



Photo by S. Yedwab

Mr. Gilbert and Mr. Klineman — the "Dynamic Duo"

College Advice: A Word to the Wise

By Gisel Santamaria, Sha'Corra Wells, and Andrea Teanga

Whether your senior year is already here or is fast approaching, the time to make college choices should be now. The process can be overwhelming and hard to handle, but with the help of your school guidance counselor, it can become much easier.

Recently, *The Hilltop Star* interviewed two of our dedicated guidance counselors: Mr. Gilbert and Mr. Klineman. They gave us a lot of information on college and finances.

Their advice is that it's unacceptable to fail, but most of all, everyone should be accountable for his/her work. In addition, students should be willing to explore new friendships and new experiences. Be open-minded and willing to take different types of courses.

Overall, graduating students must understand that college is very different from high school. College gives you freedom and allows you to be independent. It's up to you to budget your money and manage your time wisely. There are no parents there to tell you what to do at every hour of the day. You are your own boss.

However, for those seniors who aren't a part of the college application rush, think about other options.

A high school diploma is not enough to make a decent living today. If college is not your priority right now, then consider other avenues to enhance your skills, such as cosmetology, trade school, graphic design, business school, etc. Make sure you make a decision that's right for you.

College Tips:

- Make sure to apply to at least five colleges your senior year
- Apply early
- File your FASFA
- Apply for scholarships and grants
- Keep your grades up and stay involved in your activities.
- Start visiting colleges early in your high school career.
- Make a résumé of your activities and experiences for when you are applying to college.
- Stay in contact with your guidance throughout high school, especially your senior year.
- When applying, be sure to meet all deadlines.

Start Saving for College The Sooner the Better

By Gisel Santamaria, Sha'Corra Wells, and Andrea Tenaga

College is a great milestone in your life. You are able to experience so much and earn an education to help you succeed. However, college is expensive and paying for it can be difficult. It's stressful and overwhelming to know that you might not be able to go to the college of your dreams because of money issues.

The fact is college is getting more and more expensive each year. In fact, loans, grants, and scholarships may not be enough. Another issue is that many parents are applying for loans for their children, but are not getting approved. That leaves students in the predicament of either not going to the college of their choice or not going to college at all.

In a recent poll done at PHS, 65% of the students feel they may not be able to attend college or the college of their choice for financial reasons. Some even intend to enlist in the army instead of going to college.

All in all, going to college today is just not that simple. With tough economic times, paying tuition for college is becoming more and more difficult. Students should really start saving for their college education, so they won't be left with a money gap. The sooner you save, the better!



Photo by S. Yedwab

Service with A Smile at Family Day 2012

See complete coverage in June 2012 issue



Photo by S. Yedwab

Behind Cinco de Mayo

By Ana Rojas and Ana Vazquez

Around the world a lot of people think that Cinco de Mayo is the Mexican Independence Day, but it is not. Cinco de Mayo was a war between France and Mexico. The real Independence Day is on September 6th.

On the morning of May 5, 1862, 4,000 Mexican soldiers defeated 8,000 French soldiers. The French had been there for about five months where they stayed in the state of Puebla located only 10 miles away from Mexico City. Cinco de Mayo commemorates "La Batalla de Puebla" and their victory against the French army.

"La Batalla de Puebla" or the "Battle of Puebla" began because France invaded Mexico's territory because Benito Juarez canceled the interest payments of foreign debt. By his doing so, the Emperor of France Napoleon III, decided to send

soldiers to Mexico. When the battle ended, the Mexican side had defeated the French.

In the United States, everyone celebrates Cinco de Mayo with colorful festivities and delicious Mexican food. The traditions vary in the United States and Mexico.

California, for example, which has the largest Mexican community, celebrates with family gatherings, music, folklore dances and lots of food!

In Texas, they throw the house out the window with the Cinco de Mayo festival at the Market square in San Antonio. Festivities include food and concerts and a statewide menudo cook-off and best salsa (hot sauce) contest; yummy delicioso!

Feliz Cinco de Mayo!!

Sources: www.timeanddate.com/holidays/us/cinco-de-mayo

www.honeymoons.about.com/od/exploremexico/a/cincode-mayo.htm

Women's History Month Assembly Inspires Everyone

By Gisel Santamaria

Sergeant Sheppard, a very dynamic speaker from the Armed Forces, celebrated Women's History Month in an assembly sponsored by ROTC. On March 27, this highly enthusiastic woman did a terrific job of showing us the greatness of being a woman. Sergeant Sheppard presented a power point that named the great women in our history from the first woman astronaut to the first Hispanic woman to be appointed to the Supreme Court, Justice Sonia Soto Mayor.

Furthermore, Sergeant Sheppard shared with us what the word women means to her. She said the "W" stands for wise, "O" for outspoken, "M" for misunderstood, "A" for awesome, and "N" for never, as in never give up. She said every woman has all these qualities and characteristics. The one I like the most is "N" for never because a strong woman never gives up.

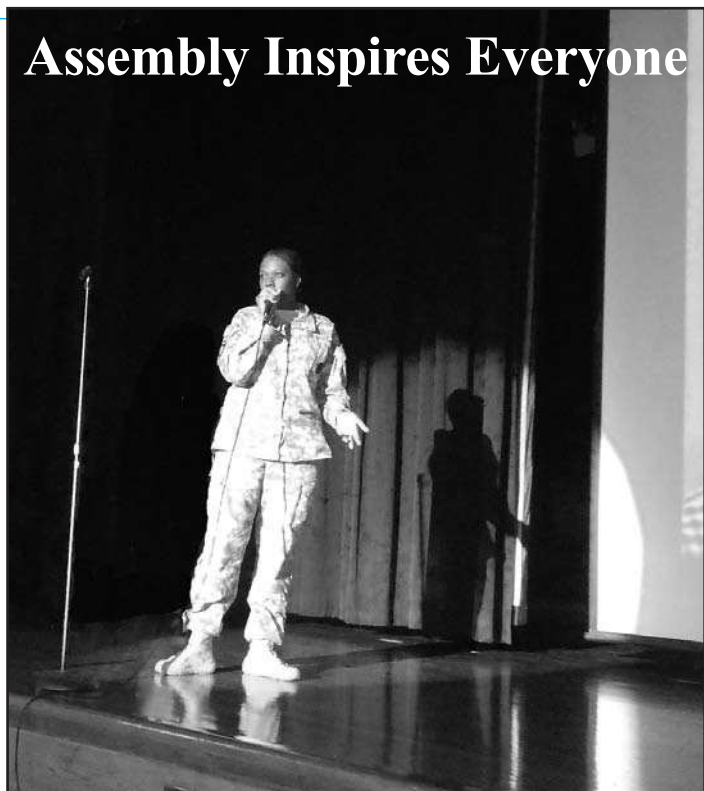


Photo by S. Yedwab

Sergeant Sheppard performs for Women's History Month Assembly.

Sergeant Sheppard really made sure to live up to the greatness of what a woman is, and she told us that we, as women, should never give up

on our dreams.

Many thanks to Lt. Spender and his crew for this inspirational program.

Thumbs Up for 'Once on This Island'



Photo by S. Yedwab

Selina Navarro, pictured above, performed the lead with poise and grace. Play review will be in the June Issue.

What's in this Issue

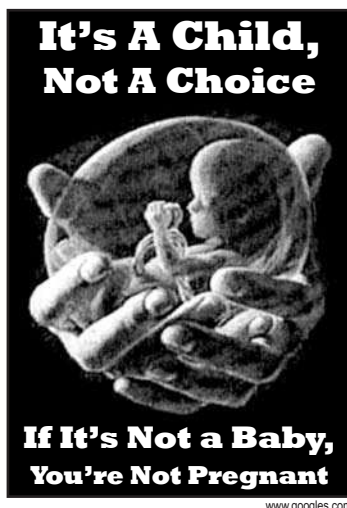
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VIEWPOINTS

ABORTION

Choice : A Woman's Basic Right

By Yovanna Garcia



Throughout history, women have been portrayed as feeble and ineffectual, unlike their male partners. It wasn't until August 26, 1920, when the Nineteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution became law that women were allowed to vote in the fall elections. Ever since, women have learned the significance of having a voice in matters that used to be deemed as "male matters".

In life, the most basic right that anyone can have is the right to have a choice. However, once again, it seems that a woman's basic right to make decisions over her body is being targeted by a male-dominated society.

The view of a growing number of men on abortion is as follows: "We oppose abortion. We oppose using public revenues for abortion and will not fund organizations which advocate it. We support the appointment of judges who respect traditional family values and the sanctity of innocent human life. We salute those who provide alternatives to abortion and offer adoption services." (www.eu-thenasia.com).

However, it seems unreasonable that men (who do not have to endure the pain and sometimes, physical risks of pregnancies) would be against abortion. Men do not have to bear the child until full term and, generally, do not have the same emotional connection to the baby while it is in the womb as a mother will. How can someone ask a woman to bear a child, knowing she will just give it away?

Many people say that if teens are mature enough to have sexual relations, they are mature enough to deal with the consequence of having a baby. However, people need to realize that not all abortions are performed for teenagers. According to www.about.com,

only about 221,000 (17%) of all abortions in the United States were performed for teenagers.

Actually, an abortion is not always the result of a bad mistake made by a teen. Sometimes, a woman's health is put at risk if she bears the child to full term. Sometimes, the baby may be at risk of being born with severe deformities and the parents would rather not bring a severely handicapped child into the world.

If abortion were to become illegal in America, a lot of people who cannot financially afford a baby would turn to underground "clinics" where uncertified people would perform the abortions. Why should a woman have to put her life in jeopardy because of unfair laws? Is the life of an unborn baby more important than a woman's?

To be "pro-choice" is to believe that individuals have unlimited autonomy with respect to their own reproductive systems as long as they do not breach the autonomy of others (www.civilliberty.com). Abortion does not affect anyone but the man and woman who would be having it performed. If the couple decides that they are not ready to have the baby, emotionally or financially, they should not be forced to bear the child.

Governmental laws should not dictate that a couple must have a baby because it is "morally right." Church and state should be separate and religious beliefs should not control the laws of this nation. No one should have control over a woman's body, but the woman herself.

Abortion Is Not an Option

By Julia Lora

It's true that Americans have the right to make their own decisions and do whatever they want to do. However, I believe abortion is something that no one should advocate for. The process of killing a human life before it has a chance to live is both inhumane and unfair. "No civilized society permits one human to intentionally harm or take the life of another human without punishment, and abortion is no different," says Linda Lowen, a former radio/TV broadcast journalist.

Pregnant women have the responsibility to care for the child growing inside them. They have to consider the child in every decision they make. Even if the woman was raped, she still is responsible for her child's life. If she doesn't want the child, then she should give it up for adoption.

Regardless of how the woman got pregnant, or whether or not she wants to keep it, the child still has the right to live. "From 1973 through 2005, more than 45 million legal abortions have occurred in the U.S." (Gutmacher Institute.) That's a shocking number, and it's all because of women who only think of themselves.

Ultimately, abortion should not be tolerated. The baby has the right to live and taking away that right is both unconstitutional and absurd.

The term "legal abortion" is such an oxymoron. Last time I checked, murder was a crime. Everything changes once a baby's in the picture. Women should not only think of themselves, but should think of the child, too.



Photo by www.ctgblaw.files.wordpress.com/2010/03/just-marriede.jpg

Gay Marriage Is Part of the Future

By Lluvi Rosas and Branden Navedo

We are for the legalization of gay marriage. We choose this position because the reasons opposing it are illogical and break the promise of equality made to the citizens of the US.

Some people are merely sticking with what has "always" been. They follow the rules set down by their own religion. People feel that gay marriage is unnatural. They also think that love, or a relationship between two people, or marriage, should be limited to male and female companions for the purpose of procreation.

Depriving people of the right to gay marriage is to deny them many legal rights. It violates the promise made to treat every citizen equally. These rights include the right to survivor's benefits fol-

lowing the death of a veteran spouse, the right to receive additional Social Security benefits based on a spouse's contribution, the right to file a joint bankruptcy petition with a spouse, as well as many others.

People against gay marriage are simply following ancient rules and guidelines when the reasons for creating such laws have long since diminished. They have no reason for believing in these rules other than the fact that this is the way life has always been.

Many people suggest that homosexuality is not part of human nature. This is not true because homosexual relationships have always existed. It is even said that that gay marriages are more intimate than heterosexual marriages because they reach beyond the purpose of procreation.

www.arguingequality.org

Voting Matters — Even at P.H.S.!

By Yovanna Garcia



Photo by S. Yedwab

In America, citizens eighteen and older have the privilege that most people around the world cannot say they have: the right to vote. "The ability to vote exists as one of the most cherished Constitutional Rights that many fought for, marched for, and died for over the centuries" (webpage.pace.edu) and anyone who does not take advantage of the opportunity is unreasonable.

If people no longer had the right to vote, democracy would cease to exist and this country would quickly become a totalitarian society. Generally, citizens are not aware of how much one vote can matter. The differences that one wishes to see in the world begin with voting.

A primary example of the importance and significance of voting can be found in PHS's very own democratic system. When the senior class of 2012 did not like the class shirts that would represent their class, the students

let their voices be heard by arranging and attending a class meeting that would ultimately change the outcome. The class re-voted on the shirts and the logo was changed to suit them. Although one voice can sometimes make a difference, when united, the power of democracy prevails.

The Twenty-fourth Amendment to the United States Constitution guarantees our right to vote. By not voting, U.S. citizens give up their right to influence governmental policies. The right to vote is a sacred right and one should take initiative to vote for the greater good of the nation.

More News

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH



photo from http://fashionscollective.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/07/coco_chanel1.jpg

Coco Chanel

An Inspiring Tribute

By Guadalupe Garcia, Odalys Cabrera and Jenny Hernandez

March is a month that represents powerful women in the world. It is a whole month dedicated to women who made a change in history, not only in the United States, but internationally as well.

Women throughout time have fought for their rights, and now, even to this day, we have gained many more rights and much respect thanks to the women who fought for us.

Here at PHS, we also celebrated the women of past generations by honoring them with a Woman's History Reading Event that took place in the library on March 28.

During the celebration of inspirational women, we had many people talk about encouraging women in their lives. A faculty member, Mr. Velez, read one of his very own poems dedicated to his mother who died of cancer when he was very young.

He read a somber poem about the things he missed from when his mom was alive. He said that his mom was his hero. Mr. Velez then gave the floor to various students from his class who read information about important women.

Victor Reyes talked about our First Lady, Michelle Obama. She graduated from an Ivy League school, majoring in law. Michelle Obama is known for being the

first African American woman First Lady of the United States of America.

Of course, there are many other famous women that made history. Lauren Romero read about



Photos by S. Yedwab (top) Mr. Velez



(middle) Mrs. Scott-Roush



(below) Lauren Romero

Gabrielle Coco Chanel who revolutionized woman's clothing. During her time, women were forced to wear corsets and tight clothes. She also created the popular and expensive perfume, Chanel Number 5, which is still used today.

There are many powerful women that continue to leave their legacy behind. Most importantly, there is still ongoing change to make life in the world a more positive and productive experience for women.

The Hunger Games
A Thriller with a Twist

Photo from movieweb.com

By Julia Lora

The Hunger Games, a futuristic series about star-crossed lovers, is nothing short of phenomenal. Two people, a boy and a girl, from each of the twelve districts of Panem are selected to represent their district and battle in the Hunger Games on live television.

There can only be one survivor, but this time, the traditional battle takes an unexpected turn when the two chosen people from District 12, Katniss and Peeta, fall in love and begin helping each other. The audience applauds this and the rules of the game begin to change in their favor. At the end, both Katniss and Peeta survive the battle. However, only one survivor is allowed. Now, President Snow, the leader of the Hunger Games, tries to eliminate the survivors causing a dangerous spiral of events. This first movie was a great success and we're sure the rest of the trilogy will be successful as well.

The Holocaust: Let the Healing Begin

By Jenny Hernandez, Guadalupe Garcia and Odalys Cabrera

January 1933, was the beginning of an infamous part of history that affected many people even to this day. Even though time goes on, people still find it a struggle to move on with their lives after the tragic outbreak that started in Germany and later broke out in other countries in Europe.

The horror of the Holocaust began with the insane idea of "perfection" in Germany when the country came under the control of a dictator known as Adolf Hitler.

In time, staying alive was the key to escaping the harsh struggle of life in concentration camps and ultimate extermination. Many went into hiding leaving everything behind.

Most people don't know that we have a member of the Passaic High School Family that can relate to this topic. Good hearted and inspiring Mr. Weissman opened up about being a second generation holocaust survivor in an interview with *The Hilltop Star*.

In this case, his parents underwent a series of events during the era of The Holocaust. However, Mr. Weissman lightened the seriousness of the mood for a moment



Photo by http://www.martinfrust.ws/htmlfiles/holocaust.html

Child survivors of the Holocaust filmed during the liberation of Auschwitz concentration camp by the Red Army, January, 1945.

by joking about his very comfey couch, as he invited us to sit down and begin the interview.

To start, we asked Mr. Weissman about the play he wrote based on The Holocaust and what motivated him to write this play. "I want students to know I'm ready to reveal the real me," he said. As Mr. Weissman continued to express his ideas, he began to open up a side that we never pictured. "I always knew there was a lot of

pain inside of me and I didn't know where it was coming from," shared Mr. Weissman.

We then asked if writing the play was a healing experience for him. Mr. Weissman simply replied, "Yes, it brought out a lot of pain I had bottled up inside." At the end of the interview, we left the office inspired and excited about Mr. Weissman's upcoming play. It will definitely be a play worth watching!

POETRY MONTH

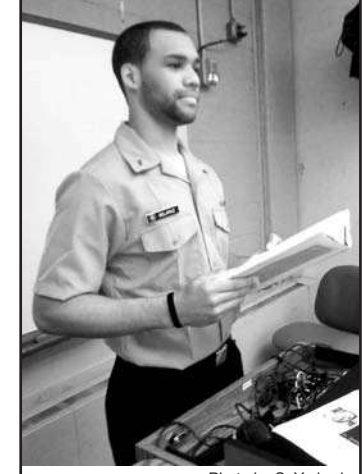


Photo by S. Yedwab
Michaeh DeLaPaz read "I too, Sing America" by Langston Hughes during PHS's celebration of National Poetry Month in the library.

Editorial: PHS Students Don't Feel Safe

By Alyssa Rivera and Tracy Cuevas

Fifty-five percent of the students do not feel safe in school according to a poll taken by *The Hilltop Star*. Crowded hallways, gossip and a basic lack of respect for each other creates an unsafe environment for our school. "This is definitely situational. This has a lot to do with who you

hang out with and who you're near. It's about to be my third year in this school, and because I am mostly hanging solo or with a couple of my studious friends, I have not even seen a fight, only heard of them.

If you hang out with the crowd that always talks about fights, this school is dangerous. They gossip, do drugs, etc..." A.C. said. Past altercations make students

fearful of their surroundings. They have a state of mind that anything can happen at any time.

Living a life in fear is unhealthy. Students will never succeed, if they are afraid and insecure about themselves and their surroundings.

PHS should do everything possible to surround us with positive energy, so that we have the best mindset for success.

MOVIE REVIEWS

The Hunter

A Movie with an Edge

By Lluvi Rosas and Branden Navedo



Photo from movieweb.com

The Hunter is a film of surprising scope, yet it manages to remain intimate. The plot revolves around a man, David Martin, who is a skilled and ruthless mercenary. Martin is a hunter on the illegal side of life. His mission is to hunt for a tiger believed to be extinct. Martin is hired by an anonymous company that wants the tiger's genetic material.

The hunter arrives in Tasmania posing as a scientist. He sets up a base camp in a broken-down farmhouse.

Martin is led down a path of unforeseen dangers, complicating his deadly mission. While he is on a mission to trap the tiger, he stays with a family whose father has gone missing.

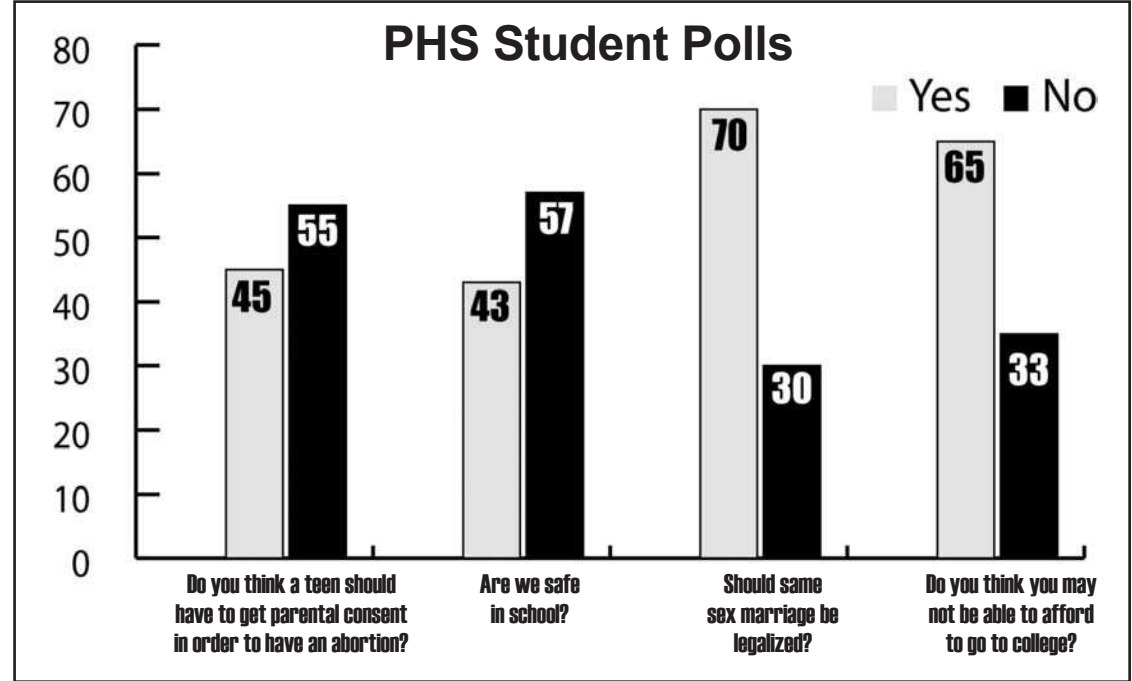
Martin becomes increasingly close to the family. It is interesting to note, that, as his attachment to the family grows, Martin connects with people on an emotional level for what might be the first time in his life.

We enjoyed watching *The Hunter*. It was a thrilling movie, that incorporated greed and human interest. If you like action and love, see this movie.

Who's Who in The Hilltop Star

Ms. S. Yedwab.....Advisor
Mr. R. Messina.....Assistant Advisor

Yovanna Garcia.....Co-Editors in Chief
Gisel Santamaria.....Co-Editors in Chief
Alyssa Rivera.....Editor
Tracy Cuevas.....Assistant Editor
Branden Navedo.....Assistant Editor, A&E Co-Editor
Lluvi Rosas.....Assistant Editor, A&E Co-Editor
Julia Lora.....Assistant Editor, A&E Co-Editor
Diane Ortega.....Features Editor
Jennifer Rojas.....Centerfold Co-Editor
Loddyman Pina.....Centerfold Co-Editor
Mabelly Tejeda.....Centerfold Co-Editor
Jenny Hernandez.....Features Co-Editor
Odalys Cabrera.....Features Co-Editor
Guadalupe Garcia.....Features Co-Editor
Ana Rojas.....Features Reporter
Ana Vazquez.....Features Reporter, Ask Aida
Sha'Corra Wells.....Features Reporter
Andrea Teanga.....Features Reporter
Ashley Burgos.....Fashion Designer
Deyaniris Abreu.....Fashion Designer
Alan Humphries.....Co-Editor Sports
Sally Flores.....Ask Aida, Sports Co-Editor
Cristal Soriano.....Sports Co-Editor





http://news.hockeydraft.ca/wp-content/uploads/rumours.jpg

By Alyssa Rivera

Rumors are one of the most negative forms of communication, and they often break up relationships. Other people shouldn't be in your problems or any type of situation because it's not their relationship. Most teens tend to snoop and be in the problem thinking they can fix it, but in reality, the only people who can actually fix the problem are the people in the actual relationship.

Your significant other should not feed into what other people say because there are many who would say anything to start problems. In their minds, they're the good ones because they "told the

truth," but it was really just a lie or a rumor.

Many relationships break up because of what other people say. A partner often listens to other people while in a relationship and automatically thinks what they say is true. That leads to assuming things and also jumping to conclusions. Therefore, the arguments start and then a break up may occur. This is all due to "trust." To be honest, lies hurt more than the truth.

The majority of high school students are the way they are because they want to "fit in." A reputation is a main concern during your adolescent years. Your personality and the way you act to-

wards others is what matters.

Being influenced by wrong decisions will affect your reputation in a negative way. Rumors will just add to that. Teenagers tend to switch words around using the "he said, she said" method, or just lying altogether. They think it puts bad on the person they're talking about and good on themselves because they "know things." However, it doesn't always work that way, and the person spreading the rumor can be exposed as a backstabber.

In conclusion, starting a rumor won't only start trouble, but it may also put the instigator in a bad light.

Teens Dealing with Controversial Issues

Rumors

Are You Listening To Them?



http://www.mnn.com/sites/default/files/main_teen_8.jpg

Sleeping Difficulties

Reflect Poor Choices

By Diane Ortega

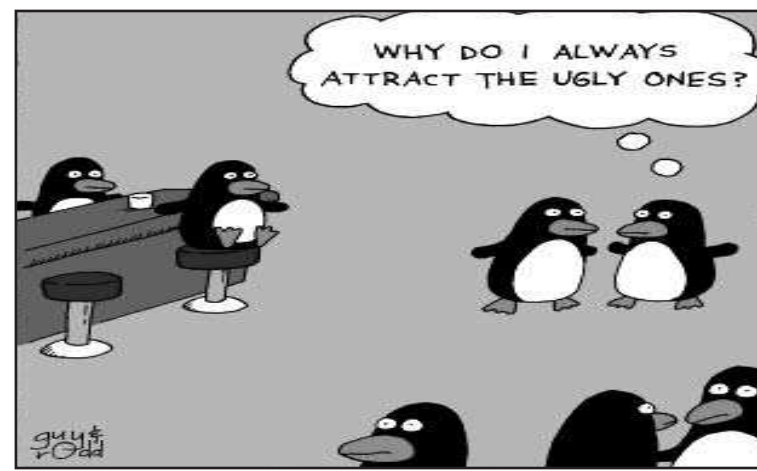
Most teenagers and adults need between seven and ten hours of sleep per night to wake up feeling refreshed and energetic. Due to hectic schedules, poor lifestyle choices, emotional issues and a variety of sleep conditions, a good night's sleep is often just a dream. If you have difficulties, take matters into your own hands and look forward to good sleep in the near future.

You could hold back a hectic schedule. One of the main reasons people fail to get enough sleep is that their days are full of activities. Here are some suggestions:

http://www.teenissues.co.uk

1. Reorganize your days by cutting out the unnecessary activities like watching television, reading magazines, playing video games or texting.
2. Don't add anything new to your schedule till sleeping patterns improve.
3. Exercise during the day to help tire yourself out.
4. Keep your bedroom temperature cool
5. Cut out caffeinated drinks such as tea, coffee, etc.

These tips should help you to get your beauty sleep when you start to make better lifestyle choices. As long as you follow this plan, your sleep difficulties may very well end before you know it.



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Betrayal

Steps to Forgiveness

By Jennifer Rojas, Mabelly Tejada and Lodymyer Pina

Betrayal is the ultimate disappointment especially coming from someone you trust. It isn't always easy to forgive those who have stabbed you in the back, however it's not always easy to have a clear view on who you can trust to begin with. But it's clear that the results of betrayal are always the same.

Being hurt by someone you care about, can hurt a little more than it would coming from someone who doesn't have any significance in your life. People can be cruel and vicious, but those actions are never expected from a loved one. This is why forgiving a stranger is easier than forgiving a close friend or boyfriend/girlfriend.

People can choose two paths when it comes to these difficult situations. Either let the person go and never talk to him/her again, or try to forgive him/her and work on rebuilding friendship and

trust. Both are difficult to do, but not impossible. It takes both parties to be willing to fix the friendship in order to genuinely forgive each other. It's always wise to remember everyone makes mistakes. Although the person who commits those mistakes make forgiving harder, holding grudges isn't healthy. Try to be the bigger person and accept what has been put in your path of life. Don't dwell on the negatives of the situation. Instead, work on making it better.

Embrace the Rainbow

Confront Your Negative Feelings

By Jennifer Rojas, Mabelly Tejada and Lodymyer Pina

Homophobia is a range of negative attitudes and feelings towards homosexuality and people who are identified or perceived as being homosexual. It's a feeling that not many understand, but some can relate to it.

The biggest predicament to this issue is that some people may not even know they are homophobic until they are approached with the situation.

Yovanna Garcia, Class President, is very outspoken on this subject. In fact, she was a guest speaker for the "Homophobia Reduction Workshop," which Teen Pep hosted in March.

We interviewed Yovanna Garcia about her thoughts on homophobia and her responses were very insightful. According to Garcia, homophobia is caused by environmental factors and lack of knowledge. Generally, a person's surroundings and upbringing influence what he or she believes is morally right or wrong.

Garcia also believes that some people are homo-



Photo by S. Yedwab

Panel for Homophobia reduction workshop given by Teen PEP.

phobic because they are not comfortable with their own sexuality. Why should it bother someone that another is comfortable with being openly gay?

Now, more than ever, homosexuals are coming out and it is causing others to feel uncomfortable. As a result of this, some homosexuals still hide their identity because of how others might perceive them.

Homophobia is definitely a teen issue. It affects both heterosexuals and homosexuals in our society. After all the anguish, it is less damaging to accept those who have chosen to be who they truly are. Perhaps, trying to understand our more complex feelings will help to make us more tolerant.



http://festivals.loveindia.com/friendship-day/friendship-betrayal.html

Homophobia Quiz

Are you a homophobic?

By Lodymyer Pina, Jennifer Rojas and Mabelly Tejada

1. Do gay people make you nervous? **Yes or No**
2. Do you think gay people deserve what they get? **Yes or No**
3. Is homosexuality unacceptable to you? **Yes or No**
4. Would you end the friendship if you found out your friend was gay? **Yes or No**
5. Do you think homosexual people should not work with children? **Yes or No**
6. Does the company of a homosexual make you uncomfortable? **Yes or No**
7. Do you believe that marriage between homosexuals is unacceptable? **Yes or No**
8. Do you make derogatory remarks, like "faggot" or "queer" to people you suspect are gay? **Yes or No**
9. Does it matter to you if your friends are gay? **Yes or No**
10. Do you avoid gay individuals? **Yes or No**



Photo by S. Yedwab

Homophobia Awareness skit given by Teen PEP.

Results

If less than 30% of your answers are yes, you are tolerant of homosexuals.

If 40% - 60% of your answers are yes, you are semi tolerant of homosexuals.

If more than 60% of your answers are yes, then you are considered homophobic.

Abusive Relationships Demand a Tough Response

By Diane Ortega

Abusive relationships are characterized by extreme jealousy, emotional withholding, and lack of intimacy, raging, sexual coercion, infidelity, verbal abuse, threats, lies, broken promises, physical violence, power plays and control games. Abuse does not need to be physical. It could also be emotional abuse which is as damaging as physical abuse. Emotional abuse causes long term self esteem issues and profound emotional repercussions for the partners of the abusers. Therefore, abusive relationships get worse as times passes.

Abusers are often survivors of abuse themselves. There are many

attributes of abusers that are documented. They may have experienced trauma from childhood emotional, physical and sexual abuse. Abusers act out of deep seated shame and feelings of inadequacy. They usually try to pull their partner down to make themselves feel better. However, the first step to leaving an abusive relationship is to admit that you have the right to be treated with respect and not be physically or emotionally harmed by another person.

As a result, you could help yourself by making sure you're safe. Anyone that you trust can help you. If the person has physically attacked you, don't wait to get medical attention or call the police. Assault is



http://janielacy.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/10/abuse.jpg

illegal, and so is rape even if it's done by someone you are dating. Avoid the tendency to isolate yourself from your friends and family. Ending abuse and violence in a teen relationship is a community effort with plenty of people ready to help.

http://kidshealth.org



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Got a question...

ASK AIDA

Dear Aida,
I have this friend who told me her ex boyfriend has been bothering her and has not stopped insisting to be with her again. She has told him, "No," so many times, but he just says that he isn't going to stop until she agrees to see him. He has also threatened her that he would find her and make her be with him. What should she do?

Concerned

Dear Concerned,
She should tell someone of higher authority like the police for a restraining order, and she should let her parents know what's happening. He needs to understand that she doesn't want to be with him and, if he doesn't simply understand from her words, then there is no other way than to inform the police.

You should keep a close eye on your friend. This girl sounds like she may really be in danger!

Aida

Dear Aida,
How do you think your school year is going? What are your future plans and what advice can you give to freshmen?

Curious

Dear Curious,
I'm a senior so the feeling of being in high school for the last year is GREAT!! I know for a fact that I will miss PHS, because it holds so many memories, not only for me, but but all the seniors. We all made such great friends and cherish wonderful moments in our high school life.

What's next, well everybody is going their own way, pursuing their lifelong dreams and moving forward. We are all making our own paths (the sad part) by going to different colleges and universities. So, it will be hard to keep contact with one another. But that is life. Sometimes, you have to lose good friends in order to gain new ones.

My advice to freshmen

Aida

would be to do the best you can! Freshmen year counts a lot; most colleges look at your freshmen and junior years, so make sure you're on top of everything. Time is going to fly by, so hustle up all you can. Do all the work first, and then play, because in the end it'll pay off!!



ON OUR MINDS

Should same sex marriages be legalized?

Same sex marriage should be legal. They are human beings, whether they're homosexual or heterosexual. They deserve the right to marry, even if it's the same sex.

Samantha Rodriguez

I think it should be legalized because you should be allowed to love who you want.

V.R.

Same sex marriage should be legalized because everyone should have the same rights.

Jenny Almonte

I believe it should be legal because everyone should have the same rights. Everyone has feelings.

Stephanie Polonia

For girls, it should be legal, but for guys, no.

W



ASL Students participate in "Deaf Day."

I do believe same sex marriages should be legal because homosexuals should have the same rights as others. They should be happy as well.

Jose Perez

Same sex marriage should be legalized because everyone deserves a chance to be with the person he/she loves in a more committed way. We are in a new world where things have changed and ignorance is something people should have less of.

A

Yes, everyone is created equal, and just because you're a girl with a girl or a boy with a boy, doesn't change the fact that we are humans.

B

They're not the same as ordinary couples, but that doesn't mean they should be treated differently. Same sex couples deserve the same rights as every other couple.

Kiana R.

Same sex should be legalized because everyone should marry the person of his/her choice.

A

This is a free country where everyone should be able to have their own rights.

F

Everyone should have a chance to be happy in this world no matter what their gender.

Naemi

For sure, this is America, land of the free, where we should have the freedom to marry whomever we wish.

V

Do you think a teen should get parental consent in order to have an abortion?

No, it's actually the teenager's problem because she is pregnant.

Anonymous

Parents should not have the right to give consent to underage pregnant women wanting an abortion. They obviously weren't conscious enough parents to stop the child from getting pregnant in the first place.

Luvi Rosas

Teens should go for parental consent especially when it comes to abortion. They should sit down and think that they'll never see a human being breathing because they decided to take its life away.

Anonymous

A teenager should have parental consent because in the end the parents supports the child financially.

S.G



Juniors and Seniors playing Musical Chairs during "The Games."

I think if the student is a minor she should make a decision with her parents, but, if she isn't at least 18-years-old, then she shouldn't.

Anonymous

I don't think teens should get parental consent because they are the ones with the child not the parents.

A.G

I think they should because they never know if something will go wrong.

A.O

Yes, there should be parental consent, so the child can know about more options.

A.P



DECCA student's celebrate DECCA Week.

Advice would not hurt. At a young age, a girl having a child is not the best dream. All she wants to do is have the abortion, but one good piece of advice from a parent may just change her point of view.

P.R

There is no "winner takes all" answer to this question. There are certain cases where teens find themselves with their parent's sentence of being kicked out of the house if an event such as pregnancy occurs.

For children with these kinds of parents, that prefer abandonment rather than dealing with their child's situation, I consider it acceptable to have an abortion without a consent.

But for those teens that just see abortion as another form of birth control, don't want to deal with the effects of pregnancy on the body, or have become addicted to abortions, I believe parental consent should be mandatory. In fact, in some cases, they should not be permitted to abort, even with the consent of their parents.

Ronny Siri

It depends on how old the teen is. If she is 14 years old or under, she should get consent. For those above 15, it's up to them.

Jennifer R.

Yes, an abortion is not a simple little problem that could be solved so easily. If anything were to happen to a teen during the abortion, parents could sue the clinic or doctor who performed the abortion.

N.R

Yes, how about if something goes wrong with the teen during the abortion.

C.O

Yes, so the parents could talk to the teen, so they won't make a big mistake

R.H

Are we safe in school?

I don't think it's safe in school because there are a lot of fights in and out of school.

S.T



The Bioecology Club participates in the Club Fair.

I think we are because there are cops, teachers and security.

D.T

Not really, because there are many exits around the school and students can help people sneak in. There aren't enough teachers or cops in the hallways; they get distracted easily.

Jennifer Ruiz



PHS students enjoy the Club Fair.

Now that it is getting warmer outside, people are getting crazy.

M.A

No, we are not safe in school. The reason is because anyone can come in at any moment whether it's a person in school or not and attack the students.

A

Yes, whenever something big happens there are detectives and cops in every hallway and corner of this school.

B

I think we're safer in school than in many other places.

B.B

Not really, because we need more cops and security in school. Students can help people from the outside to sneak in PHS.

Cleverly

No, because there still are fights and people disrespecting each other.

A.M

No, because of gang violence.

Y.C

Do you think you may not be able to go to any college or the college of your choice for financial reasons?

No, because there are many scholarships I'm eligible for and they can be great help.

Jennifer R.

Now a days, there is help you could get in order to pay for college. There is financial aid, as well as grants and scholarships you can apply for.

N.R

No. There are a lot of scholarships and financial aid. Therefore, you could go to any college of your choice.

C.O

It is not very difficult. You have a lot of options.

B.N

Yes, because money in my family is really needed at the moment.

Jorge G.

I may not be able to go to school because financial aid believes my parents make too much money. Seriously, my parents don't have enough for the rent, let alone for my education!

Pablo N.

Yes, I may not go due to financial reasons.

Arleth M.

Yes, it's terrible... depending on a scholarship that might not even be available to you, due to your financial situation.

Henry F.

Yes, because I don't have a family who has a lot of money.

A.M

Yes, because I haven't saved up money for college.

J.F

Financially, without the government's help, I don't think I would be able to go to college. If the government does help me, then yes, I will be able to go.

Jenny Almonte

I believe I wouldn't be able to go to college because of financial reasons. But, if I do better in school and receive a scholarship, then, yes, I would be able to go

Stephanie Polonia

Yes, because I'm poor and I don't have as much money as others. I would have to work, get money from family and borrow from the government. Me, by myself, I CAN'T.

Jose P.

Prom Tips

Are you ready for one of the most memorable nights of your high school career? Do you have your dress, shoes, ride, corsages or anything of that sort? Well, here are some tips on how to get ready for prom.

Limo companies:

ViP Luxury Limos
www.vipluxurylimos.com
(973) 383 - 4661

Toptown Limo Ride
35 Main Avenue
Clifton, NJ 07014
(973) 662 - 1116

Dress stores:

Lord & Taylor
Bloomingdales
Nordstrom
Martha's Place
Group USA

Hair salons:

D' Katty's Beauty Salon
345 Monroe Street
Passaic, NJ 07055
(973) 778 - 3440

Beraca Beauty Salon
35 Garden Street
Passaic, NJ 07055
(973) 779 - 7107

Shoe stores:

Steve Madden
Aldo
Macy's
Nordstrom
Lord & Taylor
Bloomingdales

Makeup:

MAC
Sephora

Corsages:

Exotika Floral Designs
343 Monroe Street
Passaic, NJ 07055
(973) 470 - 9377

Prom Fashion History

1970



1980



1990



Prom Fashion 2012



Photos by www.google.com

TENNIS

A Passion for Tennis

By Sally Flores

Rahul Rana's determination, skill, and love are what have brought him to become captain of the PHS Boys Tennis Team. The first time Rana played tennis; he knew it was the sport for him.

This year, his goal is to beat his average score of last year. Rana's most challenging opponent was the first singles player from Clifton High School.

Rana is very competitive. In fact, what he likes best about being on the team is hitting the ball as hard as he can. "Sometimes my opponent can't even see the ball fly past him. It's fun to see his upset face," he shared.

Rana gives great recognition to his coaches who train the team members to their maximum po-

tential and beyond. "I have a lot of hope for my team," he said. "We are always motivating each other to do our best. Before a game, team members make sure to eat a good meal and get plenty of exercise."

Rana would like to give Abhi Rana special recognition because he is very serious on the court. "He always puts in 100% effort just like me," he shared.

As for post graduation, Rana says "I love playing tennis and I will keep playing till forever." Outside of tennis, Rana likes to keep active by playing basketball, baseball, lacrosse, and going bowling

The Hilltop Star would like to thank Rahul Rana for the tremendous impact he's made as part of the PHS Tennis Team.



Photo by S. Yedwab
Rahul Rana

TRACK

The Joy of Running

By Cristal Soriano and Sally Flores

Diana L. Rodriguez, a Junior, is a member of the PHS Girls Spring Track Team who has a passion for her sport. She first joined track because she always loved running, and now that she's a part of the team her goal for this season is to surpass her personal record.

Rodriguez claimed her most challenging opponent is Gabriela Gonzaga. It is this challenge that makes her one outstanding and dedicated runner.

Rodriguez said, "What makes me dedicated is the challenge that comes with it and the teammates that surround me. You never know how practice will be, how a race will turn out, or how your body feels that day. But through it all, my teammates and coaches are supportive."

Rodriguez praised her coaches. "I respect my coach, Coach Grant, because he trains me well and allows me to be prepared for anything that may come up during a race," she shared.

When we asked her about her teammates, she replied, "I absolutely love my teammates!" She also felt the ones who deserve recognition were those who also run distance. "Yessenia Lopez, Selenne Galvez, and Katherine Rodriguez are those teammates who know what it feels like to run long distance," said Rodriguez.

This athlete enjoys the fact that she meets many new people during the races where numerous teams compete. Before a meet, Rodriguez gives herself pep talks and mentally prepares herself to do the best she can.

She completely dedicates herself to running all year-round. Rodriguez has been part of the Cross Country Team, Winter Track Team, and Spring Track Team. She encourages everyone to join Spring Track and join the family!



Photo by S. Yedwab
Diane Rodriguez
Spring Track

SOFTBALL

Let's Run the Bases with PHS Softball

By Allen Humphries

Spring is finally here, and with spring comes base running. No, not baseball; softball. The team is headed by a great group of athletes; Emily Ledesma, Maria Amezcuita, and Millitza Rivera, who gave us a little insight into the sport they love.

When asked what sparked their interest in this sport, Rivera said, "I just decided to try it and I became very good at it." Amezcuita responded, "As a little girl I always used to watch baseball with my father. So once I turned old enough to play on my own I told my parents to put me on a team because I love it." While Ledesma said, "It seemed like a fun sport." So it appears these athletes watched the game from afar until they were old enough to play themselves.

These players are all high achievers and super competitive. "What I plan to accomplish this season is to have a whole lot of wins, and for us to try our best be-

cause we have a great team," exclaimed Rivera. Ledesma added, "I hope to have a batting average of .500 and for us as a team to work hard and get far in the season." However, Amezcuita topped everyone by saying, "This season, I plan to win all the games and go to the all star game."

Clearly, these softball players are very goal oriented and driven to achieve greatness this season. Amezcuita felt this way, "I think my coaches are the best. They work hard and work us hard so that we can be the best," she said.

"Our coaches are awesome. They train us so that we can be prepared for anything that might happen at a game," said Ledesma.

Rivera said, "Honestly speaking, my coaches can teach, they train me a whole lot and every day I learn something new. There's never a problem with me learning something new. I love my coaches, Hauser and Torres."

These girls are headed for great things. Wish you the best!



Photo by S. Yedwab
Millitza Rivera



Photo by S. Yedwab
Emily Ledesman



Photo by S. Yedwab
Maria Amezcuita

VOLLEYBALL

Spike the Ball

Boy's Volleyball Team Rules

By Cristal Soriano

The PHS Volleyball Team hit it off with a great start this season.

Team players, Pedro Tepale and Kevin Jose, talked to us about their season, passion, and their dedication for the sport. Jose's mother, who played for the PHS Volleyball

Team, made him try out, when he showed an interest in volleyball. However, Tepale just wanted to try something new.

Volleyball is a very enjoyable sport for both teammates. Jose loves everything about it. "Personally, I enjoy 'digging' and playing defense the most," he said. Tepale likes playing against other teams, and the laughs all the teammates have in practice. He considers all his teammates to be his second family.

Jose said, "We get mad at each other, but at the end of the day we're a family and love each other like brothers. We all deserve recognition as a team. There's not one player that dominates; we all need each other. If one person is missing, it feels a whole lot different."

Both teammates are very ex-

cellent players. What motivates Tepale to strive, is his daily practicing and giving it his all. "I never give up on my goals," said Tepale. Jose, on the other hand, told us, "The past players motivated me; especially the team of 1997 and my coach."

Jose feels Coach Gomez pushes the team to its best, when he yells, "Prove me wrong! I hate being right!" Tepale feels his coaches are the best and they encourage him a lot. "They help me become a better player," he said.

Just like all athletes, Jose and Tepale have different methods of preparing themselves before a game. Jose told us, "I don't listen to music while warming up, and everyone thinks I'm mad, but I'm usually getting my head into the right mentality for the game."

Tepale focuses on every game they have and tries his best to give the game his all. "Just like Coach Gomez said, 'It's never over until it's over.' Always play other teams as if they are the best," said Tepale.

With their drive and motivation, it's no wonder that their motto is, "Play hard or go home!"



Photo by S. Yedwab
Pedro Tepale and Kevin Jose

GOLF

On the Green with PHS A Cool Place to Be

By Allen Humphries

Let's take a walk on the green, on a nice breezy spring day. Yes, we're talking about golf, and PHS's very own golf team. So, to give us a perspective on what it is like as a golfer, we present Joshua Rodriguez.

"Playing my cousin's Wii," Rodriguez said, "sparked my interest in the sport. Contrary to popular belief, golf is not as easy as most people think. It takes much skill and effort. Actually, when starting out, it can get frustrating, but Rodriguez is motivated to strive and push through the struggle."

As each new season rolls around, new opportunities arise to do great things. Rodriguez said, "I plan to have a good time, meet new people, and win some matches for Passaic."

In a sport like golf, an athlete needs a coach who is patient and

consistent, and the team found that person in Coach Pratkano. "I absolutely love Coach Pratkano, I see him as a second grandfather and think he is an outstanding coach," said Rodriguez.

Camaraderie is important in any sport, but in a sport like golf, where it can get really frustrating, that support is all the more important.

Rodriguez is very close to his teammates. "I like my teammates; we're truly a family," shared Rodriguez. But, of all his teammates, he considers Allen Humphries to be the closest to him. "He has helped me out a lot," said Rodriguez.

In this sport it's all about being loose and relaxed. The slightest tension can throw your swing off. So Rodriguez likes to listen to music and think about trying out new shots and tricks to prepare for the game.

We wish him a great season!



Photo by S. Yedwab
Joshua Rodriguez

Congratulations to all the PHS athletes on their spring sports season

Boy's Baseball Team Dominates the Field

By Cristal Soriano

William Sanchez, PHS senior, grew up watching baseball. For him, baseball was always a family tradition and, as he got older, he started playing on teams. Sanchez is motivated to accomplish his goal of playing for college baseball. Since he is currently a senior, Sanchez hopes his last season will

be his best!

He believes the most challenging opponent to be himself. "Only you can push yourself, only you can put up with your pain," said Sanchez. He finds baseball to be an exquisite game that is far from boring.

Sanchez plays baseball all year round. "Baseball is my life and passion, I play in a lot of different

leagues to improve my game," he said. He prepares himself for a game by going to the field early to practice his batting to become mentally strong for the game.

Sanchez's passion is fueled by his two great coaches. "I think my coaches, Mrs. Diza and Mrs. Smith are the best coaches in PHS," he said. "They are always going the extra mile to help the

team succeed and accomplish our goals."

Sanchez likes the way the coaches "push the team to the extreme." He believes the intense workout they receive show that commitment and hard work bring victory.

Sanchez is serious about being the captain of the baseball team.



Photo by S. Yedwab
William Sanchez

"As the captain, I feel my teammates connect to my positive energy and commitment," he said. Sanchez feels that pushing himself hard every day will motivate his teammates to greater commitment.

Kudos to the PHS Baseball Team.