

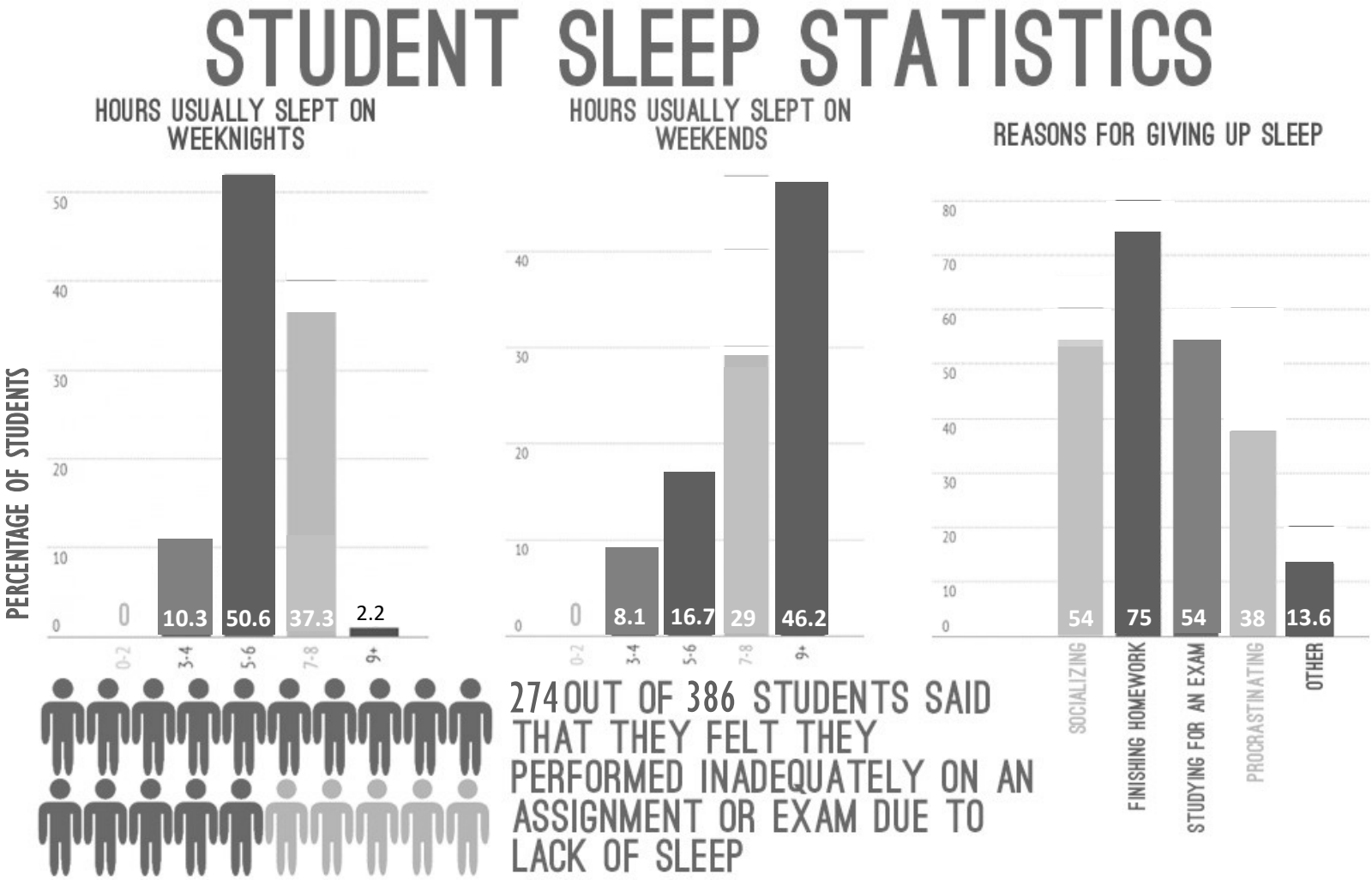
Sleepy Start to School after Midterm Week

By Hannah Blaskiewicz

Coming off of midterms week it appears that Sayville high school is overflowing with exhausted kids. The early mornings for teenagers has them yawning at 7 AM when they disembark from the yellow buses and slouch into the school. High levels of stress and long nights plague high schoolers, and it's not just midterms week, it's everyday.

We're tired. Although it may be hard to believe teens need about 9 to 9-and-a-half hours of sleep a night. Teenagers along with infants are in the stages of human development that physically require the most REM sleep for the most efficient growth. This is because teenagers, along with infants, are going through significant development in their brain and size with growth cognitively and physically. Sleep deprivation is a serious issue. Too little sleep than what's needed hinders performance in a myriad of activities from test taking to gym class. Although most people are only concerned with how sleep affects their grades, sleep deprivation can also lead to other consequences such as microsleeps. Microsleeps are small naps that can happen at anytime, but mostly occur when a person is tired and unengaged. Car accidents are a common when one someone is sleep deprived because people experience microsleeps behind the wheel. In a school where kids are in the

first two years of driving, sleep deprivation can have significance for their performance behind the wheel. Since teenagers need sleep for development, why is it that they seem to be getting so little? Many believe that the early start for school plays a part in the exhaustion of teens, but movement in start time seems impossible due to the need of daylight for the sports after the last bell rings. Since the start time can't be moved it seems that teens just need to go to bed earlier. However, that is not an easy fix. So why do teenagers stay up so late? While many claim it is the amount of work that they are sent home with, it may be a less controllable reason. Most studies point to the fact that teenagers have a different circadian rhythm than adults. The circadian rhythm, or the body's sleep wake cycle, for teenagers has them staying awake into the night due to the late release of melatonin. Scientifically, teens stay up later and need to sleep in, but the fundamentals of school could never allow that. For now we will continue to clutch our coffee as we race the late bell through the hallway to first period.



Sayville Middle School Auditorium
Monday, February 10th @ 7pm
56 minutes/Appropriate for ages 10 +

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Sayville Students Gave Outstanding Performances in

26 Pebbles by Linda Mittiga



The play *26 Pebbles* deals with the events surrounding the December 14th school shooting in the small town of Newtown, Connecticut.

When its author, Eric Ulloa, had first heard the terrible news in 2012, he was living far away from the small town. Many months after the tragedy, however, he had found he was still struggling with its impact, even as its newsworthiness peaked and fell in the media. Ulloa decided to visit Newtown in search of answers. After multiple trips and over “sixty interviews with people from all walks of life within this community,” he conceived *26 Pebbles*, explaining that it “is not a play about

the death of twenty young children and six adults. Those are just the circumstances. *26 Pebbles* is the story of hope and family and community. It is the story of the human condition.” Ulloa delivers in this poignant portrayal. He deftly shifts the tragic focus that could be Sandy Hook’s legacy to one of hope and love. With great sensitivity, he describes the town and its people who are dealing in the aftermath with the loss of their innocence—innocence, both in the comfort zone of a small town that has never seen such violence, as well as, the children and school personnel who were tragically killed.

The subject matter is a difficult one. Art imitating life at a devastating moment might seem literally too close to home—the parallels to our own small town are chillingly familiar. The play, however, offers a human and balanced view of all aspects from outrage to compassion. Every voice is represented; every emotion portrayed, and while there is no changing the tragedy that occurred, *26 Pebbles* ends with a truly uplifting and cathartic message. A drama this intense might seem too difficult for high school students to perform. The range of emotions is demanding even for seasoned adults. Yet, the masterful performances by the Sayville players who plumbed the depths of fear, loss, grief, anger, and hope were extraordinary to behold. Moving scenes came alive in their faces, their voices, and their hearts. What audiences experienced in the intimate setting of the *Little Theatre* was both heart wrenching and breathtaking.

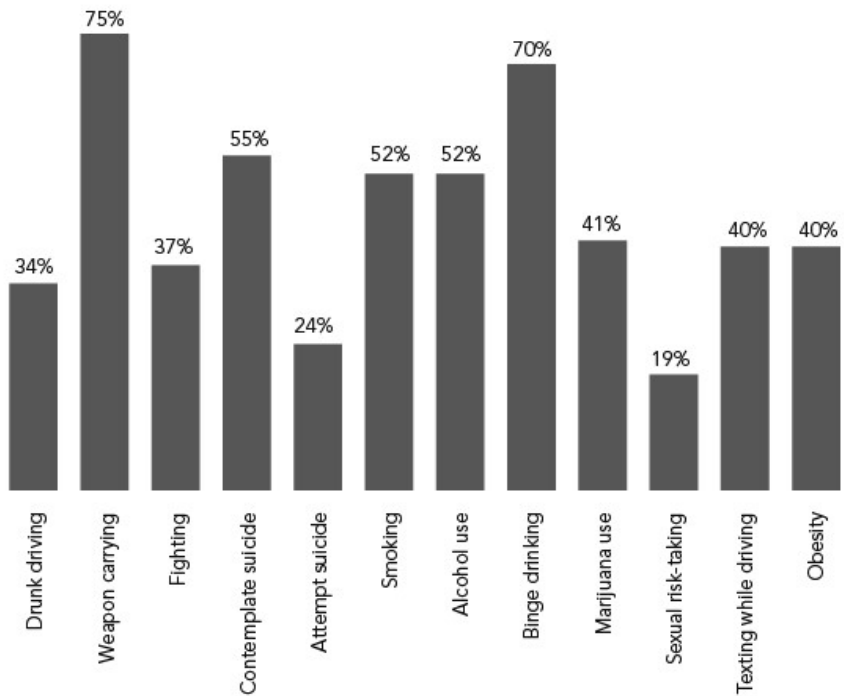
During play rehearsals, psychological counseling provided by Mary Gravina, LCSW, Assistant Vice President of Counseling & Pediatric Services, Hospice Care Network counseled the Sayville students about grief caused by such a tragedy. She helped them identify with their characters and yet not be overwhelmed by the traumatic re-enactments they were being asked to perform on the stage. It was

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Sleep Loss Makes Teens More Risky, Dangerous

Regularly getting less-than-enough sleep at night may be responsible for more than just fatigue for teens. A new study in the journal Preventive Medicine shows that it can raise the risk of a whole host of unhealthy and risky behaviors.

Increased likelihood of behavioral and health outcomes for teens getting only five hours of sleep compared to those getting eight or more, 2011



The Current is a publication of Sayville High School.

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Faculty Adviser: Mr. Shaw

The Current welcomes letters to the editor and article submissions.

Please drop off with or email faculty adviser.

Don’t Tell Me to Smile

Author’s name withheld by request

I'm walking in the hallway, maybe I'm thinking about my next class, that test I have to take next period. Maybe I'm thinking about something that's going on at home, or with my friends. A male teacher who I don't have, who I don't know, tells me “Hey, smile”. Another girl hears “Why do you look so down, just smile”. And yet another is told, “Come on, lighten up, smile a little”. It may not be by the same teacher, it may not be on the same day or even the same year. Maybe it's even a different school, but regardless, this district, and every school district, has ignored the unintentional harassment of its students for far too long.

I’ll preface this by saying that it's not always male teachers, and it's not always female students, and regardless this is still an issue. But what is being shown, is that this disproportionately affects women, and almost every time I have been told to smile in an inappropriate manner, it has been by a male teacher.

A school is a place of learning and growth, however with such a stressful school environment, it's hard to find someone within our highschool who hasn't been impacted by the pressure of academia. Regardless, I come to school to go to class, to learn, to take my tests, and hopefully to do well. I come to school in order to develop into the successful person I hope to become. I don't come to smile. I am tired of male teachers telling me to smile. Does my face offend you, should I make myself look pleasant to brighten your day?

You should never place yourself into another person's life, and tell them how they should or shouldn't be feeling. When I am told to smile, I am told that despite whatever I'm going through, despite whatever I'm feeling, I should make myself appear happy so the world around me can ignore my suffering. Especially as a woman, in a world where it's so hard for females to be perceived as strong and dynamic creatures, having male teachers go out of their way to tell the women in our school that they should soften themselves for others' pleasure is downright nefarious.

Teachers, ask yourself, why am I asking this student to smile. Is it because I think they look upset? If so, if I were feeling upset, would I want someone to tell me to “just smile”? Or would I want them to legitimately ask me a question about my feelings? Would I want them to treat me like a person who is mature enough to express their problems in a manner more complex than a facial expression? Would I like to be treated as a person responsible enough to experience their own emotions, without someone else policing them? Would I want to be belittled by a person who knows nothing about my situation, and told to just push it away and smile for the world's approval?

Men, ask yourself how many times you get told to smile on a daily basis. Ask yourself how many times people have told you that you're too intense, too harsh, too stressed out all the time, not happy enough. The unfortunate reality, for women in the workplace, is that 98% of them have been told to smile by coworkers while on the job. Because the gender stereotype of the pleasant smiling woman, is so ingrained in our society, by perpetuating it day-to-day within a school, our teachers, especially the male ones, are telling women that later in their life when they are told in work to be less ambitious, less intense, and to have less drive, that it is okay.

If a man were to yell at a woman on the street and tell her “hey give me smile” it would be considered catcalling, or street harassment. Telling a woman to smile has implications larger than just a student changing her facial expression, it's telling a woman to change how she looks so she could please a person she has no obligation to. It’s telling her she has no right to control her own body. Catcalling and street harassment are only a step away from being sexual harassment, just as “hey smile” is only a step away from saying “you look better when you smile”. Just because it's a school environment does not change the undertones of the comment. There is a weight to words, and all of the female students feel it.

Next time you see a girl in the hallway who looks unhappy, think twice before you tell her to smile. Alternatives to that could be, “Good morning!” Or, “Hey, how are you?” And if you don't know the student well enough to feel comfortable asking her how she is, you shouldn't be telling her to smile. If you're legitimately concerned about her well-being there are ways to go about helping her that don't include reducing her to an object. Just something to consider.

HELP WANTED !

Join *The Current*

Meet us Wednesdays,

10th period in the Little Theater.

26 Pebbles Review

Continued from p. 2

an especially bonding experience. As the actors learned their roles, they remembered the news reports and media coverage of the incident. Seven-and-a-half years ago, many of the Sayville High school performers were close in age to the six-year-old victims. One actor was a six-year-old living close to Newtown at that time. She and her family moved to Sayville several years later.

After each performance of *26 Pebbles*, the actors participated in question-and-answer sessions with audiences. The students shared their insights about the craft of acting and exploring their emotions, noted Newtown’s resemblance to the Sayville community, and expressed what they learned from the incredible true story. All agreed what happened at Sandy Hook should not be forgotten. They felt that choosing to perform *26 Pebbles* was one way to spread the important lessons. As a line in the play states: “It’s all about how you ripple out and what these vibrations can be.”

“I guess,” Eric Ulloa had said in an online interview for TheatreMania in 2017, “all I ask for is that audiences leave the theater and continue to discuss and tell the story of Newtown. Tell your friends and family and neighbors.”

“It’s been quite a ride for us,” Sayville Drama Director Mr. Shaw remarked about the production, “and I’m very proud of this group.” Mr. Shaw also noted that, “To my knowledge, and according to the publisher, we are only the second performance of any kind of this show on Long Island. The first was in the Three Village summer program.”

Congratulations to the cast and crew for showcasing this courageous story and adding to the ripple effect.

And the Sayville High School Saturday matinee, despite the snow shower, raised \$400 for Sandy Hook Promise.

Below, members of the student theatre group Sayville Players perform the play *26 Pebbles*. Photos by Linda Mittiga



The German Perspective on Climate Issues

Amelie Teske

Our environment is the key to existence of life on the earth. All living beings on earth could not survive without the environment and that's only one of the most important functions that the environment gave us. But lately we've been less concerned about the environment and these effects can be very strongly demonstrated. In these last years the temperatures have risen significantly. One reason for this is the greenhouse effect. The greenhouse effect is actually a normal process for our system. Sun rays fall on our atmosphere; they are absorbed in the ground and then radiated back into our atmosphere, so that the heat radiation can reach space. Greenhouse gases, which for a small part are in the atmosphere, now reflect these heat rays, causing them to fall back to earth. This is how a natural greenhouse effect would happen. But since we humans expose more carbon dioxide to the atmosphere than expected through the use of cars, airplanes and ships, the greenhouse gases accumulate in large quantities. That leads to the fact that the actual heat radiation which should reach the universe can be exposed now only to a small part into the universe. This in turn means that our planet is exposed to more heat. But without the greenhouse effect our earth temperature would be about -19 degrees. Due to the ever-increasing heat in our atmosphere, it is now more likely that in the warm regions of the USA, such as California, more and more often leads to forest fires. But this is not the only issue we have with the climate changes. Our glacier and icebergs at the North Pole are beginning to melt, leading to the extinction of many of the animals that live there. In 2008, the polar bear became the first animal to make the Endangered Species Act list of threatened species because of global warming. Because of the large amount of melted ice, our sea level is rising too. This can and will be a big problem in our future, because many islands will be flooded by the water rise. As a result, many people have to give up their homes and are forced to move to another country. Every kind of discovery we are currently making about our environment indicates that the climate change will be a major problem for our future. So why should we hope that a world miracle will arrive to stop climate change, when we already have clear facts on the table?

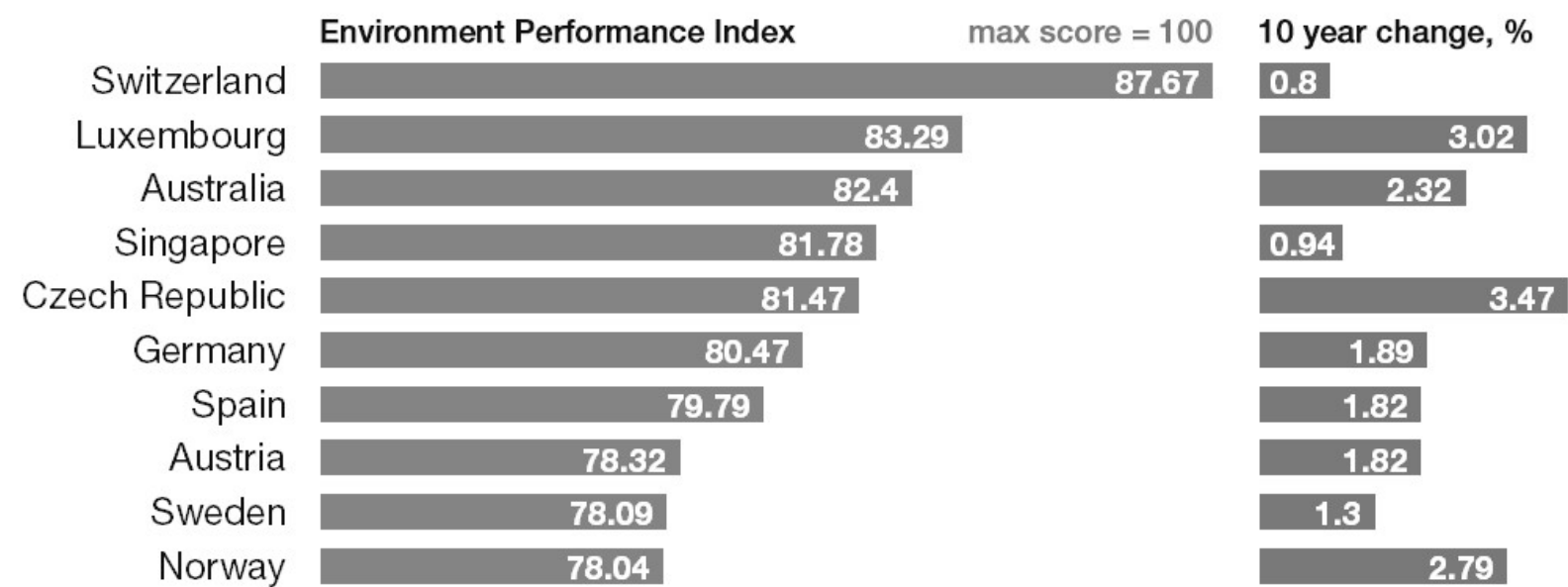
Many students fight under this statement in my hometown, Hamburg, Germany, because many young people are not happy about the decisions that the politicians are making for our future right now. Students go on strike to show that climate change will play a big role in our lives and that we have a voice as well, because in the end it's our future. Our generation has to deal with the consequences of the decisions that they are making, but it shouldn't work like that.

That's one reason why a group called Fridays for Future was formed. I was there at the first strikes and the number of people who came was very small at that time. But over the months there was a lot of interest in building a big community. Today it has around 5,000 students on the streets on a single Friday and around 20,000 people on a global climate day. For that, all age groups come together to reach a big goal. In my old class, I was the only one who went on strikes. Because for many people, time in school more important and valuable than to go on a strike. And for some it's just embarrassing to get involved with this kind of topic. The students who are going to the strikes like my friends and I really enjoying the time there. We all come together for one big event and to fight for your goals. That's our spirit and that makes us strong.

If I now compare Germany and New York, I can see a few differences. First, our strikes are better organized. Secondly, we have a greater willingness than the New Yorkers to do something about the environment and the last point is that schoolchildren in Germany are trying harder to implement the points they complain about. A good example is like, we are trying to get to school or friends with trains and bicycles. Here in Sayville, we are using the car every single day, no matter what. And these non-environmentally friendly little things that we are doing regularly in our lives, could in the end make big differences in numbers, if we are talking about CO2. So we must try to find a way that benefits both our health and the environment. For example, you could try to save water in your household by taking short showers. This way we don't waste precious water from the environment and you save a little more money. As you can see there is always a way to make a small improvement to our environment. Because our environment is the heart of the earth and therefore very important for our lives.



Which countries do the most to protect the environment?



Source: EPI, 2014

Book Review

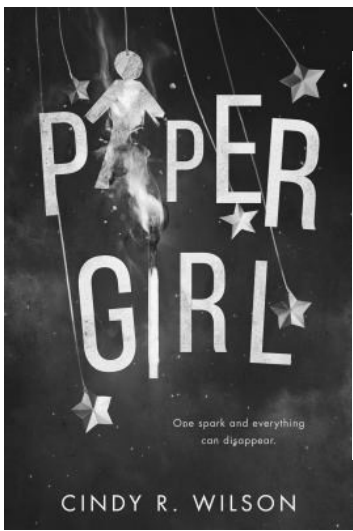
Paper Girl by Cindy R. Wilson

Review by Nora O'Donnell

With Zoe's life being taken over by severe social anxiety, she knows only one thing for sure: the only things that are safe and reliable are made out of paper. Her life, her room are made of paper and everything outside is a raging fire waiting to burn her and everything she values to ash.

Zoe's life has been confined to her family's apartment for the last year. Her only outlets or interests consist of making elaborate paper artwork, and playing chess anonymously online. This is until Zoe's mom hires he childhood crush, Jackson, to be her math tutor.

In this novel readers watch Zoe grow as a person, find the strength to step out of her comfort zone and be happy.



“I haven’t left my house in over a year. My doctor says it’s social anxiety, but I know the only things that are safe are made of paper. My room is paper. My world is paper. Everything outside is fire. All it would take is one spark for me to burst into flames. So I stay inside. Where nothing can touch me.”

From *Paper Girl*



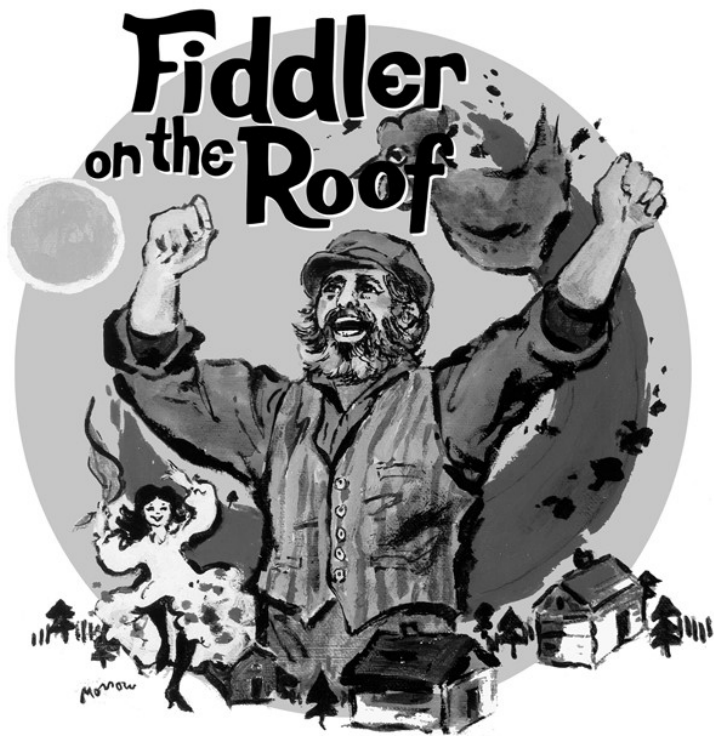
Where in SAYVILLE?

Last issue’s Where in Sayville picture went unidentified as the sign at the auto collision shop on South Main Street. This issue presents a monument dedicated to one of Sayville’s bravest heroes. Captain Merrill Mason graduated from Sayville in 1964. Soon after, he was serving as a pilot for the American Air Force in Vietnam. On August 12, 1972, his aircraft

was shot down, and Mason was officially listed as “Killed in Action.”

Several efforts have been made to keep Mason’s story alive in the hearts and minds of Sayville residents. One of the most important Senior Awards and Scholarships is named for him, and in recent year’s, this monument marks the site of Merrill Mason Island.

The first student who comes to the Little Theatre with the correct, exact location of this monument will win a \$10.00 gift card to the So-Bowl Café!



March 19-21, 7:00 pm, High School Auditorium

Brook Street Players Prepare the Spring Musical

This year, Sayville High School’s Spring Musical presented by the Brook Street Players is *Fiddler on the Roof* with music Jerry Bock and Lyrics by Sheldon Harnick. We are so proud to share this timeless story which boasts such popular songs as: “If I Were a Rich Man,” “To Life,” “Sunrise Sunset,” “Far From The Home I Love” and “Miracles of Miracles.”

The original Broadway production of the show, which opened in 1964, had the first musical theatre run in history to surpass 3,000 performances. Fiddler held the record for the longest-running Broadway musical for almost 10 years until Grease surpassed its run. The story takes place in 1905 but its themes are as fresh as today’s headlines. Its story of family and traditions will fill you with emotion and make you laugh out loud!

Those who work in the district might recognize some of the names of our principal players: Shaun Gibbons: Tevye, Elizabeth Campbell: Golde, Ayla Kaczmarek: Tzeitel, Ben Flaumenhaf: Motel, Paige Gaiser: Hodel, Hunter Caiazzo: Perchik, Chloe McCormack-Falk: Chava, Kyle Finn: Fyedka, Adain DeVerna: Lazar Wolf, Anna Crisalli: Yente

The show will run March 19th – March 21 all with a 7:00 pm curtain. AND a Saturday matinee at 1:00. Tickets can be purchased online at: www.shsny.booktix.com starting March 2nd. If you have further questions, please call the High School box office at: 631-244-6799. Please come see the incredible performances on stage and off by our student actors, musicians, and crew. They are working so hard to create a truly professional performance of this iconic musical!

Attention Class of 2020 Community Scholarship Applications Open

The window for the Class of 2020 Community Scholarship applications is now open on the Guidance website. Every year, well over \$100,000.00 is given by various community organizations and families in the form of scholarships and awards to members of the senior class. Many are in memory of a beloved member of the community, others are awarded to students pursuing a specific career path. There are awards for people who went to specific elementary schools or for participants in community activities. Many of the awards have no academic criteria.

To view the applications, visit Sayvilleschools.org. Navigate to the high school Guidance Office and click on 2020 Community Scholarship Applications. Complete the general Community Scholarship application first, then figure out which scholarships you are eligible for.

Completed applications are due in the Guidance Office by February 28. Early submissions are encouraged.



Memorial scholarships are awarded every year to graduating seniors in memory of many members of the Sayville community, including (left to right) NYPD Officer Glen Pettit, member of the Class of 2020 Cameron Riccomini, former Sayville English teacher Jane Taber and Keith Nintzel, a member of the Class of 2001.