

# The REDHAWK REVIEW



*Sea of Stars, a linoleum block painting by Panya Cao*

## The Omicron Variant: Ominous and Omnipresent

By Julia Neville

Unfortunately, by now, we've all heard the news, some even

having to experience this reality firsthand: Omicron, the newest and most infectious COVID-19 variant in the U.S., is here to stay.

While the first logged Omicron cases in WA state were in early December of last year, the severity of the situation has increased

expeditiously over the past few weeks. Vaccinated and unvaccinated people alike are

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# It's 2022. Will Uncle Sam be Drafting You?

By Sophia Lumsdaine

By the end of their senior year, most high school students have either turned 18 or soon will. The transition into legal adulthood brings many new and exciting opportunities to young people, but for young men it also means that they are legally required to register for potential enlistment in a military draft. The draft has been inherent in the identity of our country since its very founding, with the first use being during the American Revolution. Since then, it has been used in the Civil War, World War I and II, and the Korean and Vietnam Wars. Many people are aware of its use in history, but now feel it is dusty and irrelevant, and does not seem to personally relate to them. However, the issues surrounding the draft are still quite pertinent. Having reached their 18th birthday, all young men are required by federal law to sign up with the Selective Service System, the agency which manages records of those eligible for the draft. After a 30-day grace period, failure to register is considered to be a felony, punishable until the time a young man reaches his 26th birthday. No one has been prosecuted for this in the past 35 years, but penalties remain on the book. Short of actual use of the draft, signing up with the Selective Service, or the choice not to do so, has ramifications, even after the 18-to-25-year-old period is over. Registering with the Selective Service can impact receiving college loans and grants in 31 states, as well as federal training and jobs.

Currently, only “male persons,” as specified in the Military Selective Service Act, are required to register. However, there is much debate about extending this to everyone, as topics regarding gender roles are discussed. This July, in both the House and Senate, strong support was shown for expanding draft registration to women in the National Defense Authorization Act of 2022. On December 27th, President Biden signed legislation which failed to broaden draft registration, despite the proposal having strong support this summer. While the effort to incorporate women into the Selective Service System did not become law this year, this recent proceeding indicates how close the country may be to making women eligible for conscription.

Some believe that for a variety of reasons the draft will never be used again. Because technology has become so advanced, a draft force is unreliable, and a war large enough to require the use of conscription seems too drastic to be likely, it is argued that the draft is irrelevant in the 21st century. However, due to the US government's tense relations with both Russia and China, some experts believe that a war with one or both of these powers, though far from certain, is a dangerous possibility. Recent developments in Taiwan and Ukraine, in particular, have highlighted underlying hostility between the great powers. An article in the Atlantic by Hal Brands, professor at the Johns Hopkins School of International Studies, states that federal government analysts and officials are “fretting” over the risk of military confrontation with China. In a

separate Foreign Affairs article, he argues that conflict over Taiwan would quickly escalate and spill into a large-scale military event. “A war [with China] is likely to be long rather than short [...] and much easier to start than to end.” If such a large-scale war were to occur, there is a distinct possibility that a greater supply of troops would be necessary than are currently in the armed forces. Writing for the Modern War Institute at West Point, author Justin Lynch illustrated his thinking through a hypothetical situation. “Consider a scenario in which the United States is fighting a major, non-nuclear, protracted war against a great power adversary ... [The] Army will not be able to continue to meet its operational requirements with its existing force structure. Once the government has that realization, it could turn to the Selective Service System.”

This type of circumstance remains unknown, even quite unlikely, but is enough of a possibility that high school students should be aware of the situation, and consider how they will respond to the Selective Service requirement. During the most recent draft activation, the Vietnam War, vast numbers of young people were drafted, but vast numbers also made the choice to refuse conscription. These individuals were confronted with a decision that may have to be made again. In considering this reality, it is important that young people contemplate their actions regarding the future of the draft and their relation to it as they grow into adulthood.

## Swag Seniors

By Elio Wentzel

Senior Sunday is back, and it's been super sweet to see the smiling/smizing seniors in my yearbook editor inbox. Over the years, my fellow classmates and I have sometimes fallen prey to the whims of the school photo companies that hurriedly take our portraits when we least expect it. Personally, I'm not sure I've had a good hair day with Lifetouch since my fourth grade retakes. Finally, we get the chance to have a successful day of posing and smiling until we forget what the verb means.

Our portraits don't only show off our fits; with all of the tree, ocean, and bunker backgrounds, Fort Worden definitely deserves a shout-out for being a versatile location with lots of foliage and even more wind chill. Even with Pacific Northwest weather, I've had so much fun at senior portrait shoots, yelling “We're in Las Vegas, baby!!” (no idea how that started, but shoutout Jeannette and Lia for going along with it) and getting cute mid-laugh expressions. Taking people's portraits this year, I loved seeing the confidence that comes with seeing a still that illustrates our best

self. As we complete our second-to-last semester of high school, it's important to capture who we are at this moment. It feels so strange that we'll be joining all of the past PTHS classes on the third floor of the main building, right alongside the black-and-white photos of the twentieth century (the earlier half of the twentieth century, we know your class isn't so old that you didn't have color photography Profe). Maybe, we'll look back in ten years and wonder why we chose that shirt to be published in the school yearbook. Still, it'll be nice to reflect and smile at our

excitement at an unknown future. Plus, if Meta sticks around, there's always the opportunity for a Throwback Thursday post to show off the cool cats we were in high school.

# Omicron Variant, Cont.

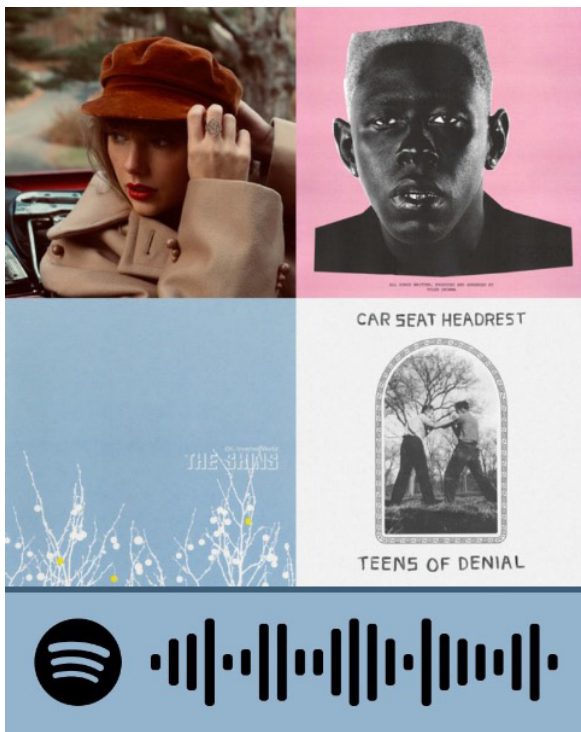
finding themselves at risk of being infected, rapid test results are no longer reliable—especially not on their own—and vaccinated people may want to consider getting their booster shot for optimal, first-rate protection. In summary, “the highly contagious Omicron variant has fueled an explosive surge of known cases, with an average of more than 800,000 new cases a day reported on Saturday,” a recent NYT database reported. In light of such news and as more students and staff become exposed to the inescapable, mysterious variant, Port Townsend High School faces a difficult decision: that of deciding how to proceed in the best interest of both the school body and overarching community of Port Townsend.

Thus far, PTHS has remained in-person, surging forward bravely even in this next phase of the pandemic. Those who have become exposed or tested positive do have ways in which they’re accommodated and able to stay caught up, luckily, sometimes by using that dreaded Zoom link in Google Classroom and other times through simple email or Remind correspondence. Still, some wonder, is it enough? It’s a very frustrating predicament that we are all in. We share the same vulnerable playing field and, no matter how disappointing, some sort of adjustment may need to be made. It’s tempting to want to continue basking in the sense of normalcy, adopting a more laid-back approach to fighting the pandemic. After all, if this

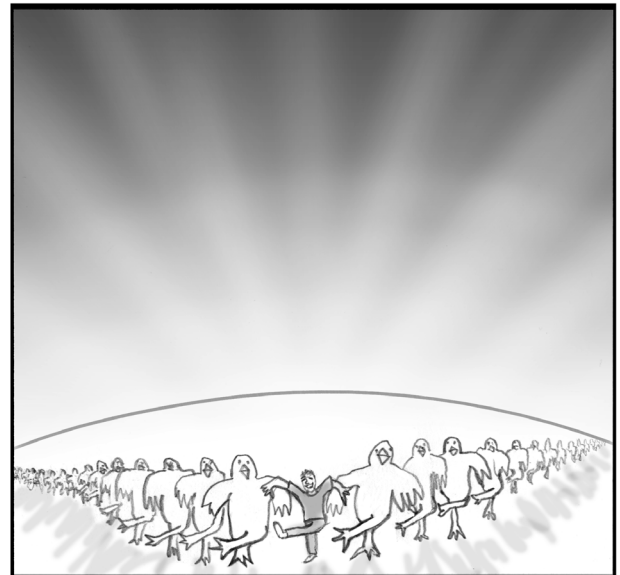
virus will reach all of us, what good does it do to try to protect ourselves? Yet we need to resist this urge by staying persistent and conscientious, even if we don’t want to—at least until the dust of the pandemic settles enough to assuage those who are tired of hearing about the precipitous amount of cases taking place in high contact areas. Growing concerns and questions about long-term impacts of infection expose privileged rhetoric that disability advocates have been fighting against since the very beginning of the pandemic, and it’s become clearer than ever that we must work to protect each and every individual in our community.

The collective PTHS body can agree that it has been a true gift to

have an uninterrupted education during this first semester, marking the return of social and academic consistency in our lives. For students, being able to have class discussions, work on group posters and projects in the same space, and attend club meetings and sports practices alike has been advantageous to all. In light of staying safe, though, transitioning to a more virtual-friendly platform should be more of a consideration and a conversation to be had. In order to ensure the continuation of in-person classes and a strong, sound community in the future, making such sacrifices and adjustments might be necessary.



By Rennie O'Donnell



*“Oh, it’s definitely gonna be a good year!”*

By Fin Watson

# Opinions: Respect, Not Agreement

By Savanna Hoffmann

Opinions. Everyone has one and, usually, they're the root of conflict, especially in a democracy. With the phenomenal invention that is the First Amendment, the presence of disagreement and conflict was well recognized. The Founding Fathers decided it was worth more to allow democracy to flourish and trust that differences could be respected and worked around, rather than to just sweep the nation with more totalitarian ideas to ensure continuity and prevent uprisings. While they weren't perfect people, the

Fathers did have some serious foresight into the future of the experiment in democracy and repeatedly warned against division and factionalism, most notably in Washington's Farewell Address.

It is so frustrating and disheartening to see the country still in such disarray in terms of racial issues, as well as those concerning poverty and other biases that have deep roots in the foundations of America, and even more to see that our elected officials are barely functioning at their jobs. They are meant to represent us and our ideals as Americans. Government officials have spent

too long spitting hate and blame on each other that each side can no longer even recognize a genuinely quality idea if it comes with the opposing party name.

The biggest problem we face now is not singlehandedly at the hands of the Republicans or Democrats; the problem lies in the fact that both sides are so intolerant of each other, respectful conversations about real issues our country faces seem impossible. Every American loses when we perpetuate disrespect towards those whose views differ from our own. Agreement and respect tend to get confused nowadays.

Just because you don't agree with someone else doesn't mean you can't respect that they have that opinion for a reason! This is an important ideal, although it does have its limits. Challenge yourself to look past your own bias and try to consider why someone else thinks the way they do. Make debate an enjoyable activity—it's important to share viewpoints and put yourself in the shoes of another. The future of America is in the hands of our generation, so let's make sure we start strong with healthy, democracy-friendly habits!

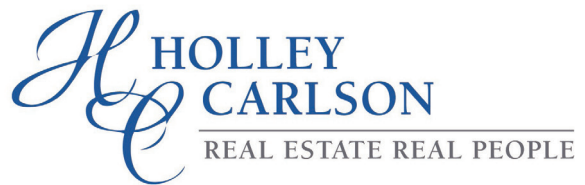
## Staff

## Recommendations

**Elio Wentzel** recommends a peaceful afternoon in the Public Library, either doing an end-of-semester assignment or reading a high-quality book like *Gossip Girl*. The upstairs space offers comfy, socially-distanced chairs and a slightly-scary quiet that permeates

**Sophia Lumsdaine** recommends investing in a good hat this winter, particularly one of Chloe Lampert's super stylish hand-crocheted ones!

**Maya Dow** recommends the second season of *Cheer*, especially good for long hours of an Omicron isolation.



COLDWELL BANKER BEST HOMES

## *The Redhawk Review*

Elio Wentzel - Editor-in-Chief

Sophia Lumsdaine - Junior Editor

Maya Dow - Graphic Design

Julia Neville - PR Maven

We hope you've enjoyed your peruse through this issue of the 2021/2022

Redhawk Review! This paper is written and produced by students, for students. Its aim is to both inform our student body about current events in our school and community and to provide an opportunity for students to get involved with journalism. We are always looking for more students to work with us, either as committed staff members or as contributors of independent pieces addressing topics that they are passionate about.

We'd also love to work with students interested in creative writing, poetry, photography, illustration, or other art forms. If you're interested in journalism, or just in learning more, please let me know! We would love to have you on board. We are creating this with ideas of interest of students in mind, so feedback and thoughts for the future are always appreciated!

Thanks for reading and stay safe,

Elio

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