

2017 Mid-Term Exam Cancellation

Mia Fuller
Staff Writer

The decision is in, please stand by...

By the time January comes around, it seems that every Freeman student turns on their Twitter notifications, not for a celebrity or the hottest tech company, but for the Henrico County Public Schools official Twitter account.

HCPS communicates to parents and students about future school activities, fundraisers, sports events, and any other educational detail that could ever be necessary.

Yet, what Henrico students get most excited about is when their favorite Communications and Public Relations director, Andy Jenks, sends a message.

Mr. Jenks' job is to serve as a public figure for the Henrico County Public Schools system.

"I serve as the chief spokesperson for the school division, which means I coordinate crisis communications, news coverage of the school division, and I carry out the announcements involved in closing school for inclement weather," Mr. Jenks said.

In December, Mr. Jenks posted a county-wide Schoology alert, encouraging students and parents to take a survey regarding their opinions on how snow days should affect mid-term exams.

"There were a wide variety of options, as you can imagine," said Mr. Jenks. "Here's a shocker...a lot of students indicated that we should think about cancelling exams. Never saw that coming."

The survey's intent was to hear from the county on what its opinions were of mid-terms.

When decisions regarding exams have to be made, now or in the future, the survey will give an insight into what may be the best course of action for possible cancellations.

"We look at it as a big picture," said Mr. Jenks. "We want

Article continued on Page 2.



PHOTO: THE CLIO

Feeding the Byrd Funding Richmond's Historic Theater

Mia Fuller
Staff Writer

Maybe you missed seeing the newest block-buster film in theaters. Or, maybe you want to see a film over again without paying a large sum of money.

Whatever the case may be, people everywhere can see many popular movies for a bargain price at the Byrd Theatre in Richmond.

The Byrd was built in 1928 and is named after William Byrd, a founder of Richmond. The historic character of the theatre has been sustained through the years, keeping the same crystal chandelier, marbling, and paintings intact.

The Byrd has always been known for its low ticket prices. Recently though, it has raised ticket prices from \$2 to \$3 for admission and a \$1 facility fee.

Though the price change will not affect the customers significantly, the extra charge is going to help keep it as a functioning Richmond establishment.

General Manager Todd Schall-Vess, has been working and practically running the Byrd for the past 19 years.

"Our price has always been below the normal movie ticket price, and we hope to keep it that way," Mr. Schall-Vess said.

The rise in price, however, will help the Byrd with financial stability.

"The ticket raise is going toward the operational side," Mr. Schall-Vess said. "It is a business, and it has to be taken care of."

However, renovations are to be strictly funded by grants and donations from public.

Over time, the overall appearance and details of the theatre have aged and need replacement. In the past few years, the Byrd Theatre has had a roof replace-

ment, air conditioning replacement, and boiler and plaster repairs.

In the future, it is looking to replace the old red seats, renovate the marquee outside the theatre, update the restrooms, replace the carpet, and address other structural needs.

"The thing that has been misinterpreted in the news is that the price raise is going toward renovations. However, the price raise is going toward the operational costs of the business—not necessarily the renovations," Mr. Schall-Vess said.

This year, Freeman's senior class had the opportunity to go to the Byrd Theatre as part of the revival of "Senior Movie Day." On January 31, the senior class traveled down to Cary Street and watched *Ferris Bueller's Day Off* with their fellow classmates.

The whole experience was organized by Mrs. Bargo and the

Article continued on Page 2.

Students Showcase Diverse Talents

Molly Herring
Staff Writer

Saturday Night Live is coming to Freeman. The annual student talent show has seen some extraordinary acts in the past. This year, Freeman is steering away from tradition.

The new Student Variety Show will be "more cohesive, tied together, with a common theme," said Ashley Weber, junior class sponsor and show director.

In the past, there have been plenty of musicians and performers, and all are welcome, but this year Mrs. Weber encourages students to grab a few friends and put together casual, funny acts as well.

Mrs. Weber recruited freshman Anna Durham and senior Zechariah Hartzog to host because "their personalities are a good fit for the show," said Mrs. Weber.

The responsibility of organizing the show falls on the junior class officers this year.

"We make advertisements for the show to figure out how we can raise the most money for prom," said junior class president Zach Schwertz. The ticket revenue from the show will go towards a band for prom.

This show will also showcase the talent of Freeman's two MCs. "This is something I've always wanted to do. I want to be on TV and whatnot," said Zechariah.

Anna is hoping this will be her "in" to the entertainment industry. She plans to hook viewers with her charisma and big smile.

"My life goal is to be Jimmy Fallon," said Anna.

"Students should sign up so they can showcase their talents to their friends and family members and because it is an opportunity to see new people. It is going to show how diverse and interesting Freeman is," said Zach.

If you would rather not perform, show up and support your friends alongside senior Alexander Obaugh.

"It's going to be really funny, and everybody is going to be laughing and smiling," said Alexander.

The Variety Show is already racking up some exciting acts.

"I am singing, performing with a band, and I think I am an aerobics instructor in a skit, too," said senior Myles Casey.

Myles encourages students that are too shy to perform to come watch the show and support their classmates.

"I mean honestly the fact that Madison Sutherland, Myles Casey, Nick Ackies, Alexander Obaugh, and Zechariah Hartzog are all going to be in leotards and legwarmers is enough to get people to show," said Myles.

Senior Nick Ackies is highly anticipating to the show.

"I'm a senior, and I've never done anything like this before, so this is going to be my last YOLO moment before I graduate," said Nick.

The Student Variety Show is an opportunity to break out of your shell.

"Don't be afraid, be yourself," said Anna.

The Student Variety Show is on Feb. 10 at 7p.m. in the auditorium. Tickets are \$5. Sign up or show up.

Tutoring Program Inspires Entire School

KeAnna Anglin
Editor-in-Chief

Freeman faculty and students pride themselves on being a family, a collective coming together to support one another in various endeavors, challenging themselves and their peers, and being their best selves. For this, one need not look further than the Algebra I tutoring program.

A week before winter break, Associate Principal John Marshall and geometry and math remediation teacher Anupama Pasyavala launched the Algebra I tutoring program.

This program is a biweekly peer tutoring opportunity to help students pass their retakes of the Algebra I SOL in February of 2017.

"We have students who are working to pass an SOL class but are enrolled in a different [math] class, and we saw a need for them to get some extra help. I am the supervising administra-

tor of the math department, so I worked with Mrs. Campbell, who heads Mu Alpha Theta, Mrs. Pasyavala, who works with math remediation, and Mrs. McKinney, a SOL coordinator, to come up with a solution," said Mr. Marshall.

Peer tutors meet with their tutorees twice a week in the small gym during their lunch and study periods.

"We meet each Tuesday and Thursday," said junior peer tutor Mary Katherine West.

"Usually, there is a new set of notes for the tutor and student to go through each day. After reviewing the notes, there is a set of practice problems that [the peer tutor and the student] complete together to ensure that the student understands the material. Finally, the student completes an assessment on that day's lesson to see what he or she has retained," said Mary Katherine.

Many students in the program have enjoyed their tutoring experiences.

"Both of my student tutors are

amazing," said freshman Kayla Jones.

"The program has been extremely helpful because now that I am in geometry, it is nice to have people to help me study and refresh my memory. I love how my tutors don't just give me the answers but also challenge me to try and figure it out myself," said Kayla.

"I love how my tutors don't just give me the answers but also challenge me to try and figure it out myself."

- Kayla Jones

The program currently hosts 40 tutorees and 40 peer tutors. However, at this time, tutoring is only available to students working to pass the Algebra I SOL in

February.

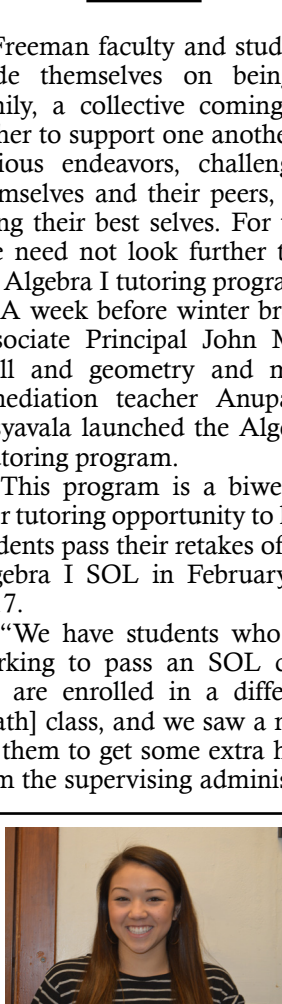
Currently, peer tutoring opportunities are only available to juniors who have been identified by their respective math teachers as good candidates and senior members of MuAlphaTheta, but there are plans for expansion in the future.

"I am working with Mr. Marshall to extend this program to students who will be taking the Algebra I and Geometry SOL in the Spring," said Mrs. Pasyavala.

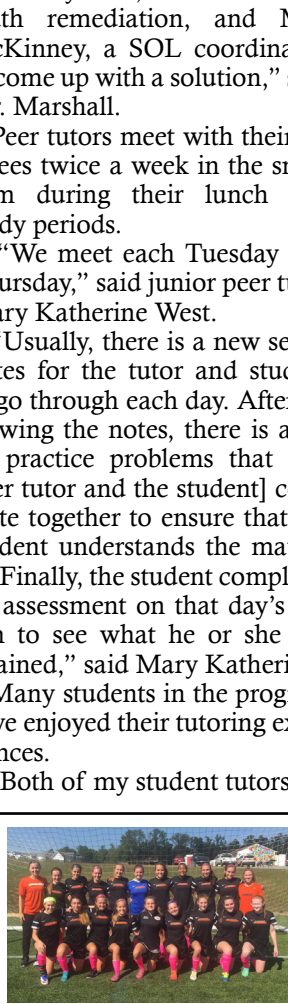
"We have very few student tutors who feel confident about helping in geometry, so that can pose a challenge. Nevertheless, I am glad to help in any way possible to get our students to pass their math SOL," said Mrs. Pasyavala.

Beyond simply the math help, there are lessons for the teachers, students, and peer tutors as well in helping the school.

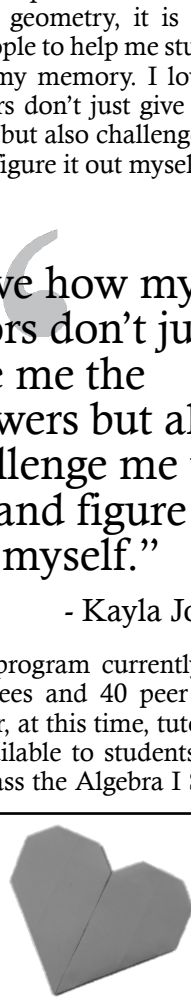
"This program has shown me how important it is to help the people around us and work together to better our school," said Mary Katherine.



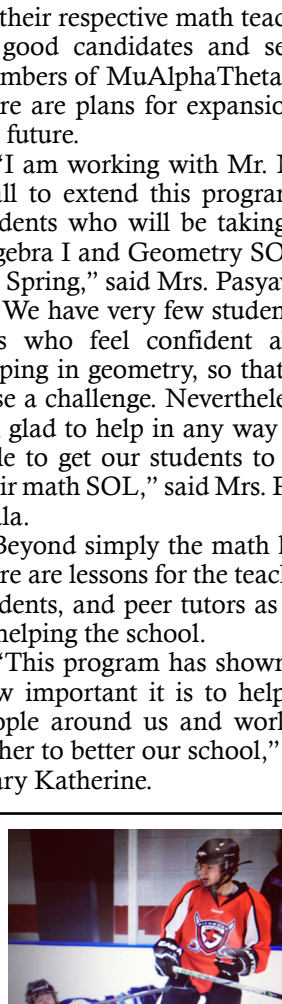
Opinions:
More Than A Test Score?



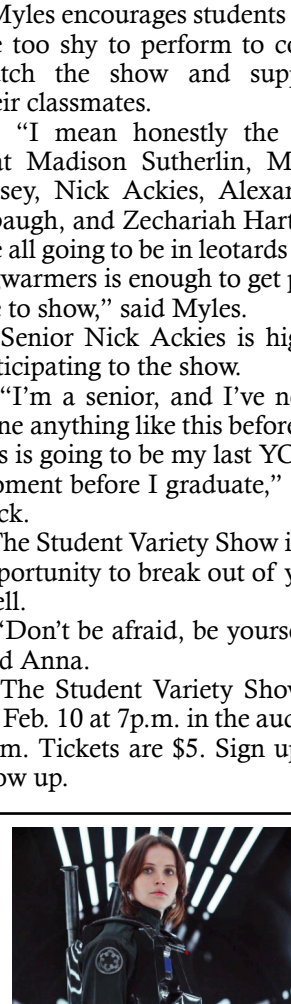
Features:
Jackie Hemp



Center Spread:
Love is love is love...



Sports:
Ice Hockey



Arts & Entertainment:
Rogue One to Ten?





PHOTOS: EMILY FINTO

The Google Gals

Girls Tech Club Defies Gender Norms

Megan Kelleher
Staff Writer

To the outsider, the words “css” and “html” may have no significance. But to senior Gabby De-Filippo, these terms are integral to coding, a passion that led her to start Freeman’s very first girl-oriented technology club.

In eighth grade, Gabby developed her affinity for coding. She started teaching herself bits and pieces of the “basic frameworks” of coding, she said.

Wiley Hunnicutt, the club sponsor, said that Gabby “was motivated to empower girls by teaching them how to code.”

In her junior year, Gabby formed the Girl’s Club of Technology.

During one of the meetings last year, Gabby “brought in one of [her] mentors to talk about her experience in the technol-

ogy field,” she said. The club “worked with coding on Notepad on [their] computers,” creating HTML coding which “is the basic code behind every webpage you see,” she said.

In order to make the teaching process “more personalized,” Gabby decided to teach the club with the website Code Academy. Code Academy explains “step-by-step how to code,” she said. At every meeting since school started, the club has worked with “‘make a website,’ ‘html,’ and ‘learn html and css’” features on the website, she said.

In a typical meeting, the members use “a series of websites” to “research different aspects of coding that interests them,” said junior Alexandra Smyth, club member. However, the club also “discuss[es] potential service projects through coding,” she said.

The club found a fun activity to combine both coding and new

technology to benefit the Freeman community. At the club’s most recent meeting, an elementary school Instructional Technology Resource Teacher (ITRT) came in to show the club how to design things to print on a 3D printer.

Usually, coding and 3D printing do not go together—“coding is generally used to create stuff that you interact with virtually (i.e. a software program or a video game), whereas 3D printing is used to create a tangible object (i.e. a plastic toy or model),” said Jessica Ciokan, ITRT.

Using a program called Tinker Cad, with a gadget called a “Makey-Makey,” the club is planning to design objects to “tell time, word sentences, alphabetize, count money,” or even “block calendars,” Gabby said. In order to integrate the world of coding and 3D printing, the “Makey-Makey” gadget “allows [the club] to connect a computer

to objects in real life,” said Ms. Ciokan.

The club is in the early stages of developing its design; however, one thing the members are sure of is that they want to give the finished products to the Academic Integration Services (AIS) students here at Freeman.

“To ensure that the products they create are relevant to the students in the AIS program, the club officers and I met with the teachers of the AIS program earlier this month and identified the types of skills that their students need to develop and practice,” said Ms. Ciokan.

Because of the emphasized “daily life skills,” the club wants to give back to the Freeman community. “Creating these things for Freeman students in the AIS program gives this project a clear and relevant purpose,” said Ms. Ciokan.

As an advocate for more women considering the science and

technology field, Gabby knew that the “Girls in STEM” event at Holman Middle School would be a perfect opportunity for the club. The event is hosting girls from grades three to five, in an effort to foster a love for STEM at a young age.

The club will be teaching alongside other groups around Richmond such as the Science Museum, Godwin’s Math and Science Center, and Dominion Power. The event will be using a program called Light Bot—specifically designed for younger children—to develop the “basic logic” for coding early through games and other fun activities.

Whether it be coding, service, or advocacy for involvement, what is unique for the Girls Club of Technology is that they “learn stuff they think is cool just for the sake of learning it,” said Ms. Ciokan, promoting learning both inside and outside the classroom.

Rebel-Con Saves The Day

Rachel Alexander
Staff Writer

Two brothers attempt to resurrect their mother using alchemy, only to be drawn into a battle for the fate of humanity. A young girl confesses her feelings to her crush, who fears she has uncovered his most embarrassing secret. A possessed student serial killer murders his classmates one by one. A basketball team struggles to work together and succeed as a team.

These are some of the stories that the moving animation of anime and the still cartoons of manga tell. Originally created by Japanese artists, anime movies and manga graphic novels have diffused across cultural lines, finding dedicated fans and casual enthusiasts right here at Freeman High School.

“Our mangas are so well-worn, and we’re constantly buying new ones,” said Rosemary Wheeler, school librarian. Recognizing the wide student interest in the genre, Ms. Wheeler and the library staff worked to plan Freeman’s first-ever annual Rebel-Con.

Rebel-Con was hosted in the library during all lunches on Wednesday, Dec. 14, and was held in concert with the library’s book fair. Anime, manga, and comic book fans got to hear from speaker Eric Russel, who works part-time in the production of comic books and graphic novels and shares interest in this unique form of Japanese art and storytelling.

“You got to see what it was like, to be in the position of an animator or artist out in the real world,” said freshman Al Gilstrap, a self-proclaimed member of multiple “nerd societies.”

“So many students are interested in the illustration end of manga and anime,” said Ms. Wheeler. “Mr. Russel came prepared to say one thing, but he

changed what he had to say to what their interest was.”

“[The anime art style] has inspired me to draw some really cool things,” said freshman Alexia Hess. “It is hard to draw the bodies of [anime characters], but I really like the eyes,” she said. From action-packed ninja fight scenes to Medieval Victorian settings to elegant figure-skating sequences, the dynamic animation style of anime has inspired a strong base of viewers here at Freeman.

Leading up to Rebel-Con, Ms. Wheeler posted a school-wide poll posted on Schoology to find out what students would like to learn from Mr. Russel. The majority indicated a curiosity to find out about upcoming shows and manga, while the close second had voted to learn how to get involved in the industry.

“I was thinking of possibly entering a portfolio to Marvel and D.C.,” said Alexia, who would ultimately like to pursue a job in the comic book industry.

To answer questions about how to pursue illustration as a career, Mr. Russel talked about the different techniques and skills an artist must have, and when asking him questions, “[the students] knew what they were talking about,” said Ms. Wheeler. “They knew the jargon of the subject matter.”

Students were not only knowledgeable, but also excited. Although each lunch block saw varied attendance, the anime, manga, and comic book fans were captivated by Mr. Russel’s presentation—some even dressed up as their favorite characters for the event.

“Now that we’ve got a small group that has shown real interest, we can work with them to make [Rebel-Con] better next year,” said Ms. Wheeler.

According to Ms. Wheeler, events like Rebel-Con are important in representing the diversity in student interests.

“You feel like, ‘Hey, I’m not the only nerd,’” said Al.

2017 Mid-Term Exam Cancellation

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to make decisions in the best interest of students, their families, and our district as a whole.”

That is why, on Jan. 13, at exactly 4 p.m., the student parking lot of Douglas Southall Freeman erupted with car horns and celebratory screams. Mr. Jenks had finally sent out the tweet everyone was waiting for: 2017 mid-term exams would be cancelled.

“As a school division, we felt that additional time dedicated to classroom instruction, in lieu of mid-term exams, would be beneficial to students and their families,” said Mr. Jenks.

Closing school, let alone cancelling mid-terms, is a tricky decision. The communications department takes a lot into consideration for calling a snow day,

and how many snow days are called plays into the cancellation of mid-terms. “Safety is the number one concern,” said Mr. Jenks.

Whenever a snowstorm hits, workers from the transportation department must examine all the roadways to see what the traveling conditions are like. They also have to check the walkways and driveways at every Henrico County school.

Technically, there is not a concretely allotted amount of snow days HCPS is allowed. It is better to think of it in terms of instructional hours, not days. “Currently, our instructional day is longer than the minimum required by the state. So, every day we accumulate ‘banked’ time. This is advantageous because when we lose a day or two because of

snow, it chips away at that ‘bank’ but we’re still very much ahead of the minimum amount of instructional hours required by Virginia,” said Mr. Jenks.

So, midterms are in return affected by the loss of class time. If enough class time is taken away by snow, then mid-terms would be cancelled, but if there is still plenty of time in between, mid-terms will go on as planned.

As for the future of mid-term exams, nothing is set in stone. Things happen, weather changes, and plans alter every day. So, the county will just have to continue to listen out for those messages from Mr. Jenks. “I’m prepared to represent the school division in any way necessary, and to make sure folks feel fully informed about the issues they care about,” he said.

Feeding the Byrd

Funding Richmond’s Historic Theatre

Continued from Page 1

senior class officers in hopes of bringing back the forgotten Freeman tradition.

“I reorganized Mrs. Criswell’s binder from when she was sponsor, and I found this tab that said ‘Senior Movie’ which interested me... I thought it would be neat to bring this tradition back,” Mrs. Bargo said.

Over 300 tickets were purchased for the event, practically filling up the Byrd with the senior class.

“I hope that the tradition can continue as long as possible, and I hope the students enjoy it,” Mrs. Bargo said.

This movie experience for Freeman students will not only act as a senior “perk,” but will also bring in additional funds for the Byrd, giving the theatre more compensation

for renovations as well as maintenance.

There are many ways to help the Byrd Theatre. People can go to byrdtheatre.com/information/fundraising to find out more about ways to donate.

The Byrd is also hoping to start a membership program soon that will help with the funds for renovations. There are also vol-

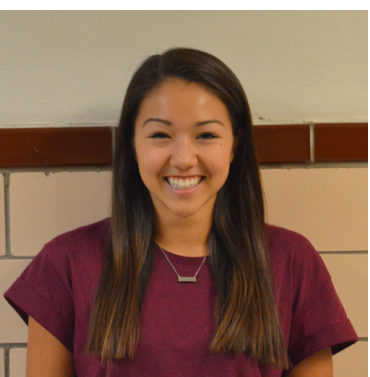
unteer opportunities through the Byrd that allow students to help contribute to the growth of the theatre.

The future of the Byrd Theatre relies on its customers and their willingness to keep the Byrd alive for years to come. If you cannot make a donation, going to see a movie will also help with the progress of the Byrd. Something as simple as watching your favorite new movie can make a big difference in the preservation of Richmond’s historic Byrd Theatre.

“We don’t expect high school level kids to feel the need to donate; however, there is absolutely no such thing as a small donation,” Mr. Schall-Vess said.



Are We More Than a Test Score?



Sarah Lim
Opinions Editor

If you ask high school students what their least favorite part about high school is, I'll bet a majority of answers will include midterms and finals. Midterms are stressful for various reasons. With midterms

worth 20% of a semester grade, they have a substantial affect on your overall GPA. Additionally, an immense amount of time must be dedicated to memorizing and understanding all the concepts taught over 18 weeks in seven various classes.

Are midterms worth the stress and anxiety they induce?

Cumulative tests are going to be a part of college and the learning process. Learning how to study for and to take an exam are skills that will be valuable for the rest of your life.

Many graduate level degrees require a final cumulative assessment in order to receive a master or doctorate level certification.

Individuals pursuing a trade job that does not require a college degree, such as an EMT, real estate broker, personal trainer, or pilot, must take a certification exam.

Though there is future value in the skills associated with test taking, for us teenage scholars, why must we constantly be tested in order to prove our educational worth?

Perhaps the problem with midterms isn't the test itself, but the idea that we are worth the number or letter grade that arises from that test. Perhaps the problem is the culture of education associated with test taking.

In the current public school education system, teachers are forced to constrain students to 18 weeks to learn a set amount of materials. Let's call this material a "standard of learning" or better yet, an SOL.

Teachers inspect and identify where there are problems in understanding the first half of SOLs with midterms. The scores typically have a normally distributed outcome. Most students

should perform at an average level while some will be above and below average.

To appreciate how absurd this concept of learning is, think of this same model in daily life, for instance, building a home.

There's a contractor who is told he has two weeks to build a foundation for the home. He tries his best and is then inspected on his work to ensure it is up to standard and receives an 80%. Great, it's average. It is time to build the first floor. In two weeks, he does all he can to ensure everything is up to code. This time he receives a 75%. He keeps building and building until the whole structure collapses.

If your reaction is one that people typically have in education, then you may wonder if you had a bad contractor. Perhaps you needed different standards to use for inspection or simply more

frequent inspection.

What nobody seems to question is the process. Why did that builder continue to build if the foundation was average? Why do teachers test students during mid-term examinations but then continue racing through new material so the student can perform averagely on yet another examination?

Instead of constraining when and how long a student has to master the SOL causing the scores to vary, what should vary is amount of time a student receives to understand the material allowing all students to master the material.

Midterms are very hard to prepare for, and sometimes even harder to take. Millions of kids have taken midterms before and millions more will take them after you and me.

He Said

Jack Neary
Opinions Editor

Chick-fil-a drive through. Split the check. #equality

Black Mirror. Don't watch it with your mom. Or your younger sister.

Why won't anyone let me follow them?

Snowing on Monday and 70 on Friday. Make up your mind.

No exams? No more stress #ezpeasy

I watch it for the commercials.



Perfect Date

Netflix Recommendations

Finstas

Richmond Weather

2nd Semester

Super Bowl

She Said

Sarah Lim
Opinions Editor

April 25th because it's not too hot and not too cold. All you need is a light jacket.

The Wonder Years. Fun for the whole family.

...They should not exist.

January blizzards bring... January summers?

Rain drop. Drop top. My GPA is gonna drop drop.

I hope Peyton Manning wins again.

Do Students Deserve to Sign?



Kyle Adams
Editor-in-Chief

The primary mission of school: to educate.

While this seems obvious, American society has effectively rerouted the purpose of high school to instead revolve around social interactions, self-discovery, and of course, sports.

All three of the aforementioned aspects are certainly vital to the authentic high school experience, but as a whole there is a deficiency of enthusiasm surrounding students who excel in the academic sphere of high school compared to those who impress in sports.

When Freeman students receive the enviable opportunity to

play sports at the collegiate level, they receive signing days. These days are filled with celebration of the student-athlete as everyone gathers in the school library to hear parents and coaches laud their kids and to watch the student-athletes sign their letters of intent.

Student-athletes deserve these signing days, for they put in countless hours of work to perfect their crafts daily. The commitment to their school and their sports warrants outspoken appreciation. However, I am rather confused as to why the best academic students in the school do not receive similar reverence.

There are scholars walking the halls of Freeman who await decisions from various Ivy League schools in addition to other upper-echelon universities. They put just as much, if not more, time into their work as many student-athletes. They go through similar frustrations and difficult journeys to success. They will receive offers of admission and be just as elated as student-athletes are. Also, there is just as much excitement surrounding those major college decisions as those of athletes.

So, why do these students not get school-sponsored soirées for their noteworthy feats, too?

Criteria-wise, I am uncertain of what would qualify someone for an academic signing day. The school could hold the function for the top tier of students ranked in the class, whether it be top 15 or top 20.

Schools should encourage students to prosper both in the classroom and on the field or court. Athletics should not supersede academics in an institution where the chief operation is to educate. The student who earns admission into a premier academic university deserves equal public veneration from the school to which they have devoted countless hours.

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Letters to the editor are encouraged. They must be signed before they can be printed. Because of variety and space, only a limited number of letters can be published. The Commentator reserves the right not to print a letter.

A Guide to Getting Fit



Jack Neary
Opinions Editor

Get the Right Outfit

The first and most important part of a workout is the look. You have to look good to feel good. Buy some dri-fit t-shirts and some running shorts. Neon running shoes are also a must. Let everyone know you're the best runner around. You also have to be able to move around in your clothes. Practice some high kicks to make sure your outfit is roomy enough.

Find a Workout Plan

Now that you have the right outfit, it's time to figure out what you'll be doing in that outfit. Find the right workout routine for what you want to accom-

plish. If you want to build arm muscle, then you shouldn't do as much running. If you want toned legs, then hop on the treadmill or go do some deadlifts. The internet is a great tool to find a workout; but if you have money to spend, you can always get a personal trainer.

Get a Gym Buddy

Everybody needs some help. Find a friend who wants to work out so you can go together. This will help keep you accountable and make going to the gym more fun. Make sure your gym buddy has a schedule that allows you to go at the same time. Also, make sure your friend isn't a lot stronger than you so you look weak by comparison. I cannot stress this enough.

Actually Work Out

This is definitely the worst part of working out. Kinda sucks but also kinda important.

Start a Fitsta

You did the hard part. Now you get to show it off! Start a fitsta to let other people know about your progress. (I had never heard of a fitsta before I wrote this. Apparently it's an Instagram where you post stuff about your workout.) This can be funny or serious. Either way, it lets others know what you're doing and helps keep you accountable for

your workout. Don't let down your followers!

Hit the Sauna

Wow! That was a tough workout. You earned some spa time. Go hang out in the sauna or steam room. If you don't have one of those available, just take a relaxing bubble bath or turn on your shower until the bathroom feels like a steam room. Now you're balling on a budget.

Eat Right

Even when you're not in the gym, you're still working. To make sure you get the most out of your workout, you need to eat food that helps you exercise. Some people try a diet, like the Whole 30 or the Paleo Diet. (Spoiler Alert: the Paleo diet is not historically accurate. You don't have to hunt and kill your food with stone tools.) However, the most important thing is to eat balanced meals that are low on processed sugars. Think about the basic food pyramid and go from there.

Keep Doing Your Thing

Now that you've started, don't stop. Getting in shape and staying in shape takes continued effort. But don't worry. Now that you've read a comprehensive guide, you're ready to go!

Jackie Hemp Leaves No Kid Behind

Megan Kelleher
Staff Writer

Soccer is more than just a sport for sophomore Jackie Hemp; it is a way to form a lasting connection with others through volunteer work and donations.

As a member of the Strikers Soccer 2000 Elite Girls Team, Jackie volunteered with United Methodist Family Services this past November.

Strikers has a partnership with UMFS, and with nearly 40 foster kids at UMFS, the Strikers' players "help the kids there who are having a tough time at home with their families," Jackie said.

Players are not the only ones volunteering at UMFS with Strikers. "The coaches go and coach the [UMFS] kids during gym class once a month," Jackie said.

In the past two years, "some of the Striker people go volunteer and set up Christmas lights for the holidays," Jackie said. This year, while hanging up Christmas lights together at UMFS, Jackie struck up a conversation with an employee.

"The woman was saying that they [the kids at UMFS] really like soccer and they're all asking for soccer balls this Christmas," Jackie said. The children's love for soccer originated from



Jackie poses with her Strikers Soccer 2000 Elite Girls Team.

PHOTO: JENNIFER ROBERTSON

"the complimentary soccer clinics that Strikers provides on a monthly basis at UMFS," said Ann Hemp, Jackie's mom.

This got Jackie thinking about what she could do to help the community at UMFS. "We wanted to get them all soccer balls," Jackie said.

Most of the children "were go-

ing to ask for soccer balls, but most of the parents can't afford to get soccer balls," Jackie said. She took initiative "to make sure that each kid got at least one thing they wanted for Christmas this year," Jackie said.

Because Jackie's coach had organized the volunteer opportunity, she helped Jackie get in

touch with the employee she had spoken to at UMFS.

Jackie emailed the woman, who "gave me all of the kids' names and how old they were."

Following the email, Jackie and her family "went to Premier Soccer and ordered 40 soccer balls, giftwrapped them, and sent cards for each of the kids," Jackie said.

"When the coaches went to do their monthly clinic, they took the soccer balls with them to give to the kids," Jackie said.

The Hemp family "normally does some sort of donation" each holiday season. Mrs. Hemp emphasized that in their family, she and Mr. Hemp "teach [their] children to help others when they can," she said. In previous years, the Hemp family has chosen "an Angel Tree kid from church;" however, "instead of doing that this year, we donated the soccer balls."

Mr. and Mrs. Hemp felt "proud that Jackie is such a compassionate person," and that they were glad that Jackie looked "to help those who are less fortunate," Mrs. Hemp said.

This year was particularly rewarding for Jackie.

"I was really happy that the kids would have something fun to open on Christmas," Jackie said, beaming. "Hopefully they'll make use and have fun with their gift."

In the years to come, Jackie hopes to have a bigger role in the UMFS community.

"One of the coaches asked if I wanted to go help coach with their coaches next January to watch their coaching session to learn from them," she said. She also hopes to do "something similar" with the donations "to help the organization next year."

What Was The First Thing You Noticed About Your Significant Other?

"She is really nice and funny."

"Probably his personality. I've known him since elementary school, and he's super nice."

Juniors Lucy Fonville and Drew Frank

"I would say what attracted me to him was his personality. He's outgoing, and I can be weird and fully myself around him."

"The thing that really caught my eye was her sarcasm, making us an instant match."

Sophomores Hopper Strauchler and Abbey Collier

"Probably how outgoing he is and his looks, not gonna lie."

"The first thing I noticed was definitely her smile and how friendly she was."

Sophomore Katy Coleman and Senior LJ Crossley

Junior Starts Boat Restoration Business

Ryan McCracken
Staff Writer

Nathan Bergstrom sees a business opportunity where others never think to look. He has ventured into the world of used boat sales, purchasing fixer-uppers and flipping them for a profit.

Three years ago, Nathan was browsing Craigslist with his older brother, Christian, when they stumbled upon an old motorized fishing boat for sale. Sensing a deal, the brothers pounced on the opportunity. Inspiration struck when they determined that by working on the boat and restoring it to its former condition, they could increase the value enough to make some serious money.

For Nathan and his brother, mechanical know-how runs in the family. "My father and my grandfather are both mechanically inclined," said Nathan. "We've learned a lot of what we do from them."

Although fixing the boats can be grueling work, it is worth it for Nathan. "It usually ends up taking around 12 hours," said Nathan. "But we get to make

a lot of money, and we enjoy doing it."

Their most recent boat, obtained for \$6,000, ended up selling for \$13,000. The duo has sold a total of five boats, netting them roughly \$15,000 in overall profit. So far, Nathan has put all of his earnings into savings.

One tactic Nathan uses to raise the worth of his boats is to buy them in the winter and then wait to resell them in the summer, when the market is hot and the prices are at their highest. "People don't realize that by selling their boats in the offseason, they're losing money," said Nathan. "So, we kind of use that to our advantage."

Nathan typically negotiates the prices in-person

with the buyer and rarely haggles. "They usually give an idea of what they want, and most of the time it's just yes or no," he said.

Nathan and his brother make the most of their time with the boats. "We use them while we're fixing them up instead of just letting them sit there," he said.

Nathan enjoys spending time on boats so much that soon he plans to buy one of his own, a nineteen-foot bass boat he has been keeping his eye on for a while now.

Nathan intends to keep buying and selling boats for the foreseeable future, and whether or not he continues to do so, there is a bright future on the horizon.



PHOTO: CHRISTIAN BERGSTROM

Nathan tests his boat in the water.

Freeman Students Go Live

Mackenzie King
Features Editor

"We are live in three, two, one!" Ms. Rae LaBrie, the photography and video media teacher, began teaching the morning announcements class—now club—when she became the photography teacher at Freeman four years ago.

Ms. LaBrie encourages students to join the morning announcements crew for the hands-on experience and student-led style of learning.

"What I've heard from students in the past is that they get to meet a lot of people, and it becomes like a family because we are all working towards this production," she said.

Sophomore Andy Hansell was first introduced to this "family" as a stand-in last year. As a student across the hall in a technology class, he was asked to fill in for the day because of the lack of students in the crew. After being introduced to the set and technology, Andy was asked to become a full-time member.

"When they asked if I wanted to join, it was an instant yes for me," he said.

Andy's first time as anchor was not until a few months after he joined the



PHOTO: ALEX MOSS

anchors broadcast the morning announcements.

crew, though.

"I was scared to start because what if I messed up? The whole school is watching," he said.

The students rotate roles in the class, so each person can experience a new aspect of the production. Roles include: anchor, weatherman, cameraman, video board, sound board, teleprompter, Mac operator, and director.

Though it is highly recommended that students speak in front of the camera, Ms. LaBrie does not force any students to be anchor.

"Many people think the announcements is just being an anchor, but there are a lot of other behind the scenes stuff, too. A lot of people don't know about those jobs but might be interested in them," Andy said.

There is no application process to become a member of the morning announcements crew, but

members get to experience a sort of Freeman fame.

"A lot of people I don't know come up to me in the hallway to tell me 'good job on the announcements.' I think it's cool that people are watching and enjoying the show," Andy said.

Aside from the newfound fame, the morning announcements club can prepare students for a career in any field. Whether a student wants to pursue a broadcasting career or not, the club exposes students to public speaking, technology, and leadership.

With the help of more students, the club may once again become an official class next year. Andy and Ms. LaBrie encourages students to sign up for the club to make the class a possibility.

"I definitely want more people to join the club. We really need them and could go a lot further if we can get more people," Andy said.

Sophomore Flies High with Drones



PHOTO: GABBY COX

Alec surfs on his computer in class.

Alex Moss
Staff Writer

It's a bird, it's a plane... it's Alec Wren? Not quite. But, it was probably one of the sophomores self-built drones. Freeman's own Alec Wren builds and flies his own drones at an extraordinary level, not to mention altitude.

On March 22, 2014, Alec received his first drone, and his passion has taken off since then. His love for science is seen from his favorite TV shows, Myth Busters and Strange Acts of Science, to the remarkable words teachers have to say about his talent. Earth Science teacher Matthew Scott said "He has ability to pick up [a project] and run much farther with it than expected amazes me."

Alec's capabilities go farther than the classroom. He was recently accepted into Virginia Space Coast Scholars (VSCS) from which 380 students out of 1000 are selected and "are put into a hard-working course

where students must read, write and complete modules on aerospace technology," said Alec. These 380 students are then narrowed down to 40 students who attend a week long camp at Wallops Flight Facility (run by NASA and other astronomical powerhouses). Alec feels he is "on path to be one of the 40 students."

Between school and working with VSCS, Alec has still managed to find time for recreational drone flying. He often goes to an air field with his repair-man, his father; or depending on the weather, he will test one of his drones in his neighborhood.

"We can easily spend hours talking about or building a plane," said Alec's father, Matthew Wren.

Alec and his co-pilot Andrew Partington often fly on the Collegiate baseball fields at the Robins Campus in Goochland County. The two met through a Facebook page and often fly together as well as "hangout to talk and fly drones," said Andrew.

Alec does not just limit his

drone-flying to Virginia. In 2015, Alec went to Malvern, Ohio for a three day flight convention with 300 pilots. But, this convention had no time for show and tell. Every hour there would be drone battle where each plane would try and knock the other planes to the ground, and the last pilot flying would reign victorious.

It seems as if Alec's hobby is boundless. First, he flies and builds drones. Second, he plans to use his talents to enter into a week-long workshop with NASA. Third, he fights with drones.

Henrico County gifted Wren with a programming software for his robotics club, and he has already received letters from Hampden-Sydney College and Longwood University for his unmatched abilities in the field of aerospace technology.

"Alec has vastly improved his flying and building skills and has nowhere to go but up," said Andrew.

Some would say to look forward to Alec's success, but in this case, just look up.

From Oxford to Freeman

Liza Moody
Staff Writer

The legacies of J.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, and other literary geniuses live on at Freeman. Inklings, originally a literary discussion group at Oxford is also the name of Freeman's creative writing group. The club meets after school every Monday in room 120 to both discuss and write literature.

During meetings, the club has workshops that can vary from "working on character building...to any sort of writing activity or prompt to keep us on our toes," said Caroline Azdell, co-president of Inklings. The workshops are beneficial to help the members get "[their] creative juices working more easily," said Julia Gibson, co-president of Inklings.

Another portion of the meeting gives club members the opportunity to share their works. "The best thing that a writer can do is to share his or her work and listen to what others have to say," said Kyle Schuster, the Inklings sponsor.

In fact, Inklings is an open environment and "a place where you can share what you've writ-

"Inklings is a good resource for someone who may be curious about the world of creative writing and [who] is just starting out, as well as for those who write all of the time."

- Mr. Schuster

ten...without fearing that you'll be judged for it," said Caroline. By sharing their works, the writers are able to build upon their

THE FELLOWSHIP

The Literary Lives of the

INKLINGS

J.R.R. TOLKIEN

C.S. LEWIS

OWEN BARFIELD

CHARLES WILLIAMS



PHILIP ZALESKI & CAROL ZALESKI
PHOTO: WASHINGTON POST

stories or poems because the other members "all get to give them feedback on it," said Julia.

Members of all levels are a part of Inklings. "Inklings is a good resource for someone who may be curious about the world of creative writing and [who] is just starting out, as well as for those who write all of the time," Mr. Schuster said.

Moreover, while some members only write occasionally, other members have had their works published. A short essay written by Julia Gibson won a Scholastic Arts and Writing Award, and literature by many of the members has shown up in the *Educator*, DSF's annual collection of literature and fine arts which "showcases the creative work of the school community," said Wiley Hunnicutt, sponsor of the Educator.

Ultimately, Inklings has inspired writers to create tales that range from hobbit-holes and snowy woodlands to modern day superheroes and dystopian fiction.

Freshman's Wild Australian Adventure



PHOTO: GABBY COX

Alex works on an assignment in class.

Molly Herring
Staff Writer

"They eat kangaroo," said freshman Alex Eddy, laughing at my shocked reaction as I racked my brain for a response. For the entirety of 4D, Alex transported us from the lackluster Freeman halls to her former hometown, Brisbane, Australia.

Alex lived in the countryside of Brisbane from ages eight to twelve. Richmond natives, her family moved to pursue a new job and a "new adventure," she said.

Alex's eyes light up when she talks about Australia. For an adventurer like herself, the country is one massive playground. "There's a place called Lone Pine Sanctuary, which is where you hand-feed kangaroos and hold snakes, and there are alligators and koalas around," Alex said nonchalantly.

"The kangaroos are in big enclosed areas that you walk in. They aren't dangerous unless you try to kidnap their child," said Alex. "I saw an emu attacking a baby joey, but I couldn't do anything."

When she was not bounding around her 20 acre property, Alex attended an all-girls private school, Somerville House. "The schools all have uniforms that

are very strict. We had school shoes, socks, dresses, swimsuits, and hair ties," said Alex.

Alex learned that in Australia, school drama is inescapable. "I think it is really fun to compare cultures. "The way people dress is different and the fads are different, but it is a lot cliquier than the stereotypical American school," said Alex. The social groups all have names like "the TC's--that's the 'too cools,'" she said.

Although not much is different besides "the way people talk," Australians enjoy peculiar cuisine. "Everyone loves soy sauce, Nutella, and vegemite, which is like leftovers from factories put into a spread. It tastes like vomit," said Alex.

Australian life is never mundane. "There are so many tourists around. I was at my friend's birthday party, and we were rollerblading in Southbank after school. These Japanese ladies just came up to us and stopped us to take a picture," said Alex.

Strange things happened in her house, too. "During January, we would get this one bright green tree frog that swam up our toilet and would just hang out. You had to look before you peed," said Alex.

Alex moved back to Richmond before middle school and has since gone back to visit her friends. "I visited once before

winter break. I was an exchange student at my old school and lived in my best friend's house. I got to see all my old friends again," said Alex.

When visiting, Alex and her family do more "touristy things," said Alex. "I went to Sydney and toured the Opera House," said Alex.

She also convinced her parents to take her bridge climbing. "I have bridge climbed three times. You get in a harness and climb to the top of the bridge and across if you want. It's so much fun," said Alex.

Alex's global perspective does not go unnoticed by her peers. "My favorite thing about Alex is how incredibly unique she is. I love getting to hear about all of the cool places she has been and her very original view on everyday life," said junior Liza Laughlin.

Alex has not made a decision to move back to Australia, but she certainly plans on visiting again even just for the love of adventure.

"I think living in Australia gave Alex a new and different perspective of life here. She is able to relate to the people and surroundings of Richmond to those in Australia. She also keeps in touch with her friends in Australia which keeps her connected to her life there."

Day in the Life of Senior Danring Marip



5:55 AM - Wake up

6:15 AM - Drive to swim practice (if I haven't met the minimum for the week yet, or else I stay asleep)

8:00 AM - Drive home

8:20 AM - Take a nice shower

8:30 AM - Eat cereal for breakfast

8:40 AM - Drive to school

9:00 AM - Do homework from the night before that's due soon

11:35 AM - Browse the internet for memes

12:00 PM - Go to lunch and browse more memes

4:00 PM - Go home and eat an early dinner

5:00 PM - Take a nice long nap

11:00 PM - Wake up and do homework

12:00 AM - Snack and watch TV shows

1:00 AM - Go to bed

L is for the Way You Look at Me, O is for the Only One I See

What Will You Be Doing On Valentine's Day?

Mr. and Mrs. Reilly are all Smiley.

Hank Holland
Staff Writer

After meeting at Freeman in 2011, Latin teacher Carter Reilly, and computer technician Josh Reilly are happily married and expecting a baby girl in June. After being connected through a mutual friend, the two had a great connection right away.

"We went on a date and the rest is history," said Latin teacher, Carter Reilly.

Mrs. Reilly has been teaching Latin for nine years at Freeman. Meanwhile, Mr. Reilly is working his fifth year as a computer technician at the help desk.

The two enjoy evenings out and hanging out at home.

"We both like watching TV shows that are awesome; we like being social and going out with friends; we are opposite on a couple things, but, I think opposites attract," said Mrs. Reilly. They even participated in a kickball league together.

As for eating out, there is a clear favorite.

"We love Bonefish Grill, Bang Bang Shrimp; we have an obsession with that; we each get our own," said Mrs. Reilly.

Mr. and Mrs. Reilly enjoy working at Freeman, but they hardly see each other during the day.

"It's nice to come home and talk about your day together, having the same work environment," said Mrs. Reilly.

Having completely different jobs keeps them busy in different parts of the school.

"I rarely see her during the day. She may pop her head in once going to the main office, but it's nice to be able to say 'hi,'" said Mr. Reilly.

They both grew up in the far West End and attended Godwin High School but did not know each other. Mrs. Reilly was a freshman, but now they are closer than ever. After getting married on March 28, 2015, the two have grown closer and closer.

"He's very patient, generous, and kind to me," said Mrs. Reilly. "I like her nerdiness, and how much she loves Latin. I know nothing about it,



Mr. and Mrs. Reilly smile with each other.

but I like listening to her talk about it and how she teaches with such enthusiasm," said Mr. Reilly.

The couple enjoys working out together, but Mrs. Reilly plans to take it easy as they are expecting their baby girl, Reagan, on June 9.

"We're excited to start a

family and have her grow up and do all of the fun things that we enjoyed as kids," said Mrs. Reilly.

Mr. and Mrs. Reilly look forward to raising their daughter in Henrico County and hope to have a second child in their future.

"We're excited to start a

Be Prepared for Valentine's Day!

I love you

- English

Te amo

- Spanish

Ich Liebe dich

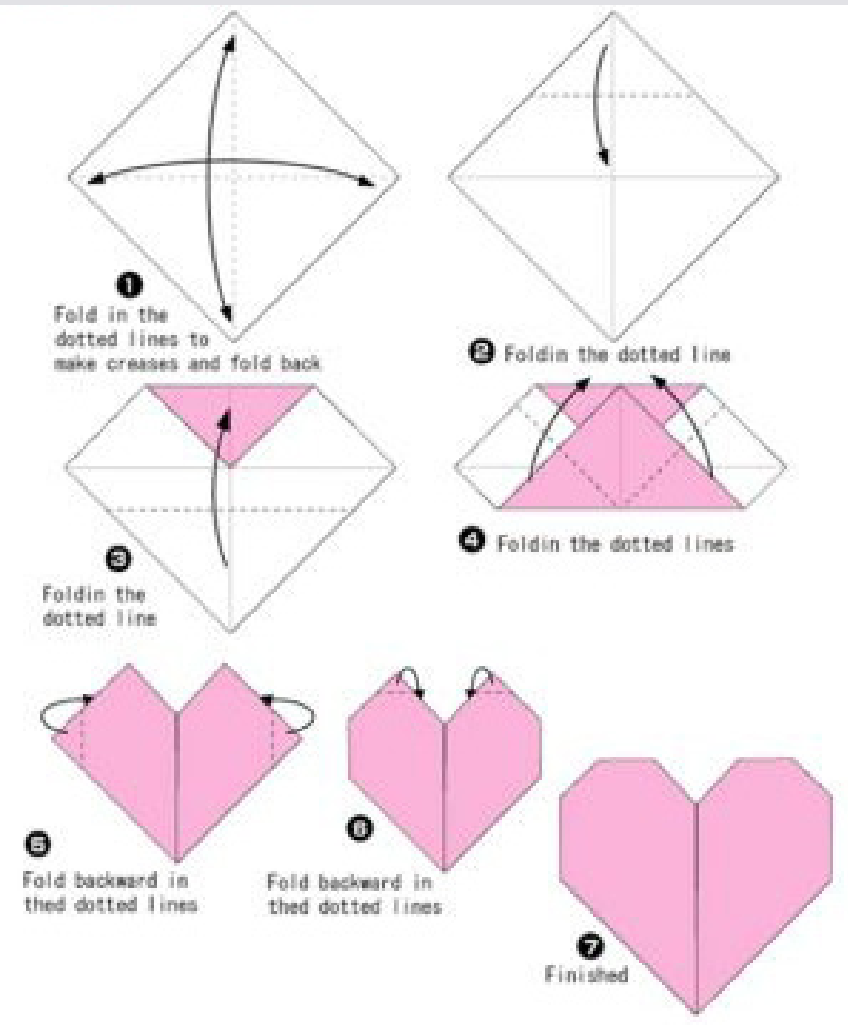
- German

Aku Cinta kamu

- Indonesian

Ngiyakuthanda

- Zulu



Is breá liom tú

- Irish

Je T'aime

- French

T'estimo

- Catalan

Ûnë të dua

- Albanian

Jeg elsker dig

- Danish

L'úbim t'a

- Slovak

Every Day Deserves the Same Love.



Elena Rogers
Center Spread Editor

Originally a Christian holiday set in the middle of Lupercalia, a Roman celebration of fertility, Valentine's Day has transformed into a widely celebrated day of love for people of diverse backgrounds and religions.

Now, numerous countries spanning three continents enjoy celebrating a day of love.

In a world where divorce rates are reaching new heights, heartbreak is a common theme of pop songs, and rape rates are only increasing, it's comforting to know that humanity has not completely given up on love. Colombians celebrate

Love and Friendship

Day, in which appreciating friendship is the main focus. Russians celebrate International Women's Day and Defender of the Fatherland Day, when women and men are given gifts on their respective days. Catalonians celebrate St. Jordi's Day, an occasion to show love for friends and family by giving books to men and roses to women. On Valentine's Day, South African women literally wear hearts on their sleeves, the Danish send anonymous love letters, and Filipinos have mass weddings.

However, South Koreans have claimed the title of my personal favorite in terms of celebration. On the 14th of every month, there is a day to celebrate love in different ways. Some of these days include Rose Day, Kiss Day, Music Day, Hug Day, and Movie Day.

There are infinite reasons to celebrate the love we have for each other, the environment, ourselves, and so much

more.

A few weeks ago, my dad came home from the grocery store with a gallon of milk and a blanket. He gave me the blanket for no other reason than that he thought I would like it. This small gesture made me extremely

happy and I could truly feel the love my father has for me. Not only did I receive a soft, new blanket and expression of love, but I was inspired to show my love for someone as well. Taking a page out of South Korea's book, I declared the next Tuesday Movie Day and invited an old friend to see a movie with me. It was a lovely outing with a friend I had minimally spoken with in recent months.

Sharing your love is so easy, and we should learn to do it more. Next time the dishwasher is clean and needs to be unloaded, why not do so before your mom even asks?

Maybe your parents have to stay late at work one night. How sweet would it be if they came home

to a meal prepared by their favorite children? If there is a homeless person sitting on a corner of the intersection by your house, consider taking him or her a meal every now and then.

Though Valentine's Day is a wonderful reminder to the world that love is lingering in the air, it should not be the only day love is hanging around. If people from all over the world can celebrate and cherish the love they have with their friends and family, why not connect those friends and families with other friends and families across oceans and deserts and cities to create a world full of love? Because, no, it should not matter whom you choose to love, as everyone deserves to love and be loved. After all, "Love is love is love," said Lin-Manuel Miranda.

All the Single Ladies!

Anna Lyle Collett
Design Editor

Hailing from the town of Pawnee, Indiana, came a celebrated holiday known as Galentine's Day.

"February 14th, Valentine's Day, is about romance. But February 13th, Galentine's Day, is about celebrating lady friends," Leslie Knope, Deputy Director of Pawnee's Parks and Recreation Department said.

Galentine's Day is a time for women to get together and celebrate their friendships. Some say it is superior to Valentine's Day because it is a time to thank your friends for supporting each other, eat breakfast food, and spoil your gal pals. One of those people is Leslie Knope.

"Oh, it's only the best day of the year. Every February 13th, my lady friends and I leave our husbands and boyfriends at home, and we just come and kick it, breakfast-style. Ladies celebrating ladies," Leslie said.

Leslie has always been



Leslie Knope sits at her Galentine's Day table.

encouraged to pursue things in life she is passionate about.

From a young age, Leslie was inspired to follow a career in public service by her involvement in community programs as a child. As a teenager, she attended Pawnee North High School, where she participated in many student organizations. She was in Debate Club, Model United Nations, Young Republicans, and Young Democrats. She also founded a club known as Young Independents. She continued her work as a public servant through college and into the Parks and

Recreation Department in Pawnee.

Leslie's love for public service can only be matched by her love for her girlfriends. Leslie's cheerful attitude can often be found complimenting her best friend Ann Perkins with strange words of endearment.

"Oh Ann, you beautiful, rule-breaking moth... right now, you are the most beautiful, glowing, sun goddess ever," Leslie said.

Leslie combined her intense love for her lady friends with her fondness of breakfast food when forming Galentine's Day.

"We need to remember what's important in life: friends, waffles, and work. Or waffles, friends, and work. Doesn't matter, but work is third," Leslie said.

When combined with another brilliant Parks and Recreation department philosophy, "TREAT YO SELF," Galentine's Day could possibly be the best day ever. A day for ladies to celebrate ladies.

"It's wonderful, and it should be a national holiday," Leslie said.

This is a satirical adaptation of NBC's show Parks and Recreation.

"We need to remem-

Matchmaker, Matchmaker, Make me a Match!

Fill out the matchmaker survey to find your true love, best friend, or similarities with other students. Fill it out if you're looking for a date or just for fun! Results will be emailed to you after Valentine's Day!!

Take the survey here: tinyurl.com/dsf-matchmaker

It's also on Schoology!



PHOTO: MATCHMAKE.COM

Catching Up with Current Couples.

CLAIRE & LUIS

On March 29, 2014, "Cluis" was born. Claire Nicholson and Luis Barrios began dating midway through their freshman year of high school. Now seniors, they are still together.

Originally, Luis attempted to have Claire and Brett Reid date.

"At the time, I had a girlfriend, and I always thought Claire was really pretty, so I wanted Brett to date her since he was my best friend," Luis said.

"She was a really pretty girl when I first saw her, and she caught my attention the moment I first saw her." The potential relationship was not successful and eventually resulted in Claire and Luis dating.

Claire and Luis have a routine when they spend time with each other. "We eat food, watch TV a lot, and go to Which Wich," Claire said.

Many of their favorite date destinations are those that they have been going to for years.

"Usually, we go to Chick-Fil-A for breakfast, Which Wich for lunch, and then there are two dinner options. Galaxy Diner or Cookout are some of our favorites, and then Krispy Kreme for dessert," Luis said.

However, Claire and Luis are not just home-

bodies. They often go on double dates with Rebecca Houck and her boyfriend, Justis Araujo. Luis also claims to have gone on a double

date with Kim Kardashian and Kanye West.

Some of the best memories Claire and Luis have together are ones where they are inches away from celebrities.

"When we met DNCE, we were one locker room away from Selena Gomez," Luis said.

Through busy schedules, Claire and Luis have always been able to make their relationship last.

"We always made time for one another during the summer and on weekends during the school year," Claire said.

The couple makes sure that they have time for one another and to keep their relationship strong.

"We want to be there for the other person and have fun as a couple by being ourselves," Luis said.

"We don't get tired of one another and when we get in fights, we always make sure to work them out," Claire said.

Claire and Luis want to be there for each other and are at a point in their relationship when they can just be themselves.

"We want to have fun as a couple by being ourselves and not trying to force something in order to make the other person happy," Luis said.

Despite the possibility of their going to different schools after graduation, the couple intends to keep dating.

JULIA & SOPHIA

Sarah Halsey
Staff Writer

Would you start dating the person who hit you in the head with a basketball during P.E. class? Julia Recher did with girlfriend, Sophie Cole.

However, Julia did not mind the accident.

"I thought she was really nice after that happened because she wouldn't stop apologizing," Julia said.

Junior Sophie Cole and Senior Julia Recher started dating on November 27, 2015.

The two have been inseparable ever since they began dating and have grown close over the past year and a half.

"We are really close and we tell each other everything. We felt a connection early," Sophie said. The two appreciate their openness with one another.

"I value the emotional support we give one another," Julia said.

Despite having very opposite personalities, Julia and Sophie get along very well.

"Even though we aren't alike, we have similar views so we fit well. We also both like to go to concerts," Julia said.

"We have different personalities, but we have the same views on outlooks on life and opinions on things."

Most of the time, Sophie and Julia go out when they are together.

"We go to the river

over the summer, and we go to a lot of concerts," Sophie said. "We also go downtown sometimes to see street art."

When they are not out doing adventurous things around Richmond, Sophie and Julia like to relax with one another.

"We dye each other's hair and watch movies," Sophie said. They also like to eat at Galaxy Diner and Chick-Fil-A.

Both Julia and Sophie know that they value one another more than anything, and they are each other's priorities.

"We make sure to work through everything, and when we have issues we try to not let it affect our relationship and bring us apart," Sophie said.

With Valentine's Day coming up, the couple is not sure what their definite plans are but are expecting to celebrate the holiday together.

"Last year we went to the VMFA, so I think we will go to dinner together," Sophie said.

Freeman Locker Rooms Get Makeover

Nick Ulrichs
Staff Writer

Freeman girls basketball tradition is lacking. However, Doug Clements and associates worked 90 to 100 man hours and sacrificed many holidays to make that statement false.

His effort to inspire more rigid tradition came in the form of repainting the girls' locker room. It took "more work than I had planned," said Coach Clements.

The large task of redoing the locker room included taking five coats of paint off the wall and spray painting the lockers navy blue which is closer to Freeman colors than the previous royal blue lockers.

Also, Coach Clements had help from a professional graffiti artist to add different designs to the locker room that cannot be found in any other locker room.

Coach Clements also had help from sophomore Abigail Wilson who shares his agenda for using the locker room as inspiration.

"It inspires the team to be better because it makes us feel more important to the school," said Abigail.

When people first walk in to the locker room, the first thing they may notice is the graffiti clouds that surround the Rebel symbols on each side of the locker room. Then they go back and find a wall with a collage of different shapes that are all different colors.

However, the wall across from the different geometric shapes has nothing but the base layer



A freshly painted mural in one of the gym locker rooms at Freeman.

PHOTO: DOUG CLEMENTS

of light grey paint that is the background color for the rest of the locker room. At first, this appears to be an oversight, but Coach Clements has big plans for this wall of the locker room.

He intends for every senior girl each year that uses the locker room for their sports to put their handprints on the wall at the conclusion of each season.

"[The handprints] give it a sense of tradition," said Coach Clements.

This is the fight against the lack of Freeman tradition. This progression helps update the locker rooms which has not been done since 1974. Freeman went 42 years without updating these locker rooms.

This could be one of many rea-

sons "the school community has lost some pride in itself," said Coach Clements.

As well as making traditions, Coach Clements's goal includes making the student body and the surrounding community have pride in Freeman. He wants to encourage students to contribute and take part in their school.

Coach Clements's main objec-

tive is to inspire tradition and school pride, but he also wants this to help leave his legacy and this renovation is his way to give back to the students.

"It's bigger than us, [we must] buy into the concept of that thought," said Coach Clements.

Sophomore Takes Heavy Competition

Tyler Hendricks
Staff Writer

Wrestling is a sport involving extreme endurance, fine-tuned skill, and pure will-power. For sophomore Edwin Gutierrez, it is his favorite sport.

Edwin first began the sport in fifth grade at the urging of his gym teacher at Maybeury Elementary. He wrestled at Byrd Metro, then at Tuckahoe Middle School, and finally at Freeman.

Edwin went through his middle school and high school seasons with sophomore Ernie Campbell, one of his close friends. The two friends met in third grade through school. Ernie said he befriended Edwin, who at the time was not only the new kid in school but also did not speak English.

"He is a good, dedicated athlete who likes to work hard and get better," said Ernie. He also noted a difference in Edwin on and off the mat.

"In practice we don't goof around, everyone is serious. Outside of practice, he is a funny guy," said Ernie. Head Coach Matthew Henshaw described Edwin as a "strong, promising young athlete with a sense of humor."

"He is a good, dedicated athlete who likes to work hard and get better."

- Ernie Campbell

"Edwin has taken on a varsity role since his freshman year. He works hard and has improved his skill level quite well," said Coach Henshaw. While noting the differences be-

tween middle school and high school wrestling, Edwin also mentioned the increased rigor of high school and wrestling a varsity position.

"It is a lot harder because everyone is a lot more mature and takes it much more seriously," said Edwin. He said one of the most difficult parts of the sport was the training and conditioning required.

"We run up and down the stairs to the second floor, we climb ropes in the small gym, and we lift on Tuesdays and Thursdays," Edwin said. The conditioning is to get ready for the grueling physical exertion required during the three periods of a match and for the possibility of wrestling more than once during a match. Normally, another difficult part of wrestling is making weight; however, for Edwin, he has to gain weight instead of lose

weight.

"I should be wrestling 195 this year, but I'm wrestling 220, so I have to gain weight," Edwin said. During his high school wrestling career, Edwin has wrestled in the 182, 195, and 220 weight class. Despite the difficulty of conditioning and making weight, Edwin enjoys the sport for the fun and the people.

"I like the coaches and the people. They all come from different places and have some cool stories," Edwin said.

His goals for the season are to make it to the regional meet. To do this, he will have to place first, second, or third in the conference meet within his weight class. In terms of post-high school goals, Edwin said he might be interested in pursuing club wrestling in college.



Erin Hayes in the halls of Freeman.

PHOTO: NICK NEWTON

Flipping Through High School

Caroline Wall
Staff Writer

What started as a way for her mother to keep her busy has become a lifelong passion for junior Erin Hayes. Erin has been doing gymnastics since she was three years old because her mom "needed something for me to do." Now Erin spends her time competing on Freeman's gymnastics team.

According to Freeman gymnastics coach Margaret Carlson, Erin is a "huge asset" to the team. "I like to call Erin the 'Dark Horse' because she is an awesome gymnast who sort of flies under the radar, but she usually comes out in the top three," said Coach Carlson.

Erin used to participate in club gymnastics year-round, but she now primarily focuses on the Freeman team as well as Freeman cheerleading.

Her gymnastics experience outside of school has helped Erin be successful at school in both gymnastics and cheerleading. She currently competes in the all-around event but says she enjoys the bars the most.

"Erin is always working hard at practice and is willing to be put in any event for the better of the team," said junior Kate Carlson.

No matter what event she is participating in, Erin is always contributing to the team. "She always has a great attitude and always kills it at every meet," said junior Kameryn Shears. "[We're] excited that she can continue being a great part of the team," said Coach Carlson.

The team "works well together," said Erin. "We all help each other. Your friends and your team are the ones that actually get you through gymnastics. It's so much pressure and so much joint pain." She hopes the team will have as

much success as they have had in the past. "It would be really cool to make it to States again this year as a team," said Erin.

When Erin is not working to make it to States, she enjoys hanging out with friends and going to the River. She is also close with her family and spends time with her two sisters.

Erin must also spend a large amount of time completing her schoolwork. "I mean, it's not that hard," said Erin. "Usually I do schoolwork at school," she said, giving her more time to enjoy gymnastics practice and Freeman in general.

"[Freeman]'s so accepting, compared to other schools," said Erin. "It's more like a family." Both her time spent at Freeman and her time spent doing gymnastics have helped shape Erin into who she is.

"Gymnastics has been really fun. I love it," said Erin. "I miss it when I'm not doing it."



Edwin (left) about to wrestle a St. Chris opponent.

PHOTO: EDWIN GUTIERREZ

Rebels Make a Splash in the NOVA Pool

Dain Ripol

Emma Buckley

Zach Schwertz
Staff Writer



PHOTO: DAIN RIPOL

Dain swimming in a meet.

While most high school students are still sleeping in the wee hours of the morning, freshman Dain Ripol is diving into the pool at NOVA at 4:30 a.m., not once, but seven days a week.

Inspired by his University of Virginia alumnus swimmer father, Dain began swimming at four years old. Dain's parents taught him how to swim at his previous summer recreation league pool, Wemby Swim and Racquet Club.

Today, Dain swims in the club's highest ranking competition group, Senior Gold. Dain is a young swimmer in a group mainly populated by upperclassmen. His coach, Geoff Brown, jokes playfully about Dain's age compared to his teammates.

"I'm probably his least favorite because I'm young and in his group. He likes to pick on me...it's hilarious," said Dain.

Aside from the lighthearted banter, Dain reaps the benefits of his club's legacy. Every so often, former NOVA swimmer and Olympian Townley Haas visits his hometown pool to practice with Dain's group. While his father may be his inspiration for swimming, Townley remains Dain's favorite swimmer.

Like the Olympian, Dain's best stroke is freestyle. He enjoys swimming freestyle events, particularly distance freestyle, the 200 Individual Medley and 400 Individual Medley.

"Dain is good at a lot of things. Freestyle is his best stroke, and he's really good at distance freestyle. He's kind of evolved over the years," said longtime teammate and friend Mark Graff.

Despite his young age, Dain has made a promising name for himself in the world of swimming. One of his greatest accomplishments was winning the 500-yard freestyle event last March at the 2016 NASA Showcase Classic in Florida, fin-

ishing the race with a personal best time of 4:39.64. Furthermore, Dain recently qualified for the Junior Nationals Championship Swim Meet, an exclusive meet for accomplished swimmers under the age of 18.

Swimming has not always been rainbows and butterflies for Dain, however.

"I did the mile one time. It was rough. I was sick with Mono, it was my first week back and my coach put me in the event. I just died. It was 64 laps," said Dain.

In addition to swimming for NOVA, Dain is a member of the Freeman varsity swim team. Dain's passion for competition, school spirit and the sport of swimming has not gone unrecognized by his teammates.

"Dain is a racer. In relays, he's always able to pull out amazing splits to get a win for the team," said Mark.

While still only a freshman, Dain aspires to swim at the collegiate level after high school, although he is unsure where he might continue his swimming career.

Dain is working hard, even at the crack of dawn, to continue his streak of accomplishment. He has already found success for the Rebels swim team, and the freshman shows an even more promising future for years to come.

Lucy Collins
Staff Writer



PHOTO: KRISTEN PHELPS

Emma Buckley (center) stands with teammates Emma Phelps (left) and Sarah Farney (right).

From the field hockey field to the swimming pool, and having school and studies in between, Emma Buckley is the epitome of a "Jill of all trades." Starting swimming at the age of three, Emma has always had a knack for the water.

"I remember when I was little, I used to sit on my mom's lap and watch the swim meets at my pool. I would just watch them swim back and forth, and one day I went face first in the water, and my mom said, 'Emma, kick, kick, pull your arms!' I just started moving and it kind of stuck," Emma said.

At four, Emma began swimming for Three Chopt Pool. With her competitive nature, Emma wanted to move from recreational swimming to a competitive version of the sport. The summer after fourth grade, Emma began swimming for the YMCA of Greater Richmond Tritons, where she swam for four years before coming to high school.

"Tritons was basically the equivalent to NOVA, so I swam a lot and competed in multiple meets a month. I had a few different coaches that helped me perfect my strokes and build up my endurance. Now I am able to hop in the pool and start swimming without any trouble," said Emma.

Since Emma started swimming at Freeman, she has expanded her athletic horizon. She is also the goalkeeper for the girls' varsity field hockey team.

"In middle school there was not a swim team, so I was not able to participate in any sports in school. Although, when I came to Freeman, I wanted to try something new. That's the reason I took up field hockey," Emma said.

Emma excels in academics as well, being involved intensely in her classes, and participating in multiple extracurricular activities. She anticipates furthering her academic career at the College of William

and Mary. Although she was not recruited for swimming, she hopes to join the club team.

During meets, Emma likes to get her other teammates hype for their heat. Rather than going through a pre-meet routine, she enjoys cheering her teammates on, in order to get herself ready to jump in the pool and show off her skills.

"I sometimes listen to music, but there really is not any time to do that. We go to the pool and do warm ups, and I like to cheer everyone on. Typically, you find other people who are swimming the same event, put your cap on, and get ready to swim," she said.

"I knew a lot of other people who were going to swim for the club team, so that is why I wanted to start. My sister was a senior on the team when I was a freshman, and she and her boyfriend were captains. So, I joined the team looking up to them as role models," she said.

Balancing out a busy schedule between school and sports can be hectic for many individuals, but not for Emma. Her persistence with her school work and her sports career has given her the foundation for a well-rounded, dedicated lifestyle.

Rebels Jump and Spin on the Ice

Hailey Reid
Staff Writer

At the crack of dawn, specifically 5:30 a.m., juniors Abbie Markel and Lindsay Chambers are doing jumps and spins on ice.

Abbie and Lindsay both skate competitively at Skate Nation. They go practice skating before school two or three days a week.

"I have been skating since I was six, so about 10 years now," Abbie said.

Performing in competitions involves skating in front of multiple judges.

"It can get complicated because the judging system is pretty complex in the higher levels," Abbie said.

Judges look at various aspects of the performance to judge the figure skaters' routines. There are eight levels of skating and for each level, there is a test. Lindsay said that the judges "fly out to evaluate your test to see if you are ready to move up on the next level."

"Judges test you on your ability and technique, timing, rhythm, and power. The hardest and most rewarding part of skating is finding out if you pass or retry on



PHOTO: ABBIE MARKEL

Abbie (left) skating at a competition.



PHOTO: LINDSAY CHAMBERS

Lindsay (right) skating at a competition.

your skating test," Lindsay said.

The judges look at many aspects within the system. The system involves one pivoting element, one no-hold element, one rotating element, one creative

element, one intersection, one linear element, and one traveling element. Abbie competes in "synchro." This includes being a part of a synchronized skating team. She is a bronze medalist

based on the individual test and competes on an intermediate level with her team.

In the practices with her team, Abbie "works on [her] program and making it as good as it can be

for competitions. On Saturdays, we practice on ice for an hour and fifteen minutes followed by ballet for conditioning," Abbie said.

Lindsay also competed on a synchronized team last year. "We would travel to Michigan, Massachusetts, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and more and skate in different formations," Lindsay said.

"The thing about figure skating is that there isn't 'time off' or 'break'; I skate all year round," Lindsay said.

Figure skating has served other purposes along with being fun.

"Figure skating is a way to relieve stress just like you would do in any other sport, except less padding," Lindsay said.

Abbie's plan for when she graduates is to pass the "senior" level of skating.

Abbie and Lindsay also do freestyle skating for fun.

With the stress of school, Abbie and Lindsay can always look forward to figure skating. "I love making new friends and learning new programs at Skate Nation and at Ice Zone. Public skating is also the best way to have fun and you'll probably find me skating there with Abbie," Lindsay said.

Family Ties Draw Junior to Ice Hockey

Caroline Daniel
Staff Writer

Though snow and ice may close Henrico County Public Schools, neither fazes junior Patrick Gorman.

This Rebel plays football, lacrosse, and also a rather uncommon sport: hockey.

"I've played since I was three or four," Patrick said. Patrick also has closer ties to the sport than most: His dad is his coach.

Patrick's father has played a large part in his hockey career, though he was not always Patrick's coach. "My dad's family is from up North, so he kind of introduced me, and he, like, wanted me to come out and skate just to try it."

Specifically, his father's family is from the New England area. "I grew up in Connecticut and I've played organized hockey since I was five. We often skated on frozen ponds...and played pickup

hockey," said Steve Gorman, Patrick's father.

As he has aged, Patrick's perspective of the game has shifted. When he was younger, he played for both the Generals and the Richmond Royals. "I used to travel pretty much every weekend. The furthest I went was probably the New York-Pennsylvania area," Patrick said.

Now, Patrick plays for his father's pick-up team. "It's a bunch of older guys and they want me to play because of my endurance," he said.

This endurance can make a significant difference in the team, according to Mr. Gorman. "[Patrick's] hockey coaches and teammates have always appreciated his hustle on the ice and know when the team needs a lift, they can count on Patrick to step up," he said.

Hockey is a stress reliever for Patrick. "When I hit the ice, I don't even think about anything. It's just fun for me. Even practice

is fun," Patrick said.

Patrick's motivation has changed as well. "[It was] definitely my dad, at first. I didn't want to let him down because he wanted me to play," he said. Though Patrick's father is still a motivator, now it is "just to play with [his] dad and to have fun playing."

Another tradition in Patrick's family involves teaching younger members to play the sport, and Patrick plans to continue this legacy.

One of the reasons Patrick thinks hockey is worth teaching is because it has positively impacted the rest of his life. Hockey has given him friends "all over the [Richmond] area" and even some that live as far away as Michigan. "They're kind of like your brothers," he said.

Hockey has taught Patrick lessons that are important even outside of the rink. "Hockey teaches you to stick up for your teammates or friends and to hold each other accountable on and



PHOTO: PATRICK GORMAN

Patrick Gorman (right) playing in a match.

off the ice," he said.

"It made him a better and more well-rounded person," said Austin Hampton, Patrick's former teammate.

Playing hockey has also shaped Patrick's personality and his

understanding of the world. "I think it has changed me because of the creativity...and brotherhood involved in the sport. It has changed my life for the better," he said.

SPORTS
BRIEFS

Wrestling

Record: 8-1

Quote: "I am very proud of this team! The wrestlers and coaches have done an exceptional job of improving themselves." -Coach Henshaw.

Key Players: Ernie Campbell and Michael McGuire

Boys Basketball

Record: 8-9

Quote: "We have decided to hang our hats on defense and since then the team has improved drastically." -Coach Parpart

Key Players: Grey Pappas and Michael Fortune

Girls Basketball

Record: 4-14

Quote: "Going into the second half of the season, I'm really optimistic. We've done really well the past few games and we're coming together as a team." -Coach Clements.

Key Players: Molly Bruce and Eleanor Cary

Swimming

Record: 14-0

Quote: "We are having an awesome season.. We have many swimmers who have dropped a notable amount of time in their events since the beginning of the season, and by watching how hard everyone works during practice, times will keep dropping."-Coach Tiller.

Key Players: Maura Graff and Colin Whiting

Winter Track

Record: N/A

Quote: "It was a little slow getting started in terms of meets but things are starting to come around." -Coach Reutinger.

Key Players: Lauren Thornton and Ja'Kari Williams

Gymnastics

Record: 4-0

Quote: "We have won every meet so far. And I think I have the best team Freemans had in the recent years." -Coach Carlson.

Key Players: Erin Hayes and Camrton McCarty

Freshman Stars on Varsity

Jackson Woody
Staff Writer

It is rare that an underclassman stars on a high school varsity team; most do not even make the team at all. Freshman Kerrigan White defies the odds.

Kerrigan is the starting point guard on the girls varsity basketball team and leads the team in scoring, assists, and many other statistical categories. Her high level of play makes her a key factor to the Lady Rebels' game plan on both ends of the court. "She's good at everything.

So far, it seems like the team is rallying around her and getting better with her. Her willingness to not only get herself better, but the team better, makes her a special player," said Doug Clements, head coach of the Girls Varsity team.

Even though she shines on Friday nights in her white Nike Hyperdunks, Kerrigan's highly acclaimed basketball talents originated in her middle school days. She played for Quiocassin Middle School along with James River Blaze, a travel team, under the dim lights of small, dusty middle school gyms and vast collections of AAU courts.

"I started taking basketball seriously around seventh grade.



PHOTO: SANDY SPICKNALL

Kerrigan chases down a Godwin player.

Since then, I've worked on my game probably three days per week," said Kerrigan.

She realized her true love for the game when her travel squad was the underdog to an elite team from Northern Virginia but pulled off the upset victory by a wide margin.

"They thought they were going to blow us out and had no respect for us, but we crushed them. That's when I thought basketball was something I wanted to do seriously," said Kerrigan.

When Kerrigan arrived at Freeman, her intensity and passion for basketball followed her on the court. She tried out for the varsity team in November and proved to the coaching staff that she belonged to the team.

"Coming from a middle

school to a varsity level is a big jump, but I never thought she was intimidated on the court. She was always aggressive on the court and played hard," said Coach Clements.

Kerrigan quickly adjusted to playing the tempo of varsity basketball. Coach Clements, a former Rebel point guard, believes shifting her into the point guard role paid extreme dividends not only for Kerrigan, but the team as a whole.

"At first she was wide-eyed and nervous about the role, but now she's comfortable in that role and her teammates are more comfortable with their roles alongside her," said Coach Clements.

Coach Clements has not been the only one overseeing her journey. Kerrigan receives key

guidance from her parents that help her learn and adjust to the pressure of playing such an immense role on a varsity basketball team.

"I encourage her to always play with determination and not to get down on herself when she messes up. In middle school she used to get really anxious during games, but now she's matured a lot and had fun playing," said Forrest White, Kerrigan's father.

Kerrigan, along with two other freshmen, earned their spots on the team. One other freshman was Eleanor Carey, who, like Kerrigan, plays point guard.

"Kerrigan and I play the same position so we compete in practice but also work together as teammates in games," said Eleanor.

Senior forward Molly Bruce, team captain and 4-year varsity player, admires quite a bit about the starting point guard.

"Kerrigan's intensity and work ethic make her really special," said Molly.

Coach Clements believes Kerrigan has great potential going forward.

"Her strong work ethic will get her a lot better down the road. If her goal is to play Division I college basketball or make an all-conference team, then she will work to get that," said Coach Clements.

Junior Sparks Rebels' Success



PHOTO: SANDY SPICKNALL

Chris makes a move in rivalry game at Godwin.

Caroline Wall
Staff Writer

Since first grade, junior Chris Gilliam has spent his time dribbling down a basketball court. Now a starter on Freeman's varsity basketball team, Chris has come a long way.

"Christopher was the little kid at one point, hanging out with the older kids," said his mom, Ellen Gilliam, but that practice

in the neighborhood "help[ed] him develop the skills to get by them," she said.

Chris has been on the varsity team since sophomore year, and his coaches and teammates have appreciated all that he has offered in that time. "He's scoring. He's passing. He's playing good defense. He's rebounding. He has worked hard to improve his game in all areas," said varsity coach Larry Parpart.

For Chris, basketball has always been a family affair. "My

dad played in high school, and then my brother and my sister played before me, so my family got me into it," said Chris. His natural talent helped him to keep up with his family. "Just give him a ball and he seems to excel," said Mrs. Gilliam.

Although his siblings no longer play basketball, Chris has found a new basketball family in his Freeman teammates. "Everybody really knows what it takes to win, and we're very unselfish and are willing to work together," said Chris.

His teammates are fond of him as well. "Chris is very enthusiastic," said junior Andrew Catlet. "The team wouldn't be the same without him."

Basketball is an "escape from school" for Chris and gives him "something to do that's fun." Chris enjoys the games and team dinners before games the most. Outside of school, "[Y]ou can often find him at the Tuckahoe YMCA or the University of Richmond's Weinstein center playing with friends or anyone that is there to play," said Mrs.

Gilliam. "And if he isn't there, he is on the driveway dribbling and shooting the ball."

However, Chris has other interests as well, including playing Xbox and drawing. He is able to balance basketball and schoolwork by "trying to get ahead," Chris said.

"Chris is a great example of a Douglas Freeman student athlete," said Coach Parpart. "He is an excellent student."

Chris currently does not plan on continuing basketball in college, but his time on the Freeman team has been full of highlights. His most memorable game so far this season was the game against Cosby. "Even though we lost in double overtime," said Chris. "I had 30 points."

He wants to have similar games throughout the rest of this season and hopes that the team will "make the playoffs and not just lose in the first round." In the meantime, Chris will continue to reflect the values of Freeman basketball and work hard during practices and games.

Freshman Sets Fast Pace

Liza Moody
Staff Writer

Freshman Liza Neely is on track for success. As a Leadership student and one of the leading runners on the Freeman track and cross country teams, Liza has a bright future ahead of her.

Liza has been running track for four years now. "I ran track all throughout middle school," she said. "I joined track at Freeman because I love to run."

"My schedule is very busy," Liza said. "I am in the Leadership Center, so it can be hard

sometimes to balance running and school."

Even with a packed schedule, Liza always makes time for after-school track practice. "We alternate our practices each day. Some days it will be a distance run that is four to five miles, and in-between we do a track workout," she said. "A track workout is different each day. Sometimes it is 800s or 600s, and we have to repeat the distances with a time given."

Liza's dedication to practice pays off at her track meets. "I typically compete in the mile and the 4x4," she said. "My best mile time is 5:27, and my best two-mile time is 12:03. My fa-

vorite race to run is the mile because it is a strategic race. I like to get out fast and finish faster."

"Liza is one of the best athletes on the team," track coach Brian Reutinger said. "She could end up being our top 3200-meter runner, but she also has the range to compete well in the 400 and 800."

"She always motivates me every day at practice," junior Mia Girardi said. "We are about the same speed, so we can compete with each other."

"My goals for this season are to get my mile to 5:20 and make states," Liza said. Liza's long-term goals include continuing her track career in college. "I would like to get some sort of running scholarship" she said.

No matter the circumstances, Liza always tries to display a positive attitude.

"Liza is very friendly and gets along with everybody," Coach Reutinger said. "She is focused to do well, but also has a playful side to her. She can be seen often times sliding down the stairwell leading to the track."

"One of my favorite memories was traveling to Hampton for a meet at Boo Williams Sportsplex," Liza said. "When the team travels together, everyone has fun and, laughs the whole bus ride there.

"Liza is motivated to improve. She trains well on her own on the weekends and is committed to making herself better," Coach Reutinger said. "I hope she continues to develop and can be a key contributor to the girls team in multiple events at the conference, region, and state level."

Vaulting to Success

Alex Moss
Staff Writer

To reach states is one of the most impressive feats for any student-athlete to accomplish.

For a student athlete to reach states in their first year of competing in their respective sport, that is not an impressive feat, but nearly an impossible one.

Soaring at state qualifying heights, junior Joe O'Connor and sophomore Cameron McCarty did just that in their first year of pole vaulting in the 2015-2016 winter track season.

Pole vaulting is a winter track event in which athletes run and plant a pole and use their momentum to fling themselves over a challengingly high bar while arching their backs in such a way that will give them maximum height.

Joe and Cameron have unbelievable personal records coming in at 13.5 feet and 9 feet respectively.

"Being the only pole vaulters at Freeman, the two have gained a bond that helps push and motivate the other to get better each and every jump."

Both found their way to pole vaulting through sports that "involve throwing [themselves] into the air somehow," said Joe. Cameron credits some of her



PHOTO: JOE O'CONNOR

Joe running in pole vault.

success to crossover from gymnastics bars, while Joe, also a former gymnast, throws himself in the air on the volleyball court and off the diving board.

Besides winter track, both students are involved in multiple sports at Freeman. Joe is a current member of the Varsity volleyball team and former member of the JV basketball team. Cameron plays field hockey in the fall and is on both the gymnastics team and winter track at the same time and "goes to gymnastics meets on the weekdays and track meets on weekends," said Cameron.

Being the only pole vaulters at Freeman, the two have gained a bond that helps push and motivate the other to get better each and every jump.

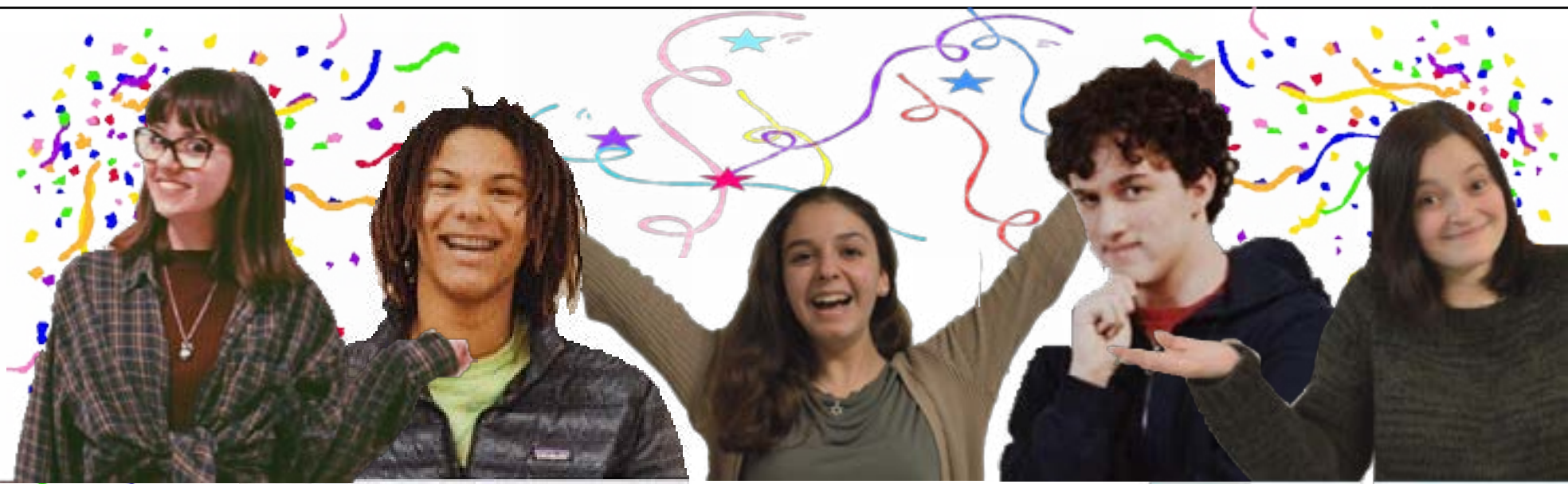
Coaches and other members of the winter track team alike are impressed with their accomplishments last year, and expect much of the same this season.

The winter track season has just begun, but Joe and Cameron are focusing on Feb. 3 and 4. That is when the post season starts and they look to make their remarkable runs to states once again.



PHOTO: LIZA NEELY

Liza running at recent track meet.



Lights, Camera, ACTION

Ellie Somers
Staff Writer

Every year, Freeman Theater 2, 3, and 4 classes get the opportunity to audition for and compete in the Virginia High School League's one-act competition. "We are performing 'The Green Bird' which is an adaptation of a longer version based on the Italian commedia dell' art genre," drama teacher Mary Spears said. "It's a broad comedy in fairy tale form that involves a royal family, an evil sorcerer, [a] talking statue, [and a] singing bird that is actually a prince under a spell, but the dialogue is contemporary. It's very funny and has a

lot of physical comedy." This year, the competition will take place at Deep Run High School on Feb. 2. Freeman will compete against other schools in the conference, including Godwin, Glen Allen, Deep Run, Tucker, and more. "The Virginia High School League administers this competition, and we adhere to the same guidelines as sports in terms of eligibility of participants," Ms. Spears said. "We have a conference festival, regional, and state level festival. We compete against other high schools in our conference and the top two winners advance to the regional level and the top two winners from that advance to the state level." Senior Claire Gardner is look-

ing forward to this year's competition. "This is going to be my third year doing it," she said. "I play Calmon, the King of Statues. He is the narrator of the play. He is a marble statue that tells the story while being part of it." Junior Franklin Pugh is another returning actor. "I have completed two one-acts previously, one competitive, one was a senior one-act," he said. "I play King Tartaglia, father of the abandoned twins, possessed by a love potion and in love with my daughter." Sophomore Teagan Fenderson is excited to perform in her first one-act competition as a new Freeman student. "I didn't compete at the ones at my old school,

but I'm sure this will be a great first experience," she said. "I am the role of Smeraldina, who is the evil villain of the show. She has disguised herself as the king's mother so she can essentially ruin the kingdom." "I'm hoping we take first in districts and I'm hoping we could go to states," Claire said. "This seems like a show and a cast that could get us there." "I hope for the competition that we can all perform our best and do the best show that we can for the judges, and I hope that we can see some truly excellent theatre performances when we go to the competitions," Franklin said. "My hopes for the competition are that we win and can move on to the next stage of competing,"

Teagan said. "I think we have a great group of actors and have the potential to win." "We hope to do our best work and let the chips fall where they may," Ms. Spears said. "It's always a learning experience and a great day of theatre and the students love meeting other theatre kids who are striving to do the same thing they are doing. It's a great atmosphere of camaraderie among the schools, though everyone would like to win and get to perform again."



Rogue One to Ten?

Nicholas Wright
Staff Writer



A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away... Yep, I bet you've heard that before. Star Wars, with its swashbuckling action and galactic adventure, returned last December with Gareth Edwards' "Rogue One: A Star Wars Story." And for being number eight in the franchise, the film lives up to that iconic opening line. Part of that Star Wars legacy is the confusing jungle of sequels and prequels (how is Episode I the fourth movie they made?), and "Rogue One" is no exception. The story takes place immediately before the original 1977 film (Episode IV, if you're counting), with its final scene linking up neatly with the first ever Star Wars scene. Remember how Episode IV started with R2-D2 having the secret plans to the Death Star? If you don't remember, well, you know now (think little blue-and-white robot and giant gray planet with a laser). "Rogue One," essentially, is the tale of how those blueprints ended up with our favorite little astromech droid. It follows Jyn Erso, daughter of the Death Star's designer, across the galaxy as she searches for her father and ultimately devotes herself to the Rebel cause (Rebels are the good guys. Think Princess Leia, Luke Skywalker, and Yoda). Upon watching "Rogue One," my first reaction (af-



PHOTO: WWW.IMDB.COM

ter putting my socks back on; they'd been knocked off) was that the movie genuinely feels like Star Wars and not like a disconnected spin-off. I had worried that with a new director, a new cast of characters, and 21st-century special effects the film would not fit into the Star Wars canon I knew and loved. All of those worries were blasted away when I watched the story weave itself in that classic Star Wars style. And the film score! Never have I become so excited by a movie's music. It's expansive and dramatic, and it masterfully conforms to the plot and fills the shoes left by the legendary film composer John Williams. "Rogue One" also succeeds in fleshing out the Star Wars universe. The film shows that the Galactic Civil War (yes, these things have names) is more than an ideological battle between the Light Side and the Dark Side of the Force; it is a brutal and horrific war costing the lives of many and disrupting the livelihoods of even



more. Edwards illustrates that heartbreaking realism in "Rogue One." Beyond the laser battles and explosions lies a serious discussion of the meaning of heroism. Viewers see that heroes do not have to be extraordinary people with Jedi superpowers. Heroism is found in anyone who sacrifices himself for a greater cause, and, man, is "Rogue One" chock-full of ordinary people made heroes acting in the face of impossible odds. As far as criticisms for the film, there are not many (blame the bias of a diehard Star Wars fan for that). "Rogue One" has an enormous and diverse cast, and because of that there was a general underdevelopment of characters. We will never know the stories of Chirrut Imwe or Baze Malbus apart from their brief acts of heroism. But that may be the point of it, after all. Also, while the special effects were often breathtaking, there were some apparent flaws here and there. When Disney bought Lucasfilm in 2012 and announced a fresh batch of Star Wars, I thought the franchise would be ruined. Boy, was I wrong. Each new film is better than the last, and from the looks of Episode VIII and the young Han Solo movie, Star Wars will continue to amaze and delight audiences. Such a stellar film like "Rogue One: A Star Wars Story" undoubtedly merits five stars. So, whether you are a Star Wars buff or not, make the jump to hyperspace and go see this movie. It's out of this world.



Freeman's Very Own One-Woman Act

Caroline Daniel
Staff Writer

Junior Ashlyn Siler does not do anything halfway. Once she started experimenting with music in sixth grade at Tuckahoe Middle School, she never looked back. "Music's my thing," Ashlyn said. Though many people enjoy listening to music, few pursue it to the extent Ashlyn has. She participates in strings, festival choir, and color guard, all of which take place in the fall. When Freeman's color guard is no longer in season, she competes with Deep Run's winter team so she can continue to do what she loves. "It's a lot," she said. For example, "At the [winter] assembly I'd have to run all the way from strings to chorus." However, her busy schedule has not kept Ashlyn from trying other types of music that interest her. "I am teaching myself piano, and I'm hoping to learn bass guitar," Ashlyn said. She searches

YouTube to find modern songs that have played on the radio in the past. "I try to pick the easier songs with...chords. I already know where the notes are, and I can read music, so that makes it a little easier," Ashlyn said. Ashlyn enjoys combining her skills and singing while she plays the piano. "I was in a band for not too long. It was freshman year," she said. Ashlyn credits her older sister, Brittany, as part of her music inspiration. "My sister also plays violin...[and is] majoring in it at JMU," Ashlyn said. "I was a copycat." However, Ashlyn "has loved music since [she] was a toddler," said her mother, Christine Siler. In addition, she is not afraid to branch out from what her family has done and embrace talents that are uniquely her own. "They can't [sing]," she said. "No, no, no." Ashlyn's presence has impacted Freeman's music classes. "My favorite memory of Ashlyn was her marching band solo this year," said Rob Blankenship, the

head of Freeman's band program. "She was so into it and intense about it that sometimes people didn't know her falls were intentional," he said. "It was very good." Kristen Batson, the director of Freeman's chorus program, also has fond memories of Ashlyn. "She calls me 'Mom.' She has

since the first day of school," Mrs. Batson said. "She brings so much energy and character and personality to the class." Music has changed Ashlyn as much as she has changed Freeman's music programs. "Music has made [her] more creative and imaginative," said Mrs. Siler. Her mother also noted that Ash-

lyn "strives to do well" in all she does. Ashlyn encourages anyone interested in music to work hard at their dreams. "Don't get frustrated. Push yourself. Music isn't easy," she said, "but it's really worth it."



Ashlyn practices her routine over the summer.



Ashlyn poses with the color guard.



PHOTO: XANG PHOTOGRAPHY

Photo published in MOD Magazine.

Bring on the Bands

The National

Young the Giant	February 26th
The 2017 Excision Tour Featuring the Paradox	February 28th
St. Paul and the Broken Bones	March 8th
The Avett Brothers	March 10th and 11th
Eli Young Band	March 18th

The Broadberry

Breaking Silence Fundraiser Concert	February 18th
Larry Keel with Boy Named Banjo	February 24th
Eisley with Civilian and Backwards Dancer	February 25th
Windhand with Pilgrim and Heavy Temple	March 3rd

Freeman's Next Top Model

Rachel Alexander
Staff Writer

Junior Shea McLoughlin is two different people. "Here [at school], I'm wearing sweatpants...I'm kind of to myself," she said. "But, when I'm out doing my thing, I'm definitely more confident." Shea's "thing" is modeling. For the past three years, Shea has been an active model, often traveling to D.C. with her mother to participate in photoshoots. From clothes to makeup to swimwear, Shea models a diverse array of products, including eyebrow-growth inducers and masquerade masks.

Shea transferred to Freeman from St. Gertrude High School after living in Connecticut and previously Paris. Although she was born here in Richmond, she remembers the culture of fashion in Paris to have influenced her interest in fashion and design.

Although fashion is no longer her main focus, Shea talks about her passion for art.

"I love to draw," she said. "Make-up artists will do a lot of things that are creative, and I enjoy that because I like art."

For Shea, it is the creative process of modeling that is the most exciting. "[There is] the photographer, who

has their idea, and the make-up artist who has to collaborate with the photographer," she said. "There's also hair people, nail people, stylists..."

Although it can be challenging to become comfortable with a new set of people for each photoshoot, Shea believes that she has grown as a model by putting herself out there. "I love being a part of a creative team," she said. Still, "[i]t can be kind of awkward if someone you don't know at all is touching your face, putting makeup on you."

"I have a lot of insecurities, but I feel confident when I am modeling. Academics aren't really my thing, I'm more creative." The creativity part comes into play for Shea when it comes to "drawing people to things."

Shea calls this confidence, and it is an important aspect of modeling which seems a bit like acting. "Say they give you shoes to model, then you have to put all the pizzazz in your feet," Shea said. "If it's about a handbag you have to make [the handbag] look cool."

Balancing modeling with school is not a problem for Shea, although a lot of her time is spent on the road. Modeling is what she loves to do, and she plans to continue "to strive to reach [her] full potential."

"4 Your Eyez Only"

Kyle Adams
Editor-in-Chief



The real is back. After nearly two years since releasing his double-platinum album "2014 Forest Hills Drive," J. Cole spontaneously dropped a new album entitled "4 Your Eyez Only" this past December. With only two weeks' notice before its release, even his most avid fans (including myself) did not know what to expect.

The Fayetteville product released an album that frustrated some, delighted others, and obfuscated many. Lyricism is eminent for Cole, and his story-telling abilities join the likes of East-Coast stars Jay-Z and Nas—from whom he gains inspiration.

Throughout the album, J. Cole tells the sequential life experiences of the proto-

"This perspective is a real one, another lost Ville son. I dedicate these words to you and all the other children affected by the mass incarceration in this nation."

- J. Cole

typical African-American young man in his hometown, Fayetteville, NC.

Initially listening, I thought Cole was mirroring his previous album in which he told his life story. The two tracks titled "She's Mine" discuss having a wife and newborn daughter, paralleling Cole's recent life changes.

However, further exploration of his lyrics convey a life filled with violence, destitution, and drug-dealing—all of which Cole has previously noted avoiding.

The last song of the album is the eye-opener. Cole reveals that the album is in fact the biography of his friend James, a man who fell into the suffocating traps of "hood life." This biography is being told to James's daughter after James was killed.

Cole's previous albums contained catchy punchlines and heavy 808 beats. Conversely, this album features melodic sounds in accordance with Cole's evident agony from seeing the vicious cycle in Fayetteville take his childhood friends, serving as a microcosm for black America.

I am not infatuated with this album like I was with "2014 Forest Hills Drive."

The songs do not reflect Cole's true life story. The songs individually are dense with controversial topics that evoke intellectual connection with many listeners; but besides the thematic racism and violence, the album feels comparatively discombobulated.

Separate from the musicality, Cole has an unmatched ability to get on the microphone and speak his mind, no matter how much criticism he may receive.

Unlike most rappers, he heavily emphasizes the value of love and human interconnection. With this ability, J. Cole may be the greatest thinker of any living rapper pertaining to social issues combined with his brilliant introspection.

After all, J. Cole is just a man with a dollar and dream.

Thanks a "Latte" for the Coffee

Lauren Tull
Staff Writer



There's nothing better than a hot drink on a cold winter day, and a traditional European coffee from The 21hundred will be sure to warm you up and excite your taste buds.

Located at 2100 John Rolfe Parkway, The 21hundred is a family-owned and operated espresso and gelato shop. With a variety of hot and cold drinks and 18 flavors of gelato, it has something for everyone.

The Wilson Family owns The 21hundred, and it had always been a dream of theirs to open a family business.

"[We] had always thought a coffee shop would be a really fun thing to do," said Payton Wilson, one of the store owners.

The 21hundred opened on Oct. 11 and is quickly becoming a vital part of the neighborhood.

"We hope to continue building a relationship in the community, and we have been very encouraged and are already hearing good feedback from people in the area. We have many regulars, and the regulars have become friends," said Mr. Wilson.

The 21hundred is a group effort, and all five Wilsons

work there. Working together all day gives them the opportunity to really get to know each other.

"You would think living with each other would be the way of doing that, but everybody's lives are so fragmented these days. With everyone going in different directions, when you are forced to be there together, you start finding out what they are really like and what they can do," said Mr. Wilson.

There are many coffee shops in the area, but The 21hundred is taking a unique approach to its products to differentiate themselves. It is moving away from processed, sugary drinks and is focusing on "building a traditional drink you would find in European coffee shops, rather than the sweet, overdone drinks that America has come to know."

Even coffee shop owners must do their homework. The Wilsons learned everything they know from another local Richmond coffee company.

"We were really fortunate to connect with Blanchard's Coffee Roasting. We started talking to them early on in the process, and the whole company down there is phenomenal," said Mr. Wilson. "They have been incredibly supportive, hugely helpful, and we've been carrying their products exclusively."



PHOTO: 21HUNDRED FACEBOOK PAGE

Artisan coffee served at The 21hundred.

If coffee isn't your thing, or you are in the mood for a cold treat, The 21hundred has up to 18 flavors of gelato ready to be enjoyed. The gelato it serves is handcrafted by the Palazzolo family in Michigan. "It's a super product. They make everything there and make it in small batches. There's not a big machine in the middle of a factory cranking everything out," said Mr. Wilson.

In addition to its endless choices of espresso and gelato, every Friday and Saturday morning C&C's gooey and delicious cinnamon rolls are sold at The 21hundred. "The lady that makes them is a one-horse operation and does everything on her own," said Mr. Wilson. Most of her business is built on internet preorders, and The 21hundred has become her distri-

but ion point. "She can stay in here and hand them out, and it allows us to connect with people we wouldn't normally get to connect with, so it's a win-win situation," said Mr. Wilson.

The interior of The 21hundred is charming and looks like it came straight from Pinterest. The counter is made of distressed wood paneling, there is a chalkboard menu covered in calligraphy, and strands of twinkling lights are hung above comfy chairs making it feel cozy.

For many, The 21hundred is quickly becoming a favorite spot in the West End. The people are friendly, the espresso is high quality, and the gelato is delicious. It's the perfect place to go on a rainy day, for a study session, or when you're in need of a caffeine boost.

Do you have any art, photos, poems, or stories you would like to share?

Submit to the Educator, DSF's literary magazine, at dsfeducator@gmail.com or in room 119.

EDUCATOR AT OR

Luckiest Friday the 13th in History

Comic by: Lauren Hecht

