



Features

Summer Academy:
The new initiative
expanding the reach
of LFA's offerings

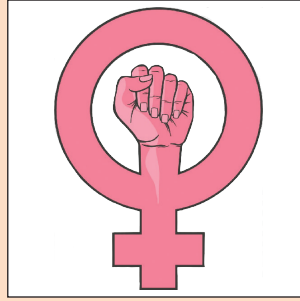
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Read about various
alumnae from LFA
and their inspiring
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The Lake Forest
mayoral candidates
spoke with *The
Spectator* about the
contentious race.

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Suits, Sneakers, and Scoreboards: Lake Forest Academy's 2023 Gala

By Nicholas Bisulca & Richard Zhang
Editor-in-Chief & Managing Editor of
Digital

The Lake Forest Academy Gala is an annual event that seeks to support some aspect of LFA. It could be a co-curricular program, boarding life, the addition of a new building to campus, or some other feature of the school. The Gala has always been a night for alumni, parents, faculty, and trustees to come together and support the school, while also having a great time.

This year the Gala is supporting the Athletic Center Expansion project. Assistant Dean of Advancement Garry Sloan and Assistant Dean of Advancement Christine Ryder stated that the Gala project is always determined by the Board of Trustees, and there was a natural fit between the Athletic Center Expansion and the Gala. "The decision was kind of made for us when you have a project this big. You don't want to have an event that is focused on something other than that big project. So the two things just sort of naturally went together."

On April 29th, LFA invites the community to come to Crown from 6:00pm to 10:00pm for a cocktail reception, testimonials, and events such as student performances by the Fine and Performing Arts

Department—with the main and only fundraising aspect of the Gala being the paddle raise that is held during the ceremony. In regards to how the paddle raise works, Ryder said, "The auctioneer will call out a level and as many people as interested in supporting the project at that level will raise their paddle, which will have a number on it. The auctioneer will call out the paddle numbers, and that tells us to record that bid, and that becomes their pledge."

Athletic Director Darrin Madeley added that "having everything in the gym will be loud, in a good way, and it should be an incredible experience." While it is usually held in Cressey, with this year's Gala being held in the athletic center due to the focus on the expansion, attendees have even been asked to wear cocktail attire with sneakers.

One focus of the yet-to-be-named addition to the athletic center is to improve the life of students and faculty on campus. It will make life easier for coaches (and students), keeping their schedules healthier while eliminating the need for off campus practice. Head Boys Varsity Basketball Coach Kyle Konec said, "A big piece about coaching right is being able to not only put the time that you want to know with your players but also being able to spend time with your family and loved ones keeps you refreshed and recharged to



Courtesy of LFA communications

The new athletic building will include an indoor track and three courts.

be able to be the best coach you can be."

Construction of the new building will begin on the west side of Crown with a target date June 1st. The facility will have large glass windows that will look straight into the student union.

Some new additions include three practice courts, a competition court, a second floor track, a new weight room space, four basic squash courts and a fully glass championship court, locker rooms, bathrooms, and more. Madeley's office will also move into the new building, along with a second trainer's office. These new additions will ultimately give student-athletes more of an opportunity to get practice in on their own time. Konec remarked, "I think it provides

more opportunity and time for athletes who might be focused on getting to the college level. It gives these student-athletes the opportunity to not have to sacrifice getting dinner or not having to sacrifice missing study hours, and ultimately, I think it allows them to have healthier routines as they pursue their goal to play at the next level."

Renovations will also be made to the current gym. The bleachers will move to one of the new gyms, and turf will replace the court in Glore Gymnasium. This space can be used for teams to practice indoors all year round while also allowing the trainers to practice more athletic-style training with LFA athletes. The turf will be large enough to host 4v4 soccer games and will also include netting for batting cages. In addition, an AC unit may be installed.

Above all, many students are simply excited for a new place to hangout and get work done. "It's great for the community and like the student union this building is for everyone, not just athletics" said Madeley. "I want every student to realize this building is being built because of the things you guys have done."

Sloan echoed a similar sentiment, saying, "This is a community space, a space that's really going to enhance our ability to serve the needs of our students, our faculty, and our alumni and promote physical, mental, and emotional wellness."

Ryder added, "Students' school life and personal life balance is going to be so much better because of this new facility."



Courtesy of LFA Communications

The new athletic building will have large glass windows facing the Student Union.

A reflection on Multicultural Day

By Avery Martin & Tanya Ganesh
Managing Editor of A&E & Sports
Editor

With students coming from 40 different countries and 15 different states, Lake Forest Academy is a place of diversity. Being home to a community, rich in culture, language, and identity, it is necessary to provide a comforting and fostering environment for students. Ultimately, it is this diversity that teaches us to grow as peers.

The celebration began on the night of March 14th with the Multicultural Talent Show, an opportunity for students and faculty to get up on stage and express their culture or celebrate another. Several different sections of language courses performed popular cultural songs in French, Spanish, and Mandarin. Additionally, students performed solos and duets in their home language and showcased various dance and music groups. Caxys in the audience sang along to familiar songs, swayed their flashlights, and let out cheers of excitement and encouragement for performing friends.

Through these performances, many students found themselves sharing a piece of their identity with the school. Nghi Doan '23, who was part of the Vietnamese girls' performance, described how, "All of the Vietnamese girls on campus were in that performance, and we definitely got closer after those 3 weeks of practice." She con-

tinued, "I feel like all of our effort made the performance, and everyone's support in the audience really made it worth it."

Sajan Shah '23, a Multicultural Prefect, described Multicultural Day as "a day that we don't have classes and celebrate LFA's diverse community through guest speakers, performances, clothing, and student-run workshops that showcase their culture and identity."

The day began with guest speaker, Rohina Malik, who with solely a chair and a mic managed to move much of the community with her powerful words on her experience living in America as a hijabi.

Claire Ireland '24 reflected, "What I most appreciate about Mrs. Malik's words was the way she opened up conversations within our community. While I'm not a member of certain identities that she has, I felt very cognisant of other people's experiences and simply hearing what they have to face everyday—It was an eye-opening experience."

Students participated in workshops including "Give Me Salsa," "How to Henna," "Black Identity and Culture through Hair," "Filipinos and Karaoke," or "A Race of Vietnamese Traditional Games."

Additionally, a number of discussions were held including "Fostering Empathy through Identity and Literature," "Unapologetic Identity: Remaining Comfortable in a Social Environment that is Not Famil-



Photo by Yue Chen

Students celebrate and share their culture at the Multicultural Day fair.

iar or Comfortable with You," or "When Does a Joke go from Funny to Offensive?" Theresa Fu '24 participated in the Mahjong Workshop, which is "a Chinese tile-based game of strategy and skill." Fu explained, "I've grown up seeing my relatives play, but I've never gotten the chance to try it because it's not as common in the US...having multicultural day gave me initiative to not only play it but also share it with other people."

After workshops, the Cultural Fair took place, where students taught the community about their culture through food, history, music, dance, and more. Anusha Srivastava '23 reflected, "I go day to day acknowledging my culture, but I don't really get to celebrate." She described that many South Asian girls performed Bollywood dances

during the fair, and shared foods such as pani puri and mango lassi. She explained, "Dancing is very incorporated into Indian culture, and it was a way to show people that this is how we express ourselves."

AP French teacher Mrs. Tanwar, who led a Bollywood Dance workshop explained, "For me, that experience was, I mean, beautiful, because I could celebrate my culture with somebody else."

At the end of the day, LFA hosted a group of Spanish flamenco dance performers who taught students and faculty about the different types of Spanish dances. It was a lively and educational performance that was loved by the community. As Tanwar described, "It's a way to bring people together to share their understanding and also to learn more about the other culture."

Spring break trips around the globe

By Jessie Ji & Harry Luo
Photo Editor & Staff Writer

Being a global citizen is essential to education at LFA. In classes, we learn to explore the question of how we fit into the school and the world. The curricular and co-curricular trips are an extension of learning inside classrooms, allowing students to engage in the global community with curiosity. During this year's Spring Break, five groups of students, a total of more than 100, traveled to Washington, Seattle, Cuba, Guatemala, and Kenya.

In all trips, service-learning is emphasized as a way to engage students in a global context. Yet, "it was not necessarily our students coming to help them," said Erin English, Director of Experiential Learning Health and Wellness & Community Department Chair, "but it really is learning about them—what is it about their lives, the situation, and the obstacles." With the redefined service-learning experience, students have the opportunity to connect with local people, participate in various activities, and reflect on their identities.

During the one-week service trip to Guatemala, LFA students worked with the organization Friends of San Lucas to learn about the Mayan culture, help con-

struct homes, and collaborate with the Women's Center as well as community leaders. "The trip to Guatemala was an incredibly enjoyable and meaningful experience for me as it introduced me to the beauty of the country and the richness of its culture," Benjamin Xu '25 said regarding his experience on the Guatemala trip.

Wold's Human Rights Class and Balson's Civilization & Culture of Latin America Class traveled to Cuba to experience its food, culture, music, and arts. While Cuba has often been portrayed negatively

as a less-developed country in the news, "The architecture of this place is so different from the places that I've ever lived, with all the colorful buildings and spirited people surrounding me," commented Angela Zhang '24. On this trip, students also immersed themselves in Cuba by dancing with Cuban music bands, visiting a local junior high school, and playing soccer with Cuban teenagers. When recalling the most nostalgic experiences throughout the trip, "It was the time when I bonded with the workers in the hotel,"

recalled Zhang. "Even though we speak different languages, we both have a passion for getting to know each other...I really felt that people here are living in a carefree and supportive community."

"It was an awesome trip, and I would've done it again within a blink of an eye!" said Global Department Chair Yue Chen, leader of the Kenya trip. Of all five trips, the most dramatic one is awarded to this; the students arrived at the airport after a 25-hour-flying and were told that their check-in luggage did not arrive. In the next three days, everyone lived a "luggageless" life. However, despite the occurrence, the group fully engaged in the programs, worked through challenges, and embraced the core values of "service." The activities included learning about women's power, refurbishing school equipment, deworming livestock, preventing human-wildlife conflicts, and a safari game drive.

Along with students' increasing interest in going on LFA trips, next year there are more options for destinations such as Berlin, Miami, Spain, Turkey, and the UK. LFA trips not only give students a time to travel and bond with friends, but they also provide a platform to experience worldwide culture in a life-like and entertaining way.



Photo by Sam Wold

LFA students on the Cuba trip go on a nighttime walk around the city.

Welcoming a vibrant spring: Holi at LFA

By Tanya Ganesh
Sports Director

Vivid colors splashed upon a sea of white T-shirts, Bollywood music blasting, students sprinting across rainbow grass, dodging hues of rich reds, bright yellows and lively pinks. Laughing faces smeared with pigment under tie-dyed hair sneaked up on fellow students, powders nestled in cupped hands, awaiting to dash color upon their next victim. As multicolored, tinted clouds arose through the air and enveloped the crowd, a joyful “Happy Holi!” erupted through the chaos. No, this is not a Color Run—this is Holi.

Holi symbolizes the triumph of good over evil, and is celebrated all day and night across India and Nepal. The fes-

This year LFA saw its best turnout yet. Anusha Srivastava ‘23, one of the South Asian Student Union (SASU) leaders, recalled, “We were running and laughing, chasing our friends with colors, throwing water balloons, trying to get everyone to be as bright and colorful as possible.”

Many of these students participated for the first time. “I could feel the positive energy—everyone around me was having a good time, so I had a good time,” Claire Costello ‘25 said.

Nirali Dalia, a Health, Wellness and Community teacher, reflected, “It’s so nice to see how many people show up. We are given permission to throw stuff at each other, of course students will show up.” She continued, “I wish there were more adults... it’s an opportunity to have innocent fun.



Photo by Saanvi Malkani

Students get intense as they dodge or embrace the color, and embrace each other.

tival focuses on the values of diversity, unity, and inclusion across groups of gender, class, race, and other social divisions that we often separate ourselves with inherently. It serves as an opportunity to set aside differences, strengthen bonds of existing relationships, and create new beginnings. People are brought together to play and laugh, forget and forgive, and to repair ruptured relationships.

You may wonder, why the color? It is with this plastered pigment that a sea of faces can truly blend together. The symbolism of this unique celebration is to unite strangers, and show that everyone is equal—everyone is human. The festival is a time to let go of any distinctions and simply celebrate life on this Earth, together. It is this concept of togetherness that is the beauty of Holi. Holi’s religious, cultural and spiritual traditions are significant to Hindus all over the world, its message of love and inclusion invites people of all cultures and religions to join in on the fun.

It’s really rare that even the students get to be kids, and this is a celebration where adults get to be put in the same group.” Dalia was also able to bring her family to the event. “It’s [Holi] something we’ve wanted to do as a family. We didn’t get to celebrate growing up, so it’s a really cool experience to share it with them at LFA.”

The Holi celebration at LFA took place on April 9th, although the date of the festival is March 8th. Srivastava explained, “I think the hardest thing for us was date and time because we wanted to do it when it was nice and sunny out, which is why we couldn’t do it on the actual date, March 8th.”

Holi begins on the Full Moon Day in the month of Falgun, according to the Hindu calendar, also known as Choti Holi or Holika Dahan. It marks the end of winter and the advent of spring, as the tireless effort, patience, and discipline of harvesting farmers can finally take a break from the fields as the crops mature. The eccentricity of the event reflects the anticipation and



Photo by Saanvi Malkani

Seniors join to celebrate their last Holi at LFA.

excitement for the prolific harvest to come.

Beyond its agricultural roots, the festival has deep spiritual roots in Hinduism, going back to the Srimad Bhagavatam Purana, containing numerous stories of Lord Krishna’s youthful antics and mischievous childhood—he was known for playing pranks on the village girls by drenching them in water and colors. These stories focus on the birth of new life, welcoming change and difference, blossoming relationships of both old and new, and the celebration of dharma over adharma (Dharma is a duty, guiding one’s conduct and actions in accordance with one’s inner truth, reflected in your life purpose. On the other hand, Adharma is everything immoral, unethical, or unlawful).

Spent with friends, family, and loved ones, Hindu festivals have a deep religious and cultural significance, and Holi is no exception.

With the variety of identities that LFA nurtures, it is important to have a comfortable and welcoming environment for students to not only call home, but feel at home.

Naira Sainsi ‘25, a member of SASU, said, “It’s necessary to make sure everyone feels included and like they belong, no matter what culture or background.” Celebrating such events helps eliminate any ‘otherly’ feeling, creating normalization and in turn, comfort in our community.

Srivastava further explained, “I think that when affinity groups are able to host events like these, it highlights those cultures that are present in the community but we don’t celebrate everyday.”

As Dalia stated, along with the spread of cultural celebrations “we need to keep in mind the cultural sensitivity of what it represents, while also having fun.”



Courtesy of @lfacademy on Instagram

Lily Botero ‘25 joyfully throws colored powder.

Look out for LFA's new Summer Academy

By Esti Rosenblatt & Claire Ireland

Photo Editor & Senior Editor

In the upcoming summer of 2023, Lake Forest Academy is hosting its very first Summer Academy. In an expansion from its previous and ongoing middle school STEAM programming, classes for high school students (including those enrolled at LFA and outside schools) are now offered. In this summer-school-esque environment, these students will take classes from 8:30am-2:30pm five days per week in one subject of their choosing. The high school curriculum will include Ceramics, Foundations of AP History, Geometry, and Algebra 2. Each of these classes allow for transcript credit for LFA students and may apply to those outside of the community as well.

In the past, LFA has had experience with summer programming. Before the pandemic, LFA offered an ESL (English as a second language) program during the summer. Around one hundred students – most from out of the country – would live in LFA dorms and learn English with teachers in LFA facilities as well as participate in activities. The goal was for students to be prepared for the upcoming school year. This is very similar to the Summer Academy's outlined objectives. Aforementioned,

the already established Middle School STEAM Camps offer science based opportunities where students, according to the LFA Website, can “have fun developing and sharpening their critical thinking skills while having the opportunity to learn on our campus.” Courses include Forensics, Archaeology, Creating Chemical Potions, and more. Tom Johnson, Dean of Faculty, elaborated that this summer the STEAM camp offerings have expanded to three separate weeks of classes with both morning and afternoon sessions.

Johnson spent a long time working with Chris Tennyson, Head of School, and Nancy Nassr, Academic Dean, to develop the Summer Academy. Thinking of the evolving needs of the school, Nassr said that the Summer Academy creates an avenue that gives students the opportunity to take new classes. Johnson stated, “The primary goal is to offer students courses to take over the summer as a means of advancement in their highschool -or middle school- track.” The second goal of LFA's new summer program is that it will be a helpful tool when it comes to admissions. Opening the campus to prospective or incoming students will introduce more people to LFA's strong academics and beautiful buildings, possibly leading to more applications when that season comes around.



Courtesy of @lfacademy on Instagram

Lake Forest Academy will be open for students in the new Summer Academy program.

While the program's possible implications on students and the LFA community are overwhelmingly positive, there is a simultaneous concern of how the Summer Academy could influence the already competitive nature of Lake Forest Academy's student body. The courses offer opportunities to get ahead, especially with classes like Geometry or Algebra 2, which can put students on an accelerated path in their mathematics careers. Johnson acknowledged this fact, but reassured that this

risk is not really evident as students in the Summer Academy can only take “one or zero” class, thus not a real cause for concern. Additionally, AP programs can not be offered over the summer, further eliminating some of the potential competitiveness.

If you are interested in taking part in this program, be cognizant of registration closing May 10th. While as Johnson stated, “There is a learning curve to all of this,” this new opportunity provides ways to get ahead for both LFA students and our school.

Seniors' goodbye to their sports

By Anusha Srivastava

Managing Editor of Production

Arguably the most bittersweet experience during one's time in high school is their last leg of senior year. For those of us who are choosing the college path, we can finally take a deep breath now, knowing where we are going, or for others, it's knowing that they are taking a gap year or even pursuing their athletic dreams. However, while there is some relief in knowing what is after high school, we are still finishing up AP exams and finals while dealing with the difficult action of saying goodbye to the family we created through our time in high school.

For a lot of us, we create these close friendships and family-like bonds through

LFA's required athletics, which, although some find tedious, as Brian Botero '23, a varsity cross country and volleyball player, as well as track runner, stated, “Don't look at sports as a chore, the school does it for a good reason: to maintain a good physical and mental health especially when we are very academic students who study a lot.” Botero furthered his statement and said, “That for every team I tried, every single team, regardless of level, is very welcoming, so play sports to not only show skill and maintain health, but use it as an opportunity to socialize.”

Additionally, when using athletics as a window to form these friendships, we get to meet new people from all over the world, a unique possibility

most do not get to experience until college or their post high school years.

Ziyi Ye '23, an international student herself, as well as a varsity volleyball, basketball, and badminton player, and former track runner, described the school as “a mini United Nations” because no matter what sport she played, she met players from everywhere: Asia, Africa, Europe, and North & South America.

In all honesty, one might question whether the cultural and ethnic diversity created clicks based on background, but during Ye's time at LFA, she explained, “At first, I viewed my relationship with teammates as different than that with friends and roommates, but very quick my teammates became some of my close

friends, they became my family, because no matter what, they supported me during my most difficult times.... because of this kind of community I grew through my sports, it gave me more confidence.”

Tatum Young '23, a teammate of Ye's on the varsity basketball and volleyball team, also a softball player, mentioned three other big things she took away from sports: “Use sports as an opportunity to be carefree, use your games and practices as a way to move on and grow, and lastly do not wish away time... everything happens for a reason.”

People like Jackson Macejko '23, a prep hockey player and varsity lacrosse player, attested to believing that everything happens for a reason. He described that in his freshman year, he was not able to play due to a knee injury, but “coming back I was much stronger and had better stick handling.” Next year, Macejko plans to play Junior Hockey, but notably one thing he said he is going to miss is the close relationship with his teammates that dorming and LFA allowed him to create.

Although we feel a weight lifted for finally completing and living a high school experience full of ups and downs, we are saying goodbye to the family we created. However, we are also saying hello to the future ahead, taking all that we had the privilege of learning from our peers, teammates, friends, teachers, and coaches these last four years.



Courtesy of @dianabishopp on Instagram



Courtesy of @nicholas_bisulca on Instagram



Courtesy of @beverlyfishman on Instagram

Various student-athletes pose for pictures on their Senior Nights.

Editorial: Underestimating the Humanities

While one can trace the importance of the humanities back to the beginning of Western civilization in the city-states of Greece, in recent years there has been pushback against what was traditionally the backbone of liberal arts education in the West. The rise of the digital age has represented a major blow to the study of subjects such as history, politics, society, and the classics, as there seems to be a new culture of people who believe that these subjects are no longer necessary to thriving in a world that needs more coders and engineers, not writers and historians. This mindset has led to a major decline in humanities-related majors across the United States, with some colleges even disbanding many of their humanities-related majors.

Between 2011 and 2021, the number of students majoring in English went down by a third. This is a terrible development for the future of education. While it is true that history doesn't teach you how to build a jet engine, and the classics don't show one how to program a Chatbot, the humanities can be of tremendous service in teaching one how to think critically, no matter the field they choose to pursue. There is a reason that often, times of high culture such as the Renaissance and the Enlightenment are followed by periods of enormous technological expansion, in this case, the Scientific and Industrial Revolutions. Through the study of history, we may become cognizant of the mistakes of our ancestors so we may not repeat them in the future, through the study of language we may better communicate ideas to our coworkers or peers advancing progress, through the study of literature we may view lives far from our own that may offer insight into the plight of others bringing the world closer together, through philosophy, we may gain a greater understanding of our place in the universe thus teaching us to lead a more thoughtful existence.

All of these can be of tremendous benefit in almost any field whether it be Law or STEM. On a day-to-day basis, the critical thinking that a humanities education provides can dramatically improve one's ability to innovate or excel in one's particular field whatever it may be. They can help us be more flexible in our ever-changing world. According to a study done in light of increased automation, the fastest-growing jobs in the US in

the last 30 years have almost all specifically required a high level of social skills-something the humanities is designed to induce.

So, with all this, it is a shame then that LFA, and more widely the modern American high school, seems to have fallen into the same trap that many colleges and their students have, that of ignoring the humanities in favor of a STEM slanted education. Going through four years of English and history classes at LFA, one may come out of it disenchanted.

The same culture that regards the humanities as pointless is prevalent even here at a top prep school. Many will anxiously study for their Calculus test while also preparing for the Scientific Olympiad, leaving little room for English and History, the later of which, does not even need to be taken all four years.

There's really no equivalent to the amount of STEM-centered extracurriculars one can participate in at LFA compared to the humanities. This does leave a person interested in the humanities at LFA somewhat stranded.

In addition to this, LFA only offers 16 History/Social Sciences classes compared to English, Math, and Science, all in the 20s. LFA does not offer every one of the 16 classes shown in the curriculum, as many semester-long electives such as "Sports in America" and "A History of Global/human rights" are rarely taught.

Many LFA students have completed every History class and feel that LFA should offer more. This is not necessarily LFA's fault, but it is a symptom of a wider lack of interest in what for millennia has been the basis of education. This is not to discourage the study of STEM, which is a vital and fascinating field, but STEM and more widely academia itself simply could not exist without the critical thought and talent that the humanities yield.

Art is difficult to define, as it is not a formula, meaning no set process will generate a work of art. However, works of art, no matter sculpture, painting, music, or literature, retain a few common characteristics. A work of art is best defined by its use of creativity, impact, and application of the final production.

The reasons to create art are practically infinite. However, no matter the reason, the artist always utilizes creativity as a harbinger, shaping their emotions into an organized set of lines, words, and notes. Even con-

ventional characteristics of art, such as skill, are not necessary, as beauty is entirely subjective, and a line being straight or curved does not necessarily make a work of art beautiful or ugly.

However, creativity, using an artist's unique imagination, is necessary to create a unique work of art. Then, the next test of a work of art is its impact—what emotions or ideas it provokes and the application the work has on society.

It is well known that art is subjective. Most artists make art intentionally vague to appeal to a broader range of people and allow the audience to interpret the work using their creativity, life experiences, and perception of reality. Simultaneously, artists may aim to convey philosophy or argument through their works. To simplify, a creative expression of one's emotions, beliefs, ideas, or feelings is art in its most authentic form.

After knowing what art is, you may start to see it surrounding you, and you may start to question what purpose this art has for society. Creating art allows for a creative outlet for unhealthy emotions. It is known that bottling up emotions is unhealthy, but not every day do we have someone we are comfortable sharing with. Being able to articulate your feelings through art acts as therapy or a destresser for many.

More generally, art helps humans connect, acts as a means of communication education, and provokes understanding. A goal of most artists is to make the meaning of their artwork relatable. Human experiences, however unique they seem, are seldom genuinely unique. Some may find discomfort in this, while others feel the opposite. Either way, during a struggle, it feels good to know that someone else has experienced what you have and has survived.

As a means of education, art tells stories and experiences that may be utterly foreign to you. Nevertheless, learning about these experiences is healthy and will give you greater empathy or knowledge about whatever subject the art discusses.

Ultimately, you should study what you want and what would make you the happiest, whether it be STEM, language, literature, or religion. Do not let someone dictate what is best for you, as that is what is typically best for them. However, it is crucial to see that just because a school or possibly a society values one discipline over another, it still has value if it has value to you.

SPECTATOR

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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.

UPCOMING LFA EVENT

LFA's chapter of Amnesty International is hosting a fundraising event called JAMnesty on April 28th outside of the Student Union at 7 P.M. Numerous students and musical groups will be performing, and other LFA clubs will be selling merchandise and informing about the cause. This event is open to the public, so parents, friends, and families are all invited to come! Come help Amnesty International support women in Iran!

Upcoming and exciting activites at LFA

By **Bela Bock, Chloe Jhin, Ford Sweet, Erin Cho, Joon Lee, and Mac Feingold**
Staff Writers

After a while of having restrictions on activities at LFA, new experiences are ramping up. With the end of the school year coming up as well, Affinity groups and clubs are looking for new leaders as the senior class is leaving. Amnesty International is also looking for a new leader for next school year. Sophomore leader Dayla Rosen said they are looking for, "Someone who's super dedicated and someone who will put their all into planning events. They have to care about the causes and be organized in order to make an impact on the club and the community." She added that Amnesty is not a big commitment, but they ask that members and leaders take a more active role. As for Affinity groups, specifically Asian Cultural Union, leaders try to help Asian students feel included within LFA. When asked about what it means to be a leader of ACU, Richard Zhang '23 stated, "It means a lot to be able to represent Asian culture at a boarding school with students from international countries, since it means that we can not only help those students feel comfortable expressing either culture and celebrating their holidays and traditions, all while sharing those personal and cultural experiences with the wider LFA community."

Zhang hopes that ACU expands outside of its affinity to offer a safe space for students. Students who are interested in the opportunity to pursue authentic self expression while learning about fashion design can now join the Fashion Club. During meetings, students will discuss and break down elements of their favorite brands, create their own pieces, and experiment. When discussing its formation, founder Esti Rosenblatt '24 said, "Although a focus on fashion has previously not been offered at school, we are excited to introduce something new to LFA and give students an opportunity to start pursuing a career in the industry." The club is expected to start meetings before the end of this school year and will start production during the upcoming season. Usually, people are eager to leave school at the end of the day and make their way back to their dorms and houses. However, on April 15th, seniors gathered in Crown to experience an eventful night. Due to Covid, this will be the first senior lock-in since 2019. The senior student council and their class advisors planned this event and sought Crown to have access to the ice rink and more. Senior class advisor Suzy Vaughn stated, "As the night goes on, they are going to condense the area where people can be." Chaperones took shifts throughout the night, which assured safety for the students. All-School President Riko Kishitani '23 said, "The pool will be closed all night because they don't have a life-



Courtesy of Mia Rogers and David Scarisbrick

Field's Open-Mic Night brochure advertises for April 20th.

guard to stop anything bad from happening." Nonetheless, the remaining areas of Crown were open to students. On April 27th, Atlass hosted the "Meat Sweats Night." Atlass Dorm Head Kyle Koncz said, "Since Covid, we couldn't meet up as a dorm as a whole, so this year we are excited to bring back new traditions." Koncz added how it will be a meaningful time for the Atlass boys because everyone "likes to eat." Meanwhile, Field is looking forward

to their "Open Mike Night". Field Dorm Head Emily Kalis said, "We are hosting the Open Mike Night, which is a great opportunity for boarders to perform in front of our little dorm community." Furthermore, Kalis added how the dorm parents are assembling new activities for the senior girls. As the school year winds down and students look forward to the next, excitement is growing about the many new opportunities that will be offered

Academics advances forward

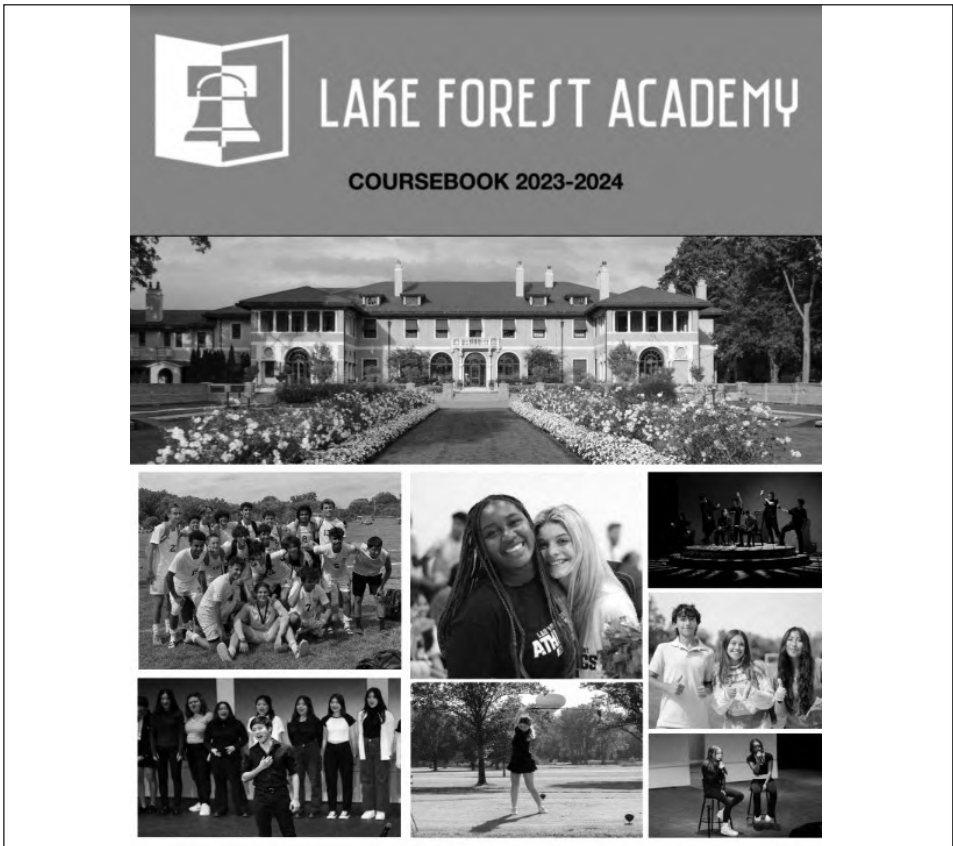
By **Liv Kelly and Emma Swanson**
Staff Writers

As LFA is continuously evolving, so are the academic policies and courses. These exciting improvements will be put in place for next year. One will be the new comprehensive coursebook that Academic Dean Nancy Nassr has been working on. Compared to the old coursebook, this one includes everything a parent or student may need to know: graduation and athletic requirements, prerequisites, course maps, and more. Within the updated coursebook, there are significant changes in academic requirements, one of those being that rising 9th graders will have one life science requirement along with one physical science requirement; whereas, in past years, a life science was not required. The hope is to broaden students' knowledge of science and better prepare them for college. Additionally, students will be able to drop a course through the first progress report without facing any penalties. Any time after will result in a "W," representing a withdrawal from the class. In previous years, a student was only able to drop a course within the first cycle. Nassr explained, "I think that the previous window for dropping a class was so quick for students that they had to drop before the first progress report, and that just wasn't enough time for teachers to assess properly, but particularly for students to understand

whether or not they can really engage with the material or not." She discussed how this improvement is going to serve as beneficial for both students and teachers since students' GPA won't be as affected, and teachers will be able to assess students for longer. A cap at six classes is being considered, but not yet an official policy, to ensure that students have lunch periods. The main obstacle

in implementing this change is that students might not be able to fit in all of the classes they would like to. However, Nassr stated, "If we look at the current data and research about student mental health, we know that young people are in crisis, especially young girls and women who are really in crisis right now. For me, that was the big driver and continues to be. I think we have to cap classes because it's

just too much stress and pressure for students to go without lunch and some sort of mental break during the day." Again, this policy is still only in the process of being considered. English is a required core class, but for those who show interest in expanding their knowledge and depth of understanding in the subject, there are many new English electives added for next year that range from Asian Literature to True Crime stories. English Department Chair, Denise Foster, said classes were added to "broaden students' experience and move into more contemporary fiction." Some were reduced to single semester classes; however, this was done so students can take more electives to explore other interests. Along with literature and true crime classes, other classes have a focus on identity within writing, such as "Gender, Race and Identity through Shakespeare." Foster added, "There is nothing more central to a human being than issues related to identity," which is what she believes inspired these classes. Offering classes where students are able to see themselves in writing adds a sense of belonging and empathy and can further engage students in literature. In conclusion, each of these improvements to the academics at LFA have been set in place to benefit the students and give them more opportunities to explore their interests and it is exciting that they will be set in place next school year.



Courtesy of LFA website

The new coursebook is comprehensive in nature.

The Return of Sailing at Lake Forest Academy

By: Mimi Sexton and Myles Haight
Staff Writers

You just finished a long day of school. You have been looking forward to practice all day. As you approach the beach, you see all the different sailboats lined up, and you can't wait to get out on the water. You love being out on Michigan, and you feel so lucky to have such a fantastic lake you can take advantage of so close to your school.

Lake Forest Academy has sporadically had a sailing team for the past 20 years. LFAs team is typically sparked by a few experienced sailors who have an interest in the sport. They had a strong team from the years of 2005-2009 and again in 2011-2013. LFA currently has a group of very interested and motivated sailors in the program run down at Lake Forest Beach, and it is the biggest and most committed team we have had yet.

Will Howard, the Sailing Director for The City of Lake Forest and coach of both Lake Forest High School and LFA, said, "The current six sailors are getting dialed in quickly and the leadership of Matthew & Mimi Sexton and Elise Brandt will pay dividends. These three have substantial competitive experience competing all over the country and their leadership is getting Caxy Sailing off to a great start."

There is a lot of potential for the program to grow in upcoming years as word gets around about the sailing team. LFA has already gotten the opportunity to sail in multiple regattas in the Chicago area this season, and is hopeful for a great season ahead, actively competing in regattas.

Current team member Maddie Goldman 25' said, "Sailing for Lake Forest Acade-



LFA students prepare for their first regatta.

my has honestly been a very exciting but also a challenging experience." She is a first time sailor who shared that she has had an interest in sailing her whole life, and when the opportunity presented itself, she had to join the team. Even with just six members that are a part of sailing, we are hopeful for a successful season due to all of the sailors being fully committed.

Many different physical and mental aspects go into sailing. Howard shared that you need to build up your endurance and be ready for "physically demanding and exhausting days." The practice and race schedule for the sailing team is rigorous with practices at least five days a week for multiple hours a day and races (regattas) almost every weekend.



Photo by Will Howard
LFA's sailing team finishes the first race of the regatta.

A lot of psychological factors go into sailing as well. There are a lot of things that you need to overcome while being a sailor; Howard shared, "You can't be afraid of big breeze and huge waves. You know those days where garbage cans are blowing over and the wind is blowing your car out of your lane? Well we go sailing on Lake Michigan on those days. Sometimes you just have to hold on and let it rip!" You also have to overcome the frigid temperatures of Lake Michigan during the spring sailing season.

When sailing, if you aren't in the race physically, you won't perform how you want to. The same thing goes for mentally. Unlike many other sports, the conditions and factors that go into the sport barely ever stay the same and change constantly. "You have the natural conditions: waves, wind speed and wind shifts," said Howard. These variables are constantly changing. Failing to notice them can cost you your race. Howard continued, "You have to use these factors to get around the course smarter than your opponents like a game of chess. All the physical and mental aspects of making decisions and the focus that is required to make the boat go fast are unique to sailing."

Sailing is a sport that everyone deserves to get the opportunity to try. Having a solid team at LFA gives students a chance to get involved with this unique sport. Current captain Matthew Sexton 24' said, "It is also important for LFA to have a sailing program because it will put LFA on an even playing field with schools elsewhere, like the East Coast." He explained that many gifted sailors and intelligent students choose to go East because the schools there provide more opportunities for sailors.

Sailing is a sport that you can do for your whole life. It can bring special experiences such as the chance to sail all over the world, seeing new places and meeting new people. The sailing community is small, yet tight, and has been a pleasure to be a part of and hope to continue on at LFA.



LFAs Sailing Team after qualifying for the Missa Mallory Regatta.

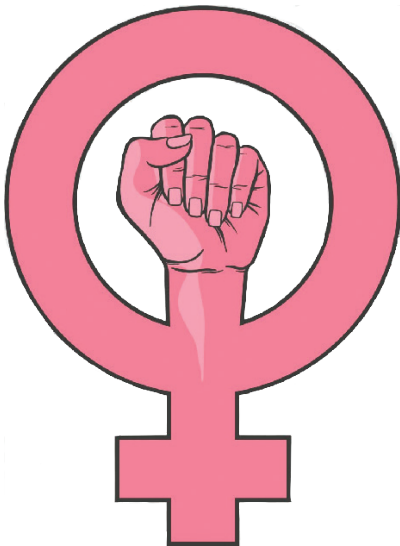
Photo by Sara Sexton



By: Riya Kapoor
Managing Editor of Collaborations



Nancy How Speer '59:
Nancy Speer graduated from Ferry Hall in 1959 and has since then been inducted into the hall of fame, honored as a woman of distinction and holds a place as a life trustee. After Ferry Hall, Speer studied at Wellesley College for her B.A and then at Wesleyan University for her M.A.T.. Speer has had an incredibly successful career and has held positions as the vice president of Planned Parenthood in North Dakota, South Dakota, and Minnesota; vice president of development at Abbott Northwestern Hospital; and Director of Development at Breck School, and External Relations Director at the University of Minnesota's Humphrey School. Speer currently serves on the executive committee of The Nature Conservancy of MN-ND-SD, and she chairs the board of *Womenwinning*. Her recent public service has included board leadership positions at the Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy, the Loft Literary Center, and Advocates for Human Rights. Serving as a vice president of Planned Parenthood, the decisions to overturn Roe V. Wade hit Speer close to home. "There are some battles that will never go away," said Speer. "A woman's right to choose will always be an ongoing debate. It does not matter how long we have fought in the past, there is no time to sit back and relax." One of Speer's biggest role models is Tina Smith, CEO of planned parenthood and senator of Minnesota. "Tina votes her conscience and stands her ground" explained Speer. "One of my biggest challenges is working in a male dominated workplace. I had to learn how to advocate for myself and not let work politics take over." Speer's advice to the Lake Forest Academy students is to "listen to the voice inside that is telling you what you can do. Learn how to get rid of external noise and have a laser focus on what you want to make a difference in."

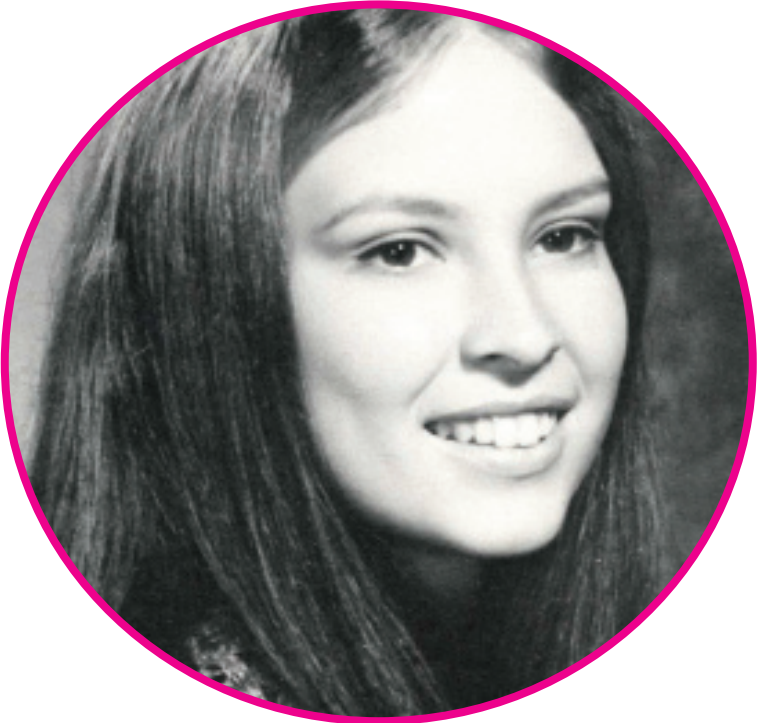


Joyce Mesenbrink Standish '60:
Joyce Standish graduated from Ferry Hall in 1960. While in college, Standish received a letter from the CIA. Standish worked for the agency for two years and did work for them in West Africa. There, she met her former husband, who was also a CIA employee, and had her two daughters. In 1979, Standish came back to the United States and joined a company called JRB, a segment of a company called SAIC, as an administrative assistant. Here, she worked with various health companies including the OSHA and NIH. After a year and a half, Standish moved to the contracting office of the company. Standish then relocated to Albuquerque, New Mexico to work for the corporate office of SAIC. At this time, both of Standish's children were in college. "I was alone for most of the time, but I had great bosses and exciting work to keep me busy," said Standish. After doing work with national labs and the Air Force, she got promoted to Vice President of Administration. Standish was driven by her biggest inspiration: her parents. "My family is extremely hardworking. They are constantly looking for ways to learn new things and my end goal is always to make them proud" said Standish. She is also inspired by her children. "I raised two daughters and I am incredibly proud of them. They are wonderful daughters, wives, mothers, and granddaughters" expanded Standish. She is an exemplary example of working diligently and passionately to reach the top. "I never expected to be in the role of a Vice President," explained Standish. Standish retired in 2001, and now spends her time making quilts and doing art. She is incredibly fulfilled by both her family and professional life.

Sandra Weis Alcosser '62:
Ms. Alcosser graduated from Ferry Hall in 1962, and while the majority of her classmates had their eyes on the seven sister schools, she thought she wanted to pursue psychiatry at a small university close to her home in South Bend, Indiana. After months of sitting in lecture halls hearing from professors that she could barely see, Alcosser realized she wanted a more intimate setting. Literacy provided just the environment she pictured—a place to have interactions instead of transactions. She won multiple awards for her writing during her time taking these classes, and eventually secured an internship with the *Mademoiselle* newspaper in New York. When Alcosser started this job, women were not even allowed to wear pants in the workplace. While she expanded her career to the political and social scene addressing the drug problems in Central Park and spreading the gift of knowledge by translating for the large immigrant population, she realized how much importance she gave to nature. Alcosser is the first poet for the Wildlife Conservation Society, an honor awarded to her by the National Endowment for the Arts. She also serves as Montana's first poet laureate and has dedicated her career to conservation both the environment and literacy culture during its darkest times. Alcosser has been a writer-in-residence for both Glacier National Park and Central Park Zoo. "I loved writing because it gave me freedom to do what I loved, and support while I did it" said Alcosser. "Take advantage of the chances you get to see the world," she concluded.



Kathryn Warner Miller '70:
Kathryn Miller graduated from Ferry Hall in 1970 where she served as class officer, service club member, and as a participant in Glee Club, Drama Club, and Yearbook Club. Following her graduation, she studied at Stanford. During her time there, she read a book that sparked her interest in public service. She moved to DC to work in Washington D.C. as a legislative assistant, a lobbyist, and a press secretary in the Department of Health and Social Services. Throughout her life, Miller worked as an advocate for children in the foster care system and victims of rape and domestic violence. "Giving back to other people and serving the community needs to be part of your life. Gain perspective and remember that there are people past the ones you know" said Miller. Miller raised seven children, four of whom were adopted internationally. At this same time, Miller earned her master's in school counseling and founded a non-for-profit elementary school. Currently, Miller holds a position in the New Hampshire House of Representatives where she serves on the House Health & Human Services and Elderly Affairs Committee. Throughout her life, Miller has worked tirelessly to protect our nation's most vulnerable citizens. Her dedication and hours of selfless service set an exemplary example for the current LFA students. Miller currently holds a position in the LFA Hall of Fame.



In the words of Assistant Head of School, we celebrate the contributions of our alumnae and the broader world in which we live. On Women's March, Lake Forest Academy honored our alumnae. By presenting the stories of women who have made a difference at LFA took the opportunity to acknowledge that women in and out of our community have shaped the world we live in, despite the struggles we have faced. Ranging from 1960 to 2015, our alumnae and Lake Forest Academy [LFA] have held great accomplishments all over the world, from fighting measles in Nigeria to working for women's rights. We have done groundbreaking work and made a difference to society. These are just a few of the many ways our alumnae have made a difference.



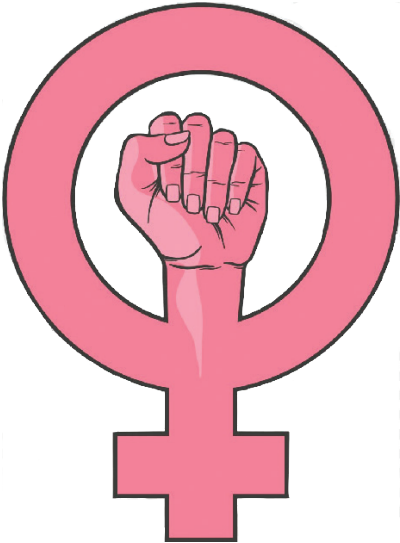
Darlene Ineza ‘15:

Darlene Ineza graduated from Lake Forest Academy in 2015. While attending, Darlene served at the Ferry Hall prefect. She went on to study at Bowdoin College with a major in biochemistry and a minor in sociology. Ineza always had an interest in public health and even did work with NGOs and research firms to support this passion. “Growing up, I always wanted to give back to my people and my community,” said Ineza. She grew up in Rwanda and always knew that eventually she would find herself back there again. After graduating in 2019, Ineza moved back to Rwanda and worked as a T.A at a medical school. Here, she realized her passion for medicine and decided to move back to the US to get her M.A from Stanford. Following this, Ineza started a role at a research and development firm in Rwanda that focused on health, agriculture, and education. “I want to create structures and systems that will be in place forever to support the growth and prosperity of my country” explained Ineza. “With a lot of privilege came a lot of responsibility. I was privileged enough to recieve an incredible education from LFA so I have a responsibility to give back and have value for things beyond myself.”. Ineza currently does work supporting development projects in East Africa and Rwanda. Ineza’s work is fueled by pure passion. “When choosing a career, think about what really gets you up in the morning. Do something you could do endlessly without feeling bored. Lean into what your passions really are.” concluded Ineza.



Andrea Shen ‘12:

Andrea Shen graduated from Lake Forest Academy in 2012. She went on to earn her bachelor’s degree in business from The University of Pennsylvania and her M.B.A from Stanford. Like Somy Thottathil, Shen is also a first generation child, being the daughter of two immigrants. “My parents were incredible role models for me. They are internally motivated and the reason I have a high sense of knowing and wanting to achieve.” Shen has had an incredibly successful business career, currently working in product strategy at Meta, but her toughest battle was not in her career life, but rather her personal life. Shen has competed in pageants since she was 10 years old and holds titles including Ms. Asia North America and first runner up in New York and California. Shen was faced with barriers such as Asian American and first generation underrepresentation. “My parents were completely against it. They wanted me to focus on my education and even asked “why would they crown Asia?”. Shen felt a moral and social responsibility to pave the way for other Asain Americans with the same dreams. She used her platform to redefine the standards of beauty. “Change does not happen if people who have the potential to do so remain silent,” said Shen. Shen’s actions are an inspiration to all Asian women all around America. Her ability to balance her career life and still make time for her passions is admirable. Shen’s moral responsibility to pave the path for other women of color has had a lasting impact on her life, and she continues to work hard to break glass ceilings both in the professional and personal realms.



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all around the world, students
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ver the world. From treating
the CIA, FH and LFA alumni
and made amazing contribu-
ew of their incredible stories:



Somy Thottathil ‘03:

Somy Thottathil graduated from LFA in 2003 and studied economics at The University of Chicago. She had always had an eye for fashion and after realizing economics was not her route, Thottathil moved to London to intern with a stylist. During this time, she worked a desk job in a hospital to make ends meet. Being in a hospital made her realize her passion for medicine. Thottathil worked tirelessly and diligently to come back to the US, study pre-med at Northwestern, and residency at Rush, and she eventually secured a job at Cleveland Clinic as a doctor in the emergency room. “My goals were vague and lofty,” explained Thottathil. “Going from a fashion designer to a doctor was difficult because trying to map out that path for myself with no support system seemed really impossible.” Thottathil is the daughter of two immigrants. From a young age, the values of determination and persistence were instilled in her. “My dad was the first person to leave his village and get an education. This later translated to him raising children and getting them the best education possible.” Although it was extremely difficult, Thottathil learned from her parents that strength of will and sense of purpose will get you to where you need to be, regardless of obstacles and barriers. Thottathil’s mother grew up in a time where women were not supposed to be in the workforce. “She knew she wanted to be a nurse, so that is what she did.”. This same strength of character is what pushed Thottathil to pursue her dreams of becoming a doctor. Her advice to us is to always remain calm in the face of adversity. “When I stay calm, everyone around me does too and this is how we get the job done” said Thottathil.

Ann Spires ‘84:

Dr. Ann Spires graduated from LFA in 1984 and then took a year in Kenya to do volunteer work. While living in Kenya, Spires observed the issues in the rural area she lived in. “There was an extreme lack of proper healthcare, young people were dying and nobody knew why it was happening,” said Spires. In Kenya, Spires took it upon herself to set up a library to increase access to education, but “a library is no use if the people are too sick to use it” she expanded. Living in these circumstances and seeing firsthand how our actions directly affect the lives of others inspired Spires to attend medical school. She did her residency at a community health center in Lawrence, Illinois, who’s idea was to serve people that did not have direct access to care, such as low income families and immigrants. What attracted Spires to healthcare was having the chance to improve the quality of life. Following her values, Spires traveled to Haiti and Guatemala and worked alongside the Native American Health Service. Since she was a medical student, Spires knew she wanted to be part of the bigger picture. While attending a convention, she heard a talk about Doctors Without Borders and knew this was a way to fulfill her value system. She traveled to Sri Lanka and Nigeria where she served internally displaced personnel from the civil war and tamed the measles epidemic. Spires touched on a challenge that women in the STEM field often experience: the gender imbalance. “It can be frustrating when you walk into a room and patients don’t know that you’re the doctor just because of your gender.” explained Spires. Spires has broken barriers for women in STEM and done incredible work in the medical field. “I encourage you all to take a year or two off and devote it to living like people who are not like you, people who do not have what you have. This will dramatically change your perspective on what issues are important and what you want to do with the rest of your life” concluded Spires.



All photos are courtesy of LFA Archives

Reaction to women's NCAA championship game

By Djasahn English

Managing Editor of Social Justice

The wild rollercoaster that was this year's March Madness included the usual upset, injury, and heartbreak. However this year the Women's NCAA Tournament received a level of attention never before seen, a level still short of what it fully deserves. Much of this attention early on can be attributed to the dominant play of the latest basketball phenom, Caitlin Clark.

Clark averaged 31.8 points, 10.0 assists and 5.2 rebounds and helped lead the Hawkeyes to the title game, where she dropped. She had 30 points, eight assists and two rebounds in the loss to LSU, and she finished with more points (191) and assists (60) than anyone has had in a single women's NCAA tournament. LSU as a team had a historic run as well, they scored a championship game record (102), and shot 75% from three in the first half. Three different women scored at least 20 points, LaDazhia Williams (20), Alex Morris (21), and Jasmine Carson's (22) – Carsons did so coming off the bench. Their star player Angel Reese ended the game with a 15 point, 10 rebound, and 5 assist double double, and ended the season with a single season triple double record of 34.

Unfortunately the historic season and tournament run by Angel Reese, LSU, and Caitlin Clark was marred by the media and fan reactions to the passionate celebrations of the victors. With the intense competition of the tournament, celebrating and trash-

talking had already been seen by many players, and Caitlin Clark's trash-talk alongside her excellent play was one of the driving factors of her growing popularity.

However, when Caitlin Clark was on the receiving end of the trash-talk, there were those within the cohort of new fans she had amassed during her run, who had not followed women's basketball who were quick to come to her defense, quickly turning ugly in their remarks towards LSU players.

Reese, predominantly, was called anything from "unsportsmanlike" to racist dog whistles like "ghetto" or "classless." Social media was flooded with anger, disgust, and a lot of racism, while the media ran with the story, critiquing the display of emotion until it overshadowed the historic play of the women in the tournament.

Student-athlete Gabi Stewart '24, expressed how she's also often had her emotions policed heavily when competing. She said, "When I showed any frustration during games, I was usually told specifically to tone it down, my emotions seemed to always be too much for others, and got checked way more often than other players around me."

Competitive and entertaining sports, let alone basketball, have been home to unhealed racial tensions for a long time. Anyone who paid attention or re-watched basketball during the early rivalry of the Lakers vs. Celtics would have to work very hard not to notice the racial undertones of the clashing between Magic Johnson and Larry Bird.

Senior writer for ESPN, Howard Bryant, wrote on this divide as a child who grew up in it. In the article "Magic, Bird were more than Rivals," he said, "There was a game being played beyond Bird and Magic that should have been compelling enough on its own, but feelings in Boston were still raw."

Bryant explained why many even outside Boston fell along the respective racial lines of the Lakers vs. Celtics debate. He said, "For his years in Boston, many white fans wanted him to represent their views, to be their final stronghold to a game that in less than 20 years had turned almost completely black demographically. They wanted Bird to restore an honor they felt had been taken from them."

Former Stetson Women's Basketball

player, and LFA Spanish teacher, Tameka Carter expressed how her athletic experience was affected by race. She said, "Race is hard to avoid everywhere, but as a black female athlete, it constructed my everyday" However, she continued by finding something positive to take from the situation. She said, "This is all nothing but good, even the negative part because when we get certain people to talk about us as female athletes, that's clout that I didn't really experience when I was younger. So it is exciting to see something that I would see on ESPN in relation to men's sports, especially when you see this type of stuff in men's sports all the time. In my mind it's exciting because it highlights women in sports, whether it's with conflict or not."



Courtesy of @BleacherReport on Twitter
Angel Reese (left) pictured taunting Caitlin Clark in championship game, Clark (right) pictured taunting Louisville crowd after an Elite Eight match up.

The history and psychology of polarization

By Ella Gartz

Editor-in-Chief

In a country facing crippling climate change, daily mass shootings, and other life-threatening frights, political polarization is reported to be a third of Americans' greatest concern. Our own division. Our own struggle to come together and talk about our problems, let alone try to solve them.

To fight it, we must broaden the historical and psychological context to which we understand it for ourselves and our community.

First, it is important to recognize that unity does not mean peace. According to Chris Dozois, AP United States History Instructor, "The most united the United States was, was in World War Two," in "one of its most desperate states." This is because, as Dozois said, "Peace gives you time to worry about your own concerns and what bothers you as an individual," let that be economic, political, social, or cultural.

"Usually times of prosperity in the country [also] bring unity but it's harder and harder now because we're more educated, we're

more informed" and have a "greater awareness of the people left out," said Dozois.

"In the post war period, as a result of the move to suburbia and discriminatory real estate practices, the majority of the U.S. had less exposure to other groups and minorities than they do today, creating a popular illusion of homogeneity and the 'American Family,'" said Montgomery Gold '23, AP United States Government and Politics student. "Nowadays, the internet has allowed more minorities to band together and express themselves to the wider U.S. audience. As a consequence, more people from previously isolated and homogeneous communities are coming into contact with individuals from other groups whose beliefs and values may not align with their own," Gold added.

This idea of "in-groups" and "out-groups" is a common study of social psychologists like Dr. Sarah Taylor, the AP Psychology Instructor. The Out-Group Homogeneity Effect is "overestimating similarity between out-group members" while "overestimating differences with-

in your in-group," said Dr. Taylor. This idea of saying that "they're all the same" has an underlying element of "dehumanization" because it is human to "think of ourselves as individuals," Dr. Taylor added. Moreover, representative heuristics can "double-down" on this as we tend to "have more contact with members of our own groups" so "exposure to it [the out-group] might be limited," which can be further manipulated by "what you're seeing in the media," which often lacks "a full, representative sample." Groupthink, Group Polarization, Deindividuation, and other concepts of social psychology are also often involved in political polarization.

Lake Forest Academy, like any community diverse in background and thought, is prone to political polarization and debate. But as a school, "We are not here to tell students what they should think, we're here to help them discover how to think [and] how to discern information: What is good information? What is accurate information? What do I take from that?" said Garry Sloan P'19, P'21,

and Assistant Dean of Advancement.

When political discourse at LFA arises, in response to coursework or current events, we should "take advantage of the chance to do it in a controlled way" so "it's not going to be finger pointing and no one's going to walk out angry," said Dozois. Oftentimes, "we put people in a room and it's awkward, but sometimes some of those [conversations] get through to people," Dozois added.

Making an effort to expose ourselves to "not conflict but contrary opinions" and "different viewpoints" allows us to better understand one another and reduce polarization, said Dr. Taylor.

But sometimes it is not just "politics," and those conversations need to be distinguished from this one. According to Sloan, he draws the line where others' "beliefs or systems are rooted in somebody else's oppression or an attempt to keep somebody else from rising up." Moreover, Sloan stated, "If your contribution to the school puts into question what we are trying to accomplish as part of our mission then the answer is no."

Do college rankings matter?

By Max Ma

Senior Editor of Social Justice

From the end of March to the beginning of April, college decision announcements for the regular decision application cycle have begun to trickle in. Seniors are starting to choose their destination for the next four years, just as juniors are beginning to meet regularly with their college counselors to prepare for their own application process. When selecting colleges to apply or commit to, college rankings are commonly believed to be a very important factor to be considered. However, do college rankings really matter?

Currently, when it comes to ranking colleges in the U.S., *U.S. News & World Report* has been the primary and most reputable source for the public. Over the years, the *U.S. News & World Report* has improved as it becomes more inclusive in terms of valuing and measuring the success rates of all students from different socio-economic backgrounds. With important factors such as the retention and graduation rates, the *U.S. News* can still be used as an efficient tool to narrow down students' lists of schools. However, admittedly, a number of colleges, including Reed College and Colorado College, have withdrawn their names from the ranking.

The essential reason for many colleges to pull out of the system is that they felt

like the factors that they valued as an institution were incongruent or not reflected by the factors used in the ranking. According to Ben Wetherbee, Associate Dean of College Counseling, "At the end of the day, college ranking is a very simplistic way to think about the college process." It shouldn't be the decision maker. When selecting a college, a student should focus more on the school's culture and values to see how it resonates with you as a person, instead of their ranking. "That's why," Wetherbee said, "Whenever I'm counseling students, I'm hopefully holding a mirror up to themselves and asking them: who are you? Hopefully you're gonna find a school where you feel like there are other people that share those same values." This is also why the college counseling office at LFA puts a huge focus on students getting out to visit college campuses to make firsthand observations. "When you have your own experience, that's gonna basically trump any other thing that you hear or read," said Wetherbee. These college visits also should be more than just doing the information session and tour. It eventually comes down to a student's due diligence such as talking with a random student on campus about what they enjoy about the school, or finding a copy of the student newspaper and seeing what the hot button issues on campus are.

As Frank Sachs, former president of the



Photo by Max Ma

U.S. News College Ranking magazine display on a shelf in LFA's College Counseling office.

National Association for College Admission Counseling, nicely put it, "College is a match to be made, not a prize to be won." It's very easy to fall into the trap of treating the college counseling process as a validation process, because students feel like everything they have been working on up to this point has been leading up to this moment. However, when students treat it with a mindset of trying to collect as many trophies as they can by trying to get into the most selective school they can, it becomes problematic. Students begin to value things that are at odds with

where they will end up being and becoming the best version of themselves.

"LFA is a college prep place, not a college placement school," according to Wetherbee. Students and families are investing in LFA, not necessarily for the name of the school they will go to when they leave, but for an experience that prompts the best version of the students themselves: the best thinker, the best friend, the best community member, etc. What you value as a person and how it resonates with the culture of the school that you are applying to — in the end, these are the things that truly matter.

Studying abroad: High school vs college

By Nghi Doan & Ava Trandel

Managing Editor of News & Managing Editor of A&E

In today's increasingly interconnected world, pursuing education overseas has become a highly sought-after approach for students who wish to expand their horizons and acquire an enriched understanding of the global landscape. The United States in particular, has witnessed a surge in international student

enrollment over recent years. This can be primarily attributed to these individuals' aspirations to immerse themselves in unfamiliar cultures and hone diverse skill sets through their study abroad experiences. It is, therefore, imperative to understand the hurdles and opportunities these students face as they undergo their academic journeys both in college and high school.

A crucial distinction in the study-abroad experience depends on the age at which students embark on this journey. For

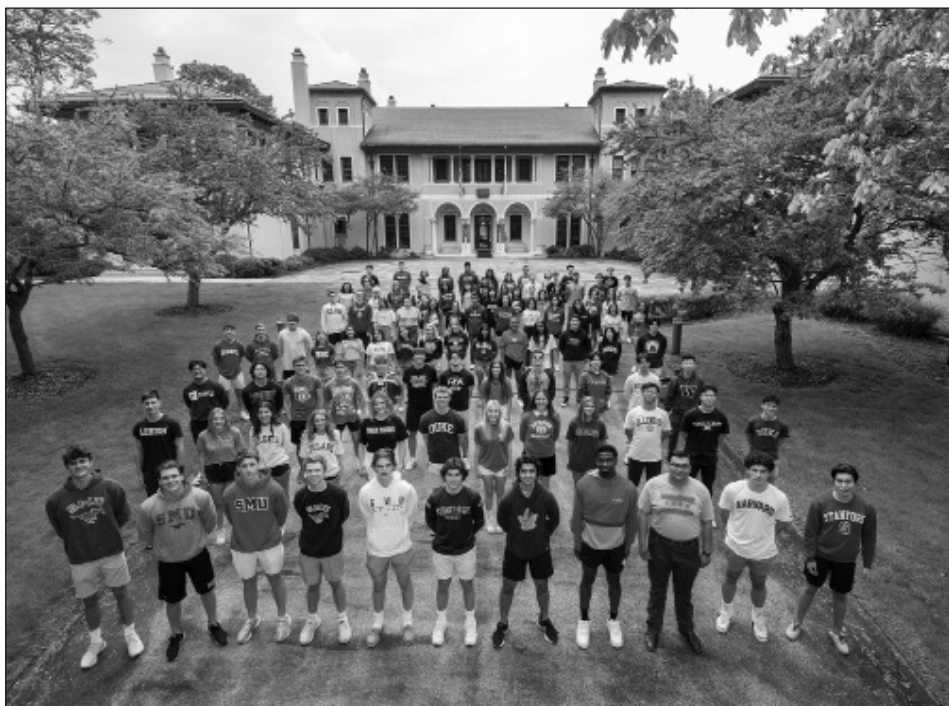
non-native English-speaking learners, it is common for them to attend boarding high schools in primarily English-speaking countries. This is a bold decision for any student to make, given that many of them are only 14 years old when they leave home and venture into an entirely new realm. In contrast, native-English-speaking students generally opt for international education during college or university enrollment — typically around 18 years of age. At this stage in life, they already possess a more advanced level of independence and prior exposure to various situations, thus rendering them better equipped to tackle potential obstacles while pursuing academics overseas.

While high school and college-aged students are at different stages of life and maturity when making the decision to go abroad, their motives to do so are often similar. Beyond just seeking exposure to new cultures, diversity, and progressive thought, studying abroad provides the opportunity to live in a foreign country when otherwise, the opportunity to do so might not exist. That motive for moving overseas is especially relevant for college-aged students since many want the experience of living in another country at some point in their young adult lives. Still, it only becomes harder once they're done with their

education. Living so far away from home also fosters a greater sense of independence and self-sufficiency and can greatly prepare students for life beyond college.

Another reason many Americans are seeking an education outside of the US is due to cost since the majority of international universities are more affordable than US institutions. Even the cost of studying internationally at these universities is often less than the cost of public education in the US, making international study the best option for many.

Ultimately, whether an individual is an international student attending a boarding high school or a native English-speaking student pursuing a college education abroad, studying overseas can offer remarkable experiences that facilitate unique opportunities and development in unimaginable ways. However, it is important to evaluate the practical aspects of such ventures, which encompass securing housing arrangements, adapting to new cultural norms and languages, as well as establishing essential amenities, including bank accounts and insurance coverage. With adequate preparation and the appropriate mindset in place, embarking on a study-abroad journey has the potential to be one of life's most gratifying accomplishments.



Courtesy of LFA Communications

Class of '22 seniors pose for a photo in their college shirts.

Willow Project: The irriversable oil plan

By Beverly Fishman
Managing Copy Editor

“(The Willow Project) will have irreversible effects on the climate and wildlife.” said Nathaniel Seminara, a Sustainability Council member. Irreversible. A project that is on track to negatively impact the trajectory of the Earth’s climate and affect every aspect of life. The weather, humans physical health, wildlife, and ecosystems of this planet are already at immense risk due to human caused air and water pollution, making a large oil collection plan dangerous for our future.

On March 13th, 2023, the Biden administration approved a major oil drilling plan known as the Willow Project. Alaska’s biggest crude oil producer, ConocoPhillips, proposed the plan in 2020 during the Trump administration and it was approved. Due to the change in administration and the global pandemic, the project was put on pause but has resurfaced during the Biden administration but still holding onto the previously approved regulations granted to the cooperation years earlier. Valid leases in Alaska made it difficult for Biden to stop the project and to the public’s disdain, he only minimized the parameters to which they can drill. Many have questioned the severity of the matter, not quite understanding the immense impact this project will have on the environment. According to the Natural Resources Defense Counsel (NRDC) and the Center for American Progress, the Willow Project will produce up to 287 million metric tons of carbon dioxide over the next thirty years, about 9.5 million tons of carbon pollution being released into the atmosphere every single year. These values are detrimental as carbon pollution in the atmosphere rapidly increases the warming of Earth’s temperatures. Due

to the high use of fossil fuels around the world, especially in countries such as the United States, the Earth is already in a state of emergency as the rate of warming has been at an all time high, measuring at 0.32 degrees fahrenheit every decade. While this small number may seem harmless, that narrative is nothing but false.

Science teacher Kevin Hagens AP Environmental Science class highlights the impact of carbon pollution, explaining that the warming of the planet can lead to increased natural disasters, drought, change in seasons, depleting health and decrease in safe nutrients for humans and animals alike.

The Willow Project not only affects the environment, but human and animal life as well. The Willow Project would disproportionately affect the Native Village of Nuiqsut, a predominantly Iñupiat community of around 400 people who are already surrounded by oil development. Town members face high rates of chronic illnesses such as respiratory cancer and ailments due to the alarming amounts of pollution they are exposed to, and have been for years. The health of these people are put at risk, but their lifestyle as well as the oil construction would displace the migration routes and birthing grounds of the Teshekpuk Lake caribou herd, one of the primary sources of subsistence foods for the village who reside on the arctic slope of Alaska. The pollution and newfound traffic will impact local habitats for thousands of wildlife besides the caribous. The damage would be from disruption in habitat which is why protesters are very cognizant and vocal regarding this harsh consequence. Waterways will become polluted, affecting and poisoning salmon health and populations. Arctic habitat and land will be impacted, heating the icy climate and



Courtesy of Creative Commons

Pictured is an oil rig in Alaska where the Willow Project will begin their oil drilling project.

therefore putting migratory species and native Arctic animals at risk. Especially because the plan is proposed to last thirty years and will release alarming amounts of pollution, the threat this project poses can have long lasting effects, possibly causing extinction or drastic changes in lifestyle.

Since its original plan proposal in 2020, environmentalists have been extremely vocal about their opposition to the Willow Project, but during recent negotiations between ConocoPhillips and the Biden administration, the uproar of anger has been heard throughout the world. On Change.org, a popular petition and fundraising site, just over 5 million people signed the petition called “Biden Administration and ConocoPhillips: SAY NO TO THE WILLOW PROJECT!” It was started by Sonny Ahk, prior to the negotiations, and the message was directed towards President Biden and ConocoPhillips in hopes to gather enough support to grab their attention. There have been hun-

dreds of similar petitions, along with protests around the nation, but despite the overwhelming amount of support, they did not achieve their hopeful goal. However, the approval of the drilling plan has not stopped the passion of environmentalists and passionate citizens. Various legal corporations are prepared to challenge ConocoPhillips before construction begins. “We and our clients don’t see any acceptable version of this project, we think the [environmental impact] analysis is unlawful,” said Jeremy Lieb, a senior attorney for Earthjustice. Environmental businesses, Alaskan residents, and supporters of the opposition don’t believe the claim that this project will have economic benefits and they are adamant in the fact that even if there was, the environmental impact is not worth the money that can be theoretically made.

The future of our planet is uncertain. Scientists have different opinions on our status, the effects of climate change, and importantly, the timeline of Earth. The Willow Project is only one of thousands of harmful oil drilling projects but the length of the plan, projected air pollution, environmental effects, citizen opposition, and imposition on Alaskan residents are greater than any other American projects at this time.

Environmentalist and LFA senior Braeden Murray addressed his concerns “with increased disregard for the environment, it is our responsibility, faculty, students, and administrators to act as leaders and pave the way for change.” Millions are disappointed in President Biden, major oil corporations, and the administration who has pledged to protect the environment to the best of their abilities. The disregard for the well-being of our planet is frightening and it is resulting in a direct increase in climate change.



Melting ice sheets and terrain effected by climate change.

Courtesy of Creative Commons

Backyard brawl: The Lake Forest mayoral election

By Ambika Gupta
Editor-in-Chief

This year’s Lake Forest mayoral election was marked by unprecedented controversy: the role of the Lake Forest Caucus, the lack of female representation in Lake Forest government, the value of contested elections, the sources of campaign funding, and the role of local partisanship all came into question. In most years, the Lake Forest Caucus nominates a candidate who typically wins without contentestion. This year, however, the Lake Forest Caucus nominee, Dr. Randy Tack, was competing against two independent candidates, Prue Beidler—a finalist for the Lake Forest mayoral Caucus nomination—and Paul Hammon. *The Spectator* was able to interview the mayor-elect, Dr. Randy Tack, Prue Beidler, and a representative from the Caucus.

The Caucus nomination of Dr. Randy Tack is one of the most controversial aspects. The Caucus vets different candidates through an interview, and then at their annual meeting, the chosen candidates are confirmed by a majority vote. Typically, 100 to 200 Lake Forest residents attend this annual meeting, but around 500 residents attended this year. At this meeting, the mayoral candidate was not confirmed by vote—receiving more ‘no’ votes than ‘yes’ votes. This was unprecedented. Despite the fact that this Caucus candidate was not confirmed by vote, the Lake Forest Caucus continued to support Dr. Randy Tack as their nominee.

Nowhere in the bylaws of the Caucus does it specify what to do in the event their candidate was rejected. According to S. Aneeqa Aqeel, External Communications Chair of the Lake Forest Caucus, during an interview with *The Spectator*, “This is a part of the bylaws that is vague.” In fact, the confirmation of the nominees by the public was a fairly recent addition to the bylaws.

During an interview with *The Spectator*, Tack commented on this situation saying, “What they [those writing the Lake Forest Caucus bylaws] didn’t anticipate was that a candidate within the process might look at

that [the confirmation annual meeting] as an opportunity to be re-considered.” He recalled what happened after the annual meeting, “After this occurred, they re-convened and reconsidered candidates and re-voted and they selected me for a second time.”

The role of the Caucus at large was questioned. Some questioned its credibility and power. Technically, every registered Lake Forest voter is part of the Caucus. However, each ward of town has elected officials who work at the Caucus. These elected officials unofficially vet candidates for important positions—like the mayor.

When asked why the Caucus was created, Aqeel responded, “The Caucus is in its 88th year and the mission is to support non-partisanship and agenda-free municipal government to keep both the cost of government low and the effectiveness high.”

When being vetted for a position, the Caucus asks each candidate if they would run against the chosen candidate if they are not elected. Beidler agreed during her interview with the Caucus. She said during her interview with *The Spectator*, “That’s a requirement for you to be a candidate...I think that’s kind of against your first amendment rights.” She continued, “Do they [the Caucus] want to close down worthy opponents? They do.” She reflected saying, “the point is as recently as November 9th I sent emails to people saying I’m not running as an independent, and when the vote happened [at the annual meeting], they basically just ignored the vote... If they are playing by new rules...why should I have made an agreement to them and I’m expected to honor that..when they aren’t even following their own bylaws.”

As a reflection on her experience being vetted by the Caucus, Beidler said, “Now, I have been the second choice candidate for mayor, and they believed that I stirred people, that I was an activist.” Beidler continued, “Since 1861 there have been no female mayors, does that suggest a system that’s working smoothly to you?” She reflected, “I’m not sure in any other highly educated community you would find that [no female mayor] at this point.” She continued, “I don’t think they [the Caucus] have made it



Courtesy of @lakeforestcaucus on Instagram
The photo above showcases the Lake Forest Caucus’s nominees.

a priority, frankly they would disagree, but I feel like they could have done a better job seeking people out.” She points out how this year there were no female candidates nominated for city council [there were female candidates for other positions on the ‘ballot’ at the annual meeting] and that the plan committee is made up entirely of men.

On this subject, Tack said, “We’re going to have one [female mayor] and we will have one when the right one steps up and is chosen by the community...now the question is will the person be self-selected or chosen by the community.” He continued, “In other words, it’ll be a merit based selection...I would never want to be selected for any reason other than the fact I was the best person for that position.”

On a broader note, the value of contested elections came into question. Some think that contested elections are a symbol of well-functioning democracy, while others believe that contested elections can have negative ramifications on the community.

When reflecting on this year’s contested election, Tack said, “It’s unfortunate...it put the community through something that wasn’t positive.”

The cost of the contested election was an important issue for the Caucus. According to Aqeel, “Our typical budget in a year is \$10,000.” However this year, Aqeel said, “We were able to raise about \$60,000 pretty quickly and crucially it was no strings attached.”

A prominent criticism of Prue Beidler’s campaign was the funding source. On the topic of this year’s advertising costs, Aqeel said, “I think our opponent who ran against the Caucus nomination expected that we would not be able to raise the money. That was kinda the strategy.”

Additionally, some claim that contested elections introduce partisanship into local politics. This could discourage people from remaining active in the Lake Forest government. On this subject, Tack said, “We have all volunteer government and, in order to get people to get in, they don’t want to fight about social and political issues.” Tack

said that “it [this year’s election] brought into partisanship that normally isn’t here.”

Beidler also voiced a similar sentiment, “Is this [the contested election and its resulting hostility] a reflection of the divisiveness in the country? I would say yes, probably. To think Lake Forest is immune to what is happening in the rest of the country would be naive.”

During campaigning season, discussions of partisanship came about. Prue reflected on this and said, “They [her opponent] began making issues about candidates I’ve given money to.” She said comments came up like, “She is going to bring Chicago to Lake Forest.” She added that, “It should have been irrelevant [her donations] since the Caucus is in fact nonpartisan.” She stressed in her previous positions in local government she made it a priority to separate her political beliefs and the nonpolitical, local issues she dealt with. She reflected, “Now to my knowledge, we have not had a Democratic mayor...maybe running as a woman who also happens to be a democrat was a problem.”

Conversely, Tack said, “There was also an undercurrent..the person that I was running against was very politically active...donating a lot of money to a political party and political candidates that—perhaps I would say—have viewpoints and philosophy that aren’t very reflective of Lake Forest.”

Aqeel also voiced a similar belief, she said “All the support for her [Beidler] campaign...came from one political party—a national level political party. Non-partisan goes right out the window.” Aqeel also added, “It’s important to understand the structure of government here. The mayoral office is involved in potentially creating but mostly enforcing local laws (minor taxes, zoning laws, etc). They are not really involved in litigating things considered hot button issues or national issues. The task of mayor is actually quite non-political.”

The 2023 Lake Forest mayoral election sparked conversation and, hopefully, was a reminder to stay aware and involved in local politics.



Courtesy of @prueforlakeforest on Instagram
This year, yard signs appeared all over town.

David v.s Goliath: LIV Golf vs. PGA Tour

By Quinn Knight
Senior Copy Editor

The world of professional golf is set to experience a major shakeup as a new player, the LIV Golf League, enters the scene, challenging the long-established PGA Tour for supremacy in the sport. With over 90 tournaments annually and a total prize pool of over \$400 million, the PGA Tour is the world's most well-known and famous golf tour. On the other hand, the LIV Golf League is a brand-new and ambitious golf league that wants to transform the landscape of the sport by bringing a team-based model, cutting-edge technology, and substantial rewards into the loop.

LIV Golf is a new league that launched in 2022 with a format that is designed to shake up traditional golf. The league proposes a shorter format with only 54-hole events rather than the traditional 72, with fewer players and a team-based structure. However, the league has generated significant controversy due to its perceived threats to the established golf order and the team it's being led by. Funded by a Saudi-backed investment fund, LIV Golf offers major financial incentives for the top golfers in the world to join their league, which could lead to a significant shift of power and money away from traditional golfing bodies such as the PGA Tour. Additionally, the league's format

and team-based structure have been criticized for being too gimmicky and taking away from the individual aspect of the sport. Their motto, "golf but louder," is seen as a threat to the tradition of what golf is and what the PGA Tour has preserved for so long. Many see the launch of LIV Golf as a direct challenge to the PGA Tour. The controversy surrounding the league reflects the broader tensions between established golf institutions and new, disruptive forces in the sport.

The controversy stretches far beyond the golf course. LIV Golf is under backlash as being backed by the Saudis is viewed as problematic by some due to concerns over the Saudi government's human rights record and their use of sport as a tool for political purposes. The source of the prize funds is being thought of as "blood money," and this league is just a way for the Saudi government to brighten its image and fill its pockets.

The PGA Tour, with its rich and historical success, attracts many top golfers in the world who strive to play on the tour and compete against the best in the world because of the tour's established fan base. The tour features a wide range of sponsors, from financial services to clothes, and has been successful in luring some of the most important brands in the world to support its tournaments which adds reasons for different players to stay.



Courtesy of Creative Commons

The battle between LIV and the PGA fights on.

The LIV Golf League's challenge is to attract and retain top golfers to play on the tour while competing with the PGA Tour's existing contracts and sponsors. Varsity Golfer Christian Martinez '25 said, "Golf is a game all about tradition and history, which the PGA Tour is full of and LIV is not. That is why I don't think that money can have more power than classic tradition. The biggest named golfers, such as Tiger Woods, Jordan Spieth, Jon Rahm, and many others, are staying on the PGA Tour and have negative thoughts about LIV." Many top golfers have signed long-term contracts and confirmed loyalty with the PGA Tour and its sponsors, prohibiting them from playing in rival tours or events.

Now as the battle between the two rages on, one thing will not be disrupted as this war wages... the majors. The Mas-

ters, PGA Championship, U.S. Open, and Open all decided that the best players in the world deserve to play in these tournaments no matter what tour they play for. Varsity Golf coach Ben Wetherbee says, "As a golfer, I'm glad the major championships are, for at least this year, going to continue to feature the best players in the world. Throughout history, the four major championships have always been the measure of greatness and legacy in the sport, and it would have been a shame if those tournament stops weren't showcasing the best talent that is out there." He believes that despite the controversy the players should be allowed to play in the biggest events the sport has to offer.

Whether the LIV Golf League can upset the equilibrium and pose a threat to the PGA Tour's dominance remains to be seen.

Caxys compete in March Madness

By T.J. Minsky
Staff Writer

"Hurley and the Huskies have their dreams come true." These were the words from legendary announcer Jim Nantz as the University of Connecticut secured their 5th basketball national championship.

This year's NCAA tournament was one to remember. The underdogs stole the show: 16th seed Fairleigh Dickinson upset a 1 seed (Purdue) for just the second time in history. 15th seeded Princeton made a shocking run in the dance by upsetting 2nd seed Arizona in the first round and 7th seed Missouri in the second. These upsets are great but what makes them even more special is the fact that it can put players that are at smaller schools on the national radar. Just a year ago, Princeton freshman Caden Pierce was playing for Glenbard West High School in Glen Ellyn, Illinois. Flash forward to now and the Illinois native aided the Princeton Tigers to a Sweet Sixteen run including a 16 rebound performance over major SEC school Missouri.

Other freshman natives of Illinois that competed in March Madness are as listed: Jaden Schutt (Yorkville, Duke), AJ Casey

Jr. (Chicago, Miami), Braden Huff (Glen Ellyn, Gonzaga), Amari Bailey (Chicago, UCLA), Ty Rodgers (Chicago, Illinois), Trey Pettigrew (Chicago, Nevada), Nick Martinelli (Glenview, Northwestern), Kam Craft (Buffalo Grove, Xavier), Ben Vanderwal (Elmhurst, Furman).

For LFA, it hits closer to home as we had two former Caxys compete in the 2023 NCAA tournament. One of the Caxys that competed in the NCAA tournament was Marquette junior Olivier-Maxence Prosper. Prosper spent his senior year of high school in Lake Forest playing on the varsity basketball team before transferring for a post graduate year. Prosper's team was one of the top seeds in the tournament but fell short to the veteran led Michigan State Spartans in the second round. However, that does not take away from Prosper's very successful junior campaign. He posted 12.5 points, 4.7 rebounds a game while shooting 51.2% from the field. Prosper also had a career high 31 points in the third game of the season.

The other Caxy to play in March Madness was Southeast Missouri State senior Chris Harris. Harris played varsity football and basketball at LFA and was nominated for "Illinois Prep Player of the Year"

for the 2016-17 season. Harris was on a 16 seeded team, meaning that his school needed to win their conference to get into the Big Dance. Harris led his team to this feat while averaging 15.6 points per game. Harris also scored 23 points in the Redhawks sole tournament game which

they lost. In an interview with CBS, Harris talked about how being forced to sit out due to injury during his freshman season allowed him to become more "consistent" in the way he goes about things.

More Caxy athletes will get to have moments like these; it's just a matter of time.



Courtesy of @semo_mbb, @marquette.basketball, and @lfa_varsitybasketball on Instagram
Two LFA Alumni suit up for March Madness in 2023.

The 95th Academy Awards: A night to remember

By Ela Jain & Theresa Fu
Staff Writer & Senior Editor

After the decidedly boring or rather, uneventful previous Oscars ceremonies, with the exception of last year's controversially deemed "infamous" slap, 2023's Oscars surprised its viewers by being a historic night for film in a completely different way.

The frenzied and absurdist comedy film *Everything, Everywhere, All At Once* was described by its creators Daniel Sherbert and Daniel Kwan as "putting my mom in the Matrix." It won seven Academy Awards, which made it a historic win for Asian creatives. Taking place in a Chinese-American owned laundromat, the movie grapples with everything from universe-hopping IRS auditors to generational trauma as it touches upon familial bonds. Equipped with a considerably

smaller budget of \$25 million compared to its competing blockbusters (*Top Gun: Maverick*, a \$170 million budget and *Avatar: The Way of Waters* budget, a hefty \$250 million), and a 38-day shooting period, it was a novel victory—breaking records for most acting wins for a single movie and Asian representation.

In particular, 60-year-old Michele Yeoh, a legend in cinema who has gone almost entirely unrecognized for it, was finally given her flowers with a Best Actress award, making her the first Asian woman (only the second of which to be nominated—the first in 1936) and the second woman of color to win this award ever. Presenting the award was Halle Berry, the first Black woman and woman of color to win Best Actress back in 2002, and the two now Oscar-decorated women shared an emotional hug.

As for Best Supporting Actor, Ke Huy Quan



Courtesy of @therealruthcarter on Instagram
Best Costume Design winner Ruth Carter joyfully holds her Oscar.

became the first Vietnamese-born actor to win an Academy Award, and gave an impassioned speech that brought audiences to tears as he spoke about his journey as a refugee, family fleeing Vietnam in 1978, living in a refugee camp in Hong Kong before being brought to America in 1979. Quan's career started as a child actor in *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom* before coming to a standstill as he switched to work behind the camera. Upon his return to acting, *Everything Everywhere All At Once* was the first script he read.

As evident by the film's over \$100 million in box records, both the diverse array of actors and the comedic yet personal story of an aging woman's exploration of motherhood and acceptance, resonated with many. Senior Tracey Liu reflected, "Growing up, I didn't see a lot of [mainstream] movies showing my culture... as an Asian person," which consequently added to a feeling of isolation. "Seeing [Asian culture] on the

big screen," Liu added, was a way for her to identify with and visualize her upbringing.

The Oscars also presented Ruth E. Carter with her second Oscar, making her the first ever Black woman to win two Oscars. She previously won for costume design in 2019 for *Black Panther*, and she came back to claim her award for the sequel, *Black Panther: Wakanda Forever*. She dedicated her award to her late mother, saying "Thank you to the Academy for recognizing this superhero who is a black woman. She endures. She loves. She overcomes. She is every woman in this film. She is my mother." Carter's record breaking win represents a new era for women of color in the industry, and was a well earned win for the beautiful costumery with inspiration from African Indigenous tribes adorning the characters of *Black Panther: Wakanda Forever*.

However, it was not all roses for the Oscars. They have come under fire for the blatant miscasting of lead dancers during the performance of Indian song "Naatu Naatu" from the hit Telugu movie *RRR*. While the song made history for being the first ever Oscar win for India, the performance did not feature any Indian dancers behind or in-front of the camera.

But, from numerous records being broken to topically touching speeches, this year's Oscars set historical milestones in the world of film and television; an important step to reflecting the diversity in cinema's audiences, and acknowledging the impact of racial representation.



Courtesy of @kehuyquan on Instagram
Everything Everywhere All At Once cast pose together in celebration.

A hidden gem: LFA's spring season for the arts

By Maya Mitckess
Managing Editor of Digital

The Lake Forest Academy spring season for the arts isn't the most known time for performances, but it can definitely be deemed the most creative. Though not for credit, the spring season for the arts is a time for contemporary, student-led work. This year the spring performances will be on the same date as the spring choir concert on May 16th.

Though hidden, the spring season for the arts department is open for everyone to take advantage of, and it is not just for those who want to write or act in a traditional play. Matt Boresi, Director of Theater, said on the opportunity, "That [the spring season for the arts] includes students writing new work, which sometimes gets fully produced and sometimes gets a reading. That includes people who have been working on fight choreography or dance who might want to show what they've been working on, even if it's not a complete story with a beginning, middle, and an end. That includes student directed plays. That includes student directed films."

The spring season is truly a free for all, but with one persistent caution, "The only guideline is the constant warning that spring at LFA is crazy," Boresi commented. Between prom, AP exams, graduation preparation,

and finals, a lot of the time students have has already been filled. Those who want to use this creative outlet must be committed and passionate about their work. This is usually the reason no one hears about these student-made shows as it is unavoidable to question right up to the date of performance whether the show will actually go on.

There are two solid shows that are most likely going to be seen by the public this year: a short and immersive murder mystery by Krish Desai '24 and a romantic comedy that is a satirical commentary on etiquette in society by Joie Romelus '23.

Both of these students decided to take on the extra work for their own reasons. "I spent a lot of my high school career either taking APs or taking classes that would look good on a transcript. And so for my senior year, I decided I wanted to do something different,

you know I wanted to take a class for me," Romelus remarked. She decided to take Directing, a class run by Boresi, where she found out how students are able to produce shows of their own in the spring season.

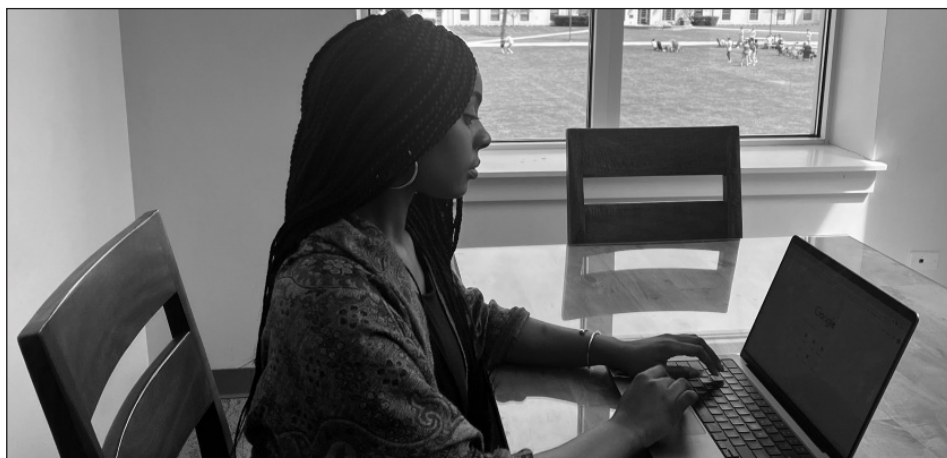
On the other hand Desai commented, "I think it probably dates all the way back to last year with *Tricksters* [most well known student-led performance to date]. I wanted to try to make something of my own." Since the bar for student-led productions was set so publicly, there is hope for a bigger and more masterful spring season of student works this year and in the future.

Those who decide to lead a project have to learn all different facets of a production including writing, lighting, set design, costume design, advertising, and more. That being said, there is always a person to get help from. Alejandro Quiroz '23,

Director of Sound, stated, "So usually, I'm just there to be like, 'Okay what do you need?'" Those who have experience in acting and behind-the-scenes work are always around to help students get their ideas on stage, those taking the lead just have to learn how to coordinate with everyone. Many lessons are learned in the spring season when one takes on the work of creating something from their own brain.

After this long process comes the actual performance. On this topic, Romelus commented, "It's one thing if you sing for someone, it's another thing if you sing for a singer because a singer not only likes what they're hearing, but they can appreciate what you're doing." Having humans in seats isn't the goal for these performances. Those who show up need to be ready to participate and appreciate the hard work that is being put on stage.

Since *Tricksters*, the opportunity to create something for an audience has been officially seen as an option for students. On being apart of the spring season in the future, Boresi remarked, "If you're reading this, and thinking, hey, this is of interest to me, and maybe you want to do a big funny play with a huge audience, or maybe you want to do an experimental work that we literally do in the woods, come find me and tell me where your head is, and we can start planning for next year."



Joie Romelus '23 prepares for her play.

Photo by Maya Mitckess

A reflection on Ukraine after one year

By Finn Harrison
Managing Editor of Politics

Two months ago, the war in Ukraine reached a grim milestone. On February 22, 2023, the war crossed the one-year mark capping off a year filled with needless bloodshed, civil unrest, and stalemate.

However, there are some signs of progress after the bloody year of fighting. In November of this year, Ukrainian forces retook the city of Kherson, which had been under Russian occupation for over six months. As Ukraine receives increasing support from the West and Western-aligned nations, the country has managed to hold off further Russian advances. On the aforementioned anniversary of the war, the Polish government pledged multiple Leopard tanks to Ukraine, promising to deliver more in the future. With this, Poland joins the large group of western nations supporting Ukraine with arms.

Amid this wider Western solidarity, President Biden made a surprise visit to Kyiv, marking the first time in years that an American President had stepped into a warzone. The President said in his speech there, “One year later, Kyiv stands, and Ukraine stands. Democracy stands. The Americans stand with you,



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President Joe Biden visits Ukraine in February of 2023 to meet with President Volodymyr Zelenskyy as a demonstration of Western solidarity.

and the world stands with you.” The visit seemed to be a move by the leader of the free world to show that it was united around Ukraine’s struggle. Luckily for Ukraine, the world seems to be following.

On April 4, 2023, Finland officially joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), followed by Sweden - effectively locking up the Baltic Sea from Russian interference. This was obviously no coincidence. Western countries rushed

to unite in the face of Russian aggression in Ukraine, especially using the NATO alliance to do so. In turn, European leaders and governments have reaffirmed their support for Ukraine, despite the continent’s deep dependence on Russian oil.

Across Europe, especially in eastern and central regions, people have had issues paying their gas bills as prices skyrocketed over the long winter in the wake of the sanctions, however, Europe’s resolve to

defend Ukraine has remained. In Estonia, a member state of NATO and one of the countries most dependent on Russian gas, the people voted in a landslide to keep their pro-Ukraine, pro-sanction government in power under the Reform Party. This indicates that even as European and American gas prices go up in the face of sanctions on Russia, the world appears resolute in ending the unjustified violation of Ukraine’s people and sovereignty.

BRICS nations abandoning the US currency

By Jiaqi Li
Staff Writer

In recent years, BRICS nations—Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa—have been attempting to abandon and reduce the use of the US currency. The main motives for that action are that they hope to reduce the dependence on US dollars and to prevent domination of the US currency in the world economy. “One major problem nations like the BRICS have when it comes to the US dol-

lar is that it is the main leading currency in the world,” said Economics teacher Eric Hillebrand. While trying to avoid the dominating state of US dollars, “these developing nations have been able to go to US Banks and dollar-denominated banks for loans in the past, at the best rates,” said Hillebrand. These nations expected the money they borrowed to be safe and, as Hillebrand claimed, “won’t fluctuate in value much.” He continued, “However, over the last year and a half, the US central bank (‘The Fed’) has been very concerned about inflation

in the United States. To combat inflation, they have raised interest rates steadily over that period of time. For BRICS nations, this means that the interest rates on their loans are rising too.” This intrigued them to reduce their reliance on the US currency while increasing their own autonomy.

To further that attempt, the BRICS countries have been taking actions to abandon US dollars as a reserve currency. They established the New Development Bank in 2013, which can be considered an alternative to the western dominated financial in-

stitutions, such as the World Bank. Moreover, among the BRICS nations, many countries have signed bilateral currency swap agreements with each other. These agreements allow the two countries to have an exchange in currencies as the central banks can borrow each other’s currencies in case of need while it also promotes trade between the two countries. This financial bond among the BRICS nations reduced their dependence on the US currency.

However, abandoning US currency may still have some potential risks. Hillebrand stated, “I think one risk to developing their own currency might be that it will not attract enough investment because global financial capital will not believe in its stability. If it develops that way, it will be hard for a ‘BRICS currency’ to compete with the USD, the Euro, and the Japanese Yen as investment currencies.” When discussing the effect on US dollars, Hillebrand replied, “BRICS countries’ investors won’t fully abandon the USD; they will just have another option when they want to use a currency for trade or to borrow or invest using a currency that they hope will remain stable and not lose its value. That said, if fewer people buy the dollar, or if more people sell the USD to purchase a new ‘BRICS currency,’ the value of the USD will decrease. The immediate effects of that would be that Americans would import fewer goods and services and be able to export more.”



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Presidents of the BRICS nations push for new global currency to counter the dominance of the US dollar at the 2023 15th BRICS Summit in South Africa.