

# The Royal Gazette

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## France's Article 24 Law *pg 04*

Citizens fight back against a new bill proposing to ban citizens from recording police in a demeaning manner.



## COVID-19 in Wuhan: A Year Later *pg 8*

Approximately one year after the first case of COVID-19 was detected in Wuhan, the city moves on.

# SEARCHING FOR THE PERFECT TURF

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A long-awaited addition to our school's infrastructure is finally here, but not without some controversy.



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# This Month's Top Stories

Get the most important news right away. Here are some of the top stories of December.

By Anne Fu — Editor-in-Chief



HAMILTON

## City Makes New Plans for Holidays During COVID-19

**Above:** Hamilton Mayor Fred Eisenberger and Medical Officer of Health Dr. Elizabeth Richardson update the media on the effects of COVID-19 in the city on March 13, 2020. *(Don Mitchell/Global News)*

This year's holiday season is sure to be an unusual one, as families struggle to accommodate for COVID-19 in their winter celebrations.

On December 19th, Hamilton entered the "grey" zone of Ontario's new coronavirus monitoring framework, which calls for full lockdown procedures — the most severe provincial response to the virus possible. As such, citizens are reminded to be extra cautious about coming together this month. COVID-19 is transmissible by contact, which means large gatherings like holiday parties are especially risky to hold during the pandemic. For some, however, this upheaval also means a struggle to find any sort of relief at the end of an unforgiving year.

"The scary part — and it's just part of COVID — is that we do have plans but these plans could always change within a week based on how many cases that are in Kenora, or if we go into a different code," said Shannon Matheson, a nurse, to the Canadian Press. Her family is currently trying to work out Christmas arrangements in the midst of increasingly unpredictable social distancing measures.

At the same time, however, health and municipal officials are warning about the dangers of travelling from place to place during the holidays, with the threat of widespread infection looming overhead.

"Given the fact that many people would be taking some time off over the holidays it is probably a good opportunity to lockdown, as we were in March, to try and contain the spread of this virus," said Hamilton Mayor Fred Eisenberger, during a December 17th town hall.

**...if members of the public choose to ignore public health measures and gather outside their households, the consequences risk overwhelming Ontario's hospitals.**

**Ontario Hospital Association, in a press release warning against holiday gatherings**

So, what can one do to spread holiday cheer while following physical distancing protocols? Although some are inclined to see COVID-19 as a dampener on their joy, the pandemic can also present new opportunities for ways of connecting with one another.

"Consider hosting a virtual holiday gathering this year," advises Hamilton City Council in one public information release. "Hamilton Public Health Services does not recommend hosting an in-person gathering unless you live alone and are getting together with one other household."

Indeed, there remain a number of ways to get together without gettin-

g together, so to speak. This year, applications like Skype, FaceTime or Zoom can all help you connect with family and friends from a distance and share the holiday spirit. Sharing meals, playing games, opening presents and singing songs can work just as well virtually as they can in person, with a little extra organization and creativity.

As always, outdoor events with plenty of ventilation are safer than indoor ones, where circulating air can transmit the virus from person-to-person. Sharing food, utensils, and gifts by hand is not recommended, as these are easy ways to pass the virus along. Instead, health officials suggest families opt for pre-portioned, individual meals; or a quick get-together between dining at a distance to avoid possible contact.

Outside of celebrating with family and friends, there are also plenty of community activities to enjoy this year. From upcoming virtual concerts by the Hamilton Philharmonic Brass and the Burlington Symphony Orchestra, to parades and performances by Christmas choirs and local theatres, ways of celebrating the holiday spirit at home remain as lively as ever. There are also a wide variety of organizations to be donating to in the holiday spirit, as the local community's needs are growing especially critical. Organizations like Mission Services, Hamilton Food Share, and CityKidz could benefit greatly from the support and assistance of beneficiaries.

### EXTERNALS

**Sarah Fuller Breaks Barriers on the Gridiron**  
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### INTERNALS

**Defund HPS Challenges City Hall and Police**  
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### And in Pop Culture...



After significant backlash over a half-finished, glitchy game, Sony has removed the highly anticipated open-world video game *Cyberpunk 2077* from the PS4 store.

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**Why Do We Prioritize Christmas During the Holidays?**

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### ARTS AND CULTURE

**Searching for Diversity in Hallmark Christmas Movies**



The Pfizer and Moderna vaccine are the only vaccines to be approved for use in Canada so far.

CANADA

## Vaccine Rollout Begins Across Country

**Above:** A healthcare worker administers one of the first doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccines. Canada's doses are being prioritized for long-term care residents and other frontline workers. *(Carlos Osorio/Reuters)*

After COVID-19 exploded into a global crisis in March, pharmaceutical companies have been racing to develop a vaccine for the virus. Corporations like Pfizer, Moderna and AstraZeneca are at the forefront of this rally, with all three organizations having already made deals with the Canadian government for millions of doses worth of vaccines. Apart from these three companies, a wide range of other drugmakers are also competing to have their coronavirus shots approved by Ottawa. Brands like Medicago, Johnson & Johnson, Novavax, and Sanofi remain strong candidates, but have yet to finish their phase 3 trials. All in all, the country's orders total up to 400 million doses of vaccines — enough to immunize the entire population several times over.

Among the first of these vaccines to be certified by health officials was the Pfizer candidate, whose developers Pfizer Inc. and BioNTech SE announced a 95% effectiveness rate within its mid-November phase 3 trials. The first 30,000 doses of the Pfizer vaccine arrived in Canada on December 14, to be administered over the coming weeks to frontline healthcare workers and the elderly. As the Pfizer vaccine requires two doses, this will be enough to immunize some 15,000 people, with an additional 249,000 doses expected to arrive by the end of the year.

On December 15th, the government announced Canadians would additionally be getting early access to the Moderna vaccine as well,

in the form of 168,000 doses by as early as December 2020, as part of a larger guarantee for 40 million vaccines from Moderna in total. Since the Moderna vaccine requires a double dose as well, this will be enough to vaccinate 20 million more Canadians.

"The Government of Canada continues to do everything possible to protect Canadians from COVID-19. This includes securing the world's most extensive portfolio of vaccines and taking all necessary measures to ready the country to receive doses once they are authorized for use," said The Honourable Anita Anand, Minister of Public Services and Procurement. Indeed, Canada is leading internationally in terms of doses secured per capita.

Despite this, some are worried about how vaccines will be divided up — especially when it comes to less developed nations. Canada has faced critique from organizations like Amnesty International, who claim the country is hoarding valuable doses.

"Canada has done exactly what we would expect a high-income country to do, and they've done the right thing by their country," says Andrea Taylor, Assistant Director of Programs at Duke University's Global Health Innovation Center. "But it's quite a scary picture at the minute, because so many countries are missing."

"As Canada gets vaccinated, if we have more vaccines than necessary, absolutely we will be sharing with the

world," said Prime Minister Justin Trudeau in an interview on CTV's Question Period.

The 30,000 doses that have arrived already are slated to be distributed across all 10 provinces via 14 different inoculation centers. Although these first few shipments will only be enough to immunize a handful of the population, Health Canada expects that all 38 million Canadians will be vaccinated by July-December 2021.

Regardless of how vaccine rollout will proceed, vaccinated people will still be required to wear a mask and follow social distancing protocols, as they can still transmit the virus. More likely than not, this will only be the first step in a long journey towards containing the devastation COVID-19 has wreaked on the country.

### HOW ARE VACCINES DEVELOPED?

- **Phase 1:** Tests in efficiency and dosage amongst small groups.
- **Phase 2:** Scientists divide a population of a few hundred volunteers up by categories like age and gender, and test the vaccine in all.
- **Phase 3:** The vaccine candidate is given to thousands of people to monitor its rarer side effects and its overall efficacy.





WORLD

# JAXA Probe Returns with Rare Asteroid Samples

**Above:** The Hayabusa-2 capsule landed in an isolated corner of the Australian desert and was found after several hours of searching. (AP/Shutterstock)

A Japanese spacecraft carrying rare subsurface samples from an asteroid has successfully returned to Earth, making this the second time in history that untouched samples have been collected from an asteroid's surface and brought back for research.

The capsule, released from a spacecraft named Hayabusa-2 (a word meaning "dragon palace") was first launched in December 2014, rendezvousing with its asteroid of interest by mid-2018: a 1 km wide rock designated as 162173 Ryugu. From there, the craft surveyed the asteroid for a year and a half, before finally collecting a sample to send back home, which landed back in the Australian outback on December 6th, 2020. With these specimens, scientists will now be able to analyze the contents of the asteroid for certain organic materials, in order to determine more information about the formation of the solar system and life on Earth. As these new samples were taken from below the asteroid's surface, they will likely be less affected by environmental conditions, making them a valuable source of analysis for years to come.

Yuichi Tsuda, project manager of the mission, described the event as a "rare event in human history", suggesting that the research team may find "clues to the birth of a planet and the origin of life" in these samples. The data from this collection will be shared within a year between Japan's space agency JAXA, the American space program NASA, and various other international associations.

For the next several years, Hayabusa will spend its time completing orbits around the Sun, observing exoplanets and solar system

dust, before flying by two more asteroids to collect photographs of them — meaning that even after its capstone mission, this probe's adventures are far from over. The information it gathers during these fly-bys will also be critical in developing methods of defending against meteorite impact on Earth, as it will come extremely close to both near-Earth objects in its mission.

"We had never expected that Hayabusa-2 would carry out another mission... but it's a scientifically meaningful and fascinating plan," explains Seichiro Watanabe, a professor of planetary science at Nagoya University and one of the scientists working with the probe.

Indeed, the Hayabusa-2 probe has been surprising in more ways than one. Early samples suggest that even more material has been collected than expected, which left one JAXA scientist "almost speechless" with joy. Hirotaka Sawada, the first person to open the capsule, was thrilled to see particles as large as pebbles inside the 40 centimeter wide capsule, meaning that these researchers will have extra samples to work with.

As for JAXA's future plans, the sky (or solar system, rather) is the limit. Recently, Japanese astronaut Soichi Noguchi broke new ground as part of the first team to hitch a ride on SpaceX's Crew Dragon ship to the ISS. JAXA and NASA continue to collaborate extensively on projects involving international research, including plans for further space exploration. In the coming years, they hope to bring back more samples from one of Mars' moons, and work with the American agency on their Artemis lunar project.



Follow Hayabusa-2's journey, from 2014 to beyond.

## December 3, 2014:

Hayabusa-2 is launched from Earth.

## June 27, 2018:

The spacecraft arrives next to 162173 Ryugu, remaining just above the surface to take observations from a distance.

## September 21–October 3, 2018:

Three rovers, HIBOU, OWL and MASCOT, are sent down to the asteroid surface to take photos and collect data.

## February 21, 2019:

The first surface samples are collected from the asteroid.

## July 11, 2019:

The first subsurface samples are collected from the asteroid.

## December 6, 2020:

Hayabusa-2's sample capsule lands back on Earth in southern Australia, and transported back to Japan securely.

## 2021–2026:

Hayabusa-2 will spend the next 6 years cruising around the solar system studying exoplanets.

## July 2026:

The probe will fly by L-type asteroid 2001 CC21 at high speeds. During this approach, scientists will collect data that will help inform future methods of mitigating meteoroid impacts.

## July 2031:

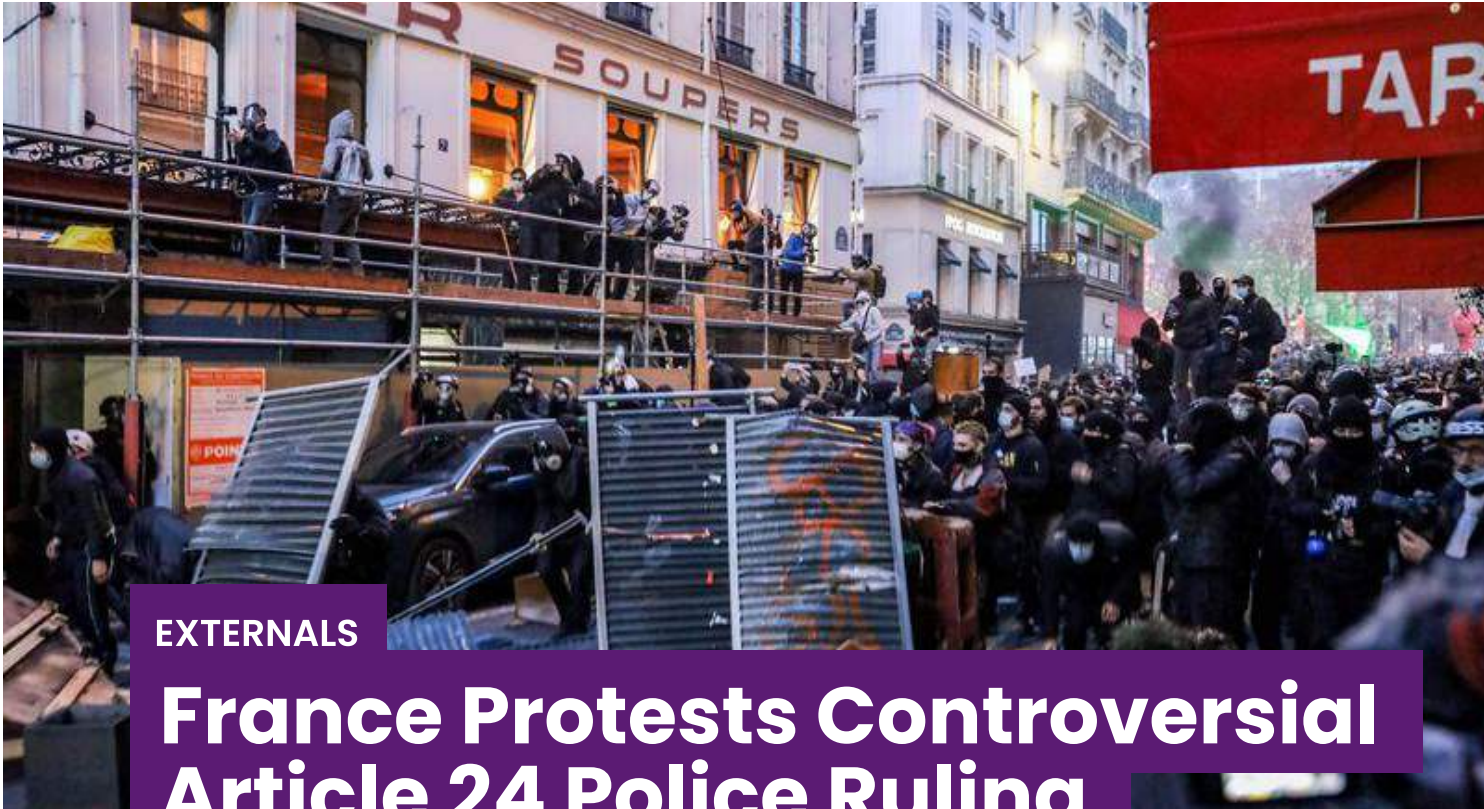
A rendezvous with 1998 KY26, a fast-rotating microasteroid, will be conducted.

# External News

The biggest stories from outside the Ancaster community on a provincial, national and international scale.



EXTERNALS  
Canada Pledges to Ocean Management  
pg 05



EXTERNALS

# France Protests Controversial Article 24 Police Ruling

**Above:** Police use street barriers as riot shields during a demonstration against Article 24, a security law that threatened to prohibit citizens from publishing negative photos or videos of on-duty officers. (Ameer Al-Halbi/AFP)



By Gavin Liu  
Staff Editor & Writer

Since November, the streets of France have been filled with demonstrators as citizens protest against the controversial Article 24. This article, part of the Global Security Bill, prohibits the posting of photos and videos that are malicious towards police, injuring their "physical or psychological integrity." French citizens are rallying against what they say to be the obvious flaws with this proposition, leading to the protests rocking many major French cities including Paris, Lille, and Montpellier.

Protests have been going on for weeks, with violent clashes between the public and the police becoming more and more common. Water cannons, tear gas, and batons have all been used against the fringe protestors and their black garb. Among

those peacefully protesting there have been anti-government Yellow Vests and some rioters. Many have been detained during protests.

Protest culture runs through France, and this revolutionary spirit has made it so that French protests and demonstrations are much more successful than other countries, namely the USA. A symbol of French protests, Les Gilets Jaunes, or the Yellow Vests, began protesting in 2018 over a hike in oil taxes. The yellow vests were representative of the objects that are mandatory for motorists to keep in their vehicles in case of an emergency. These protests eventually became an overarching rejection of the leadership of French President Macron.

Earlier this year in January, Cedric Chouviat, a 42-year old delivery man, was killed by police in an altercation over using his phone on his scooter. According to the coroner, the cause of death was asphyxia and a broken larynx, and in the video he says "I'm suffocating" seven times. His death was caught on video and presents clear parallels with the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis. In July, three officers were charged with manslaughter for his death, and Black Lives Matter (BLM) protests took France by storm.

Now with Article 24, and the explosion of support for BLM this past year, the flaws with the bill are obvio-

us. The main criticism of this bill is that these videos and photos are some of the most important ways that the public can hold law enforcement accountable for their actions. Often the stories captured by the general public and those recounted by police officers very wildly, so punishing those who post this sort of media stifles free speech and possibly journalism. UN rights chief Bachelet has called for the reviewing and removal of Article 24.

On the 21st of November, Black music producer Michel Zecler was trying to enter his music studio when he was confronted by three police officers for not wearing a face mask. This ultimately led to the three police officers beating the man and racially abusing him. Once the security footage of the incident went viral at the end of November, the French public was enraged and protests continued. Four police officers have been indicted. Macron condemned the incident, and the French government has decided to completely rewrite Article 24, but nonetheless, protests continue as no action has occurred on the part of the government.

The pressure is on for the French government to implement change and rewrite Article 24 to protect the integrity of free speech and let the public hold the police accountable for their actions, seen in the power imbalances of racial confrontations. The French will not stop protesting until Article 24 is dead.

## LES GILETS JAUNES

Ever since they began in 2018, France's Yellow Vest protests have made the reflective piece of clothing a popular symbol of working-class agitation worldwide. The new Article 24 demonstrations draw upon this same deeply-embedded sentiment in the country.





By Rose He & Anika Kanagaretnam  
Staff Writers, Designer & Editor

Canada is one of the many countries that heavily depends on its oceans for sustainability and growth, making them one of our most crucial resources. Many choose to ignore this fact, causing an immeasurable amount of pollution to seep into our oceans. Despite announcements for decreasing mass water pollution, there's no definite answer of whether it is truly being removed from the oceans.

On December 2nd, Canada took initiative to tackle this global issue by joining with 13 countries in a pledge to sustainably manage 100% of each country's own oceans by 2025.

The countries supporting the plan, titled The High-Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy, are Australia, Canada, Chile, Fiji, Ghana, Indonesia, Jamaica, Japan, Kenya, Mexico, Namibia, Norway, Palau, and Portugal.

What Canada Is Going To Do

The goal of every country in the pledge is to balance "protection, production and prosperity" in managing oceans, which will affect around 30 million square kilometres of national waters. The plan suggests that countries focus on five distinct areas: ocean wealth, health, equity, knowledge, and finance. Members of the panel plan to implement actions regarding the recommendations by 2030 or earlier. The panel's goal is to have 100% of oceans under national jurisdiction sustainably managed, as well as to reach a global target of protecting 30% of oceans by 2030. Each country's contribution will depend on its circumstances.

It is assumed that Canada already has large plans running to help oceans. One of their plans is for Fisheries and Oceans Canada to amend the existing Fisheries Act by introducing draft regulations during this month, which intends to rebuild fish stocks that are being harmed by overfishing. In addition, the federal government is promising a discussion paper by the end of December, which will be about "boat-to-plate traceability." This will assure consumers that they are receiving what they are paying for. It will also help end illegal fishing and the issues based on board vessels in other locations. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau elaborated by stating, "We are committed to working with our international Ocean Panel leaders, and to developing a comprehensive blue economy strategy. We are also calling on more world leaders and other partners to join us in turning our goals into reality."

Why This Pledge Is Important

This plan could allow for the creation of up to six times more food from the ocean. If it succeeds, we could

OTHER NATIONS THAT SIGNED THE DEAL



EXTERNALS

Canada Pledges to Ocean Management

Above: Canada has committed itself to sustainable ocean management, although the future is somewhat uncertain. (Volodymyr Kyrlyuk/Shutterstock)

ld see up to forty times more renewable energy in the world. This plan could lead to a reduction of poverty, and will help with the goal of keeping rising temperatures below 1.5° C. The New Ocean Action Agenda Release stated that "The ocean provides food, energy and medicine. It is the source of recreation, discovery, identity and culture for billions of people." The oceans are significant to the earth's population, which is why it is crucial that we protect them.

Canada has the world's longest coastlines at 243, 042 km, which explains why we are extremely affected by our oceans. Our economy and overall well-being align with how the oceans are being treated, reminding us that we have a large responsibility in maintaining the oceans' health. This reason alone should convince all of us to take care of the oceans. If our oceans are not able to thrive, we will not be able to either.



Canada is expected to begin drafting regulations this month to address overfishing issues and redeveloping fish stocks. Some industries have pushed back, citing economic concerns.

Boris Worm is a professor of marine ecology at Dalhousie University, who also happens to be a scientific advisor for the Canadian government. He reviewed the papers that were written for the ocean's agenda. According to him, "only one-quarter of fish stocks is considered reliably healthy." The only way to recover our oceans is to act on this issue. Worm phrased the way we treat oceans in an interesting manner, saying, "We've been taking what we want and putting back in what we do-

n't want," which reflects how humans have been treating the oceans over the years.

Anya Waite is part of the Ocean Frontier Institute at Dalhousie University in Halifax. She stated, "The ocean controls our climate, carries 100 times the heat of the atmosphere and 50 times the carbon," she said. "If we don't have the oceans front and centre, we can't understand climate change and we need development of the blue economy to include sustainability."

Oceans are significant to our health and well-being. Without them, survival would be close to impossible, which is a clear reason why we must accept the responsibility of taking care of them.

Will Canada Fulfill These Promises?

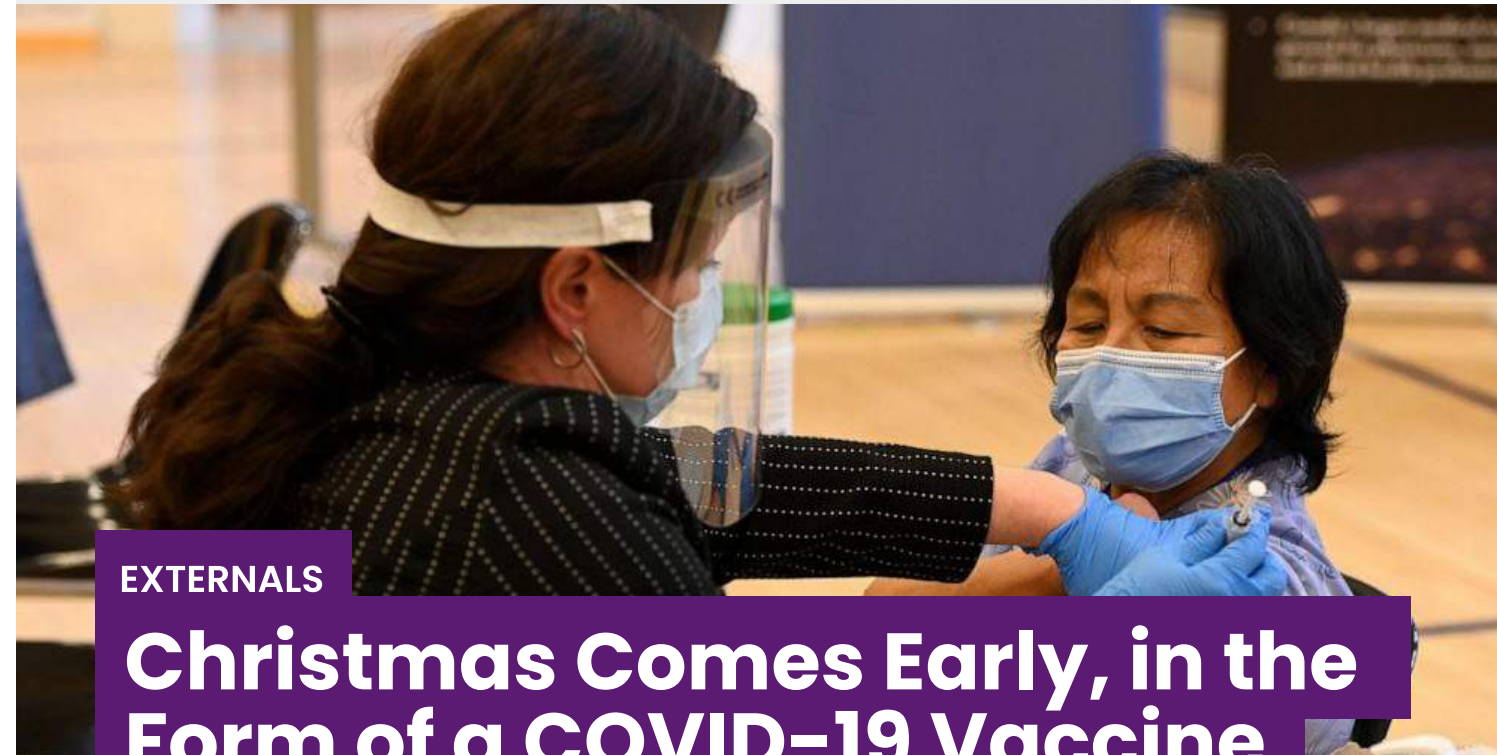
Many speculate that much action may not actually be taken before 2030, as Canada has many past promises regarding ocean plans without updates on the progress. Josh Laughren, executive director of the environmental group Oceana Canada, comments, "This isn't the first time governments have signed on to non-binding, long-term commitments, and people tend to get wary of more of those."

An intergovernmental organization named the G7 has raised attention on the issue of plastics in the ocean before. In 2018, Trudeau announced that Canada will use its G7 presidency to let each nation focus on ocean plastics and pollution. Despite agreeing to gradually solve this issue, plastic production and waste are still continuing to grow.

Globally, millions of metric tonnes of plastic waste enter the ocean each year. It is expected that Canada and the other 13 countries will act on achieving this goal by 2030.

70%

According to a poll conducted by Leger, 70% of Canadians are feeling highly optimistic about 2021 after this vaccine news, while 15% are feeling "somewhat optimistic". In contrast, 10% are feeling somewhat pessimistic, and 5% "very pessimistic."



EXTERNALS

Christmas Comes Early, in the Form of a COVID-19 Vaccine

Above: The very first COVID-19 vaccine in Canada was administered by Director of University Health Network Safety Services Tamara Dus to personal support worker Anita Quidangen on December 14. (Frank Gunn/The Canadian Press)

By Faria Haque  
Staff Writer

As 2020 comes to an end, the best Christmas gift Canadians could have received is the COVID-19 vaccine. This month, the Canadian government approved Pfizer and Moderna's mRNA-based COVID-19 vaccine. According to CBC, Health Canada announced the approval on December 9th, after spending two months reviewing the data from the company's phase three trials. Other companies, such as Johnson and Johnson, are still waiting for their approval.

Vaccines that are intended for usage in Canada or Ontario will first undergo a regional clinical trial to determine if they are safe and effective, and will then be evaluated and authorized for use by Health Canada. Once a vaccine is approved, Health Canada will continue to monitor the vaccine to ensure it is safe and effective. As Dr. Barry Pakes, a physician and assistant professor at the University of Toronto's Dalla Lana School of Public Health explains, the vaccine will help inoculate the immune system against the coronavirus and stop it from progressing, so someone carrying the virus will be less likely to develop the illness. However, it will not kill the virus if it enters your body.

The Pfizer vaccine will be delivered directly to a number of provincial and territorial distribution points as early as the end of this month. Both the Pfizer vaccine and the Moderna product must be stored at ultra-cold temperatures (-70°C and -20°C respectively), as they are both based on new mRNA technology, which is a very "fickle molecule", according

to Dr. Pakes. The federal government has already set up secure cold storage facilities across the provinces where the vaccine will be placed. There will be 14 distribution points nationwide that will be ready to receive vaccines starting on December 14.

The Pfizer vaccine also calls for two doses three weeks apart, which have been shown to be 90% effective at preventing COVID-19. The vaccine overall is effective in everyone, including across age groups, racial and ethnic minorities, and in people with underlying conditions like obesity, diabetes and high blood pressure. The vaccine is also effective on pregnant and breastfeeding women, as well as those who have compromised immune systems

249,000 Pfizer COVID-19 vaccines will arrive by December to Canada. Long-term care residents and primary healthcare workers will get their vaccine first, then healthcare workers, adults in indigenous and remote communities, and finally, adults with chronic healthcare needs will get the vaccine.

"Ontario is ready to deliver COVID-19 vaccines to Ontarians as soon as they are available, and that starts with vaccinating our most vulnerable and those at greatest risk... our priority continues to be the health and safety of all Ontarians and so we will all make sure that no matter where they are receiving a vaccine that will be safe and fast immunization experience," said Minister of Health Christine Elliott.

Despite this, there are concerns regarding the vaccine's relia-

bility and its side effects, due to how its production was fast-tracked. Like any other vaccine, this one has the typical side effects, such as feeling fatigued or having sore arms after a shot. However, some wonder if there could be more severe consequences that come with a shot.

Kristen Choi of CTV News wrote about her experience while taking part in the Pfizer trial in the summer. After her first vaccination, Kristen felt fine, but it was a different story with the second one. She said that the second dose hurt more, and by the end of the day she felt lightheaded, chill, nauseous and had a splitting headache. At 5:30 AM, she woke up and took her temperature, finding it was a scorching 40.5°C.

However, Kristen's side effects were all normal. Although the vaccines may sound frightening and unpleasant, there's nothing to worry about in the long run. According to Dr. Sumon Chakraborty, an infectious disease specialist, side effects like those are actually indicators that your immune system has been activated, not evidence that the vaccine causing the disease in you.

"The concept of side effects of this vaccine is very daunting, but there are far better than getting sick from COVID-19," said Dr. Paul Offit, inventor of the rotavirus vaccine. Indeed, Kristen's symptoms later went away the next morning.

All in all, Canadians should not be afraid of getting their vaccines in the coming year. Although adverse effects may seem intimidating, it is very unlikely that serious harm will come to you from a vaccine.



**\$10,000**  
Organizers of lockdown gatherings could be fined as much as \$10,000.



Hamilton will stay in lockdown for at least 28 days, or until January 18, 2020. Indoor gatherings with other people outside your household are not permitted, but outdoor ones of up to 10 people with physical distancing are. Schools and trails will remain open. Restaurants will be limited to take-out or drive-thru service, with no indoor or outdoor dining permitted.



EXTERNALS

# COVID-19 Cases Spike Again in the Winter

**Above:** As temperatures start to fall, a whole host of factors could cause COVID-19 cases to heat up again, from holidays to frequent indoor gatherings. *(Evan Mitsui/CBC)*

By Sanya Patel  
Staff Writer

Canada has seen a dramatic increase in the number of cases of COVID-19 recently, as the rate of infections begin to climb out of control. Looking back at the timeline of Canada's progression regarding the combating of the virus, we seem to have lost control as the strain on health care systems increases and cases continue to rise.

The first case of COVID-19 was reported on January 25, 2020, at Sunnybrook Hospital in Toronto. During the first few months of the pandemic, we saw, as expected, that the case count was quite low as the incubation period had not begun. During March of 2020, the cases began to increase and we had officially entered the first wave of the pandemic. Schools were shut down and other precautions were being taken to flatten the curve. Canada had increased testing, masks were deemed mandatory, our border with the USA was shut down, and the government implemented restrictions on international travel. Now in the present day, we are coping with the second wave of this virus as the cases continuously rise despite an effort being made to flatten the curve once again.

The second wave is much worse than the first, as the curve has steepened. Here is the monthly breakdown of the total number of new cases per month:

- March 3, 2020: 3 new cases
- April 3, 2020: 1,249 new cases
- May 3, 2020: 2,760 new cases
- June 3, 2020: 675 new cases
- July 3, 2020: 319 new cases
- August 3, 2020: 353 new cases
- September 3, 2020: 570 new cases
- October 3, 2020: 2037 new cases
- November 3, 2020: 2972 new cases
- December 3, 2020: 6494 new cases

(The majority of the cases come from Ontario and Quebec.)

**...we're going to have to make sure that we change the trendlines on this COVID crisis right now.**  
**Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister**

Amidst this second wave, Canada clearly has experienced a major increase in the number of newcases compared to the first wave. During the first wave in the springtime, we were able to successfully flatten the curve from having thousands of cases to just hundreds in the summer. However, this time it seems to be much harder to flatten the curve, let alone maintain the number of cases. Due to the sudden increase in cases, most of the pressure is on the healthcare systems and government to get control over this pandemic back. The future projections remain unclear, but officials say if people continue to do what they are doing, the modelling suggests we could see thousands of

cases and an increase in the number of deaths. If people increase their contacts for the holidays or for any other reason, the country is expected to see 60,000 new cases daily by late December.

Despite this grim projection, we still have time to flatten the curve, according to an interview with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau on Global News from November.

"We still have a shot at Christmas... If you want to gather with your loved ones at Christmas, even in a restrained way, we're going to have to make sure that we change the trendlines on this COVID crisis right now," Trudeau said. At present, the government and the people across Canada have been attempting to make sure this happens.

The impact has not only affected the nearing holidays, but has also impacted small local businesses even more than ever. As the government attempts to get this virus under control again, it means non-essential businesses must be shut down or increase their restrictions. Due to this, many businesses have suffered as they still attempt to recover from the first wave.

There are many uncertainties in the coming days on possible new restrictions, future projections in the coming months, and what the effect of the holiday season will be. It is more crucial now than ever to flatten the curve before these foreboding models become a reality in Canada.



Wuhan

COVID-19 is suspected to have originated from a seafood market in Wuhan, although the Chinese government claims it existed abroad long before that. A WHO mission to the country is expected to clarify this disease's origins once it arrives some time next year.

**78 million**  
cases of COVID-19 have been recorded worldwide, as of December 23rd.



EXTERNALS

# Battling Coronavirus at its Epicenter in Wuhan

**Above:** Wuhan citizens wearing masks wait in line for a train on November 25. Since the virus' outbreak early last year, the city has claimed to have virtually eliminated all its cases. *(Hector Retamal/AFP)*

By Grace Wang  
Staff Writer & Editor

Ever since the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic that started in December 2019 in Wuhan, the world has been in conflict. Although the virus may have originated there, one wonders: how has Wuhan been handling this situation, and what is it like now?

In January 2020, the total number of confirmed COVID-19 cases have reached 581 worldwide, with 571 being in China and 375 in the Hubei province alone. With the rapid spread

of the virus, Chinese authorities have announced a complete lockdown of all the cities in the Hubei province on January 24. All airports and any form of public transportation was shut down to keep anyone from leaving and entering, leaving the cities in utter isolation. All shops, apart from other than medicine and food stores, were shuttered; and strict restrictions had forced people to quarantine. They announced all this only a day before the Spring Festival in China, to prevent more spread of the disease.

More than 40,000 healthcare workers were put to work into different provinces. Hospitals for the virus had been built all over China after the Xiaotangshan hospital had been built for the SARS outbreak in the early 2000s. China immediately began building hospitals after their previous experience with SARS. The Huoshenshan hospital was built in Wuhan after a decision was made on January 24. This new facility would have the ability to treat 1,000 patients affected by COVID-19 at a time. The hospital was completed in 10 days, finishing with 269,000 square feet and a 1,500-bed capacity.

In April 2020, China officially announced that they were lifting lockdown in Wuhan after five days of 0 cases in a row. The city and its 11 million people had been quarantined for over three months. Although people were still encouraged to stay home, thousands of people were gathered together — wearing face masks — at the Huangshan Mountain Park in the Anhui province with a capacity of 20,000 people. Similar crowds were also gathered together in other parts of China. However, experts say gatherings like these should be avoided.

oided.

3 weeks after lockdown had been lifted, Wuhan reported a total of only 3 cases. As for the rest of China, they had reported 0 deaths since lockdown in January. In Wuhan, people were able to leave the city as long as they showed authorities that they had a green QR code, which allowed authorities to know that they were healthy. Security footage showed a surge of cars leaving Wuhan after restrictions had lifted. As for Chinese medical teams, COVID-19 hospitals were temporarily closed after restrictions were lifted, allowing doctors and nurses to go home to loved ones.

So how is Wuhan doing now, after almost a whole year since the disease was first found and over half a year since lockdown had been lifted? In January, Wuhan's streets, roads, parks, and shopping centers were almost completely empty. Given the exception of workers cleaning areas, it was basically a ghost town. Now in December 2020, parks and shops are being filled up with people again all wearing masks. Empty roads are now filled with traffic jams and winter lights are gaining audiences again. Mainland China now only has around a total of 15 cases each day within its population of 1.3 billion people. As for Wuhan in the Hubei province, there has only been a total of 1 case since last month.

China and Wuhan have been through a lot this year. From the first case found to quarantining, now living life basically like normal. The world hopes for a better year with 2021 coming up now that a vaccine has reportedly been found. We can hope for the best together.

## HOW DO COUNTRIES VIEW CHINA'S RESPONSE?

	positive	negative
Canada	36	61
America	31	64
Italy	49	51
Spain	50	49
France	54	44
UK	60	31

Non-responders are not shown.  
*(Pew Research)*



EXTERNALS

The Impact of COVID-19 on Small Businesses

By Iris Elik  
Staff Writer

With the current circumstances of the world, it's no surprise businesses have taken a massive hit in sales. I've interviewed one of my favourite small businesses to get their insight on how COVID-19 has impacted them. Astro Cases is a new business that sells cases for phones and AirPods. They have an Etsy store, where I purchased my "smiley face" case, and the quality is very high. I asked Astro Cases eight questions about their business and the pandemic.

**Q: What would you say has been the biggest struggle of being a small business in COVID-19?**

**A:** The shipping rates have been a huge struggle, when I started my business during this summer, I had to figure out my shipping options. Canada Post, the main shipping carrier in Canada was so expensive I had to find another option. Then I found chitchats. The shipping rates keep increasing every month.

Astrocasesco/Astro Cases is an e-store, meaning there is no physical store to purchase products from. I can see how shipping rates would definitely be a massive struggle!

**Q: How has your social media changed over the COVID-19 period?**

**A:** Social media during COVID-19 did not change for me.

**Q: What was the inspiration for starting Astro Cases?**

**A:** My inspiration for my business was TikTok!

TikTok has been a huge outlet for businesses of all sizes, especially now. I think it's admirable of someone to start their own business with the help of a platform.

**Q: How have you been communicating with customers throughout COVID-19? Has it been different than pre-virus times?**

**A:** In my opinion, there hasn't been much of a change.

This would, again, be understandable as Astro Cases from



Above: Small businesses are facing new challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. (Illustration by Anne Fu/The Royal Gazette)

the beginning has been communicating with customers mainly online.

**Q: Where do you hope to see Astro Cases in 5 years?**

**A:** I hope that my Astrocasesco brand becomes huge! That in 5 years I won't feel ashamed of myself.

Astrocasesco just hit 2,000 followers on Instagram! I would be surprised if this business didn't grow.

**Q: What is your personal favourite product(s) from your store?**

**A:** My favourite products from my shop would be the butterfly case, the black flames case and the cow case.

My personal favourite has got to be the recent fall/winter case collection. I think there's a lot of great options from those collections to choose from.

**Q: What is your stance on using social media influencers for promotion? Do you find there to be a significant change in sales?**

**A:** I did influencer marketing once and



that day I had one of the most sales I ever had! I would definitely recommend trying!

Most brands see a huge difference in sales once an influencer uses their product. This is based on what I've seen from other brands, such as Wildflower Cases. They used to be a small LA-based store, but have now amassed a significant following on their Instagram. I entirely agree with Astrocasesco's answer.

**Q: Why have you chosen this pricing for your store?**

**A:** I had to keep in mind the labour, the material prices, the time, etc, for the price.

For reference, an iPhone phone case is \$18 CAD and an AirPods case is \$12 CAD.

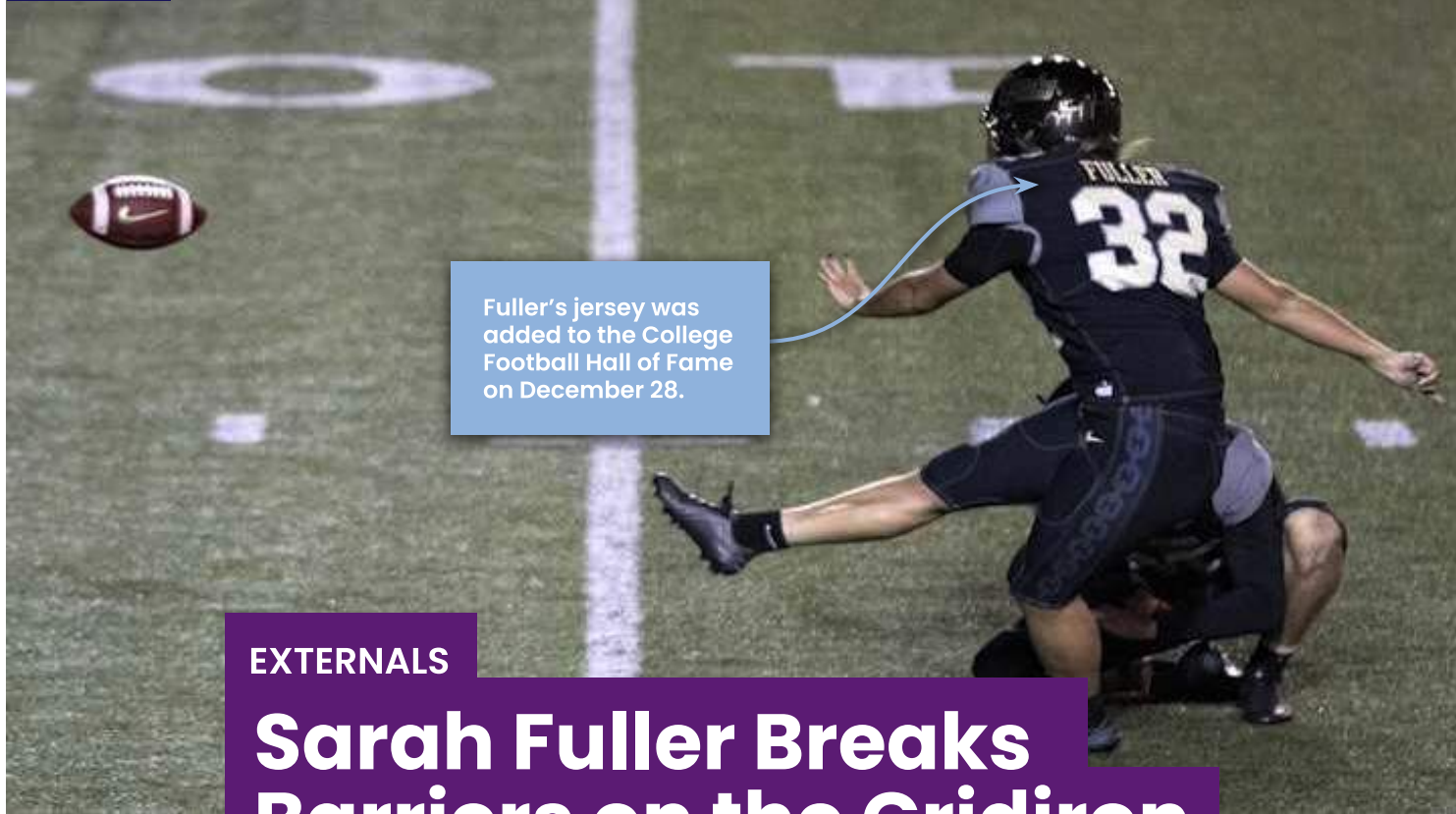
After having such a positive experience with Astro Cases, I truly believe that this business will grow and expand. During times like these, it's always important to help out local and small businesses. For those who are looking to pick up a new phone case for themselves, a friend, as a holiday gift, I would 100% recommend purchasing an Astro Cases case. Their Instagram is @astrocasesco.

Check out Astro Cases' Instagram for more information on products, news, deals and where to buy their cases. ↓

@astrocasesco

What Did They Once Say?

“I know there are probably people out there who are like 'She doesn't even play football.' But I was the right person for the job... I think I had all the right skills and everything to be myself, to represent my family well, to represent the school well, and I think that was enough.



Fuller's jersey was added to the College Football Hall of Fame on December 28.

EXTERNALS

Sarah Fuller Breaks Barriers on the Gridiron

Above: Sarah Fuller kicks an extra point as Harrison Smith holds during the second half of an NCAA college football game against Tennessee, Saturday, December 12. (Wade Payne/AP)

By Nicolas Tazzeo  
Staff Writer

On November 28th of this year, Sarah Fuller opened the second half of a game between the Vanderbilt Commodores and the Missouri Tigers with a 30-yard squib kick that catapulted her into sports history.

Vanderbilt needed a kicker after their placekickers tested positive for COVID-19 which made them unable to play for fear of further spreading of the disease. Commodore coach Derek Mason called up head soccer coach Darren Ambrose to ask if he had anyone available to kick for the matchup against Missouri. Ambrose recommended Fuller, who in the 2020 soccer season, posted a 7-2 record with 28 total saves and a 75.2 save percentage for The Commodores as goalkeeper while they won the SEC soccer championship. Mason asked Fuller, the day after the soccer team won the championship, if she wanted to come for a try-out.

Fuller did, and she blew Mason and the rest of the Vanderbilt football players away with her supreme athletic ability and a rocket for a leg. She made the team and became prepared to suit up for them as Vanderbilt's only kicker for the game in Columbia, Missouri. Coming into the game, Vanderbilt's record was an atrocious 0-7 and by halftime, they were trailing 21-0 with

little to no hope for a game that they would eventually lose. But the main headline after the game was not the one-sided game score or Missouri's 603 yards of total offense. It was Fuller's picture-perfect kick that other placekickers and punters dream of making.

To this day, Fuller remains with the team as a viable and valuable player for the squad for the rest of the season, even though coach Derek Mason was fired from his position a week later sporting a 10-37 career record with The Commodores after six seasons with the team. Just 15 days earlier, North Texas University announced that Fuller will be transferring there in 2021 to play goalkeeper for The North Texas Mean Green for the rest of her collegiate career while also studying for her master's degree in hospital administration.

Coming from Wylie, Texas, Fuller grew up playing soccer starting when she was 5 years old. She eventually attended Wylie High School where she started as goalkeeper for 2 seasons and eventually won the 2017 District 6-A Goalkeeper of the Year Award for her outstanding performances. She was able to kick the ball 60 yards in soccer games which is more than half of a football field. Once she got to Vanderbilt on a soccer scholarship in 2017, she was immediately confronted with injuries



Above: Fuller celebrates with her teammates after kicking an extra point to tie up the game. (George Walker IV/The Tennessean)

that sidelined her until she became one of the SEC's premier soccer players during the 2020 season. She has inspired young women around the nation to believe that they can do anything. If Sarah can kick a soccer ball 60 yards, why can't they? If Sarah can play Power 5 conference Division 1 NCAA football, why can't they?

Sarah plays with the motto 'Play like a Girl' and if that means playing as hard as we can and breaking boundaries like she did no matter if you are male or female, then maybe we should all play like a girl sometimes.



By Joely Stockl  
Staff Writer

**Heading into the 2019-2020** NBA season, the Toronto Raptors were largely doubted by basketball analysts, because of the substantial loss of Kawhi Leonard. Although being the unpredictable team they are, the Raptors finished the season with a 53-19 record which was good enough for 2nd place in the Eastern Conference. The loss of Leonard gave shooting guard Fred Vanvleet, and 2019 Most Improved Player of the Year Pascal Siakam more minutes to play. These two stars did not disappoint, as Siakam led the team, averaging 22.9 points per game while Vanvleet averaged 6.6 assists per game. Raptors veteran Kyle Lowry had another very successful season, leading the team by playing starting point guard all year.

The Raptors were acknowledged as a very defensive-first team that other teams found it hard to score on them all regular season, until the playoffs at least. With the COVID-19 pandemic, the NBA season got pushed back into August with 13 regular season games remaining. Those games were played in a bubble in Orlando, where they also held the NBA playoffs at this time. In the first round, the Raptors faced the Brooklyn Nets who were easily swept in a best of 7 format, 4 games to none. With Nets superstar Kyrie Irving, out of the lineup with an injury, they didn't have much hope as they were playing the second best team in the league.

The next matchup for the Raptors was facing the Boston Celtics; a team that had finished one spot below them in the Eastern Conference standings. The Raptors ended up falling to the Celtics in 7 games, 4-3. The Celtics handed the Raptors 3 losses out of 4 matches they played against each other in the regular season, so it was expected to be a tough matchup for the Raptors. Pascal Siakam specifically during the postseason did not have as large of an impact as we are typically used to seeing from him. With LeBron James and the LA Lakers taking home the championship trophy, this extended season was finally over. Now we look towards next season, which is set to begin officially on December 22nd.

**Additions** During the offseason, 3 big name players from the Raptors were on the market for NBA free agency: shooting guard Fred Vanvleet, and two big men aka the centre position, Marc Gasol and Serge Ibaka. Toronto managed to re-sign Vanvleet to a 4-year, \$85 million dollar contract, which was definitely necessary given how much he has improved over the past few seasons. Given that the Raptors lost two of their big centremen, they needed to fill a large



Last year was a historic season for the Raptors, after the team secured their first NBA championship ever. This made them the first non-American team to win a North American major sports championship in 25 years.



EXTERNALS

## Raptors 2020-21 Season Preview

**Above, left to right:** OG Anunoby, Pascal Siakam, Serge Ibaka, Nick Nurse and Marc Gasol of the Toronto Raptors. *(Cole Burston/Getty)*

hole. This would be filled by 33-year old Aron Baynes. He won't be expected to put up big numbers like Ibaka or Gasol, but he is a cheap replacement that can possibly leave room for Chris Boucher to gain more minutes. Chris Boucher is a big man that is expected to have more of a role next season. Coincidentally, he got a 2 year, \$13.5 million dollar contract extension which signals that the Raptors expect more out of him. Lastly, the Raptors picked up a low risk small forward in Deandre' Bembry, who they are only paying \$2 million a season.

### Losses

This off-season, there were really only 2 major losses that have been previously mentioned: Serge Ibaka and Marc Gasol. Serge Ibaka is a 7-foot centreman who made huge contributions last season. Ibaka averaged 15 points per game along with 8 boards. He was valuable for his relentless defense and rim protection in Toronto, along with his miraculous 38% three point percentage. As a centre, these were major assets for Toronto. Although the big man signed a 2 year, \$19 million contract with the LA Clippers, joining former teammate Kawhi Leonard. Secondly, Marc Gasol is another substantial loss for the Raps. Averaging fewer points than fellow centre Serge Ibaka, Gasol was crucial in the 2019 Championship run. Even though last year was a bit of a down year only averaging 7.5 points per game, Gasol was still a very beloved player on this team. Marc Gasol ended up signing a 2 year contract for an unknown amount of money with the championship winning LA Lakers. It is

sad for Toronto Raptors fans that we have to lose two substantial players on our team, but we do have a quickly approaching season to get excited for!

**The Raptors are being doubted by NBA fans and analysts for the second year in a row once again because of their losses during the offseason. Everything seems to be pointing in a negative direction this season, but with Fred Vanvleet resigned, and depth players playing more minutes, Raptors fans shouldn't doubt their team so quickly.**

### Preview

The NBA regular season is set to begin on December 22nd 2020 with the Raptors not able to play their first game until the 23rd against the New Orleans Pelicans. Due to COVID-19, Toronto will begin playing their games out of Tampa, Florida. We may not be physically able to go see our Raptors play, but we are lucky enough to be able to watch them at all during this unpredictable year. The Raptors are being doubted by NBA fans and analysts for the second year in a row once again because of their losses during the offseason. Everything seems to be pointing in a negative direction this season, but with Fred Vanvleet resigned, and depth players playing more minutes, Raptors fans shouldn't doubt their team so quickly.

**50** Protests held by Sikh people abroad have been held in 50 different cities.

**250** million Sikhs participated in a nationwide general strike on November 26.

**300** As many as 300 thousand people may have participated in a single march to Delhi.



EXTERNALS

## Sikh Farmers Hold Protests in India

**Above:** Protesting farmers clash with police near Delhi on November 27. The demonstrations are being held in opposition of new laws that would give corporations power over small farmers. *(Altaf Qadri/AP)*

By Simran Matharu  
Staff Writer

**A huge calamity is currently** breaking out in India — and no one's talking about it.

Just a few months ago, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his government passed three agricultural bills. To summarize, the bills are said to assist small and marginal farmers by offering them with multiple marketing channels and providing a legal framework for farmers to enter into pre-arranged contracts, among other supposed benefits.

However, these laws are posing many threats to the careers of farmers across India.

The supply chain of produce in India is quite complex. After farmers grow their commodities, they bring them to the Agriculture Produce Marketing Committee (APMC). There, the produce is bought by licensed middlemen. These middlemen, who buy the produce in bulk, negotiate with the farmers according to the set price, with respect to demand in the market. If no one ends up buying the produce, or the open market provides a lesser price than the cost incurred, the government will buy the produce instead, at a Minimum Support Price (MSP). This agricultural product price - a 'safety net' for farmers - ensures that they are protected from the uncertainties of the markets, as well as natural unpredictabilities. Although it is not a very high sum, it assures farmers are not losing money and gua-

rantees that they will come home with some amount of money.

Until now, the only way private players could legitimately acquire produce was through middlemen at APMCs. With these new reforms, however, those private companies can buy directly from farmers, without the use of middlemen.

Farmers fear that without the safeguarding provided by the government, these large corporations will exploit the farmers. They can start buying produce in bulk, arm-twist small farmers, and force them to drive down their prices.

Another fear that is arising is that the MSPs will be removed completely. This would result in no guaranteed sum for farmers, which would put them into even further debt than many of them are already in. The unreliable variables such as weather conditions, pests, availability of water, and market demand will heavily impact a farmer's income without any protection, and will lead to a very inconsistent profit.

Hence, farmers have been voicing their concerns through protests in the past few months. Just two weeks ago, tens of thousands of farmers began marching to New Delhi, where they were faced with police firing tear gas shells and water cannons, in addition to using batons to beat protestors. Nonetheless, the farmers are determined to express their apprehensions and fight for change.

India is not the only country protesting against these new bills. Thousands of individuals across Canada are expressing their solidarity for farmers in India through protests. These protesters are showing support all over the nation, in cities like Toronto, Saskatoon, and Halifax. In fact, one of the first world leaders to vocalize their support for the farmers' right to protest was Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, stating that "Canada will always stand up for the right of peaceful protest anywhere around the world. And we're pleased to see moves towards de-escalation and dialogue."

### SUPPORTING FARMERS



Support the American Sikh Council with a signature.



Help raise awareness about the protests to the UN and the UK government.



Donate to KhalsaAid to back the protests financially.

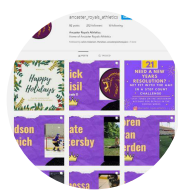


Support a Punjab family for \$360 or less to fulfill their essential needs.

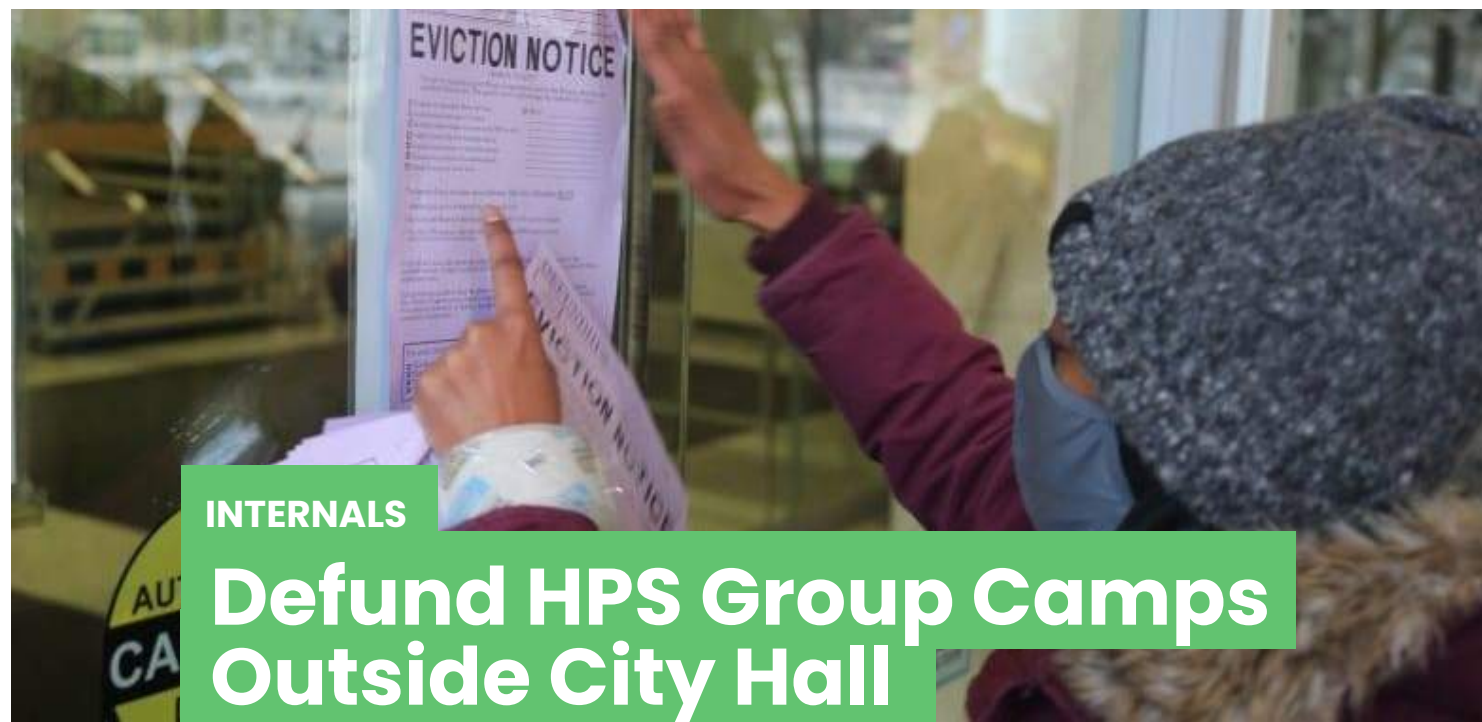


# Internal News

News on what matters immediately to you, from **Ancaster High School, Hamilton, and the GTA.**



**INTERNALS**  
**AAC Highlights Athletes During Quarantine**  
pg 16



INTERNALS

## Defund HPS Group Camps Outside City Hall

**Above:** A protestor tapes an "eviction notice" sign onto the windows of Hamilton City Hall in support of the group's demands for better municipal housing initiatives. **(Dan Taekema/CBC)**

By Aisha Mahmoud  
Staff Writer

Tensions this year have been high, as people all across the United States and Canada take to the streets to march against police brutality and racial discrimination. The deaths of those such as George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Ejaz Choudry, and Breonna Taylor have sparked many Black Lives Matter protests and initiatives.

Now in Hamilton, a local coalition known as Defund HPS has made it their mission to call on the city to make changes to our municipal budget. They are demanding that the City of Hamilton allocate funds from the growing Hamilton Police Services budget to create free and affordable housing. On Monday, November 23rd, the coalition set up "Freedom Camp" outside of City Hall. There were activities for protesters; everything from movie night and karaoke to t-shirt making. Speakers dropped by at Freedom Camp to discuss housing for the disabled and the health effects of homelessness. They set up tents at the site, and stated that they would not leave the property until their demands have been met by the city.

The rally was forced to come to an early end on November 30, after Hamilton Police officers arrived to dismantle the camp. Sparks flew between officers and protestors ran high as tents and sleeping bags were thrown into waiting garbage trucks, while members of the coalition videotaped the acts. At 9 PM on that



**Above:** Defund HPS members livestreamed their coffin-carrying demonstration on Twitter. **(Defund HPS/Twitter)**

same night, Defund HPS responded to the takedown of their campsite by carrying an empty casket to Mayor Fred Eisenberger's home, which they claimed was symbolic of the blood on his hands.

"People die in the cold every year right across this country and right here in Hamilton," said one unidentified protestor, in a Twitter livestream that broadcasted the act. "Last night we had a vigil to commemorate those who have lost their lives, those who will lose their lives and those who have died due to Fred's inaction. He did not attend that vigil, so we have brought the vigil here to him."

The city took further action against the protestors on December 2, after police arrested 18 people who at-

tempted to hold a sit-in after hours in city hall. Although the citizens were released afterwards, each one was fined \$65 for trespassing property.

"It escalated, and they were the ones escalating it," said Sarah Jama, one of the demonstration organizers. She was offered a private meeting with Eisenberger to discuss defunding the police but turned it down, demanding any such discussions to be made publicly. "It's not much, but they're saying I'm not allowed to be on the property... I'm still here."

The "Defund the Police" movement has been making waves around the globe. Proponents of the policy argue that the purpose of defunding the police is to use those funds to address other issues. This means investing in affordable housing and at-risk communities. These funds would also be used to hire social workers and mental health professionals, who are more equipped to handle mental health related non-violent 911 calls. The remaining police budget would also be used to increase police training in de-escalation. Instead of increasing the police services budget, investing in at-risk communities helps lower crime rates and homelessness, which decreases the need for policing.

Hamilton Mayor Fred Eisenberger, has refused to meet publicly with Defund HPS so far. Hamilton citizens are being loud and clear, yet the mayor is not listening. The fight for affordable housing in Hamilton is far from over.

## BY THE NUMBERS

**25** students attended the 2020 GROW STEM virtual conference.

**3** The event lasted for 3 days, featuring panels and workshops held by local universities.

**4** different universities took part in the events, including Ryerson, Waterloo, Ontario Tech and McMaster.



INTERNALS

## GROW STEM Conference Uplifts Local Youth

**Above:** In this screencap from the 2020 GROW STEM conference, a handful of attendees, along with co-founder Leanne Tran (top row, second from left) join in on a workshop held by Ontario Tech University. **(GROW STEM)**

By Lindsay Liu  
Staff Writer & Editor

With the conclusion of the first conference, great things are in store for GROW STEM, a STEM-oriented conference organized by co-founders Leanne Tran and Michelle Luu of Ancaster High School. The idea for GROW STEM began when Leanne and Michelle noticed the lack of female students in their Grade 11 Computer Science class and during their Mohawk College field trip. This observation urged them to take action and given the popularity of virtual events during the pandemic, they created the GROW STEM conference. This conference had the goal of "address[ing] the gender gap in STEM" specifically in technology as well as "diversify[ing] the field and provide more opportunities to girls and non-binary students to...find potential and talent in [STEM]."

The GROW STEM 2020 Conference took place from November 27th to the 29th, with preparations beginning since the end of August. The conference garnered approximately 25 participants and received an overall positive reaction. According to Leanne and Michelle, feedback on the conference from students said that they enjoyed learning about engineering, and were "grateful for the opportunity to attend." A favourite part of the conference for students was the chance to speak to "current female undergraduate engineering students and hearing about their experiences in university and STEM." Also, the participants seemed to be very engaged and a "sense of community"

developed as the conference progressed, said co-founders Michelle and Leanne.

According to Leanne and Michelle, the highlight of their conference and the greatest takeaway that they wanted people to remember was "the sense of community, positivity, and inclusiveness...present throughout the conference," calling the overall experience "uplifting."

Through organizing GROW STEM, Leanne and Michelle learned more about business concepts such as "budgeting, communication through meetings, advertising" and many more. The two ran into a bit of trouble contacting schools of interest and figuring out schedule plans, but in the end got in touch with 4 great schools - Ryerson, McMaster, Waterloo, and Ontario Tech - and collaborated with them to deliver a fantastic conference.

As for the future of GROW STEM, Leanne and Michelle noticed that attendees demonstrated interest towards the health sciences as well as other fields of STEM alongside engineering and technology. Due to these observations they have decided to expand this event into a series of "mini conferences focusing on different STEM topics." The next conferences will be in February and will centre around "gaming and computer science" and a larger conference is in store on the topics of medicine and biology, as well as one centred around space. Students interested in these topics, be sure to follow @growstem on Instagram for future events, information, ways to get

involved, and more!

To conclude, a special message from co-founders Leanne and Michelle:

"This conference couldn't be possible without our amazing sponsors and partners! GROW STEM 2020 was funded by the Government of Canada through Rising Youth, a grant program by TakingITGlobal. They provide microgrants to youth ages 15-30 across Canada to implement service projects to benefit their communities. You can find out more about applying at [www.risingyouth.ca](http://www.risingyouth.ca) or on Instagram @risingyouthtig. We were also sponsored by Scholars Ancaster, a new tutoring Centre in Ancaster operated by two female entrepreneurs, Amy Furyk & Mary McGowan - who believe in the power of education and knowledge. Both online and in-person tutoring is available for all subjects and grades. They are also excited to announce the up & coming STEM program at their Centre. You can find more details about the unique Scholars STEM program here: <https://www.scholarsed.com/program/stem-education/>. We'd also like to thank The Net for their ongoing support in this project! The Net is Ancaster's first ever youth-empowerment team run through Ancaster Community Services and is open to youth in Ancaster ages 13-18. Through The Net, youth have the opportunity to develop their leadership skills, be involved in their community, and earn volunteer hours. You can learn more about them on Instagram @thenetacs or by emailing them at [thenet@hpl.ca](mailto:thenet@hpl.ca)."





Check out more coverage on student-run initiatives on pg 14.

# INTERNALS

## Students Start Online Business

By Caitlin Adams-Nequia  
Staff Writer

Three students, two from AHS and one from Macnab, have started an online business on Instagram. To contact their store, they can be found on Instagram @c\_and\_bs\_store2020.

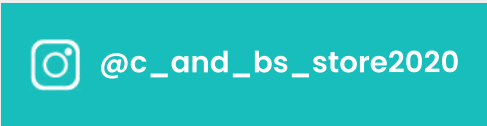
C and B's store creates handmade custom bracelets and drawings with each person in the three-person team handling one part of the business, although the owners of the account would prefer to stay anonymous. The jeweller makes bracelets, as well as handles social media including posting, captions, and stories. The artist handles business including payment plans and promoting the business. Lastly, the editor handles some marketing such as deciding on prices and discounts, and also deals with video edits such as music and sound. The business was started last summer by the jeweller and editor. The girls thought it would be a good way to gain business experience. The artist was brought in by the jeweller in late November, everyone thought it would be a fun idea to add art to the business.

Although C and B have just opened their store, they say they plan to continue it past college, and even open up a physical shop one day in addition to their regular jobs.

"We are working on a website and payment details. If you have recommendations please DM us," says the group. They also say it can be difficult when you're a student having to juggle the business, homework, and classes. One of the most important things for them is that you have a safe way to pay them, saying "we want to make sure everyone stays safe." Money transfer apps can be unsecured so they want to ensure whatever app chosen is safe for you and them.

The group plans on widening their social media platforms, "We'll be

Check out C and B's Instagram for more information on products, news, deals and where to buy their bracelets or artwork.



# INTERNALS

## AHS Hosts Holiday Talent Show

By Emma Menard  
Staff Writer

On Thursday December 17th and Friday December 18th, students and staff got to see the annual Ancaster High Holiday Talent Show, in a different way than in the past years. This year has definitely been a different year, so this year the team of student's from Ancaster High's ambassadors decided to take on the role of adapting this year's holiday assembly to be completely virtual. Featuring video performances from students in all grades, and varying in different styles or talents, such as voice acting, singing, dancing, acting, and instrumental performances. Student performances were from: Jocelyn M and Clarissa W, Emma M, Zachary G, Zach, Ahmed A, Sama A, and Laura B. As well as some special video performances from the student's in Ms.Crowe's and Ms.Laka's classes, as well as a special performance from the teachers and staff at Ancaster High. The teachers and staff performed a special twist on the show American I-

dol, and performed a series of songs all while lip syncing and competing to find out who had the best performance.

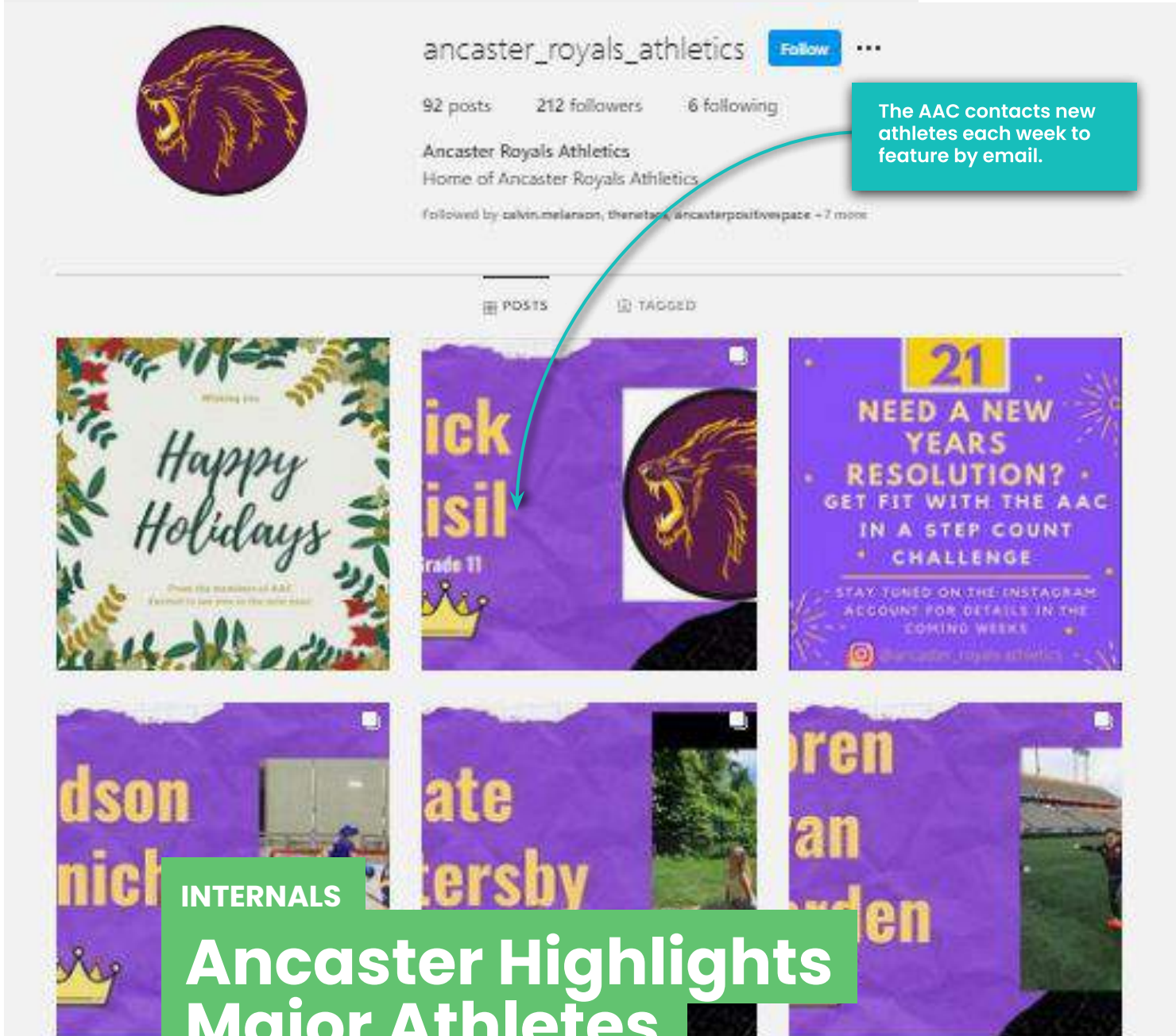
Above: Clarissa White and Jocelyn Mattka perform at the Holiday Talent Show. (Ancaster High Student Council/The Royal Gazette)

In conclusion, although this year has had many unique events and changes to our usual school year, the annual Ancaster High Holiday Talent Show was still as fun as ever!

# FUTURE PLANS

23

The Ancaster Athletic Council Instagram page has highlighted 23 athletes so far, across all grade levels and in every sport from badminton to hockey to cross country. This initiative is a part of a larger endeavour to bring sports involvement online during the pandemic, and highlight AHS students' athletic achievements.



Above: The Ancaster Athletics Council Instagram account (@ancaster\_royals\_athletics) has been featuring student athletes for the past several weeks. (Ancaster Athletic Council/Instagram)

By Aisha Mahmoud  
Staff Writer

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected nearly every aspect of our lives. Most notably, our day-to-day at school does not look the same way it did just a year ago. We've made many adjustments, and we're still settling into the new normal. Despite this, we've found creative ways to keep school spirit alive at Ancaster High.

The Ancaster Athletic Council, one of our school's largest clubs, has thought long and hard about how to continue to celebrate athletics at Ancaster High. They began an initiative called "Ancaster Athlete Celebrities". Every week, a few of our very own AHS athletes are featured on their social media page, with photos and fun facts about the student.

I interviewed two members of the AAC, Isabelle Schurer and Madeline Dilabbio, to ask about where the inspiration for the initiative came from,

what life is like for athletes amidst the pandemic, and how the AAC is keeping the Royal spirit alive during these unprecedented times. They said, "As the Ancaster Athletic Council, we realized we had to find some way to acknowledge all of the unbelievably talented athletes we have. We wanted to highlight all of the talent because we are unable to compete in sports at the moment. The Athletic Celebrities posts have only been going on for a few weeks and have already made a big impact on school spirit and involvement. So many students are reaching out to us. It's amazing to see the athletic community coming together".

When asked about the effects of the pandemic on athletic life, they said, "Many students at Ancaster High use sports as an outlet. Sports are a huge part of many students' lives, and not being able to participate has definitely affected them, both mentally and physically. Continuing on with activities as well as our Athletic Celebrities posts are just some of the

efforts we have been making to try to keep the athletic culture alive. Even though the pandemic has taken sports away from us, it hasn't taken our Royal spirit".

It is amazing to see how the Ancaster Athletic Council is celebrating athletics at Ancaster High. We need now more than ever to uplift and support our fellow students. Go Royals!

"Sports are a huge part of many students' lives, and not being able to participate has definitely affected them, both mentally and physically. Continuing on with activities as well as our Athletic Celebrities posts are just some of the efforts we have been making to try to keep the athletic culture alive."

Isabelle Schurer & Madeline Dilabbio, AAC members



# SEARCHING FOR THE PERFECT TURF



By Jocelyn Mattka & Joe McDermott  
Staff Writers & Editor

This month, Ancaster High unveiled its most recent expansion: a brand new turf field. The *Gazette* spoke to staff, students and community members regarding this development.

*“A dream I have is that when COVID is over, and when the track is installed, that we will have a huge inauguration party, perhaps a homecoming in the fall of 2021.”*

**Ms. Woof**, principal of Ancaster High

This holiday season, it appears that Ancaster High has received a gift that will keep giving for many years to come! After several weeks of construction, the beautiful new turf that so many students and staff have been trying to catch glimpses of is complete.

Although we cannot yet use this turf for all of its many purposes, that hasn't stopped excitement over the project from building. This new turf is a full-size field, designed uniquely with our royal purple and gold colours, and already marked out for many different sports. Ms. Woof, our principal at AHS, is particularly enthusiastic about the wide variety of possibilities this field has to offer.

“Some people call the new field ‘the football field’ but I prefer to call it a ‘sports field,’” she stated to the *Gazette*. “I know that many people will see the football markings first, but I see soccer, field hockey, lacrosse, rugby, lawn bowling, track and field and all sorts of other sports on that field... Maybe we can have future graduations on the field. Or maybe a marching band or musical concerts? Tournaments for sure... and who knows what else?”

The principal's big dreams don't stop there. She has spoken about what this new field could mean for promoting equality and accessibility in our school community. “A dream I have is that when COVID is over, and when the track is installed, that we will have a huge inauguration party, perhaps a homecoming in the fall of 2021,” she explained. Ms. Woof even goes so far as to suggest that we consider having the “first inaugural game [as] a Girls' Field Hockey game under the lights.”

This progressive stance only serves to enhance the hopeful feelings that many are already associating with the new sports field. Like a promise of spring to come, the field will be ready and waiting as soon as health and safety regulations allow for it. This field, constructed as part of HWDSB's strategy for creating “great” high schools, will provide students with one more feature that will provide them a “high quality education, facilities, and resources, regardless of where their postal code is,” which is exactly what the board is aiming to do.

Aside from all of its potential for students and the community, the new sports field has a number of interesting technical features as well. It was built and installed expertly by the construction company Gateman Milloy, a company that operates under Carpell, both of which Ms. Woof would like to extend a thank you to! As Ms. Woof explained herself, the field was “built with incredible engineering that offers proper drainage, slopes, safety features etc.” It was “also built to provincial accessibility standards, which is why there is a lovely ne sloped pathway to the field that can be used by everyone.”

From a financial perspective, this field is a huge benefit because it cuts out the maintenance costs of a grass field and can be used for a longer season. Ms. Woof also describes how “it will not get holes or dips and it will drain properly. If you go look, you'll see it is ever so slightly higher in the centre.” This raised center will allow the field to drain properly, which is another reason why game cancellations due to weather conditions should be drastically reduced.

In addition to the companies involved in design and installation, Ms. Woof would like to extend a thank you to HWDSB, the Facilities Management Department and Alex Johnstone, our school trustee.

On the other hand, some students and parents do not feel the same overwhelming enthusiasm towards the project. Avid high school football player and Ancaster High alumnus Bob McDermott expressed to the *Gazette* his feelings concerning the new field and artificial turf in general.

“The field was certainly due for an upgrade, but I didn't see artificial turf as necessary,” he said after seeing photos of the new field. “Ancaster High is situated within such a beautiful natural environment unique among schools. It's the perfect spot for a real grass field, and it could've been done for a fraction of the cost simply with a proper drainage and irrigation system.”

Such a stance largely originates from nostalgia; Mr. McDermott said “there was always

something about returning after summer to play football and the smell of fall grass” as he explained the role of atmosphere in his love for football. But he also made sure to stress the issue of injury prevention and how artificial turf may pose risks to players. “Turf is a much harder surface which increases the risk of more severe injuries, and creates the possibility of friction burn. I think that safety outweighs whatever aesthetic benefits the field brings to the school.”

This approach is not uncommon among both parents and students who have grown increasingly wary of the risks associated with high school football. Beliefs that artificial turf may work to exacerbate this issue are also common among many.

Conversely, there are others less concerned about this aspect, instead focusing on what the new turf will offer athletes. Zain Mir, a current grade 12 student, seemed rather excited about the much-anticipated field.

“The old field was full of dry patches of dirt and a lot of bumps. Turf has come a long way from where it was a few years back, and though it does cause more injuries, it also allows for less maintenance on the ground and always having a suitable field,” Zain emphasized most the convenience of having this suitable field within close proximity and easily accessible.

Disregarding the contrast in perspective, the change a renovated field could bring is undeniable in its impact on the school. Students now will experience athletic opportunities expand, and the addition of a new element to the school will work to benefit all Royals in enhancing their view of Ancaster High. Looking into the future, AHS hopes to see a new track installed in the spring of 2021, which will only further inspiration and Royal spirit at the school!



See all images of  
the new field by  
scanning here.



# Views & Voices

The *Gazette's* staff weigh in on what they believe matters with **essays, opinions, reviews and advice.**



**VOICES**  
**Review: Queen's Gambit**  
*pg 23*



## VOICES

# Why the Rotational Learning Model Doesn't Work

**Left:** Despite the board and the school's best attempts at bringing school online, one student believes this method fails both teachers and students. *(Illustration by Rose He/The Royal Gazette)*

By Jocelyn Mattka  
**Staff Writer & Editor**

**For the first semester of the 2020/2021 school year,** Ancaster High School has adopted an all-new structural model. The "rotational model" has been met with a lot of criticism from students, staff and parents, but still remains in place without any current plans to change. As a grade 12 student, I have three major issues with how the rotational model operates, all of which hinder learning, rather than aid it. Particularly, this model is doing nothing to offer adequate support for those who opt out of in-person learning.

## A DELAYED RETURN

This year's in-person return back to school is being delayed until January 25th, due to the new provincial shutdown. This means all students — including the ones who previously used the hybrid model — will have to adapt to the fully remote one.

The biggest reason why I feel the rotational model does not serve students is because of its lack of consistency. While this model does allow students to take up to 4 courses throughout the entire semester, the way in which each course's content is spread out is bizarre. With this rotational model, 2 and a half hours are dedicated to the same course every morning for about four weeks, while the rest of your courses are fitted into 40 minute time slots in the afternoon. In every rotation, the morning course changes. Placing such a heavy emphasis on any one course at a given time is a poor method for reducing stress on staff and students. In some

cases, teachers have felt the need to move at a breakneck pace during these "in-person" learning blocks, piling on heavier workloads than they ever would have in a regular 75 minute period.

Teachers are feeling like they need to make up for lost time from the rotations when they only see their students for 40 minutes a day via Microsoft Teams. I speak from experience when I say that some teachers do not slow down or speed up their pace during the rotations, which only makes things more difficult for some students. With no cohesive approach, students can wind up with a regular course load from their shortened classes and a double course load from their morning period all piled on top of each other. Clearly, a higher level of communication and planning is needed between teachers in order to ensure situations like this aren't occurring. On the other side of the table, teachers are dealing with a constant schedule change too. For some teachers, having more or less time than usual with students may create difficulties when trying to plan courses in an appropriate manner, not to mention the stress of a potentially very fast-paced morning class each rotation.

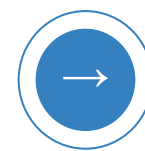
In addition, this structure does not work well in combination with e-learning courses, which many remote learners may choose to combine with their regular "in-school" courses. The reasoning behind this is that e-learning courses operate at the same pace throughout the entire semester, while the courses in the rotational model do not. What I am getting at is this: Instead of using the rotational model to reduce stress, this model only ensures that students are always, always stressed.

Finally, keeping remote learne-

rs in the loop during in-person blocks is an unfair expectation to place on teachers. Without being paid for any extra work or prep time, these teachers are expected to support both in-person and remote students. When they are able to do this effectively, the appreciation from remote learners goes without saying; however, when teachers are unable to meet these ridiculous standards, panic ensues. From a student perspective, losing touch with a 4U course for a month at a time is not an optimal situation. This model has been set up to allow remote learners, but not truly with them in mind. With such a high percentage of students opting for a fully remote model, this system needs to be reworked in a way that will better address this significant portion of the school community.

Overall, the rotational model does nothing to benefit students or staff. Especially for remote learners, this structure is difficult, discouraging and stress-inducing, during a time that is already filled with enough added hardship. If this is the model we continue to work with, I can only ask that the school community continues to be aware of all students and staff and work towards a solution that is both more inclusive and conducive towards learning.

**With no cohesive approach, students can wind up with a regular course load from their shortened classes and a double course load from their morning period all piled on top of each other. Clearly, a higher level of communication and planning is needed between teachers in order to ensure situations like this aren't occurring.**



Check out more on holiday card ideas and cooking recipes on pg 27.



By Ashley Smith  
**Staff Writer**

**December is a time of year** dominated by one particular holiday: Christmas.

Christmas is a widespread holiday, celebrated in 160 of the world's countries, and Canada is no exception. This is the time of year when you shop for Christmas presents, sing Christmas carols, decorate Christmas trees, and enjoy various other Christmas festivities. It was recorded from a 2019 survey that 87% of Canadians celebrate Christmas, with 51% celebrating it as a secular holiday, and only 35% as a religious holiday.

The major question at hand here is: why is Christmas centralized in North American culture?

Christmas started as a Christian holiday, celebrating the birth of Jesus. It was inspired by centuries-old mid-winter celebrations such as the celebration of the winter solstice in early Europe, Yule in Scandinavia, and Saturnalia in Rome. Saturnalia is theorized to be the most influential holiday when Pope Julius I selected the date of Christmas, pulling in traditions from the pagan holiday to craft the new, Christian holiday. By the end of the sixth century, Christmas was widely celebrated throughout Europe, as well as Egypt. By the end of the eighth century, it was also celebrated in Scandinavia, and by the Middle Ages, Christianity had replaced the pagan religion.

A little more Christmas history is that, in early colonial America, Christmas was actually banned from being celebrated by Puritans. The general traditions of the time (gift-giving, feasting, dancing, and drinking) were forbidden and condemned in early colonial society. Celebrating Christmas was considered sacrilegious.

If Christmas started as a religious holiday, why is it so popularly celebrated as a secular holiday? Also, why do we in North America celebrate Christmas when it was banned?

One word can answer this question: capitalism. Christmas had a resurgence in the 19th century, specifically because of the rise in Western capitalism during the time period just after the Civil War. Post-Civil War America was seeing a rise in wealth, industrialization, and commercialism/consumerism, and the old traditions of gift-giving and partying were revived. The Christmas craze further increased in the 1920's,

## DID YOU KNOW?



According to a survey carried out by the Chartered Professional Accountants of Canada (CPA), the average Canadian spends \$643 on Christmas gifts.



## VOICES

# Why do We Prioritize Christmas?

**Above:** A Christmas tree in Ottawa is adorned with ornaments, in this photo from December 2014. *(Adrian Wyld/The Canadian Press)*

during a post-war era where disillusionment was widespread and people turned to the nostalgia and decadence of Christmas to recreate the luxury, comfort, and relaxation of simpler, safer times. In addition, people were experiencing the newfound wealth of the Roaring 20s, and gift-buying and giving became more extravagant.

Christmas has further grown and evolved to be a largely consumerist and capitalist holiday, with few celebrating it religiously. North America is blatantly capitalist, with our society and trade system being largely controlled by corporations and private owners with intent of profit; Christmas is a holiday for corporations to push products onto consumers. Christmas has become the main holiday of the season simply because it is the easiest to profit off of. In a society that puts immense focus on economy, the traditions of Christmas (gift-giving, decorating, partying) are the easiest to market and commercialize.

So what other holidays are there?

Winter is a time of celebration for many different cultures, with a variety of different holidays and traditions that are less focused on in North American society. Below is a brief list, including descriptions, of a few winter holidays.

## Hanukkah

Hanukkah is a Jewish holiday that spans over eight days, starting on December 10th this year. It celebrates the resurgence of devotion for the Second Temple in Jerusalem, also known as rededication. Those who experienced rededication witnessed a miracle where the oil of a menorah

candle, which was only enough to last for one day, burned for eight days. Hanukkah is celebrated through lighting a menorah, reciting blessings, playing with dreidels, exchanging gifts, and consuming traditional Hanukkah foods (latkes, sufganiyot, etc.)

## Kwanzaa

Kwanzaa originated in 1966, inspired by first fruit celebrations in Africa. Kwanzaa is celebrated over the week of September 26th-January 1st, and it is meant to honour African heritage. Kwanzaa is celebrated through lighting candles on a kinara, discussing the seven principles/values of African culture, a culminating feast (karamu), and traditions including: singing, dancing, African drumming, poetry reading, and storytelling.

## Fiesta of Our Lady Guadalupe

The Fiesta of Our Lady Guadalupe is a Mexican holiday that is celebrated on December 12th. This holiday celebrates the encounters between Juan Diego and the Virgin Mary. Public fiestas are held, children will dress in traditional costumes and get blessed, and people will pray in churches.

Society is becoming more progressive and recognizing the existence of other holidays in small ways. Instead of "Merry Christmas" being the normal greeting, people are starting to use "Happy Holidays" or "Seasons Greetings" to be more inclusive. Despite its mass popularity, Christmas is starting to be less domineering as other holidays are celebrated and appreciated within North American culture. This change may be small, but it is important to acknowledge and appreciate cultures and traditions that differ from the majority's as well.



BY THE NUMBERS

- 1 Although 17 non-white artists were nominated for Album of the Year from 2007-2017, only 1 won.
- 10 Black artists have won the coveted Album of the Year award since the Grammys' inception in 1957.
- 4 Even major artists like Aretha Franklin have never been nominated for the top 4 categories.



VOICES

# Artists of Colour Were Snubbed by the 2021 Grammys

**Above:** Mason Ramsay, Billy Ray Cyrus, Lil Nas X and BTS perform an “Old Town Road” mashup at the 2020 Grammys on January 26, 2020. *(Allen J. Schaben/Los Angeles Times)*

By Aisha Mahmoud  
Staff Writer

It's the end of the year, and award show season is right around the corner. The Grammy Awards are a fun time for celebrities, artists, and fans alike. It is a chance to celebrate and look back on the music and memories that were created over the past year. In the past, there have been so many iconic Grammy moments: Taylor Swift calling out Kanye West, Adele sharing her Grammy with Beyoncé, Billie Eilish walking around with her five Grammys, Michelle Obama's surprise appearance, Kendrick Lamar's powerful performance, and many more.

The Grammy Awards are obviously a key part of pop culture. Despite this, we keep seeing a trend in Grammy nominees and winners. In 2005, when John Mayer won Song of the Year over Kanye West's "Jesus Walks"; in 2013, when fun. won Best New Artist over Frank Ocean; in 2014 when Macklemore won over Kendrick Lamar for Best New Artist, then in 2016 when Taylor Swift won Album of the Year over Kendrick Lamar's "To Pimp a Butterfly"; in 2015, when Beyoncé didn't win Album of the Year for her self-titled "Beyoncé", which was her magnum opus, a masterpiece, and a completely new way to create a full album experience. As if it couldn't get any more outrageous, she didn't even win Album of the Year for "Lemonade"! What do these snubs all have in common? White artists winning over more deserving artists of colour.

Fast forward to 2020, and the Grammys have announced the 2021 Grammy Award Nominations. This year, albums like *folklore*, *Chromatica*, and *Changes* have been nominated for Pop Album of the Year, and "Yummy", "Don't Start Now" and "Cardigan" were nominated for Best Pop Solo Performance. Surprisingly, The Weeknd's "Blinding Lights", which was the longest running song in the top 10 of Billboard Hot 100 ever, was not nominated. The Weeknd also wasn't nominated for his critically acclaimed album *After Hours*. The singer was supposedly going to be a strong contender in Record, Song, and Album of the Year.

**“What do these snubs all have in common? White artists winning over more deserving artists of colour.”**

Fans all over social media were rightfully shocked and surprised. Are these nominations (or lack thereof) a reflection of the biased and racist history of award shows, or was the Weeknd truly not deserving? "After Hours", the Weeknd's fourth studio album, combines R&B and pop sounds with his dreamy vocals. The album brings back nostalgic elements of 80's music. Within the lyrics, you can find desperate whispers to a past lover, sultry one-liners, the journey to becoming a new man, and terrified thoughts of who he once was. As soon as the album was released, it was an instant hit and a fan favourite for Album of the Year. People all over

social media are outraged that "After Hours" was not nominated. Frankly, so am I.

## HEAR THE DISCUSSION

What do different groups have to say about racial bias in the Grammys?

I don't think there's a race problem at all... We don't, as musicians... listen to music based on gender or race or ethnicity. When you go to vote on a piece of music—at least the way that I approach it—is you almost put a blindfold on and you listen.

Neil Portnow, Recording Academy President

It is tiring for Black musicians to continuously face rejection while white artists are often given the accolades and glory... How much harder do Black artists need to work in order to win these coveted awards?

Jack Clohisy, journalist on *The Tufts Daily*

## THE PODCAST BOOM?



75% of Americans are familiar with the term 'podcasting' — up 70% from last year. The industry is expected to be worth \$1 billion by 2021, bringing what was once a niche medium to a major 21st century media platform.



VOICES



# Podcasts to Keep You Cozy in December

**Above, left to right:** Covers for the Alex Sedlak Podcast, Song Exploder, and The Daily. *(Alex Sedlak, Hrishikesh Hirway, New York Times)*

By Joely Stockl & Gavin Liu  
Staff Writers & Editor

**Alex Sedlak Podcast, hosted by Alex Sedlak**

I discovered the creator of this podcast, Alex Sedlak, off of TikTok initially, and the more I began to watch his videos, the more I began to realize he was changing my mindset. His podcasts included him and two of his friends conversing on different aspects of life including: self improvement, and the mindset.

Alex is only 19 years old, but already has 1.2 million followers on TikTok and the amount of followers he has proves just how much he is influencing people. I listen to this podcast when I walk to school and it really helps get my mind thinking about how I can be better and do better. His podcasts can be for anyone, but it specifically targets younger people, ages 13-30.

Everyone who listens to some of his podcasts is most likely going to relate to what he is saying in one way or another. He talks about everything from relationships, to money, to spirituality, to education. His goal of this podcast is to help people self improve and make people realize their potential in life. I have been following him on TikTok for about 8 months and I now realize how much he influences people just by scrolling through comments and reviews. He releases 1-2 podcasts per week and they have really become something I look forward to each week, so I hope you take my advice and give this podcast a try!

You can find this podcast on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, and YouTube.

**Song Exploder, hosted by Hrishikesh Hirway**

This is a very unique podcast I have been listening to, called *Song Exploder*. The point of this podcast is to bring on famous musicians and have them explain the process of how their songs were created.

I find this podcast especially interesting because it allows music fans to get to know some of their favourite artists better. This can help the artist and their fans connect on a deeper level and possibly attract more fans who relate to the ideas of their songs. The musicians explain the idea behind the song, the instrumental pieces, and all the lyrics.

Some artists they have had on the podcast who are really big in pop culture right now are, Billie Eilish, Dua Lipa, Selena Gomez, and The 1975. I have never come across another podcast that is alike to this one, and I find it very interesting to hear about the artists on a personal level. A lot of times they explain their emotions while making the song and it is really cool to be able to sometimes relate to these famous artists. It shows the audience how even famous people are people too, and we all experience emotions, and no one is immune to that.

This podcast has been created into a Netflix series recently, which may be another intriguing way to try out *Song Exploder*. I have just recently discovered this podcast even though it was created in 2014, but I really hope you give this podcast a listen!

You can find this podcast on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, and their television series on Netflix.

**The Daily, hosted by The New York Times**

Sometimes the news is hard to follow, and the amount of information being presented to you can be overwhelming. *The Daily*, like the title implies, is a daily podcast updating every week day, presenting news stories to you in short 20 minute episodes. I heard about *The Daily* in June, and have been routinely listening to each episode as they dive into the news; it's all incredibly engaging and is presented in a way that anyone can listen and learn about global issues.

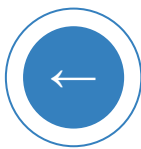
Michael Barbaro hosts and interviews different guests, all knowledgeable in their own fields of news. While often American-centric, the *Daily* will tell stories from all around the world, from the Taliban in Afghanistan to the protests in Hong Kong, to the refugee crisis in Greece. *The Daily* narrates captivating stories of those in the heat of the action.

Personally, some of the biggest reasons I enjoy the *The Daily* are: I can still stay engaged in international news without specifically setting out time; it's great for students to stay active, learn about, and understand global issues in an accessible way. No background information is really needed to learn from and to enjoy an episode.

*The Daily* also offers many different perspectives, looking past political lines, religious beliefs, and race. These personal testimonies and stories are uplifting and create empathy, contrasting the grim and stark world of news today. I highly recommend this podcast to everyone as it helps us better understand the world around us and the many different perspectives that help us view the world through different lenses.

You can find this podcast on Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts, Stitcher, and Spotify.





Check out more coverage on women breaking barriers in sport on **pg 10**.

**62M**

Despite chess' reputation as a somewhat esoteric game, the series raked in 62 million viewers in a month.



**VOICES**

# The Queen's Gambit is (mostly) Worth Gambling On

**Above:** Netflix's *The Queen's Gambit* brought a new perspective and a touch of glamour to the time-worn game of chess. (Phil Bray/Netflix)

By Vita Rao  
Staff Writer & Editor

This review contains spoilers.

In a time of such pain and hardship, the escape that television shows and films provide has become increasingly vital. From *Tiger King* to *Enola Holmes* to *The Social Dilemma*, Netflix, specifically, has remained consistent with its phenomenal and thought-provoking content. *The Queen's Gambit* has become one of the most talked-about television shows of the year, after being released in October of 2020. In fact, it garnered around 62 million viewers within the first month on Netflix, making it one of the most-viewed scripted limited series.

Adapted from the novel of the same name, the show is set in the mid-twentieth century, revolving around the struggles of a chess prodigy, Beth. However, the impact of her recognition produces numerous obstacles: drug addiction, alcoholism, mental health issues, sexism, among others. The performance given by Anya Taylor-Joy, who plays Beth, is unequivocally the most underrated actress of the year; it is her stand-out performance that makes the show so unique and compelling. The emotional-intelligence and depth that she brings to the character are unparalleled and truly make the show extraordinary. One will find themselves constantly craving more, as its unpredictability and unusual plot make

it so breathtaking. Expect the unexpected with this television show.

### Reception

*The Queen's Gambit* has been well-received by critics and viewers alike, with many praising it for its exploration of so many prevalent topics. It has gotten overwhelmingly positive ratings, with an 8.7/10 on IMDB and a 99% on Rotten Tomatoes, both of which are rare and exceptional. In addition, numerous professional chess players have discussed its realistic depiction and accuracy, claiming that it is fairly true-to-the game. Furthermore, the social media storm that ensued has simply grown as the show continued to age, as many have taken to places like Twitter and Instagram to share their thoughts and theories. This has led to the interest in chess has skyrocketing, specifically among women: chess sales are booming, internet searches for the game continue to grow, and the appreciation for professional players has grown.

However, the lack of representation on the show — with Moses Ingram being the only person of colour in the cast — has resulted in some backlash. Beth befriends Jolene, a Black woman, during her time at The Methuen Home. Although Jolene helps and saves Beth multiple times, she gets minimal exploration and is essentially used as a pawn to further the story, which seems like tokenism. The character isn't necessarily important to the story, but necessary for the show to appear more diverse. Tokenism is an

extremely harmful practice, and it's both disappointing and unacceptable. I think viewers and BIPOC deserve better than to be treated that way; it's 2020.

Overall, the show has its strengths and its faults. Therefore, after watching it, I would rate it a 7.5 out of 10.

Rating: TV-MA



## THE REAL LIFE INSPIRATION FOR THE QUEEN'S GAMBIT

Although *The Queen's Gambit* is a wholly fictional story, Beth Harmon possesses a number of resemblances to real life chess grandmasters such as Bobby Fischer. Like Fischer, Harmon was a prodigy of the game in her youth, but also struggled with addiction, much like Fischer did with mental illness. Beth's game against Vasily Borgov in the final episode was modelled off of a real game between Fischer and Boris Spassky (USSR) in 1972.

**VOICES**

# Ranking Netflix's Christmas Movies



**Above, clockwise from top left:** Stills from *The Princess Switch*, *Let It Snow*, *The Christmas Prince*, *Holiday* and *Holiday Calendar*. (Netflix)

By Vita Rao  
Staff Writer & Editor

It is that time of year again: snow is falling, coats are being retrieved from basements, the hot chocolate mix is quickly running out, and there is a burst in the viewership of Christmas movies. How does one choose between the Christmas Prince and Christmas with a Prince? To help you make this extremely difficult decision, I have compiled a list of some of the most popular Christmas movies on Netflix. The movies will be ranked based on three factors, all of which one should look for when watching a Christmas movie: cringe, diversity, and general enjoyment.

### 1. Holiday Calendar: TV-PG

A magical holiday calendar that reveals the future, an intense love triangle, and a struggling photographer? This movie has it all. Although the storyline is painfully predictable and the script can be cringe-worthy at times, it is fairly tolerable for a Christmas movie. The leading actors had some chemistry and the acting wasn't too bad, although laughable at times. I did appreciate the immense racial diversity in the film; it's extremely rare to see Christmas movies with a primarily Black cast. Therefore, I would give this movie a **6.5 out of 10**.

### 2. Let it Snow: PG-14

A small-town group of teenagers experience hardship on Christmas Eve in unique ways: there is romance, there is self-love, there is friendship. The storyline is a little confusing and there are plenty of plot

holes, but it's also emotional and explores issues that teenagers may experience. It has its fair share of cringe but doesn't overdo it with the Christmas theme; it's a decent balance. In terms of diversity, the cast is primarily white and heterosexual, with four of the nine main characters defying this. Overall, I would give this movie a **6 out of 10**.

### 3. The Christmas Prince Trilogy: TV-PG

As some of the most iconic Netflix-produced holiday movies, *The Christmas Prince* trilogy has become a classic within the holiday-movie-watching community.

The first movie revolves around a journalist, Amber, who travels to Aldovia to write a story about the wild prince. After getting to know him, she learns that her preconceived notions were wrong, and he is a kind-hearted person. As they battle obstacles and deal with overzealous family members, they start to fall in love, with the prince proposing to her. The subsequent movie follows the hardships that Amber faces in adjusting to the royal life and her wedding to the prince. In the third movie, viewers watch as Amber and Prince Richard work to solve a mystery and prepare for the birth of their child. The films consist of a mainly white, heterosexual cast, as two people of colour and two LGBTQ+ characters appear in all three movies. Therefore, I would rate this movie a **5 out of 10**.

### 4. The Princess Switch Trilogy: TV-PG

It seems as though, in recent

years, Vanessa Hudgens has become Netflix's favourite actress, at least for Christmas movies. The newest addition to her Christmas movie repertoire was the second installment of *The Princess Switch* trilogy. The first movie is about two identical people from opposite sides of the world meet, deciding to switch places, without telling any of their loved ones — it's important to note that one of them is British. Along the way, they find love and form an unbreakable bond with one another. In the sequel, the two princesses deal with the unpredictability of love and their other evil look-alike's diabolical plans. The storyline is highly unoriginal and the acting is mediocre at best. I couldn't handle Vanessa Hudgens' poor British accent; it just got worse as the film progressed. Of the main characters, one is a person of colour and the main romantic pairings are heterosexual. I would give this movie a **3.7 out of 10**.

### 5. Holiday: TV-MA

After Sloane is criticized for being single on holidays, she and a stranger decide to be each other's 'holidays' — someone who attends all holiday-related events, so as to avoid the problems of being single on those days. I have a high tolerance for holiday-related movies, but even I struggled to get through the movie. The stereotyping and problematic behaviour of every single character in the movie ruins what could have been an interesting plot. There are no LGBTQ+ characters and only a few people of colour in the cast. I think it was supposed to be relatable, somehow, but it didn't come across that way, which is why I would rate it a **1.5 out of 10**.

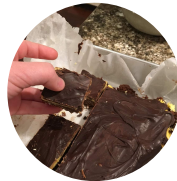
Check out more coverage on holiday movies and diversity on **pg 25**.





# Arts & Culture

The latest on what's happening in the world of entertainment, lifestyle, and pop culture.



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## ARTS & CULTURE

# Diversity & Progress in Hallmark Movies

**Above:** *Christmas Comes Twice*, one of Hallmark's new releases, is a symbol of the card company's new attempts at diversity. **(Allister Foster/Hallmark)**

**By Brooke Vesentin**  
**Club Advisor**

With the holiday season fast approaching, lots of families all across the world are sitting down and enjoying some of their favourite seasonal films. There are many different types of holiday movies that people enjoy: some prefer the family favourite classics, while others tend to be more drawn to the more romantic side of the holidays. And as we all know, no one does holiday romance films like the Hallmark channel.

The channel stems from the Hallmark company which began over 100 years ago in 1910, when its founder Joyce C. Hall and his brother Rollie Hall created a holiday greeting card company, which over the years developed into the beloved Hallmark brand, which is the largest and longest running greeting card manufacturing company in all of North America. The Hallmark channel is a part of the massive company and was founded in 1995 by Halmi Jr. and is owned by Crown Media Family Networks. The channel produces countless shows, movies and televised specials each year, but it is most commonly known for the large register of holiday films it produces. Each year, the Hallmark channel begins airing their new and some of their most popular festive films in early November which then run all the way until the end of December. The channel even has an event called "Countdown To Christmas" in which a new film is released every week up until Christmas.

Even though lots of viewers enjoy the content that the Hallmark

channel produces, it can often be an easy target for jokes due to the films often cheesy and repetitive plots and characters. The movies are all quite quickly filmed and mass produced within the same year they are set to be released, so most times the plot, quality, script and acting is not up to par with other holiday films. However, audiences' criticisms about the Hallmark movies don't just end there. For years viewers have been pointing out the lack of diversity that these films often feature. The Hallmark movie industry is one that is largely dominated by White, heterosexual, cisgendered and Christian people. Very rarely in the past has Hallmark ever attempted to change and diversify their films, even when they do, it is not on a large scale.

In the year 2020, the channel has attempted to feature more diversity within their movies than they have previous years. In 2020, history was made as the first Hallmark Christmas movie to feature an LGBTQ+ couple in a leading role, was released called *The Christmas House*, which aired on November 22, 2020. The film stars *Mean Girls* actor Jonathan Bennet alongside Robert Buckley. It features various storylines, one of which is about the couple attempting to adopt a child. This is a big first for Hallmark, and definitely a big step taken towards what is hopefully to be more frequent LGBTQ+ couples featured in Hallmark's films.

On their 2020 line up, we can also see that they are releasing a film featuring a Black couple as the leading couple called *Christmas Comes Twice*. There is also a movie set to be released called *Love, Lights, Hanukkah*, which stars *Boy Meets World* actor Ben Savag-

e along with Mia Kirshner. Both of these films are great since Hallmark mainly seems to feature white, Christian couples as the stars of their films, so this is a nice change.

Even though we are glad Hallmark has been attempting to diversify their register of films this year, many viewers wonder if it is something we should applaud them for, since this diversity should have been featured in their films years ago. Not to mention, there are still many more groups of people that are not yet represented within the films, at least not as main characters. This includes people with disabilities, other ethnic groups, plus-sized people, other religions, other races, transgender people, non-binary and gender non conforming people, lesbian couples, bisexual people and much more.

**For years viewers have been pointing out the lack of diversity that these films often feature... Very rarely in the past has Hallmark ever attempted to change and diversify their films, even when they do, it is not on a large scale.**

Although Hallmark has taken a step in the right direction, they have barely begun to add diversity within their films and still have a long way to go. Even the diversity they have added to their films this year is small in comparison to the amount of the typical movies they are still releasing starring white and christian couples. Much of their "diversity" is also only ever token characters that feature many harmful stereotypes to various groups of people. Unfortunately, even if Hallmark is open to change, a large portion of their intended audience is not and is against diversity being added to the films. Since these films are mass produced by a large company, in order to make lots of money, that unfortunately means the network may stray away from adding diversity since many fans have threatened to boycott the movies that have it. All we can hope is that Hallmark will choose to keep producing movies that feature representation. We need to uplift and support the films that do, so we can get more of them in the future. We also need to continue to push for more of their films featuring diverse casts and storylines that are not stereotypes, just like we have been doing for years now. This is so important since everyone wants to see someone who looks like them on screen, especially during the holidays!

**By Noor Menhel**  
**Staff Designer**

As we reach the end of 2020, anime fans can agree that this past decade was undoubtedly a breakout era for the genre in the West. Put simply, anime is a style of Japanese film or TV animation aimed at different age groups. The majority of Westerners likely didn't know much about anime during the 2000s, or may have ridiculed the topic whenever a person mentioned that they like watching it. Anime became a global sensation from 2010-2020, and nowadays, most of us probably know at least one person who watches it regularly, or may be that person themselves. But what exactly brought anime to the global stage?

One of the largest contributing factors to the genre's international success was the anime adaptation of *Attack on Titan* (*Shingeki no Kyojin*), produced by Wit Studios beginning in 2013. It was based on Japanese manga artist Hajime Isayama's *Attack on Titan* manga that debuted back in 2009, which is currently one of the best-selling manga series of all time. The show immediately grabbed people's attention: the first episode's bold premise, astonishing brutality, and dramatic climax caught the attention of viewers around the world immediately. These elements continued to apply as the show progressed, uncovering the mystery behind its titular "titan" creatures episode by episode. The extreme hype around *Attack on Titan* helped it go mainstream, to the point where people regularly bring it up in conversations about other major Western TV shows like *Game of Thrones* or *The Walking Dead*.

*Attack on Titan* is set in a world where all of humanity lives behind a series of three, enormous circular walls, guarded from the terrifying, man-eating titans that roam the outer lands. In the year 845, the titans break through the walls of the outer southern district, Shiganshina, causing panic and killing thousands. After the protagonist Eren Yeager witnesses his mother being eaten by a titan, he vows to exterminate every last one. This undying determination leads him to join the Survey Corps, a deadly military branch where soldiers fight against the titans outside the walls in order to retake the area.

Viewers join Eren on his adventure alongside his childhood friends, Mikasa and Armin, experiencing the world-building, plot twists, and edge-of-your-seat moments that Isayama has created, all while following an unforgettable dark fantasy storyline that dives into themes of human morality and political manipulation. Each season presents new dangers along with jaw-dropping animated scenes, a beautifully-scored original soundtra-



## DID YOU KNOW?

*Attack on Titan* started out as a one-shot comic drawn by Hajime Isayama in 2006. It wasn't until a few years later that Isayama decided to turn it into a series.



## ARTS & CULTURE

# The Legacy of Attack on Titan

**Above:** *Attack on Titan*, a show many fans consider to be one of the most influential animes of all time, entered its final season this year. **(MAPPA Studio)**

ck, and a relentless story that has made the show one of the greatest animes of the modern age!

When season 3 part 2 of *Attack on Titan* debuted in the spring of 2019, its viewership broke records that were never expected from an anime. Episode 5 of *Attack on Titan* season 3 part 2, titled "Hero", became IMDB's second-highest-rated TV episode of all time. The episode preceding that, titled "Perfect Game", became IMDB's third-highest-rated TV episode of all time. Both episodes hold a 9.9/10 rating, which is just behind the first-place holder: Episode 14 of *Breaking Bad*, titled "Ozymandias", that has a perfect 10/10 rating. These accomplishments make *Attack on Titan* the first anime to ever hold these records. In addition, the trailer for the fourth and final season of *Attack on Titan*, which was released on May 29th this year, became the most-viewed seasonal anime TV trailer of all time on YouTube. The original uploaded trailer from user Pony Canyon has over 11 million views. There are also over 20 million combined additional views of the same uploaded trailer from other anime distributor companies such as Crunchyroll, Funimation, Madman, and more!

The final season aired on December 6th and is still continuing to release weekly episodes on Sundays. It is confirmed that there will be 16 episodes running (until late March), proving that there are still plenty of chapters being adapted from the current incomplete manga. The first episode introduces an unfamiliar perspective to viewers, as it takes place four years after the end of season 3. The final season of *Attack on Titan*, which is now being produced by MAPPA Studio, describes how the past three seasons have been meticulously

building up towards a final battle between a massive cast of new and returning characters, along with Eren's newly-matured mindset that makes him one of the most complex characters in the show. So far, the final season has been very well-received. The use of CGI on certain titans, the new atmospheric opening theme titled "My War" by Shinsei Kamattechan, and the emotionally-moving closing theme "Shock" by Yuko Ando are all executed wonderfully.

To anyone who hasn't seen the anime and is able to withstand the bloodshed, *Attack on Titan* is considered the most anticipated anime of 2020 and is a masterpiece in the making. It's never too late to join the millions of fans the show has worldwide, follow each character's journey, go through an emotional rollercoaster, and witness how the story of *Attack on Titan* will finally come to an end. Hop on the hype train and dedicate your heart to *Attack on Titan*!



## SETTING RECORDS

*Attack on Titan* has sold over 100 million manga copies as of 2019, making it one of the best-selling mangas of all time. At its peak year in 2013, it sold a whopping 11,000,000 copies in one year, and charted on The New York Times Manga Best Seller list for 81 weeks straight.





ARTS & CULTURE

# Tasty Holiday Recipes to Get You Through the Season!

**Above:** Nanaimo bars made from the recipe described in this article, adapted from All Recipes. *(Jocelyn Mattka/The Royal Gazette)*

By Jocelyn Mattka  
Staff Writer & Editor

Nothing says Christmas like the smell of fresh baked treats wafting through the house from the kitchen! If you are looking to get baking this season, here are two of the tastiest goodies I have tried, sure to send that heartwarming aroma into every part of your home.

Shortbread Cookie

The first of these is a classic, shortbread cookie. These cookies are easy to make, take little time to bake and are perfect for setting on a dessert tray at any holiday. While shortbread may bring Christmas to mind, the beauty of these cookies is that their simplicity makes them easily transferable to any occasion requiring something sweet.

- In order to make these cookies, you are going to need:
- 1 cup of butter (usually two sticks worth)
  - 1/2 cup of sugar
  - 1-1/2 cups of all-purpose flour
  - 1/2 cup of cornstarch
  - Sprinkles!

Once you have your ingredients assembled, start by beating your sugar and flour together. If you have an electric mixer, use it for this step! If not, be prepared for some serious beating by hand until the sugar

and flour look light and fluffy. If you are using an electric mixer this should only take about five minutes. At this point, gradually add in the cornstarch and flour until the dough is well blended.

With your dough prepared, put a thin layer of cornstarch on your hands so that the dough doesn't stick, then begin rolling the dough into little balls. These balls can be quite small, or as large as you would like, depending on the size of cookies you want. For a sweets tray, aim for about an inch in size. These cookies don't expand very much in the oven, so don't worry about not giving them enough space on the tray. Don't forget to line your pan with parchment paper before starting this step!

Use a fork to press lines into your balls and sprinkle some coloured sugar or sprinkles onto the cookies. For Christmas cookies, I recommend green, red and white.

When you're happy with your cookies, place them in the oven and bake them for about 20 minutes at 300 degrees. When they're finished, they should be lightly browned on the bottom. Let them cool for a few minutes before removing them from the pan.

You should be able to make about three dozen of these cookies. Copyright for this recipe belongs to RDA Enthusiast Brands, LLC.

Enjoy!

Nanaimo Bars

The second treat I have to share with you is a nanaimo bar. This one takes a little more time and patience to make, but it is well worth the effort! This three-layer bar will go perfectly with your shortbread cookies on a dessert tray and is sure to be a crowd pleaser.

Here is a list of the ingredients you will need, separated by layer:

- Bottom layer:
- 1 cup of chocolate
  - 1/2 cup of butter (usually a stick worth)
  - 1-1/4 cup graham cracker crumbs
  - 1 cup flaked coconut
- Middle layer:
- 2 cups powdered sugar
  - 1/4 cup butter
  - 3 tablespoons milk
  - 2 tablespoons custard powder
  - Green food colouring (optional)
- Top layer:
- 3/4 cup chocolate chips
  - 2 teaspoons Crisco All-Vegetable Shortening

Start by lining a square pan (roughly 9 x 9 inches) with parchment paper. This recipe works like a series of building blocks, so make sure your parchment paper is smooth, large enough and ready to act as a solid base.

To make the bottom layer, begin by melting the chocolate chips and butter together in a small bowl. Add the graham cracker crumbs and coconut. If you would like, you can also add half a cup of chopped pecans to this layer; however, it is not necessary and is not an ingredient I normally include. Once these ingredients are well mixed, press them into the bottom of your pan. Put this into the refrigerator and leave it until the first layer is cooled and hard.

For the next layer, simply beat all of the "middle layer" ingredients together on medium with an electric

mixer. At this point you may also choose to add in one teaspoon of mint extract, which will give this green layer an extra flourish! When it is well mixed, spread it in the pan, over top of the first layer. Be careful not to scrape up the bottom layer as you spread this one. Refrigerate this layer, just as you did with the first one.

To make the final layer, microwave the chocolate chips and oil until they are just melted. Spread this layer over top of the other two and put it all back in the refrigerator.

Once your squares have cooled completely, they will be solid

enough for you to cut into whatever size you would like. About 16 squares will result in lovely, bite-sized pieces for a treat tray, while 9 would be larger desserts. This recipe is credited to All Recipes; however, it has been tweaked significantly from the original.

The batch I have displayed was made in the summertime and included a traditional middle layer. Yours will have a green middle layer, unlike mine. Armed with two delicious recipes, you are sure to be a baking sensation not only at the holidays, but all year long. So what are you waiting for? Go back some treats and spread some holiday cheer this winter!



**Above, left:** Completed shortbread cookies, made with a recipe from RDA Enthusiast Brands, LLC. **Above, right:** Shortbread cookies in progress, after flattening but before the addition of sprinkles. *(Jocelyn Mattka/The Royal Gazette)*



ARTS & CULTURE

# A Letter to 2020

By Jocelyn Mattka  
Staff Writer & Editor

There are a lot of things people are saying about you, 2020 But I think I'm going to bite my tongue. Instead I'll tell you things you haven't heard, Yet.

Thank you for the sun.  
The moon.  
The rain.  
Flowers.  
Waking up,  
And going to sleep.  
A smile.  
A warm sweater.  
Stories.  
Birds.  
Prayers.  
Songs.  
Stars.  
Love.  
Kindness.  
Hope.

You tried to take so much away from us.  
Yes, 2020, you tried. And you failed.

2020, you're just a number.  
A future generation's unlucky number.  
The new "Friday the 13th".  
What a reputation.

But that's not all you are.  
You're the lessons. The gratitude.  
2020, you tried to knock me down,  
But you only made me stronger.

Thank you for pushing me.  
You tested me for resilience.  
Thank you for cutting me down to size.  
I needed a lesson in gratitude.  
Thank you for opening up my eyes.  
You showed me who my true friends are.

2020, you've given the most brutal lessons, in the most compassionless way,  
But you will never take enough from me for me to stop saying  
"Thank you."

2020, you've happened upon a beautiful world,  
All you've done is forced us to look a little harder  
To find it.

So thank you, 2020.

Now I'll take everything you've given me  
And I'll go meet  
2021.



ARTS & CULTURE

DIY Holiday Crafts!

By Emma Menard  
Staff Writer & Designer

Watercolour Christmas Scene

- Materials Used
- Masking tape
  - Watercolour paints
  - Paintbrushes
  - Water
  - Cardboard
  - Watercolor paper
  - White gel pen

For this watercolour Christmas scene, use masking tape to tape your watercolor paper to a piece of cardboard or to your table. Then use more masking tape to make the

triangle shape for the tree, then use some water and paint the space within the triangle shape with water. Then layer on your desired paint colors, and let it dry. Once the tree is dry, remove the triangle shape of tape, and use a brown paint to paint on a tree trunk. Then using more paint, design different sizes of squares and rectangles, near the base of the tree in different colours to create presents. Then using a white gel pen, once the present

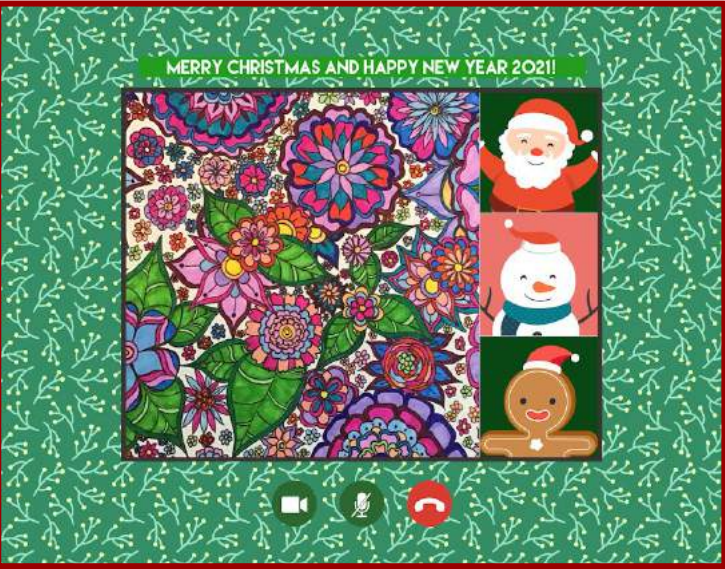
shapes are dry, use the gel pen to add a plus sign with a little bow shape in the center of the plus sign. Lastly use your desired paint colour to draw little banners or ribbon lines across the top of the page, and add little dots of colour to create colourful christmas lights.



Digital Holiday Card

- Materials Used:
- iPad or any device
  - Pic Collage app
  - Photo of a drawing

For this digital christmas card, all you need to do is choose a template on Pic Collage, and then choose images that you want to include in your card. You could pick photos of yourself, or photos of your artwork, or any other photos that you want. You can also change the text on the card to say whatever you want your card to say, So have fun with it and get creative!



Salt Dough Ornament

- Ingredients:
- 1 cup of flour
  - 3 tbsp and 1 tsp of salt
  - ¼ cup and 2 tbsp water
  - Cookie cutters
  - A straw
  - Acrylic paint
  - Mod Podge

Preheat your oven to 300 degrees fahrenheit. In a bowl combine your salt, flour and water, until a dough forms. Then on a lightly floured surface take your dough out of your bowl and knead it for about 10 minutes. Then roll out your dough and use cookie cutters to cut out your shapes. Then use a straw to poke a whole near the top of the ornament, to create a space for the string later on. Then bake in the oven for about 30 minutes. Then allow them to cool completely. Then paint your ornaments, and then add a layer of mod podge to seal the paint. Lastly add a ribbon and you're good to go!



HOROSCOPES

Sagittarius

November 22 - December 21  
Happy Birthday Sagittarius, although things seem hard during these times, everything will eventually work itself out and you will be able to relax once again.

Capricorn

December 22 - January 19  
Capricorn, you are celebrating this holiday season with your favourite people around you. Cherish every moment with your significant other(s).

Aquarius

January 20 - February 18  
Aquarius, you have good things coming for you this new year, 2021 will be a bright new start for you.

Aries

March 21 - April 19  
Your maturity will bring you great things this holiday season, Aries. Do not let those around you distract you from your main goal.

Taurus

April 20 - May 20  
Although you think you are under control of someone else, Taurus, you have the wheels. Try to open up more and look for these opportunities you are quite often missing.

Pisces

February 19 - March 20  
Your impatience is proving to be a great disadvantage for you. Pisces, try to improve this habit of yours and good things will happen.

Cancer

June 21 - July 22  
You need to catch up on your work, Cancer. Stop procrastinating!!!! Get rid of all these distractions and know what to focus on!

Leo

July 23 - August 22  
Leo, your phone is quite a distraction from your family. It would be very nice if you could somewhat fix that and put your phone down for a bit.

Gemini

May 21 - June 20  
Gemini, you will spend a lot of time with your family this season and that may take a toll on you. Remember to focus on yourself as well. A little self care can go a long way.

Libra

September 23 - October 22  
Libra, your persistence will make everything worth it in the long run. Do not be afraid to fight for what you believe is right.

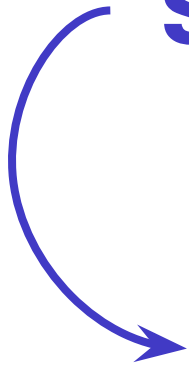
Scorpio

October 23 - November 21  
You continue to drag things on longer than necessary Scorpio. This is an annoyance to those around you, try to improve for this new year!

By Noor Menhel



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### Editor-in-Chief

Anne Fu

### Club Advisors

Hannah Breiding  
Brooke Vesentin

### Supervising Teacher

Mrs. Bentham

### Graphic Designers

Anne Fu  
Rose He  
Noor Menhel

### Illustrators

Anne Fu  
Rose He  
Noor Menhel

### Editors

Kaitlynn Anderson  
Anne Fu  
Anika Kanagaretnam  
John Kerr  
Saihaj Law  
Gavin Liu  
Lindsay Liu  
Amy Ma  
Jasmine Marcaccio  
Jocelyn Mattka  
Zonna Mir  
Sukhleen Multani  
Macee Popowich  
Vita Rao  
Eden Ridpath  
Grace Wang

### Writers

Iris Elik  
Anne Fu  
Faria Haque  
Rose He  
Anika Kanagaretnam  
John Kerr  
Lindsay Liu  
Gavin Liu  
Aisha Mahmoud  
Simran Matharu  
Jocelyn Mattka  
Joe McDermott  
Emma Menard  
Zonna Mir  
Caitlin Nequia-Adams  
Sanya Patel  
Vita Rao  
Ashley Smith  
Joely Stockl  
Nicolas Tazzeo  
Brooke Vesentin

## Contact Us

 @ahsroyalgazette

 gazetteroyal@gmail.com

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Microsoft Teams

DM us @ahsroyalgazette