

Mavs Unite Across Language Barrier

Hannah Tittermary
Staff Writer

Freeman High School has a growing population of Multiple Language Learner (MLL) students, and the need for accommodations is growing too. Mavericks United (Mavs United) is a new program that aims to unite our newest community members with the Freeman Family by creating Freeman Focus classes with peer mentors who explain important information about the school.

Foreign language department head and Spanish teacher Sarah-Henning Snellings, who helped create this program, is very passionate about the integration of all students into our Freeman community. “[I] can see students feeling more comfortable coming to [...] teachers when they have a question,” she said. MLL students are also “trying out for cheerleading when they wouldn’t have before, or applying for the ACE Center ... which is ultimately the goal,” said Ms. Snellings. While this is the first year Mavs United has been a fully-fledged program, it has already had a positive impact on students.

MLL teacher Cara Ferras’s Freeman Focus classroom is the first place this program has been put into action. Students such as seniors Clementine Fuller, Farah Abdullah, and Henry Haggard are in the classroom and they teach lessons, help with English, and spend time with their MLL peers.

“Three years ago I had small classes with about eight in a room,” said Ms. Ferras. “And now I have 23 to 26 in a room and it’s still growing.” The Freeman community now has over 200 MLL students, and the school’s diversity is still increasing. According to Ms. Ferras, Mavs United is “going to make a huge



Mr. Densley’s class

difference and unite people.” Senior Clementine Fuller, one of the peer mentors in Ms. Ferras’s Mavs United class, is passionate about communication in Freeman. “Language is the foundation of

“Language is the foundation of communication.”

- Clementine Fuller

communication,” she said. The relationship between peer mentors and MLL students is peer-based and focused on smoothing their transition into our student population. “It’s really fun because we all

have opportunities to practice the languages that we want to learn and work on,” said Clementine.

Math teacher Ryan Densley also has a Freeman Focus class for MLL students who want extra help in Geometry. His classroom is just like any other classroom would be, except there are multiple different languages used around the room, including Spanish, Portuguese, Arabic, Northern Pashto, Farsi, and Urdu. While doing their Wellness Wednesday “Round Up,” the class can speak their first language but are also encouraged to practice their English if they wish. Mr. Densley’s favorite part of having a culturally diverse classroom is “the variety of experiences

that the students bring,” he said.

Sophomore Maria Prado, one of the students in Mr. Densley’s Freeman Focus class, appreciates how Mr. Densley “helps people understand math, especially if they don’t speak English well,” she said.

Maria’s classmate, junior Cristofer Pereira, said that “everyone learns in different ways” and that Mr. Densley has helped him with both English and Math.

Classes like Mr. Densley’s and Ms. Ferras’s are “really important,” said Ms. Snellings. “I’m just so excited to see where it’s gonna go.”

Ms. Ferras thinks it’s important for students to consider what it’s like “going to a new place,



Mr. Densley



Ms. Ferras

new school, new language, new everything, and the kind of anxiety that it might create,” she said. “When [students] see that they have people here to help them, it just calms any anxiety.”

Mr. Densley looks forward to seeing Mavs United grow in the future. “I would love it if we were able to just do more. I would love it if we incorporated peer mentors,” he said. “I love that there is such excitement and such energy behind it [and] that we have a student population here that is heavy on MLL students. If we want to make Freeman a place for all students alike, it’s important that we include them.”

The Club Fair Returns to Freeman

Farah Abdullah
Copy Editor

The Freeman Student Council Association (SCA) hosted its first Club Fair in years in order to increase student involvement in extracurriculars. On Sep. 23 and 24, club leaders set up tables with tri-folds in the big gym to provide students with information about Freeman’s various clubs.

The Club Fair was hosted during Freeman Focus and was mainly open to underclassmen. Sophomore students attended on Sep. 23, while freshmen attended on Sep. 24. Juniors and seniors new to Freeman also had the opportunity to attend the event on either day. Upperclassmen were

“One of our goals as a school is to create a culture of belonging.”

- Mrs. Reilly

not required to go to the club fair because “it was impossible to have the entire student body in the big gym,” said test coordinator and SCA co-sponsor Carter Reilly. “We felt that [upperclassmen] not new to DSF ... have already been exposed to a variety of clubs over the last 2-3 years.”

Though the SCA is known for hosting events like Homecoming, another part of their job is to promote student involvement in other extracurricular activities. Senior Alka Link, one of the SCA presidents, said that “after two years of clubs not being able to interact with a lot of the student body, we

thought it would be nice for the freshman and sophomore classes to be able to see all the clubs that Freeman has to offer and get involved early in the year.” She emphasized the importance of being exposed to clubs as someone new to Freeman. “I would have loved this kind of event when I was an underclassman because I didn’t get involved in [clubs] until my junior year,” she said. “It would have been great to know about all the clubs sooner in order to have more time [to be] in them.”

Sarah Chilton was one of many sophomores who attended. She said that the event gave her the opportunity to “reach out to clubs that [she] wouldn’t have heard of otherwise.” Though Sarah prefers to fill her free time with sports, she plans to join more clubs in the future. Sports “have always been a positive experience for me,” she said. “I think [clubs] can have the same effect too.”

Sarah has been involved in French Club since her freshman year, but she found more clubs to join at the fair, including the recently founded Competitive Uno Club. Sarah advised students intimidated to join a club to “go with a friend.”

Letters for Rose was one of the 20 clubs at the Club Fair. Because



Students at the Club Fair

it is a community service based group in which volunteers write letters for nursing home residents, Letters for Rose provides students with another incentive to join clubs in high school. “I think the big motivation for a lot of people joining is getting the [community service] hours,” said president of the Letters for Rose club, junior Shiny Chandravel.

Although the main purpose of

the Club Fair was to increase underclassmen involvement in clubs, it also provided student leaders with a chance to interact with potential members. “Because our club officers are all juniors, a lot of the [members] we get are [also] juniors,” said Shiny. “[The fair] was a great opportunity to get people from other grades.” Overall, the Club Fair was a success for Letters for Rose. “At least 10 [students]

requested to join the group,” said Shiny. “That’s impressive.”

As the year goes on, students of all grade levels are encouraged to expand their interests and get involved within the school, whether it’s through clubs or other extracurriculars. “One of our goals as a school is to create a culture of belonging,” said Mrs. Reilly. “Where all students feel connected to Freeman in some way.”



Uno Club at the Club Fair



Sophomores entering the Club Fair



The SAT... on an HP

Shishira Nakka
Staff Writer

The season known by all and loved by none is slowly approaching: SAT season. Number 2 pencils are on the verge of breaking, hands are chafed from writing, and eyes are red from late-night studying—but not for much longer. The College Board is holding trials for virtual SATs with the goal of creating an easier, more relevant version of the test.

Freeman teacher Christie Cabell, who proctors the exam here at Freeman, said that the virtual SAT would be “easier to administer and a lot shorter” for both proctors and students. The regular SAT takes “about four hours now,” while the virtual exam is around “two to two and a half hours,” said Ms. Cabell. She also spoke on the potential problems that could come with testing online. “If there is a technical issue,” she said. “We will have a dedicated help desk person that will be able to help them.”

One thing that wouldn’t change with the electronic SAT is the test-taking environment that we all know and love, the one so quiet that you can hear every scribble and turn of a page. A virtual SAT exam would have a different format, but the rules and protocols would remain the same. Because of this, “it probably will be beneficial for [students] for it to be given in a [quiet] environment like that,” said Ms. Cabell.

Additionally, a huge aspect of the SAT is its length. Senior Stephanie Portillo took the virtual exam on Sep. 17. “I liked that I had a timer counting down to tell me how much time I had left,” she said. Along with a personal

timer on every screen, it would seem like the virtual SAT would require more testing materials to bring, however, Stephanie found that all that was really needed was “an electronic device such as laptop or iPad to take the test.”

The topic of technology often begins with a discussion about accessibility—would using computers take away accessibility to the SAT? Ms. Cabell said it would not “be less accessible because [the school] will provide a device if [students] don’t have a personal one or school one to use.”

In a world of growing technology, many students are more comfortable testing on a screen than on paper, and therefore prefer to test on a laptop rather than with paper and pencil. Stephanie, who took both the virtual and paper SAT, felt more comfortable with the computer test, and if she had a chance to do it again, she would choose the virtual version over the paper version.

With the reduced time for the test, Ms. Cabell believes the virtual test would be “less over-



PHOTO: STOCK

whelming” for those with test-taking anxiety, making it easier for students to manage. Reviews of the virtual SAT from students all across the nation found that the “test felt a lot less stressful” and was overall “easier to take.”

The College Board’s goal for these trials is to end up with a more modern and efficient ver-

sion of the SAT, while also trying to encourage more students to take it. The College Board hopes the SAT exam will become accessible in a time where other aspects of college applications are otherwise inaccessible. They “want to keep [the] same doors of opportunity open for all students.”

Teachers from high schools

who gave the test say that these changes to the test are timely and clearly centered around improving the student experience.

The College Board “is finally catching up [and] making the process less cumbersome is the goal,” said Ms. Cabell. “[This] is a good move for [the College Board] to make it digital.”



PHOTO: STOCK

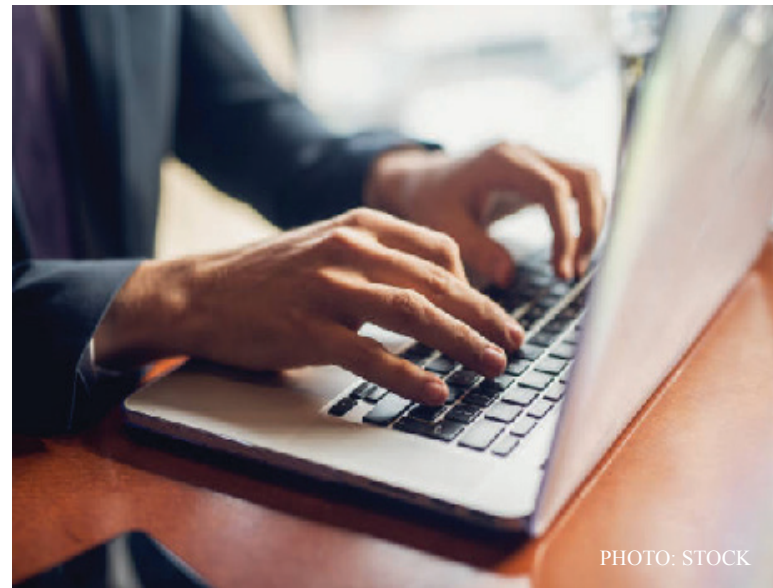


PHOTO: STOCK

A Flag of Remembrance

Ava Flournoy
Staff Writer

The Freedom Flag is raised high in September every year at Freeman High School, but do students know what it represents? Created by Richard Melito, the owner of local restaurant Melito’s, the Freedom Flag remembers the tragic events of Sep. 11, 2001. Mr. Melito used the flag as a symbol of freedom and a reminder to all Americans of what happened on that horrific day.

In late September 2001, Mr. Melito created a “drawing on a napkin” of his future flag, leading to the development of a memorial. It went from an idea to reality in January 2003 when it became the state’s official flag of remembrance.

When creating this flag, Mr. Melito had many emotions. He said it was like “going back to the Vietnam War.” All the feelings he had led to the Freedom Flag, a way to visibly honor those who had perished.

Mr. Melito said that he wants the Freedom Flag to educate people. “By having the flag at school and flying [it] on the flagpole, people will start to understand and ask questions,” he said. “So I hope getting a flag in all schools



PHOTO: FREEDOM FLAG FOUNDATION

The Freedom Flag in Delaware

will teach the next generation.”

Senior Grayson Archibeque commented on what the flag means to him. “I feel thankful knowing that the flag represents such brave men and women,” he said. “I feel a bit of sadness knowing that so many families are without a family member because they lost someone on that day. I am very grateful knowing that there is a flag in their remembrance.”

Each part of the Freedom Flag means something different. There are ten elements to the flag itself; the most prominent ones being the star and stripes. The white star in the middle represents “all those who have fought for freedom,” said Mr. Melito. The white stripes surrounding the star in a pentagon

shape represent the five branches of the US Military. The red stripes symbolize the bloodshed and the planes that went down. The white stripes represent the Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs), fire fighters, police officers, rescue workers, and Port Authority employees who lost their lives.

When talking about how often the flag should be flown, Grayson believes it should be flown as much as the American flag. “I think that this is something we should honor and be thankful for throughout the whole year, and not just the month of September,” he said. “It’s important to give thanks to the many innocent and brave men and women who lost their lives.”

Mr. Melito, on the other hand,

said “I [think] it’s left up to the individual or individuals to decide where and how and when they should fly it.” Elaborating, he said “I think the flag has its place, certainly [Sep. 11] is when it should be flown, but Douglas Freeman flies it all year round.”

The hope for the future of the flag is to continue to educate individuals all around the country about what happened on Sep. 11, 2001. “We hope to have all 50 states included by the 25th anniversary [of 9/11], which is in 2026,” said Mr. Melito. Another long term goal for the flag is for it to be a global symbol. “I would like to see it flown worldwide to let other nations know that freedom is not free and that we



PHOTO: RICHARD MELITO

Mr. Melito hanging the Freedom Flag.

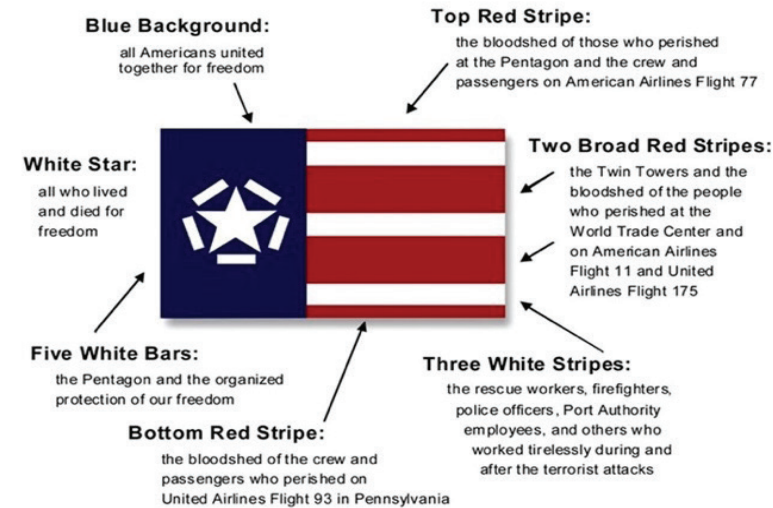
are honoring people [who have died to maintain it],” he said.

The Freedom Flag will always have a place at Freeman High School and potentially in many more states and the international community to educate people about the legacy of Sep. 11, 2001.



PHOTO: FREEDOM FLAG FOUNDATION

The Freedom Flag being adopted in the state of Oklahoma.



What each part of the Freedom Flag means

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To Be or Not to Be ... Real?

Adair Reid
Editor-in-Chief

Ever since the spring, I have been haunted by the voices. Daily outbursts like a shot heard around the Eastern Time Zone provoked by the buzz of a timer, set off each day when it's least expected. It is BeReal, the app sparking conversations about what authenticity means on social media while simultaneously promising the lack of complexity that makes it appealing to its target audience: high school and college students.

The app was founded in 2020 and promises the titular 'realness' through its posting system. A notification is sent out at one time each day and allows its users two minutes to snap a picture of what they're doing, using the back and front camera. BeReal is yet another result of the pandemic era, a time when our FOMO (Fear of Missing Out) had come true and everyone else's quarantine seemed to be a little better than ours. However, the app hit the Freeman area

more recently, around winter of 2021 when regular life seemed to finally be picking up again.

As a former user of BeReal, I once understood the appeal—on the surface, the app is a fun outlet and a way of recording the day-to-day. But the constant notifications outside of the daily timer started to grate on me. At the end of the day, I didn't need to know who else was 'being real' and how late they were to the punch, although I will admit setting off the BeReal past 11 PM is unfair to everyone who has a sleep schedule. Nevertheless, BeReal persisted in catching me doing pretty much nothing compared to my friends, like driving to practice, running errands, or being bored in a cubicle—it was as if the app went out of its way to call me out for how dry my summer was.

But after deleting the app, I started to question if cutting BeReal out of my life had truly benefited me, so I turned to the most reliable source of information around: the student body.

Much of the reasoning for downloading the app is the same. "I got

BeReal in April last year because everyone else had it and I felt like I was missing out," said senior Catriona Flynn. As an app that has a singular purpose, many users welcome the simplicity and lack of disruption. "It's something to look forward to every day and I always forget about it until the notification comes and then I'd BeReal," said Catriona. However, BeReal finds itself in contradictions more often than not. "I think that it kind of defeats the purpose of the app to have a posting late option," she said. On Friday nights, though, BeReal has perfect timing. "I like that it goes off during every football game, that's really fun," Catriona said. Countless photos from the student section show the proof is everywhere.

But when it comes to 'good intentions,' no social media function is known for holding to their mission statement. As an app with no ads, no fees, and not much else besides pictures of people, it might be beneficial for us to question what exactly BeReal is really for? While location sharing is optional, it is usually turned on by default

... a great way for the app and whoever is really behind it to track the most annoying generation and what they get up to doing. An opinion many users share that is more likely true than false (or at the least, less stressful.) But let's be real, I will bet \$100 BeReal is either part of an FBI program, or the app will be used to solve a murder mystery by some amateur true crime podcast this year (Halloween is coming up anyway.)

While founded with good intentions, my verdict on BeReal is just as predictable as the app's ever-evolving fate. Like any form of social media, it always loses its promised sincerity. BeReal isn't

real. Neither is anything on the internet ever. Except for maybe YikYak. The option to post late opens up a pathway to create a more 'curated' version of our daily life, which is directly against the goal the app touts so openly. And to be honest, maybe it would be good for everyone to be a little less 'real,' or at least, put the camera down (we all know you don't have that much storage.) The incessant need to digitize our memories and preserve them forever isn't just telling of a generational fear of Alzheimers, it exposes a fear of living our lives where they were truly meant to be lived—in reality.

FOOTBALL THEME TIER LIST

ICONIC

PRETTY GOOD

NOT FOR ME

BORING

FASHION CRIME



Fantasy Football, Real Pain

Peter Kriebel
Sports Editor

Every weekend NFL fans subject themselves to a two-pronged bombardment of stress: watching their favorite team duke it out in reality and their fantasy squad do the same in the land of make-believe. In fantasy football, fans are

able to play general manager by drafting a team of players whose statistics correlate to points. Each week, members of the league go head to head by starting the combination of players that they believe will score the most points. Whoever's team scores more points in the week walks away with the win. Seems pretty simple when described like that, but when the waiver wire, injuries, opponent ranks, practice reports,

and game-day weather are taken into account, fantasy football can begin to feel like a full-time job.

Having played fantasy football for over a decade, Freeman English teacher Mr. Abril embraces the grind that comes with it. "[I] pick people up, drop them, constantly look at the waiver wire," he said. "I do my research." This process takes time, but for Mr. Abril, it's worth it. "I realize that I might spend a little more time on it than necessary, but I think it's a skill that I don't usually exercise," he said.

Currently in two leagues, both with buy-ins, Mr. Abril is familiar with the stress caused by playing imaginary football. "I do get stressed out. I'm not gonna lie," he said. "I had a friend drop out of our league because of the stress that it caused [them]."

So why would anyone choose this time-consuming, blood pressure-rocketing way of

watching sports? Because it's fun okay?! Is that so wrong?! Stated more eloquently, Mr. Abril feels it enhances his experience as a football fan. "Fantasy has given me the opportunity to look into that sort of granular data, number-driven thing," he said. "That's normally not my thing."

Some leagues between friends simply play for the love of the game and bragging rights, but the older the participants get, the more likely it is that leagues have buy-ins and extreme punishments. Freshman Drew Nunnally is in a league that, he said, requires the loser to "eat the hottest wing from Hangry Joe's," a hot chicken joint down the road from Freeman.

What's perhaps worse than any physical punishment a loss in fantasy may cause is the mental abuse suffered by participants. A loss in Fantasy is like "getting stabbed in the back by a knife," said Drew.

One loss in particular sticks with Drew. The matchup came down to Monday Night Football where Drew held a one-point lead. His opponent had no remaining players and the matchup was as good as won. "I could have taken [my players] out and caught the W," he said. "But instead, I kept them in to try and get more points." Initially, this risky move looked to have paid off for Drew. "Mid-fourth quarter they still had positive points so I was fine," he said. "And then, the other team scored twice and I lost." A hard way to go out, but a lesson learned nonetheless.

Fantasy football offers a fun and exciting way for football fans to get closer to the sport they love. Even if their fantasy team is garbage, they can always just take a break and enjoy watching their real favorite team play. Except for you Commanders fans. You all should probably seek therapy.

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Drew Nunnally poses with his fantasy football weekly review.

“Monster: The Jeffrey Dahmer Story:” Review

Jazmyn Howell
Arts & Entertainment Editor

Once again, Netflix has come out with a highly controversial documentary, but it's not quite why you'd think. On Sep. 21, 2022, "Monster: The Jeffrey Dahmer Story" was released on the streaming service. The documentary stars Evan Peters as Dahmer and is directed by Ryan Murphy. The story unfolds just as the cops and public learn about Jeffrey Dahmer, the serial killer.

To stray from the content of the TV series, I would like to bring up the utter lack of respect that Netflix had in creating this series. Not only did Netflix go against the wishes of the victim's families by making yet another documentary about Dahmer, but they also proceeded not to reimburse them at all. Netflix even brings up the family's wishes, or lack thereof, in the series and makes almost a whole episode about the fact. The families have openly made statements that they don't want any documentaries made; since then, there's been 10. Not only has there been documentaries but there has also been books written by friends and even Dahmer's father trying to humanize this murderer and his family. I'm not saying that nothing should be made about Dahmer; I be-

lieve that Dahmer's case shows the racism and homophobia stemming from the time, and the series shows how many of these murders could have been avoided. However, this is still an incorrect way to make films about serial killers.

Director Ryan Murphy only met a few of my expectations, while he dramatically failed in most. Many of the episodes fell short. They focus on Dahmer and his family's pain instead of the real victims. I will admit I'm interested in why killers kill and the science behind it. It's a phenomenon that much of America shares, but this series placed pity on Dahmer's parents. In episode eight titled "Lionel" they spend a whole 48 minutes discussing Lionel Dahmer's (Dahmer's father) hardships after Jeffrey's arrest.

When a serial killer of this magnitude gets arrested, a director should never decide to cast pity on the family members of the killer or the killer themselves, but that is exactly what this series did. Lionel Dahmer deserves no sympathy. This man wrote a book about his "experience," then tried to profit off the pain of the victim's relatives and proceeded to be angry when they decided to sue. That alone is disgusting, and the fact that Netflix and Ryan Murphy thought it was okay to shine a light on his pain rather than the victims' families is inexcusable.

Episodes six and seven lived up to my expectations. Episode six follows Anthony (Tony) Hughes, a gay, deaf, African-American man searching for his dream. This episode left me in shambles, which is surprising because since the age of five, I have been interested in tv series, books, movies, and podcasts about true crime. I can say only once has a story left me like this. This episode was an example of the proper way to make a documentary showing the lives of the victims before Dahmer. To show who they were instead of just being "Jeffrey Dahmer's victims." They highlight Tony's life, his family and friends, and only then insert the pinnacle turning point: Dahmer.

Episode seven, on the other hand, follows Dahmer's indirect victim: his neighbor. It is about a woman named Cassandra who lived next to Dahmer and was a witness. This episode shows the guilt and strife she had to live with after Dahmer's arrest. Most importantly, this episode brought attention to why Dahmer wasn't caught quicker by showing how the police blatantly ignored this woman and her knowledge.

If you know anything about serial killers, you would know how bad Dahmer was at it. Many people knew of his actions, and he wasn't very good at hiding them either. The series shows how police ignored these complaints solely because Dahmer's

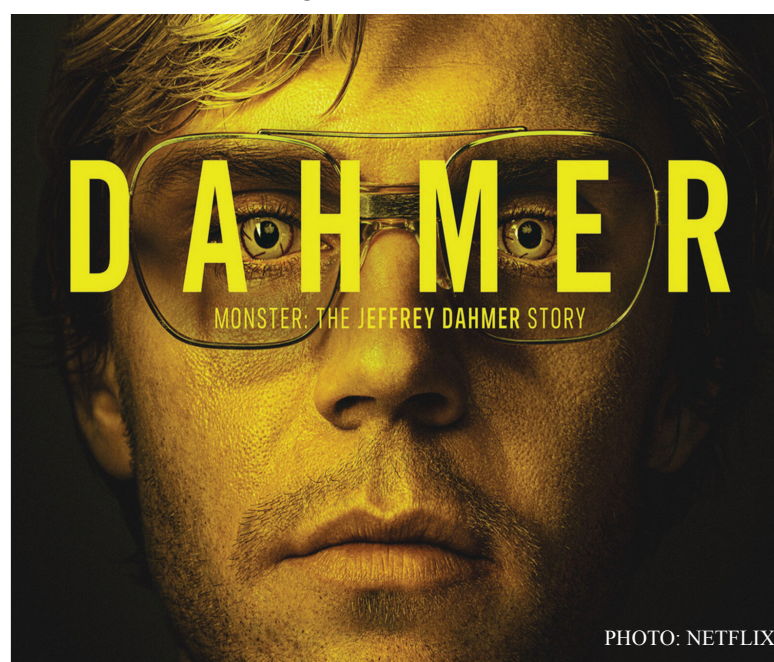


PHOTO: NETFLIX

Series cover for Netflix's Dahmer

victims were predominantly gay, African-American males. While this Documentary did live up to the expectations in certain episodes, it just simply wasn't enough. They should have created 17 episodes to tell each victim's story. This would've portrayed Dahmer as the monster he was and how he stole these people's lives.

To do something Netflix failed to do, I would like to honor his victims: Steven Hicks (age 18), Steven Tuomi (age 28), Jamie Doxtator (age 14), Richard Guerrero (age 25), Anthony Sears (age 24), Ricky Beeks (age 33), Eddie Smith (age 28), Ernest Mill-

er (age 24), David Thomas (age 23), Curtis Straughter (age 18), Errol Lindsey (age 19), Anthony Hughes (age 31), Konerack Sintasophone (age 14), Matt Turner (age 20), Jeremiah Weinberger (age 23), Oliver Lacy (age 23), and Joseph Bradehoft (age 25). We should remember these people, the ones who were wrongly taken from their families. I would not recommend watching this documentary. Instead, I strongly recommend reading news articles, court documents, and interviews with the victim's families to truly grasp Jeffrey Dahmer's impact on these communities and families.

What Freeman is Streamin'



Michelle Ntumy (12)
She/Her

"I like watching both old and new releases. I like older shows because you can revisit them and find things you didn't see the first time."



Oakley Cotropia (10)
She/Her

"I like Netflix the best because it has the biggest variety of movies and shows. There are always new movies and shows coming out on Netflix."



Elijah Ahmed (12)
He/Him

"I like watching older movies more than newer ones because 80s movies are funnier and seem more realistic. Beat Street is my favorite older movie."



James Bryant (10)
He/Him

"It really depends, if I'm trying to binge watch something I'll use Netflix. But if I'm just trying to be chill I'm with Prime Video."

Content Blocking Success

Abby Crowe
Editor-in-Chief

Freeman's new content blocker is unproductive and too restrictive. It is hypocritical and treats high schoolers like they are kindergartners. Useful and necessary programs are no longer allowed which inhibits learning. Below are three notable restrictions on our current school computers.

Images
Try googling Freeman Mavericks. See how no images come up? That is due to the extremely restrictive content blocker that was put into effect this year. A harmless Google search for project work is now nearly impossible due to the ridiculous controls. Teachers and students have had to find work arounds from the blocker and many solutions involve using phones- which administration has tried to crack down on this year as well. With the restrictions on images and resources though, phones are the only way students can complete school-related assignments.

College Help
Juniors and seniors who are interested in applying to the University of Virginia have most likely heard

of @uvadeanj on Instagram or her popular blog Notes from Peabody. Behind the college admissions insight pages is counselor Jeannine Lalonde who gives prospective students and their parents advice for the next chapter. If you thought Dean J would be an appropriate resource that Henrico would approve of, you would think wrong; her blog is restricted with the new content blocker. I mean, you never know, her videos of activities fairs and weighted vs. unweighted GPAs could get pretty heated.

Music
Calling all music lovers! Would you like to connect with other artists and support their work? Too bad, so sad! The content blocker has chosen Bandcamp to be its next victim. Apparently buying and selling music can be a dangerous activity according to Henrico. Staying on the music train, the popular music streaming service Spotify has also been restricted by the county. If teachers don't want students on their phones, then we should be able to listen to music on our computers. All throughout the halls, students wear airpods, wired headphones, and everything in between, so clearly the blocking is not stopping anyone from listening to music.

HE SAID SHE SAID

SPORTS EDITOR Peter Kriebel

GUEST CONTRIBUTOR Maggie Newton

<p>Cold legs are a drawback in the winter but an asset in the warmer months.</p>	<p>My hair always gets stuck in the screws, and then it gets slowly ripped out as I stand up. Not pleasant.</p>
<p>Built-in footrest makes these surprisingly comfortable.</p>	<p>I've sat on better chairs.</p>
<p>Comfortable seating but don't be fooled by those splinter-ridden armrests.</p>	<p>Comfort: 7/10. Visual Appeal: 0/10.</p>
<p>Truly a young man's seat.</p>	<p>Satan's chair.</p>
<p>No lumbar support</p>	<p>I like how they have wheels, but is it too much to ask for some back support?</p>
<p>If every classroom had these no one would ever be late</p>	<p>very nice</p>

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The friendly gnomes who protect blocked Google pages

New Physics Teacher: Mr. Gallo

Ada Malpani
Centerspread Editor

The Island Gallonia only has a few rules, but they must be followed: “Be Persistent, Be King, Be Tidy, Be Responsible, Be Brilliant.” Interested in being a part of this new nation? Just ask Thomas Gallo, Freeman’s new physics teacher.

A proud James Madison University graduate, Mr. Gallo double majored in Physics and Philosophy during his time there. After losing his post-graduation job opportunity due to the Sep. 11 attacks, Mr. Gallo was not sure where to go next. He called up a friend who was also a recent graduate, and she told him about the teaching job she currently had. “I thought I’ll do this for [a few] years, then get a new job,” said Mr. Gallo. “But in those first three years, I just loved working with kids.”

Mr. Gallo began his teaching career in Northern Virginia, then moved down to Henrico and began teaching at Godwin High School. He then got an offer to work at The Steward School, where he had the opportunity to teach both physics and philosophy classes to students. Philosophy and physics may seem like an odd combination, but they are actually fairly similar. “[When] you start getting into advanced physics, physics and philosophy ... really do start to overlap,” said Mr. Gallo. “Because at the end of our knowledge, you kind of have to make a lot of guesses, and that’s not all that different from spirituality and philosophy.”



Mr. Gallo

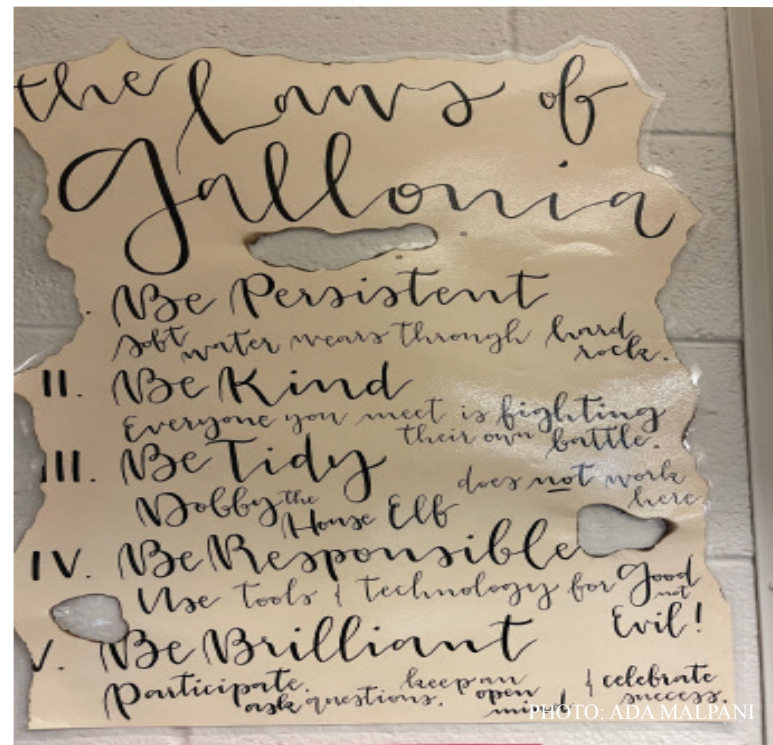
Mr. Gallo is always interested in exploring and answering more advanced or interesting topics that come up in physics classes. “Most teachers kind of just give you the equations ... and look like they want to retire early,” said senior Griffin Belding, a student in Mr. Gallo’s AP Physics I class. “He’s the first science teacher I’ve had who actually cares about the interesting parts of it.”

Mr. Gallo’s favorite part about working with students is “being a good mentor.” Mr. Gallo incorporates this idea into his teaching style. He wants to focus on preparing his students for the real world,

by giving them the tools and resources they need, but without an instruction manual to follow. “The best way to educate someone is just to be honest with them about what’s coming, and what’s coming is a challenge,” said Mr. Gallo. “I don’t want to lie and say that life’s just gonna be handed to you. I refuse to do that to you kids.”

Griffin agrees with this philosophy. “He kind of lets you figure your own way through the class, with just enough guidance to make sure that you don’t fail,” he said.

Junior Nicolas Gavin also appreciates the freedom Mr. Gallo’s class has. “If we have questions,



The Gallonian Constitution (located on the wall of Mr. Gallo’s classroom)

we’ll go off to explore those questions,” he said. “Not in a manner that would take away from class time, but in a way that would be beneficial for the whole class.”

Mr. Gallo even manages to make the most boring part of class interesting: the dreaded lectures. “He’s funny and entertaining,” said senior Meg Pollard. “When he does notes, he tries to make it as easy to understand as possible.”

A common complaint of science students is that they can’t comprehend abstract scientific concepts. Mr. Gallo tries to help students understand these difficult ideas. For example, “[when

explaining] the way the Earth revolves around the Sun and the way gravity affects us, he used a metaphor of a bug on a person inside of a truck,” said Nicolas. “He makes these really big concepts tangible and into something that everybody can understand.”

Mr. Gallo sees his first few weeks at Freeman as a success. “The culture of this building is unlike any other place I’ve ever been,” said Mr. Gallo. “The thank you I get at the end of every class—I feel that there’s this really sincere appreciation from the student body, it’s delightful. [Freeman] really does feel like home.”

Calculus Teachers Introduce Student-Paced Grading



Mr. Densley’s 5th period class

Poppy Friske
Staff Writer

From rigorous study guides to late-night test packets, Advanced Placement (AP) Calculus students have their work cut out for them. In an attempt to lessen the strain on grades and allow students to focus on retaining information, Sara Fergus, AP Calculus and Algebra II teacher, and Ryan Densley, AP Calculus and Geometry teacher, have replaced traditional tests with “Knowledge Checks.” Knowledge Checks are laid out similarly to traditional tests, but are significantly less time-consuming, available to be retaken, and graded based on student comprehension.

Freeman’s math department head and math teacher, Whitney Beaton is optimistic about the future of this collaborative curriculum. “I think it’s really a nice change of pace, especially in some of our AP classrooms, where you might be more expecting of a traditional style test,” said Ms. Beaton.

Through the steady incorporation of Knowledge Checks into the lesson plan, teachers are able to “unpack some of that [stressful] baggage carried by students,” said Mr. Densley.

The overall goal of this modification is to place more emphasis on the process of learning a new mathematical concept. This system is “more adequate at showing [progress] than just a purely grade-based system,” said Mr. Densley.

Ms. Fergus started Knowledge Checks during her student-teaching program in South Burlington, Vermont. “[My] goal for [students is] to [help them] understand calculus by the AP test and if they don’t get it by September, that’s

okay,” she said. Ms. Fergus finds that this new approach of testing allows for more student-paced learning. In addition, “anxiety definitely goes down and that leads to more learning,” said Ms. Fergus.

Ms. Fergus’s collaborator on this mastery-based approach, Mr. Densley, was introduced to the concept of Knowledge Checks during Professional Development over the past summer. “I was always very good [at math] until I got to AP Calculus, but it wasn’t really what I was interested in,” said Mr. Densley, a former Freeman student himself. “I was more interested in history. [Math] was just one of those classes that I had to get through.”

Mr. Densley “came to be fascinated with the teaching of math” as he “worked through [his] degree and masters,” he said. This newfound appreciation for the subject is supported by Henrico County Math Department’s mantra: “Everyone is a math person.”

“As a math teacher, I work very hard at really helping students recognize that math is not just one thing ... there are lots of fields and opportunities,” said Mr. Densley. “Even though you may not be good at geometry, or algebra, maybe you’re really good at trigonometry.”

Many calculus students have voiced their optimism for the incorporation of Knowledge Checks into the curriculum. “I think in the future, they could potentially [be helpful],” said junior Hannah Mahan, one of Ms. Fergus’s students. Hannah appreciates the way that the math department has tailored classes to students by allowing them to redo tests and quizzes. By reducing the strain to score highly the first time,

New Freeman Staff

Exceptional Ed

Ashley Johnson-Albanese
Kevin Simonds
Selene Marsh



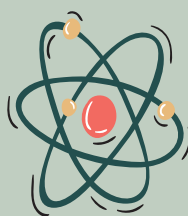
CTE, Arts, P.E

CTE: Patricia Adams
Arts: Tiffany Floyd
PE: Gretchen Hiort



Science

Orien Altman
Erica Baz



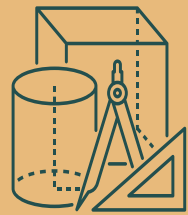
Science

Thomas Gallo
Michelle Stockner
David Turner



Math

Sara Fergus
Max Galleher
Andrew Badgett
Schermaly Raymond



Counseling

Janice Cushman
Jennifer Melton
Jenny Hines
Kate Garnett



Languages

Sarah Dawood
Rhian Kossack



Other Staff

Assis. Principal: Jose Florez
Maintenance: Hung Duong
Clinic: Angie Owens



Hannah feels “like [she] won’t be as stressed about math and [she’ll] be able to learn more.”

“Being able to prove that you understand or that you have knowledge of a concept [will] make the student’s lives a lot easier,” said Ms. Beaton. “Especially in the high pressure AP classes.”

Critical thinking, a major aspect of any AP math class, is a relatively new concept that forces students to “engage their brains a lot ... more than when I was a student,” said Mrs. Fergus. An ever-evolving subject, calculus allows Freeman teachers to modify their lessons yearly and stay up to date on what will allow their pupils to thrive.



Students collaborating on Group Applied Thinking

Junior Takes Whisks with Cookie Business

Cat White

Online and Opinions Editor

In July of 2020, junior Christian Washington started experimenting with different cookie recipes in his home kitchen. Baking had always been a passion of Christian's, but it wasn't until an inspiring review from his aunt of his snickerdoodle cookie that he decided to take this passion to the next level.

Cookies and Crust is a national cookie company that delivers homemade cookies straight to customer's doorsteps. Selling a variety of cookie flavors with gluten-free options and even dog treats, Christian's business is no small undertaking. "I started with my website, then all of my branding, social media, and obviously baking," said Christian. Not only does Cookies and Crust cater to individual customers, they have a variety of large corporate clients who order cookies for events. "My first big order was for Icon Realty," said Christian. "They ordered 160 cookies, so it took me about a week to complete the order." Other corpo-



Christian with a customers and Mayor Levar Stoney

rate customers of Cookies and Crust include Model Tobacco Lofts, L.L. Flooring, and more.

Christian's customers are not strictly located in Richmond, as he has cookie orders being shipped as far as Colorado. "I couldn't believe my cookies were going all the way to Colorado," said Christian. "Just seeing that my company could expand so much and that it was actually going somewhere [was] so inspiring."

Cookies and Crust comes with a large time commitment for Christian. "Last year I missed the first day of school because I was up all night baking cookies," he said. Christian has a two day turnaround for all of his orders, so when a 400 cookie corporate order was placed right before the start of school, he had no choice but to bake until the order was fulfilled. "That experience taught me resilience through business,"

said Christian. "Whatever you put your mind to, you can do."

The balance between his school work and running a business is something that Christian took on with no hesitation. "I've learned that time management is huge, especially with school," he said. "If I have school stuff to do, I wake up every morning at six o'clock to get it done." His baking process is two days long. The first day consists of making the dough, batching the cookies, and putting them in the freezer. The next day is when Christian bakes, packages, and delivers his cookies to the post office. "The most important thing is being able to delegate your time and delegate tasks. If I find that I can't do it all, I'll have somebody else do it for me," said Christian.

Christian's mom, Shameka Washington, has been happy to help Christian through this complicated process. As an owner of a real estate business, she is familiar with the challenges that can come being an entrepreneur. "Business is always top of mind for Christian," she said. She describes him as "creative, resilient, and cool."

As of recently, Christian has had the opportunity to hire employees for his company. "At first it was just me and then I had my mom and my little brother start to help out," he said. "Having a team of dedicated staff to help me delegate those tasks now is huge." Christian emphasizes the importance of his team and how he knows that he would not be able to be successful without them.

"Ultimately, what I want to do is have my own platform where I can inspire other kids who do the same thing," said Christian. His end goal is to be "a mentor who goes around the country being like a speaker, and helping to inspire other kids to follow their passions." Dating back to middle school, Christian has been interested in entrepreneurship. He faces obstacles being in this space at such a young age but he does not let that slow his progress. "No matter your age, if you want to own a business, just start it. Everyone starts from somewhere," he said.

Cookies and Crust is a product of Christian's years of hard work and dedication. "It's incredible to see that a cookie would get me to where I am today," said Christian.

Audrey Bates Advocates for CRPS

Celia Acey

Staff Writer

Over a year ago, Freeman senior Audrey Bates was diagnosed with Complex Regional Pain Syndrome (CRPS). While persevering through a challenging diagnosis, Audrey has become an advocate for this rare disorder.

After having a surgery to remove an accessory navicular bone in her foot, Audrey was experiencing abnormal post-operative symptoms. She decided to go to the doctor, where she was diagnosed with CRPS.

"CRPS is a chronic nerve pain disorder that can develop after an injury, surgery, or medical emergency," said Audrey's mom, Annette Bates. "The pain is greater than would be expected and continues far longer than it should."

"There is no definitive diagnostic test for CRPS," said Mrs. Bates. "Because it's not fully understood ... doctors use the

Budapest criteria to diagnose CRPS." This criteria uses sensory, vasomotor, sudomotor, motor, and trophic categories to diagnose this rare disorder. Audrey had symptoms in each category.

Audrey's life completely changed after her diagnosis. "I [couldn't] do a lot of the stuff that I used to do. I really have to keep my leg in mind when planning things," said Audrey. Activities such as standing or walking for long periods of time or even wearing pants could cause pain in her leg.

"[Audrey] had to miss school multiple times over the course of last year due to the pain being unbearable," said Audrey's friend, Rithika Ravirala. "Catching up on school work, which can be a burden on anyone's mental health, in addition to dealing with something so painful, is what makes her one of the strongest people I know."

Despite her challenging diagnosis, Audrey maintained a positive attitude. "[After COVID] everyone was having a hard time, and even with this curve ball,



Audrey supporting CRPS

Audrey didn't miss a beat. She immediately started researching and finding treatment options, and continued to play field hockey as she could," said Mrs. Bates. "She never seemed to feel sorry for herself, and how she manages the day to day with such a positive attitude continues to amaze me."

In spite of CRPS halting some of Audrey's daily activities such as running and playing field hockey, she found new activi-



Audrey playing field hockey

ties to enjoy. "She started working at a vet hospital as a step towards her aspirations to being a veterinarian," said Rithika.

As part of her new advocacy, Audrey participated in a virtual CRPS Awareness Walk with a team of her friends and family. "It was a really great experience to see everyone come out and donate," said Audrey. "It's nice to know that people are there for [me]."

One of Audrey's main goals in

advocating for CRPS is to just spread the word. "Raising awareness gave [Audrey] a voice during a difficult time and a distraction," said Mrs. Bates. "The more we can raise awareness, the more funds for research in this field we can raise, and the more people living in chronic pain can be helped."

Because CRPS is so rare, a majority of people are unaware that it exists. It has been nearly impossible for Audrey and her family to find doctors who specialize in this rare disorder. "We were both definitely frustrated by the lack of knowledge from the doctors Audrey was referred to," said Mrs. Bates. "CRPS is rare, but from research we have found, many cases likely go undiagnosed. And for those who are diagnosed, the treatments just aren't there."

"[Audrey has] educated many people our age and even people older about her condition," said Rithika. "Though I and others don't know her pain, we are now aware and can be more understanding to others like Audrey who are fighting every day."

Chris Smith: Social Media Success

Maggie Jacoby

Staff Writer

For many people, it is a rare and exciting experience to meet somebody famous. Whether they're from YouTube, TikTok, or Instagram, there is a thrill that comes along when meeting them. However, @Chris_Minecraft, known to most students as Chris Smith, is actually a part of the Freeman Family.

Chris is a senior at Freeman who has gained popularity on various social media sites over the past few months by making Minecraft videos. He loves making content in his free time and hopes to expand his video creation to more than just short clips. His largest following is on Tik Tok, where he has around 1.2 million followers. On Youtube, he has almost 994,000 subscribers, which is the equivalent to 665 Freeman High Schools.

Chris has a silver play button for YouTube, meaning he has reached 100,000 subscribers. He is about to get his golden

play button, which requires him to have 1 million subscribers.

"I started in February of 2021, just making videos for fun," said Chris. "I started thinking about it and was like 'why don't I upload these onto TikTok? Everybody uses TikTok.'" Proceeding the upload of his first video, Chris gained 60,000 followers in a two-week span.

Although making Minecraft videos started out as a fun hobby, Chris soon realized the monetary opportunity he had when brands started reaching out to him. "Companies like Bridge Wallet and Dragon City [would] reach out to me and say 'hey, if you make a video sponsoring our product and post it on your TikTok, we'll pay you around \$2,000,'" Chris said. Due to the income he receives from sponsors, Chris has never had to get another job.

Chris is very independent in his craft as he edits, films, and manages his content, meaning he creates his own thumbnails, runs multiple social media accounts daily, and deals with the business aspect of

it all. However, since Chris isn't 18 yet, his dad deals with the legal contracts and financial management side of things. "[My family] love[s] that I'm able to do this and actually make money off of it. They fully support me," said Chris.

With so much to do on social media, you would be surprised to hear that Chris's schedule is usually pretty clear. Other than working on videos, he uses his free time to finish homework, flip on his trampoline, and do gymnastics. Because Chris doesn't reveal his identity on the internet, he gets to do what he wants without being recognized, which he said he prefers.

Chris receives thousands of comments on each video he puts out. This is one way he can get feedback on his work and know what types of videos viewers want to see next. Almost all of these comments are positive reflections of his effort. "Wow! All really good! New sub!" commented one subscriber.

Looking into the future, Chris has big goals to fulfill. He would like to grow on all of his platforms, which include YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, Snapchat, and Facebook. He would also like to expand his video creation content. Chris plans on continuing with his success in the industry for as long as he can. He also plans to go to college as well. "I plan on going to Reynolds for two years and then getting my bachelor's in computer science at JMU," he said.

Whether you're an avid Minecraft player or just in need of something to watch, Chris's social media accounts will surely keep you entertained. As Chris Smith continues his journey, make sure to check him out on all of his socials. His TikTok is @Chris_Minecraft, his YouTube is ChrisMC, his Instagram is @real_chrismc, and his twitter is @ChrisMinecraft.

NATHAN SZBOTA IS FINA WORLD JUNIOR MENS 5K OPEN WATER SWIM CHAMPION

NATHAN SZBOTA

Nathan is a Sophomore at Freeman and has been swimming since he was 3 years old. This September, Nathan went to Africa, where he won two events at the FINA World Junior Open Water Swimming Competition.



HIS WINS

Nathan won two events: the 4x1500 mixed relay with Team USA and the 5k open water

HOW DID HE PREPARE?

When training for the event, Nathan swam 70,000 meters a week in the months leading up to the competition.



WHO WAS HE AGAINST?

Nathan was swimming against top swimmers from around the world in the 14-15 Age group. His top competitors were from Germany, Italy, and Turkey.



"INTO THE FINISH, I WAS JUST GIVING IT EVERYTHING I HAD, JUST TRYING TO GET MY HAND ON THE TOUCHPAD FIRST. I JUST GOT IT, BARELY."

-NATHAN



PHOTO: CHRIS SMITH

Chris and his Youtube award

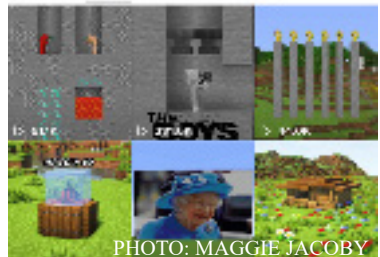


PHOTO: MAGGIE JACOBY

Chris' TikTok account

Freeman Senior Scores Cornell Soccer Commitment

Ella Post
Staff Writer

Ava Jung, a senior at Freeman High School, has chosen to continue her soccer career at Division-I, Ivy League, Cornell University. For 12 years, Ava has been dominating the local soccer scene by playing on both Freeman's varsity team and on the Richmond United Elite Clubs National League. She plays defensive midfield, or "the sixth." At Freeman, Ava is a member of the Leadership Center, the vice president of the Uno Club, and she works with RVA Access, an organization where kids with disabilities can come play soccer.

During Ava's sophomore year, COVID-19 shut down the world, pausing her soccer career. However, this setback eventually helped Ava and her family refocus on what was most important: school. During the pandemic, the recruiting process went digital. "All the coaches were watching her virtually," said Ava's dad, Charlie Jung. "[Ava] finally had a showcase where [she] went to North Carolina and it was the first time where college coaches were

"I have also made a ton of friendships through soccer, and I'm really grateful for that."

- Ava Jung

allowed to a showcase [and] ...it was the most scouts they've ever seen." That same weekend Ava was injured during a game. "That was a big emotional moment," said Mr. Jung. "But again, I think that was a good kind of a moment for us as a family to say 'you know, soccer is just something we enjoy, but let's focus on school.'" Ava has learned a lot about what



PHOTO: AVA JUNG

Ava sports a medal and a smile as she walks off the field.

she wants to pursue in college from the injury. "I was looking more on the academic side when picking what college I wanted to go to because [in the] long term, [I] was not going to be playing professional soccer," she said. She looked at schools with rigorous academics like the Ivy Leagues and other schools such as the University of Virginia, The College of William and Mary, and Davidson College. Ultimately, she committed to Cornell University. "I think the reason why I picked Cornell is because I want to major in business, and they have a really good business school there," said Ava.

Ava has also mastered the skill of balancing soccer, school, and her social life. "I mean, I feel like it's like a constant struggle, trying to balance everything, but I guess it's just prioritizing," said Ava. "Sometimes soccer is more lenient and I need to focus on

school more, or it's the opposite." In addition, Ava has become familiar with sacrifices such as skipping high school events. "I haven't had the full high school experience like football games," she said. "But I have also made a ton of friendships through soccer, and I'm really grateful for that."

One of Ava's teammates for the past five years, Walker Bristow, described Ava as "probably one of the funniest people [she has] ever met. She's super kind and she just says things that make [people] laugh." Ava's work ethic has also been inspiring for many people. "She contributes a lot and she leads by example," said Walker. "She's always doing well, so everyone kind of follows her. She's super smart, [she's] always doing homework, and does really well in school."

Ava's hard work and dedication have certainly helped her get to

where she is now. "Surrounding myself around with people that push me to do well [and] being a part of the leadership program



PHOTO: AVA JUNG

Ava dribbles and surveys the field.

FALL SPORTS CAPTAINS

GIRLS VOLLEYBALL



Sophia Smith (left) and Emily Pinotti (right)

BOYS VOLLEYBALL



Left - Right: Jace Nguyen, Brayden Owens, Jacob Buxbaum, Henry Mumford, Christian Sleman

CHEER



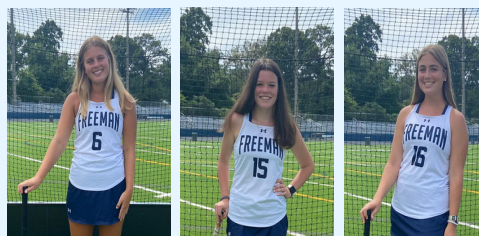
Left-Right: Catherine Mottley, Betty Grace Thompson, Alka Link, Lauren Mielke

FOOTBALL



Ty Bowman (17), Jason Abbey (33), Alex Brann (57), PJ Moore (11)

FIELD HOCKEY



Avery Fonville Simone Fortier Adair Reid



Meg Pollard Ann Collier Ferguson

CROSS COUNTRY



Charlotte Gardner (left) Avery Edmonson (Right)

DSF SPORTS INSTAGRAM ACCOUNTS

Follow these accounts if you want to see: Sporting event reminders, weekly shoutouts and team pictures



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@dsfgirlsvolleyball



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@dsfboystennis



@dsfgirlstennis

Freeman Golf Doesn't Putter Around

Audrey Jones
Opinions Editor

From the hot, humid days of late summer to the crisp afternoons of early fall, the boys of Freeman's golf team have been spending hours on the green practicing and competing.

Since late July, the team has been traveling to local courses, including their usual practice spot at Richmond Country Club, to face other high school teams in matches and tournaments. Now, as the season comes to a close, the players and coach can look back fondly at what the Mavericks accomplished.

This year, the team featured several fresh faces, including new coach Ray Moore, a Latin teacher at Freeman. Despite the return of "only four players from last year's team," Coach Moore believes the team has done well. "I knew we would be competitive," said Coach Moore. "I just didn't know we would be as good as we are."

The Mavericks' 26-4 record is a testament to their excellent season. "We won the first tour-

"I just didn't know we would be as good as we are."

- Coach Moore

namment of the year, which is the Lake Chesdin Invitational, and I think we surprised some teams knowing how much we had lost," said Coach Moore. "I'm very proud that the guys have stepped up this year and filled in admirably for some seniors that were really good last year."

A typical practice for the golf team takes place after school and lasts about two hours. "We pull into the country club around 4:15, and stand around for a little and talk. Then we go to warm up and putt," said senior Owen McGuill, who is on the team.



The golf team takes a team photo on the course.

PHOTO: FREEMAN GOLF

Spending the first 10 minutes of practice putting is an important strategy for the Mavericks. "We putt to make sure that we're working on our short game," said Coach Moore. "Usually the better teams are really good around the greens and that is where they separate themselves."

After putting, the team transitions to play nine holes, where focus becomes critical. "We all begin to 'dial in' or focus up for the practice," said Owen. "We have to focus at every practice because after every round, your score determines if you're going to play in the next match or not."

Although the focus of practice is important, Wit Rader, a senior on the team, described the atmosphere as "high energy and positive."

While there are 12 players total on the team, "during matches, the top six players are selected to play nine holes against six players from other teams," said Wit. "The top four scores are counted, and the team with the lowest total wins."

However, most players will get an opportunity to compete over the course of the season because "we adjust the starting lineup based off of the com-

petition," said Coach Moore.

"When it is your turn to tee off, it is pretty nerve racking, at least for me it is," said Owen. "But after the first few holes, the nerves have worn off and you're playing your game." His favorite shot to hit at a match is "Flop Is Always The Play."

The setup of matches is "really wide open," said Coach Moore. Depending on the number of schools participating, the match can be described as a duel, tri, quad, or tournament. Typically, the players are matched up by seed and go out and play in groups of three or four.

This year, Freeman's biggest competition includes Deep Run High School and Godwin High School. "They are the two teams that we know we have to go through to get to the next round," said Coach Moore. Midlothian High School is also considered a good competitor. "[Midlothian] can beat any of the three of us on a given day," said Coach Moore.

Regionals took place on September 25 and 26, and Freeman finished in fourth place out of 12 competing teams. Sophomore Charlie White placed in the top

three individuals outside of the two winning teams, so he advanced to the state tournament individually. In the state tournament which took place on October 11, Charlie placed fifth. He "[shot] a 70, two strokes behind the state champion. This will mean that he will be first team all-state," said Coach Moore.

While competition is a big part

of the team experience, so is building bonds. "Coach Moore has definitely helped me grow as a person this year," said Wit. "During tough matches, he helps take some weight off our backs by reminding us to stay positive."

Similarly, Owen said that "Coach Moore is good at picking you up after a bad round and he is good at always being positive and keeping a level head."

"The opportunity to get to know the guys that are on the team, that's been the best part," said Coach Moore. "Also, my dad's [helped] as an assistant coach, and my son comes up and hits the ball a little bit, so it's been a nice family connection time too, which is good."

After a great season, Coach Moore thanks Coach Williamson for helping him transition into doing this. "He was very helpful, and I really appreciate everything he did to get me to where I was able to take over and know what I was doing," he said.

"The team would also like to thank Coach Moore for volunteering his time to be our assistant coach," said Wit.



DAVID BADAHOUN

Freeman Field Hockey: "Like A Family"

Katie Hall
Staff Writer

On Freeman's varsity field hockey team, the athletes are more than just teammates. "We are all kind of like a family," said sophomore Ann Ryley Parker.

The team's tight-knit dynamic has made for a memorable season. "Especially this year, we're super close. It's kind of like we're all best friends," said senior Ellie Clements, one of the team's goalies. "The way that we are together [has been] one of the best experiences of my life."

Team spirit is a driving force for the team. This fall, the team established a new tradition of player recognition. Following each game, Coach Perez presents one player with the "Mavvy Award" during the post-game huddle. This award is presented to the athlete who made the most impactful contributions during the game.

Although forwards are typically recognized for their essential

"You have to be a full field team player."

- Coach Perez



Coach Perez and the team pose with their trophy.

PHOTO: DSF FIELD HOCKEY

As of the end of September 2022, the Mavvy Award recipients have been: sophomore Sarah Chilton, juniors Mackenzie Fellows, Eleanor Tongel, Tayloe Tweardy, and Celia Acey,

and seniors Emily Carver, Ellie Clements, Ann Collier Ferguson and Margaret Sherdardson.

According to the team, the Mavvy Award is a bright spot after every game, but especially follow-

ing tough losses. "This award definitely gives us something to look forward to and it helps us support each other after every game. Even if we lose, someone will still win the Ma-

vy," said junior Tayloe Tweardy.

The Mavvy highlights individual contributions and helps athletes reflect on their performance, regardless of the final score. "The first time I won it was after a hard loss in overtime," said Ellie. "It did kind of help me overcome that loss and separate my skills from the loss. It let me know that I still did a great job and contributed to this team, even though we did end up losing."

By celebrating model players, the Mavvy award demonstrates the importance of dedication to the game. "It's just an extra way to show my appreciation for them working hard," said Coach Perez.

The field hockey program feels like family for the team, but notably for the head coach as well. Aside from coaching varsity field hockey here at Freeman, Coach Perez is a faculty member at Tuckahoe Middle School. "I call them my children all the time because I started teaching the majority of them in sixth grade at Tuckahoe. I watched them go from these little 11 year olds sitting in class, to turning 18 and driving," said Coach Perez. "I just think that [it's] a really, really awesome aspect to [get] to see them through the most influential parts of their life."

scoring contributions, the Mavvy Award is also given to other positions, like midfielders and defenders, whose contributions are less apparent in the team stats. "I think it makes them realize it's not just about scoring goals and it's not just about saving goals," said Coach Perez. "You have to be a full field team player."

Acting as an incentive, the award motivates the players to perform at their highest level. "It pushes everyone to have their best game," said Ann Ryley.

Although some might expect the award to create competition between teammates, it actually fuels their camaraderie. "I feel like the Mavvy Award kind of brings everyone together to play their best and then whoever makes a larger impact [is] put in the spotlight," said Ellie. "[This] allows the teammates to celebrate their victories while also celebrating the team victory."



Rage and Joy Over a Fictional Fish

Jazmyn Howell

Community and A&E Editor

At the D23 convention, Disney released the upcoming live-action “The Little Mermaid” trailer starring Halle Bailey, an African-American actress, as Ariel. This casting decision caused controversial hashtags and slogans like ‘NotmyAriel’ and ‘Make Ariel white again’ to trend for days after its release while the trailer racked up over twenty-three million views on Youtube.

Many opponents of Disney’s decision emphasized the differences between Bailey and the original look of the character in the 1989 animated classic. “It’s going to be a different kind of girl,” said senior Adriana James, the vice president of Freeman’s Black Student Union (BSU) and captain of the Step Team. “She’s going to be brown-skinned. She’s going to have dreadlocks.”

While the public has known about Bailey playing Ariel since the summer of 2019, this news continues to trigger debates on representation in the entertainment industry. Users on Twitter have said their displeasure is with her hair, which is set to be dark red dreadlocks instead of the original, where Ariel had straight, vibrant red hair. “It wasn’t just choosing a woman who was black for me,” said biology and chemistry teacher Mrs. Boz. “It was [about] choosing a woman who proudly wore her ethnic hair.” The argument against Bailey’s hair type is also seen as illogical by supporters. “She’s not going to have a perm underwater,” said Adriana, “[And] say-

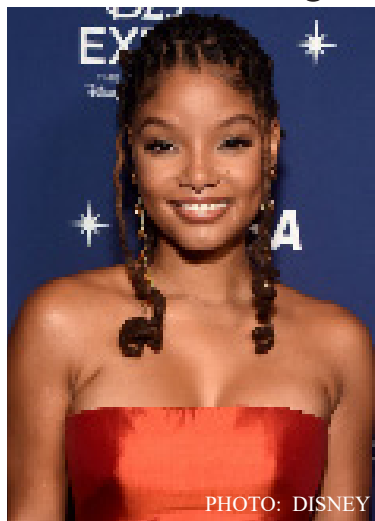


PHOTO: DISNEY

ing that her hair isn’t red enough is just grasping for straws.”

Others pointed out the controversy was amplified because of Bailey’s starring role, clapping back at critics by making statements such as ‘If Ursula were black, critics wouldn’t care’. Throughout the history of the entertainment industry, African-Americans have been portrayed as villains or have been heavily influenced by stereotypes like the ‘black best friend’—or had no presence at all. “The Help”, a 2011 film about racial tensions in 1960s southern society, has faced criticism recently as viewers noticed the only purpose of black characters was to push white counterparts forward, even though the story was intended to be centered on a group of African-American women.

While Disney’s attempt to increase representation in a classic fairytale may be seen as controversial or pandering, many are excited for the opportunity to see themselves on screen. “Making [positive main characters] African-American really shows



how our society has grown as a whole,” said junior Nevaeh Jones.

After the eruption on Twitter, many parents and guardians started posting their young African-American girls reacting to the trailer, showing the decision’s positive impact. “Not only was I excited because she was black, but she has locs and I have daughters who have locs,” said Mrs. Boz.

These videos caused many people to see the impact a more diverse representation of a fictional character could have. “It made me happy to see how ecstatic everyone was to finally get the representation they deserve,” said junior Natalie Schweickert.

Multiple reasons are being brought up about why people are angry about Halle’s role but many fail to realize Disney’s intentions for the remake. “They just wanted to show diversity in a way where people could see themselves [in] a main character role,” said Adriana. “If grown adults are mad about little things in a children’s movie ... it goes to show how ignorant people can be to certain situations and certain stereotypes.”

Surprisingly, this isn’t the only

African-American actress set to play a traditionally white character. In the summer of 2020, it was announced that Yara Shahidi is set to play Tinkerbell in the new live-action Peter Pan. “There’s already a white tinkerbell and now there’s going to be a black one. It’s giving more representation to a different group of people,” said junior Camille Rivers.

Tinkerbell’s casting decision did not entirely cause the same stir and many would wonder why. One theory is that Tinkerbell falls into African-American stereotypes. Tinkerbell is typically described as stubborn, sassy, and hot-tempered—harmful stereotypes that are generally placed on black women. “I feel people are not as upset about Tinkerbell because she’s a side character,” said Camille. “If [casting directors] made Peter Pan black you know how mad [critics] would be?”

However, these two movies are not the first to feature African-American actresses stepping into the role of traditionally white princesses. In 1997, Brandy Norwood starred in a live-action version of “Cinderella”. The movie had im-

mense success: initially collecting 60 million views, it sold 1 million home entertainment units in the first week alone. It was named the most-watched television musical in decades, giving ABC its highest Sunday-night viewership rating in over 10 years. However, this adaptation also faced brutal attacks from critics. “Some people are just really limited in their mindset and [are] very ignorant,” said Mrs. Boz. “I was just excited to see a black Cinderella and to see a multiracial movie with no limits.”

While these actresses have faced relentless criticism, many have raised questions about the double standard for white actors playing traditionally African-American roles. “When you look at mainstream actors, they’re predominantly white [obviously because] we live in America,” said Adriana. “You’re [gonna] always have that.”

On top of this controversy, Disney also announced a new princess at the D23 Convention, Asha, the first Afro-Latina princess in Disney history. There’s not a lot of information currently available about the plot of the movie. However, Disney will return to its tradition of 2D design for the film. “I want to see where they’re going to take it,” said Adriana “[It should be about] the diversity within her personality, within her character, [and] within her background.”

Even though many are upset with these roles and feel Disney is trying to ‘please’ a specific audience, many also feel it’s finally opening new doors. “We have prejudices and biases and those things come out,” said Mrs. Boz. “When something makes us uncomfortable, instead of us just saying ‘I’m uncomfortable,’ we don’t explore that.”

Whether you’re angry or ecstatic about these new movies, they are still set to premiere throughout 2023.

My Review

During the lead-up to the album, I watched every development with bated breath. Every single time a new piece of information came out, I became excited for Oct. 21 all over again.

To absolutely nobody’s surprise, I had to listen to the entire album on the day that it came out. Literally, I woke up and the very first thing that I did was open up Spotify to listen to the album in its entirety. Overall, I found this album to be both an exciting listen and a bold step in a new direction. When compared to Swift’s other works, I think that it is just as good as everything else which, needless to say, I found phenomenal.

Regarding the songs, I found myself most enjoying “Karma” and “Anti-Hero”, these are the songs that I think most resemble 2014’s “1989” and 2017’s “reputation”—two of my favorite albums of all time. The song that took me the most by surprise was “Snow On The Beach” which features Lana Del Rey. This is the first time these two artists collaborated on a song and I thought that their voices sounded beautiful together and made the song sound unlike anything else that I have heard which I thought fit really well within the album concept.

I also found this album release in particular to be extra exciting as this is her first brand-new album since 2019’s “Lover” to follow the full promo and release cycle. As both “folklore” and “evermore” in 2020 were surprise releases and announced with little to no warning, having a brand-new album to get excited about over a month in advance was a super fun experience.

Artist of the Month



PHOTO: ZEYNA M'BENGUE

Jazmyn Howell

Community and A&E Editor

Junior Zeyna M'bengue has become one of the most well-known names at Freeman because of her photography.

Zeyna started her photography Instagram account (@_Zeyna-Photography) in 2019. Since then, she has amassed over 400 followers. “I needed my camera after school, and I was in my leadership class,” said Zeyna. “[My friends] wanted a picture, so it started there and grew into [way] more.”

Even though people have started to recognize Zeyna’s talent recently, she has been taking photos since middle school. Zeyna’s passion for photography started four years ago on a family vacation. “I was taking pictures on my tiny little iPhone 5, and my mom said they were really good,” said Zeyna. “For my 13th birthday, my whole family poured money together to get me my first camera.”

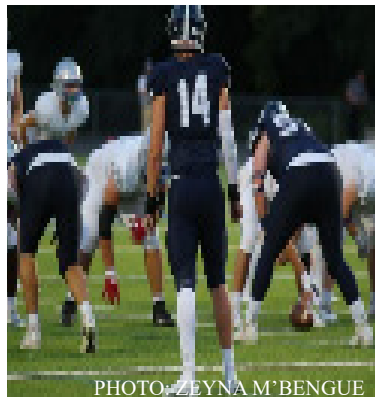


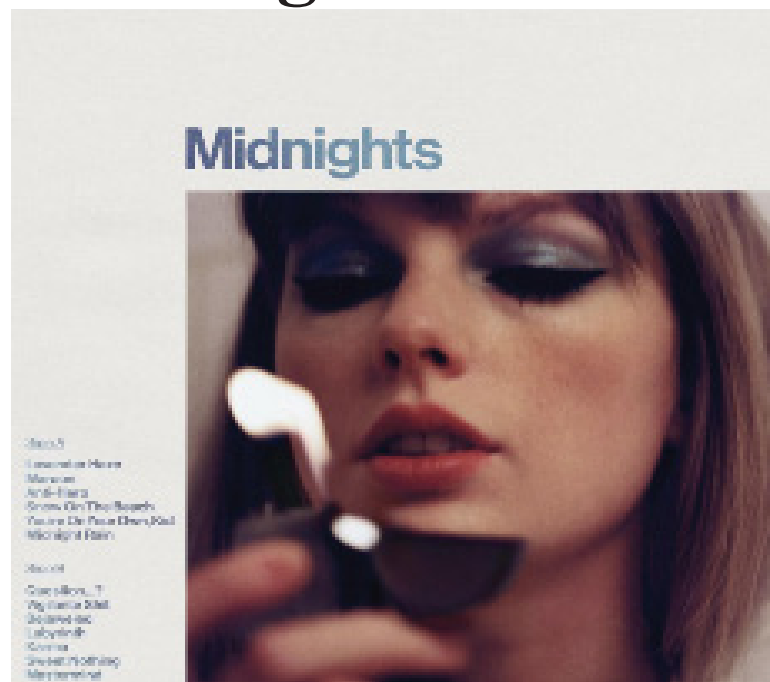
PHOTO: ZEYNA M'BENGUE

Although she’s been photographing Freeman’s student life since her sophomore year, this year has shown a spike in her admiration—a result of her documenting the Class of 2023. “Our Secretary, Adair Reid, is heading the project of a Senior Video to highlight the countless events we are involved in as seniors,” said Class of 2023 president Grayson Archibeque. “She gave me the idea to choose Zeyna as our class photographer, and after I saw her photos and spoke with her, I knew she would be the best fit!”

Zeyna expressed the inspiration for her work was Glen Allen’s former photographer Kait Bucci. “She did a fantastic job with their athletics page,” said Zeyna. “She’s also a huge inspiration for all school photographers and media in general.”

Zeyna hopes to explore new aspects of photography later down the road. “I do want to work more politically,” said Zeyna. “I’ve thought about doing photojournalism.”

“Midnights” Review



Morgan Strudgeon
Editor-in-Chief

I, like most people at Freeman who keep up with everything that Taylor Swift does, woke up on the first day of school and got really excited. Was I stoked for the first day of school? A little bit. But I was mostly surprised by Taylor Swift’s announcement of “Midnights” that had come out overnight.

In the middle of her acceptance speech for Video of the Year speech at this year’s MTV Video Music Awards, Taylor Swift announced that on Oct. 21 she would be releasing a new album entitled “Midnights”. When the album concept was announced, the singer said that the songs on this album came from “the stories of 13 sleepless nights scattered throughout [her] life.”

This is the first time in almost two years that Swift has released a brand new album, as her past two record-breaking albums were both re-recordings of “Fearless” and “RED”. Because of this, the album is expected to be a huge release within the music industry.

With multiple special editions being released for pre-order within a week of the

initial announcement and the fact that the album earned more than 100,000 pre-orders in the first 24-hours alone, this album is projected to potentially put Swift into the history books once more.

According to the Billboard, if “Midnights” reaches the No. 1 spot on the Billboard 200—which Swift has already proven herself more than capable of doing, with ten albums that have already topped the chart—Taylor Swift would enter into a tie for both the most No. 1 albums by a female artist and third place for the most albums to top the chart since it was founded.

From the moment the album was announced, Swifties knew that this album would likely be a step in a new direction for the singer, yet still sentimental regarding her past eras and the rest of her discography.

Even though the announcement was unprecedented, Swift made sure that the promotion surrounding the album allowed for “Midnights” to remain front-and-center in the minds of fans. In the weeks leading up to the release of the album, the singer took to social media and began releasing song titles, one by one by picking numbers off of lottery balls.

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Richmond Monuments go to L.A.



PHOTO: ZEYNA M'BENGUE

Afton Hessian
Staff Writer

The Monument Avenue monuments are getting a new view: Los Angeles. In the fall of 2023, four Confederate monuments previously located in Richmond will be featured in an exhibit in the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles (MOCA). The exhibit, titled "Monuments," will display Williams Carter Wickham, Matthew Maury, Joseph Bryan, and most notably, former president of the Confederacy Jefferson Davis. The monuments in Richmond have had a contentious past, ultimately leading to 73 Confederate monuments being taken down since 2020. This has received mixed reactions, from people relieved symbols of the Confederacy are no longer seen on their drive into the city, to others feeling as though history is being erased. The hope for the exhibit is to create conversations about the fallout of the Civil War in areas not as directly impacted as Richmond is. "We live in Richmond, ground zero for a lot of the things related to the Civil War," said Monroe Harris, chair of the Richmond Black History Museum and Cultural Center of Virginia. "But in other regions of the country, their exposure and understanding of it is somewhat limited." LAXART, an independent and nonprofit art space, purchased the statue of Confederate War General Thomas Jackson after it was taken down in 2020. The monuments being taken down was unexpected for many Richmond citi-

zens. Mr. Lewis, a social studies teacher at Freeman, was among those surprised to see the monuments taken down. "I did not think they would [be taken down] in my lifetime," he said. "[It] just didn't seem to be such a fringe idea."

"It was significant to watch it unfold in order to see that the people's voices were being heard. [That] alone was a historical moment," said senior Cooper Hamilton, a Member of Young Republicans.

Despite the monuments being a topic of controversy, many who grew up in the South had grown accustomed to the monuments. "It was not shocking [to see the monuments]. It was kind of just part of the landscape," said Mr. Lewis.

Cooper Hamilton shared a similar sentiment. "It was never shocking [to see the monuments] ... Richmond was the capital of the Confederacy and I have grown up passing them," he said.

Senior Jasanti Rainey, a member of Freeman's Black Student Union, said "it was never shocking, but based on the significance of the monuments, I feel something because of what the monuments mean to some people."

Once the monuments were taken down, some of the prominent ones were given to the Black History Museum and Cultural Center of Virginia (BHMVA). The BHMVA allowed LAXART to use some of the monuments for the exhibit. In an interview for the Richmond Times-Dispatch, Hamza Walker, a curator for "Monuments," said "we cannot overstate the importance of having Richmond on board with this exhibition ... having Richmond on board is seminal." Though the BHMVA is work-

ing with LAXART, some feel that more is needed to make the exhibit beneficial. "I would hope that they contextualize it to some extent," said Mr. Lewis. "Hopefully, if it's presented correctly, it will [be valuable]."

With the old monuments gone, there have been conversations about possible replacements. "We have a long list of historical figures from Richmond that had a positive impact on everyone—someone like that should replace them," said Cooper.

Similarly, Jasanti said "I would probably put different races in the monuments because other races have had significance in history, it's not just white [people]."

Following the exhibit, the four Richmond monuments will be given back to the BHMVA.



PHOTO: ZEYNA M'BENGUE

Behind the Scenes of Maverick Media



PHOTO: GLORY ATRA

Lizzie Herod
Staff Writer

"Good morning Mavericks!"

A familiar phrase we hear every morning from the Maverick Media team. The Freeman morning announcements have grown over the years, and the students behind the broadcast continue to make an impact in the school community. Maverick Media informs the students and staff on what events happen in and out of Freeman, from club meetings to daily national holidays.

The headteacher of Maverick Media, Ms. Buchbinder, was new to DSF last year. "Ms. Buchbinder helps out a lot," said junior Blessing Atra, who is a part of Maverick Media. "Whenever we have a camera that breaks or the sound doesn't work, she's there to fix it."

The morning announcement name was originally "WDSF" (W Douglas Southall Freeman.) "Since we were finally all back in the classroom and starting kinda fresh, everything was a new concept," said Ms. Buchbinder. She wanted some changes, so she "thought it would be fun for [the] video media class to rebrand the news station," she said. "I asked the class, and one of the students came up with 'Maverick Media.'" During COVID-19, Maverick Media faced many hardships, but they're back now with more students participating in the class than ever before.

Out of all the new goals for Maverick Media this year, one of them is to influence students to join all

types of diverse activities, clubs, and sports, while also providing an enjoyable start of the day. "I want Maverick Media to be more lighthearted and fun where people can watch and laugh," said Blessing.

As a result, Maverick Media has taken out some of the less necessary aspects of the morning announcement, including the weather report. "Everybody can see the weather when they get up," said Ms. Buchbinder.

The Maverick Media team does plenty of behind-the-scenes work to broadcast every morning, with each person having a specific role. In the 60-minute period "[there's someone] in charge of operating the camera, using [a] teleprompter, writing the script, running the OBS machine, and making sure everyone sounds good," said Blessing.

Maverick Media switches out the broadcasters every couple of days so the audience gets to see different faces. Still, some broadcasters love the camera. "Billy and my twin sister, Glory, always love broadcasting," said Blessing.

In addition to making broadcasts every morning, Maverick Media students help other extracurriculars within Freeman. "We help out with the yearbook," said Blessing. "We take pictures and send them to Ms. Buchbinder, who then sends them to the [yearbook]."

Maverick Media also combines the photos they take and makes videos for the introduction. "The video is very entertaining and I love seeing what other students are doing around school," said junior Olivia Branson.

Review: Blue Cow's New Location



PHOTO: BLUE COW CO.

Merrick Mock
Staff Writer

Filling a vacancy at the Village Shopping Center, the West End welcomes Blue Cow Ice Cream. The already popular area has been packed since the store's opening on Aug. 19, 2022. During its mid-August opening, Blue Cow offered free ice cream, encouraging many to return due to the friendly employees and the bizarre ice cream flavors. Many local high school and college students saw the perfect job opportunity and applied to scoop ice cream. Blue Cow offers a variety of flavors, from boring vanilla to outgoing goat cheese with a blueberry swirl. "The most popular flavor is most definitely sea salt brickle with a caramel swirl," said Hayden Schwartz, a senior at Freeman and employee at Blue Cow. These new, outgoing mixtures of flavors have customers flocking to Blue Cow. After tasting every flavor in the shop, Key lime pie and Blue Cow Patty were hands down the best. The Key lime pie is a Key lime-based ice cream with little pieces of graham cracker, which adds an unexpected, but delightful crunch. Blue Cow Patty has a chocolate ice cream base and includes Oreos and Butterfingers. This ice cream tasted like every kid's dream and every parent's

nightmare but it did not disappoint.

The most peculiar flavor was most definitely the goat cheese ice cream with a blueberry swirl. Although it sounded strange, it tasted like blueberry cheesecake, which was a pleasant surprise. Another wacky flavor was the carrot cake, which contained roasted carrots and salted pecans. The carrot cake was the worst one I tasted. After taking a bite of the ice cream, I got an unpleasant chunk of a roasted carrot. The carrots overpowered the rest of the ice cream's flavor and left an unpleasant taste.

Coming fresh daily from Roanoke, Virginia, Blue Cow ice cream is locally sourced. "What makes Blue Cow unique from other ice cream shops is that it has a fresh taste because it is so local," said Talayah Anderson, a Virginia Commonwealth University student and Blue Cow employee. Although this ice cream is on the pricier side, customers are paying for locally sourced and higher-quality ice cream.

One critique I have is the portion size. Even though the ice cream is locally sourced, the prices are still a little outrageous. I ordered a regular size for \$4.75 and only received one scoop.

The workers themselves seem to be passionate and kind people. After walking into the shop, each worker greeted me with a warm welcome. The employees are happy to serve

you, which is an essential quality to have in such a social job.

I asked customers around the store what their favorite flavors were, and the most popular answers I got were cookies and cream, Campfire S'mores, and Key lime pie. Each individual seemed satisfied with their ice cream and service, which contributes to the positive atmosphere of the shop.

Something that stood out to me was that each employee I interviewed said the most common customers they had were elderly people. This was interesting because I would expect it to be younger kids. However, getting ice cream from a local shop makes a perfect date for old-timers.

Blue Cow reminds me a lot of Gelati Celesti as they both have delicious, pricey ice cream in common. These types of stores are always the most convenient after eating dinner out and wanting a sweet treat. However, if you're the type of person to want ice cream every night, I would suggest just buying a tub of ice cream to save your bank account.

I recommend Blue Cow to anyone with a sweet tooth. Blue Cow's promise is to 'serve up smiles, one hand-crafted scoop at a time,' which they certainly accomplish. I left the shop satisfied and I encourage people of any age to go and try Blue Cow Ice Cream!



PHOTO: BLUE COW CO.

BLUE COW Ice Cream Ranking

- Key Lime Pie- 9/10
- Blue Cow Patty 10/10
- Banana Pudding 8/10
- Sea Salt Brickle with Caramel Swirl 9/10
- Pumpkin- 8/10
- Carrot Cake- 2/10
- Non-Dairy Rocky Road- 3/10
- Red Rooster Coffee with Chocolate Chip- 4/10
- Triple Berry Crisp- 4/10
- S'mores- 2/10



Graphic credits: Iazmyn Howe