



## Freeman Alum Named Teacher of the Year

Jack West  
Opinions Editor

When social studies teacher Lara Curry learned that she was the 2015-2016 Teacher of the Year, she was overjoyed. Mrs. Curry, a Freeman graduate herself, immediately noted the "generosity of her colleagues" and felt "incredibly humbled."

The Freeman faculty chooses the Teacher of the Year by email ballot. The criteria includes being a fulltime classroom teacher, having an excellent reputation as a teacher, and at least 3 years of teaching.

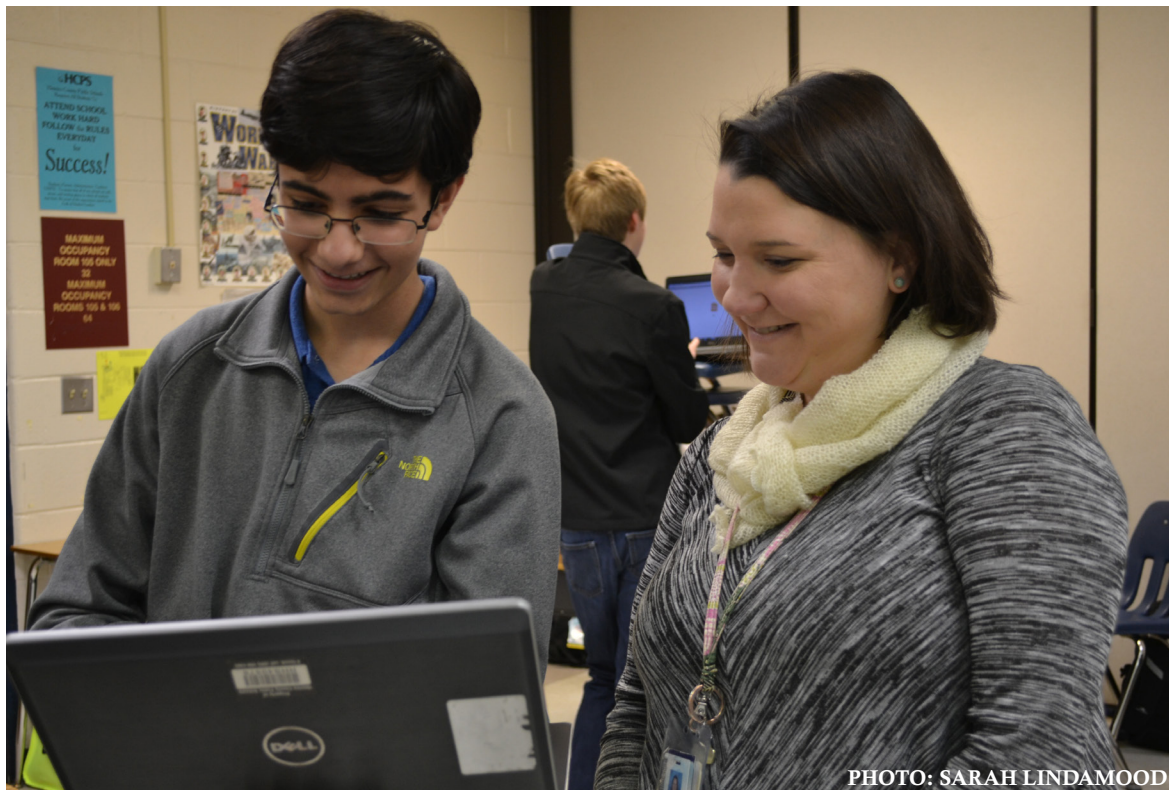
Mrs. Curry has been teaching at Freeman for eight years. She teaches World History II for Leadership Center students and AP European History.

Many of Mrs. Curry's colleagues voted for Mrs. Curry because of her positive attitude and success cooperating and collaborating.

John Larkins, social studies department chair calls Mrs. Curry a "team player."

Mr. Larkins describes her as "always positive, upbeat, and never has a negative attitude."

Mrs. Poates cited specifically, "Her content knowledge, how she works beautifully with all



Mrs. Curry imparts her wisdom on her student, sophomore Paul Sabharwal.

kinds of students, her caring approach which is immediately evident when you see her interacting with students, and her involvement with clubs" as reasons for Mrs. Curry's success.

Mrs. Curry's students also have good things to say about her.

"Mrs. Curry always knows how to make class interesting,

and having her for two years was awesome," said sophomore Patrick Murphy.

"Mrs. Curry's enthusiastic teaching style and wholesome devotion to European History keeps myself and my peers fully interested and involved even in such a rigorous class," said senior Clayton Ashe.

Her teaching style helps her connect with students in a unique and personal way.

"I try to bring art into lessons as much as I can because the study of history isn't just about the governments in charge and the wars that were fought, but how people lived and what made them excited, and artwork is indicative

of the society and culture of the time," said Mrs. Curry.

Junior Mary Lawrence Young said that Mrs. Curry's enthusiasm for art history was one of her favorite parts of class.

"I loved the artwork from the Renaissance" she said.

"Most importantly I want to convey that I care so much about every single student and the idea that they have a place in my classroom is far more important than anything I ever teach," said Mrs. Curry.

Mrs. Curry said she did not always know she wanted to be a teacher. After graduating from the University of Mary Washington with a Bachelor's degree in art history, Mrs. Curry was employed at an art gallery in the university.

"I discovered that my favorite part about working at the gallery was the teaching aspect," said Mrs. Curry.

Having been inspired by her teachers, including current teachers Mr. Peck, Mrs. Harlow, and Mr. Dozier, she soon returned to school at the University of Richmond to become certified as a teacher.

Mr. Peck said that Mrs. Curry as a student was "exactly like she is now: unfailingly attentive, astonishingly polite and fascinated by history and art."

## Free Heart Scans Offered at Freeman

The Cameron K. Gallagher Foundation Collaborates with Lopynski Foundation to Sponsor Event

Clayton Leep  
Sports Editor

Every year 40,000 babies are born with heart defects in the United States, and 25 percent of these children will need surgery or treatment at some point in their lives to survive.

However, many victims go years, even their entire lives, without knowledge of their fatal illness.

In March of 2014, Freeman sophomore Cameron Gallagher collapsed at the finish line of the Shamrock Half Marathon in Virginia Beach, VA. Her death was a shocking loss to all those who knew her.

In 1996 Rebecca Lipscomb was a sophomore track athlete at Freeman. Unbeknownst to them both at the time, Rebecca and her father had a genetic heart defect that ultimately cost Rebecca her life.

During a P.E. class, while walking her warm-up lap on the track, Rebecca collapsed.

"I was in the small gym at the time, and a student came and told me someone had collapsed. The ambulance was called and had to administer CPR," said

Suzanne Criswell, former PE teacher and current director of student activities.

In light of these tragedies, the Gallagher family and the Cameron K. Gallagher Foundation has taken an important step to make families aware of possible heart defects.

Saturday, Feb. 20 The Cameron K. Gallagher Foundation partnered with the Ryan Lopynski Big Heart Foundation to sponsor a free heart screening for all youth athletes around the Richmond area.

The Lopynski Foundation was founded by John and Jeremy Lopynski after their son, a freshman at Virginia Tech, died of a sudden cardiac arrest while visiting home one weekend. The Lopynski Foundation travels to Virginia high schools and middle schools giving free heart screening to students in efforts to detect heart disease before it becomes fatal.

"There are unfortunately hundreds of athletes that die each year because of heart defects that could be detected with heart screenings. Hopefully this will open people's eyes for potential risks," said David Gallagher, Cameron K. Gallagher Foundation founder and Cameron's fa-



PHOTO: CLAYTON LEEP

Over 300 families came to the small gym Saturday Feb. 20 for free heart screenings offered by the Cameron Gallagher and the Ryan Lopynski Big Heart foundations.

ther.

The screening took place from 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. and took about 20 minutes per screening. Athletes were screened in gender specific rooms then waited in line to have their results interpreted.

Volunteers from Hanover and Chesterfield County Fire Departments were present as well as nurses and two cardiologists.

Families could pre-register on the website, but registration was also taken at the door. The purpose of the screening was to help as many athletes as possible. The

volunteers were able to screen 250 youths and a few adults. These screenings uncovered 29 abnormalities which could be determined upon follow-up to be serious. The cardiologist recommended to the parents that their pediatricians be made aware of the screening result and for families to make appointments with pediatric cardiologists.

Freshmen Emme Levenson and Cammy Lynch attended the screening.

Emme said that her family attended "in support of Cameron



Gallagher because my parents and brother knew her, and also just to make sure we were ok."

Cammy described the process: "They put sticky things all over your body and attached probes to it attached to a machine with a print out of your heart rate."

There was a cardiologist who interpreted the results.

Although heart screenings are not a means to eradicate heart defects, they are a necessary precaution to prevent future fatalities.

"Things are going to happen sometimes and sometimes we can get a handle on it and sometimes we can't. This helps us get ahead of the game," said Mrs. Criswell.

"It isn't just one person that this could happen to" Emme said.

## Locked Door Policy Implemented for Safety Concerns

Students and Teachers Express Concern for Hallway Congestion and Extended Travel Time

Kyle Adams &  
Sara Hamilton  
Staff Writers

As a result of a Henrico County Public Schools safety audit on Jan. 7, Freeman doors will now be locked during school hours.

The audit was conducted by a safety committee consisting of a Chair Safety Officer and members of Henrico Fire, Police, Technology, Construction and Maintenance, and Transportation. These annual audits are state-mandated.

The committee found that Freeman had a vulnerable school layout with numerous doors remaining unlocked throughout the school day.

"Students, teachers, and parents showed concern about so many doors being open during the day, and we had to look at what we could do to make it safer," said Anne Poates, principal.

All doors, excluding the north Annex entrance, will now remain locked for the entirety of the school day. Some doors will be unlocked solely for the lunch periods. Students are instructed to not open the doors for anyone.

While hesitant to make this change, the Freeman faculty recognizes the necessity of the new policy to ensure the safety of their students.

Social studies teacher Laura Jones, whose classroom is located near the congested Annex, said, "I understand the reasoning behind it. However, I do feel that this end of the hallway is less safe because there are so many people in one place unable to move. It could become a different type of safety issue."

Ms. Jones's classroom neighbor, social studies teacher Ashley Weber, has also noticed the same safety concern.

"I can see both sides of it. We obviously don't want to allow people in the building, but

it seems dangerous having this many people crowded in the hall," said Mrs. Weber.

Mrs. Poates said that the school will need to make adjustments to combat the congestion resulting from changes in student traffic.

Many students feel frustrated by this change.

"Everybody is rushing and pushing each other; it could cause a riot," said sophomore Rafael Rosete.

"I feel bad for claustrophobic people," said senior Sasha Evans.

Students have voiced questions about the necessity of the policy.

"If there was an intruder, what would stop him from going through a few locked doors rather than the front?" senior James Wiltshire asked.

"I understand where they come from to make sure people can't come in uninvited, but I think we are taking too harsh of measures," said sophomore Liza Laughlin.

"I have always felt safe at Freeman," said junior Libby Browder.

The closed door policy has also made students late to class because students moving from Green Acres to the math hall have elongated treks.

"Our hope was to have doors automatically unlock during transitional time, but our technology is not updated enough to do so. The current programming cannot hold enough commands," said Mrs. Poates.

While most teachers have been forgiving of tardiness because of crowded halls, some students have not been excused.

"My teacher said she will give me a referral the next time I am late," said freshman NyAjah Brooks. Junior Molly Bruce has also noticed a detrimental effect from shortcuts being prohibited.

"The new policy makes class rushed because people are showing up late," said Molly.

When asked if a schedule

change will be made to allow for more transition time between classes, Mrs. Poates said: "We will look at it on an individual basis. My hope is not to shorten classes even more."

While negativity seems to be an attitude shared by most students, many students are also understanding.

Many students simply wish that things could go back to the way they were.

"I liked having a breath of fresh air between classes. That is something that was unique to our school," said Molly.

However, Mrs. Poates said, "I know students are upset, but they are responding beautifully. Everybody is so willing to be a team player and I am quite impressed with our students' compliance."

"I am hoping this eventually becomes the fabric of life around here" said Mrs. Poates.

# Name of Middle School Sparks Controversy

Max Slone  
Staff Writer

For years, the controversial history behind the name of Byrd Middle School went unmentioned. When a Hermitage student named Jordan Chapman started voicing her opinion over the school's name over the summer, many people around Henrico County started to realize and agree that a name change could be necessary.

Harry Flood Byrd served as a Virginia state senator, governor, and United States senator. During this time, he was known as a racist and avowed white separatist.

An online poll on the CBS 6 website revealed that 59 percent of people think that Byrd should keep its name, 38 percent were in favor of the name change, and 3 percent were undecided.

Paula Chambers, a Freeman parent and a parent of a Byrd student is in favor of changing the name.

"I would like to see the name of Byrd Middle School changed because I don't think it was ever appropriate to name an educational building for a person who closed public schools in open defiance of a United States Supreme Court decision, as Harry F. Byrd did," said Ms. Chambers.

Ms. Chambers' discontent with the name of the school goes all the way to 2010, the year her first child enrolled at Byrd.

"My family has been unhappy with the school's name since the fall of 2010, when our first child



PHOTO: YASHIA BURRELL

The name of Byrd Middle School is the subject of debate in Henrico County.

entered. Now, our third child is there as a 6th grader. I'm excited that others stepped forward this year to get the ball rolling, and I'm hopeful that the school board and community are listening," said Ms. Chambers.

Ms. Chambers has no problem with the school itself, she simply wishes for a name change.

"Byrd is a great school with energetic and creative teachers, and students from all walks of life and family backgrounds. We just wish it had a different name, one that didn't reflect an ugly history," said Ms. Chambers.

Seventh grader Leah Eaken claims that most students at the school do not want a name change, herself included.

"We don't talk about it a lot because students at Byrd don't think they should change the name. I don't think that they should change the name because while Harry Flood Byrd may have had a bad history, it doesn't

have much relevance at Byrd today," said Leah.

Principal Anne Poates said she first heard about the possible name change in the news.

"Changing the name of a school is a challenging and costly proposal but in some cases is warranted. In this case, I think it is certainly important to hear from as many stakeholders as possible and take their input seriously," said Mrs. Poates.

Mrs. Poates does not think that the possible name change will impact Freeman.

Current Freeman students who previously attended Byrd Middle express mixed feelings regarding the name change.

"I've never heard of Harry Byrd, but the name doesn't bother me and I would want them to keep it," said sophomore, EJ Jefferson.

"I think it would be smart to change the name so that everyone would not be mad at the

school because of who Harry Byrd was," said sophomore, Cameron Leonard.

Henrico County's Director of Communications & Public Relations, Andy Jenks, said the potential name change was brought up over the summer. There was a school board meeting on Dec 10, 2015 and another one scheduled for later this month.

Mr. Jenks said that there has been discussion about who Byrd could be named after if it is decided that a name change is necessary but that they aren't anywhere close to a decision yet.

"It would almost certainly be a community conversation so a few things have to happen before we get to that point," said Mr. Jenks.

According to Mr. Jenks, the ultimate decision for a name is decided by the school board.

"It's the school board's decision, but like a lot of important things, the school board bases its

decision on community feedback and ultimately they're representatives of the community," said Mr. Jenks.

Mr. Jenks said that the county has received feedback from both people wanting to change the name and people who want the name to keep the name.

"It's a core group of people who have done a really nice job of articulating their concerns and bringing them forward in a professional manner. But as a result, we've also seen the other side of that argument, and we've seen a smaller number of people voice concerns about not changing the name and right now we're simply in the stage of gathering information and listening to what the community has to say," said Mr. Jenks.

The people who want to change the name have made it clear that they believe Harry Flood Byrd was not a man worthy of naming a school after.

"The folks who are in favor of changing the name do not believe that a former elected official who is known among many things for spearheading the massive resistance movement should represent a school. I think some folks are pointing out the irony that history has taken a different turn; maybe the school would not have been as diverse as it currently is today, and therefore the name should represent its diversity and not someone who is known in the history books for opposing that kind of diversity," said Mr. Jenks.

# Ethics Bowl Team Wins in Close Competition



PHOTO: COLLEGIATE

The Freeman team poses after being named Virginia State Ethics Bowl Champion.

Sara Hamilton  
Staff Writer

At Freeman, ethics is not a subject taken lightly.

"We are what we do, and therefore it matters that we do the right thing," said Rob Peck, social studies teacher and director of the Center for Leadership, Government, and Global Economics.

"Ethics is the basis for all human social interaction," said junior Nitish Vaidyanathan.

On Jan. 30, the following team of seven junior students in the Leadership Center won the Virginia High School Ethics Bowl: Allen Baiju, Forrest Feaser, Jane Geiger, Sarah Lim, Nicholas McComb, Beau Nardo, and Nitish Vaidyanathan.

Mr. Peck introduced the new opportunity to his Seminar in Ethics Philosophy and Law class in the fall.

"I knew I had some students that enjoyed discussing the topic, so I made it available to them," said Mr. Peck.

The National High School Eth-

ics Bowl offers the opportunity for student teams to present a position in response to different real-world cases and discuss the ethical accuracy of their position.

"It forces us to get out of our own heads and think about the world around us," said Nitish.

There are 15 cases that the students prepared for in advance, things from genetic engineering to cheating on a test.

The seven students began to meet in October before school a few days a week for about 45 minutes to prepare for the competition, and they also did some research outside of school.

"As we got closer to the competition, we would meet every morning regardless of whether Mr. Peck was there," said junior Jane Geiger.

"We were all pretty good friends already because we have a lot of classes together, but we definitely had a lot of argument about what position we were going to take for each case. By the end, we learned to rely on each other to get the job done when we were up on a panel," said Jane.

Mr. Peck described his role in helping the students prepare as the "Questioner-in-Chief."

"He not only taught us the different ethical theories, but also how to frame our arguments. He

taught us how to state what we believe in a way that makes sense and stay true to our principles," said Nitish.

Held at Collegiate School, the team competed against teams from Deep Run, Appomattox Regional Governor's School, James River, and Collegiate throughout the day.

"We slowly gained confidence over the course of the day. It was relieving to know that someone would back me up if I didn't say the right thing," said Nitish.

"It was more a collective effort to see how well we could do," said Jane.

The team was asked a total of five out of the 15 possible questions, and each round lasted about an hour.

The first part was a round robin. Then they compared win-loss records, and the top two teams played against each other in the finals.

During the day, Freeman collected two wins, a loss, and a tie, placing second overall. The team advanced to the final round against Collegiate.

When Freeman and Collegiate tied in the final round, no one was quite sure what to do.

After first declaring co-championship, Mr. Peck and Collegiate's ethics teacher called the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the headquarters of

the Ethics Bowl, who instructed them to add up each team's total points from the day.

The co-championship was revoked, and Freeman was declared champion of the Virginia High School Ethics Bowl.

This decision resulted in Freeman's qualification for the National High School Ethics Bowl Championship. If the team wins their upcoming virtual match against the Maryland state champions, they will compete at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in April.

"It was an interesting, fun, and worth-while experience," said Mr. Peck.

Mr. Peck proposes that Freeman could send more than one team in future years if another teacher is interested in participating.

"I definitely would not have been able to do this without Freeman and the guidance of Mr. Peck and my teachers," said Nitish.

It turns out that the application of ethics extended far beyond the debate at the Ethics Bowl.

"The students on both teams were very gracious with one another, which was very nice to see. You kind of wish that others could see that you can be competitive and polite all at once," said Mr. Peck.

# Rebel Run To Include New Activities and Events

Ross Metcalf  
Staff Writer

Picture the Freeman track with hundreds of runners and walkers lined up and waiting for the starting signal, the staff parking lot turned into a carnival filled with events run by members of Freeman clubs and teams and live music blasting from the big gym steps.

This event is the 5k Rebel Run, however the event offers more than just the race. The Rebel Run will be held on Mar. 19.

Throughout the day participants and spectators can visit a youth clinic run by the girls lacrosse team, a 'Drive 4 Your School' booth run by the football team, lunch on sale from the members of the softball teams, a bake sale from the baseball teams, and a cake walk from the Rebels swimming club.

During the 'Drive 4 Your School' event, people 18 years and older are able to test drive new Ford vehicles. There will be an art show and face paint sta-

tion by the National Art Honor Society, an arts and crafts station run by the Art club, an adoption stand from the Freeman Furs, and a cheerleading clinic to promote summer cheer camp.

To top it off, there will be live music from Fordson Labs, featuring Coleman Greene and Carter Ward, and the Phaty's, featuring Will Evens, Andy Heller-Jones, and Colin Arnold. Fordson Labs, original hip hop from West End Richmond with folk inspired aspects, will play from 10:30 a.m. to 11:20 a.m. The Phaty's, a jazz fusion with jam band elements, will be playing from 11:35 a.m. to 12:25 p.m.

The Rebel Run is a 5k (3.1 mile) road race. The event begins on the track, runs down the bus loop, goes through the neighborhoods across Three Chopt Road, and loops back down the bus loop, ending on the track.

The Rebel Run is a yearly tradition that is usually held the weekend before spring break. This is the Rebel Run's fifth year. The goal of this annual event to raise money for the Freeman athletic programs.

**Freeman High School**  
**March 19, 2015**  
**9 a.m.**

*The Rebel Run 5K & 1 Mile Fun Run is open to our community. All proceeds benefit Athletic Boosters and student athletes of Douglas Freeman High School.*

"This year's event will be more like a carnival atmosphere in addition to still being a 5k road race involving a more family oriented event, where people who choose to run can afterwards go and something to eat and get their faces painted," said Brian Reuter, cross country and track coach.

The Rebel Run is an opportunity for the Freeman Athletic community to come together for the benefit of the athletic programs combined with the other members of Freeman's community and surrounding neighborhood.

"The Rebel Run is the single biggest fund raiser for the Free-



PHOTO: SARAH LINDAMOOD

Rebel Run will take place on Saturday, March 19, 2016

man Athletic community outside of booster donations," said Suzanne Criswell, Director of Student Activities.

This event is for the benefit of the entire Freeman family and the community. The money making power of this event buys needed supplies and equipment for all athletic teams. The money raised is added to the donations and ticket sales to bring the funding for all of the athletic teams.

Open to walkers and runners, this even offers a great time for socializing while enjoying the scenery. The event has gained popularity as a training run leading to the Ukrop's Monument

10k in April.

"I am really excited to be running this event with my teammates. I ran it in eighth grade and am looking forward to seeing what changed," said sophomore Ryan McCracken, track and cross country runner.

Anyone who is interested in volunteering for the event is welcome to contact Shawna Shade, Athletic Booster Club member and event coordinator, at shawnashade@verizon.net. Sign up for the event can be found on dsfathleticboosters.org.

# Is it School Spirit or School Spite?



**Coleman Greene**  
Editor in Chief

In 2006, the principal of Freeman High School, Dr. Edward Pruden Jr., banned all students from a playoff basketball game against Maggie Walker. This was in response to an inappropriate cheer against a Mills Godwin player. This incident will forever be remembered as the “Brokeback Bobby Incident.”

I will be the first person to say that I love a rowdy student section. I blared my Ethiopian mountain horn at every football game. I wore red long johns with a sad face to spite the Eagles at

the Godwin-Freeman basketball game. I am not afraid to look like a fool, and I believe that everyone in the Rebel 6th Man should be fired up from the first whistle to the last buzzer. But there is a line between looking like a fool and being foolish.

Exactly 10 years after the aforementioned incident, our student section proved again to lack class and self-control at the first Godwin basketball game of this year. At halftime, SCA representatives from the respective schools announced the inaugural Strike Out Cancer Bowl-A-Thon between Freeman and Godwin. In addition to providing some competition between archrivals, the proceeds of the Bowl-A-Thon would go to cancer research. When the Freeman rep spoke, the Godwin fans hooped and hollered, supporting the cause.

When the Godwin student, Parker Canada spoke, we booted him. In front of the entire community. While he was talking about charity. And cancer.

To make it worse, Canada took to Twitter: “I lost a lot of respect for Freeman tonight, can’t even

support a cause that affected my life/family personally without getting booed.”

I believe that our senior class has abused its power of leadership, especially at sporting events. Not only is our school spirit lackluster compared to the glory days of before, our school spite seems to be more present than ever.

I am writing in response to the Parker Canada incident, but the present state of our student section, as well. This bush league move was not an isolated event, but it reassured my discomfort with our student section.

As a freshman, I saw the blue and gray colors of Freeman to represent class, tradition, and respect. But as I often hear the words fa\*\*\*\* and ni\*\*\*\* fly from the student section, maybe I was wrong. I could talk about a need to be politically correct, but that is an argument that no one wants to talk about. More than that, this is not even a problem of being PC. If we talk about this in a spectator context, our student section must hold itself to a decent standard of sportsmanship.



Freeman fans cheer at home game versus Deep Run.

But even at an ethical level, there needs to be a basic respect for other humans, especially those providing your entertainment for the night or sharing an opportunity to help charity. Not only are we disrespecting the other team’s players and students, but we are disrespecting our own team that is trying to win an honest game. If we cannot agree on a common standard of class at a public sporting event, then our tradition of intensity and pride is lost.

Here are my thoughts: clap

when appropriate. Respond appropriately to referee calls. Get riled up. Yell “#15 takes bubble baths,” and “he’s a freshman,” (even if he isn’t). But remember that at the end of the day we are at a high school basketball game and the opposing school’s students are just us in a different neighborhood ten minutes away.

I hope students do not see this as a condemnation of rowdiness and shenanigans at sporting events. However, this is a cry for reevaluation of the present state of the Freeman student section.

## What if America Loved Black People Like Black Culture?



**Yashia Burrell**  
A&E Editor

From Al Jolson and Elvis to Miley Cyrus, white artists have indulged in black culture and painted it white since the beginning of American music. The influence of black culture has affected the way we view music and fashion for centuries.

And this is a good thing. To say that something as culturally transcending as rap only belongs to black people contradicts the reason the music was created in the first place. But when the music and culture is watered down and

made into parody for white audiences to try on, is it fair for black people to be outraged over it?

Rap has been used to deal with struggles unique to being black. Artists we couldn’t imagine American music without, especially rap, like N.W.A, Wu-Tang Clan, and Tupac wrote about the things they were living, the crime they saw outside their window, and the side of the police the country refused to recognize. The world failed to pay attention to these situations until rapped or sung over a catchy beat.

So when the black community gets upset and calls out cultural appropriation, it’s not an attack on white people consuming black music or black fashion. It’s frustration at the lack of empathy for the struggle from which the style and culture has its origins. It’s an attack on a system and an industry, and the consumers who fail to acknowledge the problems within it.

We live in a world where everything that is ghetto or trashy

about blackness is something to be desired on someone white. Cornrows, dreadlocks, and afros are edgy when worn by white girls on high fashion runways but cause black men and women to be suspended from school and fired from their jobs

But the issue with white people using a culture they didn’t create and pretending to own it to be “cool,” doesn’t end with the erasure of black people. White kids love black culture when black culture is convenient for them. We are entertainment. It is fun for white kids to listen to J. Cole and Tupac and pretend that they don’t live in the West End of Henrico. It’s dangerous. A world of drugs and oppression that they don’t understand but are intrigued by.

When Beyoncé released a music video that emphasized her blackness and simultaneously called out bad policing, she is dubbed a racist by the white listeners who supported her when they believed her music was created

for them. Once we stop being pawns for white industry, creating things only to be easily accessible to white people, and those who consume it, the distaste for black lives but love for the things we create becomes clear.

The same white kids that have endless Kanye albums memorized and have every Future mixtape downloaded are the same ones who are apathetic the second we protest in response to our lives being taken at a phenomenally high rate by the people sworn to “protect and serve.” The second we demand the same respect for our lives that whites expect for theirs, the eagerness for white kids to want to be black and participate in our culture quickly fades.

That is the problem—white people have the choice to decide that they no longer want to be black. When the news articles and stories of dead black boys are uncomfortable for them, they can turn off the T.V. and be unaffected. That is a privilege

we don’t share. Once white kids have dipped their toe in and out of blackness, I am left to watch my people, children that could be my family, killed because black equals threat, go to school where it is seen as a “joke” to take pictures with shirts that spell the n-word or hang nooses around trees on school property.

I am not telling every white student in this school that it is wrong to engage in a culture they enjoy. What I am saying, is that understanding and appreciating culture doesn’t end at the things that entertain and excite you. In order to truly understand an entire group of people and what they represent, people must step outside of their privilege and take the culture in its entirety, including circumstances that may make you uncomfortable.

The question was never whether or not it is right for white people to listen to rap, but once you’ve taken everything you wanted from black culture, will you continue to stand for black lives?

## Did Someone Call the PC Police?



**Rachel Varon**  
Opinions Editor

It’s interesting how a black rapper can say the n-word into a crowd of thousands of people, and yet it would be too controversial for me to spell it out in this article. Some might even consider the fact that I described the rapper as “black” instead of “African-American” is in poor taste. I don’t mean this in the sense that “if they can say it, I can say it” because that is absolutely not the case, but rather to consider the importance of the intentions of our words in conjunction with our selection of them.

This is what my grandmother would call “a sensitive topic”. There is no clear answer, no boundaries of what is right versus unacceptable based on logic or science. In its history, this country has suffered overt racism, sexism, xenophobia, and homophobia. Its past has left it scarred and, understandably, sensitive. These tensions are difficult to understand and more difficult still to discuss. Because of these complications, we as a society have created a series of rules of conduct regarding sensitive issues.

However, I’ve found that in many instances, these commandments of civility have become more about the rules and less about the principle. Not sounding a certain way has become more important than not feeling a certain way, introducing into modern culture the agents of “Political Correctness” and their subsequent rebels.

There are a lot of things in

the world that annoy me. Two of those things stand out to me though, because of their relevance to this school and because of the paradox they present: bigotry and political correctness.

Every time I hear someone say racism/sexism/etc. doesn’t exist in America today I choke out a high pitched “as if” because that is just bull. It exists in this very school! Double standards in dating are everywhere. The homophobia displayed at basketball games has been cringeworthy. There are very valid complaints, I think, that can be made about the lack of tolerance at this school.

However, my frustration with this end of the spectrum is mirrored, although not quite as strongly, with those at the other end.

The fact of the matter is that most of the offensive behavior, that I’ve seen at least, projected in these halls have not been with bad intentions. Were they in poor taste? Absolutely. Reprehensible? Definitely. Unforgivable? I don’t think so. While there are genuine racists in the world and in this school, I will not be discussing them in this article because they do not deserve my attention. The instances I will be discussing in this article are those situations in which the offender was not trying to be hurtful, but rather trying to be funny. It seems that they just haven’t stopped to consider the implications of what they are saying, or how it may affect those sensitive to their jokes. I’m guilty of that myself. I used to call things retarded all of the time. My seatbelt that got stuck was retarded, the jammed zipper on my jacket was retarded and having to wake up early for school was retarded. I’d been told before to not use that word, but by a snappy girl who just told me I was being offensive and left it at that. I thought she was annoying and kept on doing my thing. Clearly I didn’t actually think my zipper had a mental disability so what was she so upset about? It was just a figure of speech. It wasn’t

until I said retarded in front of a kid with down-syndrome and saw his father’s face that I realized what an incredible jerk I had been. I used the word “retarded” as if it equated to saying “dysfunctional” or “unfortunate”, and I never felt more ashamed of myself, essentially saying that young boy was “dysfunctional” and “unfortunate”.

I know that the people I hear making jokes at basketball games about gay people, making stereotypical Jewish jokes, or passing comments about “where women belong”, etc. aren’t bad people. I didn’t think about people with disabilities when I made the comments I did, and I don’t think these people are thinking about the gay kids in the student section, or the women fighting for respect in the professional world when they make their comments either. They are just making dumb jokes, and this is where my beef begins with the people who make “Political correctness” about being correct, rather than being respectful. I think the way to combat ignorance in the world is education, not finger-wagging. The focus should be on what is actually insensitive or hurtful, not in getting offended for the sake of being offended because it makes you seem more progressive.

When that girl snapped at me, I resented her. Had she stopped and explained to me WHY saying retarded was rude, it would have stopped being about “following the rules” and more about the principle of respecting one another for which the rules were created in the first place.

It’s not that you shouldn’t say something is gay or retarded because society deemed it is not “politically correct”; you shouldn’t say it because it is an insult to millions of people around the world who don’t deserve that kind of disrespect. This is why being conscious of what we are saying is so important. This is why it doesn’t matter what you meant, it matters what you said.

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# Students Spend Free Time in Freeman Library



PHOTO: SARAH LINDAMOOD

Simone Stein, senior library aid, helps to shelve books after her classes end during 7th period.

Meredith Given  
Staff Writer

It may come as a surprise to you, but the books in the library don't shelve themselves. This and many other tasks are accomplished with help of the library

aides. The library aides are students who go into the library during one of their free class periods and help with tasks. "They help with anything we need to get done like re-shelving books, helping laminate, helping create displays, and helping recommend books," said Laurie

Kaplan, librarian. There are seven library helpers, one for every class period: Devon Newsone, Dmitry Walsh, Konstantin Rega, Simone Stein, Nancy Pone, Kayla Mertz, and Meredith Neurohr. These students had to fill out an application in order to be selected. It is a volunteer job and does not count

as a class. "I get out after sixth and work in the library during seventh, I also get community service hours," said senior Simone Stein.

The jobs the library aides are assigned vary depending on what the librarians need help with that day. Some of their main jobs include: sorting and shelving books, laminating paper, and putting together displays.

"I mostly organize books and sort and shelve them, I also help with any little projects that the library's working on like laminating and putting out displays," said Simone.

The library aides spend a lot of time in the library. Some of the students volunteer because they are already spending so much time in the library and wanted something to do.

"I've been working in the library for about two or three weeks now. I was already in the library every day during fourth period and was getting bored just sitting on my phone everyday so I became a library worker and it keeps me busy," said junior Meredith Neurohr.

Working in the library gives the students different experiences than those that they would have in a normal classroom.

"I like helping people and signing passes. I like the quietness

of the library it gives me a break from school," said senior Dmitry Walsh.

The librarians enjoy having student helpers because it lets them know what students are interested in.

"They help give a perception of the teenager's eyes and help give us an idea of what teenagers would like," said Mrs. Kaplan.

The library aides have a large input on the displays and posters that are seen around the library. They get to help design and make the displays.

"I get a lot of input on what things should look like, and I got to help out with some posters for Black History Month," said junior Nancy Poncea-Morales.

The library aides aren't the only ones that help out around the library.

"Special education students come in and help restock paper and help with organization," said Mrs. Kaplan.

Without the help of the library aides the library would not be able to function as well as it does. They help keep the library running efficient and keep it organized.

"Without the library aides helping, there would be too much work for the librarians to do and we wouldn't get everything done as efficiently," said Mrs. Kaplan.

# Senior Transfer Adjusts to Life at Freeman

Mackenzie King  
Staff Writer

"There's no place like home." Just like Dorothy, senior Emma Wagner seemed to click her red heels together and magically return home.

After moving to Boston, Mass. in seventh grade and living there for four years, Emma and her family returned to Richmond, Va. winter break of this year.

At the end of seventh grade at Moody Middle School, Emma learned that her father received a job opportunity in Boston, Mass. Emma was upset about the idea of leaving her friends, but excited that she would be able to experience city life.

"I've always wanted to live in a big city, so I thought it would be fun. The prospect of it all was exciting," she said.

Even though the actual process of moving was "stressful," Emma was able to bypass the initial move to Boston.

"In seventh grade my science teacher had a Grand Canyon field trip so I was there with

friends from school while my parents were moving. I stayed the night with a friend and then flew to meet my parents in Boston," she said.

Ann Allred, senior and longtime friend, also attended the Grand Canyon trip and valued her last moments with Emma before she left for Boston.

"We were definitely living in the moment because it was exciting being so far away from our families, but I knew we would keep in touch so it was only so sad," Ann said.

Emma and Ann still managed to visit each other while living so far apart. The girls said on their visits they would either explore the sites of Boston, visit traditional spots in Richmond like the Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden, and talk about the differences between the two cities.

While Emma liked the "big city feel" of Boston, there was no denying the major differences between Virginia and Massachusetts.

"I learned that I don't do well in the cold from living in Boston and that the mentalities are very different," Emma said.

They were "typical northerners. They were brutally honest but still nice," Ann said.

The school setting was also very different.

"When I first moved, people didn't talk to me for the first month. They just didn't want to know me."

After that first month, though, Emma was able to make new friends.

Though Emma and her family lived in Massachusetts for four years, there was always a plan to eventually move back to Richmond. It was originally decided that the Wagner family would return for Emma's junior year, but Emma didn't begin school at Freeman until the week after winter break this year.

Starting school as a second semester senior was not as hard as expected, though.

"It's easier because none of my grades matter. My old school worked on a trimester system and a lot of my classes didn't transfer over to Freeman so my grades to date at my old school are my grades here," she said.

Emma said she was also able to reconnect with old friends



PHOTO: JOHN WAGNER

Emma poses with her family for a picture in Boston.

and meet new faces through old friend groups.

"My very first day here I met someone with a friend group of people I already knew. It's weird but nice to reconnect because we have all changed so much. It's like meeting new people that I'm still comfortable with," Emma said.

"The prospect of a more nomadic life as opposed to a stationary life is more appealing," to Emma, and she hopes to live such a life, applying to multiple

colleges in California.

Emma said she has learned a lot about herself through her adventures in Boston.

"I still have southern opinions and mannerisms but if there is anything I can take away from the move is that everything is always changing, whether you notice or not, so focus on the positive. It's been an interesting, educational, and overall positive experience," Emma said.

# Student Snowboarders Hit the Slopes on the Weekends



PHOTO: SCOTT PHILLIPS

Junior Sam Murphy takes a break from snowboarding to take a picture.

Sarah Farney  
Staff Writer

Junior Grayson Phillips and junior Sam Murphy are getting "snow board" of all these skiers.

Snowboarding at Wintergreen, a Virginia ski resort, is the perfect winter pastime for Grayson, Sam, and sophomore Liza Laughlin during a 3-day weekend or holiday break.

"I think snowboarding's more fun than skiing. It's newer, and I was better at it. I've heard it's hard from people who learned after me, but which one you like more depends on what you want

to do," said Grayson.

It's a common misconception that snowboarding and skiing are very similar, but having your feet strapped together in a snowboard definitely makes a difference.

"It's similar in a way that you have to know the rules of the mountain and it's a lot about balance, but it's definitely really different having your feet strapped together versus apart in skis," said Liza.

Snowboarding is known as a challenging hobby because it requires patience. It's similar to learning how to ride a bike; balancing is hard at first, but once it clicks, you can do it with ease.

Sam started snowboarding at a young age and experienced the frustration of falling.

"When I was little my parents had friends who lived near Wintergreen and I just tried it out. I was really bad and used to cry because I fell down so much," said Sam. Sam is a self-taught snowboarder who never learned to ski, while Grayson took ski lessons and applied what he learned to snowboarding.

"I learned to snowboard in 5th grade at Wintergreen, I took a ski lesson there and kept at it. It was difficult, one day it just kind of clicked," said Grayson. After Grayson got a K2 Brigade snowboard for Christmas in sixth

grade, and the hobby stuck.

Now Grayson and Sam have enough experience to attempt tricks. Grayson has completed rails, jumps, boxes, 180s, and 360s and Sam has completed 360s.

"My favorite trick is a big kicker because you get a rush. It's exhilarating," said Grayson. A big kicker is when you jump off the largest ramp on the mountain.

Liza first tried snowboarding late January 2016, proving it's never too late to pick up the hobby. Although her background in wakeboarding and skiing was helpful, Liza still had her fair share of falls. The first day, she would fall 10-15 times going down the mountain.

"By the second day I picked it up and tried the harder slopes. I liked that if it got too hard you could just sit down and take a break. There are a lot of easy ways to stay in control when you know what you're doing," said Liza.

"It was fun to watch her learn," said her junior brother, Trey Laughlin. Trey has been snowboarding for years, but decided to sit back and let Liza learn without any help. She was careful, like all new snowboarders, but, to his amusement, still fell multiple times.

Snowboarding is an uncommon hobby at Freeman because of Virginia's warm climate and the cost. Students can make limited trips to Wintergreen from late December to early March, but after that the season ends.

"Rentals were \$50 and \$80 for

lift tickets, so my family can only go once in a while. It's definitely not something we can do every weekend. It's a little easier for people who own houses at Wintergreen because they have season passes," said Liza. On top of rentals and lift tickets, snowboarders also need warm jackets and gear which aren't cheap.

"The only real drawback is sitting down every time you have to put a boot on because your butt gets soaked," said Sam.

Students who snowboard at Freeman typically go to Wintergreen or Snowshoe, a ski resort in West Virginia, because they are the closest. However, snowboarders' favorite trips are to Colorado or Canada where the mountains are bigger.

Grayson said his eighth grade trip to Vail, Co. was his favorite snowboarding experience because snowboarding on fresh snow is incomparable. Sam has been to Aspen and Telluride, both in Colorado.

"We went in a back bowl that was all powder and really fun to ride in. Powder is more fun to ride in because it's smoother," said Grayson about his trip to Vail.

"My favorite days are when you wake up in the morning and there's fresh snow," said Sam.

Snowboarding is a unique hobby for anyone who enjoys the snow.

"You're going fast down a mountain, yeah it's scary but more exhilarating. The most important thing if you want to learn is to keep trying," said Grayson.

# Man on the Street

What comes to mind when you think of Valentine's Day?

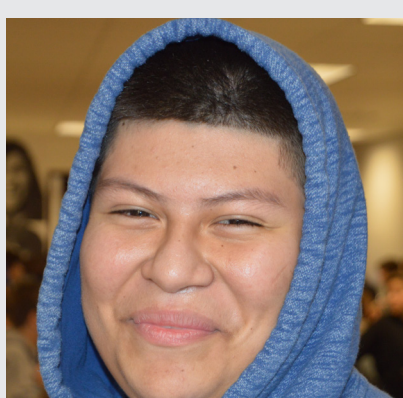


**Emma Washington**  
Sophomore

"When you go to Costco and your mom says you can get some of the fancy chocolate."

**Francisco Delgado**  
Sophomore

"Lots of love and lots of red."



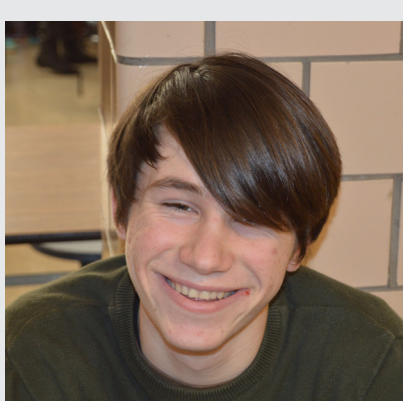
**Riley Ford**  
Senior

"The next day there is a bunch of discounted chocolate."



**Zach Fox**  
Sophomore

"The curiosity about love and what it really means."



**Olivia Yang**  
Senior

"I think of sitting on my bed with my cat."



**Jared Watson**  
Junior

"Baby Cupid shooting arrows at people."



# Multi-Talented Student Has Big Plans



PHOTO: JAMIE BACON

Competing in swimming is just one of the activities on senior Vincent Hou's college application.

Thomas Best  
Staff Writer

When most Freeman students are sound asleep, senior Vincent Hou is just waking up to get ready for swim practice. He packs his bags, and by 4:30 a.m. he's in the pool. After a two hour practice, Vincent prepares for a crammed day at school.

His day begins with early bird Calculus BC, his favorite class.

"I've never been a real math person. I barely scraped by with A's during Algebra II and Trigonometry. The fact that Mrs. Campbell and Mrs. Harlow were really good at teaching calculus definitely made me like it more," Vincent said.

His calculus class is then followed by five other AP courses and an honors English class. He has a 4.97 weighted GPA and is currently ranked 15th in the senior class. Vincent is also the only National Merit Scholarship semifinalist in his grade.

"Schools give money to National Merit finalists and, less frequently, semifinalists because they usually have good test scores and grades," he said. Vincent qualified for the scholarship by scoring in the top one percent of people who took the PSAT in Virginia. Virginia's cutoff for this year's PSAT is 222 and Vincent scored a 225.

Vincent qualified as a National Merit Scholarship finalist on Feb. 10.

In spite of all Vincent's academic and athletic responsibilities, he still managed to find time to fill out 23 applications to a total of 17 different colleges. These numbers differ because some scholarships and special programs require an additional application. Some of these schools include: Harvard, Duke, University of Pennsylvania, Johns Hopkins, Brown and Washington University in St. Louis.

Although he applied to some of these schools because there was Merit Scholarship money involved, Vincent was primarily looking for an elite medical program. While some of the colleges he applied to have much higher acceptance rates than Harvard or Brown, many of them guarantee acceptance to their medical schools if a student earns their undergraduate degree there. Because of this, Vincent also applied to less selective schools such as George Washington University, Case Western Reserve University and University of Oklahoma.

"I thought I really wanted to study business once upon a time. I even went and met with the swim coach at New York University," Vincent said. "He pretty much said that with my grades and his influence I could

get a spot at the Stern School of Business." The Stern School at NYU has a 15 percent acceptance rate and was ranked the 11th best business school in the country by U.S. News & World Report.

However, after completing his internship for the Leadership Center at a local loan office, Vincent realized that he no longer wanted to study business.

"The people I worked with were great, but it was so tedious," he said. "I couldn't imagine myself doing that for the rest of my life." Part of the reason Vincent wanted to study business was because he wanted to choose a different career path than his parents, who are both doctors.

"In the end grades matter most," Vincent said. "Sure I could have gone to practice more and maybe gone D1, but for me medical school is the end goal. Most of the time it's a pretty simple formula, you pay attention and do your homework and you can do well," he said.

"Vincent has been a pleasure to work with throughout the college application process. He is highly motivated and goes above and beyond to communicate with me and ensure that we're on the same page in regards to his college applications," said counselor Shannon Edwards.

"He will absolutely be a valuable asset to any college that he attends."

# Hoverboards Roll Onto Freeman Turf

Hoverboards Grow in Popularity among Freeman Students and Teachers

Elena Rogers  
Staff Writer

According to their website, when you step onto a Hoverboard 360 you "step onto the future."

Freeman students agree, this ad accurately captures their enthusiasm for the board.

The Hoverboard 360 is the latest in mobile technologically-advanced products. It is a self-stabilizing board that can be compared to a small Segway without a handle.

The Hoverboard 360 is easy to ride. Lean forward to go and lean back to stop. To turn, just put more pressure on the left or right foot. For example, to turn right, put more pressure on the right foot.

Don't be fooled by the name. The Hoverboard 360 doesn't actually hover. Other brands marketing almost the exact same product such as "Hendo Hoverboard" or "Hoverboard," are generally less popular because of either lower quality or higher cost.

Hoverboard 360s cost around \$350 each. Freshman Christian Ostrom said the board is "totally worth the cost," but he added that he does not think it would sell if it cost much more.

"It's pretty simple to ride. Once you get the hang of balancing on it, it's pretty easy," Christian said.

Riders must be careful not to get ahead of themselves on this board.

Mark Faglioni, psychology and government teacher, who recently bought his son a Hoverboard 360, said, "My son let me ride it and I was having a lot of fun until I leaned too far forward, and it sped me into the table in our kitchen. It's deceptively fast."

The Hoverboard 360's maximum speed is 12 mph.

"If you try to make the board go faster or ride it for too long at the max speed, it will beep a few times and then slow down



PHOTO: GRATTA

Trudie Grattan rides her Hoverboard 360 around her house.

and shut off," said freshman Evan Wood. Safety features like this keep the board from being considered hazardous.

"It lights up too so you can see it in the dark," said junior Trudie Grattan.

The battery life of a Hoverboard 360 is about two hours.

"I use it almost every day. I charge it for an hour and a half and then ride it until it dies," Christian said. Before the board dies completely, it will start slowing down, so it doesn't give its rider a jolting stop when the battery runs out.

There have been reports of battery explosions from overcharging the Hoverboard 360. However, Evan said he is not worried at all and other student Hoverboard 360 owners agree they think there is nothing to be worried about.

"The manual advises not charging it more than two hours to ensure that the battery does not catch on fire while it

charges," Trudie said.

"We charge it whenever someone's not riding it and it hasn't caught on fire yet," said Mr. Faglioni.

With this in mind, what will come of this highly advanced technologic product in the future?

"I think it would be fun to ride them during sports games. It would be like playing polo, except on hoverboards," Trudie said.

"I think they're going to become the new mode of transportation. Instead of seeing people riding bikes down the street, we'll be seeing people ride hoverboards," Mr. Faglioni said.

Though not many students own their own Hoverboard 360s, interest is increasing as word spreads about this futuristic board.

Maybe we'll be seeing Hoverboard 360s in the hall one day.

# FREEMAN STUDENTS MAKE THE HALLWAY THEIR RUNWAY

## Junior Myles Casey Struts His Unconventional and Edgy Style



Myles Casey shows off his edgy style with a black hoodie and ripped jeans.

Page Ryland  
Staff Writer

Junior Myles Casey walks the halls of Freeman as if it's his runway. Wearing his signature retro corduroy jacket

that once belonged to his grandfather, high-waisted jeans, slight platform shoes, and a tattoo choker necklace, Myles is turning heads.

"I kinda have always had a distinct style, but I have become more of my

own in high school," said Myles.

Myles describes his look as "edgy, hipster, and unique." His outfits seem to represent exactly who Myles is.

Myles expresses a lot of energy when talking

about his favorite trends and fashion topics. His positive attitude and personality has reflected on his opinions of fashion.

He said he doesn't judge anyone on their looks or what they wear, because he knows everyone expresses themselves in their own way.

In Myles's opinion, the fashion icons he favors, seem to all represent individuality and confidence.

"I love Lily-Rose Depp (Johnny Depp's daughter) because she is so laid back and wears whatever she wants while making it work. She doesn't stress about what people think about her," said Myles.

Along with Lily-Rose, Myles said he admires singer Melanie Martinez's boldness.

"She's unique. She doesn't do the traditional," said Myles.

Myles said he doesn't let the judgment of others get him down. His self-confidence allows him to feel comfortable in anything he wears.

"I definitely think it is a good quality to have to be able to express yourself how you want to," said Myles.

Myles's emphasis on originality and self-perseverance is present not only in his style, but within himself.

"It is almost motivational when someone judges me," said Myles.

Myles expresses each clothing piece in such detail, and holds special meaning to every item.

He said his favorite look right now is "high-waisted everything!"

Myles said jean jackets are a must and he certainly thinks everyone should have one in their closet.

On the other hand, Myles isn't too fond of all fashion trends. He is quite confused why bell-bottom jeans are still a thing.

"I cannot stand them... but I am all for dressing 70's sometimes," said Myles.

Myles has some great tips on how to maintain a unique style on a budget.

"Thrill stores are the way to go. You can find the best stuff," said Myles, while showing off the glasses he purchased at Bygones.

Myles has a distinct style and has a clear-cut opinion about where he likes to shop and where he does not like to shop. He said he does most of his shopping at local thrift stores. His favorites are Bygones in Carytown and occasionally Goodwill. He certainly enjoys scooping out the best finds.

Although Myles said Urban Outfitters is one of his favorite places to shop, it tends to be on the more pricey side.

"What I do is I go to Urban and I find the brands they sell there. Then I find them online somewhere cheaper to save money," said Myles.

Currently, Myles does not have a plan for a career in fashion, but that doesn't mean he won't pursue fashion in the future. With his passion for fashion, genuine personality, and fierce attitude, Myles is excited for his future.



## Lauren Potts Proclaims Her Urban Street Style Daily



Lauren shows off her new hairstyle.

Nick Newton  
Staff Writer

Walking down the hall, one can identify Senior Lauren Potts from her unique style. She is wearing sandals, a plain olive green t-shirt, and flared jeans, while sporting a backpack filled with colorful pens for her art.

Lauren is not one to subscribe to brand names or popular fashion. She does most of her shopping at local thrift shops.

Lauren will buy anything on the rack that jumps out at her, but she generally selects clothes that fit in with her urban or street style. If she can find anything that checks the boxes of "good clothes and cheap price tags," Lauren will consider buying it.

Sometimes, when the thrift shops run thin on threads, Lauren will

change things up and go to her typical non-thrift shop, Urban Outfitters.

Because her taste is so diverse, and she is willing to wear anything that strikes her, Lauren has made some bold statements over the years.

"Last week I died my hair grey and dressed like my grandma, but like a fashionable grandma," said Lauren.

In case you are looking for some advice, Lauren listed off some of the newer trends that she approves of.

She said she likes it when "guys wear cuffed jeans with Oxfords... also [crazy] socks." Her favorite accessories currently are black ankle boots and big earrings.

It is difficult to characterize Lauren's style because it changes daily. She doesn't do any planning of outfits or even generally aim for a certain "look."

"I don't really take

myself seriously enough to have a style," said Lauren.

Lauren's general nonchalance about her fashion leads to unique styles. She just gets out of bed and wears whatever she feels like.

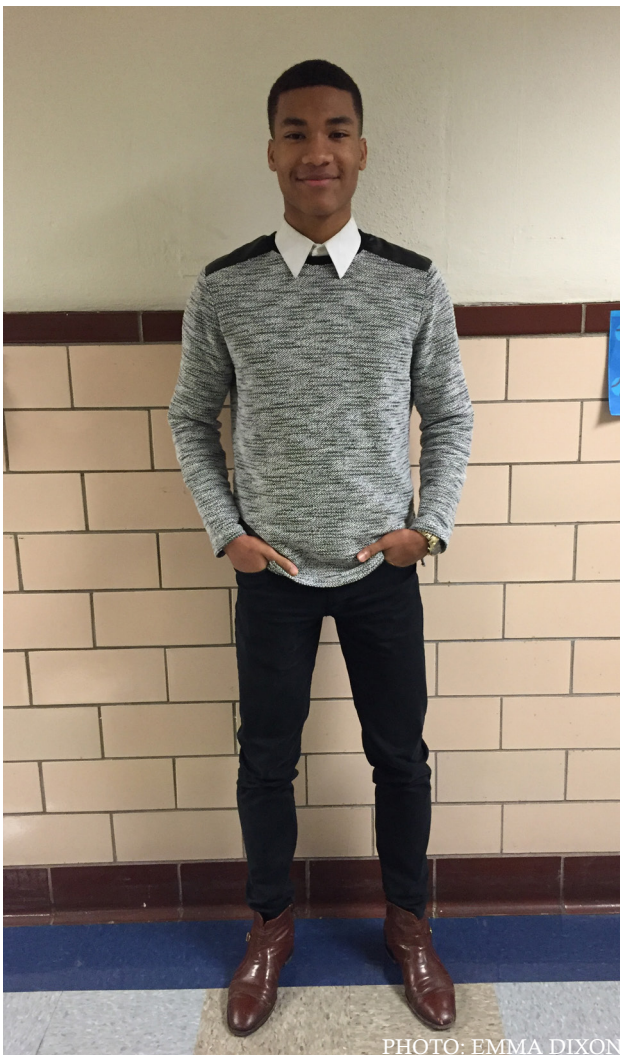
"I don't really have a routine, I just roll with it," Lauren said.

She usually does not apply makeup in the mornings, but if she decides to do so, Lauren will "sometimes do some colorful lipsticks or eyeliner."

She likes a diverse range of styles and clothes. The only fashion Lauren does not approve of is whenever she sees people wearing the same clothes as everyone else around them. She generally suggests avoiding mainstream styles, and she prefers to see people wearing something unique.

Whatever Lauren's style is today, you can be sure she will stand out from the rest of the pack.

## Senior Joseph Mitchell is the King of Neutral Colors



Joseph poses to show his styling of neutral colors.

Emma Dixon  
Centerspread Editor

Senior Joseph Mitchell is a testament to the saying "people who wear black lead the most colorful lives."

"My favorite color to wear and style is black," said Joseph, who was wearing all black.

Joseph's style shifts daily, but one thing it always consists of are neutral colors.

"More recently I have been wearing a lot of black, grey, and white," said Joseph.

Although Joseph's wardrobe consists mainly of neutral colors, he experiments with different styles each day depending on his mood.

"At this point I think of my style as experimental. One day I might wear a fake nose ring and other days I'll wear a choker. I like experimenting because I like changing it up," Joseph said.

Joseph's style is unique to him because it is a

different representation of his personality.

"Everyone wears or styles something a little bit differently and that sort of sets us apart and makes everyone's style unique," Joseph said.

Experimenting with different styles and types of clothing has evolved with Joseph's courage in trying new things.

"I have admired that now I am not so afraid to try new things. If I like it, then I am going to wear it," Joseph said.

Joseph gets most of his inspiration from his dad as well as different runway shows.

"When watching runway shows, I might see two colors paired together that I never would have thought would look nice, or a sweater and a certain type of coat, and I think maybe I can find something like that," Joseph said.

Joseph gets many of his clothes from local thrift stores where he is able to find old clothes and make them new, or new clothes

and add different elements of his style.

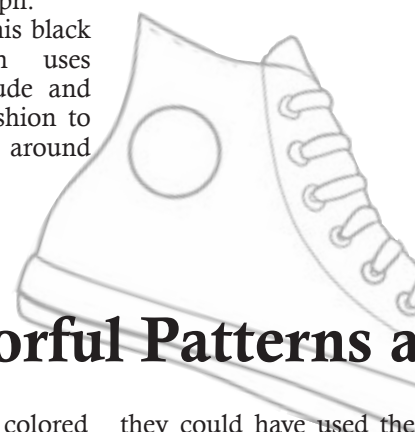
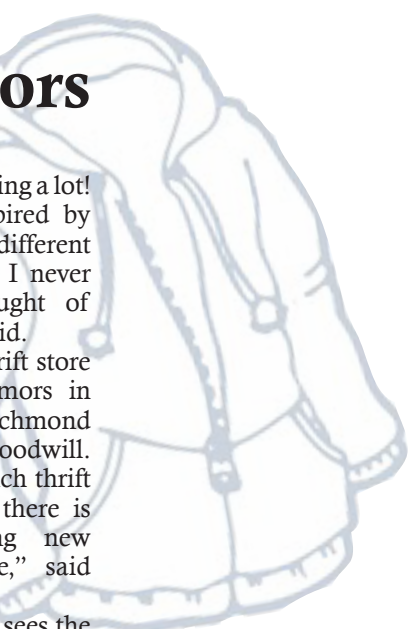
"I like to go thrifting a lot I am always inspired by new things and different elements of style I never would have thought of before," Joseph said.

"My favorite thrift store right now is Rumors in downtown Richmond as well as Goodwill. Regardless of which thrift store you go to, there is always something new and unique there," said Joseph.

Joseph not only sees the visual aspect of different fashions and styles but sees the importance of it to each individual.

"People gets jobs and make money off of fashion and it influences so many different things. Even if you don't think you are interested in fashion, it represents so many different things and is more than a visual aspect; it represents each person," said Joseph.

Even through his black clothing, Joseph uses his colorful attitude and mindset about fashion to influence those around him.



## Junior Emma Phelps Finds Freedom in Making Her own Clothes



Emma fashions her hand-made clothes.

Connor Loughran  
News Editor

Instead of baking cookies with her grandma, junior Emma Phelps makes clothes that she then wears at school.

For over eight years, Emma has been making many of her own clothes. Under the instruction and continual assistance of her grandmother, she has been able to customize her wardrobe in a way that doesn't break the bank.

"My grandmother taught me how to sew when I was younger, and I've just been gradually perfecting my style," said Emma.

Emma has estimated that roughly 25 percent of her closet consists of her original creations, including tops, skirts,

dresses, shorts, and various miscellaneous items.

"I love to make dresses. They might take awhile, but the finished product is really rewarding," said Emma.

However, she did not start fashioning her own clothes out of an adversity for modern style. Making clothes is just simply second nature for her now.

"I try not to stand out with my homemade pieces. I like to play by the rules somewhat because I'm not really trying to make a statement," said Emma.

She has found that she appreciates the concepts of current fashion trends but sometimes finds it necessary to make certain alterations.

"I like brands like Free People, but I don't like

how it's cheaply made. Instead, I try to replicate those styles in my pieces," said Emma.

Her ability to control most of the process ensures that all of her pieces are accurately tailored to her needs, and she can avoid paying department store prices for poor quality.

"Making your own clothes allows for freedom. You can modify the patterns to make them whatever you want to be; it's not by the book," said Emma.

When she decides to make a new item, she goes to JoAnn's Fabric and straight to their designer books section to find inspiration. If she discovers a fabric or style that she likes, she will buy it and head to either her grandmother's house or

to the sewing room at her family's farm.

"I love to look through Vogue. I have the best luck finding cool stuff in there," said Emma.

Despite requests from friends and family to make them clothes, she prefers to keep it as a hobby.

"I have considered selling them, but then I would have to have the time to sew all year long. My workload doesn't always allow for that," said Emma.

In addition to creating her own clothes, Emma sings in her church choir, runs track, and swims. However, this fashionable hobby allows her to set herself apart from the crowd.

"I like how my pieces fit in, but they are also able to be unique in their own way."

## Reagen Fakhoury Flaunts Colorful Patterns and Designs



Reagen shows off his hooded leather jacket.

Emily Finto  
Staff Writer

He's wearing a brightly colored dashiki, blue-grey jeans, rolled up to showcase the geometric printed socks, and gently worn Sperry shoes. With carefully styled hair and a unique fashion sense, senior Reagen Fakhoury is breaking away from the stream of Freeman's multi-colored chino pants and button downs to forge his own path.

One look at Reagen's diverse ensembles and you can tell he's open minded with his clothing choices. A linen dashiki, a

pull-over shirt commonly worn in West Africa, can show his personality just as much as a black leather jacket does. To him, it's not about mimicking a specific trend as much as it's about wearing what expresses his personality.

"Most mornings I just wake up, look in my closet, and put on whatever looks good," said Reagen.

The majority of Reagen's clothes are bought online and not from any particular store. The variety of his wardrobe reflects the diverse sources of his clothes.

For example, some of his favorite pieces are his Michael Kors blazer-

sweater, brightly colored dashiki, and black leather jacket. He said his leather shoes are a staple in his outfits, but his go-to shoes are a pair of 4-year-old Sperry shoes he's had since his freshman year.

"I would describe my style as dapper at times and always stylish, but it's never casual Friday," said Reagen.

His friend, senior Cailey Cummins agrees. She said, "He never has a lazy day which is really frustrating."

Reagen believes there isn't a day that should be considered a "lazy day." He said girls' Nike shorts, or "Norts," are an "excuse to be lazy" when

they could have used the opportunity to experiment with their clothing.

Reagen hasn't always been as invested in how he dresses.

"I used to just rock a t-shirt and the classic Adidas, but around the end of sophomore year I started paying more attention to my clothes. I just started wearing different stuff," said Reagen.

His style inspiration is his grandmother. Reagen remembers her as always being the best dressed in the room. He said her style was "elegant, yet never over the top," a quality which influences his own style.

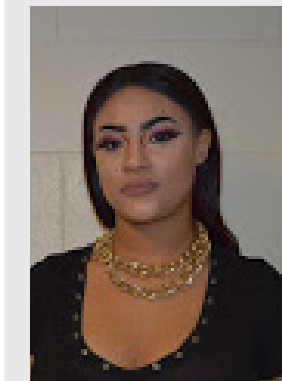
"I mean, she had style and a good attitude," said Reagen.

Another part of Reagen's style is the unique professionalism he displays.

Reagen describes himself as "organized, clean, and always well dressed." With a subtle strut and a firm handshake, he shows style isn't just about clothing. His attitude contributes to his style just as much as his clothing does.

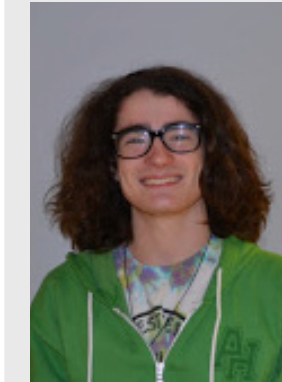
His advice to anyone trying to find their own voice is, "Just be yourself, do whatever you think will look good, and don't care what anybody thinks about you," said Reagen.

## HOW DO YOU DEFINE YOUR STYLE?



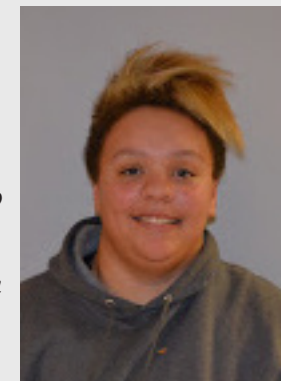
Olivia Allen  
Freshman

"I always have to have a necklace on and I like my makeup to match my outfit."



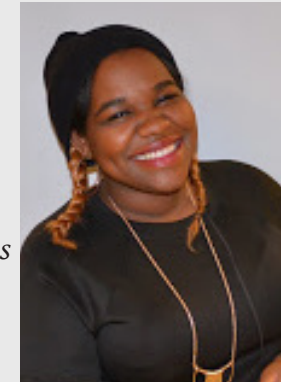
Michael Russell  
Junior

"I have various colors and patterns that I mash up together."



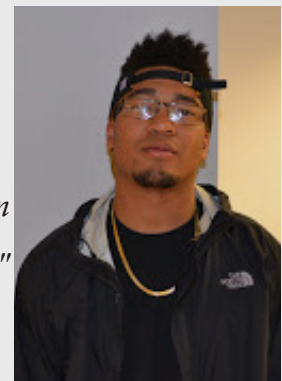
Kayla Fields  
Freshman

"My style is between an athletic and skater type of style."



Cat Tunstall  
Senior

"It is kind of street wise and that girl from the street or the hood."



Jordan Smith  
Senior

"I would define my style as fresh!"



Lyza Holland  
Sophomore

"My clothes have very vibrant colors and floral patterns, which makes them more exciting and fun."

# Girls Basketball Team Lands New Coach

*Doug Clements Takes Over as Head Coach for Girls Basketball Team, Improves Record*

Maddy Waldron  
Editor-in-Chief

Over the course of the season the girls on the varsity basketball team were not the only ones learning new skills. Doug Clements, physical education teacher and former boys assistant basketball coach, is also learning new skills: mainly, how to coach a girls team.

Prior to coaching alongside Coach Parpart for the past 15 years, Clements played under Coach Parpart for his last two years of high school at Freeman.

After 17 years of working with the boys' team, Coach Clements has with coaching his first girls team. The stark contrasts between a girls team and boys team are typically overlooked, but there are many.

"One big difference is the fact that pregame rituals for girls are more about social lives than the boys. I was surprised how well the girls listen and implement suggestions," Coach Clements said.

Coach Clements also said raising a daughter of his own has prepped him sufficiently for his first year as the skipper of the girls' team.

"Having a daughter helps tremendously as far as the mentality and the personalities between

the two [boys and girls teams]," Coach Clements said.

His daughter has not only helped Coach Clements with the adjustments, but also has helped the girls with the shift as well.

"It has helped [that she plays basketball] — she comes and practices with the team sometimes and it not only helps her but also helps the team because they see how I treat her and how I coach her and I do it all the same," Coach Clements said.

Despite the transition of switching coaches mid-season, the girls have taken to the change tremendously well and have not only improved their game, but also their attitudes.

"We have all gotten better with our individual skills because we have been pushed to do better and I think we communicate better now," senior captain Elyse Johnston said. "[Coach Clements] is really intense, but in a good way. He makes us better and has constructive criticism to tell us how to do better."

Since the switch, the girls have increased their win total by two wins. Though the season didn't go as well as the girls had planned, they improved immensely on and off the court, both as players and a teammates, and also learned how to enjoy the game for the game itself and to simply have fun with each other.

"As a team we get along really



PHOTO: SARAH LINDAMOOD

Coach Clements talks to the girls basketball team during a time-out against Deep Run.

well but also in bad times we still get along or get over really quickly," senior captain Meredith Wilson said. "We have not only been playing better as a team but also our team chemistry is better."

As the season progressed, the team not only improved their abilities but also their leadership skills. Specifically some underclassmen have risen up to the occasion and emerged as leaders.

In particular, to the team she is known as Leanne "Ling-Ling" Larkin.

"Leanne is probably one of our best overall leaders with her effort, attitude, and support of her teammates," Coach Clements said.

Coach Clements said that even as a freshman, she has shown outstanding leadership and care for her teammates. She has

learned how to enjoy the game for the game itself.

"The team is very determined. Everyone on the team is so nice but we are also all friends and we laugh a lot together," freshman Leanne Larkin said.

The team's improvement under Coach Clements is a positive indicator leading to success for DSF girls' basketball in the future.

## A Slam Dunk in Tackling Segregation

*The 804 Invitational Looks to Unite Henrico All-Stars and Community*



The 804 Invitational festivities begin at 6:30 on Friday, March 25.

Sarah Lim  
Staff Writer

A 2015 study from the University of California singled out Henrico County Public Schools as one of the most segregated school systems in the nation. This year, HCPS's Student Congress, a collection of students from each high school who discuss county issues, have begun to brainstorm opportunities to bridge this racial divide. Jacob Stern, a senior at Hermitage High School, had a vision that included unity and basketball.

Jacob is combating racial stereotypes, discrimination, and prejudice by bringing the county together through sports. He noticed that before and after sporting events, many high school students unleash their opinions of other high school's basketball or football team on social media. Sometimes these opinions are derogatory.

"[Students from different high schools] stereotype each other based on the color or character of players rather than their ability," said Jacob. "The polarity and different attitudes of students is prevalent."

Jacob is trying to fight the segregation within the county. He hopes the 804 Invitational Game will do that.

Tipoff for the 804 Invitational Game will be at 8:45pm on Friday, March 25 at Glen Allen High School. The opening ceremony will begin at 6:30pm. Jacob and volunteer leaders from each school have selected two male players from each Henrico County high school to compete alongside one another. The game will unite the county as students cheer for two players from each of Henrico's nine high schools representing different communities and ethnicities. All ticket sales will benefit the Boys and Girls Club of Metro Richmond.

After an incident involving a Glen Allen High School student playing a racist parody during a warm-ups against John Marshall High School and the petition to change the name of Harry F. Byrd Middle School because of the namesake's leadership in rejecting racial integration of schools, Jacob is tackling a hot button issue that has come to a boil in the last year.

"I think a lot of comments come from the fact that Varina and Henrico's teams are fully black while Deep Run is almost all white. I think that has driven us apart when in reality it really shouldn't matter," said Jacob.

Seniors Gabe Fountain and Clayton Leep have been selected as the two players to represent Freeman during the game.

Though Gabe said he has never faced discrimination on or off the court, he said there is a problem.

"There are definitely stereotypes between the high schools, but students can't really control that," said Gabe.

Clayton was also excited to learn he was going to participate in the game.

"I'm going to do my best to represent Freeman," said Clayton.

Suzanne Criswell, activities director said, "Gabe and Clayton have overall talent and team ability. They are the ones on the team that will be able to represent everyone."

The night will feature a number of additional events. At 6:30pm, senior Ellie Bisese will compete against other top female players in a three point contest. At 7:30, Clayton Leep will throw down with the county's best dunkers in an NBA-style dunk contest. Fordson Labs, a local hip hop collective of senior Coleman Greene and Godwin senior Carter Ward, will perform at half time of the game.

"Carter and I are excited to promote unity in Henrico County and support our school," said Coleman.

Jacob said this event has not received a lot of attention most likely due to the lack of broad advertising. He and his fellow coordinators have purposefully not done a great deal of advertising.

"If I were to let everybody know about this early, people would have more time to find something to criticize. We want this event to be about unity. I know it's the first year and it's not perfect," Jacob said.

Jacob will distribute a promo video in late February to every high school in Henrico to play on their morning announcements in order to gather support and provide information involving ticket sales. He hopes to have 150 to 200 students from every school attend the game.

"We can get over our differences and rally around a cause that is bigger than ourselves," said Jacob.

### Where:

Hermitage High School

### When:

March 25 at 6:30

**Tickets go on sale March 7th for \$5 in the cafeteria.**

Follow @804Invitational for updates and rosters!

## Winter Sports Wrapup

### Basketball

#### Varsity Boys

The varsity boys team finished 10-11 on the season. Led by seniors Gabe Fountain (14.4 ppg) and Clayton Leep (10.9 ppg), the Rebels finished in sixth in Conference 11. They earned wins on the road against Glen Allen, Lee Davis, and Tucker. They fell in the first round of the Conference 11 tournament to the Hermitage Panthers.

#### Varsity Girls

The varsity girls team finished 3-17. The Rebels were captained by seniors Stephanie Ziu, Meredith Wilson, and Elyse Johnston. The Rebels also got contributions from senior Ellie Bisese and junior Molly Bruce. They earned wins against Thomas Jefferson, Maggie Walker, and Lee Davis and did not qualify for the Conference 11 tournament.

### Freshman Boys

Coached by Jason Howard, the boys team was led by Rob Steele and Ethan Lustig.

#### JV Boys

The JV boys team finished 10-9 on the season. Led by sophomores Grey Pappas and Andrew Catlett, the team scored wins over Hermitage, Collegiate, and Glen Allen. The team suffered a setback midway through the season with the injury of Alex Moss.

#### JV Girls

The JV girls team, led by Caroline Bisese and Abigail Wilson, earned wins over Maggie Walker Governors School twice and Hermitage twice. The team looks to rebound next year with a strong returning core of 14 freshman.

### Gymnastics

The gymnastics team performed exceptionally this year.

They won their Conference 11 tournament, and eventually made the 5A South Regional tournament, and secured the title. The Rebels scored a total score of 141.550, and won by a margin of 3 points. The Rebels also scored the highest number of points in all events: the vault, the bars, the beam, and the floor routines.

Led by sophomores Kameryn Shears and Mallory Girvin, the Rebels earned solid wins in meets at the beginning of the season.

In their first meet, they beat Atlee and Deep Run to secure a home win. In their second meet, they defeated Tucker and Godwin, and established themselves as contenders in the Region.

The Rebels placed third in the State Tournament on Feb. 19 and 20 at Kellam High School in Virginia Beach.

### Indoor Track

The indoor track and field team performed very well this year. The Rebels boys team finished fifth in the Region 5A South meet, beating out Tucker, Glen Allen, Hermitage, and Godwin among others. Junior Waleed Suliman got second place in the 1600 meter race, and first place in the 1000 meter race. Look for the Rebels in the 5A State tournament February 26-27 in Hampton, Va.

### Wrestling

The wrestling team had some strong individual performances this year. Richmond Times-Dispatch Scholar Athlete of the Month Jake Sitison led the team and went 12-1 in the month of January, and finished second in the Conference 11 meet, which earned him a spot in the 5A South Regional tournament. Overall, the team finished fifth in the Conference 11 tournament.

### Swimming

The Rebels swimming team went undefeated this year in all of their meets, winning the Henrico County Championship. In the final meet, the Rebels swim team won by a combined score of almost 500 points over the second place team, Godwin. Sponsored by Laura McKinney, this club team was among the top Douglas Freeman winter sports. With meets on Friday nights, the Rebels got significant contributions from senior boys Will Riggs, Jac Cortright, Vincent Hou and sophomore girls Carter Bristow, Clair Cortright, and Maria Vinson. Freshman Maura Graff has set records in the 50 free and 100 fly. The team is looking to expand and elevate from the club status to become an official team for Douglas Freeman. The team has a solid returning core of juniors including Emma Buckley and Jack McSorley.

# Rebels Gymnastics: 5A Regional Champions

After an undefeated season and winning the district championship, the Rebels roll into the state championship

Carl Nease  
Staff Writer

The 2015-2016 Rebels gymnastics team has made history: finishing the regular season undefeated. Despite this accomplishment, one of Freeman's most successful varsity teams doesn't draw a large crowd for meets.

On Saturday Feb. 6, the gymnastics team won the Conference 11 meet at Henrico. Sophomore Kameryn Shears was named Gymnast of the Year and Coach Sharon Kelly was named Conference 11 Coach of the Year.

"The Conference championship at Henrico High School, against Lee Davis was really exciting, both of us were undefeated, both of us had really good talent, so it came down to who performed better and we ended up winning so it was really exciting," Kameryn said.

Freshman Cameron McCarty describes Coach Kelly as an "amazing coach."

"It was good to see her get recognized for that," Cameron said. "She is really supportive and she tries to help us do difficult stuff," Cameron said.

"She definitely deserved it because she pushes us really hard to be great and she doesn't get enough credit," Kameryn said.

Every member of the gymnastics team earned all-academic



Sophomore Gymnast Kameryn Shears competes on the beam against Henrico and Deep Run.

honors.

They competed in the 5A South Regional Championships Saturday, Feb 13.

This success has truly been a team effort. Coach Kelly said that a lot of the underclassman have contributed their talent, while the upperclassmen have brought their leadership.

This year's team has very accomplished athletes, including gymnasts that have competed at the regional and national levels.

"Every gymnast on the team has been doing gymnastics for a really long time outside of school, two are regionally ranked, and one is nationally ranked," Kameryn said.

Currently, Cameron McCarty is the only gymnast who competes outside of school. She competes against gymnasts from all over the state for Richmond Olympiad.

Two of the strongest performers are sophomores Kameryn

Shears and Mallory Girvin.

Senior leadership has also been a crucial part of the team's success.

"The seniors are really good at organizing things for us to do as a team," said Mallory.

"The team leaders are seniors Wizzie Christopher, Noelle Davi, and Hannah Crowley," said Coach Kelly.

The events in gymnastics consist of the bars, beam, vault, and floor. Kameryn and Mallory

both compete in all of the events.

Kameryn's highest scoring event and also favorite event is the floor routine. Mallory's highest scoring event this year has been beam and her favorite is bars.

Sharon Kelly has been coaching the Freeman team for 20 years and has 37-38 years of coaching experience.

"It has been a combination of senior leadership and the talent throughout the freshmen, sophomores, and juniors that has made the team so successful," Coach Kelly said.

"The daily gymnastics practice is from 4-6 p.m., with stretching, then practicing events in which they will compete in, starting on the floor first because they share the small gym with wrestling and then doing bars, beam, and vault," said Mallory.

"Everyone has done their part and does what they are good at, which has helped have really high scores against other teams," said Mallory.

Some of the other contributors are Wizzie Christopher, Noelle Davi, Cameron McCarty, and Erin Hayes. Coach Kelly would like for Freeman students to know that there "is a gymnastics team here, it is a varsity sport, and it is bursting with talent!"

# A Physics Teacher In Motion Stays In Motion

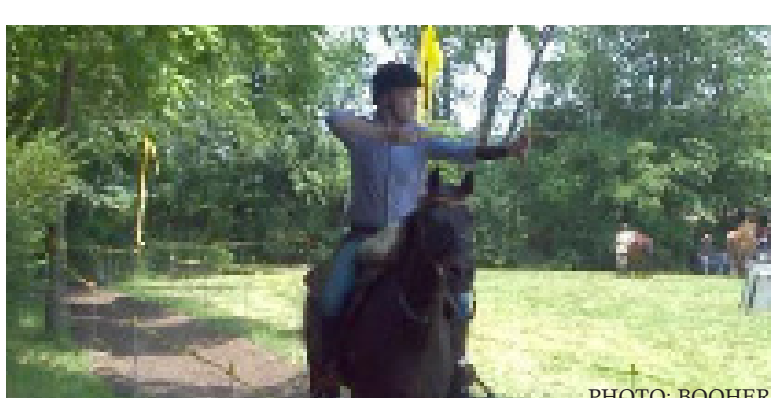
Sam Anderson  
Sports Editor

Mounted archery, fencing, and surfing are unique activities hard to find in one place, but at the end of the Annex all of these sports collide.

Mounted archery is a sport where a competitor shoots a bow and arrow at a target while on horseback. The archer is riding the horse at a canter, one level below the fastest a horse can run. There are different variations of mounted archery such as moving target, or the rider is standing, or facing backward.

Physics teacher Jeremy Booher was always fond of riding horses, which sparked his interest in mounted archery.

"I took a horse riding physical education class in college, and the horse I would ride the owners were trying to train it to become a horse used for mounted archery. That's how I found the sport," Mr. Booher said.



Mr. Booher participates in a mounted archery competition.

According to Mr. Booher, mounted archery is scarce in Richmond, but he competed in Pennsylvania. During a competition, the mounted archer canters through the course shooting at three targets. The final score is based on where the arrows hit the target. The whole run takes about 16 seconds, and on average the competitor can shoot about three shots on the ride down the course.

"It was fun with the horse I did it with, because I got to

work with him exclusively and gain trust. I can't hold on [to the horse] because of holding bow and arrow," said Mr. Booher.

Since he has moved to Richmond, Mr. Booher has found his new love in fencing.

"I go to Richmond Fencing Club once or twice a week. We warm up and then work on footwork and technique," he said.

"I enjoyed archery more because it felt like I had a teammate in the horse, and I like horses," he said.

Mr. Booher explains, "I was a knight in the past, and old habits die hard. In the future I would like to combine elements of both sports and try jousting."

Across the hall, another physics teacher, Devon Collins, has been surfing since he was a teenager.

"My family goes to the beach every summer. I boogie boarded to start and then moved on to surfing at age 12. When I turned 16 I got more serious and taught myself how to surf," Mr. Collins said.

Being a purely summer hobby, Mr. Collins frequents Croatan or Sandbridge for the best waves.

"I try to go at least four times a month in the summer," said.

Mr. Collins hasn't participated in any competitions yet, but has considered participating in the East Coast Championship in Virginia Beach. One reason he hasn't competed in competitions is because Mr. Collins mainly surfs to relax and also because it is not difficult to learn or pick up, and not for competitive reasons.

"I love to get out in the ocean,

and going to the beach with my family. Growing up and surfing is relaxing, and I like being connected to nature," he said.

He prefers riding a long board surf board, rather than a short board.

"I started out riding a short board, but it was very difficult to learn. It is similar to driving a Ferrari versus a Towne Car. Short boards are for tricks like you see on TV, while long boards are for more relaxed, easy fun riding. It is more laid back. When I ride, I can walk around on the board, sit Indian style, and I have gotten close to hanging ten," he said.

He said surfing on the East Coast is not as good as the West Coast, and he dreams of surfing anywhere in Hawaii.

"The waves are constantly six to seven feet and you can surf every day. On the east coast sometimes you can't surf, and you need the right conditions too," he said.

"If you go to the beach and stress you are doing it wrong, that's why I like to surf," said Mr. Collins.

# Junior Wrestler Battles Obstacles in Return to Mat

Deija Bowden  
Staff Writer

Junior Brett Reid's 2015-2016 wrestling season was cut short when he received a concussion competing for the fifth place at the Regional Tournament held at DSF on Feb. 6. Brett was wrestling Tucker wrestler Karillos Azer when he was injured.

Brett began wrestling at age 13 at Byrd Middle School and has continued wrestling at Freeman.

He was interested in wrestling because all of his friends wanted to try out, but to his surprise he said that his middle school coach saw a lot of potential in him, and he realized that he was actually good and wanted to stretch his talents as he entered high school.

Little did he know then, he would make the varsity team freshman year and continue to wrestle for varsity. Brett has attended wrestling camps and received one-on-one lessons since he has been on varsity.

During Brett's freshman year he won third in the Conference in the 106 weight class and third in the Conference in the 113 weight class sophomore year.

Coach Matt Henshaw said that Brett works very hard.

"I admire his work ethic and will to succeed," Coach Hen-



Junior Brett Reid pinning an opponent in a 2015 match against JR. Tucker.

shaw said.

Before his concussion, Brett began this season with a broken ankle from being hit by a pitch during a baseball game in October. Brett used crutches for a week and a boot for four weeks to heal.

After a grueling four week period of recovery Brett developed pneumonia on Dec. 15, 2015. Not even pneumonia could dis-

courage him from wanting to finish the season strong. Once Brett recovered from pneumonia, he returned to the mats Wednesday, Jan. 6 at the Deep Run Dual Tournament.

While wrestling at Deep Run he suffered from respiratory distress.

"I couldn't move my hands, and I couldn't walk. It was so scary. I couldn't even walk to the

car," said Brett.

"I already knew my lungs weren't 100 percent," said Brett.

Coach Henshaw said, "It was hard to watch his dreams be taken away. I felt really sad for Brett and his family."

After that scary event, Brett continued training for a winning season. Ten days later, Brett won second place in the 120 weight class at the Tucker Invitational

Jan. 16.

Coach Henshaw believes Brett can put the obstacles of this season behind him if he "keep(s) involved in wrestling clubs, camps, and tournaments to gain experience."

"Brett is very enthusiastic and speaks out. He likes to be really fast paced and gets through the moves quickly," said freshman varsity wrestler Tyler Thomas.

Brett's record was 7-5 this season due to injury and illness. On average, a wrestler would wrestle 35-50 matches a season.

"Brett is one of our best wrestlers, who wasn't given a chance to be at his best all season long," said Coach Henshaw.

His goal this season was to place well enough in Conference and to move on to Regionals using his favorite moves, the ankle pick and super duck.

Coach Henshaw has coached Brett for two years but has known the Reid family for several years.

He suggested that Brett should keep doing what he has in the past.

"[He should] get back onto the horse and keeping moving forward," said Coach Henshaw.

Brett's attitude has not changed with all of the inconvenience in the beginning of the season and the ending of the season.

"He has a win or go home attitude," said Tyler Thomas.



# Seniors Commit



Parents watch as Oakley Mize and George Holm sign their letters of intent on February 3, 2016

Coleman Greene  
Editor-in-chief

Senior football players George Holm and Oakley Mize signed their letters of intent on National Signing Day on February 3, 2016. George committed to play offensive line at Cornell University.

"I am immensely grateful for my family, friends, and coaching staff at Freeman for the support, as well as the coaches up at Cornell for the opportunity they

have given me," said George.

"George has been a guy who demonstrates how you can really improve over the course of time. He sets a great standard for us on the field, and off the field with his work in the classroom and ending by playing in the all-star game and making second team all-metro. I think he's got a really bright future ahead of him," said Head Football Coach Mike Henderson.

Oak decided to continue his career as a linebacker for the Generals of Washington and Lee University.

"It was great to just have everyone there supporting me with all my friends there and it was a fun time," said Oak.

"Oakley is the guy who grinds every day and really puts the team first all the time. He was willing to move positions this year to help out the team. He was one of the few guys we had this year that started both ways, a true team player," said Coach Henderson. The pair are the first college commits to play all four years in the Freeman program for Coach Mike Henderson.

# Senior Shotputter in Final Season

Ashley Frederick  
Features Editor

Senior Rebecca Webb scores points during track meets without running laps. Rebecca is a third year shot put thrower on Freeman's indoor track team.

"I played basketball my freshman year but after my first season of spring track, I figured out I was pretty decent at throwing. I then decided that I would join the team the following year," said Rebecca.

Her winter event is shot put but she throws both shot put and discus in the spring.

"I actually prefer spring track because of the weather. Because it's warm outside, practice is more bearable," said Rebecca.

Rebecca almost always places in the top three at meets and has a few simple strategies to prepare for throwing.

"I keep my head clear and don't think of anything else. I really try not to let anything distract me before I throw," said Rebecca.

In addition to practice, Rebecca gets ready for meets by listening to a pre-game playlist.

"My playlist helps me focus and get into the zone I need for throwing. I also go over the steps in my head a few times so I am mentally prepared," said Rebecca.

Rebecca's personal record is 33 1/2 feet, while 30 feet is considered to be good. Her coach, Ryan Carmody, exceptional education teacher, is proud of her accomplishments.

"This year, she stepped up as a leader. She takes initiative when it comes to practice and she is always dedicated," said Mr. Carmody.

While Rebecca is known for being a winning athlete, she is also known for being a devoted teammate.

"She's really everything you would want in a teammate. She's funny, supportive, and always pushing you to do your best. Also, she's easily one of the best throwers we have at Freeman. We can always depend on her for a win," said sophomore Sara Elliot.



Senior Rebecca Webb prepares for a meet and shows off her shotput form.

In the future, Rebecca is considering throwing in college.

"I've talked to a few coaches, but I haven't made any decisions yet. So far I've talked to Christopher Newport, Randolph, and

West Virginia Tech," said Rebecca.

While she hasn't finalized any college decisions yet, Rebecca is excited to prepare for her last season of spring track and wants

to end her Freeman career on a high note.

"I'm very much looking forward to the spring season and I expect her to make big strides," said Mr. Carmody.

# Are You Ready For March Madness?

*Freeman Commentator Hosts ESPN.com Bracket Challenge for All Students*



Michael Wagner &  
Trey Holsten  
Sports Editors

March Madness is coming. Whether you're a basketball fan or not, there is no way to escape the Madness. On Sunday, March 13, the matchups for the NCAA Tournament will be released, opening the gate for millions of people across the world to fill out their brackets. Two years ago, billionaire Warren Buffet stated that he would give \$1 billion to anyone who completed a perfect bracket. Unfortunately, the generous billionaire is not hosting the competition this year, but there are many competitions online, with the most popular hosted by ESPN and CBS Sports. Through these websites and others, you can join the general pool of applicants or start your own group to compete with friends. Another fun way to get in on the March Madness fun is to do the brackets by hand.

Officially starting on Tuesday, March 15 in Dayton, Ohio, the NCAA tournament will start with 68 teams and will eventually be whittled down to two lucky teams in the NCAA Championship on April 4 in Houston, Texas. As of now, there are many



The Commentator Bracket Challenge will go live on March 13.

teams that are assumed "locks" to make the tournament. Oklahoma, UNC, UVA, Villanova, Kansas and Maryland are considered top picks for the NCAA Tournament. There are still quite a few games left, including the conference tournaments, and many of the NCAA teams have chances to improve their resumes come tournament time.

Locally, the teams expected to make the tournament are UVA and VCU, but don't count out the Richmond Spiders. Seen in wins over California and George Washington they have the ability to win the A-10 tournament and secure a bid. In the ACC, the perennial powers are expected to make the field, but Syracuse, Florida State, and Clemson are

considered on the bubble. ESPN Analyst Joe Lunardi predicts that the ACC, Big 12 and Pac-12 will have the most teams in the field. There are many upset-minded teams out there, don't count them out when filling out your bracket. Some Cinderella teams include Kansas State, Providence, Michigan, Georgetown and Nebraska. We feel as if there are many teams that are ranked higher than their play. UNC, Iowa, Iowa State, Kentucky and West Virginia are among these teams. They can either have a blowout win, or suffer a bad loss on any given night, so come tournament time, we would count them out. Some teams on the upswing right now include UVA, Michigan State, Maryland, and

Villanova. Malcolm Brogdon, Denzel Valentine, Melo Trimble, and Josh Hart lead their respective teams along with the help of quality coaching, so look for these teams to advance deep into the tournament. In compiling your bracket, always look for the teams that are on winning streaks and that are playing well at the end of the season.

Nobody on record has ever gotten their bracket perfectly right. The odds to get a perfect bracket are 1 in 9,223,372,036,854,775,808. We will try to guide you on the right path.

First Suggestion: Make multiple brackets. The more brackets you make, the more chances you have of a bracket being better. Make as many as you can and change them up. You don't want all of them to be wrong if one team loses - it could easily happen. Put each bracket in your different pools. Only one of them might be good but winning one prize is better than none.

Second Suggestion: Make some with your brain and some with your heart. Your heart may have a favorite team and a favorite conference while your brain will choose what you know is right. Make brackets with both. Only one team will win and it is likely that yours will not be it. I

have found that my head is usually smarter than my heart.

Third Suggestion: Some may say upsets are just a fluke, but flukes are one of the most common fish in the sea. If you go looking for a fluke you might just get one. Don't pick a 16 seed to win but anything else is fair game. All other seeds have lost before. There is almost always at least one of each seed that has an upset besides 15 and 16. This year is a good year for upsets due to the high amount of parity in the standings.

Statistics for upsets: The first round is the toughest to get correct because they have the most games. Here is some info for guessing upsets. A 15 seed has won in seven of the 31 years of the modern 64 team tournament. You should consider a 15 seed upset in one bracket. We think there is a better chance of it occurring this year due to all the upsets that have already occurred. The 14 seed has won 20 times in 31 years and the 13 seed has not fared much better with just 24 wins. The 10,11, and 12 seeds surprisingly win about 35% of the time. The 8 and 9 seed matchups are virtual tossups. The percentage is 50/50. For full stats go to <http://mcubed.net/ncaa/seeds.shtml>.

Once the bracket is fully determined, we will create a bracket group on ESPN.com for students to compete in. The name of the group will be **DSF Commentator**. It will require no password and each participant will only get one entry so pick the bracket you think is best. Good luck and remember, the odds are not in your favor.

# Junior Class Postpones Student Talent Night



PHOTO: SARAH LINDAMOOD

Student talent night is postponed indefinitely.

Jack Bernhardt  
Staff Writer

"I'm 100 percent positive people at this school have talent," said Brian Durrett, junior class sponsor.

Mr. Durrett is in charge of helping to produce this year's Student Talent Night, an event originally planned to take place on Feb. 12.

After weeks of preparation and organization by the junior class officers, sponsors, and Freeman staff, the event has been postponed to the spring, with the date to be determined.

Student Talent Night has been a tradition and success at Freeman for a number of years.

"I've been helping with the show for 16 years... A few years ago, it was a sold-out show. I have noticed over the past years that the crowd has dwindled,"

said Mr. Durrett.

The junior class sponsors and officers in charge of setting up the night have also noticed the lack of student interest in relation to the diminishing number of auditions and dwindling audience size.

"Student Talent Night is not up to par with students. It really didn't jive with timing of the year," said Stephanie Gutierrez, junior class sponsor.

While striving to carry on old traditions, the officers and sponsors of the junior class want to include new and exciting features that would appeal to the student body.

"We need to find what students are interested in. I would rather the students be excited about it than push old and tired traditions," said Jaime Bargo, another sponsor for junior officers.

The officers and sponsors are trying to find other ways to boost this event's popularity. The addition of teacher lip-sync battles, prizes, and audience involvement are some suggestions for raising the status of the occasion.

"We've added a cash prize for the winners... It is something that

shows we are trying to keep students involved and interested," said Jeanne Rockwell, historian for the junior class.

The junior class officers are hopeful that adding these changes, along with making other improvements, will revive student's enthusiasm and excitement for the show.

One talented senior is Taylor Rendon, a drummer who won last year's Student Talent Night.

"I really wanted to show my talent and what drummers can really do... It gave me the opportunity to not only show others but myself that if you really practice and put your mind to something it shows what you can really do," said Taylor.

Mr. Durrett spoke of the opportunities that Student Talent Night offers students in high school.

"The event is the perfect place to try out your dream in front of your peers," said Mr. Durrett on the occasion of having an event like Student Talent Night.

Student Talent Night gave Taylor the opportunity to express his own drumming style. He was able to showcase his talent and

win by putting his own unique twist and style to his drumming performance.

"I can't emphasize enough how much Student Talent Night is a great occasion to get yourself out there in the Freeman community... It's definitely an experience you will always remember," said Taylor.

The junior class sponsors and officers are looking for students like Taylor to participate in the event.

"I think students just need to think outside the box, be creative and be who they are. It is what we are looking for in the in the show," said Mrs. Bargo.

For the students and staff working to uphold this tradition, all that matters is that the talents of students in Douglas Freeman don't go unnoticed.

"It would be really disappointing because a lot of people, including us, are trying to get the tradition to continue... I know we have talent at Freeman, We just have to find it," said Jeanne.

# Students Succeed in VHSL One-Act Competition

Anna Lyle Collett  
Staff Writer

From the beginning of the second nine weeks, to the final hours before the performance, the Freeman theater students challenged themselves to impress the judges at their district competition.

Freeman's Theater Arts II, III, and IV classes went to Mills E. Godwin High School on Feb. 5 to compete in the Virginia High School Conference 11 One Act Competition.

The competition is similar to a sporting event. Each school has a team that competes for who has the best players, but in this instance, the players are actors. Mary Spears, drama teacher, took 13 of her students to the event.

Typically, Mrs. Spears picks a play that fits the abilities of her students. She will also occasionally choose a play based on a unit the advanced theater class is studying.

"Sometimes I select something that we are doing a unit on, but often times, I look at the strengths

of the cast. It depends on what I find. If I have a good comedy actor, I lean towards comedy, but it has to meet the time criteria," said Mrs. Spears.

Every year, the focus of the play changes, centered around the time constraints the competition places on them. Each school is given only 35 minutes for their play, and five minutes to set up and take down the set.

In such a short amount of time, the actors work extensively to prepare for the performance.

"Right after the fall play, we will do auditions, which are extensive. We start working as soon as we can and sometimes they work on lines over break. It's a pretty fast turnaround. We usually have a couple of weeks to rehearse, but because of the snow, we lost quite a bit of time," said Mrs. Spears.

As a result of the snow days, the cast had to stay until 10 p.m. some nights before the competition.

After all the actors' hard work, the Freeman one act earned second place for their performance of "The Rules of Comedy," so the team advanced to the 2016 Region 5A South Theater Festival on Feb. 20.



PHOTO: ANNA LYLE COLLETT

The Theatre Arts class finishes the one-act show with a song and dance.

val on Feb. 20.

Many of the other cast members benefited from their hard work. At the competition, seniors Angus Dawson, Owen Payne, and Baraka Chege were awarded Best Actor Awards.

Sophomore, Joe O'Connor, looks back at the long hours of rehearsal as a happy memory.

"This one act was a lot of fun..."

we had everyday rehearsals, we usually were here late," said Joe.

Also, senior Ellie Priday thinks of this as a fun, and confidence-boosting experience.

"It's definitely helped me to grow in confidence. I couldn't answer questions without sinking into my desk, and now I can perform in front of an entire school," said Ellie.

Mrs. Spears works hard with her students and hopes that they can all benefit from their work. She teaches her students that whatever happens, their work is worth it all.

"You go to do the best job you do and let the chips fall where they may, and be gracious in what you get," said Mrs. Spears.

# Freeman Students are #trending

KeAnna Anglin  
Staff Writer

Have you ever pinned a Dorito to the wall of your dad's office and gotten 47,000 retweets? Didn't think so.

Maybe you've created a meme music video of Drake dancing to "Hotline Bling" and gotten 9,000 retweets? Nope, you probably haven't done that either.

Junior Rebecca Houck and senior Morgan Mitchell have a title that few carry: they are "Twitter famous."

Twitter fame is when a person or account has a lot of active followers and receives a lot of public feedback on their posts via retweets, favorites, replies, or quote tweets.

Many Twitter famous people have created a livelihood out of creating comical content for social media. These people spend most of their day trying to produce the next viral video, but the success came much easier for Rebecca and Morgan.

"I just saw on Tumblr that someone had pinned a chip to the wall, and so I decided to try it," Rebecca said.

"I honestly was just hoping my dad wouldn't get mad at me for pinning food to a wall."

On Nov. 22, 2014, Rebecca tweeted a picture of the Cool Ranch Dorito she pinned on her dad's office wall. Almost a



year later, on Nov. 21, 2015, she posted an updated picture of the same chip still there. All Rebecca did was post a humorous picture for her peers to see - or so she thought.

"I was just relaxing during Thanksgiving break then Grayson Phillips texted me that my tweet was on Worldstar," Rebecca said. "I couldn't believe it."

Rebecca's tweet not only made it to Worldstar, a Twitter account that highlights comedic videos or memes, but also received over 500,000 smiles on iFunny, a website that posts comedic images, GIF's, and videos. Her tweet was also posted on many other famous accounts on Twitter. In addition to the thousands

of Twitter users who saw Rebecca's tweet, it was also seen by teachers.

"It was really cool when my physics teacher, Mr. Booher, told me he saw it on iFunny," she said.

Like Rebecca, Morgan stumbled upon Twitter fame too.

"I was just really bored because none of my friends could hang out, and I had the Myidol app, an app similar to Photoshop, and I just decided to make a Hotline Bling video of Drake," Morgan said. "I thought it was kind of funny, so I decided to post it on Twitter just for fun."

Ironically, Morgan planned to delete the video the next day, but by then, the video had already blown up.

"I woke up the next day, and I didn't know what happened," Morgan said. "In two days it got 9,000 retweets, and it was honestly so unexpected."

Not only did Morgan have success on Twitter, but it didn't take long for her video to be shared on other networking sites as well.

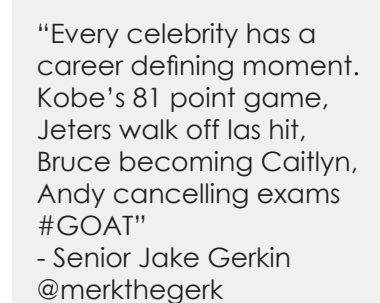
"The video was featured on a couple Worldstar accounts, and people began sharing it on Instagram, Facebook, and Tumblr too, which I thought was pretty cool," she said.

As for Rebecca, she said she is still hoping for the Doritos company to see the post and ask her to be in a Super Bowl Commercial.

# What is Your Best Tweet?



"Jumpman Jumpman can my GPA go up or something woo!"  
- Sophomore Mariem Gayed @blessaMAREica



"Every celebrity has a career defining moment. Kobe's 81 point game, Jeters walk off las hit, Bruce cancelling Caitlyn, Andy cancelling exams #GOAT"  
- Senior Jake Gerkin @merkthegeerk



"@GodwinPride Eagle Hunting season!"  
(picture to the left)  
- Mr. Massa @Rvamassa



# Will the 2015 Mr. DSF Be the Last to Reign?

William Omberg  
Staff Writer

**“I think that social media has affected students’ desire to try Mr. DSF,”**  
- Carter Reilly,  
SCA sponsor.

The reigning Mr. DSF, senior Peter Humble, was once a nervous sophomore with second thoughts about joining Freeman’s annual man-pageant.

“I had filled out my application and had it in my hand while talking to my older brother. I said, ‘Will, I don’t know if I want to do this.’ And he goes, ‘Yeah, you do.’ He turned it in for me. I’m so glad that he did because it turned into a great experience,” said Peter.

Mr. DSF has become a Freeman tradition over the decades. The event showcases male students’ talents and costumes. But, when it comes down to it, “it’s for people who are willing to embarrass themselves,” according to Carter Reilly, Latin teacher and SCA sponsor.

“It’s a great opportunity to show Freeman your talents, whether they are impressive or not-so-impressive,” said senior Reagen Fakhoury, SCA Secretary and Treasurer.

The show is organized by the SCA, with proceeds going towards various scholarship funds, Christmas Mother donations, and teacher appreciation gifts.

Mr. DSF began in 1981; it was called Mr. Turkey Legs and was held the week before Thanksgiving. It was sponsored by the

Rebellettes, not the SCA. Still, the contest had a playful mood and the all-male field of contestants were judged in categories such as outfit, dance routine, and legs. Students and teachers alike poured into the cafeteria during lunch to watch the show, provided they brought the price of admission—canned goods for the local Children’s Hospital.

In 1997, the contest simply became known as Mr. DSF and was pushed to a Friday evening after winter break. Heavy snow threatened the inaugural contest, but it did not stop the show. It was an instant success.

“I’ve never been so impressed and surprised with the astonishing talent I witnessed at the Mr. DSF Contest. Buying a ticket was the best money I’ve ever spent,” said then junior David Pollard, in the 1997 issue of The

Historian.

The second official Mr. DSF picked up where the first left off, and while there was no threat of snow, there were 15 contestants performing in front of a near-sold out crowd.

The following decades witnessed the rise of Mr. DSF. There has been a Mr. DSF contest every year since 1997.

“It was so popular and had so much excitement built around it that people couldn’t get tickets for it,” said Gretchen Sweat, exceptional education teacher and mother of two Freeman alumni. “One of our friends in the neighborhood called me the night of the show and said, ‘I went up to the school to get a ticket for it, and I can’t get in the door.’ After that, I started buying tickets for my neighbors. I could not wait to see it every single year because

it was just so creative.”

From younger siblings helping their older brothers on stage to contestants entering the auditorium on motorcycles, the event has provided Freeman with countless memories throughout the years.

“My favorite memory of Mr. DSF is when Charlie Bonner won the competition as a sophomore. He dressed up as Beyoncé, and he reenacted her popular song, “Single Ladies” with the costume and the backup dancers. While all of the guys had creative “talents,” his was definitely the most unexpected and entertaining!” said English teacher Megan Ariail.

Charlie was the first sophomore to win the competition, yet he retired from competing after winning his crown in 2012. His favorite memory of the 2012 show? Winning.

Despite its famed past, attendance to the event has been dwindling over recent years. Last year’s show was smaller than usual, but it still had a fair turnout and eight enthusiastic participants.

Only three applications were submitted for this year’s show, originally scheduled for Jan. 16. Needing roughly eight participants for a successful show, Mr. DSF has been postponed to later this spring.

“I think that social media has affected students’ desire to try Mr. DSF- for fear of being

blasted on social media by their peers. Students are scared of doing stuff these days because they don’t want to be made fun of on the internet,” said Mrs. Reilly.

Junior Ryan Fad is not concerned with negative attention on social media; in fact, he thinks Mr. DSF will bring him the stark opposite. At first, Ryan had doubts similar to Peter’s but ultimately decided to apply for the show this winter.

“I figured what do I have to lose? If I lose, my name’s out there; people know that I tried and that I’m a legend. But if I win... Well that would say everything there is to say,” said Ryan.

Ryan was encouraged by friends to showcase his humor and air guitar skills, something which has already given him fame among the Freeman community on Twitter after a video of his skills surfaced last year.

Although he has yet to perform in the show, Ryan did complete the application process this year. Questions on the winter application ranged from, “What animal would lead your sleigh?” to simply “Tell a joke.” Such loose and easy-going questions allow nearly any Freeman guy to participate in the show.

“I think that anyone who is thinking about it should definitely put themselves out there and apply to be a part of Freeman’s history because, hey, you might be the next Mr. DSF,” said Ryan.

## Rapper Revisits Roots



HBO’s official film poster for *J. Cole Forest Hills Drive: Homecoming*.

Kyle Adams  
Staff Writer



Jermaine Lamarr Cole of Fayetteville, NC, better known as J. Cole, was recently featured in an HBO Special documentary highlighting the rapper’s recent tour of his latest album, “2014 Forest Hills Drive.”

Throughout the documentary, Cole focuses on exposing the ugly truths of being an aspirational kid from a small town ravaged with crime.

The documentary consists of five 45-minute episodes released on a weekly basis in December 2015, eventually to be capped off by a 90-minute finale of Cole’s final concert in Fayetteville from his album tour.

Highlighting systemic issues in America is a recurring topic in Cole’s songs, and he is undeniably one of the greatest lyricists of the current generation. Like other rappers, Cole incorporates mature lyrics to his songs. However, his articulate emotion and overarching message separates him from the pack.

He has evolved from a hungry

rapper to champion for cultural change amongst rappers and the overall African-American population. He no longer raps of his dreams of being rich but instead preaches the value of love.

To begin the final episode, Cole says, “I feel like Fayetteville is a microcosm of America.” Cole firmly believes that Fayetteville, just like the United States as a whole, is defined by a large majority of the people struggling to live peacefully with a smaller population that is blind to the dilemma. He frequently discusses controversial issues (such as police brutality) in the public eye, unfazed by potential backlash.

In his final concert in Fayetteville, he professes to his audience that reaching one’s dream destination—often being Hollywood for Americans—is not what success ended up being for him. Emotionally touching his audience, paying homage to his roots, and finding peace within himself were integral aspects to Cole achieving musical fulfillment.

In the five years that I have been listening J. Cole, he has grown immensely. His albums no longer contain songs meant to be radio hits. He instead used his latest album as a timeline of his life (from child to superstar)

to explain to his listeners how being rich did not improve his character; his ability to finally express his raw emotions did.

Cole’s comfort with personal imperfections is why his thoughtful lyricism is unparalleled.

Additionally, J. Cole has evolved as a man. He no longer sports flashy clothes, diamond watches, or oversized gold chains. In his song “Love Yourz,” he says: “It’s beauty in the struggle, ugliness in the success. Hear my words or listen to my signal of distress.”

This song portrays his effort to change the audience’s perspective of what “The Dream” should be—an internal improvement rather than external.

Remembering the struggle he and his mother experienced, J. Cole created the Dreamville Foundation, which grants impoverished single mothers the chance to live in his old house rent-free in Fayetteville in order to regain financial stability for up to two years. Part of his life mission displayed throughout the documentary is how he wants to invigorate the youth of Fayetteville and of America to stray from the small-town mentality and its vicious cycle of failure.

In the final installment, J. Cole surprises all that come out to Crown Coliseum in Fayetteville for his tour’s finale. He not only plays the entirety of his latest album but also older songs to reminisce about the beginning of his career. Nearly everyone in the audience is jumping and screaming to the songs. At some points in the concert, Cole stops singing and the crowd does not miss a lyric.

This concert is not only unpredictable, but also legendary. J. Cole brings two of the hottest rap artists in the world to his hometown to reward a few thousand longtime followers. A performance by Drake of his songs “Energy” and “Know Yourself” ratchets up the crowd’s appreciation for Cole’s effort in organizing a memorable concert.

As if that was not enough vivacity, Cole then brings out East Coast legend Jay-Z who was the first major producer to recognize Cole’s talent and sign him to his label.

For the avid rap fan, this documentary is a treat to watch. Cole’s career is captured in a jarring truthful film, showcasing the beautiful and the ugly moments of a rap superstar.

Even for those who are not rap-inclined but want to learn the story behind one of the greatest rappers of our time, this documentary could also be for you. It is available for most TV providers via HBO: On-Demand.



Pho So 1 is located off Horsepen Road.

## Picky Eater Tries Pho

Jack Neary  
Staff Writer

This is what happens when you send a guy who never eats anything more adventurous than a spicy Chick-Fil-A sandwich to try authentic Vietnamese cuisine.

Every person I asked about the restaurant raved about its authentic, delicious food. I decided that despite my misgivings, I would bravely do my duty to the DSF Commentator and go to Pho So 1.

Located at 6403 Rigsby Road near the intersection of Broad and Horsepen, Pho So 1 is hidden behind Mexico Restaurant.

After driving by it twice, I finally pulled into the parking lot and was pleasantly surprised by what I saw.

From the outside, it looked like any building in any shopping center in America. If you switch out the sign, it could be a convenience store.

To start, I ordered two sets of appetizers – shrimp and pork rice paper rolls (\$3) and chicken rice paper rolls (\$3), both served with peanut sauce.

I don’t really know what I expected: basically, it was a little meat and a lot of rice wrapped in lettuce. The peanut sauce made it a little better, but I wish there was more meat in it. It felt like I was eating a Chipotle burrito without the meat.

For the main course, I ordered a large #11 – Pho Tái Nam (\$7.75). If you, like me, cannot read Vietnamese, this meant beef noodle soup served with slices of eye round steak and well done flank. Looking back, I probably shouldn’t have ordered it when I didn’t know what animal or the part of the animal the meat came from.

The food was out in only 10 minutes. The soup came out in a large bowl, with a plate of cilantro leaves, lime, and bean sprouts on the side. The soup contained rice vermicelli - a thin form of rice noodles - along with the thinly cut eye round steak, flank, some diced onion, basil,

and peppers.

After trying (and failing) to learn how to use chopsticks for 10 minutes, I accepted my defeat and asked the waiter for a fork, which made it marginally easier to eat the meat and noodles.

However, I do have one word of warning regarding eating pho: it’s hard to impress someone when you’re loudly slurping down soup and noodles and fishing for meat in your soup. I wouldn’t recommend going there for a business meeting or a first date.

The steak and flank were good, but a little chewy and not as flavorful as I had hoped. Although I’m still not sure which was which, I think I preferred the steak to the flank.

However, it was difficult to find a good piece of meat without too much tendon or fat. The degree of difficulty in eating and the underwhelming meat soured my impression of the pho.

When I wasn’t shoving food in my mouth, I could look up and watch some basketball on one of the TV’s around the restaurant. Despite the fact that almost every table was full, it was easy to carry on a conversation at normal volume.

After finally finishing (giving up) on my bowl of pho, I walked up to the counter and paid for my part of the meal: water, a large bowl of pho, and two chicken rice paper rolls. It only cost \$11.47, well within the average high schooler’s budget.

My biggest regret from my meal at Pho So 1 is that I didn’t order the #15 (pho with slices of eye round steak). I ignored the recommendations of Ross Metcalf and Kerry Baumann, who explicitly told me to order the #15. I thought I knew more than them, but I was sadly mistaken.

Although a more adventurous choice than Cookout or Casa Grande, Pho So 1 is similarly low-priced and relatively close to Freeman.

If you are a fan of Vietnamese cuisine, consider Pho So 1. If you are a pickier eater like me, I would stick to Chick-Fil-A.