

CORONAVIRUS!

Stay-At-Home Issue #1



THE HILLTOP STAR

Vol. 58, No. 2

The Student Newspaper of Passaic High School, Passaic, NJ

May 2020

What PHS Students are Saying about COVID-19 and the Lockdown

By Juan Tellez

As you may have heard, there is this COVID-19 virus that is deadly because it attacks the respiratory system, causing death to people who are either really young and really old or have some other pre-existing health condition. This virus originated in China, has spread throughout the world and people have raised awareness about the virus and are trying to fight back.

Even companies that you would not ordinarily think would have anything to do with public announcements, like for example Netflix. They made a whole series about what to do when a pandemic like this happens. Also President Trump and Governor Murphy have been providing information about how to tackle this disease, telling people what to do in regards to our safety.

The best way to help yourself or others to stop the spread of the virus is to wash your hands, don't touch your face and stay home if you feel like you have it. If you are sick, tell your parents to be aware at the store that they aren't the only ones trying to survive, meaning that people

need to buy the things they need not forever. Don't hoard stuff.

Information about the state and national scene is important, but what are the students of our own community saying? Carlos Aguilar said, "The virus has affected our everyday lives. The schools were closed and some of us can't even live in our houses. I want to step free out of my house without people fearing the virus. It gets boring staying in one place 24/7. School life online is manageable but waking up early is just a pain even though that is something we regularly do. Who knows what the long term effects of the virus will leave us?"

Jocelyn Martinez was feeling frustrated when she said, "It's really bad [not having school] and the APEX isn't really helping because I feel like it's taking more time and some teachers keep marking us absent even though we are doing the work." A source who is a teacher said, just let teachers know, this is new to all of us.

Juan Ortiz wanted to go back to school, even though he is not having any issues with attendance. "I hate being in my house. Not a lot of collabora-

tion with anyone, I miss my friends and teachers, I feel more trapped here than I do over there at school."

Missing the comradery of friends, Denise Lopez said, "It really sucks because I have too much time on my hands and I don't get to see my friends. On top of that online school is ridiculous since some students learn better with the teacher instead of on their own." The distance learning requirement will only be in effect for as long as is necessary to curb the spread of the virus. Then we will all be back in school.

Jeremiah Tirado said, "It's unfortunate that this had to happen especially in the beginning of a new decade." Let us hope that this is not the way the rest of the decade will be. 2020 has been a handful.



PHOTO BY LEANDRO MATOS

A view of Passaic High School during the lockdown in April.

Raul Luna stated, "Yeah it sounds pretty epic at first, like oh wow, two weeks with no school and now it's just boring I wish I'd go back." This sentiment of wanting to get back to school and get back to some normalcy is common among all the students I spoke to. It seems

that everyone misses each other, and wants to get back to normal.

Mariana Nunez has learned something new about herself, saying, "I hadn't realized this before, but I really hate the indoors. I want to go outside so bad. It's so hard to cope with."

Continued on Page 5

The Difficulty of Daily Life During Quarantine

By Alexander Manzanares

As COVID-19 continues outside, everyone is still forced to stay home and not come out of their house in order to stop the spread of the virus. It seems like everyone is doing the best they can because they do not want to get the disease and also to make the quarantine end as soon as possible.

Another important aspect to staying at home is keeping up on your own mental state. While you may not get the virus, it is boring to stay home all day and not be able to go outside to have fun, go to places or hang out with friends. Remaining healthy is important, so following the Center for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines for handwashing for twenty seconds minimum, with lots of soap and water, and staying away from others is important. Doesn't it feel like we are always washing our hands?

Being locked down in quarantine, things have been different and more difficult for everyone, because ever since the government ordered us to stay home, closing stores and other non-essential businesses, we aren't able to see family members or friends. No one wants to be responsible for getting someone else sick

or getting sick themselves, so we have to stay far from everyone, in order not to contaminate or be contaminated by them. This can have a negative affect on one's mental health, so stay busy.

Another thing that has been more difficult is buying food, water or any other supplies that people need because most of the stores are out of stock of most things that people need all the time. Many are buying more than they need. Hopefully, everyone will just buy what they need to get by and not force shortages. A big concern is that stores will run out and then mark up the prices of things. It is important to let the stores restock and get the things in that we need, so when going out only get what is needed. Leave items for others too.

Another stress that many, especially students who like to go out, is that they are talking about a curfew. It is being considered that being out after eight will result in a fine or arrest. It is something that people in America are not used to thinking about. So, please just do what is needed so that the government does not need to lock down further.

The biggest stress by far is the fact that many

Continued on Page 5

I Want To Go Outside!

By Mariana Nunez

I hadn't realized it before, but I hate it indoors. I want to GO OUTSIDE SO BAD. While I have never been one for the outdoors, now that it is impossible to go out, I want to get into the sunlight and enjoy the outside.

Although it is so hard to cope with being stuck inside, with family all the time, at least it gives me the time to finally binge watch my favorite Netflix shows. I could finally draw in my unfinished sketchbook, and with no limit, practice with my instruments. I have been spending time with my siblings and we have been staying entertained.

Entertainment is fine, and it is important, but you should also find a way to exercise. Try just getting up and walking around at least three times a day for thirty minutes, to stay fit during this quarantine. Try moving or doing some activity for a few minutes and you will be surprised how much better you feel.

Someone who is happy we are all staying home is my Mom. We get to help her out more

than the usual with the house chores. I am not saying I like doing chores, but my mom likes having the extra help around the house. Don't forget Mother's Day. Do something nice for your mom, like dishes, laundry, or cooking. Give her a break, she deserves it!

The whole shutting down of the sports was surely depressing. They took the privilege to go outside and now our favorite sports on television. This virus is really something. Recently it's been trending that many famous people have gotten infected by it too such as Kevin Durant and Tom Hanks. Seeing famous people get the disease makes many feel like no one is safe. So just do your part and stop the spread.

So far, 2020 has been a completely horrendous disaster, since the very beginning. In January, we were on the verge of starting a war with Iran and unfortunately at the end of the month, lost one of the greatest players in the NBA, Kobe, his daughter Gigi. In February we saw Australia in raging flames, the coronavirus was starting

Continued on Page 4

Where did the Coronavirus Come From?

By Juan Tellez

The first thing to note is that the coronavirus is actually from a family of viruses that have been with us for a long time. There is not just one virus that has just started now. In fact the first identified human coronavirus was back in 1965, and it caused the common cold. Like a lot of other diseases this virus has mutated to be more dangerous.

This COVID-19 coronavirus began in Wuhan, China, as many people already know. This is also where the SARS epidemic broke out. SARS was originally in bats and then transferred to humans in one of the “wet” markets found around China.



WORLDWILDLIFE.ORG

The pangolin is one possible source of the coronavirus.

They are called wet because animals are live and then slaughtered right there in front of the customer so that they know it is fresh.

There was also some talk about the COVID-19 coming from pangolins, which is a cool-looking scaly anteater, (I will stick to hamburgers, thank you), because supposedly there weren't any bats for sale in the wet market when the epidemic broke out. This is also why many believe, and there hasn't been any way to disprove it, that this disease escaped from the Wuhan lab where they do disease research.

COVID just like SARS is now transmitted from person to person without being in contact

with infected animals. That is why this has spread all around the world to be the worst pandemic in the twenty-first century.

According to WebMD, there are currently seven coronaviruses that can infect humans. SARS came out of China in 2002, where it spread to 28 other countries. MERS started in Saudi Arabia in 2012, and is less contagious than SARS, but more deadly.

These two diseases have killed less than a thousand people each, (which means that they are both less contagious than the current COVID-19 pandemic, and also more deadly.) That is a bad combination, and the reason that we are in the situation that we currently find ourselves in. More than 8,000 were infected by SARS and 774 died, in 2003 and then four more cases in 2004. There were only about 2,500 cases of MERS, but it killed 858. At the time of writing this there are over four million cases of COVID in the world and almost one and a half million, just in the United States. This is a much bigger issue.

While U.S. officials are still not certain where this came from, and everyone with any



GOOGLE.COM

The most likely source of the coronavirus outbreak is from a wet market in Wuhan, China.

means is trying to find a solution to the current problem, the focus is still on China with their “wet” markets being the cause of other disease outbreaks, and the Wuhan lab where they work with viruses. It does not appear that this was intentional from the Chinese. What is certain is that this is a major issue for the world.

There has to be a way that humanity can prevent this from happening in the first place. Many people are suffering all around the world and there needs to be a way of stopping diseases before they get out of hand. That will take the cooperation of nations around the world. Cooperation before a problem exists is always hard to do.

Corona Came for Us, and It Came from China

By Caroline Lopez

The arrival of the coronavirus, COVID-19, to our communities took all of us by surprise. The first reported case of the infectious disease happened four months ago in Wuhan, China, before it spread in the country and took the lives of thousands.

As it was a quickly-growing epidemic, media and news outlets did not fail to report on the situation, and even after being warned about its emergence to the United States, the federal government claimed to have it under control. But as the current one and quarter million U.S. [at the time of writing] confirmed cases show, this was not the case.

The first confirmed case of coronavirus in the state of New Jersey was reported on March 4, specifically a male in his 30s who was hospitalized in Bergen County. This was the beginning of a real nightmare that was destined to change our lives.

I remember my exact reaction to this information. It had been a school day, I was simply watching the news before going to bed for school the next morning, when a reporter located in Bergen County had announced the news. Knowing how close this area was to my own, I was in complete shock.

Shortly after, the number of cases in the state began growing and someone who supposedly was diagnosed with it had visited my city, Passaic. This is when I personally started panicking. I knew a virus of that severity, especially a new one, was not to be ignored.

School was still in session, although talks concerning the coronavirus were given to students. Our gym period was replaced with an assembly by health care professionals who explained the disease, its symptoms, and how to prevent it. As a student who is constantly moving around the school, I would hear other students talk about the situation. Some agreed that it was scary, while others simply made fun of it. I wanted to think everything was under control, and if something were to happen that authorities would know how to respond, although I also knew that only so much can be done in outbreaks like these.

As the media became more concerned about the virus, suggestions on washing our hands frequently and keeping a distance with others were given. In Passaic High School, some of my teachers would also recommend the class to follow these guidelines. The outbreak in our area had still not been apparent by this time, which explains why most students still kept going to school. Chromebooks were also provided to students within this time period.

March 13th became our last day of school, as directed by Governor Murphy. No one knew it would be our last day until further notice, it was unexpected. As someone who looks forward to attending each and every single one of my classes to learn and interact with others, I felt sad. But I knew why it was done, and I agreed with it nonetheless.

Students and teachers had to convert to remote learning, using APEX, an application that tracks students' work for each enrolled class and the time they spend on it. Many students struggled accessing this application due to being new to it, or technical difficulties. The school, however, took it to Google Classroom to give instructions on what to do in each situation.

I personally think the school administration acted quickly and responsibly to facilitate this new way of learning. They gave out directions and provided either emails or Remind codes to students for any help needed. Although I have not been a big fan of APEX and wish to go back to school, I comprehend that desperate times call for desperate measures.

The Mayor of Passaic, Hector Lora, has also been taking care of the situation. He has been keeping his people updated through the use of his public Facebook account. In fact, Lora has been promoting the guidelines requested by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO).

From personal observation it looks like the people of Passaic are taking this situation seriously and have been adhering to social distancing guidelines as well as staying home. If we all do our part, then we will be able to beat this virus and get back to work and school soon. So let's all do our part!



GOOGLE.COM

There are unsupported theories that the virus escaped from a lab in Wuhan, China.

Facts About the Coronavirus Outbreak

By Javier Arce

The COVID-19 pandemic is still working its way through the world, but what is it and how did we get to where we are now?

COVID-19 is an infectious disease that has affected most of the world's population. The disease is caused by the viral pathogen known as SARS-cov-2 or coronavirus, a virus that belongs to the same family as the SARS disease that killed thousands of people in 2002. The virus has that name due to its form, having peaks around it that look like a crown, and that helps the pathogen adhere to lung cells to release its genetic code, explained researchers from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

It started last year as an epidemic outbreak in central China, Wuhan, from the wet market in which wild animals were (and still are) slaughtered and sold for their consumption. Just like many other viruses that have infected humans, there

is substantial evidence that affirms that the disease has started first in the wild animals that were being sold in the Chinese market according to the Chinese Department of Health.

Recently in February 2020, the virus spread throughout the world, after various people were found infected in Europe, creating turmoil and panic in the world-wide population. So far Italy has the most reported cases in Europe, which reported more than 100,000 positive cases and an increasing death rate from the disease according to the authorities of the country. The disease is also affecting most other European countries including Great Britain, Germany, France and especially Spain.

The disease first starts as mild influenza, affecting the airways, which then creates nasal congestion along with the typical symptoms of the flu; headaches, high fever, in some cases it worsens causing high fever and breathing problems. According to the World Health Organization

Continued on Page 5

Schoolwork Helps Students Cope with Lockdown

By Franchesca Jiminian

Remember about a month and a half ago when we all heard about this virus that was going around? Many of us, me included, thought that it was a joke, that it could not come to America. However, this whole pandemic thing was totally unexpected. Personally, I thought to myself, "This will never reach us," but was I completely wrong.

Everything has turned into a complete disaster. It feels like no one knows what to do anymore. People are saying this is worse than the swine flu, but who our age even remembers that? Honestly, none of us ever thought this would get so bad, so fast and hurt us like this.

Now that the pandemic has caused the schools to lock down as well as every other "non-essential" business, there are many questions that need to be answered so that we can get through the worst of this with as little harm as possible.

Looking at the school situation, all students but especially seniors are wondering about how their work will count, how they will still get credit for the year and finally, what about senior activities and even graduation? How will students work from home, when some people do not have access to the internet at home or even a computer?

Administrators at PHS planned ahead for this unlikely event, and planning ahead in this game, gave all students assigned Chromebooks in record time. Who would have thought that all of that could be done in just a few days?

When Mayor Hector Lora an-

nounced schools were going to be closed for two weeks many students, myself included did not think much of it. Two weeks at home would be a nice break. However, by the time the two weeks were almost up, the cases were getting worse rapidly.

After a couple weeks at home, working on APEX assignments, we found out that this was going to a much bigger problem than originally thought. First, we were not going back to school until the end of April, then until the middle of May, and now this school year is shot.

Shortly after a few days of being out of school, Passaic had the first positive case of Covid-19. Everyday after that the numbers started doubling upwards every day. That was scary, because we were already in lock-down, and people were getting sick. Sadly the county of Passaic has over 14,000 cases (at time of writing) and the numbers are still rising. It is common that all of us know someone who has been infected.

However, it does look like things will start to get better soon. The numbers of new infections are leveling off and we will hopefully have flattened the curve. PHS students have been trying to stay positive throughout this whole crisis but everyone is going at least a little crazy as the news is just making people nuts. The United States now has more cases than China or Italy, which is very sad.

The entire lock-down situation has made many of us realize just how annoying family locked together can be. Baby sisters and brothers come in and out of our rooms 24/7 especially when trying to work. Moms are great, but sometimes we just are not hun-

gry. Brothers who are yelling at full volume at his PS4, getting angry playing 2K. Many of our houses are just insanely crazy right now.

Honestly, can any of us wait until we go back to school? Now school is pretty much done for the seniors, with now graduation ceremony, prom or any other activity. This is honestly no fun and if I had one wish, I would wish for all of this to just go away. People are hurting and this disease is no joke, but we are all suffering to some extent.

APEX online school has been somewhat easier, for everyone that I have spoken to. At first many of us bombed some of the tests, but it got easier with time, and thank you to teachers who help us out to get it.

Many PHS students have been elected to help their little siblings do their homework, in addition to do their own. It is not easy, but it is something that we all have to do now that the quarantine has made us all stay hom in quarantine mode.

My three-year-old sister has online school as well. I find it funny how a three-year-old is supposed to do homework online, with my mom or me beside her, of course. She has to do things like read online books, sort of like the pdfs, she has to write her name

on paper and I have to send her teachers a picture of what she did, also draw pictures of what she did throughout the day, her favorite season, etc.

My sister complains about how hard her work is, but I wish my work was that easy. My mom literally yelled at my brother every morning because he's too lazy to get up to do his work. Maybe that's why my mom got a phone call last week from his math teacher, my brother was so upset. We are all working and struggling through this together.

They even cancelled professional sports due to players getting infected. A whole bunch were tested positive. The lack of sports has affected my brother, and many PHS students, who follow sports like a religion. It is just one more example of how

the world has changed so much so fast.

Every student I speak with says that they cannot believe they are saying it but they actually miss school. They miss their normal lives. They absolutely prefer sitting down in a class learning rather than being home, trying to figure things out on their own. They miss their teachers. Being home working from home, doing chores at home, and being stuck in a room doing computer schoolwork is quite boring.

One thing is certain, that when all of this ends we will all have a deeper appreciation for the time we spend in school and the way that students interact with each other and with teachers. PHS will definitely be a better place when we all get back to school.

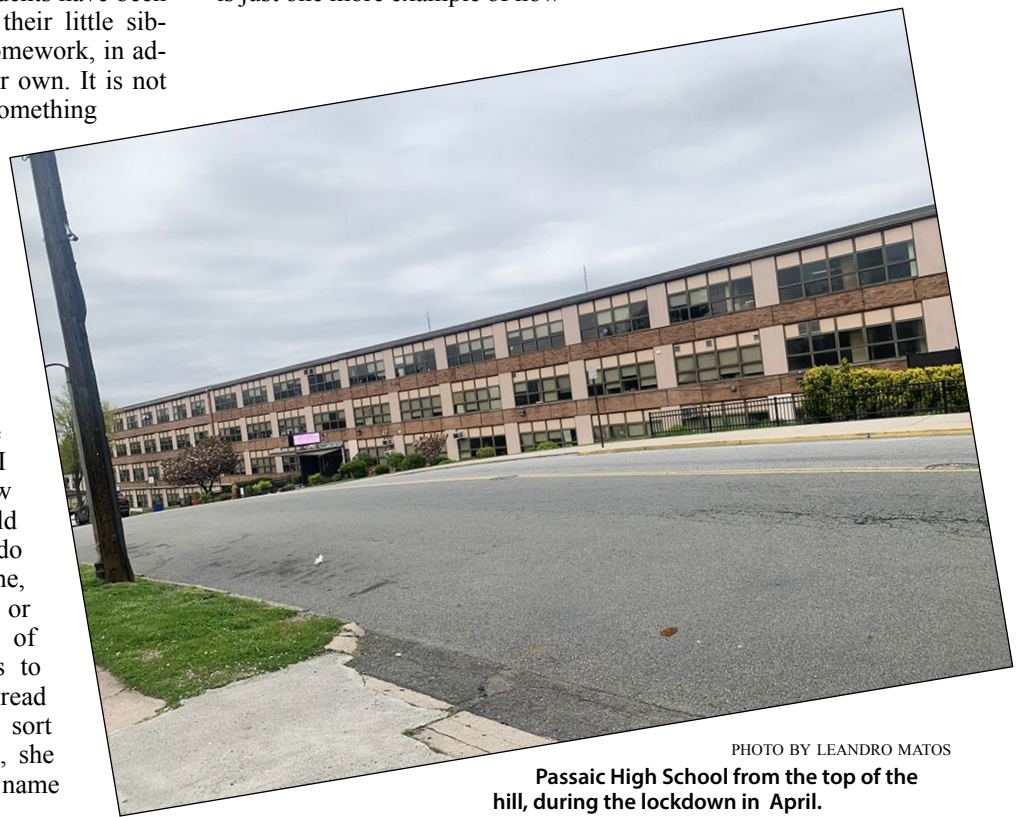


PHOTO BY LEANDRO MATOS
Passaic High School from the top of the hill, during the lockdown in April.

PASSAIC OPTIMIST THROUGH THE GENEROUS DONATION OF MS. EMILY KAUFMAN is sponsoring PHS STUDENT RECOGNITION



STAFF MEMBERS
Please take a moment to nominate one student for consideration.

FOUR GIFT CARDS WILL BE AWARDED WEEKLY.
We hope to select one student per grade if possible.

Dealing with the COVID-19 Pandemic

By Ambar Paniagua

This world-wide epidemic has shaken up the world in unimaginable ways. Who would have thought how easily the world could change? It is in times like these that we sometimes forget about small problems that still can impact a person's life. Things that people would normally be doing are completely changed.

High school seniors are being greatly affected by this pandemic. In many ways this may seem superficial or somewhat selfish, but in reality they have spent over twelve years of their life working hard to graduate. Many seniors throughout the country and especially in Passaic will probably not have a prom. Even smaller things that really change people's lives, like spending their last few months of high school with their friends.

As a junior, I have been affected as well, but it is hard to

imagine how this is affecting the senior class of 2020. Not only are good grades being affected but many freshmen and sophomores will not be able to take the PARCC assessment. All grades are affected by this terrible pandemic, but that is just one small concern and all we can do is wait. It is like a whole year is being wasted. The quarantine this year will have an affect on the rest of our high school career.

What I've heard through social media from friends, and listening to what seniors I know talking about, they are questioning whether they are going to graduate on time or maybe even graduate at all. It is making all of us uneasy, but it is making seniors really nervous. The craziness that is going on could make any of us nervous, due to the amount of hours and time put in by many seniors just for them not being able to graduate on time.

The seniors I have spoken to

are saying that they understand that this is a severe situation, that people are dying and the economy is being affected. However, they know that the senior class will have to give a lending hand to everyone who is in trouble during these times. Maybe this outbreak will stop tomorrow or maybe in one year, but that uncertainty is what keeps a lot of seniors and even juniors questioning, "what is going to happen next?"

Many of the seniors are saying that they understand that these times are unprecedented, but that they still want to have as normal as possible a time to graduate and be kids, who have worked hard and now are graduating. They do feel a little guilty that the times are tough, but they also want to try and be as normal as possible.

Many look for the good in small things. Who would have ever thought that we could go to school without even getting out of bed? To be honest I

would rather go to school and I know many others who would rather go to school too. Students would joke about not having school for days due to snow blizzards and joke how we need a few days off, but this is not the way any of us ever imagined a break would be. It is definitely a scary time to be alive. However, I know that the students of PHS are doing our part, by practicing social distancing. Every day the risk will lessen and each day we will be one day closer to getting out and going to school and basically be back to normal. The problem is some people are still going out, not out of necessity, and also not taking the proper precautions.

To all the seniors who are home right now, reading this paper to get a chance of knowing what is going on in PHS, even though we are home, take this time to look into your future career or maybe find a hobby that could help further yourself. Take this time to evaluate

what you want to do with your life.

So, will we ever be going back to school to finish this year? This can be worrying because there is so much we still have to learn that cannot be taught through online school. Also, seniors in particular, need their recommendation letters from their teachers, and support to further their schooling after they graduate, even if they do not walk the grass. There is just a big mess and no answers at this moment.

As a student, I understand the fear of the senior, but worrying will truly not make anything better, only worse. So, take this time to find yourself. Maybe this is the chance that you never had time to pursue to just explore the possibilities. Also, teachers and other school staff is still working to help you. If you have questions or concern, ask them! We will get through this together. See you when school finally opens!

The Curious Case of Coronavirus

By Rosa Gomez

As Donald Trump announces an extension for the social distancing guidelines until April 30th, and then for much later, people are discussing how long everyone needs to remain in quarantine, and also when and who will be able to open up soon. A major concern is that people need to get out to work, to be able to provide for their families, and also for the mental health of seeing others, and being healthy.

Every day, people watch television or search the internet to find the time when the number of cases of coronavirus begins to decrease. Recognizing the great sacrifice and hard work put out by all the hardworking nurses and doctors at the hospitals and health clinics is truly amazing.

Many health care workers are putting in extra time to handle the numbers of cases in our area. However, other workers, who are not dealing with the corona epidemic are finding it difficult to maintain their own patients.

Many patients are not keeping their appointments with doctors in heart health, mental health, or even cancer. This will eventually have a dire affect on many in those areas of health care, not to mention the patients who require those services.

There are countless people relying on all of these health care professionals. It is not a job that not just anyone can do. It is important to have a positive outlook on things, especially with the situation the way it is right now, because what's the point of being so gloomy? I mean we're already inside so the least we can do is smile. The sacrifice of staying indoors will help countless others.

The pharmaceutical industry is working around the clock to find a cure or at least a treatment. Hopefully they will do this quickly and find a breakthrough so we can get back to something approaching normal. Already there have been many treatments, though nothing has been proven to help everyone and there are no vaccines yet. How-

ever, with the greatest minds in the world working as hard and as fast as they can, it is only a matter of time before there is something that will help us deal with this terrible disease.

In the meantime taking some time to be productive is highly recommended. Try to take this time to discover any new or repressed talents you might have. Including but definitely not limited to learning how to play an instrument, how to cook, or maybe even how to, most importantly, find some time to appreciate your friends, family and anyone else you're thankful for.

As we are witnessing history, it's safe to assume that anything really is possible because life does often imitate art. It's also proof that once this is over, go out there and do whatever is on your bucket list! All while being cautious and safe, of course. Lastly, one final message for all the seniors out there, we will get through this!



PHOTO BY DORIS GARCIA

An empty street near Home Depot in Passaic.



PHOTO BY LEANDRO MATOS

A line outside ShopRite with shoppers spaced apart.

I Want To Go Outside!

Continued from Page 1

to develop a bit more. Now in March [as of this writing], the COVID-19 virus has taken over various countries.

The worldwide death toll from COVID-19 races up everyday, in New York, New Jersey, countries around the world. As the total number of cases is approaching four million, at the time of writing, it is important for everyone everywhere to do what they can to stop the spread of the disease and to help out in any way they can.

Each day more people are getting infected and dying. This pandemic plague is currently caging us in our houses. Just tell me HOW CAN THIS YEAR GET ANY WORSE.

Let's just hope that the summer redeems this year. Experts, like Doctor Fauci are saying that this disease will probably go away during the summer

just like the regular flu, so let us hope and pray that it is the case.

I want this whole coronavirus thing to disappear. This year is my 16th birthday and I want to celebrate outside with my family and friends. If things keep going like this, I might not get what I was looking forward to this year. Not only that, but the Olympics, this year in Tokyo might get cancelled and at least postponed. I really like to watch the Olympics during the summer.

As of now, we do not get the freedom to go outside but at least we can stay home and indulge ourselves with the things we find delight in, that is RIGHT AFTER we're done with the 500 assignments we get everyday. We have to stay positive and find the good in these times we're living through. One day we will all be laughing about the time we did school from home.

Facts About the Coronavirus Outbreak

Continued from Page 2

tion, 80% of the cases do not need to go to a hospital because it can be self-treated. Out of the other 20%, 15% might develop pneumonia that has to be attended by a doctor, and the other 5% are most likely to die from the disease.

In April, the virus has reached most of the world's countries and infected over a million people. This outbreak has forced the world's leaders to take drastic action. The President of the United States, Donald Trump, has taken into consideration the many prevention measures needed to stop the spread of the disease. These actions include self-quarantine at home to stop the transmission of the virus, the closing of many airports to stop the flow of newcomers with possible signs of the disease, and the closing of many schools and places with a great concentration of people.

Among the most affected countries around the world

we find Italy and China, these countries have lost thousands of lives, and the US being the country with the largest quantity of positive cases, and the number still increasing.

The most affected states in the US are New York and New Jersey. Even though authorities closed schools, stores, parks among other places, the virus has spread in these states at an exponential rate causing our current situation.

The city of Passaic has reported more than a thousand positive cases and the rate is still rising. The number could be greater since many infected people have decided to stay home because all the hospitals are either overloaded or close to capacity.

Experts expect that the number of infected people will reach the maximum point during late-April and after that, it will begin to decrease. Even though the infection may cease at the end of April, our schools could be

close until May or even June. As of the writing of this article, Governor Murphy has not made the final decision to close the schools past May 15.

The quarantine is having a great impact on the American Economy, many people have lost their job and small businesses are being hurt. Many businesses are going bankrupt at an incredible rate. The government has taken unprecedented measures, giving checks to individuals to get them through the long quarantine period. Another program in the stimulus is giving loans and grants to businesses affected by the closure. Hopefully this will boost to the economy.

For the moment, the only thing we can do is enjoy our time with our families, work on our online classes, watch some movies, but most importantly remember to stay home to be safe.



PHOTO BY DORIS GARCIA

An empty street in Passaic.

What PHS Students are Saying...

Continued from Page 1

With a little encouragement she added, "At least I can binge watch my shows and do other activities I want to do."

On a group chat Jeffry Hernandez and Angel Montiel got to talking about the quarantine. Jeffry said "Okay, so like it's boring my dude and I feel trapped and stuck," Angel says. "It is fun for me because I'm not even doing anything and because I'm working instead of doing school work." Just kidding, he is working AND doing his schoolwork.

The virus quarantine is pushing many of us to do things that we never thought would happen, Jennifer Hernandez said, "I feel stupid, because I feel bored most of the time. The most I can do to distract myself is help my mom around or doing my work online which is something we're all new at." Helping mom around the house is one good way to stay connected.

This whole pandemic situation is new to everyone. Some people find it as a way to relax and some people find it stressful. From my own observations, this whole situation is terrible because I know people who have the virus and are fighting for their lives. I want to wish them well.

It is also so cruel to see people suffering and see other people start to act like savages in the supermarket, everyone trying to grab supplies they need for their family and leaving people who need it the most with nothing. It is all enough to shake up anyone's faith in humanity.

This has affected my life personally because now I have online school and I'm just trying to keep up with everything and instead of being outside I spend most of my day looking at a Chromebook screen trying to finish my assignments and do the next one. But to me it's funny how all these people that said they hate school are posting on social media saying they miss it. These certainly are trying times. Maybe when all of this settles down we will not take school for granted. Maybe students who acted out and now look at you all bored in the house, still doing schoolwork without friends, will realize that school is a good place because it is filled with good people.

I really hope that everyone learns from this whole pandemic and will take things more seriously in their personal lives and take school more seriously too. This situation should teach everyone, as it has me, not to take anything they have for granted because one thing could happen and you could lose it all.

To all my friends, teachers and classmates, be safe and keep doing the three tips, and follow CDC guidelines. We do not need any more people getting this virus, so be careful out there guys. We WILL get through this like we always have and will see our friends as soon as this is over. Just remember to do your schoolwork and try to work with your teachers and it's okay to take breaks once and awhile guys so you don't overload yourself with work.

Difficulty of Daily Life During Quarantine

Continued from Page 1

are out of work. The need to pay the bills is important, and also to buy the supplies needed to shelter in place. Right now many are not able to earn the money to pay for the things needed by families, and not being able to provide is a stress for anyone. Many are furloughed and others laid off, and that is an obvious stress for anyone. The people in and around Passaic are pulling together to help those that are still in need. Meals are still being provided at the school.

Many are still working though, especially if they are in the food or other essential supply industry. They may have to work into the evening or even into the early morning to get it all done. However, that can also be a stress because they are coming home after the curfew. So not wanting to be stopped by police they worry about coming home after curfew. They will have to worry about the time and also by being out in the world they are more at risk of contracting the virus. It is important not to come into contact with people, as much as humanly possible.

Even through the difficulties of working, people are finding new and interesting ways to get the job done. For students, just asking for a ride to work is not really possible anymore. This virus quarantine is making everything that people took for granted more difficult every single day.

Just being at home can be boring. Boredom is a stress, just staying inside all day everyday can be stressful for those who like going outside. Even though teenagers sometimes have the reputation for locking themselves in their room, they actually do like having contact with others, and this virus is making that impossible. Speaking with friends, they are concerned that they cannot go outside and cannot visit with

each other. Who would have thought that just hanging out would be illegal? That is definitely a stress.

Many students are keeping in touch in any way they can, mostly through texting. It is important to stay in contact with friends and family that we cannot see right now by any means possible. Even if you hate texting, do it to check in on others, give them a call and make sure you can brighten up someone's day. You can be the brightness in someone's day. It is easy to just ask them how they are and see if everything is ok. Friends need to know you care, and that can relieve stress for both of you.

PHS students are working in classes on APEX, and guess what, that is a stress for students too. Most students say that they feel like they are just sitting around reading articles, then doing quizzes. APEX is definitely not as good as being in class. There is not personality of our teachers or the interaction between students or teachers. Looking at a screen all day does not help anyone's eyesight either.

Most students I speak to really do not like APEX. They think it is just like a treadmill, where they do the same thing everyday. It is tiring and stressful. Sources say that they would much rather go to school and have a teacher teach them rather than doing all the work at home in front of a screen. Getting through the work and mastering things can be a relief to the stress of not working in class with friends and teachers.

There really is not anything we can do at the moment, so just stay strong, keep working, stay in contact with friends and family, take a break once and while, and reach out for some help if you need it. We are all in this together, and together we will all get through this.

Seniors!

Keep an eye out for a special print issue of The Hilltop Star, which will be distributed to graduating seniors in June.

A New 'Dynasty'

By Clarissa Barrera

"Dynasty" is an American prime time television soap opera reboot based on the 1980s "Dynasty." While students are probably unaware of the first "Dynasty," being broadcast twenty years before we were born, the new show, based on the old, is still worth the watch. It is appealing to kids today, just as the old show was for our parents, maybe grandparents?

"Dynasty" revolves around the Carringtons, a wealthy family residing in Denver, Colorado. The show begins by revealing heiress Fallon Carrington, a businesswoman, who believes she will soon become the new COO of Carrington Atlantic, her family's company. However, Blake Carrington (her father) shocks his family by introducing them to Krystle, his fiancé. Now, Fallon plots against Krystle and her father with his chauffeur, Culhane, and soon with Blake's biggest rival, Jeff Colby. "Dynasty" reveals the truth, from secrets to scandals, in the home of billionaires.

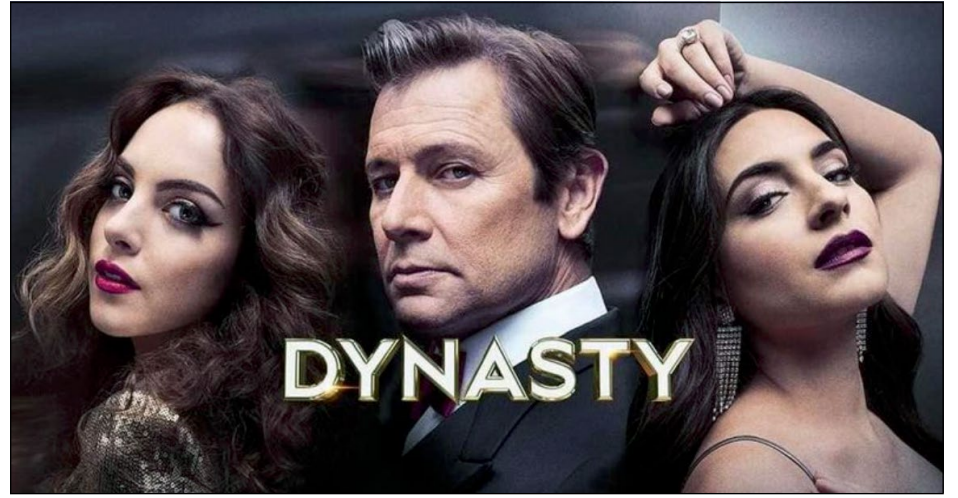
My favorite character from this show

would be Fallon Carrington (Elizabeth Gillies). Fallon is a daring and charismatic character who is smart and keen when it comes to business. She never settles for less and is willing to go the extra mile for whatever she wants.

I especially admired her when she fought for the Carrington Atlantic and worked her way to the top. Though she is a smart savvy businesswoman, she was not afraid to take chances even if it risked her fame or wealth.

Throughout the three seasons of "Dynasty," the viewer follows Fallon through her lowest points to her highest peaks. My favorite scene from the show would be when Fallon gives up Carrington Atlantic and decides to open her own business. That's when I noticed Fallon was facing a character breakthrough because she desired nothing but Carrington Atlantic since she was a child.

Fallon is also spoiled sometimes but as the show progressed one sees Fallon breaking out of her bad habits. She becomes more open-minded yet more daring.



NETFLIX

My overall rating would be 5 stars out of 5. This show is amazing and very entertaining. Every episode is worth watching. I enjoyed how every character carried traits that can be relatable to the audience. They were not just billionaires but human beings at the end of the day.

Though I may not be rich, I was definitely able to relate to all of the characters in some way. I related so much to Fallon and I feel that as I watched her

make her mistakes and pick up from that, I was able to learn something as well. Not only that, but since Fallon is an outspoken person, I think it rubbed off on me and I think I have a little bit of Fallon in me.

I enjoyed watching all three seasons of "Dynasty" and I hope there will be more episodes soon. I definitely recommend this show for anyone who is interested in dramas or in anything entertaining.



NETFLIX

Actors Penn Badgley (right) and Victoria Pedretti (left) are confirmed to reprise their roles in season 3 of "You," which will premier in 2021.

You should watch 'You' while home

By Abigail Alzogaray

While you are home, cannot go out and are looking around all the streaming services trying to find something new or interesting to watch, may I suggest the Netflix series "You."

The series was created by Greg Berlanti and Sera Gamble and launched on September 8, 2018, but season two was just launched this past January 14. A popular choice, it has now been renewed for a third season. So, once you get addicted, you can watch the next season in 2021. (Maybe we will be out of quarantine by then).

The story is about a shy, but brilliant, bookstore owner Joe Goldberg (Penn Badgley) who meets a beautiful aspiring writer, Guinevere Beck (Elizabeth Lail). Their relationship is charming, but it is also awkward. He becomes obsessed with her and uses his brilliant mind to get her attention. He uses every tool he can think of to be closer to her, including social media and the internet. The awkward romance becomes a little more sinister when he not only tries to get her attention,

but also removes any obstacle that would prevent him from getting to her.

So, what would Joe do for love? It appears that he would do a lot of creepy things. That is the draw of this show. Actually, season one ended with a certain ex-girlfriend, who Joe thought he had killed, returning. That is a really bad breakup.

This is your fair warning though. This show is pretty risky. Joe commits a lot, and I mean a lot, of acts of violence against all kinds of people, but especially women. This is not the series to watch if you are turned off by violence against women. However, that is the draw of the show, to see just how much he can get away with.

This show is loosely based on a novel by Caroline Kepnes. There are some major differences, but the show does a great job of keeping the viewer glued to their device. Not that any of us are so picky right now. With the quarantine going on, we are all desperate for entertainment. Right now you can binge watch seasons one and two on Netflix, then you will be waiting for season three with me.

10 Tips on What to Do When You Don't Understand Your Homework

By Clarissa Barrera

The quarantine has thrown us off our regular routine and so it may be difficult to adjust to the temporary change of lifestyle. With the switch to online learning and having to self-study, it can be stressful and time-consuming. Here is what you should do when you're struggling with your homework:

Contact your teachers

Teachers may be unaware of your situation so it is best to email them or shoot them a text through remind. One text can lead to an extension. Don't fear communicating with your teachers because they serve to help you.

Create a groupchat with your friends

If you and a friend share a teacher or a class then it may make things easier if you all worked together. You can also talk to your friends over the phone for help or for emotional support.

Research

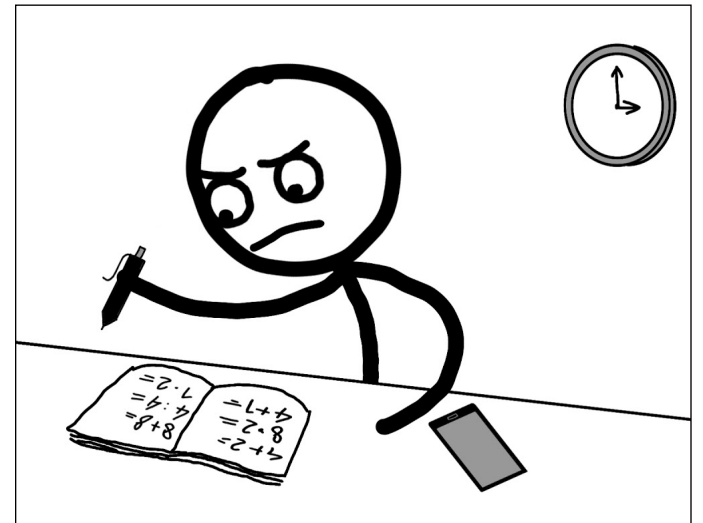
Watch youtube videos and try using Khan Academy to try and deepen your understanding of a topic. Try out practice examples.

Create a workspace where you can focus

Avoid working from your bed. Work in a quiet place and a clutterless environment.

Plan out your day

Begin your day as you normally would. Set alarm clocks in between classes for attendance. Have breakfast before you start class and pace yourself throughout each period.



GOOGLE.COM

Start it as early as possible

After completing a day's worth of work, I continue working on the following day's work to ease the load off my back. The work pays off! I usually get a couple free periods because I already completed the work the day before.

Take breaks

This doesn't mean hop onto your phone for hours. Step away from your workplace and get a snack to cool your mind off.

Listen to music

Listening to music can help you relax a little more as you study.

Turn off your phone

If you know that you are deeply attached to your phone then turn it off before you start your homework.

Study during your spare time

Read textbooks or study off of educational apps to help you understand any confusing topics.

Remember: don't put too much pressure on yourself! Your mental health comes first.

How To Pass Time During The Quarantine

By Melissa Castillo

Although the coronavirus is very negative and being quarantined at home might seem very boring and depressing, there are actually many ways in which you can make things better and not feel like every day that passes by is an entire year.

At the start of this quarantine, many thought this would be fun, but then all too soon, the reality of being locked inside all day seemed horrible. What could anyone do? How could one possibly survive being stuck in the house for so long, but after a lot of researching and brainstorming, I have come up with multiple amazing ways to pass time during the quarantine.

If you wanted to change your room, but never found the time to do it, well now you have the time. You can even work through some of the stress of online classes by moving the furniture around your room. If more room is needed in your room, maybe it is time to get rid of those toys from your kindergarten years.

If you're looking to do something productive but don't know what to do, there are actually many options in store for you. Cleaning, cooking and organizing are three things that are in fact productive things that will help your to-do list become smaller. You can clean areas of your room or house that never get as much attention as other spots do because of the fact that before this, you were



When you get tired of cleaning cooking and organizing, there are always good shows to watch on Netflix.

always busy.

You can bring out the chef in yourself. Surprise everyone, including yourself, and prepare breakfast, lunch, dinner, or even all three for your family and impress them with your amazing cooking skills. If you don't have good cooking skills, now that you have so much free time, you can practice them and improve by making different meals.

Check out YouTube. Everything is on there. You can become a master chef by watching YouTube videos and practicing in the kitchen. You can organize your room by changing it up or moving furniture around. You can also organize your wardrobe or anything else that your heart desires.

Another great way to pass time during quarantine is to

watch new shows or movies that interest you on Netflix. This one is one of my personal favorites because watching Netflix and being cuddled up in my bed is one of my favorite things to do on weekends and now I can do that way more often because of all my free times. You can branch out and explore different genres of TV shows or movies that you've never watched before, or re-watch some of your favorite shows. I suggest the Office, The 100, Black Summer, The Society, Dark and The OA. These are all amazing shows that make you think like crazy and they have multiple seasons as well.

So in your nice clean room, all organized and neat, you can prepare yourself a treat in the kitchen and then catch up on some shows. That activity can



/123RF.COM

Bring out your super chef and surprise your family with your new and improved cooking skills.

go a long way to helping your mental health during this difficult time.

In addition to those activities, something else you could do is catch up on some self-care, if you were too busy before to treat your hair or skin or body the way it should be treated. It is insane how many people I know who are coloring or changing their hair or their look, now that they have the time and if you do something that is horrendous, well no one needs to know. There will be enough time for any mistake in personal care to go away and be fixed before we see each other again. Now is the time to catch up and even experiment with all of that!

You can take an entire day and decide on your skin and do an in-depth skin care routine and

test out new products or put a face mask on and watch Netflix while eating your favorite snacks. You could put on a hair mask or try some new hair products while also watching Netflix or doing something else that's productive. You could also treat your body by trying out some new forms of exercise or different diets in your own home since the gyms are closed. You could detox your body by drinking different types of teas or trying out other methods.

There are so many different ways that you could practice self-care during your free time, these are only a few. Okay, I am coining the term right here, you can totally home spa.

In conclusion, there are many different things that you could do to pass your time during this quarantine. You don't have to just sit in your bed and sleep yourself away every day or become depressed because you can't go outside. You can do something productive like cook or clean which would help motivate you and also impress your parents. You could catch up on some Netflix shows which is always fun and interesting. You could also practice some self-care on yourself which is also always a good choice.

These are only a few suggestions. Do what makes you happy and whatever satisfies you during this quarantine and I can assure you that in the end you will be happy and feel much better than before!

What To Do Until We Go Back to School

By Amelia Reynoso

Have you been sitting at home scrolling through Instagram? Do you feel like you don't have anything to watch on Netflix or Hulu? Well you're in the right article. After we got the news that we will be going on for an indefinite break from school, no one knew what they would be doing. However, we now have APEX and online work to do, what do we do after? Well let me tell you about some shows, movies and websites that you can actually watch free movies on.

Let's start with Netflix. Netflix is now putting on many new movies. Some of these movies are like *Outbreak*, this movie is about a disease that got to this small town in California, and army doctors tried to contain it. This movie can really intrigue a lot of people as right now this is happening in the whole world. Also, Netflix has put out the movie *GoodFellas*, which is probably one of the best movies of the century. Netflix has the movie *The Irishman*, which also has to do with the mob, this movie is about the Jimmy Hoffa disappearance. Go on Netflix and see what's trending on Top 10, try something



GOOGLE.COM

Disney's "Onward" is available on Disney + streaming service.

new maybe you'll like it. Even if you aren't into the mob type movies these are really good. *The Irishman* is so good it was up for best picture last year.

Also, a good investment right now is getting Disney+. It has all of our childhood shows. Disney owns the rights for all of their own movies like *Frozen 2*, and that is a great movie. There are also other great Disney and Pixar movies. *Onward* was just coming out in the theatres when the pandemic hit, so it bombed there badly. Disney released it quickly on Disney+ and it is great. *Onward* is the story of two brothers (who are elves) who go on a quest to meet their father who died when they were children. Now that they are both over sixteen they

will have one day with their father, and he teaches them about the power of magic in people's lives, as well as the real magic, which is family. This is a great way to discover the importance of family especially that we are all stuck at home with them.

Disney also owns the rights to Marvel and Star Wars, so there are so many movies and series that you won't get bored, even after days of binge watching. So get onto APEX do your work, but when you are done, log onto Netflix or Disney and with some snacks, catch up on the video.

Well, I hope that I've helped you have a better quarantine experience. Let's hope that it doesn't last long. See you all back at school.

Write for The Hilltop Star!

Even though we cannot meet in person, we are still publishing online. If you are interested in submitting an article, please contact Mr. Zeiler by email at hzeiler@passaicschools.org,

THE HILLTOP STAR

The Student Newspaper of Passaic High School

Staff Writers:

- Cristal Alcaraz
- Araceli Aldana
- Abigail Alzogaray
- Edwin Arrieta
- Antonio Balderas
- Jorge Bardales
- Clarrissa Barrera
- Alexander Bello
- Jalen Brown
- Evelin Cabrera
- Andi Cardoso
- Maria Centeno
- Bianca Cordova Hernandez
- Omar Fleites
- Doris Garcia
- Edwin Garcia Gutierrez
- Jessica Gonzalez
- Sharlene Gonzalez-Ayala
- Sharlene Hernandez

Staff Writers:

- Stephanie Herrera
- Gissell Ibarra
- Gerardo Linares Argote
- Gabino Lucero
- Alexander Manzanares
- Michael Martinez-Guerrero
- Leandro Matos
- Erika Mejia
- Yulissa Olivares
- Ambar Paniagua
- Dayana Pedraza
- Kimberly Perez
- Russel Perez Almonte
- Amelia Reynoso
- Micheal Rodriguez
- Miguel Rodriguez
- Alejandro Sosa
- Juan Tellez
- Brian Torres
- Jimmy Vega

Advisor:

Harris Zeiler

hzeiler@passaicschools.org

Hilltop Logo Banner by Danny Rivera

Thank you to the members of the PHS community who have contributed photographs, information, and articles to this issue of The Hilltop Star. Without your help, this publication would not exist. We look forward to working with you throughout this school year! Reach out to Mr. Harris or a newspaper staff member if you would like to join, contribute information, or respond to newspaper content.

www.hilltopstar.com

Layout and Printing by Media Trends LLC
732-548-7088



Remember Basketball?

By Alexander Bello

Remember when we were all in school, and were able to go see and support the various PHS Indian teams, especially this year's Varsity Basketball team? That seems like years ago, but just a few short weeks ago our Indians Basketball team had a great year!

The basketball team of 2019-20 has done better than the last few years completing their season with a new coaching staff. The new focus of the team on practice and perfection means that they have been and will continue to win games, which means that they also have a better roster.

The harder roster has not stopped this team from continuing to win, striving for excellence. In fact, it has made them dig deep and work harder. Senior, Cam'ron Sylvester said, "It's great to see all the hard work from all the players come

together with a winning season."

It is a winning season they had too, with 18 wins, and going to the quarterfinals against Kennedy. Most of the varsity players are seniors and being there last year, they put in all their effort to represent Passaic and make the city proud. For whatever reason, they have certainly left their mark. Senior, Hector Mateo said, "It is something we all love doing, but we wanted to finish our time at Passaic with a 'W' to remember us."

The main players that have been putting up numbers are Coby Sylvester (PG) and Antrell Monroe (SG) they have been putting the team on their backs and scoring about 20 points a game. They have been putting up numbers since they were freshmen, so it is nothing new to them. They were made for scoring because of their love of the game.

They key to this team is that they work together to score.

Everyone on the team works hard and plays their heart out in every game. The stats prove it. Their defense was the greatest advance to the winning this season. They focused on a good defense being a good offense. No team this year was able to run up the score on these Indians.

PHS Basketball is just beginning their rise to greatness. Little by little they will work hard to continue their momentum. They are working to keep it going through next year. Next year will also be a tough roster, so they need to keep it going.

When everything opens up and we are all back at school we all need to support the hard work and success of the Varsity Basketball Indians! People should definitely come to support their games at the high school and will enjoy the show they put on. Hopefully our team can win this year and we'll be here rooting and supporting them. Go Indians!!!



PHOTOS BY COACH MUNOZ

Top Left: The 2019-2020 PHS Basketball team.
Top Right: Coby Sylvester throws for a point.
Bottom: A team prayer unites team members before a game.

How Rudy Gobert Locked Down the Entire NBA

By Jalen Brown

Two-time defensive player of the year, Frenchman, Rudy Gobert has just locked down the award for a third straight year. Who is Rudy and why should you know who he is? Well, Rudy Gobert caught the coronavirus early in the pandemic and put the whole NBA on lockdown.

At the beginning of April, the Utah Jazz center tested positive for the coronavirus, just before a game with the Oklahoma City Thunder. The NBA reacted quickly to protect the lives of their players and the fans, by postponing the game.

His teammate Donovan Mitchell now has it too. They both have the coronavirus. They are not the only basketball players to have it. It has spread through the NBA, much like it has spread through the rest of society. It was the scare that these famous players are not immune that has helped to force the rest of America to take notice of this horrible disease. These players getting sick forced regular Americans to believe that if these players could get the virus then no one was immune, that we all were



Utah Jazz center Rudy Gobert gets a rebound during an inter-squad scrimmage game at Hill Air Force Base, Utah, Sept. 29, 2017.

PHOTO BY PAUL HOLCOMB/U.S. AIR FORCE

at risk.

In order to protect the people the NBA then cancelled the entire season. To a die-hard basketball fan this is a sad day that I never thought would ever happen. Marcus Smart, Christian Woods and Kevin Durant, all tested positive. The close proximity of players means that this rapidly spreading disease spread through many of

the players very quickly.

Thank goodness all these players have since recovered. When the NBA reopens they will all be playing. No doubt their health as athletes and their young age has helped them to recover quickly.

The players are not the only people that have it either. New York Knicks owner James Dolan and NBA Analyst Doris

Burke also have the Coronavirus. Because of the coronavirus, the NBA made the decision to still have games, but without fans and limiting the reporters in the locker room after the games.

No fans in the stadiums is something that some NBA players don't like. They want fans in the stadium. The support from the fans is moti-

vation to perform their best. LeBron James does not want to play games in an empty stadium. The fans make the game better and make it feel more alive. Because the coronavirus situation has gotten so bad, the NBA has suspended the regular season and the NBA season could be extended until August.

It has been a rumor that the microphone touching incident, right before Gobert tested positive, has stressed the relationship between him and his teammate Donovan Mitchell. However, this rumor has been put to bed. These players want to get back to work. Jazz executive vice-president said in a tweet, "They're ready to put this behind them, move forward, act professionally. ... We're very pleased with the collective makeup of our group, Donovan and Rudy in particular. We look forward to moving forward."

The owners and the players want to move forward. The fans definitely want to put all this behind them, and the American people are ready to defeat this disease and get back to work and being normal.