

## Mr. Foltz Wins Gilman Teacher of the Year

**Audrey Jones**  
Staff Writer

Each year, every school in Henrico County awards one teacher the Gilman Teacher of the Year award. In February 2022, Freeman officially announced the Gilman Teacher of the Year as Mr. Patrick Foltz. The Gilman Teacher of the Year is chosen through a form completed by teachers; they nominate peers for the honor and can comment on each nominee. A panel of school leaders and former recipients of the award select a winner based on the nominations and staff feedback. The criteria for the nominees is “pretty open ended,” said principal Mr. Marshall. “Is it the best leader? Is it the teacher that teaches the most challenging classes? We leave that up to our teachers to decide for themselves.” Mr. Foltz, Freeman Science Department Chair and teacher, began teaching at Freeman in 2003 and currently teaches Environmental Science and Biology II Ecology classes. Mr. Foltz holds a strong presence in the halls at Freeman among faculty and students. “He is a very strong teacher-leader. Doing hard things requires leadership, and education during a pandemic is exactly that,” said Mr. Marshall. “We know that he would do for us what we would do

for him. His force and personality is very well liked, and he is a respected member of the team.” “He is free and down to earth. He is really nice to his students,” said freshman Moska Hashimi, one of Mr. Foltz’s students. Former Freeman science teacher Mrs. Campfield said, “Mr. Foltz is a team player, which makes him a good colleague. As a teacher, he is passionate about science and cares about his students.”

“He is free and down to earth.”  
- Moska Hashimi

In the classroom, Mr. Foltz strives to keep his students engaged while learning. “I like to make learning fun, I like to do things whenever possible, and I like to trick students into learning,” said Mr. Foltz. “You kind of feel out what they’re like, what they need, and then you go from there.” “He’s a really cool teacher in general because he makes learning fun,” said freshman Tristen Hodges, a student of Mr. Foltz. Upon learning that he won Gilman Teacher of the Year, Mr. Foltz was surprised. “First of all, I am very humbled because I am just a small part of the whole Freeman Family and the stuff that I see here every single day- I am just blown away,” said Mr. Foltz.

Most were not as surprised. “It’s just really fitting that Mr. Foltz won this year. This year has required people to stay positive when things were hard and has required

“He’s a really cool teacher in general because he makes learning fun.”  
- Tristen Hodges

leadership from all over the place,” said Mr. Marshall. “It has required teachers to step up and either fill in gaps when we lost teachers or to keep everybody positive and relaxed, and those are two things that Mr. Foltz does very, very well.” This is not the first time that Mr. Foltz has been nominated for this award. “He has actually been nominated for many years for this and could win in any year, but it was particularly fitting that he won this year,” said Mr. Marshall. Receiving the Gilman Teacher of the Year award is quite the accomplishment for Mr. Foltz, and it means a lot to him. “I see so much that everyone around me is doing on an everyday basis so to be honored this way is beyond flattering,” said Mr. Foltz. “I just get humbled, emotional, and even choked up a little bit that they felt that I was deserving of this.”



Mr. Foltz helps students with a science project.

**Haiku by Mrs. Campfield:**  
*“My Haiku of Patrick”*  
Mister Foltz is Great  
He teaches, befriends, and leads  
Mister Foltz helps all

## Lights, Camera, Action: Prom! Freeman Set to Host Prom at the John Marshall Ballrooms on March 26, 2022



PHOTO: JOHN MARSHALL BALLROOMROOMS

Preview of the venue.

**Russell Nystrom**  
Design Editor

On Saturday, March 26, Freeman students and faculty will come together to hold the first traditional prom since May of 2019. This year, prom will be held in the Virginia Ballroom of The John Marshall Ballrooms. Due to the outbreak of COVID-19, the Class of 2020 was unable to have their prom at the John Marshall Ballrooms, and decided to donate their spot at the venue to the Class of 2022. “Although we didn’t get to specifically pick the venue, I’m pretty excited because it’s a beautiful place to host the prom,” said Grayson Archibeque, president of the junior class. Prom is typically held later in the year, in late April or May. However, due to unique scheduling circumstances this year, prom is being held at the end of March. “The third marking period is definitely the most challenging quarter to say the least,” said Grayson. “And, you know, prom will hopefully relieve some of the stress and anxiety of that third quarter.” Mrs. Kim Jordan, junior class sponsor, added: “It has been a difficult few years for our student body during the pandemic. I think this will be an excellent way for the upperclassmen to celebrate the ending of the school year.” The school is taking precautions to ensure that prom remains a relatively pandemic-safe event. “We have Dr. Rodriguez, one of our assistant principals, who’s head of our COVID-19 Response Team. We’ve had some things approved from her committee [already] and we will continue to get things approved just to make sure that we’re following the right guidelines and making sure that we fit within the updated guidelines of Henrico County,” said Grayson. As for masks, regulations have been updated in response to Senate Bill 739, which removed the mask mandate in Virginia public schools. “Masks are now optional within the prom, and although they are optional, they are highly encouraged,” said Grayson. In the ever-changing state

of the COVID-19 pandemic, the junior class officers have had to be prepared to alter their plans for prom several times. “I’m really proud of our class officers and how they’ve handled themselves throughout this process full of many changes,” said Grayson. Another notable update to COVID-19 guidelines since homecoming 2021 is that students from other schools will be able to attend the dance this year. In order to bring a date from an outside school, the guest must be under the age of 20 and an administrator at the guest’s school must complete a form. This change in procedure will allow students to bring a close friend or significant other. “I was not able to take my girlfriend with me to homecoming, so I am really excited to have the opportunity to have my senior prom with her,” said senior prom court member Blair Bishop. For this year’s prom, the theme is Hollywood. “[The junior class officers] picked this theme because we haven’t used it in a while,” said Grayson. “I think it fits well for this year because this is going to be our first real prom in about two years now ... it’s a really good opportunity to start the new true sense of normal off.” Many students are excited to be back to normal, and are thankful to have the opportunity to have a prom before they graduate high school. “This is the first prom we’re going to have in nearly two years and, I think this is a great step and making school feel a little

“I think that [prom] will be an excellent way for the upperclassmen to celebrate the ending of the school year.”  
- Kim Jordan

bit more normal again, and allowing the students to enjoy such a very special night,” said Grayson.



## Freeman Culture Day: The Ins and Outs

**Lily Bowman**  
Staff Writer

Students of all nationalities excitedly await Freeman’s annual Culture Day as an opportunity to embrace their heritage and share their traditions with the Freeman Family. Whether students are strutting down the runway, belting their country’s national anthem, or sharing their home cooked recipes, each and every culture is celebrated with enthusiasm and praise. This event is being hosted by Equity Ambassadors on March 24 from 4 p.m.-7 p.m. All students and faculty members are invited to participate in this multicultural celebration.

The main goal of Equity Ambassadors in hosting this event is to embrace diversity and educate the student body on their peers’ countries of origin. “The purpose of Freeman Family Culture Day is to open the eyes of our community to the vast diversity that we have in our school,” said senior Sagar Murthy, Freeman’s Executive Committee Representative for Equity Ambassadors. “We often fail to acknowledge it because the classes we are in do not expose us to who our classmates really are as people. Our goal is to foster an environment at Freeman where everyone feels like they belong!”

Another student, Aarna Sitani, junior and a leader of the Cookbook and Performance Committee, said, “Freeman has one of the most diverse student bodies in the entire county, but it’s sad that we don’t really know a lot about these people’s backgrounds.”

While Culture Day has been a big hit in the past, the leaders of this year’s event are working to include new engaging elements. “We’re hoping to be more organized this year. Last time, we just had a fashion show in the library, where [models] would come down the stairs and [no one] really talk much about [the outfits],” Jessica Nguyen, senior and a leader of the Fashion Show Committee. This year, Jessica’s committee is hoping to include different exhibits where each model will have a presentation about the origins of their outfits.

“[I will be] organizing what will happen in the show, how it will start and end and how we will manage to get everyone to [participate],” said Dubraska Lozano-Perez, junior and another leader of the Fashion Committee. She is hoping that this event will be one of the highlights and is excited to share all of the details with the student body soon.

Another improvement being made to the Culture Day festival is a collaboration with Freeman’s



PHOTO: CLAIRE MORRIS

### Students plan and prepare for Culture Day at Freeman.

World Language Week events. The team is eager to find more outlets for student participation and thought the incentive to receive extra credit for bringing in food would boost attendance. “We are going to have an entire cafe where people can bring food from their cultures,” Aarna said. “Plus, we will have a cookbook that is more like we’re sharing recipes. Last year during virtual school, people brought in different food and they shared how they made it through videos.”

In addition to bringing in food, students can participate in performance opportunities. “We’re giv-

ing different performances from different cultures and letting other people interact with that themselves,” said Aarna. “One thing we’re doing is a Bollywood type of Zumba. Instead of us performing for [the audience], we’re allowing the audience to dance [with us] as well.” Other groups such as Step Team and a Freeman salsa group are on the schedule to perform.

The Holi festival is a staple of the Culture Day celebration. This festival is traditionally observed in India, but today it has spread to many areas of the world. Holi falls on March 18 this year, but the Freeman Holi Festival will be on

the same day as Culture Day on March 24. “I’m definitely looking forward to the Holi Festival,” said Jessica. “It’s always really fun.”

Filled with flying color powder, smells of freshly cooked food, and music from around the world, Freeman’s Culture Day is a day that cannot be missed. Sagar said, “I am really excited to see the Freeman community come together again to celebrate our growth as individuals and as a community. I am excited to see all the hidden talent and stories that go unnoticed and untold. It will be our first in-person Culture Day as the Freeman Mavericks!”

## Freeman Offers its First Dual Enrollment Classes

**Farah Abdullah**  
Staff Writer

After lengthy consideration, Freeman will finally offer its first Dual Enrollment (DE) classes next year. Dual Enrollment Calculus and Dual Enrollment English 12 courses are now available for eligible students for the 2022-2023 school year.

Dual Enrollment courses allow high school students to take college classes while they are still in high school. Dual Enrollment has been fairly common within Henrico County Public Schools (HCPS). Schools have offered DE for students in specialty centers, such as J.R. Tucker High School’s Advanced College Academy (ACA), but Freeman is one of the few high schools in HCPS that will be offering a DE curriculum outside of a specialty center. Freeman will be using the J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College Dual Enrollment curriculum. Principal John Marshall said, “it’s open to any student that wants to [take] it [and] has taken the prerequisite courses.” Many Freeman students plan on attending a two- or four-year college, and Dual Enrollment gives them an opportunity to be in a college class beforehand. “We would much rather students get some experience with that here while they have [resources] in this building as a safety net,” he said. “And when you look at the

cost of colleges these days, any credits you can knock off while you’re here is a great deal.”

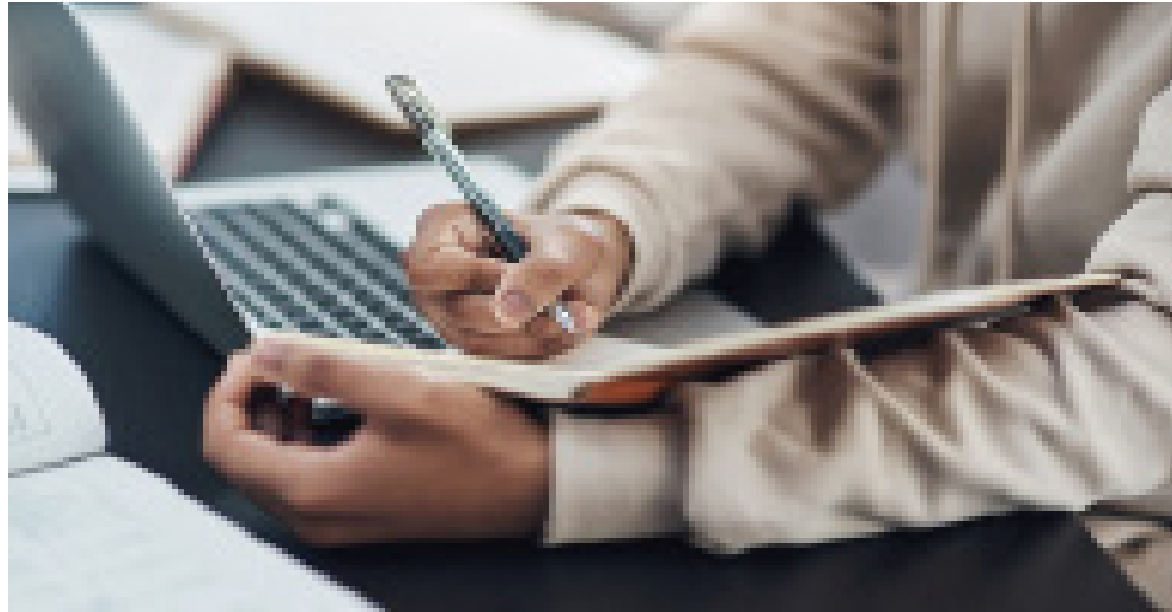
Similar to Advanced Placement (AP) classes, Dual Enrollment classes raise students to a 5.0 GPA scale as well as offer a chance to earn college credit to transfer to eligible colleges. Because “sometimes students are not quite ready to step into the rigor of AP and the test that goes with it,” Mr. Marshall said, “what we want is for [them] to get a chance to get college credit and get exposed to that type of rigor.” Students are encouraged to speak with their coun-

*“It’s open to any student who wants to take it.”*

- John Marshall

selor about what courses will fit their goals in and after high school.

Dual Enrollment Calculus will consist of a semester of a calculus preparatory course and college level calculus course. A main difference between DE and AP Calculus is that the Dual Enrollment class combines precalculus and calculus, while the AP Calculus curriculum usually requires students to take trigonometry and pre-calculus the year before. Students must complete a trigonometry class before taking DE Calculus, but pre-calculus is not a prerequisite. The amount of credits and the type of credit accepted depends on each



A student writes in their notebook.

colleges’ requirements, but math teacher and head of Freeman’s Math Department, Mr. Derek Podolny, said, “AP Calculus can give you credit for an engineering-level calculus, [while DE] will be limited to an intro to calculus course.”

In order to become a Dual Enrollment math teacher, teachers must meet the college’s level for an adjunct professor, which requires 16 credit hours of a master’s degree level mathematics. “We will be following the guidance of Reynolds Community College Mathematics Department on what’s expected to be taught in the course,” Mr. Podolny said. “Because we are teaching it here, we have the ability to bring in Ms. Beaton’s other experience with calculus.”

Ms. Beaton has taught DE Calculus Highland Springs High School, and she is currently the only math teacher at Freeman that is eligible to teach a Dual Enrollment course.

Dual Enrollment English 12 will be the equivalent of English 111 and 112 from a community college. Mr. Brian Durrett, English teacher and head of Freeman’s English department, said “the Dual Enrollment English class is a composition course; AP English 12 or 12 honors is a survey of British literature.”

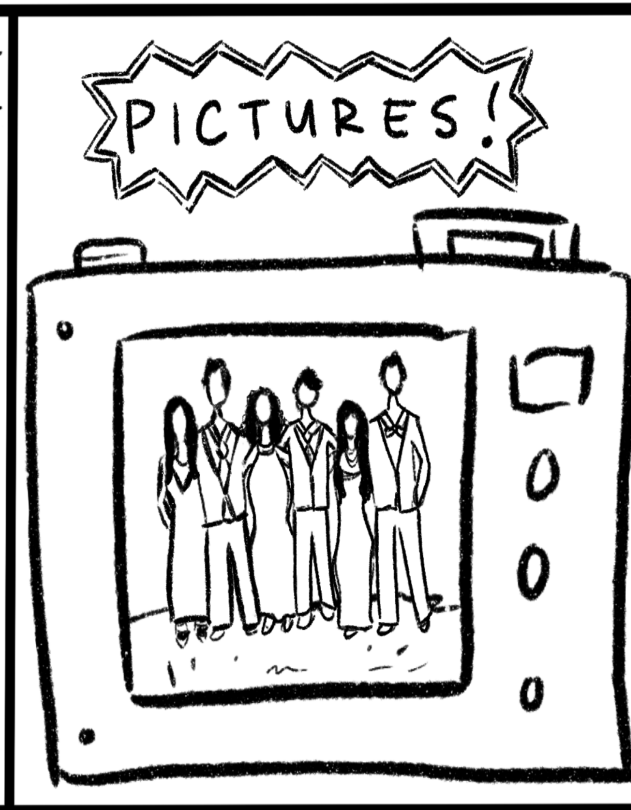
The DE English 12 class will allow students to get used to a college course. “[Taking dual enrollment classes creates] a doorway towards furthering your education, if that’s the route that you decide

to take,” Mr. Durrett said. Though the DE course gives students the opportunity to get the same GPA raise as AP classes, Mr. Durrett notes that students must “make informed decisions about taking classes that are beneficial for them and not because of GPA raise.”

Rising senior Betty Grace Thompson will be taking both DE English 12 and DE Calculus in the 2022-2023 school year. “I’m [taking DE] to get more advanced classes into my schedule as well as to get ahead in my college credits,” she said. “I’m excited for it. I think it’s really cool that we’re bringing it to Freeman, and I think it’ll be a good experience to get some insight on what college courses will be like.”

## A PROM TIMELINE...

DRAWING: ADA MALPANI



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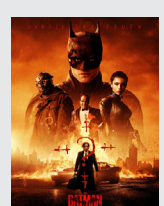
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## We Need a Student Kitchen



**Ada Malpani**  
Staff Writer

As I stand in the seemingly never-ending Starbucks line awaiting my overpriced iced latte at 8:00 a.m., all I can think about is how much better my life would be if I wasn't in this situation.

After getting the caffeine fix that took 20 minutes of waiting in the morning rush, I finally head to school and await the long stretch of school before lunch. When I finally sit in the cafeteria, I am greeted with my lukewarm fried rice in my barely functioning thermos. Or, if I didn't have time to pack lunch because I left home early to wait in line for coffee, I get some soggy pizza, and (if I must admit) pretty good fries as my lunchtime meal.

Given the obstacles I face getting coffee and the disappointment of lunch, something has to be fixed. It's time to get a student kitchen.

A student kitchen would fulfill students' needs, keeping them healthier and happier. As we all know, people are not nearly as pleasant to be around before they've had their morning coffee.

A kitchen could also provide students with a wider array of culinary options and break up the monotony of a school lunch. It would give students "more meal options," said junior Jeremy Price. For example, "[we would] be able to make meals that are healthier and not just sandwiches, chips, and all that stuff." Moreover, students wouldn't be restricted by what the cafeteria offers or what food would stay fresh during the long hours between morning and lunch.

The most obvious piece of equipment that we should have is a microwave. "I feel like that's overdue by now... it could even go in the cafeteria," said Jeremy. It can be a bit of a "hassle in the morning to put stuff in a thermos or keep stuff warm in tin foil; it would be much easier to just warm something up at school." A microwave is undoubtedly the most useful tool; students could heat up their meals for lunch and even make a cup of instant

noodles or a bag of popcorn.

In accompaniment with a microwave, a coffee maker is a necessity. "I would just like coffee in the mornings at school," said freshman Piper Troxell, "like a Keurig, that would be fun." Personally, if Freeman had a coffee maker and a microwave, all my educational (and other) needs would be met. After all, like many of my peers, I learn much better when functioning on caffeine and a full stomach.

Another reason for a kitchen is that students are no longer allowed to get food from outside places. Although that rule is justifiable, it does considerably limit a student's opportunities when it comes to interesting and delicious meals. Because "we're not allowed to bring any outside stuff at schools," Jeremy said, "we may as well be able to bring stuff in and warm it up."

Of course, there is the question of how we would make a kitchen at Freeman a reality. However, I am fairly certain it's a possibility. With Freeman's large population, if enough students pitch in and make an effort to show administrators the need for this, it could certainly happen. "We could take donations and fundraise for the kitchen to make sure that we have supplies for everyone," said Piper.

As for how it would be regulated, an adult supervisor and perhaps a pass system would keep everything working perfectly. The next question you may ask is where the kitchen would be located. Luckily, Freeman has plenty of options.

"We could pair up with a teacher if they have an empty classroom during lunch period," said Jeremy.

Finally, a kitchen could open up the pathway for interesting classes and activities based around cooking. For example, "It'd be cool to have some sort of food club or something where students could come together and cook for nonprofits or raise money," said Jeremy.

Overall, a student kitchen would drastically improve at least my experience at Freeman. I would be greeted with a hot (or iced) cup of coffee and a nutritional and warm meal every day. What could be better than that?



PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES

## She Said



**Isabelle Hevron**  
Opinions Editor

Big groups are more fun

Fancy Restaurants

Nay.

Maybe 1980s themed

Something basic like neon

Flowy dresses are so pretty

## She Said



**Cindy Xie**  
Opinions Editor

Prom edition!

Big or small group?

Best dinner spot?

Promposal? Yay or nay?

Best dance theme?

Best afterparty theme?

Flowy or fitted dress?

Smaller groups

TBH wherever the food is good

Yay! Kind of awkward but fun

An enchanted forest vibe is cool

Casino night never fails to impress

Fitted

## SAT to Migrate to the Modern Era



**Jack Harenchar**  
Online Editor-in-Chief

The days are numbered for everyone's favorite exam as we know it. On Jan. 25, College Board announced that the SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test) will go digital in the coming years.

First administered to students in 1926, the popular college placement test has undergone minimal changes to its administration structure, as the paper and pencil exam has so far weathered the storm of modern technology. But that won't be the case for much longer; beginning in 2024 for domestic and 2023 for international students, the SAT will be administered online.

Students will still report to testing centers on the day of the exam, but they will now take a shortened version (two hours instead of the traditional three-plus) using a personal computer or a loaner provided by the administrator. The test, which will still be scored on a 1600-point scale, will utilize adaptive testing that will give students questions based on their previous right and wrong

answers, similar to MAP testing.

Some perks that students may enjoy from this change are the ability to use a calculator throughout the entire math section, a shorter reading section more similar to what students will see in college, and the ability to receive results faster.

The transition to digital testing comes in the wake of multiple years of test-optional college admissions. Fair Test: National Center for Fair & Open Testing, a non-profit organization critical of the SAT, reports that 80% of the roughly 2,300 four-year colleges aren't requiring the exam for high school students in the graduating class of 2022. Further, more than 1,400 schools have already expanded this test-optional policy to current high school juniors.

In an effort to keep up with the times, it was certainly on par for College Board to transfer its staple examination to a digital format, but from my own perspective, it comes with a bit of nostalgia.

As someone who has taken the exam three times, I view the three-hour pencil and paper test as a staple in the college application process. For decades, the test has been a uniform platform that allows universities to glean the first bit of information about the skills of an applicant. While many argue that students should not be admitted into colleges and universities based on their test-taking ability, the reality is that, like high school, tests are still the way that we judge the knowledge of students.

While moving the SAT to a

digital platform certainly makes

sense money-wise and time-wise, I am hesitant to say that I fully support the College Board's decision. In my view, moving the exam to a digital format actually seems to hinder the accessibility of the exam in a time when the number of students taking the SAT is already dwindling. What can be more straightforward than your run-of-the-mill, bubbled-in, multiple-choice test? Now, you're asking students to bring technology into the equation- and we all know how reliable that can be- and for those without their own device, to learn how to use the one lent to them while trying to take a significant test. Did the College Board not learn from virtual AP exams?

But with that being said, the move probably makes more sense than not. Gone are the college days of our parents, when finals were conducted in Blue Books. These days, many professors administer their examinations via technology. The digitization of the SAT will seek to prepare students for the modern college experience.

While the move will certainly provoke some "back in my day" comments from parents, who's going to argue against receiving your score quicker or taking a shorter test that adapts to how you are scoring. Plus, a calculator throughout the math section is a game changer!

Though it'll still be a few years, I will certainly add my voice in wishing the SAT as we know it, a fond farewell.

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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.

## Timeline for Administering the Digital SAT Suite

	International SAT	PSAT-Related Assessments	U.S. SAT and SAT School Day
Spring 2023	Digital	Paper and Pencil	Paper and Pencil
Fall 2023	Digital	Digital	Paper and Pencil
Spring 2024	Digital	Digital	Digital

Digital Paper and Pencil

PHOTO: COLLEGE BOARD

# Reviewing School Lunches at Freeman



**Maddie Carpenter**  
Features Editor

School lunch has been a subject of controversy for a long time. There is a common stigma that school-provided meals are unhealthy and taste bad. However, I am here to tell you that school lunch is not bad at all. In fact, I think that it is a great option for all students.

Beginning this year, Henrico County Public Schools has made all school lunches free of charge, thanks to a program created by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. I am definitely a proponent of this change because it ensures that every student will be able to eat lunch every day, whether they just forgot

to pack one that day or struggle financially and consistently are unable to afford the ingredients needed to make their own lunch.

In addition to the benefit of lunches being free, some of them are actually pretty good. I had not eaten school lunches since elementary school before this year. I had always heard pretty bad things about it, so I never really gave it a chance. However, this year I thought that it was worth trying the school lunches since they are free, and, being a senior, this is my last chance to try them.

The pizza is a fan favorite. I have tried Freeman's pizza before and I can tell you with certainty that it is a solid 7/10. In my opinion, it is just as good as Little Caesars pizza, if not better. The crust is cooked to perfection and the flavor is delicious. It is not too greasy either.

Another lunch that I had an overall positive experience with is the corn dog nuggets. I won't lie, I was a little skeptical at first. Pizza is pretty hard to mess up, but corn dog nuggets are a bit riskier. However, I was pleasantly surprised when I tried them. The bread was not as crispy as I would have liked, but the actual hot dog was really good. I had not eaten corn dog nuggets since elementary school, so it was a nostalgic experience that adds bonus points

to the overall score. I would give the corn dog nuggets an 8/10.

I did not have as good of an experience with the school's orange chicken. The flavor was fine but nothing special. Also, it was not crispy at all, which was a key factor I was hoping for when I tried them. Additionally, the orange chicken was served on top of fried rice that was frankly just not good. I do think that orange chicken is a creative school lunch idea, and I love Asian food, so I appreciated the effort. I would give the orange chicken a 4/10. It was definitely one of my least favorite school lunches.

French fries are a side dish that comes with many of Freeman's meals. The quality of them really just depends on the days. Some days, they are super crispy and super flavorful. Other days, they are soggy and bland. I have had more good experiences than bad ones, so I would give them a 6/10.

All in all, I would definitely recommend school lunch! It may not be as good as your favorite meal from Jack Brown's or Osaka, but it is a solid option for lunchtime at school. Our Freeman family is grateful that those who need school lunches have access to them, and we thank the cafeteria staff for providing healthy and delicious lunch options!

# Spring Cartoon

\*Made by Opinions Editor Cindy Xie\*



# Fame In Hollywood!



**Katherine Hynes**  
Community Editor

Lights flashing, cameras snapping, a crowd shouting your name. A singular crystal-plated stiletto heel steps out of a long, black limo. A skyline of fame fades in the background, illuminated by the Hollywood sign. The shine of the strip of red under your feet seems to go on forever, just like this night.

The theme: Hollywood. The night: One to Remember. This must be a night of glamour, fame, and fortune. For seniors, it's their last dance, their last time to shine- to own the stage. For the juniors, it's their time to show us what they've got. If you're going to make a dance theme "Hollywood," you've got to commit and pull through. Hollywood is full of expense and fascination, putting less than 100% into this simply will not do.

Music is a very important part of dances, especially prom. Senior Madeline Holdren said, "If I had to pick one song for my walk down the red carpet, it would be 'Telephone' by Lady Gaga."

Senior Sophie Georgiadis said her chosen "moment to shine" song would "definitely be something by Beyonce." A Hollywood theme provides a great opportunity for a vast and various music selection. Songs like "Empire State of Mind" by Jay-Z and "Paparazzi" by Lady Gaga are absolute must-haves for this special night. A high-class, fame-induced playlist will most certainly be created.

Now, what about the attire for such a glamorous theme? Junior Ann Collier Ferguson said, "I will definitely be wearing red for the night, there's no other way!" Red and gold are sure-fire colors that will make a statement at prom. Gold and sequin accents are also sure to be a hit this year, given the Hollywood theme.

The dance floor will be filled with girls in long shiny dresses and boys in sleek, black tuxes. Senior Claire Desouza said, "I think the boys should wear tuxedos to prom for sure. They already got to wear extravagant, funny suits to Homecoming."

The decor for this prom has the opportunity to be one of the best Freeman has ever seen. Senior class sponsor and history teacher Jennifer Szot said, "The Hollywood theme has been done a lot, but I think it could be great for our prom." Decor that could fulfill Ms. Szot's prophecies include a red carpet (obviously), a photo booth, a huge Hollywood sign, a bouncer, and a giant gold disco ball, of course!

From the Golden Age of Hollywood to New Hollywood this prom theme is one of class, pizzazz, and glam and will be one that we will all remember. Let's spend the whole night on the dance floor. See you there!



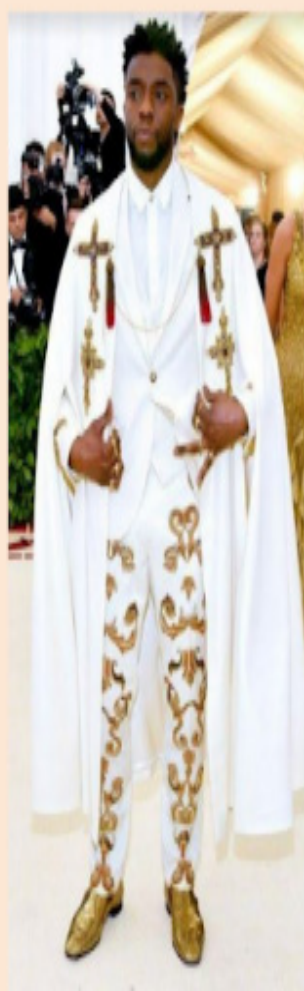
Students wait in line for lunch.

PHOTO: CLAIRE MORRIS

# Best Met Gala Fits

\*Made by Opinions Editor Isabelle Hevron\*

## My Favorite Met Gala Looks



PHOTOS: GETTY



PHOTO: HUFFINGTON POST

The famous Hollywood sign overlooking California

# Quiz Bowl Team Takes Regional and State Championship Wins

**Ella Hurlbert**  
Copy Editor

The Freeman quiz bowl team recently met with great success in the Virginia High School League's (VHSL) regional and state scholastic bowl tournaments.

Under the leadership of teacher sponsor Mr. Matthew Scott and team captain Joseph Chambers, the team took first place at regionals by a large margin on Feb. 12 and earned their first state championship win in seven years on Feb. 26. Joseph was accompanied in competition by fellow seniors Kieran Wall, Gio Mazzeo, and Kenny Vo, sophomores Annabelle Nee and Katie Hall, and freshman Anuj Damle.

The team worked hard for their victories. "We practice Tuesday mornings before school and Wednesdays right after school," said Katie. "Mr. Scott helps us run practice rounds and gives us practice packets ... we're lucky to have him as our sponsor."

"They're brilliant students," said Mr. Scott. "I see my job more as a facilitator to help them achieve what I know they can already get to, and I enable them to get to those competitions and set up practices, but all of that success is on the students."

The quiz bowl team's successes don't stem just from their practice schedule- the competitors' teamwork is one of their best assets.



Freeman's Quiz Bowl team poses with sponsor Mr. Scott at state competition.

"Seeing the camaraderie between the students is awesome," Mr. Scott said. "Knowing that they each have strengths and weaknesses and working on them, and seeing the students figure out amongst themselves the best way to tackle problems is really inspiring."

"If everyone generalizes, that's great, but that means you all won't be good at one thing. That's usually what you want," said Kenny. "You want to know one thing really well, and then your teammates make up for it. I'd say the team's greatest strength is probably our diverse knowledge of topics ... Gio's the more math-focused individual: math, science, physics. Kieran's

got astronomy and history ... I'm the religion and mythology guy."

"We cover a lot of topics really well," agreed Katie. "We have a lot of people who specialize in [history and science], and Joseph knows a lot [about] ... literature and music questions, which is really helpful."

"[We've won] seven trophies," Joseph said. "There's so much stuff that I know from quiz bowl that I have no real reason to know ... [but] it's fun to be in class and realize that 'I've heard about this before.'" At the state competition, Joseph not only won alongside his teammates but was also selected individually as part of the

five-member All-Star state team.

Despite this year's exciting victories, there is one concern shared among many members of the quiz bowl team. "I think [we need to work on] recruitment, honestly," Katie said. "We have a lot of senior boys, obviously ... [they're] most of our team. Next year, we're really going to have to work on recruiting in order to get a full team."

"Everybody should join quiz bowl," Joseph said. "You may not think that you're going to be very good at it ... [but] after a few months, you'll know far more than you ever expected."

"A lot of people I think are intimidated by it," Katie said. "They

think they have to be genius-level smart to be in [quiz bowl]. But you don't ... you can specialize in something and be really valuable for the team ... I would just encourage people to try it out. You don't have to be crazy smart. You really will be better at it than you think you will."

"There are schools around Virginia ... that have quotas of questions they have to write every week. That's not us," Joseph explained. "We go and we have fun with it. That really plays to our strengths, because we're not super in our heads about it."

"I don't think we take losses as hard as other teams do, and we just try to play and have a good time," Mr. Scott said.

Even with recruiting concerns, Gio said "there are surely prospects for next year. I'm very proud of our team members and all the work they've been putting in, especially the underclassmen."

Freeman's quiz bowl team is currently registered to attend a national competition in Atlanta, Georgia later this year. "As soon as we decide what types of fundraising [to pursue], we will definitely look for student body support to help get us there," said Katie.

In addition to helping raise money for the team's nationals bid, Freeman's student body can show their support for the quiz bowl team by watching them compete in the "Battle of the Brains" televised competition on CBS6 later this month on March 26.

# Freeman's Familiar New Chorus Teacher

**Taylor Widdifield**  
A&E Editor

Because a strong choir is essential to any music department, Freeman has made a new addition to the family: chorus teacher Mrs. Michelle Tuck. Mrs. Tuck has returned to teaching after a two-year break spent taking care of her newborns. Prior to her break, Mrs. Tuck was the chorus teacher at Tuckahoe Middle School, and previously taught general music at Crestview Elementary.

Despite her taking on her new leadership role halfway through the school year, Mrs. Tuck's time at Tuckahoe made her transition easy. "I already knew about 80% of my students," she said, "so the transition of coming in mid-year has gone smoothly."

Mrs. Tuck's students felt similarly, especially those who attended Tuckahoe Middle. However, junior Megan McBride, despite having had Mrs. Tuck in middle school, believes that "[Mrs. Tuck] made the transition seamless for everyone."

Teaching the Concert, Festival, and Show Choir classes keeps Mrs. Tuck on her toes while she's at Freeman. Springtime, in particular, is one of the busiest times of the year for chorus students as they prepare for choral assessments. In addition, Festival and Concert Choirs are preparing for concerts in March and May. Despite the potential difficulties, this is one of the best times of the year, according to Mrs. Tuck. "It really gives us something to work for," Mrs. Tuck said. "We know that everything has to be in tip-top shape."

In order to keep everything running smoothly for success at choral

assessments, and for musical success as a whole, Mrs. Tuck takes on a structured style. "She works us hard," Megan said. "She'll make sure things get done."

Mrs. Tuck's teaching style isn't limited to the structure she keeps in her room; she makes sure to provide a safe space for all of her students. "She's detailed with what she wants us to do while still keeping in mind what we want," senior Yasmin Lopez said.

"She creates an environment full of trust," Megan said. According to Megan, Mrs. Tuck's teaching is like a "breath of fresh air," and her students always knowing they can talk to her. "She treats you like her child," Megan said. "She's very motherly and welcoming."

Having taught music for ten years, Mrs. Tuck's impact on the Freeman community extends far past her prior positions. Mrs. Tuck was a chorus student at Free-

man herself, which helped inspire her to pursue music in the first place. "When I was in chorus at Freeman, I decided I could be a teacher and also do what I love: singing," said Mrs. Tuck.

This idea has seemingly come full circle, as Mrs. Tuck has inspired her own students to continue chorus. According to Yasmin, Mrs. Tuck has left the biggest musical impact on her and is the reason she continues chorus. "She has led me to continue doing music in high school," Yasmin said. "She's the reason I want to continue it in college." Yasmin's inspiration from Mrs. Tuck to continue her music career is not an isolated occurrence. "I see how all the students look up to her and trust her," she said. "I would not be in love with music like I am without her."

Mrs. Tuck's relationship with her students is one to be admired, and she continues to positively

impact her students. Her passion for music not only pushes students to pursue their passions, but gives students a role model to look up to at Freeman. "She pushes you to want to be like her," Megan said. "She's so loved and talented."



Mrs. Tuck in her office.

# New Freeman Math Teacher Rides the Roller Coaster to Success

**Ada Malpani**  
Staff Writer

After riding 271 roller coasters some may say that they have had enough, but for Nicolas Cox, Freeman's new math teacher, there can never be too many roller coasters. As a math teacher, Mr. Cox interlaces his love of teaching and roller-coasters to make the classroom a more engaging and entertaining place to learn.

Mr. Cox's love for roller coasters started young, and his favorite one was always the Dominator in Kings Dominion. His connection began when it was being built. In fact, "It was the first roller coaster that I can remember watching them build," said Mr. Cox. Watching roller coasters being constructed and experiencing the rush of adrenaline as one speeds down the tracks at more than 60 miles an hour is what Mr. Cox said "spurred my love of math and science."

Mr. Cox even worked at three different amusement parks, and operated many roller coasters during this time. "I was really fortunate to be a supervisor at the Dominator for the 2019 and 2020 seasons," said Mr. Cox. The coolest part, according to Mr. Cox, is "the 'behind-the-scenes' of how they [roller coasters] work." With friends, Mr. Cox enjoys ranking roller coasters and discussing them: which aspects make them better or worse and why they like them.

Growing up, Mr. Cox knew he wanted to be a teacher, but was influenced by his peers and family to avoid it. Instead, he went to the Center for Engineering at Hermitage High School, and while there, began to tutor his friends whenever needed. Here, "I came



Mr. Cox standing outside of his room.

to the conclusion that I do want to be a teacher," said Mr. Cox.

After graduating from Hermitage, Mr. Cox went on to earn a Bachelor's degree in Mathematics, with a concentration in Secondary Teacher Preparation. Then, he received a Master's of Teaching degree in Secondary Math and student taught at his alma mater for the second semester of the last school year to complete his student teaching requirement.

This year is his first year teaching, and he is already loving both the process of teaching and the students he gets to meet along the way.

Mr. Cox is a "great addition to the math department," said Freeman Math Department Chair and teacher Derek Podolny. Mr. Cox brings with him a "youthful energy with a new perspective on things."

Additionally, Mr. Cox has worked hard to help students who struggle the most in Algebra. It can be "really hard to find teachers that connect with those students and are willing to go to any [lengths] to catch them up on any of the gaps that they have," said Mr. Podolny.

"My favorite part about teaching is getting to know the students," said Mr. Cox. "Sure, you can solve

a quadratic function, but what do you do outside of school?"

He wants to share his love of math and works hard to develop connections with students and make them feel comfortable while they are in class. By forming connections with students "I can show them that math class can be fun, and it's something that we can all enjoy," said Mr. Cox. One way he does this is by using roller-coasters to describe the ways math can be fun, and useful in real life.

For example, his Algebra II students "'rode' a roller coaster to determine increasing and decreasing intervals on a graph," said Mr. Cox.

Mr. Cox "takes his personal enthusiasm... and tries to work that into his teaching," said Mr. Podolny. Instead of giving students worksheets or busy work he emphasizes "students working together in groups where he is more of an assistant in the learning process."

Recently, Mr. Cox won the First Year Teacher of the Year award. He said he is "incredibly grateful to work with other teachers who are here to answer my questions on a day-to-day basis and help guide and shape my lessons to make each one as good as it can be!"

## Who Am I?

- He teaches at Freeman
- He went to the University of Notre Dame
- He is part of Freeman's math department
- Traveled Asia for a month as a baritone in a choir
- Completed the Marine Corp Marathon In D.C.
- Is the parent of twins
- Gets sea sick

## Freshmen Advocate for Late Release

Daisy Fuller  
A&E Editor

In the wake of the strict enforcement of parking lot activity and student releases, a group of freshmen have banded together to advocate for freshman late release. Freeman freshmen have begun a campaign for their afternoon release to be pushed from 3:55 p.m. to 4:15 p.m. This push is a result of parking lot tension and their inability to form carpool groups. While most seniors are fortunate enough to have early release, juniors and the few sophomores who drive are

burdened with the chaos of the Freeman parking lot in the afternoons.

When students are released from their last block of the day at 3:55 p.m., the parking lot is almost immediately swarmed with students desperate to avoid the impending lines that form at the exits. A line is inevitable, however. At Freeman, we have established an unofficial procedure of three feeder lines per exit in an attempt to minimize excessively long lines. Although ours is arguably a simple system, some have extreme difficulty following the rotation of the feeder lines, which ultimately causes confusion

and chaos. Despite having much more driving experience than students, it is often parents who fall victim to this misunderstanding and ultimately cause congested lines and delayed releases.

This issue caught the attention of the Freeman Class of 2025 and they decided to take action. They realized that most of the parents who cause these issues and inhibit student drivers are likely picking up freshmen. Because freshmen are the only grade level completely unable to drive, they have decided to claim responsibility for the parking lot madness and insist on

mandatory late releases.

Their plan for freshman late release consists of the typical 3:50 p.m. senior release, juniors and sophomores being released at the normal 3:55 p.m., while freshmen will remain in their last periods an extra 20 minutes. Their proposal also indicates that parents picking up freshmen must remain outside of the student lot until 4:25 to allow for the safe and efficient exit of student drivers.

While this plan is still in its formative stages, the leaders of this initiative have assured the Freeman Family that freshman late release shall be implemented no later than mid-April.



PHOTO: @FREEMANHIGH SCHOOL OFFICIAL

## Spring Sports Go Virtual

Hank Thompson  
Features Editor

With a surprising turn of events, Springs sports are going virtual. In an email sent out on March 2nd, Coach Harmon announced the change.

In an effort to introduce another nuance to society before the Pandemic ends, all sports are to move to a virtual setting by the end of the month.

"How do they expect me to coach virtually? It's simply not feasible," said Mr. Seegar, Lacrosse coach and Macroeconomics enthusiast. Meanwhile, others have been more accepting on the transition. "I've traded in all my lacrosse



Soccer team captain Barry Jones practices soccer.

equipment for a used Xbox," said junior Field Smith. "Really everybody's making sacrifices for the team this year."

Smith is one of many students making this transaction. "I saw an

ad for a used playstation on Craigslist. Let's just say I lost more than my money on that trip."

"For soccer, we pretty much just play FIFA 22 all afternoon," Jones

said. "Its honestly more competitive online than

*"For soccer, we pretty much just play FIFA 22 all afternoon."*

- Barry Jones

it ever was in-person"

Some teams have made the transition easier than others. "We literally just run in place in front of a Microsoft Teams call," said senior Captain of Track Brett Bishop. "It's humiliating," said senior Gio Mazzeo. With a substantial portion of the Spring season still to come, most can only wait to see how it plays out.

were very few students in the asynchronous period. This leaves me and my fellow teachers wondering, could these doctor's appointments have been fictitious?" he said. "And if so, why did students not want to come sit in one room, in silence, with a bunch of strangers, for three hours?"

Notably, the sophomore class seems to have been spared from this rush of appointments. Sophomore Nitya Kumar noted that she knew of "few, if any" fellow sophomores who were struck by this trend. "I am so impressed with the fellow members of my grade," she said, "and that no sophomores fell mysteriously ill."

Luckily enough, by Thursday, after the two days of asynchronous work, attendance was back up to normal levels. Doctors across the metropolitan Richmond area can finally breathe again, as students have left waiting rooms and returned to the halls of Freeman High School.

## Freeman Family Feeling Unwell

Annabelle Glassman  
Editor-in-Chief

On Tuesday, March 16 and Wednesday, March 17, the Freeman community experienced an unprecedented rise in the number of doctor's appointments scheduled for during the beginning of the school day. Coincidentally, many of these appointments coincided with the two asynchronous periods caused by the English 10 Standards of Learning (SOL) test being administered on those days. When students went to the attendance office to get one of the coveted yellow early dismissal passes, they were greeted by extremely long lines. As they waited with students, snaked around attendance, into the main office, and even extending all the way to the main hall, the Freeman Family was left wondering: is our family feeling okay?

Senior Claire Morris described her wait in the line as "last[ing] an eternity". She explained



the situation as "a line the likes of which I have never seen in my four years at Freeman." One thing Claire observed, she said, was that "everyone had notes for doctor's appointments, but nobody really seemed all that sick." However, she believes that these appointments could have been "check-up visits, or something like that," she said.

Some are wondering if this could be another outbreak of the 'Freeman Flu' that went around the school earlier this year. "So many of my friends were not in class," said senior Sydney Greiner. "I'm also really scared about a

repeat of March 2020. Patient Zero could be walking the halls as we speak." Sydney also expressed concerns regarding overworking the medical community. "Our healthcare heroes have done so much already," she said. "It is crazy to think that Freeman alone asked so much more of them."

Many teachers were saddened to find so many students missing from both their valuable ten-minute first periods and the asynchronous time. "I was beyond excited to see new, smiling, student faces," said English teacher Kyle Schuster. "However, much to my dismay, there



# Welcome to the 'Tater'

• • • • • DSF Monthly Horoscope • • • • •		
	Aquarius	You can do anything. Join the military.
	Pisces	You're creative. You think that attending a private art school is a good idea, your student loans will be paid off in no time!
	Aries	You're fearless. Just don't try to sneak another ketchup packet from the cafeteria staff.
	Taurus	You're feeling devoted. Make sure to check up on your significant other...if you have one.
	Gemini	You're feeling deceptive. Tell your parents you love them.
	Cancer	You're feeling emotional. Make sure no ones in the bathroom before crying in the stall.
	Leo	You're feeling prideful. However, I'd keep quiet about the "easy" test you just took.
	Virgo	You're feeling organized. Don't let anyone touch your pencil pouch.
	Libra	You're feeling neutral. Don't get stuck in the middle.
	Scorpio	You're feeling underappreciated. Be mean to someone, they deserve it.
	Sagittarius	You're feeling stubborn. Make sure to disagree with your "friends."
	Capricorn	You're feeling lazy. Make sure to read your horoscope tomorrow.



the **Eagles' Eyrie** online  
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godwineagles.org  
Instagram: @godwineagleseyrie  
Go check out our friends on Pump Road!



## Surrounding Counties

### Review

Sydney Tyler  
Sports Editor

As many of us know from fourth grade geography, there are four counties and two cities that surround our lovely, perfect, utopian county of Henrico. So now the moment you've all been waiting for, the official review of our Surrounding Counties.

#### City of Richmond

While the city is unfortunately not a county, it will still be included due to its cultural significance and proximity to Henrico. Because of its ease of access to the river, copious restaurants and moderately overpriced (but still good) coffee shops, and entertainment opportunities, the city makes a strong case for itself. However, due to the lack of parking and quality infrastructure, and the amount of one way roads, I have to subtract 3 points. This leaves the City with a final ranking of 7/10.

#### Goochland

Our next county, Goochland, is our first real county and quite the contrast from the city. This county is excessively large and contains next to nothing. There are also too many one lane roads with aggressive curves, which

can make driving a challenge at times. However, sometimes this change of pace is a refreshing break from the hustle and bustle of Henrico. In the end, though, the lack of anything in Goochland leaves then with a solid 5/10.

#### Hanover

Very similar to Goochland, Hanover also doesn't have a whole lot going on, but they're a few steps above. They have upgraded from Goochland's one high school to have four of their own. They do tend to get more snow days than we do, which is unfortunate. Overall, this county is rather condensed and tends to have slightly more activities and occupants, so overall Hanover earns a 6/10.

#### New Kent

I cannot say I have much experience with New Kent other than driving through it on the way to Virginia Beach. It is also a bit too large for me, and the shape is rather odd. From some brief research, it also doesn't appear to have much going on; I have to give it a 4/10.

#### Charles City

Rounding out the two cities that surround us is Charles City. I've heard they have the favorite breakfast option of our

Online Editor-in-Chief, Grayson Horner: a sourdough, mostly poppyseed everything bagel. But other than that, is this city even real? 2/10.

#### Chesterfield

They wish they were us. Chesterfield is by far the most similar county to Henrico, but they just do it worse. The shape of the county is bad. It's too big and overall very mid. They offer absolutely nothing special, and when they do, we probably have a better option, to be honest. Additionally, you have to go over a bridge to get to the county, which automatically removes at least two points. 1/10.



Chesterfield County



Goochland County



Hanover County

## Freeman Principal Forgets Farewell

Jack Kelleher  
News Editor

Tragedy struck at Douglas Freeman High School this past Friday, with over 1,000 students left stranded after their principal, Mr. John Marshall, forgot to conclude his afternoon announcements with "Go Mavs!" The Freeman principal, notorious for leaving large gaps of time between saying "as always" and "Go Mavs!" in his afternoon address, got distracted during the announcement by a rogue box of spiritwear, causing him to neglect the magic phrase. The lack of his parting words left students stranded and confused,

not knowing what to do next. As Freeman senior Ian Donnellan said, "[e]very student knows that the bell doesn't dismiss them, Mr. Marshall does." To many, this seemed like an inevitability. Ian said that "sometimes the pause goes on for so long that we think that he forgot, then he comes on and says 'Go Mavs!' ... I'm actually surprised it didn't happen sooner," he said.

The aftermath of the event has left the student population scarred and losing trust in their principal. Freeman senior Russell Nystrom said, "First he forgot this. What's next, not sending the Freeman Forward?" In his Sunday Mes-

sage, Mr. Marshall profusely apologized for this oversight, stating that "last week was not a great week for the Freeman Family" and promising that this would "never happen again."

Many have even proposed that Henrico County should step in, providing an extra day off for students to compensate for the time they lost, as well as the physical and emotional damage suffered that day. As for his approach to future afternoon announcements, it remains to be seen what Mr. Marshall will do. All we know for sure is that it could affect the lives of every Freeman student dramatically.

# Foreign Exchange Student Joins the Freeman Family

**Riley Speidell**  
Centerspread Editor

Tomás Tocornal is experiencing his first and last year of American high school at the same time. After coming to the United States from Chile, Tomás moved in with schoolmate and family friend, Sabrina Layton, and her family. Although the United States is different from his home in Chile, Tomás has enjoyed the challenges that come with living in a new country.

Tomás comes from a big family, with three brothers and three step-brothers, all older than he is. However, Tomás's hometown is one of the smaller towns in Chile. "It is not very crowded where I live. There is more nature and it is not like living in the middle of a city," he said.

Although this is his first time living with the Laytons, Tomás's family has been connected to the Laytons for years. "Tomás's mother, Rebeca, and I met the first week of college and became fast friends," said Suly Salazar-Layton, Sabrina's mother. "Rebeca is Guatemalan and has lived mostly in Chile, and I am Colombian. We have always been super close even when we don't see each other for years at a time."

In his first half of his senior year, Tomás has experienced a few firsts, such as his first hide-and-lock drill. "We don't do the



PHOTO: SHARON KELLY

Tomás (left) and the Layton family supporting Sabrina at DSF gymnastics' senior night.

school shooter drills in Chile, and my first one happened here. That was crazy," said Tomás. Watching his first Freeman basketball game was more entertaining for Tomás. "The first basketball game I went to was fun because we won. The

one we lost was not as exciting," Tomás said. Basketball games were a new experience for Tomás because his school in Chile is significantly smaller than Freeman.

Because Tomás attended a bilingual school in Chile, he was a

fluent English speaker before moving to the United States. However, speaking English is not always enough to understand Americans. "I sometimes forget that he isn't from here and forget to explain American nuances or idiosyn-

crasies to him. Then, I look at his puzzled look and realize he doesn't know what we're talking about," said Mrs. Salazar-Layton.

Tomás was also unfamiliar with several movies that Sabrina has included in her "movie-cation," a list of her family's favorite movies. "13 Going on 30," "How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days," "Clueless," and "Forrest Gump" were all included on this list.

Despite the occasional cultural unfamiliarities, however, Tomás has certainly seen some American movies. "I have seen a bit about prom from the movies and I am excited to see it this year," Tomás said.

"He didn't know who Destiny's Child was," Sabrina said. "He didn't know who Kesha was, but when I asked him about Beyoncé, he got all offended that I would assume he didn't know who Beyoncé was," Sabrina said.

Tomás will have until just after graduation, on June 16, 2022 to get through what he hasn't seen of Sabrina's movie list before he returns to Chile to finish school back home. He will likely graduate from his school in Chile in December. "I'd like to go to college [in Virginia], but that is not until next year, in September of 2023," said Tomás.

Even once Tomás returns to Chile, and wherever he ends up going to college, he will always be part of the Freeman Family!

# Senior Shares Her Traveling Experiences

**Lillie Connor**  
Staff Writer

Having traveled and lived in more countries than the average senior, Sofia Pereira has had a far from normal childhood. A new addition to the Freeman family this year, Sofia was born in Portugal, moved to Spain, then to Peru, and on July 19, 2021, she and her family immigrated to the United States.

With a Portuguese father, a Peruvian mother, and attendance at an English-speaking British catholic school, Sofia grew up speaking three languages: Portuguese, Spanish, and English. "She speaks all three languages very, very well," said Mr. Nicholas, Sofia's Spanish teacher.

Sofia's background in different cultures and languages comes in handy inside and outside the classroom. Her different experiences help build a community in the classroom where students are more comfortable to speak. "She doesn't seem worried about those things that someone who hasn't had as much exposure to as many people and different experiences might be worried about," said Mr. Nicholas. "Not quite as embarrassed, not quite as shy, just willing to con-

tribute and help other people learn the language which is invaluable."

Mr. Nicholas likes to integrate Sofia's unique cultural background from all the places she has lived in and visited into lesson plans.

traveling in college and potentially get a job that involves international traveling. "I would like to do something international, because I want to take advantage of the fact that I can speak three languages,"

from taking numerous classes and workshops to help lead her to success in the business world. Taking advanced photography lessons at the Toulouse Lautrec Institute in Peru and learning about marketing and e-commerce have proven a helpful tool in Sofia's pursuit of photography. By taking professional makeup classes at the Fashion, Art, and Design Institute, Sofia was able to offer professional makeup and fashion makeovers along with photography sessions.

Similarly, being well-versed in business skills came in handy with her donut business @Doughfit on Instagram. With about 2,000 followers, Sofia and her sister sold doughnuts with under 100 calories through Instagram. "During the pandemic, we had free time, so we cooked healthy desserts daily. One day, we had a craving for doughnuts, but we know that those are generally fried and full of sugar and flour, so we decided to create our own," said Sofia. Through trial and error of a variety of different alternative donut recipes, Sofia and her sister finally found the perfect recipe.

Their innovative business of healthy donuts succeeded in part because of social media. "Having an Instagram account helped us a

lot because we reached many people, and our friends, family, and influencers shared our page [@

*"I always remember to maintain my identity and maintain my essence."*

- Sofia Pereira



PHOTO: @SOFIAPEREIRA03

Sofia Pereira on one of her excursions.

"I've asked her to share, especially with Spain and Peru, the music and food she experienced. I get a lot of feedback from her about the different cultures with regards to food," said Mr. Nicholas. Sofia would like to continue

said Sofia. She loves the rush of freedom that comes with switching locations. "You forget about everything. And you're also able to discover new places, try new food, and meet new people," said Sofia. Moving has not stopped Sofia

Doughfit]," Sofia said. "In addition, we got in touch with several influencers and food reviewers and sent them our donuts, which they shared on their Instagram stories."

"I see Sofia's experiences in her everyday life in the way she shows up for her friends. She is very open and accepting. I believe this is from her experience with so many different people," said Rachel Stanton, Sofia's friend.

Over the course of her life, Sofia has lived, adapted, and excelled in four different countries. "Even if I move from one country to another, I always remember my identity and maintain my essence. It is not an easy task, but it all depends on having a positive attitude," said Sofia. "Therefore, I can emphasize that it is essential to be flexible and resilient."

# Junior Baker Whips Up a Following

**Maggie Newton**  
Staff Writer

Picture this: a vanilla bean cupcake with a creamy cannoli-flavored filling and topped with a chocolate icing that is so shiny you could use it as a mirror. This item comes straight from junior Kate Bowman's Instagram account. Kate, a longtime baker, has been perfecting her craft for as long as she can remember.

"I have been baking my whole life [and] I've started a more serious kind of baking maybe in the last five years, like decorating cakes and sugar cookies," said Kate. On top of the high level academic classes she's taking this year, Kate is also growing her bak-

ing account and managing multiple baking jobs for friends, family, and other Richmonders. The most difficult thing she's ever baked were sugar cookies for a family member's wedding. "There were 120 of them and I had to bake them over the span of [around] three weeks," Kate said. "It was a lot of time and with sugar cookies when you're icing them the consistency has to be really on point." Kate usually gets hired once every few months. Most recently, she made a cake for her grandfather's birthday.

Kate's mom, Lori Bowman, is an avid encourager of Kate's passion. "When I think of Kate's baking, I think of her decorating specifically," said Mrs. Bowman. "Kate is very artistic and I love how it gets to come out in her baking."

Kate is known for her intricate and elegant designs. Her specialties are cakes and cookies, but her favorite things to decorate are cakes.

"I really like the decorating element of it and how you can be creative with what you make and like what the final product looks like," said Kate. She normally blocks off a few hours to get her baking done, but sometimes it can be difficult to balance baking and schoolwork. "Sometimes it is a struggle just because you don't know exactly how long it's going to take you, [and] certain things might come up," said Kate.

Clementine Fuller, a junior at Freeman and a close friend of Kate's, is another huge fan of her baking. She has enjoyed seeing Kate's skills progress. "She's nev-

er satisfied with something until it's exactly how she wants it to be," said Clementine, "I think [her

*"I really like the decorating element of it and how you can be creative with what you make and like what the final product looks like."*

- Kate Bowman

skills] became a lot more advanced with her very methodical baking." Clementine is also a fan of Kate's Instagram account, @kate\_b\_bakes. "I think it's really cool that she's found a platform where she

can show off the stuff that she's worked really hard to make," said Clementine. "All of her pastries and [other baked goods] are so pretty and aesthetically pleasing."

"My sister really persuaded me to start [an Instagram account]. I had a lot of pictures of the stuff I had done and I thought it would be fun to share it and let people see what I make," said Kate. She started her Instagram account in late 2021, and it has been steadily growing since then.

From cheesecake to cake pops to sugar cookies, Kate does it all. She learned her techniques from watching baking videos on YouTube and television baking championships on Food Network. "Online videos and TV baking competitions have influenced me the most because it has allowed me to see the variety of baking and different techniques people use," said Kate.

"I'm looking at culinary schools and [I'm] interested in baking and pastry arts programs that they may have. And I also like [the idea of] working at a bakery or a restaurant," said Kate. She can also see herself owning a bakery one day in the future. Kate is currently looking for summer jobs at bakeries.

Kate's advice for aspiring bakers is to "just keep at it. It takes a lot of practice and patience, definitely takes a lot of patience. And you just kind of have to try trial and error and also to find what you like making."



PHOTOS: KATE BOWMAN

A few of Kate's baked goods.

# There's Nothing Soft About Managing

**Peter Kriebel**  
Staff Writer

When a sports team wins, players, coaches, and even fans get the credit. But the unsung heroes behind any successful team are its managers. The managers help coaches focus on coaching. Just ask gym teacher and softball coach Becky Milton. "I don't have to worry about setting up and stuff," said Ms. Milton. "I can always count on them to do what I ask them to do." Managers of the softball team "help set up our practice stations. They also help get us ready for the game, whether it's water coolers, ice, game balls ... helping find whatever needs to be done," she said. Helping Ms. Milton is something senior softball manager Jazmin Iraheta-Gruessing knows a lot about. "Freshman year I was going to try out, but then I had chipped [a bone in] my elbow.

And I was really disappointed about it," Jazmin said. The injury didn't keep Jazmin sidelined. "I went to Ms. Milton and I was like, 'Is there anything I can do for the team, that's like also being on the team?'" Ms. Milton offered Jazmin a managing position, and "ever since I just managed

*“Ever since I just managed because it felt right.”*  
- Jazmin Iraheta-Guessing

because it felt right," Jazmin said. After her first season managing, Jazmin decided to return each season. She said she likes "being like part of the team," as well as "the friendships that I've created with a lot of the girls on the team." Jazmin has also learned valuable traits from managing, including "leadership skills and

how to work together as a team." Getting the most out of teenagers right after a long day of high school is enough of a challenge without having to set up, take roll, or handle any of the other small details that make a practice run smoothly. Managers take care of all of that and more. And while many times their presence may go unnoticed, their services aren't lost on Ms. Milton. "Their attitude is great about helping other people," she said. "[They] always want to know, 'What can I do next?' I don't have to babysit them." The players have taken note of the managers' impact as well. "They help get the field ready for playing and help get things ready before practice so we'll maximize our time practicing instead of setting up," said junior softball player Allie Hazlegrove. Physical labor isn't the only thing the managers bring to the table, either. "They make jokes," Allie said, which would seem to be a priceless addition to any team.



A manager supports her player.

**Boys' Basketball**

- Gray Proffitt - 1st Team All Region
- Grant Smith - 2nd Team All Region
- Davis Cauble - 3rd Team All Region

**Winter Track**

- Ian Gilstrap, Blair Bishop, Brett Bishop, Aidan Cassidy, Ben Coker, Angelina Ellen, Merrick Mock, Elizabeth Grace, Julia Pellei, Kelly Mollenauer

**Wrestling Finalists**

- Wyatt Giddings
- Brey Loving

**Girls' Basketball**

- Natalie Schweickert - 3rd Team All Region
- Genevieve Travers - 3rd Team All Region

# The Problem With Commanders

**Kieran Wall**  
Editor-in-Chief



PHOTO: THE WASHINGTON COMMANDERS

## The new Washington Commanders logo.

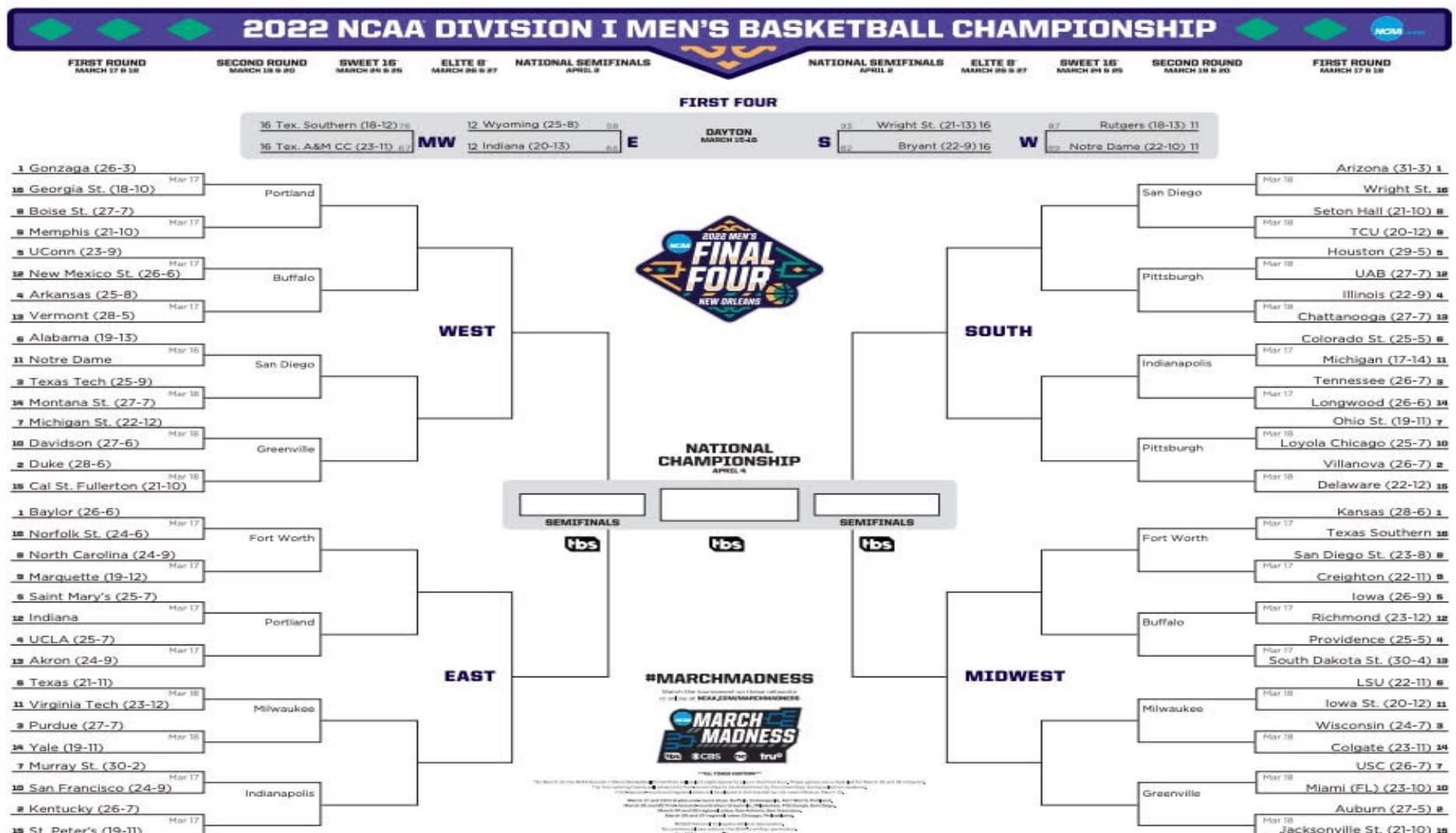
named the Texans. It is reflective of not only their location, but the pride and hardworking spirit of their fanbase. Commanders lacks any obvious connection to Washington D.C., divorced from both the fans and community. In their reveal video, Washington declared that they wanted the brand to be based on the legacy of the franchise, "built by tradition, values, and beliefs." What part of the name Commanders reflects this aforementioned legacy? It's not like there weren't options that did this very thing. For example, one of the names circulated early on was the Washington Red Hogs. Pigs and hogs have been associated with the franchise since the early 1980s, when Washington's offensive line earned the nickname "the Hogs" after leading the team to three Super Bowl victories. The name even led to a cheering section known as the Hogettes,

known for their pig costumes and charity work. The moniker persists to this day, and would be a clever nod to Washington fans and the "legacy" discussed in the video. Adding insult to injury was the reveal itself. Anyone paying attention to the process knew the name would be Commanders a month before the official announcement. How? Well the Washington marketing team told us! In early January, Washington accidentally released an unblurred video in which we got a clear shot of the Commanders' name and logo, the exact name and logo adorning the brand today. When I first saw the video, the blunder was so obvious I assumed it was misdirection to throw leakers off the scent of the actual name. I simply underestimated the front office's capacity for pure incompetence ... a mistake I'll never make again. So are there any good things

that have come with the rebrand? For one, the new logo is a step-up. The yellow outline and stenciling on the Commanders' version of the "W" looks objectively better than the Football Team logo. And although I was a bit hesitant at first, I've warmed up to the Premier-League-esque crest, especially now that they've fixed the Super Bowl dates. The uniforms are also a strong point, particularly the new matte-burgundy helmets. In my opinion, another advantage the rebrand brings is attention. What Washington needs more than anything is a good quarterback. I'll stop ranting about the new name if we start winning, and right now the key to winning is a quarterback who can bring together a team that has all the pieces to be successful. A quarterback who signs with Washington has the opportunity to be the face of a new franchise, a prospect that could be attractive to potential free agents. There are other signs this could be the start of a new, better era for Washington football. Washington's owner Dan Snyder is once again under Congressional investigation for sexual harassment and workplace misconduct, and there are promising signs that this time he won't be able to weather the legal storm. Snyder facing consequences and being forced to sell the team would serve as a small bit of justice for his alleged victims and finally put an end to the culture of abuse and incompetence that pollutes all aspects of the organization. So although I'm not the biggest fan of Washington's new name, I do hope it can be the symbol for much needed change in the franchise.



Washington's new uniforms





# Caroline Zorn: Tackling Three Athletic Seasons

**Isabelle Hevron**  
Opinions Editor

While many high schoolers are involved with a sport, few can accomplish what senior athlete Caroline Zorn has achieved at Freeman. Caroline is a three season athlete, running cross country in the fall, swimming and running indoor track in the winter, and running track and field in the spring. She also plays recreational soccer almost all year, but still manages to stay on top of her school work. This means Caroline plays a total of five sports, most of which overlap with each other.

However, Caroline is known to be extremely humble in regards to her accomplishments, both academic and athletic. "You would never know how smart Caroline actually is because she never brags or flexes it, but she is," said senior Walker Beck, who swims and runs with her. Not only is she a member of the swim team, she is one of the captains who led the swim team to Regionals. "Caroline is definitely a lead-by-example type. She's not going to get in your face before a race, but will perform well and expect everyone else to do the same" said Walker.

Caroline swam competitively for NOVA of Virginia Aquatics (NOVA) since she was young, and only last December decided to step

back from NOVA swimming because of the money and time commitment. She did, however, continue to swim for Freeman. "I kept swimming for my school because it had been such a large part of my life and felt like I needed to finish out my senior year," said Caroline.

Every swimmer has a favorite stroke or event. Caroline's was the 200 meter breaststroke and 200 meter freestyle when she was swimming competitively, but it became the 50 meter or 100 meter freestyle once she cut back on swimming. Described by Walker as "laser-focused with unbelievable stamina both in the water and on the track," Caroline does not plan on committing to college for swimming, but thinks she may try to walk on or play club wherever she ends up going.

Shortly after she ended her time at NOVA, Caroline decided to pick up cross country as something to do with her new free time. "I joined cross country as something to do after I stopped swimming and found I was pretty good at it so I continued with track in the spring," said Caroline.

Her teammate, senior Alyssa Gagen, describes Caroline as "hardworking and humble" and "supportive and encouraging to all the underclassmen."

Caroline loves the team culture that stems from cross country. "My favorite part about cross country is definitely the people,"

said Caroline. "It's technically an individual sport and you have an individual time, but it is a lot more team centered than regular track or swimming." She is more of a distance runner, and her favorite track event is either the mile or two-mile race. Since cross-country is a very team oriented sport, it's really important to support your teammates, which Caroline loves to do. "My favorite part about track and field is probably watching races after I've finished mine," she said.

When she is not playing one of her many sports, Caroline spends a lot of her time volunteering. "I

*"Laser-focused with unbelievable stamina both in the water and on the track."*

- Walker Beck

volunteer with my church a lot and I work with Jacob's Chance, which is a special needs outreach organization, but I somehow am able to fit it all in," said Caroline. Her schedule can be extremely packed, and there have been a few weekends where she has had a cross country meet in the morning, a soccer game in the afternoon, and volunteering in the evening. Luckily, she has found

ways to handle any stress that stems from her athletic, academic, and service-oriented dedication. "I'm taking a few hard classes this year, but I'm in SODA (Students of Developing Attitudes) which is sort of like a de-stress class and, with Freeman Focus, I'm not

usually too overwhelmed with schoolwork." Caroline is entering her last season as a high school athlete, and according to Walker, she is known to be "the smartest and most athletic person in the room at all times, guys or girls."



Caroline Zorn runs in a track meet.

PHOTO: CAROLINE ZORN

\* not all captains listed

## Freeman Varsity Spring Sports Captains

### Baseball



**Macho Santiago**  
**Jackson Beale**  
**Colin Estrada**

### Lacrosse



**Girls:**  
**Lucy Larkin**  
**Emma Jacoby**

**Boys:**  
**Nate Elkin**  
**Dell Vidunas**

### Soccer



**Girls:**  
**Genevieve Travers**  
**Maggie Patten**

**Boys:**  
**Sam Moran**  
**Barry Jones**

### Softball



**Sydney Tyler**  
**Brooke Ward**

### Tennis



**Girls:**  
**Cindy Xie**  
**Sydney Greiner**

**Boys:**  
**Ethan St. John**  
**Charan Sama**

### Track



**Girls:**  
**Madelyn Miller**  
**Caroline Zorn**

**Boys:**  
**Blair Bishop**  
**Brett Bishop**

# Coach Parpart: A DSF Athletics Legend

**Catherine White**  
Staff Writer

If you've ever attended a Freeman basketball game, you may have noticed the words "Parpart Pavilion" painted on the gym floor. The gym's name honors long time boys basketball coach Larry Parpart, who retired from coaching basketball in 2018. Parpart is the only high school basketball coach in Virginia with over 500 career wins- 526 to be exact. In addition to his basketball success, Parpart has been the head coach of the Freeman girls tennis team for 44 years. The girls tennis team is the reigning regional and state champion heading into the 2022 spring season. Coach Parpart's extensive resume with Virginia High School League (VHSL) athletics has recently earned him a spot in the Virginia High School Hall of Fame as part of the 2021 class.

Parpart's coaching career began at his alma mater, Hermitage High School, as a coach, physical education teacher, and math teacher. There, he led the boys cross country team to a state title in 1971.

Coach Parpart joined the Freeman Family in 1978 as an assistant coach for the boys basketball team. After becoming head coach in 1985, he went on to lead this team for the next 33 years. During this time his teams had 25 winning seasons, with regional titles in 1995 and 1996. "One time we had 23 straight years of going to the regional tournament," said Parpart.

Coach Parpart attributes much of his success to the people he worked with. "I was fortunate enough to get to work with some great coaches, both as head coach and as an assistant coach. And we were very fortunate to have great student athletes as well," he said.

Current Freeman basketball coach, Chapin George, played under Coach Parpart from 2005 to 2007. During this time, the Freeman team was runner-up in the old Colonial District tournament and advanced onto the regional tournament. "Playing

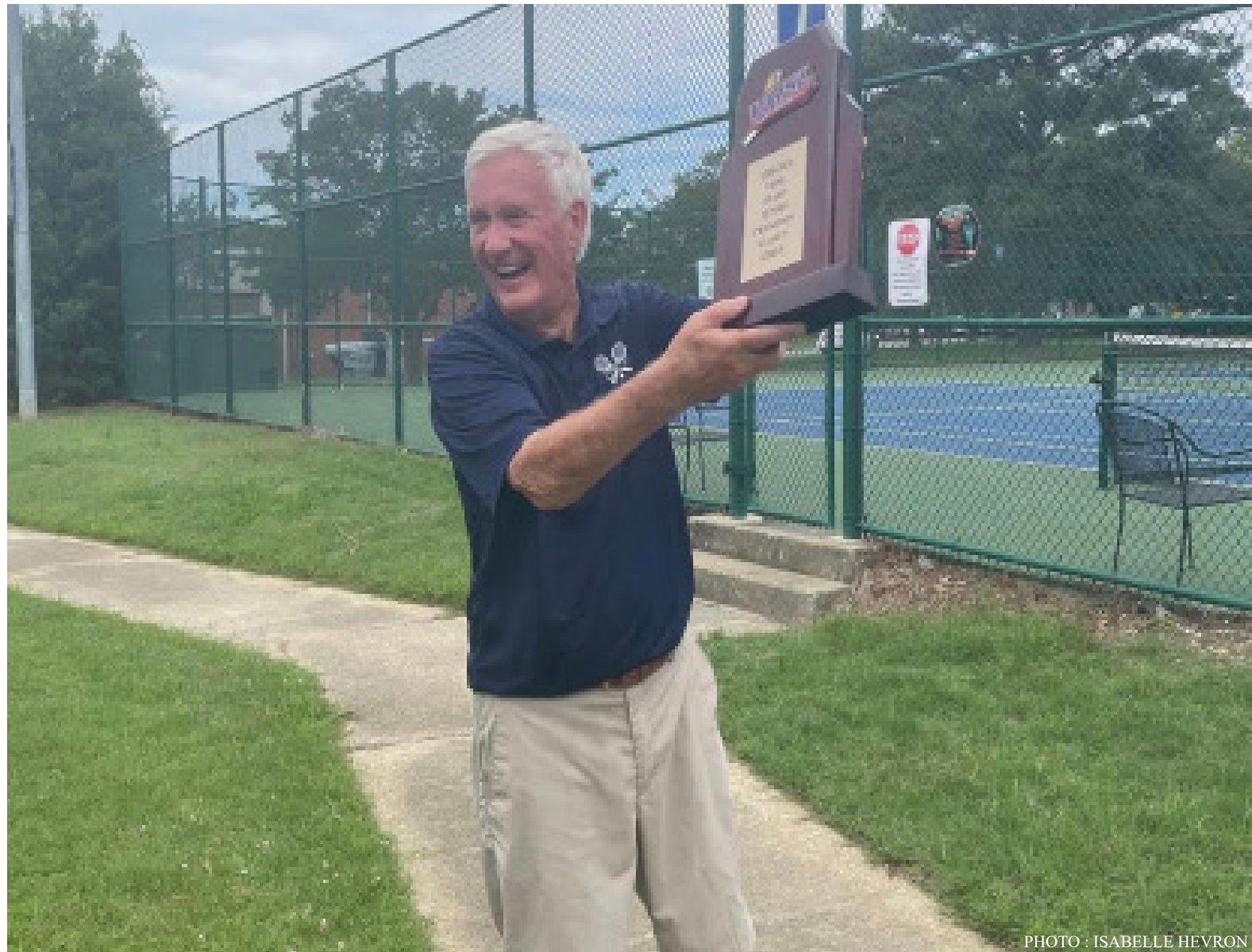


PHOTO: ISABELLE HEVRON

Coach Parpart hoists the trophy after girls tennis won the 2021 State Championship.

for Parpart was a true privilege," said Coach George. "He used the game of basketball to instill into me a stronger work ethic. He was all about core values, with family being at the top of the list."

Coach George noted that Parpart strived to make his players feel like a true family. "Aside from his win totals, it was the other intangible elements he taught young men and women that set him apart from the rest," he said.

When asked to describe Coach Parpart's style, Coach George noted that "his style revolve[s] around passion. He [has] so much passion for the game and for his players. Anybody can see that passion when it is game time."

Senior Grace Johnson, a member of the girls tennis team, ex-

pressed a similar sentiment. "He's very passionate about what he does and I think that's what makes him such a great coach," she said.

Coach Parpart began coaching the Freeman girls tennis team in 1978. Since then, his team has won two state championships, in 1983 and 2021, as well as having seven runner-up finishes and winning 11 regional titles and 20 district titles. These stats make him the winningest coach for girls tennis in VHSL history. "Winning states again last year was exciting," Coach Parpart said. "I think we've made state runs eight or nine times. So we had some disappointments too, but that's just a part of sports."

Grace Johnson has been playing under Coach Parpart for four years. She said, "He can be

very lighthearted off the court, but once we start playing, he gets super into the matches."

Because of his many accolades, Coach Parpart was recently inducted into the Virginia High School Hall of Fame as part of the 2021 class. This is an honor reserved for those who have made outstanding contributions to high school athletic activity programs. According to the VHSL, "Nominees must exemplify the highest

*"Anybody can see that passion when it is game time."*

- Chapin George

standards of sportsmanship, ethical conduct, and moral character."

"His induction into the hall of fame is an accolade of which he is completely deserving," said Coach George. Coach Parpart was joined by eight other inductees in a ceremony held in Charlottesville, VA on Feb. 6, 2022. The 2021 class included notable inductees such as Olympic gold medalist Allen Johnson and Super Bowl champion Mike Compton.

In regards to being inducted into the hall of fame, Coach Parpart said he was "amazed, surprised, and honored," and being inducted was "nothing [he's] ever thought about before." Parpart described the entire experience as "very, very rewarding."

# “Donda 2:” Yeet OR Skete?

Emily Waters  
Sports Editor

Perhaps the most significant part of Ye’s ‘Donda 2’ was the lead-up from the “Skete” fiasco to the Stem Player, Ye burned many bridges before his “Donda 2 Listening Party” in Miami on Feb. 22. But because of the drama surrounding his life and the release, nobody has talked about the actual music contained within Ye’s latest album.

First off, his listening party “performance” could barely be referred to as such. Because he was not singing live, the listening party for Donda 2 involved an enormous crowd watching Ye stand and sway to an entire album of music on stage in front of a burning house/church. Considering the lead-up on social media, I was expecting more.

Before Ye got on stage, heartbeat sounds played throughout the venue. Don’t forget that he made his audience wait over an hour longer than promised to perform, which is a little reminiscent of the 2016



PHOTO: COMPLEX

## One of Kanye West’s promotional images for “Donda 2”.

Hillary Clinton rant in Sacramento.

The first song, “True Love,” contained what most believe to be vocals from the late XXXTentacion, which I have to say was a nice touch. Once he got through the new album, Ye did perform. There were even live appearances including Jack Harlow, Migos, Pusha

T, Playboi Carti, and many more. However, Travis Scott’s feature on ‘Pablo’ was not enough to dig him out of his AstroWorld hole- and will certainly not be a chart-topper.

While Donda 1 was centralized based on similar melodies and tones, Donda 2 is more thematically centralized: to my count, al-

most every song mentioned some personal drama of Ye’s. From the violent Pete Davidson reference in “Eazy” to the Kim Kardashian security scandal reference in “Security,” Ye clearly had one thing on his mind when songwriting.

This being said, I did enjoy many of the songs. “Candyland,” for

example, is a masterful blend of J. Cole’s signature sound alongside very Donda-esque melodies. “Flowers,” teased on Ye’s active Instagram account, is great, too. But my favorite has got to be “Selfish.” If you’re a fan of “Moon,” “Bound 2,” or “Father Stretch My Hands Pt. 1,” you’ll like this one and “First Time.”

“Mr. Miyagi” is perfect for all the Drake superfans out there (if those still exist in 2022). I think if Donda 2 were to go on Spotify, “Maintenance,” “Security,” and “Eazy” would top the charts.

As for the worst of the album, I’d have to nominate “530” and “Do I Look Happy.” The latter should really be two separate songs, and it disses too many people to be able to focus on any one slant. The former, “530,” is just plain unfortunate. To some it may be of good taste, but I hear Ye screaming nonsense into a microphone and then over-autotuning it.

Overall, I would say this album is not much to talk about. It’s not bad enough to fuss over, but it’s certainly not one of Ye’s best.

# “The Batman” Review: A Darker Knight than Ever Before

Adair Reid  
Staff Writer

A cultural icon, Batman has superseded his humble beginnings as a comic book hero to become one of the most recognizable silhouettes in film today. While many different versions of Batman exist- some lighthearted and campy, and others dark and reclusive, most adaptations stick to the core struggle between good and evil that Bruce Wayne experiences.

The first Batman movie debuted as a series in 1943, four years after the Crusader’s 1939 comic book release. However, the plot was largely influenced by the anti-Japanese sentiment that was common during the World War II era and served as propaganda.

1966 saw the first Batman movie that captured the essence of the comics and starred Adam West as Batman and Burt Ward as Robin alongside each other.

Tim Burton’s 1989 take with Michael Keaton as Bruce Wayne introduced a much more gothic tone for the series, which evolved into a modern staple of film adaptations.

1995’s “Batman Forever” marked a complete shift in gears, and while Val Kilmer’s acting as Batman was lauded, the melodramatic villains (played by James Carrey and Tommy Lee, respectively) brought a lighthearted, campy tone to the movie that didn’t mesh well with the darker conventions of earlier adaptations.

The series was thought to be dead after the critical failure of 1997’s “Batman & Robin,” until Christopher Nolan’s trilogy consisting of “Batman Begins” (2005), “The Dark Knight” (2008), and “The Dark Knight Rises” (2012) was released. The trilogy ushers in a new,



PHOTO: THE BATMAN

modern age of Batman movies that took on a serious tone and presented moral questions to their audience. The rise in popularity of superhero movies at the time added to Nolan’s success, but the particular significance of the second installment, “The Dark Knight,” has remained timeless in its critical appreciation. The films set a standard for the character and the world of Gotham City that has since remained unsurpassed by Ben Affleck and the disaster of “Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice.”

All these factors being considered, “The Batman” (2022) star Robert Pattinson will have quite the challenge when it comes to filling the cavernous space of the iconic Batmobile.

Director Matt Reeves’ “The Batman” can be defined in one word: nonstop. The constant action provides more than necessary momentum for the almost three-hour runtime and allows the film to move seamlessly from one scene to the next. The audience never loses interest, but they also rarely get a moment to breathe under the film’s imposing seriousness.

Gotham City shines in this iteration, as “The Batman” sets a

Manhattan-esque stage for the film’s tumultuous events. The audience is immersed in every dark corner of the city; making the film a standout from other adaptations that have simply slapped the label of “Gotham” on a gloomier carbon copy of New York. The heart of the city, however, is personified in GCPD (Gotham City Police Department) cop Jim Gordon (portrayed by Jeffrey Wright), who serves as the good cop foil to Batman’s heavily armored exterior, both literally and figuratively.

Pattinson’s Batman doesn’t seem to “like” much of anything that he does, but he is simultaneously deeply connected to Gotham in a way that is beyond explanation. Even the enigmatic Catwoman, played by Zoe Kravitz, fails to probe Batman’s motives. The Bat is characteristically self-reliant, but the audience becomes well-acquainted with the mental and physical scars this stress and exhaustion causes. Batman and Catwoman’s relationship adds a human element to the film, but because it remains within the parameters of the characters and their responsibilities, their scenes often end in a tentative question mark.

As the movie’s main villain, the Riddler, played by Paul Dano, is chilling- but not all of his verbal threats stick the landing. The only drawback of the Riddler’s presence is that he leaves little room for other antagonists to pose a true threat to Batman: specifically the Penguin, played by Colin Farrell. Still, this classic comic villain heavily contributes to Gotham’s gritty criminal underworld, albeit in a less imposing manner.

The lighting holds symbolic significance and pays homage to the comics with its heavy yellow and black tones, showing off the theme of the struggle between light and dark. It also serves the purpose of showcasing the dirt and garbage strewn across Gotham’s streets, as if the whole city has been overgrown by corruption, crime, and a chronic lack of trash cans.

Michael Giacchino’s score is a unifying component of the movie, incorporated masterfully to show off the different sides of Bruce Wayne’s character- the music is gentle at vulnerable moments and brash as he transforms into his alter ego, namely, “vengeance.” This and Nirvana’s “Something in the Way” provides a sort of mu-

sical Scotch tape and reinforce the film’s main themes of time, abandonment, and blurring the line between vigilante and villain.

One thing not to expect from the movie is any sort of comedic relief: there is little to none, which is not a surprise coming from Pattinson’s ever-stoic Batman. However, this break from side character quips serves two purposes: it maintains the tension and suspense the film relies on and clearly separates it from widely popular Marvel movies that increasingly use humor as a crutch.

Another thing not to anticipate is Batman’s relationship with Alfred (played by Andy Serkis)- the movie makes it clear that Bruce Wayne still struggles with his parents’ tragic deaths, and hardly perceives Alfred as a father figure, despite his obvious presence as one.

The most unforgettable aspect of “The Batman” isn’t a car chase involving the Batmobile or a suspenseful sweep of an orphanage owned by the Waynes, but the stunning cinematography present throughout the film. It sets a standard not just for the Batman series, but for superhero movies in general, and packs symbolism and recurrent motifs not just in the most memorable shots. The film is beautiful even in its most dire moments and alleviates some of the ever-insistent darkness.

“The Batman” first struck many audiences as unnecessary and just another Hollywood reboot, but the cast performances, direction, and score are likely to change more than a few minds. It may not be a “fresh take,” but it utilizes the core elements of the Caped Crusader in such a way that fans may be able to find consensus on the rightful adaptation of Bruce Wayne in Pattinson’s performance.

# The History of that ‘S’ Thing We All Drew in Middle School

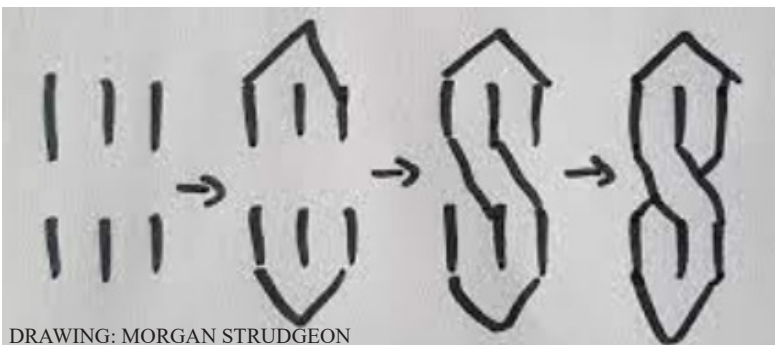
Morgan Strudgeon  
Staff Writer

For many people, middle school is a time that they would rather forget. But despite everything we have tried to erase from memory, there are a few things that we cannot seem to forget, one of which is what has come to be known as “the cool S.”

This symbol has been a part of student life for years, and the students of Freeman are no exception to this. One student, junior Estela Tarabay, said when she was in middle school she “used to draw them on just about everything. Desks, my notebooks, homework, even on myself!”

Drawn with a total of 14 lines, the “cool S” is something all kinds of students have drawn. Sophomore Ellie Hughes said that throughout middle school she drew them all the time. “I would always draw them on paper and then whenever we would use whiteboards, I would then draw them on those,” she said.

However, while it might be something that this generation of students has claimed for themselves, the history of the “S” shows that it actually has a history that begins much earlier than people are aware of. The “cool S” has been a part of graffiti culture for about 50



DRAWING: MORGAN STRUDGEON

years, and can be seen on all kinds of walls and desks, as well as street art, dating back into the 1970s. Some call it the “superman S,” as it has been rumored to be associated with the popular superhero. When asked about his thoughts on the “cool S,” freshman Mathew Guise said “that’s the Superman S, isn’t it?”

Another common notion of its rather unclear origins is that the symbol originally came from the popular surfwear brand Stüssy in Southern California. However, in official statements and interviews from the company, it is clear that there is no official association with the brand.

Even though the “cool S” might be something that feels like an inside thing within a friend group, this actually is far from the truth. When senior Andrew Borran was living in Arizona, the “cool S” was also prominent in his school. “When I was living [in] Arizona, kids used to draw that on

everything,” he said, “they actually used to get into trouble for drawing it on stuff because the teachers thought that it was connected to gangs or something.”

Although some people might think that the symbol is a part of underground, gang, or graffiti culture, it instead seems to be something that everyone has learned through their years in school. Junior Simone Fortier said, “I remember that my best friend Ray taught me how to do it on a drive one time,” she then said that she went on to draw them constantly and said that she “really think[s] that it’s a symbol of our generation.”

Another student, Blaine Nelson, said that he learned how to draw it from his older brother “he thought he was cool because he knew how to draw it,” they said. However, for a lot of people, they were left to figure out how to draw this popular symbol for themselves. Freshman Mathew Guise said “I learned on my own because I

saw the other kids doing it and I wanted to know how to draw it.”

While the “cool S” has been a graffiti and pop culture symbol for about 50 years, the symbol that has come to be known as the “cool S” can actually be seen in works that precede the past fifty years. In the background of Hans Holbien the Younger’s painting, “The Ambassadors” from 1533, a symbol, looking oddly like the modern “cool

S” can be seen on the table between the two men in the painting.

Even though the origins of the “cool S” might be shrouded in mystery, there is little doubt that it is something that everyone has learned how to draw. Whether it be a symbol of adolescence or representative of something greater, the “cool S” has been around before us, and it might be around longer than us too.

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# Crochet Club Weaves into the Freeman Family

Henry Haggard  
Staff Writer

As students grapple with second-semester pressures like standardized tests, spring sports, and final exams, it's hard not to cave to stress. Some Freeman students, however, are finding ways to relax. One of these ways is knitting's lesser-known cousin, crochet.

Freeman's Crochet Club gives students a place to unwind and make art every Thursday after school. The group was created in November of 2021. Students gather in room 139 to talk and crochet every Thursday. "I've been crocheting for almost two years now, since a little bit after quarantine," said senior Virginia Johnson, the president and founder of Freeman's Crochet Club.

It did not take long for Virginia's hobby to turn into a school-based extracurricular. "A lot of my friends were seeing what I was do-



PHOTO: CROCHET LIFE

ing and how passionate I was about it," Virginia said, "and they were asking me to help them [learn]."

After a brief stint teaching her friends to crochet, Virginia "brought it to school, [so she could] offer it to anyone at Freeman." In the Crochet Club, anyone means everyone, from crochet professionals to complete beginners. "The meetings are

spent teaching the basics," Virginia said. "It's really chill ... we tend to just hang out and talk."

Crochet Club sponsor, history teacher Caitlin Roberts, agrees. Crochet Club "is a really fun group of kids," Ms. Roberts said, "and I think it's a relaxing outlet for students." Ms. Roberts sees the club as very welcoming to all students. "The people who

come in here are from all different kinds of backgrounds," she said.

Students can cool off by crocheting any number of things. "They've done some granny squares, they've made flowers, and then sometimes they'll come in and can crochet whatever they're working on [outside of school]."

Virginia has a few personal projects she's working on. "I re-

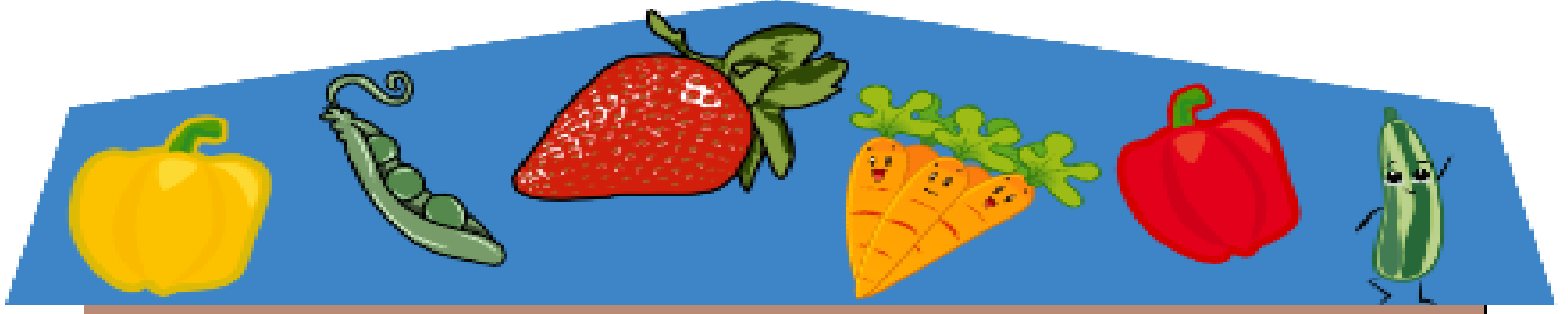
ally like to make hats," she said. "I also really like to make cardigans, but they are a lot of work."

There is no pressure to leave Crochet Club with a finished product. Ms. Roberts likes to think of Crochet Club as "an opportunity to learn something new that is mindless ... to shut everything off. You don't really have to think very much."

Sophomore club member Jyohna Wilson agrees. "I started learning when I was six years old," she said, "and I'd watch my nana do it all the time, so I asked her to teach me ... [Crocheting] lets me make something of my own and calms my mind."

If anyone is on the fence about joining Crochet Club, Ms. Roberts said, "I would tell them it's an opportunity to meet new people and learn new skills."

All-in-all, the club is a "wonderful group of people that I felt immediate comfort around," Jyohna said. "We're able to learn from each other and share our craft. Overall it's a very great place to be."



## FARMER'S MARKETS IN RVA

### South of the James Market:

Every Sunday!  
4821 Forest Hill  
Ave, Richmond,  
VA 23225

### West End Farmers Market:

Every Saturday!  
13808 Gayton Rd,  
Richmond, VA  
23233

### St. Stephen's Farmers Market:

Most Saturdays!  
6000 Grove Ave,  
Richmond, VA,  
23226

# Rusty Taco Review

Jazmyn Howell  
Staff Writer

On February 7th, 2022, the much-anticipated Rusty Taco opened its doors to the people of the West End.

To my surprise, the food was very disappointing. On the Rusty Taco website, they claim to have "authentic tacos." When I read that, I expected the food to be packed full of flavor, just like many Mexican restaurants. Instead, I got watered-down Americanized Mexican food. I decided to order the brisket and beef fajita taco, and both were a huge letdown. The brisket taco came with smoked brisket, queso fresco, diced onions, and cilantro. The brisket was overcooked, which made the whole taco have a dry and flavorless taste. I thought the rest of the toppings would enhance the flavor of the taco, but it added no flavor at all.

The next taco was the beef fajita taco which included skirt steak, fajita veggies, and pico de gallo. The beef fajita was a step up from the brisket, but still not great. The steak was tough. The flavor of the steak tasted like they threw a bunch of pepper on it last-minute. The pico de gallo gave this taco some moisture, so it was not dry like the brisket taco. One thing that they both had in common was they tasted more like tortilla than meat.

What I got next is a classic, chips and salsa. It wasn't my favorite. The salsa was not chunky at all, it was smooth and tasted like a mix of ketchup and marinara sauce. The next thing I tried was the chips and cheese dip. The cheese dip had a weird chunkier consistency. It tasted like they got store-bought taco seasoning and dumped it in there. Even with that taste, I would still recommend the cheese dip over the salsa. For dessert, I got the churros. The churro



PHOTO: RUSTY TACO

Rusty Taco in Short Pump.

had a type of caramel sauce in the middle, which was a pleasant discovery. The sauce was good, but I felt it blended in with the cinnamon and sugar flavor from the pastry. I still liked the caramel sauce, but the flavor did not stand out. Even though the churros exceeded my expectations, it still couldn't save the rest of the meal.

One of the most important things a restaurant provides is the service. The service was as you would expect at any type of fast food restaurant. Like many other franchises, it was being run by two students. They weren't super friendly or warm. They weren't very busy inside the restaurant but they had many to-go orders. My food ended up coming out in a decent amount of time. It took a little longer than I feel it should have, but with only two workers I couldn't expect peak service. Thankfully, the food wasn't cold when I ate it.

Rusty Taco was originally a small business. Now, Rusty Taco is a big franchise owned by Inspire

Brands. This same brand owns over 32,000 restaurants across America, including Arby's, Buffalo Wild Wings, and Sonic. I don't think an industry who owns Arby's has any business owning a Mexican restaurant. In America, a lot of small business restaurants serving ethnic food are run by people from other countries. So, when I spend my money on their food, I know I'm going to get an authentic experience. Big industries shouldn't run restaurants like Rusty Taco because they end up losing so much of the flavor and uniqueness of the original restaurants.

I would honestly recommend going to more authentic Mexican restaurants. Most of the time small businesses will have better pricing, anyway! Rusty Taco restaurant let me down big time, but as it is part of a franchise, I shouldn't have expected authentic Mexican food. I would recommend supporting your local small business for a better tasting and more affordable meal.

# Leadership and Art Students Collaborate on New Mural

Abby Crowe  
Staff Writer

Plans for a new mural located outside of Douglas Freeman's Leadership Center are underway, with help from both art and leadership students. Replacing an outdated mural, the new one will display a positive message to current and prospective Freeman students.

Last school year, the art department was asked by Principal John Marshall to paint a welcome mural in the main hall that would reflect the diverse population of Freeman High School. Since then, art teachers Elizabeth Jones and Miriam Bonano have created a list of other blank walls around the school that will all be getting revamps in the coming years. The first location on the list is the wall at the entrance of the leadership center.

"They really wanted something that would tell the story of the students that are there currently," said Mrs. Jones. "And inspire the people who are coming in and out of the Leadership Center." Assisting in the design process are leadership students who were asked to write about their favorite memories from the space.

After collecting thoughts from students and center teacher and director Mr. Rob Peck, the art department has compiled everything and come up with sketches. Now that two rounds of sketches and revisions have been completed, Mrs. Jones said, "Everyone is starting to come together on the central idea."

Once the sketches are combined into two options, art students, leadership students, and the teachers involved will review

each and select their favorite. After the final sketch has been chosen, it will be projected onto the wall and painting will begin.

There are about 30 students in Art Four, Art Five, and the National Art Honor Society (NAHS) helping throughout the whole process of creating the mural.

"The best part of the process so far is seeing all of my artistic peers interpret the message and images differently while still having the same baseline message," said senior and NAHS President, Dani Henry. "The most difficult part has been trying to marry them all together and make the finished design seem coherent."

As a center student, senior AK Canavos has had input in the design process and thus far, she said, "it's been really stressed that this is meant to be a mural that represents what the current center experience is like." She included that one of the challenges that comes with recreating leadership ideas is that much of the curriculum is abstract.

Art students and leadership students often approach projects differently, and the seamless marriage between the two is a big goal for the mural. "The hardest part has been getting in the minds of another group," said Mrs. Jones. Because of the many steps involved in merging ideas and skill sets, the process has taken a while. Jones estimated that the project is on track to be completed in May of 2022.

As for other murals around the school, Mrs. Jones said, "We might try to tackle one a year." She hopes that having a certain color scheme and style for the murals will be a visual thread that connects different areas of the school together.



PHOTO: ANNABELLE GLASSMAN

Mural art students painted in front hall.