Benjamin Franklin (January 17, 1706 [O.S. January 6, 1705] – April 17, 1790) was one of the Founding Fathers of the United States. Franklin was a renowned polymath and a leading author, printer, political theorist, politician, freemason, postmaster, scientist, inventor, civic activist, statesman, and diplomat. As a scientist, he was a major figure in the American Enlightenment and the history of physics for his discoveries and theories regarding electricity. As an inventor, he is known for the lightning rod, bifocals, and the Franklin stove, among other inventions.[2] He facilitated many civic organizations, including Philadelphia’s fire department and The University of Pennsylvania, an Ivy League institution.[3]

Franklin earned the title of “The First American” for his early and indefatigable campaigning for colonial unity, initially as an author and spokesman in London for several colonies. As the first United States Ambassador to France, he exemplified the emerging American nation.[4] Franklin was foundational in defining the American ethos as a marriage of the practical values of thrift, hard work, education, community spirit, self-governing institutions, and opposition to authoritarianism both political and religious, with the scientific and tolerant values of the Enlightenment. In the words of historian Henry Steele Commager, “In a Franklin could be merged the virtues of Puritanism without its defects, the illumination of the Enlightenment without its heat.”[5] To Walter Isaacson, this makes Franklin “the most accomplished American of his age and the most influential in inventing the type of society America would become.”[6]

Franklin became a successful newspaper editor and printer in Philadelphia, the leading city in the colonies, publishing the Pennsylvania Gazette at the age of 23.[7] He became wealthy publishing this and Poor Richard’s Almanack, which he authored under the pseudonym “Richard Saunders”. After 1767, he was associated with the Pennsylvania Chronicle, a newspaper that was known for its revolutionary sentiments and criticisms of the British policies. He pioneered and was first president of The Academy and College of Philadelphia which opened in 1751 and later became the University of Pennsylvania. He organized and was the first secretary of the American Philosophical Society and was elected president in 1769. Franklin became a national hero in America as an agent for several colonies when he spearheaded an effort in London to have the Parliament of Great Britain repeal the unpopular Stamp Act. An accomplished diplomat, he was widely admired among the French as American minister to Paris and was a major figure in the development of positive Franco-American relations. His efforts proved vital for the American Revolution in securing shipments of crucial munitions from France.
NHS Contributes to Community

By: Julia Weinick ’17; Gazette Staff Writer

The National Honor Society is an organization that recognizes outstanding high school students. NHS members have demonstrated excellence in areas such as leadership, character, and service.

To be eligible, a student must have a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale. The society also possesses the four pillars of NHS: leadership, character, service, and scholarship. Students in grades 10-12 who fit these requirements are eligible for acceptance into NHS. Students who are accepted into NHS should be aware of the time and commitment involved.

Because she believes it is a good club and it will benefit her as a student and as a person, Love stated, “I am excited to be a part of a club with members who share the same values as me and enjoy helping the community.”

Love has participated in several community service opportunities. She expressed that her favorite community service has been working with younger children. She has had the opportunity to do this through the Leadership Training program at Beth Tikvah Camps, where she is an aid to a counselor and learns the responsibility of taking care of young children.

The junior maintenance forms are completed in March, but Julia Sacks has already got a head start. Sacks is heavily involved with her youth group that helps out in the community on a regular basis. Her group works with Art with a Heart, located in Baltimore. She expressed that this community organization helps make art for Baltimore to make it a “brighter and more beautiful” city.

Sacks stated, “I want to feel that I made a difference in someone’s life and realized how much I have helped even if it’s through a little action.”

To stay in NHS, seniors are required to be involved in at least 20 hours of service throughout the year. This can include service within the school, sports, service in the community, club involvement, or holding a leadership position in an organization. In addition, the senior members are required to have participated in three NHS activities such as Penny Wednesday, refugee blanket making, and canned food drive, peer tutoring, crisis center, junior ring escort, or freshmen orientation.

NHS is where all members join together to make an impact in their Franklin and Baltimore community.
There’s no place like the home that is created by the Franklin theater program. This year the theater program decided on The Wizard of Oz as the spring musical. Through the imagination of the participants and the great collaboration between students and director the amazing world of Oz can come to life. Students from all parts of the school come to audition to be a part of the exciting adventure known as High School Theater. Anyone can audition if they want as long as they prepare the required material. Auditioning is a two to three day process that starts with individual singing auditions consisting of one minute of a song from a musical and anything else Mr. Hughes or Mr. Kessel asks to hear such as matching notes. The next day is dance auditions, and the choreographers teach the students part of one of the dances from the show. After learning the dance, an individual group of about eight people perform the dance twice for Mr. Hughes. After dance auditions come call backs, which sometimes continue the next day. Call backs are when the director wants to see a specific student again or other students do specific things such as read for a character.

The Wizard of Oz is a show about a girl named Dorothy who lives on a farm in Kansas and runs away, but after returning home is swept up with her house in a massive tornado. The tornado brings her to a mysterious land called Munchkin Land where she inadvertently kills one of the wicked witches and meets Glinda the Good Witch who wants to help her get home and the Wicked Witch of the West who wants to kill Dorothy for murdering her sister. On the way to the city of Oz to meet the Wizard on the yellow brick road, Dorothy befriends the scarecrow, the tin man, and the cowardly lion who she takes with her on her journey. Through battling witches and flying monkeys they embark on the adventure of their lives.

The students have different views on auditioning. Rosy Henderson said, “I’m most excited about the costumes, but I’m nervous for the props.” Maya Williams said, “I’m excited for the choreography, and I’m nervous for the singing.” Jacob Sanchez is exited for set and costume but nervous about special effects. Jordan Greene is exited for the sound effects. For the show all the students are expecting it to be a great experience for the technical aspect and a great family connection that brings a sense of happiness and closure for the seniors.

Like any tryout or audition it can be nerve racking and stressful, but as long as students are prepared and don’t stress themselves out more than they should, it will be exciting and at the end of the show process it will be worth it.
To receive our new quarterly email bulletin, please provide us with a personal email address. Email alumnifhs@gmail.com to update.

Alumni meetings are held every other month starting September, 2016. Refer to Website franklinalumni.com for more information.