



Voltage

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Science Park High School

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SPORTS

SPOTLIGHT: VOLLEYBALL

By Eduarda De
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Every school has that one sport where everybody and anybody will come out to watch and support.

Here at Science Park, we stand with volleyball. It is so difficult to not feel the adrenaline when watching the girls play, no matter where it is. After being stuck in a pandemic and not being able to go to school, the girls on the team showed up on August 26, 2021 ready

to start a great season.

During the season, the team practiced every day from three to six PM, and competed with high schools around New Jersey, such as East Side, Irvington, Barringer, Cedar Grove, and many more.



The girls themselves also have pretty impressive stats. Paula Brown (middle blocker) is #20 in NJ for kills and blocks. Outside hitter, Sekna Bazzi, was #10 in NJ for assists, having one hundred and twelve in total.

The team is led by Coach Ensolda Veli, Gabriele Correa

as captain, and Lauren Melo, co-captain. When asking Gabriele Correa what her favorite thing about leading the team is, she responded with, “My favorite thing about leading the team isn’t the leading itself, it’s the time and effort it took me to get the position. It’s like a trophy at

the end of a tough tournament. Not a participation trophy though, but a first place trophy. It’s such an honor to go from some random sub freshman year to go to my dream position and lead my team. I’m so proud of my progress and my team for getting to where we are today. Win or lose I know I tried to push them to do their best, and to me that’s enough.” She also said how volleyball makes her “feel like I have [she has] no other worries in the world.” You can see her and everyone else's determination just by sitting in the stands. Eliana Jean, the team's setter, explains that, “being a part of this team, it has actually made me feel like I am a part of something.” The love surrounded by these girls is expressed in the way they play.

The most exciting games are the ones with our rivals, East Side. Everyone wants to be there to watch. When we score the crowd screams and cheers. There is something exhilarating about chanting “Let’s Go Chargers” as someone steps up to set the ball.

As the season ended, we have to say goodbye to all the seniors that have been with the team since freshman year. It is bittersweet but the team worked hard, and hopefully next season we can have as much school spirit and a good season!



SPHS Students are Given Chromebooks

By Victoria D Rengel

At the start of the 2021-2022 school year, the school, along with the city of Newark, was able to provide chromebooks to all attending students. Previously, if a student had a district device, they brought it in and then got a new one. If you did not have a device, then you would simply get a chromebook. Students now have these chromebooks until they graduate.

Previously, if students were in need of a chromebook to partake in online classes, the district provided them one. What makes this new policy different is the fact that every student received one and got updated ones. This is very significant for Newark Public Schools. Firstly, expanding internet access is extremely important. Being in lockdown for almost a few years now has shown how crucial it is.

However, many kids cannot afford to purchase an internet connection or even a computer so this district plan is helping to level the playing field.



Q: What do you think about the school giving students chromebooks?

“I think it is a good idea, it is something that they should have done a long time ago. Technically since you can bring these chromebooks home it allows us to do homework at home. Not everyone has the

money to afford their own so this is good.” - *Anna Clara Abutrabe, 10th Grade.*

“I think chromebooks are good for the school cause a lot of students don't have tech access at home or even the money to buy it. So this helps them. Additionally since now there is more internet access it gives students more resources” - *Briana Cedano, 10th Grade.*

BEYOND SCIENCE

Op-Ed: What Is Going On With NJ Elections? A Breakdown

By Ashley Lourenco

New Jersey's gubernatorial elections took place on November 2, 2021. After some contentious days after the election, the results were finally announced barely in favor of Phil Murphy, from the Democratic Party.

Results aside, the campaigning from both candidates is an issue that definitely deserves more attention. Providing for many a good meme, if you've stepped foot outside your house throughout the last 3



months, you've most definitely seen election ads.

"Stop Team Trump. Vote Murphy".

Or, more infamously, the absolutely overplayed Jack Ciattarelli ad. Alternatively, if you've been on YouTube, you probably know this by heart. A clip of Phil Murphy detailing that if taxes are your number 1 issue, then New Jersey just "isn't for you." Ciattarelli of course goes on to criticize this, because Murphy "just doesn't get it!"

In the most non-partisan way possible, I stress: *what is going on?*

Dissecting the Murphy Campaign

The Jersey Democrat's strategy is demonstrative of a larger national trend: the re-emerging relevance of Trump. The Murphy campaign's concentrating on Trumpian politics is, while understandable, unstrategic. As this was a tight race, it would be productive to examine what exactly happened for the winning side.

Ciattarelli's core campaigning ground was on lowering taxes.



Since his other views are less known, it was very evident early on that bashing him as a “Trump Republican” didn’t make sense to many voters.

Don’t get me wrong — there was definitely winning ground here. Most of Murphy’s progressive views have been fleshed out in an honest, empirically backed way. The most prominent example is, you guessed it: taxes. Murphy has explained in many a debate that taxes are a net benefit to the community, as they cover the essentials (education, healthcare, etc). Logically, he was right. There was absolutely no need for a PR miracle. So why this strategy?

Let’s go back to the 2020 Presidential election. With 14 electoral votes, New Jersey was an overall Democratic state. Thus, it is understandable to be frustrated about the bureaucratic mess

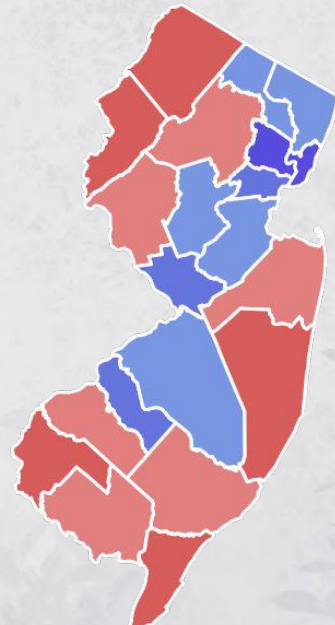
left over from previous administrations, seeing as how constituents are likely to agree (easily!). It seems as though the logical conclusion from Murphy’s team was to point out the similarities between the former president and Ciattarelli.

However, I’d argue the opposite: that is the exact reason that this was too much.



Concluding Thoughts and Relevance

Clearly, this had to have worked to some degree. The fact that Murphy’s strategy resonates with the Democratic Party demonstrated the sway of partisan politics. Leftover momentum from 2020 influenced our elections, for good or for bad, which is crucial to note during a time when our elected officials matter now more than ever; the modernization of rights restrictions should urge a devotion of attention towards trends in politics.



We're Back! An International Relations Recap

By Victoria D Rengel

Author's Note: Information may have changed since written.

Civil War in Myanmar

The international community is called to take action to help the situation in Myanmar. Burgener, the envoy, is calling on the international community or the security council to place embargoes on Myanmar in hopes that this would force the military to “calm down.” Recently a United Nations Envoy has come out and said that the

situation has escalated greatly. Previously the conflict was contained geographically but now it has spread throughout the whole country. This country has always had internal fights but following the coup on February 1st the situation escalated. In the last election, Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy Party won. The military however viewed this election as fraudulent and then had a successful coup. As a response to this on September 7th, a “People's Defense Force” was created to combat this military group. Since then it has been the military fighting the PDF.

Crisis in Lebanon

Lebanon has been in the middle of one of the biggest economic crises ever seen; it is being seen as a failed state. In the 1990s, Lebanon had finished their 15 year civil war. As a result of the war, the Lebanese government decided to adopt the dollar as their currency, which meant banks always had to have a large stock of dollars. At the time the exchange rate was one 1,507 lira for \$1. However following the civil war in Syria, since both countries are geographically so close the Lebanese economy suffered greatly. As a solution a “ponzi scheme” was made, banks would



give an annual interest to those depositing dollars which forced the bank to pay old depositors with new depositors money. Since banks started running out of money, there reached a point where people could not take money

out; this was back in 2019. Recently Lebanon has taken even larger hits: (1) explosion in Beirut, (2) effects of Covid-19, and (3) a tax on WhatsApp calls which led to civil uprisings. Now as a result the economy is very inflated and many

are relying on money from foreign relatives to be able to survive.

North Korea Testing Missiles

This October North Korea has restarted its missile tests. Neighboring countries such as Japan and South Korea were on high alert since these tests violated many international laws and were fired in such close proximity. Additionally the UN has prohibited North Korea from even testing ballistic or nuclear weapons. These weapons are so significant as they are made for longer ranges and hypersonic (travels 5x the speed of sound).



If there was any miscalculation in any of these tests, Japan or South Korea could have easily been hit, the effect of which would be detrimental. Since these missiles were being launched from a submarine, the probability of error in calculation is pretty high. North Korea justifies this and says these weapons are to only be used defensively.

Biden Hostage Situation

Tensions are building up high against Biden as pressure is being put on him to get American Hostages back. As of now there are at least 66 hostages in total, being held in Syria, Saudi Arabia, Rwanda, Russia, Iran, China, Cuba, Afghanistan, and recently Haiti.

Political Map of the World, January 2015



A total of 26 families reached out to Biden in a letter demanding he bring these Americans back home. Many criticized the “bureaucratic process” and say that American citizens are being put on “the back burner” once again.

The Pitfalls of Social Media: Dangerous Trends

By Lucas Saldana

Although some don't like to admit it, the internet can be a great place, filled with all types of entertainment, news and games. However, what starts off as a simple "joke" can get extremely destructive and costly, fast. The 'Devious Licks' TikTok trend is a bright and bold example of this. For those who do not know, a "lick" is slang for the action of stealing or vandalizing something, without getting caught. Students across New Jersey and America have been encouraged by this trend to record

themselves stealing or vandalizing school property, whether it be stealing soap dispensers, drawing on bathroom stalls, or even disconnecting toilets and moving them across the room. Social media in general has led to teens making poor decisions, and they, or someone else, often pay the price. For example, Snapchat is the second most popular social media application.

According to one study, it was found that users 25 and younger visit the app over 20 times per day. On top of this, Snapchat has a feature called "Streaks," which are given to users to

Finally, social media in general has been associated with anxiety and depression, since young people will be highly concerned about their appearance and reception online. By all means, social media can be a great resource for

text back and forth with somebody over the course of two days or more. These streaks are visible to both members of the conversation, and are lost when someone doesn't text the other for an entire day. This can lead to people not wanting to upset their friend by ending their streak, and continue the conversation.

According to ABC News, "Experts say Streaks can cause a concerning hierarchy of friendship that can leave some teens afraid to disappoint others if they drop a Streak." Snapchat also has a "Snap Map" feature where you can see where your friends are posting from.

learning, connecting with others, and just having good-old fashioned fun. However, we need to be careful with how much and how we use this incredible tool.



Charlie the Charger

By The Voltage Staff

Despite jokes about his furry-esque nature, *Charlie The Charger* is the proud mascot of our club. However, not much is known about Charlie (if you've never seen or heard of Charlie, he's on our front page).

A few years ago, there was talk of adopting a school mascot, as it wasn't practical to dress up as a lightning bolt. Thus, some drawings were made, and a talented artist produced a rough draft.

At first, Charlie was a panda, but then, after a bit of remodeling, he eventually ended up as a superhero-looking fox!

Unfortunately, Charlie was not adopted as the school mascot. Thus, we at *The Voltage* took the design and started to incorporate it into the covers of our issues.

At *The Voltage*, we are proud of adopting Charlie, who has now been a vital member of the newspaper for years.



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