

# The Comet Chronicle

Abington Heights High School — Where students are the focus, and excellence is the standard.

## Preview of Our Production of "Beauty and the Beast"

By Hannah Siddiqui

The months-empty doors to the auditorium are once again being filled with the melodic score of this year's AH drama production. Behind the velvet curtain, months before its contents extend to the public, students are diligently learning lines and eagerly awaiting the moment when those curtains finally open.

This year's play, *Beauty and the Beast*, has already kicked off rehearsals, and the cast could not be more eager to be able to portray the timeless characters and story of this beloved classic.

This year's cast consists of talented students from all grades. Junior Siena Bossi will be playing the role of Belle this year alongside John Roman Vachino, who will be the Beast. The villain this year will be played by Ben Mott, in his role as Gaston. Senior Aidan Lam will be playing Lefou, Gaston's comedic sidekick. Maurice, Belle's eccentric and kind-hearted father, will be played by Cayd Specio. Inside the castle, where the magic of *Beauty and the Beast* comes to life, Dane Huggler will be playing the energetic French candlestick, Lumière, and Anais Butovich will be Cogsworth, the

slightly uptight and comical clock. The loving Mrs. Potts, accompanied with her adorable son Chip, will be played by Capri Pettinato and Aniyah Mendez. Last in the castle are Ava Smolley, playing Babette, the castle's maid turned to a feather duster, and Liz Cowgill playing the elegant Wardrobe (Madam de la Grande Bouche). The full cast list on our website.

While several people have experienced the enchantment of *Beauty and the Beast* on the screen, seeing it come to life on stage is an entirely new experience. "It's a classic that everyone knows," says Aidan Lam (Lefou). "It's catered towards kids, but people of all ages can come to enjoy the musical. I think the fact that *Beauty and the Beast* is canonized as a Disney classic is what draws people to want to see it; everyone knows it!"

We can expect the play to become open for the community in early December, but until then, the cast will be rehearsing for hours on end to make this production another one the community will love. Sharing similar sentiments to other cast members, Dane Huggler (Lumière) adds, "I think the community will love the energy



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Huggler and Smolley practice a dance routine as Lumiere and Babette.

that myself and my fellow cast mates put into the show. There's also large, over the top numbers that the audience will recognize and love just as much as the original."

Clearly the cast is already in the midst of preparing a spectacular show that people of all ages will enjoy. The community is sure to recognize the dedication the cast will have put into recreating this 'tale as old as time' when it goes live.

Performances will be Friday, Dec. 1 at 7 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 2 at 7 p.m. and Sunday, Dec. 3 at 2 p.m.

## AH Class of '73 Share Memories by Attending Football Game



Zorina Boersma/AH Media

Military, Law Enforcement, First Responders, and Healthcare workers rise to be honored at football game.

By Zorina Boersma and Andrew Husisian

On Saturday, Sept. 16 the Abington Heights varsity football team hosted Western Wayne. It was a special day at the Pit for many reasons. The class of 1973 came to support the varsity football team. In addition to that it was also Military, Law Enforcement, First Responders, Healthcare Appreciation Day.

The USMC presented colors in the middle of the field as the Abington Heights marching band played the national anthem. Past and current students were among those who presented the color in the center of the field.

During the game, we spoke with several

members of the class of 1973. Some, like Mary Fick, are still connected the Abington Heights. Fick said that she was so happy to be back watching another football game and said she was happy to see her grandson, junior Liam Fick, play.

Joan Yanish said that it was good to see and remember the good time she had with her classmates. Yanish said that they even went on a memory walk before the game. We asked Yanish what advice she would like to give to highschool students today. She said, "You can do anything, it is in your DNA. You just have to decide that you want to go for it."

See our site for more coverage of this story.

# Sports & Activities

## Zalewski Scores Her 50th Career Goal for the Comets

By Nora Albright

On Oct. 2, Madison Zalewski scored her 50th career field hockey goal at Abington Heights High School.

“I knew I was only one away, but I tried not to focus on stats. My team always comes first and I do whatever I can to win games for us, whether it’s passing or scoring,” said Zalewski. “It was more of a team milestone than anything.”

The Abington Heights senior first started playing field hockey in seventh grade. She was inspired by her mom Christine Zalewski, who played at Bloomsburg University.

“Knowing how successful my mom was at field hockey growing up, she motivated me to play. I have learned so much from her and am so grateful,” Zalewski explained.

Alongside field hockey, Zalewski also excels on the girl’s basketball team and earned sixth place at the PIAA State Championships for javelin this past spring. She also broke the school record throwing a personal best of 131-1.



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Zalewski helped to lead the varsity field hockey team to an undefeated regular season record.

Zalewski is also sixth in the nation for total goals scored this year with 24 and twelfth in the nation for total points (goals and assists). The team is ranked 17th in the state, which is the first time this has happened in school history.

Zalewski will take her talents to Old Dominion University, a Division I school, where she will continue her field hockey career next fall.

## Both Calvert and Stiles Reach Milestone

By Macey Ramsey

This fall, both Lilia Calvert and Kohen Stiles reached the goal of scoring fifty goals in their high school career. This is a momentous milestone for two of Abington Heights’s soccer players.

Kohen Stiles, class of 2024, has been playing this sport for 13 years. He went into the Varsity Boys match where he set the record not aware that his 50th goal was coming up. Much to his surprise, Stiles found out after the game that he achieved this special score for his high school career.

When asked about who helped him, Stiles stated, “All my teammates and past coaches helped me because of all the effort they put in me to develop, that is much appreciated.”

Stiles truly thanks his team and coaches for aiding him in this procurement. He also expressed that, “Soccer isn’t an individual sport, my team put me in the position to succeed and score all those goals.”

Also achieving this milestone is sophomore Lilia Calvert, who started soccer

at just 2 years old. She was striving for this accomplishment, she definitely knew about it and was optimistic about it occurring that very game.

When asked about her motivation, Calvert replied, “Motivation from my family, teammates, and myself helped a lot. They are always pushing me to be a better player and person. Having positive people that push you and are determined with you helps a ton.”

Congratulations to both Lilia and Kohen. We hope to see many more goals in your future.



Gianna Julian/AH Media

Stiles and Calvert are both making moves.

## Fall Sports Recap

By Zorina Boersma

As of October 18 the records and highlights for each sport are as follows:

Boys’ Cross Country: 15-4

Several runners qualified for districts.

Girls’ Cross Country: 19-0

Won the league championship for the third year in a row.

Boys’ Golf: 13-0

PIAA district 2 gold medalist Alec Hamilton, finished one above par, and the silver medalist, Cade Kaellaher, finished two above par.

Girls’ Golf: 6-5

Rose and Kate Peters both qualified for individual districts.

Field Hockey: 10-0-1

They are ranked 11th in the State Madison Zalewski scored her 50 career goal and is currently ranked 9th nationally for points scored. Peyton Pallman and Marygrace Sabatini are tied in the state for assists.

Football: 4-3

Mason Fedor was nominated for Pennsylvania High School Athlete of the week.

Boys’ Soccer: 10-1

Currently tied for first place in the league with North Pocono.

Girls’ Soccer: 11-0

The team has secured the LIAA Division 1 Championship.

Girls’ Tennis: 13-2

Mary Boothe and Sona Hanumali qualified for PIAA State Championship.

Girls’ Volleyball: 11-5

Both Sadie O’Brien and Veda Dickinson achieved 100 kills.

Many of our teams and players are now continuing with their seasons or have started their post season journeys.

# Arts & Entertainment

## The Evolution Of Horror Cinema, and How It Has Affected Our Halloween Culture

By Ben Specht

In today's day and age, horror films continue to captivate audiences, and studios attempt to one-up each other each and every October by releasing countless horror films into theaters. These films, while they are often amusing and do their job of frightening audiences throughout, are usually forgotten not long after. However, there are times when a film comes along that leaves a mark on Halloween and changes how we view and celebrate the season. From the early days of cinema to the present day, horror films through the years have left an eternal mark on Halloween culture.

Although horror films have been around almost as long as film itself (tracing back to the late 19th/early 20th centuries), the beginnings of their lasting popularity started in the 1930s, roughly the time when films went from silent to sound. At this time, Universal Pictures was on the financial brink, and over the coming years they would find their winning formula: horror movies, many being adapted from literature. Films like *Dracula*, *Frankenstein* and *The Invisible Man* were huge commercial successes, and made way for

many Halloween costumes and pieces of merchandise. Since many of these films were literary adaptations, the looks of the various monsters were almost entirely invented for the movies. It is because of these films (and because of actors Boris Karloff, Bela Lugosi, Claude Rains, Lon Chaney, etc.) that we associate monsters like *Frankenstein* and *Dracula* with certain definite traits and images.

This filmmaking formula started to wane towards the start of the 1940s. Monster movies, while still relatively successful, were no longer seen as scary. Moviegoers were understandably more afraid of the horrors of real life, with the threats of World War II and atomic destruction hanging over the American consciousness. In this period, Universal settled on making a high volume of monster movie sequels and crossovers, being less focused on scares and more on entertainment and escapism. By the end of the decade, *Dracula*, *Frankenstein* and *The Wolf Man* were paired with one of the most famous comedic duos of all-time, Abbott and Costello, for laughs, a far cry from the chilling masterpieces of the early 1930s. Horror cinema continued to take a backseat throughout the atomic age of the 1950s, where it would often blend together with

science fiction. True horror cinema would not come back until 1960's *Psycho*, which pushed boundaries in ways never before seen in not only horror films, but films in general. It also originated the "slasher" genre, which is characterized by a crazed killer with a body count causing terror to a society.

Over the course of the decade, restrictions on film content began to lift, bringing with it some of the most violent and gruesome horror films that had ever been made. 1968's *Night of the Living Dead* not only popularized the zombie film and the independent film, but it also caused controversy due to the highly graphic content, especially for the time. It is because of this film (and many other horror films such as *Rosemary's Baby*) that the MPAA movie rating system came into effect that same year.

The 1970s and 80s saw a renaissance in the horror genre, and many other iconic horror villains were born. Killers such as Halloween's Michael Myers, Friday the 13th's Jason Voorhees and *A Nightmare On Elm Street's* Freddy Krueger are still famous today, and are seen in popular culture every October. All of these films are not only still watched by countless people today, but many, Halloween in particular, receive sequels, prequels and reboots continuing to today, with varying quality.

The present day has seen many horror films that have achieved worldwide recognition. Horror films in recent years such as Jordan Peele's 2017 film *Get Out* and the 2018 film *Hereditary* have proved that the horror genre has shown no signs of slowing down. Many of these modern horror films have not only set out to both entertain and scare audiences, but also to gather critical acclaim and to tackle and symbolize a myriad of social issues.

Horror films have evolved from exterior scares to interior scares; from exploring not only the actions of the villains, but their innermost thoughts as well. From classic monsters to psychopathic killers, these movies have all left a lasting impact on our collective Halloween culture over the course of a century, and they will continue to for many generations to come.



Photo Courtesy of AMPAS, Universal Pictures

Bud Abbott, Lou Costello, Glenn Strange, Lon Chaney Jr. and Bela Lugosi pose for a promotional photo for *Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein* (1948).

# Arts & Entertainment

## Album Review: “The Land Is Inhospitable and So Are We” by Mitski

By Olivia Philips

On September 15th, Mitski released a new album, “The Land Is Inhospitable and So Are We.” The eleven tracks focus on themes of hope, love, and memories. I rate this album a 9.5/10, only because I wish the songs were longer.

Overall, this album is one of Mitski’s best. The instruments and the vocals inspire a deep emotional response, and show how Mitski has grown from her first album, “Lush,” which was released in 2012.

If you are new to this album, I recommend that you listen to “My Love Mine All Mine” first, because it is one of the best songs on the album. This song focuses on Mitski’s love, and how she wants to leave it all behind when she dies so other people can enjoy it.

“The Deal” is another amazing track, focusing on Mitski wanting to get rid of her soul, not for personal gain, but so she can be rid of the burden of carrying it.

If you prefer instrumentals and the background music over the vocals, “Heaven” showcases the beauty of music. In this song, Mitski uses an orchestra to portray the sound of heaven, and her vocals

## Book Review: “Cake Eater” by Allison Dahlin

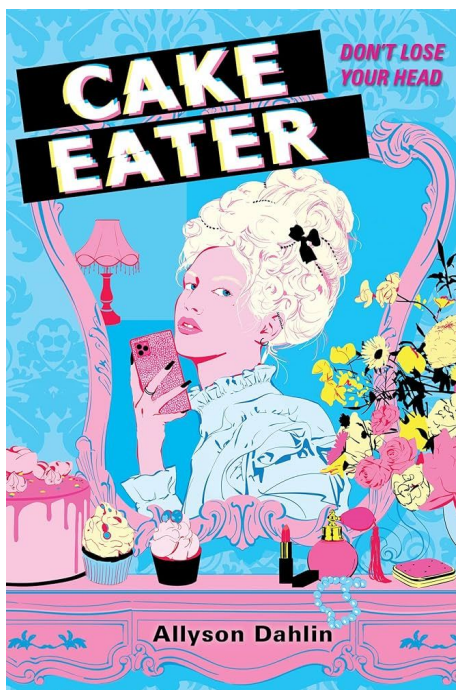


Photo Courtesy of HarperTeen  
The colorful official cover of “Cake Eater.”

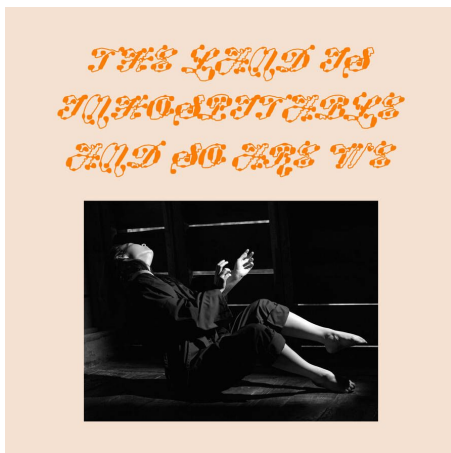


Photo Courtesy of Dead Oceans  
Official cover of “The Land Is Inhospitable and So Are We.”

complement the music.

I would also recommend “I Don’t Like My Mind” to new listeners. The song portrays Mitski’s feelings of regret, and the distractions she makes to avoid sitting alone with her mind.

This album is personally my favorite so far, and it is one of the best albums to start listening to if you want to get into Mitski and her music.

By Madeline Philips

If you like Marie Antoinette, futuristic settings blended with historical places, and petty online drama, Allyson Dahlin’s book is the one for you.

It perfectly mixes a Marie Antoinette-centric version of the French Revolution with a futuristic setting. It starts off in Austria, in her mother’s palace, where she is informed that she will be marrying the Dauphin of France: Louis-Auguste.

Online drama and lavish parties ensue, with Marie and Louis’s relationship on the forefront, having only each other to trust.

The descriptions of the futuristic gel-glo day outfits and sparkly pink evening gowns were absolutely amazing. However, it paints Marie Antoinette in a very different light; instead of the thirty-year-old woman who helped drive France into ruin, it’s a seventeen-year-old ruining her carefully crafted public image and becoming hated by the overall public.

Overall, I recommend this book; it’s a solid 8.5 out of 10.

## Leo’s Entomology Corner War on a winged foe: Scientists split on the significance of the decrease in the spotted lanternfly population

By Leo Mascia

We’ve all heard of the smallest public enemy, the spotted lanternfly, but has the media coverage and call to action truly made a difference?

If you’re anything like me, you’ve seen the videos on TikTok of people filling bottles full of spotted lanternflies to dispose of them in groups of hundreds, so you would assume we are winning this war on these parasites. Still, their recent decrease in population may not have been significantly influenced by the “kill on sight” reputation they’ve received.

So let’s look at the facts, according to the scientific journal NeoBiota, 2017’s lantern fly sightings in Pennsylvania tallied roughly 9,000 of the bugs, jumping up to over 150,000 in 2019, quite a dramatic increase for only two years.

The latest update in sightings and surveys now shows only 61,000; not quite as low as the 2017 numbers, but a significant decrease in population. The numbers look quite a bit like a significant decrease until other interpretations of the data start to surface.

Some believe that the decrease has to do with the erection of their primary food source. The invasive “tree of heaven” may be to blame, considering the lowering population of these trees.

“Without the tree of heaven, the spotted lantern flies are potentially moving further, and dispersing to new areas looking for resources that are out there,” said Matthew Travis, the spotted lantern fly national policy manager for the US Department of Agriculture told The Guardian.

So this begs the question, have we truly won the war on the spotted Lanternfly, or are they just falling back?

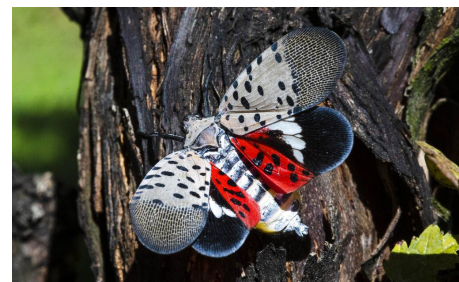


Photo Courtesy of AP News  
The spotted lantern fly, deemed enemy number one, may be leaving on its own.

# Summit Spotlight

## Abington Heights Senior Does it All

**By Cecelia O'Malley**

Aidan Lam, 17, is the student who is involved in almost everything Abington Heights High School has to offer.

From Student Council president to senior school board representative, the Clarks Summit senior does it all.

"Within our school, I try to be involved in every type of activity that our school has to offer," Lam says.

Along with these positions, Lam also is co-president and concertmaster of the Honors Orchestra, a member of Honors Choir, will play the role of Lefou in the upcoming school play "Beauty and the Beast," is a member of the National Honor Society, as well as captain of the Mock Trial team. These are only a few of the many activities Lam is involved in. He also plans to try out for the school's tennis team this spring.

Not only is Lam involved in these clubs, but he holds positions in each. One of his most esteemed positions is being president of Student Council, because of the many responsibilities the position demands.

"A lot of my job deals with delegating tasks and meeting with people. For every activity that StuCo puts on, we must first

get approval from administration... Other than that, I also plan and execute all of the club meetings," Lam said when speaking about his responsibilities.

How does he balance it all? Lam knows he has to stay disciplined and focused.

"Half of the battle is not giving into temptation. I have really bad tendencies to procrastinate, and choose a nap over my obligations, but a lot of it is discipline and getting it done in order to keep my mental health in check as well as my responsibilities," Lam said.

Lam said his favorite three extracurricular activities are Student Council, Mock Trial and Orchestra because they give him a creative outlet, and he does well at each of them. Lam also is well respected and liked throughout each of these clubs and teams.

Lam's accomplishments are something that do not go unnoticed. One of his most passionate accomplishments has been his activism. He has taken on a nationally-recognized leadership role at one of the largest LGBTQ+ rights organizations where he utilizes his voice to advocate for conversations about intersectionality of gender, sexuality and race in the queer community.



Geoff Brock/AH Media

Along with that, Lam has also started his own personal research project to continue his investigation on the interplay of race, gender and sexuality in contemporary western society with a research mentor at the University College Cork in Ireland.

"I hope to complete this research and utilize it to contribute to the 'It Gets Better Project' used in six states," he said when talking about his personal research.

Doing what you love is huge, according to Lam. According to this successful senior, if you aren't doing what you love, your motivation won't be there.

"I participate in extracurriculars with passion and conviction, and I only took classes that I was interested in. Once you do that, it comes easily and it doesn't feel like work."

## Mr. Hofmann: From Up Stairs to Up Front

**By Ethan Avery**

American author and motivational speaker Rachel Hollis has a quote that says, "Moving doesn't change who you are. It only changes the view outside your window." In Mr. Hofmann's case, the view from his window changed from the practice field to the front parking lot. The jump from math teacher to Vice Principal of 9th and 10th grade was difficult and every day throws him a new challenge.

"I loved teaching and interacting with students in the classroom," said Mr. Hofmann, referring to the transition.

Becoming an administrator came with challenges he hadn't thought about before the promotion, like how different each day can be from one another and how challenging it can be to prepare for everything that may come.

It also came with a lot of personal growth, and days he dealt with an inner struggle of whether or not it was the right move.

Despite the difficulties, he insists the people here, as well as the positive relationships that have been built, make it worth it.

"(Mr. Becchetti and Mrs. Theony have) been great mentors," said Mr. Hofmann. "If it weren't for the other administrators being who they are as people and colleagues, it would've made the transition much harder."

According to Mrs. Rogalewicz, who started at the same time as Mr. Hofmann, their first year here together was "typical of a first-year teacher" as it was hectic and full of figuring out new things that led to more personal growth and experience.

During his years here as a teacher, Mr. Hofmann's been a part of seven league and eight district championship teams as a coach with the track team.

Most important to him though, has been connecting with his students and watching them grow throughout the years of high school.

Now in his new role in the school, Mr. Hofmann hopes to help change the climate of the school.

"We want our teachers and staff to feel valued and appreciated. We want our students to feel this is a great place to come and learn."

"So far so good. I think he's a good mix of tough and soft. He's always fair and well-respected," said Mrs. Rogalewicz about Mr. Hofmann's work so far. "I hope he follows through with policies and holds everyone to the same standards."



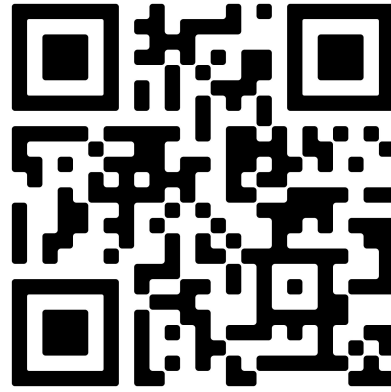
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Mr. Hofmann sits at home in his new office.

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