

# COUGAR CHRONICLE

June 2022

## And we're Back!

By: Raphael Englander, Editor-in-Chief

It has been over a year since JBHA students last saw paper copies of the Cougar Chronicle dotting the hallways and tables in the lobby. Instead, for the last batch of editions, readers have logged onto the Chronicle website and enjoyed our articles virtually. That ends now.

We are back – and we hope to see you all picking up copies as you pass by them. Covering topics from major supreme court decisions to interviews with Barrack's beloved faculty, the Chronicle is students' single-stop vehicle through which they can explore and learn about both their school and the world as a whole. Happy reading!



**“Happy Reading!”**

**“Love Where you Learn”**

Centerspread on Pages 11-12  
with Interviews from  
Rabbi Lesack, and Incoming Upper School Director,  
Mrs. Trajtenberg!

## Roe v Wade in Peril

By: Becca Miller, Executive Editor

All the most momentous Supreme Court decisions had a sweeping majority. *Brown v Board of Education* was unanimous. So was *Marbury v Madison*. *Roe v Wade* was 7-2. And now it's about to be overturned by a 5-4 vote. There's something so sleazy about that. Five to four. It is also the least upsetting part of the situation.

We like to mythologize the Supreme Court. They loom above us in their long black robes, holding the Constitution in their hands. Their very titles sound like something out of a high fantasy book. Supreme Court Justice. It oozes righteousness, holiness, and prestige. We follow the thunderous footsteps of giants such as Thurgood Marshall and Ruth Bader Ginsburg as they lead our country on the path its core values set. They rise above the partisan fray, clearly seeing the way forward in a way we can't. And yet our Supreme Court has descended into the very political brouhaha it was created to avoid. Five to four. A vote almost completely on party lines. A vote cast by justices who were *elected* on party lines. I doubt that a majority of the Senate really thought Brett Kavanaugh was an upstanding, wise man, worthy of the position. They did not vote for the man, they voted for the party. There was a time when the Supreme Court valued person over party.

**“How is it possible, in a democracy, for a ruling that the majority of the population disagrees with to become law?”**

The prerequisite for the position of Supreme Court Justice should be someone wise and knowledgeable who knows and honors the Constitution. But today's senators care more about their parties than the worthiness of the person they confirm for this responsibility. They vote not for a person, but for a party. And so the Supreme Court becomes corrupt with partisan politics and Justices who belie the honorific.

Our country has a narrative throughout our history that we charge toward justice. Slowly and surely, two steps forward and one step back, we inch forward. Our pace may be slow, but our direction remains onward and upward. We progress. A step in that progression was when women across the country fought and won a major victory in the *Roe v Wade* decision. They battled, and triumphed, and breathed a sigh of relief, and we progressed. This decision marks the opposite. This is a regression. I will grow up with fewer rights than my mother and grandmother. I never thought that it was possible, that progress could be undone. We are moving backward in history. I shout that we are going the wrong way, but the wind swallows my words. I guess this is how it feels to have your rights stripped away.

We all learn that America is a democracy. But this is a decision that will affect the lives of hundreds of millions of people, and we don't get a say. 69% of Americans believe in a woman's right to choose. *And yet*. How is it possible, in a *democracy*, for a ruling that the majority of the population disagrees with to become law? It's one thing that we don't elect Supreme Court Justices –the president appoints them, and the Senate confirms them. But the Senate distorts the voice of the people. Its very structure does not reflect the popular majority by design. And the majority of our current Supreme Court Justices were appointed by presidents who lost the popular vote. No wonder its actions are so twisted and unrepresentative. It is so far removed from the people. The Supreme Court is the body of government that arguably has the most direct impact on the people, but it is the branch of government in which the people have the least say.

**“Our Supreme Court has descended into the very political brouhaha they were created to avoid.”**

What was supposed to prevent the tyranny of the majority has now gone too far by allowing the minority to rule. A device intended to amplify everyone's voices now drowns us out, magnifying the empowered few over the many. We are helpless. We are powerless. We are stunned by our own impotence in a country that supposedly values freedom, equality, and the rights of the governed. America really does a great job pretending to be a democracy. It had me fooled.

Now the wool is pulled from our eyes, and the rug is pulled from below our feet, and five unelected individuals (one of whom is an alleged rapist) have power over the bodies of every woman in the country.

**“And so the Supreme Court becomes corrupt with partisan politics and Justices who belie the honorific.”**

## Quality Over Quantity: Why There Are Too Many Clubs at Barrack

By: Niva Cohen, Editor in Chief

The Barrack club schedule is crammed with many options that are pretty similar to each other. Barrack boasts about its “nearly four dozen” clubs and publications on the website. There’s no question that the variety of extracurriculars here is impressive, but at some point, it becomes too much. We have reached that point.

When there are so many clubs, they conflict with each other. People who might be interested in several must pick just one, much to their chagrin, they can’t be in two places at once. As a result, clubs struggle for membership, even if their goals or activities align with student interests. The sheer number of options is overwhelming; it’s impossible to understand what each club actually values, how they act (if at all), and which is worth joining. Overcome by an embarrassment of riches, some students decide to tap out altogether. Such an outcome is a shame for uninvolved students and a disaster for clubs. How can they survive with membership so low? If there were fewer to pick from, fewer scheduling conflicts would arise, and student life would feel much more manageable.

The logistical and membership fiasco might be worth it if each club were distinct in its aims and activities, but that isn’t the case. There are clusters of clubs that are similar to each other and could easily merge, clearing up the club schedule and increasing numbers. They seem to exist independently simply because of a lack of communication among students. Since the barrier to starting a club is so low, students are naturally more inclined to create their own than to take a risk and reach out to an unfamiliar student who leads a similar club that already exists. The outcomes are conglomerates of friends, all in the same grade and social circle, meeting in a classroom once a cycle to chat or laugh as they would in the Dining Commons. When I came to Barrack, older members of my clubs welcomed me to the school and made me feel invested in the community.

The fact that clubs are so segregated by grade makes me pity incoming sixth graders and freshmen who won’t have the social fabric that benefited me so much. If there were fewer clubs and a wider range of people in each of them, joining a new one would feel much less intimidating and far more appealing. Beyond social comfort, there is another reason why people insist on starting clubs instead of joining pre-existing ones: college. They think it looks impressive to have spearheaded, led, and innovated. Who knows, maybe it does – I’m not the expert. But I hate that clubs have become just another resume builder. The school encourages (or, at the very least, enables) such instrumental and opportunistic thinking by making it so easy to form a new club. Many would agree that we need to reexamine the culture in our school around college and college stress. Maybe clubs are a good place to start.

### Club Schedule

#### A Week

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Girls Who Code (201)	Annenberg (206)	Architectural Design Club (206)	Derech Eretz (112)	Environmental Action Club (1101)
Human Rights (312)	DECA (203)	CARE (112)	Israel Club (B* <sup>M</sup> )	HEAR Club (B* <sup>M</sup> )
Math Tutoring Center (110)	Weightlifting Club (Gym)	Cheer Club (1101)	Math Counts (201)	Moat Belt Din (303)
Mock Trial (206)	Writing Center (314)	Model UN (313)	Outside the Bubble (110)	Photography Club (106)
	Yearbook (CoSuit)	Rocket Club (201)	Writing Center (314)	Student Association (206)
		Super8 Club (110)	Yearbook (CoSuit)	Topics in Ethics (112)
			Sci FI Book Club (PM)	Women’s Empowerment Club (110)

#### B Week

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Math Tutoring Center (110)	DECA (203)	CARE (112)	Engineering Club (207)	Cougar Chronicle (112)
MEET (1204)	Jewish Philosophy Club (108)	Cheer Club (1101)	Gateway (110)	Fashion Club (303)
Mock Trial (206)	Jewish Thought Club (112)	GSA (052)	Israel Club (B* <sup>M</sup> )	HEAR Club (B* <sup>M</sup> )
Stock Market Club (314)	Woman’s Empowerment Club (110)	Ushem Shamayim (313)	Mini-thon (205)	Moat Belt Din (303)
TEAMS (207)	World Affairs Club (310)	Lucy Belle Rainbow (311)	Sports Debate Club (108)	Political Action Club (110)
Weightlifting Club (Gym)	Writing Center (314)	Topics in Science (205)	Yearbook Club (CoSuit)	Widener Memorial Club (311)
Yearbook (CoSuit)		Super8 Club (110)	Weightlifting Club (Gym)	
			Writing Center (314)	

“The sheer number of options is overwhelming; it’s impossible to understand what each club actually values, how they act (if at all), and which is worth joining.”

This piece would not be all that constructive if I did not recommend some remedy to what I see as a bi-faceted problem: the excess of clubs and the lack of people involved in them. To solve the former, the administration should gather leaders of similar clubs and help them work out a merger. New club proposals should require a more intensive review process and application, including a justification of what the new club will provide the student body that they can’t seek elsewhere. SA shouldn’t *shut down* small or single-grade clubs, but they should find some way to incentivize growth and diversity of grades, especially between high- and middle school. As for the lack of involvement, I firmly believe that slimming down the number of clubs will help because it makes a statement that the clubs we *do* have are high-quality and there for a reason. It’s also important to get people involved early. Hopefully, middle and high schoolers will eat lunch together again next year so that middle school students can join clubs. And if the school is going to enable people’s itch to build their resumes, perhaps there should be a policy that club leaders have to have been members for at least three full trimesters (maybe even longer) before gaining titles.

I write this article not because I resent club culture, but because I love it, and because I want it restored to its former glory. And if you see me strolling the halls with an application for a club that will make it harder to found new clubs, don’t be surprised (irony intended).

# The Worrying Age of Microtransactions

By: Don Miller, Staff Writer

When one thinks of video games, one conjures images of fun, vast audiences, and the familiar single transaction system. You go to the store, pick up a game, pay, and you now own the game. With modern technology, this system has changed to include complicated networks of spending, transactions, and gambling, all within the game itself, surrounded by infrastructures designed to trick you and get you addicted to spending money. What constitutes gambling in a game? What is the line between enjoying the features of a game and being addicted? How are we tricked? And has gaming always been this way since quarters and arcade cabinets?

In games through the past decade, microtransactions have become highly prevalent. A microtransaction is a small transaction conducted online. Although the definition and word itself has words like “small” and “micro,” the scale of such purchases is on a level far more significant than many would assume. To further understand the microtransaction, let’s look at a step-by-step description of how a microtransaction works. A prime example is the deceptively categorized “free to play” game of *Clash of Clans*, in which the premise is that you have abuse and try to upgrade it. In the game, one can buy items called “gems.”

These gems can then be spent in place of other resources one would need to play and progress through the game to receive. Looking at the foundation of progression in the game, one will encounter things that are restricted by one thing, time. “Gems” can then be spent to break through these barriers, allowing the player advantages over others with progression in the game. These “Gems” are the first form of deception. Games such as these will always have various forms of currency. A player can earn currency but can only *buy* premium currency, which games sell in agonizingly small quantities so that the buyer will always crave more. Our second exploitative encounter is as follows. As one progresses in the game, they have less and less time to complete tasks. This further encourages the player to purchase premium currency to maintain the rate of progress initially set by the game that, with the reinforcement of daily rewards for play, one has become accustomed to and worked into their routines.

Now that our game has successfully hooked us, let’s go to the in-game shop and look at our options. In the shop, the very first offer is \$0.99 for 99 gems. Ok, so our conversion rate of USD to gems is a 1 cent to 1 gem ratio, right? Well, if one looks next to it, there is another offer, \$10.00 for 1,200 gems. So what’s going on here? This is a prime example of a game warping the perception of the player to encourage more spending. One may think that they would not fall for such a trick, not succumb to the game’s manufactured pressure. Well, that person is probably right. This then raises the question, how does the game make money? If many refrain from spending, what pays for the running and upkeep of such games? Surely it cannot be profitable.

This is where the concept of “whaling” factors in, which gaming apps use to turn a profit. Torulf Jernstrom, a software developer since 2009, is featured in a youtube video titled “Let’s go whaling,” a recording of a conference where Jernstrom outlined his app’s tactics. In his lecture, Jernstrom explained that “the whales are the ‘high paying guys’ (1:00), the people who will spend copious amounts of money every time they open the app. Jernstrom characterized that whales are wealthy businessmen competing against each other within the game (1:10). In reality, this is not at all the case. “Whales” can be anyone and will usually be those who are either unable to help themselves, are truly addicted, or who lack the financial wisdom to know how much is a reasonable amount to spend.



**“No longer exists even the cooldown of inserting a coin into a machine, now we are able to forfeit our savings at the push of a button.”**

Now that the infrastructure of manipulating players has been established, there is an element that can be included in games that are in its entirety, gambling. Loot boxes are random chance draws that one pays using premium currency for things that either provide a competitive advantage or are purely cosmetic. One of the bigger draws of this is the fact that other players will be able to see what you win, giving the paying player bragging rights within their newfound addiction. This is flat-out gambling. You pay money without the slightest inkling of what you may receive in the hopes of potentially receiving something of high value. In the *Clash of Clans* example, At least you knew what you were getting. Leaving the prize up to chance or lottery is one of the most scummy business practices because it exploits children on seemingly innocent platforms to which they readily have access. Many horror stories exist of children unknowingly spending hundreds because of the lack of online microtransaction regulations. The next time you sit down to play a relaxing video game, remember to be aware. If you are playing a game that includes microtransactions – which, in all honesty, most do – you are being preyed on at every moment. Please, buyer: beware.

Video games have always had a monetary transaction involved; after all, they are luxury entertainment. These days, you can waste copious amounts of time and money playing them, and it is essential that you find a balance before they drain you completely. It is possible to spend *some* without getting sucked in to the exploitative cycle, but it is not easy. The solution: be vigilant. Be *careful* when you find yourself in these scenarios. Ensure your security through awareness. No longer exists even the cooldown of inserting a coin into a machine; now, we can forfeit our savings at the push of a button.

## Is Kanye West Crossing a Line Against Pete Davidson?

By: Manny Shklar,  
Arts and Entertainment Editor

It's not uncommon for one of the greatest musicians to make almost daily headlines over the last 20 years. However, in the case of Kanye West, people seem to have thrown away his musical accomplishments to focus on his recent feud with A-list comedian Pete Davidson. Following Kim Kardashian's divorce from the award-winning rapper in West, she almost immediately began dating Davidson, and he quickly played a role in West and Kardashian's four children's lives. Now, after West's repeated attempts to pull Davidson away from his kids, the public is still deciding: Which of the two stars is right, and which is wrong?

**“Whether in public or private, the rap mogul has tried hurting and harassing Davidson.”**

West, who has earned fame from his chart-topping albums “Graduation” and “808s & Heartbreak”, has spent the last year using social media to attack Davidson in many ways. He has also tried to reach out to Kardashian, who refused to speak to him for eight months after filing for divorce, eventually demanding that West put an end to his intervention. Whether in public or private, the rap mogul has tried hurting and harassing Davidson. Meanwhile, Davidson has grown much closer with Kardashian, and their relationship remains strong.



Davidson has resorted to comedy when regarding much of the drama.  
Source: ctm.com

While most mainstream media has focused on West's side of the story, there are genuine points to be made for Pete Davidson. He's done multiple comedy routines centered around the feud and has dealt with hate from West and his supporters despite recurring mental health struggles. Furthermore, Kardashian has cited Davidson as a great role model for her kids and says that they have all connected well.

So, is there anyone on the right side? I believe that Davidson is in the right here, as helping Kardashian raise West's children is something that would be expected. I believe West is taking the matter too far and can only get part of what he wants by talking it through with Davidson, but there are obviously many sides to the conflict. What do you think?



West and Kardashian are struggling to come to a compromise. Source: Complex.com

Continuation from page 7

## School News Get to know Barrack's Security!

By: Raphael Englander,  
Editor in Chief

Mr. William Pollard

Mr. Pollard has worked at Barrack since September of 2017. He grew up in Philadelphia and is a retired State Corrections Officer, working for the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections for 24 years before retiring in February of 2017 and becoming a security guard at JBHA later that year.

His hobbies include recreational shooting and athletics; he enjoys working out and playing football and basketball. He is also a big fan of both the Eagles and the 76ers. Mr. Pollard has been married since 2004 and currently lives in Phoenixville along with his family.

Mr. Agrait Rodriguez

This is Mr. Rodriguez's first school year. He was born and grew up in Puerto Rico and, after graduating from high school, joined the United States Navy.



After serving in the Navy for four years, he came to Philadelphia and joined the Philadelphia Police Department. Now, as a retired police officer, he is one of the school's security guards. Mr. Rodriguez has a wife, a 23-year-old daughter, and a 32-year-old daughter who is a registered nurse. In his spare time, he does repairs in his and his daughters' homes and enjoys watching YouTube.

## Ms. Stern Retiring Interview

By: Addison Smith,  
Opinion Section Editor

After 26 years of being Jack M. Barrack Hebrew Academy's esteemed art teacher, Ms. Stern is retiring. The Chronicle decided to interview her to here about her plans for the future, her vision for the art department, and some of her favorite memories from her time at JBHA!

What first lead her to this job?

Ms. Stern had a background in teaching and had just moved to Philadelphia, so she felt that teaching would be a good way to integrate into the greater Philadelphia community. The art teacher position was available, because the prior art teacher had taken a sabbatical. Ms. Stern left after a year as the former art teacher returned, but when they left, Ms. Stern was offered the position full-time. She accepted and the rest is history

What were your first years and last years at Barrack like, and how do they differ?

In the beginning of her time at Barrack, Ms. Stern worked three quarters of the year with the middle school, and one quarter with the high schoolers. For her first 10-12 years teaching here, Ms. Stern had to teach high school classes after school hours. This was due to the dual curriculum, which made it hard to have art class during the school day. This led to one-to-two hour classes, and was very draining, as it wouldn't allow Ms. Stern to leave until 5:30 P.M., so she was very happy when after school classes were eradicated.

Retiring isn't something one can do on a whim, and Ms. Stern was already thinking about retiring prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, but continued working through this time. Art classes online were certainly a struggle for both Ms. Stern, and her excited students – it wasn't possible to get the same direction and communication that an in person class provides. Ms. Stern isn't only an art teacher, she is also a business owner, and upon her decision to retire, her business was also thriving, giving her the last bit of encouragement she needed to end her time her at Barrack.

What is your business, when did you start it, etc.?

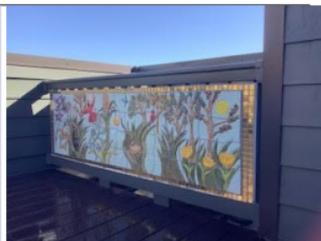
Ms. Stern owns her own custom tile business, where she makes mosaics for companies, community centers and regular people. Ms. Stern started her business while in graduate school and right now she is working on an exterior piece for an atrium (an open-roofed entrance hall) for someone's home. She was recently one of seven chosen out of 270 to create a project for a Penn hospital in Lancaster. Although this is a huge job and an absolute honor to be picked for, Ms. Stern has worked on bigger projects than this one. She considers this one of the beauties of this job, because of the flexibility of being her own boss and the great variation in project sizes and difficulty level. She is going to be working with a company called "Gatekeeper", that will lead her to new and exciting projects. Ms. Stern said that the hardest part of being both a business owner and a teacher, is the extra hours spent before and after school working on her business. Another unexpected thing is the lack of stability with certain projects, as before starting a job, the price is already paid. Tiles can break in the kiln, and she would have to start all over, taking up more time and resources without being able to charge more. Balancing the time, materials and mishaps are all a challenging part of the job.

What are you going to do upon leaving Barrack?

Ms. Stern will mainly continue work with her business, as well as working for an organization called "Center on the Hill" where children and elders can participate in clubs, classes and activities. She will be exhibiting her art, teaching classes, and teaching techniques to help them create a mural for the outside of their building. Ms. Stern will also be working with the "Mosaic Society of Philadelphia". Something she is really looking forward to is hopefully going to Croatia for a couple of weeks this summer. She originally got this idea when some of her friends went a few years back on a boat tour and loved it. A bonus of the trip is she will also visit Northern Italy and see Pompeii.

What do you hope for the art department in the future?

First of all, Ms. Stern hopes that the school a new art teacher, and that the art department will continue to grow and have specific art classes catered to the students interests. She also hopes that there will be additions to the art department, like music and drama.



A terrace installation. Mural is 2'x 7' sculpted ceramic tile

**"taught high school during after school hours"**



A sculpture made using wire and screen covered with thimble and stained glass

What classes did you teach and which one was your favorite?

Ms. Stern typically teaches 6-12, but this year she didn't teach juniors and seniors. Ms. Stern offers an array of art classes: glass, pottery, mosaic, 3D art, drawing, painting, etc. "Each class is very different to teach" she says, but as the kids progress through the art program she



One of the 4x4 ceramic tile designs from my production line (Pictures from Ms. Stern)

gets to know them better. One thing she loves with all of her classes is adding new projects and teaching new techniques.

What was your favorite memory from your time at Barrack?

There isn't one absolute favorite, but she really enjoyed trips like Teva, with the sixth graders, because she got to see the students outside of art class and they could see her in a different light. She also really enjoyed having classes with kids who really enjoy art and want to learn more, as it made her job more interesting and fun!

Overall Ms. Stern has enjoyed her years at Barrack learning and growing with the school, and the Barrack community wishes her the best on her future endeavors.

**"Also a business owner"  
"Her business was also thriving"**

## Get to know Barrack's Security!

By: Raphael Englander, Editor-in-Chief



All photos taken from JBHA staff photos or provided by those photographed (from left to right, Lavar Aikens, Larry Boston, Luis Castillo, Mike Crepack, William Pollard, Agrait Rodriguez)

### Mr. Lavar Aikens

Mr. Aikens has been a security guard at Barrack for 12 years, joining the school in August of 2009. He grew up in West Philadelphia and has been in security his entire life, since age 17. His favorite thing to do is cruise, which he likes to do about two times a year. Mr. Aikens is an avid sports fan of all the Philadelphia teams, Penn State, and Villanova Basketball. His favorite sport is boxing. He has a 22-year-old daughter who is a senior at Penn State University, and a fiance, whom he hopes to marry sometime next year. JBHA was his first experience with the Jewish community, and he has appreciated learning about the culture and teaching his daughter. "They make us feel like family here," he says. Mr.

### Larry Boston

Mr. Boston has been at Barrack for 22 years, working security for ten. He grew up in Philadelphia and likes sports, movies, and bowling, as well as other activities. Although he likes to watch sports, he prefers playing them. Favorite movies of his include

*Scarface* and other gangster movies, *Grease*, and *West Side Story*; enjoying the singing and dancing. Mr. Boston has seven sons, one daughter, and three grandchildren. "Being around here brings back the love part of me from being a parent," he says in regards to interacting with students. "It just makes me want to be here... it feels like a family."

### Mr. Luis Castillo

The 2021-2022 school year is Mr. Castillo's fourth year working at JBHA. He grew up in North Philadelphia and has a wife, a 27-year-old son who lives in Florida, and three younger children who are currently in elementary school. Mr. Castillo likes reading news articles, mobile gaming, and spending time with his children. His favorite movies include *Star Wars* and *The Lord of the Rings*, and he has enjoyed reading the Harry Potter series and playing *Dungeons and Dragons*.

### Mr. Mike Crepack

Mr. Crepack has worked at Barrack for a year. He grew up in Brookhaven, Pennsylvania, and is a retired federal Air Marshal, a job in which he worked in counter-terrorism on airplanes, a role that allowed him to travel all over the world. He has been married for five years and has a 12-year-old son. Mr. Crepack loves to do activities both he and his son can enjoy, regardless of age, whether it is

an amusement park, a water park, or skiing. Mr. Crepack would like to say that "he really enjoys being here. The people and the parents are great."

Article continued in School News on page 5...

**"They make us feel like family here"**  
**"The people and the parents are great"**

## Senior Reflections on Their Time at Barrack

By: Benny Scheinmann, School News Editor

Many Barrack students look forward to the end of the second trimester as it is the longest and hardest of the three. Trimester three is the beginning of “the home stretch,” with only one trimester to go before summer. However, some students feel differently. For the class of 2022, the third trimester marks the beginning of the end of their time at Barrack and as their time at Barrack nears an end, the seniors prepare to say goodbye. As Max Hirsh prepares for this bittersweet goodbye, he says that his “experience at Barrack has been amazing” and that Barrack is different from other schools because of the “tight-knit community we have,” which is “something [he] wouldn't trade for anything.” As a high schooler at Barrack myself, this message about the community really hit home and made me sad about the idea that one day, I too would have to leave this amazing family that we have here.

Another senior this year, Nina Berkowitz, commented on her departure from Barrack, saying that “Barrack has been a very welcoming environment adding that she “loved the opportunities [she's] been given to make positive changes to the school.” Due to Barrack's size, the administration can take a lot of input from the students. Nina has felt that she has been able to voice her opinions, and she is proud of the changes she's made during her 7-year Barrack journey.

Unfortunately, sometimes the fun that Barrack has to offer can be overshadowed by the stressful workload. With the right guidance, however, this can be managed. Senior Rebecca Scheinmann says that “being a successful Barrack student is all about time management and balance.

**“Never be afraid to fail in a class or a sport”**

**- Roni Cohen**

Make sure you are on top of your assignments so you have time to relax and time to enjoy the fun parts of high school.” This may seem self-explanatory, but simply making a schedule and not doing long-term assignments the night before they are is good advice for students who have time left at Barrack.

Lastly, although cliché, being yourself is important to being successful at Barrack. Roni Cohen, a fantastic student-athlete at Barrack, said to “take risks” and to “never be afraid to fail in a class or a sport.” Along with this, Cohen gave important advice to young students: “don't worry about what others think or say.”

As we say goodbye to these seniors, I am confident that they will do amazing things wherever they go next year. I offer a sincere thank you for everything you all have done for the Barrack community. You will be missed.



## Bonding Off Campus

By: Mikaela Garber, Israel Editor

During the pandemic, many students felt distanced from the members of their school community. Online learning didn't allow for the usual grade-level bonding activities and the ability to explore the world outside of school with a school kehillah. Although Barrack has been in-person for quite some time now, outings and other grade activities are just beginning to be reintegrated into the schedule. The revival of off-campus field trips have many students excited.

While students were unable to go off-campus during last year's Shishis, this year gave some grades the opportunity to make new memories with their class outside of Barrack's property. A trip to local synagogues allowed sixth-grade students to perform chesed projects in the community. Other trips included Skyzone and an escape room! Being able to do something fun with the entire grade proved to be an incredible opportunity for bonding.

In addition, academic trips were also re-introduced. For the eleventh grade STEAM students and tenth graders, Monday, May 9, brought an exciting opportunity to explore Drexel University's material science laboratory. During the tour, students learned about "smart fabrics" and got to see a scanning electron microscope, which shows intensely magnified objects. Jordana Harwitz '24 explained that the reintroduction of field trips is "great because it gives us a chance to explore our surroundings and apply our knowledge from school."



JBHA smugmug page- Class of 2026

Day trips are a great way to bond, but recent overnight trips have given students a way to get to know their classmates better. According to Mollie Lachter '27, such trips "take all the good parts of school and make them better. It's a way to just have fun." Williamsburg and TEVA have historically been fun and memorable experiences. Now that those trips have been reinstated, students can once again experience the excitement of an overnight trip with their grades. In Williamsburg, middle schoolers enjoyed hands-on learning in Jamestown and Colonial Williamsburg.

The revival of the Muss program is one last experience about which students are excited. Muss is the ultimate grade bonding trip, with three months of adventures all around Israel. This fall, the eleventh graders attended this program with few changes due to COVID. All in all, they feel as if the program helped them grow closer with their entire grade. Although the seniors were unable to go on the traditional Muss trip, they got the chance to experience a two-month program in Israel this spring.

Reinstating trips certainly has added meaning to the core value of kehillah/community. It has given everyone the opportunity to get to know others outside of a classroom setting and interact with people whom they otherwise might not have talked to. As Barrack looks into next school year, field trips and opportunities to bond will hopefully continue to be a vital part of the schedule.

**"Online learning caused a decrease in grade bonding activities and the ability to explore the world outside of school."**

**"It has given everyone the opportunity to get to know others outside of a classroom setting and interact with people whom they otherwise might not have talked to."**



Barrack Instagram- Class of 2024

**"Reinstating trips certainly has added meaning to the core value of kehillah/community."**

**"It's taking all the good parts of school and making them better."  
(Mollie Lachter, '27)**

# Terror Attacks In Israel

By: Margot Englander, School News Editor

The mass stabbing in El'ad, Israel, which occurred on May 5, 2022, is just another attack in a time of terror, marking at least 17 Israelis killed since mid-March. This attack followed a wave of violence by terrorists in Israel, the newest update to a long and horrific history. This occurs during a time of religious importance for multiple religions, and therefore, religious conflict. The collision of Pesach, Ramadan, and Easter creates a smoldering pot of heightened danger. It is clear that these attacks are anti-semitic in nature, reflecting the belief that Israel is not a Jewish state.

The May 5th attack occurred after a series of conflicts between Palestinian stone-throwers and Israeli police at the Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem. This particular clash raised concerns that Israel has entered a new stage of living in fear of brutality for all citizens. The stabbing was a result of a war-cry issued by Yehwa Sinwar, the leader of Hamas in Gaza, urging Arabs to "get your cleavers, axes or knives ready." It took place in El'ad, a primarily orthodox community, and left three wounded and two severely injured. Nobody has claimed responsibility for the attack, but Hamas, an Islamic militant group that controls Gaza, called it a "brave and heroic act," claiming it was a natural response to the Israeli occupation of the Mosque.

Encouraged by Hamas, protestors have set up barricades to prevent Israeli Jews from coming during visiting hours. They threw stones and fired fireworks against the Israeli police forces, and the police responded with sponge-covered bullets, sound grenades and tear gas – fueling anger within the Palestinian Arab community. Palestinians view Israeli visits to the Mosque as an attempt to undermine Muslim control of the site; Israeli authorities claim that there has been no attempted change in the leadership there.

There is no clear relationship between the attacks, motivation or reasoning for timing, besides, of course, a violent demand for an expulsion of Israeli leadership of the Israel area. The deadliest wave of attacks since 2016 seems only to be starting, as other attacks have already been reported since then, and we can only hope that there will be a peaceful resolution, and Israeli lives be saved.

**“Deadliest wave of attacks since 2016”**

The Aqsa Mosque is one of the holiest sites in Jerusalem for both Muslims and Jews, the latter group revering it as the Temple Mount, home to two ancient Jewish temples. Modern Muslims believe that Muhammad was transported from the Great Mosque of Mecca to the Aqsa Mosque during his night journey.



<https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/terrorists-in-israel-questions-and-answers/>  
Emergency Medical Services visit the site of a terror attack.

## Dissecting the Seniors' Muss Experience

By: Max Hirsch, Outgoing Senior Staff Writer

As the seniors' year comes to a close, many of them are anxiously awaiting their trip to Israel this spring. Through all of the Covid related uncertainty and changes to the program, it seems as though the plan is at last finalized. Students will be leaving for Israel on March 27th and returning on May 30th. Despite Barrack maintaining their relationship with the Alexander Muss High School in Israel program in this unusual circumstance, students will not be given the traditional Muss experience. Staying for two months as opposed to the standard three, not a second can go to waste. Students will be traveling all over Israel over the course of this two-month span, and because their classes will have finished prior to going on the program, they hope to accomplish just as much in a shorter time period. Hunter Kimmel, a senior who is planning on going on Muss this spring, commended the program for its flexibility in ensuring its curriculum fulfills student needs. "It's super exciting that we'll be going on trips every day all over Israel. It seems pointless, in my opinion, to do the traditional Muss trip and take classes once we've already graduated. I can't wait to be on the move every day," Kimmel said.



**Hunter Kimmel, a senior who is planning on going on Muss this spring, commended the program for its flexibility in ensuring its curriculum fulfills student needs.**

Another change worth noting is the locations in which the students will be staying. Although the Hod Hasharon campus has become a cornerstone of the Muss experience, students will be staying on three different campuses this spring (not including Hod Hasharon). Jacob Erlbaum, another senior hoping to go to Israel next month, doesn't seem too fazed by this change. "I think it'll be kind of awesome to stay on three different campuses and change the status quo....it feels more adventurous," he said.

There's no doubt that the seniors will be experiencing a different program than the one this fall - and that may be disappointing to some. But the global pandemic has altered every facet of our lives, and we need to adapt to that. All in all, the seniors are very fortunate to even have the opportunity to go abroad this spring, and I think those attending will not regret it for an instant.

## 10th grade looking forward to upcoming Muss Trip

By: Mikaela Garber, Israel Editor

**"In spite of the fact that our program might be slightly different from past years, the experiences and memories created while on the trip are sure to be life changing, and I can't wait to be on my way."**

The sights in Israel are breathtaking and being able to see them while walking and camping in different locations is sure to be beautiful. While the views in Israel are amazing, Israeli culture is unmatched due to the diverse society living in the country, and I can't wait to travel to Tel Aviv and Eilat, among many other places. Seeing beautiful sights and fully experiencing the Israeli culture is something that I am excited about.

However, some parts of our experience are still going to be affected by COVID-19. For example, the trip to Poland to visit concentration camps has been known to be extremely meaningful and touching. Unfortunately, travel through different countries has been greatly affected because of the pandemic, and therefore, the Poland trip has been cancelled for the upcoming year. In addition, the decision about whether or not home hospitality will be allowed is still up in the air.

With the school year coming to a close, many sophomores, including myself, are anxiously and excitedly awaiting our Muss program in the fall. After hearing about this life-changing experience for years and years, it seems hard to believe that we are finally preparing for the trip. Although I am definitely looking forward to going on Muss, I also have some reservations about the experience.

Between all of the trips we have planned in Israel, and the interesting lessons we have in store, Muss is sure to be a fun and intriguing experience. Although we have the ability to learn about Israel while at Barrack, I am looking forward to being able to learn about Jewish and Israeli history in the place that it actually happened. Furthermore, yam el yam, the trek across Israel, is supposed to be challenging, but amazing.



<https://www.australianjewishnews.com/baluk-student-a-person-under-suspicion/>

Alexander Muss High School in Israel Facebook page: The Australian Jewish News-Baluk student 'a person under suspicion'



Open weekends are certain shabbat and holidays throughout the trimester that have traditionally been times where students can go off campus to visit family and friends. Being able to stay with loved ones who live in Israel is something that a lot of us were looking forward to, and still hope to be able to do.

COVID has severely impacted our ability to bond as a grade, and Muss will serve as a good opportunity to strengthen our relationships. From missing out on the end of middle school together and the eighth grade Israel trip to events such as our 9th grade dance not happening, our grade hasn't been able to get to know each other as well as we would have otherwise. As those who went on Muss previously can testify, the trip brings the grade together in extraordinary ways. Spending so much time together will help us learn new things about our fellow students who we don't know as well. Moreover, the different trips will give us the opportunity to make new memories as a grade.

As I anticipate going on Muss this coming school year, I am eager to explore Israel and bond more with my grade. In spite of the fact that our program might be slightly different from past years, the experiences and memories created while on the trip are sure to be life changing, and I can't wait to be on my way.

## Israel's Participation in the Eurovision Contest By: Rachel Loeb

The Eurovision Song Contest is an annual international songwriting competition featuring primarily European countries. It is organized by the European Broadcasting Union, and fifty-two countries have competed since its start. Each country chooses a performer and submits an original song less than three minutes in length, which is broadcasted nationally to be voted on. The winner is decided based on two semi-final rounds, followed by a grand finale. The contest is hosted in the country that won the previous year; this year's competition is in Pala Alpitour in Turin, Italy. Thousands of spectators and journalists attend and cover the contest, from rehearsals to press conferences. The Eurovision contest is among the world's most-watched non-sporting events, and this year, viewership peaked at 10.6 million views. This year, the winning country was Ukraine, and they won the competition with the song "Stefania." The contest, in general, is very important because it unites Europe while also providing the winning artists with success and international fame.

Inspired by the Sanremo Music Festival, the contest was conceived by Marcel Bezencon, the president of the European Broadcasting Union. It was created to test the capabilities of live television broadcast technology while also creating a bond between European countries. The rules have evolved over time, but the current scoring system has been in place since 1975. As it stands, each country is awarded two sets of points: one from a group of five music industry professionals and the other from the viewers. Fans can vote by phone, text, or in the official app. The voting happens again in the Grand Final, where the points are calculated, and the winner performs again before taking home the glass microphone trophy.

Israel's process for choosing its representative begins with auditions. Thirty-three participants make it through the initial auditions, and seventeen are chosen to move forward to the live shows.

On the X-Factor, several rounds of eliminations happen until there are only four finalists; this year, they were Inbal Bibi, Eli Huli, Michael Ben Davi, and Sapir Saban. The finals occur in two rounds. In the first round, the artists perform cover songs, and one is eliminated. Then the three remaining contestants perform their original songs for Eurovision, and they are voted on by the public and two jury groups:

one is the Israel X-Factor Judges, and the other is a professional committee. Israel first joined Eurovision in 1973 as the first non-European country granted entry, and they have participated forty-three times since then. In total, they have won the contest four times: in 1978 with Israel has a significant history in Eurovision, as it unites them in 1998 with Diva, and in 2018 with other countries and also with Toy. They have also hosted Eurovision three times: twice the artist's career. Israel has had a successful past in the Eurovision competition, and hopefully, next year, they will go further.



"This year, Israel got 13th place and failed to qualify for the finals; however, it still had some involvement, as the Ukrainian band that won the competition filmed its introductory video in Israel."

"X-Factor Jury, which determines the country's Eurovision entry."

This year, Israel was represented by Israeli singer Michael Ben Davi. His song was L.M., and it is a song about his journey towards self-acceptance. Israel got 13th place and failed to qualify for the finals; however, it still had some involvement, as the Ukrainian band that won the competition filmed its introductory video in Israel.

# Interviews with Rabbi Marshall Les

This is an end-of-the-year interview with Rabbi Lesack on views and answers for the future of Jack M. Barrack Hebrew Academy after his first year as the Head of School...

By: Ariel Shavit, Layout Editor and Rachel Loeb, Managing Editor

**Question:** What were some goals you had coming into the year as new Head of School and what are your goals for next year?

**Answer:**

Rabbi Lesack formalized his goals into “three buckets”: Community, Relationships, and Understanding. He wants to strengthen the Barrack Community between parents, students, and teachers because he believes Barrack to be a “community based school” where “everyone should feel connected” after the effects of COVID-19. This year Rabbi Lesack was trying to understand “who we are, where we are going etc...” Lesack participated in meet and greets, throughout communities across The Philadelphia area- from Allentown to Lower Merion. He created focus groups and a survey for alumni, students, and parents which will provide feedback on positive aspects of the school and aspects that the school needs to work on to build a better future.



<https://www.jackmarrack.com/2021/10/10/new-head-of-school-marshall-lesack-2021-2022>

**Question:** What is your opinion on block scheduling, like specific classes a trimester? For example, different JS subjects/classes each month?

**Answer:** Block scheduling is essentially 90-115 minute classes, and Rabbi Lesack says there's value in both approaches, and drawbacks to both approaches. There needs to be a bigger conversation with educators about goals, number of courses, and the workload.

**Question:** A lot of schools allow Sophomore and Juniors to take AP classes, and not just the Seniors. Would you ever consider adding this as an option?

**Answer:** The AP program is completely different because of what it demands of students and their teachers and whether it fits the educational model of our school. Lesack sees that there are significant strengths to our program in offering APs only during senior year, but also understands the questions students ask. The conversation would ask students to think about it, as Rabbi Lesack came from a school where AP classes were offered earlier than senior year. Lesack understands that there would be questions about workload stress, as his experience with students taking APs is that it is at a high level, with a fixed curriculum and time frame leaving less room to deviate from the curriculum. Mrs. Trajtenberg, as the incoming Head of Upper School, needs to be in the conversation to discuss the future of AP classes.

“Community, Relationships, and Understanding”

## Barrack and Mrs. Rebecca Trajtenberg

### The New Upper School Director: An Interview with

### Mrs. Rebecca Trajtenberg

By: Lila Elkins, Centrespread Editor

**Starting this July, Barrack will be welcoming in a new Upper School director who isn't really new at all. Current College Counselor of the Upper School, Mrs. Rebecca Trajtenberg will be taking on this position with excitement. But what is an 'Upper School Director'? And how did this become Mrs. Trajtenberg new venture? We have answers from an interview with the current College Counselor this past week.**

**Q:** If you had to describe the position of 'Upper School Director' in the most simplest way, what would it be?

**Trajt:** An opportunity to work with Upper School students, shape their academic portfolios, help with their social and emotional Jewish lives, and overall help school enthusiasm within the Upper School. Mostly, I would be a helping hand in making the Upper School students have the best experience.

**Q:** Where can people find you?

**A:** Not in the same office. I will probably be roaming the halls, in your classrooms, engaging with students, and on the athletic fields.  
(next week formal announcement)

**Q:** What will your relationship with the students look like in the new position?

**A:** I think that I will have more of an overall connection with students in their whole experience at Barrack, 9th through 12th, not just 11th and 12th.

**Q:** How did this happen?

**A:** When Mrs. Levin retired, the position at the time was split 3 ways, between Mr. Cooper, me, and Mr. McLaughlin. When Rabbi Lesack came, he felt it was better to have one person be the leader of the Upper School. I wanted a different type of challenge than I had had for the past 20 years that I have been out of college. This opportunity was exciting to me and I applied.

**Q:** What would a day to day look like?

**A:** I know that there will be lots of student engagement within classrooms, meeting with teachers and administrators, infusing fun into the hallways, and working collaboratively with the Upper School staff.

**Q:** What is your vision for the Upper School and should we expect any changes?

**A:** Not any massive changes right off the bat, I want the opportunity to live the role. I know how amazing of an institution we are, I think we can take it to the next level for social / emotional programming, academics, and Jewish life. The infusion of fun is super important to me so we are hiring a Student Life and Activities Coordinator for next year- this will be someone that brings change day to day to the Upper School atmosphere.

**Q:** What is one thing you will miss about being College Counselor?

**A:** I think I'm still going to have that connection with students through their 4 years even though that opportunity to work one on one with students and form that bond will be lacking, but it will be replaced with an overall connection with the whole upper school. It will be a different relationship with the students under a bigger umbrella.

On July 1st 2022, Mrs. Trajtenberg will be our school's new Upper School Director, a position well deserved for our teacher and mentor who has helped shape the academic careers of many students.

**“I wanted a different type of challenge than I had had for the past 20 years that I have been out of college.”**



Marymount High School. College flags.

**“Barrack will be welcoming in a new Upper School director who isn't really new at all.”**



Paw Prints. College students animation

## Silk Sonic and Olivia Rodrigo Clean Up at the Grammys

By: Manny Shklar

Though the Grammy Awards usually have many different winners throughout the night, 2022's show was dominated by a few musical standouts. From new bands like Silk Sonic to record-breaking debut artist Olivia Rodrigo, who won 3 awards in her first year, there is no doubt that we just saw another great year for music.

To start the big night, Silk Sonic, the band made up of Bruno Mars and Anderson .Paak, took home 4 Grammys, winning each award that they were nominated for, including both Record of the Year and Song of the Year for "Leave the Door Open". These accomplishments put Mars in an elite club of just 25 musicians, as he reached the milestone of 15 career Grammys, truly defining his outstanding job as an R&B mogul. For Anderson.Paak, on the other hand, the ceremony put him up to 8 Grammys in his career. Fans should expect even more amazing music from this power duo.

**"These accomplishments put Mars in an elite club of musicians, as he reached the milestone of 15 career Grammys, truly defining his outstanding job as an R&B mogul."**

Another person who killed it at the Grammy Awards was new artist Olivia Rodrigo, who smashed tons of records with her song "Driver's License." Despite already having popularity as an actress, the 19-year-old pop star captivated audiences with her debut album "Sour." "Sour" featured songs such as "good 4 u" that continued her steady and fast rise to the top of every chart. She was greatly rewarded for these efforts, winning 3 awards, including the coveted New Artist Grammy. With these signs of her dominant 2021, the music world can definitely look forward to more chart-topping hits and broken records attributed to Olivia Rodrigo.

Finally, winning 5 awards, the most of anyone, Jon Batiste pulled off upsets and cemented his legacy and impact on the music industry. Though he won a few minor awards with little competition, he surprisingly won over the favorite, Rodrigo's "Sour", the award for the Best Album with "We Are". Batiste, a modern Jazz and R&B artist, also won the award for the Best Music Video and made an impact among many people and communities with his song "Freedom." Jon Batiste's defining year in music history has transformed him from a small artist to a big one with a strong resume.

On a night that can change people's lives forever, these well deserved awards have brought more attention to all the artists involved. Silk Sonic producer D'Mile summed it up perfectly for all the winners, as he was "just in disbelief of what happened." All these artists implemented a new footprint on the music industry, and it is going to leave a mark for many years to come.

**"With these mementos of her dominant 2021, the music world can definitely look forward to more chart-topping hits and broken records attributed to Olivia Rodrigo."**

**"Jon Batiste pulled off upsets and cemented his legacy on the music industry."**



Mars and Anderson paak formed an unexpected team that is winning awards early on. Source: nme.com



Batiste ended up having a massive night, taking home 5 awards. Source: npr.org



Olivia Rodrigo's historic debut year garnered her 3 Grammy Awards. Source: billboard.com

## Keeping Up With Kanye: A 2022 Overview

By: Lila Elkins, Centrespread Editor



© Lisa O'Connell  
Source: Variety Magazine, The Verge  
Las Vegas, NV Weekly

It is no secret that Kanye West -now legally named Ye- is one of the most notorious, controversial, and idolized celebrity figures of our time, with his most recent endeavors only adding to his reputation. Here is a timeline of Ye's most notable moments from this year:

### The Divorce

Filed in 2021 by Kim Kardashian, West and Kardashian's divorce wasn't made official until March of 2022. That previous year was riddled with anti Kardashian tweets Ye made, some saying he was planning to divorce her, others describing how he had originally planned to abort their first child but had decided against it- a tweet Ye thinks was Kim's justification for being 'just not that into him' anymore.

### 'Skete'

One cannot mention Kanye West's recent drama without thinking of his degradation of Saturday Night Live comedian Pete Davidson, who became Kim Kardashian's newest Beaux. Ye has not held back on social media when expressing his views of Davidson, naming him 'Skete' and saying that Davidson will, "NEVER MEET [his] CHILDREN." In the midst of all the Skete VS. Ye drama, Kanye released an album, Donda 2, and left off supposed collaborator Kid Cudi due to his friendship with Pete Davidson. Kanye took to Instagram in February saying, "Just so everyone knows Cudi will not be on Donda because he's friends with you know who." Davidson has been relatively cordial with West, attempting to keep the peace, saying in a text to Ye, "As a man, I'd never get [in the] way of your children. That's a promise. How you guys [go about] raising your kids is your [business] and not mine. I do hope [one] day I can meet them and we [can] all be friends." Let's hope that works out for him...

### The Shows He Didn't Do

In March, in the midst of Ye's concerning behavior on social media, the Grammys officially dropped him from their 2022 lineup. Variety magazine said, "Our sources say Kanye's team isn't surprised by the decision." Variety went on to say that allowing Kanye to perform would have been a risky choice, as he might have used his stage time to, "continue his online harassment of Pete Davidson" (Aswald, 2022). The 2022 Grammys was not the only performance Ye didn't do this year. He also dropped out of performing at Coachella this past April only two weeks before the event. After speculation that his cancellation was due to his ill prepared and barely rehearsed set, Page Six cleared up the rumors by sharing that Kanye was planning to seek care for his mental health. The Swedish supergroup Swedish House Mafia took Ye's place in the Coachella 2022 lineup.

### Donda 2 and Stem Player

Under a heavy rock of controversy in 2022, Kanye has still managed to broaden his musical and business endeavors, introducing to the world one of the first music platforms to be owned exclusively by an artist. He created the Stem Player, a small pod-like speaker that plays his newest album, Donda 2, a second tribute to the artist's late mother, Donda West. Ye's Stem Player is revolutionary for the music industry. It allows West as an artist to own and profit off of his own music without having larger platforms such as Apple, Amazon, or Spotify take almost 88% of the cut. The Stem Player is \$200, and while the sentiment is well intentioned, the reception to the platform has not been all positive. The Verge described the Stem Player as, "murky" and uncertain. Donda 2, while promised only on Stem Player, is now available for free streaming to anyone on SoundCloud.

Kanye's wild ride of only the first five months of 2022 has entertained, concerned, and confused the world. Yet while haters and fans alike sit in awe of his public rashness, we cannot help but sympathize with a man who is subject to a recent divorce, a rocky battle with mental health, and an overall yearning to be a prominent father figure in his children's lives. Godspeed Kanye.

**“Under a heavy rock of controversy in 2022, Kanye has still managed to broaden his musical and business endeavors.”**

This is really the antagonist in Kanye's life



Cred: ifunny.com - Pete Davidson on The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon

## Art by Rachel Loeb, Managing Editor



## Welcome New Chronicle Staff

By: Raphael Englander, Editor-in-Chief

As the 2021-2022 school year draws to a close, the Cougar Chronicle is happy to announce its newest batch of editors. We would also like to thank our past editors, especially our outgoing co-editors-in-chief, Danny Cohen '22 and Aron Shklar '22, and the rest of the senior editorial staff. We wish you well in the next chapter of your journeys.

Now, onto the 2022-2022 Cougar Chronicle Staff!

**Opinion Editor: Addison Smith '24**

**Layout Editor: Ariel Shavit '25**

**Managing Editor: Becca Miller '23**

**Sports News Editor: Benny Scheinmann '24**

**World News Editor: Edan Held '24**

**Centerspread Editor: Lila Elkins '23**

**Arts & Entertainment Editor: Manny Shklar '24**

**School News Editor: Margot Englander '25**

**Israel Editor: Mikaela Garber '24**

**Editor-in-Chief: Niva Cohen '23**

**Managing Editor: Rachel Loeb '24**

**Editor-in-Chief: Raphael Englander '23**

**Features, Games, & Art Editor: Sophia Mittman '24**

**Thank  
You to  
our  
2021-  
2022  
Staff!**

**Now, onto the 2022-2022 Cougar Chronicle Staff!**

## “Can’t Stop Singing: *Barrack on Broadway*, from Inception to Opening Night”

By: Brandon Singer, Staff Writer

The situation was growing increasingly dire. Spring break was approaching, and we had yet to recruit the number of students needed for our nine-person cast. Regardless, the cast and crew of Barrack’s 2022 production of *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* remained steadfast in our hopes that, in due time, our show be presentable to the school’s community. Unfortunately, Third Trimester mayhem prevented students from finding the time to join the *Bee* company. So, we remained three cast members short — and had to get creative.

A revue seemed like an adequate option, yet many cast members, as well as Jeff Reim, our jack-of-all-trades musical director and set designer, could not shake the feeling that putting on such a production would feel like dredging up little ol’ numbers buried deep in our arsenals, just to say we “at least did *something*.” Yet, when all else sounded more and more unattainable, the perspectives of cast members who felt a revue would be an exemplary opportunity to showcase the showtunes that touched us and colored our sensibilities as actors and musical theater aficionados won out.

The cast and company ultimately agreed that, though a revue could not replace an enchanting, earth-shaking, life-affirming, breath-taking, etc. (real ones know what these phrases refer to) musical, it would serve as a valentine to the very shows that led cast members to see themselves on the stage of the auditorium of St. Joe’s (may she rest in peace).

So on Sunday, May 22nd, and Monday, May 23rd, Barrack’s Drama Department was proud and honored to present *Barrack on Broadway*. During the production, multiple students and mainstays of JBHA’s theatrical productions sang the openers, “I Want” songs, ballads, and 11 o’clock numbers that have provided solace, magic, and meaning throughout their time as students beyond.

Oh, and those who mourned the opportunity to see their classmates portray preteens competing in a spelling bee, they were in for quite the surprise during the second act. The cast members of Barrack on Broadway, assuming various *Bee* roles, performed a medley of the show’s most outstanding numbers and invited one audience member per show to get on stage and compete in the Bee himself (those offended by audience participation may have found this section triggering).

Though Barrack’s Drama Department could not put on the *Bee* in its fullest form, the show’s ultimate message is exactly what propelled the cast and crew to bring *Barrack on Broadway* to life. As each student gave their hearts and souls to each number, it became undeniable that putting your everything into your passions offers a triumph more lasting than material fulfillment — an unrelenting belief in your sheer determination, incision, talent, and ability to conquer all life throws at you.

## Midterm Elections: Races to Watch and Why They Matter

By: Niva Cohen, Editor-in-Chief

At the halfway point of every president's tenure, the president's party – and by extension, the president – is among voters and dictate what he will be able to accomplish during the next two years. In an increasingly polarized political climate, midterm elections are all the more important; passing bills with the bipartisan support is nearly impossible, so the party in Congress has disproportionate power. Races for 35 senatorial, every House, and 36 gubernatorial seats will occur this November, and the stakes are high.

President Biden will face a hostile and antagonistic Congress if Republicans manage to flip either house. The non-presidential party tends to prevail in midterm elections, an effect that might be amplified this year by economic factors. Inflation rates and gas prices have soared, and since the Democrats control the White House and Congress, voters blame them. Biden's approval rating is in the low forties, indicating a general antipathy toward his party. Republicans are therefore hopeful – and Democrats scared – that they will take back the House and Senate. Even with a Democratic Congress, Biden has struggled to get bills passed; in a Republican-controlled Congress, it will be nearly impossible. A Republican majority might also spend time and resources investigating President Biden to distract from his agenda or find cause to impeach him. If the Democrats can't hold onto their congressional seats in November, the White House will struggle both offensively and defensively for the remainder of Biden's term.

Beyond their direct political impact, the midterms will help determine what kind of election will occur in 2024. Former President Trump has endorsed many of the candidates running this November, including in the Republican primaries. If Trump-backed candidates win in these preliminary elections, it will demonstrate that the Republican party is still vulnerable to and approving of its latest president. Other Republican candidates represent a more moderate and anti-Trump perspective; indeed, Trump has accused some of a lack of allegiance in 2020, either for not overturning the election results or rebuking Trump for the insurrection. If Trump's picks prevail, it suggests that Trump will win the 2024 Republican presidential nomination (although he has not officially declared his candidacy) and continue to set the tone for the Republican party. The midterm elections will fuel predictions about the trajectory of the country as a whole and the Republican party more specifically.

Because of gerrymandering, the political manipulation of maps, there is no question about who will win most House seats, but there are some crucial exceptions. In Michigan's seventh district, Elissa Slotkin (D) is the incumbent in a

Republican-leaning district. She hopes that her campaign funds and conservative platform on immigration will pull her through a difficult election against Tom Barret, her Republican opponent. In Ohio's 13th District, another seat sits precariously in the Democrats' hands. Incumbent Tim Ryan (D) is stepping down to run for senate, leaving Emilia



Preliminary predictions for the 2022 Senate races  
<https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2022/05/11/2022-senate-races/>  
 Sources: <https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2022/05/11/2022-senate-races/>, <https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2022/05/11/2022-senate-races/>

Strong Sykes (D) and Madison Gesiotto Gilbert (R) to face off for his seat. The former is the co-founder of an organization aiming to elect Black women, while the latter was an Ohio beauty queen and employee of the Trump administration. A new district, Texas's 15th District is predominantly Latino and sits next to the southern border. Monica De La Cruz (R) will be the first Republican Latina in Congress if she triumphs against the Democratic nominee (determined during the May 24 primary).

In the Senate, Pennsylvania, Georgia, and Alaska all

have notable races ahead of them. Pennsylvania's Pat Toomey has retired, leaving his seat open to a crowd of Republican candidates and a couple of Democrats. Among the Republicans are Trump-endorsed celebrity doctor Mehmet Oz, hedge fund executive David McCormick, and real estate

"Some can only muster up the energy to care about the presidential elections, but midterms are just as important – if not more – in determining what gets done nationally and statewide."

"President Biden will face a hostile and antagonistic Congress if Republicans manage to flip either house."

developer (and Sarah Bartos '20's father) Jeff Bartos. The Democrats are Lt. Gov. John Fetterman from western Pennsylvania and current Representative Conor Lamb. In Georgia, the seat that gave Democrats the majority in 2022 will again be a battleground. Trump's candidate is former college football star Herschel Walker, and he is the frontrunner to challenge incumbent Raphael Warnock (D) this November. In Alaska, moderate Republican incumbent Lisa Murkowski will have to fend off Kelly Tshibaka, who has Trump's support. Murkowski voted for Trump's impeachment and might pay the price among Republican-establishment voters, whom Tshibaka is trying to corral through reminders of Murkowski's 2017 vote for the Affordable Care Act.

Although not in the national government, gubernatorial races will be crucial in determining state policies for the next four years, especially vis-a-vis abortion (which will soon lack federal protection). In Michigan, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer might face backlash for strict COVID protocols as former Detroit police chief James Craig (R) eyes her seat. Akiba alum and Barrack parent Josh Shapiro will be the Democratic nominee to replace Pennsylvania governor Tom Wolf (who has reached his term limit) in a race against one of nine Republican candidates. In Georgia, Stacey Abrams will face either former senator David Purdue (Trump's pick) or incumbent Brian Kemp, who beat her in 2018. Abrams has risen to national prominence in her fight to get out the vote, especially in Black, historically disenfranchised communities.

Some can only muster up the energy to care about the presidential elections, but midterms are just as important – if not more – in determining what gets done nationally and statewide. Especially as the country grows more polarized, the party in power matters – at least if you believe they'll prioritize what they say they will. So if you can vote, vote; and if you're too young to vote, just pay attention, because it will be a bloodbath.

# “Russian citizens protesting in capital Moscow in opposition to their government’s attacks on Ukraine”

By: Jordana Harwitz, Staff Writer

The enormous launch, effects, and fatalities of the Russia-Ukraine war have shaken the world, and news is changing by the hour. On February 24, 2022, Vladimir Putin, a totalitarian Russian leader, called for a “special military operation” to “demilitarise and de-Nazify” Ukraine, claiming Ukraine and Russia are one. This invasion sparked enormous controversy and activism around the globe in defense of Ukraine and awareness about Russia’s nuclear weapon armory. At the beginning of the attack, Putin aimed for the Ukrainian capital, Kyiv, but has recently targeted coastal areas. The United States and many Western European countries have frozen all Russian financial assets and halted travel with Russia, imposing heavy sanctions. Putin outwardly opposed Ukraine’s potential participation in NATO, a major European military alliance of which the United States is also a part, and claimed that NATO threatened Russia’s security and independence. Since Ukraine is not a current NATO member, the USA and other Western European countries have sent medical, military, and financial aid but no troops. The war has fully escalated and has left thousands of innocent Ukrainian citizens dead and displaced.

Democratically-elected Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy publicly stated that “Ukrainians want peace, but that if they need to, they will defend their country’s independence.” His citizens stand by his heroism and courage. New dramatic updates on the battle are announced daily: during the afternoon of May 12, Finland declared its application to join NATO, and Putin publicly voiced threats and fury. On May 13, the first Russian war crime trial commenced. 21-year-old Russian soldier Vadim Shishimarin was accused of shooting a 62-year-old Ukrainian man on his bicycle under the order of his commanders. President Zelenskyy argued that Russian military officials “who give such orders” are “simply sick and incurable.”

Additionally, United Nations representatives have been filing reports and publicizing the war’s detrimental effects on Ukrainian children: the destruction of their schools, unimaginable deaths of family and friends, and even sexual violence from Russian soldiers. Officials are continuing to investigate these claims. Ukraine is the obvious underdog in this situation, but extreme support from the Western world helps their predicament improve.

During the most recent NATO assembly, NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg declared that “Ukraine can win this war”, as the invasion “is not going as Moscow had planned.” NATO diplomats emphasized the importance of continued military aid to Kyiv and global support. During such a surreal time of duress, Western and more privileged must provide Ukraine with support and activism to offer assistance against a tyrannical enemy and its leader.

The war has fully escalated and has left thousands of innocent Ukrainian citizens dead and displaced. “Ukrainians want peace, but that if they need to, they will defend their country’s independence.”  
-Volodymyr Zelenskyy



## 11th Grade Reflections on Muss

By: Becca Miller, Managing Editor

Muss was different for every person depending on their individual perspective. Each experience is unique. And yet Muss is also this great common experience uniting everyone who participated. It changed all of our lives.

Before Muss, I was skeptical of those who would rave about how amazing Muss was and how they would never be the same after they returned. I couldn't believe that Muss would live up to that much hype. But in the end, Muss exceeded my expectations.

It's true that every day on Muss is special and memorable – it's a three-month-long adventure. Nicole Epelboim '23 said the most meaningful moment for her was "one trip where we went to the Bar Kochba caves... [where] we sat in the dark and lit matches so we could see each other and started singing various prayers and songs." On Muss, we are so consistently assailed by breath-taking views and spiritually impactful lessons that we almost get used to constantly being awestruck.

Muss made me reconsider my Jewish identity and this was true for the people I spoke to. In Israel Studies, we learned the entire history of the Jewish people. Our teachers forced us to contemplate what Judaism means to us in ways that previously never occurred to us, our new perspective of the entire history of the Jewish people leading to deeper contemplation of the values that have driven us all this time. We also forged a very real connection with the land of Israel, which was something new to me, even though I had visited in eighth grade. I felt like I was on hallowed ground. Lila Elkins '23 remarked about Tzfat that "the air feels different there, holier, and closer to God." Through all the hikes, simultaneously exploring the landscape and learning about the living history beneath our feet, we became physically and spiritually connected to Israel. One step at a time, we came to know and love every harshly beautiful and beautifully harsh inch and acre of the Promised Land. Elkins was so moved by the experience that she "definitely know[s] that one day [she] want[s] to move to Israel." When Muss ended, it felt like leaving home rather than returning to it.

During that plane ride back to the United States, my acute sense of loss intensified with every mile. I felt – *I feel* – such a deep love for the land of Israel, completely separate from the complex politics and controversies that overwhelm it in the US.

That being said, Muss wasn't always overwhelmingly positive. Sometimes it could be just overwhelming. I always heard about how much closer our grade would get on Muss, and while that did happen, it wasn't always easy to navigate the constant socializing. When remarking on grade bonding at Muss, Lila Elkins '23 said that "Muss made me see everyone's real personalities and learn to love everyone individually." Spending so much time together brought everyone closer, but the lack of privacy and boundaries also caused friction. Nicole Epelboim '23 remarked that "the hardest part of Muss was constantly having to be around people and not having any real alone time. While I love my friends dearly, it was strange transitioning from seeing them mostly at school to being with them 24/7." Communal living is really difficult. I thought it would be like a three-month-long sleeper, but the reality was more complicated. Having to live with people for an extended period of time makes it impossible to get away from all the little annoyances, like messiness and unexplained odors, and you inevitably get on each other's nerves. Everyone has different living habits, and we had to learn to coexist and make accommodations, which couldn't happen without some drama. Also, we all only have so much social stamina. No matter how much we love each other, being with other people all the time isn't always effortless or healthy. It was hard to find time for ourselves, and it took a conscious effort not to let our self-care slip through the cracks amidst all the excitement and socializing. I think that ultimately, not only did we all learn valuable life skills that will help us when we're living in dorms in college, but we also grew closer together by overcoming our small struggles and petty squabbles. Being tested and challenged strengthened our friendships.

**"We are so consistently assailed by breath-taking views and spiritually impactful lessons that we almost get used to constantly being awestruck."**



## “A Heatwave in India Wreaks Havoc: Climate Change Can Be Blamed”

By: Edan Held

India is no stranger to heatwaves. Just three years ago, in May of 2019, India and Pakistan saw a heatwave like no other, with temperatures reaching over 120°F. Now, however, they are seeing something of a similar nature, just earlier in the year and potentially more severe.

In March and April of this year, India experienced the hottest temperatures in 122 years. While much of India is accustomed to heatwaves beginning in May and June like the one in 2019, none would have thought that one could emerge as early as March. Typically, there is a steady rise in temperatures, usually concentrated in a few areas. This year, however, the temperatures drastically spiked in March, before the summer months, and spread over much of India. Temperatures have hit about 120°F, staying at over 90°F throughout the night, heat that is not only uncomfortable but deadly (it had killed 25 at the time of writing). Extreme temperatures, especially throughout the night, prove costly to the human body; at night, for example, it's hard to recuperate and rejuvenate for the day ahead. There is also an increased chance for disease to spread at these temperatures.

The heatwave has also caused economic setbacks in India. Crops are dying at an unprecedented rate, presenting problems both domestically and trade-wise. As crops die, farmers lose their money, and the population suffers as well. Internal shortages affect exports as well — India is struggling to trade large amounts of excess crops, a hope they had in light of the war in Ukraine. Along with crops, the power grid is struggling as well. As more people need air conditioning, they are consuming more electricity, driving nearly two-thirds of Indian houses to lose power for up to 12 hours at a time — a 12 hour period during which cooling is desperately needed and clean water, crucial to hydration in the heat, may not be attainable.

Much of this drastic, severe heatwave can be blamed on climate change. Heatwaves may be a natural phenomenon, but our failure to act and change the way we interact with our environment has made heatwaves a common, annual occurrence, with the severity seeming to increase each year. At the same time, the short-term solution to the excruciating heat in India harms the climate even more. Around 75% of India's energy comes from burning fossil fuels, and in a time when cooling and air conditioning are vital, more fossil fuels are burned, thus continuing the cycle that causes these heatwaves to occur in the first place.

What is happening in India is devastating, yet real. While not entirely at fault, climate change and our failure to help reduce carbon emissions is fueling and worsening the natural disaster that India faces each and every year. If we in the United States continue to destroy our environment, soon enough, we too may experience something that seems like a foreign oddity — a devastating heatwave.



In New Delhi, a man sells air conditioners, a much-needed machine during this heatwave.  
<https://www.cnbc.com/2022/05/02/india-heat-wave-in-pictures.html>



<https://www.cnbc.com/2022/05/02/india-heat-wave-in-pictures.html>  
 During the daytime heat, a farmer pours a bucket of water on himself to cool down  
<https://www.cnbc.com/2022/05/02/india-heat-wave-in-pictures.html>

**“Temperatures have hit about 120°F, staying at over 90°F throughout the night, leaving 25 dead at the time of writing.”**

## Sports

### Benny Scheinmanns WAY Too Early Fantasy Football 2022 PPR (points per reception) Rankings

By: Benny Scheinmann, Sports Editor

Benny Scheinmann is a fantasy football expert and throughout his seven year experience with fantasy football has never won the championship. With that being said, he has never missed the playoffs and is yet to finish outside of the top 5. With the help from the 2021 champion Jack Barrack they created these rankings as of June 2022.

- |                    |                        |                   |                   |
|--------------------|------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Jonathan Taylor | 6. Najee Harris        | 11. Travis Kelce  | 16. Stephon Diggs |
| 2. Derrick Henry   | 7. Christian McCaffrey | 12. Ja'Marr Chase | 17. Cedee Lamb    |
| 3. Cooper Kupp     | 8. Justin Jefferson    | 13. Mark Andrews  | 18. Nick Chubb    |
| 4. Austin Ekeler   | 9. Davante Adams       |                   | 19. Deebo Samuel  |
| 5. Dalvin Cook     | 10. Alvin Kamara       |                   | 20. Joe Mixon     |

19. Tyreek Hill
20. Jaylen Waddle
21. Saquon Barkley
22. Javonte Williams
23. Leonard Fournette
24. D'Andre Swift
25. Keenan Allen
26. James Conner
27. Mike Evans
28. J.K. Dobbins
29. Josh Allen
30. Aaron Jones
31. A.J. Brown
32. Cam Akers
33. Kyle Pitts
34. Darren Waller
35. Tee Higgins
36. Chris Godwin
37. Jerry Jeudy
38. Terry McLaurin
38. D.J. Moore
39. Amari Cooper
40. Ezekiel Elliot
41. Antonio Gibson
42. Michael Yondorf
43. Lamar Jackson
44. Mike Williams
45. Amon Ra St Brown
46. Elijah Moore
48. Diontae Johnson
49. Treyton Burks
50. JuJu Smith-Schuster

## The Biggest Winners from the NFL Draft

By: Manny Shklar, Arts and Entertainment Editor

Every year, on the last Thursday of April, 32 exceptional athletes hear their names called to the stage in front of national TV and shake hands with one of the most prominent figures in sports, NFL commissioner Roger Goodell. It always seems as though there is an agreed upon best player in each draft by analysts and front offices alike, however this year was the first in a long time where no fan could be certain who their team would take, as there was a copious amount of talent at so many places. While most years we see quarterbacks go first overall, nobody could be quite sure who would be the coveted top pick. Most people expected a defensive end in Georgia's Tramon Walker or Michigan's Aidan Hutchinson, while others predicted it would be Alabama's offensive tackle Evan Neal. With such uncertainty in the first round and even more in the rounds after that, these three teams were able to pull off great moves to reshape and redefine their rosters and legacies, and ultimately win the 2022 NFL draft.

### Philadelphia Eagles

**Important moves:** Drafted Jordan Davis and Nakobe Dean, traded for A.J. Brown

Despite holding three first round picks in the first round, the Eagles, led by general manager Howie Roseman, only made one selection on draft day, grabbing defensive tackle Jordan Davis, an athletic 6 foot 6 run stopper on the Georgia Bulldogs' defense. Davis was highlighted for his size, athleticism, and impressive 40 yard dash time. Then, in the third round, Philadelphia selected Davis's Georgia teammate Nakobe Dean, who has a phenomenal chance to be the top pick of the draft, as he was originally expected to be a top 20 pick. Dean, a linebacker known for his on-field IQ, was ranked by ESPN as the top linebacker in this class, yet he fell to the third round due to his badly strained pectoral muscle. Finally, with the biggest move of the draft, Roseman pulled off a blockbuster trade to acquire standout wide receiver A.J. Brown, only having to give up picks 18 and 101. The Eagles indubitably were one of the biggest winners of the draft, and they could contend for more than just the NFC East this season.



Sauce Gardner (traded at Cincinnati, allowing for touchdowns in college. Source: sports.ign.com)



AJ Brown highlighted the trades in the first round. Source: AJ Brown on Instagram (@1k\_alwaysopen)

**"[Jordan Davis] was highlighted for once-in-a-lifetime athleticism for his size, as he ran a faster 40 yard dash than many position players who are already established in the NFL such as quarterback Patrick Mahomes."**

### Baltimore Ravens

**Important moves:** Drafted Kyle Hamilton, Tyler Linderbaum, David Ojabo, and Travis Jones

Impressively, the Ravens traded away their best wide receiver, Marquise "Hollywood" Brown, but came away with one of the best draft classes in the league. After acquiring the 23rd pick, they selected Tyler Linderbaum, a center who displays all the skills necessary to become a superstar offensive lineman on the next level. Prior to that, they were able to pick up Kyle Hamilton, a Notre Dame product who was easily the best safety in every way heading into Thursday night because of his ability to match up with receivers, tight ends, and running backs whether they do or don't have the ball. These were proven by his 8 interceptions and 138 tackles throughout 3 years of college. But their dominance did not stop after the first night, as they drafted linemen David Ojabo and Travis Jones in the second and third rounds, respectively. Ojabo, an edge who went to Michigan, was considered a top 15 talent before tearing his achilles recently. If he can get by his injury troubles in the NFL, he may be a scary force for years to come. Similarly, Travis Jones is one of the best interior linemen in the draft, but due to positional needs of other teams, the Ravens got great value with this pick. If all their prospects pan out like expected, they will have one of the best defenses in the league for a very long time.



David Ojabo was a likely top 20 pick before tearing his achilles. Source: The Michigan Daily

### New York Jets

**Important moves:** Drafted Sauce Gardner, Garrett Wilson, and Jermaine Johnson II

As a team with 2 top 10 picks and with a reputation for making bad picks in good positions, the Jets definitely turned it around in this draft. With the fourth pick they selected Ahmad "Sauce" Gardner, who has dominated college football at Cincinnati by not allowing a single touchdown as a cornerback. While it's doubtful that he can keep up that production in the NFL, his development will be key to this young team that's loaded with potential. After taking a defensive back, they switched to the offensive side of the ball at pick 10 by making Ohio State product Garrett Wilson the second wide receiver off the board. Looking at Wilson, his slight frame and good speed doesn't make him stand out, but upon watching him play one would see that he can flexibly act as a big receiver or a small one, a gift that is shockingly rare among receivers in the NFL today. Finally, they traded up from pick 35 to pick 26 and drafted edge rusher Jermaine Johnson II, who was originally as high as pick 7 in many experts' mock drafts.

In one of the deepest and most talented classes the NFL has seen in years, it was hard for teams not to nail the draft. The Eagles, Ravens and Jets clearly were able to stand out from the rest of the field. Whether it was through big time trades, later round steals, or smart early picks, each of these teams found talent to propel their teams to new levels for years to come.

## Athlete of the Issue: Jenna Ufburg '23

By: Eden Singer, Staff Writer



Jenna Ufburg '23 is the athlete that can do it all. Although lacrosse is her main sport, Jenna dominates the field and court during soccer and basketball season as well, leading her teams to championship wins across all three sports over the past few years. While Jenna's high level skills in all three sports scream "great athlete," her main athletic attributes — unbeatable work ethic and non-stop aggressiveness — notably distinguish her from the rest. Jenna out-hustles every one of her competitors, always bearing them to the ball and mauling them out of the way. As described by teammate Dayna Felger '22, "Jenna is a tenacious, selfless, and all around amazing athlete and teammate." In addition to her game-time success, Jenna puts in the work to improve her skills during her personal time, when no one is watching, further displaying her commitment to Barrack athletics. The uniqueness of Jenna's versatility in all three sports is truly remarkable.

During soccer season, as a formidable defender, the opposing teams' offenses struggle to beat Jenna, often getting stopped in their tracks (and occasionally getting knocked out of their tracks) due to Jenna's ferocious defense. In Jenna's opinion, basketball stands as her "least favorite" and "third sport." But blessed with athleticism, natural instincts, a strong work ethic, hustle and drive, Jenna proved to be of great value to the Cougars on the basketball court. Her crucial role in rebounding and playing rough, aggressive defense accelerated the team's success. Standing at 5'7", Jenna is the big man for the girls basketball team, outplaying and out-rebounding the 6'0" and sometimes even taller opposing players. Beyond Jenna's success on the soccer field and basketball court, it is in lacrosse that Jenna truly shines. With unbelievable stick skills, lacrosse IQ, and athleticism she effortlessly blows by other teams and precisely places the ball in the net — goal after goal. She is known to set up the offense, looking to thread the needle with the perfect pass into the middle to one of her teammates, enabling them to score.

While Jenna is the star of the Barrack lacrosse team, perhaps more importantly, her role as a leader, both on and off the field, motivates her fellow teammates and facilitates their success as well. As a kind, thoughtful, and motivating leader to her teammates, Jenna creates an environment of inclusion and camaraderie on the team. It is these qualities, as well as her high energy, that her teammates strive to emulate. Talia Erlbaum '23, a long-time teammate, considers Jenna "a tremendous leader on and off the field" and admires Jenna's "amazing work ethic," as well as her ability to "give 110% effort into everything she does." Another of her teammates, Talia Willner '23, comments on Jenna's dedication as an athlete and her ability to "put her all into every single game no matter the difficulty."

Jenna's love for lacrosse, as well as other sports at Barrack extends further than just the game: "To me, Barrack athletics means more than just playing sports. It's about the friendship and memories created and its effect on my development as a person and a player." As an integral part of the athletic program at Barrack, through her skill and leadership, Jenna Ufburg has created a great name for herself within the Cougar family. We are excited to see all that Jenna accomplishes during her senior year.



## After Being Postponed for 99 Days, Baseball is Back

By: Manny Shklar, Arts and Entertainment Editor

On December 2nd, 2021, baseball suddenly came to a halt. Many thought the 2022 MLB season would be postponed, or never even happen if the team owners and Players' Association could not agree on a new set of rules to abide by, including pitch timers to speed up the games. Superstars sat in free agency waiting for offers that couldn't come, while fans hoped that the two sides could come to an agreement of any kind, as the season was at serious risk of being canceled. Finally, after multiple meetings and 99 baseball-less days, the MLB was back, and it is shaping up to be another fantastic season.

Throughout the entire offseason, one of the most highlighted aspects of this season was the talented rookie class from highly touted position players like Bobby Witt Jr. and Adley Rutschman to hard-throwing pitchers in Hunter Greene and Joe Ryan. However, none have been more impressive than Seiya Suzuki and Steven Kwan. Suzuki, who signed with the Chicago Cubs for a 5 year deal worth \$5 million dollars, is shaping up to be the best rookie from the class already. Coming into the league at age 27-, he is truly the most experienced player of the bunch as he played many years of professional baseball in Japan. Kwan, a left fielder for the Cleveland Guardians, is already breaking records. In just 29 games, the 24 year old is hitting a .265 average, with a 17 to 10 walk to strikeout ratio, showing he is already one of the top contact hitters in the league

"Fans hoped that the two sides could come to an agreement of any kind, so long as baseball was played."

"There is no doubt that these two rising stars will dominate the league for years to come."  
"Unfortunately, the Rangers' superstars are struggling to find their footing on their new team, and at this rate they aren't going to come close to seeing the playoffs for a while after this."

There is no doubt that these two rising stars will dominate the league for years to come.

While the rookies have been making the season fun, highly-rotated free agent duos became a trend over the offseason as proven by the Texas Rangers and Philadelphia Phillies. The Rangers, who have not been in the postseason since 2016, got the two biggest names on the market in Marcus Semien and Corey Seager. Semien won a Gold Glove award, honoring him as the best defensive second baseman, and finished in third place for MVP voting for the Toronto Blue Jays in 2021 while Seager played a crucial role in leading the Los Angeles Dodgers to the World Series, hitting .306 in 358 at bats. Together, Semien and Seager form the best offensive middle infield the league has seen in a long time and they aren't switching teams anytime soon, as they inked deals for 7 years and 10 years, respectively, worth a combined 500,000,000 dollars. Unfortunately, the Rangers' superstars are struggling to find their footing on their new team, and at this rate they aren't going to come close to seeing the playoffs for a while after this.

The Phillies also signed two massive stars in the MLB, acquiring outfielders Nick Castellanos and Kyle Schwarber to add to an already stacked lineup. Both of these players are off to hot starts in Philadelphia, as Castellanos has hit over .280 and Schwarber has already slugged 9 home runs. One of the biggest critiques against these deals is that both Castellanos and Schwarber struggle on defense, but the Phillies are out to prove the non-believers that a good offense can win in one of the most competitive divisions in baseball.

Trades have been and always will be one of the most exciting things off the field in sports. Their immediate impact to turn fringe teams to playoff teams, and good teams to championship teams has impacted every sport for years on end. There is no doubt that one of the biggest deals this year was made by the young and exciting Blue Jays. Coming off of a 91 win season that saw them still miss the playoffs, the only MLB team located outside of the United States became desperate for an upgrade on defense, so they traded lower ranked prospects from their system for two time Gold Glove and one time Platinum Glove, the award for the best defender in all of baseball, third baseman Matt Chapman from the Oakland Athletics. With an offense carried by two of the best young hitters in baseball, Bo Bichette and Vladimir Guerrero Jr., the Blue Jays are suddenly a serious World Series contender.

As the season new picks up steam and more players get into the swing of it, baseball will only get more exciting. With Kwan and Suzuki already getting All-Star considerations, and the Phillies' free agents carrying them to another level, there is no doubt that the season will only continue to get better. From the thrilling combinations of players' speed and power to hard throwing pitchers with new and improved pitches, fans could see one of the best seasons of the modern era in every way imaginable.



Steven Kwan's historic start is only helping his AL ROTY case. Source: New York Post



Castellanos and Schwarber teamed up with reigning MVP Bryce Harper (right) to compete in a stacked NL East. Source: Philadelphia Inquirer



Semien (middle) and Seager (left) have made one of the best middle infields in baseball. Source: Nolan Written

## NBA awards: Who Was Snubbed and Who Deserved the Award?

By: Benny Scheinmann, Sports Editor

It seems as though no one is ever happy with the awards given out at the end of the NBA regular season. The NBA always seems to upset some people with their picks. This year is no different. The awards given out are the coach of the year, sixth man of the year, defensive player of the year, most improved player, rookie of the year and the most valuable player. This year's controversial picks in each category seem to have upset the public who act as though they are the professionals who can never be wrong.

Lets begin with the rookie of the year. Scottie Barnes of the Toronto Raptors was awarded this accolade, the same award that was won by legends like LeBron James, Michael Jordan and Larry Bird, to name a few. Evan Mobley, center for the Cleveland Cavaliers, was the runner-up in the close race and received only five fewer first place votes for the award than Barnes. The difference between the two was that Mobley was individually successful on a less competitive team, while Barnes was a key piece on a solid Eastern Conferences playoff team. Barnes' more balanced star line and his value on defense was noted by the 100 sports writers and broadcasters who voted on the award. Had he not gotten injured, Oklahoma City Thunder's Josh Giddey may have overcome both Mobley and Barnes and received rookie of the year. However, midway through the season, Giddey suffered a season ending hip injury, ending his first season in the NBA. While many debate who deserved the award between Mobley and Barnes, both are undeniably great players with bright futures in the NBA.

Moving onto the most improved player of the year, the award this year went to Ja Morant. Next is this year's defensive player of the year award which went to Boston Celtic superstar defender Marcus Smart, the first guard to win the award since Gary Payton in 1996. Although beloved by Celtics fans, many people disputed this victory, saying that he only won the award because his team was amazing defensively, not because of his individual defense. While the defensive player of the year award is an individual accolade, being the leader of a defense that only allowed on average 104 point per game to be scored by the opposing team (the lowest in the league) shows how truly large an impact Smart makes on defense. Previous to winning the award, Smart was recognized for his defensive efforts but not taken as seriously due to the fact that he is undersized compared to many other great defenders. The other two nominees, Mikal Bridges and Bam Adebayo also had incredible seasons defensively but neither topped the impressive defensive season of Marcus Smart.

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## Continuation from previous page (NBA AWARDS...)

### NBA: Who was Snubbed? Who Deserved the Award?

Benny Scheinmann, Sports Editor

Two awards that did not receive so much backlash were the sixth man of the year award, which went to Tyler Herro, and the coach of the year, which went to Suns coach Monty Williams. Williams coached the Suns to the top position in the stacked Western Conference and Herro came off the bench for the first place team in the east, the Miami Heat. Neither of these races were very close and both Williams and Herro won their respective awards by a large margin.

Now getting into the most substantial award, the most valuable player. The most valuable player award is supposed to go to the player that had the best performing season. This year's MVP was Nikola Jokic, center for the Denver Nuggets. Jokic, who won the award the previous season, joins 13 others who have won the MVP in consecutive seasons, such as Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Michael Jordan and Magic Johnson. Joel Embiid, center for the Philadelphia 76ers, finished as the runner-up for the award, which aggravated both Sixers fans and basketball fans, in general, around the country. Finishing with 13 games with 40 or more points and 10 or more rebounds while also being incredible defensively and leading his team to the fourth seed in the East, Embiid's season was never boring. Jokic, on the other hand, lost his two best supporting players early in the season and yet still finished with a playoff spot in the competitive Western Conference and went on to accumulate 19 triple doubles throughout the season (a triple double is when a player is in the double digits for three of the five major star categories [points, rebounds, assists, steals, and blocks]). Along with leading his team without his two best players, he also led the league in almost every advanced stat including eFG%, TS%, PER, OWS and VORP. Now a two time winner of the award, Jokic is also regarded by many as the best passing center the NBA has ever seen. Nevertheless, Embiid had a fantastic season and the year he wins the award is soon to come. This year the NBA's Kia MVP was Nikola Jokic. Love it or hate it, those are the facts.

Basketball is an amazing sport because of how truly competitive it is. Everyone wants to be the best and to be recognized as the best, but the important thing is to recognize others' success and to work harder because of it. That's what these awards are all about, and with that being said, there's always next year.

## Games and Features

### June Edition Word Search

By: Ariel Shavit, Layout Editor

U L A Y O L Y H S K D O G T D S Y X A K N N O  
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- Graduation Shavuot Summer Beach Vacation Sunny Friends Family
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- School Teacher Memories Fireworks Party Class Assignment