



# THE FLAME

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GOLDA OCH ACADEMY

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WEST ORANGE, NEW JERSEY

## GOA Attends Historic March For Israel

By Henry Sacks '26

Approximately 300,000 people gathered on the National Mall in Washington D.C at the March For Israel, a rally to show support for Israel in their ongoing fight against Hamas.

"I was so proud of the GOA students, parents, and staff who made this their priority," said Head of School Rabbi Nevins. "It wasn't an easy day, physically or emotionally, but it allowed us to bring our values to life," he said.

The rally, organized by the Jewish Federation of North America, had three main purposes: "to march for Israel, to march for the release of the hostages, and to march against antisemitism."

It was evident that there was a high level of Jewish pride throughout the crowd.

GOA junior Aly Biloon said, "I could not be more proud to be Jewish and stand with my people to show the world our love for Israel."

According to the official event website, MarchForIsrael.org, the march was, "An opportunity for all Americans to come together in solidarity with the people of Israel, to demonstrate our commitment to America's most important ally in the Middle East,

to condemn the rising trend of antisemitic violence and harassment, and to demand that every hostage be immediately and safely released."

The rally featured a diverse lineup of speakers, including government officials, actors, singers and speeches made by family members of hostages currently being held in Gaza.

Despite competing political and religious views among the presenters and throughout the crowd, partisanship was put aside for the day. Speakers from both chambers and parties of the legislative branch spoke to support this common cause.

Republican Senator Joni Ernst of Iowa said, "We are here today as Republicans and Democrats to assure you that we will not shrink back and shudder in fear."

In fact, there was a segment of the rally dedicated to religious allies, when Christian and Muslim figures discussed their partnership with and steadfast support for the State of Israel and the Jewish Community.

The March for Israel was designated as a Level One Security event in the United States, which allowed for a strong presence of federal law enforcement throughout the city, especially on Capitol Hill. Law enforcement officials reported that there were no

safety threats before or during the march.

Once the rally was announced, the Jewish Federation of Greater MetroWest reserved over 40 buses to help students and participants make the journey to and from D.C., with 17 buses allotted to local Jewish day schools.

On the Monday before the rally Dr. Apter addressed GOA students in 8th through 12th grades to discuss the purpose and goals of the march, safety, and other logistics. Dr. Apter explained how all students' voices will be heard in our outpouring of support for Israel.

Golda Och Academy traveled on three buses: the 8th and 9th Graders on one, the 10th graders on one, and the 11th graders on one. Seniors were split up among the three buses where they were able to interact with and model behavior for underclassmen.

To stay organized and prioritize students' safety, each bus had an adult captain and multiple adult chaperones assisting throughout the entire trip. Each chaperone had a smaller group of 6-8 students whom they were responsible for during the rally. To stay visible, chaperones held GOA signs while walking.

Junior Brandon Sternthal said, "GOA handled the day extremely well. The teach-

ers took on a really big responsibility in monitoring us students, and it was a great success."

GOA's buses joined many others parked at Robert F Kennedy Stadium in D.C., where passengers on the buses received free Metro Cards to take Metro trains to the Smithsonian station.

Sophomore Marley Fischer said, "The moment I exited the Metro stop and saw how many people were gathered for a common cause, I felt so proud to be part of such a historic event for the Jewish people."

People were seen wearing Israeli Flags, holding placards of hostages, and joining frequent chants of "Bring Them Home!"

Throughout the day, emotions fluctuated between grief, sadness, anger, hope, joy and gratitude.

For example, Orna Neutra, the mother of Omer who is being held hostage, expressed her anger and sadness. "From a place of deep pain, we hold strong for you, Omer. We speak in your name, tirelessly... Omer you're not just my beloved son, you touch so many in deep and profound ways," she said.

After many profound and heavy speeches, famous Israeli singers Ishay Ribo and Omer Adam sang together to lift attendees' spirits and pride.

GOA students and staff left the rally slightly early to reduce the difficulty of departure. Some groups took the Metro back to RFK stadium while other groups walked back.

Groups then loaded the buses and departed for the Maryland House rest stop where boxed dinners were picked up to be eaten on the road.

"Many years ago, the great Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel said that when he marched for civil rights in Selma, Alabama, he felt that his feet were praying. It was the same for us in Washington—in a time of deep concern for our beloved State of Israel, we prayed with our feet," said Rabbi Nevins.



## Profound Display of Unity: GOA Reflects on March For Israel

By Abby Hodes '25

On October 14th, Golda Och Academy actively participated in what is believed to be the largest pro-Israel gatherings in Washington, DC.

The profound impact of the march was felt deeply by students, faculty members, and parents, many of whom describe it as a life-changing, historic experience.

GOA Upper School Principal Dr. Apter said, "Ahavat Yisrael/Love of Israel is a core value of the school. Throughout the year, we strive to design lessons and provide experiences to give students the opportunity to learn and show their love of Israel, but it is rare that we get to show our love of Israel publicly with hundreds of thousands of people from across the nation. I was so proud that our GOA community stood up to make our voices heard."

The rally, which drew participants from all walks of life, featured a spectrum of

speakers, ranging from politicians to parents whose kids are held hostage. The bravery of these parents in sharing their experiences among thousands, added to the rally's powerful atmosphere and helped instill a sense of empowerment within the crowd.

Math teacher Mrs. Antiles describes her experience at the gathering as, "beautiful and peaceful." She noted that the crowd "cut across all levels of religious observance and political affiliation." "We stood together, united as a people, as a family," she added.

Sophomore Marley Fischer describes her newfound perspective, "Before going to the rally, I really didn't know what to expect but I did know that it was not something I wanted to miss. Looking back, it was so empowering to see hundreds of thousands of Jews stand up together as one community. The experience really changed my view on how much of an impact a group can make and how important it is to stand for what you believe."

"At the rally, I saw so many friends from

all different stages of my life which was such a beautiful thing because it reminded me that we all have an underlying love for Israel that will forever connect us," she said.

"I felt united with our Jewish community as it is really special that everyone can unite together for the same purpose despite having various political beliefs," said Batsheva Hodes, a parent chaperone for the march. "I never felt more proud to be an Israeli-American Jew than while at the march."

Junior Jesse Schiffman encapsulated the sentiments of the day, saying, "To be at the rally meant to be a small but significant part of a 300,000 piece puzzle that showed the nation and the world that the Jewish people are strong and will overcome any obstacle together. It meant representing the hostages trapped in Gaza and the brave soldiers fighting who needed support. It was amazing to see what a huge impact we Jews and our allies could make, and the fact that it was safe and peaceful makes it that much better."

Since the attack on October 7th, some have reported feeling a sense of helplessness and despair. The experience at the March for Israel helped counteract this feeling. This march was a defining moment for Jews in America, illustrating that even when physically distant from Israel, American Jews can stand together and be there spiritually.

Mrs. Antiles, who is the proud mother of an IDF soldier, expressed how impactful the rally was for her, considering her specific connection to the war.

"I felt tremendous comfort and strength, seeing with my own eyes this powerful demonstration of support and solidarity for our Jewish homeland. I know our soldiers are energized by the outpouring of love and support that the American Jewish people are giving them right now," she said.

"We are all one people and when we stand together, we are strong and unstoppable, so this gives me tremendous hope -- our future is bright!" she added.

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#### Girls Varsity Soccer Finishes with Ruach, Kehillah

The Golda Och Academy Girls Varsity Soccer team finished the season with a record of 7-4 (7 wins and 4 losses) earning an impressive second place in the Colonial League. PAGE 12



## Building Committee Renovates Upper School Appearance

By Marley Fischer '26

The Golda Och Academy lobby, bathrooms, and locker rooms have been newly renovated, organized by the Building Committee to add modernity and innovation to the Upper school building.

The last update to these parts of the building was decades ago.

"The Building Committee recognized that the bathrooms were long due for an update. We pooled our resources to help the school facilitate the facelift for the entrance, bathrooms, and locker rooms," said one committee member.

A noticeable difference in the entryway includes new, sleek, wooden panels and a "merch" case. New TV screens highlight the accomplishments and milestones of students and faculty. The lobby also is much more secure due to the Scanning Stations added at the entrance.

A big banner hung on the wall was the idea

of our Head of School, Rabbi Nevins.

He said, "I wanted us to convey our school values, especially our obligation to treat each other with love and respect. For this reason, I asked our team to design a banner with the Torah's centrally placed verse, 'Love your neighbor as yourself; I am the Lord.' I want all of us to remember that beyond all the awesome achievements of our students and staff, it is our kindness that ultimately counts."

The bathrooms and locker rooms are another huge part of this renovation.

"My favorite part of the remodel is the bathroom. What used to be a dirty tiled room is now clean, bright and brings forth the colors of our school," says sophomore Gracie Sacks.

The new all-gender accessibility bathroom is yet another essential addition.

"As the world starts to evolve, our school has an obligation to evolve with it, and the all-gender facility displays that growth," says freshman

## Tikkun Olam on Display at GOA Club Fair

By Rachel Hyman '27 and Kate Breslin '27

Golda Och Academy hosted its annual student-led club fair in the gymnasium earlier this semester. This event showcased Golda Och's enriching and diverse extracurricular activities.

As the gymnasium was transformed into a bustling center of students, clubs catering to virtually every student interest possible were presented to students with opportunities to get involved.

For many students, this fair is the first step to discovering one's interests and talents, and by offering so many vibrant opportunities to students, it encourages them to experiment and see where their true interests lie. In addition, the fair signals the start of a journey that provides students with essential life skills outside the classroom, such as organizing events and managing a budget.

Juniors Rose Berman and Abby Hodes, co-founders and co-presidents of One Love Club, said that the goal of their club is to, "further

educate teens in the community in order to help themselves and others."

The One Love Foundation is a national non-profit organization with the goal of ending relationship abuse. The One Love Club empowers young students with the tools and resources required to see the signs of healthy and unhealthy relationships. During this club, students participate in role plays and learn terms commonly used in this space.

Junior Shayne Cyttrynbaum, president of the Climate Activism Club, said, "The Climate Activism Club is the perfect place for those who care about climate action and environmental justice. We work in wider coalitions to advocate for federal, state, and local climate policies, and work to engage GOA and the wider Jewish community in climate action."

The Climate Activism Club is a Kvutzhah ("chapter") of the Jewish Youth Climate Movement (JYCM). It organizes especially for climate justice, and the club has fundraised over \$1,100 to date to support numerous JYCM projects and

## Tefillah Program Continues to Grow

By Pauly Raskin '27

The new school year at Golda Och has brought about many new changes, including developments in the tefillah program.

This year's schedule change was developed in an attempt to fit the needs and wants of the students, giving them the option to choose between meditation tefillah, art tefillah and traditional tefillah for the first four days of the school week.

Also included in the tefillah schedule was the re-implementation of Zman Kodesh on Friday mornings during the first period under the leadership of Rabbi Goldman.

Zman Kodesh is similar to last year's Friday morning tefillah: it is a time to celebrate student and teacher achievements from the past week, news about holidays and club events. Concluding Zman Kodesh, Mr. Richman leads the upper school in a song. The GOA community comes

together on Friday mornings with slight but impactful alterations. Rabbi Goldman has added a more celebratory atmosphere as students end each week.

Senior Noah Hazan said, "Since we have started Tefillah Shleimah, I feel like I have gotten closer to God and I am starting to enjoy tefillah more."

By utilizing the Torah and tefillah in whatever meaningful way they see fit, students appear to be enjoying the new adjustments and strengthening their bond with God.

Students say their tefillah activities are now more enjoyable with the passionate energy of their peers.

"Being surrounded by peers who chose to be in my specific tefillah cohort makes the experience all the more meaningful," says sophomore Marley Fischer.

Students appreciate their freedom to choose the space in which they daven or learn Jewish

Morgan Sternthal.

Locker rooms were given new floors, lights, and a tiled wall displaying the GOA colors.

"I remember going into other schools' locker rooms during away basketball games and wishing our locker rooms could have a modern and clean vibe like theirs. I am super happy our school was able to take initiative and redesign," says junior Aly Biloon.

Now that many features of the school are renovated, students wonder, what is next?

There are numerous classrooms and additional spaces in the school that are relatively old and in need of fixing. Students have many suggestions about improving the school and are excited to share them and see what is to come next.

"Looking ahead, we want to continue these aesthetic renovations for the rest of the first floor and then upstairs, before considering even more substantial capital improvements in the years ahead," said Rabbi Nevins.

has planned protests against fossil fuel financing.

Senior Eliana Finkel, president of Breast Cancer Awareness Club, said, "Every member of BCA learns to have a sense of compassion after being exposed to the harsh reality of what it is like to live with breast cancer."

Breast Cancer Awareness Club works toward the dual goal of raising money and spreading awareness for breast cancer.

While these are only a few clubs showcased during the club fair, none would come to fruition without the dedication and hard work of club leaders who serve as ambassadors for causes they are passionate about.

These leaders play a pivotal role in uniting our community and creating a sense of belonging and camaraderie for each student. Golda Och Academy's club fair is not merely an annual event; it's the embodiment of the value of Tikkun Olam that Golda Och Academy prides itself on and a testament to the school's commitment to fostering well-rounded students.

values through various activities. Students will soon be able to choose new tefillah electives and explore unique ways to connect with God outside of traditional davening.

In the past, traditional tefillah occurred in separate rooms two days per week. Sixth and seventh graders davened together, the eighth graders davened by themselves, and the whole high school davened together in the Beit Knesset.

Additionally, there was a learning tefillah, with two days per week dedicated to learning about tefillah, parashot, and other Jewish education.

There was also the beloved Friday tefillah, where the entire GOA upper school community came together every Friday morning in the gym. Together, students and teachers recounted events of the previous week, sang songs, heard about clubs from club leaders, and discussed upcoming events.



## Rabbi-in-Residence Goldman Brings Passion to GOA

By Sagan Shapiro '27

This year, Golda Och welcomed Rabbi Lindsay Goldman, a new Rabbi-in-Residence with a unique blend of a passion for teaching and a deep commitment to supporting students in their Judaic journey.

Rabbi Goldman, a proud alumna of the Lefell School (formerly known as Solomon Schechter Westchester), has been eagerly supporting the spiritual and intellectual growth of GOA's students.

"I have wanted to become a rabbi since I was in 9th grade and I met the Rabbi in Residence at my high school," Rabbi Goldman said.

Her journey to becoming a rabbi was deeply influenced by her interactions with a mentor who demonstrated a balance of both teaching and spiritual guidance.

"I admired how he was able to teach and also able to be a rabbi to students as we needed him. I wanted to be a young, fun, relatable rabbi that can teach and also support students going through a challenge with their Jewish identity or a hard time in any part of their lives."

Rabbi Goldman's higher education began at NYU, where she studied education, laying the framework for her teaching career. Her desire to impact students' lives led her to work at the University of Maryland Hillel for two years, but she soon realized her heart belonged elsewhere. She subsequently taught middle school Rabbinitics and Tefillah at the Charles E. Smith Jewish Day School (CESJDS) in Rockville, MD, honing her skills in education.

She then embarked on a five-year journey at the Jewish Theological Seminary (JTS) to study rabbinical studies. At JTS, she worked at NYU Hillel for

three years as the Rabbinic Intern, advising the egalitarian minyan and teaching a weekly class called "the Jewish Learning Seminar."



Her diverse experiences and Hillel provided her with a unique perspective that she brings to her new role at Golda Och Academy.

Goldman's relationship with GOA dates back to her high school years when she spent the summer with USY on Wheels and made friends from the organization. The school's values and vibrant community had always left a lasting impression on her.

## New GOA Students Reflect on Learning Style

By Leo Milch '27

While everyone has been adjusting to the new school year at Golda Och, ten new high school students who transferred from The Idea School have been adapting to a different type of learning than they were used to.

The Idea School was a Jewish project-based learning institution located in Tenafly, NJ, which opened in 2018 but was forced to close at the end of the 2022/23 academic year due to residual effects of the pandemic.

The 40 students at The Idea School have dispersed to Golda Och Academy, Kushner, Leffel, Frisch, and other Jewish schools in the Tri-State Area.

New GOA junior Shir Heicklen said, "It's honestly really hard adjusting because The Idea School was so lax, but not in a bad way. You could learn how you wanted to. You could express your creativity in a way

you can't at any other school, and it's hard to have to go back to the norm after that."

This is a relatable perspective for The Idea School students, as there are significant differences between the academic approach of Golda Och and The Idea School's style of learning.

GOA Upper School Principal Dr. Apter reinforced the commonality between the two schools' approaches. "In the classroom, students are engaged in the learning by doing rather than absorbing information presented by the teachers. Student choice is available for some classes in the high school, and for many projects assigned across the middle and high school, students have a choice in the content and product," he said.

"Our 12th grade Independent Study class encourages students to find their passion project, our Academic Elective Blocks give middle school students the opportunity to choose different topics that interest

"I became interested in working there last year when I saw this job description, which encompassed so much of what I wanted to be doing, and I started speaking with Dr. Apter and Rabbi Nevins, both of whom I had known and worked with before."

Rabbi Goldman is excited about the comprehensive Jewish Studies curriculum at GOA, which offers Hebrew, Tanakh, Rabbinitics, and Judaic electives.

One of her primary focuses is on enhancing the Tefillah program at GOA. She wants to ensure that it is both educational and that students know how to actively participate in any service while making it relevant and interesting. Rabbi Goldman believes that Judaism is not just a class with a grade but a way of living, and she is dedicated to nurturing Jewish life outside the classroom.

As she embarks on her new role, Rabbi Goldman wants every student to know they can talk to her about religious or spiritual issues they may be facing, whether in or out of school.

Goldman said, "Especially with the heartache that many of us are experiencing with what is going on in Israel right now, please know I am here for you." She understands the significance of support during these challenging times and is ready to provide guidance.

Golda Och Academy has found a compassionate and inspiring teacher who is well-equipped to guide the spiritual and educational journey of the school's students. Her passion as a teacher, understanding of student's needs, and commitment to creating a vibrant Jewish community make her an invaluable addition to students and the entire school as she continues to share her wisdom, enthusiasm, and unwavering support in the years to come.

them, and our Tefillah options in the high school give students more ownership in the ways in which they express their spirituality," he said.

At Golda Och, the assignments are common across the class, while at The Idea School, most assignments were individual student-led projects. The only traditional subject at The Idea School with assessments and traditional homework was math.

Golda Och is more structured than The Idea School, which can aid students in building up their ability to adapt to change and be independent.

Sophomore Yael Benzaquen said, "I really like the art and STEM program here. It's much more structured than programs in other schools I have been to, and it's really nice to have that space to work in."

While the integration of these schools is not necessarily easy, everyone has been able to come together to make the learning experience work for everyone.

## HS Arts Department Follows Eurydice to the Underworld

By Arielle Karni '26

A young heroine in love. A "Nasty, Interesting Man". A journey through the underworld. Powerful string, and countless plot twists.

Golda Och Academy's 2023 high school production of Sarah Ruhl's play, Eurydice, delivered all of this drama and more.

The Arts Department once again transformed the upper school's multi-purpose room into a black box style stage and theater for this production.

Eurydice is a reimaged story of the classic Greek myth of Orpheus. Ruhl's unique and modern twist of the timeless love story spins the tale from the eyes of the heroine, Eurydice.

GOA senior Hannah Weisz said, "Eurydice is a reimaged version of the princess and the pea, twisting common fairytale archetypes into a new comedic musical."

The play opened with Eurydice, played by Katriela Nelkins '25, and Orpheus, played by Jesse Berkowitz '24, as bride and groom. On their wedding day, Eurydice meets the Nasty Interesting Man, played by Talia Rosen '26, who lures Eurydice away with the promise that he has a letter from her deceased father, played by Weisz. While leaving the Nasty Interesting Man, Eurydice trips on stairs and falls to her death. Eurydice is welcomed to the underworld by Little Stone, Big Stone, and Loud Stone, played by Leo Milch '27, Bradley Griffel '24, and Yael Benzaquen '26, respectively, who invoke the audience's imagination while enforcing the rules of the underworld.

All of this was brought to life (and death) by a stage crew that included seniors Adina, Peri and Shoshie Newman.

GOA arts teacher Mr. Yeshion, who directed the play, said, "It was truly a joy directing this exception-

al cast in our production of Eurydice. The performers dedicated their entire being to the creative process, crafting extraordinarily beautiful characters through incredibly nuanced and captivating performances. Bravo!"

Sophomore Talia Rosen echoed Mr. Y's enthusiasm, "Being part of the Eurydice production was an amazing experience. We really bonded as a group and the end result was really cool too."

Sophomore Gracie Sacks provided her service as makeup and hair artist for the play.

"Working for the play was truly amazing. It is so inspiring to see all of the hard work done behind the scenes and minuscule details that transform the show. I gained a greater appreciation for both the actors, directors, and the arts themselves," she said.

The Arts Department's next major production will be the high school musical Once Upon A Mattress, debuting January 11, 2024.



## Strikes Cost Auto Makers Millions

By Noah Cytrynbaum '28

This fall, the United Auto Workers union staged a three-week strike against the “Big Three” auto manufacturers: Ford, Stellantis, and GM, costing the industry a collective \$9.6 billion.

The strike began when Shawn Fain, President of the United Auto Workers union (UAW), announced that a deal had not been reached with any of the automakers and announced that workers in three plants — a Ford plant in Michigan, a GM plant in Missouri, and a Jeep plant (owned by Stellantis) in Ohio — would walk off the production lines.

The UAW said that if their demands were not met by September 22, more workers would strike. A deal was once again not reached, so 5,600 workers from 38 different manufacturing plants walked out. Now, 25,000 out of 146,000 workers are on strike.

The UAW has made significant demands, including a 40 percent wage increase over four years, inflation protection, pension benefits for all employees and a four-day workweek. In addition to these primary demands, the union workers want to be re-trained to manufacture electric vehicles (EVs) instead of being laid off and being replaced by younger, tech-trained workers.

Regarding the demand that EVs would benefit the workers, senior Hannah Weisz said, “I think that should be

the bare minimum. A change in company goals has nothing to do with the value of its workers. They should be given the same treatment, if not improved, as before. These companies certainly have the resources to provide it.”

The UAW’s strategy is a cunning one; it works by striking at a fraction of the plants (often the more profitable ones for the company), which means that the companies can not predict which factories will strike while still keeping many of the factories running. This keeps money flowing for the union’s fund, which will compensate for the striking workers.

“I’m not sure that the strikers’ method of striking is the most effective,” said senior Josh Lancman. “Although they will last longer, being paid, it seems like it’ll remove the impact of striking from the worker and the companies.”

Political conservatives and auto industry executives have said that productivity will decrease in a four-day workweek. However, there have been cases in many Western countries where a four-day workweek actually increased productivity, with workers feeling they had more to work for. For example, Japan introduced a four-day workweek as a nationwide guideline. Since its implementation, this shorter week has helped with the labor shortage brought upon by COVID-19 and boosted productivity by 40 percent.



## Immigrants Cause Concern at Southern Border

By Hannah Zoller '26

The immigration situation has become dire as there has been a significant increase in immigration from the southern border, indicating a strained US-Mexican immigration system. The Biden Administration announced measures intended to alleviate these problems, as White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre affirmed that President Biden is, “doing everything he can” to handle the influx of immigrants.

This includes enforcement and deployment of additional troops and federal officers to the border and the removal or return of over 250,000 people since May 12.

Jean-Pierre said, “diplomacy that has been done with the region, including Mexico, to deal with this issue, because... this is a regional issue that we’re seeing as it relates to unlawful migration.”

Federal authorities also are struggling with this surge of immigrants, which has drawn federal resources and powered concerns in cities all around the nation. Last month’s border arrests indicate a rise in immigration since August, when Border Patrol arrested approximately 181,000 immigrants crossing into the United States. In fact, it’s the largest total since December, when Border Patrol apprehended over 222,000 migrants.

A Department of Homeland Security spokesperson said, “We remain vigilant and expect to see fluctuations, knowing that smugglers continue to use misinformation to

Producers.

There has been a recent increase in workers unionizing and, in some cases, striking against major companies, including Kaiser Permanente, various hotel chains in Southern California and most notably, Starbucks. This increase emerges due to the rising cost of living, with necessities becoming more expensive as inflation becomes increasingly demanding on Americans. Meanwhile, large companies’ owners, CEOs and investors are growing wealthier.

President Biden and former President Trump separately visited the striking workers and addressed the issue of electric vehicles. Biden warned against the automakers taking advantage of electric vehicles by shifting manufacturing to non-unionized labor in the South, such as Texas or Florida, which would be cheaper. Trump, meanwhile, warned against EVs as a whole, saying that electric vehicles would lead to many workers facing unemployment because EVs have fewer parts, meaning their assembly requires less manpower.

Three weeks into the strike at the time of writing, armed with 25,000 workers, UAW President Shawn Fain announced that, after progress in negotiations with Ford, GM and Stellantis, there would be no additional strikes. The companies have all reached tentative agreements with the UAW to end the strike as of October 29.

prey on vulnerable individuals.”

The Department of Homeland Security has admitted over 281,000 individuals since May, while “expanding refugee processing and family reunification options,” the spokesperson said.

Sophomore Arielle Karni said, “This immigration crisis really does impact all migrants and the people involved with the immigration policies as I think there are people who do want to help the migrants.”

Democrats have made efforts to help the immigrants seeking refuge in the United States without angering US citizens.

Sophomore Arielle Karni added, “It is interesting that immigration political tensions have increased in Chicago while Texas has also been managing thousands of migrants.”

Large immigrant groups from Venezuela have been traveling on freight trains toward the US, while the border patrol has been preparing direct deportation flights for these immigrants back to their home country.

The Department of Homeland Security recently extended Temporary Protected Status for Venezuela, which gives Venezuelans the right to live and work in the US on the basis that their home country is unsafe.

The United States has struggled with contentions over its border with Mexico for decades. With increased policing preventing illegal crossing of the border, along with new legislation allowing further legal immigration into the US, the government is taking new strides to conclude the long-disputed border crisis.



## GOP Contenders Vie for Nomination

By Rachel Nadelmann '25

This past fall, Republicans gathered at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library in Simi Valley, California, for the Second Republican Presidential Debate.

All Republican presidential contenders, with the exception of Donald Trump and Asa Hutchinson, were in attendance. By all accounts, the debate was a spirited two-hour exchange of the candidate’s differing opinions.

Many candidates stood out from the rest and enhanced their standings in the race. Amongst the strongest performances was given by Nikki Haley from South Carolina, who attacked Ron Desantis by accusing him of banning fracking in Florida, an issue that resonates strongly with several swing states.

Haley also successfully sparred with Vivek Ramaswamy when she criticized his comments on the use of social media by teens: “Every time I hear you, I feel a little bit dumber.”

She also criticized Tim Scott for his inability to limit spending during his time in the Senate, saying, “Where have you been? Where have you been, Tim? Twelve years we’ve waited, and nothing has happened.” Junior Austin Colm says, “Nikki Haley has a firm and collaborative approach to addressing decisive issues that currently plague our nation.”

The three candidates whose performances were more mixed were Ron Desantis, Tim Scott, and Chris Christie. Desantis was effective in his attacks on Donald Trump, who refused to show up to yet another debate, pointing out that Trump’s absence showed a fear of confronting his competition.

However, Desantis failed to effectively counter Pence’s accusation of increasing Florida’s budget by more than 30% during his tenure as governor. Likewise, he also failed to defend himself against Haley’s claim that he took steps in Florida to block fracking - which Republicans almost universally support.

Similarly, Tim Scott’s performance was decidedly mixed. The South Carolina Senator challenged Ramaswamy

for his business ties to China and attacked Haley for supporting increased gas taxes while she was governor of South Carolina. Scott failed to register any damning attacks on his opponents.

Chris Christie, true to form, continued his assault on former president Donald Trump in his failure to show up to the past two debates. Level-

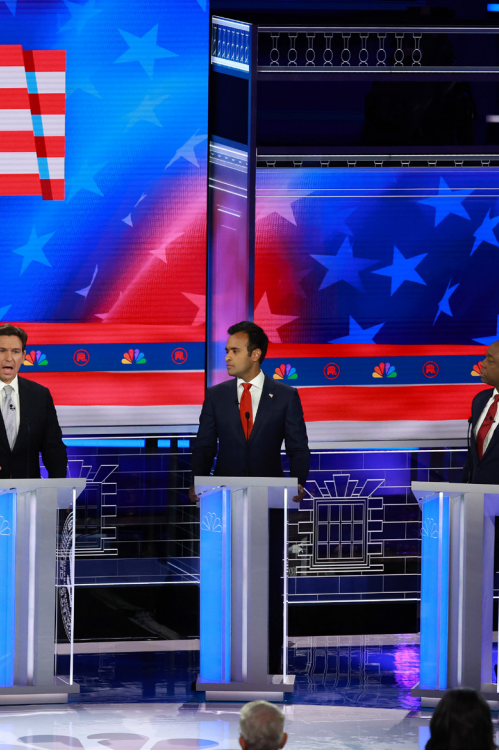


ing his comments directly to Trump, Christie said, “No one up here is going to call you Donald Trump anymore; we’re gonna call you Donald Duck.” Christie also effectively emphasized the danger posed by an alliance between China and Russia. However, Christie was only remembered for his shots at Trump rather than memorably presenting his own positions.

When it came to Vivek Ramaswamy, Mike Pence and Doug Burgum, their performances were received as tepid. Ramaswamy failed to deflect the many attacks lodged at him by his fellow candidates for his business dealings with China. Aside from attempting to defend himself against his candidates, Ramaswamy could not make any persuading arguments about why he should be president.

“I believe Vivek’s success in the first debate was largely because he came out of seemingly nowhere and made a big splash, getting a lot

of screen time and clearly trying to portray himself as something like a Trump surrogate on the debate floor, in Trump’s absence,” said junior Shayne Cytrynbaum. “But by the second debate, the other candidates were used to him and able to push back much more, and I think a lot of viewers now see Vivek as simply a loud, obnoxious



contrarian, without the charisma that Trump or the prudence that Biden has.”

Pence repeatedly failed to address the questions directed at him by the moderators. When pressed on whether the Affordable Care Act was here to stay, Pence ignored the question entirely and instead called for the passing of a federal law expediting the death penalty. Despite being asked on multiple occasions about how he would respond to the “dreamers” in the United States, Pence ignored the question each time.

Even though Doug Burgum, North Dakota governor, needed to make memorable comments in the debate to boost his poll numbers, he failed to do so. At one point in the debate, Burgum attempted to interject; however, he was met with a moderator’s response of “Sir, we’ll have to cut your mic, and I don’t want to do that.”

Throughout the evening, the three moderators tried their best to control

the debate, but the interruption and arguments of the candidates overpowered their efforts.

The Second Republican Presidential Debate displayed the candidates’ true passion to stand out from each other, making the debate all the more riveting. Each candidate’s performance signaled the strengths and weaknesses that lay ahead for their campaign trails.

The Third Debate of the season took place last November in Miami, Florida with many topics to discuss, specifically the outbreak of the war between Israel and Hamas.

Compared to previous debates, the candidates spent much time discussing foreign policy. All candidates expressed their condemnation of antisemitism and outgoing support of Israel. However, it shocked many people that no candidates discussed the protection of Palestinian civilians in Gaza.

Abortion, another hot topic was discussed which revealed the distinctions between candidates’ views.

Nikki Haley stated, “I don’t judge anyone for being pro-choice, and I don’t want them to judge me for being pro-life.”

Haley expressed her desire to eliminate the divide between pro-life and pro-choice and work towards saving as many babies as possible.

Tim Scott, who has since dropped out of the race, said in the debate that abortions are “unethical and immoral” and Ron DeSantis criticized Democrats for supporting abortions without time restrictions.

At the peak of the discussions between candidates, Ramaswamy and Haley’s discussion got a little heated. Ramaswamy noted that Haley’s daughter is an active user of TikTok and Haley responded with “Leave my daughter out of your voice. You’re just scum.”

Despite the performances of the candidates, political analysts still seem confident that Trump will be the Republican Candidate in the 2024 Presidential Election and it will be difficult for any of the other candidates to surpass him.

## Earthquakes Devastate Morocco

By Jackson Meirzon '27

A massive earthquake rocked the town of Oukaimedene, Morocco, on September 8, 2023, and claimed over 2,900 lives, injuring 5,500. The earthquake measured 6.8 on the Richter scale, making it one of Morocco’s largest ever; its quake tore through the countryside, destroying homes and buildings.

Magen David Adom, Israel’s emergency rescue service, sent teams to Morocco, providing medical treatment to the thousands of survivors.

Northern Africa had not experienced an earthquake of this magnitude in over 120 years.

According to the United States Geological Survey, citizens in Spain and Portugal could feel the tremors over 550 miles away.

For days after the initial earthquake, many residents of villages along the High Atlas mountain range were trapped under the rubble; there is only a three-day window in which a person trapped under rubble can survive, after which their chances of survival plummet dramatically.

Accompanied by rescue teams, dogs were used to sniff out people trapped beneath the rubble.

“Residents lack the means to purchase even a single brick,” said Bouissirfane, a citizen of Oukaimedene who lost his whole family in the devastating earthquake. “We have lost everything — our homes, our livestock, and all our possessions.”

The deadly earthquake killed over half the village’s population and left nearly every building and home

## Taylor Swift Breaks Records, Re-Releases Albums

By Mia Schwartz '25 and Rose Berman '25

Taylor Swift officially wrapped up her first United States leg of The Eras Tour in August 2023 with six consecutive sold-out shows in California.

Since her first show on March 17, 2023, the total gross of tickets and sales has been over one billion dollars. Swift earned an average of \$13 million per show in the first 22 shows of The Eras Tour.

“If Taylor Swift were an economy, she’d be bigger than 50 countries,” said Dan Sweetwood, President of research software suite QuestionPro Research and Insights, in a story for Global News Wire.

Tickets for The Eras Tour went on sale on November 15, 2023, selling over two million tickets in a few hours. Swift broke a Ticketmaster record for most tickets sold by an artist in a single day, ultimately leading to technical

issues with the website and causing it to crash. Many “Swifties” could not purchase tickets after waiting in the Ticketmaster queue for hours.

Sophomore Gracie Sacks recalled how she, “did not survive the Ticketmaster queue after waiting a long time.”

Tickets purchased in the presale were sold for an average of \$254, while resellers sold tickets for up to tens of thousands of dollars. Once at the shows, the spending continued; between purchasing tickets, merchandise, and new outfits, fans attending The Eras Tour spent an average of \$1,300 each.

Each performance by Swift during The Eras Tour spanned more than three hours, with Swift singing 42 setlist songs per night, along with two “surprise songs.”

Senior Giselle Weiss shared, “Although I was in the very last row of MetLife stadium, I could feel Taylor’s

energy. Her stunning stage presence, along with the incredible excitement from her fans, made the entire concert experience better than I could have ever imagined.”

During her performance on Saturday, May 20th, at Gillette Stadium in Massachusetts, Swift said, “I kind of just feel like telling you... I’ve just never been this happy in my life, in all aspects of my life, ever, and I just want to thank you for being a part of that.”

On October 27, 2023, Swift released 1989 Taylor’s Version which marked Swift’s fourth re-recording of one of her past albums, giving her full custody over four out of six of her previously stolen albums.

1989 TV still includes fan-favorite songs such as “Blank Space” and “Shake It Off,” and also releases five special “from the vault” songs (songs that Swift did not initially include on the album’s first release).

Junior Abby Hodes said she is,

“most excited for Swift’s vaulted song ‘Now That We Don’t Talk’ and just listening to all my old favorites such as ‘Wildest Dreams’.v”

Swift also released ‘The Eras Tour’ Movie, in theaters since October 13, 2023. Making over \$26 million in ticket sales on the day of its release, Swift is projected to make over \$125 million. This will surpass the highest-grossing concert film, Justin Bieber’s “Never Say Never,” which made \$73 million. Many Swift fans who were not fortunate enough to attend the Eras Tour look forward to living out their dreams of attending the concert at the movie theater.

Junior Yaelle Messulan had the privilege of attending two nights of the Eras Tour and the premiere of the Eras Tour Movie. She said, “Both were incredible, and if you were unable to get tickets to the concert, you should definitely go see the movie in the theater.”



# “Golda” - a Film Review, Fifty-Year Anniversary, and Understanding the Yom Kippur War

By Josh Lancman '24

Yosi ben Hanan has one of those life stories you cannot help but think was made for the movies.

He is a 1967 war hero; featured on the cover of LIFE Magazine holding an AK-47 with the caption “Israeli Soldier Cools Off in the Suez Canal.”

His wedding was attended by most of Israel’s military elite; and his honeymoon in Nepal was interrupted by the Yom Kippur War.

During a brutal defense of the Golan Heights against the Syrian Army, itself only Israeli territory for seven years at that time he was wounded thrice in action, each time refusing to be evacuated.

He was rescued behind enemy lines (after being wounded a fourth time) by Sayeret Matkal special forces member Yonatan Netanyahu, older brother of current Prime Minister Bibi Netanyahu.

He is a Medal of Courage recipient, later named an Aluf, or general, in the Israeli army.

There are uncountable stories of heroism from this now fifty-year-old horror of a war, but the gist of the Yom Kippur War is this: Israel and its neighbors got tired of fighting. After losing far more troops than expected (three to four times the casualties in the Six-Day War of 1967) and seeing that they could not maintain their military edge over the Russian-backed Egyptians and Syrians forever, the Israeli people began to look for peace. The Arabs, vindicated from their embarrassing loss six years prior, were similarly looking for a better situation in the region. Another six years passed,

and Egypt and Israel signed an official peace treaty with the help of the United States in the Camp David Accords of 1979.

This is not the story of Israeli director Guy Nattiv’s new film “Golda.” Instead, Helen Mirren has a small-scale panic attack for 100 minutes, playing Prime Minister Golda Meir while chain-smoking as many cigarettes. Mirren’s character arc can be summed up as such: she is terrified of

tary of State Henry Kissinger to assist the Israeli military with a massive resupply effort and wins the war.

Mirren’s fear and bloody conscience over the deaths of several thousand Israeli soldiers is rammed down your throat at every possible moment, as when she solemnly watches coffins draped in an Israeli flag being loaded onto a cargo plane for burial at Har Herzl, the Israeli Military Cemetery in Jerusalem. It

of that same secretary and Mirren, something of a distant observer.

If you were to take “Golda” as a history lesson, you would walk away with a “great person” view: that the entirety of history is dictated solely by the influential and powerful, rather than by the people, heroes like Yosi ben Hanah, and their leaders in turn. So how do we understand the Yom Kippur War, fifty years past? In her 2021 book “Israel,” author Noa Tishby routinely refers to the war as a “close call” (Tishby 298), something which “left the Israeli people reeling in shock and anger for a long time” (Tishby 130) yet resulted in a world-changing peace agreement only a few years later.

“Only a month after the signing of the [Egyptian-Israeli] agreement, 75 percent of the [Israeli] public believed it,” she writes. “Things can happen in a hurry when the right leaders appear –” an interesting way to refer to Egyptian President Anwar Sadat, who started the Yom Kippur War originally, but still.

It’s a tragedy with an immensely positive outcome, the result of the people of both nations and the leaders they supported, even as Sadat was assassinated by Egyptian Islamic Jihad members in 1981. Home to guilty leaders like Golda, legendary heroes like Hanan, enemies turned allies like Sadat, and thousands upon thousands dead with a peace treaty as a bow on top, the war’s legacy remains conflicted and confusing fifty years later. A shallow film only reinforces that.



Israel being destroyed when caught off guard by an Arab surprise attack at the beginning of the Yom Kippur War, at one point telling her assistant to prevent the Arabs from taking her alive by any means necessary, including assisted suicide. She experiences extreme guilt whenever hearing about the death of an Israeli soldier, with one of the film’s main plot points being how her secretary loses a son due to a military blunder Mirren makes. Eventually, she convinces US Secre-

seems as though the wars between Israel and its neighbors stopped because the leaders, like Golda, got tired of it, not the people.

And where are those people in “Golda” anyway? The war is viewed on 70s analog computer screens and in zoomed-out, artificially darkened computer-generated imagery with accompanying sound bites of battle. The entire film takes place within the halls of power; the only view of direct loss in the war is seen in the reactions

warm, friendly, and nurturing.” Barbie, in one of her most brilliant statements of all time, responded to Gloria: “By giving voice to the cognitive dissonance required to be a woman of the patriarch, you robbed it of its power... We have to stop the Kens.” Perhaps this article is my way of giving voice to such cognitive dissonance. But rather than attempt to stop the Kens, shouldn’t we include them in our feminist fight? While we women can appreciate the pink, glitter and feminist jokes brilliantly embedded throughout the film while also discerning between the tongue-in-cheek wit and the blunt irony of much of the dialogue throughout Barbie (after all, we are the gender with superior multitasking abilities), it is not “enough” that males simply go see the Barbie movie. Rather, I urge all men to see Barbie immediately with the laser focus and attention span usually dedicated to fantasy football, particularly during Gloria’s masterful monologue which boldly and unequivocally states the main theme of the movie stripped of all hidden meaning.

# Men Must See Barbie; A Deeper Look into “Gloria’s” Monologue

By Arielle Karni '26

Within the first few days after the Barbie movie dropped this summer, it became a huge hit, shocking the world with its deep meaning and compelling storyline.

The movie impressively set many records, including being the largest opening for a female director in history and breaking 17 individual box office records, domestically grossing higher than any other Warner Bros. movie ever.

It even created an international shortage of pink paint around the United States.

Many women worldwide agree that America Ferrera’s performance as “Gloria” boldly encapsulates the perpetual struggle of women burdened by unrealistic and unattainable standards forced upon them by society.

Gloria opens her standout monologue with the simple theme, “It is literally impossible to be a woman.” She continues to give one example after another that nearly every woman can relate to, as evidenced by the number of long-haired heads I wit-

nessed shaking in agreement in the silent darkness of the theater.

Gloria laments, “You have to be thin, but not too thin. And then you can never say you want to be thin.”

In a society where the tide seems to be shifting to be more accepting of plus sizes and influential body-positive activists abound on social media, The Economist concludes that “It is economically rational for ambitious women to try as hard as possible to be thin” in its December 2022 edition, noting that “Discrimination against fat women has not diminished as their numbers have risen.”

She continues, “You have to be a boss, but you can’t be mean.”

Marianne Cooper, a sociologist at the Clayman Institute for Gender Research at Stanford University, agreed in the April 30, 2013 edition of Harvard Business Review, summarizing that “high-achieving women experience social backlash because their very success – and specifically the behaviors that created that success – violates our expectations about how women are supposed to behave. Women are expected to be nice,

When Gloria bewails, “You have to answer for men’s bad behavior, which is insane, but if you point that out, you’re accused of complaining,” I can’t help but think of the treatment of female sexual assault victims.

Women are commonly asked if they provoked their assaulters with what they wore, what they drank or where they went instead of male aggressors being held accountable for their actions. In the face of the gender wage gap, women are encouraged to negotiate more effectively, know their worth and, in the words of Sheryl Sandberg, former Meta and Facebook COO, “lean in.” I venture to guess that Gloria might inquire whether women should change their behaviors or whether men should change theirs.

The monologue concludes, “And if all of that is also true for a doll just representing women, then I don’t even know.” This sentence is a commentary on the weight of criticism that Barbie dolls have borne on their tiny little shoulders over the past 64 years.

# ACT and SAT Move to Online Format, Not Fair

By Rachel Max '24

The ACT and SAT are two standardized tests that have long been used by colleges and universities in the United States to evaluate the academic readiness of applicants.

The idea is that if every student takes the same test, you’d be able to get a clear picture of where a student fell to get around the possibility of grade inflation and or vastly different expectations at schools nationwide.

However, in recent years, these tests have faced increasing criticism for being outdated, biased and unfair, resulting in more and more schools adopting test-optional policies, meaning that students can choose whether or not to submit their test scores as part of their application.

This trend was accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, which disrupted the availability and accessibility of testing centers, making it nearly impossible for students to take the test. In response, the College Board and ACT

Inc., the organizations that administer the SAT and ACT, respectively, have announced that they plan to offer online versions of their tests, with the ACT having begun its pilot earlier this year. The goal is to provide more flexibility and convenience for students who want to take the tests and to maintain relevance in a system attempting to do away with them.

This move is not likely to save these tests as it not only does not resolve the current problem but creates new ones. An online test poses significant challenges for ensuring the security and validity of test questions and results; while in-person exams are done under the strict supervision of a proctor, an online test relies on an AI monitoring program to ensure no cheating is taking place. The only problem? Those programs aren’t perfect; they can be beaten, outsmarted, and hacked and can even set off false alarms for cheating.

Also, putting aside the possibility

of cheating, the ACT and SAT have a long history of placing rich, white students at an inherent advantage, a fact that multiple studies have proven to be true. Rich students have the disposable income to pay to take the test multiple times and can afford an expensive ACT/SAT prep course or tutor. By making the test digital, this disparity could be widened as not all students have technological fluency such as access to a reliable internet connection, computers or a quiet environment conducive to taking such a high-stakes test.

“The entire standardized test process has always been unsettling for me because it is only fair for those students who can afford special tutoring and programs. There can be a really smart kid out there who deserves to get into the college they want but they are unable to take the SAT or ACT because of their financial instability. I am happy that there are new options being created to even out the playing field,” said sophomore Marley Fischer.

Also, according to the current plans, the online tests will have a different format and structure than the in-person tests, which may affect the difficulty level, content, and scoring criteria. For example, the online ACT will have fewer questions and shorter time limits, and the online SAT will have an optional essay that will not be scored by human graders.

As a result, the online versions may not be a fair comparison to in-person tests or tests from previous years.

“For me the [digital] test seemed easier because of the reading section. The new test had shorter passages rather than long ones, and I felt it was easier to answer the questions following the stories,” said junior Lilly Wise.

Ultimately, only time will tell if test-optional policies are effective and if switching to online testing will be enough to keep these exams alive. However, moving away from standardized testing in general will only hasten that process.

By Shayne Cytrynbaum '25

For several months, the media has been flooded with increasingly negative portrayals of electric vehicles, claiming that they are somehow less sustainable, less equitable and more expensive to manufacture than gas- or diesel-powered vehicles. While electric vehicles are certainly not perfect, this popular assessment is dead wrong.

Before I start lauding the merits of electric vehicles, let me begin by stressing that no cars are “good.” The culture of car dependency started in the 1950s, born out of a misguided dream arising in the Golden Age of American industry, a dream that never materialized.

Urban planners like Robert Moses hoped to use the automobile to renew America’s cities, but they did so by destroying entire neighborhoods to make way for highways and car infrastructure, mostly in poorer neighborhoods home to immigrants and people of color. The remaining communities located next to car infrastructure now face corollary problems like food deserts and hotter urban microclimates and face higher rates of asthma and lung disease (which is caused directly by the thousands of smoke-emitting cars driving by each day, not “poor living conditions” or “the use of illegal drugs,” as some critics have suggested).

“I’m not going to say that I’m not surprised that this is happening know the effects that carbon emissions from cars have on the climate and the air around us,” said GOA junior and automobile aficionado Solomon Langer. “But while I do believe there are solutions to this problem, I believe it is going to take longer than just coming up with something right now. I really think it needs to be studied in-depth and done right.”

The negative effects of car dependency have been well-established for decades among urban designers, sociologists and environmental justice experts. Opposition to the ever-expanding highways that cover America has only grown since the “urban renewal” project started in the 1950s. Rather than making perfect little suburbs where everything is available, far away from the hustle-and-bustle of the city, car dependency has instead forced longer drives that take up time and money, contribute to pollution and the climate crisis, increase the likelihood of car crashes and worsen our stress levels as we sit in traffic. There is a reason why so many Americans reminisce about their college campuses and why trips to Disneyland or Europe are so popular:

walkable, green streets with fewer cars are just more pleasant to be in than wide, traffic-filled roads surrounded only by gas stations and McDonald’s.

Although they contribute far less to air pollution and the climate crisis than traditional vehicles, electric vehicles still reinforce the problems that come with car dependency. While electric cars are a great replacement for gas-powered cars, the best solution is still municipal policies that encourage the use of public transit, walking



and cycling and that fight car dependency.

This all being said, electric vehicles (EVs) are still far better than gas-powered, diesel-powered, or hybrid vehicles. In terms of CO2 emissions per mile, almost every single EV on the market is better for the climate than gas cars. In fact, the biggest EVs on the market, such as the Ford F-150 Lightning truck (~6,500 lbs), the Ram 1500 REV truck (~7,500 lbs) and the GMC Hummer EV truck (~9,000 lbs), are comparable to the smallest gas-powered cars (which weigh only 3,000 lbs or less) in terms of carbon emissions, producing around 300-350 grams of CO2 per mile. Meanwhile, the non-electric versions of those same vehicles can produce upwards of 800 grams of CO2 per mile.

“The reason gasoline cars and trucks are so much more climate-polluting is that they are so much less efficient,” explains climate analyst and self-described “chart geek” Barry Saxifrage.

“Put another way, gasoline vehicles need to burn a lot more fuel to produce the same amount of useful energy. That results in more emissions for the same energy.” Gasoline car engines produce 33% more CO2 than a coal plant would produce for the same amount of energy, and the electricity

powering electric vehicles is seldom ever from just coal, normally being a mixture of electricity derived from fossil fuels and renewables.

Another major (and false) talking point used by opponents of EVs is that their batteries are less sustainable due to the amount of mining needed, as EVs need hard-to-come-by minerals such as lithium, cobalt and “rare earth metals” for their batteries.

While the mining of these minerals is undoubtedly bad for the environment and

Institute in Houston, found that “Even if the world increased 12-fold the annual global production of all rare earths, lithium, cobalt and even copper, the metals produced would comprise just 3% of 2020 world coal production,” and that “Over two decades, five times more power would be produced by mining an equivalent amount for wind rather than coal.”

Concerns over the sourcing of said minerals, meanwhile, have been alleviated by the recent discovery of what could be the world’s largest lithium ore deposit along the Oregon-Nevada border. Mining for lithium, cobalt and “rare earth metals” has also been increasing in countries with better human rights records, such as Australia, Chile and Argentina. This means that an EV-driving society will not need to rely on despotic regimes like China for their batteries for much longer and that EVs can help foster trade within the democratic world.

Outside the issue of their sustainability, one of the most common critiques of electric vehicles is their cost. This is a criticism I can frankly understand, and it is, in fact, why my parents still drive gas-powered cars. However, many EVs are becoming much cheaper: the Nissan Leaf has lowered its base price to \$28,140, the Chevrolet Bolt EUV is now \$28,795 and the Mini Cooper SE Electric costs \$30,900. While these are certainly not cheap, they are far less expensive than they were just five years ago and still remain significantly lower than the average price of a new car, which is currently over \$48,000. Increases in federal subsidies to EV manufacturers and tax credits for consumers are together making EVs more affordable. Those concerned about the costs of EVs for lower-income families should understand that the climate crisis is going to hurt their pockets much more in the long run, as drought and crop failures will drive up food costs, home insurance premiums increase and extra repairs are needed to protect against storms, floods and fires.

Electric vehicles are clearly not perfect, and in many ways, they perpetuate the ills of car dependency by dishonestly presenting themselves as a completely sustainable, green option. However, they are still far better for the planet and our communities than gas-powered cars; they produce less greenhouse gasses, need less mining and cause less asthma and pulmonary diseases. So, while electric vehicles are not the end-all-be-all solution, until we as a society finally move away from car dependency and invest in public transit and walkability in cities, electric cars are a better replacement for gas-powered cars.



## College Athletes Allowed to Earn Pay At Last

By Henry Sacks '26

Collegiate athletes are now eligible to receive compensation through Name, Image and Likeness (NIL). NIL is a policy that allows players to engage in activities such as signing autographs, running camps, and endorsing brands - ultimately leading to payment for the college players. While many critics oppose this idea, this policy is extremely beneficial and appropriate for college athletes.

Before the approval of NIL, college athletes were viewed as amateurs. Considering their hard work and dedication toward their chosen

sport, it is neither an accurate nor fair statement to call a Division 1 athlete an amateur. The NIL rules allow college athletes to discredit unfair nicknames and prove their talent.

"I love watching college sports when it comes to March Madness or Michigan football games. What D1 athletes can do is very impressive, and I personally find watching them equally as interesting and fun as watching professional games," said sophomore Brandon Schall.

Nearly a year after the approval of the NIL deal, there have been many short-term and long-term benefits.

Tim Dardenger, a sports marketing expert at Carnegie Mellon University, said, "What the public has to be aware of is that these NIL laws were created in the spirit of being beneficial to the players — and they are."

Through this new enactment, college athletes are compensated, allowing them to learn various life skills, including how to pay taxes, sign contracts, and make smart financial decisions. Many athletes come from low-income families, or their parents do not teach them these essential skills. The rules of NIL open up financial possibilities that teach these young athletes important tasks useful not only for a career in sports but also for financial decisions made throughout all careers.

Significant NIL deals are not only beneficial for athletes but also for schools. When athletes host events, they draw attention to the entire university, increasing interest in the college.

Female athletes participating in college athletics have also been beneficiaries. For example, in March Madness of 2023, Louisiana State's star player Angel Reese gained over 650,000 followers on social media, which culminated in her signing deals with Amazon, Airbnb and PlayStation.

Critics may argue that NIL detracts players from their academics. However, athletes can still balance their time to focus on both aspects. Former tenured Villanova Men's Basketball Coach Jay Wright said, "I want players to still come to school to get their education and then want to benefit from NIL."

Not only are athletes on the receiving end of this deal, but NIL has also contributed to the growth of businesses. Famous athletes who sign with a specific brand or company increase the potential for brand exposure. Supporters of athletes with deals will be curious and possibly purchase items from the brand, increasing their overall revenue.

Brands partnering with college athletes help the business align with the values and causes that the athlete supports. If athletes are passionate about social justice or gender equality, the brand will attract customers due to the deal between the athlete and the company.

Top-tier athletes like Shadour Sanders, Bronny James, Livvy Dunne, Caleb Williams and Travis Hunter have all earned over two million dollars from their deals.

If they can be this successful at the college level, they are in good hands for when they continue their athletic careers.



USC Quarterback Caleb Williams has earned millions of dollars from his NIL deal.

## Physical Exercise is the Best Medicine

By Gabe Hirsh '26

Physical exercise is the most available medicine the world offers.

Many pharmaceutical drugs, including painkillers and antidepressants, come

with potential side effects. Relying on pills may lead to unwanted side effects, and in some cases, individuals may become dependent on these medications, which can pose long-term risks such as addiction. Medications can sometimes mask underlying problems rather than addressing the root causes. Medications may also include side effects.

For example, let's examine two common medications to illustrate this point:

1. Ozempic (Diabetes Medication): At least 15% of individuals using Ozempic, a medication prescribed for diabetes, report side effects such as weight loss, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain, or constipation. These side effects can be uncomfortable and affect an individual's quality of life.
2. Escitalopram (Antidepressant): More than 5% of people taking escitalopram, an antidepressant, experience side effects such as tiredness, nausea, headaches, or constant sweating. While these side effects may be less common and generally considered less severe, they can still impact an individual's well-being.

Unlike these medications, exercise can address these issues more directly. For instance, if you are struggling with weight loss, you can go for a run. Some of the side effects of exercise are soreness and injuries, however, soreness can go away with patience and proper rest and injuries can be prevented with proper technique. "I feel much better after

exercising because it pumps me up for the rest of the day unlike medicine which can have side effects and isn't natural," said sophomore Alex Marillo.

There are two important studies related to health and well-being that illuminate the benefits of physical health. The first investigates the impact of a single 30-second bike sprint on cellular scavenging (ability of cells to remove harmful molecules or free radicals) in our bodies. These harmful molecules can damage cellular components, including DNA, proteins, and cell membranes. The researchers found that one sprint increased cellular scavenging by up to 178 percent.

One of the main components of cellular scavenging is the presence of antioxidants. Antioxidants are known to reduce the risk of many diseases, such as certain cancers and heart diseases. Cellular scavenging activity is an essential defense mechanism to maintain the overall health and function of cells.

The second study shows the effects of exercise compared to antidepressants on mood enhancement. These findings underscore the potential of exercise as an effective method for improving mood and mental health, offering an alternative approach to traditional pharmaceutical treatment.

Over a 16-week period, a group of subjects underwent an intriguing experiment. One set received escitalopram, a commonly prescribed antidepressant, while the other engaged in outdoor running sessions lasting 45 minutes, occurring two to three times weekly. The findings were remarkable, concluding, "After 16 weeks, 45 percent of patients in the antidepressant group vs. 43 percent in the running group no longer had a DSM-IV based depression or anxiety

disorder," says the Journal of Affective Disorders. This amount competes with or is better than most antidepressants.

Although exercise has proven to be more effective, the overreliance on medication still presents a higher demand. This is likely driven by social trends.

In modern society, medicine creates an expectation for quick fixes and immediate relief from health issues. This instant gratification can lead people to prefer medication as it promises rapid results, unlike exercise, which requires time and effort to yield benefits. It's crucial to acknowledge exercise as a sustainable solution that might require a few weeks to manifest noticeable results but offers substantial long-term benefits. Overall, medication for mental health is often a temporary fix that doesn't address the root causes of health problems. Exercise offers sustainable, long-term solutions, which is essential in the face of increasing rates of chronic diseases and mental health disorders. An overemphasis on medication often neglects the profound health benefits of exercise. This shift has led to a surge in health issues, including obesity, heart disease, and mental health problems.

Now, if you haven't been exercising regularly, it's a good idea to begin at a comfortable pace and gradually increase your exercise duration over time. "I think exercise is very necessary for your physical and mental health. It definitely helps me," says sophomore Sam Kishelev.

Additionally, consider motivating and informing people you're familiar with about the advantages of incorporating exercise into their lives. Even if you only have time for exercise a few days per week, it can still help you feel significantly better and improve your physical health.



## Protests Against Netanyahu's Judicial Overhaul Rocked Israel Before Oct. 7 Attacks

By Jordyn Weisleder '25

In the past couple of months, thousands of Israeli activist groups have been protesting throughout Israel in response to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's agenda to overhaul the Judiciary system and lessen the power of the Supreme Court.

Protesters are determined to protect Israel's Judiciary, as it plays a significant role in evaluating executive power. In Israel, the Prime Minister and his majority group work together, leaving the Judiciary as the primary check on governmental power.

Unlike the United States, Israel lacks local governance and a formal constitution. This lack makes the power of government more centralized in parliament. The basic laws can be changed at any time when voted by the majority, which allows the Israeli parliament to weaken Judiciary power.

In the past, the Israeli Judiciary played a prominent role in protecting the rights of minorities such as Palestinian citizens and noncitizens from around the globe. Many say that weakening

the Judiciary will cause important issues in the country to be overlooked due to the change in power.

On February 25th, 2023, Netanyahu posted on X (formerly Twitter) before the demonstrations and protests, "I call on the responsible voices in the opposition - not to cooperate with the lawlessness and immediately enter into negotiations."

When Netanyahu introduced his plan to Israelis, larger cities like Tel Aviv began to protest. Israeli business leaders were taken back, and major military reservist units threatened to stop reporting for duty in times of crisis if this law were to pass.

In March 2023, Netanyahu paused the overhaul and talked with opposition lawmakers and leaders. Soon after, in June, Netanyahu stated that the overhaul would move forward. This led to intensifying and skyrocketing protests all over the country.

Worldwide, Jews took to social media, intending to show their response to Netanyahu's decisions by posting pictures



April 2023



November 2023

Split Screen: In Spring 2023 thousands protested against Netanyahu's judicial overhaul. Now, thousands come to Tel Aviv to advocate for the release of hostages held by Hamas.

of protests weekly. In March, before Netanyahu paused the overhaul, Adi Kotlicki, a cousin of junior Jordyn Weisleder and resident in Herzliya, captioned a post with her family: "Smiles full of hope. Fighting for a

democratic Israel." Freshman Violet Berman '27 shared similar hopes "for a quick and safe end to the war." For now, the media and IDF do not have any suspicions as to when the fighting will end.

## Misconceptions About the War in Israel

By Abby Hodes '25

On October 17th, 2023, the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) were incorrectly accused of the deadly explosion in the parking lot of the Gazan Al-Ahli Arab Hospital. Media outlets around the world immediately condemned Israel for this rumor spread by the Hamas-run Palestinian Ministry.

King Abdullah II of Jordan labeled this as an "Israeli massacre," which was a "heinous war crime that cannot be ignored."

According to the American Jewish Committee, the IDF stated, "From an analysis of the IDF's operational systems, an enemy rocket barrage was carried out towards Israel, which passed in the vicinity of the hospital when it was hit."

The IDF revealed further evidence by presenting an intercepted conversation between Hamas officials confirming that a

misfired rocket by Palestinian Islamic Jihad hit the hospital. U.S. President Joe Biden reaffirmed this assessment in his speech in Tel Aviv.

The flow of evidence to prove Israel's innocence continued as the IDF revealed additional information. They stated the parking lot did not feature a crater in the ground, and there was no structural damage to any nearby buildings—both indicators that it was not an IDF strike.

Israel was quickly blamed nonetheless, with individuals and the media all around the world claiming it had hit the medical facility and that hundreds had been killed; this behavior was condemned by Turkey, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and others. The countries had no evidence for their claim that an Israeli airstrike caused the damage, though they continued their harmful statements.

Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh

claimed that "the U.S. holds the responsibility of the hospital attack because of the cover it gives to the Israeli aggression."

Geoff Bennet, Co-Anchor of PBS NewsHour, set the record straight, claiming "U.S. officials [told him] their preliminary assessment, using independent intelligence of imagery and intercepted phone calls, is that—'Israel is not responsible.'"

Furthermore, Hamas deliberately places its launching sites where civilians live, allowing civilians to be at risk and susceptible to being harmed by misfires. Since the beginning of the war, approximately 450 rockets aimed at Israel have fallen within Gaza, endangering the lives of Palestinians in Gaza.

Hamas stores weapons in residential areas, schools, hospitals and mosques, and fires these rockets from densely populated areas. Therefore, it is challenging for the Israeli army to target military grounds without risking the lives of innocent Palestinians.

The Israeli Army, unlike Hamas, has been relatively considerate as they contact civilians in Arabic to evacuate their homes before launching a rocket into Gaza.

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21 Jewish Community Organizations Release Climate Action Plans

By Shayne Cytrynbaum '25

Twenty-one leading Jewish organizations in the United States and beyond have released Climate Action Plans, mostly for the first time ever, in a major show of support for climate activism within the Jewish community.

These organizations are all part of the Jewish Climate Leadership Coalition, a network of Jewish organizations, federations, schools, synagogues, camps, and other community institutions committed to writing and publishing Climate Action Plans. The Coalition was founded in the spring of 2022 by Adamah, the largest Jewish environmental organization in the United States, and has come to include over 260 local, national, and international Jewish institutions. "Together, we recognize the urgency of the climate crisis and our obligation to do more," said Adam Lehman, CEO of Hillel International, in a promotional video for the new alliance. "Our Coalition represents major Jewish organizations, engaging millions of people of all ages and backgrounds across the world."

This group includes the Jewish Federation of North America (JFNA), the JCC Association of America, Hillel International and the Jewish National Fund USA. Also included are the synagogue associations of three of the four main Jewish denominations in North America — the Union of Reform Judaism (URJ), the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism (USCJ), and Reconstructing Judaism — plus their respective denominations' rabbinical associations and the Orthodox movement's Rabbinical Council of America. The founding members are rounded out by Adamah, the "Associated" Jewish Federation of Baltimore, Birthright Israel, the Foundation for Jewish Camp, the Jewish Agency for Israel, the Jewish Funders Network, JPro, Moishe House, the Network of Jewish Human Service Agencies and the Prizmah Center for Jewish Day Schools.

"I think it's absolutely inspiring to

see not only these major Jewish organizations coming together to combat climate change, but also over 230 other smaller organizations joining with them to develop their own plans over the coming year," said junior Ady Goldman-Brown. "It gives me a lot of hope and shows me that even with all of the scary things going on right now, people are going to keep doing what they can to help the environment!" he added. The released Climate Action Plans

to rally the wider Jewish community to take climate action. "A lot of big organizations build buildings in places that aren't exactly good, causing cities to move into natural areas, leading to species going extinct," said junior Rikki Farkovits. "I want to see Jewish organizations create environmental impact reports for any facilities or construction to make sure this doesn't happen."

To help the member organizations

By keeping costs low for member organizations pursuing their Climate Action Plans, Adamah and the Coalition hope to see all Jewish community institutions developing their own plans now that funding is less of a concern. "As Jewish organizations, we have an obligation to follow through on public pledges to Tikkun Olam," said senior Hannah Weisz, Fundraising Director of the GOA Climate Activism Club.

"Coming up with a plan is just the starting point, and I am so excited to see what we can do with these resources. Funding opportunities like matching grants and interest-free loans provide everyone in [the Jewish Climate Leadership Coalition], including our school, with the opportunity to start pursuing climate action now!" Hannah said. Golda Och Academy joined the Jewish Climate Leadership Coalition as an institutional member in September 2022, though a Climate Action Plan has not yet been developed. However, this year, the student-led GOA Climate Activism Club is focusing on renewing interest in a Climate Action Plan within the school community and administration and working with school leaders to develop an ambitious plan as deemed possible in recognition of the urgency and severity of the

climate crisis. "Last year, GOA joined the Jewish Climate Leadership Coalition. The Climate Activism Club now looks to work with our school administration to develop a tangible action plan," said junior Oren Goldman, Vice President of the Climate Activism Club. "We hope to reduce GOA's greenhouse gas emissions through the use of clean energy sources, carbon offsetting, climate education, and other strategies. The Climate Action Club is excited to work with the school administration and the wider GOA community to improve and sustain our school for future students," Oren said.

fulfill their Climate Action Plans, the Jewish Climate Leadership Coalition offers funding opportunities, including "Interest-free loans of up to \$100,000, with a five-year pay-back, and matching grants of up to \$10,000."

Membership in the Coalition is free for all organizations, so this fund has been levied entirely from private donations. However, Adamah is applying for green energy subsidies and tax credits made available to faith-based nonprofits by the 2022 Inflation Reduction Act.

The Coalition has also received grants from local partners that will allow for higher payouts in specific regions, including the Baltimore area and Orange County, California, and it is pursuing more of these opportunities in the future.

range significantly in their ambitions, but key areas that excited many of the organizations included environmental education, reducing food waste and meat at their events, buying carbon offsets to compensate for the carbon emissions from flights and drives, and utilizing sustainable Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) investing strategies for their pension funds and endowments.

In guiding the member organizations in creating their plans, Adamah divided these action steps into two main categories: "Getting to Net Zero," which covers all institutional greening efforts and serves to make the member institutions more sustainable in their own right, and "Expanding Impact" which includes education, advocacy, and finance and serves



Tens of Thousands March Worldwide in "Global Week of Climate Action"

By Matthew Simon '25

Tens of thousands of activists and concerned citizens joined protests around the world this fall, calling for an end to fossil fuel burning.

"The burning of fossil fuels is the leading cause of climate change, and I am encouraged that protests calling for action against fossil fuels are happening around the world," said junior Oren Goldman.

The protests, organized by many different youth groups and climate organizations, took place in dozens of countries worldwide, from Austria to America, India to Indonesia, France to the Philippines and Senegal to South Korea.

In Quezon City, activists lay down in front of the Philippine Department of Energy and Natural Resources. In Vienna, thousands of high-school students staged a sit-in on the steps of the Austrian parliament building. In Stockholm, chants of "climate justice!" could be heard at an official event marking the 50th anniversary of the Swedish King Carl XVI Gustaf's coronation, which was happening the same day. In the city of Goma in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, activists marched against the expansion of oil drilling in the region, especially the new East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP), currently under construction.

"I am always so inspired and motivated when I see the images and videos of so many people, from disparate countries and communities all across the globe, advocating for climate justice and climate action," said junior Shayne Cytrynbaum.

"Even when I am feeling desperate

about the current political and financial situation in relation to the climate crisis, I think back to our mass social movements and I remember that ultimately having enough people out in the street can spur an unlimited potential for action, as long as we activists remain dedicated and vigilant," Shayne said. In New York City, an estimated 50,000 to 75,000 people attended the "March to End Fossil Fuels" in Midtown Manhattan on September 17, in what has been described as the biggest rally in the city since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

More dedicated activists protested at major banks and financial institutions known for funding fossil fuel projects, including the Federal Reserve Bank, BlackRock, and CitiBank. Symbolic sites targeted for protest also included the Museum of Modern Art (over its ties to fossil fuel investor KKR) and Zuccotti Park, which was famously the starting point of the Occupy Wall Street movement in 2011 and is also partially owned by fossil fuel bank Goldman Sachs. In a speech at the March to End Fossil Fuels, progressive Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY) told the crowd that the climate movement must become "too big and too radical to ignore," a common adage in social movement organizing.

She said, "We are all here for one reason: to end fossil fuels around the planet... And the way we create urgency is to have people around the world in the streets." To publicly demonstrate the wide sup-

port for stronger climate action, organizers worked to make the march as intersectional and inclusive as possible. The march included rabbis and imams, high schoolers and seniors, healthcare workers, labor union organizers, scientists, Indigenous activists, immigrant rights advocates and even an old school bus repurposed into a "dance hub."

"The wide variety of people who attended the March Against Fossil Fuels demonstrates how strong the climate justice cause is and how many people it excites," said junior Rachel Nadelmann. "Everyone in their life has been or will be impacted by climate change, and so the fact that people are coming together to



show the urgency and validate the climate crisis's existence is remarkable."

Messages in speeches, chants, and signs explicitly tied the climate crisis to issues of racism, classism, ableism, and colonialism, calling for a Green New Deal to try to address these problems more holistically.

The New York City march ended near the UN Headquarters Building, where world leaders gathered that week for the United Nations General Assembly meeting when most of the world's leaders traveled into the city. Protests have been a recurring feature of General Assembly meetings for years now due to this unique opportunity to force world leaders to acknowledge their demands. Jean Su of the Center for Biological Diversity, who helped organize the mobilization, said, "Tens of thousands of people are marching in the streets of New York because they want climate action, and they understand President Biden's expansion of fossil fuels is squandering our last chance to avoid climate catastrophe."

President Biden has been praised by some climate activists for passing the historic Inflation Reduction Act last year, which included \$369 billion in climate funding, but he has faced harsh criticism from many who are still angry that he broke his campaign promises of declaring a federal climate emergency and ending new oil and gas infrastructure projects on federal lands, with Biden already approving the controversial Willow Project oil drilling in Alaska and the Mountain Valley Pipeline in Virginia and West Virginia.

UN Says Climate Window "Rapidly Closing" in Dire New Report

By Daniella Lofstock '23

A new report from the United Nations' climate research body has warned that the window to avoid climate collapse is "rapidly closing," in what has been described as the organization's direst warning yet. In their 2023 "Global Stocktake" report in anticipation of the upcoming COP28 Climate Conference, the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) wrote, "Collective progress on adaptation and loss and damage must undergo a step change in fulfilling the ambition set out in the Paris Agreement. There is a rapidly closing window of opportunity to secure a liveable and sustainable future for all."

The Global Stocktake reports were designed under the 2015 Paris Climate Accords as a way for member countries to take inventory to see how much progress has been made on their collective climate goals, with the first release this year and subsequent stocktakes being released every five years after that. Although the next assessment report cycle from the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is not expected to finish until 2028 at the earliest, this first Global Stocktake report is key in reporting the current state of affairs. The climate policy analysts at the UNFCCC determined this threat by analyzing how close the world is to surpassing the limit of 1.5°C of heating set during the Paris talks. Researchers believe that the environment's temperature has increased by around 1.1°C since the start of the Industrial Revolution, but that with its current trajectory, there is a high chance it will surpass a 2°C increase by 2050, which climatologists say will lead to irreversible and unstoppable climate breakdown as feedback loops cause the natural stabilizers of the world's climate system and biosphere to collapse.

"Losses and damages to human and natural systems have already been observed. Climate impacts are eroding past human development gains and, without sufficient adaptation action, will impede the ability to make such gains in the future. Adaptation is the responsibility of all governments, at all levels, yet capacity to recover is undermined by repeated extreme climate events," according to the UNFCCC report. This fear was echoed by junior Emily Maines, who said, "It is very scary to see what is happening to the planet, and how the years are starting to get warmer and warmer. I hope that the people on planet earth can come together and help reverse this climate crisis."

The UNFCCC hopes that these increases

ingly dire warnings about climate collapse and its social, economic, and ecological consequences will spur stronger climate action, but so far little action has been taken in any country. The low-income countries in the Global South that are most at risk due to climate change are largely powerless to stop it, restricted by their own minimal per capita emissions and their weaker economies and governments.

In contrast, the richer countries of the Global North, which are responsible for the vast majority of historic greenhouse gas emissions, have been unwilling to take decisive action due to their own insulation from the crisis. Many activists worldwide have been pushing for bolder climate action to keep the climate within its "rapidly closing" safe window. "I am utterly horrified at the inaction of most governments and corporations around the world in the face of such extreme climate disasters," said junior Shayne Cytrynbaum. "I could understand a little bit if they did not take climate change seriously back 10 or 20 years ago, when the climate crisis was only just beginning to make itself known, but now, in 2023, after the summer of disasters we've had, I am furious and heartbroken that the world still has not got their act together to take meaningful climate action."

Others, however, feel that although saving the climate is important, the lack of action on this crisis is more understandable due to geopolitical and legal bounds. "The government is bound by the Constitution and should do as much legislation regarding climate policy that is within their power, and only within their power," said junior Austin Colm.

This Global Stocktake report comes soon after the hottest summer record, in which swaths of North Africa, Europe and Asia were hit by blistering heat waves. Furthermore, this summer has had multiple dangerous wildfires, like the ones in Canada, Hawaii and much of the Mediterranean region. Floods have hit major cities such as Beijing, Phoenix, Mumbai, and Los Angeles, and over 14,000 are dead or missing after a catastrophic storm led to a double dam collapse in Libya.

Further global heating could lead to even more wildfires, extreme weather events and storms, as well as massive famines, droughts and even pandemics, which can cause great harm to people's everyday lives.

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Over 14,000 Dead or Missing in Libya Following Disastrous Tropical Storm

By Marissa Jacobs '23, Noga Arieh '23, and Emily Maines '23

Cyclone Daniel struck Libya this past September, bringing with it extremely dangerous weather conditions that threatened life and property throughout the North-eastern regions of the country. The storm has already been identified as the deadliest Mediterranean tropical cyclone in recorded history, killing at least 3,958, with over 10,000 missing or presumed dead in one city alone.

Rescue teams have worked tirelessly since the cyclone hit, struggling to find and identify bodies of people who fell victim to the tsunami-like floods, with the Libyan Red Crescent (the national affiliate of the International Committee for the Red Cross) reporting at least ten thousand missing persons. The climate crisis tremendously increased the likelihood of a storm like this, which is called a "medicane" or "Mediterranean cyclone." Scientists have found that climate change made a medicane of this magnitude 50 times more likely, and increased the storm's strength by up to 50%. Junior Jolie Feig reacted to this discovery, saying, "Climate change is a pressing issue in today's world, and the fact that it is causing death and tragedy around the world is unsettling to hear about."

Derna was known to be the worst affected city, as heavy flooding and strong winds caused two dams and four bridges to

collapse, further submerging much of the city with water and killing around 1 in 5 people. The mayor of Derna, Abdel Moneim al-Ghaithi, said, "The situation is very large and surprising for the city of Derna. We were not able to confront it with our capabilities that preceded the storm and the torrent."

The failure of the dams in Derna was one of the primary causes of damage, as entire buildings were washed into the ocean, with 891 buildings completely destroyed and 609 further damaged. Derna's double dam collapse is already believed to be the second deadliest disaster of its kind in history.

Experts believe that the death toll could have been much lower if the country had stronger warning systems in place, as city officials could not properly warn people of the dangers of the dam, which had not been properly maintained. Libya's head of state, Mohamed al-Menfi, posted on X (the social media site formerly known as Twitter) that his government would investigate any possible negligence or corruption related to the lack of proper upkeep of the dam and determine whether it contributed to the disaster.

Public anger has risen against the status quo, with protestors burning down the house of Derna's mayor in anger over perceived negligence relating to the dams' upkeep. Junior Daniella Lofstock said, "The further tragedy that occurred because of the failure in the upkeep of the dam could have

been prevented, and I believe it is important to determine how significant a cause this was."

The humanitarian crisis is worsened by the lack of sanitary water following the cyclone, as fears over waterborne diseases such as cholera grow. Bodies continued washing ashore for days after the storm, making access to clean water difficult. The destroyed dams in Derna held the city's main reservoir for drinking water, and floodwaters have inundated the plumbing systems of several cities, allowing untreated sewage to mix with water that has now risen to the surface of streets. Elie Abouaoun, the Country Director for Libya at the International Rescue Committee, said, "Access to clean water, sanitation, and hygiene facilities will be required to prevent a further crisis within a crisis."

Cyclone Daniel also hit several other countries in the Central Mediterranean, killing 4 in Bulgaria, 7 in Turkey and 17 in Greece, which had previously faced devastating fires throughout the summer.

Countries around the world immediately offered aid to Libya to provide some relief from the catastrophic loss of life and property, with the United Kingdom donating £1 million (\$1.25 million), Egypt setting up "shelter camps" near their border with Libya and Turkey sending two planes carrying 168 aid workers, two search-and-rescue vehicles, two boats and assorted humanitarian aid. Junior Ari Jacobs was glad to hear about the foreign humanitarian aid, saying,



97 Killed in Devastating Maui Wildfires

By Ester Golan '25

The Hawaiian island of Maui was ravaged by horrific wildfires, completely destroying the historic town and tourist center of Lahaina and killing 97 people last summer.

The first wildfire started around 6:30 in the morning on August 8, 2023, but as firefighters quickly responded to it, few civilians or tourists took much notice. As the day progressed, however, a second fire quickly consumed the center of the island and blocked the single road in and out of Lahaina, destroying countless buildings and spelling a death trap for those who had not yet left. Many civilians were killed, while others had to evacuate their homes with nothing but the clothes on their backs. Some even had to jump into the ocean and swim offshore to escape the flames.

"I'm horrified that so many families have been displaced in such a small amount of time," said junior Rikki Farkovits. "I'm saddened by the loss of life and history, and I hope everyone affected by the fires is as safe and happy as possible given the circumstances."

"We don't know what actually ignited the fires, but we were made aware in advance by the National Weather Service that we were in a red flag situation," explained Major General Kenneth Hara of the Hawaiian Army National Guard. "So that [means] dry conditions for a long time, so the fuel, the trees and everything, was dry." Climate change is believed to have played a major role in these drought conditions that allowed the fires to spread so quickly and so intensely. According to the Los Angeles Times, "The chance interaction of terrain, weather, building development, vegetation, and the growing force multiplier of climate change have seemingly rewritten natural history... although any one of these factors would typically lead to increased fire risk, all of them together created a tinderbox that was primed to explode. All they needed was a spark."

"I think that the Hawaiian wildfires are yet another example of the suffering caused by the climate crisis," said junior Rachel Nadelmann. "It doesn't make sense to me that there are still deniers of climate change, considering how many wildfires have occurred throughout the world in such a short amount of time, especially in America." Although it initially denied any responsibility, Hawaiian Electric Company

(HECO) later accepted the blame for the first fire but continued to deny involvement in the second, deadlier fire. According to HECO, the first fire "appears to have been caused by power lines that fell in high winds," which confirms reports and cell phone footage given by residents. Many in Maui have blamed the island's former emergency chief, Herman Andaya, who has since resigned, over his decision not to sound the emergency tsunami sirens on August 8. Critics say he was not qualified for the job; he was merely selected for the role due to his close relationship with Maui's former mayor. Andaya said, "I went through a very arduous process, and I was vetted... I was interviewed by seasoned emergency managers, and they all deemed me qualified."

Although he resigned, citing personal health concerns, Andaya defended his decision regarding the emergency tsunami sirens, arguing that since the public had been educated to move to higher ground if they heard the sirens, some people may have mistakenly moved closer to the blaze, which was strongest in the mountainous center of the island. "Andaya was faced with an extremely tough situation, but I understand why he is facing criticism as countless lives were lost due to his decision to not sound the emergency tsunami sirens," said junior Aly Biloon. "I honestly do not know what I would have done as either way, sadly, numerous lives would be taken."

Lahaina, the town in Maui worst affected by the conflagrations, is a major source of income for the island due to its beaches and historic sites frequented by tourists. This includes a single Banyan tree planted by missionaries in 1873 that covers nearly 2 acres of land, which miraculously survived the fires with only exterior burn damage and is already starting to recover. Also destroyed were the historic Waiola Church mission, the Old Lahaina Courthouse, and the Pioneer Inn, which was the oldest hotel in Hawaii, first built in 1901.

"Seeing the pictures of the fire's aftermath breaks my heart," said junior Austin Colm. "I cannot believe that all this destruction happened so quickly." On October 8, precisely two months after the fire, the island's new mayor unveiled a reopening plan for West Maui to resuscitate the local economy. However, this plan has faced fierce opposition from some residents, with over 15,000 people signing a petition to keep the island closed until a more thorough healing process can be completed.

"People should educate themselves about disasters like this that occur all over the world, even when it doesn't directly affect them." Nevertheless, rescue efforts are still somewhat curbed by the complicated political situation in Libya, as the country is in the midst of its second civil war since 2011, when the country's long-time dictator Muammar Gaddafi was overthrown, which led to a US-led NATO force intervention that heavily destabilized the already fragile state. Some are hoping, however, that the messages of solidarity and unity coming from across the country, even in regions controlled by opposing forces, suggest a new spirit of reconciliation in the country and that this tragedy could also be an opportunity for peace to return.

"Libya has had a very rough modern history, and this catastrophic flooding and subsequent public health crisis is unfortunately likely to further destabilize the country," said junior Shayne Cytrynbaum. "My hope, however, is that this disaster can be the 'straw that breaks the camel's back' and cause ordinary Libyans to demand an end to years of fighting, a return to just and democratic government, and truth and reconciliation commissions to investigate the systemic problems and individual errors that led to this disaster. Sometimes a tragedy can be a catalyst for deep reflection and bold change, and as we see more and more climate disasters, I hope that we all truly learn from them."



## Girls Varsity Soccer Finishes with Ruach, Kehillah

By Reese Silberfein '27

The Golda Och Academy Girls Varsity Soccer team finished the season with a record of 7-4 (7 wins and 4 losses) earning an impressive second place in the Colonial League.

They first began their season weeks before school even started. Their preseason work was difficult; they came to school for practice, day in and day out.



The focus of the preseason was to get in pristine shape for the upcoming season. They worked on individual and team skill development, as some girls had never played soccer. In practice, the girls came to know their teammate's strengths and weaknesses, the coach, and how the team works together. Throughout their long practices, they had to run miles, practice drills and learn offensive and defensive plays.

The team, coached by Mr. Cohen, is led by co-captains Talia Perlstein '24 and Cayla McKay '25. The roster consists of three seniors, six juniors, two sophomores, and three freshmen.

The Roadrunners' top scorer this season was junior Aly Biloon with 13 goals, and close behind is senior Talia Perlstien with 12 goals. This season's assists leaders were Aly Biloon with ten, and sophomore Maya Footerman with eight.

This season was the story of a team that has improved and grown by leaps and bounds with new players and a positive attitude. Last year, the team lacked girls so they were forced to play 80 minutes of field time with no subs and only a small break during halftime.

Injury plays a big part in a sports season, and as many girls sustained injuries, the number of players able to

contribute last season lessened.

Sophomore Marley Fischer said, "Our team this year is a lot stronger than last year. We have added a few talented players to our roster, which has helped our team improve. We have had so much fun growing as a team, and I'm excited for the rest of the season and years to come."

In a groundswell of support, all GOA upper school students and staff participated in a pep rally that ranged from the hyped gym to outside along the field where the team was cheered on during a game.

This ruach and kehillah helped them win a tough game against Paine Tech 4-3.

In addition to the regular season, the team had an amazing opportunity to play in a state tournament this year. They were the fifth seed, receiving a bye, and then playing an away game at Eastern Christian School. Although they suffered a tough loss, playing their final game against talented players and a challenging team was an incredible opportunity and experience for the entire team.

The girls were able to develop their skills through competitions against other teams and players with higher skill sets. It allowed the team to learn new ways to improve their game for next season and spend a memorable last game together.

After the final game, the girls gathered, reminiscing about the memories

and bonds they had created throughout the season.

Captain and senior Talia Perlstien delivered this message to the team for the following season: "While the game itself is fun, my favorite part is the team dynamic, spending time with different people across the high school. It's a really good way to forge close bonds between grades. Though I'm sad that this is my last year playing for this team, I can't wait to hear about all they will accomplish in future years."

Throughout the season, the team has become close-knit and understood how to work together, playing all kinds of teams. As Talia described, the bonds between grades also become more prominent in everyday school socialization in the halls and all school events. This team came from all different skill sets and grades to form a team that worked tirelessly over the season. The group may look different next season with new players, but the bonds and memories will continue.

## Men and Women Make U.S Open History

By Noah Stoch '27

This past U.S. Open, history was made, on both the male and female sides of the net.

Starting on the women's side, Coco Gauff, the number six ranked female player became the second youngest American to win the U.S. Open behind Serena Williams at 19 years old.

Following the match, Gauff said, "It's been a long journey to this point." At Wimbledon in 2019, 15-year-old Gauff was first put into the spotlight after defeating world number 44 Venus Williams in the opening round. Since then, Gauff has continued to progress in both singles and doubles.

After a frustrating opening match against Laura Siegemund, where Gauff and Siegemund argued over the time allowed between points, Gauff won all of her matches and found herself in the U.S. Open final.

Gauff found herself playing against world ranked number two Aryna Sabalenka. After losing the first set 6-2, Gauff had an incredible comeback, eventually defeating Sabalenka 2-6, 6-3, 6-2.

On the men's side, Novak Djokovic won his record-tying 24th grand slam. The only person to have ever previously won 24 grand slams was Margaret Court Smith.

Coming into the U.S. Open Djokovic was ranked second in the world. The defending champion, Carlos Alcaraz, was number one.

After blowing past the rest of the competition, Djokovic defeated world number forty-three Ben Shelton in the semi-finals.

At the relatively young age of 21, it is astonishing that Shelton is competing this far.

In the semifinals, Alcaraz faced off against world number 3 and 2021 U.S. Open champion Daniil Medvedev. Medvedev defeated Alcaraz in four sets, knocking out the defending champion.

There was an immense amount of tension leading into the final match between Medvedev and Djokovic. Back in 2021, Djokovic and Medvedev faced off at the U.S. Open final as well.

It was a historic match, as Djokovic was one match away from winning all four grand slams in one year, something only five other players ever have accomplished in the sport's history, but ultimately Medvedev upset Djokovic in the final. Djokovic swore this time would be different.

As the match began, it looked very even. Djokovic and Medvedev had an exhausting 32-ball rally in the middle of the second set that stunned the crowd. The set ended as close as possible, with Djokovic taking the win 7-6 (5) in a close tie-break.

By the championship point, the crowd was on the edge of their seats with anticipation.

In the end, Djokovic won the third and final set 6-3, using every ounce of energy left in his body.

Djokovic defeated Medvedev in straight sets this year, claiming his 24th grand slam and revenge for the his loss in the 2021 finals.

## Varsity Girls Volleyball's Incredible Season

By Mia Eskin '27

This has been an incredible season for the GOA Varsity Girls Volleyball Team. The team is made up of thirteen athletes and their coach, Ms. Endlich.

Throughout the season, the athletes attend daily two-hour practices, working together to put in full effort and develop their skills.

Freshman Sagan Shapiro said, "This has truly been one of the best teams I have ever played for. We all work together, and these girls have become like my sisters. Win or lose, we all work extremely hard to improve our serves, sets, and bumps, and we sincerely believe in each other."

The starters are: Aliza Beiber, Eliana Finkel, Maya Taylor-Prince, Avital Ely,

Rebecca Altman and Chloe Elder. The JV team includes Mia Eskin, Alma Adiel, Violet Berman, Liora Goldberg, Daniella Lofstock, Sagan Shapiro and Rachel Hyman.

"Without Coach Endlich's commitment and love for the team, none of their success during the season would have been possible. She is an excellent coach who taught these young ladies not only a fantastic game of volleyball but also life values to carry with them," said freshman Violet Berman.

The girls began pre-season practices in late August, where they worked hard every day to improve their skills and prepare for the regular season. They began playing games in early September and went on an incredible winning streak.

Later in the season, the team competed in the Essex County competition. They won their first tournament game against Newark Lab, a team from a higher division. They then advanced to their second tournament game against Newark East Side, a team two divisions above. Each team won a set, and the game was neck and neck, but ultimately, the girls could not bring home the victory.

Despite the tough loss, the girls were proud of their performance and with their final record of 7-2, and a first-place finish in their conference.

This season will be remembered for the team's dedication, kindness and positivity, as it allowed them to perform at their full potential.

## Jets Fans Hold Onto Hope Despite Injured Aaron Rodgers

By Joey Sherman '28

Before the NFL season began, the Jets were possible Super Bowl contenders with Aaron Rodgers playing the starting quarterback position.

If Tom Brady could be traded to a new team and win the Super Bowl, why couldn't Aaron Rodgers? Jets fans were finally looking forward to a hopeful season. This could be the first time in years that the Jets have a good roster.

The last time they made the playoffs was in 2010. Their overall record in the past decade from October 9, 2013, to October 9, 2023, is 55 wins and 107 losses. In the 2024 season, the Jets are 4 and 4 in their first 8 games.

In their first game, with anticipation from fans around the world watching, Aaron Rodgers only played four snaps (90 seconds of play time) before falling with an Achilles injury from a hit by defensive end Leonard Floyd, officially ending his season.

"I always thought Rodgers was past his prime, and this injury does not surprise me. That said, I wish him a speedy recovery and good health," said junior Austin Colm.

There were some promising moments, such as Garrett Wilson's impressive touchdown catch and Xavier Gipson's touchdown return. Even though they won the game, Rodgers' injury was heartbreak-

ing for many fans.

However, not all hope is lost for Jets fans. People figured that the Jets would sign a veteran quarterback, and the playoffs could still be a possibility. Aaron Rodgers also stated that he would try to come back for the playoffs.

So far, however, the Jets have made some unexpected decisions. They decided that even though Zach Wilson had a rough start in his career, he was on the road to being their starting quarterback.

The only veteran quarterback recently signed is Trevor Siemian. As a result, fans doubt whether the Jets could actually make the playoffs this year.

In the upcoming weeks, the Jet's schedule is very rough. They are playing some of the best teams in the league. However, if the Jets do not do anything to improve the roster, they could likely have a disappointing year once again, forcing fans to wait until next season for Rodgers' return.



Rodgers was injured in his Jets debut this September