

The Roundup

magazine

By the students and for the students of Hills West

Volume: 37 Issue: 4

THE TUTOR DYNASTY

Opinion

Also Included In This Issue:

- HHH Library renovation
- Calling all "Smart Creatives!"
- What's With All That Racquet?



Doran's Classroom of the Future

JAIME WEINREB

It is not a secret that most students find classroom time to be monotonous and tedious. Teachers are finding more and more that their students are becoming less and less enthusiastic about coming to class every day to learn. Hills West English teacher, Mr. Doran, hopes that he can change the way students feel about class time and learning. Mr. Doran is in the process of trying to transform the traditional classroom setup (desk/row seating arrangement) into a workspace similar to that of a Google office or Starbucks cafe.

In his classroom next year, desks will be replaced with bean bag chairs, stools, workbenches and/or couches, giving students a more relaxed and stimulating environment to occupy. Mr. Doran hopes that this change will spark interest when students walk through the door. "I want students not to think of themselves as numbers--mere statistics on a page--and to enjoy school the way that they did when they were children. I look at my daughter and every day she is excited to go to school. She comes home brimming with interest in all subjects. I want teenagers to experience that feeling again because the world embraces creativity and passion. I think these are the characteristics that breed success and personal fulfillment."

Mr. Doran wants his classroom to function like a place of employment and hopes his classroom encourages his students to be innovative and imaginative. "Smart Creatives," a term coined by Eric

Schmidt and Jonathan Rosenberg in their book *How Google Works*, describes the type of employees Google attracts and the type of student Mr. Doran wishes to cultivate. At Google, smart creatives are the perfect employees of what is now being called the information age; they are the type to explore their ideas without hesitation. Schmidt describes them as "...the folks who combine technical knowledge,

becoming experts at those skills, and teaching those skills to others. Teaching is the best way to learn."

Mr. Doran has already received a full class set of Google Chromebooks for his students. Each student will be able to access Google Classroom and will be allowed to use their cellular devices for academic purposes when necessary. Endless information is available online, and allowing cell phones in class acts as an additional learning tool.

Mr. Doran also plans to have Art Honors Society students paint murals of famous literary scenes on the walls of his classroom, further sparking student interest and creativity. Hills West principal, Dr. Catapano loves that Mr. Doran has taken this initiative as it acts as a pilot program. He sees success for this change and hopes it will promote learning in a different

way. That being said, Catapano fears that once this change occurs all classrooms would want to mimic the setup, but this class set up is not right for all classes. English is a unique subject in that it allows for creativity and exploration; the new setup may not be practical for other school subjects.

This change is still in the process of being approved, as Mr. Doran has been asked by Mrs. Fallon and Dr. Catapano to write a proposal. Mr. Doran's vision of tomorrow's classroom could result in a tremendous change in the way students grow, develop and most importantly, view school.



A photo from the famous Google offices that Mr. Doran's class is going to use as inspiration.

business expertise, and creativity." An important trait that smart creatives possess is that they are not afraid to fail. Mr. Doran feels as though some of his students hold back their insights in class because they fear being wrong. He hopes this new, open and relaxed environment will allow students to step out of their comfort zone and inspire others with their wisdom.

Hopefully, the change in setup will result in more collaboration between students as Mr. Doran believes that students rely too much on their teachers for their only source of information. "I want them to learn the importance of teaching concepts to themselves,

THE TUTOR LILLY MILMAN DYNASTY



Thomas Edison, renowned inventor and trademark of the American spirit, once said, "there is no substitute for hard work." However, it is possible that this maxim has lost some of its truth over time; specifically, in the realm of rigorous high school classes where money has started to weasel its way in in the form of private tutoring.

In recent years, the amount of participants in the private tutoring industry has grown exponentially and there are over fifty large franchised tutoring firms in the country. This includes well known learning centers like Kaplan, Sylvan, and the Princeton Review, as well as smaller, online organizations such as TutorVista.com. Additionally, it is not uncommon for both high school students and teachers alike to provide paid tutoring sessions after school hours. With sessions costing upwards of forty-five dollars an hour, it is not surprising that private tutoring has silently been growing into a nearly five billion dollar industry. However, it may finally be time to take a closer look at what is possibly the new backbone of the

American education system.

According to the most recent U.S. News Report on Education, Half Hollow Hills High School West has an AP participation rate of about fifty-six percent, which is more than double the national average of about twenty-one percent. This begs the question: is there something in the water at West, or is there something fishy going on beneath its surface? Although tutors are traditionally meant to provide quick fixes and temporary solutions for struggling students, their roles have definitely changed.

One student, who wishes to remain anonymous, admits to being tutored for an hour and a half each week in the subject of math: "Although it might be easier for me to learn in a lower level math class, the harder class I'm in now looks better on a college application." Mr. Ferretti, Social Studies teacher and AP tutor, does not disagree with this logic, as he stated, "If you have the money and your main goal is to get into the college of your choice, then it's your choice

whether you want to take harder classes and get tutored or not."

However, this trend of students taking classes that are above their skill level and capabilities is more insidious than it seems, as it results in students heavily relying on their tutors, specifically for studying. Another student, who also gets tutored in math, claims that his tutor prepping him for an hour before each test has no affect on his personal studying habits, but this might not be entirely accurate.

As high school has been set up to be a four-year long preparation for college, it is extremely important for students to gain as much independence as possible in a short amount of time. In order for this to occur, they must be able to make educated decisions about which classes are appropriate for them to take and about how to prepare themselves for these classes. If a student wishes to take a class that he or she believes to be a bit too difficult, then it is the responsibility of this student to rise to the occasion on his or her own; hiring an expensive private tutor can only be helpful for so long before it becomes hurtful.

Referring back to Edison, nothing can truly take the place of hard work, not even a weekly session with a paid professional.



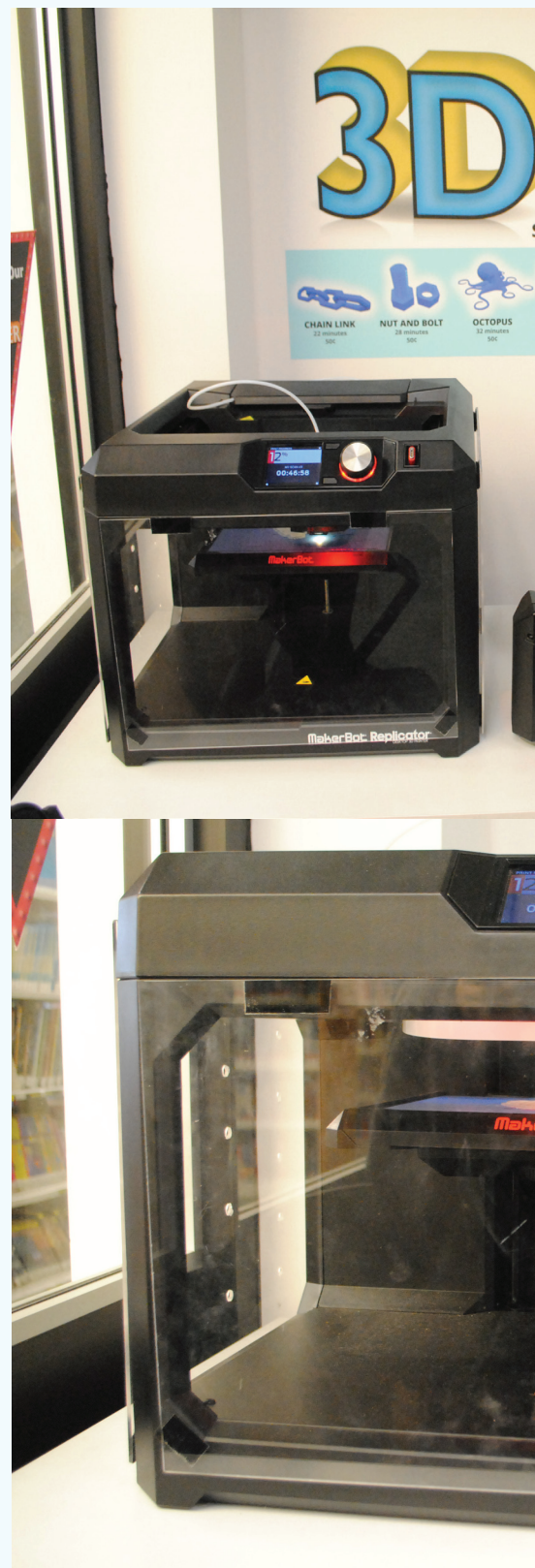
Big Changes Coming

For the past half century, the Half Hollow Hills Community Library has been a favorite among local children and adults alike. The Dix Hills building opened in 1967 on Vanderbilt Parkway and has served as a fixture in the local community ever since, providing a source of information and tranquility to local residents. Behind this facade of solitude however, the library is at the center of a major overhaul, which plans to bring the building and its programs into the 21st century.

The driving force behind these upcoming changes is Helen Crosson, a woman with two masters degrees and over three decades of library experience under her belt. Her career is nothing short of extraordinary, having risen through the ranks from an entry level position at an Upstate New York Library to her first director position at Cold Spring Harbor, where she spearheaded their campaign to build a new library. "It's all about connecting the dots" Crosson said, "Having good communication skills can set you on the path to success." Crosson herself is an example of this mantra: While working as a Librarian, she befriended the Head of New York State Libraries and expressed her de-

sire to be a Library Director. Sure enough, within weeks she was offered the job as director of Cold Spring Harbor's Library. Recounting her time there, Crosson stated "When I took over we were operating in a 700 square foot facility we didn't even own and had to rent." The prospect of running a community library approximately the size of the one here at Hills West didn't satisfy Crosson, so once again she put her communication skills to use to lobby for a new library. "Just as I did with the Director of Libraries, I found a person who could help me achieve my goal and I outright told them what I desired." In this case it was the local State Senator, who after Crosson's lobbying, supported her cause and secured funding for a new 26,700 square foot library.

Last year, Crosson left her 15 year post as Director of the Cold Spring Harbor Library for the same position in Half Hollow Hills, a library also seeking a major renovation. "My experience with Cold Spring Harbor's renovation was certainly a plus, and I really wanted to do what I did there with a new community" Crosson said. The current building of the library has remained unchanged since 1990, and the campaign



ng To HHH Library

ANTHONY PASSELA



to renovate has been underway for the past several years. An architect has already been hired, plans are being drafted and a bond vote for the project is expected to be held next year. The new changes at the H.H.H library are more than merely cosmetic ones, as the library is rapidly expanding its technology programs and offerings. “We’ve started doing demonstrations with our new 3D printer and green screen and they have been phenomenal successes, kids seem to love it,” Crossing said.

“We’re even holding computer coding classes at the library this summer.” Indeed the new technology offerings have opened the library up to children and allowed for learning and enrichment that goes beyond reading. Librarian Margie Hartough confirmed that the library also has big plans for summer vacation, and will be hosting numerous community service projects including the construction of a life size “Candyland” for local children to play in. “It should be a great experience for all involved,” said Hartough.

Besides community service and technology initiatives, the library also plans to launch new teen centered events. “Local teens can look

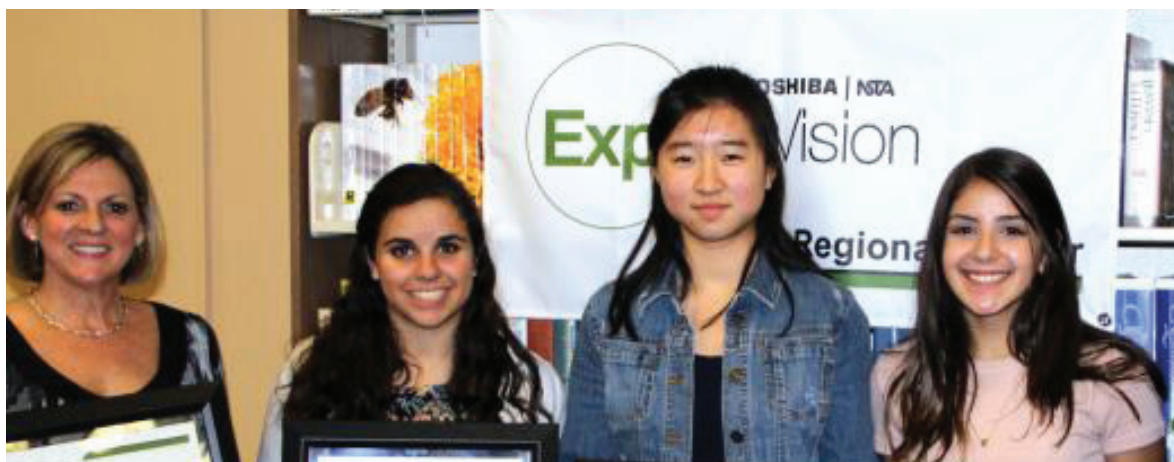
forward to Teen Paint night, chess club and contests to win coupons to their favorite local restaurants,” said Jenny Cammarro, a librarian in charge of teen oriented programs. The new push for teenage participation in library activities has already been popular with students, including Junior Rena King. “[The library] is a great place to come after school, whether you need to do homework, research or just hang out. It’s just a very secure and resourceful place in general for high school students.”

The future is bright for Half Hollow Hills Community Library, a place with a prominent role in the local community that goes beyond reading. “I love this job because I’m always meeting new people, and it’s so fulfilling to work with and help children and other community residents,” said Director Crosson, noting the recent hosting of an event to make blankets for local veterans. “Kindness to the community is so important because local support is what keeps this place thriving.”

And thriving it is, as the Half Hollow Hills Library looks to begin a new chapter in its local history.

More Than an Award

JAYDA LISMAN



Mrs. Davidson, Alexis D'Alessandro, Tiffany Kim, and Victoria Sacchetti

Recently, Alexis D'Alessandro, Tiffany Kim and Victoria Sacchetti - all juniors at West - received the news that they had not succeeded in the second stage of the Toshiba competition. However, their accomplishments should not be disregarded. The girls were the first group from High School West to be recognized as regional winners. To be recognized within the first stage, a group makes up the top one percent of those who participate in the competition - clearly there is something special about these girls.

The second stage of the competition requirements were quite different from their initial paper in which the girls proposed a theory regarding the process of identifying and potentially preventing the development of ALS. Essentially, the girls' presentation focused on the advancement

of technology in regard to the degenerative disease, Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis, better known as ALS. Working together, the girls developed the idea of a drug encapsulated by a multilayered nanoparticle. The drug would then catalyze the ubiquitination of mutant SOD1 (a mutant protein linked to ALS), thus alerting the cell's preosomes to destroy the mutant trait. Alexis' uncle, Craig Koch, is bravely fighting against ALS and inspired the girls' project.

Required to develop a website, create a video and a prototype of their innovative idea, the girls worked restlessly for several weeks. Mrs. Davidson, a chemistry and research teacher at West and the girls' mentor, said, "My job was to make sure the girls were on target."

The girls also received some help from the Toshiba competition. As a result of their success in the first round, the girls won a Toshiba laptop that had been programmed with the latest software to help the girls achieve success with the development of their website. Not only did Toshiba lend a hand, but the girls reached out to various sources to help develop their site.

Despite their indisputable hard work and dedication, the girls did not achieve their goal in the second stage. However, to Alexis, the basis of the girls' idea meant a great deal more. Alexis said of the competition, "Being a part of the Toshiba Exploravision Competition has been a great experience and I am so incredibly proud of my team for working so hard."

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For years, the west side parking lot has been an exclusive luxury. According to the student handbook, the student parking is a privilege only for seniors. In order for a senior to receive a parking pass, they must go through a series of paperwork that must then be reviewed by administrators.

However, it is evident to anyone who stays after school that the senior parking lot is predominantly empty. Some juniors believe that the lack of cars is an opportunity for them to park there. It is common knowledge that most juniors who drive to school park along Suncrest Drive - a street less than a mile away.

Drew Tucker, a junior, expressed his opinion regarding the juniors parking in the lot by saying, "It should be allowed because Suncrest is far and if the senior parking lot is empty, there is ample space." Jamie Arborea also explained that, "We [juniors] should be able to park where everybody else parks. It's not fair that we have to park on Suncrest and walk a long way to school." The walk from Suncrest is about ten minutes, and that is if the person decides to speed walk in the middle of the 2 o'clock traffic. However, the problem is that some juniors have been parking in the senior lot - during the day.

Many believe this issue is trivial because nothing bad will come of using excess parking spaces. For future juniors, events like this can impact them immensely. The current juniors may set a precedent for the future ones and their goal will come to fruition. When asked about how she felt this will impact her next year, sophomore Katie Chiesi responded, "It's not bad if a couple extra people park there, I think juniors next year will start parking there and they will eventually have to build a bigger parking lot."

Numerous seniors felt that it was unfair that juniors were taking over the parking lot. Tulsi Pandya clarified why she and many others were unsupportive. She said, "It's annoying because we didn't park there when we were juniors, so they shouldn't." Nicole Cerniglia provided another explanation as to why the current rules should stay the same by stating, "There's barely enough space for all the seniors to park so adding juniors would just make it more of a challenge to get a spot".

There have been a lot of debates regarding the parking lot on social media sites such as Twitter and Yik Yak. The arguments however result in no changes, the seniors complain about no space in the lot and juniors heatedly defend themselves.

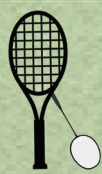
Administration has made no announcements either condoning or condemning it. As of now, there are no signs of a clear solution.

PARKING PRIVILEGES?

ALYSSA NG



What's With All That Racket?



JEREMY SHUSTER

Strength, toughness, and teamwork - these are just a few adjectives that describe the many sports Hills West succeeds at. However, these adjectives do not fairly represent the Hills West Tennis and Badminton teams. Both sports are games of finesse, skill and accuracy; and are amazing to watch when perfected. Well this year, the Colts have nearly perfected both.

The Hills West Boys Tennis team - while delivering two state qualifying players, Dylan and Duane Davis - has had an unbelievable season this year. In past years the only team able to beat Hills West has been district rivals Hills East. Well this year, the tables have turned - twice. On April 16, 2015 the Colts ended Hills East's 106 game Suffolk County winning streak by a score of 5-2. Aziz Rashidzada at first singles came up big in this monumental win, as well as great efforts from the rest of the team. "This was a major goal of our's entering the season," said Senior Dylan Davis, "and it felt great to accomplish it as a team." The Colts then went on a five game win streak when they went up against East a second time. West came out on top again, cementing their spot as the top of the district. Dylan Davis, speaking to the team's potential, "We are very experienced and confident, which allows us to play loose." Tennis is one of those sports where each match

is played by an individual, but it takes a full team effort to win and be successful.

Badminton is a combined team of Hills East and West, and unlike the Tennis teams, must

work together with those who are usually their rivals. Lead by Senior, first singles, and Captain John Stanis, the Hills Thundercolts Badminton has put together an unstoppable team. No team has come close to beating them; the closest 8-1. They've had impressive wins versus undefeated Com-mack and defending Suffolk County Champions Miller Place twice. John Stanis said, "The team is doing very well due to the amount of talent we have and the hard work we have put in during the season."

A team with 14 new players, it has a starting lineup dominated primarily by Seniors. "Many of our returning players did not start last year, but have stepped up this year and it's paying off," Stanis explained. With many of these new faces gaining valuable experience and improving their skills, the future is bright for Hills Badminton.

When Hills West sports are discussed many think of football, basketball and baseball - but it seems like a new era has begun. The racketed teams have established a name for themselves and they have also gained a great deal of respect.

Despite their lack of recognition prior to this year, both the Thundercolts Badminton Team and the Colts Boys Tennis Team have succeeded tremendously and it is indisputable they will continue to serve the Hills Community with winning seasons.