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CONQUERING COVID ON CAMPUS

COVID'S GLOBAL IMPACT

BY VERONICA GARZA
Editor-in-Chief

The coronavirus has blanketed the globe in economic instability and health precautions while simultaneously promoting the unity of nations in a search for a vaccination and financial rebuild. The Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Center recorded the infection of "more than 20 million people worldwide" and "the deaths of several hundred thousand." Advocacy for international cooperation is growing along with the spread of the virus. According to a survey conducted by the Pew Research Center, 59 percent of people questioned believed the co-operation "would have reduced the number of coronavirus cases facing their country."

The U.S. currently accounts for the most cases, reaching six million on September 1 after climbing from four to five million within sixteen days in August. However, the spread appears to be slowing in reaction to a temporary halt in residential evictions ordered by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. In addition, the New York Times reports the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act has "covered as many as 12.3 million renters living in an apartment complex or single-family home financed with a federally backed mortgage." The U.S.'s attempts to prevent a future increase in cases has evolved beyond quarantines and mask mandates.

Countries in Africa are also experiencing a climb in cases. Their number of positive tests reached 1,237,070 as of August 30. Egypt hosts eight percent of the continent's cases, according to the Africa CDC. Because of their economic downturn, Victor Harrison, African Union Commissioner for Economic Affairs, reported the pandemic has "exacerbated an already dire tax revenue situation," as "Africa's GDP growth is projected to be between -4.9 percent and -2.1 percent in 2020." This leads to a reduction in international development aid as other countries face financial turmoil of their own.

The Chinese economy, the world's second largest, is scheduled to grow just one percent this year due to the Coronavirus claiming it as its first victim. Their five largest banks have "reported their biggest profit declines in at least a decade," according to CNBC. In addition, authorities in Beijing have

reportedly asked financial institutions to "sacrifice 1.5 trillion yuan (\$219 billion) in profits this year" in order to lower loan rates and defer repayments. However, Morgan Stanley analysts observed the pre-provision operating profits of most mid-sized Chinese banks to have grown "between 8% and 27% in the second quarter compared to a year ago" and are expecting the return of dividends in 2021.

India has been rapidly approaching new heights in infections as they surpass 4.4 million cases and 75,000 deaths. In comparison to other countries (namely America and England), their mortality rate appears to be low. CNN reports it to stand at 1.7 percent versus America's 3 percent and England's 11.7 percent, which can be attributed to India's underfunded health infrastructure, as among the 86 percent of deaths nationwide, "22 percent...get an official cause of death," due to deaths happening less frequently in hospitals in comparison to homes. In Delhi, community medicine specialist Dr. Hermant Shewade found "only 63 percent of deaths get cause of death certification," with only 35 percent of deaths getting registered in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Jharkhand. As cases climb in India, Russia races to formulate a vaccine and put a serious stop to the spread.

On August 11, Russian president Vladimir Putin announced the country to have approved a vaccine for SARS-CoV-2, the source of the coronavirus, and expects mass vaccinations to begin in October. The vaccine, nicknamed Sputnik V, would be given in two shots separated by a 21-day gap. According to *NewScientist*, Russian researchers "pre-registered phase I and phase II trials" in early August. Both shots would consist of modified adenoviruses and the spike protein from the coronavirus, which "should prime the immune system for an encounter with the actual coronavirus." In addition to Russia's advancements, the World Health Organization reports over 100 vaccines to be in development.

The coronavirus has attacked immune systems and economies across the globe, leaving a dire need for rehabilitation and security in its wake. America focuses its efforts on residential issues while regions such as Africa and China turn their attention to their slowly growing economies. India concentrates on their rising infection rate and unregistered deaths as Russia undergoes vaccine trials. As cases increase, countries race to find a cure in the hopes of returning to normalcy within 12 months.

SELFLESS ACTS IN UNCERTAIN TIMES

BY VERONICA GARZA
Editor-in-Chief


On September 30, Torrance High School will host its first UCLA blood drive of the 2020-2021 school year at the Torrance-South Bay YMCA. THS ASB has held two blood drives per year for at least the last decade. THS partners with UCLA to donate pints of blood that will be used for "a variety of purposes from transfusions to operations," as ASB Supervisor Mr. Nathan Jones explains.

Due to distanced schooling and the inability to utilize campus for events such as these, this will be THS's smallest drive in history. Regardless, Mr. Jones and participants feel "very happy to still be helping save people's lives." The purpose of these blood drives is not limited to helping those in need, but also inspiring students to become life-long donors. Mr. Jones hopes students will "continue to give blood throughout their lives" because "it is a small act of giving that helps people you have never met."

ASB Vice President, Andy Park, organized the event. "Thank you so much to everyone who is donating blood," he states, "it is very noble and courageous that you are willing to sacrifice your own blood for the sake of others' lives." As stated previously, the blood drive makes Tartars value the selfless acts of kindness. No matter the slim chances, being able to save a person's life is an honorable deed.

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Teaching During Covid 19

By: Joshua Flores

It has been nearly five months since quarantine and much has happened since then. Last school year, our second semester was abruptly interrupted, and we have been learning online ever since. With the beginning of this school year being all virtual, only time will tell if we are able to go back to the classroom. I know this school year may be difficult at first, but if we keep an open mind, we will be able to do things in a normal way.

One group of people having an especially difficult time with virtual learning are teachers. In an article written by Benjamin Fearnow, a media reporter for *Newsweek*, he highlights how “teachers in states across the U.S. are resigning and retiring at higher rates as schools begin reopening,” which is a very unfortunate thing to see. There are many different reasons why teachers have chosen to stay away from the classroom because of virtual learning.

Jessica Smith, a teacher in St. Petersburg, Florida, resigned after five years. Her reasons were the stress and paranoia of

having to live stream with students. Erica Bean, a science, Social Studies, and Language Arts teacher in Greensboro, North Carolina, resigned in late August after almost 20 years of teaching. Her resignation was based on the difficulty of balancing between virtual learning and raising her own children.

Marina Watts, staff writer for *Newsweek*, writes about how 250 teachers in one New Jersey school district have requested a leave of absence for the 2020-2021 school year. This caused the district to switch from hybrid learning to virtual learning entirely. Support for hybrid learning was high in the Freehold Regional High School District with 82 percent of parents supporting hybrid learning. But because of an increase in absenteeism, the District had no choice but to forsake hybrid learning. Teachers across the country are feeling the impact of the Coronavirus both inside and outside the classroom. During this school year, we should be more supportive of our teachers while they adjust to virtual learning.

What’s the Big Mystery?

By: Joshua Flores

Rutherford County Schools in Tennessee is being criticized for having parents sign an f agreement not to monitor their children’s virtual classes. After a significant backlash from parents, the district is now allowing parents to monitor their children’s classes with permission from the teacher, but they cannot record the classes. The big question is, Why? What’s the mystery?

Criticizing the district’s decision, Laurie Cardoza-Moore, founder of Proclaiming Justice to the Nations (an organization dedicated to fighting anti-Semitism in America) said “[The District has] been data mining our children for years, compliments of common core.” This implies the subterfuge of lesson plans that inculcate political agendas.

Mrs. Cardoza-Moore added, “What are they trying to hide? What is the problem? Why won’t they let us sit in?” Questioning the motives behind the district’s decision to keep parents oblivious to what their children are being taught in school was mentioned in an interview with *Fox & Friends*.

In an article detailing the interview, Caleb Parke, an associate editor for *Fox News*, writes the district responded in a statement from James Evans, Communications Director for Rutherford County Schools, which said “We are aware of the concern that has been raised about this distance-learning letter,” showing the district acknowledging the repercussions of its actions.

Rutherford issued “new guidance to principals” that allowed parents to assist their children during virtual lessons if permission from the instructor is granted. Parents further must refrain from sharing or recording any portion or portions of the classroom activities.

According to an article by Joseph Wenzel, Digital Content Manager for *WSMV Nashville*, Rutherford County Schools stated they did not intend to “prevent parents from being involved with their children during distance learning,” but to protect the privacy of other students in the classroom. To paraphrase Hamlet, there’s something fishy in the state of Tennessee.

DNC, RNC Comparison

By: Joshua Flores

A few weeks ago both the Democratic National Convention (DNC) and the Republican National Convention (RNC) were held to announce the choosing of the presidential candidate for the Republican and Democratic parties. Each national convention lasted four days, Monday through Thursday. The DNC was held between August 18 and August 21 and the RNC was held between August 25 and August 28.

The first day of the DNC was marked by Democratic politicians calling for unity against President Donald Trump, among them former presidential candidate Senator Bernie Sanders. There was also a moment of silence for George Floyd, whose death has sparked protests across our nation.

An opening prayer by Cardinal Timothy Dolan, who leads the Catholic Church’s Archdiocese of New York, was held on the first day of the RNC and saw Donald Trump speaking with a group of six U.S.

hostages and detainees freed during his administration.

The second day of the DNC saw Caroline Kennedy, daughter of former president JFK, and her son Jack Schollsberg expressing their support for Joe Biden and the official nomination of Joe Biden as the candidate for the Democratic party.

Tuesday on the second day of the RNC First Lady Melania Trump made a speech expressing her sympathies to the people who lost loved ones to COVID-19 and to those who are suffering from the virus.

On Wednesday the third day of the DNC Kamala Harris was officially nominated as Biden’s running mate and Democrats urged people to vote and emphasized the “need to protect the Postal Service,” from reductions in the amount of mail that passes through it.

On the third day of the RNC Vice President Mike Pence accepted the official nomination to be Trump’s running mate. Pence

also expressed his sympathies to families that have lost loved ones due to the Coronavirus.

The fourth and final day of the DNC began with a speech from former presidential candidate Andrew Yang and ended with Joe Biden officially accepting the Democratic Party’s presidential nomination.

The last day of the RNC Donald Trump talked about how a vaccine for the Coronavirus can be available by the end of the year or sooner and concluded with him officially accepting the nomination to run for a second term as President.

If you want more information on coverage of both the DNC and RNC you can look at recaps of them at the *National Public Radio* website, an American privately and publicly funded non-profit media organization based in Washington, D.C. It was established by an act of Congress and most of its member stations are owned by government entities.

PANDEMIC POSITIVE

BY KARA SERAFIN
Staff Writer

Taking care of your health is extremely important in times of stress. This COVID-19 pandemic has been challenging for everyone, and it is crucial to remember to take care of yourself. It can be difficult to stay positive in these situations, but there are many options available that will ease the pain.

We are constantly receiving news updates from social media, television, newspapers, and more. While this abundance of information can be useful, it can also have negative effects on our mental health. Much of the broadcast media is bleak, and it can be hard to see the light in the darkness of this pandemic. Make sure to take breaks from consuming media and find happy stories within the quagmire. There are always positive aspects to our world.

It is easy to feel isolated because of social distancing as we are not able to see friends and family in person. This does not mean we have to feel alone. You can call friends and family through FaceTime, Zoom, or use email, text, and other methods to keep in touch.

You can also utilize these strange circumstances to reach out to a family member or friend that you haven't spoken to in a while. William Aruda of Forbes.com mentions, "You may be at low risk of severe consequences from the virus, but it may not be the same for your neighbors whose immune systems are compromised."

EXTRA EXERCISE

BY KARA SERAFIN
Staff Writer

Extracurricular activities are an essential part of the high school experience. Unfortunately, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, sports and other extracurricular activities have not been able to start normally this year.

The principal of Torrance High School, Mr. Girgis, sent out an email regarding these activities. He stated, "We are moving ahead with the possibility of bringing athletic/extracurricular program conditioning to our campuses as soon as the end of this month." This is great news for THS students.

Health and safety are the priorities and have to be taken into consideration. Mr. Girgis mentioned, "TUSD is currently developing plans for opening high school campuses for athletic conditioning and practice activities that are within the allowable guidelines." There will be no competition prior to December and practices will take place outdoors, in order to comply with regulations.

In order to participate in the activities, students and parents will need to complete the clearance process. It is recommended to schedule an updated athletic physical examination because it can be time-consuming. Keep an eye out for more updates on the situation as an activity schedule is currently being made and there will be a virtual parent meeting. These extra activities sure are exciting!

TRIUMPHING AGAINST THE ODDS

BY KARA SERAFIN
Staff Writer

Schools across the country have been heavily impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, including Torrance High School. Classes are virtual and sports and activities have been postponed. Although this is a challenging time for students, parents, and faculty, many have worked together to make this school year the best it can be.

The circumstances are noticeably different this year, and Mr. Girgis, the principal of Torrance High School, stated, "The biggest transition is not seeing the teachers and students every day. We still connect with everyone but through virtual platforms." TUSD schools are starting off the school year virtually, so in-person interactions are limited.

This school year, class schedules and registration were set up differently to accommodate social distancing guidelines. Mr. Girgis described setting up the schedules as "extremely challenging." The THS counselors and Mr. Roulette, who was instrumental in the scheduling process, had to create three master schedules instead of one. They had triple the amount of work to do this year, but worked extremely hard and succeeded in creating unique schedules for each student.

Setting up registration was also "very difficult. We had to have registration in parts instead of normally having it all the same day for each grade level." The Torrance High School administration was faced with much adversity in starting off this school year, but they triumphed by adapting to the current conditions.

During challenging times we must stick together, so reach out to your loved ones to check up on them.

Other occupations you can undertake include exploring hobbies, taking relaxing baths, reading, and watching funny movies and TV shows. You may discover a new favorite pastime! Remember to spend some time outside every day and get some exercise as both give you mental and physical benefits.

Mark Stibich of verywellmind.com explains: "When you engage in high-intensity exercise, your body and brain produce hormones and neurotransmitters that have a positive impact on your mood, memory, energy levels, and sense of well-being." Otherwise known as endorphins, exercise releases the body's feel-good chemicals. These activities also keep you physically healthy, which is essential during a pandemic.

It can be difficult to stay positive during a global crisis, but it is possible. Remember all of the obstacles you have overcome already in your life and focus on what you can control. We are all in this together.



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ANOTHER DEBACLE

BY MIKI IGNACIO

Staff Writer

The highly-anticipated live-action remake of 1998's classic Disney Princess film, *Mulan*, premiered on September 4 on Disney+. Directed by Niki Caro, this two-hour film stars the main heroine Hua Mulan (played by Yifei Liu) on her journey of fighting for her village.

Set in imperial China, Hua Mulan is a strong, free-spirited girl chained down by the societal expectations set on Chinese women. However, when her father Hua Zhou (played by Tzi Ma), a disabled war-hero, is drafted to an emergency battle, Mulan takes his place. She flees with her father's armor and sword, disguises herself as a male, and undergoes training to become an exceptional soldier.

One of the most notable criticisms and controversy received is the omission of Mushu the dragon. This beloved comedic sidekick did not make it in the 2020 film, and fans of the 1998 version expressed blatant disappointment. Along with Mushu, Shang is also excluded, but was adapted into two separate characters:

Commander Tung (played by Donnie Yen) and Chen Honghui (played by Yoson An).

Compared to the 1998 version, the 2020 version lacks the family-friendly atmosphere and replaces it with a mature tone. None of the upbeat and iconic soundtracks were included, but were replaced with eye-catching action scenes. Considering the latest adaptation is rated PG-13, its audience is able to appreciate the fighting choreography and exchange of clashing weapons.

According to Nicole Clark, top critic for Rotten Tomatoes Nicole Clark reported many viewers and fans were disappointed with *Mulan*. The charm of the 1998 animated film had dissipated in the 2020 live-action film. Clark opines, "It might have been an excellent reinterpretation, were it not so heavy-handed and, well, Disney-fied." Clark added, "[W]hat remains bears minimal discernible relationship to the original, while reading too much like a basic Marvel film." If you like your action-packed films minus the lovable characters, this year's *Mulan* just might rattle your cage.

TOMMY COMES BACK TO SCHOOL

BY MIKI IGNACIO

Staff
Illustrator



Pets of the Week September 14-21

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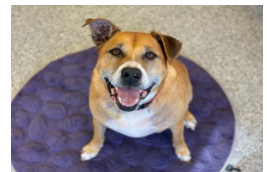
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Titus
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