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# The Huguenot Herald

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December—Bonus Electronic Issue

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## NRHS Annual Civics Symposium

By Lily Conroy

On December 11th, the New Rochelle Fund for Educational Excellence hosted its annual Civics Symposium in the Linda Kelly Theater at New Rochelle High School. The symposium, an event planned by AP Government teacher Ms. Minchin, has been a staple of the AP Government course for years. Each year, students are asked to submit a research paper on a topic of their choice, from which a panel of local experts select several to discuss at the event. Students from AP Macroeconomics and AP Human Geography classes also attended, and were given the opportunity to ask questions and participate in the discussion of their classmates' papers. For these students, the event was an

opportunity to explore topics that aren't typically covered in their classes and integrate their knowledge from those classes. One AP Macro student stated that the topics covered in the papers "aren't things I necessarily think about often, and I definitely have never heard them in a classroom setting." She added that the discussion of these issues allowed her to integrate some of her knowledge of economics into her own questions about the issues at hand.

The symposium's panelists have varied from year to year, with previous attendees including Iona College Professor Alex Eodice and Westchester County Clerk (and former New Rochelle mayor) Tim Idoni. The event has often been a forum to discuss hot-button issues of the day, but also allows

students to gain a deeper understanding of less frequently discussed issues such as gerrymandering.

This year's panelists were current Mayor Noam Bramson; Rev. Dierdra Clark of the New York Covenant Church; Martha Lopez, an assistant to the county executive; Jim Maisano, the director of the Westchester Consumer Protection Department; and Iona political science professor Dr. Jeanne Zaino. The panelists brought together diverse areas of expertise and applied them to a discussion of five student papers, written by AP Government students Rachel Betts, Alex Gonzalez, Rachel Gorman-Cooper, Adam Weingast, and myself. The papers, which spanned topics from maternal mortality to electoral college

reform, elicited discussion among panelists as well as among students who attended.

The symposium can be extremely fulfilling for all students involved, but especially for those whose papers are discussed with the panel. Alex Gonzalez, whose paper explored the question of whether immigrants are really taking American jobs, stated, "It was a rewarding experience to hear the topic of my paper be discussed more in depth by experts." An opportunity to hear one's views discussed in this type of forum is rare for high school students, and definitely makes the assigned research paper feel much more immediately relevant. Not only that, but as Gonzalez also stated, "It was a lot of fun."

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## NRHS Students Attend JSA Fall State

By Eliza Crocker

Earlier this month, twenty-nine New Rochelle students traveled to Providence, Rhode Island for the first Junior State of America overnight convention of the 2018-2019 season. Fall State was filled with debating important social and political issues, meeting new people from throughout the Northeast State region, and exploring the city of Providence.

Chaperoned by the lovely Mrs. Minchin, we took the train up to Providence after school on Friday, November 30th, donning our New Ro JSA shirts when we arrived to the hotel that evening. After grabbing dinner at the nearby mall, we held a lighthearted chapter bonding activity that allowed us to learn more about each other and prepare for debates over the coming weekend. On

Saturday, the convention began with a keynote presentation by Shiva Ayyadurai. The scientist, who invented email and ran as an independent candidate in the 2018 United States Senate election in Massachusetts, engaged the audience in an insightful discussion of progress beyond political party lines.

After the opening session, we had the opportunity to participate in a number of debates, with topics ranging from "Resolved, legacy should not play a part in college admissions" and "Resolved, capital punishment be abolished in the United States" to "Resolved, the moon landing was fake" and "Resolved, pineapple is a legitimate pizza topping." Our chapter saw many students speak in debate for the first time, whether as a main speaker, a sub speaker, by commenting on a thought talk, or by

asking questions. Five of our chapter members even took home a total of seven Best Speaker awards! Each one of us benefited from thoughtful discussion of the critical (and not-so-critical) matters facing our society today.

Other highlights of the weekend included a mock Supreme Court session, an activism block featuring panelists involved in advocacy for transgender and reproductive rights, and of course, the famed JSA dance, with this year's theme being "blackout." I love attending JSA conventions because it gives me the chance to meet people from across the Northeast who hold the same interest in politics as I do. I always learn so much by listening to the perspectives of others, and I leave every convention fulfilled and better informed.

We are all looking forward to our next convention, Winter Congress, in Washington, D.C. this coming February. At Congress, we will get to write our own bills, deciding which topics we want to debate and present before a mock Senate or House session. D.C. is known for being a fun trip, so I encourage you to come to our next JSA meeting for more information if you are interested. Our weekly meetings are very casual, and debates are informal, so there is no experience necessary. We are always looking to expand our chapter! Meetings are every Thursday in room 367 at 3:15.

# Broadway's *Once on This Island*

By Daviel Schulman

As I walked into the Circle in the Square Theater, it was as if I had been transported to a Caribbean island. The theater was humid, filled with the smell of roasting goat. The stage was covered in sand and had a flowing river; clothes lines were hanging; live chickens and goats roamed around. The sounds of islanders enthusiastically interacting with each other and the audience filled the theater. This is what it's like to attend the Broadway hit musical, *Once on This Island*.

*Once on This Island* is the story of a girl named Ti-Moune. The four gods, the God of Water, the Goddess of Love, the Goddess of Earth, and the God of Death, play a major part in Ti-Moune's life. Ti-Moune grew up on the poor side of a divided island. Although everyone around her is satisfied with their lifestyle, Ti-Moune wants more from life. She dreams of meeting a handsome, rich man. Similar to *The Little Mermaid*, Ti-Moune immediately falls in love with Daniel, a man she saved from drowning. Daniel is from the wealthier side of the island which excites Ti-Moune, but her parents do not approve

of her leaving. It is a story of forbidden love (as in *Romeo and Juliet*), difficult choices, and destiny controlled by the gods.

The show originated on Broadway in 1990, and was re-



vived in 2017. The music was written by Stephen Flaherty (composer) and Lynn Ahrens (lyricist), who have collaborated on many other musicals. *Once on This Island* won the Tony Award for Best Revival of a Musical in 2018. What's appealing about this musical is its distinctiveness. The music beautifully captures the sounds of the islands. In almost every song, the ensemble imitates the

sounds of nature, the birds, the winds, the water, through their voices. Many interesting percussion instruments are used such as an agogo bell (the oldest samba instrument which has its origins in Yoruba music), an

owl whistle, finger cymbals, and a vibraslap (inspired by the jawbone of an African donkey or zebra). These percussion instruments, along with an alto flute, clarinet, piccolo, soprano saxophone, and guitars create a unique style of Caribbean island music. One of the most well-known songs from the show, "Waiting For Life", begins with a simple baseline of electric guitar chords. Then percussion

is added as well as simple background vocals. The highlight of this song are the amazing vocals of Hailey Kilgore. In contrast, "Ti-Moune's Dance" begins with simple acapella vocals and then becomes an upbeat percussion chorus to which Ti-Moune moves rhythmically.

All of the actors in *Once on This Island* are magnificent performers, perfect for their roles. Past and present cast members included Norm Lewis of *Phantom of the Opera* and *Les Miserables*, Alex Newell of "Glee", and Lea Salonga of *Miss Saigon* and *Les Miserables*. The actress playing the leading role of Ti-Moune, Hailey Kilgore, made her Broadway debut in this musical. She joined the cast at the age of 18 during the end of her senior year of high school.

Sadly, *Once on This Island* will be closing on January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2019. Though tickets for the show now start around 90 dollars, cheaper tickets can be obtained by rushing the show when the box office opens, or TDF (the Theater Development Fund). A national tour of the musical is said to launch in Fall 2019.

## *Mrs. Peregrines Home for Peculiar Children: Book Review*

By Cecilia Roe

If you enjoyed the Harry Potter series, then I highly recommend you read *Mrs. Peregrines Home for Peculiar Children*. The series, by Ransom Riggs, includes four books which take you on the journey of Jacob Portman in the amazing world of Mrs. Peregrine and her peculiar children. These books take you on an emotional rollercoaster but at the same time give you the magical feel of the *Harry Potter* books. In the book the main character, Jacob Portman, is just an ordinary Florida kid. He goes to high school and even has a job like any normal teenager, but once Jacob's grandfather passed away he leaves Jacob clues leading to a mysterious place

known as Mrs. Peregrines Home for Peculiar Children. As he gets to know the people of this mystical world he discovers that they are anything but normal. Whether it be Hugh who has his own hive of bees in his stomach or Olive who floats as if she was a balloon or even Claire who has an extra mouth in the back of her head. He slowly gets to become a part of their world, saving them from their enemy, the hollows. In all of this, he discovers that he may have more in common with the peculiar children than he thinks.

The way Ransom Riggs writes the books make the reader feel personally connected with each and every one of the characters. The amount of description and thought put into

the book makes you able to almost see the peculiar world around you and makes you want to hop right into the story alongside the characters. It captivates in every moment and at sometimes has readers on the edge of their seats.

The way the author wrote the book gives the great magical aspect of *Harry Potter* but also gives some heart wrenching stories of the children. Even if this may not be your typical read, I highly recommend at least giving it a try. You will not be disappointed. The book has a perfect variety of fantasy, mystery, and romance all in one. In addition to the fabulous writing, the thing that makes the book special is the pictures. Ransom Riggs incorporated black and white

photos in which he had found from various flea markets and thrift stores into the book, incorporating them into the storyline. The pictures add the perfect touch to the book making everything seem real.

In conclusion, I would highly recommend this series no matter your preference of genre. The whole story hooks you in, making you constantly wanting to read more. Ransom Riggs gives a perfect balance of everything in the books and has readers feeling as if they could go into the peculiar world themselves. Overall, I rate the series a 5 out of 5; I personally love the *Harry Potter* series and this series was a pleasure to read as well.

# Holiday Recipes

## Provided by the National English Honor Society

At the end of this month, we have an entire week to spend time in the kitchen. We recommend trying something sweet! Here are three delicious and easy cultural dishes to try out.

### Spritz Cookies

Preparing Spritz cookies is one of many German Christmas traditions. Every year, German families gather to make the dough and decorate these festive cookies. Spritz are light butter cookies that complete any holiday platter.

#### Ingredients:

- 1 ½ cup butter
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 egg
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- ½ teaspoon almond extract
- 4 cups sifted flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder

#### Recipe:

1. Cream butter & sugar
2. Add egg, vanilla, and almond extract
3. Sift flour & baking powder
4. Add sifted mixture to creamed mixture
5. Mix until smooth
6. Put dough in cookie press
7. Bake @ 400 degrees for 7-8 minutes



### Arroz con Leche (Rice Pudding)

Arroz con Leche is a dessert eaten around the holiday season in many Hispanic households. This delicious and easy to make recipe will have you asking for more!



#### Ingredients:

- One cup of rice
- One gallon of milk
- 4 Piloncillos (unrefined Mexican sugar)
- Cinnamon sticks
- Sugar (Based on your liking)

#### Steps:

1. Put all ingredients into a pot and wait for it to boil
2. Stir slowly to make sure the rice does not get stuck to the pot
3. After stirring for 5 minutes, lower the heat until the rice is fully cooked
4. And that's it!

### Latkes:

Latkes taste like Hanukkah, bringing back memories of burning candles and spinning dreidels. Not only are they a celebration of the miracle that happened long ago, but they are a delicious miracle themselves--one that I strongly recommend you try!

- Dice 3 or 4 potatoes
- In a blender, add the diced potatoes and:
  - 1 egg
  - ¼ of an onion
  - ½ tsp. Salt
- Mix together in blender
- Pour into a bowl
- Add:
  - Two tablespoons of matzah meal
- Mix
- Then, in a frying pan
  - Use a quarter cup of olive oil
  - Spoon mini pancake sized amounts of potato batch into pan
  - Over low medium heat, brown on each side and cook through



# Editorial: The New Rochelle High School Junior

By Kate Spillane

New Rochelle High School: a place of diversity and acceptance. This is a building for developing academically and for learning to become more proactive members of society.

Imagine at least 3,500 students, with an abundance of faculty members to support them. Within this vast body are about 800 Juniors. After exploring the school for two years, Juniors have developed into more independent humans. They have learned to advocate for themselves, becoming more confident individuals. The Juniors have truly grown into the school, adopting the slang, finding all the hidden staircases, and discovering the clubs and sports teams. However, what Junior is unaware of Hoco? Or, are there any Juniors who do not know what the stacks are, or where the Embassy is?

The Junior class has a reputation for being the most stressed. Junior year is when students begin worrying about SATs, Subject Tests, ACTs, and college tours. It is the year in which many begin to undertake one or more college-level courses. Juniors are unique in that they face an overwhelming workload, yet still persevere and contribute to school and society. Indeed, one will find that the population neither consists of people who only do school work, nor of people who only scroll through Instagram or Twitter.

So, what is a New Ro-

chelle High School Junior?

A New Rochelle Junior is one who is defined by more than just academics. You can see in our school that there are Juniors who, in addition to taking rigorous courses, play sports, volunteer on weekends, participate in 20 different clubs, and still manage to find down time to listen to music or watch “The Flash.” Juniors enjoy PAVE’s productions and love to bake for clubs. Juniors are Dunkin’ Donuts enthusiasts and have additional love for Chicken Joe’s and Gemelli’s. Juniors celebrate the holidays with avid school spirit. If you walked down the halls on Halloween, this enthusiasm would clearly be evident in the many costumes of both students and teachers.

The Junior is resilient and determined. Yes, they may procrastinate at times, but have you met a Junior who does not? Juniors are not always the most optimistic or energetic people. Like many high school students, Juniors at New Rochelle High School have those days where the work piles. However, despite having “off” days, students do try their best. Overall, the Junior will make time to accomplish her goals and be successful. The Junior is able to bounce back from hardship as well. Even when faced with failure, Juniors will struggle to improve and to learn from mistakes.

Juniors are extremely ambitious. Junior year is when a world of possibilities opens. Juniors at New Rochelle High

School have access to course options which most schools do not offer. What other schools do you know that offers AP Latin Poetry? Or neuroscience? Or life-guarding? Juniors seize these chances to learn, choosing the path which interests them the most. The Junior has much freedom to explore whatever he or she desires, without worrying about a specific area to study in college.

Juniors also have spirit, for they appreciate a school with such opportunities. Unlike freshmen or sophomores, the Juniors have been in the school long enough to develop strong pride. They are also close enough to finishing high school that they desire to show true pride before they graduate. Juniors also have zeal for more than just school. Many Juniors have experienced the rush of earning their driver’s permits or Junior licenses and relish in the newfound freedom. Indeed, they are eager to take on the world.

The Juniors are a family, showing concern for each other in good and bad times. They have been together for three years, have struggle together for three years. How could you not form bonds after growing with one another for so long? The Juniors are especially close at this point in time, where all are struggling and understand that all have never-ending mountains of homework. The Juniors are ready to help each other solve Biology or Physics problems, and rejoice when they have solved a near

impossible WebWork problem together. As a result of the cohesiveness, one will see the Juniors are open-minded. They are willing to consider other points of view respectfully. Thus, this allows them to learn more about the world, enabling them to make informed decisions.

The Junior class has a unique culture. They remember the flip phones and Gameboys of the earlier 2000s, but also embrace Gen-Z memes, SnapChat, and apps. They can joke about the older technology and iconic songs from 2008. They remember *Twilight* and Rebecca Black’s “Friday” and the rise of Justin Bieber. Juniors are able to reminisce about the past while also enjoying new experiences. So, what do you think constitutes a New Rochelle High School Junior? The New Rochelle Junior is one who is able to manage work and play in order to accomplish academic and personal goals. The Junior is one who encompasses a variety of traits which help him or her stay positive and motivated. The Junior is one who will succeed because of his or her efforts. Despite the current hardships, Juniors have promising futures with honor societies, colleges, internships, jobs, and fulfilling personal lives. The Juniors have risen from freshman year to become a class that is sure of its place in the school.

These are New Rochelle High School Juniors.

## What if we could stay underwater longer?

By Alex Streinger

What if every human being could stay underwater without breathing for up to thirteen minutes at a time, and dive to depths of 220 feet without equipment? What about if you and I could have the strength to dive over and over for eight hours a day? Sounds incredible, but also impossible. Nevertheless, there is a very small part of the human population to whom this is a reality. A rare genetic mutation among the Bajau people allows them to stay underwater for much longer than the average human being (most of us can, in average, hold our breaths for only less than two minutes!).

The Bajau are part of a small community from Southeast

Asia between the Philippines, Indonesia, and Malaysia. Scientists that studied them reported that for thousands of years they have been “sea nomads”, which means that they have migrated from one place to another inside the ocean. They live on boats called “lepa-lepa” (slim boats) and every time they move, they continue their diving experience. Because of their living conditions and the fact that they depend on collecting shellfish from the seafloor, and on fishing for their food, being able to hold their breath for a long time is a big advantage for their survival.

Researchers recently published their findings in a scientific journal called “Cell” showing that the Bajau have this ability

mainly because of an interesting difference in their body format. They have unusually large spleens (on average 50% larger than other people). Although we don’t usually tend to think much about this organ, the spleen is an organ with several functions, including sending oxygenated red blood cells to our circulation, which has the result of increasing our supply of oxygen in situations it is necessary (for instance, during long dives when we are holding our breath).

More than being interesting, there are many reasons why we should care about this scientific discovery. First, we all spend years in science class studying Evolutionism, but we rarely have the occasion to face recent examples of this happening with modern humans. As the Bajau

have had this lifestyle for centuries, the researchers are convinced their larger spleens are a result of natural selection. Second, these findings may point to new ways to investigate how humans can deal with low oxygen conditions, bringing possible insights to address respiratory disorders. These disorders, including chronic bronchitis and asthma, are among the three leading causes of deaths in New Rochelle and one of the main reasons of emergency room visits in our city. Finally, as a lifeguard-in-training at NRHS, we learn that an estimated 360,000 people in the world die annually by of drowning – how great it would be if we could stay underwater at least one extra minute!