



College Board Will Introduce Changes to SAT

Clayton Leep
Sports Editor

According to Kevin Steele, school counselor, 20 years ago, no school in Virginia would accept an ACT score on an undergraduate application, but today the SAT has revamped its test solely to catch up with the popularity of the ACT.

After years of decreasing popularity, The College Board has decided to make some changes to the SAT. On March 5, 2016 the SAT will unveil a new test to high school students attempting to gain admission to college.

The SAT will feature seven changes when it debuts in March.

First, the test will have no penalty for wrong answers. Mimicking the ACT, wrong answers will not be counted against students allowing for more guesswork.

Second, the College Board has partnered with Khan Academy to provide free test prep to all students through the Khan Academy website.

Another change comes in the writing section. On the new SAT, the writing portion will be optional. This also aligns with ACT parameters.

The fourth change comes in the reading section of the test. Questions in this section will be based upon evidence found in passages. Students will have to look at what is there instead of what is implied.

The fifth change has made many students happy. The new SAT will not test students on



Sophomore Lindsay Chambers stresses over an upcoming SAT test.

unusual words, but students will be required to use context clues to obtain the meanings of words given. For many students this will eliminate hours of memorizing peculiar vocab words.

"I'm so glad I won't have to spend hours on end memorizing complicated vocab words. It's going to be a big relief when I walk in to the test in March," said junior Taylor Dip.

The reading section has another major change in its use of graphs and charts. Seen infrequently on the old SAT, visual models like graphs and charts will be essential tools in the test taking process of the new SAT.

The seventh and final change to the SAT comes in the reading section. The revamped test

will utilize passages from history and great texts. This will allow for students to be tested on what they may be learning in school at the time.

However, with such monumental changes the question must be asked: why exactly?

Over the past two years, the SAT has been declining in America. One of the main reasons for this can be explained in three words: location, location, location.

According to Mr. Steele, the ACT, based out of Iowa City, Iowa, has completely taken over the Midwest and surrounding states. For example in Colorado last year, 100 percent of students took the ACT while only 20 percent of students took the SAT. Western states have chosen their

preference, and it did not include the SAT.

The SAT is based out of Princeton, New Jersey, making the SAT popular among students residing in the East Coast. However, in recent years the ACT has seen increasing popularity that threatened the SAT enough to make it change entirely.

The ACT is an achievement test. Much like public high schools around the country, the ACT tests students on their ability to remember what they have learned. It is a straightforward assessment on what the student has learned.

On the other hand the SAT is an aptitude test. Students must be able to use their knowledge progressively to answer the ques-

tions in front of them.

"ACT is like A + B + C. The SAT is A+B+C divided by D multiplied by F all over the square root of G. If any of those steps are wrong the answer is wrong," said Mr. Kevin Steele.

Mr. Steele, who knows his way around the new SAT, realizes many people are not used to the type of test taking on the SAT. Kids today are more adept and practiced at straightforward test taking where they use what they have learned in school. Modern students prefer an achievement test much like the ACT.

This is one of the central reasons why the SAT has lost popularity and been forced to reform.

"The SAT is a dinosaur. It has got to change its game to compete with young students we have today" said Mr. Steele.

Mr. Steele said that many colleges will not even look at old SAT scores, so it is best to wait and take the new SAT if you are a junior or sophomore.

"I am telling both of my boys to wait to take the SAT until March or April. The old SAT won't mean anything by the time they apply to colleges" said biology teacher Rachel Keller.

With the SAT revamping its setup students will have to learn new and improved ways to prepare for such an important test.

No one knows if the new test will be harder, easier, or about the same, so, as students look to score higher test scores to back up a variety of extracurricular activities, GPAs, and essays, the new SAT will give students a n opportunity to prove themselves to colleges.

Active-Duty Alumnus Inspires Supply Drive

Anna Lyle Collett
Staff Writer

Teachers and parents were shocked when the large inflow of supplies caused half of the boxes to be packed up almost a month early for the military supply drive.

The supply drive was started at the end of October in order to aid a Freeman Rebel who is currently fighting in Iraq, with 1,200 other troops.

Beth Chapman, Major Stuart Chapman's mother, is a founding member of the Richmond chapter of the Blue Star Mothers of America Inc. This organization is a place for mothers with children serving, or who have served come together to support each other.

"We started in the spring of 2007. I was pretty numb from not hearing from him. It was a heavy combat time in Iraq. I didn't know any other mothers going through this," Mrs. Chapman said.

Through Blue Star, Mrs. Chapman, with the help of Mrs. Lissy Campbell, an ELL teacher at Freeman, has started a supply drive to benefit Major Chapman's troops.

"The Blue Star Mothers of America is a national organization, and we have a chapter here in Richmond, so we are very close friends with several other mothers who have children serving," Mrs. Campbell said.

Around the time of Halloween, Mrs. Chapman contacted Mrs. Campbell asking for the help of the Freeman family.

Mrs. Campbell then contacted business teacher Mrs. Sabrina Rabon.

"Mrs. Campbell reached out to me through her email from Mrs. Chapman who was in need of help for her son, and troops,"



Sophomore Camden Lazar brings supplies to Mrs. Rabon.

Mrs. Rabon said.

The supply drive began around Halloween, and was scheduled to end on November 20, 2015. However, before the end of the drive, Blue Star had to send out 20 boxes in a variety of sizes that the Freeman students donated.

"Last week on Friday the fourth, with the influx of supplies, we had to start packing boxes," Mrs. Rabon said.

The supplies have to go through Blue Star because the organization has a warehouse where they deal with the customs forms and sizing regulations. The organization also takes all the boxes to the post office and pays for the boxes' shipping fees.

Blue Star Mothers will usually send their donated supplies to the men and women fighting in dangerous, combat areas like Africa, Afghanistan, and Iraq. Any extra supplies will be sent to the Fisher House, a place where families of veterans with low incomes and homeless statuses are distributed items to help them get off the street, and to the Veterans Affairs (VA) office.

The Freeman students surprised the community with their generosity towards the troops. Sophomore Camden Lazar got involved in the supply drive through his teacher, Mrs. Rabon.

"I felt like the military needed some help and I wanted to see what I could do to make it better," Camden said.

Since 1999 when Major Stuart Chapman, United States Army soldier, left the Freeman family, he has been all over the world.

First he attended Sewanee: The University of the South, and majored in modern European history and economics. In March 2004, soon after graduating from Sewanee, Chapman was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the United States Army.

Over the course of his time in the army, he has been deployed four times to places such as: Baghdad, Iraq, the Afghanistan border, and Jalalabad, Afghanistan. His deployments have ranged anywhere from 10 to 15 months, depending on his station.

Chapman is currently in his

fourth deployment in Baghdad, and is scheduled to return home in March of 2016. In Iraq, Major Chapman works as an officer with his 1,200 troops in the Tenth Mountain Division.

As a result of limited contact, Major Chapman is not currently aware that the supplies are on their way to his troops. The hope is that that the troops will feel some of the comforts of home.

"Stuart said they rarely get razors, even though they are mandated to shave every day. White socks are also much appreciated since they don't have easy access to laundry, and food. Stuart has been in some awful, awful places, and he has never complained about food, but he has now," Mrs. Chapman said.

Even though Mrs. Chapman has not talked to her son since Aug. 17, she knows he will greatly appreciate the supplies from the Freeman students.

"He loved Freeman. Some of his best friends from high school were in the Leadership Center. Freeman has a strong history of people going into the military. It has done a lot for the military and the country. It's a real stronghold of military graduates," Mrs. Chapman said.

The overall goal of the military supply drive was to aid the men and women serving our country while they are in combat, risking their lives for us.

"We need to help our own. They are sacrificing their lives daily for us," Mrs. Rabon said.

Freeman's commitment, thanks to the generosity of the student body, with the help of Blue Star Mothers came together to ensure that a Freeman Rebel and his troops will live more comfortably while serving in active duty.

"It makes me choke up, the response was so great. People don't know we still have people in Iraq, but the response was just so great," Mrs. Chapman said.

Henrico Christmas Mother Can Drive

Number of cans collected: about 14,000

Last year: 18,500

Top 5 Winners:

1. Faglioni
2. Peck
3. Lombard
4. Curry
5. Meador

201 books collected by the DSF Library

Dollars raised:

\$1,500 (mostly from the hard work of the SCA)

Last year: \$2,000

"They had to give us a truck with boxes ahead of time because they knew to expect so many from Freeman" - Mrs. Reilly

Hard Work Pays off for the Rebel Brigade

Freeman Marching Band Continues Excellence at Regional and State Levels

Max Slone
Staff Writer

During the month of August, while most students were still enjoying their summer, the Rebel Brigade spent more than half the month preparing for competitions that would bring home many awards. It all started at Band Camp in August for two and half weeks from 8 am-5 pm each day, and once the school year started they practiced three mornings a week from 7-8:20 am.

"We spent the entire month of August learning and practicing. Band camp is about two and a half weeks from 8 am - 5 pm getting the show done and ready. Once school starts, we practice three mornings a week from 7-8:20 am," said Rob Blankenship, band director.

There are multiple steps and people that are involved with creating the music for the performances.

"We have a drill writer. His name is Matt Hartwell, and he lives in California. He writes the drill for us. I arrange the music, and then we have a percussionist who writes," said Mr. Blankenship.

The Rebel Brigade travelled to different places around the state for competitions.

"We had three competitions and then our state assessment. The first one was at Hermitage and we got third place overall in that one. The second one was at Bluestone and that one we won champion. At Powhatan we



PHOTO: ROBERT BLANKENSHIP

Rebel Brigade performing in the bleachers at a football game.

were second place. At the State Assessment we got a superior rating," said Mr. Blankenship.

The Rebel Brigade receives trophies for good performances but they also receive ratings.

"We get ratings and trophies. The ratings go from superior, excellent, good, fair, and poor. We got superior in all four competitions," said Mr. Blankenship.

Normally, the band only does three or four competitions a year and this year the majority of them were in October.

"This year we did three plus the assessment, it was pretty much the whole month of October," said Mr. Blankenship.

Junior Nathan Grounds enjoys the competitions but realizes the

goal is to win.

"It was pretty hype, there were a lot of bands there. We just wanted to go out there and win," said Nathan.

While the competitions may be fun, they can also be stressful according to Nathan.

"The most stressful part is going out there on the field and playing in front of everybody. There is a lot of competition out there and you want to try your best," said Nathan.

For Junior Michael Russell, competitions provide a unique experience.

"The drive is a normal drive, it varies from 40-45 minutes. Depending on the weather, if it is really cold we get in uniform

but we are usually in our overalls. Once we get there we get our hand stamped for admission. After that, we watch other bands, usually the lower bands like the 2A and 3A bands then we watch the 2, 3, and 4 bands. And then we go off and do our warm-ups for our performance. It's a really fun experience because we just sit around and eat food," said Michael.

Some competitions are nearly twice the size of others according to Michael.

"When went to Bluestone, I think there were only like seven or eight bands. At bigger competitions like Hermitage and Powhatan there were like 13 or 14," said Michael.

Michael, just like Nathan finds the competitions can be nerve-racking.

"The most stressful part is waiting right before we go on because usually we have to wait behind the gate while the band is performing because usually it is one after another without any break in between. We are usually just waiting there and it's really nerve-racking and think that we have to do well," said Michael.

The band played a variety of songs from movies at their various competitions.

"We played the Star Trek theme from Close Encounters. The second song was Across the Stars from the new Star Wars trilogy, it was Princess Amidala romance theme. The third song was a compilation of E.T.," said Michael.

Typically, the band will get a tape of their performance and review what happened the day after the competition.

"We get the recording of our show and we usually watch that the next school day. We usually get our sound from it and our marching," said Michael.

Mr. Blankenship is a very supportive director.

"I just want them to all work hard. If they are struggling but still working hard that's great. I just want all them to show up and do what they're supposed to do and that makes me happy. I don't care what there score is, what place they get, I just want them to work hard and contribute," said Mr. Blankenship.

Teacher Interns Read for a Record



PHOTO: HEATHER MCMUNN

Junior Claire Keeton and senior Rebecca Webb read to students.

For the first three marking periods of their junior year, students taking the Teachers for Tomorrow class learn about child psychology, the types of learners, how to create a lesson plan, and other essential knowledge about teaching.

For the last marking period of their junior year and for all of their senior year, students get to go to an elementary school that feeds to Freeman and work as a teaching assistant.

"It's important for the students to have a hands-on learning experience of what it's like to be a teacher. If you think you want to be a teacher, this is a fantastic class to further your interest," said Ms. McMunn.

However, taking Teachers for Tomorrow helps students with more than just becoming a teacher. It can also help students with public speaking, organization, and working well in groups.

"You learn a lot about kids and other people that is helpful, even if you don't want to be teacher. You learn a lot more than just being a teacher," said Ana.

"The class gives me better ways to identify how to teach people in different ways," Nick said.

Nick also said he wants to work with Outward Bound when he gets older.

"Being in the class definitely helps with public speaking because we have to speak in front of our class a lot," said Sama.

"It also makes me be more organized and procrastinate less because we have to make lesson plans and stay on top of things," said Sama.

No matter whether they want to become a teacher or not, Teachers for Tomorrow students agree that the experiences they have gained from interning and from Read for the Record are invaluable.

"One of the coolest things is when a kid has a simple question and you help him out. The look on their face when they figure something out is amazing," said Ana.

"When a kid in elementary school finally gets an idea they've been working hard to understand, they get really excited. That doesn't happen in high school. But in elementary school they get so excited and you just want to hug them. That's basically why I joined; to make kids enjoy learning," said Harper.

"It's a book about a little boy that gets a pet goldfish named Norman, and he's disappointed because it does not meet his expectations. But by the end of the book he loves Norman," said Ms. McMunn.

"The kids were really excited when we read to them. Their eyes lit up when we came in, which was fun to see," said junior Sama Crouch.

After reading the story, the teachers-in-training had the elementary school children complete a coloring activity where they drew their ideal pet.

"It was so funny to watch the kids draw their pets because some of them drew dragons and unicorns and one girl even drew her sister and said she was her pet. It was one of the funniest things I've ever seen," said junior Nick Humble.

Many students sign up for Teachers for Tomorrow because they love to work with young children.

"I have wanted to be a kindergarten teacher since I was in kindergarten and had Mrs. Archer at Tuckahoe Elementary," said Harper.

"I've always wanted to be a teacher. My older sister did Teachers for Tomorrow too and she's in college studying teaching. My mom is also a Spanish teacher at Fox Elementary. I guess it's just in the family," said senior Ana Myrtetus.

Jack Neary
Staff Writer

Some full-time students are also part-time teachers. The members of the Teachers for Tomorrow classes are not only responsible for their duties as a student, but also their duties as prospective teachers.

On Oct. 22, the Teachers for Tomorrow classes visited Crestview and Three Chopt Elementary schools to read to 208 children from kindergarten through second grade.

They were participating in Read for the Record, a global event to promote childhood literacy, which was organized by Jumpstart.

"Jumpstart is a federally funded program that helps bring education to places that might not have many resources, areas with high poverty," said Heather McMunn, the Teachers for Tomorrow teacher.

"The goal of Read for the Record day was to see how many kids we could read the same book to in a single day," said senior Harper Ward.

The Teachers for Tomorrow classes split into groups of three and read the book *Not Norman: A Goldfish Story*, written by Kelly Bennett and illustrated by Noah Z. Jones, to classrooms of children.

SCA Winter Themed Door Decoration Competition



PHOTO: THOMAS BEST

Mrs. Bargo and Mrs. Thomas won second place in competition.



PHOTO: SAM ANDERSON

Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Carter won first place in competition.



PHOTO: SAM ANDERSON

Senior Logan Miller helped decorate Mr. Zanetti's door.

Christmas Greetings For Non-Christians



Rachel Varon
Opinions Editor

Before most have even recovered from the sugar crash following Halloween, the holiday season is ushered in, complete with Christmas Carols on the radio, over-sized jolly décor in Costco and awkwardness between different faiths.

I recently came across an article written by a fellow Jewish person in the Huffington Post, listing all the things not to say to a Jewish person around Christmas. Essentially the article criticized

how rude and insensitive people were to assume that everyone celebrates Christmas, complained about how annoying people are when they ask questions about Hanukkah, and condemned the commercial retailers for having such a small supply of Hanukkah decorations compared to the abundance of Christmas ones.

I found myself disagreeing with 100 percent of what this person said. I can't imagine something more ridiculous than taking offense at being wished something positive, even if it is misdirected. Should we all also then get offended for being wished a good morning when it is, in fact, the afternoon? Should people be offended when wished good luck if they don't believe in superstition? Likewise, no one should be offended for being wished a Happy Hanukkah, or a Quality Kwanzaa, or anything else meant with good intentions, simply because the greeting doesn't apply to their

situation. A polite correction for the greeting that pertains to your personal holiday is fine, of course, but there is no need for self-righteous indignation.

Now on the subject of the disproportion of Christmas decorations available in stores as opposed to Hanukkah decorations, or Kwanzaa, or Yule, or Bodhi day decorations: The disproportion of the representation in the stores is due to the disproportion of the needs of the customers. 96 percent of Americans celebrate Christmas, which means 96 percent of Americans are buying Christmas paraphernalia. It's purely good economics.

Perhaps what bothered me most about the article was the patronizing tone it used when expressing annoyance with "obvious" questions about Judaism and Hanukkah. There is nothing wrong with curiosity and certainly nothing malicious about unfamiliarity. I will be the first to admit that I don't

understand very much about many different traditions, such as Sikhism or Babism, although I'd like to learn. Likewise, I am happy to explain Jewish customs to anyone who asks, provided the questions are well intentioned and worded politely. For example, there is a difference between, "Why do y'all wear those Jew hats?" and, "What are those covers I see many Jewish people wear on their heads, and what are they for?" (For the record, they are called Keepahs - also known as Yarmulke - and are worn usually by men to cover their heads during prayer)

All this said, I do think there is a certain degree of respect in saying Happy Holidays, when in doubt, instead of assuming Christmas is universally celebrated by those around you. While I don't believe misdirected Christmas salutations are deliberately perverse, they can make a minority feel further isolated.

On a personal level, my family

is a very secular Jewish one, but we love Christmas! If you don't go to church, there really isn't much religious about it. Santa Claus, reindeers, and decorating uprooted trees with tinsel sounds more like a fun time than a holy one to me. So let's keep things jolly this season! Don't read too much into candy canes being handed out at school and keep in mind that December 25th is just another day to some of your peers. However, if you do find yourself in the mood to get up in arms about something this winter season, think about the wealth disparity that becomes increasingly obvious when children wake up to hundreds of gifts or none at all. Or perhaps think about all the wrapping paper and plastic being used once and immediately discarded slowly filling up our landfills every December! There is so much to be upset about, so why don't we choose bigger issues than being politically correct with our greetings.

Parents Cause Parking Lot Problems



Trey Holsten
Sports Editor

Parents ruin everything. From dates, to "yolo," to emojis, parents have their noses too far into the business of our generation.

Now, they are ruining the Freeman parking lot after school. It seems there is an unspoken etiquette about how the parking lot works. Drivers wait line to exit, taking turns filing out of the lot onto Camden Drive. The system works well, and the students respect the process. Parents, however, do not know how to drive through the parking lot. They go before their turn, drive way too fast, and have no regard for the students. Our parking lot has been taken over by aggressive moms hopped up on caffeine, doing anything to get their child to soccer practice on time.

The signs outside the parking lot and on the Freeman website instruct parents picking up students at 4 p.m. to turn in one of the entries and go out the other entry. This process slows everyone down. Parents try to turn in as students are trying to get out. Parents then end up getting stuck waiting for enough people to leave before



PHOTO: MADDY WALDRON

Parents obstruct traffic while picking up their students.

they can enter the parking lot, consequentially causing a traffic jam.

As if their entering wasn't disruptive enough, they are worse when they exit. They cut in front of people and go too fast. You would think teenagers are the irresponsible and reckless ones when driving, but parents are less cautious than their students. I have almost gotten in an accident because when I tried to go my "turn" a soccer mom in a Suburban sped in front without looking. To make it worse, a large part of the parent's negligence is fueled by phone use. I have seen many moms with their nose in their Facebook feed, instead of their eyes on the road.

Another way parents are endangering students is by parking along the grassy area on Camden Drive. This process may be faster, but it's unsafe. Parents pull in quickly, crossing over the exits of the parking lots when people are trying to leave. There are also too many cars, forcing some to block the exits for a longer time, preventing drivers from leaving.

The line of cars on Camden is also a danger to cars going down the street. With cars lined up on both sides, the road becomes too narrow and difficult to maneuver

through. The parents also leave the side without signaling. They pull out into the flow of cars and are sometimes very close to hitting others. Furthermore, parents are endangering kids who walk to meet their parents. These kids must walk through lines of cars and cannot see other cars coming, nor can the cars see them.

I have almost hit kids multiple times while driving. Luckily, I make sure to go very slowly through that area.

All of these problems have simple solutions. Parents could park in the Driver's Ed lot preventing many potential accidents. Students would have to cross Camden, but it would be safe to do so without the cars lined up on the street. Another solution that is perhaps the easiest and most gas efficient is to just ride the bus. There is nothing wrong with riding the bus. Upperclassmen can also give rides. Most student drivers (who have enough space) are nice enough to give rides to whomever needs one. Regardless of which solution parents opt for, things cannot stay as they are. The current process of picking kids up at Freeman is unsafe and inefficient.

NEW YEARS RESOLUTIONS

...WE WISH WE MADE AS FRESHMEN

1. Take elective class grades seriously. (They all end up counting towards your GPA)
2. Participate in Counselor and Teacher Appreciation Weeks. (They do so much for us, and it's always helpful to be on their good side)
3. Spend more time with family.
4. Wait a while before spending hard earned money on trends that may or may not die out quickly #LillyPullitzer #BubbleNecklaces #WhiteNikeSocks
5. Find a boyfriend/girlfriend as early as possible to get a head start on the Cutest Couple senior superlative. (Investigate said significant other to make sure they aren't crazy before committing serious time or money.)
6. Meet up with friends in wholesome places, like Costco. #FreeSamples #BuyinBulk
7. Get perfect attendance to be mentioned at least once in awards ceremonies.
8. Get to know seniors before they leave forever and are only ever seen again awkwardly at Marfin's.
9. Become a hall monitor to up street-cred.
10. Memorize the Constitution so no one can ever abuse my rights. Also for street-cred.

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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 will be published. The Commentator reserves the right not to print a letter.

Is Giving Extra Credit for Charity Fair?



Jack West
Opinions Editor

Every winter the Freeman SCA makes a huge effort to aid our community by encouraging Freeman students to donate thousands of canned goods to the Henrico Christmas Mother. However, many of these donations are motivated by teachers offering extra credit, which often turns motives from charitable to, in effect, buying a grade.

While some teachers and students may argue that the extra credit incentive dramatically increases the number of donations, they are also putting many students at an academic disadvantage. Some students are able to ask their parents for \$100 to spend on cans so that they can pad their grades, but many other

students can't afford to purchase extra cans, or, in some cases, are recipients of cans. And while all for a good cause, this allows students from wealthier families to literally pay for a higher grade. Not only are students able to improve their grade without doing any substantive work in the subject, but this opportunity is only available to some.

Another problem arises with school and class competitions for most cans collected. In these competitions, students often purchase inexpensive foods in an effort to have the greatest quantity, which sacrifices the quality these people desperately need. Items like ramen noodles, which contain little to no nutritional value, are donated because they can be purchased inexpensively and in bulk, rather than items like beans, soups, and stews, which provide legitimate nutritional value.

Many teachers have already come out against giving extra credit in exchange for cans, and some have had great success, while other have not. Mr. Peck has collected more cans than any other teacher for 11 of the past 12 years and has never offered any tangible incentive. Perhaps this is because he exercises mind control over his leadership minions, perhaps not. Despite

his success, the majority of teachers who do not offer extra credit struggle to collect many cans.

Some teachers attempt to reach a compromise between charity and incentive. These teachers only offer extra credit if the class meets a class goal. With this system, students who are not able to afford many cans can still benefit from the extra credit while students who can afford to purchase many cans are able to bring in as many as they can without disadvantaging other students.

This compromise still leaves the question of grade inflation in exchange for donation unanswered. However, I believe that I represent the majority of students when I say that we are never against an extra credit opportunity, and if there is ever an opportunity to earn it while benefitting our community, we will surely take it. If the school as a whole can agree on a strategy to negate the wealth advantage that some students have and make an effort to provide the most nutritious food possible, extra credit for canned food is a great exchange because it benefits both our students and our community.

Dancer Balances Academics and Ballet

Junior Lauren Hevron trains at the Richmond Ballet in hopes of becoming a professional ballerina

Emily Finto
Staff Writer

Junior Lauren Hevron is en pointe this year.

From an aspiring young ballerina to a professional trainee in an elite dance program, Lauren is one of 30 dancers in the Richmond Ballet's Trainee Program.

The program aims to assist student dancers' transition from dancing in a classroom to dancing for a professional company. The Richmond Ballet selects dancers from the company and has an application process for out-of-state dancers, most of whom are out of high school.

Lauren chose to take an early-bird class, AP physics with Mr. Collins, and leave during fourth period to attend her dance classes at 1:30 p.m. For the rest of the day, Lauren pirouettes and pliés through the strenuous classes and rehearsals.

It is often difficult for Lauren to balance her rigorous course load, including four AP classes, with her dance schedule.

"There is a lot of pressure from my AP classes and from dancing with professionals at the ballet. Sometimes, I don't have much energy left to complete my school work or stretch for class, but I try my best," said Lauren.

If the busy schedule wasn't enough, the ballet classes demand immense physical effort from Lauren.

"Ballet is definitely not made up of little girls skipping around in pink tutus. Every muscle needs to be controlled and strong to execute a single move," said Lauren.

A few summers ago, Lauren realized the importance of prop-

er technique when she suffered a minor stress fracture in her foot. Her diligence and care regarding the injury allowed her to resume dancing just a week later.

"Because of that injury I gained a new appreciation for my time in class and rehearsal," she said.

Lauren's interest in ballet was sparked when she was four and her family saw Richmond Ballet's annual production of "The Nutcracker."

"It seemed like a natural progression to register Lauren for classes at the school of Richmond Ballet, especially after her impromptu performance in the aisle during a production of 'Swan Lake,'" said Lauren's mother, Michelle Hevron.

For the past 10 years, Lauren has played a role in "The Nutcracker" and will focus her talents on this year's production to begin on Dec 11. She also hopes to be a part of Richmond Ballet's production of Romeo and Juliet in February of next year.

"Watching Lauren progress through a series of roles in the Richmond Ballet's "The Nutcracker" has been an incredible experience, from her humble beginning as a mouse to her current trainee roles of a snowflake and flower in this year's upcoming performance," said Mrs. Hevron.

Lauren's family supports her in her career and is thankful to the ballet for accepting her into the Trainee Program.

"Having a pre-professional program right here in Richmond has allowed Lauren to finish high school while being able to train and perform with a professional ballet company," said Mrs. Hevron.

In addition to her family, Lauren is surrounded by friends, in and out of dance class, hoping to see her succeed.



PHOTO: HEVRON

Lauren performs an arabesque in her studio at the Richmond Ballet.

"Being at the ballet is like being at home with your family, you never get tired of them," said Deema Meguid, a junior at Tucker High School and fellow Richmond Ballet dancer.

"To do something as beautiful and demanding as this brings us closer. Beyond any doubt, she is an amazing dancer and artist and we are incredibly proud of her at the ballet," said Deema.

Despite her stressful schedule, with the love and support of friends and family, Lauren said she never regrets her decision to devote so much time to ballet.

"I really like performing and the rehearsal process. It's amazing to get to work on the details of each piece," said Lauren. "Once I've completed the two years of the program, I hope to have gained enough professional

experience to maybe get a job with the company."

"Hopefully, Lauren's hard work will eventually lead to an opportunity for her to dance professionally. However, she knows that we will always be there to support her in any path she chooses," said Mrs. Hevron.

Student Archer Hits the Bullseye



PHOTO: TIMME

Luke Timme prepares to shoot at his target on the range at his Archery Club.

Sara Hamilton
Staff Writer

Luke Timme is the Robin Hood of the West End.

Sophomore Luke Timme has been competing in archery for over two years at the Hunt'N'Shak Archery Club in the Tuckahoe Village Shopping Center. Currently in the indoor season, Luke typically practices twice a week in two hour increments.

"We did archery in P.E. and I got really interested in it. I had my parents buy me a bow, and I kept doing it from there," said Luke.

According to Luke, people are typically surprised and impressed when they discover his sport.

"It's not really a common thing," said Luke.

Luke says that the most important skill he has learned from archery is patience.

"You have to be patient and wait to actually get used to doing something before it becomes habit. It takes a long time to actually become good," said Luke.

"When I'm on the range, I feel adrenaline. I get nervous about how I and everyone else is going

to shoot, but that feeling normally wears off into being tired or happy or upset with how I'm shooting and wanting to stay longer to fix it," said Luke.

Luke is always looking to improve.

"He thoroughly enjoys it, and he is willing to work hard at it too. I can tell by the amount of time he puts in to it; he is always wanting to go and shoot," said Richard Timme, Luke's father and Freeman math teacher.

"It never gets boring because no matter what you do, you are most likely never going to get the same result," said Luke.

Mr. Timme said Luke also volunteers with the younger kids at Hunt'N'Shak Archery.

Not only is archery a competitive sport for Luke, but it is also a social engagement.

"I have friends that I have made from shooting there, and they have actually become some of my really good friends," said Luke.

Freshman Julia Pardon and Senior Brian Lepka see Luke both on the range and at school.

"We are a really close-knit group. Within our club [at Hunt'N'Shak] there is an elite team, and Brian, Luke, and I are all on that team. We know each other really well," said Julia.

All three Freeman archers are

working towards earning their Silver Olympian Pins.

"Luke is pretty outgoing, he is definitely a funny guy, and he is nice. He likes to joke around a lot," said Brian.

"When we are shooting sometimes he will bump me on the shoulder just to mess around with me," said Julia.

However, Luke is serious when it comes to competition.

Both Brian and Julia agree that Luke is a good shooter. His patience, understanding of how it works, and strength all make him a valuable archer.

Luke and Julia have travelled to many competitions together, including a national tournament at JMU this past summer, where Julia placed second in the state.

Both Luke and Julia plan to continue competitive archery in the future.

"We both got our bows around the same time and it's the same bow, so it's fun to compete with him because we are at the same level," said Julia.

Luke Timme and his Robin Hood shooting skills may have a difficult time competing with Julia Pardon and her Katniss-like precision.

One thing is certain. Luke Timme brings a unique hobby to the Freeman student body.

A Day in the Life of



Senior Charlotte McMullin

8:40 am- Yell at my brother, James, to bring my car around to the front of the house

8:55 am- Push people out of my way and sprint to first period

10:42 am- Help Jane Lake flirt with underclassmen

11:30 am- Talk out of turn and make Mrs. Layne mad.

11:34 am- Search the halls to find the squad

12:27 pm- Eat lunch and pretend to care about my friends' problems

1:19 pm- Take a quick nap during study hall to regain my energy

2:11 pm- Find Blayne Holstrom and dap him up

2:30 pm- Get yelled at for eating during Spanish class

4:30 pm- Attempt to run a mile at the Y

4:31 pm- Find a pickup game of basketball with Jane and Ellie Cox to pwn some sixth graders

6:00 pm- Start watching Lost on Netflix

1:00 am- Work on my mix tape

4:00 am- Delete my mix tape and cry myself to sleep



LET'S GET TECHNICAL

Freeman students participate in Henrico County's Tech Center Program



Jerry Leftwich: Emergency Medical Technician



Sarah Farney
Staff Writer

Jerry Leftwich is spending his junior year saving lives. Jerry is a student in the Henrico Career and Technical Education (CTE) program where he is enrolled in the health sciences. By the end of the year

and four more classes. At Hermitage, he listens to lectures and does book work on 13 different units of study throughout the EMT training course. These units include anatomy, medical emergencies, and ambulance operations, which prepare Jerry to function in any emergency situation and provide him with a basic life-support level of medical care. "CPR and assessing patients are the most valuable skills I have learned so far," said Jerry. On weekends, the Henrico Fire Department partners with the students for "ride alongs" where they get to answer real 911 calls with firefighters and EMTs. "My first time on a ride along a middle aged man had a heart attack and rendered himself unconscious. I performed CPR

and revived him. It was a good feeling, I went home happy that day," said Jerry. This was the first time Jerry saved someone's life. He said he has saved "a couple more" since. "The craziest situation I have been in was when someone was bleeding out. Everyone was running around and there was a stressful and crazy environment," said Jerry. If Jerry could change anything about the program, he said, "I would want a more hands on experience." Jerry was introduced to the program when a spokesperson visited one of his classes last year. He thought it would be a good stepping stone for a future career as a physician's assistant. "I want to follow in my uncle's footsteps and go into the military as a paramedic," said Jerry.

Jerry was concerned with the program's work load. The EMT center and chemistry would be the most rigorous courses he has taken. Don Leftwich, his father, agreed that he was concerned that the difficulty of his workload would be a huge change for Jerry. "I believe Jerry has probably picked up more life skills so far with the fast pace and intensity of the program, than EMT skills," said Mr. Leftwich. "It's all good and it's all a growing process," said Mr. Leftwich, who is excited to see how this year will shape Jerry and his goals for the future. EMT is a one-year program where students graduate with three credits, so Jerry will be back at Freeman full time senior year. "I'll be certified and enjoy a laid back senior year," said Jerry.

Madona Samaan: Medical Systems Administration



Ross Metcalf
Staff Writer

For many students the best part of the day is the ringing of the 3:55 p.m. bell, but for junior Madona Samaan, enrolled in the Medical Systems Administration technical program, the 9 am bell is

the highlight of her day. Madona's devotion to friends, family, and schooling is outstanding. Madona starts her day at 6:45 a.m., by helping her younger siblings prepare for school, then preparing herself. Once she gets to the Hermitage technical program she learns about the 'behind the scenes' aspects of medical field.

Students of the tech center programs use all three elective classes at Hermitage or Highland Springs high school, either in the morning or afternoon taking classes geared to their field of study. "In the medical system administration students get to see how the other half of the medical system operates, when it comes to accounts, billing, or cost effectiveness. Whether it's from following laws and guidelines in order to fully understand how the field works," said Mr. Kevin Steele, her school counselor. When it came to creating a schedule for Madona, Mr. Steele wanted a program that "she could immerse herself into and revel in it." "I really like the tech

program, I get to learn new vocabulary in both English and that are used in the medical field that will help me in my everyday life," said Madona. Madona's desire to make everyone comfortable and happy is one of her most defining characteristics. "She has really helped me make my transition to Freeman this year," said Monica Sameoan, a sophomore and Madona's best friend. "She is not going to rest until she makes you happy or completes her assignment. I don't think I have any other student that's as passionate about anything the way she is about everything in life," said Mr. Steele. Madona uses all opportunities to the fullest extent, combining her love

for education and commitment to the medical field to work at the technical program this year. After she completes this program this year she will be eligible to take a state board test, upon passing she will be able to work in any medical business, completing office work. "I really hope to get a job in the field after I am finished with this program, but this medical systems administration program leads to the practical nursing program," said Madona. Madona has already applied for the practical nursing technical program at Hermitage next year. Upon completion she will have the ability to work in the nursing field, as a licensed practical nurse. She plans on

continuing her medical studies after high school, then return to her home country, Egypt, to continue to help those in need. "I am hoping to return to northern Egypt and to be able to help those who need it most. Many of the people are poor farmers that need medical help, and dying young is a very common event there," said Madona. Madona's devotion to her studies and her attempt to become a practical nurse and improve the lives of others is a key aspect of her life. "I would just like to thank Mr. Steele for everything that he has done for me, in his efforts to make me feel comfortable and happy at Freeman and in the technical program," said Madona.

Mina Leino: Veterinary Science Technical Center



Elena Rogers
Staff Writer

Senior Mina Leino did not paws before applying when she found out about the Veterinary Science Technical Center at Hermitage High School. While the majority of Freeman eats lunch, Mina rides a bus to Hermitage High School to finish her day in the two-year program.

to breed hamsters in one of my classes," she said. Mina's mother, Doniella Leino has also reaped the benefits of Mina's experience at the technical center. "I can honestly say that Mina has brought the Hermitage Technical Center into our home, and it's been great for all of us," said Mina's mother. Out-of-classroom learning opportunities have left a lasting impression on Mina and her friends. "One of my favorite memories from the center was when we got to go to the Metro Richmond Zoo. I had just told my friend that sometimes monkeys throw their poop and as we stood in front of the monkey exhibit, that's exactly what happened," Mina said. The hands on experience at the Veterinary Science Technical Center offers interesting opportunities and creates an engaging

environment for the students and their families. "We've been fostering three kittens this weekend, thanks to the Hermitage Technical Center. These kittens were brought to the vet tech class in September. They each weighed under one pound and were not healthy. Under the care and guidance of Karen Bowles, Vet Tech II Instructor, the students learned how to nurse these kittens back to health," said Mrs. Leino. The Veterinary Science center was created for students who have a "genuine concern for the care and well-being of animals," said Henrico County's website for technical centers. "Mina has always had an interest in science and animals so the opportunity to combine both disciplines has helped her become more focused on her high school academics," Mrs. Leino said.

In her second year of the technical center, Mina is confident that the knowledge she is gaining will aid her in her future career. She describes the curriculum as "exciting and interesting." Classes at the Veterinary Science Technical Center include learning about disease prevention, viruses, and posology, a type of math that veterinarians use. Others days, the students get to interact with the animals. Most of the animals the students deal with are small mammals or house hold pets, such as mice or dogs. "The unique lessons at the center are helpful and thought-provoking. Whenever I see the medical terms I learned in the center in a different environment, I remember the usefulness of the knowledge I am learning in the center," Mina said. "In the spring, Mina will take the NOCTI test,

which is nationally recognized. Passing this test will give her a professional certification in Small Animal Science and Technology," said Mrs. Leino. Her interest in animals has inspired her to strive for a degree in marine biology when she goes to college. "I want to be a shark biologist. We don't study sharks in the center, but last year we studied fish, which was insightful," Mina said. She is currently looking into getting an internship at an aquarium to get even more experience in the field that she wants to work in. "She's had the opportunity to meet and work with wonderful students from other HCPS high schools," said Mrs. Leino. "You walk in on the first day not knowing anyone, but after a few weeks they become your family," Mina said.



Thomas Best
Staff Writer

Although senior Harley Raines isn't chasing criminals down the hallways of Hermitage High School, she is still getting college-level criminal justice training at Henrico's Career and Technical Education Center. A native Floridian and die-hard Rebel, Harley is now entering her second year at the technical center studying criminal justice. "I became interested in the tech center after meeting the teachers and

hearing about the class," Harley said. She said she was particularly drawn to criminal justice because she "always watched cop and crime shows" as a kid. "I was really interested in criminal justice when I learned it included crime scene investigation," Harley said. "This is my second year of taking tech. Last year, I had morning tech, which leaves at nine, and I remember freaking out on the first day about how to find the bus to get to tech, but once we got there it was fine. It was really neat being in a class with students

from all the different high schools," Harley said. This year, Harley is taking afternoon classes at the technical center. "It was really great to be back because I was with the same students and teacher as the year before, so it was a pretty familiar and comfortable experience," she said. Her day starts with taking early bird AP government with Mrs. Hecht. She then follows a regular schedule until fourth period. At the beginning of 4D, she leaves for Hermitage. "We get to tech at about 1:20 and we get back to Freeman around 3:45," Harley said. "I like leaving after 4C because it gives you a break in your day, but I miss the afternoon activities like pep rallies," said Harley. Criminal justice at the technical center is a two-year course with students earning a total of six college credits. The credits are earned toward completing a bachelor's degree in criminal justice. According to the center's website, the course is designed for students

to "explore the occupations, activities and procedures involved in the criminal justice system." "The tech center offers a lot of different programs that allow students to branch out into areas they're probably more interested in. It also allows them to move around throughout the day versus just sitting in their classes," said counselor Beth Metcalf. "The workload for my tech class isn't actually that bad because you are in the class for about two hours, so you have a lot more time to get assignments completed," Harley said. Because of the way the technical center is designed, students have unique opportunities to get hands-on learning experiences in their chosen field of study. Harley, along with two other students, participates in the center's Crime Scene Team. "We're given a mock crime scene and then get 30 minutes to process each scene and ask questions," she said. That work includes collecting evidence and tak-

ing pictures. They are then given 30 minutes to complete all paperwork. "I'd say it's definitely one of my favorite parts of the class," Harley said. "I consider Harley to be one of those all around students; she's a pretty bright cookie," said Mrs. Metcalf. After high school, Harley plans on attending VCU to study forensics. She then hopes to attend medical school and eventually become a medical examiner. "I would definitely recommend the tech center to students because taking a class that's not normally available is a really unique experience. It's also a good chance to meet people from other schools you wouldn't normally encounter," Harley said. Whether you want to study criminal justice like Harley or plan to choose from one of the 47 other career pathways, Henrico County's Career and Technical Education Center provides Freeman students a unique opportunity to begin their career path before they even graduate high school.

Megan and Katya: Practical Nursing Program



Kyle Adams
Staff Writer

A high school student walking into fourth period wearing scrubs: not a commonplace occurrence in Freeman's halls. Senior Megan Clements spends her mornings in a "high-intensity, stressful, and busy" environment at Bon Secours St. Mary's Hospital, learning the

various nuances of being a nurse. She and many other seniors across Henrico County spend their mornings learning and executing hospital routines. Megan serves as a nurse assistant at Bon Secours in order to gain vital clinical experience needed to ascend the positional hierarchy in the hospital. While the Practical Nursing program is run through the Hermitage Technical Center, students like Megan who have

learned the bulk of hospital procedures and elements of the human anatomy are able to gain field experience. Megan said working at Bon Secours is much more rigorous than her core classes taken at Freeman, and she is constantly exhausted from her bustling mornings. "We have a test or quiz nearly every day and a unit per week for a new system of the body which are very large. I have to study no matter what because everything helps with the next unit and the entire year. I am working on weekends and holidays to get more experience and gain the credentials I need quickly," said Megan. Through the Practical Nursing program, Megan has also made friends with nearly everyone in her classes. "I have to be close with them; we spend three hours a day for five days a week and

a total of two years together," said Megan. In addition, Megan solidified her relationship with her best friend, senior Katya Garcia. Katya, too, looks forward to a future career in medicine. "I have learned a lot about the human body that I have never known until now, and I have met a lot of people who share the same interests as me," said Katya. Both Megan and Katya agree that while the tech center is quite strenuous, the material is much more engaging and in-depth for prospective medical students to truly learn and apply skills in a real-world fashion compared to the average biology class. In addition to her social life and dual-school life, Megan works at a nursing home to make extra money—a job that comes naturally to a nurse-in-training. After completing this program, Megan plans to spend more time in hospitals as a nurse while continuing her education as she chases her ambition to become a surgeon.

Lewis Easily: Heating and Air-Conditioning Program



Meredith Given
Staff Writer

Crawling under houses may seem like dark dusty work, but for senior Lewis Easily it shows a bright future. Lewis is enrolled in the Hermitage Technical Center, hvac heating ventilation and air-

conditioning program, where a lot of his future work may involve working under houses with air-conditioning units. The hvac program is a two year program that offers six credits if completed. Students who attend the course are able to learn the basic skills and knowledge needed for installation and servicing of

air conditioning, heating, and refrigeration systems. Students have to apply to become part of Hermitage's Center. A student has to fill out an application where they answer a few questions. "Not everyone gets accepted they will look at grades, attendance, behavior, and genuine interest," said counselor Lindsay Bradley. Students learn how to operate the tools, basic refrigeration principles, basic electricity, and how to become familiar with different residential and commercial systems. Second year students do a 10 hour Occupational Safety and Health Administration safety course and the National certification exam for the environmental protection agency refrigeration usage. Lewis has been a part of

this program for two years. "I love it all around," said Lewis. Although being a part of a center is fun and exciting for Lewis it can sometimes be a burden. "Sometimes it's irritating when the buses are late," said Lewis. But being in the center still has its perks. "I enjoy the change of scenery," said Lewis. Most of the kids that attend the center are from other schools. "I mostly hang out with center kids while there," said Lewis. Lewis is not the only Freeman student that is part of the hvac program. Terence Carter, Stephen Spears, and Michael Shaffer are all members of this tech center as well. Lewis hopes to go into one of the careers after he graduates. "I would like to work in people's houses

fixing their air-conditioning units and crawling under houses," said Lewis. "It's not easy work but it's in high demand," said Lewis. Lewis also has plans for his future after going in to the field of hvac work. "I would like to work in an hvac unit in the Navy," said Lewis. Lewis takes English 12, government, woodshop, and a study hall for his morning classes at Freeman. While at Hermitage he takes the one hvac technical center class. "I like my technical center class better," said Lewis. Completion of these courses prepares students for many certification exams, and may be helpful for future employment in different categories of hvac occupations. "The programs provides

a certification that can enhance their appeal as an applicant when applying for a job in the hvac field, said Mrs. Bradley. Lewis is confident that his work in this technical center will give him an advantage once out of high school and searching for a career. "I'll still need training, but coming out of school with an idea of what to do and experience with hands-on work will give me a great advantage," said Lewis. Lewis is very passionate about the work he does in the hvac program. He loves what he does and can't wait to work in the field of hvac work. "Lewis is very hard working and consciences student and I know that he has a genuine interest in the field," said Mrs. Bradley.

Rebel Takes 5A XC State Title

Waleed Suliman Places 6th at Regional Meet, 29th at Nationals



PHOTO: SULIMAN

Junior Waleed Suliman crosses the finish line with a time of 15:41 at the Virginia High School League Group 5A Meet at Great Meadows State Park on Nov. 13.

Maddy Waldron
Editor-in-Chief

“Start like a baby, end like a man.” This is the principle lesson junior Waleed Suliman has learned over the past two years in America.

One year and seven months. That is the amount of time Waleed Suliman has lived in the United States. That is also the amount of time it took Waleed to become the VHSL Group 5A State Champion. Because of his 6th place performance at the Footlocker Invitational meet, he is in pursuit for a national championship on Dec. 12.

Waleed went into the state meet on Nov. 13 facing a few obstacles.

The day of the states meet “was the worst day because it wasn’t raining and it was really windy,” Waleed said. “If it was [raining] it would have been much better. When the wind is blowing like that it just hurts your muscles because something

is pushing you back.”

“[Waleed] was very focused, I believed he was confident and he trusted his ability to race and to race tough,” said Coach Reutinger.

Besides the bad weather, the only other thing Waleed had to worry about was his biggest competitor from Tuscarora High School, Fitsum Seyoum. The boys are about the same speed, despite going up against the athlete that had previously beaten him that month before.

In his past races, Waleed used a strategy where he would stay behind his opponents and in the last stretch of the race he would sprint to the front of his competitors and come out in first. In this particular race, Waleed had a change of plan.

“I was planning on sticking with him [Fitsum Seyoum] and beating him in the last 800m but then I started and ended up so far ahead of him and I started leading the pack from the beginning and everyone else was behind me,” Waleed said.

According to Coach Reutinger, in the first mile, Waleed was about 15 seconds in front of his Seyoum. Halfway through the second mile, his competitor had come back to about 9 or 10 seconds behind, but in the last half mile Waleed opened the gate back up to about 15 seconds. Waleed crossed the finish line first with a time of 15:41.

“I was really happy. I looked for Coach Reutinger because I really wanted to give him a hug,” Waleed said. “When he told me nobody had won it since 1970 I thought, I did it, 45 years later and I did it.”

“It is amazing feeling, I never thought I would win states,” Waleed said.

His first place finish at the state championships scored Waleed a spot in the Footlocker Invitational on Nov. 28, 2015.

Freeman’s entire team competed in the southern regional race. However, Waleed was the only Freeman runner to place in the top ten. The national championship field is comprised of the top

10 runners from each region of the four regions: South, Northeast, Midwest, and West. With a time of 15:10, he finished in 6th place and qualified for the national championship.

Waleed will be competing for a national championship in San Diego, California on Dec. 12, 2015.

“It’s a big deal because it’s a very good accomplishment that not many people can achieve and they fly everybody out there and they put them in a nice hotel and all their meals and transportation is paid for,” Waleed said.

Waleed is flying out by himself on Thursday Dec. 10 to San Diego.

“This week I am training really hard the week before so the Thursday and Friday before I am probably just going to take it easy,” Waleed said.

Although Coach Reutinger will not be able to accompany Waleed on his trip to San Diego, he trusts Waleed to do the best that he can.

“He is a very highly competi-

tive athlete in any situation, and he is always going to be one,” Coach Reutinger said.

Most importantly, Waleed said he would not have been able to achieve any of this without his support system.

“Without my coach I would be behind. If it weren’t for him talking to me and teaching I don’t think I would be winning states or anything else.”

“[My support system] is my teammates. But, the most important thing is my coach,” Waleed said. With last year’s state championship ring on his finger, and a recent state championship in his pocket, Waleed looks to bring home more hardware for the Rebels.

UPDATE: Waleed finished 29th overall in a field of 40 athletes last weekend at the Foot Locker Cross Country National Championships at Balboa Park in San Diego. His time was 15:51.60.

Put Some Step Back in Your Pep Rally

Yashia Burrell
A&E Editor

“WE ARE DSF,” the DSF Steppers chant in formation. Eyes forward and arms straight, the gym erupts in cheers as the steppers begin.

Feeling the step team needed to create a stronger presence, and enabled by Freeman’s first club day, senior Nalease Marrow decided to take charge of the new and improved step team, along with co-captain Tynetta Thomas.

Standing around a projector, students watch high school step competition performances. Students came in heaps to fill Ms.

Williams’s room tucked away in the second floor, preparing to get themselves on one of those stages.

“Step team is a great place to make friends,” said senior Salisa Nolan. Students from all grades gathered during club day in order to revamp the team.

Nalease thought of the idea to revamp the step team to allow students to express themselves through the art of step. “Step is an art of motion that portrays a person’s personality through movement and rhythm,” said Nalease.

The step team has practice every day except Friday, learning choreography hoping to perform at other school events, like football games and stepping compe-

titions.

Other students at Freeman take responsibility for teaching and coming up with different steps. “Myself, Tynetta Thomas, and Tyrell Evans [teach choreography], however everybody on the team contributes just as much,” said Nalease.

Their first performance created some miscommunication between the teams’ members that raised a lot of questions among the student body about their readiness to perform.

“The routine got changed the day of and a lot of people were confused. A lot of people didn’t know the lines we were supposed to be in and Tynetta went to go get music but everyone thought she just left us,” said Salisa.



PHOTO: YASHIA BURRELL

Nalease Marrow and Tynetta Thomas step during the pep rally.

While first performance jitters could have collapsed the relatively young team, their willingness to work, and the confidence of their second performance, secured their place within the Rebel community.

“We actually did a prayer circle. It was a funny but spiritual way to calm our nerves,” said Salisa. All of the steppers were pleased

with their performance.

“The school’s reaction for our second performance was very supportive and we definitely redeemed ourselves from the first performance,” said Salisa.

Nalease was also happy with what they were able to accomplish, and only hopes for more. “It only gets better from here,” said Nalease.

Upcoming Events

Girls Basketball

12/29-30 Holiday Hoops Bash- Home
1/5 Glen Allen-Home 6:00
1/8 Godwin- Home 6:00
1/13 Lee Davis- Home 7:30
1/22 Tucker- Home 6:00
2/2 Hermitage- Home 6:00
2/5 Deep Run- Home 6:00
2/9 T.J.- Home 6:00

Boys Basketball

12/18 Collegiate- Home 7:15
12/29-30 Holiday Hoops Bash- Home
1/4 Henrico- Home 7:30
1/5 Glen Allen- Home 7:30
1/8 Godwin- Home 7:30
1/22 Tucker- Home 7:30
2/2 Hermitage- Home 7:30
2/5 Deep Run- Home 7:30
2/9 T.J.- Home 7:30

Gymnastics

12/16 Tucker and Godwin- Home 7:00
1/6 Godwin and Glen Allen- Godwin- 7:00
1/13 Atlee and Glen Allen- Home 7:00
1/20 Atlee and Henrico- Home 7:00
2/6 Conference Tournament- Henrico Time TBA

Winter Track

12/16 Boys and Girls Varsity Meet- Home 4:15
1/20 Boys and Girls Varsity Meet- Home 4:15

Wrestling

1/6 Deep Run- Home 7:00
1/13 Tucker and Maggie Walker- Tucker 6:00
1/20 Godwin- Home 7:00
1/22 Quad Meet- Cosby 5:00

Rebel Athletes Make Their College Commitments



PHOTO: ANNA FRIEND

Coby Sale - King University

Meredith Given
Staff Writer



After playing baseball for 12 years, senior Coby Sale scored a spot on a Division II college baseball team at King University in Bristol, Tennessee. He made it official when he signed commitment papers in the library on Nov. 17 in front of his friends and family.

Coby has been playing baseball since he was 5 years old. This spring will be Coby's fourth year playing baseball for DSF and his third year on varsity. He plays middle in fielder.

"Coby is talented in numerous ways, he is a true utility player. He can do everything well and doesn't really have any weaknesses," said Coach Ray Moore.

Getting a college offer took a lot of time and work. Coby plays on the Improve Your Game [IYG] travel team.

"I play year round, and practice for about an hour or two every day," said Coby.

"I'm very excited, I've known I've wanted to play in college for a while and I love baseball," said Coby. King University is a small private University in Tennessee. It has an enrollment of 2,427 undergraduate students. King University has a record of 24 wins, and 26 losses in the 2015 season.

So far Coby is the only one in his graduating class attending King University next fall. "The hardest part will probably be not knowing anyone," said Coby. Despite this, he hopes that being on a team will help adjust to college.

"I think being on the baseball team will help me transition into college and make friends," said Coby.

Coby is a valuable player on the Freeman baseball team and is happy to be able to continue with the sport in college. "There really isn't a weak spot in Coby's game. He plays defense very well, he hits well, he has a strong arm, and good speed he is a solid player for the team," said Coach Moore. Coby's coach and teammates have high expectations for him.

"He will absolutely do well at King University. He has a great work ethic and will do well," said Coach Moore. Coby is known for his hard work on the field. "Coby is a great guy who gives everything he has every game, he is the hardest worker on the team, and he pushes everyone to do better. He is going to be a great leader this year," said senior Jake Gerkin.

Virginia Irby - Colgate University

Kyle Adams
Staff Writer



Freeman hit a homerun four years ago in luring senior Virginia Irby into becoming a student-athlete for the blue and gray.

Virginia committed to Colgate University last spring after an official visit in April 2015. The highly-touted catcher held scholarship offers from the likes of Notre Dame, Syracuse, and Florida State. On Nov. 17, Virginia signed her national letter of intent.

Beginning freshman year, Virginia received calls on a weekly basis from Division I coaches. Virginia plays catcher—a position referred to as the quarterback of the field in softball.

On her visit, Virginia was able to sit-in on classes, converse with professors, and observe the atmosphere of the school.

"I committed mainly because of the academics and the opportunity they gave me to play. It's a great school, and the coaches were always coming to see me at tournaments," said Virginia.

Virginia also attributes

much of her success to her father and current travel coach.

"My dad has always been supportive even when we did not always have the finances to pay for travel ball expenses. My travel coach has also been very helpful in my improvement as a player," said Virginia.

Virginia played for the New Jersey Intensity this past summer, a softball program ranked 12th in the nation. The program plays annually in tournaments in places like California and Colorado, and the airfare quickly added up. However, Virginia was required to play high-level travel ball in order to uphold her scholarship offer, so the costs were an unfortunate reality.

Fortunately, Virginia received donations from friends, extended family, and anonymous support-

ers online to continue her softball career and become a student-athlete for the Colgate Raiders.

At Colgate, Virginia intends to pursue an education in either political science or philosophy, studies she said were certainly influenced by her experience in the Leadership Center at Freeman. She expects to continue her career as a seasoned defensive presence at catcher while improving her offensive skills with Colgate's experienced hitting coach.

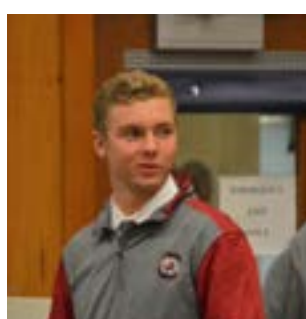
Virginia is a four-year starter and a three-year captain for the DSF varsity softball team. She has been a utility player for a team hampered by injury-playing catcher, shortstop, and third-base.

Junior teammate Gabby Barnes described Virginia as a true leader who holds everyone else accountable. Gabby also said Virginia has an unparalleled work ethic, especially as her recruitment progressed.

Virginia expects the softball team to have a successful 2016 season, for they return several starters and hope to have freshmen immediately contribute under her leadership.

Will Riggs - University of South Carolina

Page Ryland
Sports Editor



Senior Will Riggs will be leaving his Freeman swim team to join a new one on the University of South Carolina's team.

Will started at Kanawha Recreational Association during the summer but he later expanded by joining NOVA, a non-profit, year-round competitive swim program. Currently, he is a captain for Rebels Swimming.

Will said that staying motivated is a huge part in being successful, though he recognized it is hard to always keep that motivation present.

"You have to find a group of people that are just as interested as you are. It is a huge plus to be with people that share the same passion as me," said Will.

Will's cousin, sophomore Joe Riggs, describes Will as "enthusiastic, hardworking, and committed." Joe and the rest of the Riggs family are extremely proud of Will and his talent.

"Will has shown great re-

silience and persistence in pursuing swimming in college. We are really proud of him for having the courage to continue to forging ahead with his goal," said Will's mother, Lynn Riggs.

It is these qualities that grabbed Will's collegiate attention. One of which Will proudly announced his commitment to: University of South Carolina.

When he met with the USC coach, Mark Bernardino, a former UVA swim coach who has previously won 30 ACC championships, Will was fascinated in his coaching ability. He described USC's coaching staff as "excellent, up-and-coming and well-run." When meeting with his future team, he said he felt very welcomed and experienced what it felt like to be part of a bigger team.

"Even though the guys on the team were crazy good, they were very humble. I saw that everyone cared about each other as a team," Will said.

Within two weeks of meeting Bernardino and the team, Will made his commitment. Will's fastest stroke is the 200 butterfly long course, fast event in which he swam a 2:02.23, qualifying for the US Open.

Will was also recognized as an Academic All American his sophomore and junior year. To qualify for this, athletes must have at least a 3.3 GPA through all of their athletic career as well as start more than fifty percent of all competitions, while being a significant contributor to the team. Along with the Academic All American, Will also placed second at the Summer Junior Nationals in 200 butterfly.

Having completed seemingly all the accomplishments a high school swimmer can take on, Will will now look to the future. With South Carolina less than a year away, Will will spend the rest of year preparing for life's next challenge.

Carley Craddock - Radford University

Maddy Waldron
Editor-in-Chief



From sophomore to senior and Varsity lacrosse player to Radford commit, senior Carley Craddock is making bounds.

Carley began her lacrosse career playing for the Rebels Lacrosse Club at Tuckahoe Middle School. She quickly advanced her way up to the JV lacrosse team here at Freeman her 8th grade year. As a freshman, Carley was promptly added as a member to the Varsity team.

A versatile player, Carley plays both midfield and attack. She loves the fast pace of the game and the girls on the team.

"I just love the feeling I get when I play and how fast the game is going, especially if it's a good game," Carley said.

Carley plans on attending Radford University in Radford, Virginia next fall. She verbally committed to Rad-

ford in July, but officially committed at the signing ceremony on November 17, 2015 in the library.

"I chose Radford because I really like the campus, it's in the mountains, and I didn't want to be at a school in the city and I really like the coaches," Carley said.

Not only does Carley look forward to the lacrosse program at Radford, but also the academics they offer.

"[Radford] offered D1 lacrosse and I like the atmosphere there. Also, I want to be a nurse practitioner and their courses are really good," Carley said.

Playing a sport in college is not only challeng-

ing physically, but it is also time-consuming. Carley acknowledged the amount of work ahead of her, but said she is excited to become closer with the girls on Radford team.

"She's such a strong player and I couldn't be more proud of all the hard work she put into lacrosse to get where she is now," said Gracie Douglas, junior and teammate. "Carley contributed to our team immensely and playing on a team without her next year won't be the same."

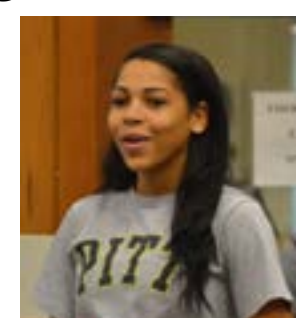
Though, before she continues her journey at Radford, she has one more high school lacrosse season.

"My goal for this season is to have fun and, as a senior, to be a leader to all the new younger girls," Carley said.

As Carley progresses into her last season this spring she will not only be training for Rebels lacrosse season but also for the Highlanders lacrosse season next year.

Jordan Bourgeois - Pittsburgh University

Deija Bowden
Staff Writer



Nov. 17, 2015, Jordan Bourgeois said she felt relieved and excited as she officially committed to the University of Pittsburgh for track. Jordan also thought about the classes provided at Pittsburgh.

"I'm doing pre-med with a track in molecular biology," said Jordan.

Coach Avery McGilvary, who has coached track and Jordan for the past two years suggested that she looked at the Univer-

sity of Pittsburgh both academically and athletically. "I think Pittsburgh is a great choice academically and athletically. It also has a great medical program that she's been wanting," said Coach Avery McGilvary.

Jordan chose to run track sixth grade year at Tuckahoe Middle School after ten years of gymnastics and playing lacrosse for three years. She said lacrosse and

gymnastics just weren't the right sports for her.

"Track was just a sport that I was really good at compared to the other sports I have played. It's also a mental sport, so I had benefited in more ways than one," said Jordan.

Before each meet Jordan has a special warm up that she does.

"I would jog for 10 minutes with my music, do my dynamic warm up, use the muscle roll out, and then pray," said Jordan.

Jordan's events are the 400m, 800m, triple jump, and long jump. Her favorite event is the triple jump. Her time for the 800m at the Amateur Athletic Union national meet (AAU) was 2 minutes 14 seconds. Her other accomplishments consist of 38 feet and 11 inches for the triple jump, and 17 feet for her long jump.

Ellie Girardi, senior track teammate who runs the 800m with Jordan says that Jordan has

been a great motivator.

"I have ran with her since freshman year and she's a very dedicated athlete," said Ellie.

Jordan's goal for next year in college is to compete in the ACC championships as a freshman.

"I'm looking forward to helping her reach the goals that other athletes have not met, and to support her in the stands as she runs in college," said Coach Avery McGilvary.

Winter Spotlights

Veteran Varsity Basketball Players

Gabe Fountain and Elyse Johnston

KeAnna Anglin
Staff Writer

Three seasons down, one to go. From the time he was a little boy, Gabe Fountain has loved nothing more than the opportunity to play the game he loves: basketball. Inches taller and years later, senior point guard Gabe Fountain will return to the court this year as a four year varsity basketball player.

"I started playing basketball in the third or fourth grade, and it is still a part of my everyday routine," said Gabe, "I'm always hitting up shots, running, and doing whatever I have to do to become a better basketball player."

Gabe is no stranger to the scrutiny of a big crowd and overwhelming pressure. Playing in over 69 games, his time on the team has allowed him to develop both mentally and physically.

"I have seen a lot of players over the years. I used to be the youngest, and now I am the oldest," Gabe said.

Since freshman year, Gabe has not only gained experience with the game, but also many treasured memories.

"My favorite memory would be a tie between my freshman year when we beat John Marshall or last year when I scored the most points I've ever



Senior guard Gabe Fountain in the season opener.

scored in a single game, thirty-two against Godwin," Gabe said.

Although being a varsity athlete is rewarding, it also comes with a hefty price.

"It can be tough because there are many late nights and then you still have homework to do," he said. "It is fun, but it is just something you have to get used to."

Senior Sammy Atcheson described Gabe as "a good leader and communicator who makes the people around him better."

Basketball has not only impacted Gabe's life, but also has allowed Gabe to impact the lives of others. "Gabe has always said 'this is our family,' not 'this is our team.' He also says we are each other's brothers," said Sammy.

Gabe has many aspirations for his last season on varsity, and with the help of his teammates he seeks

to achieve a lot.

"I plan on us winning a conference championship. It would be nice to go to states, but my goal is for us to win the conference championship. I want us to be one of the top teams in the region," said Gabe.

As his basketball career at Freeman comes to an end, he will feel mixed emotions.

"I feel kind of bitter-sweet. I'm going to miss Coach Parpart and the guys, but I am also ready for what is in store for me next," said Gabe.

These sentiments are echoed by his coach as well.

"I will miss Gabe's love for the game," said basketball coach Larry Parpart.

With one season left in his high school career, Gabe hopes to be remembered as "a player who gave it 150 percent every night."

Jack Bernhardt
Staff Writer

As team captain, senior Elyse Johnston brings more than just motivation, competition, and skills to the basketball court. This leader also brings comic relief.

Elyse is the team's starting center and is a main contributor to the team, but her attitude and approach towards tough situations make it easier for her teammates.

"She's always smiling and having fun. When practice is getting hard and intense, she provides relaxation with her goofy personality," said Ginny Moore, varsity girls basketball coach.

"Her laugh is contagious, once she starts laughing and is in a good mood, the whole team is and that makes everything so much easier," said teammate Stephanie Ziu.

Coach Moore describes Elyse as "the gel that bonds everybody together."

Elyse's experience on the varsity team has helped her. She has been on the team since her sophomore year.

"The seniors and juniors pushed me to do well and improved my skills which helped me become the player and leader I am now," said Elyse.

For Elyse, being a captain is not just a title. "Being a



Senior Elyse Johnston shoots a free throw.

captain means I lead the drills, teach the younger players, and be a good role model and example. I want the younger players to know that our record and score isn't important, but that well all have fun together," she said.

Elyse credits her dad and Coach Moore as the greatest influences on her basketball game.

"Coach Moore has taught me valuable lessons in that the scoreboard and records don't matter as much as your relationships and family," she said. In fact, one of Elyse's most memorable moments as a Rebel's basketball player came last year in a loss.

"The last game we played was against Godwin, we lost, but played well as a team. It was probably our best game of the season,"

Elyse said. Over her three years on varsity, Stephanie is just one of the friends Elyse has made. She describes the team as "very diverse" and a great way to make new friends and experiences.

Elyse's goal for this year's basketball season, "I really want the team to improve from last year as a collective group." But she said she still hopes to defeat Godwin and Maggie Walker.

The girls play at home against Godwin on Dec. 9 and Maggie Walker on Jan. 8.

"Just thinking about Elyse makes me smile. She's the best teammate, but more importantly, friend. She always makes the team more fun, even if we are losing," said Stephanie.

Junior Indoor Track Athletes

ShaKia Plaskett and Roy Stevenson

William Omberg
Staff Writer

"My life revolves around track—well, and cheering," said junior ShaKia Plaskett.

ShaKia runs the 55m, the 4x200 meter, or any other event her coaches ask of her. Not only is she versatile, but ShaKia manages her time between track in the winter and spring, cheering in the fall and winter, and various field trips for chorus.

ShaKia said she has been running "since she was a toddler" so naturally she took to running her freshman year. ShaKia said she has grown close with her fellow sprinters, despite freezing conditions and Troy Moore's antics.

ShaKia is poised for a larger role on the team. She is looking "to build off what she's done the past two years, especially in post season meets," said Coach Brian Reutinger.

"She wants to see herself improve over the course of the season and become one of the better sprinters on the team," Coach Reutinger said.

ShaKia has a special relationship with a fellow track star, junior Lauren



Junior ShaKia Plaskett trains during track practice.

Thornton. The friends met at Brooklyn Middle School and continue to push each other on and off the track.

"ShaKia is funny, and she is my best friend. She's smart and talented and acts as a great leader for our team," said Lauren.

One of ShaKia's former teachers, science teacher Stephanie Gutierrez, remembers just this about ShaKia. Mrs. Gutierrez said ShaKia taught her how to "whip" and filmed it onto her Snapchat story.

Mrs. Gutierrez calls ShaKia "funky and vivacious."

"She loves her school and is one of the hardest workers you will ever meet," said Mrs. Gutierrez.

She always has a smile on her face, until race day, when she gets down to business.

"Before meets, I like to walk around the track and listen to music, then it's time to race," said ShaKia.

ShaKia has a busy schedule, but it will not distract her from competing at a high level on the track this winter.

CR Nease
Staff Writer

Coming off a top 5 spot on the Cross Country team junior Roy Stevenson looks to tear it up on the track once again this winter.

Roy has been on the track and cross country team since freshman year. Roy is a long distance runner. His events consist of the 800m, the mile, and the 4x8, in which 4 people run 2 laps around the track each.

"The typical track practice consists of a distance run of about 5-6 miles through neighborhoods and then a cool down," said Roy. In a week he runs 30-35 miles for track.

"Cross country helps with endurance for indoor track," said Roy. Cross country differs from indoor track in that the races for cross country are much longer than indoor track.

Roy's favorite part about track meets is that they are much shorter than cross country meets and he has more time to see his friends. The hardest part about winter track is "the cold especially days when it's raining and in the 40s," said Roy.

Roy has a 4:43 mile time



Junior Roy Stevenson competes at Pole Green Park.

and his 800m time is 2:01. However, Roy wants to improve his times from last year. Track coach Brian Reutinger said, "Roy is a very reliable athlete who performs well in competition."

"Roy's good combination of speed and endurance bodes well for the track team," said Mr. Reutinger. One of the key factors that has made Roy so successful in track is his consistency during practice.

When it comes time for a race Roy calms down and focuses on finishing and

running his best.

"I usually wear special socks for races," said Roy. "The brand of the special socks is Thorlo," said Roy.

The biggest influence on Roy doing track has been his mom. "She told me to tryout when I didn't want to and I ended up really liking track," said Roy.

Last year Roy suffered a fractured toe which caused him to miss the entire season. If Roy had not suffered this injury he would currently be a 3 time varsity athlete.

Freshman Ernie Campbell is A Strong Addition to the Wrestling Team

Mackenzie King
Staff Writer

For freshmen Ernie Campbell, Freeman wrestling is a family affair. Ernie comes from a line of wrestlers: his father, uncle, and brother influenced him to begin wrestling.

"It's a family tradition for the boys in my family to wrestle," Ernie said. "It brings my family closer together because we can talk about our experiences and how to get better."

Ernie began wrestling in third grade for Richmond Metro Wrestling, and in

middle school he worked out with Freeman's team in the offseason.

"Working with the Freeman team in middle school is a great transition for middle schoolers because they get to work out on our mats and work with more experienced wrestlers," said Lissy Campbell, Ernie's mom and Freeman ELL teacher.

Working out with Freeman wrestlers helped Ernie feel comfortable joining the team as a freshmen, and he has built relationships with his team.

"We are becoming a family. I would say that Freeman has more of a bond

than other schools," Ernie said.

New Coach Matt Henshaw has coached the sport for 13 years. He enjoys building a bond with the kids and he believes wrestling influences "how you approach life, discipline, hard work and the awards that come with it, and how to deal with success and failure," Coach Henshaw said.

Impressed with his "prowess on the mat" and lack of fear, Coach Henshaw said that Ernie has what it takes to thrive in wrestling.

Ernie's teammates also admire his skill.

"Out of anyone else in the school, Ernie probably has the most potential when it comes to wrestling," said Colin Cullop, freshmen teammate and longtime friend.

Ernie is currently in the 160 lb weight class and looks forward to what this season will bring.

"One goal I have for this year would be to win conferences and place top four in regionals," Ernie said.

Ernie will take his wrestling skill to matches against rival schools this year as well.

"The team's biggest competition this year will be Godwin because not only

are they our rivals, they also have a very competitive roster," Ernie said.

The team competed against 18 teams, including Godwin, at Glen Allen on Dec. 4.

Whether he is on or off the mat, Ernie Campbell has the support of a family.

"Although wrestling in an individual sport, you work together with partners and the team for the same goal," said Coach Henshaw. "It's important that we support each other on and off the mat to accomplish our goals."



Ernie Campbell is a standout for the Rebels.

Freeman and Tucker Orchestras Collaborate



PHOTO: ANNA LYLE COLLETT

The Freeman and Tucker Orchestra practice in the band room for upcoming performance.

Emma Dixon
Center Spread Editor

Over 100 students and alumni will be filling up the Tucker High School stage to perform

the classic symphonic piece, the Nutcracker on December 17th at 7:30pm.

Starting at the beginning of the school year, Rob Blankenship, the band and orchestra director, was looking for something big to do this holiday season.

"I wanted to do something different for the winter

performance and the students thought it would be fun to do the Nutcracker. So to make it a really big deal, I thought we could invite another school to join us and invite alumni to come back and perform with us," said Mr. Blankenship.

Once the idea got rolling, the students from both Freeman and

Tucker got to work.

"We practice every day in class and once a week on Mondays for about two hours with Tucker," said senior Laura Perez, cello sectional leader.

Although many of the students from Tucker and Freeman didn't know each other previously, students are taking this opportunity to meet students from another school.

"We all introduced ourselves and began working well together. They are all really nice and funny," said Laura.

Practice for a performance like this takes time and dedication.

"We start practice by going through the music and then pulling apart the tricky stuff to make sure we all get the notes," said Mr. Blankenship.

"The hardest part is that it is an original piece. It's a real symphonic piece of music that was written hundreds of years ago and getting that under the fingers is hard, but they are doing great," said Mr. Blankenship.

Frank Sampson, the Tucker orchestra and band director, is working closely with Mr. Blankenship to perfect this piece for the performance.

"I like challenging the students to play music at this level and sharing the experience with the

audience. I think it'll be a great atmosphere," said Mr. Sampson. The performance is only a couple weeks away and the excitement is only growing.

"I can't wait to play with everyone on stage because it is such a big group," said Laura.

"I can't wait to share an exceptional music experience with performers and audience members alike," said Mr. Sampson.

"I am excited to get up there on stage with them and having that big sound of so many people and the big musical sound just hitting you in the face. Then I know that the sound will go out and beyond into the audience where it is going to be even bigger," said Mr. Blankenship with a smile.

Both Freeman and Tucker have taken this performance opportunity to raise money for the orchestra program and donate to charity. The cost is \$2.00 and a can for the Christmas Mother. Tickets will only be available at the door.

"We are so excited and hope everybody comes. It'll be a great concert," said Mr. Blankenship.

Junior Dancer Takes Her Skills to Freeman

Michael Wagner
Sports Editor

Although a newcomer to the Freeman dance team this year, junior Devon Brown is no stranger to the dance studio.

"I started dancing when I was 5 at the Regency Dance Academy and have been dancing for 12 years," said Devon.

However, Devon took a break from the Regency Dance Academy to dance with the Freeman dance team.

"I like dancing in front of an audience and I want my peers to see my dancing. Also, I wanted to be on the team to form a team relationship," said Devon.

Devon is also not the only one in her family to dance.

"My aunt Melissa dances for Lady Gaga as her backup

dancer," said Devon.

Devon said that being on the Freeman dance team has enhanced her Freeman experience "because of the team bonding, and doing things outside of school with the team."

This 2015-2016 school year is Devon's first full year at Freeman after having kidney surgery last year. She attended Freeman for the latter half of the 2014-2015 school year.

Devon enjoys dancing and she will continue to do it next year. "I've been at Regency Dance Academy for 12 years and I took a break from that to dance at Freeman, but I will do both my senior year."

This dedication to dance lead to what Devon likes most about the dance team: being challenged. She is used to having a rigorous schedule as far as dancing goes.

"She is really dedicated and she choreographed a whole dance

for the team. She is always willing to help out with anyone on the team," said Sarah Galt, senior teammate and dance team captain.

"When I was at Regency Dance Academy, I was dancing six days a week for an hour to two hours a night. For Freeman dance we practice Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4:15 to 6:15, but currently we are having extended practices for Competition," said Devon.

Devon explained that "Competition" is the name for a statewide competition where each school dance team forms routines for different categories of dance and then competes in each different aspect.

"I think our chances are really good this year because we have built a strong team and no one on the team gives up easily," said Devon.

Looking to the future, Devon



PHOTO: BROWN

Devon Brown lays down with her team at dance team practice.

said she wants to go Los Angeles and be a makeup artist, but if that doesn't work out, she said that she would try to go the VCU Arts Program for dance.

But right now, Devon is focused on helping the Freeman dance team develop and win the state competition.

Freeman Players Provide Laughs



Angus Dawson, Zach Fox, and Claire Gardener perform

Gates Towell
Features Editor

"Get out of here! D'ya wanna be poisoned? D'ya wanna be murdered? D'ya wanna be killed?" No matter what Mortimer said, I couldn't help but sit at the edge of my seat and anticipate what extravagant antics came next from the insane, homicidal Brewster Family.

"Arsenic and Old Lace," directed by Mary Spears with scenic design by Ryan Imirie was a farcical dark comedy that had me laughing from the very beginning and smiling still when I got home. From one brother yelling "Charge!" every time he ran up the stairs to two seemingly sweet old aunts making sure they had a Presbyterian service for a man they poisoned, it doesn't get much wilder than this.

Two old aunts living in Brooklyn seem to be the sweetest ladies around until their nephew, Mortimer, discovers a secret they think is completely normal. There is a corpse in the window sill chest, and to make it worse,

there are twelve men buried in the cellar. It is quite the matter for Mortimer to wrap his head around. In light of the craziness around the house, he wonders if he should subject his fiancé to marrying an insane Brewster. As Mortimer says, "Insanity runs in my family. It practically gallops."

The entrance of Jonathon, Mortimer's brother and "black sheep" of the Brewster family, brings a frenzy of switched bodies, attempted murders, and hilariously foolish Brooklyn cops together in the span of one night. With screwball humor throughout the whole play, I expected nothing less from the comical ending.

A plot that had my mind in a frenzy, the characters seemed naïve in everyone else's endeavors but their own. It was hard to watch when I knew something that the character seemed oblivious to, and this was a frequent problem that even some of the characters ironically caught on to.

Though not an avid theater buff, I occasionally like to see a production once or twice a year. With that said, this was one of

the best Freeman plays I've seen. I never thought anything would top "Damn Yankees", a play with amazing actors long gone off to bigger and better things after graduating from Freeman; however, the acting this year surprised me with excellent performances from the whole ensemble.

Jamie Bacon who starred as Mortimer shined with good-hearted yet cynical humor. His performance as a likable man who takes care of his aunts showed off his talent as a superb actor. His two aunts, Abby and Martha Brewster, played by Claire Gardner and Ellie Friday, made the combination of nonchalant murderers and sweet, thoughtful old ladies look easy. Also, the duo of Owen Payne and Franklin Pugh, respectively Jonathan Brewster and Dr. Einstein, brought to the stage a little dark humor and even more madness. As many things could be going on at one time during each scene, the entire ensemble worked seamlessly together. Each actor brought their own skillset making the production more enjoyable.

Hats off to the set design and stage crew for a detailed and charming set. It was beautifully done, and wonderfully represented the ironic stage for murder. Lastly, and definitely not least, the make-up crew did a fantastic job. I'm sure it is difficult to make teenagers look like grandparents! All the backstage crew should be commended for a flawless production.

The fall production is just one more marvelous play to add to Mrs. Spear's list. Every year she always finds and brings out amazing talent in her students. After a splendid rendition of Arsenic and Old Lace, I happily await the next production at Freeman High School. CHARGE!

Guess the Student Artist



PHOTOS: GRACE GEMMELL

1.) graphite pencil, black ink, and watercolor

2.) colored pencil, and black ink



PHOTO: GRACE GEMMELL



PHOTO: GRACE GEMMELL

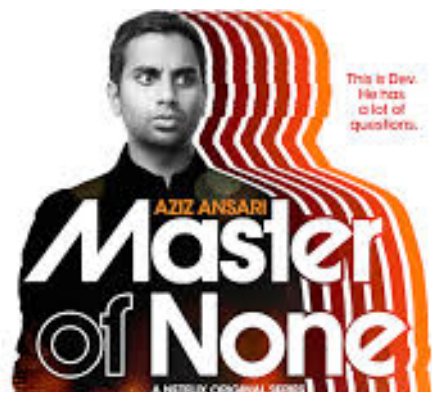
3.) colored pencil, black ink, and metallic gold paint

Answer Key: 1. Hunter Daniels, 2. Bruno Muñoz-Hernandez, 3. Mia Odlin

Spend Winter Break Not Studying for Exams

Jamie Bacon
A&E Editor

With winter break approaching, I am envisioning myself taking it easy and not studying for exams, but rather spending time with family, eating cookies and more importantly spending quality time on the couch, under a warm blanket, on my computer, watching Netflix. While productive students spend their time studying for exams, I will be living the good life. For those of the Freeman student body who plan on accompanying me into the lonely abyss that is Netflix binge-watching, here are some of the best new and classic shows available.



Master of None is some of Aziz Ansari's best work.

Most people know Aziz Ansari as Tom Haverford from NBC's Parks and Recreation, but fewer know him for his excellent work both writing for and acting in his own Netflix original series, Master of None.

Those who have seen some of Ansari's stand up work can expect to see a lot of the same elements he talks about being incorporated into the life of Dev, a 32-year-old actor trying to survive in New York City.

Playing on some of the less offensive stereotypes of Asian-Americans and their culture.

Ansari brought in his two parents to play Dev's parents in the show. Even though they lack professional training, I cannot help but chuckle at their exaggerations of Asian-American stereotypes.

I admit that after seeing just the first episode, I was not impressed. The first episode I would sum up as being mediocre, but then again, many TV pilot episodes are just like that.

Being very familiar with the famous sitcoms Seinfeld and Louis, I can say definitively that Ansari's show is most certainly on par with them.

Ansari takes on the classic subjects such as dating, food, friends, family, and others in his witty and hilarious show.



Arrested Development deserves all the credit it is given.

Those who are not already familiar with this hit TV show ought to be. This is easily one of my all-time favorite comedies.

The show is a quasi-mockumentary, but also a parody, which critiques sardonically popular reality TV shows, which star extremely vain, privileged, families who face superficial and ridiculous problems (the Kardashians).

It focuses on the fictional Bluth family, which is the incarnation of dysfunctionality. A lot of the humor arises from the situation the family is in: the rich patriarch of the family, who owns a multi-million dollar company, turns out to be guilty of a number of white collar financial crimes, and the family manages the ridiculous situation they are experiencing.

Arrested Development stars Jason Bateman as Michael Bluth, who seems to be the only sane and rational member of the family. With a character who claims to be a "never-nude" and must always be wearing jean shorts, I cannot help but love the characters. The narrator of the show gives brief, and often humorous and witty the family.

The kind of humor that the writers and actors consistently carry out is a type that everyone can enjoy. I know a lot of people who have seen Arrested Development, yet I cannot think of a single one who did not love it.



The Flash is for fans of a true superhero story.

This show embodies the bright colored comic books that come to mind when I think of superheroes. Barry Allen, portrayed by Grant Gustin, is a crime scene investigator for his local police station who gains super human speed and reflexes.

The incident which gave Berry his abilities also granted a multitude of other people powers, whom are referred to as "metahumans". Most episodes a new, evil metahuman is introduced, and the Flash must stop him. Since Berry is also a crime scene investigator, he often uses his powers to help solve cases for the police department, and often enlists his team of scientists to capture some of the more evasive metahumans.

This team is made up of many great characters, most of whom are physics and science nerds. When topics like time travel and particle accelerators come up I have to consciously refrain myself from nerding out.

The writers smoothly incorporate more of the overarching story bit by bit into every episode, typically in one short scene at the end of the episode. With a great plot that is taken almost directly from the comic books, yet still remains original, a new mystery every episode, nerd topics, and creative villains, it is difficult to find any reason not to watch The Flash.



Gotham is great for those who enjoy the Batman comics and movies.

This gives a great depiction of the crime ridden city and provides both the backstory of Bruce Wayne (who later becomes Batman) and Gotham, the city he lives in and protects.

Immediately after watching the first episode I knew I would not be doing any homework until I caught up on all the episodes.

This show brought out my repressed, inner-nerd memories of how much I love Batman.

To anyone who enjoys the Batman comics, movies, TV shows, or video games I recommend this show.

The way it can best be described is as a non-repetitive and Batman based CSI. That is, each episode has a specific narrative, typically a crime or mystery that must be solved, along with other material that advances the overall plot of the show as a whole.

While nerd culture has influenced me to have strong opinions on the Batman movies, this show has defied all expectations made by the movies.

I admit that my bias as a nerd has greatly influenced my enthused attitude towards the show, but would implore everyone to watch an episode or two whether or not you like superheroes, as it is much more than just that.

Album Review

Logic's *The Incredible True Story*



Coleman Greene
Editor-in-Chief



Maryland emcee Logic does not disappoint with this sophomore album. Coming off critical acclaim from last year's *Under Pressure*, Logic gives his fans another project for the books.

The Incredible True Story is a sci-fi epic of sorts, chronicling the last humans on earth travelling in search of the planet of Paradise. Logic's masterfully story telling completes the adventure from the first to last song.

The opening track "Contact" choir vocals with an Interstellar backdrop. Upgrade provides the listener with Logic's trademark sampling and busy drum work. Similar to other classic projects like Kendrick Lamar's *good kid, m.A.A.d city*, *The Incredible True Story* has scenes that tell the story of trip to Paradise, giving nods Logic's affinity for Rubik's Cubes and Quentin Tarantino.

The reloading point in the album is "I Am the Greatest." This song is a certified banger, as Logic gives us a song reminiscent to "Gang Related" from his last album. "Lord Willin'," "City of Stars," and "Stainless" hit back to back to back.

Logic pours his heart out, rapping about following dreams, the struggle with the music industry, and the problems he faced as a youth in the DMV.

"City of Stars" is an epic six minute song, a diss track disguised as a love song: "Cause this not a love song, this is so long, you did me so wrong, for so long." As a mixed rapper, he talks about racism that still exists in the industry, even after his successful first album. This song is the climax of the album, similar to "Nicki" from *Under Pressure*.

The album finishes with the title track, "The Incredible True Story." The song is a celebration of the all of themes from the album, from following your dreams to finding Paradise. Logic features a clip from British Philosopher Alan Watts on removing the focus money in the pursuit of your dreams: "If you say that getting the money is the most important thing, you will spend your life completely wasting your time."

While *The Incredible True Story* does not have the revolutionary effect of *Under Pressure*, Logic provides the world with another project that will change how we think about money, success, and even our planet. From the casual hip hop fan to Rattpack enthusiast, Logic does not disappoint.

Catch Logic at 8:30 P.M. on April 2, 2016 at the National.



Shoredog Café is located in the Tuckahoe Shopping Center at 435 B North Ridge Road.

Shore Dog Café Review

Connor Loughran
News Editor

I was not expecting to beat the brunch crowd when I walked into the West End's new local eatery on a Sunday, and I was also not expecting to meet a local celebrity. Sitting outside was a timid and adorable pup, Jackson, who is the second generation mascot of the Shore Dog Café.

After I placed my order at the counter, I took our table number and sat down. I fondly noticed the locally named foods such as sandwiches dubbed "The Westham" and "The Tuckahoe."

The wait to be seated was the short; I was able to admire the ambiance of the restaurant without reaching the point of embarrassing stomach growls.

The white themed space was accented well with light woods, creating an upbeat feel to the traditional moody coffee-shop darkness. The decor featured abstract artwork, including a few

dog pieces, and cute little potted trees at each table.

I ordered a bagel with cream cheese and lox, hold the capers, for \$6.50. I considered it to be a bit pricey until I finally took a bite and realized my investment was well worth it. There was nothing gaudy or flashy about my meal, nor was anything in great abundance, but the simplicity allowed me to appreciate the individual ingredients. Each bite was wholesome, and thank goodness they did not slop on the cream cheese.

After I finished my bagel, I tried the "Westham" off my friend's plate, which was a grilled chicken Panini accompanied by gouda, roasted red pepper, arugula, and basil. The ingredients were fresh and delicious, but the melted gouda made the sandwich a bit soggy.

While I ordered a more standard meal, one should not be deceived into thinking this café does not offer some guilty pleasures. Lunch dishes are topped with goat cheese, blackened

shrimp, filet mignon, grilled leeks, and various delicacies.

I returned to The Shore Dog Café one afternoon with friends to check out the evening menu. We were lucky enough to stumble upon an Open Mic Night of sorts- even though only one group was performing.

The music appropriately added to the ideal ambiance. I couldn't help but feel at home as I sipped a Chai tea latte and ate a Mint Chocolate Chip ice cream cone, while being lulled by the relaxing style of this performing duo.

Shore Dog offers organic and local coffee and ice cream, from Lamplighter Roasting Company and Homestead Creamery. Even though their dishes and drinks are rather rich, one can leave feeling somewhat guilt-free and content.

I would love to keep Shore Dog as my secret rendezvous site, but my chances are slim. The café is bound to find success as a versatile eatery, coffee shop and desert shop in the popular Tuckahoe Shopping Center.