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W.C. MEPHAM HIGH SCHOOL'S

The Buccaneer



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BELLMORE, NY

Getting to Know Mr. Gómez

By: David Collins

While many of us spent our summer at camp or the beach or on vacation, our new principal, Mr. Eric Gómez, spent his summer starting his new job here at Mepham. Before even starting in July, he had numerous meetings to acquaint himself with our school and its procedures. But no one asked him to study past yearbooks to learn the names and faces of our teachers. That's something he did of his own volition, and which apparently got him a few "brownie" points with our teachers! It really showed them that he cares and wants to get to know each and every one of them. But how do we,

the students, feel about the new guy? Well, typically, a principal is not someone you tend to "like," more like someone you tend to revere, or frankly be scared of. However, it's really hard not to like Mr. Gómez.

When I first met him in May, I was a bit apprehensive to sit down with our future principal. However, his friendly disposition was conveyed through his timely email responses, and he was incredibly kind and outgoing during my first interview with him. He went out of his way to cater to my needs in setting up the first meeting and actively tried to get to know me

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Junior Arianna Thompson gives Freshman Gianna DiPrima a temporary tattoo. Photo by: Eimaan Khan.



Buccaneer News Editor David Collins conducts his follow-up interview with Mr. Gómez. Photo by: Kayla Schneider.

Pirates Fest

By: Jamilet Rivera

On Friday, October 6, 2017, Mepham celebrated its 80th anniversary and held its annual homecoming celebration.

This year's celebration kicked off with Pirates Fest. Many of Mepham's clubs raised money and sold refreshments. Students also

enjoyed refreshments from the food truck and smoothies from Madison's Smoothie Cafe. Pirates Fest also included free face painting provided by Mepham's very own Art Service Club and bounce castles for our younger siblings and community members to enjoy. It was a memorable night for everyone who attended this year's homecoming celebration.

College Fever

College season has arrived and has finally crept upon the many backs of this year's fellow seniors. Running around to hand in transcript request forms, hurriedly asking teachers for recommendation letters, and biting our nails to make sure our grades don't drop are all too familiar for seniors.

Even though many know how much stress is evident during this period, do we seriously consider the toll it is taking on our mental health? How much thought is being put into it? Seniors are continuously being told

to take your SAT/ACTs, finish up your college essay, complete FAFSA, meet with your guidance counselor, etc. Seniors are balancing their personal life, school life, and now their college life.

We all know that stress is at an all time high during this time of the school year for seniors. But why are we not taking a deep breath and saying, "Let's focus on the wellbeing of our mental health." What does that mean? It means stressing the importance of taking care of ourselves mentally and how to do

so properly. We can't keep letting students break away beyond their mental point. We can't keep forcing them into this habitual routine of unnecessary stress.

Students are missing out on the big point here. The whole meaning of senior year has seemed to change as well. Senior year was seen as the year to tighten friendships and form new ones. It meant late night sleepovers, parties, and making more memories. Senior year wasn't pictured as crunching over our laptops late at night and hurriedly filling out information

for the Common App and submitting everything on time. Senior year is about the last ride, not the last college application being sent in. It seems that the idea of senior year has ultimately changed.

Students need to be shown support and know that there is help for them out there, such as counseling. There needs to be a push to do this whole college process in a less stressful way. Mental health is so crucially important, especially for the minds of young teenagers getting ready to embrace the harsh reality of the world.

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Editorial Policy

The Buccaneer is the student newspaper of W.C. Mepham High School. Responsible letters and guest editorials are accepted from anyone affiliated with Mepham High School.

Any articles should be submitted to *The Buccaneer* via our email:

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Expressed opinions are those of the individual writers and do not necessarily reflect the beliefs of the administration, the student body, the staff, the advisors or any advertisers. *The Buccaneer* reserves the right to edit all articles for veracity, brevity and propriety.

Back It Up

By: Annie Zomback

The dreaded announcement inevitably occurs in the beginning of June: time to clean out lockers. One would think that this would signal the end of the school year, yet this is entirely false. After locker clean-outs, students typically have at least a full week in which they are still expected to bring all of their appropriate materials to class. Rather than remaining in one's

locker, binders, folders, pencils, even textbooks travel from class to class with the student, inhabiting his/her overstuffed backpack.

Besides the struggle in which zippers barely hold enough strength to close a bag and frustration of seeing an abundance of empty, unused lockers, having excess supplies travel on one's back can cause severe back problems. "A heavy backpack can pull on the neck muscles, contributing to headache, shoulder pain, lowerback pain, and/or

neck and arm pain" (www.spine-health.com). Eighty percent of Americans admit to having back pain (www.sharecare.com), and it is a shame that this problem should start at such a young age. It is absolutely horrible to observe how many students can be found rubbing their shoulders or stretching out their backs due to the ache in their back, aided by the amount of weight on their shoulders during school. Additionally, Mepham Junior Carley Leibowitz responded to

this situation saying how it is annoying and inconvenient to have locker clean outs occur so early in the years- it causes students to have to switch from binders and notebooks to folders, which in turn can make the student very unorganized.

The answer to whether or not lockers should be cleaned out later in the school year becomes obvious when taking students' health into account. It is much more beneficial to students' backs currently and in the future.

Snapchat: Constructive or Destructive?

By: Kayla Schneider

Snapchat, an app that is used by about 158 million people per day, is dominating the social media world. Mainly used by teens, this application has revolutionized the way people communicate. Snapchat is most known for its feature to send pictures that disappear after a chosen number of seconds by the user. However, Snapchat does offer various other features that entice people to use the app even further.

Snapchat streaks are a major component that has hooked users to go on the app more and more everyday. In order to create a snapstreak, the user and a friend must send a snapchat at least once to each other within 24 hours. It may be fun to see how many days the user can keep the streak going for, but in reality, it is quite silly. People will send nearly anything to each other, ranging from filtered photos of their faces, to ceiling fans, to Cheerio boxes, to even a black screen reading, "streaks" are sent. These irrelevant photos are wasting time and distracting people from focusing on important things in life. This snapstreak feature has only given people a reason to use the app more. It's like a game that people will play to see how long a number on their screen can last for. But, that is all it is right? It is a number on a screen, yet people are so invested in this idea that they cannot break the streak.

A newer update that launched in the summer of 2017, might be one of the most danger-

ous features that the app offers. Snap Map allows a user to share his/her location which appears to friends on their map with Bitmojis (personal emojis). If privacy was not already diminished, it sure is now. It takes publicizing our lives to a whole new level. If one activates this feature, anyone who is "a friend" with the user can see where he/she is and potentially what he/she is doing. If the user is in a car, the app can tell because of the speed the phone is travelling. As a result, the user's icon will show his/her bitmoji in a car and where he/she is traveling. If someone is listening to music with his/her headphones, a bitmoji listening to music will appear on the map in the location he/she is in. Maybe the weirdest adaptation on the feature is that the app can estimate when the user is sleeping due to the inactivity of the app; therefore, a sleeping bitmoji will appear on the map. There is a way to disable this feature for the users who care about their privacy. The main issues with it are: friends who hang out and exclude others will be visible, and it can lead to conflicts and emotional discomfort, people can stalk each other, and it is simply an invasion of privacy.

This article is not suggesting to terminate the use of Snapchat. However, people should use the app vigilantly and not make it such a priority. It can be great to share life through a camera lens with other people, but it is also really great to actually enjoy time in reality with friends and family (the people who make us happiest).

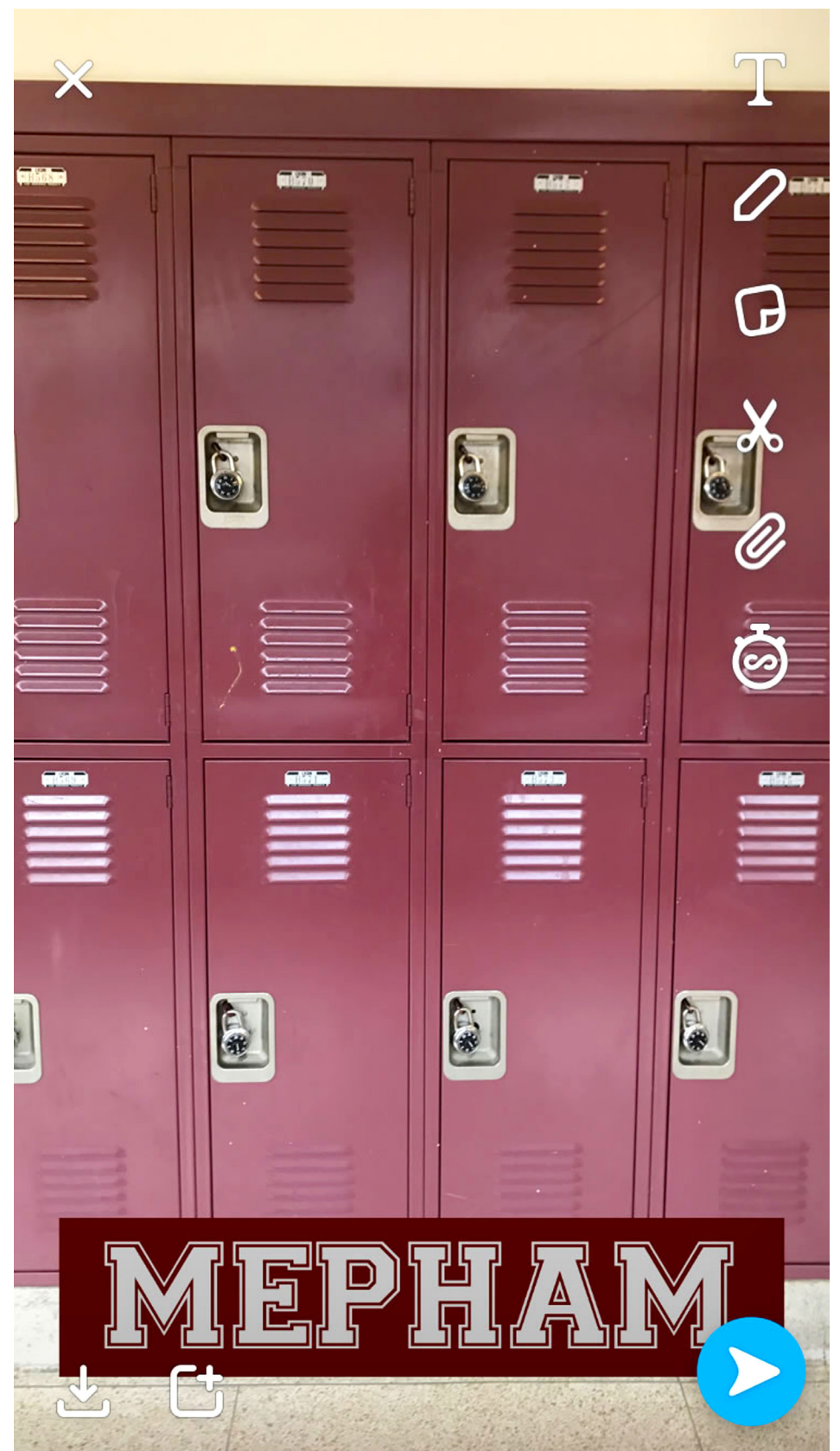


Photo by: Katie Morgan.

Eating in the Open Air

By: Jennifer Cirigliano

Throughout our high school experience, we have all been through the crowded cafeteria drill. You wait in the long line to grab your turkey sandwich and then try and find where your friends are sitting through a sea of people. It's hard enough not being able to go outside as a freshman; now having to fight your way just to sit and eat your lunch is too complicated for a free period. If there were lunch tables outside on the school campus, students would have an easygoing time eating their lunch.

Sitting in the humid classrooms for 41 minutes each and every day, nine times a day, and fighting just to keep your eyes open at times can make the school year go slower and slower each year. Then in lunch not having a car to use and walking on those 90 or -2 degree days can be rough since lunch is a time to just relax. Lunch tables outside would help create a more open atmosphere for students. They would be able to get their lunch and then go outside and eat without having to be cramped in the cafeteria. The people that wouldn't want

to sit outside don't have to. This creates more room for both people outside and people inside to not be stuck in one spot but have options of where they want to sit that day.

These outdoor lunch tables

just hanging out with some friends and doing homework, or just talking. These tables can help to create relationships by providing a place for teenagers to sit and catch up on the latest fads and topics.



Photo by: Jennifer Cirigliano.

might not only be used just at lunch. Students may use these before and after school, at any time of day while waiting for a parent pick up,

Another way these tables can be useful besides during lunch is for teachers. If it's one of those hot days and all that's on every-

one's mind is a breeze from outside, these tables might be useful. Teachers can have class outside every once in a while. While one could argue that there is access to the courtyard for this, classes that used to attempt a lesson in the courtyard proved too loud for the rest of the rooms above. Tables in the back of the school would be a great place to sit down and draw a plant or the geese on the football field in art. Maybe even during earth science, classes could find different kinds of rocks and come back to the tables to discuss and learn. These different ideas create a new atmosphere and a better learning setting for the students during long days of school.

There are many different ways that outdoor school lunch tables could be useful before, during, and after the school day. They can create new bonds between students and also fun and interesting learning atmospheres. They can also reduce the crowd inside school cafeterias and give students who are bringing and buying school lunch more options to sit and eat. There are many pros to this lunch table suggestion that could benefit the mood and well-being of the school as a whole.

NBA 2K18

By: Daniel Lanza

As it does every year, a new NBA 2K game was released. Many people feel that annual sports video games are the same, just with improved graphics. However, 2K manages to prove that it is the king of sports video games by releasing what might be the best 2K yet.

Obviously, the graphics are greatly improved. Many of the players look exactly like they do in real life. Even random players like Josh Hart and Ramon Sessions look like their real life counterparts,

which shows the level of attention the developers put into this game. The gameplay is fluid and looks like a real NBA game. However, the shot release bar was changed to be smaller and located next to the players' head, which was an unnecessary change. It's harder to see, "perfect." Overall, there was no reason to change an aspect that has been the same for multiple years.

NBA 2K18 also made major changes to two of its biggest game modes. MyCareer introduced The Neighborhood, which added an open world sandbox to the franchise. It is a great change to its most

popular gamemode. It is refreshing and truly helps to immerse the player into the 2K world. It feels like the real world where you can play NBA basketball, street ball, go to the gym, shop at Footlocker, and more. It is a little buggy, and the game has crashed for me a few times while in The Neighborhood.

Another change NBA 2K18 adds is a story mode to the MyGM mode. The storyline is about a former NBA star who becomes the GM of whatever franchise the player chooses. It definitely was refreshing to have an actual storyline in the GM mode, but it could've

been done much better. First off, part of the story doesn't make sense if you choose a big market franchise. I chose the Knicks, and apparently the new owner would want to move the team to Seattle, which would never happen, as well as other story elements that make no sense. Also, the same players complain about their minutes almost every week, even if they're told they won't get more minutes.

Overall, NBA 2K18 is a very good game. It has its flaws, like every game, but the good massively outshines the bad. It is the best entry into the NBA 2K franchise.



Happy Birthday, Mephams!

Mephams turns 80 this year. Left, the original *Buccaneer* staff works on typewriters. Photo courtesy of Yearbook and @mephams.

Getting to Know Mr. Gómez

(continued from page 1)

during the interview. Last May, Mr. Gómez told that his number one priority was to get to know the students of Mepham and their families, and when I asked him if he was actively following through on that goal, he triumphantly responded, “100 percent!” He explained that he has attended several athletic events, met the PTA parents, and gone into classrooms to get a sense of what goes on in Mepham. He emphasized that he is not an “unapproachable principal” and that he does not “want to be viewed as that at all.” He explained that “Many students have seen me pop into classes to see what they’re doing and what the teachers are doing. I also just want to say hi to kids and make sure that if they have a concern, they can speak to me.” He explicitly stated, “I enjoy speaking to the staff, parents, and getting to know people.” While his actions and attitude may seem uncharacteristic of stereotypical principals, they show a lot about his personality and his motivation behind wanting to become our principal.

As for his transition, he assured me that it has been very smooth and that parents, students and faculty have been “very welcoming.” Mr. Gómez said that he

was previously the assistant principal of guidance and that he dealt with “transcripts, schedules, and college planning, and supporting students socially and emotion-

positive.” Mr. Gómez stressed that he wants to become “a productive and successful principal.”

In order for the school to function properly, Mr. Gómez

the great things that she does with her kids in her classroom really motivates me to do a better job and inspires me to not only work with students, but to work with teachers and community members to ensure that everyone has a great experience in Mepham.” Mr. Gómez draws inspiration from his mother and uses her example to make himself better. He draws upon her passion to make himself more compassionate and outgoing in order to make us - the students and teachers of Mepham High School - kinder and more driven than ever before.

By being incredibly outgoing and persistent in his endeavor to acquaint himself with each and every student, teacher and parent in the Mepham family, Mr. Gómez has distinguished himself not only as an authority figure, but as a friend, supporter and a mentor. He wants each and every one of us to thrive and succeed in all aspects of our lives, and he wants to support us in our endeavors. He has a message for all students:

“I want students to remain focused, especially when it comes to their studies. I want them to ask questions; it’s never a bad thing to ask questions. Overall, I would like students to make good decisions to help them succeed in the long run.”



Photo by: Kayla Schneider.

ally.” This also explains his motivation behind acquainting himself with the students, parents and faculty, since he has clearly had an affinity towards helping others long before coming to Mepham.

After asking how his first few weeks have been, he replied, “They’ve been busy, but productive, and fun.” He acknowledged that “it’s going to take a while to learn the job completely, and it takes a few years to really understand the job,” but noted that “the challenges have been extremely

knows that he must act as a role model to both the students and teachers. When asked about his own role model, Mr. Gómez didn’t have to think long before responding that his mother is his greatest role model. He elaborated, “She is a single mom, as my father passed away when I was 11, and I have two other brothers, so handling three boys was a challenge in itself and learning to become a teacher while raising three boys was not easy.” He explained that “seeing her succeed in her career, and do

Missile Testing

By: Sreeshty Ray

North Korea has been developing its nuclear program for several years but recently has been testing missiles in great numbers. Tensions between President Trump and Kim Jong Un have been high as North Korea continues to launch missiles and ignore attempts at diplomacy.

North Korea is pursuing a missile program because it believes the United States will not try to remove Kim Jong Un from power if the United States knows North Korea can retaliate. North Korea is testing intercontinental missiles, which if successful, could possibly reach Chicago. This year, North Korea has had a testing success rate greater than fifty percent. North Korea says that it will not try to talk diplomacy until it is successful in creating an intercontinental missile.

Responses from U.S. officials regarding the North Korean missile program have been strong and show a sense of urgency. The United States ambassador to the United Nations, Nikki Haley, called for the “strongest sanctions” against North Korea. However, even after

new sanctions were imposed, North Korean testing is continuing. President Trump has responded tweeting, “They will be met with fire and fury like the world has never seen,” and has said that the United States isn’t afraid to use its power.

The United States is not the only nation in possible danger of a future missile attack. While South Korea has always been a reachable target, Japan has also encountered North Korean missiles in recent months. Towards the end of April, North Korea launched a ballistic missile over Japan. Japan had emergency public announcements instructing those in Tokyo to take cover. Japan’s prime minister, Shinzo Abe, responded saying, “North Korea’s reckless action of launching a missile that passed over Japan is an unprecedented, serious and grave threat.” He also had a phone call with President Trump and discussed more ways to put pressure on North Korea.

At deadline, the last North Korean missile test was September 15th. North Korea will most likely continue its plan for missile testing, unless it falls to sanctions, or begin discussions for diplomacy.

Hurricanes Hit

By: Sreeshty Ray

Hurricane Harvey, then Irma, then Maria hit the United States. The effects of each were disastrous where they hit. Hurricane Harvey hit in Texas, Hurricane Irma hit Florida, while Hurricane Maria ran through Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands as well.

In all three areas, there has been flooding, home destruction, and loss of power. People across the U.S. have also seen an increase in the prices of oil and gas as a result of the hurricanes, more specifically Harvey.

FEMA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, was running low on money as Hurricanes Irma and Maria were announced. Congress had to pass bills of billions of dollars to cover for the three hurricanes. However, the money spent allowed for relief aid to be positioned at the expected areas to be affected which allowed for a swift response. The President also complimented FEMA relief efforts, telling reporters, “I don’t think anybody has done anything like they’ve done at FEMA, and

they have done a very good job.”

There was a lot of controversy as people felt that the government wasn’t giving the same relief efforts and help to Puerto Rico, when compared to the hurricanes in Texas and Florida. Some believed this was because Puerto Rico is a U.S. territory, not a state, although the island’s residents are in fact United States citizens. In a poll by Morning Consult, about half of Americans were unaware that Puerto Rico is a part of the United States. It also showed that people who knew that Puerto Rico is part of the U.S. were much more likely to support relief efforts for the island over people who didn’t know.

While the hurricanes are over, the lasting effects will be seen for years to come as people affected try to rebuild their homes and find new jobs. It will also be a while before some even have power again in heavily hit areas such as parts of Puerto Rico. However, U.S. recovery in response to past storms such as Hurricane Katrina and Superstorm Sandy provide hope that we will be able to recover again.

Highlights from 80th A

By: Sreeshty Ray

Many Mepham students as well as the Mepham community enjoyed Pep Rally. The festival was first, with students lining up for various activities. Many clubs sold goods to raise money for their club, while others had fun activities. Science Club had gigantic bubble making, the Skull and Bones Drama Club had a photobooth, and Sophomore Club sold Mepham Pirates bracelets. Children could also play in the obstacle courses, which featured a pirate ship. There was also a food truck that was open until the end of the game. The tater tots with cheese were a hit.

Next, school spirit could be seen spread across the bleachers

and the field as students got to watch and cheer for their friends on sports teams. The cheerleaders and the kickline team had fantastic performances. Senior superlatives were also announced.

Before the football game began, a bonfire was lit at the softball field. Many people seemed to enjoy this new addition. The fire department was there to make sure everyone was safe.

Homecoming began shortly after the bonfire, with it being obvious that the Mepham Pirates would win the game. The crowd roared every time Mepham made a touchdown. Many Mepham parents representing the PTA and Sports Boosters also sold Mepham merchandise. Mepham students enjoyed the festival, Pep Rally, and Homecoming.



The bonfire rages on the softball field. Photo by: Caitlin Snoddy.



Gus Bresnaider, Mr. Grosskruez, Jessica Serken, and Maya Aptekar pose at the Skull and Bones Drama Club photo booth. Photo by: Faraz Khan.



The Pirates gather after the homecoming victory. Photo by: Caitlin Snoddy.



The kickline team performs at Pep Rally. Photo by: Nathan Degreee.

Anniversary Celebration



The Pirate dabs for the crowd. Photo by: Faraz Khan.



The football team is announced on the field. Photo by: Nathan Degree.



The cheerleaders perform at Pep Rally. Photo by: Nathan Degree.

By: Faraz Khan

On October 6th, Mepham showed off its school spirit as the football team won its fifth game of the season with a score of 35-7 leaving the record as undefeated thus far (0-5). This is especially exciting for this year is the 80th anniversary of the school's opening; therefore, a homecoming win displayed confidence and dominance.

The event was set to start at 4:30 where people began to arrive and visit Mepham's array of booths, hosted by their corresponding clubs, or visit the bouncycastle which were both colorful and fun. The booths consisted of a number of activities and games for all types of interests. Some such as the Fragments Club, let participants play an intense game, in this case hangman, to win candy. The Science Club let participants blow large bubbles using properties of both chemistry and physics, and the drama club let people take photos in the handmade photo booth. Other clubs such as the GSA Club, helped students show their pride with ribbons and other accessories.

At 6:00 the first Mepham homecoming bonfire in at least fifteen years was lit lasting for twenty

minutes before being taken out by the fire department. It stood almost 12 feet high as a representation of our football team's winning streak.

Then at 7:00 came the main event: the homecoming game of American football. This came to be an easy win of 35-7 lead by Coach Cracco against New Hyde Park due to the superb strength and strategy which the Mepham football team exemplified for our school. "We have a terrific group of young men working toward a common goal," said Mr. Cracco. "They have made many sacrifices to improve as a team and achieve a common goal." During halftime, the crowd was wowed by the skill of both the cheerleading squad and the kickliners using flexibility and balance to provide exact movement to the rhythm of the chosen music. Also during halftime, tight end James Hatcliffe and Pirette Jordana Bove were crowned as homecoming king and queen.

Throughout the homecoming festival, Mr. Gomez stated it the best: "It's always remarkable to see the community gather in a sea of maroon to cheer on our students and athletes. We appreciate all of the efforts that helped in making the evening a true victory."



Holy Guacamole

By: Nicole Farina

“¡Buen provecho!” Sra. Larrea exclaims after students made their guacamole and chose their empanadas at the annual Mepham Elite Event celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month. At the event, students had the opportunity to immerse themselves in elements of Hispanic culture by experiencing and learning new things.

Students had the ability to taste chicken, beef, and spinach & feta empanadas and follow a recipe to make their own guacamole, while learning about significant Hispanic individuals that have in-

fluenced American culture. One notable Hispanic American of today that students learned about is Katherine Davalos Ortega, who is the Hispanic Treasurer of the United States. Max Bresnaider, an eleventh grader who attended the event said, “It was a great way to celebrate and learn about Hispanic culture.”

This year, the event took place on Thursday, October 12, and there was a large student turnout. Mrs. Parlagreco, the AWOD club advisor, expressed how she “hopes the event raises awareness about how wonderful the Hispanic culture is and that students are able to try new things.”



Ryann Betancourt and Max Bresnaider have fun at one of the first ELITE events of the school year. Photo by: Nicole Farina.

Bye Summer, Hello School

By: Eimaan Khan

Oh, it was a beautiful sunny day, and I was thrilled to wake up after a good 10 hours of sleep. Isn't summer so relaxing? No school, no homework, no tensions. You have all the freedom and time to spend with your friends and family. However, that day wasn't as tranquil as I expected. Just like most teenagers out there, the first thing I did was check my phone. I couldn't believe my eyes. I was frozen in place as I looked at the calendar. There is just a week left before school starts!

I might have been a little over dramatic about it, but I am pretty sure this is a situation that some of you have been through. At least it is better than forgetting you have school like they show in some movies or YouTube videos. Anyway, I still had time, right? Honestly speaking, I love going back to school. As much as it was fun going on vacation and enjoying a break from school, I believe that a new school year gets your day back in order to your daily routine.

One of the best aspects for most people is a new school year with a fresh new start for everything. Oh, the excitement of going to the store and buying supplies from the endless options. I can just visualize myself walking into the hallways of high school to experience the most wonderful four years of my life. What makes it special is that this is the place where you can truly learn who you are and transition into a more mature and educated person. Furthermore, every year in high school is different which means sophomores might have a different perspective.

According to sophomore Alyssa Dioguardi, “I couldn't be more excited about being back in school. The interesting classes, fun teachers, and different clubs after school make Mepham High School a great environment to learn and grow.”

Similarly, Mia Deluca said, “Sophomore year is definitely different than freshman year. This year is harder than last year, but I get less work. I feel that I need more sleep. Overall though, this year is fun.”

How can I possibly forget our remarkable teachers? Every year teachers are devoted to making our new school year enjoyable as well educational. As a matter of fact, the teachers are also as enthusiastic as students to start a new school year. Social studies teacher Mrs. Alciviades commented, “Back to school is both an exciting and busy time. It is exciting to meet all my new students, but difficult to adjust to the routine.”

Living Environment teacher Mr. Francese remarked, “I feel excited to go back every year because my days now become structured. In addition I get to entertain a new audience of kids who have no idea about the madness they are about to experience.”

On the contrary, not all students are as keen as me to come back to school. Junior Haley Kadin said, “Going back to school is the most tiring experience ever. The only part that is positive about going back is seeing friends daily, but even that has drama.” I would definitely agree with her. Even though I love the high school experience, it is

a little tiring, not to mention the burden of homework and projects and assignments that we have. The academic studies have become harder and can be hard to keep up with.

While there are the new pirates coming to experience Mepham High School, there are the graduating pirates who have completed their amazing journey and are ready to take off and fulfill their dreams. Senior Sara Machado responds to how she feels about back to school: “Coming back to school as a senior is definitely bittersweet. That's because we have accomplished so many things in all our years at Mepham that we take pride in, but just the thought of starting a new chapter in our lives and leaving all our friends and mentors behind brings a nostalgic feeling. Also the facts of opening new doors of opportunities bring excitement because we can finally take off and make our dreams come true, which is the main point in everything.”

So what are you waiting for? Wake up from the glorious summer dreams, and enter the reality of going back to the busy school routines.

Battle of the Classes 2017



The teachers compete in the caterpillar relay. Photo courtesy of @mephamhs.



The seniors get pumped to compete. Photo courtesy of @mephamhs.

The Late Show with Stephen Colbert

By: David Collins & Kevin Montalti

In late September, we had the privilege of seeing late-night television's most viewed show, live: *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert*. Colbert is a noted satirical comic who had previous stints on Comedy Central with shows such as *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart*, and his own show, *The Colbert Report*.

Colbert's *The Late Show* began in September of 2015, and has now recently began its third season. Both of us ventured to the world famous Ed Sullivan Theatre in midtown Manhattan, waiting four hours to obtain third row seats for the live taping. While that was certainly a long wait, we would soon realize that it was worth every second.

Shortly after being seated, Paul Mercurio, *The Late Show's* resident stand-up comedian, riled up the audience. Mercurio immediately went to work and sought after victims to roast. Using his quick wit, he jokingly attacked his victims by finding humor in their daily lives and in their characters.

After about thirty minutes of critical roasting, he readied the audience for a mini-concert by Jon Batiste and Stay Human. The performance given by Jon Batiste and Stay Human was beyond magnificent and included them parading around the theatre, and superb solos by each musician. The trumpet player of the group, Jon Lampley, showed off his skills by playing notes which were, at points, higher than the stratosphere. Altogether, Stay Human and Mercurio did an excellent job of preparing the crowd for what would be an awesome night.

One of *The Late Show's* most viewed segments is Colbert's monologues. These take up approximately 10 minutes of the hour-long show and are used to relay the news and make fun of it. Since we were guests for both the Thursday and Friday shows (September 21st and 22nd), we got to see two of the best-written and acted monologues in months. His first was focused mainly on the Trump-Russia investigation. Firsthand, we got to witness a mistake that actually made

it on live time. He was saying that all the White House news was available on a DVD called *Now That's What I Call Collusion 45*, but the stage manager could not get the disc out of his pocket in time, so it caused Colbert to crack up on national television. Moments like these define the live show experience, as little unscripted moments make each show feel unique and alive in a way that is not felt while watching the show on television.

For the second monologue, he roasted the North Korean Foreign Minister and the Iranian President for insulting our president, while making sure to comedically attack President Trump at the same time. After that, he rolled the footage of the MSNBC host Lawrence O'Donnell having a breakdown on camera and showed a parody video that he made. This showcased his acting abilities while making us laugh numerous times over the course of only a few minutes. Also, getting to see the uncensored and uncut versions of both monologues makes it intriguing to go back and closely watch

the edited show in order to see what was changed. However, it did not make any of the jokes less funny, as the writing and delivery made these monologues incredibly entertaining.

After the Thursday night monologue, Colbert performed one of his best written segments ever on the Equifax scandal. He read some facts followed by comedic commentary and continued this over and over again for approximately seven minutes. While this might seem bland, his brilliant building on the scandal stirred the crowd as we booed at Equifax, while continuously adding layers to this baffling story. Mixing in a hilarious video about a fictitious "Identi-Vault" where people ditch society to move to a secluded farm, the tension and momentum he created grew even more. Clever lines such as, "If you turn to the person next to you, that might be you again," after mentioning that half of the U.S. population had their identities stolen and, "Fool me once, shame on you. Fool me twice, I am

you because you stole my identity."

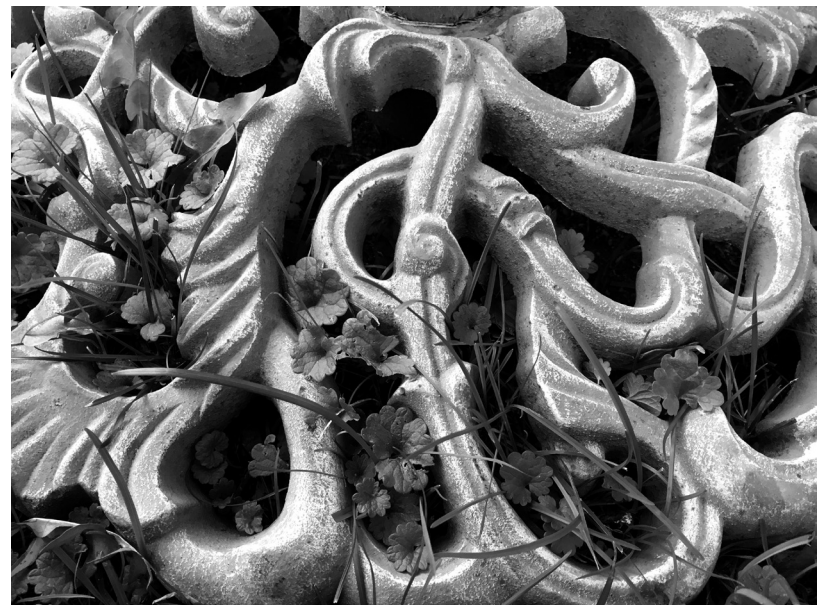
Not only were his heavily scripted monologues incredible, but the three guests that he had on all managed to be incredibly entertaining. First, the Emmy winning actor Jim Parsons of *The Big Bang Theory* gave a heartfelt interview about marriage and finding love in a world that would not allow gays to be together. He also gave us some insight into the show-creating process as he discussed what it took to greenlight *Young Sheldon*.

Next, Emmy winning actress Tatiana Maslany of *Orphan Black Stronger*. She and Colbert played off each other, and it managed to be an engaging and entertaining interview that culminated in a duet that the two performed. Colbert showed off his voice when he hosted the Emmys this September, and we got to witness a rare duet as the two sung a song from the Broadway hit musical, *Jesus Christ Superstar*. The night ended with the chart-topping British rock band, The Killers, performing their song "The Man." They engaged the audience with the catchy beat and great vocals. The song was so enjoyable, Colbert told us afterwards that he "rather liked that song." Colbert and the guests all kept us engaged and thoroughly entertained, so much so that when he told us that he would be leaving, we heard some sighs, since nobody wanted the experience to end.

The live viewing experience of *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert* is unparalleled in terms of its unforgettable heart and humor. Due to being only a few feet from Colbert, the experience feels personal and unique, as it seems like he is talking directly to you (in the audience). Having a celebrity talk to you is unforgettable by itself, but having a celebrity talk to you for over two hours creates the feeling of an almost-personal connection between the celebrity and you, and that cannot be repeated by any other experience. Altogether, the vibe that is sent by Jon Batiste and Stay Human, Paul Mercurio, and Colbert himself, leaves you with nothing but a big smile as you exit the theatre, making you want to return as soon as possible.



Photo by: Kevin Montalti.



Photos by Junior Photography 3/4 Student Ryann Betancourt.

It's Back

By: **Caroline Coyne**

“You’ll float too.” It’s the phrase that kept our parents up at night, and now, *It* is back to make us tremble beneath the covers. Earlier this past September, the revival of *It*, based on Stephen King’s highly acclaimed novel, hit theatres and topped box office charts for weeks. There are many people who simply watched the remake without having seen the original film, but those people didn’t miss much and saved three hours of their life.

It’s not a surprise to hear that the new film obtained a rating of 85% Rotten Tomatoes, while the older movie only got a rating of 57%. *It* takes place in a small town in Maine where friends Bill, Eddie, Beverly, Stan, Ritchie, Mike, and Ben are brought together as each are antagonized by the peculiar and petrifying Pennywise the clown. With the ability to show children their biggest fear, with the hope that he can capture and kill them, the protagonists, also known as the Losers’ Club, stick together as they try to stop Pennywise from kidnapping and murdering more children in their town. This is the basis for the latest *It*, but the original goes much more in depth in re-

gards to the lives of the characters.

At the beginning of the original film, we are told that the group of friends made an oath that they would come back to Derry if the horrific events they endured as children began happening again. The viewer is shown the lives of both the younger and older versions of the characters as they relive the unnerving memories from their youth and eventually find their way back to one another. Scenes move back and forth from past to present in order to fulfill the timeline of the book which the movie was adapted from.

The initial film lasted over three hours, but although it includes a majority of the events of the book, there is too much information and the beginning scenes do not flow well together. The sequencing feels choppy and the audience is introduced to each character one by one in a less than strategic way. Through phone calls occurring at the start of the movie, each character is introduced leading their adult lives in what seems to be complete normalcy. However, as the calls are received, flashbacks bring forward the truths of their childhood and what happened in Derry. This exposition lasts for an hour, and, even though important information is threaded through the scenes, the viewer is

forced to remember so many different aspects of all of the lives that most of the information is lost within copious amounts of facts. With two hours left, the prospect of paying attention and retaining even more details is daunting and leaves the spectator disinterested while checking the clock for the moment in which he/she might finally take his/her eyes away from the screen. The only thing that has the potential to keep the audience remotely attentive is the admirable performances of the cast including Tim Curry, Richard Thomas, Seth Green, Emily Perkins, Tim Reid, Dennis Christopher, and many others.

Even though the original was somewhat of a let down, the reboot was refreshing compared to the subpar horror movies that have recently been released. As opposed to the original, the duration of the new *It* film is only two hours mainly because the storyline has been split into two parts. Instead of revealing information from both the past and present concurrently, the movie has a part one and two, similar to the book. This allows a smoother establishment of the characters’ lives, and more specifically, their respective fears.

The movie was rated R due to the fact that the violent and some-

times disturbing scenes from the book were as closely translated to the screen as possible. The original film, however, has a rating of PG-13, which meant that not everything that appeared in the film was what Stephen King had in mind. Certain points in the plot are unsettling because of their close relation to the books and Stephen King’s twisted mind, but this only furthered the character development amongst the protagonists. It allowed the viewer to become emotionally invested in the lives of the people of Derry, which made the viewing experience much more enjoyable and thought provoking. With a budget of \$35 million, it is proved through the sets, script, costumes, and actors, that every cent was put towards bringing the story of Pennywise the clown and the Losers’ Club to life.

Overall, the 2017 version of *It* is far more compelling than the original. In the 1990’s, *It* attempted to cram 1,000 pages of plot and character development into a single, three hour, PG-13 movie in which the viewer doesn’t get to fully indulge in the skillfully crafted story that Stephen King constructed. If you are interested in the story of Pennywise and the Losers’ Club, I would suggest watching the revival films or simply reading the book.

Photo Snapshot

By: **Nathan Degree**



Junior Photography 3/4 Student Nathan Degree captures the beauty of Mephams’ Field of Honor.

Fashion Week

By: **Zara Khan**

Fashion week hit the city on September 7th, and with it brought some of the hottest new designer collections of the up and coming year.

Michael Kors embraced something fresh and different. His line up included models of every ethnicity and background, as well as an age range from teens to women in their 40’s. All the models wore little to no makeup to celebrate that we are all beautiful in our own way, as they rocked tie-dye cashmere sweaters, sundresses, and crocodile flip-flops. The spring line definitely channeled some of the fashion trends from the 80’s, like bright, flashy fabrics and tie-dye pieces. Overall, they brought something fun and exciting for all ages.

Tory Burch on the other hand, took on a much more minimalistic approach with its tunics, trousers, and slip dresses. The colors in this piece were fairly neutral, mostly consisting of whites and blacks, with the occasional dark blues. The dresses and trousers had a wide, boxy cut, as Tory Burch emulated the technological age we live in today. Its goal is to attract a whole new audience as the world becomes more and more advanced and futuristic.

Coach also took an interesting

approach for its spring line by getting inspiration from the Great Plains. In the past, Coach designer Stuart Vevers was known for taking long trips through different parts of the United States to find a vision for his fashion line. This line mostly consisted of rural prairie dresses in plain colors such as white and beige with the occasional touch of red for accent. In this piece, Vevers really wanted to shine a spotlight on American culture, specifically in rural areas. He even went to extreme lengths to do so, as some of the skirts were made out of actual tent material used on the Great Plains. All around, it was a well crafted piece, that paid homage to fashion of the past.

Saint Laurent gives an aura of Parisian nights, as its line consisted of pieces that were both effortless and chic. Flowy blouses and romper style shorts adorned the models, with colors ranging from gold and black to olive and turquoise. These color combinations could be worn as a daytime look and a night time look, making them very versatile. Though it is nothing we haven’t seen before, it still brings the level of elegance that can only be associated with Saint Laurent.

Fashion week will be hitting the runway this February, bringing all the latest in fashion for the upcoming fall.

Go After Your Goals

By: Nathan Rosen

This season the JV Soccer team coached by newcomer, Coach DeRosa, finished the year with four wins and six losses with two ties in league play. It was a tough season for the team, but it persevered through the low points and improved from a challenging first few league and non league games. It seemed very difficult, like any team at the beginning of the season, trying to play as a full squad with players that have never played in a real game before together. They still managed to win many games against teams like rival Kennedy, and most of the losses were only by one or two goals.

Many of those goals were netted by captains Tim Penny (7) and Rory King (5). Captain Penny commented on the slow start by saying,



Rory King attacks the goal. Photo courtesy of Christine McLaughlin.

“We started off in poor form, but once we found our stride, we worked well together and got some results!” King was also responsible for upwards of

eight assists this season to other goal-scorers like Khristo Shami and A.J. Guerrero. The main captain, Gregory Paul, was a General in the defensive

midfield, directing his fellow teammates throughout the game. Paul and King were also responsible for keeping the team in line at warmups, practice, and off the field in places like the bus.

Defender Aidan Black, right midfielder John Tucci, and goalkeeper Colin Viola also had breakout first seasons as Mephram freshmen. At the end of the season, two players were awarded with player elected awards, most improved player and most valuable player. Sophomore Evan Hamou was elected as the most improved player and freshman Aidan Black was chosen by the team as the most valuable player.

The boys still have some work to do, but many freshmen will continue to improve and look towards having a great season next year, and the sophomores will continue on to varsity to do great things.

Who Can Take Down The NBA

By: Anil Bradley

The NBA has a problem, and no, it is not a strike from the players union, decreasing ticket sales, or even a drop in television ratings. The problem plays in Oakland, wears blue and gold and easily won the Championships last year: The Golden State Warriors. Boasting possibly the best starting five the NBA has ever seen, the Western Conference is scrambling to compete against this super-team.

Last year's playoffs were dull; the Warriors won twelve straight to secure a spot in the championship, and only let up one game to the Cavaliers in the Finals. Many were expecting this to happen again, but during this offseason major moves were made in the Western Conference by the Houston Rockets, Oklahoma City Thun-

der and Minnesota Timberwolves in hopes of taking down the super team led by Steph Curry and Kevin Durant.

Oklahoma City should have been excellent last year. Russell Westbrook put up astounding numbers and set a record for single season triple-doubles (when a player puts up ten or more in any three statistics). Westbrook has a myriad of talents: his ability to shoot for points, use his vision for assists and his athleticism for rebounds. All of this led to his MVP season, but the Thunder lost in the first round of the playoffs to the Houston Rockets. Feeling defeated, their organization decided to make major moves during the offseason. Acquiring Paul George from the Indiana Pacers, and Carmelo Anthony from the New York Knicks, the Thunder have a solid chance at a long run in the playoffs.

The Thunder lost to the Rockets in the first round last year, but the Rockets were taken down by the Spurs in the Conference Semifinals. They decided to make moves of their own. Their star player, James Harden, with an insane playing ability and beard to match, signed a massive \$228 million dollar contract. They picked up Chris Paul from the Clippers, and now have arguably the best duo of guards in the league. If their speedy guards can shoot for threes and get the ball to their big men inside for points in the paint, it is likely that Houston can make a legitimate run in the playoffs.

Perhaps the most quiet, yet intriguing, offseason moves this year were from the Minnesota Timberwolves. They acquired Jimmy Butler from the Chicago Bulls in exchange for their number seven draft pick.

Jimmy Butler has a tremendous court presence, aggressive on the ball and fights for every point. His play style pairs incredibly well with that of Karl-Anthony Towns, center for the Timberwolves. Young talent Andrew Wiggins hopes to make all the difference he can in helping end the Minnesota playoff drought as well. Many overlook the Timberwolves because they missed the playoffs last year, but they bring youth with a lot of potential to this season.

The Rockets, Thunder, and Timberwolves all have goals of taking down the blue and gold monster from California. Will they manage to take down the juggernaut of the NBA, or are the Warriors just too good? Nobody can tell this early on in the season. However, one thing is for certain, the Western Conference will be exciting this year, and the playoffs even better.

Moves for Millions

By: Rory King

Over this past summer, the soccer world saw some big names switching teams for huge sums of money. The likes of Neymar, Ousmane Dembélé, and Kylian Mbappe-Lottin all made the switch to different teams. This couldn't be possible without the teams parting with gigantic amounts of money.

In soccer, players switch teams differently than in the NBA, or other American sports leagues. Although there is such things as free agency, most players don't become free agents as they sign contract renewals before they get the chance. There is also no trades in soccer like you see in the NBA. Instead,

teams pay transfer fees to bring players to their clubs. This fee is agreed with the club that the player is playing for, and the money goes straight to the club. This fee has nothing to do with the player's wage and the player doesn't get any of it.

Before this summer, the highest transfer fee was paid for Paul Pogba by Manchester United in the summer of 2016. He cost them \$116.4 million. That record was smashed by the French club Paris Saint Germain (PSG) this year. PSG spent a whopping \$263 million for the Brazilian Neymar, who previously played for FC Barcelona in Spain. That wasn't all the money that PSG spent this summer. They also agreed to a deal with reigning French champions,

AS Monaco, which will see them pay \$220 million by next season for French wonderkid Kylian Mbappe-Lottin, who is just 18 years old!

Barcelona, having just received all that money for Neymar, bought Ousmane Dembélé, 20, from Borussia Dortmund of Germany for \$124 million. Barcelona was also linked to the Brazilian Philippe Coutinho, who plays for Liverpool, and the team offered over \$180 million to Liverpool to bring him away. Liverpool though was unwilling to let him go and rejected all bids sent its way.

Before 2010, Cristiano Ronaldo was the most expensive player, with Real Madrid having paid \$110 million to Manchester United in 2009. The previous record had been

the highest for eight years. It was the \$65 million spent on Zinedine Zidane in 2001, also by Real Madrid.

So then the question begs, what has caused such a rapid increase in the price of players? Part of it can be attributed to China. Over the last few years, more and more players have been going to China because of all the money they have. Chinese teams have been willing to fork over huge sums of money to bring in European and South American players. Carlos Tevez, from Argentina, transferred to China just over a year ago. He is currently the highest paid soccer player in the world, making \$762,000 a week! Based on this summer's transfers, it looks as if European teams are ready to compete with that.



A Season To Remember

By: David Riobo

The Varsity Football team set a goal in August to win the county championship. They came within one victory of that goal. Although they did not accomplish what they set out to do, their season was the best one Mepham has had in 24 years. Despite constant hardships, Mepham was able to come together as a family and make it to the championship, and that is something no one will ever forget.

If you had asked anyone before the season who he/she thinks the championship game in Nassau County Conference 2 will be between, I doubt anyone but the Mepham football family would have mentioned our 5th ranked team.

But, this did not matter; they kept believing in themselves and getting it done week in and week out.

The Pirates opened up their season at home against the 3rd ranked tough MacArthur team. The game was back and forth, a real dogfight. The Pirates started the second half down, but that never phased them. En route to completing the comeback, the Pirates had 8 seconds left with the game on the line, and Mepham was down 6 points. Michael Proios threw a touchdown pass to wide receiver Gianni Macchio for a game tying score. Kicker and star wide receiver, Kevin McCleneghan sealed the deal by nailing the extra point, leading to an impressive one point victory that set the tone for the Pirates all year.

The team went on to mount two other impressive comebacks against Calhoun and Carey, both of which were Final Four contenders in the Nassau County Class 2 playoffs. The team was on its way to a perfect season before they got upset by Elmont in Week 7. After having a tough battle with Garden City in Week 8, the Pirates finished their regular season 6-2 and went into playoffs as the number 2 seed.

The first week of playoffs the team played a home game against South Side, and after a week of great practice and concentration, the Pirates won with ease and were on their way to Hofstra. In their conference semifinal game at Hofstra, the Pirates dominated the Carey Seahawks on a freezing cold No-

vember night. The Pirates advanced to the county championship for the first time in 24 years. An impressive achievement that came as a shock to everyone outside of the Pirates football team, this 4-5 football team from last year was now 8-2 and rolling.

The loss to Garden City in the championship was a tough pill to swallow. As you take a look back on the incredible achievements of this young group of men, it still brings a smile to your face. This team, despite being the underdog almost every week, constantly gave it their all and always found a way to win, always having each others' backs and truly playing for one another as a family. It is most certainly a season that no one will forget. Congratulations to the 2017 Mepham Pirates.

Bright Future For MBVS

By: Ziyad Gawish

The Mepham Boys Varsity Soccer Team (MBVS) was and will always stand as the most skillful soccer team Mepham has ever offered.

Led by Coaches Zachary Gosse and Joe Zorbo, Mepham made playoffs after not making it last year, and they coincidentally trained one of the most highly skilled teams in their conference. What tops it off is that this year's team was a relatively young team composed of seventeen juniors and five seniors. Most of the starting 11 were juniors and during the season, MBVS played against teams who had the majority of their starting positions claimed by seniors. Coaches Zachary Gosse and Joe Zorbo have put in hardwork and dedication to wring out the team's potential, whether it may have come from the

infamous fitness sessions during the preseason or the heartfelt motivational speeches delivered before every game reminding the team how high they can play up to. Unfortunately for MBVS, they were knocked out of Playoffs during the first round against Lawrence High School. This may have been an upset for a team that was constantly complemented by other coaches and players for their knowledge and technique of the game, but this loss can act as the fuel for the flame that will hopefully power the team to County Champs and even a spot in the State Cup. As a member of the team, I believe that we can go do better next year, and I also believe there was not a single team like us in the league.

Coming from JV, Varsity soccer is a step that requires two strides to complete. Those strides

represent conditioning and team chemistry. Throughout the year, Coaches Zachary Gosse and Joe Zorbo have held training sessions in the weight room, signed the team up for indoor league, and during the spring they have organized turf time for the team to practice on. This provided us with the strength to play the full 80+ minutes. MBVS can always be characterized as a family and most of us have felt withdrawal effects from not training together for weeks. Looking at our season wins losses and ties, 5-5-2 was something we didn't deserve. With the past behind us, we will continue following our full year schedule for another go next year. Hopefully our team dedication and determination will get us farther next season. Let's Go Pirates!



Conor Buehler, Kieran Gilroy, Jack Zaretsky, and Ziyad Gawish form a wall.
Photo by: Robert Isola.