

MARCH 2020-JUNE 2021  
VOL. 15 ISSUE 1

# THE MAROON

COLORING YOUR CONVERSATION

NEW PALTZ HIGH SCHOOL  
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Hey all!

This past year has, uh, definitely been a year? I don't know how to describe it. We just experienced, like, a pandemic. AN ACTUAL PANDEMIC. That's weird, right?

Every stage had new experiences. From absolute quarantine, where the grocery store seemed like a warzone and we were all obsessed with tigers for some reason, to online school, sitting in silence and darkness in breakout rooms waiting for someone to speak. I think we can finally admit that those breakout rooms were *silent*.

Our lives will never feel the same, but there is a sense of normalcy returning. Included in that return is the paper version of *The Maroon*! This singular issue will be a bit of a recap of the past year of craziness. With a mix of articles you'll recognize from our website coupled with new pieces, we hope this acts as a keepsake of sorts for you to remember this unforgettable year.

This issue will recount quarantine, remote learning, the 2020 Presidential Election, The Capitol Riot, and more, as well as looking to the future with the Senior Map.

We are so happy to be back in print, and personally, I am excited for the future of not just the paper, but the school as a whole. For all its horrors, the past year did shine a light on some of the significant changes necessary in our world, and I think/hope we are going to see them implemented. Read on for the staff's reflections of a hectic 15 months.

I just want to thank Mr. Neden and the entire newspaper staff for keeping us going during this hectic year. It has taken a lot of effort and motivation but we've done some really great things this year and I couldn't be happier. Thanks so much for reading, and (if you're fully vaccinated) go give someone a hug.

Enjoy,  
Adam Koplik



A collection of images from Nov. 2020 when NPHS re-opened for in-person classes. - Photos via Aidan Sheedy

# Six Feet Apart

ANONYMOUS  
From 4/23/2020

Six feet apart becomes six miles apart when an infinite stretch of time becomes 3-6 months.

The mask feels like it's choking me, even after my shaking hands rip it off in a panic.

Virtual farewells are the most painful.

Living with the constant wondering of "will I get to visit one more time" has cemented its overwhelming presence in my mind.

Two hourglasses have been turned, but one is running much faster than the other.

I stand six feet away, watching helplessly as time slips away.



Illustration by Emma Bakker

# The Maroon

Coloring your conversation

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# Wisdom from Coronavirus Survivors

MATTHIAS LAI  
Staff Writer  
From 4/22/2020

The world is on high alert, as the Coronavirus Pandemic makes its rapid and deadly progression through the world. For most of us, the biggest effect it has had is no school, we can't see our friends and maybe we had to cancel plans for spring break. We are still not seeing the more drastic impact of the pandemic, compared to cities where people aren't even allowed to leave their houses and hospitals are overwhelmed with COVID-19 patients. But millions of people faced the virus before we were even thinking of it. Some say they're the lucky ones for facing it so early. Others say they weren't so lucky, because the full effects were unknown. Either way, we have a lot to learn from the front lines of the battle against the Coronavirus.

Joshua Rock lives in Detroit, MI; a month ago he knew he got the virus from a dinner he attended where another guest had just come back from Ireland with a cough. When he went to get tested, he was denied a test because his symptoms all pointed to Coronavirus, but he was too healthy to need any sort of treatment. He began his 14-day self-isolation, and by now he has recovered.

Clement Chow's case was not so

mild. Contracted around the same time, his symptoms began slowly—a low-grade fever—and only escalated as time passed. Once he started coughing up blood and realized his blood oxygen was dangerously low, he rushed to the hospital, where he was put on oxygen and separated from his family. For the next 5 days, he would stay in the ICU alone, tended to by nurses in suits and masks, unable to see his family. Upon discharge, he had to do 10 more days of self-isolation and began recovery, but

and contact friends. But they are all safe, and that is what these measures are in place to insure. These three people, who have all had personal experiences with COVID-19, all much earlier than us, share one piece of advice: The Coronavirus should be taken very seriously.

For Chow, even though he is relieved to have gotten over the worst of it so early (he was the first COVID-19 patient in his hospital's ICU), he still sees the importance of the guidelines put in place. "After I'm better

*"After I'm better I will continue to practice strict physical distancing. We don't know enough about immunity to act like we are fully immune after recovery."*  
- Clement Chow

even now he hasn't fully healed.

Ariel Montero is an NPHS student who moved to Spain for what was supposed to be a half-year stay. But that could be extended, and right now he's not allowed to leave his house. Over a month ago, the city he's living in, Sanlúcar De Barrameda, imposed strict traveling bans to help stop the spread of the virus. For now, Montero and his family are cooped up in a 4-room apartment, passing their food through bleach for extra insurance and finding innovative ways to spend their time

I will continue to practice strict physical distancing. We don't know enough about immunity to act like we are fully immune after recovery," Chow said. He was sick. He was alone. And he was scared. It's an experience he never wants to have to go through again, and he hopes no one else has to either. He urges, "COVID-19 is crushing, both physically and emotionally. Please stay at home and practice physical distancing. Keeping more people healthy mitigates undue risk to our healthcare providers who have families of their own."

For Rock, the low came just before his mom called him. He was in pain, exhausted, and had a raging fever. As she prayed over him, his fever broke, an event he can only describe as a miracle, and from then on he experienced some aches ("like I had just done 12 seconds with Mohammad Ali"), but his path to recovery was clear. Now his focus is on helping others. He cautions everyone to wear a mask, even if you aren't at risk, because "you're not out to protect yourself. You're out to protect everyone around you." At one point, he was anxious that he might die because the virus hit much harder than he had expected, and he is healthy, fit and relatively young, so his concerns are for the people most at risk, like the elderly and unfit, who will take it much worse than he did. Montero shares that sentiment. A healthy teenager, the risk for him is low. But he isn't thinking about himself right now. "For me being locked inside isn't even the worst of it. It's knowing that there are people who don't care and because of the people are going to keep dying by the thousands." We are in a scary world right now, and it is imperative that we do our part to stop the spread. Because as Clement Chow puts it: "I know I am one of the lucky ones – I survived. Others have not been so lucky."



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Recount the toilet paper hoarding and more as we remember quarantines and the Spring of 2020

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Look back on last summer's historic Black Lives Matter movement



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The Senior Map is here! Check out the future of the Class of 2021



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Read the staff's immediate reactions to the January 6 Insurrection at the US Capitol



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# What Quarantine Has Taught Me

REETI PATEL  
Writer  
From 4/22/2020

I think we can all truthfully say that 2020 has been one of the most eventful years this century; or keeping the pure irony of the situation in mind, it has been dreadfully uneventful as we all (hopefully) cower in our houses in fear of the coronavirus. Quarantine is definitely not what was expected this year. At the beginning of a new decade, we were a hopeful audience, waiting for 2020 to be as fruitful as promised. Instead, we've spent nearly a solid month sitting at home, taking online classes, and basically drinking bottles of Purell because your dad is super paranoid... or is that just me?

This pandemic has honestly been the most eye-opening experience of my life.

In the 32 days that I've sat at home waiting for this quarantine to be lifted, I've watched unprecedented human behavior unfold before my eyes. I've watched people throwing punches over toilet paper, mothers crying over empty diaper aisles, and the voices of Italians flooding the streets as they sing from their balconies. I've watched people beat innocent Asians in the streets (why do we never talk about racism against Asian people by the way?), the governor of New York begging for ventilators and healthcare professionals from across the globe coming together to fight this seemingly unbeatable fire. Situations like these bring out the best and the worst in people, and as children of the 21st century, we get to watch it all unfold in front of our eyes.

I'm positive that this quarantine should be taken as a learning experience. We've seen what can happen when we all come together, and what can happen when

we spend our time fighting each other. We've seen what happens to nature when humanity leaves the equation, and we've seen what happens when a businessman is our president. I hope that this horrifying experience can be taken with its nearly invisible silver linings. As scary as this is, if this experience changes nothing, I will be much more concerned about the future of our world.

## KEY DATE

MARCH

11

The WHO officially declares COVID-19 a pandemic and the NBA suspends its season. Two days later, Ulster County schools shut down for "at least" two weeks.

## What Does It Mean To Be A Hero Today?

CALLA SAVELSON  
Writer  
From 4/20/2020

In a time wrought with many uncertainties and stresses, it is important to work together, to support each other, and to find good in the seemingly all-bad. We are living in a global crisis—every single family in the world is dealing with what would have been unfathomable a few months ago, countless lives are being reinvented under challenging circumstances, and healthcare workers are putting their lives on the line for our safety. It is impossible to avoid feelings of dread when every single conversation, news story, and article we consume circles around fear, trauma, stress, and death. So, let's find something good: something worth our attention, that will remind us of our humanity and keep us sane. Something that will prove to us that, even though the sense of the unknown is overwhelming, we still have each other.

Let's start with the obvious: our health care workers are heroes. Working harder than ever in conditions that seem dystopian and unreal, and fighting for their patients lives while also having to maintain their wellness. Constantly putting themselves in harm's way, dedicated to a job that seems impossible and frightening, but is truly necessary. We are lucky enough to say that our health care positions are filled with people who are constantly stepping up and performing unimaginable tasks – people who just a few months ago could never have imagined that this is what they would be dealing with.

Our teachers are heroes. With schools closed and millions of students home, our teachers have had to reevaluate their jobs, what they are needed for, and what they can do with unique influence. How can we make distance learning work for everyone? Honestly, we can't. There are countless variables in each home that will contribute to a student's online education, not to mention the fact that every single family is in a crisis. But our teachers are in a crisis too, with their own families, children, and stressors that they have to deal with everyday. And, at least in my case, my teachers have been a grounding constant, ensuring that mental health is number one on the priority list.

Our influencers are stepping up into the role of our heroes. Many of them already have a fan base who support and love them which makes them reaching out even more important. Celebrities are putting on Online Concerts, Disney Sing-a-



Signs thanking health care workers popped up in neighborhoods throughout the nation. - Photo via Adam Koplik

longs, promoting followers to stay home and practice social distancing. They are a voice of comfort through all of the chaos.

Parents are our heroes! Millions of parents are home right now either employed, or unemployed and having to provide round-the-clock childcare. If they are an essential worker, countless older siblings have had to step in to be the support for the younger child, while also keeping up with school work. They are most definitely our heroes. Parents of children who have disabilities, and the children themselves, who often have extreme needs for a solid routine are our heroes, having to constantly overcome daily struggles while also carrying the burden of stress at all hours. Parents who are unemployed are our heroes. With a limited source of income, these parents have to be stronger than ever for their children and deserve a huge amount of support and recognition.

In a world that looks like this one, we are all heroes. You can be a doctor, a teacher, an influencer, a parent, or maybe

something else entirely. Maybe you've been laid off, maybe you live alone, or you are suffering from mental illness, or perhaps you are just a high school kid who is stuck in the house with your family all day. You are a hero for staying home and practicing social distancing, for being strong for those around you, and staying away from your loved ones for safety. You are a hero for picking up the phone to call someone who might be suffering, for finding a new hobby or project to maintain your mental health, for reading a book, or getting really into a TV series. We are heroes for getting up each day, for being alive, and for having each other. Everyone can be a hero, and it's important now more than ever that we don't forget.

### KEY DATE

APRIL

28

*The United States reports its 1,000,000th COVID-19 case. Three days later, New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo announces schools will not reopen for the 2019-20 academic year.*

## The Civil Rights Movement of 2020

ADAM KOPLIK  
Editor-in-Chief  
From 6/24/2020

As I write this, I'm sitting at home, watching TV, seeing fires burn throughout the nation. Yet, in my backyard, it's nothing but blue skies and green grass. If I want to, I could shut off the television, close Twitter, and ignore everything in the country. I have that ability. I have that privilege. I'm a white male in New Paltz, New York. Sure, protests are going on, but I know I don't have to worry about them affecting me personally. I know that my life will be practically unchanged by the turmoil. If I want to, I can screen myself from the rest of the world's issues, and focus on getting my homework done. But this is not the time for shielding. This is not the time for being neutral on issues. This is a time to make your voice heard, and that's what I'm doing. Even though it's through a school newspaper, that's what I'm doing.

George Floyd was murdered. That's not an opinion or a political statement. George Floyd was killed by a policeman, while three other officers, who took the oath to serve and protect Floyd, watched it happen. Watching the video of Floyd's death brought tears to my eyes. I saw a man die. The murder of a man over a suspected forged \$20 bill. Is that the price of a life? As the officer knelt on Floyd's neck, the analogy was too accurate. Our country has some great quali-

### KEY DATE

MAY

25

*George Floyd, a 46-year-old African American man, is murdered by former Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin, sparking racial injustice protests across the world.*

ties. But it is riddled with problems, and these issues have been ingrained into our systems. Racism in this nation has never gone away; it's just been made less obvious. Sure, slavery and Jim Crow laws are gone, but that doesn't mean that we are equal.

According to the 2018 US Census Data, the American poverty rate is 11.8%. However, the poverty rate among African-Americans people shoots up to 20.8%, with it lowering to 10.1% for whites. According to a 2016 Survey of Consumer Finances, the average wealth of white people is \$900.6K. That number plummets to \$139.9K for black people. The same survey showed that the top 10 percent of Americans own over 77% of the nation's wealth, yet 88.5% of them are white. Just 2.2% are black, despite black people making up 13% of the population. In a truly equal society, the percent of a population made up by each race would be equivalent to their appearance in each percentile. A lot of this inequality has to do with years of redlining from banks that made it harder for families in predominantly black districts to get loans. But it doesn't stop there.

A 2001 estimate from the Bureau of Justice Statistics showed that 1 in 3 black men in America are likely to be imprisoned at some point in their life, compared to 1 in 17 white men and 1 in 9 of all men. For women, it's more of the same. Despite 1 in 56 women likely to be imprisoned, that number ends up at 1 in 18 when talking about black women, and down to 1 in 117 for white women.

Systemic racism is apparent in our education system as well. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, the average graduation rate for white people in the US is 89%, 4% higher than the national average. For African-Americans, the rate goes down to 79%. These systems fall into policing too, which has catalyzed the protests. In 2015, according to MappingPoliceViolence.org, 36% of unarmed people killed by police were black. Almost 1 in 3 black people killed by police in 2015 were unarmed, and out of the 104 unarmed deaths, only 13 officers were charged with a crime (details on all 104 killings can be found here <https://mappingpoliceviolence.org/unarmed>). Our systems allow for this cycle of racism to keep black people down and keep white people on the tip of the racial hierarchy.

Now that brings us to what is going on around our nation today. While the protests are for George Floyd, they are more-so a product of years of oppression. Years of unequal treatment from the police. Years

of innocent black men being killed without justice. African-Americans in this nation are fed up. Protests are intended to cause discomfort. They've tried peaceful protest – which, it should be noted, a vast majority of them have been – and were ignored. Colin Kaepernick tried kneeling during the National Anthem for this reason. He wasn't trying to disrespect veterans. He was trying to bring light to police brutality. Not only were his pleas disregarded, but he lost his job for it. Yet now those who opposed him want to call for nothing but peaceful protests? Those who told LeBron James to, "shut up and dribble." Those who told celebrities who make political speeches during the Oscars or Grammys that it's not the time? This is what happens.

The leader of the free world is making statements through Twitter where he looks to do nothing but further divide the nation. Videos are circulating of police officers instigating violence in some areas, breaking up peaceful protests, leading to predictably violent responses. Press have been arrested for doing their job. Yet, Donald Trump is hiding behind a screen and making things worse, only showing his face when he decides it's time to violate the first amendment rights of peaceful protesters so he can have his little photo-op. The President of the United States directed police to gas a completely non-violent protest, as he gave a speech saying he'll be sending the United States military into Washington, DC.

As Martin Luther King Jr put it, "a riot is the language of the unheard." The places with little to no violence, are not the places where riot patrol pulls up with shields, guns, and batons. They're places like Flint, Michigan, where the Chief of Police set down his weapons and asked



New Paltz High School history teacher Albert Cook gives a passionate speech during a protest in Kingston – Photo via Oliver ten Broeke

the protesters, "how can we help you?". The places where there is communication and compassion between cops and protesters. I know nowhere near all police are bad people, but it's a lot more than a few "bad apples." When every experience you have with a cop, you're treated like a threat just because of your skin color, like so many black men and women in this nation are, you're going to start to think there are no good cops. The system is broken. Until good cops speak out against bad cops, and not just when there's a video, but when they witness injustice themselves, there can't be equality in our nation. The police are supposed to protect the people in their community. No one should be scared of a police officer.

Equality should not only be possible in utopian sci-fi novels. Racism is ingrained in American history, and it's time we stop acting as if it has gone away. With protests going on not just in all 50 states, but throughout the world, the Black Lives Matter movement is not going away anytime soon, and it shouldn't. And responding to pleas of Black Lives Matter with "All Lives Matter" is pure ignorance. No one in the BLM movement is saying all lives don't matter. They're saying that all lives can't matter, until black lives matter. When a house is on fire, you don't put water on houses a block away because all houses matter, you put out the fire. Black men and women have been ignored in this nation for decades. It's time to listen.

## NEW YORK

**ST. LAWRENCE UNIVERSITY:** Quinn Ratynski

**CLARKSON UNIVERSITY:** Reed Freer

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**HAMILTON COLLEGE:** Eliza Behrke, Adam Koplik

**SUNY OSWEGO:** Jack Hyland, Hawke Kosofsky, Samantha Ness, Griffin Rynne

**SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY:** Madison Harp

**SUNY COLLEGE OF ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE AND FORESTRY:** Rebecca Ingrassia

**SUNY BROCKPORT:** Olivia Baker, Cate Osterweil

**SUNY BUFFALO STATE COLLEGE:** Marley Gertler

**UNIVERSITY AT BUFFALO:** Vivian Chesky, Liam Yess

**ONONDAGA COMMUNITY COLLEGE:** Gage Mowen

**ALFRED STATE COLLEGE:** Julien Higgs

**ITHACA COLLEGE:** Aidan Grinevics

**SUNY CORTLAND:** Caleb Carr, Lauryn Ronk

**BINGHAMTON UNIVERSITY:** Josh Clinton, Jessica Dugatkin, Nikolas Knobloch (Spring), Sean Nielson, Luke Sackett, John Weber

**HARTWICK COLLEGE:** Caitlin Coiteux

**SUNY COBLESKILL:** Jesse Avila-Nativi

**SUNY SCHENECTADY:** Victor Scoppa

**SKIDMORE COLLEGE:** Ben Barresi

**UNION COLLEGE:** Jack Rubin

**RENSSELAER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE:** Aidan Hoover, Ariel Montero-Majthenyi, Joseph Richards, Ella Schwartz

**UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY:** Rachel Drillings, Zoe Falcone, Ashya Farris, Isabella Fokas, Taylor Hill, Queen Irving, Alec Trifilo

**THE COLLEGE OF SAINT ROSE:** Kieran Weinstein

**HUDSON VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE:** Lindsey Brenner

**BARD COLLEGE:** Lio Capellaro

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**UNDECIDED/DIDN'T RESPOND**  
 Joshua Alicea, Jessica Ashley, Brandon Avramis, Jared Bilyou, Bany Bonilla, Madison Brooks, Connor Bruley, Jacob Bunton, Cameryn Burke, Damoni Carruthers-Little, Aleese Crocco, August Crouser, Lucy Curtis, Niaki Dial, Phillip Dobosh, Stephanie Dobosh, Anthony Dortono, Lexcia Eisenhardt, Christopher Ellis, Rojaun Fearon, Mayson Forstell, Austin Friedle, Benjamin Fromm, Gloria Gonzalez-Mora, Cecilia Harris, Dylan Herter, Daniel Hizby, Cora Holloway, Aidan Johnson, Kaitlyn Keane, Bastiaan Keessen, James Kelly, Natasha Kulcsar, Brendan Loughran, Sophia Maddalena, Luigi Mazzella, Kayla Newman, Frank Pecoraro, Eric Pollard, Joshua Renzo, Jared Ricketson, Antonio Stevens, Ryan Stryker, Steven Suttle, Jax Thompson, Elizabeth Urraca, Dakota Van Alphen, Justin Velez, Shang Zheng

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**THE CITY COLLEGE OF NEW YORK:** Julius Forte, Jack Kaplan

**FORDHAM UNIVERSITY:** Matthias Lai

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**FASHION INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY:** Charlie Sackett

**NEW YORK UNIVERSITY:** Samantha Landrum (Starting in 2022), Reeti Patel, Emilyn Wheeler, Hannah Wynters-Wright

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**PACE UNIVERSITY:** Georgia Benedict, Griffin Tietje

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 MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY: Daijah Bell

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 TEMPLE UNIVERSITY: Olivia Herman, JP Trapani

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 QUINNIPIAC UNIVERSITY: Aidan Sheedy  
 UNIVERSITY OF HARTFORD: Riley Brutvan, Andrew Geher, Jesus Martinez, Alejandro Rodriguez-Murcia  
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 MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE: Asher Brownstein, Lake Willett  
 NORWICH UNIVERSITY: Ashley Thacker  
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 UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE: Maeve Flusser

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 BROWN UNIVERSITY: Hope Nitza

**MASSACHUSETTS**  
 BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY: Talia Feinsod  
 CLARK UNIVERSITY: Ryan Hovey  
 NICHOLS COLLEGE: Logan Pece  
 NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY: Joaquin Crosby-Lizarde, Ruthie Crosby-Lizarde, Jonah Nidorf  
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**SOUTH CAROLINA**  
 COASTAL CAROLINA UNIVERSITY: Cole Struzziari

**TEXAS**  
 UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN: Riley Corzine

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 NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND, GALWAY: Jackson Soper

**DENMARK**  
 KUNSTHØJSKOLEN I HOLBÆK: Phoenix Grosell

**ITALY**  
 JOHN CABOT COLLEGE: Josie Gravatt

**OTHER**

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**GAP YEAR**  
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# New Paltz High School Reflects on Remote Learning Amid the COVID-19 Pandemic

AIDAN SHEEDY  
Staff Writer  
From 11/1/2020

It has been 8 months since a student has set foot in New Paltz High School. Throughout the struggles of the Covid-19 pandemic, high school students have relied on self-motivation during online learning. However, students are not the only ones adapting to the new school year. Teachers are also finding it difficult to spontaneously change their approach so that their lessons are feasible while remote.

“I feel like a first-year teacher,” says 30-year veteran chemistry teacher and student government advisor Stephanie Costello. “There is a disconnect between teachers and students. A student will never see me, and I’ll never see them, yet they can still do well in my class.”

The New Paltz Central School District has adopted Google Meet, a video communication service first developed by Google in 2017. The app allows students to mute and/or shut off their cameras while still present in the chat. Costello has become concerned about this habit because she is “scared that our interpersonal connections will change.”

Long time English teacher, Joe Dolan, feels similarly with Costello that there is a void between teachers and their students this school year. “I’m finding more and more that you have to spend time with students individually,” he says. “You only have 40 minutes in a class online, so you’re not building the relationships as quickly

as you would in a normal school year.” In addition to interpersonal relationships, teachers are also finding it more challenging to balance their work and personal life.

“It has become arduous,” Dolan says. “I’m still figuring it out.” This school has brought an even more massive demand for teachers than ever before. Many teachers have been saying that they work on weekdays from dawn to dusk. Stephanie Costello says, “I’m a doctor always on call. I’m grading everything 2-3 times a day, answering questions, and giving lessons the entire day without a break.”

While it’s evident that remote learning has made an already stressful job even more stressful, students at New Paltz High School have similar feelings. “The most changed aspect this year is peer-to-peer relationships,” says 4-year student government representative and Senior Class President Hope Nitza. “Students have no idea who they are in a class with anymore, and it’s extremely frustrating.” With students not being able to interact personally, the school’s shared sense of belonging has diminished. Nitza says, “even freshmen have not had a sense of community. This is going to take a big hit for sure.”

Amidst the Covid-19 shut down, schools are having a hard time involving the students without the aid of clubs and sports. “There’s no way to get involved,” Nitza says, “everything involved in a college application is missing.”

Hope Nitza is not the only one who realizes the critical role of extracurriculars. In fact, many students believe that extracurricular activities hold more pur-

pose and substance than traditional classes. Luckily, New Paltz High School Principal, Dr. Mario Fernández, says, “If I can help it, I am not going to allow us to lose any of our classes that a lot of young people use to explore and empower themselves.”

Looking for a sense of normality, students should feel excited about going back to school— even the students that used to say they hate it. The dubbed “hybrid learning” plan has been set in motion. As of press time, students in the New Paltz Central School District will be returning to a structured in-person classroom starting Thursday, November 12.

“There’s something electric when people come together,” Fernández says. Ideally, Dr. Fernández is looking to acquire new technology to allow students staying remote and the students in hybrid to collaborate and interact with each other during a live class. “If I get my way,” he says, “We’re looking at new technology like Logistics and Zoom Now that will bring the remote students into the classroom.”

In terms of concerns for a hybrid system, Dr. Fernández has his priorities in students’ screen time. “We are going back to school,” he says, “but the reality is that you will have homework that requires you to be on the computer anyway.”

It has become a more common theme among high school students that they can’t find as much time for the lighter things in life due to a combination of workload and strictly being on a computer. As Dr. Fernández notices this in conversations with students, he has realized, “you do your work, but you gotta be able to play too. I

don’t want to take away your playtime.”

As peculiar and dark the world has been, Joe Dolan has come around to see the optimistic side of things. He says, “I think that we’re going to come out of this, reflect on it, and find out what worked and what didn’t.” In a world where elementary school students have to be responsible for their own education and teachers are working around the clock every day, there is hope that progress is possible.

## KEY DATE

SEPT

8

*New Paltz High School students begin their classes for the 2020-21 academic year, with one slight caveat - it's virtual.*

# The Election of the Century

QUEEN IRVING  
Writer  
From 1/8/2021

On November 7, 2020 the presidential election race was finally called after four exhausting days. Vice President Joe Biden took the win with a total of 306 electoral votes, including votes from the Republican leading swing states Nevada and Georgia, while Incumbent President Donald Trump lost with 232 electoral votes. Biden, the Democratic candidate won the popular vote with roughly 75 million votes, 5 million ahead of Trump, his Republican opponent who won about 70 million votes.

On social media platforms like Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook, celebrations for the new president-elect broke out soon after the election was called. Citizens in cities like New York City, Atlanta, Los Angeles, Washington D.C., and more all across the country were excited to hear the news, representing flags, dancing, playing music, and celebrating the outcome of the most important election this country has ever faced. Here in the Town of New Paltz,

citizens also rejoiced. “I personally am relieved with the results of the election, it feels like a weight has been lifted off my chest,” says 16 year old New Paltz High School student Kendall Lucchesi.

While a weight may have been lifted after the election, Kendall acknowledges that there are other battles that still affect her. “[With] the recent nomination of Amy Coney Barrett, I’ve been stressed about my personal rights as a woman,” Kendall says. “Knowing that Mr. Trump doesn’t care about anyone who isn’t a white straight cis-male has made the stress increasing worse.”

Kendall continues, “but now that Joe Biden has been elected, I feel my rights are a little more protected.” Amy Coney Barrett was nominated by President Trump in October of 2020, and when she was appointed people were angry. She has expressed her belief that abortion should be illegal completely and if a woman has an abortion, she should be sentenced jail time. Taking away women’s reproductive rights is not a good step to unify a country.

Speaking of unity, New Paltz citizens are hopeful for the next four years. “Hopefully in the next four years we see

a shift and change in the racism in the country,” Says 18 year old New Paltz High School alumni Sharai Martinez. “hopefully [Joe Biden] unifies the country and that this pandemic is handled the way it should have been a long time ago.”

As we have seen in the past eight months, the Covid-19 pandemic has taken a toll on everyone’s lives. Whether you’re a student, someone with underlying health issues, or knows someone who has contracted or unfortunately died from the virus, it is slowing the country down. The fear that has been instilled in American citizens and undocumented people in America alike is ridiculous.

But this election is not all celebratory. Many local residents are also worried about what the next four years may bring. Coleen Erazo, mother to New Paltz alumni Alexis Erazo, explains that, “I’m afraid of Trump supporters and also afraid to put full trust in any politicians that they will follow through on important policies.”

In the past four years, America has seen the dedication of Trump’s supporters. The bigotry and hate that has been spread is truly astonishing. In the same vein as Era-

zo, Kendall claims that “Joe Biden faces the daunting challenge of reunifying the people of our divided country.” She confides that, “My worst fear is that the divide may grow, but I’m hopeful that [Joe Biden] will be successful in healing our country.” Sharai’s response was similar. “I’m scared that the people elected won’t keep their promises. Although we’ve seen Biden in office already we haven’t seen him as president,” Martinez explains. “That can be scary since we don’t know what he’s capable of. Other than that, I’m hopeful.”

There is no surprise that people don’t put their trust into politicians anymore. Since Trump’s presidency, we have seen a shift in what this country stands for, which should never be the case. America is a “melting pot” of all different races, religions, sexualities, and cultures, and we need to treat everyone equally. It will be hard but in the eyes of these New Paltz citizens, there is hope. There is hope to unify this country like it once was before President Trump was elected. A lot of hardships will be faced, but with the right people listening to the concerns of the American people, it is possible.

# Election Day...or Week...or Month?

ADAM KOPLIK  
Editor-in-Chief  
From 11/1/2020

Tuesday, November 3, 2020. Since President Donald Trump’s 2017 inauguration, Democrats have had this date circled on their calendars as their chance to unseat the most polarizing President in history. Their challenger? Former Vice President Joe Biden. The Trump-Biden race has been one of the most dividing, longest, and loudest campaigns in history, with personal attacks taking precedent over policy. Yet, on November 3, it will all come to an end – or at least, we hope.

The COVID-19 pandemic has thrown the entire world into a spiral, and the Presidential race is no different. Due to the disease’s destructive path, precautions have been taken to protect voters for months—the most talked-about of mail-in voting. Mail-in voting has been a thing for years, under the title “absentee”, however, many states are now experiencing it on a larger scale than ever. While Trump has accused the method of inciting fraud, many studies have shown that the mail-in ballots are rarely fraudulent, as voting se-

curity increases when it comes to them. Nonetheless, Republicans across the nation are in court attempting to require states to discount votes received after Election Day even if they are postmarked before. These cases could disenfranchise many voters, specifically military and overseas personnel, whose votes don’t usually come in until far after the election is over.

Mail-in voting is far from perfect, however. Many states are incredibly unprepared for the plethora of ballots that will be cast through the mail this year and rely on vastly outdated policies for counting votes. While Florida often practices mail-in voting and has many plans to count early ballots, states like New York don’t start counting mail-in votes until polls close on November 3. While New York is a blue state through and through, Pennsylvania, Michigan, and Wisconsin’s dated policies bring forth fears of a drawn out process where we don’t know the next President until mid-November.

Due to fears of ballots submitted after Election Day not being counted, Democratic leaders have urged voters to either vote in-person or to drop their ballot off at a dropbox that will ensure its delivery rather than press their luck with the

United States Postal Service, which has had its budget slashed leading to slower mail. Many have listened, as early voting (which includes both vote-by-mail and in-person) has had historic turnout. In Texas, which is suddenly a toss-up state, more people have voted early as of October 30 than in the entire 2016 election.

The Trump campaign has suggested that the President could be leading on election night and the Democrats could “steal” the election in the ensuing days, but counting votes is not stealing an election. Pennsylvania estimates 2.6 million absentee/mail-in ballots, the counting of which won’t be begin until the polls close at 8 PM on November 3. This is 10x more than 2016, and counting these ballots is going to take time. So, yes, early returns out of PA will lean Trump as his voters are primarily voting in-person, but we won’t know the winner for a few days as all the votes are counted.

November 3 will be a historic date in our nation’s history. No one knows what’s going to happen, but one thing is for sure. Next January, someone born in the 1940s will be sworn in as President of the United States.

## KEY DATE

NOV

7

*After days of counting, the 2020 election is finally called for former Vice President Joe Biden, defeating incumbent Donald Trump, who refused to concede.*

## TALIA FEINSOD’S TIPS FOR SURVIVING REMOTE LEARNING

- 1 Set your alarm earlier than you want to wake up so hitting the snooze button doesn’t make you late.
- 2 Make distinctions between school and not school.
- 3 Keep your body healthy.
- 4 Drink water!
- 5 Pay attention to what’s happening.

On January 6, 2021, the United States Capitol fell under attack from a group of rioters, inspired by President Trump's claim that the election was fraudulent. With the entire world's eyes on the nation's capital, emotions ran high throughout the US. As we look back at a day that will live in infamy, our writers responded to the challenge of putting their feelings into words.

## I Saw...

TALIA FEINSOD  
Staff Writer  
From 1/8/2020

I saw Nazis and Racists on live TV yesterday.

I saw scenes from The Hunger Games on the news.

Yet another "once-in-a-lifetime-event," I'm 17.

I saw confederate flags and crude Nazi propaganda.

I saw the Capitol swarmed by hate. The Vice President wore a blue tie last night.

Opposing sides spoke in agreement. I saw a man.

A man so drunk on power and delusion. And ignorance.

I saw this man bring shame to news anchors with his words.

They called him 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue.

They called him 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue because they can't bring themselves to call him what that means.

I saw a proud dictator.

I saw domestic terrorism.

I saw institutionalized racism and white privilege.

We heard praise and love.

We heard lies.

It's time to invoke the 25th.

## KEY DATE

JAN

6

*A Pro-Trump protest turns violent as the crowd, fueled by the lie that the election was stolen, raid The Capitol Building in an attempt to stop the certification of the 2020 election.*

## A Broken Democracy

KENDALL LUCCHESI  
Staff Writer  
From 1/8/2020

In response to the horrors of January 6, 2021, I am at a loss for words. Some may argue that what occurred was predictable, but I guess in my mind I never thought it would ever come to this. In short, we witnessed an attempt to overthrow our government, our democracy, propelled by our current president and certain members of Congress. I am disgusted, I am unsettled, and I am saddened; saddened in the lack of response from the police, saddened by the lack of response from our president, and saddened by the lack of dignity posed by his supporters. America was once seen as the pinnacle of democracy to the rest of the world but in reality, it has become destructive and broken under the tyranny of Mr. Trump.

## Confused

MARK LABORDE  
Staff Writer  
From 1/8/2020

It's kind of hard to think about all of this. We finally got out of one of the most difficult and confusing years of most of our lives, and only a few days into the new one, democracy is not only attacked, but mocked by these mindless goons. It truly felt like some kind of video game I've played or a really cheesy movie scene. To think that 14,000 were arrested during the BLM protests in late spring to early summer but only 83 people were arrested for yesterday makes me sick to my stomach. This country needs a whole lot of healing in a small amount of time, I just hope we're up for it.

## Disturbed, Yet Unsurprised

MAGGIE HEENAN  
Staff Writer  
From 1/8/2020

I'm utterly horrified at the events that occurred at the capital Wednesday night. Firstly from the actions of the so-called "protesters" who, in my opinion, feel to be more of domestic terrorists. Protesting is about taking a stand or action to advocate for what you believe is right, not ensuing fear, committing violent acts, and breaking and looting the nation's capital because you did not get what you want. These terrorists have slandered the name of patriotism, claiming that they do what they do for the good of the country but it's simply not true. Having pride in one's country and blindly supporting a dangerous and nearing on fascist politician are two completely different things.

Secondly, I'm disturbed, disappointed and yet unsurprised at the police response to this riot. Looking back on the events in June and July, where protests for Black Lives Matter reached their peak, the police response to those protests was nothing short of brutal. It was unexplainably upsetting to have to watch people shot at with rubber bullets, maced, beat, and thrown into unmarked vans simply for taking advantage of their first amendment rights. And now, we see the people who actually pose a threat, and yet, because they are white and mostly male, they are widely unharmed. Not only were they widely unharmed but they were seen taking selfies with police officers, and even being let through or aided by these police officers that are supposed to be protecting the capital.

I'm disturbed that I'm growing up in a country where white supremacy is deemed acceptable, white privilege is denied, and there is such deep ingrained racism and corruption in our police force. It's upsetting in ways that I'm unable to explain. I feel at a loss for words because I am so deeply disappointed in so much of America. The fact that our president urged this behavior adds even more to the hopelessness and shame I feel, and I only hope that with Donald Trump out of office, we can finally take a step in the right direction.

## A Group Chat

ROSIE SAVELSON  
Staff Writer  
From 1/8/2020

My large family group chat (originally containing 20 people, now only 19) exploded after yesterday's events at the Capitol. All of us were equally disgusted, but some focused on a half-joking comment my older cousin made about white supremacists being shot. They were upset and thought he was encouraging senseless violence. One family member expressed his disapproval by leaving ("I am deleting myself from this text group of immature nonsense"). The conversation spiralled away from where it had begun— with our mutual denouncement of the extreme hypocrisy and blatant white supremacy on display in DC— and morphed into a back-and-forth of different interpretations of my cousin's singular text. At this point another person left briefly, then returned, ratcheting our chat back up to 19 (and then he got accidentally deleted by my step grandmother). Most of us were upset at the direction our conversation had taken. Instead of the historical event we had all just lived through, instead of the rampant anti-Blackness these rioters expressed with their Confederate flags, instead of their shirts reading "Camp Auschwitz" and "6 million wasn't enough" (as Jews, we weren't surprised), we were focusing on a sarcastic text that had been misinterpreted.

I'm going to overanalyze some stuff, so buckle up. To me, this entire interaction was more funny than anything else, but it represents an issue within almost every community. Infighting is a plague; we find it much easier to police each other's reactions and attitudes than we do to criticize the larger systems at work. I don't want this to come off the wrong way— checking and calling out the language and behavior of individuals, especially those close to us, is important. I'm not talking about when an older family member says something transphobic, or cancel culture at all. I'm talking about disagreements within communities; different reactions, different perspectives, sarcastic texts that get misinterpreted. This is a function of white supremacy and many other oppressive systems: to divide the oppressed into smaller and smaller factions, forever fighting with each other instead of recognizing the true threats against them.

MATTHIAS LAI  
Staff Writer

I really hit a blank while writing this piece. For a few weeks, I struggled with whether I'm the right person to write this, whether my voice can encompass a group of people whose voice is startlingly silent. I'm half Chinese, and almost everyone on my dad's side of the family has emigrated from China or Hong Kong to America. I was born here, and my Asian heritage doesn't permeate my life the way that it does for most of my relatives, but I am reminded of it often, and it has given me a unique perspective in a town that's overwhelmingly white. Ultimately, I've decided that I'm not the right person to write about the perspective of every Asian person in America, but I have enough experience being Asian and conversing with Asian family and friends to write what is to my knowledge a shared experience among many Asian Americans.

America is facing another racial reckoning, and this time Asian Americans are in the picture. But the recent rise in reported anti-Asian hate crimes doesn't even begin to encompass the experience of Asian people in America. This May, there

## The Future of Education

ADAM KOPLIK  
Editor-in-Chief

The pandemic was long, it was lonely, it was anxiety producing, and for many, it was tragic. Dozens of societal problems were highlighted, but one of the ones that stuck with me was how wrong we're looking at education.

The College Board was generous enough to offer free AP review videos before last year's tests (which went horribly, but that's for another time). The videos were amazing, and, in my experience, helped me study a ton for those tests. Obviously, it was a good action, but it bodes the question: why were these resources just made available? It took a *pandemic* for the College Board to think, "hey, maybe kids could use some help on these \$100 tests"? That's insane! Why is it that, after doing nothing but pushing overpriced books and tests for years, the College Board does the bare minimum and wants a ribbon? Access to resources that can improve a student's education - like review videos or even something as

## Looking at America Through Asian Eyes

has been a great din around Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, more than I've ever seen. In fact, celebration of Asian cultures has been historically muted, and most Americans weren't even aware of the heritage month until 2021. I know I wasn't, and I remember wondering why there wasn't an event recognizing my culture when I saw Black history and Hispanic heritage months being celebrated. This is not to say that those cultures don't deserve to be celebrated, or that the struggles of black and brown communities are less note-

ing the experiences of black Americans and Latino immigrants, but there is a distinct dearth of literature, movies or TV shows featuring Asian American characters, and the discrimination that we face. That's probably because it's so subtle: until recently, there were no overt signs of racism against Asians. Rather, there is a silent understanding built into American culture that paints a very limited picture for Asians. We're good at math and medicine, and not much else, great scholars whose achievements can be chalked up to a culture of me-

*"Overall, we're a people taken for granted, whose services are expected and whose standards are simultaneously higher and lower than the rest of society."*

- Matthias Lai

worthy than those of the Asian community. There is no comparison for how people of different minority groups have been persecuted, and there is no competition for the "hardest struggle." However, the plight of Asian Americans is most definitely downplayed and underrepresented in America.

We produce a lot of media captur-

ing the experiences of black Americans and Latino immigrants, but there is a distinct dearth of literature, movies or TV shows featuring Asian American characters, and the discrimination that we face. That's probably because it's so subtle: until recently, there were no overt signs of racism against Asians. Rather, there is a silent understanding built into American culture that paints a very limited picture for Asians. We're good at math and medicine, and not much else, great scholars whose achievements can be chalked up to a culture of me-

simple as giving access to Adobe Creative Cloud - should be easily accessible for all.

Moving on - but not from the College Board - to the SAT. You know, the test that we've been told defines us and we need to study for weeks for. Turns out, it doesn't! Turns out, colleges throughout the nation survived a year of college admissions test-optional! Isn't it a miracle? Well, maybe less a miracle and more-so a very predictable outcome.

The SAT has always been a flawed test that really only tests how good you are at taking the SAT. It's been found to be based more on socioeconomic class than anything, and its why colleges had been slowly but surely moving away. While it took a pandemic for them to take the next step, as the test was cancelled for so many, it still shows that colleges never needed the SAT to fairly compare applicants. Any reversal on these policies would show that they think they messed up in their evaluations of the Class of 2021, which, they didn't. One test doesn't define a student, and the ending of the SAT may be the best thing to come out of the pandemic.

Another educational takeaway I had was actually pretty simple: sleep. I'm not even going to go into all the studies that show teenagers need sleep but, alas, we do! It's actually pretty important. During the most stressful year of my life, I actually found myself less stressed over school than ever before. While that may have to do with a *touch* of senioritis, it more-so involves the fact that I was able to sleep until about 7:55 AM every single day. That's still pretty early, but the fact that I, in the years of my life that I need sleep more than any other, woke up five days a week at 6 AM is insane to think about. Schools need to do something about the lack of sleep among high schoolers. It's the most important quality of our mental health, and needs to be addressed.

The pandemic showed that we need to improve in so many ways. From offering more classes online to ensuring high schooler's mental health is made priority, we have so much room to grow. But I really do believe we can get there. For all the horrors of COVID-19, it may have been the kick that the educational world needed to step into the 21st century.

## KEY DATE

APR

26

*New Paltz High School returns to in-person learning four days a week, ending cohorts and allowing all students and teachers to learn together for the first time in over a year.*

## 29 Years Later: Mr. Bartlett Retiring

CHARLOTTE FREER  
Staff Writer

Don Bartlett, the man, the myth, the legend. After 29 years of teaching and coaching at New Paltz High School, he will be retiring at the end of the school year. Bartlett, who teaches economics and AP US History, has also been the head coach for boys track and girls swim team during his time at NPHS. For those who know him, his affinity for carpentry and prior work in the military are well documented by his many stories of the two. Which begs the question, how did he end up teaching APUSH in New Paltz?

Bartlett admits that when he got out of high school he had “no intention to be a teacher and no intention to go to college. So I joined the military because I needed to do something, and by a set of coincidences I wound up teaching other people how to repair navigation systems. And I enjoyed it.”

Bartlett also realized when he was in the military that to get where he wanted to be in life he needed to go to college. Once out of the military he started attending SUNY New Paltz where he planned on majoring in electrical engineering. His initial plan was that, “after I became an electrical engineer and made money that I would become a teacher, because I like teaching people. But it (teaching) wasn’t really in the front of my mind”

However, “electrical engineering was not a good choice for me,” he says, going on to explain that what he thought electrical engineering was was not what it actually turned out to be and he didn’t enjoy it at all. But while he was taking engineering classes, Bartlett had also picked up a job with a construction company that employed a lot of high school students that had to be taught. He decided to become a teacher and while originally planned to teach shop, bounced to math and ended up focusing on history.

During his tenure, Bartlett has seen a lot of change and growth in the high school. Much of this growth he credits to former principal and vice principal, Barbara Clinton and Dennis DiBari. He credits DiBari’s hallway patrolling to “changing the whole tone of the school,” which he said had previously been wrought with fighting and “other bad things.” He also emphasized the importance of maintaining the stricter hallway policies in order to keep chaos at a minimum.

Over the many years of teaching, Bartlett has been through some of NPHS’s

most trying times. When asked about what the most difficult time of his career was, Bartlett said that one of his worst days was in 2015 when Kyle Brewer, a then sophomore, suffered from a heart attack during track practice and tragically passed away later in the evening. Bartlett, who was coaching with assistant coach Joe Foti at the time, described it as “awful. Nothing compares to that.” He also said that losing Maya Gold and Becca Lynch to suicide was equally as grueling; events like students passing away and dealing with other factors like drugs and violence are all very difficult.

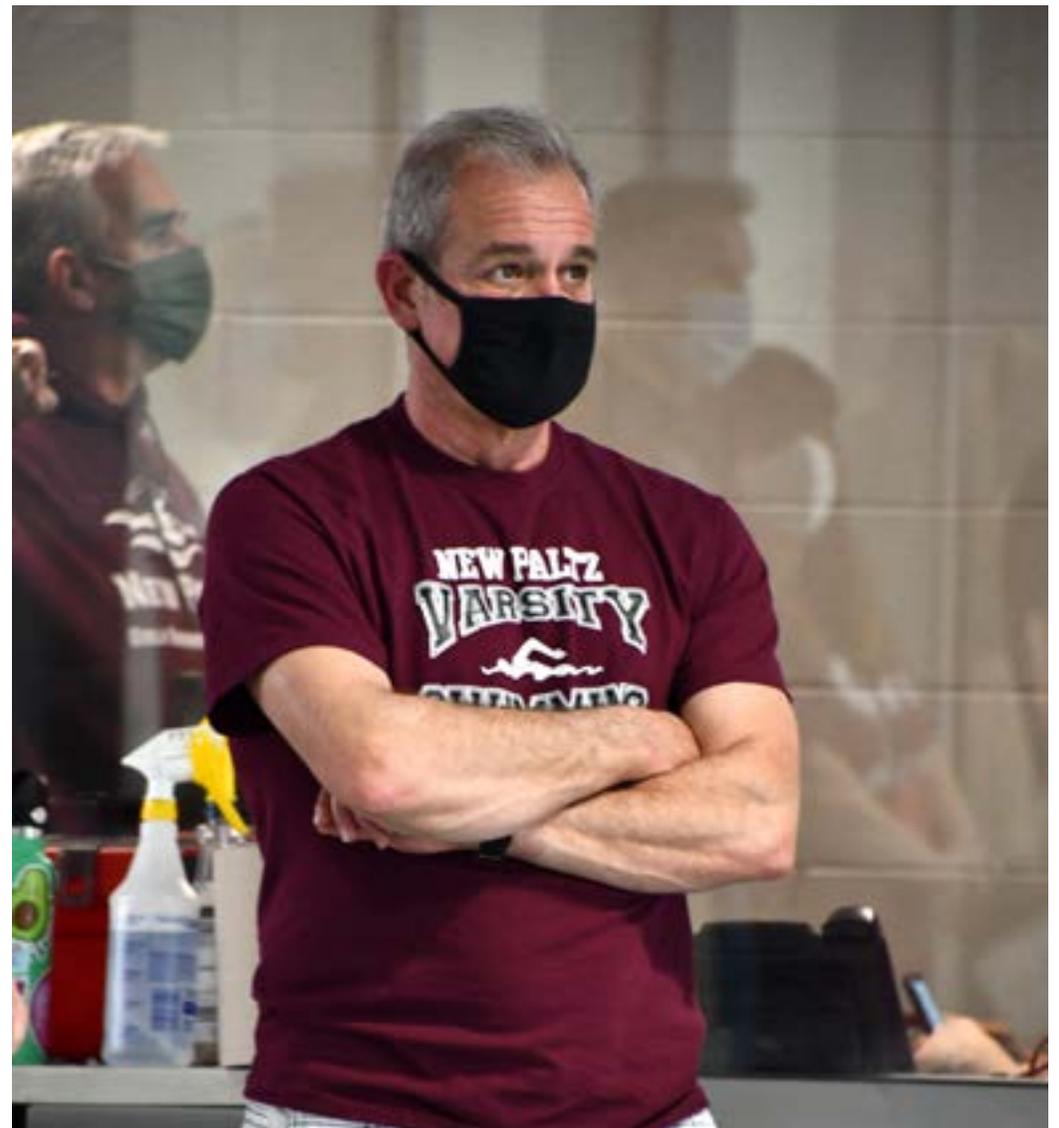
Conversely, Bartlett will tell you that the highlights of his career have simply been “pretty much everything. I get paid to have fun, it’s a great job.” He stressed that he’s not retiring because he doesn’t enjoy doing it anymore, but that “it’s just time.” He believes that it’s important for teachers to retire before it becomes a chore, and acknowledges that as the age gap between he and his students stretches out more it becomes more difficult to relate. Bartlett admits that “until we started having students in the school, I was regretting not retiring. I was like, I don’t want to do this just staring at icons,” but ultimately was glad he stuck through this school year.

Having earlier mentioned that he’s now in his “grandpa” phase of teaching, he believes that he still has other things that he needs to do and that now is the right time to move on and start doing them. He’ll be moving to Maine over the summer to finish building a house before selling it, and then moving back to the area to do some construction work with his son. But only when he feels like it. A few years ago he had planned on maybe coaching for a college team, but now Bartlett is ready to be “free to do what I want to do when I want to do it,” and said that he thinks that he’ll always work but from now on it will be on his own terms.

The big thing that he’s going to miss once he retires? “Rooms full of kids. Seeing how they react when they see stuff for the first time- that’s cool because there’s a lot of stuff that you’re teaching that kids have never heard of before.”

His advice for students is: “the things you earn you get to keep. The things you don’t earn you’re just borrowing for a little while and then they disappear. So don’t be afraid to do the work to earn it.”

And his advice for teachers, and closing words, “Remember it’s just school. Don’t get so serious with the kids that they feel like the sky is falling down if they don’t



Mr. Don Bartlett overlooking his NPHS boys track team. - Photo via Marty Brutvan

do something that the teacher requires. You know, don’t get mad with the kids, because they’re, well, kids. Sometimes I think there’s like this pressure- and I’m sure I’ve done it myself plenty of times- about performance in the classroom. But it is just school. School is just a step we have to take to get prepared for life and I think that sometimes we as teachers forget that.”

Good luck to Mr. Bartlett on his next adventures, and many thanks for the years of dedication to teaching and guiding generations of NPHS students through the high school stage of their lives.

### KEY DATE

**MAY**  
**13**

*The CDC updates their mask recommendations, announcing that fully vaccinated individuals no longer need to wear masks in the vast majority of both indoor and outdoor settings.*