



# THE SPRESS

## SOUTH PARK HIGH SCHOOL

### More vegetarian and vegan options in the cafeteria?

CHLOE BYRON

10% of the world's population follows a vegetarian diet, while 2% are vegan. This rate is increasing rapidly every year. The vegetarian diet is when someone does not eat any animal meat while still consuming animal byproducts, such as milk, eggs, and honey, and avoiding using/wearing animal products. While those who are vegan don't consume or use any animal products. The wave of being vegetarian or vegan is higher than ever before as people make new discoveries of meatless options.

Almost any grocery store provides meatless options for their customers. Just by offering one or two vegetarian or vegan options, it could be a great option for students who may follow one of these diets. Incorporating black beans, tempeh, tofu, Beyond Meat, lentils, etc., would provide those individuals with a source of meatless protein.

Not everyone will want to make a choice of getting a vegan or vegetarian lunch option, but as more become available, more people may choose them. While there are many students who don't identify as vegetarian or vegan, an overwhelming number of students thought it would be a good idea to offer meatless options. Some even say they would purchase them without personally having restrictions with meat. It's important to have variety, so everyone feels as if they have a choice.

### Teen dating domestic violence awareness

TESS LETTIE

1.5 million teenagers worldwide experience physical abuse from a dating partner in a single year, according to loveisrespect.org. Out of that 1.5million, only 33% of it reported the abuse. 81% of victims' parents choose to not believe them or think that teen dating violence is not an issue. These numbers are way too high, especially when you really think and imagine how many people are affected. This issue is not very recognized or talked about, but it needs to be talked about. You may not know what is happening in someone's life, but there are signs of abuse you can look for. For instance, if someone:

- Has become more sensitive to touch from others
- Is scared to disagree with their partner or get into any conflict
- Has marks or injuries they don't have explanations for
- Has become more distant to family and friends
- Experiences changes in their self-esteem or personality
- Wears clothes that don't fit the season to cover up marks and bruises
- Has a partner that uses rough language with them

It's very difficult to know this is happening to someone you know, but it's much more difficult to go through itself. When you're in this situation, you are being manipulated at every turn. You believe that your partner truly loves you, but if they loved you, they wouldn't put you in situations to get hurt.

If you see or experience any of these things, ask for help or use the following resources:

Resolve Crisis (1-888-7-YOU-CAN)

<https://www.nationalsafeplace.org/teen-dating-violence>

<https://www.nsvrc.org/blogs/teen-dating-violence-prevention-resources-2021-update>

<https://www.womenagainstabuse.org/get-help/resources/resources-for-teens>

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The passing of a rap icon

DAN PEPKE

DMX, American rapper, passed away in his home in White Plains, New York, on April 9, 2021. The cause of death of the rapper was cardiac arrest shortly after an overdose. DMX died at the age of 50.

Earl Simmons, better known as DMX, was born December 18, 1970, in Mount Vernon, New York The rapper began his career at age 14. His most famous or notable songs are: X gon give it, Rough ryders anthem, Hows it goin down, Slippin’, and Party up. He has produced multiple albums that have over millions of streams. Recently, because of his death, the number of his streams has jumped over 900%. His streams went from averaging 700,000-1,000,000 streams per day to over four million per day. The rapper leaves behind his wife, Tashera Simmons, and six kids. The rapper also left behind a legacy that will never be forgotten.

NFL draft

DAN PEPKE

The 2021 NFL Draft had many prospects in the roster, many of which have high hopes of making an impact to the teams they were drafted into.

The first Pick of the 2021 draft was Trevor Lawernce, a quarterback from Clemson. Lawrence was expected to go number one in the draft. He has had over 10,000 passing yards and almost 100 rushing yards as the starter for Clemson. The Jacksonville Jaguars, whose last season record was 1-15 drafted him.

The second Pick was BYU’s Zach Wilson who has over 7,000 passing yards and had scored ninety points his whole career at BYU. The New York Jets drafted him.

The third pick of the draft belonged to the 49ers who decided between three QBs because of their issues in that position. They selected North Dakota State’s, Trey Lance. Lance had opted out of last season because of the global pandemic. Although he has a lot of upsides, with him opting out he may have to knock some of that rust off.

The next pick was the highest pick for a tight end the NFL has ever seen. That tight end was Kyle Pitts who was a monster player at Florida, and drafted by the falcons who had a struggling defense this last season.

Other high prospects that went in high picks were: Mac Jones (Alabama), Justin Fields (The Ohio State University), Jalen Waddle (Alabama), Devonta Smith (Alabama), Penei Swiel (Oregon), Ja'marr Case (LSU), Micah Parsons (Penn State), Jaycee Horn (South Carolina), Patrick Surtain II (Alabama), Caleb Farley (Virginia Tech), Najee Harris (Alabama).

The Pittsburgh Steelers first selection in the draft was Running back Najee Harris (Alabama). He is the best running back in this class and hopes to make an impact for the Steelers run game. Although the draft may have prospects, it all comes down to their ability to perform in the NFL.

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT - REVIEW

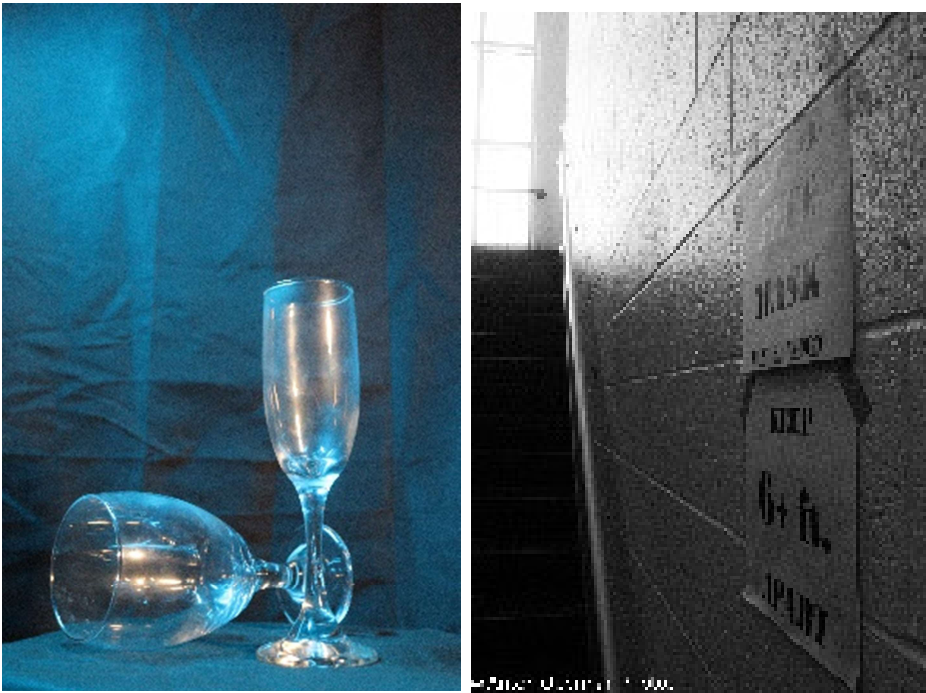
Demi Lovato’s heartfelt new album tops Billboard charts

LUKE FURMAN

Demi Lovato’s seventh studio album, “Dancing with the Devil...The Art of Starting Over,” currently holds a top ten position on the Billboard charts of several countries, including the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia.

A heartfelt and candid record, Lovato recounts her struggles with addiction, and her journey to self-discovery and reinvention. She celebrates her newfound freedom, yet does not shy away from her recent traumas. Quinn Moreland of Pitchfork says of the album, “the pop star who once professed a desire to ‘be free of all demons’ has seemingly accepted the reality that she must live alongside them.” The sincerity with which she performs each track leads to some of the most emotionally powerful music of her career. Keith Harris of Rolling Stone says of the artist, “Lovato is not given to understatement — her performances are consistently in the red emotionally.” Her emotional recollections serve to provide solace for those who may be facing similar struggles.

To go along with her album, there is also a documentary on Lovato streaming on YouTube titled “Demi Lovato: Dancing with the Devil.” It details the events leading up to and following her tragic overdose in 2018.





EDITORIAL

Possible expanded gun control

NOAH FISCUS

There has been a lot of gun violence, and it has been getting out of hand with recent crimes. President Biden is finally making a decision against guns.

In recent years, gun violence has been very evident, and with the riots during the pandemic, people have been killed. Finally, a determined President Biden is deciding to increase gun control laws. According to MSNBC, he has said that gun violence is an “international embarrassment.” We have experienced many terrible shootings, and now homemade firearms are at an all-time high. These could open the door to a whole new set of deaths during the pandemic. Another way this could be helpful for is untrained gun-owners. Many people in modern America may not be physically capable of possessing a gun or weapon, and this can take a toll on America. In my opinion, I feel like we should perform more background checks on people so we do not allow unprepared citizens to possess firearms.

Even though it may seem like an unfair law at first, we should respect Biden’s well-mannered attempts to protect us. With a little change to our gun laws, we can make our world a happier and much safer place.



IN MEMORIAM

Prince Phillip dies at 99

CHLOE BYRON

The Prince died peacefully in Windsor Castle after a month-long stay in King Edward VII’s hospital for heart problems. He was admitted to the hospital on February 16 after feeling unwell. Prince Philip underwent a heart procedure during his time there, which was successful. The Palace said that when Philip got released from the hospital, it was to pass away on his own terms and in his own bed, not a hospital bed. He was last seen publicly on March 16, after getting released.

The Queen described Philip’s death as “leaving a huge void in her life,” said Prince Andrew, Duke of York. Prince Philip was the longest-serving royal consort in British history. He was married to Queen Elizabeth II for over 70 years and served actively in the military until she became Queen.

Prince Harry returned to the UK for the first time since the Oprah interview with his wife, Meghan Markle. He went back to attend the funeral while Meghan stayed in the United States. Friends of Meghan have spoken out and claimed that she did not travel back to the UK for Prince Philip’s funeral because she “doesn’t want to be the centre of attention,” as stated by the New York Post. This would have been a shocking decision for Harry and Meghan to both attend and would have caused the attention to be directed away from Philip’s passing.

Saluting Walter Mondale

NOAH FISCUS

On April 19, 2021, Vice President Walter Mondale passed away. But what did he do that was so important, and why should we celebrate his legacy?

Walter Frederick “Fritz” Mondale was born on January 5, 1928, and died on April 19, 2021. He was 93. He left behind his two sons, Ted and William. His wife, Joan Mondale (born 1930), died in 2014. He also had a daughter, Eleanor, who passed away in 2011. Mondale participated in many things during his long life. His most notable accomplishment is when he served as vice president under President Jimmy Carter from 1977 to 1981. Mondale and Carter did many things during these four years. They visited around the nation many times. One of these travels was a visit to the USS Midway, which was stationed in the Indian Ocean during the Iran-hostage crisis. He was the first vice president to have an office in the White House, and he expanded the role of a vice president. However, the main thing that Carter and Mondale promoted was human rights. The three rights were the right to be free from government violation, the right to fulfill vital needs, and civil and political rights.

Even before his time in office, he worked hard, serving as the 23rd Attorney General of Minnesota and a United States Senator from Minnesota. After his time in the White House, he served as the 24th United States Ambassador to Japan.

Mondale always said he wanted to serve for our country, and it's a good thing he had the opportunity to do so. His bright ideas and kindness impacted America in many ways.

# Senior reflection

SOPHIA DEMATTEO

You’ll find that the high school experience is psyched up everywhere, and sometimes, it feels like a lot of pressure to live these fleeting four years to their absolute fullest. Everyone says that these are supposed to be the best years of your life, your own personal coming-of-age movie, and truthfully if this is your peak, that’s a shame. Still, high school deserves credit where it’s due; these are the years that you decide who you want to be for the rest of your life. I’ve learned to live for myself because I am the only person that I will take with me wherever I go. Attempting to impress or fit in with others is futile and tiring. You will learn what makes you happy and you must strive every day to be fearlessly and authentically yourself, and along the way, you will meet people who shape you into the person that you are meant to be. Never mind what you think you *should* be doing; comparison will waste your potential.

I think it’s also important to be grateful for where you are, yet not so close-minded that you never want to explore life further. I am infinitely thankful for the South Park experience; it is rare that you will find such a close-knit community full of teachers who genuinely *want* to enrich your mind, who truly care about you and your future endeavors. Our motto is a constant reminder of promptness, preparedness, and politeness, but South Park also preaches perseverance and compassion. I spent my freshman year at a different school, and coming here felt like finally joining an atmosphere I truly belonged to.

Still, it is good to look forward to college and then life beyond school, living the life you were meant to live. It is equally important, though, to carry with you the values you have learned here throughout the rest of your life. I know that this sounds like a lot, but I cannot express enough how grateful I am for this whole experience, and it would be selfish to keep this wisdom I’ve acquired to myself.

# Graduation ceremony will be held

CORA SMITH

After more than a year of uncertainty due to the COVID-19 vaccine, South Park High School has received good news regarding the 2021 senior graduation, declaring a formal ceremony will be held outside at Eagle Stadium.

Upon asking whether students believed a graduation should even be held, an astounding 100% of students answered they feel an in-person ceremony should be held because of the importance of the program and the onetime event for senior students. There was a similar result with the announcement that the ceremony would be outside at the stadium, with 95.2% of students approving of the decision. As a senior myself, I feel jovial despite the plausible danger of spreading the virus further. I agree it is a once in a lifetime and would love for my family members to see my accomplishments.

Graduation is a gate to a new adult world, presenting many individuals with important decisions that could impact the rest of their lives. Many have resonated with their time here at South Park, such as an anonymous student who was quoted saying, “I really enjoyed the opportunity to meet all of the amazing teachers here”. In spite of the completely new environment of learning, both students and faculty have continued to progress and adapt to the circumstances, showing the resilience towards barriers in way of education.

Hopefully, the situation regarding COVID-19 will lessen, allowing the school district to return to their accustomed ways; in the meantime, seniors will be moving onto the next stage of their lives, beginning with the 2021 graduation ceremony.

## THE SPRESS STAFF

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CREATIVE WRITING

A Pirate’s Plea (continued from May issue)

CORA SMITH

I was startled awake at the break of dawn, darkness still sparing the sky of any vibrant colors. Hazily, I glanced to the porthole of my quarters, the light of my room cascading down and onto the black waters. The sea was frightening enough to some during the day, imagery of the blackened depths at night was able to churn stomachs of any sailor. After a moment of allowing my body to wake, I made my way towards the deck, strolling through doors and up stairwells as the boat steadily rocked on the open waters. Elman was waiting for me at the foot of the deck, his jaw tightened.

“The lookout called sail, ho about an hour ago.” He began as I grew close enough. The two of us looked out past the rail, pupils contracting over the fairly large block of wood careening in the ship's wake. It was close enough to be able to notice in the dim morning light, close enough to begin firing at range within the minute.

“Run a shot across the bow, see if they turn tail.” I responded, eyes steady upon the red ensign swaying tauntingly in the ocean breeze. Elman unsheathed his flintlock, taking a moment to aim before his ringed finger pulled at the trigger, sending a cloud of gunpowder into the air and cracking the lulling atmosphere with a single bullet. Immediately he began to reload.

I squinted towards the approaching vessel, seeking out the panicked rushing of a crew or perhaps an adjustment of the sails. Nothing aboard the deck moved. A shudder ran along my spine, both Elman and I locked eyes for a moment before he was off down to the barracks to wake the gunners. The British army was known to be aggressive, though quite honestly I was shamed to not be able to hide my surprise. I could imagine the crew below the deck of the approaching enemy ship, their quick steps as they fumbled around their pristine canons. It was inevitable that the British would eventually come up with enough gold to fund their ships into toppling war machines.

As if introduced by my dark thoughts, a startling thunder barreled through the air, the ground beneath my feet leveraging as the entire ship lurched to the side. A cannonball had forcefully impacted the hull, shattering wood and whatever else was unfortunate enough to be in the way.

I stumbled on my heels, grabbing forward onto whatever I could to keep myself from falling entirely. The blood ran from my face.

Hollering broke out among the crew, shocked expression rummaging each of their features as most of the crew had been startled to the top of the ship. I stood motionless, eyes wide as I tried to comprehend how the approaching ship had managed to accurately fire from their location. I could see the vessel through the veil of shock, its frame having grown nearly twice as large as it quickly was gaining ground.

“We’re taking water.” Someone shouted from behind. In an instant I was aware, turning my back to the enemies approaching. Our ship would be practically grounded, depending on how quickly water was flooding the belly of the vessel, the winds unable to continue pushing the weight of the boat towards land. It was a fatal blow.

My palm went to my forehead as dizziness encapsulated my rational thoughts, luckily enough the crew knew procedures without constant direction. I caught sight of the new recruit hauling a mounted cannon over to edge of the deck, his hands working quickly to tie the weapon down once they’d reached its dedicated location. For a moment I wondered if the knot would hold, though the thought quickly passed as I realized it wouldn’t matter.

Cannons began firing immediately, our small arsenal desperately holding against a titan of the seas. I’d risk another glance towards the progression of the British, and nearly spat. A few cannonballs had decorated their decks, and yet the beast still prowled the waters with a dangerous speed. They were nearly within roping distance, and then it’d surely be over.

“Withdraw your swords!” I rang out, the men around me following suit of the order. I reached for my own weapon, its long blade glinting off the now risen sun as I braced for the incoming events.

Everything seemed to happen so quickly, the fore peak of the British ship plowing into the heart of our vessel. Ropes being tossed onto our boards, some cut down by brave individuals who refused to back away from the front line. Then there were men, countless, dressed in vibrant red, their metals colliding with ours as the onslaught began. I launched myself into the parade, slicing through whatever I could in order to preserve not only my own life but that of my crew.

I had cleared several soldiers by the time I could catch my breath, bodies scattered among the crimson stained deck. I heaved slowly, gripping my chest as I scanned the proceeding. There were very few of my own men left, most of which either being cornered for capture or cut down by the overpowering numbers of the red army. Then, my eyes caught on one lain body upon the main deck, instantly recognizing the recruit gazing towards the sky with glassy eyes. I wouldn’t have time to mourn the silly boy who had frustrated me earlier. I regretted my harsh words with him.

“Captain,” A voice pulled my attention towards a towering man faced in my direction, his coat layered with various ruffles and buttons.

“Good morning, Commander, beautiful day to draw blood is it?” I rasped back, continuing to back away until the wood rail blocked my way. My legs stung with exhaustion as I leaped up onto the barrier, gripping onto a low hanging rope strung from the mast whilst my other hand dangled a soaked rapier. A group had collected around the British Commander, their eyes hungry with adrenaline.

“It didn’t take long to figure out the Letters of Marque you provided were sham. I told the mayor you were no good, I did,” he paused to sneer, “and yet he permitted you to dock at our shores and swindle our assets. Well, boy, times up. You’ve ‘ought to pay what’s due.” The group of men were circled around me, swords drawn and raised. They wouldn’t dare use them unless forced to, as public executions were fancied by the public, especially of thieving pirates. “Come down now.” The commander seethed, drawing closer.

“You’ve killed my men and have sentenced my ship to the seafloor. You’d be a fool to assume I’d give you what I have left.” I answered back with my own fit of rage, my knuckles growing white on the terse rope.

“I’ll see to it that you dance with Jack Ketch if you take any longer, capt’n. No honor in stubbornness.” The heel of my boot dangled from the edge of the rail, the winds tossing my loose wear as the seas below bellowed and ripped at the haul of the broken ship. I tossed down my sword.

“Be it Jack or Davy. Dead men can’t tell tales, Commander.” My hand slid from the safety of the rope, head tilting backwards in a graceless plunge as the weight of my body carried me over the rails faster than I could make the decision else wise. The momentum was quick to send me careening towards the monstrous waves, and though the time in the air was short, it felt like an eternity. Cold air bit at my cheeks, as I could only fearfully jostle downwards.

I’d send out a prayer to the sea, a last cry for salvation in a world of angry waters and even angrier men. Then, collision. Spray harshly tugged at my body as I connected with the surface of the water, plunging down into the folds of darkness. I knew there was little to no chance of crawling out of this alive, though the willfulness in my sore bones sought life, begged for it from the ruthless depths. I clung to a lost hope and danced with the ocean’s will; my body having been consumed by the sea around me. I was coddled with the kiss of death as lungs filled with the burning liquid of salt, sending out the same beg of mercy as any overboard sailor fleeing the ulterior death from man, a desperate instinct to live, a pirate’s plea.

STUDENT CORNER

Poetry from English 11

The Bombing of 1941

Hailey Allen

So God help us!  
These are the moments we never expect  
Some soldiers were saved  
Pushing us to our last extent  
Many stones with names engraved

So God help us!  
Ships were bombed here and there  
Soldiers flying left and right  
The Japanese did not care  
Roosevelt knew this would be a fight

So God help us!  
As the holocaust began  
Men, women, and children suffered  
The Japanese knew their plan  
No one knew that it was about to get rougher

Winter

Taylor Nelson

The cold winter breeze blows through the air  
Hibernating bears sleep without a care  
As the snow flurries down from the sky up above  
Ah, it seems winter has finally come

The ground and the trees are covered in snow  
All the houses and buildings enveloped toe to toe  
It's piling high now, getting harder to walk  
Folks stomping and stepping, with no time to talk

As people go out they must bundle up  
Maybe later have some cocoa in a cup  
After all it's freezing in this winter cold snow  
But children are stubborn and they must go!

“Go where?” might you ask, I'll tell you, I'll say,  
the children all want to go out and play  
In the piles of snow that live on the street  
Throw snowballs and bury snow on top of their feet

The parents watch and listen from inside the house,  
By the warm , cozy fire, snuggled close to their spouse  
Eating piping hot soup and watching outside the window while winter brings down more cold, white, snow

Green

Nicolina Wall

Green is the color of nature  
And is an amazing color to love.  
A color of trees, grass, and plants,  
And all of the above!

But it's not just nature  
That green holds in its palm.  
It is a color of relaxation,  
A color to keep us calm.

There is more to the color green  
That may have us stuck.  
It is the clover color,  
A sign of good luck!

