

# *The OWL*



December 2017

## The Great Cardboard Boat Races

By Sharmin Akther

Hudson Senior High School participated and hosted the Great Cardboard Races! It was the third year that Hudson housed the race and teams from Ichabod and Germantown were there to compete. The competition consisted of three teams: Hudson, Ichabod and Germantown, with around eighteen boats total ( about six boats per team). Participating were students from Ichabod Crane's and Hudson High's Transportation Systems classes and students from Germantown's Principles of Engineering class. They worked on making the boats in their classes and tested them in the waters when the races began. The criteria for the boats included using only duct tape, glue, cardboard and bottles to help keep their boats afloat.

Different unique and creative techniques were taken by each school when constructing each individual cardboard boat. The funny names of each boats also made the game exciting to watch. Viewers watched as Hudson Senior High's cardboard boat raced against Ichabod Crane's cardboard boat, which they named "Trash." Yes, that was really the name of the boat. Ultimately, all teams were good sports when Germantown won this year's race. There are two races held in one school year- one in the fall and another in the spring. Hudson High Bluehawks cannot wait for the next race to compete for the Cardboard Boat Race Trophy!



## Seniors “Rank” Ranking By Saima Hannan & Tahrima Siha

The system of ranking students according to their GPA is something that has been around for as long as anyone can remember. However, the question about whether it is actually beneficial to students has become one of varied opinions. Some argue that ranks should be kept in place to motivate students, while others say that ranks do the exact opposite and discourage students instead. The Hudson City School District is debating whether or not ranks should be kept in place or changed to a new format. Some of the seniors of the Class of 2018 gave us their inputs.

**Saima Hannan:** “The system of ranking students has good intentions. It’s a way of showing students in the top five or the top ten how much they’ve accomplished. And that’s the problem. Students who don’t rank that high often feel discouraged and aim to drop out of AP classes to maintain a high GPA. They are just worried about their ranks and seem to forget that colleges want to see that students take the most rigorous courses available to them. For further proof, look in the current top ten and think about how many of those students took ALL AP and Honors courses starting from freshman year to now.”

**Tahrima Siha:** “I do not think it should exist. It discourages students who are not in the top ten. Students who do not get a ranking of their desire and do worse on their ranking feel very bad about themselves, especially the ones who try their hardest. Some students are naturally better at school work than others, which doesn’t really make it fair for everyone. Instead of using it as motivation, sometimes the rank discourages them and they give up. Students who don’t do that well in ranking get talked about by other students. Parents have even intervened in other students’ ranks. Some students do take easy classes and rank fairly well while some other students take harder classes and rank lower than they deserve. Yes, most of the harder classes offer a curve for the grades, but that doesn’t make up for the whole school year of stress and hard work that they have to go through, especially if they’ve been taking hard courses throughout all four years of high school. Why should we have to be labeled with a number to prove whether we’re smart or not? Some people just cheat and get better grades than the ones who do their own work. Should that not matter? There are many things wrong with ranking.”

**Karissa Garbarini:** “I feel like it creates a competitive drive in people to just be first in class, so instead of focusing on learning the material, they just focus on getting hundreds on everything. That causes people to cheat in order to get good grades. It creates a bad environment in classes and can ruin friendships. I think without ranks, students would try harder in school to better themselves instead of just trying to be better than everyone else.”

**Shelbi Neal:** “Ranking should not matter because we worry too much about it and that stresses us out.”

**Maya Alvarez:** “I think the people who don’t want ranking are the people who don’t try. People who try the hardest deserve the recognition through ranking. If you’re struggling with your grades, there is help available.”

**Samaria Barnes:** “I feel like it is what it is. Just because you rank low, doesn’t mean you’re not intelligent. Some people take easy classes and rank high, and some people take hard classes and rank low. I believe ranking is okay but shouldn’t be made into a big deal.”

**Noah Taylor:** “It gives students incentive to do well, but it causes a lot of drama and argument amongst them. Some people take harder classes and rank lower than the people who take easier classes. I don’t think that’s fair.”

**Daniela Rivera:** “It’s cool for the people who rank in the top 10, but it’s definitely not cool for the people who rank below that. Some people try their hardest and they still don’t rank that high when people who don’t even try as hard rank pretty high. Not all people are naturally smart. It’s not fair.”

**Suman Humagain:** “It seems pretty great for the top twenty students who try really hard. I guess it’s good because it motivates them, but at the same time, it adds another thing to stress over. For the other 100 students who aren’t top ranking, it can be annoying, especially for a student like me who chose to challenge myself with all the AP courses available, but see people who took much easier courses, like honors ones, ahead of me. Some kids would even avoid entire courses just to preserve their top ranks which, in my opinion, is pretty sad.”

## Interview with Mr. Mort

### By Osman Gofran

Mr. Mort is one of the newest additions to this year's teaching faculty. He currently co-teaches Mrs. Factor's 10th grade Global Studies and 6th-8th grade ELA classes in the Jr. High in the mornings. He is also the coach of the Hudson High swim team. Mr. Mort grew up in Rhinebeck, New York where he went to Rhinebeck Central High School. As a student, he was part of the local Boy Scouts, on a local swim team, and played the trumpet in jazz band. After graduating high school, he went to Spain for a semester in an abroad program through SUNY Purchase. Afterwards, Mr. Mort graduated from SUNY New Paltz with a Bachelor's Degree in Latin American studies and was later accepted into a hard driven program called New York City Teaching Fellows. The program is an alternative way to get certified as a teacher to instruct in schools. After finishing the program, Mr. Mort further went on to CUNY City College where he received his Master in Science in TESOL (Teacher of English to Speakers of Other Languages). After finishing college, Mr. Mort began teaching ENL at Harlem Elementary School for eight years and then transferred to an elementary school in Long Island where he also taught ENL for another two years. From there, he is now here at Hudson High with ten years of teaching experience.

What drove Mr. Mort to become a teacher was the passion that his Spanish teacher showed during high school. As a student, Mr. Mort's Spanish teacher was strict and the high expectations that his teacher put on him, helped him excel in Spanish. As a result, his Spanish teacher left an impact on him that made him want to become a teacher.

Mr. Mort's advice to students is: "Keep learning new things. Push yourself out of your comfort zone. Don't be afraid to try new things and try to do better each and everyday." As a teacher, Mr. Mort thinks that the best part of his job is when students finally understand something that they had trouble with before and when a student from years ago comes to visit him. On the other hand, one thing that bothers Mr. Mort is the negative perception of teachers by those who don't know how hard teachers work to help students. He believes the most important characteristic of someone with his job is being patient, having perseverance, and not giving up on students.

So far, Mr. Mort enjoys being at Hudson High. He said, "I love it here. I really do. I love the diversity feel and am very comfortable with the teachers and feel supported by the administration." In his spare time, Mr. Mort likes being outdoors. He enjoys camping, fishing, hiking, and music. A fun fact about Mr. Mort is that he has his own band where he plays the keyboard and the bass guitar. We are happy to have a teacher like Mr. Mort here and hope to have him here for many more years to come!

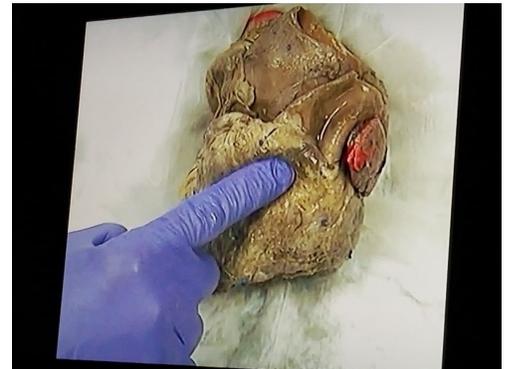


## Virtual Autopsy

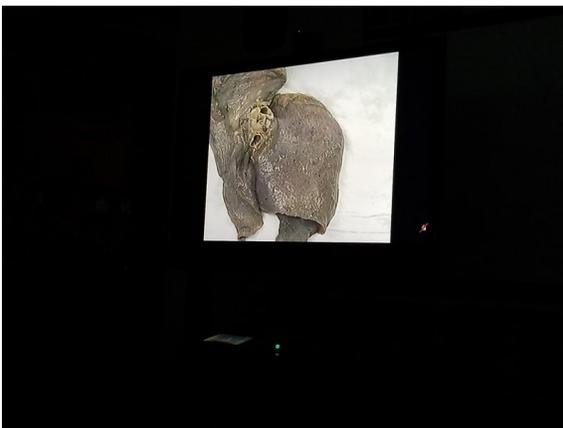
### By Abida Begum and Hasiter Tonni

On December 6th, there was a virtual autopsy held in the library. The man who hosted the autopsy was Raymond R. Vollmer. Ray taught the group a lot about the body and how you can tell if the body was healthy or not. The body that Ray did the autopsy on was that of a 90 year old woman and she was pretty healthy. He taught us about many parts of the body and how they function. Ray also educated us on how to take care of our bodies.

This first image is of a normal, healthy heart. Ray told us that the heart is the size of your fist and it shouldn't get any bigger than that. If it does get larger than the normal capacity size, that could lead to strokes, heart attack, and a ton of other deadly risks. Eating McDonald's burgers, and eating a lot of greasy foods is what leads to heart disease, stroke, heart attacks, high cholesterol and many more health issues.



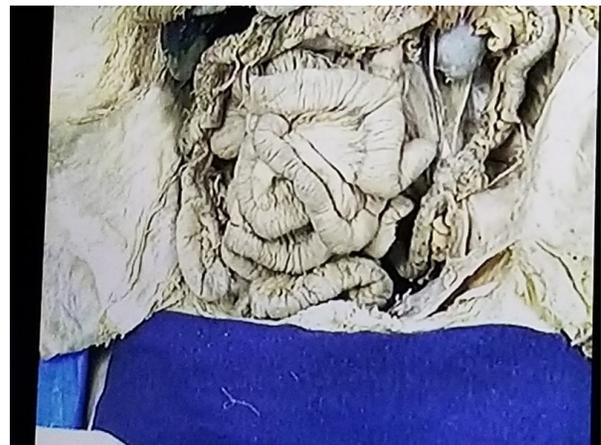
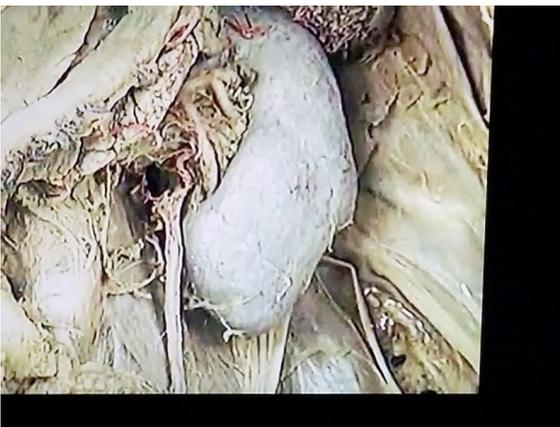
This next image is of the lungs. Here it shows that the lungs look pretty good and healthy. It's obvious that this person did not harm their system too badly. Ray informed us that to maintain robust lungs, do not smoke cigarettes or anything that has nicotine, which is harmful to the body. Next to this lung is a dark and mucky lung. This is what a lung looks like after having inhaling nicotine for some years.



For the brain, Ray demonstrated that to reduce strokes and keep a vigorous is by exercising and having a well balanced meal. On the inside the more darker and far out the edges are, the more sturdy and healthy it is. If the edges aren't as far out then that leads to memory loss, it's where dementia comes from.



Ray demonstrated a lot about the body, how it functions, the muscles, and all the good and bad things that can happen to your body if you don't take care of it. Thanks to Ray, we are more aware about what we consume on a daily basis and how we can take care of our body more efficiently.



## Hudson Bowling Team's Amazing Progress

Hudson's Bowling Team is doing an amazing job this year! The team has a record of 5-1 (26-4) and recently beat Chatham 5-0. Steve Bowes lead the team 226-612 and Connor McCagg bowled an impressive 233-586. They also beat Coxsackie. The boys' biggest challenge was on Tuesday, December 19th, when they competed against unbeaten Catskill High who beat them by



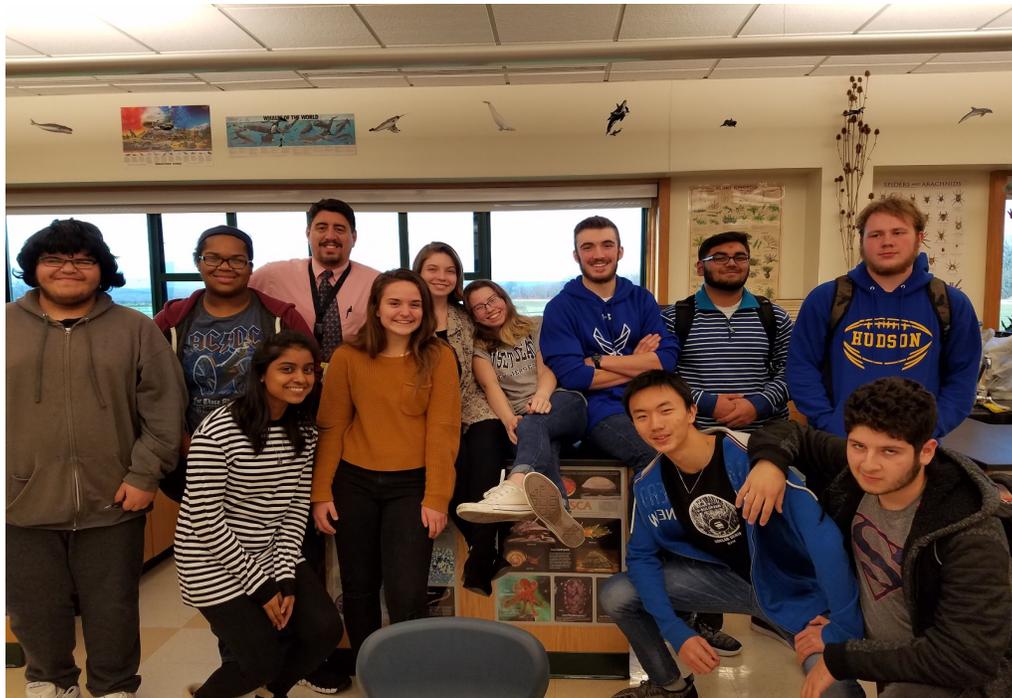
60 pins. The next match January 4th, which is Conference.



will be on the Patroon

## No Shave November By Brianna Tsitsera

Hudson's very own Environmental Club participated in the annual No Shave November event! No Shave November is a month-long journey during which participants forgo shaving and grooming in order to evoke conversation and raise cancer awareness. Teachers and students who are not a part of the club had also joined this year! Participants either didn't shave the whole month or pledged for someone else not to. This year the club raised \$232.57!



## Winter Concert By Ahsraful Shamrat



The annual Hudson winter concert was held on Tuesday, December 19th, at 7:30 in the evening. The music department practiced hard all semester so that the concert would sound flawless to the audience. The band, choir, and jazz band performed consecutively, led by Mr. Scott Vorwald. They chose both festive music and songs of their own. Additionally, the Hudson High choir performed their selections, led by Mr. Jerry Cordato. A fun time was had by all who attended and the concert got everyone into the holiday spirit!

## Mrs. Bender Receives *Top Teacher*

Congratulations to Social Studies/Google Training teacher Mrs. Laura Bender! Mrs. Bender was nominated by Student Council as Top Teacher. She will be interviewed by WNYT and her segment will show up on our local news. Stayed tuned to see her on an upcoming episode to be aired in 2018.



## Winter Sports

The winter sports' teams are off to a great start for the 2017 & 18 season! The Boys' Varsity Basketball team, coached by Mr. Shawn Briscoe, has a record of 5-0, after defeating Catskill on December 18th in a nail biting game. The JV team, coached by Dicel Jefferson, also has a record of 5-0, and recently beat Catskill in a close game of 67-60. The Girls' Varsity Basketball team, coached by Brice Ivery, has a record of 4-1 and the JV Girls' team has an impressive 5-0 record under Coach Mike Dianda.

The Boys' Varsity Volleyball team is having an amazing season with a 6-0 record. They are coached by Mr. Chuck Peters. The Modified/JV team, under Coach Mary Hunter, has a record of 1-3. This team is made up of members in grades 7-9 who are learning valuable skills to prepare them for Varsity level. The swim team has started up for the first time in years. Stay tuned to the OWL for more information on our winning teams!

## Holiday Popcorn Bark

### By Sharmin Akther

This quick,easy 15 minute, recipe is great for the holidays and amazing. It is not only a snack, but also a great gift idea. This Popcorn Toffee Christmas Bark is super delicious and great for the everyday popcorn and chocolate fanatic! Students can make this recipe the night before and enjoy it in school the next day! If any teachers want, they can use this recipe to use as a gift for upcoming holiday parties. It's a recipe that's useful for all!

#### Ingredients:

- ⅞ cup of milk chocolate
- ⅞ cup of white chocolate
- 2 x ¼ cup of toffee popcorn

#### Directions:

1. Line a 20 x 30cm baking tray with baking parchment. Melt the milk chocolate and white chocolate separately, then allow to cool slightly.
2. Pour most of the chocolate onto the tray, roughly swirling together. Sprinkle over the toffee popcorn, then drizzle over the remaining milk and white chocolate, and chill until set. Break into big chunks before serving. Enjoy!



## Flags In The Cafeteria

By Most Mitali Khatun

You may have noticed new flags in the school cafeteria. The flags are there to represent the different countries that our diverse students are from. Students feel more at home and feel a sense of pride when they see their country's flag. Dr. Suttmeier is the one who suggested placing the flags in the cafeteria. The Mexico flag is being fixed to better represent the correct flag that Mexico uses. Take time to look around and see the various countries that Hudson students represent!



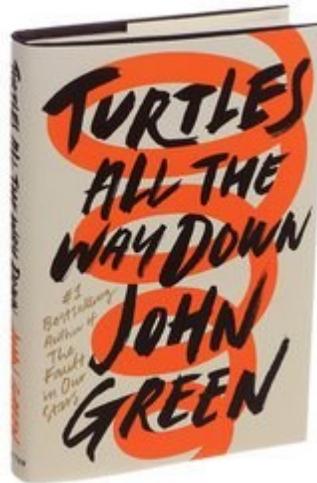
## *The Sound of Music*

By Autumn Kudlack

Save the date! *The Sound of Music* will be filling the Hudson High auditorium on March 23, 24, and 25. Like last year, there will be live music both on the stage and in the "pit." This year, Mrs. Rees will be the director with her daughter Betsy choreographing and assistant directing. Andrew Stein will be in charge of music direction. These talents will shape the musical of Rodgers and Hammerstein. Rodgers and Hammerstein's *The Sound of Music* is a story that started out as a musical and was developed into the movie in 1965 with Julie Andrews portraying Maria Rainer/Von Trapp. It follows the story of Maria coming to be a governess for the Von Trapp family and how she teaches them to laugh, sing, and play~ to be children again. In the meantime, the Third Reich is taking over Austria, so the Von Trapp family must flee. Come and witness a classic musical take the stage once again!

# *Turtles All The Way Down: A Surprising Spiral of Disappointment* By Thomas Polito

John Green's new bestseller *Turtles All The Way Down* is a seemingly complex book that doesn't really tell much of a story. By the end of the book, all that you feel is that you've wasted your own time, and through this book, John Green wasted his own time. If you have previously read any of his other books, such as *Looking for Alaska*, or *Paper Towns*, you know that he can weave a beautiful story, but this was not one of those times. He was obviously trying to make this like his other book, *The Fault in Our Stars*, but made the characters completely unrelatable and irritating. Maybe he was attempting to make us come to terms with their problems, or learn to like them, but that tactic failed miserably. Hopefully, he'll write a better book next time, but for now, pick up or reread one of his older books because it's not worth your time to read this one.



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