

The Norse Code



Winter Edition

Check out the highlights of the winter season at West Chester East High School!

From Witch Hunts to Murder Mysteries

The East Theater Company successfully put on a production of "The Crucible" for the annual Fall Play. As the musical season approaches, the ETC is prepping to showcase "Curtains" in late February.

By: Natalie Manes

The East Theater Company, or ETC, is really stepping up to the plate this year. The year started off with the fall production of Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*. The play, which was originally written by Miller as an



allegory to illustrate the paranoia and persecution of communism under McCarthyism, depicts Salem in the Massachusetts Bay Colony in the late 17th century and the brutal witch trials that occurred. Main ideas within *The Crucible* include intolerance, fear, political hysteria, reputation, figurative "witch hunting," and integrity, just to name a few,



that can be applied throughout history, and even today, despite the play itself being written in the 1950s. *The Crucible* is teeming with warning about what can result from people insisting that their particular view is correct, and allowing nothing to change it. Today, anyone can read a news headline and relate it to a theme within *The Crucible*. Everyday we see intolerance, self-righteous political leaders that refuse to change perspectives. Everyday we read articles and see news reports about families paying massive amounts of money to get their children into certain schools to maintain a certain reputation. Everyday we read about the fear evoked from certain citizens that feel unsafe in their own countries, even though they did nothing wrong. And everyday we see headlines about different news outlets that are nothing but propaganda and "fake

news" that only want to essentially create a sense of hysteria. Miller created a timeless play, and the ETC performing it, very successfully and well, may I add, almost 70 years after it was written helped add the ageless aspect to the ageless play.

However the production of *The Crucible* was only the beginning for the ETC. The anticipated winter musical this year is *Curtains*, a murder mystery that was originally produced in 2006. The show contains a musical within a musical and takes place in Boston, Massachusetts, coincidentally. The star of the show's musical is murdered on opening night. In a frenzy of mystery, music, and murder, the cast must find out who the culprit was! To find out who did it and watch the case get solved, you'll have to wait until the end of February and get a ticket to one, or maybe two, of the four performances. Don't miss out on this performance; come and support the East Theater Company in February at "Curtains" The Musical!

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**...and
much
more!!**

A Message from Dr. Brown

Hello East! To you, seniors, enjoy the remaining months of high school – regardless of your path going forward, the workload only gets greater from here on out. Underclassman, believe it or not, course selection is just weeks away. Choosing the right course levels and electives needs to be a priority. Course levels should be looked at collectively with all of your other life to do's (athletics, music, arts, work, etc.). Choose levels that push you, but that are manageable without creating crazy levels of stress. Choose your electives based on interest or be exploratory. Electives represent opportunities for growth –you may learn that you are not interested in cooking, but you love the idea of business. Choose electives that give you insight from a personal interest lens or even from a possible future career lens. If you are thinking of taking a second science, have a firm rationale, which should not be because it looks good on my transcript.

Sincerely,
Dr. Brown



House of Hope

By: Fatema Mun

Every year in spring, students organize and put on the House of Hope concert for the Home of the Sparrow, an organization helping homeless women and children in the area. Anna Mcnaull and Lia Fourakis, the heads of the House of Hope committee, sat down to discuss their project.

This year marks the tenth anniversary of House of Hope, and planning has already gone underway for the concert in spring. From its very beginnings to its planning and processing, to the final concert itself, House of Hope is not only a charity concert, but also a symbol of student initiative and passion, representing the idea that students can achieve anything if they put their minds to it.

House of Hope began in 2010 when a student in East, Stephanie Ou, had the idea to hold a concert to raise money for the Home of the Sparrow. A local nonprofit, the Home of the Sparrow strives to support homeless women and children in the community through housing support, educational programs, and necessary supplies. Once she had the idea, she saw through to it until it became a reality, turning into the annual concert the community gathers to each spring. The concert showcases acts like singing, instruments, and dancing from both students and teachers, making it a collective endeavor for community outreach.

The concert raises money for many programs at the Home of the Sparrow, including the Shared Housing Program, Women's Reentry and Assessment Program, Eviction Prevention Program, Pre-Senior Housing Program, Graduate Outreach Program, and Supportive Housing Program. These programs provide homes to women who are either homeless or re-adjusting into society from the criminal justice system. It helps women with financial support and basic supplies until they can get back on their feet. However, the effects run much deeper. Lia Fourakis, co-head of the House of Hope committee, says, "The nonprofit runs a tutoring program, which I joined. I was assigned to tutor a 4th grade boy. I continued to see his math and reading skills drastically improve. I was able to develop a strong relationship with him and his family, allowing me to increasingly understand Home of the Sparrow's impact on individual lives."



Last year's House of Hope concert was a huge success. In the second half of the concert, performers and volunteers do a "Miracle Minute". They ran around the audience with baskets in order to collect as much money as possible in one minute before the music stops. "The minute always feels like an eternity with performers running to every corner of the auditorium and the last second donations pouring in." Anna says. At the end, they rushed to count the money from the baskets and determine the final total of the money from the one minute of donations.

At the end of the night, the concert had raised an incredible amount of money for the Home of the Sparrow. Lia recalls the moment she heard the MCs announce the total amount. After running around making sure the concert was running smoothly, she finally had a moment to relax in the second act just in time to hear a "surprising announcement. "The MCs came onto the stage to let the audience know the total amount we raised, and with an amazing, generous, anonymous matching donation, we were able to raise over \$9,000 in support of this great cause!"

Such a huge achievement requires dedicated preparation and effort from the House of Hope Committee. Lia Fourakis and Anna Mcnaull

both run the House of Hope committee along with Mrs. Bland. The committee meets once a week before school from September. In the beginning, they must plan out all the details of the concert. Then, in the fall and winter, they can start discussing new ideas for the concert, send out invitations and save the dates to the community, and make advertisements. The next step, after winter break, is to finalize advertisements and run auditions while planning continues. "Overall", they say, "it's a lot of hard work, but the amazing results make it all worth it."

Despite the hard work, the House of Hope committee is an amazing experience for Lia and Anna. "My favorite thing about planning the concert is setting up the lobby and the stage before the performance," Anna says. "Transforming the lobby into a bright, welcoming area is always fun to be a part of. I also love hearing all of the acts both at the audition process and the dress rehearsal. During a lot of the concert, I am busy running around organizing things, so I love getting to hear all the amazing talent beforehand."

Planning the concert has many different processes, from the music aspect to the visual aspect. Lia says, "My favorite thing about planning the concert is the auditioning process and the decorating process. I love to hear all the amazing acts that try out, who wish to support the great cause. A variety of talent is presented, some skills that I did not even realize people had. I also enjoy designing the tickets and posters along a specific theme, as well as selecting what decorations will line the stage and hallways on the night of the concert."

For Lia and Anna, House of Hope was the perfect blend of their interests and passions, igniting them to make a change in the community through this synthesis. Lia says, "I was searching for more activities to involve myself in that were community-service oriented and had meaningful, long-lasting causes."

Anna's experience was similar, as House of Hope combined both her love of music and her skills. "After hearing how the House of



Hope concert combined music with making a great contribution to those in need in our local community, I was interested in being part of such a meaningful club. I originally planned on auditioning for the concert, but after going to a meeting, I was hooked: I knew I found the perfect place to combine my organizational talents and love for music.”

House of Hope is an amazing opportunity for high school students to “engage in a meaningful and personal service opportunity.” Students can help out by performing, donating, watching, or even joining the committee itself. The planning committee meets every Wednesday morning at 7:15 AM in 103. It has something for everyone, not just music-lovers! “The committee plans out all the details of the concert, including everything from the advertising to the decorations to the auditions.” Students interested in music, can, of course, audition to perform at the concert. Besides that, students can volunteer on the night of the show itself to help with stage crew, ticket sales, selling sweets at the bake sale, or even ushering. There are so many ways for students to get involved. Every task, interest, and passion can find their way into the concert, showing just how much

students can do to make a difference in the community.

The annual concert for the Home of the Sparrow shows the power of what our young minds can achieve through our passions. There are many causes out there in need of support, and there are many ways to make a difference in the community, both locally and globally. Any student looking to make a change in the community through their own set of skills can do it through determination and passion. “No matter what you like to do or your strengths are, you can find a cause where you can embrace those strengths to make a difference in someone else’s life. Finding something you are passionate about will make volunteering a lot of fun and inspire you to make an even bigger impact in the lives of those around you.” Anna advises. “Find your passion, search out one of the numerous causes or activities to channel it, drive forward, and continue following your dreams no matter what. You never know how much one individual’s actions can mean to someone or impact the world.” Says Lia.

The House of Hope concert is on March 27st, 2020. Be sure to come and support the Home of the Sparrow!

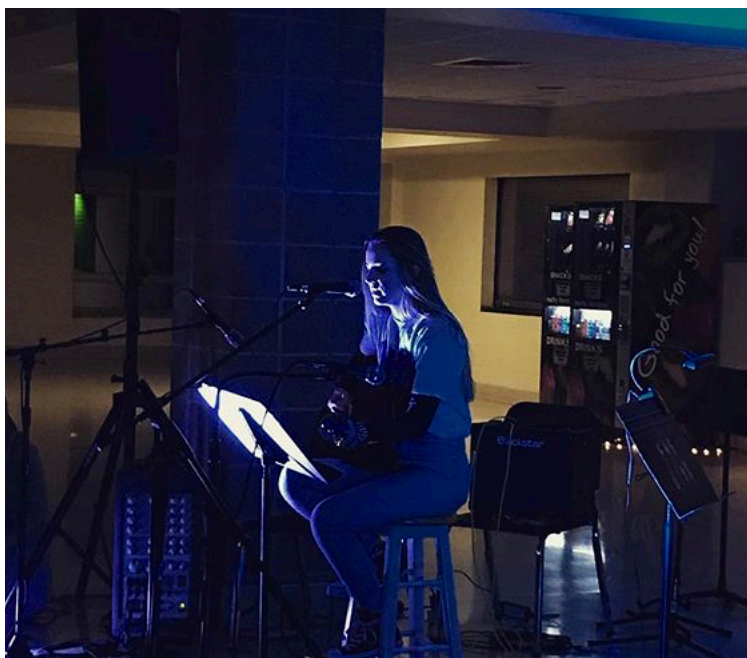
NAHS Coffeehouse

By: Charlotte Little

The National Art Honor Society had yet another successful Coffeehouse on December 14th, 2019. Students in the Honor Society showcased their artworks as the community gathered to see their talent. With live music, artsy vibes, and, of course, coffee, the Coffeehouse was a great way to display the amazing talents of East High School art students.

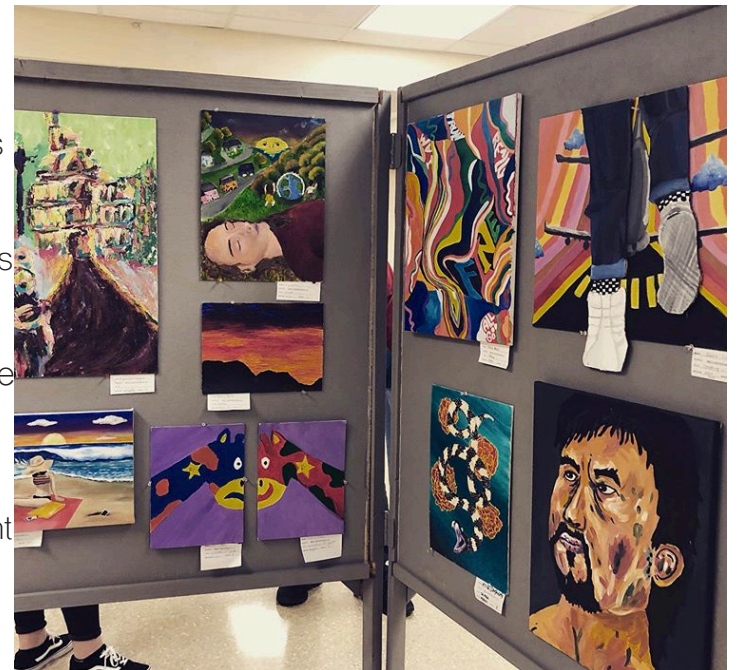
Every club has an annual fundraiser in order to help assist the finances and help pay for future trips/club related activities. For East’s National Art Honors Society (NAHS), this event is their annual coffee house. This year, as always, was a success and students were able to showcase their best work, while various musical acts performed. As well, the NAHS officers created a wonderful t-shirt design that was given to every NAHS member; this year’s design was van Gogh’s famous *Starry Night* painting, with all the names of the members integrated into the white smoke in the painting. In years past, the t-shirts have been Dunkin’ Donuts themed, the faces of the three art teachers and Bob Ross meant to imitate Mt. Rushmore, and so on.

This coffee house is extremely important for NAHS, as this is the main source of income for the club. Most of the money is used for a field trip the students take to an art museum, typically in New York City. Last year the NAHS went to the Metropolitan Museum of Art and this year they will be going to the Museum of Modern Art. This is always an enjoyable and memorable trip.



At the coffee house, the artwork ranged from canvas paintings, charcoal drawings, photography, graphic design, and everything in between. All work was exquisite and should be a reflection of how wonderful the art teachers at East are, as well as the continued support for art and music in the WCASD school district. All works could have easily been put into a museum or professional art show of some sort and would fit right in – no one would question if a high school student created it. The more I think about it, the more I realize how grateful and blessed our schools are to have such amazing art departments, when most kids in America do not get the same opportunities we are given.

As well as artwork, the coffee house obviously has coffee. Coffee was gotten from Wawa and one could get as much coffee as they pleased, as well as lots of options for food. Overall, all the NAHS students hard work paid off and guests were able to enjoy superb artwork, talented musicians, and drink all the coffee their heart desired, all for \$3.



WCASD’s New Elementary School

By: Julie Rostock

In the past few years, our school district has made some changes to its elementary schools. East Goshen Elementary underwent a major renovation to account for its growing student body. Now, the school board is planning the construction of an eleventh elementary school.

A variety of factors led to the school’s construction. The current total district enrollment is 12,079, an all-time high. This number has risen by 700 since spring 2015. This is mostly due to the new housing that has been popping up in the area: 32,000 more homes and apartments are expected to be constructed by 2027, which will likely bring 900 more students to the school district.

To accommodate these new students, the district is planning to build a two-story school, intended to support 600 students. According to Dr. Scanlon, the planning board is looking into flexible seating as opposed to the standard desks and chairs.

The redistricting process can be a difficult one, so the planning board intends to do all they can to ease the process for students and families. They hope to involve parents and teachers in the process as well.

Teacher Profiles

East High School Teachers sat down with Norse Code interviewers to answer questions about themselves and provide some deep insight into the minds of a high school teacher.

Mr. Chafetz

By: Emma Nasuti and Julie Rostock

Q: How did you decide you wanted to become a teacher?

A: Well, I didn't go to school originally to become a teacher. I have a degree in exercise physiology. That career path didn't work out for me, so I ended up basically looking for what careers were being offered at the time, and teaching was one of them. I ended up going through a program, through Philadelphia School District, where I went back to school, got my master's degree in education, and started teaching, and here I am today, many years later!

Q: If you didn't teach biology, what would you teach?

A: Probably Phys Ed and health, but I definitely enjoy biology.

Q: Tell us about your fish tanks. What kinds of fish are they? Do they have names?

A: They change every year, because I try to get them from local areas: creeks, ponds, and lakes. So every year I have different fish, and it is bad luck to name a fish. When you name a fish, they often die, so they don't have names. I have students who sometimes name them, but again, they often die when students name them. So yeah, I put fish back every year.

Q: What is your teaching philosophy?

A: Try to get to know the kids as well as possible. Teach in many different ways to try to get everybody to learn, because everybody learns in different ways.

Q: What is your most memorable experience from teaching?

A: I don't have one particular memorable moment from teaching. Just when students appreciate what you do. Here and there, when you see that, it's gratifying.

Q: What's your go-to lunch for school?

A: I don't eat well here at all. Probably just a deli sandwich from the cafeteria.

Q: What is your favorite book/movie?

A: That's a tough one. For my favorite book, I'll go with *The Catcher in the Rye*. For my favorite movie, since it's the season, I'll go with *Christmas Vacation*.

Q: What's the biggest misconception students have about you?

A: I think some students are afraid of me, just because of my demeanor.

Q: What is the funniest thing you've overheard a student say?

A: Oh, I can't say that in this interview.

Q: What's your favorite hobby outside of school?

A: I'm pretty sure everybody would know that would be fishing.

Q: When and why did you start the Fishing Club here at East?

A: There was a lot of interest one year; more than other years I noticed a lot of freshmen who really enjoyed fishing, and I just thought it was a good idea. I ran a lot of ideas by people, and just kind of got it started.



Q: What's your biggest advice for high school students?

A: My biggest advice would be to do the best you can, because there's a lot of years ahead of you. You may not think school's for you, but it's most likely going to be very, very important for you down the road, so do the best you can. I have it all over my room: take pride in your work. It's the same thing with anything. Take pride in your work and do the best that you can do.

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Dr. Jones

By: Claire Chen and Lane Aubert

How did you decide you wanted to start teaching?

Quite honestly, when I went to college, I didn't know what I was going to do and I went to a liberal arts school, which can expose you to lots of different things. While I was there, I did some volunteer work in high schools with troubled students and that sort of got the teaching bug in me. After that, I just explored teaching as an option and started pursuing it a little bit. It was never like I'd made a decision like this is what I'm going to do at that moment, but it was kind of like I gradually eased into it and came to enjoy it.

What's your teaching philosophy?

That's hard, I've written a twenty-page paper on that, you want to read it? Obviously, with my psychology background, I try and incorporate lots of different aspects of psychology into what I do in teaching be-

cause I think it's very applicable. Also, my specialty in my educational doctorate is cognitive neuroscience, so I very much try and take what the cognitive neuroscientists are learning about the mind and the brain and try and incorporate that into how I teach. But then, there is aspects of it that are beyond that. It's social, emotional, connecting with students, et cetera. All the different areas of psych that I teach in class, all of those are incorporated.

How can we improve our school?

This is a hard question because this is exactly what I do, I spend my time thinking about how we can improve schools and make them better. I don't think there's any magic bullet that you can do that's just going to come in and solve all the problems. I think all problems are multifaceted and very complex and so it takes a multifaceted, complex solution to anything. In terms of schools, I think it's a continuous tinkering, it's an iterative process where you're continually improving little bit by bit to try and get it better and continually moving forward.

What moment from teaching do you remember the most?

It's hard to isolate just one, but I have some experiences that were very memorable for good and bad reasons. My first week of teaching, my first period, probably like my third day of teaching ever, I had a student overdose in my first period class. Literally just like passed out, face to the floor, overdosed, which was kind of crazy, during my first week to have that happen, so that was very memorable. Then my second week, 9/11 happened, so those were my first two weeks of teaching, which was obviously very memorable. Then I have lots of positive memorable things too, relationships I've developed with students and lessons that went really well and different interactions and things that have happened. There's good and bad.

What was the funniest one?

There's a lot of funny moments. You never know what students are going to say on a daily basis and so that's what one of the fun things about it, they'll really surprise you with something that's just, that you're not expecting and that cracks you up. The teachers will go in and share it and we'll all have a good laugh about it. Sometimes it's intentionally said, sometimes it's not. We could make a book of all the unintentionally funny things students say.

What were you like as a high school student?

Phase one or phase two? I came into high school not very well behaved and not a good student and then I kind of turned it around pretty quickly, like end of ninth grade going into tenth grade. I don't know what clicked or changed or if it was just maturation, but then I started to become a more serious student and more serious athlete and tried harder. I was the kind of student who tried to be friends with everybody, so all the different social groups, I interacted with all of them, but I wasn't one who once I settled down, went crazy. I had a small group of friends who I hung out with, but in school, I was friendly with everybody.

What would you say to your former self today?

Looking back on stuff, I think about pivotal moments in my life where at the time I felt like it was the most horrible thing that ever happened to me, but then looking back on it, I could see that it took me in a completely different path that I wouldn't have gone down otherwise, which ended up working out great for me. Thinking back to my ninth grade self and thinking of some of the things that were going to happen to me in the future, to just kind of say like, "It'll be okay" essentially, because it works out in the end, but y'know.

Which do you prefer: Vineyard Vines or J Crew?

Vineyard Vines.

If you could meet Sigmund Freud, what would you say to him?

I would say... uh I don't know, that's hard. What would I say to Sigmund Freud? I would have a lot of questions for him. He would be just interesting to talk to. I would just want to hear him talk about his theories, quite honestly. I would want to dive in deeper and then just start asking questions once he starts talking, I don't know if there's anything specific I would wanna know going into it.

Word on the street is that you've gone sailing with Kevin Bacon's brother. Can you address these rumors?

That is true, so you're now two degrees separated from Kevin Bacon. I haven't been sailing that much recently, but I used to race regularly on Wednesday nights and he was a member of the club I raced at.

What's in your three fridges?

The main fridge is like anyone's fridge, the second fridge is more for like leftovers and sodas and stuff like that, and then the garage is for when we're entertaining.

What would some advice be for people pursuing a Ph.D.?

It's a grind, so you gotta take it day by day and task by task and not yet overwhelmed by the eight million things that are due in the near future and the distant future.

What's your favorite movie?

It's called Beautiful Girls. It's not really about girls, it's actually about a bunch of guys going back to their high school reunion and getting back together. That's what it's actually about, but of course, guys talk about girls, so that's where the title comes from.

What's something about you that most people don't know?

Well, I don't want people to know it... I think most students would be surprised in how competitively intense I am with everything. I seem laid back but I'm actually not, I'm actually really intense and really competitive.

Who's your favorite musician?

Probably Ben Folds.

Teacher Profiles

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Mr. Patt

Lane Aubert and Julie Rostock

How did you decide you wanted to start teaching?

When I was in high school, chemistry was probably one of my favorite subjects. I guess science in general was my favorite subject, so I always wanted to do something there. When I went to college, I was originally a forensic chemistry major and then, about half way through, I realized that working in a lab all day long just doesn't sound like very much fun. Around that time, I also was coaching my old middle school baseball team, my old Babe Ruth baseball team. It was more fun talking to the kids and interacting with the kids than being stuck in a lab all day, so I realized that I enjoy doing that more and changed over to being an education major. Then I got my job as a teacher.

What's your favorite movie?

That's a lot. I say, in terms of just a really good, well-crafted movie, it has to be Shawshank Redemption. I can sit down and watch that, no more what part is on. If it's on cable, I'll just sit down and watch it. If we're going by pure entertaining, I gotta go with The Dark Knight, because growing up, Batman was my favorite superhero and Dark Knight is the best Batman movie I have ever seen.

What's your teaching philosophy?

Chemistry is notoriously challenging and tricky to a lot of people. When I was in high school, it was the scuttlebutt among kids older than me, that chemistry was hard—that's a good word. They would say that, "Chemistry is so challenging. It was so hard." and when I took it, it was. My parents said it was hard for them and generations have said that chemistry was a big challenge to them. So when I teach it, I like to use it as a chance for kids to build confidence in themselves. They'll see something that's hard and they'll be able to do it and then build the confidence in themselves to do, well, anything, whether it be chemistry or anything that they thought was previously hard. If they can do this, they can do anything.

You're going to an awards ceremony for your achievements in chemistry and you can sit with four other chemists, dead or alive.

Who do you choose and why?

Avogadro, first off, of course. He made the mole and anyone that's had me knows that Avogadro is my number one scientist out of everybody. God, I need three more. I'm gonna go... Werner Heisenberg. He was a physicist, but close enough. He did chemistry too. He did a lot of stuff back in the age of the research of nuclear physics. Along with that Neils Bohr, for pretty the same exact reason. And... I'm gonna go Antoine Lavoisier. He discovered oxygen and he did in a very ingenious manner, so I think that it would be cool to talk to him, especially now.

What is something most people don't know about you?

When's this being published? [JR: Around the end of January] My wife is pregnant.

How can we improve our school?

Add more windows. The hallways are very depressing. The different murals and the Viking thing, that helps with some color but, bashing some holes in the walls and putting windows in the place would, I think, improve my mood and a lot of other people's moods.

If you didn't teach chemistry, what would you teach?

So the joke answer would be English, because I would kill that (if you've ever had me, you know why that's a joke). The real answer is math or physics. I don't think they're as much fun as chemistry, because I don't get to do the reactions, but math or physics.

What is your biggest advice to high school students?

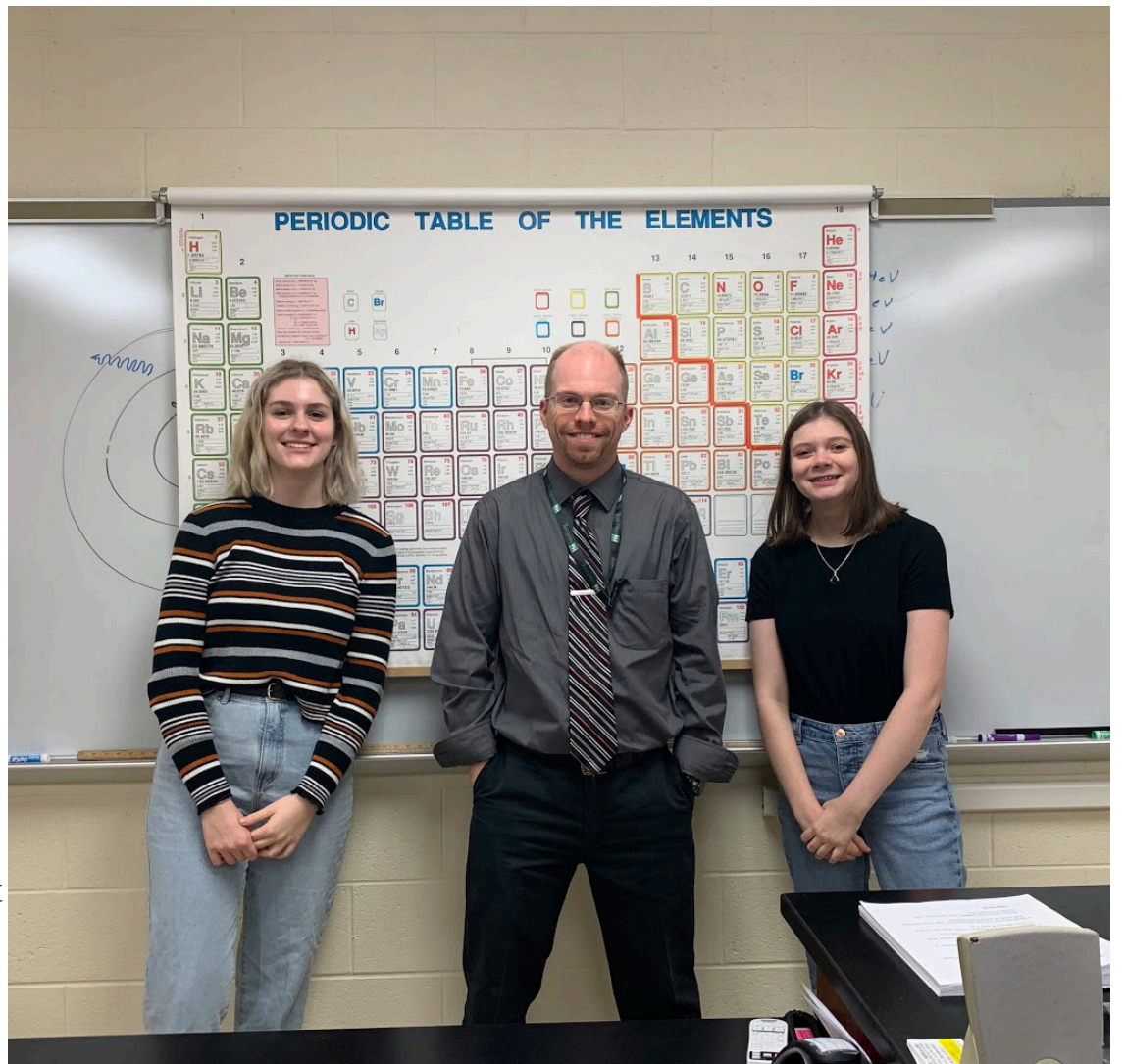
Always be positive. There's so much, especially in this day and age with social media, there's so much negativity out there. You can always find something to be positive about, no matter what happens. You can always find the positive in the situation.

Who's the best Spiderman?

Definitely, oh god what's his name, the new one. Tom Holland. He is the most likeable, the most charismatic, the least annoying. He is what Spiderman should be. He is what I envision Peter Parker being.

What's your most memorable experience teaching?

There's a lot. So in general, just seeing the kids do well. We're gonna go with that answer. I can give you a funny experience. There was that one time, I think it was two years ago, when my one class set the trash can on fire during a lab. And what made it funny was that they didn't try to put it out, everybody just instinctually took out their phones and took a picture of it. So I had to put it out with a beaker, which was amusing.



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Mrs. Maguire

Emma Nasuti and Alison Alexis

Q: How did you decide you wanted to become a teacher?

A: I started out as a criminal justice major, I think I thought I was going to law school, and then I had a couple really great English teachers in college, and they were like, "You're a really good reader of text." I also worked at a camp in the summer, with little kids, which I could never be an elementary school teacher, or a middle school teacher, and I just really like English and I really like high school kids.

Q: What is something most students don't know about you?

A: I spent most of my childhood in Chester County. It was a lot different growing up around here then. There was only one major intersection and not many stores at all. By the time college came around I was ready to get out. I spent my time in college and after living in and visiting other places and honestly made the conscious choice to come back to Chester County. It is a really nice place to grow up and also to raise kids.

Q: What's your most memorable experience from

teaching?

A: My favorite daily moments are when students are in a great discussion and we laugh and listen together. My other favorite daily moments are when we do Independent Reading and all you can hear is the flipping of the pages. No keys typing, no noise, no chatter, no screens. That's the best. I have had some really funny moments though: being confused for a student many times when I first started teaching, funny kids that pop in to classes to say hello and students who remember something that we did in class that I can't even remember.

Q: If you could have dinner with two authors, dead or alive, who would you pick?

A: I would like to hang out with Ernest Hemingway, to hear about his adventures and I think he would be fun to talk to, at least for a little while. I would also like to meet J.R.R. Tolkien because his stories got me reading a genre I never thought I would read at a young age. Seamus Heaney is a poet I would have liked to meet to talk about Ireland and themes of Irish history. A current author I would like to meet is David Sedaris. I have read all of his books and I have seen him speak a few times. But I would like to sit down and have a conversation with him because he cracks me up.

Q: What is your teaching philosophy?

A: My basic philosophy is sort of like the ones physicians take, do no harm. I want my students to be able to come to English class with an open mind and to see my classroom as a place where they can discuss and talk about things in the novels we read and beyond. My goal is that my class will make them want to take another English class, even when they don't have to.

Q: What's your biggest advice for high school students?

A: I guess I see a lot of kids walking around looking like they aren't having any fun, or aren't pursuing something that's interesting to them, and my advice would be to either find something that shows you're having fun or shows that you're pursuing an interest.

Q: What is your favorite book?

A: My favorite book from high school that I read was *The Lords of Discipline* by Pat Conroy. It was not in the curriculum, but I read it one summer and it started a summer of reading for me that changed my life. In college my favorite book was *Pride and Prejudice*. I liked that it was by a female author and addressed themes that were timely, even though it was written so long ago. And it is really funny. And of course Colin Firth in the PBS television series! The book that I have read recently that has affected the most was *Long Way Down*, by Jason Reynolds. A friend recommended it to me and it carries a powerful message written in a really cool way.

Q: What's your favorite book to teach?

A: This is a really hard question. I have read all of the books I teach many, many times. I try to think of them more as thematic units instead of the book. I also try to keep the themes current and within the times, by using discussion, journal writing and connections to other mediums.

Q: What's your favorite food?

A: Cheese, definitely!

Q: If you didn't teach English, what would you teach or what would your job be?

A: I think I would do something outside, like a career that was more outside on a regular basis. If I didn't teach English I would probably teach history, probably a lot of English teachers say that. I think gym would also be fun, but it also looks like a lot of work! So probably something outside or something I could do with my hands.

National News

2020 Democratic Candidate Profiles

By: Julie Rostock

Below are profiles of every Democratic candidate currently polling above 3%. Included is some basic information about each candidate and summaries of their views on key issues. Please note that these are only summaries of the candidates' complete plans, which can be found on their websites (provided below).

Joe Biden

Information

Polling (as of 1/13/20): 27.0%

Experience: Former Vice President

Age: 77

Education: University of Delaware, Syracuse University

Learn more: joebiden.com

Plans

Healthcare: Build upon Obama's Affordable Care Act*.

College Cost: Create free community college.

Climate Change: Promote the Green New Deal*.

Gun Control: Ban and buy back assault weapons. Mandate background checks for gun sales.

Minimum Wage: Raise minimum wage to \$15/hour.

Abortion: Supports reproductive rights, but has voted in favor of abortion restrictions in the past.

Taxes: Reverse Trump's tax cuts for corporations and the top 1%.

Marijuana: Opposes legalization, calling it a "gateway drug."



Bernie Sanders

Information

Polling (as of 1/13/20): 18.6%

Experience: US Senator from Vermont

Age: 78

Education: Brooklyn College, University of Chicago

Learn more: berniesanders.com

Plans

Signature View: Self-described socialist.

Healthcare: Medicare for All*.

College Cost: Free tuition for public colleges, trade schools, etc. Expand Pell Grants*.

Climate Change: Promote the Green New Deal*.

Gun Control: Ban and buy back assault weapons. Mandate background checks for gun sales.

Minimum Wage: Raise minimum wage to \$15/hr.

Abortion: Protect Roe v. Wade* and fund Planned Parenthood, Title X, etc.

Taxes: Pass the For the 99.8% Act: estate tax on multi-millionaires and billionaires. Increase taxes for those with a net worth over \$32 million.

Electoral College: Change it.

Marijuana: Legalize it and pardon past marijuana-related convictions.



Elizabeth Warren

Information

Polling (as of 1/13/20): 16.3%

Experience: US Senator from Massachusetts

Age: 70

Education: George Washington University, University of Houston, Rutgers Law School

Learn more: elizabethwarren.com

Plans

Healthcare: Medicare for All*.

College Cost: Fund free public college. Cancel student loan debt immediately.

Climate Change: Promote the Green New Deal* and add a "Blue New Deal" for the oceans.

Gun Control: Ban and buy back assault weapons. Mandate background checks for gun sales.

Minimum Wage: Raise minimum wage to \$15/hr.

Abortion: Protect the right to choose.

Taxes: Ultra-Millionaire Tax for the top 0.1%.

Slavery Reparations: Start a national conversation and conduct research.

Electoral College: Change it.

Marijuana: Legalize it.



Pete Buttigieg

Information

Polling (as of 1/13/20): 7.4%

Experience: Mayor of South Bend, Indiana

Age: 37

Education: Harvard University, Pembroke College

Learn more: peteforamerica.com



National News

Plans

Healthcare: Medicare for All Who Want It*.

College Cost: Debt-free college: free tuition at public universities for low- and middle-income students.

Climate Change: Promote the Green New Deal*.

Gun Control: Ban and buy back assault weapons. Mandate background checks for gun sales. Create “red flag laws” to allow friends or family to report potentially dangerous situations.

Minimum Wage: Raise minimum wage to \$15/hr.

Abortion: Protect abortion rights and include abortion under public health insurance.

Taxes: Enact a wealth tax.

Slavery Reparations: Study the possibility of reparations for African Americans.

Electoral College: Replace with a popular vote

Marijuana: Legalize it and pardon past marijuana-related convictions.

Michael Bloomberg

Information

Polling (as of 1/13/20): 5.7%

Experience: Former Mayor of New York City

Age: 77

Education: Johns Hopkins University, Harvard University

Learn more: mikebloomberg.com



Plans

Healthcare: Build upon Obama’s Affordable Care Act*.

College Cost: No change. Instead, work to reform secondary education and improve student achievement in high school.

Climate Change: Promote the Green New Deal*.

Gun Control: Ban and assault weapons. Mandate background checks for gun sales.

Andrew Yang

Information

Polling (as of 1/13/20): 3.7%

Experience: Businessman, founder of Venture for America (nonprofit to create jobs)

Age: 45

Learn more: yang2020.com



Plans

Signature Policies and Views: The Freedom Dividend: a monthly stipend of \$1,000 for each American adult.

Healthcare: Work to reduce the cost of healthcare.

College Cost: Create free or nearly-free tuition for community colleges. Control tuition for colleges that receive public funding.

Climate Change: Promote the Green New Deal*.

Gun Control: Ban and buy back assault weapons. Mandate background checks for gun sales. End active shooter drills.

Amy Klobuchar

Information

Polling (as of 1/13/20): 3.1%

Experience: US Senator from Minnesota

Age: 59

Education: Yale University, University of Chicago

Learn more: amyklobuchar.com



Plans

Healthcare: Build upon Obama’s Affordable Care Act*.

College Cost: Create free one to two year community college degrees. Expand Pell Grants*.

Climate Change: Promote the Green New Deal*.

*Terms To Know!

Affordable Care Act: Nicknamed Obamacare; a healthcare system that regulates private healthcare companies and ensures that healthcare is affordable (not free). Has been partially dismantled by the Trump administration.

Medicare for All: a healthcare system that is funded solely by a public government plan.

Medicare for All Who Want It: An opt-in healthcare program that allows consumers to choose between government-funded healthcare and private healthcare.

Green New Deal: An international plan to fight climate change, calling for the U.S. to switch to 100% renewable energy by 2030.

Roe v. Wade: 1973 decision by the Supreme Court stating that the constitution protects women’s right to have abortions.

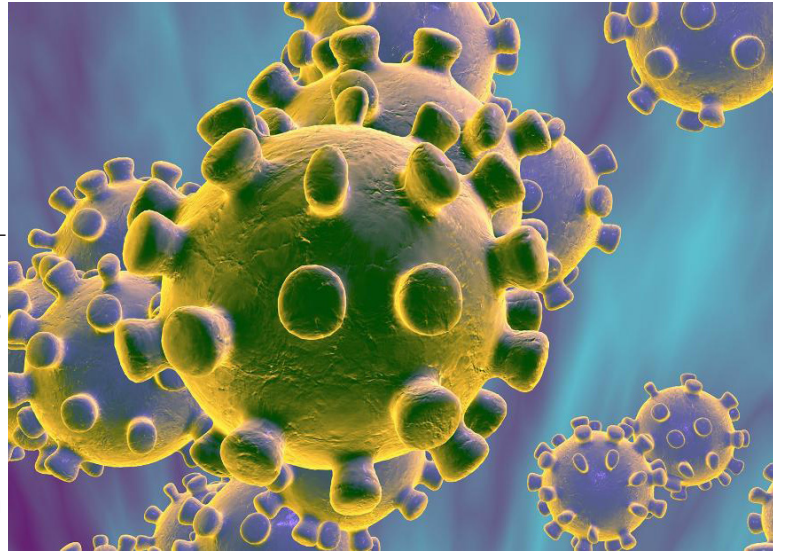
Pell Grants: Federal financial support for students in need to help them attend college.

Science and Health

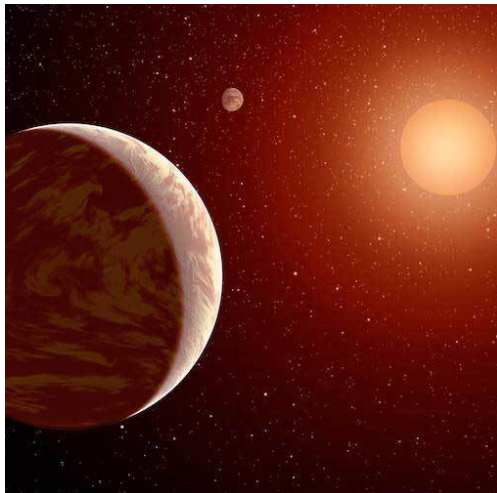
The Coronavirus

By: Claudia Frankfurth

There is a new virus outbreak called the Coronavirus, confirmed recently. The virus first emerged in China where it has already killed six people. The virus spreads from person to person which gives a chance of a widespread epidemic. All this information is relatively new and the World Health Organization is planning a meeting. The most concerning aspect is that it spreads from person to person, but the risk to the American public is low. America discovered this new virus from a man in Seattle who recently returned from China. He has respiratory symptoms similar to pneumonia. Scientists are still trying to figure out how dangerous this disease is. It seems like the people who have died from it had preexisting health conditions, so we do not know the severity of the virus. The recent surge in coronavirus cases maybe because we are paying closer attention to it or if the virus is spreading rapidly. China has not been releasing the patient's records as public knowledge which stunts our knowledge of the disease. Releasing different methods of treatment would be helpful, so America knows what they are dealing with. Now passengers arriving from China are going through extra health screenings, just to make sure we do not spread the disease internationally. When the World Health Organization meets January 22nd, they have to declare whether it is a public health emergency. They may take a less aggressive approach and just implement travel restrictions or other safety regulations. A couple of years ago, there was an outbreak of another virus in the Middle East. Nicknamed the Middle East respiratory syndrome, the outbreak did not cause any sustained human transmission. The World Health Organization did not announce the Middle East respiratory syndrome as an international emergency. It is likely that the World Health Organization will not announce that this is an international emergency because although there have been deaths the virus has not spread enough around the world. At the World Health meeting, they discussed the virus and how dangerous it is. China has restricted travel to 35 million people as the death toll rises. Chinese health officials reported on Friday that there had been 26 deaths from the outbreak and 830 cases of the coronavirus. This is a sharp increase. China also has been restricting public transportation to prevent the virus from spreading all around China. The Lunar New Year is the most celebrated holiday in China, so these travel restrictions are taking a toll on the overall mood. Hospitals are overcrowded resulting in doctors turning away some of the sick. The American and British governments on Friday urged travelers to avoid the city of Wuhan as the virus continues to exacerbate. There is now a level four warning to travelers going to China.



New Solar System... New Life?



By: Pranav Muthaiyan

Recently, phosphorus was found in a gas cloud surrounding a newborn star. What makes this discovery so important is that phosphorus is an element that is critical to sustaining life. It is currently found in the compounds phosphorus monoxide and phosphorus mononitride.

Though essential for life, most of the phosphorus on Earth

is locked up in minerals in its crust. Organisms tend to get the amount they need through their diet. Phosphorus monoxide, however, has the advantage of being soluble in water, making it far more biologically available than phosphorus locked in minerals, says study coauthor Víctor Rivilla of the Arcetri Astrophysical Observatory in Florence. If comets delivered phosphorus to the young Earth in the form of phosphorus monoxide, perhaps that helps explain how early life was able to access the element.

Finding phosphorus in the earliest phases of a star's life doesn't necessarily mean it sticks around for long enough to become incorporated into planets. So the researchers turned to evidence closer to home, taking a second look at data from the European Space Agency's now-defunct Rosetta spacecraft, which studied the comet 67P/Churyumov-Gerasimenko from 2014 to 2016. Comets are currently being analyzed for the ingredients of life, that could have helped start the birth of organisms on Earth.

"A sample return mission that collects ice from a comet and brings it to terrestrial laboratories would allow scientists to do much more detailed analyses of such simple molecules and perhaps start to fill in a few details," says George Cody, a geochemist at the Carnegie Institution for Science in Washington, D.C. For now, all we can do is wait, and see what happens.

A Cure To The Cold

By: Emma Nasuti

Scientists believe a new way of thinking may bring them closer to curing the common cold, the most common infectious disease in humans. The average adult catches a cold two to three times every year, and children tend to get colds even more often than that. To "cure it," researchers believe that rather than attacking the virus itself, they could disable a specific protein that the virus uses to spread the infection. However, scientists do not fully understand the consequences of disabling this protein yet.

A few hundred different viruses, including rhinoviruses, can cause a cold, making it very difficult to find a cure; plus, these viruses can quickly mutate to become resistant to drugs. These reasons explain why scientists at Stanford and the University of California, San Francisco have begun looking at the human host for a solution, rather than at the various individual viruses. In order for a disease to spread, the virus has to hijack a human's cells to reproduce and spread the infection. So, scientists began trying to find which gene produces the protein that this virus normally hijacks. Scientists from Stanford University School of Medicine executed many experiments and repeatedly observed that the virus needed the gene SETD3 in order to take over the cell. This came as a surprise because they already knew the gene SETD3 also could affect actin proteins, which help muscles contract, but its role in viral infections was new information. The scientists then tested this theory on mice and human lung cells; in both cases, neither cell got sick from the virus because the virus could not replicate. They even tried the experiment with other more serious diseases and had similar results, which may mean they could prevent these other diseases as well.

However, because the gene that they disabled also affects muscle contraction, the mice in the tests were not able to push their offspring out of the womb during birth. This means there may be other problems related to this one in humans when the gene is disabled. So far, scientists do not fully understand the consequences. Therefore, the best hope for a drug that will cure the common cold is one that only disables or destroys the protein when it interacts with a viral one or a drug that blocks the interaction altogether. However, the development of a drug will take time.

World News

Iran Strikes Down Ukrainian Passenger Jet

By: Lane Aubert

During the week of January 6th, Iran launched more than a dozen ballistic missiles, targeting at least two U.S. military bases. Many experts prophesied that Iran's retaliation against the United States' killing of Qasem Suleimani in an airstrike at Baghdad's international airport, but many overestimated how long it would be before America faced the consequences of its actions. Javad Zarif, Iran's Foreign Minister, justified the attacks as Iran defending itself. "Iran took & concluded proportionate measures in self-defense under Article 51 of UN Charter targeting base from which cowardly armed attack against our citizens & senior officials were launched. We do not seek escalation or war, but will defend ourselves against any aggression," he tweeted on the seventh. As the tensions between the United States and Iran rose in the past two weeks, we've been constantly reminded of the effects of war and long term conflict. Perhaps the most tragic of these reminders is the death of the innocent, most notably in the crash of a Ukrainian passenger plane.

On the same day that Iran targeted U.S. forces, Ukraine International Airlines Flight 752 ended in disaster. The flight was bound for Kyiv when it was hit by an Iranian missile and crashed near Tehran. It was in flames before it hit the ground, however, no distress signal appeared to be sent. All 176 of the passengers and crew died in the accident, including 82 Iranians, 57 Canadians, and 11 Ukrainians.

Iran originally held that this catastrophe was caused by a technical error before publicly revealing that the crash was a result of their error. The story of technical error was not accepted by a large portion of the international community, with

Canada's Justin Trudeau and Britain's Boris Johnson both stating that Iran had likely shot the plane by accident. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo confirmed on the 10th that the United States and its allies had intelligence that the plane had been shot down. After three days of suspicions, the truth about the Ukrainian passenger jet came out. The Iranian military issued a statement announcing that the Revolutionary Guard had accidentally shot down the jet. They claimed that a defense system operator was told that cruise missiles had been fired and misidentified the plane as one. A proximity missile was launched and the plane broke into pieces when it hit the ground. Soon after the announcement, President Hassan Rouhani tweeted to apologize for the incident. "The Islamic Republic of Iran deeply regrets this disastrous mistake. My thoughts and prayers go to all the mourning families. I offer my sincerest condolences," he wrote. Despite this apology and the claim that the plane was shot down by human error, Iran will likely face demands from countries whose citizens were killed. Foreign Minister Prystaiko of Ukraine told Reuters that "We have created this group of foreign ministers from the grieving nations. On Jan. 16, we will meet in person in London to discuss the ways, including legal, how we are following this up, how we are prosecuting them."

In Iran, this tragedy has fueled protests against the country's clerical rulers. The Iranian government's lack of clarity over their involvement in the crash of Flight 752 caused agitation in the country, which is now experiencing its second wave of demonstrations against the government in less than three months.

Australia Wildfires

By: Alison Alexis

Bushfires have been raging across Australia since the fire season started in late July. Al-

though the fires have devastated all areas of Australia, they have particularly affected the state of New South Wales. The smoke has poured into major cities, such as Sydney and Melbourne, which has made the air quality eleven times the hazardous level to breathe.

Australia has an annual fire season during its summer season. The hot, dry weather creates the perfect conditions for fires to start, naturally or unnaturally. A simple lightning strike can set a drought-affected forest ablaze. Human error can also be a cause of bushfires. The South Wales police have charges at least 24 people with starting bushfires since November.

As of Monday January 6th, 136 fires were burning across New South Wales, 69 of which are not contained by firefighters. At least 1,588 homes have been destroyed and about 650 have been damaged in New South Wales alone. Over 7.3 million hectares have been engulfed by flames across the six Australian states. The land area of the fires is equivalent to Belgium and Haiti combined. At least 27 people have died as a result of these fires, many of who were volunteer firefighters. At least 18 died in New South Wales, three in Victoria, and another three in South Australia.

Australia's wildlife are no strangers to these devastating fires. An estimated half a billion animals have been affected by these fires. Up to one billion have died. Professor Chris Dickman of the University of Sydney says, "The true mortality is likely to be substantially higher than those estimated." According to Federal Environment Minister Sussan Ley, a third of the koala population has died due to these fires. Australian politician Leon Bignell says, "We met some of the many families and individuals who are homeless following the fire and we all need to work together to get them back on their feet as soon as possible. The mental scars though may never heal." This fire has not only devastated the country environmentally, but it has physically and mentally scarred countless Australian citizens.

Australia is currently in the middle of its summer season, which makes it extremely difficult to contain the fires. Some officials have explained that it is futile to attempt to put out the fires since the country is in a state of drought. The state of Victoria declared a state of emergency earlier this month, following the brief state of emergency in Queensland in November. Prime Minister Scott Morrison revealed a \$1.39 billion fund to rebuild and support communities affected by the fires. Treasurer of Australia, Josh Frydenberg added another \$347 million to the fund. \$4,200 will go to each volunteer firefighters fighting these horrible fires for more than 10 days. The United States, Canada, and New Zealand have sent additional firefighters to help the overwhelmed Australians. Australian military assistance has been sent in to aid in search-and-rescue, evacuation, and clean-up.

Although Australia is almost 10,000 miles away, there are still things we can do to help. To help those who have been forced to flee their homes, donate money to the Australian Red Cross, Salvation Army Australia, or St. Vincent de Paul Society. Donate food or money to Foodbank, Giviit, or donate money to First Nations Communities' GoFundMe. To help the firefighters battling the blazes, donate to New South Wales Rural Fire Service, Victoria's Country Fire Authority, the Country Fire Service in South Australia, or the Rural Fire Brigades Association in Queensland. Finally, to help the wildlife, donate to WIRES, the World Wildlife Fund Australia, Port Macquarie Koala Hospital's GoFundMe, or the RSPCA New South Wales.



Cartoon Caption Contest

The Norse Code is pleased to announce the first monthly cartoon caption contest! Create your own caption for the following cartoon, and the best caption will win!

How to Enter Contest:

1. Scan the QR Code with your phone (or, go to the google forms link)
2. Fill out the google form with your name, grade, and caption
3. Caption must be 250 characters or less
4. Caption must be SCHOOL APPROPRIATE!

Google Form link: <https://forms.gle/XxyJ4degFLABwF2b7>



Cartoon by: Kylie Hechinger

NORSE CODE WINTER EDITION

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Interested in writing for the Norse Code? Contact Fatema Mun- 21munf@student.wcasd.net! Meetings are held every Wednesday during homeroom in 309.

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