
The Huguenot Herald

June 2019

A Review of “Almost, Maine”

By Lily Conroy

On Friday, May 3, and Saturday, May 4, New Rochelle High School’s Senior Acting Company performed “Almost, Maine.” The show was directed, produced, and cast by seniors in the PAVE 4 Acting program, with several juniors and non-PAVE 4 seniors participating as cast members. Early in the year, seniors got the chance to suggest plays of their choice for the class to perform. They discussed and voted on the options, ultimately choosing “Almost, Maine.” It allowed each member of the class to take on a fairly equal role, and the small scene sizes helped make the rehearsal process easier by allowing seniors to coordinate individual rehearsals with only one scene partner. The cast rehearsed for several weeks independently, then began holding after-school rehearsals every day for the

two weeks leading up to the show. PAVE senior Isabella Vianna called the rehearsal process “unlike any other show I had done before” due to the larger amount of personal responsibility placed on cast members, who had to schedule their own rehearsals with their scene partners and determine how to approach their roles with limited guidance. “It made things difficult,” she says, “but it also gave us a lot of freedom to make the show the way we wanted. Then, when we finally came together for full cast rehearsals, we already had the framework we had set up on our own.”

The play is set in the small, fictional town of Almost, Maine, which is isolated from any known areas of civilization. The storyline consists of a series of vignettes exploring different love stories, many with a mystical undertone. Scenes range from the develop-

ment of a new romance between two strangers to a conflict between an older married couple to a woman’s running into her ex at her own bachelorette party, and explore many different facets of romantic relationships in all their stages.

For the PAVE seniors, this final opportunity to perform for their community was invaluable. The class has participated in productions together each year through PAVE, and many have also taken roles in TheatreWorks productions with students in other grades. This show was unique, though, because for the first time the class got to apply all the skills they’ve learned through their theatre experience to produce a show on their own. The PAVE program prepared them well for this, though; senior Elizabeth Muriel said, “We choose and put on our own shows in PAVE 3 with our teacher directing so having a stu-

dent director was a change, but we all knew that Mr. Stirpe was available if and when we needed him.” While this was their last high school show, many of the current PAVE seniors are graduating to pursue degrees in theatre-related fields, and the program has clearly prepared them well.

Why the LatinX Conference Matters

By Felicity Flores-Drew

Latinx is a gender-neutral term referring to a person of Latin American origin or descent, which applies to a great deal of the New Rochelle High School demographic. The name change of the Latinx Youth Conference is a dramatic and valid switch in itself; it is more inclusive and represents the LGBTQ+ community within the Latin community.

Now that you know the basics, here’s why the Latinx Youth Conference is so significant. Representation of the Latinx community is often through a scantily clad Jennifer Lopez or Sofia Vergara, and as much as representation of a successful Latina woman in any career path is appreciated, seeing Congresswoman Catalina Cruz is a refreshing

change of pace. Catalina Cruz is a powerhouse who gave a speech that moved the audience to tears. Her perseverance and dedication inspires each and every student to follow their passions and help others along the way.

As a presenter of an immigration workshop it was difficult to discuss such a sensitive topic. Often immigration affects a family in two countries, their former home and the U.S. It is difficult to be separated from your family for a short period of time, let alone because of borders and laws that keep you from your loved ones.

The importance of this conference is more than celebrating Latino culture- it’s about acceptance and unity, a radical rarity under this presidential administration.

It’s also about educating others about what Latinx looks like and means. Latino comes in so many different colors and shapes. There is no one size fits all for Latinx, and we are so much more than headlines you hear. Latinx people work relentlessly to provide for themselves and their families and make extraordinary feats. However, along the way they face extreme difficulties, including trying to find a sense of belonging in a country that does not desire them, only their cheap labor.

Longing and pining for a new life, education comes into play and changes it all.



One of the highlights of the event was Catalina Cruz speaking on the importance of education. The value of education is infinite and changes the playing field for every Latinx person with a dream and a future degree. Education allows many of us to surpass the low expectations and malicious misconceptions about us. When others assume we have little to nothing to provide for this country, we prove them wrong time and time again.

Editorials

Why Politics Are Important

By Jasmine Jimenez

Personally, I have never been into politics. Republican Party? Democrats? The lesser known Green Party? I'm going to be honest: It's a bit embarrassing that I don't have much knowledge of such an important and relevant topic. However, it's never too late to become informed. Many students are still under eighteen! Although they may not be able to vote in any current elections, by 2020 most of them will have not only the age but also knowledge to vote for whomever they choose. Currently, one of the biggest issue is climate change. I have done research and found it to be a topic which I'm genuinely interested in. A big reason for that is that climate change and environmental issues have the greatest impact on young adults. The younger generation will deal with the consequences of the actions taken by the adults of today. For that reason, I believe there has been no better time for young people to become involved and up to date on what is truly going on in politics today.

Most young people probably know who Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez is. If not, do they even have Twitter? She was recently elected into Congress. She is passionate about involving all

young people in her plans. I recommend her Instagram account. On her story, she posts about *everything, from her garbage disposal struggles to her relatable nail salon nightmare visits. She recently came out with the Green New Deal. In simple words, the aim is to transform the economy from one that abuses fossil fuels and uses severe exploitation to one that is based on clean, renewable energy and fair work. The wealth of big industries and companies comes at the expense of lower class communities who earn a small wage and are exposed to toxic pollutants. These same communities are the ones who deal with the consequences consisting of flooding, storms, severe inequality, low-quality education, and job opportunities. It has been a cycle that has continued for far too long.*

The Green New Deal consists of specific steps to address climate change and inequality. The first part is creating sustainable jobs for families without exposing them to possible health problems. A few jobs consist of replacing lead pipes, which are the major cause of the Flint Water Crisis in Michigan (yes, it's been five years and Flint still doesn't have complete access to safe drinking water). Other jobs include the promotion

of weatherizing homes (basically air sealing, improving ventilation, and adding insulation to lower consumer spending by saving energy). These jobs will not only provide clean and toxic pollutant free working conditions, but allow skilled workers to further their careers as they will be part of a union.

Another important factor of the deal is its ability to reduce climate pollution. It will heavily promote renewable energy sources, such as solar, wind power, and hydroelectric energy, to big companies. If large industries took voluntary action to improve their energy sources and consumption, climate pollution would greatly decrease. Why I personally believe this deal to be so rational is that it doesn't just concentrate on confronting the issues of large companies, but those of small, low-income communities. The deal will replace dangerous lead pipes in homes and clean waste sites that pose a hazard to nearby towns. These small actions would be in favor of communities of color and low-income families who are most affected by these deadly toxins.

I have only stated some steps the Green New Deal would plan to take. There are still individual policies and laws in the policies which would adhere and support these steps. Many of the

propositions have already begun in the past years. However, the Green New Deal proposed by congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez is the final push to spread and further the actions some have already taken nationwide. Recently, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez gave a powerful speech based on her recent proposition. She said, "I will be damned if the same politicians who refused to act then are going to try to come back today and say we need to find a middle-of-the-road approach to save our lives. That is too much for me." Bernie Sanders, who is favored by the younger generation, also attended the meet. He gracefully said, "Instead of spending well over a trillion dollars a year on weapons of destruction, think about spending that money on making this planet healthy and habitable."

I am still not the type of person who would enjoy investing myself 100% in the world of politics, but as citizens of this country and humans living on this planet, everyone should be up to date on the current affairs. Climate change is real and it's too important and urgent to ignore. As the younger generation, our future is the current discussion in politics, which is why we need to be a part of it.

Notre Dame is not the Only Event you Should Acknowledge

By Felicity Flores-Drew

Prayers, condolences, and well wishes were sent out to Notre Dame after the tragic fire that caused the roof and spire to collapse. However halfway across the world Venezuela has dealt with endless and constant suffering. Many people are blissfully unaware of what's going in Venezuela.

It seems that our focus is often on everywhere, but Latin America. There is an economic crisis going on, in fact the daily average wage is the United States equivalent to \$0.26- which is barely enough to purchase a cup of coffee. Provisions are sparse to begin with due to food and medi-

cine shortages. The murder rate in Venezuela has skyrocketed due to political turmoil and according to OSAC.GOV in 2017, 73 Venezuelans died a violent death per day. The country is crumbling in some ways which leaves many to wonder- is no one watching or is it not a valid issue in the eyes of others?

In Paris a completely alternate response was given to the fire engulfing part of the landmark, with no death toll. It reigned in more readership from the *New York Times* than the Mueller report. The fire at Notre Dame left Americans among a vast deal of others heartbroken and crestfallen. The cause of the fire has not been released to date. There was

a worldwide sense of loss for a building, a historical landmark at that and yet there is no sympathy or tears for people who are in utter anguish.

If we put the fraction of the love, care, empathy, and energy that was put into Notre Dame 31.98 million people would be acknowledged and hopefully assisted. Venezuela is in crisis and it's not in the headlines. Other world events especially Venezuela need to be recognized because they are valid and worthy of your attention. The people of Venezuela are deserving of a divine intervention for those who were sending their prayers to Notre Dame.

Hundreds of millions of dollars

have been donated to rebuilding Notre Dame and yet the people of Venezuela who are dealing with bloodshed, extreme violence, hunger, poverty, and immense suffering- have not a billionaire to stand behind their cause. Venezuela's people have value, 31.98 million people need help and apparently a building is more worthy.

The cathedral and the values it represents should stand by anyone who is desperate need of an otherworldly arbitration to bring the country back to a peaceful state.



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Netflix's "Queer Eye": A Show For Everyone

By Daviel Schulman

This past March, the third season of Netflix's original reality show, "Queer Eye," was released. "Queer Eye" is a spinoff show of the early 2000s series, "Queer Eye for the Straight Guy." The show stars five gay men (the "Fab Five") who each specialize in a different field: Antoni Porowski is a food specialist, Bobby Berk is an interior designer, Jonathan Van Ness specializes in grooming, Karamo Brown is a social worker, and Tan France is a stylist. The premise of "Queer Eye" is that a person who needs help gets nominated by a friend or family member to be given a life-makeover by the "Fab Five." Netflix created a new take on the original series by broadening the requirements for clients

to be on the show. Now, "Queer Eye" gives life-makeovers to people of all genders.

You may be wondering, "Why watch 'Queer Eye'?" Seeing the transformation a person can go through just by spending one week with the "Fab Five" is unbelievable. The client usually begins as a self-conscious, insecure person, and ends up as a very confident and self-loving individual. The "Queer Eye" guys enthusiastically arrive at and examine their client's house, showering him/her with compliments right from the start. Each "Fab Five" member has the chance not only to improve the client's life in his area of expertise, but also to create a personal connection with the client. Tan, Bobby, Jonathan, Antoni, and Karamo each find ways to

relate to the client based on their past experiences. By the end of the week, it is hard for the "Queer Eye" guys and their client to part with one another; they have formed a strong, lasting bond. It is an extremely empowering show that will always leave you crying happy tears.

In the past 24 episodes of "Queer Eye," the "Fab Five" prepared a man to propose to his girlfriend, assisted a transgender man through his difficult journey, helped a gay man build the confidence to come out to his mother, touched the lives of two sisters by showing them the joy brought through self-care, taught a lesbian to be proud of who she is, and aided a widower to gain closure on his wife's death. These are only some examples of how the "Queer Eye" guys transform lives.

Jonathan Van Ness said, "How you take care of yourself is how the world sees you. It's okay to have a relationship with yourself." "Queer Eye" is all about helping people become their best selves.

Each member of the "Fab Five" has become very successful and well-known as a result of being on the show. From writing autobiographies to making podcasts to posting daily on Instagram, the "Fab Five" members have branched out and shown their dedication to their work. Additionally, they are all big advocates for LGBTQ rights. Get your tissue box ready and watch "Queer Eye" on Netflix!

The Fall of *Game of Thrones*?

By Alex Streinger

April 14, 2019. Fans all over the world tuned in to watch the first episode of the final season of one of the most exciting shows in the cable TV world, *Game of Thrones* (fondly nicknamed by its initials: "GOT"). The most anticipated season of all was about to commence. People got comfortable and focused on their TV screen. And at the end of the first episode in more than a year, people were... disappointed? Expressions as: "It didn't feel like Game of Thrones!" and "It was like a different show", not to mention the use of explicit language were all over the social media to describe the first episode, and the three episodes following that.

Game of Thrones has become a superlative show, most-

ly because of its fast-paced action, sensuality, and multiple twists and turns, all with a touch of magic (i.e. The Red woman, the dragons) in a seemingly Middle Age Era. The show is made in a way where main characters are either loved or hated by the fans. In the first seasons, what made the show so interesting is the fact that right after the audience started falling for a character, he/she was killed – what was quite shocking! But this season, it feels like the show wants to bring more character development so when they die, it is more sentimental. I was 8 years-old when the show started. Obviously, as much as I wanted, I was not allowed to watch it then because of the explicit content. As I grew to a more appropriate age (13 years old), I binge watched all the previous seasons. I was

instantly hooked by the unique way GOT had of telling the stories of each character. I especially appreciated getting to know their own separate lives in the show before viewing them getting together (i.e.: Daenerys and Jon Snow, that seemed so many worlds apart and the amazing result when they finally meet). In addition, even though the show is based on George Martin's 6 books (*A Song of Ice and Fire*) – so some of the plots were right there for those that wanted to read it - , I was astounded of how non hesitant the GOT directors were to kill their main characters. By watching the plot on the screen, people tend to become more emotionally attached to the characters compared to when they read the story in a book. I thought this would make the producers spare Rob and Ned

Stark, for instance. But they were ruthless!

The ending of the show left a sour taste in some fans' mouths mainly because of the sudden killing of one of their favorite characters, SPOILER ALERT, Daenerys Targaryen, the mother of dragons. A group over 1 million fans went so far as to put together a petition to ask the producers to redo Season 8! The truth, though, is that a show with so many ups and downs, such a vast array of roles and that went through so many years should not be expected to have a happy ending. Anyway, GOT was a part of many people's lives – including mine- and, has set a new standard for TV shows.

Saying Goodbye to our Editors

Lily Conroy, At a Glance

By Susanna Procaro-Foley

When Lily was in elementary school, she changed her mind every day about what she wanted to be when she grew up. At first, she wanted to be a writer. But soon, the idea of living in foreign countries and speaking different languages enthralled her, so she decided that becoming an ambassador would be an appropriate career choice. Little did she know that in 2019, she would be on the verge of graduating from New Rochelle High School and attending Vas-sar College this fall.

In some ways, today's Lily is not so different from her young self, for she enjoys many subjects in school and cannot pinpoint a favorite. "I like everything except math," she says,

but AP Biology, AP Psychology, and AP English Language and Composition are high on the list.

One of Lily's most influential high school experiences occurred during junior year, when she took Mrs. Wallace's AP Language course. Like most students, she was terrified at first. Eventually, though, she grew accustomed to the frequent pop essays that the class entails, acknowledging, "AP Lang helped me to develop my writing skills so much more than I thought was possible." Senior year, Lily again had Mrs. Wallace as a teacher when she took Speech and Communications, which was a very different experience from AP Lang because it was not writing-

based. Now, Lily frequently stops by Room 310 to visit this inspiring teacher.

Throughout high school, Lily has participated in a number of activities. For example, she's been a member of JSA since the ninth grade. "It was hard to get into because I had a strong aversion to public speaking," Lily said, but she enjoyed listening to her peers debate. Now, Lily is secretary of NRHS's chapters of both National Honor Society and Chinese Honor Society. Of course, she also co-edits the *Huguenot Herald*. Prior to joining the club, Lily hesitated to share her writing with others. She appreciates the Herald for helping her to move past this fear.

Lily has grown from an indecisive child to a slightly more

decisive young adult. Although she wants to explore various subject areas in college, she knows that she wants to pursue psychology. In addition, she wants to continue English and hopes to publish some of her personal writing one day. Lastly, she is considering a minor in Chinese, which she began learning in fourth grade.

As a close friend of Lily's I can attest that her significant academic achievements in high school merely hint at the wonderful things she will accomplish in college and beyond. Lily constantly inspires me to work hard and she is a fantastic co-editor, but most of all, she is a true friend. For that, I couldn't be more grateful.

Susanna Procaro-Foley

By Lily Conroy

Susanna Procaro-Foley has always loved to read and write. She's done both in her free time, and both have helped shape her high school experience and her future plans. Her interest in writing motivated her to join the *Huguenot Herald* at the beginning of her junior year, when she decided to explore more in-school extracurriculars. Through the *Herald*, she got her first experience with journalism; since she never took a class, she got to learn through experience, exploring different types of articles during her two years as a writer for the paper. Now, she co-edits the Herald, which has given her a totally new set of experiences. In this role, she's gotten to develop her management and communication skills, and summarizes her learnings as the chance to "figure out how to put something together."

Susanna's interests aren't exclusively English-focused, though. Since she was five years old, she's danced at

the Coleman School of Dance, first pursuing ballet and then modern dance. She's been part of the studio's Coleman Teen Dance Company since sixth grade, and now dances four to five days a week. After dancing with the same company for so long, she's developed a close community around the studio. "I started out as one of the little ones and now I'm the oldest one," she says, adding that she remembers when some of her current dance classmates were born. Members of Susanna's teen dance company are assigned a member of the junior dance company to mentor. Each dancer has a mentor three years older than them and a mentee three years younger, yielding "five generations of mentors" of which Susanna is one. In the future, "I want to continue to have dance in my life," she says. She might pursue a double major or minor in college, and hopes to teach dance at some point in her life, as well as continuing to take classes herself. Besides its extracurricular importance, dance has been a criti-

cal part of Susanna's high school experience. As a freshman, she joined the PAVE Dance program, and ever since she's gotten to take dance during the school day. She appreciates this break in her academic routine, and values this period as a time of relaxation and developing the PAVE Dance community that she's participated in for four years. This is just one of many classes she's taken in high school that have guided Susanna's future goals. Another is AP English Language, which she took junior year. For Susanna, AP Lang was "by far the most influential class I've ever taken, because it was so scary and academically demanding but it immensely improved my writing." She also found a mentor in Mrs. Wallace, who teaches the class, and frequently visits her even now that she's finished the course.

Now Susanna is a senior, and will soon be moving on to the next stage in her education. In the fall, she's going to Connecticut College, where she hopes to pursue an English ma-

ior and continue studying dance in some capacity. She hopes to get better at creative writing and to read literature from regions and time periods that we don't necessarily get to explore in high school. Even though she's decided her major, though, Susanna hopes to take advantage of the opportunity to explore other subjects, such as philosophy, psychology, and sociology. She's not sure yet what she wants to do after college, but hopes to use the four years "to find a vision for whatever career I want to pursue and figure out a way to pursue it." She does know that she wants to write a novel at some point, though, and I for one can't wait to read it.

Senior Reflections

41 Days

By Lily Conroy

High school graduation has been a distant milestone in my life for a really long time. I'm struggling to believe that right now I'm writing something that will come out only weeks before that graduation. Senior year has been a good time for me, even considering the brutally busy first semester of trying to balance college applications on top of academics and extracurriculars. I'm taking classes that genuinely interest me, I'm spending more time with activities I care about, and I'm finally learning to balance school and a social life. And it's been wonderful, but it also feels very finite, because I know that even as I'm writing this now I'm only 41 days from graduation.

I'm having a great high school experience now, but it took work to get here, and if I had it to

do again I'd do it differently. I'd join the *Herald* sooner, first of all. I remember seeing piles of newspapers in the stacks freshman year and being interested but too hesitant to try, and I wish I'd recognized that there's never a perfect time to start something and the best option is just to start. I'd probably explore other clubs, too, because I eventually worked out a schedule of activities that I like but I know there's areas I never tapped that might have changed that trajectory. I'd speak up more in class, especially early on, instead of worrying so much about making sure that what I was saying was completely right and necessary. I'd talk to more people and be more proactive in my friendships. I would tell myself not to worry so much about college admissions, that it's true that I should start my essays early so I'm not speed-writing on December 31st but that

everyone who graduated before me was right when they said that things would work out and I didn't need to spend so much time looking up statistics that would only add to this anxiety. But for all of that, I'm happy with where I've ended up.

But I'm graduating in a month, and as excited as I am it's a scary prospect. I don't want to re-experience the uncertainties and insecurities of my freshman year in high school. And I know I'll have to, to some extent, because that's the natural byproduct of a transition. But I also know that throughout high school I've been through a million small circumstances that have helped make sure that I'm standing on a firmer foundation for all these future transitions, and I'm overwhelmingly grateful. I'm grateful to the teachers I've had across my four years who have helped me figure out my

academic interests and recognize the potential of my voice in the classroom. I'm grateful to all of my friends and classmates for celebrating and commiserating endlessly. I'm grateful to the *Herald* for helping me break my own reservations and feel comfortable sharing my writing. I'm grateful to Susanna, my co-editor and friend, for bringing me to my first meeting last year and for writing with me, and for last year's editors, who helped me feel welcome and validated in my ideas. And I'm really hopeful for the next four years and the years after that, which might be a hard transition from the high school routine I've grown to love but will bring me to more places I've never imagined.

Thank You, NRHS

By Susanna Procaro-Foley

In 8th grade, my best friend failed a biology test and was very distraught. Her aunt told her to start looking into colleges, thinking that it might cheer her up and give her a goal to work towards. Thus started our obsessive college research. We made College Board accounts, looked at statistics, visited school websites, and took virtual tours. We pictured the different versions of ourselves that we could be at our different schools. We discussed how we would decorate our dorm rooms, what we would major in, how often we would visit each other, and even what meal plan we would choose (17 meals per week gave you the most for your money, we decided). College has always been a distant fantasy, a thing of the future, a faraway exit sign that no matter how fast I tried to drive, didn't come any sooner than destined. It is both exciting and terrifying that in only 99 days, I will be

hauling boxes of my possessions into a dormitory at Connecticut College, a school which my 8th grade self would have never pictured attending. As I reflect on my high school experience, I realize just how much I have learned. I know how to take the derivative of $\arctan(x)$ (thanks, Dr. Rabadi), I understand the function of DNA polymerase (thanks, Mr. Gardner), and I learned that because of *Hazelwood School District v. Kuhlmeier*, Mr. Starvaggi reserves the right to censor these words (thanks, Ms. Minchin). But I also learned that education is much more than Oxford commas, the French Revolution, and Ernest Rutherford's gold foil experiment. Although I learned extremely valuable information from the classes I took, I learned just as much outside of formal instruction. I learned that sometimes you need a friend to help you edit your essays at 3 A.M. I learned that personal health comes before grades. I learned that our decisions define

us. And I learned that education is growth; it never ends.

Recently, I remembered the words of my dance teacher, Christina Coleman. She used to tell me that life is based on the relationships we make with people, and everyone we meet has something to teach us. This has never resonated with me more than right now, as I reminisce on the past four years. NRHS houses so many great teachers, Lacia Robinson, Ellen Wallace, Debbie Minchin, and Julie McGough, to name a few. These people not only have immense knowledge in their subject areas that they masterfully pass on to their students, but they also care for people. They have always been there to lend advice when I needed it, and they have always opened their doors for me to study or take a nap in their rooms. 225, 226, 310, and 431 are my most frequented classrooms, after all. These teachers have become my mentors, and I will forever be thankful for everything they

have taught me.

So I thank you, NRHS. Thanks for the wonderful teachers, the friends, the knowledge, and the memories.