

Stay Classy, Douglas Freeman

A farewell from the editors of The Commentator



The Commentator Editors:

Front: Jack Neary, **Second row (left to right):** Thomas Best, Nick Newton, William Omberg, Kyle Adams, KeAnna Anglin, Emily Finto, Mackenzie King, **Third row:** Max Slone, Anna Lyle Collett, Sarah Farney, Ross Metcalf, Jack Bernhardt, Page Ryland, Elena Rogers, **Tree:** Meredith Given, Gabby Cox, Sarah Lim

Wrestling Insecurity



Kyle Adams
Editor-in-Chief

Authenticity is sparse in high school. Since middle school, an idealized conception of teenage life has consumed many adolescents. The urge to partake in the adrenaline-inducing activities that produce temporary buzzes and auras of invincibility lures nearly everyone in at some point.

But you are the painter of your life's canvas. You should always be the one who controls each brush stroke. Contrary to popular belief, I firmly believe you do not *find* yourself. You *create* yourself. If you do not feel like the most authentic version of yourself with your actions and decisions, it is up to you to regain the grip over your brush. Too often I see both children and adults stand complacent while awaiting a "self-discovery."

In middle school, I attempted to prove my social worth daily and be friends with everyone. Besides being exhausted from that lifestyle, I was also left unfulfilled saying and doing everything with a status quo in mind, rather than

what I truly wanted out of myself. I did not have an actual identity because I constantly wrestled with what others would think of my words, actions, and appearance against my own preferences.

My sophomore year, I itched to dive into the lifestyle that violates the values I chiefly cherish: authenticity, thoughtfulness, and courage. I longed for a massive social circle and inclusion from everyone. I could not find a niche like everyone else had after the awkward freshman year, and I spent nearly every weekend with my parents. The iPhone that rested in my pocket never buzzed with invitations.

At that pivotal time of

“But you are the painter of your life’s canvas.”

my life, Wiley Hunnicutt assigned my English class to write introspective journals about Antigone that evaluated free will, conformity, and solitude. I confessed my loneliness and sadness to her in my writing and revealed my desire to break my core tenets of life in order to no longer feel ostracized on the weekends. I trusted a

teacher with my raw emotions, and for the first time I challenged the socially accepted out loud.

She briefly wrote back to me on that Google Doc: “Hold tight to your convictions, Kyle.” That message forever changed my confidence in my personal beliefs. She will never be able to grasp how many times those words consoled me and prevented me from dipping my toes in the murky water of cal-low assimilation.

For anyone that truly knows me, fierce stubbornness is my marquee trait. It was not until Mrs. Hunnicutt redirected such stubbornness towards striving for good that I felt comfortable with my identity.

Now, as evidenced by my controversial columns in every newspaper this year, I am staunch in articulating my beliefs without being swayed by the popular opinion. Truthfully, I have felt liberated by prioritizing my convictions. However, the temptation to appease social standards continually lurks.

Rob Peck, the best teacher I have ever had, left me with a quote from Martin Luther King Jr.: “The time is always right to do the right thing.” That message is the antidote for my recurring social angst.

Thus, I challenge my readers to reflect on the authenticity of personal decisions. If you are straying from your genuine character, snatch your paintbrush back.

Lead a life you are truly proud to live.

I Rise Again



KeAnna Anglin
Editor-in-Chief

Tall and resolute, like highways to the stars, they graced the landscape with lucid beauty. Looking up, was a sight most resplendent: lush, green hickories.

This summer, I found myself at Deep Run Park a lot. Thump, thump trudged my dirt speckled, white converse as I treaded down the path. Beneath me: rich, brown soil. At first, I just went for picnics or casual hikes, but it quickly became where I went to ease frustration or find clarity. Soon, I found myself meandering off path, journaling on logs, and listening to the sounds of the stream. Amidst its many exquisite aspects, I am partial to the hickories.

After a huge storm this summer, street signs were bent, little trees tilted, and branches were lost. The hickories remained untouched. Finally, I understood my partiality and adoration for trees in general. Like the huge hickories, I am resilient and rooted, yet similar to how they need water and sunlight, I too recognize that while I am incredibly capable,

nourishment and guidance from those around me are essential. Like the carvings, I hold lessons and memories to last a lifetime. Like the little trees, my branches break sometimes. I stumble and fray at the edges, but I know the shedded leaves and lost branches will grow back.

Most times I stand tall and firm. Other times my leaves fall and my roots wither, but like the true essence of a tree: I rise again.

I've had people tell me they admire my confidence, tenacity, and strength, but these very qualities have been a huge part of my struggle the past four years. I came into high school thinking I was invincible. Somehow I had this notion that nothing would break me, and if something did, I could pretend it didn't happen. Well, I had more failed relationships than I would have liked. For a period of time, I lost my best friend (we have since worked things out and are better than ever). I became so dissatisfied with myself and my high school experience that I was convinced that there was no longer a point to having hope for finding a group of people I could call my true friends. I had no hope for finding myself. I had no hope for happiness. I no longer had confidence, tenacity, or strength. But, in due time, all of these worries have worked themselves out, but that isn't what has made my high school experience matter. In reflection,

what makes my high school experience my most formative to date is the process I've endured. I've learned that it is not about what worked out and what didn't, what I succeeded at or what I failed at. What matters is learning to love the journey, and more importantly, learning to love yourself during each step of your growth.

This is my parting message to all of you. If there is anything I've learned in the past four years, it is the power of self-love and how important it is to love yourself at all stages of progress.

We all have expectations for ourselves and our futures, and that's great, but what does the end result mean if we don't remember the journey? High school isn't easy. Change isn't easy. Life isn't easy. The things most valuable in life will never be easy, and that is the way it should be. However, just because achieving what you want will require you to overcome a lot of adversity, that doesn't mean you become discouraged. Refuse to give up. Refuse to doubt yourself. Look within, find a way to love yourself. But most importantly, find your strength. Remind yourself of the hickories. In this small fragment, I haven't exactly found who I am, or what I want to do, but I have found my strength, and when the going gets tough, I want you all to find yours--not because it will help you now, but because it will sustain you through it all.



Breathe In. Breathe Out. And Decide.



Anna Lyle Collett
Design Editor

What does it mean to make a difference?

When I was in sixth grade, I took chorus as my elective. However, I decided to switch to strings halfway through the year.

Before making this decision, several of my friends told me no one would talk to me if I switched because orchestra was "weird."

This brings me to my first point. Never let anyone tell you what is "weird" and what is not. You define for yourself what is and isn't. If I had listened to those girls when I was 11, I would not be where I am today.

The violin has led me to many experiences throughout my teenage years that have helped define my future. As I entered high school, I enrolled in the orchestra.

Over a three-year period, I worked my way into the concertmaster position, and now lead the first violin section. Strings has become one of my favorite classes throughout my years here at Freeman, as well as where I met some of my closest friends. It has encouraged me to continue to play the violin, and pursue it beyond high school. Additionally, I began teaching violin with Kate Sjovold at an inner-city church to children three years ago.

This was the point when the violin had guided into an experience that has taught me the immense value of giving to others. If you use a gift you have, no matter what it is, to help others, they can use that gift for good too. You can be the beginning of a chain reaction, spreading whatever it is you gave to others. Think of how impactful each small act can be. You can influence our city, our country, and our world.

It is important to understand the value of small acts of kindness and giving.

Denzel Washington once said, "at the end of the day, it's not about what you have or even what you've accomplished. It's about who you've lifted up. Who you've made better. It's about what you've given back." So, what has inspired you to give back? My religion has inspired me to do this.

It has always played an important role in my life. I wrote a sermon that I gave to my congregation on youth Sunday on May 7th. In this sermon, I talked about using the gifts God had given us to serve others.

I referenced a particular bible verse that spreads this message. 1 Peter 4:10 reads, "each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms."

I also want to stress the importance of small acts of kindness. We all can't be the famous athlete who gives a million dollars to a non-profit, or the funny talk show host.

However, you can be the person that contributes to the chain reaction. You can be the foundation to a movement that can better the world. The impact these acts can have on our society are unparalleled.

So I challenge everyone reading this to take every opportunity presented to you, use the gifts you have to help others, and be yourself. With all of these combined, you have the power to change the world for good.

It is your time to make your own choices. It is your time to decide what your life will be.

And so to quote Meredith Grey, "do it. Decide. Is this the life you want to live?..Is this the best you can be? Can you be stronger? Kinder? More compassionate? Decide. Breathe in. Breathe out and decide."

A Letter to Mrs. Spears



Ross Metcalf
Sports Editor

There's one mentor at Freeman who has instilled in me the value of sticking your nose to the grindstone, of stopping the complaining, and of simply getting it done.

A week before the first day of freshman year, I began what would be a humbling four-year journey by walking into Room 113 for the first time. I was supposed to meet with my brother, a senior at the time, and a few other actors to help Mrs. Spears set up her room.

I was hoping to be able to meet her and start off on the right foot. I had enrolled in her Stagecraft and Technical Theater class. Since middle school, I had worked on either lighting or sound during the school productions.

But when I walked into that hallway and heard her booming voice ringing from her room, and saw that it was produced by such a small person, it stopped me in my tracks.

Little did I know that I would end up working with Mrs. Spears for eight productions and taking stagecraft for three years.

In the time I have been privileged to work with her, there is no other memory which sticks out of my head more prominently than the opening night of Grease.

This production was my first show running lights solo. For the first time since I began working tech for shows, I felt that I had earned this right.

I had earned it through the cuts and bruises accumulated while building the set. I had earned it in the long nights spent rehearsing. I had earned it climbing the tallest ladder in Freeman to the ceiling of the auditorium with a 35-pound light in one hand and then locking my legs around the top rung and in that moment overcoming my fear of heights as I let go to hang and focus each spotlight.

To me there is a certain pride that comes with the ability to sit in the booth with the director of the shows while she calls the shows. The trust is paramount

when working tech for a show. While the audience sits and enjoys the acting, the light and sound operators and Mrs. Spears are busy trying to make sure that small mistakes do not happen and that the few mistakes don't derail the production. I consider myself in elite company and

I can say with complete confidence that becoming an active member of the theater department was the best choice I made.

extremely grateful that Spears trusts my abilities and judgement enough to allow me to run sound independently.

For four years and two shows a year, I have spent a week or two staying in the Freeman auditorium in a small booth running either lights or sound. For those few weeks I have come home to a pile of unfinished work, a quiet house, and to the knowledge that the next day would be another fourteen hours spent at school.

In hindsight, these are the weeks of theater that I learned the most. I was able to see in almost perfect clarity just how far I was willing to go to maintain grades, a social life, or sleep.

There is no other faculty member at Freeman, other than my mother, who I would consider more loyal than Mrs. Spears. Many see the side of Mrs. Spears that moves through Freeman like a hurricane on a mission, I consider myself lucky to have been able to see side of her that is passionate about her work and cares for her students.

Looking back at the successes and the shortcomings during my time at Freeman, I can say with complete confidence that becoming an active member of the theater department was the best choice I made. Theater has shown the importance of commitment and to give up your time and allow yourself to become part of something greater than yourself.

Mrs. Spears, thank you for allowing me to run the booth my way for four years and tolerating me through the setbacks. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to learn and grow which was distinctly different from any other class. Finally, thank you for making the past eight shows the highlight of my time here.

What are your plans for next year?

Andrew Elliot
Traveling the World



"I want to travel the world and learn different cultures, their ways of thinking, and just meet different people. I want to look at landmarks, the history of different states, and just have fun traveling. I'm thinking about going to the UK first."

Leo Reif
United States Marines



"Not even one percent of the American population can say they are Marine[s], and I'm going to be a part of the few that can say that. It has been a dream of mine to be Marine since I was in the seventh grade."

Guadalupe Garcia
Traveling the World



"I really want to travel to Japan, then Spain, and then I'll think of somewhere else after that. Plus, in Japan there is a street just full of arcades. I just really want to forget about school and finally just have some fun."

HSM
HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL

vs.

DST
DOUGLAS SOUTHALL FREEMAN

My life as it relates to the Disney franchise



Emily Finto
News Editor

High school was rough, but it was nothing a little music couldn't help.

However, while most turned to the latest breakout star or the next obscure band, I found comfort in a little nostalgic Disney music.

Amongst my other Disney favorites like "Mulan" and "Hannah Montana," the "High School Musical" franchise was a key part of my childhood. It also set entirely unrealistic expectations of what high school would be.

Paired with every tween romantic comedy, The Clique series, and Mean Girls, my vision of what school should be was warped to be one of rigid hierarchy, partying, and all-day free periods (thanks "Ned's Declassified").

Despite the falsely advertised experience, I managed to find some connections between the Disney soundtrack and my totally real, anti-climactic time at Freeman (aside from the actual musicality of high school, compliments of a certain Jane Geiger).

The Start of Something New: Freshman year. Bigger school, bigger people, bigger problems. Awkward would be an understatement in describing my socially flailing self as I maneuvered the beginning of high school while making an entirely new group of friends.

Downside: I didn't get to sing a duet with Troy Bolton. Upside: New teachers and classmates allowed me to start fresh. High school was completely different from middle school, in the best ways possible.

Work This Out:

Sophomore year. Finally, I had made it past freshman status.

Thanks to a fortunate combination of amazing teachers and interesting classes, I began to expertly navigate high school almost as well as the East High gang began to navigate the Lava Springs kitchen and pool. A brand new driver's license gave me a newfound freedom to venture around the far West End (and buy food). The awkwardness of the previous year had worn off and life was sorting itself out.

Get'cha Head In The Game: Junior year. I had five AP courses, serious college searches, SAT testing, and the task of searching for a summer internship. My lackadaisical approach to school was appropriately challenged this year when I discovered the required AP scores and grades for my desired colleges. My hardcore study habits mirrored that of the East High basketball team's intense music number.

On the bright side, the aforementioned driver's license continued to benefit my social life (I expanded my food purchases to the Fan).

Scream:

Senior year. I have never in my life related to a movie character more than I related to Troy Bolton during his late-night storm through the halls of East High. Fortunately, in my fit of college stress, I didn't angrily dance through the auditorium. Unfortunately, I wasn't later offered a spot at the University of California, Berkeley.

I did however, get into the College of William and Mary, officially putting an end to the horrors of college applications. #rolltribe

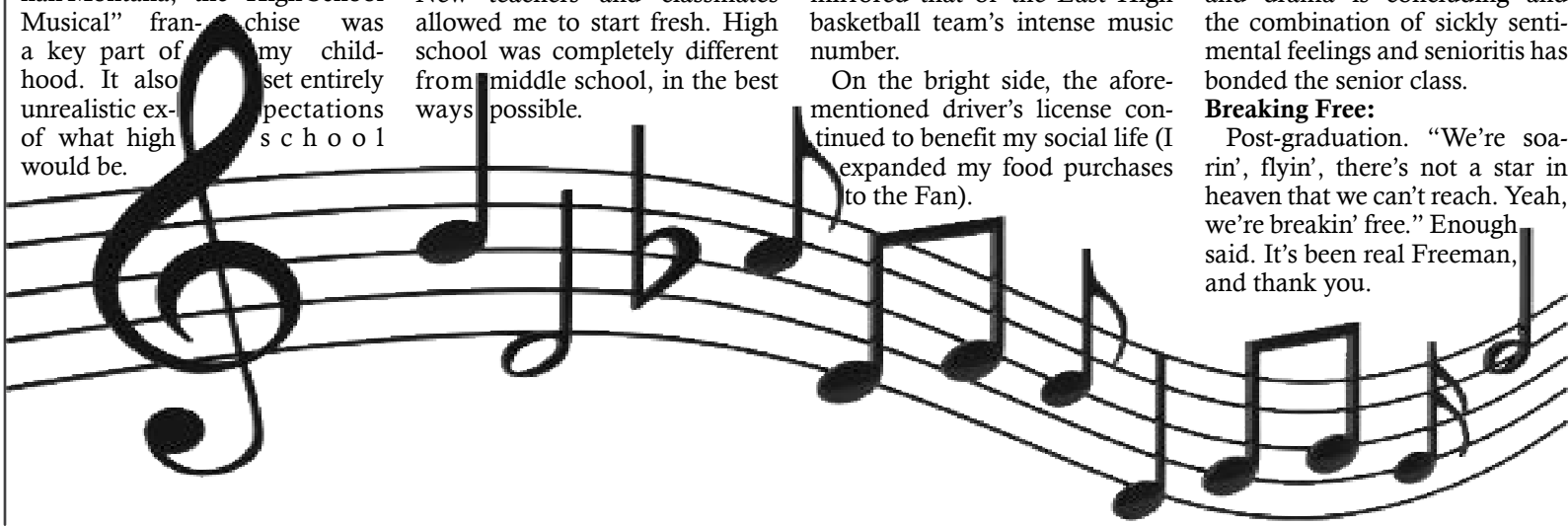
We're All in this Together:

Pre-graduation. AP's are over. It's the fourth marking period. People have decided where they're going to college. The lull between final grades and the last day of school is filled with prom planning, senior skip day, and embracing the last month of high school.

For the most part, the stress and drama is concluding and the combination of sickly sentimental feelings and senioritis has bonded the senior class.

Breaking Free:

Post-graduation. "We're soarin', flyin', there's not a star in heaven that we can't reach. Yeah, we're breakin' free." Enough said. It's been real Freeman, and thank you.



Letter to My High School Best Friends



Sarah Farney
A&E Editor

tests, and late nights of homework, but because the change means leaving behind teachers and friends with whom we've formed relationships. After we graduate, there is no guarantee we won't grow apart in college, even if we are lucky enough to be going to school together next year. So, the first thing I want to say is thank you.

Thank you to the friends that made my freshman year transition to Freeman effortless. You made sure I had a seat at lunch the first day and a partner for group projects. You were also there to help me get through every swim practice at 4:30am.

Thank you to the friends that do small things for me every day that alone may seem insignificant but together are momentous. Thanks for making Gelati Celesti a staple in my life, because even though I won't remember

what was said over two small cups of mint chip, I'll remember the feeling of genuine happiness. You're the best grammar and spelling editor a girl could ask for; I know my English teachers appreciated the help as much as I did. Thank you for walking with me to the bathroom and answering my calls even if they came way too late at night (or early, because, you know, swimming).

Thank you to the friends I made junior and senior year, I wish we had more time together. Thank you for listening to me complain about AP classes, SATs, and college essays, and thanks for your words of support and encouragement.

The second thing I want to say is how proud I am of your accomplishments. When you placed 6th in the We the People National Competition, I was incredibly proud because I

know the dedication you put in throughout the year (rare for a second semester senior) and how intimidating the public speaking was.

I'm proud of every gavel you won at a Model UN conference (and of every gavel you didn't win because let's be honest, you were robbed). Even though I made fun of the 13.1 sticker on the back of your car, I was so proud to be holding a poster cheering you on when you finished your first half marathon. When you're running for President of the United States, I'll get to say, "I knew her when..." Finally, I'm proud to call you my best friends.

I know one letter cannot do justice to the memories we've made these last four years, but I wanted to let you know one last time how much your friendship has meant to me. I hope

that there are many more years of memories to come, even if I don't get to see you quite as often. To quote one of our favorite musicals, *Wicked*, "Because I knew you, I have been changed for good."

To everyone else reading this letter, I'm sure you've noticed my experience is not unique. Friends are a universal support system through the awkwardness of high school.

Enjoy the time you have this summer, because even though the prospect of starting a new school is exciting, high school friends are irreplaceable. I sincerely hope you have been blessed with the same quality of friends that I have. Take time to reflect over the past four years because you will realize how amazing those friends really are.

Best regards,
Sarah Farney

He Said

William Omberg
Online Editor-in-Chief



She Said

Meredith Given
Sports Editor

Mrs. Lombard's because I get to watch Meredith "take a test"

Best Classroom

Whichever classroom I am "taking a test" in during 7th

Hacking Andy Jenks' Twitter so we didn't have to take exams (x3)

Biggest Freeman Hacks

Having my dad as a teacher

See how many relationships I can break up

Senior Assassin

Don't forget to take off your shoes

PDA in the stairwell

Worst Part of Freeman

The walk from the parking lot to the school

No Fly Zone

Senior Year in Three Words

You're late, again.

Lessons Learned at Douglas S. Freeman



Thomas Best
News Editor

journey at Freeman four years ago not knowing what to expect or having any idea of the type of person I wanted to grow to be. When I first arrived, I continued going through the normal motions of school, like I did in middle school.

As high school progressed, however, I was faced with new academic and social opportunities that would shape me into the person I am today.

The only people I knew when I first walked through the doors of DSF were the six other students from my middle school. Eventually, a slow but definite shift began to occur as I got more comfortable around my fellow students. I began hanging out with people who I never would

have met had I gone somewhere like Benedictine or St. Christopher's; and I no longer felt like an outsider at Freeman because I was able to find many groups of people I felt comfortable with. I was given the opportunity to learn that I thrive in large school environments, enjoy meeting new people, and putting myself out there.

While many of the changes I was faced with my freshman year were overwhelming at first, they excited and inspired me to take advantage of every opportunity Freeman offered. I started joining clubs, tried out for the volleyball team despite the fact that I have never played a day in my life, and ran for a position on student government even though

hardly anyone knew who I was. Part of this could have been my private school arrogance. Another part could have been that I finally felt like I was part of a larger, more diverse academic family and wanted to foster the new sense of community that I felt at Freeman.

I also learned that I have a profound love for learning the stories and perspectives of the people I encounter. At Freeman, I was surrounded by people of all different genders, ethnicities, religions, beliefs and socioeconomic backgrounds. I like to think that during my time at Freeman, I somehow found a way to connect with almost every group of people. I believe that this is my main goal in life. Instead of re-

maining content with the people I know and the environment I'm comfortable with, I want to use my time now and in the future to become as cultured and knowledgeable about the world and the people in it as I can.

I developed mentally and emotionally over the last four years and can say with confidence I am pleased with the person I've grown into. I will constantly be reflecting on my time in high school and analyzing which events were most significant in shaping my outlook on the world. I've learned and matured so much at Freeman and know that this school has equipped me with the skills I need to continue to thrive in all of my future endeavors.

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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.



Emily and Sarah's Abbreviated Packing List

The summer before college is supposed to be fun, right? Well not if you're stressing over what to pack. No worries, we've got you covered. Cut out this list and use it as a guide this summer to ensure that you don't forget the easily forgettable items. Take it to Target, Ikea, and The Container Store. You'll thank us later!

Kitchen

- Brita Water Filter & Filters
- Reusable Water Bottle
- (Microwavable) Bowl
- (Microwavable) Cup
- (Microwavable) Plate
- Silverware
- One good Knife
- Mugs/Travel Mugs
- Plastic Tupperware
- Ziploc Bags
- Chip Clips

Electronics

- Extension Cord
- Phone Charger
- Surge protector
- Handheld Vacuum
- (or) Broom & Dustpan
- Fan (hopefully not)
- Microwave
- Mini-Fridge
- Keurig
- Hot Water Kettle

Room

- Posters/Pictures
- Storage Ottoman
- Over-the-door Organizer
- Command Hooks
- Extra Blankets
- Beta Fish (a sure-fire friend)

Groceries

- Laundry Pods
- Stain Stick
- Iron/Steamer
- Lint Roller
- Gum & Mints
- Granola Bars
- Ramen
- Fruits/Veggies

Toiletries

- Gummy Vitamins (a must)
- Advil
- Emergen-C
- Safety Pins
- Sewing Kit

Clothing

- Rain Boots
- Raincoat
- Bathrobe
- Shower Shoes
- Sunglasses
- Bathing suit
- Business Casual Outfit

Miscellaneous

- Debit Card
- Insurance Card
- Cash
- Student ID
- Normal ID
- Fidget Spinner
- Umbrella
- Picnic Blanket/Towel
- Lapdesk
- Duffel Bag
- Headlamp/Flashlight
- Batteries
- Pepper Spray
- Hammer (trust us)

Madison Brown



Madison Brown describes her senior year as “interesting” and the senior class as “classy-ish.” The best lesson Madison has learned at Freeman is “to not take things for granted.” Advice that Madison has for underclassmen is to “spend time with your friends and family because they are what made you who you are.” Madison’s chorus teacher from freshman to junior year, Mrs. Hruska, has had the greatest impact on her life because “she was a great teacher who made learning fun and easy,” Madison said. An obstacle Madison has had to overcome is losing a friend this past November. In 10 years, “I see myself having graduated with my masters in Social Work, hopefully with a good job and maybe starting a family,” Madison said.

Late As Usual

The Story of My High School Career



William Omberg
Online Editor-in-Chief

It is 8:59 on Sept. 3, 2013; I am sprinting to class; water is dripping down my arm.

I see a whopping zero familiar faces as I race through the hallways of Freeman High School on the first day of 9th grade.

I make it to Room 133 just as the bell rings, notice all of the tables are full but one, and plant myself in the back of the room at a table occupied solely by Shayonna.

I tell everyone the story of my now-dripping wet cast (showering might not have been the best idea), accounting the not-so macho tale of fracturing my wrist on the second day of two-a-days for football.

The day gets marginally better, brightened by the peppiness of Mrs. Curry and Ms. Dean, the shared awkwardness between 25 fledgling Center-kids.

I return home after football practice questioning my high school decision.

I tell myself that my classmates are set in their friendships, that I should go to the unnamed private school where my elementary and middle school friends now go.

It’s 7:55 on May 3, 2017; I am sprinting to my AP English Literature exam; scalding hot coffee is dripping down my back.

Even my saint of a mother forgets to screw the lid onto my extra-foamed latte once in a while (Yes, she makes my coffee.

Lunch, too).

I see Mrs. Brown poised at the steps of the big gym, crutches and all.

She hands me mints and a faded picture of Rocky Balboa. I jog up the steps like Rocky, entering to the familiar faces of four-year friends.

I haven’t exactly conquered Freeman in my four years, but I like to think, at the least, it has been an Apollo Creed/Rocky Balboa split decision.

High school won the first round, capitalizing on the dreary and literally broken freshman that was me.

I think I won the second round, bonding with the Mauritian kid in the same classroom that I began high school with over a cinnamon sugar bagel and the legacy of Calvin Coolidge.

After that, we battled, Doug-

the overcorrection.

You will notice your interests and friends changing, desperately try to revert back, and then end up with a completely different problem on your hands.

High school is special because you get to feel change as it happens, whether you fight it or ignore it is up to you.

To this I would advise baby steps, trial and error on a small scale.

Freshman year is not the time to overhaul yourself completely simply because it is high school, nor is senior year simply because college is looming.

It’s easy to get wrapped up in the idea of change and adulthood, but there is no need to grow up more than you already will.

Savor the little things that are so universally “high school”—Friday night football games, your mom making your lunch, learning how to drive.

College will come and go; real life will follow suit; for now, enjoy Freeman High School and all of its quirks.

I have matured since I first walked through Freeman’s doors.

I also have gotten ahead of myself in my maturity, taken a left turn too quickly because I thought I was smarter than I am, and crashed a car (or totaled three. Yield on left turns).

Still, I am pretty much the same lanky, quixotic, and sarcastic momma’s boy that I was four years ago.

I am still almost late to everything, just a little friendlier, a little better at math, and a lot more retrospective (thank you, Rob Peck).

I thoroughly enjoyed Freeman, through the ups and the downs.

There is a lot that I will miss—friends that I most likely will never see again, textbooks I most definitely will never open again, even the daily jogs (okay, sprints) to class after pulling into the last conceivable parking spot at 8:57. “Yo, Adrian, we did it.”

College will come and go; real life will follow suit; for now, enjoy Freeman High School and all of its quirks.

las Freeman—from Honors Geometry class to January of 10th grade when we actually had to take exams.

I’m not here to say that high school will slam you down, force you to punch slabs of meat in a Philadelphia deep freezer, and then magically turn you into the Heavyweight Champion of the world (last Rocky allusion, I promise).

High school is an incessant cycle of noticing a problem, overcorrecting it, and then correcting

Gentry Dyson



Gentry Dyson characterizes his senior year with “senioritis” and his senior class as “unique.” The best lesson he has learned in high school is that “nothing is free in life” and Gentry advises underclassmen to “kiss up to teachers.” The teacher who has had the biggest impact on Gentry has been “Mrs. Weber because she makes learning fun and engaging.” As far as obstacles go, “I had no obstacles because I live life happily,” Gentry said. In 10 years Gentry will like to be “making a lot of money.”

Fatima Elgaali



Fatima Elgaali is glad that senior year is finally year, but will still miss her senior class. The best lesson Fatima has learned at Freeman and advice she has for underclassmen is to “always do your homework and pay attention in class.” Fatima says that “Mrs. Weber and Mrs. Striker have had the most influence on my decisions and life choices.” The greatest obstacle Fatima has faced has been “the fact that I am Muslim and had to deal with racial slurs and rude comments from classmates,” she said. In 10 years “I would like to believe that I might be in my second year of residency at a hospital of my choice somewhere in Virginia,” Fatima said.

Josalin Martinez



Josalin Martinez describes her senior year as “spectacular” and the senior class as “crazy.” As her biggest obstacle while at Freeman was procrastination, the best lesson Josalin has learned at Freeman is not procrastinate. Josalin advises underclassmen to not “worry about trying to figure out who you are. Just get through high school and you will figure it out in college.” The teacher who has had the biggest impact on Josalin is her vet science tech teacher at Hermitage, Karen Bowles, because “she was really supportive for me throughout the center,” Josalin said. In 10 years Josalin will “probably be a licensed veterinarian for exotic animals.”

Tanner McClure



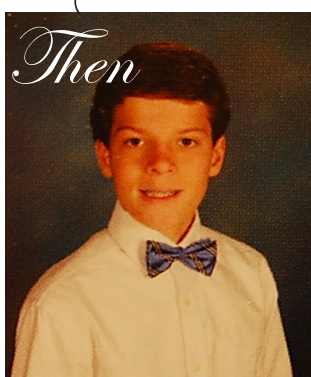
Tanner McClure describes his senior year as “hectic” and his senior class as “even so.” The best lesson he has learned in high school is “to shut up” and he advises underclassmen not to transfer schools. Tanner says the teacher at Freeman who has had the biggest impact on his life is “Mr. Durrett; he’s chill and will take my crap. It is the same way with Mrs. Baker-Neal.” His greatest obstacle at Freeman has been “annoying people” and in 10 years Tanner would like to own a salon with his own color line.

Marian Nase

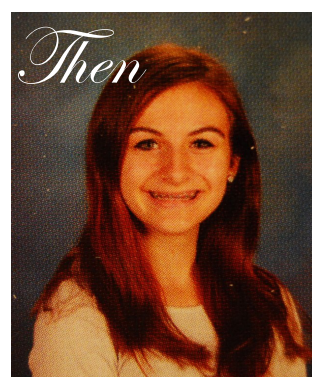


Marian Nase describes her senior year as “fun” and the senior class as “supportive.” The best lesson she has learned in high school is to “have fun and be yourself.” Advice she wants to give to underclassmen is not to “try too hard to fit in, you’ll find your people.” The greatest obstacle Marian faced in High School was her transfer to Freeman, and in 10 years Marian says “I’ll have graduated from Mary Washington and graduate school and will have become a successful psychologist for troubled youth.”

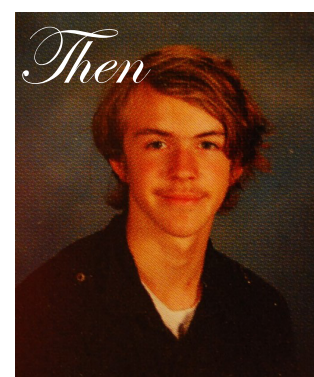
Seniors: Then & Now



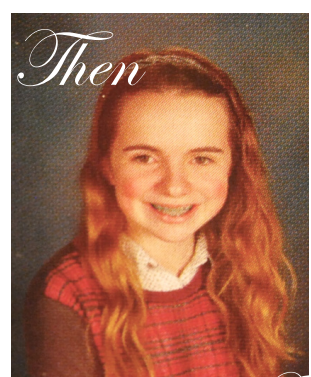
George Walker



Mary Bess Acree



Akira Glen



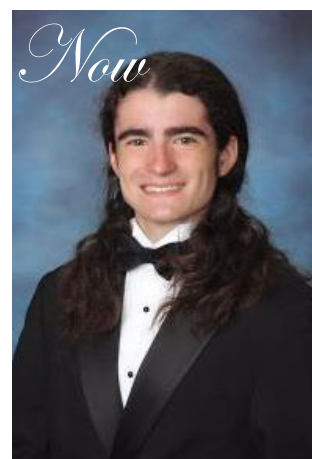
Parker Lazear



Michael Russell



Mary Lawrence Young



Most Granola



Nick Humble and Caroline Campbell

Most Likely to be President



Thomas Best and Jane Geiger

Best Friends Boys

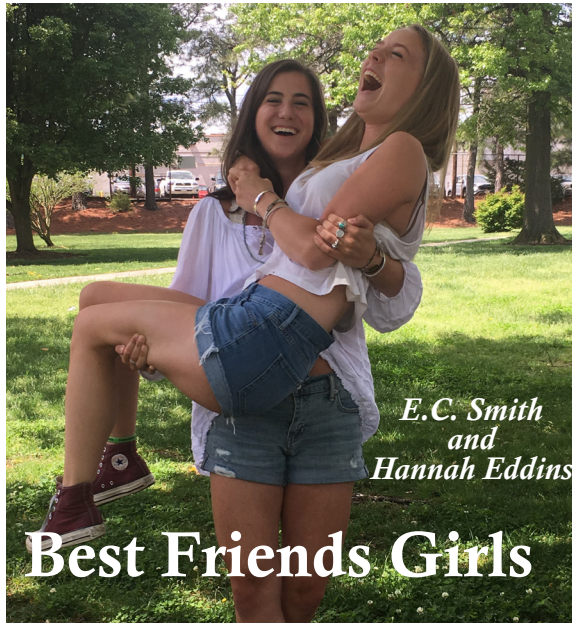


Luke Murphy and Sam Murphy

Most Likely to be a Billionaire



Kyle Adams and Kerry Baumann



E.C. Smith and Hannah Eddins

Best Friends Girls



Class Clown

Adam Lowry and Rebecca Houck

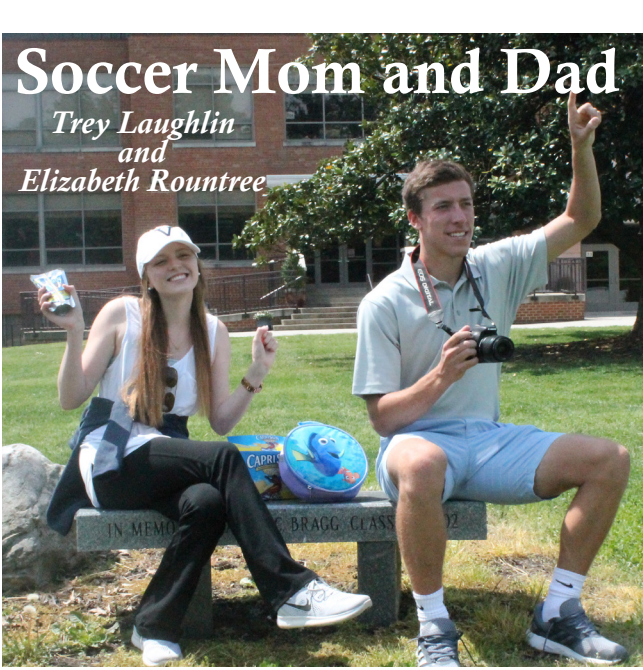
Best Dressed

Myles Casey and Odalis Brown



Most Likely to be on Broadway

Ross Metcalf and Claire Gardner



Soccer Mom and Dad

Trey Laughlin and Elizabeth Rountree



Most Athletic

Waleed Suliman and Karoline Nease



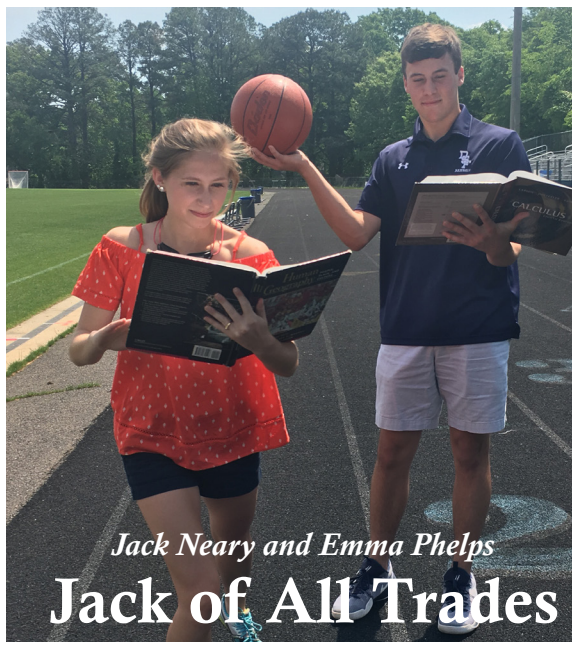
Steve Bazianos and Dana Wagenhauser

Biggest Gamer



Luis Barrios and Claire Nicholson

High School Sweethearts



Jack Neary and Emma Phelps

Jack of All Trades



Brett Reid and Trudie Grattan

Mr. and Mrs. DSF



Max Levenson and Jeanne Rockwell

Friendliest



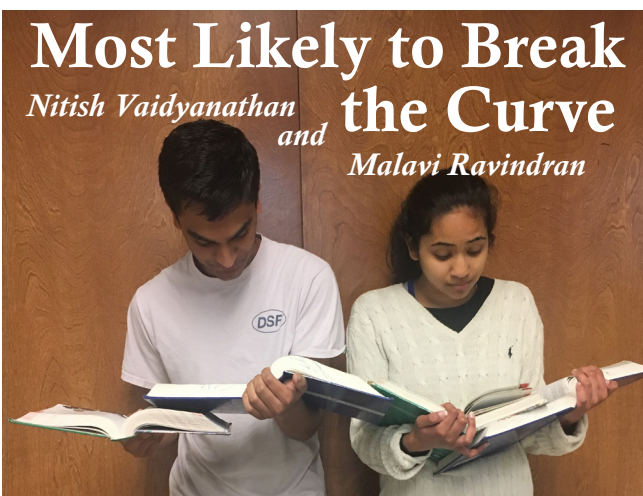
Gray Gibson and Cidney Oleniacz

Most Artistic



Charlie Holloway and Mimi Stjepanovic

Most Unforgettable



Nitish Vaidyanathan and Malavi Ravindran

Most Likely to Break the Curve



Ryan Fad and Anna Friend

Best Laugh



Rett Patterson and Tim McGinley

Biggest Rebel