presented as formal dissents.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

The Spectator welcomes responses to its articles in the form of Letters to the Editors in addition to letters on subjects of the author's choosing. Please e-mail Letters to the Editors to Mrs. Krause at akrause@lfanet.org

AWARDS

The Spectator has been awarded several prestigious journalism awards in recent years. It has consistently taken first place in competitions against schools of similar size held by the American Scholastic Press Association and the Kettle Moraine Press Association.

class of 2021 had experienced in the past, it felt recycled. It led to a class-wide lag in participation. "Although the day was a nice break from the regular academic schedule, it felt unproductive in the sense that I was not deeply engaged or challenged by the activities within the retreat," said senior Tyler Watts. The seniors as a collective wanted more of a break before heading into the stressful year ahead. They wanted something different from the usual topics, something we could really learn from and have fun doing it, not that the activities chosen were not necessarily bad. There were still some great discussions, valuable lessons learned, and many

of the students had a great time." There were even more activities, including writing, reflection, listening, and watching videos or listening to detailed informational powerpoints. While it was a fun retreat with some experiences that were enjoyable, it was not the most productive use of time during this time of year when there's so much to do to prepare college applications. Many of the seniors felt as if the retreat would've served us better in the second semester when there was less stress in the air. It was a good way to bring the class together with good intentions, but it came at a bad time, ultimately limiting its value.

High mountains and clear skies

By **Bela De Jesús**

Managing Editor of Global Perspectives

At 11,000 feet in altitude, Leadville, Colorado sits on the top of gorgeous mountains and forest. There sits High Mountain Institute (HMI), a semester abroad program for high school students. Founded in 1995, it focuses on connecting students to the environment and achieving academic excellence. The semester abroad includes AP and Honors level ac-

ademics, and three wilderness expeditions backpacking in Utah and Colorado.

HMI makes relationships with high schools across the country to recruit students. Lake Forest Academy has a long standing relationship with HMI, especially because Head of School Jose De Jesús is on its Board of Trustees. Having worked with HMI for three years, De Jesús has seen firsthand how the program works to affect students.

De Jesús was blown away when he visited the school and attended an English class

that got to write and read poetry in a birch tree field amongst the mountains. It was then when he realized the program was truly special. When asked about how the program affected his students, De Jesús stated, “The students that came back from HMI were transformed like no other program.” He said they had a different outlook not only on life, but also on learning, and were more open to building a sense of community.

Gemma Fink, an LFA junior from Winnetka, has enrolled in the program and is currently attending HMI this semester. She has since gone on two expeditions, one backpacking in the mountains of Colorado and the other in the canyons of Utah. She is thoroughly enjoying her time at HMI, and said that on top of the amazing academic experience, she is connecting to her peers. When asked about the favorite part of her day, she said, “One of my favorite things to do is come in after such a long day and just talk through it with them.”

The situation of being thrown together from all different schools and places into the isolated mountains forced them

to create real connections in such a short amount of time. However, this situation was much more difficult this year, as COVID-19 was a big factor in how they operated. Because there were students coming from so many places, there was a quarantine before the semester started, and masks are required in all classrooms.

When asked about COVID regulations, Fink stated, “The cabins are kind of like your pod... In terms of being in classes and things, you do have to distance.” Due to its isolated circumstances, HMI is somewhat of an escape from the pandemic ridden world surrounding it. Fink stated that rules are more relaxed than other places, as they are so secluded from everywhere else.

HMI gives students a unique opportunity to separate themselves from their normal lives and connect to themselves and the environment. It exists as an option for LFA students to attend in future semesters, and as Head of School Jose De Jesús said, “if it speaks to you, you should consider it.”



Photo by Gemma Fink

This is home for those who opt into going up to the high mountains for HMI.

Justice for Breonna Taylor

By **Ramaya Herman**

Editor-in-Chief

Disappointed but not surprised, many social media outlets flooded with rage and sadness as the verdict was announced—no one would be held responsible for the murder of Breonna Taylor.

Late on the night of March 13th of 2020, 26 year-old Breonna Taylor was killed in her Louisville apartment by three Louisville Metropolitan Police officers who had forced entry into the apartment, which she and her boyfriend shared, after receiving a knock and announcement of a warrant for the apartment, despite having already apprehended the main suspect. The intruders in question were Jonathan Mattingly, Brett Hankison, and Myles Cosgrove. The knowledge of her death resulted in

multiple forms of outrage including protests, demonstrations, and the creation of the hashtag “justiceforbreonnataylor”.

Contrary to the police report, Breonna Taylor was shot several times after a battery ram had been used by her murderers to enter the home. In the report it was said that Ms. Taylor was not injured and there was no forced entry.

After months of demanding justice, Breonna’s family (along with the rest of the world) were made aware that only Brett Hankison would be indicted, however not for taking a life but for wanton endangerment. The charge occurred as a result of stray bullets which were fired into the next door neighbors’ house as opposed to those fired into Breonna Taylor.

Hankison was the only officer dismissed from the force, with the others being al-



Courtesy of Creative Commons

There are many peaceful protests happening in honor of Breonna Taylor in order to get justice for what happened to her.

lowed to keep their jobs. The Class D Felony that Hankison was charged with is a minimum of a one year sentence and a maximum of five years. This, as opposed to the twenty to fifty year sentence he would have faced under a murder charge, was the equivalent of no charge at all. In fact, for many it was worse—a neighboring wall had received justice before Breonna.

The decision was contradictory to the compensation that the family was given. Almost an admission of guilt, the city of Louisville provided Breonna Taylor’s mother with a 12 million dollar settlement.

A more recent development disclosed that jurors were not given the opportunity to bring about murder charges. The attorney representing the state is

currently under review for this ordeal; however, the fact remains that the officers were not charged for her murder.

Following the court’s decision, a second wave of demonstrations ensued. The justice system had failed Breonna and, seemingly, black women everywhere once again.

As a black woman in America, the entire ordeal, from the moment the officers broke into Ms. Taylor’s home to the moment that the verdict determined no one would be punished for her death, communicated to me that the United States justice system will inevitably choose whatever the alternative to validating our lives is. It will consistently fail women of color, no matter how loud our cries or how unjust our experiences. Rest in peace Breonna Taylor.



Courtesy of Creative Commons

Breonna Taylor’s legacy lives on until justice is served to those who deserve it.

Spooky stories & “scary” costumes

By Angie Cotton and Mimi Osborne
Managing Editors of Features and A&E

Many people at LFA have either heard of or experienced their own share of paranormal activity on campus, so it's no secret that things can get a bit weird, especially at nighttime. We asked members of the LFA community to share some of their own paranormal experiences at LFA.

“I was asleep, and suddenly I woke up; it was 3:15. I look at my phone and wonder why I’m up. I’m sleeping on one side of the room. My roommate’s not even in the dorm that night, so I’m already terrified. I look across the room, and I see a lady standing on my roommate’s bed: her hair is on her face, she’s wearing old-timey clothes, somewhat of a long dress that’s supposed to be white but is instead dark and dirty. She’s kind of mumbling something about suicide and something about ‘they did it to me.’ I tried to go back to sleep, but I couldn’t, so I threw a pillow at it, and it didn’t go away. Then, I threw a book at the lightswitch, and as soon as the light turned on, she was gone. I turned the light back off and went back to bed.” --Anonymous, in their dorm bedroom



Photo courtesy of Emily Kalis

Emily Kalis dressed up as a witch for Halloween.

“Two recent alumni were walking through the Field commons late at night after the dorm parents had left. The lights were on, and they saw a man sitting on the couch facing the TV, wearing a top hat. They thought he was a dorm parent, so they tried talking to him, but he would not respond. They went around the corner of the room and they still couldn’t see who it was, because the head kept turning. They ran to their room once they reached the other hall, but came back later and he wasn’t there anymore.” -- Anonymous, in Field Commons



Photo courtesy of Mandy Krause

Mandy Krause dressed up as a pumpkin for Halloween.



Photo courtesy of Tyler Madeley

Tyler Madeley dressed up as a dalmatian for Halloween.

“A long time ago, what is now the Journalism room in upper Reid, was once a faculty workroom, which housed a copy machine. One night after study hours, I went up to make copies for my classes for the following day. As I walked from the Reid staircase to the copier, I noticed that the chandelier closest to the boys’ bathroom was swinging somewhat aggressively in a large circle. I didn’t think much of it at the time, assuming someone had spun it after study hours. It took me about 20 minutes to make my copies, and on my way out, I noticed that the chandelier was still spinning ... with the same energy it had 20 minutes earlier! There was no one else around, and there was no way this chandelier could have maintained that level of energy on its own.” -- Ms. Hagar, in Upper Reid

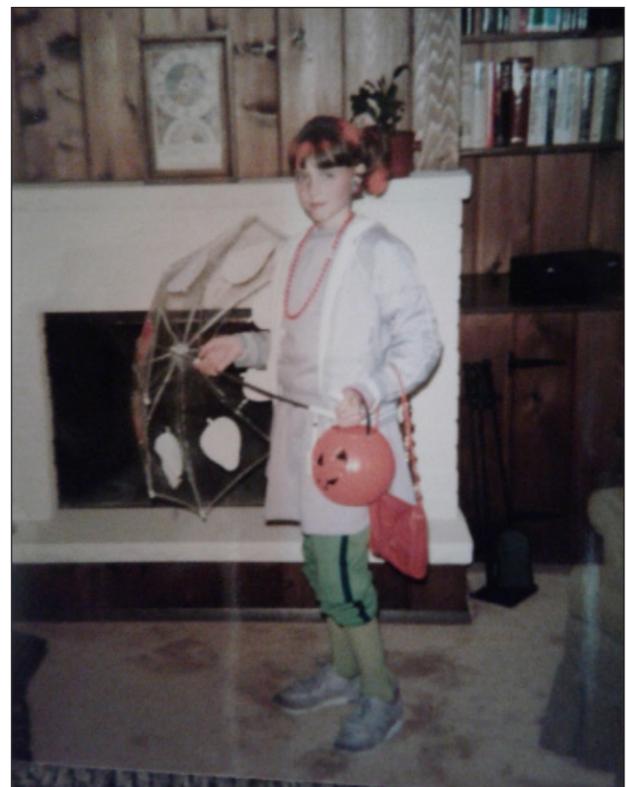


Photo courtesy of Michelle Vaca

Michelle Vaca dressed up as a punk rocker for Halloween.

“One night when I was on the late shift, I was making my way around campus to make sure everything was how it was supposed to be. Behind the Formal Gardens, it tends to get pretty foggy at night, so the ambience was already one resembling a ghost film. As I was walking around the pagoda, I noticed some people out on the pond in a canoe. I didn’t give it much attention, thinking ‘how is it possible for there to be a canoe out on this pond late at night?’ I took a second look at the pond to make sure, only to see nothing there: no people, no canoe, nothing. Just fog. It might’ve been my imagination, but I’d also like to comment on how the room below the pagoda used to store small boats and canoes that would be dragged out onto the pond when it was still used.” -- Campus Safety, by Willow Lake (behind Field)

The Black Experience: Through the eyes of Ackim Mpofu

PART I

When I was 16 years old, I was at an all-time high in my life. Within a space of three years, I had gone from a boy playing the dusty pitch of Emakhandeni to captaining the Zimbabwean Men's National Youth Olympic Team, Highlanders U-18, and rubbing shoulders with some Zimbabwe soccer legends in the historical Highlanders F.C first-team jersey. I was one of the brightest and hottest prospects in Zimbabwe at the time, and soon I had offers to play professionally in various countries/go to the United States to continue my education and play at the independent school level with the hope of getting an athletic scholarship to complete my college degree.

At Cushing Academy, I had wonderful friends (Rafa, Reissmann, Chris Mullin, Jackson Steele, and Mark Ferguson) to name a few, and teachers, especially Matt Shea. Although my experience at Cushing was positive overall, within days I quickly learned what it meant being a Black African man in America. I had my fellow students asking me questions such as "Do you have ice cream in Africa?" "Do you live with lions and shit?" "Do you live in a mud and grass thatched house?" or comments such as "Your English is very good/How come your English is so good?" and some students saying a bunch of clicks and asking if I understand. At first, I laughed it off, but it became repetitive to a point where I started to see that I was different, and I was made to feel that way. The ignorance showed the failure of the American education system in teaching kids the true history of different cultures and continents, just as it has in teaching African American History. This should have not been a surprise because black people's history in the Western World has been skewed since the 1500s. Starting with the climate theory that believed Africa's heat had produced hypersexual Africans and that "intimate relations between the men and beast gave birth to monsters in Africa." The theory puts emphasis on the fact that Africa's hot sun transformed Africans into uncivil beasts. With this idea failing to prevail due to the realization that it could not justify the geographical distinctions in color, it was changed to being hereditary through the curse theory.

The biblical defense came as some authors wrote about how Noah's white Angelike sons should not engage in sexual activities with their wives on the Ark and upon Ham breaking such a rule Ham's descendants were cursed to be "black and loathsome." Blacks were portrayed as inferior and incapable of being white. Importantly the people charged with literature could have chosen to change these narratives, but their adventures into Africa failed to do so for the, for example, Leo Africans, a key figu-

re in writing about African expeditions in the 1500s, branded Africans as people who "leade a beastly kind of life, being utterly destitute of the use of reason, of dexterities of wit, and of all arts," and "behave themselves as if they had continually lived in a Forrest among wild beast." These ideas are among a few of playwrights and books that were read in America and Europe about who the Africans were and then eventually used in the foundations of building America among key figures Richard Mathers and justifying slavery and black Africans being inferior, beastly and not capable of thinking for themselves.

400 years ago, America stole fathers, sons, mothers, daughters, and most importantly, they stole skilled labor from motherland Africa. They brought people to the Americas against their will, stripped them of their identity, name, and culture. To justify slavery, they stripped people of their humanity and made them property. These theories and ideas have perpetuated, become a culture and they have taken new forms such as Jim Crow, redlining, voter suppression, mass incarceration, police brutality. Many of these issues prevailed and have effects today. Countless books and playwrights were written misinterpreting Black Africans as a people, but forgetting that we had Mali Empire which held the richest man in the world, Songhai Empire which controlled the key trading routes in the 1600s, Great Zimbabwe which had stone walls that stunned the European explorers to a point of questioning their ability to build such organized walls thinking that it was the Greeks. Moreover, our thriving constitutional monarchies were very democratic. We had women who were queens with strong influence on their nation's internal and foreign policies such as Queen Nandi, Queen of Sheba among others. What about the skill workers from builders, ironsmiths, and the different language groups, particularly The Afro-Asian, Khoisan ("click"), Niger-Congo and Nilo-Saharan language groups. Let me show you how the white-washing of history has had an effect on me here and how the failure to teach people the truth has failed black people in America:

PART II

As we started the season at Cushing Academy in 2012, we had a strong team and I was playing the best football of my life at the time. I was so focused on my goal of being the first one to graduate from High School in my family. My first experience of "portrayal of a black man especially of darker skin like me" was when we poised to play against Winchendon. I was excited because my name was starting to get recognition due to my performances and some D1 college coaches had come to watch me that game. As we were warming up, I could feel a certain

difference in the way my teammates and coach were around me. It felt off and awkward; soon we were called back to the locker room. I knew something was off, and I may have been the one who was the problem because of the way I was being looked at.

Coach sat us down and talked about how someone in our team had threatened to kill our opponents during the game. He further noted how big of an offense this was as it would get the game canceled and potentially the accused player suspended from school. It was quiet for five minutes and the coach asked everyone to walk outside except for me. At that point, I knew that I had to be the one being accused of such. The coach explained how the administration had got a complaint from Winchendon about a Tweet under my account threatening to kill the Winchendon players. Not kill them as in my skills on the field "but literally kill them," and they felt threatened for their lives. I was nervous, I panicked and my heart was pounding profusely because an incident like this would have shattered my dreams of pursuing a higher-level education. Was I going to fall under the curse of my family of not graduating high school? How could someone do that and for what? So many things were running through my head as I explained my innocence to the coach. At that time, I did not have a Twitter account, did not have a phone, and certainly, after all those months at Cushing, the administration would have known what kind of person I was. Apparently I had created a Twitter account with my name and used my "African identity of savagery and threatened to kill them/hunt them like animals". I was an easier target and with the assumptions of a black man in America, it was easy to believe that story. Despite proving my innocence, I never got a word of support from the administration nor an--I am sorry that happened--we are with you--after proving my innocence. Luckily enough, I always had a coach and teammates who truly knew who I was and always stood by me. My coach was like a brother from another mother and my evidence clearly proved my innocence. We went on to win 4-0 against them. Trust me, I put on a master class during that game scoring 2 goals. That year I had 16 goals and 14 assists winning multiple accolades.

In my senior year, we went to play against Tabor. They were a strong team, but we were getting the better of them that night. I was putting on a show in midfield, and I had scored two goals in that game. At one point I had dribbled past two players and made a beautiful pass to Mully, and a kid turned to me and said "you African Monkey, African N----". I did not think I had heard what he said up until one of my teammates said did you hear that. I was angry and confused at how

someone would say that because although I was in America for almost two years and attending Cushing, I had never learned about what racism was and how someone could just call me that. That year I went on to being the second-ever All American player in Cushing's History, All Boston Scholastic MVP, NEPSAC MVP, and being part of a Cushing that would make playoffs for the first in a decade. I graduated with a 3.4 GPA, won the "Pliny A. Boyd class of 1894" prize, which is given to the girl and boy who have demonstrated the best spirit of general helpfulness and has had the best citizenship record. To cap it off I had a full athletic scholarship to attend Northeastern University. Despite all that success that day at Tabor, I actually started to know that where I come from and my skin color was a problem and threat to some people just because of what they have been taught either at home/tv/books and friends. That day I learned what racism was. As much as I came from Zimbabwe saying I am focusing on achieving my goals and not worrying about anything else, I could not as I started to fear for my life. From that day it was clear to me that no matter how many accolades I won and how nice I was, as long as I had dark skin, what mattered more to them was the color of my skin because this was not the last time someone called me "n---- or African monkey" during a game.

Part III: College

Enter college thinking everything is going to be great because you are in a place where you have mature and knowledgeable people. I was wrong. I do not know why I had let my guard down. Maybe it was because as a black man, you come to a point where you feel like a brick and have no feelings and you have the ability to bottle up so much pain, take so many hits and still find a way to strong? How strong can I be though because if you hit me hard enough, I am gonna pop off so that I can be heard? Is that what it takes for you to listen? Back to Northeastern University.

I was excited to go to class to be a college student and I started out as an undeclared major and switched to International Business, which I could have not done as a student-athlete because of a study abroad requirement. I eventually ventured into a Combined major in Political Science and International Affairs.

Now in Political Science and International affairs, you get to touch on the most controversial issues in the world and get to hear different opinions which is the beauty of it. Being the only black kid in class, my problem was whenever there would be a question in regards to issues pertaining to African Americans, some of my professors and peers would look at me expecting me to give answers and...

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The Black Experience: Through the eyes of Ackim Mpofu

...speak on their behalf. In general whenever there was an issue pertaining to black people I would get called on. NOTE: The black diaspora is very big, diverse, and full of different cultures. Black is more than just a color.

That was only the beginning of things though. During my freshman year, I and a couple of friends went out to a party. As we were at the party dancing and enjoying ourselves, I bumped into one of my closest female friends, and we said our hellos and I proceeded to the dance floor. As I was dancing I noticed something off about her. She just did not seem like herself. I was asking myself if she was really drunk. It could not be that bad, and I was right because she had been drugged and the guy was groping on her. I interfered acting like she was my girlfriend and I carried her back to NU. I literally carried her on my back to NU because I wanted to make sure she was safe. I get there to sign her in and I am explaining to the proctor on duty that I gotta get her upstairs. She is not feeling well. She proceeded to allow me to get her upstairs after giving me a hard time and questioning my intentions. I got upstairs and handed her to her roommate, and as I was on my way out an NU police officer was there. They started questioning me and insinuating that I had other intentions with her and that I had done something to her. Now at first, I was not asked if I did it; they insinuated that I was planning or had raped her. After 30 minutes with them, they finally let me go because they had no more evidence than just a call from the residential proctor who had mentioned that I was suspicious. That day I did not get mad, I talked to my friends about it but did not tell them the whole story because at that point in our lives, we knew that this was how life was here. We laughed about it because that is how we coped. I was just a brick taking in shots without feeling anything. I even experienced people weaponizing the police against me in one particular situation my freshman year. I went to a girl's room with her and she told me that if I did not do what she wanted, she would scream and call the police on me. The scary part is when she said, "You know who they would believe right?"

Fast forward to my sophomore year when I and a couple of friends were about to go out. For some reason, that night my boy Khorri and I decided to wear bandanas to match our outfits because it was the new thing in fashion, and we wanted to look the part. We were all excited because it had been a long time since some of our brothers who had graduated had come to see us. As we were walking (mind you this was 6 black men walking together) to our friend's car, a police patrol car drove past us for about 100 meters. I could start to feel the fear amongst us because of

the sudden silence, but who could blame us based on the past experiences we all had with the police. The car backed up slowly and as it did, you could feel the tension and anticipation although we were just walking and minding our own business. The police officer stopped and asked us "What are you guys doing over here?"

We responded: "We are walking to our car so we can drive out to our destination."

Police officer: "Who are you guys and where do you come from?"

The fact he asked us what we were doing over there when we were literally a few meters away from our campus was damning to me. The police officer then drove away. We were like--great--he didn't give us a hard time, but little did we know he was going to loop around and come back to question us again. The police car came back for the second time, pulled up next to us, and the police officer rolled down his window, looked at me and Khorri, the two boys wearing bandanas and asked us our names. Khorri got nervous as he was telling them his name.

The police officer said: Oh you look like a gang member we are looking for. Are you part of a gang? So again what are you boys doing here?

We told them we were Northeastern students and we were just going about our business. They let us go but they were still around the area up until our car pulled out. This was not surprising to me because I have played on teams where coaches have had the same black players for years and still cannot tell them apart or differentiate their names although they have coached those players for years, and oftentimes the players are an integral part of the teams. How?

Fast forward a year later, we're at the CVS on Mass Avenue. At that time, we were probably the most regular customers at CVS, even the people that worked there knew who we were because that is where we spent most of our husky dollars buying cologne, detergent, snacks, and other essentials. On that day as usual it was the 5 of us and we had Northeastern Soccer gear on. As we walked around the store, I started noticing that we were being followed around by the security guard. Everywhere we turned or stopped to get essentials, he was there sneaking his head through the corner or acting like he was just walking to observe what we're doing. I thought I was crazy, but my friends started noticing it too and we were laughing, and he was getting a little embarrassed but he didn't stop. Now I was waiting for my girlfriend to come by from her co-op, and as she walked into CVS and into our row of shelves, I looked into her eyes and I said: "Babe we are being followed by the guard; he thinks we gonna steal but watch once I hug he's gonna stop following us". I had said that

jokingly, but guess what as soon as I hugged my girlfriend who happens to be white the security just stopped, turned back and he did not bother following us after that. Now I knew what it was like "shopping while black." Besides, being in a mixed couple itself in Boston was hard. Countless times we got disgusting looks, and one moment in particular that hurt me the most was when we were shopping at Whole Foods, someone screamed "Emmett Till" at me. Our day was ruined. I could not catch a break

Now, this is just a list of things among many other experiences I have had as a black African man in America. Having to deal with the fear for my life while walking, running, shopping, in-class, and public spaces is something I have had to deal with while here in the U.S. I fear for my life, I fear for the life of my friends, in particular, my best friend who has called me countless times after he has been

stopped by the police because he looks like a suspect who happens to have dreadlocks just like him. I am scared for the black mothers who have to live with the uncertainty of their children coming back home safely after they leave the house and the pain they have endured. My experience is different from other black people in our diaspora, but we share common themes, and the America that we live in today has to change.

BLACK LIVES MATTER Student Perspectives

"I fell like there is a double standard being black in America. What I mean by that is you feel like there is always a target on your back, and it's a challenge adjusting to a PWI because even teachers play into negative stereotypes about you, and it makes it hard to succeed or even being on the same playing field of other students."
-Anonymous

"Being black in America is a crime even when you have no control over what you look like and who your parents are, and we're discriminated for something we can't control"
-Kendall

"Blackness is monetized, fetishized and brutalized. We were brought over as a means to a goal, and we're still seen that

way. To a lot of people, we're a commodity, meaning we're expendable, which is why we're so under-appreciated."
-Ramya Herman 21'

"It's pretty simple. It's just scary I feel like most black kids starting from when they're very young that their skin color is a death sentence when it comes to some things"
-Kenzie

"Being Black in America is being told your existence isn't good enough in various interactions throughout your life"
-Anonymous

"To be black in America is to be a withering flower in bloom near a beautiful palm tree"
-Anonymous



Sketch by Ramya Herman

Social distanced seasonal fun!

By Rachel Johns

Managing Editor of News

Autumn is one holiday after another. Unfortunately, many of the activities that accompany these fall festivities do not follow social distancing protocols, but fret not! Here are ideas for safe activities you can do with friends and family this holiday season.

Corn Mazes

A maze of maize is the ideal seasonal activity if you want to challenge yourself mentally while enjoying crisp fall weather. Who says that they can't be scary too? You can (pumpkin) spice it up by playing a themed game of hide-and-go-seek tag, where one of your friends is tasked with being a "murderer." The murderer has to find everyone and "kill" them, but one person, the "doctor," can revive their slain friends and try to beat the murderer to the end of the maze.

Jack-O-Lantern Making

Everybody loves some pumpkin carving catharsis. Interestingly, Illinois is the number one producer of pumpkins in the world! You may never be around so many organic orange orbs in your life ever again, so take some time to cut and gut them outdoors with your friends.

DIY Costume Contest and Parade

The scariest thing about Halloween this year is the terrifying realization that no one will see the amazing costume you've been working on. Have no fear; there is a solution. Gather all your friends in the local park to show off your homemade costumes and vote on the most creative, scariest, and funniest. You can even bring candy and host your own belated Trunk-or-Treat.

Apple Orchard

This famed fall fun never fails to buoy the spirits. Even under the diaphanous downpour I endured last year at an orchard, I still consider that day one of the most lovely days of my life. Good company really makes the experience, so make sure you don't bring any bad apples along with you.

Outdoor Friendsgiving Picnic

Get cozy beneath layers of flannel and blankets, and picnic outside with friends at your local nature reserve. Everyone can bring and share their favorite individually packaged snacks, dishes, and deserts. Take care to ensure the cleanliness of foodstuffs and their distribution.

Architectural Scavenger Hunt

When visiting your family in other towns, take a moment to admire the local architecture. Many larger cities even have architectural scavenger hunts available online. It really helps you see the beauty in places you may have thought were void of it.

Arboretum and Botanic Garden Visit

What is fall without fallen foliage? Visit your local botanic garden or arboretum to admire the natural fiery hues of the leaves. You can even collect fallen leaves to make your own autumnal collage.

Snowman Competition

A timeless symbol of holiday cheer, snowmen are universally appealing. Spend an idle afternoon making one, and challenge your friends to do the same. You can exchange pictures of your snowmen online. They can be cute like Frosty, or you can make them rather macabre like Calvin and Hobbes.

Homemade Gift Swap

The giving spirit is in the air in the early winter, so to show your friends your appreciation for each other, you can exchange unique homemade crafts. You could give your friends anything from a painting to handmade mittens to a piece of cardboard with glitter on it. The point is what you make for each other is special and meaningful to your relationship with one another.



Regina Cummings '24 decorates pumpkins in the Ferry Commons.

Photo by Rachel Johns

Breast Cancer Awareness Month

By Shylee Saladi

Managing Editor of Production

Many people see the color pink and think "girly" or feminine. In actuality, the color pink represents determination, perseverance, and strength. October 1st signifies the start of Breast Cancer Awareness Month or "Pinktober." To show alliance and support, the color pink is worn

and displayed to support every man and woman's fight against breast cancer.

October is an entire month that is devoted to increasing breast cancer awareness outside of the cancer community. The Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation was the first organization to start handing out pink colored visors to breast cancer survivors running in Race for a Cure in the 1990. After starting this

movement, the foundation handed out pink ribbons to everyone at the New York City race, which was the first use of a ribbon to signify their support to breast cancer and breast cancer awareness. The pink ribbon started out as a moment and turned into a movement for years to come. It shows support for women and men who have had breast cancer or are going through treatment to fight it.

A major aspect of October and National Breast Cancer Awareness Month is raising money for new treatments and prospective clinical trials for earlier detection so that the patients that are battling breast cancer have a better chance at beating it. The money that is raised for breast cancer goes directly to funding treatments for those who have metastatic cancer or stage IV cancer. Breast cancer is not like most other illness; after you receive treatment or surgery, there are months of being in remission and still receiving treatment. For many breast cancer survivors, October and the color pink represents their strength and determination to fight this battle.

Breast cancer doesn't only affect the person who has it, but the entire family as she/he goes through their treatment process. The families of breast cancer patients are the ones who want to find a cure for their loved ones more than anyone else since they are the ones that have to witness the struggles they are facing. To wear pink, in any form, in alliance with the breast cancer community shows just how many people are supporting those who have to go through this fight alone or with their families. The color pink was chosen to represent Breast Cancer Awareness Month since it symbolizes health and empowerment, which is the ideal symbol to support the cancer community.



Photo courtesy of Creative Commons

The pink ribbon has become the universal symbol for Breast Cancer awareness.

Helping hands during the pandemic

By Sage Ye
Staff Writer

During difficult times, it's always nice to have helping hands that lift up one another. This is harder to do amidst the COVID-19 pandemic that the world finds itself in. Nevertheless, people have actively reached out to people in need of help in order to lend a hand. In fact, there

are many people within the LFA community who have helped others in need over the summer and found a way to make a positive contribution to helping out with causes related to the COVID-19.

Over the summer, I helped by sewing masks for hospitals in need. In looking for other people who have helped and to give them their deserved recognition, I reached out to LFA community members to see who had similarly done these good deeds.



Photo by James Ye

Sage Ye '22 makes masks amidst social distancing.

As it turns out, the community at LFA has found many ways to benefit others. Darius Duff is a junior at who found ways to help out over the summer. "Me and my family bought bulks of masks from one of our fellow church members to give them to family members who have limited access to them in other states," Duff said.

Like him, other people helped supply masks. Similar to me, science teacher Mike Rogan, said, "I sewed masks for family, friends, and coworkers." Some other students and faculty had done the same thing, and in that way, helped out to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Some others in this community found ways to help out their own families. Kyle Koncz, Assistant Dean of Admissions and Varsity Basketball coach, said, "My brother and I organized weekly Zoom calls with our family that allowed my parents to stay connected and most importantly, see my brother's two daughters grow during this period of time." Koncz, among many others, found ways to safely connect with their families and loved ones during this pandemic. By doing this, friends and families have gotten to spend more time together while apart.

While some people helped out their families, a few members of this community went even further to personally help out other people in need during this pandemic. Anusha Srivastava, a sophomore, said, "I didn't do work related to COVID-19, but we did donate to a pantry looking for help after the lack of supply due to the pandemic."

David Yao, when entering his freshman year, did something similar, stating, "I bought some fresh fruits and dropped them off at the highway toll booth donation box for people in need."

Other students helped provide those in need with not just food, but other needs amidst the pandemic, such as tutoring. "I tutored a 2nd grader on Zoom during the summer. I did it because I enjoy spending time with kids, and I wanted to make a difference during this difficult time", said Lily Ainsley, currently in her junior year.

Many of these students and faculty members did small things all around and helped ease the efforts to stop the pandemic. By doing this, they helped bit by bit, showing that even by putting in minimal effort, people can still make a difference in helping out others. All it takes is a little "Covid kindness."

Anonymous opinions on the election

Compiled by Bela de Jesús
Managing Editor of Global

"I feel like as Gen-Z children, this time is one of the most important times of our lives."

"One thing to ease tension around yourself and our community is through dialogue, education, and action."

"I feel that both candidates are improper fits for the United States... the state of this country is frantic, and it will only worsen when the country will become completely divided once someone is elected."

"Just showing love and care for everyone as you never know what could be going on in their life, and cutting people some slack."

"I think this election is crucial because for once we are starting to see and recognize the need to use your voice and vote... everyone's vote counts, and I can be just one vote that stirs the Electoral College into which candidate they give all the votes to."

"I feel that in the school, even though teachers say that the community is inclusive, it is actually not that inclusive when it comes to politics."

"I believe that America has failed to live up to the American dream ideal of inclusivity and opportunity, especially at as citizens face the country itself taking these opportunities away from minorities."

[About being part of the Republican Party] I'm afraid to voice my beliefs at LFA now."

Issues our community cares about:

- Black Lives Matter
- Detention centers in ICE
- Women's Rights/Abortion Rights
- The Environment and Climate Change
- Healthcare
- Economy (wealth gap)
- Covid response
- Supreme Court decision

"The issues that are most important have to do with social injustice at this point in time."



Photo by Nick Alutto

A rally in support of President Donald Trump gathers in downtown Lake Forest.

A return to movie theaters

Promotional picture for the movie *Tenet*.

Photo Courtesy of Warner Bros.

By **Nick Alutto**
Editor-in-Chief

Coinciding with the release of Christopher Nolan's new movie, *Tenet*, many movie theatres are reopening across the United States, including theatres near Lake Forest Academy.

After months of being shut down due to COVID-19 restrictions, many movie theatres saw *Tenet* as the blockbuster that

would let them finally reopen and draw crowds to ease the financial restraint they have been under. Theatres still must take precautions to limit potential spread of COVID-19, including being limited to less than half capacity. I went to the AMC in Vernon Hills in the beginning of September to see what the new experience was like.

In its second week at the box office, *Tenet* made \$6,700,000. In comparison, Christo-

pher Nolan's last movie, *Dunkirk*, made \$26,611,130 in its second weekend. In addition, *Tenet* has very little competition in terms of other movies playing against it, with it being the only real blockbuster in theatres. In comparison, *Dunkirk* had to be in theatres at the same time as other PG-13 major releases, like *Spiderman: Homecoming* and *War for the Planet of the Apes*.

The driving force behind my decision to go to the movies was that, as a whole, they are currently not very crowded. The theatre I was in had around seven other people in it, and I selected a seat very close to the screen to be as far away from everyone as possible. The closest person was maybe 30 feet away from me.

The precautions that are in place are mandatory masks for everyone in attendance, open doors to the theatre to eliminate contact points, and less self-serve food. Most surprising of all, the soda machines are now controlled by a QR code on your phone so you don't have to touch the screens.

AMC also claims that they clean each auditorium thoroughly between screenings; however, I still brought a pair of wipes with me to ensure that my seat was clean.

In my opinion, the biggest issue with the plan is that food and drinks are still being served. This means that customers can take

their masks off momentarily during movies to eat food and drink, but it does open the opportunity for people to abuse this and take their mask off for longer periods of time. On the other hand, it makes sense from a business standpoint, since movie theatres make a hefty amount of their money in concessions.

Honestly, the overall experience didn't feel that different. After wearing a mask everyday at school, I barely noticed my mask, and the only big difference in my opinion was how few people were there. Although this may be detrimental to the movie theatre experience of seeing a movie for the first time with a large group of people, I personally wouldn't have felt comfortable with many more people in the theatre than the small number I was with.

How successful this was for movie studios and theatres is up in the air, since many movies have continued to delay their releases after . Warner Bros., the studio that released *Tenet*, has pushed their next major movie, *Wonder Woman 1984*, from October 2nd to Christmas. At this point, most major blockbusters (*No Time to Die*, *Dune*, *Fast and Furious 9*, and *Black Widow*) have abandoned their 2020 release dates entirely.

Mental health in the entertainment industry

By **Shylee Saladi**
Managing Editor of Production

From students to teachers, children to parents, and movie stars to artists, mental health affects everyone. Movie stars and music legends have had to face their own struggles with mental health as well. From the film industry, two important actors and actresses have spoken up about their struggles with mental health within their careers: Melissa Benoist and Dwayne 'The Rock' Johnson. Chrissy Teigen and her husband, John Legend, also shared their stories about facing their own struggles with mental health. Having more celebrities speak up about their own mental health struggles and journeys helps break the stigma surrounding mental health, especially in the entertainment industry.

As one of the main music streaming platforms, Spotify, reached out to neuroscience researcher, Joe Barnby, to talk about the unique challenges that artists face, and will face, in their music careers. Barnby says that "a culture of self-medication and drug abuse in the music industry poses a unique mental-health challenge to musicians" because artists have to be even more wary about taking medication while going through their mental health challenges. Barnby also says that it is important to "develop a culture of people being able to vocalize their vulnerabilities and vocalize how they're feeling, because a lot of the

time, just having someone there to compassionately and non-judgmentally listen to what you're saying can really go a long way." To be able to share those feelings and not have to put up a front is something that everyone should not feel ashamed to have.

As Chrissy Teigen and John Legend have shared with the world, after having their first child, Luna, she struggled with postpartum depression and anxiety. To go through a traumatic experience like postpartum depression, fight and overcome that battle, and then share her experience with the world is very remarkable. Opening up and normalizing talking about mental health and mental health struggles is not something that everyone can do. As someone that has a major influence in the music industry, Teigen writes that "it can happen to anybody and I don't want people who have it to feel embarrassed or to feel alone". It is even more important while going through something as severe as postpartum depression to those who have anxiety to feel like there is a support system.

Melisa Benosit also has shared her story with the public in hopes of creating a safer space in the world to talk about mental health and emphasize on how it is okay to reach out for help. Benosit has played Kara Danvers and Supergirl in *Supergirl* and Marley Rose in *Glee*, and through it all, she was going through something that no one else knew about—depression and



Chrissy Teigen discusses her battle with mental health issues.

Photo Courtesy of Creative Commons

anxiety from a young age. Melisa shares that she would "just plain lie to her closest friends to cover up what was going on until one day one of them confronted her about it." She had also been in an abusive relationship, which resulted in her turning down auditions and job offers because she "didn't want to hurt him [her previous spouse.]" This is said time and time again, but simply talking is a useful step forward in order to address mental health concerns and break the stigma that surrounds it.

Benosit spoke up about her personal experiences regarding her own fight in order to let others know that they are not alone.

Mental health is something that no one should struggle with alone, and even celebrities are speaking up about what challenges they faced in order to let everyone know they shouldn't be afraid to reach out for help. Benoist and Teigen share their stories to shed light on the true struggles that many people face in the music and film industry.

New E-sports team decimates competition

By James Kuhns

Managing Editor of Podcasts

Over the last decade, the field of eSports has grown into a media giant. Despite doubts from athletes and long standing sports organizations on the legitimacy of eSports careers, the act of playing a multi-player video game competitively for spectators has drawn in millions of fans and has even given eSports athletes the chance to win prize pools upwards of three million dollars. While eSports provide strong careers for some individuals, they also inspire others to start competitive gaming clubs of their own, including some students at LFA.

Before fall 2020, Lake Forest Academy was no stranger to eSports. Starting in 2019, a group of LFA students playing *League of Legends* matched up against other schools all across the country, competing in large scale tournaments for fame and glory. Over a year later, and with COVID-19 forcing us apart, LFA senior, Richard Wu, had a similar idea, but with a different game.

Wu had been working with the idea of starting an LFA eSports team for almost two years, but after debating between his preferred game, *Counter Strike Global*

Offensive, and a chaotic team-based game called *Overwatch*, Wu decided starting an *Overwatch* team “was more feasible in the college applications season.”

Luckily for Wu, he found it relatively easy to put together a lineup, but he felt more comfortable in a coaching position, and decided to only play when the team

needed him. With the help of co-coach and social media manager Garrison Sloan ‘21, the LFA *Overwatch* team roster, including Brooks Osborne (In-game leader), Ian Honczarenko, Tri Vien Le, Max and Will Collins, Farhan Suhaime, and Robert Billings, was ready for its first opponent.

Throughout the start of the first semes-

ter of the 2020-2021 school year, the LFA *Overwatch* team competed against 50 other schools in preparation for the PlayVS’s Midwest Region official season, and LFA came out on top, beating every team they faced and starting the regular season with an undefeated record.

The team has even created a fan-base, with many LFA students tuning into streams to watch the games, which can be found on the Twitch.tv streaming website at twitch.tv/lfaoverwatch. While Wu loves seeing his team gain a following and go undefeated, he also understands the team gives students a chance to connect over a game they love, one of these students being a Vietnamese international student, Tri Vien Le ‘21. “Not being on campus [due to COVID-19] is tough, but I love the chance to get together with my friends and compete against other schools online,” said Le.

Wu hopes to continue his team’s success throughout the regular season, and even has aspirations to start another eSports team next semester. But for now, he is focused on having “a good time, and letting [their] viewers have one as well.”



Photo by James Kuhns

Overwatch is a 6v6, character based FPS game where teams fight for control over objectives to win the game.

Music recommendations for the fall season

By Briana Murphy

Creative Director

With the change of the season, there comes a difference in the general energy of life. Fall is a time of stress for us all as we work towards finals and college applications, but an excellent way to cope with negative feelings is through music. Everyone communicates and feels things differently, but music is universal. Here’s a couple of songs to help cope with life’s various emotions or enjoy the positive vibes with upbeat playlists.

The Fall upbeat expresses staying in touch with joy. It’s a playlist that encapsulates the comfort and excitement associated with fall. This is the playlist to listen to incite positive energy in life.

The playlist begins with “Still Feel.” By Half-alive, it is a song about recognizing being trapped in a place of darkness and fighting to have a happier life. The song is an upbeat pop song that brings the feeling being of alive.

“Why Do You Feel So Down” is a song similar in composition and meaning, but it talks more deeply about being there for a friend in time of need. It’s an excellent theme song for road trips or relaxing hangouts with friends. The chorus is catchy, and the synth and percussion further solidify the music as an upbeat tune.

“Scrawny” by The Wallows is up next, which talks about nostalgia and realizing that even though they haven’t changed, they are still loved the same amount. It’s a song that’s reminiscent of bands from the early 2000s. It’s a lovely song to listen to for the positive affirmation within the lyrics.

“Cemetery” is a commentary on the downsides of materialism. It also explains

the importance of enjoying the little things in life. The main moral is a living focused only on money or business isn’t perfect because emotional wealth is more important. Despite the heavy topics covered in the song, the light piano and funky bass keep it light-hearted. The melody of the song is very upbeat and relaxed overall.

“Do It All The Time” is a straightforward tune that simulates the feeling of walking on top of the world. It focuses on living in the moment and enjoying what you have in life right now. In its essence, it’s about seizing your youth and doing what you desire.

“The Tell Me to Remix” is an old school song with feminine vocals that are sampled and mixed with the raps of more modern artists such as Trey songs and Tory Lanez. The synth and spacey vibe to the songs leave the meaning up to interpretation, but the sample’s funky rhythm keeps it lively and upbeat.

“Billionaire” is a song about having aspirations and wanting the best life yourself. It’s a song that incites hope for the future. The piece combines reggae and pop in an interesting mix, but it favors the music. It’s a contemporary classic.

“Action!” is a song about someone trying to woo a girl, and it’s a nice balance of rapping, singing, and talk rap. The song itself makes it a point to highlight percussion and piano, allowing the song to have a cretin groove to it.

“What Dreams Are Made Of” is another song about romantic endeavors, but it focuses on the honeymoon phase and the dreamy side of life. The song has a straightforward musical accompaniment and focuses on the vocals, making the song even more nostalgic and happy with the singer’s voice’s loving tune.

“Khaabon ke parinday” is a Bollywood song with very soft but uplifting vocals that make a very relaxing combination when paired with the guitar in the song. Its lyrics are also quite uplifting and soothing, which is essential in this stressful time, but what brings the song together is the contrast between the male and female vocals because they complement each other very well.

“My Boo” is a song that talks about childhood love and reminiscing on innocent experiences of love. It covers the idea of eternal love that doesn’t change. It’s a feel-good R&B song that cleverly tells a story through the lyrics and employs the differences in the male and female vocalists’ voices well.

Enjoy these music recommendations and the rest of the fall season.

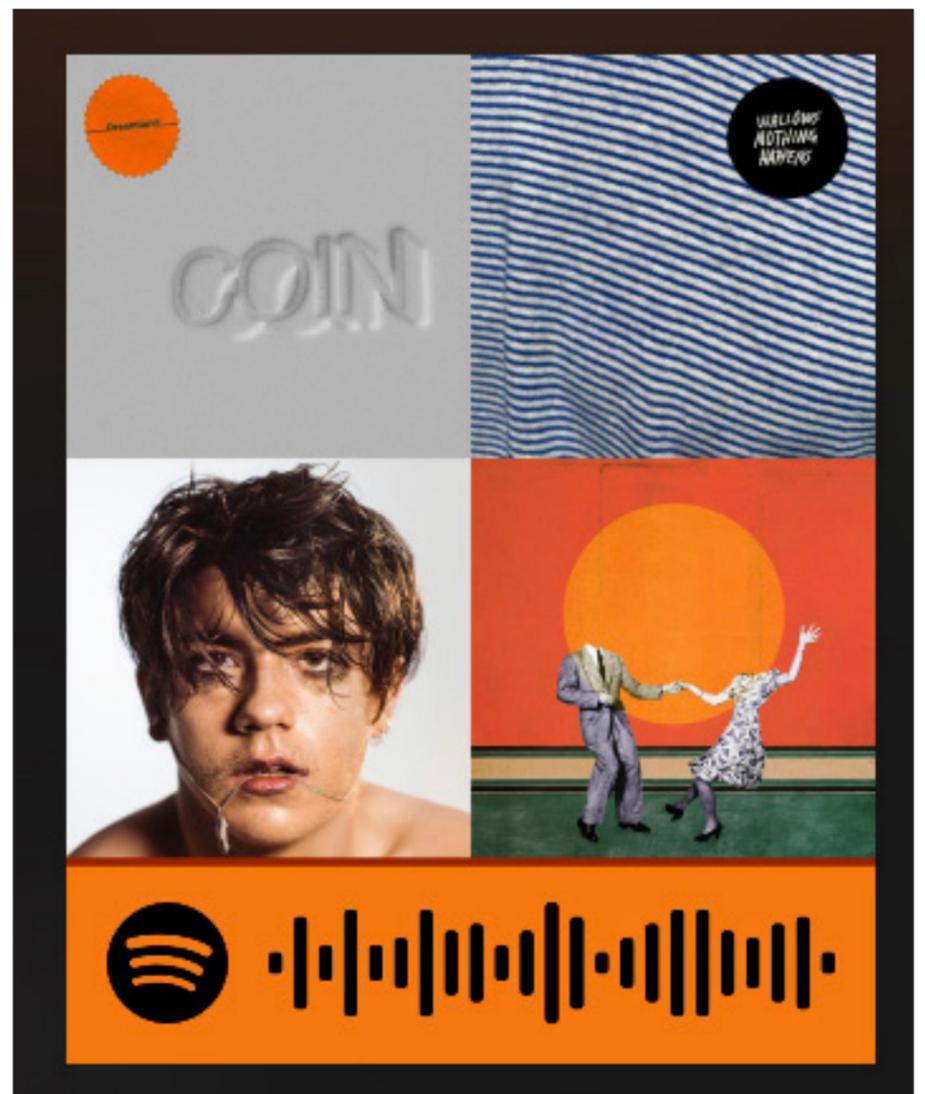


Photo by Briana Murphy

Scan the photo for a direct link to the fall playlist on Spotify.

A reflection on fall PE sports

By **Bia Leffingwell**
Staff Writer

Through a time of hardship, LFA Athletics made several adjustments to the conditions that the Caxys have been placed in. These adjustments were customized to each sport, but because of the current IHSA regulations, the usual Fall season was turned into a Physical Education season. Several sports, with the exception of a few teams, were able to practice a number of times, but they were not in any games. This means that those sports are set to compete later in this school year in order to provide full safety.

This outcome had both positive and negative effects on the players, coaches, and teams as a whole. The three teams that were heavily impacted were Girls' Volleyball, Girls' Field Hockey, and Boys' Soccer. For each individual, practicing three to five times per week without any games meant very different experiences than what they had previously been used to.

Stefano Maida '22, a junior on Varsity Boys' Soccer, said, "I felt like the PE season was a success because we were able to go out and do what we love doing while staying safe and following protocols. I would say it was definitely a positive experience for my team because we were all able to meet new members of the squad, and introduce some of the incoming freshmen to this school. We were also able to enjoy being together, and playing soccer."

Paul Makovec, Head Coach for Varsity Boys' Soccer, noted that, "It was a welcomed change from the past few months of seclusion. It was a really positive experience for our boys to take the season lightly without the seriousness of games. As coaches, we had the flexibility to carry a larger roster, experiment with some drills during training, and to just approach the PE season with the goal of having as much fun as possible."

Volleyball and field hockey players and coaches were also pleased with the

experience. Though each team took advantage of the extra season in different ways, the overall idea was similar.

Mimi Osborne, a junior on Girls' Varsity Field Hockey, said that, "The fall PE season was a good opportunity to participate in sports without fully committing to a team. It provided a nice chance for new athletes to see what sport works best for them. [It] was a great chance to get adjusted to the new dynamics and give new players an opportunity to grow."

Emily Kalis, Assistant Head Coach of Girls' Field Hockey, also added, "I felt great about the PE season. It was an extremely positive experience for our team! Since it was a PE and not a competition season, we were able to focus on team bonding, having fun and practicing the basic skills. As a coach, I looked forward to practice every day because of the positivity and energy that were exhibited by the players."

Girls' Volleyball was most impacted, as their dynamics for practicing were drastically different. The volleyball team was moved from the gym to the Quad for safety precautions.

Kirstin Palasz, a junior on the team, said, "It was hard for all the volleyball players to adjust to playing outside, as it is a different sport, but I was grateful that we got to play at all. I thought that it was an effective way to have us play even with all the regulations we had to follow. Towards the end of the season as we figured out the best way to practice, it became much more positive as we figured out how to be in the gym."

Becky Arrowood, Head Coach of Girls' Volleyball this season, was also able to find positives through the difficulty. She said, "I was very happy that we were able to run this PE season for volleyball. The girls were looking forward to being together and playing just as much as I was looking forward to having the students' energy and excitement back on campus. I viewed it as



Photo Courtesy of Stefano Maida

LFA Varsity Soccer Boys practice safe social distancing during their preseason practices.

a bonus season for the girls. I do believe it was a positive experience and I would do it again in a heartbeat for the girls."

The PE Season cannot be deemed as perfect, as there were also downsides as well. Although, none of these negatives ever seemed to outweigh the positives.

Maida noted that his team unfortunately lost a critical player, which made the end of the season a bit less positive. Osborne added that for Field Hockey, there was a lack of players, which made the season a bit rough in the start. Palasz said that the lack of games and practicing in a new environment was difficult.

Arrowood added, "Unfortunately, we were at the mercy of the weather. Some days we couldn't be outside because of rain, while other days we couldn't be inside because it was too hot!"

These downsides were out of the control of several individuals on the team, as was the elephant in the room that led to this entire season-- the Coronavirus. The PE season was strictly created in reaction to the virus taking over normal life as we had previously known it. The goal of this

season was to create a system in which teams could practice safely and healthily.

With these three sports being practiced outside, there was immediately a smaller concern about a high concentration of players in practice. Athletes were given gaiters from LFA Athletics, which were enforced by coaches. Several safety precautions were set in place: daily temperature checks, outdoor practicing, distancing as much as possible, and wearing masks at all times.

"I didn't think it was all that safe at the start," Maida said, "but then we got the news that there were zero positive cases, and that's when everyone on the team, as well as myself, felt a lot safer."

In a final reflection, each individual was pleased with what they were able to do, as they all love the sports they committed to. Even with the hard aspects, there was plenty of enthusiasm.

Maida wanted to remind the LFA community that, "In order to continue playing and representing this school, everyone should wash their hands, wear their masks, and stay safe, so that we can hopefully start playing games during the spring season."



Photo by Bia Leffingwell

Mimi Osborne '22 is able to safely play Field Hockey by wearing her mask and maintaining a safe distance from others.



Photo by Bia Leffingwell

Kirstin Palasz '22 plays volleyball indoors while wearing her mask at all times. However, quite soon into the season, practices were moved outside for even safer play.

To bubble or not to bubble: Professional sports return with varied restrictions in place

By Rohan Miglani
Managing Editor of Sports

On March 11, 2020, following a positive COVID-19 test from Utah Jazz starting center Rudy Gobert, the NBA postponed their season. Only days later, other sports leagues including the NHL and MLB postponed their season as well, to prevent further spread of Covid 19.

With no live sports for over two months, many less mainstream sports realized the opportunity they had, as there was no other competition in the sports industry. Dana White and The Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) looked to capitalize on the lack of competition and planned to have a Pay-Per-View event on May 9th in Jacksonville, Florida. The UFC, with careful planning, was able to construct a “bubble” for

their fighters and staff where people were not allowed in or out, and testing occurred on a daily basis. The overwhelming success of the event gave other sports leagues and the general public the confidence needed to try and bring back mainstream sports.

In June, plans to bring back the NBA, NHL and MLB began, with the NBA and NHL planning to create their own bubbles. While the MLB did not create a bubble and allowed for travel, they did not allow teams to leave their team hotels. While the two bubble sports organizations were able to complete seasons without any positive COVID-19 tests, the MLB started shakily with teams such as the Marlins and the Cardinals having massive COVID-19 outbreaks within their team, causing two weeks worth of games needing rescheduling. However, after the initial struggles faced by the MLB, they tightened the

rules, resulting in 60 straight days without a positive test from any player in an MLB organization. Ironically, the final game of World Series itself featured Justin Turner of the LA Dodgers being pulled during the game upon receiving a positive Covid test, but still joining the final celebration of the win on the field.

In September, the United States’ biggest sports league, the NFL, began its season with very similar rules as the MLB. Similar to the MLB, the NFL’s start to the season has been shaky, with teams such as the Patriots and Titans already having COVID-19 outbreaks, resulting in the postponement of games. However, as the weeks have gone on the number of positive tests has decreased, mirroring what occurred at the start of the MLB season.

While all 4 major sports leagues in the United States were able to come back and

play their seasons, the NBA and NHL had much more success than the MLB and NFL. This success is due to the bubble in Orlando for the NBA, and the two bubbles in Edmonton and Toronto for the NHL, which didn’t allow the players or staff to have contact with anyone who could have been exposed to the virus. While the MLB and NFL, who had prolonged seasons, could not keep these players away from their family in a bubble, these two non-bubble sports leagues have still been able to enforce strict enough guidelines to limit the spread of Covid within the leagues.

Despite the many bumps along the way, which was to be expected, the return of professional sports has been for the most part a success and something consistent to look forward to in a time of much uncertainty.



OG Anunoby hits game winning shot in game 3 of the eastern conference semi-finals.

Photo courtesy of SB Nation

Protests erupt over cancelled sports

By David Oluwole
Senior Sports Editor

This past year, life has drastically changed for countless people around the world. The Coronavirus has extensively changed lifestyles and sanitization protocols everywhere, globally.

As the Coronavirus continues to hinder activities such as sports and concerts, the feedback from people wanting to return to their normal lifestyle is prevalent.

In Illinois, most fall sports were postponed. Although, LFA has done a great job in providing students opportunities to still train and play their sport as a PE, most schools don’t have that option.

As schools delay or cancel sports seasons, the reception from parents and players have sometimes been uncooperative.

Many people protested in order to change Governor Pritzker’s ruling. As parents and athletes tried to find ways to get on the field, Governor Pritzker didn’t budge. Pritzker stated in a daily briefing, “my job, in part, is to weigh those choices but it is also

to listen to the doctors. What I want most of all is to keep these kids, and their parents, and their grandparents, their neighbors, and their friends safe. This virus is still out there. It is still being transmitted.”

Although many students’ futures ride on sports, it’s hard to allow sports to resume when there’s a virus that has killed over a million people all over the world. The state of Illinois had a difficult decision to make, but ultimately chose to protect human life.

Many neighboring states, including Indiana, have carried on with sports. Many students-athletes in Illinois chose to move to Indiana solely to be able to play this season. Those states have also steadily seen a rise in cases.

When asked about his experiences with the cancellation of sports, senior basketball player Jake Wolf said that “Although it’s tough to be uncertain whether there will be a season, it’s of utmost important to stay safe in these troubling times.”

Although it is unfortunate that many students don’t have the athletic outlet to help

them either deal with issues or have an opportunity to play in college, it is more im-

portant to value the human life that would be at risk if there was a lack of restrictions.



Junior Akindele Aboyade-Cole winning an aerial duel during a soccer game in the fall of 2019, before masks were a concern.

Photo courtesy of Akindele Aboyade-Cole

New Supreme Court judge and what it means for US

By **Bela De Jesús**
Managing Editor of Global

Among the seemingly hundreds of controversies happening in 2020, the Supreme Court nomination of Judge Amy Coney Barrett is one of the most recent and contentious. On September 18th of this year, the beloved Ruth Bader Ginsburg died of a long struggle with pancreatic cancer. After 27 years on the Supreme Court, Ginsburg had an immense impact on our country, fighting for women's rights and marriage equality.

After the late Justice Ginsburg's death, President Donald Trump nominated Amy Coney Barrett to take her seat. A conservative professor from Indiana who worked at Notre Dame, Mrs. Barrett shifts the court to be a 6-3 majority conservative majority. This has secured Republican influence in the Supreme Court, despite the party losing jurisdiction in The House of Representatives.

The controversy that comes with this nomination is that 2020 is an election year, and the late Justice Ginsburg died just as voting had started. Barrett was nominated only 38 days before election day, which made many Democrats across the country point to the hypocrisy of the situation, as a sim-

ilar situation happened just four years ago.

The late Justice Antonin Scalia died February 13, 2016 during an election year, and former President Barack Obama nominated Merrick Garland 237 days before the election. Senator Mitch McConnell of the Republican party successfully blocked this nomination, arguing that because it was an election year, the next president should nominate the future justice.

Since the nomination of Barrett creates a strong conservative hold in the Supreme Court, Democrats have suggested that the court be expanded, adding judges in order to create a more balanced court that reflects the views of the people.

When asked about what a 6-3 majority conservative court would mean for the country, Aviral Pathak, AP Government teacher, said, "If Amy Coney Barrett becomes a member of the Supreme Court, then any case the Supreme Court is going to hear... will more than likely be cases that benefit the conservative cause and not the progressive cause." Pathak pointed out that cases such as *Roe v. Wade*, that protects abortion rights, or the Affordable Care Act, which allows for more accessible healthcare, could be in jeopardy.

When asked about what Barrett's confirmation could mean for the human rights of this country, Sam Wold, Human Rights teacher stated, "Tens of millions of people could lose healthcare coverage, which is a human right." Although

this conformation threatens many laws put in place and is so controversial, Wold urges students to educate themselves on Barrett's views no matter their beliefs and understand the necessity of exercising their civic duties as young people.



Justice Amy Coney Barrett receives formal nomination to the Supreme Court by Donald Trump on September 26th, 2020.
Image courtesy of Creative Commons

ICE hysterectomies: History repeats

By **Ramya Herman**
Editor-in-Chief

Some damage is simply irreversible, and far from compensable. Beginning in September, it was brought to the media's attention that some women being detained by ICE were being forced to have hysterectomies through methods of intimidation and deception.

A hysterectomy is the surgical removal of the uterus, usually due to health complications in that area. There are partial and full hysterectomies, and they can sometimes result in the removal of the cervix, ovaries, fallopian tubes, and uterus-adjacent structures.

For the most part, women cannot con-

ceive children after a hysterectomy, and on the rare occasion that it does happen, it is considered to be life-threatening.

While the world began paying closer attention to the wrongdoings taking place later in 2020, these instances have been occurring for an extended period of time, with some women saying that their forced surgeries happened as early as January of 2019.

The first reported incident is unknown; however, in 2018, the gynecological practices were brought into question by a lawyer, yet the outside referrals persisted. A whistleblower report filed by nurse Dawn Wooten drew national attention to the problem in September of 2020.

Due to the lack of accurate documentation and recording of events regarding ICE de-

tainees, it is difficult to guess how many of these unnecessary and invasive gynecological procedures were performed. While documentation provided by ICE only showed proof of two hysterectomies, many women have come forth to say that this surgery or similar actions have been taken without their full understanding or agreement.

These actions should be concerning to everyone everywhere for various reasons. A non consensual and unnecessary hysterectomy is the manipulation and damaging of a woman's body without her consent, and every time it happens, the state of women's rights and the protection of them diminishes.

Outside of the present human rights crisis that this serves as a harbinger for, incidents similar to forced hyster-

ectomies have reared their ugly heads in the worst ways not too long ago.

During the Holocaust, forced sterilization was a form of eugenics implemented by Nazis to help rid the race of "undesirable" genes. Recently, history has been repeating itself in numerous and extremely frightening ways; however, this is definitely on the more concerning side of that repetition.

Not only do these hysterectomies pose a serious health threat both physically and psychologically for the women being subjected to them, but they also serve as a method of genocide. If the United States allows these incidents to go unchecked and without repercussion, we will find ourselves on the wrong side of history yet again.



Image courtesy of Creative Commons

Instagram is one of many social media platforms providing constant awareness.