

# The Cougar Chronicle

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JACK M. BARRACK HEBREW ACADEMY

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## Mrs. Sharon Levin: Thirty-Five Years of “What’s New?”

*Raphael Englander, Executive Editor*

Mrs. Sharon Levin has been a staple of Akiba/Barrack for more than three decades. Seeing her newspaper outfit on the first day of school is as expected as seeing students in the hallways. Mrs. Levin’s connection and involvement with Akiba/Barrack will never stop, however, this is her final year as Head of School. To honor the years she dedicated to the school, the Chronicle conducted an interview to document her recollections of her time here and hopes for the future.

### Mrs. Levin’s Timeline at JBHA:

Mrs. Levin arrived at Akiba in April of 1986 but did not begin teaching until the fall of that year. Her children had always gone to Jewish day school, so when the family moved from Washington DC, they were determined to find a school that corresponded to what they wanted. Mrs. Levin showed up at the school for her children and immediately knew it was a great fit. She thought of the luxury of having the same schedule as her children, being off on the Jewish holidays, and decided to interview for an open teaching position. She got the job and as she says, “The rest is history.”

Mrs. Levin’s time here has not all been smooth sailing, in fact, her second year was a bit rocky. After the 1986-87 school year, due to changes within the school, she was offered a half-time position. Had this arrangement remained, Mrs. Levin likely would have left the Akiba/Barrack community after only a single year. However, then Head of School, Mr. Marc Rosenstein, was resolved to keep Mrs. Levin on, essentially creating a full-time position for her. In this new role, Mrs. Levin taught courses for the juniors who did not go to Israel, coordinated senior service, and taught part-time classes at the school. Thankfully, after that school year, there has not been any similar turmoil surrounding her position at Akiba/Barrack. The next year, the student body expanded, necessitating a larger number of faculty, and she has been here ever since.

Mrs. Levin quickly moved from middle and high school history teacher, to Head of History, to Head of Humanities, and then to Academic Dean. In 2011, Mrs. Levin was appointed interim Head of School. By spring 2012, she was officially Head of School. She has acted as Head of School for ten years now and the word to describe it



*All Photos From Mrs. Levin*

would be “serendipity.”

Although she is in administration, Mrs. Levin is first and foremost a teacher. Until two years ago she was still in the classroom teaching classes. She highly values the teacher-to-student connections, the teacher-to-teacher connections, and the person-to-person connections that come with being in a classroom. Nothing better exemplifies this than the fact that Mrs. Levin has never given up having an Advisory group.

### How has the school evolved?

The school has grown over the years, and experienced the name change from Akiba to Barrack, and the change in campuses from Lower Merion to Bryn Mawr. Mrs. Levin cannot thank the Barrack family enough for their continued support. They have been firm partners but have never interfered with the way the school runs. Although there has been much change, the school is still composed of amazing families and students, it retains its mission of educating and empowering the next generation of Jewish leaders, and that mission is still in the hands of the most extraordinary professionals that Mrs. Levin has worked with. One of the greatest gifts for Mrs. Levin is the number of legacy students. Hanging out with the children of students she hung out with in the 1980s is very rewarding.

### What would the Akiba/Barrack community be surprised to know about Mrs. Levin?

They would not be surprised by much as Mrs. Levin is a pretty open book. She does a lot of talking and as a result was given the nickname “Short Story Long Levin” when she was a teacher at Akiba (for her knack of turning seemingly short stories into long tales). Mrs. Levin still loves talking with her colleagues and laughing with the

faculty. She is a government geek, and is very much interested in politics. She works hard to keep her personal opinion steeped in mystery and remain impartial. The most important aspect of her life is her family, her husband, children, and grandchildren. She is also, obviously, extremely invested in the Jewish community.

### What constitutes a “good day” at school?

For Mrs. Levin, a good day at school contains as many individual personal conversations as possible with community members in the building. Her favorite day is Friday because it is Advisory day. During Advisory she is brought back to her teaching days, with a room full of students. Although it is hard to see smiles this year with the COVID masks, Mrs. Levin always looks for smiling eyes. The more smiles she sees in a day, the better that day is.

### What is Mrs. Levin’s proudest accomplishment during her time at JBHA?

Mrs. Levin is proud of how quickly Barrack adapted to online learning with the advent of COVID. She is especially proud of everyone who has worked so hard to achieve this: the students, teachers, and more.

Mrs. Levin was always thrilled to see the self-motivated effort by students to expand the Diversity Equity Inclusion initiative within the school. As someone who grew up in the 1960s and 70s, the fight for equality and social justice has always been a major component of Mrs. Levin’s life, especially as a college student protesting the Vietnam conflict. The school was behind the curve but the students and families stepped up and the administration followed their lead.

Another of Mrs. Levin’s accomplishments is the comprehensive Israel education that all students, grades six through twelve, experience at Barrack. Israel education used to be more disorganized; now it is well thought out and structured in a meaningful and digestible way.

### What does Mrs. Levin want her legacy to be at JBHA?

Mrs. Levin has now taught two generations of children at Akiba/Barrack. She has

*Continued on Page 4*



## Let's Make a Deal

*Niva Cohen, Executive Editor*

In July of 2015, the Obama administration reached a deal with Iran and five other countries to curb Iran's nuclear weapons development in return for reduced economic sanctions. President Trump withdrew three years later. Now that another three years have passed, President Biden hopes to rejoin the agreement, but it is quite polarizing. Objectors fear that the deal is too mild and temporary, claiming that it will not succeed in checking Iran's nuclear ambitions. They might be right; however, the Iran deal deserves celebration because it is a crucial diplomatic stepping stone on the way to a more sustainable solution.



**President Obama first signed the Iran deal in 2015**

The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), also known as the Iran Deal, sprung from two years' deliberation between Iran and a group of countries called the P5+1. The participating members of the deal were the five UN Security Council permanent members -- the U.S., France, the UK, China, Russia -- and Germany. Essentially, they agreed to lift economic sanctions against Tehran, Iran's capital, in return for decreased nuclear bomb research. Iran, for its part, signed on to a range of limitations: it had to cut its cache of enriched uranium by 98% and reduce production, and the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) inspectors would be allowed to patrol Iran's nuclear facilities to ensure it was abiding by the rules.

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**“What some view as leniency is simply compromise, without which non-violent interference is impossible.”**

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While the deal was in effect, it seemed to be functioning properly. Problems only arose when President Trump backed out. Opponents of the deal point to decades of enmity between the U.S. and Iran, including a U.S. hostage crisis in Tehran in 1979, to prove that Iran is untrustworthy. It is this very history that makes the prospect of Iranian nuclear weapons so frightening. But despite turbulent past relations, Iran held up its end of the bargain for years. Every time the IAEA investigated, it found Iran to be below its enriched-uranium limits. Its cooperation began to deteriorate when President Trump imposed sanctions that were against the JCPOA's rules. Believing that top Iranian general Qassem Soleimani was plotting against the US, Trump launched an airstrike to kill him in early 2020, and Iran backpedaled completely. Its uranium levels now exceed twelve times their allowed amount. Indeed, it is closer to assembling nuclear weapons than ever before.

The Trump administration pulled out of the Iran deal because it wanted a harsher alternative, something that never came to fruition. President Trump imposed economic sanctions immediately thereafter, angering Iranian leaders and further straining relationships between the two countries. After Soleimani's assassination, the threat of war seemed more imminent than it had under the deal. Wendy Sherman, Biden's nominee for deputy Secretary of State, said that “Iran is not just being emboldened but is being left in some ways to take actions that say they will not be pushed back.” Trump has urged Iran toward, not deterred it from, violence. Although he intended to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons more than the JCPOA had, his sudden withdrawal had the opposite effect. Iran had still been a year away from acquiring nuclear weapons, but its increased uranium production in the past three years has accelerated the process. It's now only a few months away.



**President Trump withdrew from the Iran deal in 2018**

Trump's approach failed, but who's to say the deal was succeeding? Critics worry that it is too temporary to make any meaningful difference, as its sunset clauses will expire after ten years. But Iran's nuclear development was slower during the deal than it has been since the withdrawal, demonstrating at least some degree of effectiveness. Trying to make Iran agree to more permanent regulations would be fruitless and unproductively adversarial. What some view as leniency is simply compromise, without which non-violent interference is impossible. For example, people complain that the JCPOA permits Iran to enrich any uranium whatsoever, but it is only allowed to make enough for its energy needs. Iran would not agree to cap enriched uranium production at zero. The Iran deal isn't lax; it's just logical. Iran's nuclear development threatens Israel, in particular. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has used the aforementioned rationale to rally against the Iran deal. Human nature is to turn our backs on our enemies, and diplomacy with them seems traitorous and foolish. But Israel-supporters cannot let their Zionism cloud their judgment. What's best for Israel *is* the Iran deal, and what's best for the U.S. is what's best for Israel. Compromise is not a sign of weakness but a sign of strength, a willingness to do anything to prevent violence. The JCPOA might not be perfect, but it's the world's best chance at setting Iran back, buying leaders time to come up with a long-term solution. It's a bandaid, but without it, we have an exposed and gushing wound, and Iran will not hesitate to pour salt on it.



## Should Trump Have Backed Out of the Iran Deal?

*Roni Cohen, Staff Writer*

The US and Iran Nuclear Deal was originally signed in 2015 by Iran and many world powers, including the United States. Commonly known as the JCPOA (Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action), the deal placed significant restraints on Iran's nuclear program in exchange for looser sanctions from the US. In 2018, former President Donald Trump withdrew from this agreement, claiming that it was not working in favor of the United States. He insisted that the agreement failed to control Iranian missile production. Recently, Iran has disobeyed this deal, and the Biden administration has said that once Iran starts to show compliance, it will work to rejoin the deal.

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**It has been two years since former President Donald J. Trump withdrew from the signature achievement of his predecessor, Barack Obama. Leaving the Iran Nuclear Deal was the right choice, and it is clear as to why.**

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On May 8, 2018, Donald Trump and his administration withdrew from the Iran Nuclear Deal. This move was definitely controversial, but it was highly warranted. Although the deal had great intentions from the Obama administration, President Trump simply did not believe that it was supporting the United States anymore.

One reason why President Trump didn't feel comfortable with this agreement was that it was very temporary. Instead of agreeing to stop its nuclear production forever, Iran put a clock on the US and said it would only stop production until the deal expired. Although this was not the deal-breaker for the President, he would have liked to see Iran agree to limit its nuclear production permanently.



**Former President Barack Obama giving a speech after signing the US + Iran Nuclear Deal. Then-Vice President Joe Biden is to his right**

While many wanted members of the deal to address Iran's ballistic missiles, the JCPOA did not do so. This is yet another flaw of the JCPOA because firing ballistic missiles is one of the most

common methods of mass-destruction. Because Iran has no uniform army, navy, or air force, the use of ballistic missiles would be its only way to stop a strong country like the United States from attacking. Trump knew this, and it contributed greatly to his final decision. Prior to the Iran Deal, Tehran had been a part of two separate UN treaties that it failed to uphold. Both of these treaties were based on UN resolutions aimed at limiting Iran's ballistic missile use. If any new agreement is in the works, limiting Iran's ballistic missile use is a must.



**Former President Donald Trump withdrawing from the US + Iran Nuclear Deal.**

Something else that alarmed President Trump was that the inspectors for the JCPOA were not permitted to visit the Iranian military sites to examine them. Trump was right to believe that this was a necessity, considering that if a country were to have a nuclear weapon program, it would involve a military base. Even if Iran were not performing such acts at the military bases, we should not complete a deal with a country that refuses to allow neutral inspectors into its bases. Israeli intelligence operations recently uncovered that Iran was not abiding by the nuclear deal, and that its leaders have been trying to create a nuclear weapon. The first step in negotiating a new deal is integrity -- Iran lacks that.

Even putting the flaws of the deal aside, Iran is not a country we can trust. In the past and present, Iran has been presented as a threat to international security. Iran is dangerous. It supports the dreadful civil war in Syria, and sponsors terrorist organizations like Hamas and Hezbollah. Iran is also assisting some branches of the Taliban in Afghanistan.

President Trump made the right decision. For the sake of stopping Iran's nuclear program and protecting U.S. national security and its citizens, we must introduce a nuclear deal, but one that addresses all the flaws in the current one. The first step to a new agreement is staying out of one that has not worked. The final step is to wait for Iran to become a trustworthy participant.

## We NEED a Global Vaccination Effort

*Edan Held, World News Editor*

As the world grapples with the COVID-19 pandemic, vaccine production has erupted. Vaccines are being administered in various countries, and epidemiologists hope that the pandemic might come to an end once enough of the world is vaccinated. But many countries just can't afford to vaccinate their populations. Vaccines are not cheap, and finding the resources to administer the vaccines upon obtaining them is yet another hurdle that many countries face. There needs to be a global effort to administer as many vaccines as possible in every country.

Acquiring vaccines is a step in the right direction in fighting and hopefully ending the COVID-19 pandemic, but so many countries struggle to do so. Many richer countries have hoarded vaccines, leaving few available for poorer nations. By the end of 2020, before a single vaccine was administered, besides in clinical trials, Canada had already reserved 266 million vaccines -- enough to vaccinate the entire country four times over! The United States, whose population is around 330 million, had already reserved over one billion vaccines, enough to vaccinate its total population three times. Instead of giving these extra doses to poorer countries, though, countries with more than enough doses to fully vaccinate their populations have hoarded them.

Even once a country gets vaccines, inoculating its population poses a new set of challenges. As of mid-April, 40% of Americans had received at least one vaccine, while 25% of the country had been fully vaccinated. In total, over 200 million vaccines had been administered in the United States, or at least one shot in 63 out of 100 individuals. By contrast, Mozambique, a nation with a GDP of \$607 USD per capita, had only vaccinated a little over fifty thousand citizens, or 0.2% of its entire population of over 30 million people. Similarly, South Africa, another country with a GDP substantially lower than that of most developed countries, had only been able to vaccinate 0.5% of its population, showing the significant inequalities in vaccinations across the globe. That is why a global initiative to vaccinate the world is critical in helping put an end to the COVID-19 pandemic.



Some of the first vaccines from the COVAX shipment are administered in Ghana

Janet Yellen, the Biden administration's Treasury Secretary, has called for a global effort in aiding poorer countries with their vaccine distribution and continues to express the need for one. She warns that those countries are already close to a "profound economic tragedy" due to COVID-19 itself. She emphasizes that vaccinating poorer countries could be economically beneficial to the rest of the world. A refusal to get involved could lead to "a problem for America," as mutations originating in poorer countries could spread around the world, eventually evading the vaccines and rendering them ineffective. As COVID-19 continues to spread worldwide, specifically in poorer countries with low vaccination rates, mutations are more likely to occur; to help prevent those mutations, vaccines need to be more rapidly administered.

**As of mid-April, Mozambique, a nation with a GDP of \$607 USD per capita, had only vaccinated a little over fifty thousand citizens, .2 percent of its entire population of over 30 million people.**

Though there are some initiatives for a global fight against the pandemic, they have not lifted off the ground as hoped. The COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access (COVAX), organized by the World Health Organization, Gavi (an international organization striving to provide immunizations in poorer countries), and the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations, aims to "accelerate the development, production, and equitable access to COVID-19 tests, treatments, and vaccines." One of the goals of COVAX is to provide enough doses for 20% of every country's population, but it has not executed its plans yet. In February, its first shipment of 600,000 doses went out to Ghana, only enough to vaccinate two percent of its population. Though it is better than nothing, COVAX's current distribution has not done nearly enough to help poorer countries, continuing to leave a significant disparity in vaccinations between richer and poorer countries. Hopefully, it will achieve its end goal, but the need for a working global vaccine effort is currently evident.

As we continue to grasp and fight the realities of the COVID-19 pandemic, millions of people have little to no access to vaccines. That is why we must organize a global and equal effort to end vaccine inequality.

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## Mrs. Levin

imbued students, who are now adults, with the mission of the school. There is nothing better than watching the students she once taught carry on this mission. Also, Barrack's curriculum of excellent general academics combined with the richness of Hebrew, Jewish Studies, and Tanakh is second to none. She hopes she has sent forth new generations of passionate, educated young Jewish adults to become leaders in the world.

Mrs. Levin has been fortunate enough to be one of the rare few who can merge their avocation with their vocation. She is able to maintain her involvement in the Jewish community, while continuing her purpose of education. In her retirement letter, she quoted the song, "Because I Knew You," from the musical *Wicked*, meaning that every individual she has met at Akiba/Barrack has changed her for the better. If even some of Mrs. Levin's students feel the same about her, then her Akiba/Barrack career was a success. The outpouring from current students and alumni upon receiving news of her retirement is a testament to the fact that Mrs. Levin's work has indeed been a success.

Looking back over these thirty-five years, she believes she has been the luckiest person in the world. She has no regrets and cherishes her time here. It is important to note that Mrs. Levin is not retiring; she is retiring from Barrack, and will continue her work within the Jewish community.



# FEATURES

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## Artist of the Edition: Rena Civan

*Margot Englander, Features, Games, and Art Editor*

Rena Civan is an eighth grader at JBHA this year. She is the oldest of three children and loves her two dogs. Her favorite mediums to work with are



"Apple Study"

alcohol markers and pencils. However, she also dabbles in other visual art forms including painting, crocheting, and sewing. She has only recently started using the more complicated mediums, but has always enjoyed art. She's taken lessons at the Main Line Art Center, but also works on her own. Rena has taken art classes with Ms. Laura Stern at Barrack since 6th grade. Last year, before COVID, she worked on a piece in a mural class, and she is hoping that it will be hung up soon! One of Rena's

favorite parts of art is seeing images from her head come to life. She loves taking a blank canvas and transforming it into art. She is looking forward to creating more art in the future!



"Woman In Green"

## Ask Jack

*You Ask and We Try to Answer (Edited by Manny Shklar, Layout Editor)*

*With vaccines coming out rapidly, what will Barrack's future look like?*

Despite many teachers and students getting vaccinated, we will continue to follow the schedule we are currently using until further notice. This will likely continue until the end of the year, and then teachers and health administrators will reevaluate for the 2021-2022 school year. Hopefully we'll be able to return to in-person school full time next year.

*What should I do if I want to switch the Advisory I am in?*

At Barrack, you're sorted into an Advisory for all of middle school or all of high school, where you talk and do activities together. It's uncommon for people to want to switch out of their Advisory, but if they feel like it's necessary, it can be discussed. When requesting a switch, there should be good reasons, such as having trouble with peers or the teacher in the Advisory. If there are problems that can be fixed, you should try to work on them before trying to

switch. If you can't solve the problems and you're still unhappy, you can reach out to our deans or counselors so they can help make the decision with you.

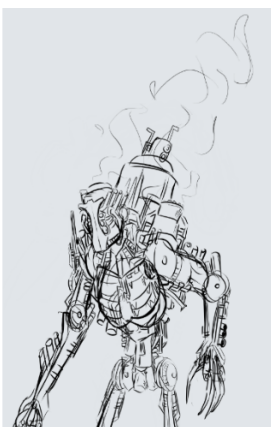
*How can I sign up for clubs midway through the year?*

While at the start of the school year there's a Club Fair that introduces the many clubs at Barrack, you could become interested in one at some other point in the year. Every club has an advisor and student leader in charge, so you can reach out to them and ask to join. If you don't know who the advisor or leader is, check the Google Doc called "JBHA Club Schedule 2020-2021." You'll find a link for it at the bottom of the SA Happenings email that is sent out each week. Ask to get onto the club's email list so you'll know when the meetings are. Every club will be happy to have new members and all of them are always inclusive. However, some clubs are only for middle school and others are only for high school.

## Artist of the Edition: Ean Geller Nocella

*Margot Englander, Features, Games, and Art Editor*

Ean Geller Nocella is a 9th grader at JBHA. He has been drawing for about four years now. He mainly does digital painting and line-art, however, he enjoys trying out all sorts of styles and mediums. Much of his inspiration comes from the things he sees during his "travels"--from the giant, intricate, refineries clustered across the Delaware River, to the diverse wildlife of Long Island. A big influence on much of his art has



"Robot"

been H.R. Giger's original concepts for *Aliens*, and countless comics. The rectangular piece is called "Salmon", and he finished it on February 3rd. The robot piece was done on May 6th, and is untitled. He has never taken any art classes except in school, and these days almost all of his work is done outside of school. If you want to check out a piece of his work, there is one hanging in the library!



"Salmon"



# My Five Greatest Movies of All Time

Max Hirsch, A&E Editor

Having been in quarantine for over a year, I can admit that I’ve seen my fair share of movies. Whether it’s action, comedy, drama, horror, or romance doesn’t really matter to me -- I enjoy them all. At one point this summer, I was even watching one movie a day! But with COVID-19 cases steadily decreasing and our country returning to normalcy, it’s time to put a pause on the movie-binging and start doing better, more active things. With that being said, there’s no better time than now to unveil my top 5 movies ever, with so many great movies fresh in my mind. I’m no movie critic, but I think my list has a nice combination of critically acclaimed movies and my personal preferences.

Here it goes:

Honorable mentions: *Shawshank Redemption*, *Wolf of Wall Street*, *Fight Club*, and *Inception*.

## #5 *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*

This 2004 sci-fi/romance film features Jim Carrey, Kate Winslet, Kristen Dunst, and many more renowned actors. The best way to sum up this movie is that it’s a love story in reverse. After a messy breakup, Kate Winslet’s Clementine undergoes an experimental surgery to utterly wipe out her memory of her ex-boyfriend, Joel. When Joel figures out that Clementine no longer has any memory of him, he opts to do the same experimental surgery. Yet shortly afterwards, on a train ride home, Joel and Clementine meet. They are under the impression they haven’t met before, but there’s some unexplainable connection. After hitting it off, they find cassette-tapes revealing their troubling past together. They are shocked, disgusted, and ashamed — but opt to give their relationship another try. I think Charlie Kaufman’s message in this story is simple but deep: no matter how hard you try, you can’t erase the past. You will always find your way back, so why even bother? What makes this movie so phenomenal is the realness displayed by both Carrey and Winslet. Throughout the whole movie they are each fighting in their own head. Their minds are telling them they need to forget each other and move on, but their hearts won’t let them. In short, I loved the plot and complexity of this movie.

## #4 *Ferris Bueller's Day off*

I know, this is a bold take. *Ferris Bueller's Day Off* is a kids movie, right? The plot is simple and the cast is merely average, no? Well maybe. But you can’t deny how fun this movie is and the way it makes you feel. Ferris Bueller, played by Matthew Brodrick, is the typical high school slacker. Featuring just one day in his life, the movie shows Bueller faking being sick to ditch school and go on a crazy journey. Whether it’s pretending to be his girlfriend’s dad and picking her up from school, driving his friend’s dad’s Ferrari over 100 mph, or going to a baseball game, Ferris is living every young kid’s dream. Ferris is the epitome of “enjoying what’s in front

of you.” As he infamously said, “Life moves pretty fast; if you don't stop and look around once in a while, you could miss it!" This quote captures the essence of the movie and has surprisingly resonated with me over the years. With that being said, you can’t watch this movie like a critic. You have to watch it lightly and appreciate it for what it is: a fun, engaging film.

## #3 *Silver Linings Playbook*

Again, this is a movie that no critics would put in their top 30. But Bradley Cooper and Jennifer Lawrence are simply remarkable in this movie. Featuring the suburbs of Philadelphia, the story is about a young man, Pat Soltano (Bradley Cooper), with bipolar disorder, whose wife recently divorced him. Throughout the movie, Solatano is trying to get his life back on track, and attempts to win back his wife. But in the process, he meets Tiffany, played by Jennifer Lawrence, a woman who faces mental health problems of her own. They form a friendship and although Tiffany is quite interested in Pat, Pat is strictly focused on reconnecting with his wife. However, when Pat’s wife is finally willing to take him back, Pat realizes what was in front of him this whole time. This serves as the general message of the movie. Sometimes we as humans are so caught up in what we think we want instead of what we genuinely want. There’s a big difference. The movie is a beautiful story, and there are some hilarious moments with Pat’s dad, played by legend Robert DeNiro. The authenticity is astonishing and makes the viewer feel quite connected.

## #2 *Good Will Hunting*

This film starred Matt Damon and Ben Affleck, who also wrote the film, which became the start of two great careers. Will Hunting, played by Matt Damon, is a self-taught genius working as a janitor at MIT. Despite having the potential to do whatever he could possibly want, Will likes living in South Boston with his friends and doesn’t want to do anything else. However, he gets in trouble

As he infamously said in the movie, “Life moves pretty fast; if you don't stop and look around once in a while, you could miss it!" This quote captures the essence of the movie and has surprisingly resonated with me over the years.

with the law and is forced to meet with different therapists. One in particular, Sean Maguire (Robin Williams), is able to connect with him like no one before. Sean and Will have their fair share of struggles, but Sean is ultimately able to open Will up, pushing him to move to California with the girl he loves. Despite having a deeply troubling background, he is able to move forward with his life. It’s not the plot or the outcome that makes this movie so great -- it’s the individual moments. Whether it’s Sean and Will fighting during their therapy session, or Chuckie (Ben Affleck) and

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Will talking about sports and girls, this movie has some hilarious and heart-warming scenes. As a viewer, there’s nothing better than watching Will develop and realize his true potential.

## #1 *The Departed*

There’s a strong argument to be made that this is the single greatest cast in the history of film. You cannot top Leonardo DiCaprio, Matt Damon, Jack Nicholson, Martin Sheen, Mark Wahlberg, Alec Baldwin, and many more all in the same movie! And you can’t forget who directed this movie—one of the great directors of our time—Martin Scorsese. This movie follows two different story lines and switches back and forth throughout the movie. The first storyline is about Billy Costigan (Leonardo DiCaprio), a cop who goes undercover to infiltrate an Irish Gang led by Frank Costello (Jack Nicholson). Simultaneously, Colin Sullivan (Matt Damon) goes undercover to infiltrate the Boston police department. Both organizations ultimately find out they have a mole, which clashes the intense storylines. Damon, DiCaprio, and Nicholson are extraordinary leads for this movie. Damon plays his role as a phony so well — especially with that smirk of his — that he is intensely hateable and causes the viewer to scream at him through the TV. This is not a new role for DiCaprio, but he brings a new level of maturity and emotion that is lacking in his other films. Nicholson is as scary as his Jack Torrance in *The Shining*, but this time you’re almost rooting for him. The supporting cast is phenomenal, and there are some really great moments between Martin Sheen and Mark Wahlberg. If you’re going to watch only one of these films, I recommend this one. You might even have to watch it twice because of all the crazy plot twists.



Billy Costigan (Leonardo DiCaprio) arresting Colin Sullivan (Matt Damon) in *The Departed*.



## How NFTs Have Revolutionized the Market

*Yoni Webner, Staff Writer*

A non-fungible token. What is that? What does that mean? Non-fungible tokens, also known as NFTs, are unique units of data that are stored in blockchains, which are digital holders (websites) that ultimately certify the uniqueness of a certain NFT. The blockchain that stores these non-fungible tokens is currently representing types of cryptocurrency like Ethereum or Bitcoin. What makes NFTs any different than crypto? Unlike Bitcoin, NFTs are irreplaceable and one of a kind, making them extremely valuable. In simple terms, NFTs are like digital sports cards.

Along with the exclusiveness that these assets hold, they have the ability to attract customers because of their intriguing speciality. NFTs have the capability to be anything; they can be in the form of music, sports, drawings, and more. As a result of the creativity it presents, many people are drawn to the idea, and they invest money in certain arts that interest them. Since people can now digitally sell certain art forms, this concept has and will ultimately change the

way people invest and look into the market.

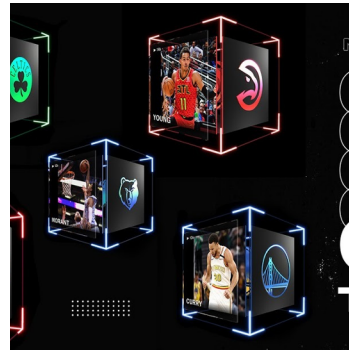
Currently, one NFT that is blowing up the market is NBA Top Shot. It enables fans from across the world to trade, sell, and buy “officially-licensed video highlights.” This means that you can “own” a certain NBA highlight as it presents a verified check mark in the top right corner of each video. This verified check mark is crucial to the overall success of NBA Top Shot — it confirms that a video has only one rightful owner. This is extremely different from the blockchain that the internet maintains, where anyone can be the owner of a random picture or video. Although these highlights may seem useless, many people around the world ultimately value ownership of unique items, even if they technically hold no real world value. No matter the scenario, irreplaceability will always attract a huge market. Another incentive that the “flow blockchain” (NBA

Top Shot’s database) carries is that people now have the ability to invest in the future. This part is extremely similar to how stocks and trading cards work: if you think a stock will do well, you put money into it. In NBA

Top Shot, if you believe players will soon do well, you can buy one of their highlights and sell it once they hit peak performance.

Although some people may think NFTs are purposeless, there are some investors who certainly think the opposite.

Some of the most expensive NFTs can sell for upwards of \$100 million. One buyer by the name of Vignesh Sundaresan bought a piece of artwork for \$69 million. Another investor bought a picture of the first Twitter tweet for \$2.9 million. Every day, more and more people are looking into NFTs: investing part of their salary into a highlight or maybe even starting their own NFT. NFTs have the potential to take over the market whether you’re here for it or not.



Basketball NFTs

## Are Movie Theaters Out of the Picture?

*Avital Uram and Shira Dorff, Staff Writers*

Movie theaters such as AMC and Regal were on the brink of closing down last year. However, there’s some encouraging news — the CDC has given the ‘OK’ to bring movie theaters back across America. The rules of how to do so vary by different states. Currently in Pennsylvania, the maximum capacity for a movie theater is 25%. Yet, in places like Texas, Alaska, and Wisconsin, the maximum capacity is 100%. In Florida, Idaho, and Ohio, the rules just say that the theaters must make sure to maintain social distancing.

Many movie theaters have been using protocols derived from public health officials. These protocols include maintaining social distancing, requiring masks at all times except when eating, and making sure no one with symptoms of coronavirus enters. The goal of most movie theaters is to keep everyone safe, whether that means enforcing the rules for customers or making sure that employees keep things clean. At Regal Theaters, the employees are required to monitor the auditoriums to make sure everyone is following the rules. Although the precautions are helpful, certain things are unavoidable. Since there are no windows in theaters, air is unable to circulate. This can cause many issues, especially because people are eating inside. If

anyone happens to cough or sneeze while eating their food, the spit particles stay in the air for a long time, and patrons are watching movies that are usually an hour to three hours.

While it seems as though there are some factors concerning movie theaters that are unsafe, some health professionals say otherwise. According to Dr. David F. Goldsmith, a public health professor and expert in epidemiology, going to the movie theater is definitely safer than going to a mall or a restaurant because no one is facing each other while eating and the crowds are smaller than the typical crowd at a mall. And the social aspect of theaters is important too. As Abby Gober ‘26 states, “Movie theaters are still needed because they provide an amazing experience for you, your friends, and your family. It is also a bonding experience.”

Regardless of whether and how the movie theaters reopen, are streaming services going to steal a lot of their revenue? To an extent, probably. Due to COVID-19 closures, movie producers have had to find other ways to display their work. Still, Hollywood actually prefers to release movies via movie theaters rather than streaming services. For one thing, movies make more money via ticket

sales than when someone rents the movie off of Amazon Prime. And it isn’t just Hollywood that prefers movie theaters -- so does the public. According to Evan Berman ‘26, “Movie theaters are still important because there is a certain feeling that you have when you go out to watch a movie in the theaters, rather than sitting at home watching one where you spend most of your day. It is [also] important to keep movie theaters running because they do provide jobs, not just to adults but also to kids.” Scout Spivack ‘27 agrees, saying, “I would want to [watch a movie in a theater] because it’s not the same as watching a movie at home. It’s a whole different experience.” While Spivack prefers watching in theaters, she understands the safety risks, noting, “I wouldn’t feel comfortable [going to the movies right now] because there is no air circulation, but it’s not necessarily more dangerous than other places, like some schools that are eating lunch inside facing each other and everything, so it’s a bit safer than doing other activities.”

There is no doubt that when the pandemic is over, people of all ages will be filling up every seat in theaters. I think we can all agree that watching a movie at home will never compare to watching a movie in a theater.



# Grease Is the Way We Are Feeling

Brandon Singer, Staff Writer

Some of the most iconic staples of American pop culture leave an enduring impact on society because of their ability to provide unadulterated escapism amidst personal or political turmoil. These works supply the levity, vibrancy, and solace



Time.com

Two young men dressed in garb commonly associated with the 'Greaser subculture'

needed to mitigate the pains one faces, even if they can only do so temporarily. While some of the best pieces of art compel viewers or listeners to absorb pain be-

fore experiencing catharsis, these works forsake despair to embrace warmth and contentment. For five decades, *Grease*, both the 1978 film and the 1971 musical that serves as the former's basis, has offered this bliss to all who could benefit from forgoing their sorrows to immerse themselves in the lives of the rebellious and uninhibited teens of Rydell High.

*Grease* is even more welcome during an era in which one's thoughts and troubles have become entirely inescapable. Humankind's prevailing need for pleasure proves how needed this exploration of the 1950's "working-class youth subculture" is as a choice for Jack M. Barrack Hebrew Academy's Spring Musical. "It's something certain among much uncertainty," notes Lila Elkins '23, who plays the head of the high-powered Pink Ladies and Rydell's resident baddie, Betty "Rizzo" Rizzo. "Everyone knows *Grease*, and watching something you know is comforting," she

continues. Those bringing this production to life are evidently sensitive to the show's ability to infinitely comfort. Directed by Head of the Drama Department for 30+ years, Dewey J. Oriente, Barrack's *Grease* does not reinterpret wholesome Sandy Dumbroski's exploration of sexuality and independence upon reuniting with the win-

**"It's something certain among much uncertainty,"**

some yet misguided Danny Zuko, respectively played by Miriam Singer '21 and Benjamin Fisher '21, as classmates at Rydell. Rather, the upper school production is a study in pure reverence of the unadulterated joy and nostalgia factor the musical provides. Where audiences won't be awestruck by reimaginings of true to form choreography or irreverent nods to the show's cultural legacy, they are guaranteed to be gratified by the reliable and affirming euphoria *Grease* has always shared.

## A Must Watch: *Stowaway*

Caleb Shapiro, Staff Writer

Streaming services have been a staple in entertainment for years, and now with the pandemic, this has only increased. Netflix — a streaming service that has always been popular — has been a platform reliable for producing successful and appealing movies across all genres. *Stowaway*, a film that debuted on April 22 on Netflix, is no exception. Described as cerebral, dark, and suspenseful, this movie is the epitome of a thriller. The plot is simple: Captain Marina Barnett, biologist David Kim, and medical researcher Zoe Levenson venture on a two-year journey to Mars. That is until they discover a hidden passenger. The stowaway, named Michael, is the catalyst behind dramatics that ensue. As the film progresses, the viewer witnesses events that unlock a new perception of the characters as they overcome previous flaws in their relationships to fight for their lives. While the entire movie is full of surprises, the end of the film is where it becomes most tense. Due to complications with oxygen, the characters face the reality that one has to sacrifice him- or herself to keep the other three alive. Action is the clear focal point in this film and it's easy to get sucked into the unfolding theatrics.



Vulture.com

Shamier Anderson in *Stowaway*

Another appealing aspect of *Stowaway* is that it is easy to follow as it features just four characters, all within the confines of a spaceship. The movie intrigues all types of people -- you can watch it with your family, friends, or even alone, and you will undoubtedly have a great time. *Stowaway* makes it difficult to say no to watching, given its alluring storyline. Currently, this movie sits in the top 10 on Netflix in the USA for good reason, and I highly recommend it if you are interested in a thrilling film full of twists and turns.



## COVID-19 Restrictions Loosen in Israel

*Jacob Erlbaum, Israel Editor*

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to rage on in the rest of the world, Israel continues to loosen restrictions regarding the virus. One area in particular that Israel had been extremely strict about was the airport and restricting travel to and from the country. However, those restrictions have loosened as the COVID-19 situation in Israel has improved. One key reason for the improvement is because Israel has been extremely efficient in administering the vaccine to the entire population. As of mid-May, with over 5,000,000 people fully vaccinated and over 10,000,000 receiving at least one dose, Israel had the second most people vaccinated per capita out of any country. The title of most people vaccinated per capita belonged to the United Arab Emirates.

MIT Technology Review

While the vaccine distribution in Israel has been extremely successful, there has been some resistance, mostly from ultra-Orthodox Jews in the country. In order to get past this resistance, Israel attempted to remove false rumors about the vaccine and work with members of the ultra-Orthodox community to convince others in their community to get vaccinated. Aside from the resistance to the vaccine, Israel

has set some standards about returning to the workplace for those who are and aren't vaccinated. In one case, a make-up artist in Tel Aviv was told not to return to work because of not being vaccinated. This frustrated the artist who even called it discrimination. Israel has established a green pass for those who are vaccinated which allows



**Healthcare workers receive their COVID-19 vaccination in Israel.**

them to go to restaurants and concerts, and to travel to places like Greece and Cyprus. While the majority of the country is vaccinated, those who aren't cannot partake in such things and it has frustrated them.

While some decided to forgo their resistance to the vaccine, there are still those who will not get vaccinated and are feeling left behind.

While at first Israel was extremely strict with its COVID-19 restrictions and received plenty of scrutiny for it, things have gotten far better as the vaccination roll-out continues and the restrictions begin to diminish. Bars, schools, restaurants, and several other indoor spaces have reopened to the public with mask wearing. This is a sign of Israel's return to normalcy as a direct result of its success in administering the vaccine to its people. Going forward, there will still be COVID-19 cases every day in the country but nothing near what it was during the height of the pandemic. Currently, the country is experiencing just a few hundred cases per day as opposed to the thousands they were experiencing per day from July 2020 up until the end of March 2021. With restrictions loosening, Israel will continue enforcing mask wearing in public spaces in order to keep cases down and allow the country to get rid of even more restrictions.

## Israeli Elections: Hope or Despair

*Yonatan Hassidim, Staff Writer*

The inconclusive results of Israel's fourth election in two years confused Israelis and Jews throughout the world, leaving them wondering if Israel's political system is functional.

About two years ago, the current Israeli government, led by Benjamin Netanyahu, lost the majority of seats in the Knesset due to a minister leaving the majority coalition to join the opposition. Since then, the lack of a majority in the parliament has caused it to dissolve and call for a new election. Many, such as Barrack student Daniel Izhakov '24, had "no idea what the outcome of the recent election was" and didn't know if anyone won. To put this whole circumstance in simple terms, all of the elections so far have revealed that no coalition has agreed on who they want to become prime minister. Two years ago, the election ideology was right-wing against the left. It has become pro-Benjamin Netanyahu against anti-Netanyahu, leaving many parties who have right-wing ideologies sharing their opposition with the left against Benjamin Netanyahu. This has caused a situation where Benjamin Netanyahu can't form any majority coalition, but neither can the other parties who don't agree on who should replace him.

This election result has an Anti-Netanyahu Bloc at the left, a Pro-Netanyahu Bloc at the right, and undecided parties in the middle. This multi-party

democracy was working well for Israel in the past, until this recent deadlock. This is the first time the right-wing has a majority vote but is split between being against Bibi or voting for him. Despite there being a wider range of representation in the Israeli political system, it also disincentivizes the coalition of multiple parties to assemble at least 61 seats. Along with the high tensions of being with or against Bibi, this has caused a complete standstill.

Many wonder what the future looks like for the Israeli government, and there are many possibilities. The most probable would be simply holding another election and hoping for a final outcome, despite the several past elections which have failed. This may seem pointless and wasteful because these elections seem like "billions of dollars down the drain," as Ari Abramovitz '22 has claimed. Still, democracy, in general, is a costly form of government because of the many compromises and specific needs for all parties involved. Another step could be to make a radical change from Israel's multi-party system to directly voting for a prime minister, much like the United States system. The last option could be the uncommitted parties joining the anti-Netanyahu bloc or joining the pro-Netanyahu bloc, allowing them to gain the necessary seats to perform a coalition and assemble a government. This option is also very probable as the United Arab List, a far-left party, is seriously considering joining

the anti-Netanyahu bloc and forming a coalition with exactly 61 seats. Yamina, the other uncommitted party, is unlikely to make a decision as it is a far-right party but very anti-Netanyahu.

However, in May, the Israeli political landscape suddenly changed. The violent Hamas eruption tremendously affected the future of the Israeli government. Beforehand, Yamina was ready to join the anti-Netanyahu bloc but, after the recent events, it ended all communications with that bloc. Despite the gap between the views regarding the Palestinian conflict, Yamina was willing to form a coalition with the anti-Netanyahu bloc regardless of it being built off of left-wing parties and the Arab parties. Yamina was prepared to put the Palestinian conflict aside to form a government without Netanyahu, but reality struck and revealed the shakiness of this coalition. With Yamina declaring this option no longer relevant, the momentum shifts back to the pro-Netanyahu bloc, increasing Netanyahu's re-election chances.

Whatever the next step is, Israel, without a doubt, still has a semi-functional political system. The people of Israel, along with Jews worldwide, must remember that although there are many political disagreements, our strength is in our unity. Keep the hope that this matter will eventually be resolved as we will overcome all these obstacles together.



# Rav Will Reflects on His Years at Barrack

*Manny Shklar, Layout Editor*

After an amazing tenure at Barrack, Rav Will Keller, our Director of Jewish Life, is leaving for a new job. He will be Head of School at the Hebrew Day School of Ann Arbor, Michigan, that serves pre-k through fifth grade. Rav Will has provided so much to our community in his time with us. He was the head of the Jewish Learning Initiative (JLI) and taught many Jewish Studies classes, always showing passion and emotion in his lessons and in the hallways. After announcing this change, he was interviewed by the Chronicle and talked about his experience at Barrack and what he's looking forward to in the future. Everyone in the Barrack community will miss Rav Will, and we wish him the best of luck.

Rav Will

***What programs would you like to bring from Barrack to your new school?***

The Pre-Shabbat Schmooze is an experience that I want to replicate in my new school. I have loved watching students of different grades mix with staff as everyone has a nosh and L'Chaim in honor of Shabbat.

***How have the people and your experiences at Barrack impacted you?***

I have been blessed to work with many incredible people at Barrack who have lifted me up, supported me in my growth, collaborated with me, and inspired me to be my best self. Barrack has taught me the value of systems, communication, and how wonderful it can be to work in an institution where people like one another and value working together.

***What words of advice would you give to the next head of Jewish life?***

Be yourself while making sure to make space for others.

***What has been your favorite part of your time at Barrack?***

My favorite moment at Barrack came last year as I saw students stream back into the building after their MLK service trips. I was overcome with emotion seeing the proud faces of our students, many who had chosen to explore new areas of service learning and were eagerly sharing the experience with their



**Rav Will with students (pre-COVID) preparing for a Pre-Shabbat Schmooze**

friends and making plans for future volunteering. Seeing students take our school values and apply them in real-world scenarios is what it's all about! More than anything, I have enjoyed the energy of our students as they discover their passions, dislikes, challenges and goals, and set about finding like-minded souls to accompany them on their journey.

***How long have you worked at Barrack?***

Five glorious years!

***What do you think will be the most exciting part of your new job?***

I look forward to the new and dynamic challenges awaiting! In my new job I will be responsible for working with different teams to fundraise, support our teachers, oversee curriculum and engage families and the community. I am looking forward to all these exciting adventures and getting help from mentors, colleagues and friends (many of whom are at Barrack) as I go.

***What advice, if any, would you like to leave with the students at Barrack?***

Taking this job meant changing the trajectory that I imagined for my life. I was not planning to move; in fact, I was hoping to stay at Barrack. But what I have learned through this process is that plans change as new opportunities arise, and we should be open to the path that G-d provides for us. Ask lots of questions, and analyze each scenario from many different perspectives to make informed choices. Consider the ramifications of your choices, and how they will affect you, your loved ones, humankind, and the world before acting. Planning is good, spontaneity is also good -- both are expressions of the power G-d has given us to create and bring G-d's will into the world.

As we remember Rav Will's kind expressions and cheerful spirit, we hope to see him many times in the near future. As he departs for a new journey, we want our beloved Director of Jewish Life to know that he is always welcome at Barrack. Thank you, Rav Will, for giving us five outstanding years of love and hard work that will leave a lasting impact on the school.

## “Cougars on 3, Family on 6!” Eight Years of Coaching and More from Mr. Cooper

*Manny Shklar, Layout Editor*

Whether you know him as Barrack's Dean of Student Life or our Athletic Director, Mr. Justin Cooper is always a welcoming presence to everybody. Sadly though, after eight years of hard work and dedication, he is moving on to become the Athletic Director of The Shipley School in Bryn Mawr. At Barrack, besides his other positions, he was also the head coach of our varsity baseball team, which came in second place this year in our league. He has always been very dedicated to baseball, looking to help players improve on and off the field and making sure everyone was happy. I've had the pleasure to learn from him in two ways, as he was not only my coach, but my Advisor as well, and he has always welcomed me and others with open arms. From the bottom of all our hearts, thank you so much Mr. Cooper for everything you have done for us. It will always be appreciated. We hope to see you often and wish you the best of luck in your new position.

jaygorodetzer.com



**Mr. Cooper coaching in the 2021 Varsity Baseball championship**

Mr. Cooper graciously answered some questions posed by the Cougar Chronicle:

***What aspects will you miss most about working at Barrack?***

I will miss the personal relationships that were formed with each student and colleague. I will miss coaching the cross country and baseball teams and representing Barrack in the great sports community.

***What were some of your favorite memories made at Barrack?***

There have been many fantastic memories. A few that stand out:

- Our first time playing Kohelet at the Wells Fargo Center when we had over 1,000 people attend
- Sitting with my kids at the Middle School Musical -- Lion King
- Baseball's walk-off win vs New Foundations
- Boys and Girls Basketball TCISL Championship wins in 2020
- My Advisory group
- Pep Rallies
- Athletic/Hall of fame Ceremonies

***What do you plan to implement from Barrack at Shipley?***

I hope to instill the same confidence that our coaches give our students and bring that to Shipley -- taking a personal interest in each student; and to start an athletic Hall of Fame and help students achieve their goal of playing college sports.

*Continued on next page*



## Farewell to Mrs. Pransky, Core Teacher and Cougar Chronicle Advisor

Jessie Singer, Staff Writer

Every Barrack student that has attended since middle school remembers sixth grade. It's a year filled with uncertainty, anxiety, and fear. However, for those blessed enough to have had her as a teacher, it was also a year filled with Mrs. Judith Pransky, which truly made all the difference.

Personally, I remember my sixth grade year with Mrs. Pransky vividly. From day one, she was warm, inviting, and inclusive. She transformed her classroom into a second home, an oasis in a large, intimidating, and unfamiliar school. She taught us in engaging, intriguing ways, opened our minds to new perspectives and possibilities, and helped us navigate the overwhelming frenzy of sixth grade with grace and poise. We learned to write expressively, to read analytically, to think critically, to collaborate with others, and to perform. We might not have realized it then, but Mrs. Pransky taught us how to be students.

Mrs. Pransky's classroom provided a unique, unforgettable backdrop to my first year at Barrack. Every former sixth grader with the privilege of being in her class remembers the thrill of dressing up for their first Book Talk, the mystery of Artifact Alley, the wonder of learning to make papyrus, the fervent frenzy of compiling memory binders, and, of course, the delight of culminating a unit in an intense

game of Ancient Civilization Jeopardy. Mrs. Pransky took us on a compelling, wild, and exciting ride through sixth grade, engaging us in the material and easing our transition into middle school. The activities of that year, and the person who invented them, paved the way for my and others' success at Barrack.



Mrs. Pransky

Mrs. Pransky

Furthermore, Mrs. Pransky devoted much time and effort into developing our characters. Sixth graders can be immature, disrespectful, and, above all, *loud*. But Mrs. Pransky had an astounding ability to instill in us, as immature and disrespectful as we were, the values of kindness, caring, responsibility, generosity, and inclusion. She showed us how to work together, to be kind towards one another, and to show compassion. Core was not Mrs. Pransky's only area of expertise; she taught us invaluable life lessons as well.

Although Mrs. Pransky achieved incredible feats as a Core teacher for 19 years, it would be short-sighted to discuss her successes in the classroom while overlooking her other accomplishments at Barrack. Mrs. Pransky served as the faculty advisor for the *Cougar Chronicle*, our beloved school newspaper, for 21 years. She worked constantly and tirelessly, reading and fact-checking every article, providing personalized, precise edits, helping to run weekly meetings, and ensuring that every aspect of the *Chronicle* operated smoothly and upheld Barrack's values. Not only did she enable the newspaper's success, but she also provided every writer, editor, and layout designer with support and advice. After working with Mrs. Pransky, each Chronicle staff member could become more eloquent, educated, confident, and self-sufficient. These are gifts that last a lifetime.

Mrs. Pransky is transitioning from teaching to full-time fiction writing. She has already published the *Mister Lister* series for the younger grades, and *The Seventh Handmaiden*, a young adult novel. So although she will no longer be teaching in a classroom, there will be countless lessons to learn from her books for years to come.

Mrs. Pransky, thank you so much for all that you have done. You truly have touched the lives of every single student that has had the privilege to know you; you have opened our hearts to newfound knowledge, newfound love of learning, and, most importantly, newfound belief in ourselves. You have seen something special in each of us, igniting in us a passion for education. Your students will remember you for the rest of their lives. This school will forever be indebted to you -- you will truly be missed more than we can ever say. Mrs. Pransky, Barrack will never, ever, be the same without you, and your dedication and incredible efforts will never be forgotten. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

Continued from previous page

### What advice would you like to give to everyone at Barrack?

Continue to work hard and aim for excellence -- not perfection. Excellence is a journey and not a destination. Take on adversity with confidence and put your teammates first. It is a privilege to wear the Barrack uniform; do so with pride, heart and hustle.

As Mr. Cooper departs Barrack, we welcome a new Athletic Director, Johnny Bistline. Johnny has been our Athletic Trainer for the past five years and is known around our community for his kindness and great work. We couldn't be more excited to welcome him to this new opportunity at the school, as he has already done so much for our student athletes to make sure everyone can play safely. Thank you for all your hard work so far. We're all looking forward to seeing you excel in your new position.



Johnny Bistline



## Thoughts from Retiring Staff

*Becca Miller, Centerspread Editor*

This is the final semester for several Barrack staff members who have decided to retire after many years of helping to shape young minds. The five staff members who are retiring are Mrs. Ivy Kaplan, Mrs. Rita Schuman, Mrs. Joyce Ferber, Mr. Barnett Kamen, and Mrs. Karen Albero. Each of these people have been at Barrack for so long they have practically become institutions at the school. They have interacted with hundreds of students and touched many lives during their time here, and they will all be sorely missed.

Each staff member kindly took the time to reflect on their careers. Below are their responses to identical questions from the Cougar Chronicle.

**Mrs. Ivy Kaplan (History Department):**



What made you want to be a teacher?

I loved playing teacher as a child. Then I taught Hebrew school in high school for extra money and loved it. After earning my degrees in History, it seemed a natural fit to combine my love of history and my love of working with children.

What have you enjoyed most about teaching?

Watching the moment when the light bulb goes on after a student understands a new idea or concept. I also enjoy leading discussions when the students apply the information they have learned with their critical thinking skills.

What is the most important thing you have learned in your career as a teacher?

To be patient and flexible. To be open to new ideas and new ways of presenting material.

What will you miss most about teaching?

I'll miss two things: working with students and talking "history" to my three wonderful fellow teachers.

Is there anything you would like to tell your students?

I'll miss all the students, but I know that they will be in very good hands with Mrs. Taichman, Dr. Ziskind and Mrs. Scheinmann.

**Mrs. Joyce Ferber (Resource):**



What made you want to be a teacher?

I became a teacher originally because of my own struggles with reading and comprehension. An English teacher in high school told my parents I was not college material. I wanted to learn the different ways children learn, and learn the methods to help them.

What have you enjoyed most about teaching?

Mostly I enjoy getting to know students, how they learn, and meeting them where they are in their learning. Nothing is more gratifying than to

experience students improve reading, writing and organization skills, and take flight with their learning. However, I do love all the fun parts of being in our learning community; going on Cheshed and class trips, taking part in the planning of events and sales as a Grade Advisor, enjoying the shows, and kvelling at Moving Up Day and Graduation.

What is the most important thing you have learned in your career as a teacher?

When I was in grad school, a professor said to us, "If you are nothing else, be humane." That stuck with me throughout my career and has helped me use methods I learned to enable students to progress with their learning. Meeting students where they are is an important learning and teaching tool for me in order to help students improve their skills and recognize their own love for learning.

What will you miss most about teaching?

I will miss the experiences I have loved when students recognize their potential and enjoy successful learning experiences. I will miss the teaching and learning community I have had the privilege to be a part of at Barrack. The faculty here are some of the most brilliant minds, as well as the most dedicated people to their profession. I have learned so much from them.

Is there anything you would like to tell your students?

Be true to yourselves; who you are is good enough; do not give up on your ambitions and dreams; be kind, be thoughtful, and help someone else as often as you can.

**Mrs. Rita Schuman (English Department):**



What made you want to be a teacher?

There really wasn't one epiphany moment. I always loved literature and working with children, so I guess it was always there.

What have you enjoyed most about teaching?

Clearly, getting to know the students and feeling that I could help improve their appreciation and knowledge of learning has been most enjoyable.

What is the most important thing you have learned in your career as a teacher?

I suppose being open to being a learner myself would be up there in importance -- not just as a teacher, but a life skill.

What will you miss most about teaching?

I will miss the students, sharing new discoveries about reading or writing, and working with like-minded colleagues.

**Mr. Barnett Kamen (Jewish Studies Department):**



What made you want to be a teacher?

I wanted to contribute and I knew I couldn't do politics

because I struggle with lying and that seems to be a prerequisite. I enjoyed being with kids -- tutoring, coaching, and refereeing. I liked making connections, so it was just a matter of finding the right subject.

What have you enjoyed most about teaching?

Getting to meet the highest quality of students. I don't know if I could have managed in a public school. I'm lucky to have worked here.

What is the most important thing you have learned in your career as a teacher?

No matter how good you are, you can always be better. Also, teaching requires an incredible amount of patience.

What will you miss most about teaching?

Being in the classroom. I really enjoy that and when I'm in the classroom I feel like my true self. My family complains that I never talk, but once I'm in the classroom I can't shut up. I'll also miss the students and the camaraderie with the faculty.

Is there anything you would like to tell your students?

Have fun and find love. If you do those two things you will be successful in life.

**Mrs. Karen Albero (Administrative Assistant to the Head of School and Muss Coordinator):**



What have you enjoyed most about working at Barrack?

I love working in a school environment. I love to hear the sound of our students passing in the hall outside my office...I believe children keep you young at heart. It has been a pleasure to work here!

What is the most important thing you have learned over the course of your career?

Here at Barrack, I have learned a sense of community within these walls...the students, faculty and staff are a family that supports one another in good times and bad. The love and support is always present here and that truly makes Barrack a special place.

What will you miss most about working at Barrack?

That's an easy question to answer...everyone and everything! I am very much looking forward to retirement and spending more time with my family and friends, but I will never forget the friendships I have made along the way!

On behalf of the entire student body, thank you to all these staff members for working so hard for so long to keep the school functioning and to help each student learn. Barrack truly won't be the same without you. Enjoy your retirement -- you've definitely earned it.



## The Reflections of our Quarter-Century Staff

*Raphael Englander, Executive Editor*

The Barrack community is made up of a large and wonderful assortment of staff members. Some of these staff members have been here a long time, longer than any of the current students have even been alive! The Chronicle thought it would be interesting to interview these pillars of the community to share their reflections of their time at Akiba/Barrack.

### Mr. Barnett Kamen, Jewish Studies Teacher, 27 years

Mr. Kamen comments that in Barrack's old building in Lower Merion, there was a limit on the number of students allowed into the school because of the small physical size of the facility. With the change in location and larger building, the school opened up to more students, expanding the Akiba/Barrack community.

Although the old building had its difficulties, being physically small and not having the greatest facilities, there was a feeling of kinship between the middle school and high school. The two sections of the student body were not as separate and there was more social interaction between grades. Mr. Kamen would love to see this return. Maybe we can set up buddy programs?

Mr. Kamen also notes that as the years go on, there seems to be more of a loss in Hebrew ability. Mr. Kamen used to teach many classes solely in Hebrew, but now most are only in English. He believes there is true value in studying these texts in their original form. The form takes precedence over the content. Hopefully, this too may return with the continuation of the Beit Midrash program.

There is a Confucious quote that used to hang in the old building: "Love where you work and never work a day in your life." Mr. Kamen is thankful for twenty-seven years of never having to work.

### Mrs. Ivy Kaplan, History Teacher, 26 years

Mrs. Kaplan has always loved being at Akiba/Barrack, witnessing its growth and modernization. She has maintained the classroom interactions between teacher and student, ensuring that students are thinking critically, while wisely integrating new technology into the lesson plan. She makes sure to utilize technology for research and final drafts, but values the old-school pen and paper approach for most else.

Mrs. Kaplan hopes to one day see the name Akiba return to the school. Rabbi Akiva, who lived 2,000 years ago, was such a great teacher, and to have the school associated with a famous educator and theologian in Jewish history meant a lot. This in no way indicates that she does not appreciate the contributions of the Barrack family. They have been vital to the student body and community.

One challenge for Mrs. Kaplan has been keeping up with the constant movement of living history. In the senior year curriculum, study of the twentieth century finished in the nineteen-seventies. However, history has moved on. Mrs. Kaplan and the rest of the History Department are always discussing how to incorporate the past forty-five years.

She views the school as a second family, her work home, and it has been a fabulous feeling to know that she was walking into a place as comfortable as her own house every day. Mrs. Kaplan loved coming into work.

### Mrs. Rivka Markovitz, Hebrew Teacher, 29 years

When Morah Ricky first began at Akiba, the textbooks were old and the content was not relevant to the students. Since then, the curriculum has adapted with the times, including online activities and videos. She encourages conversational skills and the ability to fluently speak the language, rather than the former sole focus on reading and writing. Morah Ricky has also been able to discuss topics not included in the books, to go off the curriculum from time to time. She can talk about Israeli society and the diverse communities in Israel, all while solidifying students' Hebrew.



Morah Ricky believes that the Muss study in Israel program should return to its half-year, full trimester, format. The longer program allowed students to have more of a chance to be immersed in Israeli society, the purpose of the Muss program. Additionally, she hopes that the school will bring back the weekly sing-alongs. Each grade would learn the same songs and then sing them together on holidays and other occasions, bringing an improved atmosphere and inter-grade connection. Morah Ricky used to teach Jewish Studies as well as Hebrew. By teaching these courses in Hebrew, not only was the study more enriching for the students, but their grasp of the language was strengthened.

Morah Ricky remembers arriving at the school decades ago for her interview and feeling as though she was coming home, a feeling that has not left.

### Mr. Dewey Oriente, Drama Teacher, 34 years

As time has gone on, Akiba/Barrack has become a more diverse and accepting place. When Mr. Oriente started working here, he ran TASK (Teaching Acceptance Seeking Knowledge), the club that would later morph into GSA (Gender Sexuality Alliance). At the time, however, the club could not use words such as gender, sexuality,



or gay in its title. Now, the Akiba/Barrack community is far more open, and the fact that the new title, GSA, actually contains the words gender and sexuality is crucial.

In the past, the teachers had communal offices. Mr. Oriente's office in the old Barrack building had teachers from the Core, Art, Health and Physical Education, and Jewish Studies departments. Everyone was on top of each other, in a nice way. It was impossible to not see anyone. Now he can go weeks without seeing certain faculty, albeit COVID has further contributed to this.

Originally, Mr. Oriente was only here part time in the spring to direct the upper school musical. When the music teacher at the time left, Mr. Oriente was asked to develop art electives to fill the missing spots. From there, he started teaching drama and cooking courses. Eventually, Mr. Oriente created the winter middle school musical and the autumn upper school play. By that point, he was at the school all year round and became a full-time teacher. As time has progressed, he has added bit by bit to the program. He never expected to be a full-time teacher but it has been a gift.

Mr. Oriente hopes to see the former camaraderie return. He is a department of one, with no one to bounce ideas off of. He recalls that when he first started at Barrack, his colleagues were a valuable source of advice on developing curricula and teaching the material to students in a way they could understand.

### Mr. Naim Pollard, Maintenance, 30 years

Mr. Pollard acknowledges the great improvements that came with Barrack's move to the new facility in Bryn Mawr. With a large campus, the students are able to stretch their legs, have more space to move, and can participate in community activities on the field. He remembers that these opportunities were not as readily available at the older building.



On the other hand, because of the large size, the community is more spread out, separated. Mr. Pollard used to see and talk to everyone, both student and teacher, in the hallways because everyone was so close together. Now, there is more of a disconnect, although COVID has played its part in this.

Mr. Pollard fondly remembers his time as the boys' basketball coach, being able to spend time with the students in a way he normally would not. Through this time, he could appreciate just how similar students are to one another, no matter where they are from or what their identity is. Kids are kids. Mr. Pollard loves seeing everyone in the community on a daily basis. Just as the slogan says "love where you learn," he "loves where he works."

*Continued on page 19*

## Graduating Seniors Share Lessons Learned

*Benny Scheinmann, School News Editor*

live in poverty and were possibly misguided by violent unrest in their neighborhoods. The seniors went to Blain Elementary in Philadelphia to assist underprivileged children. This community service opportunity was a huge success.

On June 15th, the seniors will finally graduate. Unlike last year, this graduation will be held on the turf field, very likely with a mask requirement. Although the graduation will still be different from pre-pandemic years, for example, sitting only with their families, and only being allowed to invite a limited number of guests, nevertheless, seniors are very excited, especially graduation speaker Noah Frisch. Noah is "so excited for graduation. It's the culmination of so much hard work, so many hours

wynfordroyals.org



of grinding. I can't wait to get up there and give the speech of the century to all my friends and family."

After being at Barrack for so long, seniors have a great deal of advice for younger students. Ilan Gordon says the most important thing to remember is "how quick time goes by and to enjoy the times you have with your friends, rather than stress about work." Similarly, Ronen Adler, when asked about his reflections on his time at Barrack, said that the pandemic made him "appreciate being with other people, so it has made us try and make senior year as normal as possible just by being together." Although a terrible pandemic, COVID-19 made many people understand and appreciate things they used to take for granted but could not do this year.

With seniors heading to a new chapter in their lives, hopefully they can use some of their own advice and cherish every moment, because just like Ronen Adler says, "It'll be gone just like that."



## COVID-19 Vaccine Rollout in the U.S.

*Sophia Mittman, Staff Writer*

The COVID-19 vaccination rollout increased drastically over the past few months in the U.S. As of April 20, 2021, approximately 25.7% of Americans were fully vaccinated. This implies they were given either both shots of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine, or the single dose of the Johnson and Johnson vaccine. President Joe Biden also announced that on April 19, 2021, all Americans over the age of sixteen were eligible for a COVID-19 vaccine. On May 10, 2021, the FDA approved that children ages 12-15 were eligible for a Pfizer vaccine. On May 12, 2021, CDC officials met to discuss the vaccine for this age group.

President Biden stated that he wished for 100 million shots to be administered during his first 100 days as President; in order to achieve this goal, roughly 1.5 million shots needed to be given each day. Biden's 100 million goal was hit on Day 54 and then he aimed for 200 million. This goal passed as well, all before Day 100. Since April 2021, the rates of U.S citizens receiving a vaccine increased to a great extent from 1.7 million doses being given per day to 2.3 million doses each day. Pennsylvania, specifically, has also been doing a great job distributing its supplies of vaccines; approximately 8.6 million had been administered by May 1. By the time this article goes to print, it is likely that everyone who wanted a vaccine would have been able to get one.

A plethora of online sites are now allowing Americans to book vaccine appointments. At the start of the vaccine rollout, states had many restrictions on those eligible for the vaccine. As time passed, however, those restrictions were slowly pulled back, allowing for all Americans over the age of 16 to get a vaccine. This was followed by all over the age of 12. Countless people were hoping that the vaccine rollout would increase so that they could move on with their lives. Indoor restaurants began accepting more people to dine once many had been vaccinated. Then mask mandates began to be lifted in many locations, and public schools began planning regular in-class teaching for September. (Many private schools, like Barrack, had been conducting hybrid teaching all year, and by the spring had transitioned to an in-class model.) As of mid-May, the percentage of Americans in the U.S given their initial vaccine dose was about 48% (more than 158 million), and these numbers are increasing daily. With a population of 332 million people and more than 124 million being fully vaccinated as of May 18th, it is impressive how rapidly these rates increased. COVID-19 impacted peoples' lives significantly, but it is shocking to see how quickly our lives are becoming normal again.

## A "Wright Brothers" Moment 117 Years Later

*Shira Dorff, Staff Writer*

On July 30, 2020, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) launched a rover named Perseverance, seeking a landing on Mars. Inside of the rover was a small helicopter named Ingenuity. On the 18th of February 2021, they landed. Then, on Monday, April 19, 2021, Ingenuity attempted the first-ever flight on Mars. The historic flight lasted for thirty seconds and flew ten feet in the air. Ingenuity is now the first powered, controlled craft to fly on another planet, prompting many, including NASA, to call its flight a "Wright Brothers moment." NASA is even calling the location of Ingenuity's first flight "Wright Brothers Field," referring to the two Wright brothers, Orville and Wilbur, who, in 1903, were the first people to successfully make a controlled, sustained flight. In a little over a hundred years we have gone from flying planes in North Carolina to flying helicopters on Mars. "It feels nuts," says Farah Alibay, a systems engineer at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL). "We've been flying on Earth for just over 100 years, and now we're like, 'Yeah, we're gonna go to another planet and fly'. It's crazy. But that's the beauty of exploration. That's the beauty of engineering."

Even once Ingenuity completed its first flight, the control center at JPL didn't get a video right away. At first, all they had was data, through which they were able to tell that Ingenuity's flight was successful. Soon after, a video was sent, taken by Perseverance. After seven years of work, Ingenuity's flight was emotional for NASA and for people around the world.

Ingenuity's parent rover, Perseverance, is about the size of a car and weighs 2,260 pounds. It is the fifth rover to make its way to Mars. It was in charge of sending a video of Ingenuity's flight back to Earth, though it also had its own separate mission to collect data to see if there is or was ever any microbial life on Mars. So far, it has not found any. It will also collect rock samples that will be sent back to earth.

Ingenuity has been doing more test flights on Mars since its first. On Thursday, April 22, during its second flight, it stayed in the air for 51.9 seconds, and instead of hovering only ten feet above the surface, flew sixteen feet. It also performed a slight tilt at 5-degrees, allowing for some of the thrust from the counter-rotating rotors to accelerate the craft sideways for seven feet.

Basically, the helicopter flew up in the air, came to a stop, hovered in place, turned, then flew back down. That may sound simple, but there were so many unknowns since Ingenuity was flying on Mars. Its third flight, on Sunday, April 25, was different from either flight before it. The craft rose sixteen feet in the air, however, instead of just hovering there, it flew 164 feet, roughly half the size of a football field, and reached a top speed of 6.6 feet per second. The team that has been working with Ingenuity has been pushing the craft's limits, including having it take color photographs. Ingenuity was a high risk project but also a highly rewarding one. Its success is huge for learning more about Mars and the galaxy we live in. NASA is hoping to build helicopters just like Ingenuity to send to one of Jupiter's moons, Europa, and one of Saturn's moons, Titan. A project to Europa could be happening by 2024 and a project to Titan by 2027. Both of these projects will be looking to see if either moon could be habitable. They will also be searching for alien life, because who knows, maybe we are not alone in this galaxy and we never knew it. We will only find out if we look, because we learn nothing if we don't seek to learn.



## The Shocking Military Coup of Myanmar

*Aron Shklar, Editor-In-Chief*

Democracy died in Myanmar on the morning of February 1st. Just hours before the first session of their newly-elected, second-ever Parliament, the powerful military, known as the Tatmadaw, seized power in a coup d'etat, detaining President Aung San Suu Kyi and many of her top ministers on the grounds of alleged election irregularities. But as protests erupted across the country and global condemnations were aired, the coup turned from an attack on democracy to a mass violation of human rights. Now, the country is awash in blood and bodies, forced under the heel of a powerful and deadly military junta. This horrifying situation must be brought to light so that proper and influential action may be taken.



**Commander-In-Chief Min Aung Hlaing, the mastermind of the coup.**

While military coups may seem rare, this is not the first time that Myanmar has suffered under martial law. In 2011, the country held its first democratic elections after 50 years of brutal military control. In November 2020, the county held its second-ever democratic vote, with Nobel prize winner and de facto civilian leader Aung San Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy (NLD) party overwhelmingly winning 83% of the vote, and 443 out of 476 seats in Parliament. However, the military claimed mass voter fraud, sparking off barely-dormant political tensions. The morning before the second Parliament was to begin, the military detained Ms. Suu Kyi and other government officials, before proceeding to shut down all local news channels but the military-owned Myawaddy TV and sending soldiers into the streets on patrol. Army Commander-In-Chief Min Aung Hlaing took leadership of the country and declared a year-long State of Emergency. Hlaing, who has been under U.S. sanctions since December 2019 over his role in the Rohingya Genocide, claimed that the military was doing this for the good of the people, and that they would form a "true and disciplined democracy." Hlaing has been head of the military since 2011, and the military held onto significant power even after the democratic elections that took place in that year. In addition, Hlaing and his family have grown in power and wealth since that

time. According to Myanmar law, he would have been forced to retire in July when he turns 65, however, with the country under martial law, that would not happen.

In response to the coup, the people of Myanmar took to the streets in protest, but chances of a peaceful response vanished quickly. While the protests were initially non-violent, the military responded with might, firing live bullets into the crowds and throwing tear gas grenades. In response, many demonstrators chose to fight back, now armed with makeshift molotov cocktails, home-built weapons, slingshots and stones, and makeshift barricades in the roads. To counter the tear gas, protesters began arriving in gas masks and lighting barricades and vehicles on fire. The military again responded with increasing violence and began killing at random, as well as conducting raids on houses and their occupants. At time of writing, over 780 people have been killed by the military response, one of the youngest victims being Khin Myo Chit, a seven-year-old girl killed in her home during a military raid. The fact that democracy in Myanmar lived only a little longer than this innocent girl shows that the military has no interest in the good of the people.

Response to the events in Myanmar have come from outside as well as inside. In a statement made shortly after the coup, President Joe Biden called it a "direct assault on the country's transition to democracy and the rule of law." President Biden also threatened to review recently-removed sanctions on Myanmar, or to add more if the situation persisted. Nearer countries, such as Indonesia, Thailand, and China, have issued responses as well.

**"The youngest victim of the coup was a seven-year-old girl, Khin Myo Chit."**

Indonesia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs urged all parties involved to act with self-restraint and peace in order to avoid violence. In Bangkok, the capital of Thailand (which experienced its own military coup in 2014), protesters gathered outside the Myanmar Embassy to burn pictures of Min Aung Hlaing. In China, they urged Myanmar to handle its differences in a way that maintains political and social structure.

Sadly, there is no change on the horizon for the time being. The military has no interest in returning to civilian rule, and as such, the protests will not stop. Until the world can take effective action, we must hope that the violence is soon resolved, and that the situation does not grow worse.



NFL Draft Winners and Losers

Jacob Hare, Sports Editor

After every NFL draft, there always seems to be one circulating question: Who were the biggest winners of the draft and who were the biggest losers? With that being said, here are three teams I believe made great selections and three teams who made some questionable decisions.

Winners:  
Lions:

While I didn't like the hire of Motor City Dan Campbell because I don't believe he is suited to be an NFL head coach, he, alongside new General Manager Brad Holmes nailed their first draft as head coach and general manager, respectively. In his infamous opening press conference, Campbell said that "we're going to get up, and on the way up, we're going to bite a kneecap off," foreshadowing the physical play that Campbell wants to bring to Detroit. In his first draft, he indeed drafted some players who might bite a kneecap off. Let's start with their first round selection, Penei Sewell. Significantly few people believed that the Bengals would pass at Sewell at five and let him fall into Detroit's lap at 7. Sewell, who received a 95.8 grade in 2019 from Pro Football Focus, has been regarded as one of the best offensive line prospects in the last decade. He has everything you want from your offensive tackle: the size, the athleticism, the hands, and the skill set. Football Morning in America writer Peter King also had this to say about Sewell, "If I could pick one player in this draft who's got the best chance to go to the Hall of Fame, it's Penei Sewell" -- pretty high praise from a legendary writer. Another pick that I loved for the Lions was Amon-Ra St. Brown in the 4th round. St. Brown is a physical wide receiver whose yards-after-catch ability can make football fans fall in love with him. He also has body control that is out of this world. While Detroit hasn't been good in a very long time, the future looks bright after their 2021 draft.

Jaguars:

Ok, this is the obvious choice, but I think you win the draft when you get a quarterback who has the potential to be a Hall of Famer. If I could describe new Jaguars quarterback Trevor Lawrence in one word, it would be 'Perfect.' Lawrence is perfect in everything he does; he is fast, he is accurate, he has a cannon for an arm; the list can go on and on about how remarkable Lawrence can be. While many people questioned the Travis Etteine pick, I was one of the few people who liked it for two reasons. First, this pick makes Lawrence very happy to be reunited with his college teammate, someone he threw eight touchdowns to at Clemson. Next, while the Jaguars already have a superb young running back in James Robinson, you can never have enough talent at one position. While I am normally against taking a running back in round one, I believe the Jaguars got an extraordinary talent, and this selection will pay off. Watch out for the Jaguars.

Chargers:

Going into the offseason, General Manager Tom Telesco knew he had to prioritize one thing over everything else: getting future-star Quarterback Justin Herbert protection. While Herbert had an outstanding rookie campaign in 2020, the Chargers offensive line was dreadful. In free agency, the Chargers went out and spent big time money on all pro center Corey Linsley; in the draft, Rashawn Slater fell into their laps at pick 13. Slater, who I believe will be an All-Pro player one day, will help the development of budding superstar

Justin Herbert. The Chargers also drafted Asante Samuel Jr. in the second round, someone I believe was a first round talent, so getting him in the second round was an absolute steal and can really pay off.

Honorable mentions: Jets, Browns, and Dolphins



CBS Sports

2020 Heisman Trophy winner Devonta Smith after the Eagles picked him 10th overall.

Losers:

Raiders:

Why does it feel like every single year we see the headline, "Jon Gruden and Mike Mayock reach for a player in the first round?" Well, that was the case again, and soon it's going to cost both of them their jobs. In the first round, they selected Alex Leatherwood, an offensive lineman from Alabama. While Leatherwood should be a viable offensive lineman for many years, there is no doubt the Raiders reached with this pick, as Leatherwood had a 60 percent chance of being open at the Raiders' second-round pick, according to ESPN. Overall, it didn't seem as though Las Vegas really filled their needs. We listened to Mike Mayock give draft advice on the NFL Network for all those years, and he can't draft? Soon he might be returning as a draft analyst rather than drafting for an NFL team.

Packers:

The Packers are on this list more because of what happened during the week of the draft with their MVP quarterback. Adam Schefter of ESPN reported that Aaron Rodgers doesn't want to return to the Green Bay Packers. This was a move that many people saw coming, and it all started in 2020 when the Packers didn't inform Rodgers that they intended to take his heir apparent: Jordan Love. The Packers have also never given Rodgers a legit wide receiver not named Davante Adams in the past few seasons. Now the Packers will be forced to have to turn to Love if Rodgers stays true to his word and does not report to the team.

Bengals:

Don't get me wrong, I think that rookie wide receiver from LSU Ja'marr Chase is a stud, but he wasn't the right pick for the team. The Bengals have finally found their franchise quarterback in Joe Burrow after he had a great rookie season before tearing his ACL. Burrow already has the weapons to be a stud; it's the lack of protection that will limit his ability to be great. In football, I am a believer in the philosophy of winning games through the trenches. Every Super Bowl champion has a great offensive and defensive line. Wide receivers are not going to be able to block and catch for Burrow. By not investing in protection for Burrow, I genuinely believe the Bengals will regret this for the next 10-15 years.

Honorable mentions: Saints and Seahawks

With the 2021 NFL Draft now wrapped up we are that much closer to the 2021 season. After an awesome draft full of trades and surprises, I expect the 2021 season to be fantastic.

Crossword Answers From Page 20

Across

4. Many students at Barrack go to this fun summer experience for 2-8 weeks at a time. (camp)  
6. These structures are built out of sand and water. (sandcastles)  
8. These crash onto the shore at the beach. (waves)  
9. When you stay out in the sun for too long without sunscreen, you get a \_\_\_\_\_. (sunburn)

Down

1. These beautiful parts of nature bloom during the spring, but stay around for the whole summer. (flowers)  
2. This delicious treat tastes even better with rainbow sprinkles. (icecream)  
3. The Spanish word is 'playa'. (ocean)  
5. This red fruit grows on a type of vine. (strawberry)  
7. The last full month of summer before we go back to school. (august)



## Athlete of the Issue: Benji Axelrod '22

*Danny Cohen, Editor-In-Chief*

"Cougars on 3, Family on 6." After every practice and game, the Barrack baseball team comes together and shouts these words. Benji Axelrod '22 calls the team a "family," noting that this particular group of guys is "special."

A lefty that can play almost anywhere in the field, Benji Axelrod '22 has been an impactful member of the Barrack baseball team since 9th grade. However, there is one particular position that Axelrod excels at: Pitcher. Throwing a 65 MPH fastball and mixing in a cutter and changeup in 9th grade, Benji was a good pitcher; however, he wanted to become *great*. Over the next two years, Axelrod would not stop working on his pitching. Aaron Heller '22, a friend of Benji's since kindergarten, notes, "I always see him putting in the extra work after practice with his coach in order to perfect his pitching, so when the season comes along he can [play to] the best [of] his ability." As a result of this hard work, Axelrod now throws a consistent 76-80 MPH fastball, and added curveball and changeup to his arsenal. He feels as though he has "grown an incredible amount as a ball player," and his play on the field backs it up. Already, Axel-

rod has thrown a complete game shutout, recording 14 strikeouts. He currently holds a great ERA (earned run average) and continues to dominate opposing batters.

Benji's favorite thing about pitching is "definitely" striking people out. He feels as though it "gets me going" and he enjoys "feeding off the intensity of it." When Axelrod is throwing, he gets "very enthusiastic," and hopes that his enthusiasm can help energize the rest of the team. On the mound, the southpaw has a "next play mentality." When his teammates make an error, Axelrod does "not get down on the whole team," instead, he focuses on the next play and keeps his head up. Axelrod understands that if he is thinking about the previous play, it will negatively affect him against the next batter. Benji also recognizes that this mentality is just as important in life, using a math test as an example. "Let's say I don't do well on a test. I can move on and focus on how I'm going to do better on the next one."

When Axelrod is not pitching, he is a very energetic and supportive teammate. While he pitched a complete game shutout this season, Benji states that his favorite moment as a Cougar



**Benji Axelrod '22 pitching against Delaware County Christian School**

jaygorodetzer.com

was when Ilan Gordon '21 hit a home run against Malvern Prep. Heller remarks that his favorite part of having Benji as a teammate is his "enthusiasm and work ethic." Hunter Kimmel '22 loves playing with Benji as he "always wants to be the best player he can be and always wants to make sure the team succeeds." On and off the pitcher's mound, Benji will always support others and give full effort 100% of the time.

If you're ever in the batter's box and facing Benji Axelrod, good luck -- he will probably strike you out.

## Barrack Spring Sports Recap

*Caleb Shapiro Mendelsohn and Yoni Webner, Staff Writers*

With the arrival of spring sports, it is always necessary that we catch you up on all of Barrack's games, meets, and matches of the season.

Starting off with track and field, the team had its first two meets against Friends Central and Delaware Valley Christian. Highlights included two juniors, Liam Cooperberg '22 and Jacob Spivack '22, competing in their first-ever school track meet. Both athletes finished second in their heat for the 100-meter dash. In the other events, Barrack placed considerably well! In the 400m dash, Isaac Klein '22 placed second; in the discus, Yonatan Hassidim '22 broke the school record with an astounding 93-foot throw! After his amazing achievement, Hassidim told us: "I'd always wanted to leave a mark on this school and I finally have it. Even if it's just my name written in small letters on a wall, it means something to me and my legacy at this school. I'd always wanted to hold some type of record

and finally accomplishing that type of goal just finally made me satisfied."

Both the boys' and girls' lacrosse teams are also off to a hot start to this season. The boys are undefeated in conference play while the girls are coming off a strong home-opening win. A high point within the boys' season was in the match versus Lansdale Catholic: Roni Cohen had a breakout game as he went 8-8 on face-offs for the Cougars. After Roni's incredible performance, we interviewed him and he said: "I started training for face-offs this year. It's always been a goal of mine to be a real component of a winning team, and this year is exactly that. The feeling of having my first-ever 100% face-off percentage was something unexplainable. Every time we matched up at the face-off X, I felt a sort of superiority over the other team, which was [created] by the confidence my coaches and teammates had in me. I can't wait to get to

work with this excellent group of guys. Go White!"

Over to girls' lacrosse, the Cougars have been playing exceptionally well, with Jenna Ufberg scoring goals left and right, and Jena Rose saving many shots. Rose was a huge factor in the girls' 13-5 victory over Westtown, ending the game with 9 saves.

Led by seniors Blake Fox and Luke Finkelstein, the Barrack tennis team was able to take down Friends Select 3-2 to get their first victory of the season!

On to softball, the girls' team faced off against the Academy of New Church on April 22nd in a cold and windy game. Although they didn't get the outcome they would have liked, the team still managed to score 12 runs in a single game: an impressive feat that definitely shouldn't go unnoticed.

*Continued on Page 18*



## Interview with NBA Reporter Dave McMenamin

*Jacob Hare, Sports Editor*

Dave McMenamin, an NBA Reporter for ESPN, is one of the most well-respected reporters in the basketball world. The *Cougar Chronicle* had the opportunity to interview Dave about his career, basketball, and much more. A transcript of the interview follows:

***Cougar Chronicle:* Was there ever a moment that made you realize that you wanted to go into sports journalism/broadcasting?**

**Dave McMenamin:** "Yeah, I guess there were many moments. I started being a sports-obsessed kid because my family was into it. You know what it's like growing up outside of Philadelphia? Sports are a way of life. My dad was a pro-sports fan. My older sister played sports and was a pretty good high school athlete. She played basketball, field hockey, lacrosse and was pretty good at all of it. Sports were what I was into when I was a kid; I was not the most athletic, but I love basketball, so I worked really hard to become a decent player. But I was most academically strong in writing, and I loved to read. What I was good at was writing, and then combining that with what I love, which was basketball. When I was in eighth grade, one of my buddies and I were making a newsletter on Microsoft Paint or whatever the program was back in the day, and writing small, short stories and articles about what we love about the NBA and the players who we are watching and our theoretical power rankings and stuff like that. We would print them out and put them out at the lunch tables. And from there, I was in high school, I was writing for some of the local papers in the Philly suburbs: The *Main Line Times*, The *Suburban*, and *Wayne Times*. And even before college, I got an internship with NBC 10 on City Line Avenue. Doors kept opening, and I still had the interest. And so it was like, why would I stop? And that's kind of the story of my career."

**CC:** How did you end up at ESPN?

**DM:** I worked for NBA.com out of college and worked there for about five years. My last year with NBA.com, they entered into a partnership with Turner Broadcasting, so they moved their television studio from New Jersey, where I was working, to Atlanta. And they had these meetings where they were like, OK, so now that it's a partnership like you guys have been working here, what would you do to make the website better? And I was like, well, whenever we write about the Lakers and Kobe, our traffic spikes; it's clearly the most popular player and team. And some of them are, I guess, "competitors" like other places where you go for NBA coverage, ESPN, Yahoo, CBS Sports. Those sites have writers spread out. They don't have all the writers in the New York metropolitan area. And so I said, yeah, we should have someone in LA, and I was twenty-five at the time. I was saying this as a theoretical concept. I went to Syracuse, and all my best friends live in New York, all my family's in Philly. So I wasn't like saying you should send me to LA. But they came back after discussing that idea down in Atlanta with another staff meeting about a month later. And they said to me OK, so that LA idea of yours, we like it, and Dave, when can you move? So I moved to LA. But this was around the recession, so I covered the Lakers winning the championship in 2009 for NBA.com and the championship parade and everything like that. I want to say it was less than a week later that I got laid off because they lost 20 percent of all the staff; they started this new project called NBA Digital. Digital was a partnership between NBA.com and Turner, and they had this course correct. So now I'm twenty-five. Now, like everybody else, I'm unemployed, just lost my dream job. But I had an interview with ESPN for a job

in 2008. I didn't get it. It was Henry Abbott who was interviewing for a number two, but I got deep into the interview process, so I got to know some of the folks on the NBA side at ESPN. And lo and behold, the timing worked out around the same time I was laid off. ESPN was just starting a string of local sites. So I think when I was laid off in Chicago, I had already been watched. And in short order, they launched ESPN, Boston, ESPN, Dallas in LA, and I think the last one was in New York. And so it wasn't long before I found out that they're going to be looking for staff in LA and so because of our great folks at ESPN, I was like, I would be completely insistent that whatever I could do, and it was tough because my lease was ending and my roommates were moving on in life. And I had to decide what I wanted to do because I don't have a job at this point. And through a friend of a friend, I ended up subletting a place for a month to do the ESPN interviews in person. I had my stuff in boxes. One month, I just had my bed and a couple of suits and a couple of pairs of basketball sneakers and workout gear. And fortunately enough, I got the job, and I was able to start with ESPN right before Christmas 2009 and have been at ESPN ever since.

**CC:** What advice would you give a young journalist?

**DM:** You're going to have to work hard. When you're in high school and college, there's a natural way for you to prove where you stand amongst your peers because there are papers that you write and there are tests that you take, and you get graded, and then those grades result in your GPA. You know exactly where you stand. But once you're in the workforce, it's all subjective. And my way to get around was maybe by playing favorites or getting around; maybe someone is getting the more enviable assignment or whatever; just you can't slack off in my work. You get to have a work ethic that I will not be taking days off during the season. I'll take a vacation in the off-season. But during the season, I'm not going to take a random practice off because of whatever. No, I'll do all my other stuff on my time. If the team I'm covering is playing or practicing I'm going to be there. And then beyond that, it's about going above and beyond. And that's been the most challenging part about this job: in the last 14, 15 months. I got pretty good at doing a job with the resources that I was accustomed to in terms of sending me to every game. And so the night before the game when I'm in a random city, I can link up with an assistant coach or an assistant general manager for a dinner or a couple of drinks and then the day of the game, maybe do the same thing, get a coffee with someone like that. I recognized over time that you just absorb it like it's relationship building. Everyone says if you actually had to like their steps, you have to do right. So I got good at that. Like, I'm not going to just stay in my hotel room and watch a movie or whatever.

**CC:"** What's your all-time starting five?"

**DM:"** Well, this isn't easy, but I'll go Shaq at center. Kareem had a better career, but Shaq is so dominant I couldn't imagine not taking him. Then it gets tricky because Magic can't shoot it in today's NBA, and if I am going to build a team that can win, I'm going to need some roster balance because Lebron and Michael Jordan aren't excellent shooters, and Shaq isn't a good shooter so give me Steph as my point guard. I don't believe he's a top-five player ever, but I need him if I'm going to win. At power forward, give me Hakeem because he was so talented that he could play the four even though his natural position was center. So my lineup would be Stephen Curry, Michael Jordan, Lebron James, Hakeem Olajuwon, and Shaquille O'Neal."

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### Spring Sports Recap

Along with the softball team, the baseball team has also scored an incredible number of runs. Outscoring their opponents 46-17, with three games being shutouts, the Barrack baseball team has looked extremely impressive. In the double-header vs Solebury, the Cougars ended up winning by a combined score of 30-0. In these two games, Pitcher Benji Axelrod threw 14 strike-outs and a shutout, Ben Beal recorded 5 RBIs and 13 strikeouts, Ilan Gordon threw out three batters and hit a 2-run homerun, and Aaron Heller had a 5-hit game. Along with these performances, many other players also had notable plays; Hunter Kimmel hit a triple, Noah Pomerantz had a crucial RBI, Aiden Sandler had multi-hit games, Danny Cohen pitched a shutout inning, and Ronen Adler hit an RBI to ultimately secure his first hit in varsity baseball.

With it being Barrack's first sports season since winter last year, it is extremely impressive that all of its teams have performed to this caliber. Go Cougars!



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## Quarter Century Reflections

Mrs. Rita Schuman, English Teacher, 37 years

Mrs. Schuman notes that the school used to have a very narrow focus on what an Akiba/Barrack student should be. Over the years, however, more and more students of all different learning styles and approaches to their education have joined the community. This, in addition to the Resource program, allows students to flourish in many types of ways.

In the past, there was more communication between the administration, faculty, and students. There was a sense of a unified endeavor that everyone in the community was working towards. Because of the small size of the old building, students and teachers were also mingling and interacting. This sense of community was cherished and the school looks forward to a revitalization of this feeling.

Mrs. Schuman notes that the emphasis on critical reading and writing skills has never lessened. Akiba/Barrack has always taught multicultural literature, and her method of relating to and encouraging students has grown but also maintained the same foundation she started with upon her arrival at Akiba. She also feels that the faculty can now devote more time to each student and are able to individualize their teaching approach.

Ms. Laura Stern, Art Teacher, 25 years

When Ms. Stern first began teaching art, all middle school students had to take a quarter-year of art, but now it is an elective. As a result, only those who are truly interested in the subject invest their time, meaning that Ms. Stern can teach more focused classes concerning more advanced topics and processes. She is also able to bring in the techniques from her own professional career to give students usable skills.

In the old building the facilities were not up-to-par when compared to the current building. However, the former building had a lot of personality and a feeling of hominess, and was geographically closer to Ms. Stern's home, which meant a shorter commute.

Ms. Stern has stayed at Akiba/Barrack for so long because the school has continually evolved. Art used to be after school, like sports or drama. Now, students who want to participate in a sport or a production, or live far away, can take art classes free of those conflicts. Art can be a break from the stress of the more academic coursework, as well as imbuing students with hands-on skills and basic art history. This year, Ms. Stern has three advanced senior students, all of whom take her portfolio elective and will minor in art in college. These students are given a large chunk of time to independently work on individual projects. Ms. Stern finds it very satisfying to witness their progress.



Mrs. Olga Voskoboynik, Controller and Human Resources Director, 25 years

Ms. Voskoboynik came from her job as a financial advisor to look for a Jewish day school for her daughter. She never thought she would work for a school as all her life she worked for public companies. However, the environment at Akiba/Barrack was so warm and welcoming that she has been here ever since. She believes it is very important to raise the next generation of Jews who are firm supporters of Israel, have a strong grasp on their identities, and can become the next generation of leaders. Ms. Voskoboynik is proud of the graduates who make her work worthwhile.



She does everything she can to make sure that any family who wants to send their child to Barrack can do it, no matter the financial barrier. Some families need financial aid, especially with COVID, so Ms. Voskoboynik's role is to approach different foundations and ensure that the school is both economically stable today and also fifty years from today. A school cannot rely only on the academic component; the financial component of the school is also crucial. She is proud of the community.

Rabbi Michael Yondorf, Jewish Studies Teacher, 33

Rabbi Yondorf says that in the past, the students' chances to study Talmud at Barrack were far more limited. Only a single semester was offered in addition to the option of Talmud during the seniors' independent study periods. Today, the students who want to study Talmud can. The Beit Midrash program helps students to build critical thinking skills as everything in the Talmud is a challenge, and nothing is taken at face value. There was more of a cozy and intimate feeling in the old building, Rabbi Yondorf comments. Students and staff could gather in the foyer, and there were coffee houses and pop-up drama performances. Hopefully this homey feeling can return. Also, Rabbi Yondorf highly values students' opportunities to spend time together and with faculty outside of the confines of the building. (Before COVID, he used to invite students for Shabbat dinner.) He states, "It is important to see teachers outside of their role as teachers, and as people." Over the years Rabbi Yondorf has been the designated male chaperone on many Akiba/Barrack trips, from Washington DC, to Boston, to Rome. He values this informal time with students outside of the classroom. He has also been a Student Association advisor for most of his years at the school, and has been involved in running, chaperoning and catering Shabbatonim. A fun fact is that when Rabbi Yondorf used to make soup for the Shabbatonim on Fridays, the seniors would form a line from the kitchen to snag a bowl (senior soup day).



# The At-Home Zoos of the Barrack Faculty

*Raphael Englander, Executive Editor*

**Ms. Marsha Messinger, Core**

Ms. Messenger has two dogs, an eight-year-old poodle mix, Lucky, whom she adopted from the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, and an eight-year-old shih tzu mix, Lexie, whom she got when Lexie's previous owner had to rehome her. Ms. Messinger has had dogs her entire adult life and has always had multiple. At one point she had five dogs at the same time (although it was a bit much!).



**Ms. Messenger's dogs**

She loves making a home for dogs that are homeless. Also, they keep her company and can sense when she does not feel well or is sad. In those moments, they stand by her and provide companionship. Her pet peeves are when they bark like maniacs whenever someone walks by with a dog. (She lives in an apartment complex, so this is fairly common.)

Ms. Messinger most loves how sweet and not demanding dogs are. "They are always happy to see me! If I have had a bad day, their wagging tails and kisses fix it all!"

**Ms. Cynthia Miller, Core**

Ms. Miller is the "mom" of two cats, Jip and Cuffy. Jip is 15 years old and loves to attend Ms. Miller's virtual Core online classes. Cuffy is 6 and

acts as the best natural alarm clock imaginable (especially if you want to wake up at 5:00 in the morning!).

Ms. Miller has had as many as six cats at the same time and they tend to live long lives. The ones she has lost are "angel cats" and they each have dances Ms. Miller's students do in their memory. (Her past and present students should all remember.)



**Ms. Miller's cat Jip**

She has always had animals -- "everything from parakeets, kitties, dogs, turtles...and I remember each one clearly." She also had a great relationship with a neighbor's dog when Ms. Miller was three. Her name was Queenie, and she was a "nanny" to all of the kids in the neighborhood.

Ms. Miller adopts pets because she simply loves them, always has and always will, although Jip and Cuffy do love to spread their food all over the kitchen floor as they eat it. "They have such individual personalities and they are lots of fun (dinner habits notwithstanding). I cannot imagine a life without them."

**Ms. Cheryl Gray-Mitchell, Science**

Ms. Gray-Mitchell and her family provide a

home to a wonderful and large assortment of animals. Her three dogs, Honey, Mabeline, and Beau, three cats, Diego, Darwin, and Rosie, two chickens, Ethel and Laverne, two dozen koi (with names like Fluffy, Here Comes the Sun, and more), and thirty thousand honey bees, definitely fill the house. As Ms. Gray-Mitchell puts it, "We are at carrying capacity."

Ms. Gray-Mitchell has had pets her entire life. Ever since her first cat, Midnight, and first dog, Sampson, Ms. Gray-Mitchell has found that "animals offer a great source of emotional comfort." As an only child, her pets were almost like siblings.

This long history with animals is reflected in Ms. GM's passion for rescuing animals from abusive and/or neglectful situations. All of her cats and dogs are rescues, with some of the dogs even coming from puppy mills. As a result, the animals arrive in all different emotional states and levels of training and socialization. Ms. Gray-Mitchell rehabilitates these animals and gives them a good home.

Ms. Gray-Mitchell and her husband love nature and being outdoors. This love for the natural world informed their decision to become beekeepers. Taking care of a honey bee hive is a "meaningful and fulfilling hobby" because honey bees are in danger of going extinct. One great benefit is that Ms.

*Continued on next page*



## How To Stay Connected Over the Summer

Margot Englander, Features, Games, and Arts Editor

With summer right around the corner comes overnight camp, family vacations, and the absence of everyday school. One of the major problems that students are now facing is “how to stay connected with friends over the summer.” Of course, this year and last year were especially difficult, given the addition of COVID restrictions. If you’re struggling with figuring out how to stay connected, look no further! Here are a couple of COVID-safe suggestions.

1. **Good old fashioned letter writing:** If you or a friend are heading to overnight camp this year, the only way to communicate is by writing letters! Time to whip out the old envelopes and stamps! While letters are most commonly used for overnight campers, you can still send letters to friends who aren’t away, and maybe you’ll discover a new-found appreciation for the time before phones.
2. **Hanging out in person (COVID-safe of course):** The best way to stay connected is to actually see your friends in person! Nothing can replace the feeling of seeing your friends and talking face to face. A couple of ideas are hanging out at the park, sharing a meal (outdoors and six feet away), or meeting at a friend’s house (preferably one who

has a big backyard and space to safely de-mask).

3. **Choose a hobby to “share” with your friends:** Sometimes the best way to connect with friends is to share your hobbies and interests. You and your friends can choose a book to read together, a TV show to binge, or an arts and crafts project to work on at the same time.
4. **FaceTime:** A fool-proof, comfortable, way to stay connected is to FaceTime/call your friends. This way you can wear pajamas, lie in bed, and basically do whatever you want, while being able to talk to your friends!
5. **Drive-In Movie:** If you or a friend has a safe space in your backyards, you can project a movie onto a screen and stay COVID-safe, while watching and enjoying snacks.
6. **Send A “Care” Package:** A great way to show your friends that you care about them is to send them packages of things that you know will make them happy. You could send snacks, candles, toys, and other fun things.

Hopefully, this summer, we will be able to see more friends and have more fun than in the summer of 2020.

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Gray-Mitchell can collect and eat the delicious honey and give it away to friends and family.

Ms. Gray-Mitchell has always loved Japanese gardens and gardening in general. This interest led to the building of a koi pond in her backyard. Sitting next to the water, watching the koi, and hearing the sound of the waterfall, while the fish eat out of her hand, “provides [Ms. GM] an inner peace.”

Last by not least are the chickens. The hens provide “yummy fresh eggs,” eat pests around the garden, and help fertilize the soil.

Ms. Gray-Mitchell’s many pets allow her to live in the present. They give a sense of companionship, help her forget the craziness of the outside world, and equally importantly, keep Ms. Gray-Mitchell warm in the winter!

### Ms. Stephanie Raphael, Core

Ms. Raphael has three cats, Johnny, who is thirteen, Jean Paul, who is four, and Ophelia, who is six months old. She got them all as kittens. Johnny is from Georgia while Jean Paul and Ophelia are local. She also had a dog named Charley, a three-year-old standard poodle, a six-year-old ferret named Dawg, and a myriad of fish.

Although her parents did not let Ms.

### At Home Zoos

Raphael



### Ms. Raphael’s ferret

have any pets except for the occasional cat, once she was on her own it all changed. At one point she had four cats, two ferrets, a guinea pig, and two dogs. Ms. Raphael’s animal pet peeves are scooping litter and when the dog barks incessantly and does not listen. Also, when he takes off at the dog park, and you’re thinking, “Yeah, don’t know when I’ll see him again.”

She adopts animals because they are fun, affectionate, and bring her great joy. (The dog can be a pain in the neck sometimes though.) The kitten just embodies joy. “We all need more joy in our lives.”

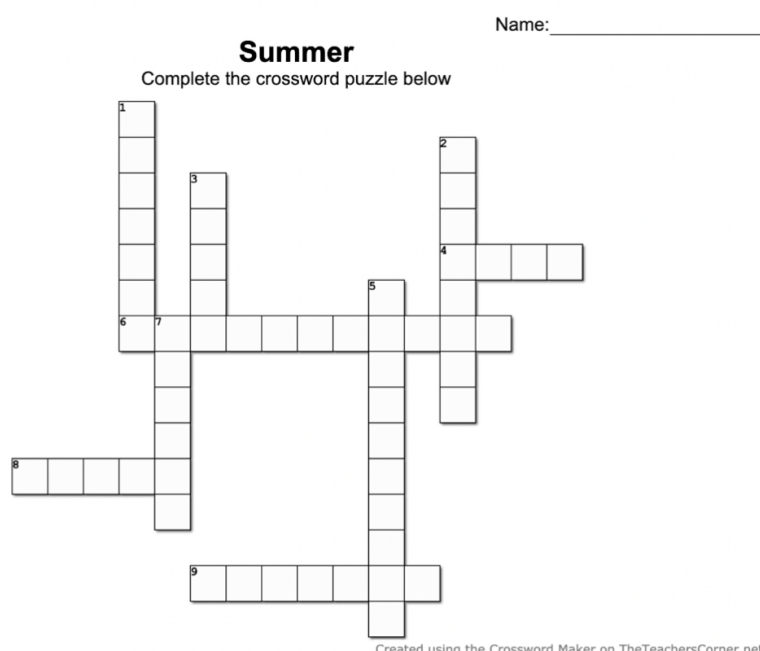
### The Covid Mishap

Eve Kobell, Staff Writer



### Summer Crossword

Margot Englander, Features, Games, and Art Editor



#### Across

4. Many students at Barrack go to this fun summer experience for 2-8 weeks at a time.
6. These structures are built out of sand and water.
8. These crash onto the shore at the beach.
9. When you stay out in the sun for too long without sunscreen, you get a \_\_\_\_\_.

#### Down

1. These beautiful parts of nature bloom during the spring, but stay around for the whole summer.
2. This delicious treat tastes even better with rainbow sprinkles.
3. The Spanish word is 'playa'.
5. This red fruit grows on a type of vine.
7. The last full month of summer before we go back to school.