



PHOTO: ELLIE SOMERS

Freeman Under Construction: Mayhem Ensues in Parking Lot

McBride Rawson
Staff Writer

No progress ever comes without sacrifice. In the case of the upcoming turf field, construction will cause space in the parking lot to be significantly limited. “[The construction] is best case scenario a 4-month project,” but to be safe, “they have chosen to make it an eight-month window,” said Suzanne Criswell, director of student activities. The construction has been planned for immediately after the fall season, preserving the 2017 and 2018 football seasons.

“The place that makes or breaks your athletic department is going to be your football season,” said Mrs. Criswell. “We have to preserve that season that gives us the most amount of ticket sales.” When the construction starts, a large section of the parking lot will function as a staging area for the equipment. “They are going to be taking over 50 spots for a staging area and a new driveway for them to be able to get their equipment in and out,” said Laura Hollowell, assistant principal in charge of parking. Half of the teacher lot closest to the stadium entrance will be roped off, as well as two or three rows of the student lot running from the teacher lot to Camden Road. To access this area, “[t]hey are going to make a new driveway into the parking lot, just for construction,” Mrs. Criswell said.

The construction company is “protecting our property... because they don’t want to damage the cars.”

All seniors are guaranteed parking.

“We have always sold to seniors first,” said Ms. Hollowell. “It’s the county’s criteria.” So many juniors will not be able to park at the school this year.

For juniors, seasonal parking passes following the VHSL calendar will be available by application. “Fall isn’t affected as much... for spring it’s going to be very, very difficult.” When reviewing the applications, Ms. Hollowell said, “We’re basically looking at what students need the parking for credits.” Students that need to drive in order to receive credits for classes such as Teachers for Tomorrow, early bird classes, or out of zone leadership have priority.

Many juniors are disappointed about the parking situation. Junior Alex Sreng said, “I think the school could have done a better job in finding alternative ways for students to park.”

Ms. Hollowell said, however, “I have tried everything to try to recoup some spots,” but “there is no other option.” She talked to central office Driver’s Ed about potentially utilizing the Driver’s Ed lot for parking, but “that isn’t going to work, they said it is a safety issue.”

Ridge Baptist Church offers

spots for students, but they sold out before the school year, so that option is also unavailable. Many seniors feel sympathetic for those affected by the construction but are overall satisfied with having guaranteed spots. “I feel bad for the juniors because they have a privilege taken away from them... I’m glad it’s not me,” said senior Natalie St. John.

Juniors also feel content with having spots at the moment, as junior Matt Ford said, “I got a

“We are looking at eight months of disturbance of our everyday activity to get an absolutely fantastic addition to Freeman.”

spot, so, therefore, I feel fine.” Much of this inconvenience is out the students’ control, many are continuing to focus on maintaining a positive attitude.

Once the parking lot is cleared and the turf field put in, this new addition to Freeman will hopefully overshadow all inconvenience. “I think what we are looking at is eight months of disturbance of our everyday activity to get an absolutely fantastic addition to Freeman high school,” Mrs. Criswell said.

Tennis Court Redo

Zoe Costello
Staff Writer

A plan to renovate two of the tennis courts was confirmed after years of playing on damaged courts.

“We’ve been asking every year for them to be redone and resurfaced, so the county decided it was time,” said Jeff Given, the boys tennis coach. The plan was confirmed by the Recreation and Parks Department at the beginning of the last school year.

As the school was being renovated in 2008, trailers acted as temporary classrooms. “They put all the trailers on the tennis courts, and on the top two courts put all the construction material,” Coach Given said.

The construction materials ended up damaging the tennis courts, and the bottom four tennis courts were resurfaced. The top two only received temporary patches.

“The courts were almost unplayable. They both had a huge crack going down the center with weeds growing out of it, and pavement coming up that could have been dangerous,” Coach Given said.

“Because the courts are considered a parks and recreation facility, it was [The Parks and Recreation Department’s] responsibility to get them resurfaced and redone, the courts aren’t necessarily the school

property,” said Suzanne Criswell, Director of Student Activities.

Coach Given and girls’ tennis coach Larry Parpart have gone to the county many times addressing the problem, and last year, the Recreation and Parks Department finally passed a plan to renovate the courts.

“The week after school was over, they came and completely demolished the courts,” said Mrs. Criswell. “The first thing they did was put in the gravel, then they put in the asphalt, and now before they can do anything else they have to wait for the asphalt to ‘cure.’”

The construction is planned to be done in October, but it may end up taking longer.

“I don’t know the schedule, but they’re working at all the Henrico County public schools and parks,” Mrs. Criswell said. “I know they’re busy.”

Both the boys and girls tennis teams start practice at the end of February and are hoping the courts will be finished by then.

“I’m not too happy with [construction] because it leaves us with less courts, and when we practice we use all of the courts,” sophomore Sally Mumford said.

However, many players are excited by the prospect of new courts.

Junior William Westerfield said, “It’ll be good for the team, the courts were really bad before, but now they’ll be good and playable.”

No Change to AP Score Acceptance Policy

Laney Van Lenten
Staff Writer

This year a rumor that Virginia state colleges are accepting AP scores of 3 or higher is so rampant that both teachers and students alike believe it is true. One small detail: it’s not.

State legislation passed in 2015 regarding public college AP policies, Code 23.1-906, states that state schools must have a policy that accepts AP credit for the corresponding class. However, it doesn’t include any details regarding scores.

For now, each college determines its own policy. James Madison University, for example, gives college credit for every score of 3, whereas at the University of Virginia, the minimum score that is applicable to receive college credit is a 4.

“A positive [of requiring colleges to accepting a score of 3] would be that students would be less stressed and have less pressure on them, especially those who take multiple APs,” said AP Spanish teacher Jill Carrol.

Students like senior Carter Echols were particularly excited to hear about the rumored policy update.

“This change [would] make me feel better about the tests, knowing that I’ll definitely get college credit for most of them,” Carter said.

Despite these favorable outlooks, colleges question the logistics of a possible change. Each university and college had an opportunity to submit justification regarding why they should or should not accept a 3 for any given class, such as the rigor of the subject in college or differing material. Teachers shared some concerns as well.

“My concern is that students would not work as hard in class, that they would not be as motivated to learn,” Sra. Carroll said.

For AP English 11 teacher Mr. Abril, it was the curriculum that gave him the most pause.

“The College Board would struggle to make sure that every high school had a more aligned curriculum,” he said.

At last, the rumors are put to rest. Schools will accept scores of 3 on AP exams according to their own policies, which are subject to little change. In the future, perhaps legislation will require schools to streamline their college credit applications, but for now, each school will go its own way.



PHOTO: TOM VEAZEY

Senior Joe O’Connor was announced as Homecoming King Saturday Oct. 14th at the 70’s themed dance, joining Queen Molly Herring on the dance floor.

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New Faces Join Freeman Faculty



PHOTO: LIZA MOODY

Assistant Principal Tim Sanders smiles at his desk.

**Caroline Wall
News Editor**

Some adults may tell you that high school was the best part of their life. Tim Sanders is not that guy.

Mr. Sanders has joined the Freeman staff this year as an assistant principal, despite his own misgivings about high school.

"I was in the music program at my school. I probably would have hated high school without that," he said. "I was

waiting to get to college."

Mr. Sanders, originally from New Jersey, has been living and working in Richmond for the past 10 years. Before coming to Freeman, he spent three years teaching the integrated services program at Lee Da-

vis High School and then six years teaching special education, algebra, and geometry at Glen Allen High School.

However, Mr. Sanders is taking on a different role at Freeman.

"I felt like I could make more of a positive impact for more students [in a different role]," he said. "As a teacher, you only affect the kids in your class. Now I can reach more of the school if not the whole school."

Mr. Sanders is responsible for the junior class as well as anyone with a last name beginning with L-Q. Additionally, he oversees the Social Studies, Fine Arts, and Exceptional Education Departments.

In his first month, Mr. Sanders had already discovered what makes Freeman different from other schools, including the tradition and "comradery" of the school. "Freeman has more of a sense that people want to be here," he said.

Before moving to Richmond, Mr. Sanders attended James Madison University. "I was originally a music major, so I play a lot of guitar and drums," he said.

Though he enjoys music, he has little time to practice it. When Mr. Sanders is not helping Freeman students, he is usually at home tending to his two kids, a 3 year-old and a 1 year-old. "I have two kids, so hobbies are few and far between," he said.

Mr. Sanders, whose office is off the main hall, is looking forward to his time as as-

sistant principal. "I am excited to get to know everybody here and working with the great teachers and students," he said.

While it may seem odd to have a high school assistant principal who did not especially enjoy high school, Mr. Sanders believes his high school experience will help him to relate to Freeman students.

"I liked parts of high school, so I can tap into people who like it, but I can also tap into parts of students who don't want to be here," he said. "It gives me some skill."

Mr. Sanders is ready to become a part of the Freeman family.



**Shots Fired
at Cookout**

on The Commentator Online

PHOTOS: LIZA MOODY AND ELLIE SOMERS



**Amber Bebbs
Exceptional Education
What is the best part of your job?**

"Being an advocate for individuals with exceptional needs."



**Jill Carroll
Spanish
What's the coolest/strangest job you've ever had?**

"Taught some children of famous people, like O.J. Simpson's daughter and Peter Frampton's son."



**Sean Cook
Exceptional Education
What is your favorite quote?**

"You miss 100 percent of the shots you don't take." -Wayne Gretzky -Michael Scott



**Yalibi D'Addario
French
Where are you from?**

"I am originally from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Angola and South Africa."



**Kelly Day
Testing Coordinator
What was your first job?**

"My first job when I was 16 was dressing up as Chuck E. Cheese! I worked there for two years."



**Jordan DeButts
Math
What were you like in high school?**

"A nerdy, awkward, wannabe punk."



**Caroline Estrada
School Nurse
Where are you from?**

"Born, raised & educated in Ireland. Lived in NYC for 15 years after college and moved to RVA in 2007."



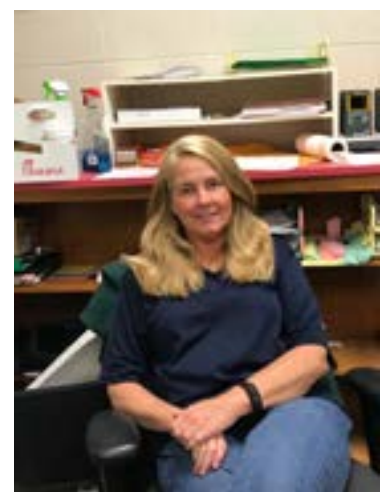
**Samuel Ketner
Technology Education
Plaid or polka dots?**

"Polka dots have been sadly neglected by time."



**Toccara N. Paige
Attendance Secretary
What's the coolest/strangest job you've ever had?**

"I was a correctional officer at Deep Meow's Correctional Center."



**Sara Rengstorf
Math
Early bird or night owl?**

"Early bird except when the Christmas movies are playing on Hallmark, then I don't sleep."



**Angela Rhodes
Math
What is your favorite quote?**

"The only way to learn mathematics is to do mathematics." - Paul Halmos



**Janet Rost
School Counselor
What do you think makes Freeman different from other schools?**

"Everybody here is SO NICE!"



**Jennifer Szot
Social Studies
What's the coolest job you've ever had?**

"In college I worked at a clothing store...it was fun to choose the mannequin's clothes."



**Carla Weller
Financial Secretary
What's the coolest job you've ever had?**

"I currently have a part-time job driving the train at Short Pump Town Center."



**Benjamin Williamson
Social Studies
What is the best part of your job?**

"Working with amazing, inspiring people. Building relationships and being a positive influence."

A Sweet Solution to a Salty Problem



Nick Ulrichs
Opinions Editor

French fries are the newest vegetable... and my favorite vegetable at that.

There is a small minority of people that tell me, "French fries are not a vegetable," but closed-mindedness is never the answer to such a controversial topic.

Henrico County Nutrition Services is a surprising supporter of my favorite vegetables. Although there are many vegetables on the menu, French fries are still classified as a vegetable. This may shock some people, but I have always known that French fries are a vegetable. Blake Derby, weightlifting coach and opponent of French fries being a vegetable, was surprised to hear this news.

"A French Fry is a potato, and that is not a vegetable," said Coach Derby.

He is not alone in his stance against the vegetable. Shirley True, cafeteria employee, also disagrees with the school system's classification of French fries being a vegetable; however,



PHOTO: NICK ULRICHS

The DSF cafeteria staff work hard each day to feed the school.

she is unable to change this because it is a decision made by Henrico County Nutrition Services.

"There are some things that are hard to get used to," said Shirley True.

The school board and I seem to be alone in our views on this issue. However, there is a solution to the issue of French fries being a vegetable.

"We could substitute French fries for sweet potato fries," said English teacher Angela Smith. Sweet potatoes are far more nutrient-rich than potatoes, so it would benefit the health of all students. She believes Henrico County could do better in terms of providing nutrition for the students, and something as simple as substituting sweet potatoes could be the answer.

The cost of sweet potato fries could be the main reason why they are not served.

Though French fries will never technically be a vegetable, my inner Rachel Ray will always respect what the cafeteria is whipping in the kitchen.

However, if my mom fed me French fries instead of vegetables I would have to put a lot more effort into my Wii Fit grind. This

would mean a lot more weekends on the couch shaking a controller with my elbow while I'm eating a bag of salt and vinegar potato chips. And since I'm in Henrico County, the chips are "vegetables."

While Henrico County is busy disappointing Michelle Obama, French fries won't get any healthier or any less delicious.

This is My Story: An Odyssey of iPhone



Nicholas Wright
Opinions Editor

Who's a man's best friend? It's not a dog – it's the iPhone. We carry it around wherever we go, petting it affectionately when we feel lonely. When we get bored, we play games with it. We're overly protective of it, taking care never to let it drop and get hurt. We feed it and let it get

plenty of rest. Some of us even give it a cute name. We lovingly ask, "Who's a good boy?" The answer is always iPhone. Yes, iPhone, you are a good boy.

The most faithful companion of our generation is this shiny little rectangle, and we have some pretty serious emotional attachments to it. I'm no different.

Not too long ago, I faced a crisis. My phone was confiscated in class. The particulars of what happened that day are not important, but it left me in a terrible situation: I had to wait 24 hours until my mom could come rescue my iPhone. I had to spend 24 hours without my beloved hunk of pocket metal.

Those 24 hours changed my life. Although I don't use my phone very often during school (and certainly not in class! Stay in school, kids.), for the rest of the day I felt like something was missing. The trinity of phone-keys-wallet in my pockets was incomplete. Every 20 minutes I would suddenly feel the lack of pressure on my thigh, my hand

would race into my empty right pocket, and my mind would slip into panic mode. After a few terrified heartbeats, I would remember where my phone was and shed a tear for my loss.

On my way home, I began to think through the implications of my now phone-less life. My Snapchat streaks were dead! How many texts would go unanswered? What if my grandma called me? Would Flappy Bird ever forgive me for my neglect? I was forced to accept my bleak fate.

The boredom set in that evening. There was no Instagram to scroll through. There were no memes (spicy or not) to enjoy. There were no episodes of Seinfeld to binge.

So I did the unimaginable. I sat down and got some homework done. Without my phone to distract me, it took me less than half the time! I then had time to have a delightful conversation with my mom. What a woman! (of course, I had to explain the confiscation situation to her eventu-

ally). That night I even managed to open a book and read something!

After another uncomfortable school day, my shiny rectangle returned to me in a glorious moment of ecstasy.

From this point onward, however, I was a little more cautious in how I approached my phone usage. My unplanned tech hiatus showed me just how much I rely on my phone every day. It does everything for me: communication, information, and entertainment. In those 24 hours I saw that life outside of iPhone can still do most of that, but in ways more genuine than technology. I also realized how much of my phone use is a waste of my time, taking valuable time away from me living my life.

I'm not saying we should give up on iPhones or social media or the internet – Technology, without a doubt, improves everyone's lives. Like most Freeman students I've grown up in the 21st century and can't deny its benefits. What I'm suggesting, how-



PHOTO: APPLE.COM

ever, is that we are a little more addicted to our devices than we admit. Maybe there are some parts of life we miss out on because of our tech habits. When older people complain that we're "glued to our screens", maybe there's a bit of truth to what they say.

I encourage all of you to go ahead and whip out that phone during class. Let your teacher take it away and send it to the main office. You just might learn something.

Commentator Staff

Editors-in-Chief
Caroline Daniel
Jackson Woody

News:
Rachel Alexander
Caroline Wall

Features:
Molly Herring
Ryan McCracken

Arts & Entertainment:
Lucy Collins
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Sports:
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Staff Writers

Emily Anstett, Braxton Berry, Lauren Bruns, Laney Van Lenten, Julia Cassidy, Mark Graff, Katie Cooper, Zoe Costello, Kate Yarbrough, Maggie Flournoy, Emme Levenson, Juliana McKean, Caitlin McSorely, Greer Peacock, Cameron McCarty, Grace Powers, McBride Rawson, Cole Ryland, and Remy Schimick

Staff Advisor
Lauren Lombard

The Commentator is a publication of Douglas Southall Freeman High School

Principal: Andrew P. Mey
8701 Three Chopt Rd. Henrico, Virginia 23229
http://schools.henrico.k12.va.us/freeman/
Phone: (804) 673-3700
ldlombard@henrico.k12.va.us

Letters to the editor are encouraged. They must be signed before they can be printed. Because of variety and space, only a limited number of letters can be published. The Commentator reserves the right not to print a letter.

NICK vs. NIC

Nick Ulrichs
Opinions Editor

Nicholas Wright
Opinions Editor

Sexy nurse every year

Halloween Costumes

I've worn the same Spiderman 'stume since I was eight

Gotta hang up the romper

Fall Weather

Just an excuse to dress like a lumberjack

Respect the band

Student Section

Freshmen, move back!

Always bring extra shorts

Haunted Houses

Scooby-dooey Doo, where are you?

All up in them guts

Pumpkin Carving

I'd rather be pumpkin chunkin'

Sophomore's Boomin Business



PHOTO: BRAXTON BERRY

Alexander and friends enjoy their success.

Braxton Berry
Staff Writer

For freshman Alexander Sam, shoes are a passion.

Alexander has created a “Boomin” business committed to the resale of coveted shoes and clothing on his e-commerce website.

“I got into this business when I saw the major money making opportunity in seventh grade. Many of my friends were into the ‘sneaker game’ and I began catching interest in it too,” he said.

Alexander was amazed by how a pair of shoes could go for thousands. Inspired by this seemingly easy opportunity to make money for himself, he founded his company, Kicks Boomin.

“I began the business by purchasing many used pairs of sneakers, mainly off of my friend, freshman, Aidan Lane. I would take them home, clean them up to restore a nice look, and put pairs up for sale to local friends on social media such as Instagram and Snapchat. I eventually began selling on eBay,” Alexander said.

After a few months of this sales tactic, Alexander had enough revenue to finally scale his business. “I had gained enough capital to begin selling brand new pairs,” he said.

Scaling Kicks Boomin was easy

once the revenue started coming in. “My business is pretty profitable, and I’ve made \$23,000 this year. I’ve sold about 56,000 pairs and I’m projected to sell 100,000 next year. I am trademarked, and I have just been filed as an LLC in Virginia,” Alexander said.

But now he was faced with a challenge stemming from the real world issues of supply and demand, as well as pressure from a crowded market—competitors would wait in long lines and stock up on all the new shoes.

“I wasn’t trying to camp out for days, so I took advantage of my computer experience and began using ‘Sneaker Bots’ to my advantage,” he said. This allowed him to set up checkout information and automated task releases, helping him to gain access to high demand merchandise.

“I can’t tell you who I get my merchandise from, but I can tell you I get it from sites and sellers where I flip the price based off of the demand,” he said.

His business skyrocketed from that point on, and he began making a name for his business.

Nicholas Troutman, a fellow student, and customer for more than a year was more than enthusiastic to talk about Alexander’s business. “Kicks Boomin is honestly a five-star business. I got all my stuff in less than a week and a half, which is good for items of such high quality and demand.”

“Alexander sells supreme

shirts, cases, and headbands. He sells Kanye West merchandise, including the Yeezy Boost 350 V2 ‘Zebra,’” Nicholas said.

Kicks Boomin, and the chatter that comes with it, has expanded past Freeman’s walls. Alexander’s merchandise has been sold and worn by a famous Instagram star under the name of Fatboy SSE.

“He currently has 3.2 million followers on Instagram,” he said.

His mother, Amanda Prak Sam, is also his biggest fan. “I am very proud of Alex’s success, but I am not surprised. He has always been very bright and determined to succeed. I feel that his accomplishments are exceptional because, as the son of the former refugee, he did not have the advantage of having a parent who was familiar with the American culture. I feel that he had to overcome obstacles that most children born in this country do not have to face,” she said.

Alexander Sam has big dreams for his business in the future. He plans to focus on gaining business credit because he hopes to grow Kicks Boomin. “I look forward to 2018 for great expansion of Kicks Boomin. I think the appreciation Freeman is giving me will really help me on my way to success,” he said. Promo Code BOOMIN can be used for a 10 percent discount.



PHOTO: RYAN MCCrackEN

Day in the Life: Che Williams

7:45 – Wake up when my alarm goes off, no time for snoozing

7:50 – Play some music to get ready for the day

7:55 – Wash my face, shower, change, eat - just do what I have to do to get out the door

8:30 – Leave my house and go to Freeman

9:00 – School starts, get through my classes

4:00 – My mom picks me up, we go get something to eat – usually an 8-piece meal at Chick-fil-a with a vanilla milkshake

5:00 – Go home, settle down for a bit, do some homework

5:30 – Go downtown to Yellowbox Recording Studio

5:35 – Start making music in the booth with my friends, we test out some beats, make a book, go over adlibs and then bounce it (mixtape coming on Spinrilla from Binoobaybee)

9:00 – Hang out with my friends, relax

12:00 – Watch an episode or two of “Power”

1:00 – Finally get some sleep

Last Night’s Ghost Shines On-Stage

Julia Cassidy
Staff Writer

While walking the Freeman halls in between classes, the mysterious stickers featuring purple hands with eyes on them scattered around the school may have caught your attention. These stickers are the logo of the independent four-person indie rock band started by junior Nathan Vranas and his friends called Last Night’s Ghost.

The band started in 2014 and formed naturally when Nathan went to Veritas School.

“At my old school [my bandmates and I] just came together. We were just playing music together, and then it just happened,” Nathan said. The other people in the band are Nathan’s friends Win Benko, Rohan Hal-loran, and Ben Slone, who go to Veritas High School and Trinity Episcopal High School. Nathan plays the drums and Ben plays the lead guitar. Win plays bass and is the vocalist. Rohan plays the rhythm guitar and is the main song writer. They rehearse at Nathan’s house in



PHOTO: JULIA CASSIDY

A sticker found on a Freeman Locker.

a spacious room with a speaker system. Nathan said balancing the demands of school with rehearsals and shows is not a problem because the band normally rehearses on Sundays.

Nathan believes band’s cooperative mindset allows them to produce music well. “Someone comes in with lyrics, and then we build the music around it. It’s a lot of collaboration,” he said. Everyone has a distinct purpose in the band. Nathan is mostly

involved in the instrumental part of making the songs, but helped with the song writing of “Keep the Light On,” his favorite song. Some other songs that the band has produced are called “Hand Me Your Failures,” “I Was Wondering,” and “Fall.”

The band’s inspirations include Micro-wave, The Wonder Years, and Tiny Moving Parts.

“They are the three bands that we try the most to sound like,” said Nathan.

After the songs are written and rehearsed, Last Night’s Ghost plays at parties or at venues like the Canal Club or The Camp. “When I am onstage and I look down into the crowd and see people singing our songs or lyrics that I wrote, it’s really cool” said Nathan.

All of the profits from shows go back to cover the costs of the band which include paying for printing shirts and stickers or recording music

Nathan said that while the band makes money, it is not a job.

The concerts are not only an opportunity to market the band and to make music, they are also a great opportunity to meet new people. “Everyone in this scene is really cool and fun to be around,” Nathan said.

Nathan said that since his first week at Freeman marching band camp over the summer of 2016, that his peers from the Freeman band have been very supportive of Last Night’s Ghost, and Freeman has given him the opportunity to meet people who share his passion for music. “It has been cool getting to know people who are into music like I am,” he said.

Carly Cohen, a junior and the assistant drum major for the Freeman marching band, has seen Last Night’s Ghost in person and said, “The [Freeman] band people all sit together at the booths in the side and when Last Night’s Ghost comes on,

we dance and sing along to their songs in front of the stage. During the song ‘Fall,’ all the guys [in the Freeman band] make a mosh pit. Their last concert was their first headliner—it was a great show.”

Carly owns some of the band’s merchandise, including a Last Night’s Ghost t-shirt. She said that whenever they play at the Canal Club, she thinks they are best band there. Sophomore Miles Fagan is another regular at their shows and actually got up on stage with them once to play a song. “I love them. They are super cool,” Miles said.

The band’s fans may be rejoicing soon as Last Night’s Ghost is producing a new E.P. This new E.P. is their first since last year’s release of “Wait For Me,” which can be found on Spotify and iTunes. “We just finished recording our next E.P., but we haven’t released it yet,” said Nathan.

The band hopes to expand it’s range in the future. Nathan said, “We are trying to get out of Richmond and play around—maybe in Harrisonburg or Virginia Beach—and get our fan base a lot bigger.”

Quiz Bowl Team Participates in TV Competition

Katie Cooper
Staff Writer

A group of students gather in Room 148 after school on a Wednesday afternoon, tossing trivia questions back and forth—each receiving a swift (and usually accurate) answer. “Who shot Ronald Reagan?” someone asks, and is met with a moment of silence before hearing “John Warnock Hinckley... (duh)...”

These kids—members of this year’s Rebel Scholastic Bowl Club—are at ease and laughing with one another despite it being the first gathering of the year.

The Scholastic Bowl is a series of competitions in which the members of this club will partici-

pate over the next few months. They compete to win by answering questions on subjects ranging from science to pop culture.

The Scholastic Bowl Club has been rebuilding its competition over the last few years. The sponsors, science teacher Matthew Scott and social studies teacher Ann Harper Pittman, are enthusiastic about this year’s team.

“We have smart kids at this school,” said Ms. Pittman, admitting she’s hopeful about the team’s prospects of advancing.

Even after not being active in Quizbowl competitions until recently, the club does not have any fear of Battle of the Brains, a broadcasted television program that will be the club’s first tournament of the year.

These kids aren’t known as the underdogs in the face of the other competing Virginia schools and laughed off the suggestion. Even with their relative lack of experience, the club is not afraid of their upcoming Battle of the Brains contest.

“It’s cool because people around the state have known about Freeman. We’ve been around for a long time, and our school has always had a good reputation,” Ms. Pittman said.

Although it might sound like it, Scholastic Bowl is not a game like jeopardy. Says Ms. Pittman, “there’s a strategy to it.”

“There are a couple of people who have said they’re going to join, and I think they’ll make some really good additions to the

team,” said junior Will Chambers. Ms. Pittman said that Will excels in pop culture questions, and is a good team player.

The team will be doing some traveling this fall, including going to Maggie Walker, VCU, and UVA for competitions.

At the end of last year’s season, the members of the club took a trivia assessment and submitted the results to the Scholastic Bowl board members. The purpose was to rank the team among other participating schools. The team’s quiz results from last year were very high which gives them an advantage for this season.

Despite the glory that comes with winning, it is the camaraderie among the club members that truly makes the pursuit en-

joyable. Said Will, “Watching everyone grow and get better as a team has been one of the highlights of being in the club.”

As Will’s excitement about the competition builds, the words “oh, absolutely” are his only response when asked if he expects success in tournaments this year.

After their competition this October, the local WVTR station will feature the Rebels on “The Battle of the Brains” in February. The club welcomes new members. Interested individuals should see Mr. Scott in Room 148 or Ms. Pittman in Room 225. Meetings are held every Tuesday morning and Wednesday afternoon in Mr. Scott’s room.

SUCCESS for Freshmen

Grace Powers
Staff Writer

Regardless of the end goal, success can start in high school. For incoming freshmen, the transition from middle school can make that success feel unattainable.

"I've seen people have a great junior and senior year and maybe not be able to get into the school that they want or the career they want because their freshmen and sophomore years were so bad," said Michael Henderson, P.E. teacher and head varsity football coach. Coach Henderson is teaching a new class designed to help freshmen succeed.

Called SUCCESS, this class is taught first period by history teacher Laura Jones and seventh period by Coach Henderson with several senior mentors in each class period. Each class has 10-12 students, hand-picked from middle school, receive a college prep credit for the class.

"We know the pitfalls of what is going to make a student successful once they get into high school and what type of student makes it to graduation. Those students who are lagging in those areas when we go down to the middle schools are pinpointed and signed up for freshmen year in SUCCESS," said Timothy Sanders, assistant principal.

Mr. Sanders was involved in a similar program at Glen Allen High School last year called STEP, but is involved in bringing the class to Freeman this year. Though there are only two class periods of freshmen, Mr. Sanders sees great potential for the program.

"The goal is by the time they're juniors, they turn around and

become mentors to the freshmen. We also want to build in some work-study, getting them out into the community exploring jobs and opportunities and getting them ready for college," Mr. Sanders said.

The class curriculum is fluid, but every day starts the same way. The students write down their grades on a piece of paper to turn in to the teacher.

"If they're missing any assignments, they have to record that and then they have to record what their plan is that day in SUCCESS," said Ms. Jones.

SUCCESS does not just focus on grades. The students also do character-building activities and learn skills such as time management and organization. For example, students in Ms. Jones's class recently took a test to determine their personality type.

"We're trying to have a more constructive conversation like 'Okay, you have this kind of personality; your teacher has this kind of personality. Let's figure out how we can have a cooperative relationship,'" said Ms. Jones.

Freshman Katya Ramirez said she thought the class was a great opportunity for her, especially since she struggles particularly in math. She said there is nothing not to like about it because it is like a study hall with added help from both senior mentors and Ms. Jones.

"Rachel helps us with math, Kennedy helps us with science and social studies, and Ms. Jones just helps us extra if we need it," Katya said.

Freshman April Erwin is also taking Ms. Jones's SUCCESS class this year. She said that she was nervous about transitioning to a seven-period schedule but feels supported by the close-knit

environment of the class.

"You get to talk to Ms. Jones about anything. We actually have a personal side to our relationship, so if you come in and you're not in the mood one day, you can talk to her. She just helps you get through the day," said April.

Senior Kennedy Mackey chose to mentor in this class first period. She tries to help each student understand material from their other classes based on their individual learning style.

"We often assume that everyone learns in one way and that is often times the issue with public schooling. We try to teach everyone in a verbal manner, and that's not how everyone learns," said Kennedy.

She picked this program in place of taking an AP class but says it is more rewarding to help people find opportunities that may not have been available to them before.

"Not only is it worth it, it teaches you patience; it teaches you how you're going to have to deal with people who aren't always going to learn as quickly as you," Kennedy said.

The teachers agree that the mentors are a crucial part of SUCCESS. Mr. Sanders believes they "have the power to change some kids' lives."

Eventually, this class may be open for all freshmen to take. For now, the teachers and mentors are looking toward a bright future for every one of their students.

"We feel like we're teaching them to be successful in whatever they want to do," said Coach Henderson.

Students interested in becoming mentors during first or seventh block can contact Mr. Sanders or Mr. Marshall.



PHOTO: EMILY HALL

Morgan helps students at Peter Paul Development Center.

Senior Makes a Difference

Remy Schimick
Staff Writer

Not many high school students get to go to recess, but for senior Morgan Canaan, recess is just part of her average day. Morgan has been volunteering at the Peter Paul Development Center on 22nd street near Church Hill two to three times a week since freshman year. She described the center as an "after school education-based program for at risk students" with the purpose of closing the achievement gap. The children are divided by grade level and then bused from their elementary school to the center for lessons, extracurricular activities, and recess.

Her first year of high school, Morgan came to the realization that she had lost interest in tennis, a sport she had played since middle school. "I realized I kind of hate sports," she said with a laugh. With newfound free time after school, Morgan had a gap for a new activity. "I needed something better than that," she said. "I like working with kids, and those just happen to be the kids you can go work with."

Morgan fills an important role at the center. She is there working as a classroom assistant to the teachers, forming lesson plans, and in some cases taking charge and leading the class herself. When Morgan is not helping the teacher, she sits, listens, and learns with the kids. "I've basically relearned first, second,

and third grade," she said smiling.

Although Morgan is quick to downplay her effect on the community, others are more than willing to praise her. "Morgan has been there for these kids. They trust her, they look up to her, they respect her, and they love her," said Rosemary Jones, the Director of Volunteer Services at Peter Paul Development Center. More praise came from Freeman's very own Wiley Hunnicutt, an English teacher. "[She] chooses to volunteer her time to try and make a positive impact in her world, no matter how seemingly small," she said.

Morgan's commitment to the center is also evident in her relationship with the children. "I have worked with the same group of kids, and they have traveled through the grade levels as I have traveled through high school," she said. It's easy for her to see past any differences she and the children might have. "I think there's a misconception," she said, "that they need ways to get out of their situation. It's more about addressing differences than trying to compensate for them."

To Morgan, volunteering is not about the community service hours or how it will look on college applications. "[Volunteering just for college applications] would just be a waste of time," she said. At the end of the day, it is about doing something that she loves while making a difference in her community.



PHOTO: LIZA MOODY

Students engage during SUCCESS class.

Sneeze on the Beat and the Beat got Sicker

Kate Yarbrough
Staff Writer

When sophomore Aubrey Cronin, also known as Sneeze, was in seventh grade, he would go out on his roof every night and freestyle rap for hours. "Anytime I said the same word or phrase, I would immediately start over," he said. "I still do that to this day, and I guess that's really where my flow control came from." He was on house arrest, he said, and he wanted to do something constructive with his time.

Since then, his style and technique have improved drastically. "When I started, it was complete and utter garbage," he said, laughing. As he became more confident, however, he was glad to move away from a more generic sound and find his own.

"I started to become more comfortable with the idea of growing with my art and allowing the way I am to be channeled through it," he said. "The process became more and more meticulous until now...every ounce of my being is in every single word."

He first discovered his passion for music when he was around 8, freestyling with the support of his uncles. "Once they got locked up, I wasn't in any position to be around music in that sort of depth," he said. "I mean, I've always loved music, but I just stopped caring about creating anything of my own."

grandparents not long after, and although he felt they were not nurturing of his art originally, they are now. "I think it's great!" said his grandmother, Mrs. Trent. "He's found something he loves and he's working really hard to pursue it, and I'm proud of him."

Once he got back into music at 13, he began fervently working for his passion. In his return, his uncle is again his biggest supporter. "He may not be very musically oriented, but he sees the passion I have for the music. Any chance he gets he helps me." His uncle is often the one to take him to his recording studio, PGB Productions.

He released his first song "Bohemian Bars" on July 4. "I put that out just trying to show that I had the ability to be lyrical. It was just straight bars, and there wasn't a lot of musicality, but it was very traditionally hip-hop," he said. Despite this, he does not want people to be too comfortable with that kind of sound.

"Even though that is an aspect of my art, I feel like there's infinite possibilities," said Sneeze.

Sneeze is currently working on an E.P., which he wants to release "before the semester is over, hopefully, but definitely before the year is over," he said.

Sneeze records with PGB Productions, and the help of a close friend named Liam Ortwine. "He makes all my cover art, and he filmed the video of Bohemian Bars," he said.

However, he chooses the mu-



PHOTO: LIAM ORTWINE

Aubrey dreams about his successful future.

sic by himself, with the help of the Internet. "All of my beats are free to use instrumentals on YouTube," he said.

"Any chance I get, I'll rap for anyone that's willing to listen," Sneeze said. He has done several open mics since last summer, "once at a park and once at a library," he said. Sneeze is known for his ability to perform on the spot. He can sometimes be found in the lunchroom during 4B, freestyle rapping.

He views his music as a sentient and interpretive art: "Music is

just a feeling. Maybe you'll take something from it, and somebody else will feel completely different about it."

His grandmother agrees, "I think to know Aubrey through his music, you have to listen to the lyrics; all of his lyrics have a story and a purpose. It's not just a bunch of words," she said.

Sneeze wants to have a career in rapping, but it's for more than the money. "My older brother tries to support me, but he can't see it the way I see it. He only looks at it in terms of monetary

gain," he said. "But I want to make real music."

For Sneeze, rapping is more than a hobby, it's a passion. "This is something I love more than anything," he said. "If I wanted anybody to know anything [about me], it's that this is what I'm going to do forever."

Sneeze can be found through his YouTube channel, Sneeze-Music, where Bohemian Bars, Sneeze - Elevation, and his new song, Sneeze - Conduit, can be found. His Instagram is @sneezelessnessy.

National Immigration Policy Hits Home

American Citizenship: More than Just a Test

Juliana McKean
Staff Writer

Most Freeman students would not know who the current Chief Justice of the United States is. However, every immigrant attempting citizenship of the United States has to know answers such as these for naturalization tests.

According to United States Citizenship and Immigration Services, before immigrants even reach the naturalization tests, there is a long and complex process that can sometimes take years to complete.

"The benefits of citizenship should be earned...

if you're going to make the choice to be a part of the country that's a great thing, but you need to show that you're serious about it," said Rob Peck, director of the Center for Leadership, Government, and Global Economics.

Once it is determined that an individual is not already a US citizen, the first step is to ensure that one is eligible to become a citizen. Some of the requisites for eligibility include being able to speak, read, and write basic English, as well as knowing the fundamentals of US history.

Once deemed eligible for naturalization, Form N-400, a 20-page document that must be com-

pleted, asks for information about virtually every aspect of life — from marriage history to criminal records. Applicants must have their biometrics taken, involving collecting fingertip data and taking photos. This step allows United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to search criminal records and expand the information known about applicants.

Following the completion of Form N-400 and the biometrics, USCIS conducts an interview. This is one of the biggest steps of the naturalization process, as it includes questions about application and background.

Once all of these steps have been completed, USCIS will issue applicants a written notice regarding their decision on Form N-400, and their naturalization interview. Applications will either be "granted"

In addition to the interview, participants must also take a civics and English test. This test includes questions about the history of America, such as naming an author of the Federalist papers and the war in which Eisenhower served as a general. This part of the process is often the step that causes many to fail, as many American citizens would not know the answers to these questions.

Once all of these steps have been completed, USCIS will issue applicants a written notice regarding their decision on Form N-400, and their naturalization interview. Applications will either be "granted"

(approved for naturalization), "continued" (lack of documents or failure of naturalization test), or "denied" (citizenship is not possible for the applicant).

After receiving a "granted" written notice, applicants are finally able to take the Oath of Allegiance at a naturalization ceremony. In the past decade, the United States has admitted 7.4 million new citizens, and in 2016 alone, another 750,000 received citizenship. In this ceremony, approved applicants turn in green cards and receive their certificates of naturalization — this final step is by far the most important, as it takes immigrants years of waiting

until they are approved to undergo this process.

For many families attempting citizenship, the process can take even longer.

"My grandparents' entire family had to go through the whole process, so it's usually faster for an individual person to go through it, but for a family of 6 people, it took a long time for them all to get passed," said senior Julia Paraiso. If children are under 18, once their parents have achieved citizenship, they become citizens as well.

The path to citizenship is an extensive one, but it is truly a special moment when citizenship is finally achieved.



Sam Garcia*: Honduras

*Names have been changed to protect student identity.

you gotta have closed-toe shoes."

It was at this part in his journey that Sam and his family were stopped by authorities. "I got caught by border patrol. And now, I have to go to court," he said. At any moment, the family could receive a letter notifying them that they must face a judge who will determine the legitimacy of their claim for residency. "If I get a letter, I have to go. If you don't go to court, you get a deportation."

That is a heavy weight to carry. But "once you are here, you don't think about that anymore," said Sam. At Freeman, Sam has found his niche in the student community, spending time with friends and attending classes. This spring, he plans to try out for the school soccer team; in Honduras, Sam remembers how people enjoyed playing soccer and following professional teams. "It's not like here, [where there is] basketball

and football," he said. "There, it's only soccer." Sam has worked hard to succeed in classes taught in English. "The first year, I only really had ESL, so I had all A's. But [the next year] I had all the real classes, so it was really hard for me."

As Sam has grown more accustomed to speaking and writing in English, he has settled into life in America. "[At first] I didn't want to come because I didn't know what I was going to do. But now, it's like I don't want to leave," said Sam.

"I got my friends here," said Sam. "I can communicate with anyone I want now."

Yet, as an undocumented resident, he sometimes feels separated from his peers. "[Some of my friends] have solved their problem; they're legal now. I'm in the process to become legal...it might take years," he said.

Knowing this makes the future uncertain. Talk of immigration and possible deportation is "always in the news. It has a big influence on me, because they can send me back," said Sam. "But it is what it is."

Still, Sam has dreams for the future. He plans to attend college and study medicine. Sam appreciates the academic focus and support offered at Freeman.

Yet he has one message for fellow Freeman students on behalf of his immigrant peers: "[Don't] judge somebody just because they're legal or not. We're all people, you know. We're all like you." -RA

Suspension of DACA Threatens 'Dreamers'

Caroline Daniel
Editor-in-Chief

Dubbed the "Great American Melting Pot" by Schoolhouse Rock, the United States has always been a country of immigrants. People from different countries come to America seeking refuge, increased economic opportunities, or the freedom to be themselves since the country's founding. However, immigration has recently become an issue at the forefront of national consciousness as the two major political parties disagree on policies to address newcomers.

One major development in this series of political battles is President Trump's Sept. 5 decision to suspend DACA, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals. This program was created as an executive order under President Obama in June 2012. It addressed the "Dreamers," a group of immigrants brought to the United States illegally by their parents when they were children.

"President Obama essentially acted out of frustration over Congress' refusal to act on immigration," said Ben Fabian, AP Government teacher. He noted that

both Republicans and Democrats have called for immigration reform for almost two decades. In fact, the issue has been present in American politics for even longer; it was mentioned in the 1980 Republican debate between George W. Bush and Ronald Reagan.

DACA gave law-abiding "Dreamers" the opportunity to come forward and register themselves with the government in exchange for deferring action on their immigration status. These two-year, renewable periods of delayed action would allow them to be eligible for a work permit and to avoid deportation.

However, executive orders "are essentially an order from the president...to an agency of the federal government telling them how to enforce a law [that already exists]," Mr. Fabian said. President Trump and many others in the Republican party claim President Obama's order was unconstitutional because "current immigration law would not permit the president to make that sort of specific exception" in terms of enforcing the law, he said. President Trump's suspension of the order requires Congress to act

on the measure before March 5, 2018 or risk ending the program for good.

Despite President Trump's legal authority to repeal a former president's executive order, deporting the "Dreamers" is against the current popular opinion. According to a Politico/Morning Consult Survey, 76 percent of Americans want the "Dreamers" to "remain either as citizens or permanent legal residents." Though this figure includes 84 percent of Democrats, it also includes 69 percent of Republicans, including two-thirds of self-identified Trump supporters.

"People who were brought here as children essentially didn't have a choice...but in many cases they grew up as though they were Americans," Mr. Fabian said. The United States may be the only home the "Dreamers" have ever truly known. In addition, DACA residents identified themselves to the government; if the government then refused to allow the protections once afforded under DACA and used that information to deport those who came forward, many people might feel betrayed.

President Obama's DACA program.

"We were eligible for it, so my parents got a work permit and I got my student visa," said Laura.

Acquiring a visa is no simple task. First, applicants must select the visa they wish to attain and submit a petition corresponding to that visa. After the paperwork is submitted, applicants must wait until it is approved, which can take months. Once the paperwork is cleared by the Department of State, applicants interview with a State representative and receive confirmation of their visa status.

Though each application is unique, the typical application process can take anywhere from two months to several years.

"It was pretty quick. It took around six months, and after that I just have to renew it once every two years," said Laura.

Those who wish to renew a visa must present their current visa, along with their citizenship and employment information, to the Department of State. The process usually takes a matter of weeks.

Those under the DACA program automatically became eligible for a student visa. With President Trump's suspension of it, many potential applicants may lose their eligibility, potentially jeopardizing the future of thousands of Americans in need of a visa. However, those who already have a visa, including Laura, retain their eligibility.

Though Laura does not have to stress over her legal status, she still plans to become a naturalized American citizen. -JW



Marco Gomez*: Honduras

*Names have been changed to protect student identity.

40,000 feet in the sky and suspended in motion, junior Marco Gomez* found out he would be leaving his home country Honduras — forever. "[My parents] told me on the plane. They told me I was going to visit here. They never told me I was going to live here."

After finding out, "I was like, 'No way, stop kidding,'" said Marco.

"I've always wanted to live here, but when I actually came, want[ed] to go back." While Marco already had some family members living here in Richmond, he had to leave behind other family and friends. At Byrd Middle School, the transition was hard. "When I first came, I didn't want to be rejected — I wanted to fit in," said Marco. To fit in meant first learning English.

As a student in Honduras, Marco had a background of basic English classes, but he never expected to ever

use the language. "And they teach you English in Spanish. It's not the same."

However, he soon found that English was necessary for all facets of his everyday life in Richmond. Marco's family felt compelled to leave Honduras, for life there meant constant concerns for personal safety. Growing up, Marco could not spend time with friends outside of the school day. "My parents did not let me because it was too dangerous. [There were] kidnappings and other crimes like that," he said. Gang activity in Honduras, while common, is not overt.

"They would call you and say, 'We know where you live. We're going to take all your money.'" When Marco was 10, his parents were kidnapped in broad daylight.

"[The kidnappers] took their wallets and their credit cards and got all the money from their accounts," he said.

After this scare, Marco's parents decided to move to America. Now Marco is a confident student, enjoying his time in class and on the Freeman soccer team. "Pretty much I'm Americanized," said Marco.

Still, it is hard to feel totally comfortable without being able to do the same things as one's peers. "Over there I could have a license and get a job anywhere, and here I can't. You know, due to immigration and stuff." As Marco and his family wait for legal residency status, Marco sometimes feels different from his peers. "But no one judges me," he said.

If there are people who treat him differently, Marco is not concerned. "If they don't want to talk to me because I'm Hispanic, I don't care," he said.

Marco is well adjusted to life here in the United States as a part of the Freeman community. He has enjoyed design and drawing classes, and Marco plans to study architecture. His plans for the future also include someday receiving his citizenship status and permanently settling in the United States.

"You know, it just feels like home here" he said. -RA

Jane Acosta*: Mexico

*Names have been changed to protect student identity. .

have the right to "drop [her] because [her] documents are invalid," even once she has been accepted into a school. Similarly, Jane explained that her friend who graduated from medical school and became a doctor through an opportunity granted by DACA will "have to hang up the coat of the day [DACA] gets removed."

Jane considers the United States to be "all [she] has ever known," but she emphasizes that she has "had it easy" when she compares herself to her friend who had to "wade through the Rio Grande River," or "be drugged...and forced to cross" to enter the United States.

Jane said she is grateful for the opportunities afforded to her by the United States and hopes one day to gain full citizenship like her younger brother who was born here. As for her parents, who are here illegally, they live and work under her deceased grandfather's social security number. She said she and her family live a similar lifestyle to any other American citizen, but with the constant threat of deportation looming over their heads. Jane is here to make a positive impact and advocate that she and her fellow Hispanic-Americans "are not a threat." -AM

There are over 185 different types of visas that cover a variety of purposes, including work, education, and family. Senior Laura Ferreira has a student visa. Laura was born in Brazil but came to the U.S. when she was 5. Three years ago, she qualified for a student visa under



Laura Ferreira: Brazil

Not all legal residents of the United States are citizens. In fact, many foreign-born residents of the United States are on immigrant "visas," which are temporary passes that allow immigrants legal residence on the basis that they are benefiting the U.S. economy.

There are over 185 different types of visas that cover a variety of purposes, including work, education, and family.

Senior Laura Ferreira has a student visa. Laura was born in Brazil but came to the U.S. when she was 5. Three years ago, she qualified for a student visa under



Alana Luiza*: Brazil

*Names have been changed to protect student identity.

When junior Alana Luiza* moved to the United States, she left her black hair behind. Alana and her family moved to the United States from Brazil in 2014, and since then, Alana has dyed her hair almost "every color in the rainbow."

"I've had blonde, red, blue, green, pink, and basically orange," said Alana. Her mother, who runs a local cleaning business, sells self-care products online and dyes Alana's hair at home. It was her mother who suggested moving to the United States. "Everything started when she was talking about Canadian pies," said Alana. The conversation progressed, and soon they were discussing the idea of moving to America.

At the time, her father was working for a large Brazilian oil company but was forced to leave his job due to widespread bribery and corruption. "We basically only had my dad's job, and we were still pay-

ing for the house...it was just really bad," said Alana. Political scandals disrupted the Brazilian economy; inflated market prices and limited job opportunities ultimately determined the family's decision to come to America. They first settled in Orlando, Florida, before moving to Richmond.

"When we first came, we basically bought everything in Walmart," said Alana. "We went to Ross like five times [to buy clothes.] We came back with the cart overflowing each time," she said.

Despite the new wardrobe, transitioning to life in America was not easy. "Imagine being in a place where there is no one that you know. You only have your family, and it is hard."

Communicating in English was challenging. "I barely knew anything, to be honest," said Alana of her English skills. Although she studied English at her private school in Brazil, Alana said thinking and speaking in English was completely different from learning in the classroom.

Now Alana is quite comfortable with English, and "I'll talk forever if you let me," she said. She follows current events and politics, and she has strong opinions of recent talk of immigrant deportation.

"I find it unfair," said Alana. "Immigrants do most of the jobs Americans don't want to do, and you're basically expelling everyone that's doing the jobs you don't want. If you don't want to do the jobs, how are we stealing them?"

As Alana's family continues to wait for approval on their legal residency status, Alana hopes to one day become an official American citizen. Until then, her advice to fellow Freeman students is to "just be aware everything going on in the world. Sometimes, it can get so focused on your own life, but try and understand [other people] in the outside world." -RA



Jason Edmunds: Ghana

gling because of what is going on now, and they look at me and say 'you're pretty lucky.' They tell me how glad they are that I'm a citizen because their process is so complicated," said Jason.

According to the Department of State, there are three requirements to attaining U.S. citizenship via international adoption: first, the adopting family must have at least one parent who is an American citizen, either by birth or naturalization. Second, the adopted child must be under the age of 18. Lastly, the child must be lawfully admitted to the United States as a permanent resident in the legal and physical custody of the U.S. citizen parent.

After these requirements are met, the adopted child automatically becomes a U.S. citizen, which Jason said he does not take for granted.

"It's a privilege, and it's a great thing to have. Many people have been here and are still going through the struggle to be a citizen. Being a citizen in a country like the United States is a great thing to have because many people don't have the chance to be here," said Jason. -JW

Profiles written by: Rachel Alexander (News Editor), Alex Moss (Online Editor-in-Chief), & Jackson Woody (Editor-in-Chief)

First Year Receiver Makes an Impact



PHOTO: ELLIE SOMERS

Liam setting up for defense during the Atlee game.

Cameron McCarty
Staff Writer

Maybe you've heard the crowd cheering him on or his name announced on the loud speaker after his touchdown. Regardless, junior football player Liam Simpson is new to the spotlight and thriving in it.

Freeman's starting wide receiver had never played football prior to this year. Liam was en-

couraged to play football by both quarterback Jack Pollard's dad and his baseball coach.

Liam's skill set lies in his speed and his dependable catching ability, which makes him an "all-around threat," said Head football coach, Mike Henderson.

"Liam is very hard working and quietly goes by his business, he is a smart player and transitioned well to the sport," said Coach Henderson.

During the summer, Liam and Jack frequently went over plays

and worked on routes.

"At the beginning it took a lot of time to get him up to speed with everything, but on his part, he did great learning everything and working really hard to learn all of the plays and the formations," Jack said. His dedication has paid off; he has scored three touchdowns so far this season and shows no signs of slowing.

Liam attributes much of his success to Jack because he has helped him throughout the transition process. Liam thinks Jack

is a dependable leader because "he always throws solid passes which makes it easy catch."

Liam has been working hard in order to maintain his position on the team, and it shows on the field. The hardest part about learning the new sport for Liam has been learning the plays and running the routes.

Contributing to the teams offense isn't all he does. Liam fits in well with his new teammates. Coach Henderson said his "great personality adds to the team chemistry." Liam said that his favorite part about being on the football is being on a new team and meeting new friends.

So far the Midlothian game is Liam's best memory this season "because I caught a touchdown and that game I had my most yards receiving" and "everyone played really well together," said Liam.

Outside of football, Liam is a dedicated baseball player. He is currently a part of the mid Atlantic Orioles, an elite travel baseball team, and plays centerfield on the Freeman's varsity team. Although some coaches would not want to share their star players, Andrew Moore, Freeman's baseball coach, actually motivated Liam to try out for Freeman's football team.

"I think it is really neat how Coach Moore encouraged him to try out. It has made the transition that much easier" Coach Henderson said.

Sports Briefs

Boys Volleyball

Key Players: Joe O'Connor (12) and Chris Gilliam (12)

Season Highlight: "Defeating defending state champions James River," said Coach Dave Calvert.

Girls Volleyball

Key Players: Teegan Howell (10) and Molly Herring (12)

Season Highlight: "Defeating Godwin away for the first time in 5 years," said senior Molly Herring.

Golf

Key Players: Trevor Elliott (11) and Patrick Murphy (12)

Season Highlight: "Placing second at the Regional competition," said senior Henry Ingram.

Field Hockey

Key Players: Caperton Birne (11) and Lauren Blanchetti (12)

Season Highlight: "Defeating both Hermitage and Tucker by slaughter rule," said senior Lauren Blanchetti.

Boys Cross Country

Key Players: Cullen Munro (11) and Henry Alcaine (12)

Season Highlight: "Younger runners moving up to the varsity team," said Coach Brian Reuting.

Girls Cross Country

Key Players: Liza Neely (10) and Mia Girardi (12)

Season Highlight: "The team performed really well at the Octoberfest, and that was our best meet to date this season," said senior Lauren Tull.

Football:

Key Players: Ned Mize (12) and Jack Pollard (12)

Season Highlight: "Scoring 54 points versus John Marshall," said Coach Mike Henderson.

Competition Cheerleading

Key Players: Kate Carlson (12) and Kameryn Shears(12)



PHOTO: MIA FULLER

The team practicing their jumps.

Cheerleading Competition Canceled

Emily Anstett
Staff Writer

The Rebel competition cheerleaders were looking forward to hosting the rotating District Cheer Competition on Oct. 4.

The competition would have included cheerleaders from Hermitage, Glen Allen, Henrico, Tucker, Deep Run and Freeman in preparation for the regional competition

The competition was canceled because three schools of the six competing schools dropped out of the tournament due to injured cheerleaders.

Coaches Erin Henshaw and

Heather Shears coordinated four practices a week starting July 31 in preparation for the competition. Once school started, the team had three practices a week. When the tournament was canceled it was "really disappointing," said senior varsity cheer captain, Kate Carlson.

"I was really excited to be able to compete at Freeman, on home turf, so it's disappointing that we can't compete at home anymore. Instead we have to go compete somewhere else, especially since we were preparing a lot for the competition," said Kate.

"They have very few competitions. It takes a long time to perfect a routine- so there are not a ton of opportunities to compete. That was one of the biggest let

downs is they would not have an opportunity to go before judges for some feedback," said Suzanne Criswell, director of student activities.

Henrico County is in the Colonial District and because the competition was canceled, Rebel cheerleaders and the other three teams that did not drop out, were able to perform in the Capital District's tournament on Wednesday Oct. 4. At the tournament, hosted by Hanover High School, the team performed in front of judges for a score, but wasn't included in the competition. The routine was 3 minutes long and included stunts, tumbling, jumps and a dance. The cheerleaders performed a modified version of this routine at the homecoming

pep rally.

The cheerleaders were planning to compete at the regional competition on Saturday Oct. 21, but an injury sustained at the Homecoming game caused the team to drop out of the regional competition.

Three years ago, the competition team resumed competition after several years of inactivity. Each year, the team has worked to improve by attending stunt and tumbling clinics and weightlifting with Coach Derby.

Freeman hopes to host the District competition next year "if the Colonial District decides to continue to try and have it," said Mrs. Criswell.

REBEL SPORTS CALENDAR

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
October 16 th Field Hockey @ Deep Run (6:45 pm)	October 17 th Boys Volleyball @Thomas Jefferson (7pm) Girls Volleyball @home	October 18 th Field Hockey vs. Maggie Walker @home (6:45 pm)	October 19 th Boys Volleyball vs. Atlee @home (7pm) Girls' Volleyball @Atlee (7 pm)	October 20 th Varsity Football game @Hermitage (7 pm)
October 23 rd	October 24 th Boys' volleyball @Glen Allen (7pm) Girls Volleyball @home (7pm)	October 25 th	October 26 th Boys Volley @Deep Run (7pm) Girls Volleyball @home (7pm)	October 27 th Varsity football game vs. Godwin @home (7pm)
October 30 th Field Hockey: Varsity Region Tournament @ River City Sports Complex	October 31 st	November 1 st Field Hockey: Varsity Region Tournament @ River City Sports Complex	November 2 nd Girls and Boys cross country region tournament @ Pole Green Park (12pm)	November 3 rd
November 6 th First day of practice for winter sports	November 7 th	November 8 th	November 9 th	November 10 th Boys and Girls cross country state competition vs. Colgan @ Great Meadow- The Plains

Sophomore Volleyball Player Starts on Varsity



PHOTO: MARAGARET DEWITT

Peter hits the ball for a kill against Tucker.

Lauren Bruns
Staff Writer

Despite only a year of volleyball experience under his belt, sophomore Peter Hughes is already starting as middle blocker on Freeman's boys' varsity team.

Peter's current successes are the products of months of self-motivated hard work.

"Before school starts, practice is for three hours, five days a week. Once we are back in school, it's two hours, three days a week as well as two games. Every other Saturday night I practice for four hours, and every now and then I will find an open gym and be sure to get there to practice for an hour or two," he said.

Peter's confidence is apparent on the court despite his initial uncertainties.

"It is nerve wracking going out there in games and competing against people twice your size and a lot older and more experienced than you. It's hard having to live up to the pressure of being a sophomore and to live up to juniors and seniors, but there is nothing more exciting than when you do something right," he said.

Senior Joe O'Connor is impressed by Peter's transition from junior varsity.

"He has adapted really well to the pace difference. He is always cheering on everyone and lifting people up," he said.

Peter's coaches have noticed his positive response to the challenge of varsity volleyball as well. "His biggest strength is his short memory," said Coach David Calvert.

"Any first year Varsity player is bound to make mistakes, but as a sophomore, sometimes the weight of those mistakes weighs heavily on Peter. He's done a great job of learning from his mistakes, and not letting one bad set or one bad match carry

"The coach telling me 'You made it' confirmed that everything I did for the past six months paid off," Peter said.

over into the next one," Coach Calvert said.

This attitude is bolstered by a lively and supportive team culture.

"Everyone is really nice. When you mess up, people are always there to say you'll do better next time and they get excited with you when you do something great. It's almost like having coaches your own age," Peter

said.

Senior Chris Gilliam has recognized Peter's efforts.

"As a sophomore on varsity without much experience, he has embraced his role as a starter," Chris said.

In addition to volleyball, Peter is finding ways to juggle basketball and his studies. Despite the many hours he spends training a week, he says his efficiency at school makes his workload significantly smaller.

"I make sure I'm really focused during free time in classes to do homework in school so that when I get home I only have about an hour and a half of work. It's difficult but I manage it well."

Young Life has become a great distraction from the stresses of school and extracurricular activities for Peter.

"It's somewhere I can just be myself. I don't have to stress about anything else and I enjoy being with people my age," he said.

Peter is excited about developing into a more experienced player over the next three years.

So far, his most gratifying memory was making the team. "After a week of trying out for varsity, the coach telling me 'you made it' confirmed that everything I did for the past six months paid off," Peter said.

Peter hopes to share many more memorable experiences as he continues in his volleyball career and aspires to eventually play in college.

Girls Volleyball Starts the Season Strong

Emme Levenson
Staff Writer

The start of the new school year means longer days, added stress, and more caffeine for most students.

For the girls' varsity volleyball team, this year has brought an undefeated beginning of the Class 5 Region B season. The team started off the season 6-0.

The girls' volleyball team began practicing on July 30, a week before their first game.

Individually, the girls worked hard during the off-season to fill the shoes of two starting seniors, Molly Bruce and Kerry Bauman, who graduated.

"We've had big step up plays by our two junior middles, Lianne Larkin and Sarah Rowe, and a big step up by senior right side Betsy Lake that's producing very well offensively," said Drew Lovering, the varsity girls' volleyball coach.

"Our setting has improved;



PHOTO: MARGARET DEWITT

The team huddles up during a time out against Maggie Walker.

we had a freshman setter last year that got way better in the off season, so she's doing a fantastic job," said Coach Lovering. Now a sophomore, Teegan Howell attributes the team's success to improvements in setting, passing, and serving.

"We may not have the strongest offense or the strongest defense, but we are really scrappy and get balls up. I think our offense has

improved," said Teegan.

Coach Lovering believes their toughest match was against Godwin, where the team won 3-1 in a riveting fourth set, winning 25-20. The Godwin pep band played and many Freeman students came out to support the volleyball team.

"The overall team play against Godwin was good attitude, especially in the third and fourth

game. We stepped up and ended up outplaying Godwin," said Coach Lovering.

This was the first time the girls have beaten Godwin with Coach Lovering.

In the following weeks, the team will face their toughest competition: Midlothian, Glen Allen, and Deep Run.

Senior Emma Griffith said while the volleyball team has de-

feated some tough competitors, their games against Glen Allen and Deep Run will be the most competitive this season.

While they did lose to Glen Allen and Deep Run, the Freeman team was the "first to take a set off of Glen Allen this season," said senior Janie Holsten.

The team is supportive of one another, and this contributes to their overall success on the court.

"As we get further into the season, our team chemistry improves more and more," said junior Catherine Nelli.

Teamwork and talent is what the girls believe has made them so successful this year.

"We have a really diverse group of girls, and we all have a ton of different skills," said Emma.

Hoping to continue their success, the Freeman Girls' Volleyball team trains harder and harder each day.

New Golf Coach Leads Team to Regionals

Mark Graff
Staff Writer

For social studies teacher Benjamin Williamson, being new to Freeman did not just mean getting ready to teach new classes. He was tasked with coaching the Freeman golf team.

"I really enjoyed working for Mr. Mey previously at Meadowbrook... so I interviewed and once I had the position of teaching... they just asked me if I'd do it, and I said I'd be happy to help out," Coach Williamson said.

Coach Williamson came into the season with experience, as he has been golfing since he was a teenager and remains an avid golfer today. "When I worked for rental car companies, there were a lot of opportunities to play with customers, so I played a lot into my 20s and now into my 30s," said Coach Williamson.

He also has coached a high school varsity team before, but he said that he was a very different experience than at Freeman. "Mr. Mey knew that I coached previously, I coached lacrosse at the varsity level. I coached at Monacan. That was always weird, I was teaching at Meadowbrook and coaching at Monacan, so I didn't have a lot of school spirit since I wasn't teaching there," said Coach Williamson.

Rob Peck, the former golf coach, had other obligations and decided it was his time to phase out of coaching the team. According to Coach Williamson, however, Mr. Peck has not stopped supporting the team even though he no longer coaches them. The transition, which may sound difficult in such a short time, went very smoothly according to both coaches.

"He spent two weeks this summer, once he had given up the position coaching, coaching our team, while I had other obligations. He's been a real mentor for the program, he's never hesitated to answer any questions that I had, which I know early on was many," said Coach Williamson.

"It's his team, not mine this year. I told him what I had done in terms of how try-outs would go, how many people to keep on the team... and then day to day the players understood if there's ever a question in the end it's Mr. Williamson who would make the decision, not me," Mr. Peck said. He also noted how their coaching styles were fairly similar, joking, "He's a little quieter than I am, and probably a little more polite also."

"Coach Williamson is a very good coach, he understands that we have our own individual games and he tries to keep us motivated and help us out. He takes the time to know us and we really appreciate that," said Hen-

ry Ingram, a junior on the team.

"These players have been really great. It's unique in coaching. If you're trying to get a guy pumped up for a face off in lacrosse, you have to get animated and even get in their face, which obviously doesn't work for golf," said Coach Williamson. According to the Mr. Peck, coaching golf is "more about maintaining an atmosphere where everyone can play their best golf."

Although some may assume that this change in leadership would hurt the team's success,

Freeman golf has actually had one of their most successful seasons in a while, with a 18-6 regular season record, and a 30-7 record including regionals. They placed second overall at regionals, and had two golfers, Patrick Murphy and Trevor Elliot, advance to states.

"The hardest thing is that we have eight or nine guys that could start in every competition, but we only have six spots to fill. It would be easier if there were six guys who were clearly the best, but we're spoiled for quality

here, so it makes it a tough decision for who gets to play," said Coach Williamson.

At states, Trevor finished 12th overall, while Patrick finished 16th.

With all of the hype surrounding this year's team, Coach Williamson made sure to credit Mr. Peck. "Any success we've had this year honestly comes down to groundwork he laid." Both coaches have built a fiercely competitive team representing Freeman this year.



Coach Williamson with the team after placing second in Regionals.

Freeman's Biggest Fans

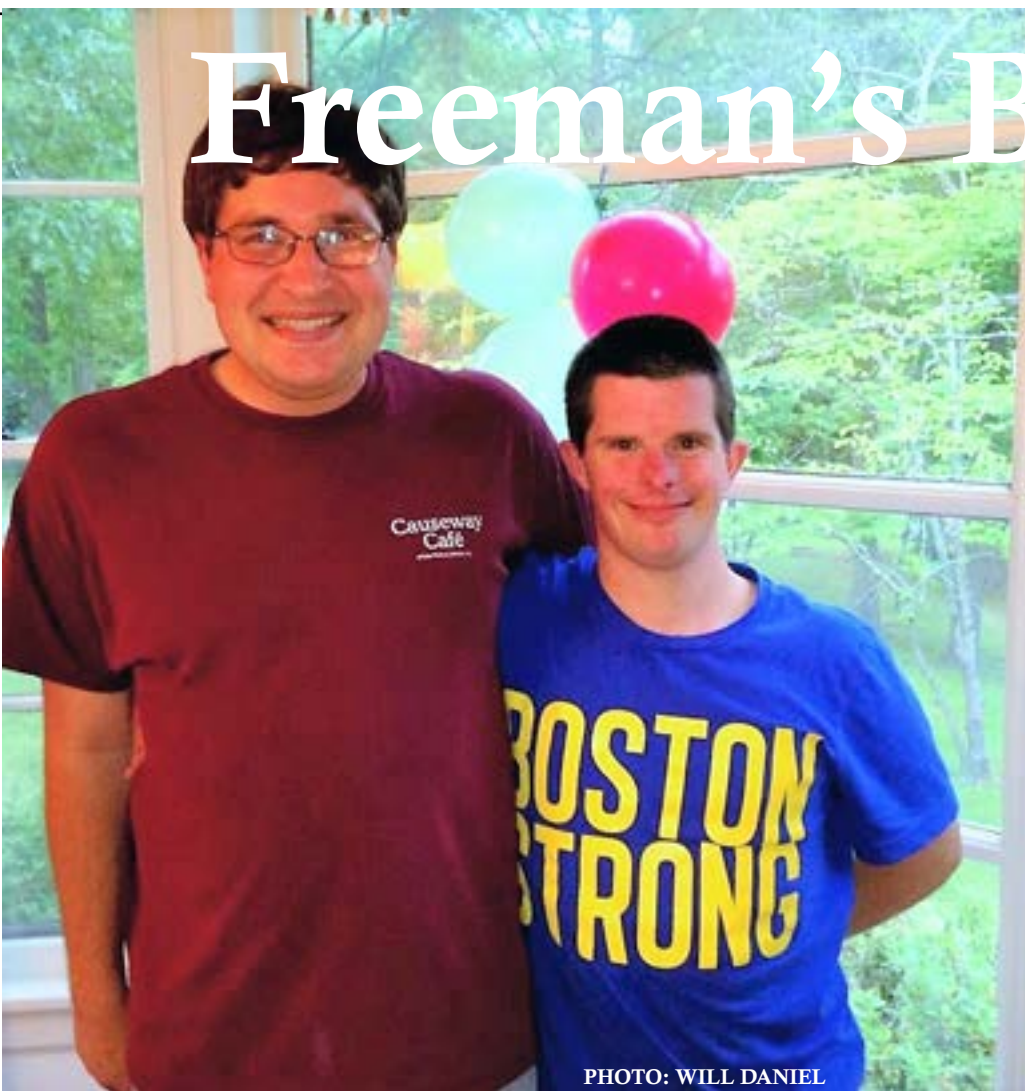


PHOTO: WILL DANIEL



PHOTO: WILL DANIEL

Pete (left) and Will (right) pose with Freeman seniors at William E. Long Stadium.

Molly Herring Features Editor

Freeman's biggest athletic fans are the scorekeepers, announcers, and concessions workers. Two of the most iconic members of the Freeman family, Pete Richardson and Will Daniel never fail to show love and support for Freeman.

Will and Pete met in the summer of 2000 at Kanawha pool. "My sister brought me to Will and I said I would love to meet Will," said Pete. Since then, the two have been found together at almost every Freeman home sports game, something students have grown to count on.

"I love having Pete and Will at our games because they know every single player by name and cheer for them regardless of how they are playing," said senior Emma Griffith, who plays on Freeman's volleyball team.

"Looking up in the stands and seeing Pete and Will cheering for every point encourages us to keep up our energy no matter what happens on the court," said senior Liza Laughlin, volleyball player.

Pete is a Freeman graduate and Will is a former Tucker Tiger. "My favorite memory [from high school] was when Josh Brinkley got an amazing slam dunk at the Godwin game. It was my junior year," said Pete.

After they met, the two grew closer through their participation in Special Olympics. Will is a former Special Olympics global messenger, which means he goes around Henrico talking about his experience with the program.

"Special Olympics is all about respect and inclusion and unity. It is all about having some fun with people that we play with. We do soccer together, basketball together, and powerlifting together. Power lifting helps us out with soccer and basketball, trying to get fit, trying to get ready

for fall and winter," said Will.

The most common place to spot Will and Pete on the Freeman campus is behind the snack bar at every home football game. "Pete was the one who got me involved in that actually, in the stand. If it wasn't for him, I wouldn't be doing it right now," said Will.

The two thrive in the busy environment and love making new friends. "I meet people that I know and people that I do not know. I love being involved," said Will.

Students always appreciate seeing the duo's smiling familiar faces behind the counter. "They are what makes the Rebel family," said senior Ursula Mitchell.

Pete's favorite part about Freeman is the athletic program. During his time as a Rebel, he was a helper for the athletic department. "Pete was at everything when he was a student here," said Suzanne Criswell, Athletic Director.

After noticing his commitment, Ms. Criswell asked Pete to be the scorekeeper

for the soccer program. "He did a much better job at it than I did," Ms. Criswell said.

After his second year, the athletic department gave Pete a varsity letter. At his graduation, he received a varsity letter jacket.

When Pete started bringing Will to all the Freeman games, they were given the opportunity to do the pre-game announcements. Part of the game introduction has been a round of applause for Pete and Will ever since.

Will and Pete embody the spirit of the Freeman family; their enthusiasm and support never falters. Next time you see them behind the snack counter or at a Freeman game, be sure to stop by and show your appreciation for their unwavering Rebel spirit. "They are always happy to be here. They really love this place," said Criswell.

Sophomore Key for XC



PHOTO: LAUREN TULL

Karson finishes an XC race.

Greer Peacock Staff Writer

Sophomore cross country runner, Karson Girvin, discovered her passion for running with the help of her family. Her parents pushed her to run cross country because they recognized her talent after she had been running 10ks with them. She started running 10ks when she moved here in seventh grade. Her first 10k was in March of 2015 with her parents. Karson's mother, Jerri Girvin, wanted to do it "for her own personal growth" and Karson "wanted to wake up at 5 am and train with her," said Mrs. Girvin.

"Now it is like a family tradition, we all do the monument 10k together," said Karson's mom. Karson has encouraged her younger brother and older sister to run the 10k with them.

"I play soccer, so I have always liked to run," said Karson. Karson runs track in the winter and plays soccer in the spring. "Soccer is my favorite sport because I've been playing for so long, but I like running because it is individual and you are basically just competing against yourself" she said.

Karson began running last year as a

freshman. She had a successful freshman season; she was one of the two girls from Freeman who qualified for the state championship. She said her time at states was "good, it was probably one of her best times" at 20.36. Her personal record for a 5k is 20.16.

"I like trying to beat my time each race and pushing myself to get better," Karson said.

Brian Reutinger, boys and girls cross country coach, believes Karson is showing improvements between last year and this year. Karson does not really have any bad races, said coach Reutinger. She has "good and great races only." His hope for Karson this year is to improve during the season and carry on that success throughout the postseason.

Though her season is young, Karson "has already started out this year better than she ended last year," he said. He said Karson needs to "continue to stay focused at practice. The better she can practice, the better she will do in races."

Karson enjoys being part of a team and encouraging others to do their best. "She is a coachable teammate and athlete...she always has a positive attitude and gives it her all," said Mrs. Girvin.

"She is a good teammate to have and she is extremely positive. She has a good attitude that rubs off on others," said Coach Reutinger. The girls on cross country push one another to get better individually, so they can improve as a team. "All my teammates push me to get better, as well as the coaches," Karson said.

"She has a very positive attitude and influences us to stay on task," said Karson's teammate, Grayson Brittingham.

"Usually after we're done running we'll go watch the other races and cheer on our teammates" Karson said. The team is tight-knit, and the "girls are all in each other's corners" so that each member can improve.

Karson practices every day after school for an hour and a half. On the weekends, she will usually go on a long run, as instructed by her coach. Sometimes she will run with friends, and sometimes she will run by herself.

Karson is in the Leadership Center and said that juggling practice and school "is not too bad, but she has to manage her time well."

Karson also plays the oboe in advanced band and enjoys reading. Karson originally came to Freeman for the Leadership center, but has since found her passion for being a supportive teammate and an unstoppable athlete.



PHOTO: CAROLINE DANIEL

Gabriella guards the goal against Hermitage.

Lax Player Makes a Switch

Lauren Tull Design Editor

Senior Gabriella Mignardi learned how to play field hockey two months ago, but she's already become an integral part of Freeman's varsity team.

Gabriella started her athletic career seven years ago playing lacrosse, and she and her coaches quickly realized that her skills were best suited for the goalie position.

"I started out as a goalie, and I've been one ever since," said Gabriella. In order to be a successful goalie, fast reflexes are essential. Gabriella has a "fast reaction time" so she can get to the ball and stop it from going in the goal. Gabriella prefers being a goalie to playing offense because she is "not good at attacking, and blocking it is a lot easier" for her, she said.

When she was in eighth grade, Gabriella admired her lacrosse coach, Coach Regina Ryan, and credits her with making lacrosse fun but also competitive.

"She made me a better player in general just because of how she coached," said Gabriella.

Lauren Blanchetti, a senior captain on Freeman's varsity field hockey team, asked Gabriella to join the team after seeing her play goalie for Freeman's varsity lacrosse team. Head varsity coach, John Bennett, was in the market for a new goalie because the former goalie, Emma Buckley, graduated in June. Gabriella immediately accepted the invitation. "Coach Bennett is one of my favorite coaches I've ever had—he's so happy and fun!"

Though lacrosse and field hockey have some similarities, each requires a very different set of skills as a goalie.

"Lacrosse is more focused on proper

hand movement and blocking using your hands, whereas in field hockey you are mainly using your feet and stick to block the ball," said Gabriella. When becoming a field hockey goalie, Gabriella had to learn to guard the goal with her lower body, even while wearing massive foot and shin pads for protection.

Varsity field hockey has improved throughout the season, though the team is very young after losing 12 seniors last year.

"It's a really close knit team, and we all work well with each other," said Gabriella.

The team, many of whom have been together for several years, readily welcomed Gabriella. "I feel like I didn't really earn my spot, but the team has helped me acquire field hockey skills," she said.

Gabriella's favorite moment from this season happened in a scrimmage during practice. Junior Caperton Beirne "popped the ball into the air, and I stretched as far as I could and saved it," she said. Field hockey will help Gabriella keep her goalie skills sharp, hopefully leading her to a successful final high school lacrosse season in the spring.

"I think playing field hockey will make me a better lacrosse player because I will be working on my reaction skills throughout the year," she said.

After graduating from Freeman this year, Gabriella hopes to continue playing lacrosse and being a goalie in college.

"I'll probably play either club or inter-mural lacrosse, but I just know I want to play," she said.

Gabriella has enjoyed her past few months of varsity field hockey. "I definitely wish I had played field hockey earlier. The team is very close, and we have fun while still being competitive," she said.

A New Star Shines on Stage



PHOTO: ARIELA PRESS

This summer, junior Ariela Press performed in *Macbeth* at the Quill Theater.

Cole Ryland
Staff Writer

They say when you gaze upon a star, it's already dead, but for junior Ariela Press, it's the polar opposite; her acting career is still lively. A long-time performer, she takes great pride in acting in musical and theatrical productions. This year, however, Ariela took one large step in her performing history: she took the stage in the play *Macbeth* by the distinguished Quill Theater group.

The story began when Ariela auditioned to be an acting intern in *Macbeth* with Quill Theater, a substantial step from school and local productions.

"Upon auditioning I thought I was gonna have a behind the scenes role," she said. "So when I got the call that I was cast, I thought 'Well, I didn't see that

one coming.'"

Because of the intensity of the production, Ariela had to work hard on her role.

"Although my role was minimal, I never did Shakespeare so speaking the language was a challenge," she said.

According to theater-mate Connor Battle, speaking the language was not the only challenge Ariela faced.

"It was an outdoor group so sometimes I would text her and she would say it was super-hot and miserable," he said. However, Ariela endured the heat for nearly four months, and finally performed in early August to an eager audience.

Although this was a large step in theater for Ariela, she also has had many other experiences with other groups that all contributed to her acting skills. Two summers ago, Ariela acted in a production at Boston University

that touched on "vital subjects on megacities in Asia".

"It focused on real-world issues and had a big moving effect," she said. The experience for her was a very fruitful one, which she thanks her instructor for.

"This one instructor, Mikaela Donovan, was the singing teacher and her philosophy & style was very enjoyable," she said. Upon returning from Boston, her peers described that her skills increased from years before.

"She was a great singer and actress in middle school," Conor Battle said. "But when she returned from Boston, there was this level of polish - way more precision and ability."

Going back to the beginning, Ariela said her passion for acting ignited when she was very young, after watching her sister act in a play.

"I remember all the kids in the audience were distracted, but I

was extremely focused," she described. "And then I acted in my first production at age seven, and since then I've been hooked."

Ariela's passion for performing has shaped her into the person she is today, and she plans to continue her passion as much as she can throughout her life.

"Something's thrilling about performing, and whether I'm performing for five people or a thousand, it's all about the art," she said. "If you don't love it, the audience won't." Fortunately for her, and her peers, she does love it.



Taylor Swift Reinvents Herself... Again

Hailey Reid
Sports Editor



"I'm sorry, the old Taylor can't come to the phone right now. Why? Oh, 'cause she's dead!"

These are just a few lyrics in Taylor Swift's new song, "Look What You Made Me Do," which introduced the world to her new identity in music.

Honestly, this Dr. Jekyll to Mr. Hyde transformation threw me off a little. What made Taylor make this change? Clearly, someone made her angry.

There is a lot of controversy going around the people referred to in this song. Taylor sings, "I've got a list of names and yours is in red, underlined." Who is she talking about? It seems as if she has problems with a lot of people. Maybe she needs to have a nice little talk with some of these people instead of just writing songs about them.

However, I give props to Taylor Swift because she had some major guts to call out those who have said negative comments about her. She made a bold statement with the first two songs on her new album, 'Reputation,' which is being fully released on Nov. 10.

She has since released another song, titled "...Ready for It?"

This tune is a bit tamer. It is reminiscent of the upbeat music of her past. This song is supposed to be about her boyfriend, Joe Alwyn.

Taylor cannot seem to find out who she really wants to be. She has gone from country singer, to a pop singer, to... whatever she is now.

Many stars in the past have gone through similar stages as Taylor Swift. They think they are a new person, and then they go back to who they always were before. Who knows what sparked Taylor's drastic change, but I am just wondering when she is going to go back to normal.

She is getting people talking, which was most likely her goal. But this music does not make any sense and does not fit with her personality.

Some people believe that the song is allegedly about Kanye West. The line "I don't like your little games, don't like your tilted stage, the role you made me play as the fool, no I don't like you" is possibly calling him out, considering he had a tilted stage for one of his concerts.

What happened to the old country Taylor? I feel as though I took her for granted. She needs to come back.

Alright, Taylor. I think we have had enough of you "starring in [our] bad dreams," let's go back to a little more "Love Story."

Yoga Mats Rolling Out Across RVA

Caitlin McSorely
Staff Writer

Every Tuesday as the sun's final beams disappear beneath the tree line, the golden lights on the Carillon Tower illuminate hundreds of Richmonders deep in their yoga practice.

This is no rare occurrence in Richmond. According to instructor Michelle Landon of One Drop Yoga, free outdoor yoga is peacefully spreading, connecting people from "all walks of life."

"You learn to breathe through the challenging moments...what you learn on the mat, you take off the mat," said Mrs. Landon.

"I love yoga because it helps slow down the mind, connecting it to the body and heart," said Richmonder Stephanie Michaluwicz after one Tuesday's class.

Gregg, a participant, said, "I personally like outdoor yoga, everyone can come out and do yoga at their own ability level. Oh, and the free pops always helps with numbers." He is referring to King of Pops, which gives popsicles to all the yogis attending class.

Aiming to provide the community with non-traditional yoga settings, One Drop Yoga offers free classes at Virginia War Memorial, Byrd Park, and Libby Hill Park.

"It was really cool, everyone was just doing yoga together," said senior Meredith Christian regarding a yoga class she took at Byrd Park through One Drop Yoga. Meredith got into yoga by taking classes for fun at American Family Fitness. "I like that it's a combination of exercise and relaxation," said Meredith.



PHOTO: CAITLIN MCSORELY

Local Richmonders gather for yoga at the Carillon.

Richmonders do not stop at free yoga and pops. Another yoga non-profit organization, Project Yoga Richmond (PYR), has a mission to increase access to yoga regardless of physical and financial ability.

PYR offers yoga classes with a "pay what you can when you can" motto. The money goes to community outreach projects. Their outreach includes providing people in the juvenile justice systems, Chesterfield prison, and some Richmond city schools the opportunity to roll out a mat.

"It is awesome to serve the population that way," said Holly Zajur, the Communications Manager at PYR. Yoga will continue

to be impactful, as "the world is always going to have ups and downs." She believes that the benefits of yoga "ripple out, impacting everyone, in ways of interacting with other people."

PYR offers classes at their studio, located off Dickens Road, as well as Saturday Salutations at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts in the warm months. Among the PYR staff is Freeman alum Dana Walters, the Vice President and Co-founder.

Moreover, the power of yoga flowed to Freeman's faculty this year. Margaret Carlson, a PE teacher, reached out to the teachers offering a free yoga class in the library after school every

Wednesday. Eight faculty came to the first class. Mrs. Carlson has logged hundreds of yoga instruction hours, including an eight-week course.

"I just wanted to give back to the teachers," said Mrs. Carlson. Mrs. Carlson's brought this tradition from her former school, Pocahontas Middle School.

Freeman Mindfulness, a new program librarian Laurie Kaplan is working on, will begin having meetings during study blocks on Wednesdays. Yoga, along with meditation and breathing exercises, will be included in this class. Perhaps yoga will be rippling among the Freeman students in the near future.

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Musician Grows Music Like Flowers

Maggie Flournoy
Staff Writer

Headphones in, tall stature, and head moving along to the music, junior Jackson Holm can be spotted amongst a sea of Freeman students doing something abnormal. Creating his own music.

"I love making music because everything that I make is my own personal work and you don't have to say anything to establish a message or a tone," he said.

"You can say something, but you don't have to," he said.

Jackson's older brother, George, is the one who inspired his appreciation for music. "He just hooked my iPod up to his computer and put a ton of music on it. That's how I got into The Beastie Boys and The Beatles and Eminem, and [those were] probably my first few inspirations for music."

Jackson is releasing his first EP, *Exotic Flowers*, at the beginning of next year. An EP, or Extended Play, is used to describe an album with a small number of songs. It is often used for new artists to get their first tracks into the music industry.

"My friend texted me one day that the name of one of my songs sounded like an exotic flower," Jackson said, wearing a pale blue shirt with a pink floral pattern. "That's how I came up with the title."

Jackson says the genre of music his album falls under is "a mix of hip hop and indie music."

Jackson is not working on his album alone; juniors Seth Forrest, Cole Ryland, and Bradley McNamara are helping him. Seth is a bass player, Cole plays the guitar, and Bradley critiques Jackson's tracks.



Exotic Flowers album cover.

"We have always had the idea of making music, but then in December of last year Jackson got his keyboard and started producing music. Ever since then we've been writing and making music," said Bradley.

"I met Jackson on the football team in Freshman year. We just kind of kicked it off. We became friends and later found out that we both had common interests in music," said Seth.

Seth plays the bass guitar and is doing some of the instrumental parts of the songs on the EP. "[Jackson has] pretty much said that it's going to be a group collaboration with the writing," Seth said. "So I haven't actually written anything yet, but that's the plan eventually."

Jackson took piano lessons for a few months, but he said when it comes to his skills with "producing, mixing, and mastering", he is self-taught.

"I can play the piano, a little bit of ukulele, and a tiny bit of guitar but not really," said Jackson, laughing.

Jackson has a specific writing process for his pieces. "You start with one chord or maybe one line of a song and then you just keep on building on from there," he said. "I think a lot of music is just a moment of inspiration."

"We get in a group and have writing sessions where we'll each write a verse or so," said Bradley. Jackson said it includes Cole playing a guitar riff, followed by Jackson "making a beat." After that, the four of them will write a verse that they think "would go well with the song."

Jackson uses the program "Ableton Live 9" to create his music. Jackson said that this is a good program for beginners because "everything is right in front of you." He calls his music "analog electronics," using the program to create all of the different instruments.

Jackson has been writing songs and rap verses since he was in sixth grade and likes "being able to express my own message through the creativity of words." He has had to make some sacri-

fices for music. "I quit [football] to help give me time for music and stuff," he said. This sacrifice was not in vain. Both Bradley and Seth believe that Jackson will continue music.

"Jackson has only been producing for about a year, but in that time he's gotten so much skill that I feel like if he continues to progress the way that he is he definitely has like an avenue in music," Bradley said.



You can find Jackson's music on
soundcloud.com/user-90349418.

What to Watch on Netflix this Fall

For animal-loving adventure junkies...
Okja



For 80's music enthusiasts and sci-fi lovers...
Stranger Things
(Season 2 out October 27!)



For avid sports fans...
Last Chance U



For people who indulge in "creepy" things...
Bates Motel



For our comedy fanatics...
Friends from College



The S'Mores Rolled Ice Cream at Cold Platform.

Ice Cream with a Modern Twist

Review:

Cold Platform



4336 Pouncey Tract Rd,
Glen Allen, VA 23060

Lucy Collins
A&E Editor

Neatly tucked between a Buffalo Wild Wings and a barber shop, Cold Platform offers a new up and coming fad: rolled ice cream. Rolled ice cream is created when the ice cream base is poured onto a cold surface, freezing the liquid base, and then morphing the frozen liquid into a rolled form.

Once you walk through the doors, you are greeted with white walls, tables, and fluorescent bright lights, giving this ice cream shop a very modern appeal. Once you reach the ice cream counter, you are greeted by lovely workers, pointing out to you a plethora of unique ice cream flavors. Here are some to tickle your taste buds: s'more, French toast, strawberry shortcake, rocky road, cookies & cream, mint chip, Nutella crunch, turtle, and salted caramel. These flavors are an ice cream lover's dream. An upside to the shop is that you can create your own rolled ice cream. Cold Platform offers a three step process in order to create your own rolls. Step 1: Choose your own base, Vanilla or Chocolate. Step 2: Add up to

two mix-ins (excluding hard and gummy candies). Step 3: Choose your toppings out of the 30 different options available. A downfall to eating here is that there is only one cup size, for the price of \$6.65. Although this is a great place to go with friends or on a date, be prepared for a big sized portion of rolled ice cream. Finishing five rolls of rolled ice cream, for me, was like trying to finish a marathon. I kept eating and eating, but the ice cream kept showing up, like an unshakeable old habit. That being the only obstacle I encountered in the white walled ice cream shoppe, I have nothing but high remarks for this up and coming store. If you enjoy unique ice cream flavors, the more impractical the better, I advise you to take the journey to Short Pump Town Center and enjoy the modern twist on an ice cream shop that is Cold Platform.



PHOTO: LUCY COLLINS

Best Burritos Ever?

Review:

Best Friends Forever



2915 W Cary St, Richmond, VA
23221

Mia Fuller
A&E Editor



Chicken Pibil at BFF.

Burritos and your best friends: these are the key themes of Carytown's most talked about new restaurant, Best Friends Forever.

BFF is located on West Cary Street, directly across from the Byrd Theater. A couple doors to the right is the home of its parent restaurant, Don't Look Back. The infamous taco dive caught fire earlier this year, prompting the opening of BFF. The restaurant was intended at first to be a pop-up, opened for a limited amount of time. Originally named 11 Months, the restaurant consists of a standard, yet elegant, Mexican dinner menu. Now, in response to high demand, BFF stands in Carytown as the hottest, burrito-centric restaurant in Richmond.

I went on a Wednesday night, around 6 p.m., with two of my closest friends. The inside of the restaurant was small, yet bright and inviting. Their theme of friendship was prominent throughout the décor; each wall portrayed doodle-like drawings in bright yellow paint. We sat in a roomy window seat and peered at the menus located in a box on the table.

To start, we got an appetizer of chips and queso. At first, the queso was not my favorite; it was nothing different or extraordinary. However, it grew on me with the help of some amazing tortilla chips. Since it was not one of the more crowded nights in Carytown, our food came out quickly. One of my friends ordered a "Breakfast Burrito" that included eggs, black beans, ba-

con, salsa fresca, and a cheddar-jack cheese. The crispy bacon and pop of fresh salsa paired well and made for a phenomenal meal. I also went with a specialty burrito called the "Chicken Pibil." It was packed with chicken, Queso Chihuahua, pinto beans, poblano rice, and was spiced with an annatto-garlic combo. The burrito was filled to the brim with meaty goodness, and the annatto-garlic seasoning was a fiesta in my mouth. My other friend ordered a burrito bowl with a lettuce base, white rice, black beans, cheese, and sour cream. She ordered a small and was happily surprised at how much food came for only \$6.

At the end of our meal, I opted out on trying their desserts of flan or churros and chocolate. This was because, in my opinion, no dessert will ever compare to the key lime pie from Don't Look Back.

Overall, my experience at Best Friends Forever satisfied my cravings and left me with a smile on my face. The meals were relatively cheap for the quality of the ingredients, each meal ranging from \$8-12. The theme of friendship also added a new element of happiness to the location that is different from any restaurant I have been experienced.

If you miss Don't Look Back as much as I do, take a trip down to Best Friends Forever- it is sure to fill your heart, as well as your stomach.