

Sayville High School students trained by former U.S. Vice President Al Gore at Climate Reality Project’s Leadership Corps

By Harrison Bench

1,136 individuals, including five Sayville high students, representing forty three countries gathered in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, October 17- 19 to join in one common effort: the protection of life on our planet. Seniors Vic Creviston, Olivia Davidson and Hannah Bishop, joined Juniors Harrison Bench and Keira Mizzi, and Melissa Horak Parrott, Sayville resident, parent and Education and Outreach Coordinator for the Central Pine Barrens Commission were fortunate to be among them.

Former U.S. Vice President and Nobel Peace Prize recipient Al Gore led the group through the science, visible but inconsistently reported catastrophes, and emerging risks associated with man-made climate change. Ninety-seven percent of climate scientists agree that man-made climate change is a reality. Carbon pollution is warming our planet and prompting weather volatility and extreme droughts, flooding, wildfires and super storms. Right now, scientists predict that the current rate of carbon emissions will lead to an average increase in global temperatures of 7.2 degrees by the end of the century. The increase will exacerbate currently observable water shortages, droughts of agricultural lands, extreme temperatures, vector-borne diseases, and the frequency and volatility of weather-related events.

The Vice President and climate scientist focused on the significance of an immediate shift away from fossil fuels as the first necessary intervention, stating, “with a shift to a clean-energy economy, we can still create the sustainable future we all want. But we have to act now.”

All five Sayville students are members of, the Suffolk Student Climate Action Committee (SSCAC), a bi-partisan Committee comprised of high school students from across Suffolk County demanding climate change action from elected officials. Junior Harrison Bench says “The conference in Pittsburgh was so phenomenal. Learning in the presence of Vice President Gore and many notable climate scientists was an opportunity that I will cherish forever. Now having completed the training, I feel so much more confident in the fight against the climate crisis. I also feel inspired to do so much more than I already am, and to bring the knowledge that I have learned to my community, school, and even, my home.” The Climate Reality Conference provided the most up to date climate science and the tools needed to go out into your community to encourage change. Bench continues “With this under my belt, I am so eager to reach out to more people, and to have a bigger and more impressive impact on others, when it comes to climate change. This is a serious threat to the humanity of civilization, and, if we don't act now, the damage is going to be irreversible. I, for one, am ready to bring everything I have to the climate crisis, and, I am 100% positive that the Climate Reality Leadership Corps has motivated me tenfold.” Hannah Bishop added, "meeting other students like us and other people doing great work to fight the climate crisis was so inspiring." Vic Creviston adds, "We were even able to meet Vice President Gore and give one of our SSCAC hats to him! He took it, read our name and loved it!"

In seven short months, the SSCAC has already met with all Islip Town Council, Supervisor Carpenter, County Executive Steve Bellone, Suf-

folk County Legislator Bill Lindsay, NYS Assemblyman Englebright, NYS Senator Croci and they has a pending meeting with NYS Governor Cuomo- urging all to transition to 100% renewable electricity by 2030,a goal set by Governor Cuomo. Towns such as Southampton and Easthampton have already committed to this timeline.

Continued on page 2.



Top: H. Bench, H. Bishop. O.Davidson, V. Creviston and K. Mizzi at the Climate Change Conference.

Bottom: Sayville students share a minute with Vice President Al Gore.

Sayville Players presents

OUR TOWN

by Thornton Wilder

Wednesday, January 17; Thursday January 18 at 7:00 pm

Friday, January 19; Saturday, January 20 at 8:00 pm

In the Little Theater

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Student Spotlight

Josh Minutello ‘19

Nationally Ranked VR Gamer

Junior Josh Minutello disappeared from the high school for a few days this past fall. He had an appointment in California with the nine other top ten rated players of the virtual reality video game, *The Unspoken*, an Oculus Touch-enabled VR action game that pulls players into a hidden world of spellcasting and magician’s duels. Players manipulate the environment around them with the powerful arcane forces that flow through their fingertips, summon eldritch monstrosities with their bare hands, and rise up through the ranks of an urban magic fight club.

Josh reports that he spends up to eight hours a day on the game, often streaming his games live for his fans to follow. He is the youngest of the top ten players, but reported that he really enjoyed meeting the other players and that they treated him with respect. VR games, Josh says, are often more appealing to older players because of the high cost of the equipment.

Though Josh didn’t win the California tournament, he is awaiting word on an invitation to participate in an international tournament in Poland during the spring of 2018.



AP Capstone Expands into Year 2: Research

By Jilleen Barrett

Last year, Sayville High School’s first AP Seminar students were learning how to gather important information, analyze it, and present it in front of a camera for the AP Board to view and evaluate. This year, eighteen of those students -now Juniors in the Class of 2019- have decided to take it to the next level and perform independent studies of specific topics in the newest Advanced Placement class at this school, AP Research, taught by Mr. Shaw.

One of those students is Brady Dolan, who is researching how endocrine disrupting compounds are impacting gender ratios of a common bait fish called the Atlantic Silverside, specifically in the Great South Bay and Long Island Sound. It’s important that the ratio of these fish are even, because without enough females the population could die out. Many other fish feed off of the Atlantic Silverside, so if the Atlantic Silverside population were to die out, the food chain of the Great South Bay and Long Island Sound would be destroyed. Dolan is using fish that he will obtain from fisherman in the two different locations, and he will dissect them to determine their sex and complete the sex ratio evaluation. He’ll use Microsoft Word Excel to gain a statistical analysis. Abby O’Connell, another student, is studying the misuse of drugs among college students, as many colleges ban the substances from campus. Despite this, many students continue to use them- O’Connell is figuring out why using a meta-analysis evaluation of past studies that have already been done by other researchers.

One requirement of the class, among others, is particularly tricky- finding an expert advisor. An expert advisor is someone who is accomplished in the field that one may be studying, and can guide the research that he/she does. This is to legitimize the studies performed, which can significantly aid a student who is trying to succeed in the class and during the presentation that substitutes as an AP exam toward the end of the school year. Dolan and O’Connell are both currently working on finding their advisors, as it’s not easy to convince an expert of a particular field to help a high schooler for several months. Mr. Shaw created an outline of a letter for the students to use to fill out information pertaining to their project and send it to the potential advisor. Many people get denied aid from their top choice, and have to find someone else, unfortunately. Others have been very successful. Sierra Boyce is working with a team of attorneys and professors at the New York School of Law, Kiera Mizzi is working with a faculty member at Harvard University.

The presentations and projects involved in the AP Capstone program as a whole is rigorous and difficult, but well worth it. Many students come out of their first year in the program feeling stronger in research capabilities and writing abilities. This is all because of the two teachers of the program, Mrs. Dashiell and Mrs. Sohl. It’s unknown how this year’s research students will feel at the end of the year, but right now, everybody seems to be confident in their projects. Mr. Shaw is the drive behind this feeling of security. Thanks to the great teachers and administrators at Sayville High School, we now have this amazing program and Sayville students will graduate even stronger.

Farewell to Mrs. Ochs

The “Test Center Lady”

Mrs. Cathy Ochs retired from the Sayville public school system in December. Mrs. Ochs is known is the high school as the Test Center Lady, serving in this position for 12 years. However, Mrs. Ochs has put in a total of 20 years of service to the school district in several other capacities. Congratulations to Mrs. Ochs on a well-deserved retirement!




Climate Reality Project, cont’d


“I am amazed at the passion and dedication of these students”, says Melissa Parrott, founder and mentor of the SSCAC, “they know this is their future and are prepared to fight for it. I’m very proud of their commitment.”

Long Island’s coastlines are rising; the weather is getting warmer, creating droughts and affecting agriculture, Zika made its appearance on Long Island due to warming temperatures; the Southern Pine Beetle is here, killing millions of trees and decimating our forests, essentially turning the trees into kindling. “It’s not debating if climate change exists anymore, it’s about creating resiliency, adaptation and reducing suffering” says Ms. Parrott.

“With the added value and information I received from this conference, I'm looking forward to circling back to Sayville’s elected officials and providing them with a roadmap to successfully transition to renewable electricity,” says Senior Olivia Davidson, "if Southampton, East Hampton and Brookhaven can do it, so can Islip- we’re ready to help”.



**Interact
SOUPER
BOWL**



Please donate cans of soup to the Sayville Food Pantry during January!

5 cans + 1 hour of service

Jackson Pollock Meets Blood Splatter in SUPA Forensics Blood Analysis

The members of the SUPA Forensic Science class combined their knowledge of blood spatter analysis with an artistic inspiration from Jackson Pollack to produce some original artwork. Presented by Mrs. Stoll-De Pompeo as a STEAM initiative, adding the Arts to Science, Technology, Engineering and Math, the students incorporated active and passive blood spatter of differing angles of impact and velocity to their work. Please stop by the showcase outside the cafeteria to see these creative works.



Congratulations to the Athletes Helping Others on their support for the Special Olympics at the 2017 Polar Bear Plunge!



The Current
Book Review

The Leaving
A novel by Tara Altebrando

By Nora O'Donnell

It has been eleven years since six kindergarteners were abducted without a trace. Their friends and families tried to move on. Then one day five of the six children return. The children are now 16 and have no memory of what has happened to them the last 11 years. They barely recognize their families or themselves, but they think they remember each other. None of them have any memory of the sixth victim who didn't return with them. Their families want answers especially the families of the sixth child.

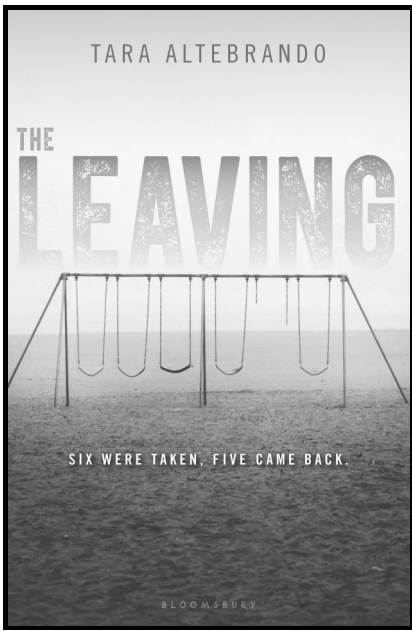
What happened to the children all those years ago?

Where have the children been all this time?

What happened to the sixth child?

You will have to read this amazing story of mystery and self discovery to find out.

The Leaving is available in the high school library.



Sayville Players Triumph in *Almost, Maine*

The reviews are in, and they all agree. The Sayville Players production of *Almost, Maine* was a delightful exploration of the many forms of love. The cast, made up of over 30 students, performed the show over four nights in November to sold out audiences in the Little Theater. High School students were treated to previews of the show during their English classes. Many of them returned for the full show.

Almost, Maine tells nine stories of people falling in and out of love in the northern territory of Maine, a place where magic can happen, and often does.



Junior Kaitlyn Maher and senior James Velazquez were featured in the “Her Heart” vignette of *Almost, Maine*.

LEGALLY
BLONDE



The Musical™

March 21-24

High School Auditorium

The Current is a publication of Sayville High School.

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The Current welcomes letters to the editor and article submissions.

Please drop off with or email either faculty adviser.

National and Local Politics

Senators Flake and Corker Retiring from the Senate

By Vincent Vertuccio

Two conservative senators, Senator Flake (R) of Arizona, and Senator Corker (R) of Tennessee, who are up for re-election next year have announced that they will not be running for re-election. After announcing his retirement, Senator Flake (R) delivered a rebuke of President Trump on the Senate floor, likely due to no longer being worried about electoral repercussions. Flake also called out other Republican senators who he claims have blind loyalty to President Trump. Senator Flake's speech won applause from other Republican Senators, including Republican Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R).

Senator Corker (R) also made headlines after comparing the White House to an "adult day-care center," and saying that he regrets supporting the President. These two senators have joined a growing group of Republican senators disavowing Mr.Trump, including other prominent Republican senators such as Senator Ben Sasse (R) of Nebraska, Senator Murkowski (R) of Maine, Senator McCain (R) of Arizona, and Senator Murkowski (R) of Alaska.

With two senate seats now left open, they are expected to be hotly contested, with Congresswoman Kyrsten Sinema (D), Former State Senator Kelli Ward (R), and Congresswoman Martha McSally (R) all running for Flake's seat. Conservative firebrand, Congresswoman Marsha Blackburn (R) is running for Corker's seat, and Democrats are hoping to recruit the popular former governor of Tennessee, Phil Bredesen (D) who managed to win all 95 counties in his last re-election bid. Democrats would need to gain three seats to take control of the senate, and Democrats are targeting senate seats in Nevada, Arizona, Tennessee, Alabama, and Texas. That's not to say winning any of those seats is an easy task, not to mention that many Democratic incumbents in states Mr. Trump won last year are up for re-election.

Local Political News

Election Day has come again, with elections taking place here on Long Island and across the nation. Here in Suffolk County, Democrats maintained their majority in the Suffolk County Legislature. Sayville's representative, Bill Lindsay (D), has won re-election in a hotly contested race, eeking out a narrow two point win. The race for Suffolk County District Attorney, an open seat, was won by Tim Sini (D). Sini won in a landslide, winning by 26 points. The Suffolk County sheriff's race, another open seat, was much closer. Errol Toulon (D) is currently leading in that race by a little under 1,400 votes. The race is still up in the air as absentee ballots are counted, although with the absentee ballot count about 40% complete, and with many Republican strongholds fully counted and Toulon's lead remaining stable, it appears increasingly likely Toulon will hold his lead. If Toulon maintains his lead, he would become the first African-American elected countywide in Suffolk. Republicans maintained total control over the Islip Town Council, with incumbent Trish Bergin Weichbrodt (R) and newcomer James O'Connor (R) being elected. Sayville, is a part of Islip Town. Republicans flipped the Huntington Town Supervisor and Shelter Island Town Supervisor slot to red while Democrats flipped the Riverhead Town Supervisor slot to blue.

Across the county line in Nassau, Democrats flipped the County Executive post, with Laura Curran (D) winning the position by 3 points. She will become the first woman to be Nassau County Executive. Democrats also flipped the Nassau County Comptroller slot by a single point. The Hempstead Town Supervisor and Town Clerk positions flipped to blue, which will mark the first time that Democrats will hold those posts in over a century. In the Hudson Valley, Democrat George Latimer (D) defeated incumbent Westchester County Executive, Rob Astorino (R) by 14 points.

In New Jersey, Phil Murphy (D) won the governor's race by almost 15 points, in a sharp rebuke to Chris Christie (R), the current term-limited governor known for scandal and historically low approval ratings. Sheila Oliver (D) was also elected lieutenant governor, becoming the first African-American woman to hold that position. Democrats maintained large majorities in the New Jersey state house and senate as well. The City of Hoboken also elected its first Sikh-American mayor.

In Virginia, a governor's election predicted to be very close, turned into a large Democratic victory. Ralph Northam (D) was elected governor of Virginia by almost 9 points. Justin Fairfax (D) won the lieutenant governor's post by about 5 points, and became the second African-American elected statewide in Virginia. Mark Herring (D) won the Virginia's attorney general's race by almost 7 points. In the Virginia House of Delegates, Democrats exceeded all predictions, and picked up 15 seats, bringing the balance of power to 51 R 49 D, which is the largest Democratic pickup in Virginia since 1899. Recounts and possible special elections due to election day issues may occur and could cause Democrats to retake or tie in the chamber. Virginia elected the first openly transgender state legislator, elected the first Latinas to the Virginia state house, and the first Asian-American woman to the Virginia state house.

In Washington, Manka Dhingra (D) won a special election to the Washington State Senate, which caused the chamber to flip to Democratic control and the state to become a Democratic trifecta (meaning the state house, senate, and governorship are all under democratic control. Maine also passed a ballot initiative to expand medicaid under the Affordable Care Act.

Every Child’s Dream Photo Essay

By Jessica Fraccalvieri

Every club and class came together on December 15 to provide a complete holiday experience for hundreds of new friends. From serving food to singing carols and painting faces, Sayville’s students definitely put their best foot forward to produce this very important annual event.



Members of the Class of 2017 Return to Share Tales of College Life

The day before the holiday break is always an exciting day at Sayville High School. Students are busy turning in last assignments and often have their thoughts on the exciting days to come. This day also sees the return of many members of last year’s graduating class to share their stories of their first semester at college with the current seniors.

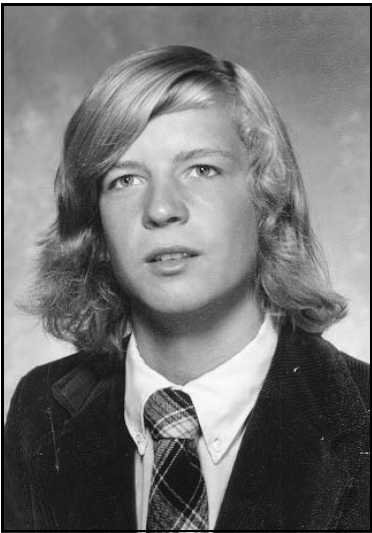
The day began with a special assembly program for seniors in the auditorium on the issue of hazing. Members of the senior class sat on stage, backs to the audience in dark hooded sweatshirts and read the stories of nine young people who lost their lives in hazing incidents. The final student shared the story of Chuck Stenzel, who graduated from Sayville High School and died after being left in the trunk of a car in freezing temperatures with a bottle of whiskey, a bottle of wine and a beer. After hearing his story, Mrs. Cannini, a familiar and respected member of the high school staff stood to share her story

as Chuck Stenzel’s younger sister.

She shares stories of her brother, and how his tragic death impacted her family. Her mother went on to advocate for hazing victims and was ultimately responsible for the anti-hazing laws in 44 states.

Seniors were then divided into groups based on their college plans, and they heard from current college freshman. Advice ranged from how to manage demanding schedules, how to choose classes and how to manage a social life. Graduate Sarin Baldante spoke earnestly to the female students in the senior class when she pointed out that rape and sexual harassment on college campuses is a very real issue that everyone needs to be alert to. Conversations continued in English classes, where seniors were able to ask more personal questions.

This year was the tenth Annual Alumni Assembly, which is a program of the High School Site Based Team.



Chuck Stenzel was a member of the Sayville High School Class of 1976. He was killed in a hazing incident at Alfred University.

WHERE IN SAYVILLE?

Congratulations to Hailey Keyser and Dylan Krinsky who correctly identified the gates at the entrance of the former Shortell Estate, now the Sayville Marina Park.

This issue’s Where in Sayville... where are this community’s World War One veterans memorialized with this plaque?

The first students to bring the correct answer to the Little Theater will win free acai bowls from So-Bowls!

Junior Banquet

Friday, April 20

Bellport Country Club

COMING THIS SPRING!

Get your act together!

Prizes for best group and Individual performances!