

# The Commentator

Vol. LXVI, No. I ..... Douglas Southall Freeman High School ..... June 2018

## Artwork Brightens Hallways

See the student-made murals on pages 4 and 5



## Infinity War Review

See page 8



## Promoting More Diversity in Henrico County Schools

Kate Yarbrough  
Opinions Editor

Henrico County Public Schools is creating a new Equity and Diversity Advisory Committee. The 26-member committee will consist of “one teacher, one student, one parent, and one school leader from each of Henrico’s five magisterial districts,” according to the Henrico Schools website, with five more seats “reserved for interested citizens.”

The new committee was created as an effort to make Henrico Schools more diverse and accessible to the community.

“The main goal is to help the school division have a better and

very clear sense of what can make out efforts more equitable and diverse as a school system... Equity, diversity, and what we call ‘cultural competency’ have been focus areas for the school system for quite some time,” said Andy Jenks, Henrico Schools’ Director of Communication and Public Relations.

Earlier in the year, the schoolboard also introduced a new Director of Equity and Diversity, Monica Manns. This is the first Director of Equity and Diversity Henrico County has ever had.

“One of her main responsibilities will be to facilitate this advisory committee [and] to make sure that they are functioning well and at the high level that

everyone expects,” said Andy Jenks.

Freeman, as a leader in school diversity in Henrico, will hopefully learn from the committee while also supplying important information to the schoolboard.

“What the diversity committee can do is help inform us on how to run a school...but also I think that we have something to provide to them, as we’ve been working with diversity and all of its strengths and challenges for many years at Freeman. Other schools are just starting to encounter that, so I think that we’ll be a resource for them as well,” said John Marshall, assistant principal.

In their application, teachers,

students, parents, and interested citizens were asked to “provide demographic information, respond to several questions, and provide one personal recommendation in the event that they become a finalist,” according to the Henrico Schools website.

Applications were accepted until May 13, and training for members is planned to begin in June. After this training session, it is expected that meetings will occur on the first Tuesday of every month from June to March.

Through these meetings, the committee hopes to formulate “well informed advice to the schoolboard” regarding “ideas, feedback and things that are occurring in the community that

might be a good fit for the school system,” said Andy Jenks.

Several community listening sessions and online polls were created to help the committee determine goals.

“If we identify themes emerging, those will be possible areas of focus for the Equity and Diversity Advisory Committee,” said Monica Manns.

Through this committee, the schoolboard hopes to encourage new participation and perspectives in a number of ways.

“Our goal is to put one student from each of Henrico’s five districts on that committee to provide a voice from a student perspective, and we think that’s important,” said Andy Jenks.

## First Ever All-Star Prom

Mark Graff  
Editor-in-Chief

Freeman led the charge to organize HCPS’s first prom for exceptional education students. The prom was a success, with students from Freeman and Glen Allen in attendance. The event took place at Trinity Lutheran Church on Saturday, May 5.

The All-Star prom looked like any other prom, with decorations, a photo booth, a DJ, dinner, and the highlight for many of the exceptional education students: an ice cream bar.

“The whole evening was just happy and amazing. The kids were smiling, dancing, having fun, eating lasagna and ice cream. It was overall one of the happiest days of my teaching career,” said Lauren Lightfoot Clare, the department chair for the integrated services programs at Freeman.

Many of the students from Glen Allen and Freeman knew each other from summer school at Virginia Randolph, so for some it felt like a reunion. They dressed however they felt comfortable; some wore tuxes and dresses while others came in a t-shirt and shorts.

The goal of the prom was to create a friendly environment where any special accommodations could be made and every

student would feel welcome.

Student volunteers came to help make the night run smoothly. Their role was to help greet students, serve food, and have fun with them however they could.

“This would not have happened without the work of the integrated services aids and the student volunteers. I could not be more proud with the students who volunteered. The way they interacted with all of the prom participants was truly inspirational. They had personal connections with each and every one, whether it was encouraging them to dance and meeting them wherever they were with their dancing abilities or having a twenty-minute conversation with them or serving food,” Mrs. Jones said.

Junior Abby Cornwell was one of the students who volunteered at the prom. According to Abby, the prom was filled with excitement.

“They were waiting at the door for their friends to come in. One student even brought in enough corsages for every girl student and teacher. There wasn’t really a divide between us and them. Everybody was just smiling and laughing and dancing... nobody worried about what anybody thought about them.”

According to both the students and teachers, the night went wonderfully. “That program and

those kids are really close to my heart, my parents were all exceptional education teachers, so it was awesome to see those kids to have something that they could call their own... they loved every second of it,” said Tim Sanders, assistant principal.

Brandon Cokes was one of the All-Stars at the prom, and he said that he enjoyed being with all his friends at the prom. Allison Spangler liked dressing up in her green dress, although her favorite part was the ice cream bar. All of the exceptional education students said they had a ton of fun.

With the success of the event, the teachers and administrators are determined to make next year even bigger and better. They hope to include students from every Henrico school next year, and have already started reaching out to venues and planning fundraisers.

Choices for next year’s venues include: Tuckahoe Moose Lodge and the Belmont Recreation Center. Both the students and faculty are optimistic about the chances to get a county-wide prom running next year.

“I think it’s going to be amazing... when you have volunteers from every school everyone has somebody that they know so it keeps that same small, intimate feeling while including everyone in the county,” said Abby.

The goal is to get as much donated to the prom as possible, and try to get media to come to the prom to bring attention and sponsors. The PTA was able to help fund the All-Star Prom this year, and the Trinity Lutheran Church was able to provide the location for free, but on a larger scale there would be more costs.

For the behind the scenes story on the teachers, planning, last minute changes, and future goals for the prom continue reading on the Commentator Online.



PHOTO: RICHMOND TIMES DISPATCH

Prom King and Queen, Nicholas Wright and Caroline Wall, walk in together.

## Prom Proves Rumors Wrong

Laney Van Lenten  
News Editor

Despite rumors, Prom went off without a hitch on Saturday, May 19. Students swarmed the downtown Hilton Richmond Hotel, and were treated to “A Starry Night” of music, food, dancing, and fun.

“I thought it went great, everyone I talked to said they had a great time,” said Junior Class President, Adam Notley.

Along with the dancing and festivities came the prom court dances, and the crowning of the prom king and queen. This year, the Senior Class crowned Nicholas Wright and Caroline Wall.

“Getting prom king was pretty crazy. I felt like it came out of nowhere, but it felt good. The crown looked kind of dumb, but being royalty feels good,” Nicholas said.

“It’s super flattering to know that my classmates think of me in such a positive way,” Caroline said.

The heat of the small venue took a toll on students as they danced to their heart’s content. However, there were refreshments waiting just outside in the main area of the hotel.

“It was a fun, yet sweaty dance,” Nicholas said.

Overall, the 2018 prom was not something to be missed. Inside Out, a 13-piece pop band returned to perform covers of hit songs such as Despacito, Fireball, and Uptown Funk.

When the night was done, students were shuttled to their cars on a party bus, gossiping about the events of their evening and chattering about their after prom plans.

“It was a great night spent laughing and dancing with friends,” said senior Maria Vinson.



PHOTO: BARBARA MYERS

Student Thomas Ross and Teacher Barbara Myers pose for a photo at the dance.

## Cafeteria Hit By Health Inspection

Zoe Costello  
News Editor

On May 2, multiple health code violations were found in the cafeteria after a routine health inspection.

The health inspector found four violations: hot food items kept below the acceptable temperature of 135 degrees, cold food in the refrigerator kept above

the prescribed temperature, salad and whipped cream kept at the wrong temperature, and a meat slicer with dust on it.

“We cook ahead of time for the first lunch, so by the time [the inspector] came the temperature had dropped,” said cafeteria manager Surina Thomas.

The cafeteria staff had just finished making the salad when the inspector arrived. “The stuff we use for the salad has to sit out while we make them, so by the

time we were finished the temperature had risen. They were in the fridge, but they were still cooling off,” she said.

The staff corrected all of the violations. They put the food that was below the prescribed temperature back in the oven and reheated it, disposed of the food that was above the correct temperature, and cleaned off and stored away the meat slicer.

No students knowingly became sick from the health code viola-

tions.

This is the first time that Freeman has had four violations.

Health inspectors visited multiple schools in Henrico the first week of May, and also found violations at Ridge Elementary School, Davis Elementary School, and Tuckahoe Middle School.

For more details, go to the Commentator Online for an extended story.



PHOTO: CAITLIN MCSORLEY

Junior Victoria Nunez buys lunch.



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# Living in the Middle Ground of High School



Kate Yarbrough  
Opinions Editor

For a 17-year-old, I spend a lot of time worrying about my own mortality.

Sitting in my pathetic little desk in room 101, I often find myself staring blankly at my poor, neglected math test resting unfinished in front of me. My brain is, sadly, as absent as my gaze. Lulled by the furious tapping of buttons on TI-84's and scratching of mechanical pencils, the scrape of a chair breaks me from my reverie—another student has turned in their test. Looking around at my fellow classmates busily engrossed in their tests, I find myself wondering:

“Wow. I wonder what it would be like if I knew what I was doing right now.”

But this isn't only applicable to Calculus class; sometimes I feel like I'm the only one who sees how important this time is in the scheme of the rest of our lives, and how completely unprepared I am to handle it. That every second we have in our first three high school years—freshman, sophomore, and junior—is just as important as our senior year.

Yes, the senior issue just came out, and despite how wonder-

ful and thoughtful those articles were, I'm sure you're touched yet bored of columns headlined with some variation of Advice from a Teenager. I am here, however, to offer a unique perspective of sorts, as I am a junior. I don't have anything figured out yet; I am not burdened with the weathered wisdom of surviving all four years of high school.

That, and I constantly feel like I have no idea what I'm doing.

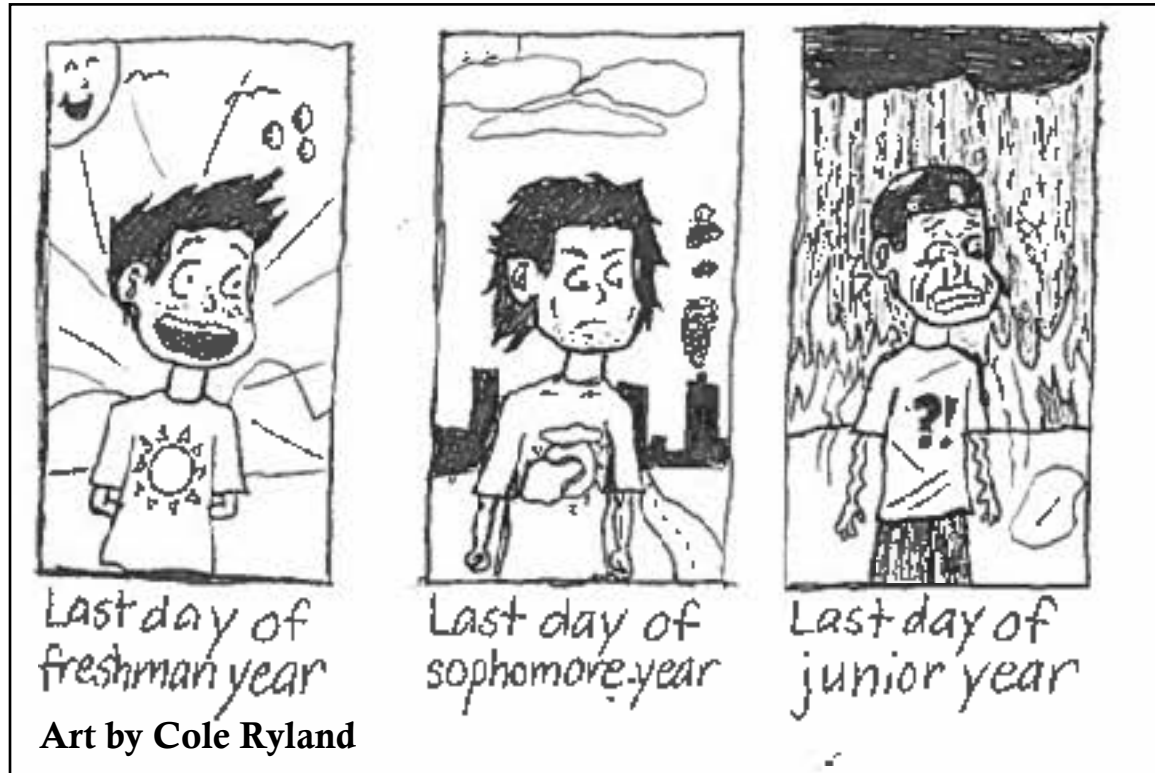
When I was younger, I thought my childhood was infinite. I loved birthdays, I loved seeming older and more mature. But its moments like sitting in a rented Boston condo with my parents, looking out the window at the snow after a long day of college tours, when I wonder how I suddenly am, like, almost a grown-up.

It hits me like a punch to the gut. What am I doing? What have I been doing for the past three years in high school? Homework? Senior year is on its way, and still don't know the three types of irony. The last year of physics has felt like a nice, pretty watercolor of pictures of boxes sliding down ramps and confusion.

But then again, I'm not there yet. I'm not a senior; I'm not leaving to go to college in a few weeks. But I'm also not a freshman. I don't have all that time left, I've taken the SAT, there's a set of car keys hanging from a keyring on a red lanyard in my backpack. Nothing is happening, yet everything is happening.

I feel like this time in our lives, the middle ground of high school, is largely disregarded, but I think that who we are in this time allows us to understand more about ourselves than any time thus far.

As the seniors graduate, and our



Art by Cole Ryland

ninth, tenth, or eleventh school-years are ending, we wonder, what's going to happen next in this weird middle ground? What will my classes be like next year? Will I actually start my summer reading before the last two weeks of summer? (The answer to that last question is probably no.)

I, for one, am terrified. But I'm also fascinated. My favorite part about being in this time, the moments before the shoe drops, is watching the people around me react to it in their own way.

Although sometimes I feel like the only one in a perpetual freak-out about how important this time in our lives is, but I know I'm absolutely not. I know that all of us feel in over our heads sometimes. Going out of your comfort zone is the only way to truly learn about yourself and grow, as much as that sucks.

Writing this column right now, I

feel overwhelmed. Being offered this position on the Commentator staff is an incredible opportunity for me, but as a person who doesn't tend to feel comfortable talking in front of the class, it is also terrifying. But here you are, the Freeman student body, reading my words printed hundreds of times. And here I am, most likely trying not to freak out.

Take advantage of this middle ground. Do what makes you uncomfortable, but also what makes you comfortable. Learn from yourself, and keep in mind that no one else knows what they're doing either—we're all in the same boat.

Juniors—have fun on college tours! Accept how crazy everything is and just see as much as you can. Sophomores—take the PSAT with a smile, that's an experience you'll likely never have again (although, I can't tell you

the reason we take the PSAT a whole year before most of us take the SAT. But tell the nice teacher thank you and fill in those bubbles with passion!).

Even beyond school activities, try things! This is one of the only times we can try something completely spontaneously without major repercussions. Explore the city! Take a dance class! Start a club! If those seem too intimidating, change your Instagram profile picture! After any sort of change, you're bound to learn more about yourself (even if what is learned ends up being, “Oh my God, I actually look terrible in that picture, never mind”).

We're all going to be in our senior years at some point, and at this point we've all completed our freshman years. That's what this middle ground is--- you're not here, nor there. So enjoy it.

# Should Freeman Have End of the Year Exams?



Braxton Berry  
Opinions Editor

I hate high school final exams—taking them, talking about them, and thinking about the time I have to take out of my day to take a test that does not accurately portray my success as a student.

It is now that time of year where students go into a frenzy, studying furiously for different exams, and the controversy of cancelling final exams is more prevalent than ever.

Final exams warrant an unnecessary amount of stress to a

time of the school year which should be peaceful. A time when warm summer days, crashing blue waves, and sweet watermelon dance in our heads; while Aristotelian philosophy, momentum equations, and the imperfect tense flee our now post-standardized test minds.

For students to be fairly assessed on the content they learned throughout their time in class, a considerably long and time consuming test would be needed. It is hard to study and find old materials from the beginning of the year, especially if some teachers decide to not review for a beneficial amount of time.

After working hard all year long, even students with the highest grades have to worry as they frantically try to memorize every piece of information they learned.

An advantageous alternative for final exams would be to have four quarter grades each worth 25 percent of the fi-

nal grade, or replace final exams with a long term project.

In order to complete a project, students can really show what they have learned without the stress of a testing environment.

With a project assignment, students can show their creativity and the content they learned in a unique way.

Even if a student knows all of the material, the effort and time it takes to complete a project on their work can show them the hard work ethic that they need to use for the rest of their life. Additionally, students do not get the opportunity to come back to school and receive their final exam grades or see what they could have done differently.

Many students only see the tests' effects on their grades once they receive their final report card, and have to accept their grade without argument.

For students who passed every quarter with A's, final exams can be somewhat tedious and

a waste of time and resources.

After many other standardized tests, final exams can become a bit useless and bring more stress to students who have just went through an even more stressful testing environment.

Many teachers and students would argue that final exams can help many students who fell behind but still learn the material to pick up their grades and prove their knowledge of the material.

However, for most students who are not borderline passing, final exams are an extra amount of stress and do not have any positive outcomes.

If a student really learned the material throughout the school year, they would not need another exam to prove it.

Rather there should be other alternative ways to test a student's ability other than a test. The final exams are repetitive of unit tests, and if a student passes all of their unit tests, then they should not have to prove once again

that they know the material.

In a real world situation, if a student fell behind in a class and failed a test, they would need to move on with their life and aim to do a better job the next time.

To give students 10 percent of their final grade out of one exam is to let students go through the year thinking that if they fail one quarter, they have a safety net to bring their grade back up.

Final exams are also a questionable way to show what students have learned. In the real world, students will not be able to take a multiple choice test in a classroom to prove that they know the material.

Students will be challenged and will need to overcome adversity to succeed in life, and schools should take the “finals” opportunity to teach that to their students.

Final exams are not setting any example for students to follow, and they are not benefitting the futures of students in real world situations.

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

## INSIDE OUT

Kate Yarbrough  
Opinions Editor

Sorry I missed my SOL, I was taking an AP exam.

Still wondering what the Common App even is.

“Eaaaaooooow!”

Senioritis begins now.

Still haven't seen any “Baywatch”-style slow motion running— not worth it.

Watched the first five minutes of episode one, didn't get the hype.

## An Introvert and Extrovert Weigh in on the Issues of the Day

Braxton Berry  
Opinions Editor

I was too busy listening to bops so I wouldn't want to “Kermit sewerside.”

Scared for it, but I can't wait to move out.

“Okuuuuurt!”

Unless you want to drown...dont hire me.

I'd rather do a project I can make about myself than waste an hour of my life.

Great addition to pop culture.

SOL schedule

College applications

Cardi B

End-of-the-year projects

Lifeguarding

“13 Reasons Why”



## Contestants Compete for Mr. DSF Title

Katie Cooper  
**Online Editor-in-Chief**  
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**News Editor**



PHOTO: KATIE COOPER

(From Left to Right) Drew Parkhurst, Joseph Strait, Nick Ulrichs, Joe O'Connor, Quintin Tedeschi, Tyler Thomas, Ravan Inayat-khan

Students joined together to watch seven boys compete for the title of Mr. DSF. There was a question and answer portion, a costume portion, and a talent portion to the competition. In the end, the final three came down to Joe O'Connor, Ravan Inayatkhan, and Tyler Thomas. Each boy was asked to answer a final questions, and Ravan Inayatkhan was crowned the 2018 Mr. DSF winner.



PHOTO: KATIE COOPER

### 2018 Mr. DSF winner

**Name/grade:** Ravan Inayat-khan, sophomore.  
**Describe your act:** I'm doing a rockabilly act that is unlike anything you've ever seen.  
**What made you want to participate?** Money talks.  
**What does it take to be Mr. DSF, and do you have it?** It takes what I've got and I've got it.  
**What's your source of inspiration?** Elvis Presley.  
**What has this competition taught you?** This competition has taught me that I'm very talented.  
**What's your catchphrase?** "Goodness gracious great balls of fire."



PHOTO: KATIE COOPER

2016 Mr. DSF, Coleman Greene makes a surprise performance for the audience.



PHOTO: KATIE COOPER

**Name/grade:** Joe O'Connor, senior.  
**Describe your act:** Lots of flips. Literally flipping.  
**What does it take to be Mr. DSF, and do you have it?** It takes some spunk. I hope I have spunk.  
**Who is your greatest competition?** Definitely Ravan. I feel like he's going to be the one to beat, he has a pretty solid act.  
**What's your catchphrase?** "What you're not gonna do is disrespect me."



PHOTO: KATIE COOPER

**Name/grade:** Quintin Tedeschi, senior.  
**Describe your act:** It's a dancing masterpiece, unlike anything you've ever seen. Much like Shakira's "Hips Don't Lie."  
**Who is your greatest competition?** Ravan, 100%. Mr. Honky Tonk...I'm incredibly worried.  
**What has this competition taught you?** That there's three things in life: God, country, and females.



PHOTO: KATIE COOPER

**Name/Grade:** Drew Parkhurst, senior  
**Who is your greatest competition?** I have no competition compared to those other fools competing.  
**What will your first purchase be if you win \$100?** I would immediately invest it in cryptocurrency.  
**What has this competition taught you?** This competition has taught me that with enough heart, you can achieve about half of the things you set your mind to.



PHOTO: KATIE COOPER

**Name/grade:** Tyler Thomas, Senior  
**Describe your act:** You know when you get home and there's one cookie left in the box and you take it? That's what my act feels like.  
**Who is your greatest competition?** Ravan because he's actually talented unlike the rest of us goons.  
**What's your source of inspiration?** Britney Spears.



PHOTO: KATIE COOPER

**Name/grade:** Joseph Strait, senior.  
**Describe your act:** I'm making fun of SoundCloud rappers.  
**What made you want to participate?** You win \$100. (And one of my friends made me sign up).  
**What will your first purchase be if you win \$100?** Probably a cookout milkshake  
**What has this competition taught you?** That Nick is a terrible dancer.  
**What's your catchphrase?** Enjoy the finer things in life.



PHOTO: KATIE COOPER

**Name/grade:** Nick Ulrichs, senior.  
**Describe your act:** It's kinda like the burning sensation you get stubbing your toe and there's nothing you can do to fix it. It is equally hostile as it is confusing.  
**What does it take to be Mr. DSF?** The ability to digest meat like a man and the ability to wear ankle socks without shame.  
**Who is your greatest competition?** The administration, because they keep censoring what I'm trying to do.

## Freshman Opens Doors to Kindness

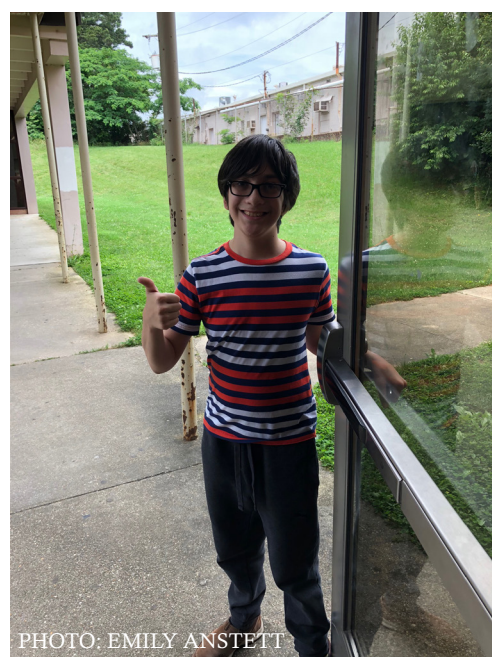


PHOTO: EMILY ANSTETT

Sam Kantor holds the Annex door open.

### Greer Peacock Sports Editor

Freshman, Sam Kantor, has one goal: to inspire his classmates to be kind. You might see Sam opening and holding the doors for students and classmates around the school. Holding the doors for people is a way for Sam to meet their day a little bit better," Sam said. His favorite classes are Spanish and the Freeman Project. Sam's favorite teacher is his Spanish teacher, Sarah Snellings. "She is really nice and I learn a lot from her," Sam said. Sam enjoys playing video games

like Trove and Terraria. He also enjoys playing with his cats. "All of my cats are rescues. Their names are Simon, Charlie, Fred, and Peanut," Sam said. Sam strives to be kind to everyone. "I love being a part of the Freeman project. I get to help out people around the school," Sam said. Right now Sam is helping build a garden in the front of the school. Sam has enjoyed being a part of the Freeman Project to participate in. "I tried to start a food drive after spring break but there was not enough time left in the school year," Sam said.

When he is not helping out with the Freeman Project, Sam is helping out students and teachers around. At lunch he passes lunch trays to students in the lunch line. If someone looks like they need help, Sam is always willing to lend a hand. "In my class I often asks his classmates how their day is going," Ms. Snellings said. "He will stand up for students. If he feels like a student isn't being treated fairly, he will advocate for them," Ms. Snellings said. Ms. Snellings also notices Sam "high five his classmates" when they answer a question or get a good grade on a test or quiz. He likes to bring extra practices and games that he has made to help his classmates study for tests.

"I want to be a good person and it makes me happy when people appreciate it," Sam said. "Someone once gave me a thank you note along with a bag of candy," Sam said. Sam's biggest influence has been his parents. "We've always told Sam that it's easy to be mean, and anyone can break things. The best people are the ones who build things and who help people" Sam's dad, Andrew Kantor, said.

Sam has grown up practicing kindness. "He has always been quick to help other people when he thinks they need it, or just to be polite. He has figures that if you are good to others, it comes back around," Mr. Kantor said. "Sam has helped busy parents in the supermarket when they dropped groceries and he convinced us to foster kittens and puppies from the Richmond Animal League when it ran out of space," Mr. Kantor said. "He used to play with kids who were all alone on the playground and he likes to give compliments," Mr Kantor said. "I like to think that even the little things he does, which cost him nothing, make other people's days a little better," Mr. Kantor said.

"Sam reminds me that it is okay to stop a moment and do a small bit of good," Mr. Kantor said. Sam's advice to his classmates is to "be nice when you need to and even when you don't. It will help you along the way."

## Retiring Teachers Leave their Mark

**Sandy Faw**  
 Spanish



Years teaching: 32  
 Years at Freeman: 25

"She paid attention to all students individually and helped them personally, and if you needed help you could go right to her," said Jihad Torky.

"She encouraged lots of questions, and she didn't think any question was a dumb question. She really valued our integrity. She taught me everything I know about Spanish. I am in AP Spanish now and she built that foundation," said senior Regan Gagnon.

"Sandy Faw has been a vital part of the World Language Department. Her attention to detail and care and passion for her students are hallmarks of her greatness as a Spanish teacher. She will truly be missed," said World Language Department Director, Carter Reilly.

**Nancy Williams**  
 English  
 Exceptional Education



Years teaching: 8  
 Years at Freeman: 12

"She is very helpful, friendly and she makes directions very clear," said Bobby Hubbard.

"Mrs. Williams is a good person who will help you with anything. She has been helping me with my grades, and I am really thankful for that," said junior Omar Murray

"When two teachers work together in the same classroom, the best you can hope for is an avoidance of any confusion for your students. The past three years working with Nancy, for me, has been seamless marriage of shared values and teaching philosophy. I am happy to know she is moving on to new ambitions, but after she leaves Freeman, there will be a total void left here especially in my classroom," said English teacher, Jason Abril.



# Seniors Leave Legacy on Walls

Julia Cassidy  
Features Editor

While most students spend their study halls studying for exams, doing homework, or playing Fortnite, senior Anna Marie Cielanski is doing something entirely different: painting a mural of a dinosaur on the art hall wall next to the art room.

Anna Marie is one of the seniors in Ms. Field's art class completing the final art project to design and complete a mural with personal meaning on the art hall walls. The students had the opportunity to choose the subject matter and submit a design, artist statement, sketch, and color scheme

for approval. After approval, the students started priming the walls then drawing and painting.

Ms. Field hopes that the project will become a new senior tradition and a way for students to leave their mark on the school before graduation.

**"...like a thank you note."  
-Mrs. Field**

"I wanted them to decide what they wanted to leave at Freeman like a thank you note for the four years they spent here and also to leave their own personal voice... on the school" said Ms.

Field.

The subject matter for the murals range from a green octopus to a bridge going over the James River to a field of animals. Each mural has a unique and personal meaning to the senior who painted it. Anna Marie, who has been with the Freeman art program for four years, is painting a mural that depicts a Tyrannosaurus Rex chasing after a car through the woods. Her mural has personal meaning.

"I chose something I love which is dinosaurs and I got my inspiration from one of my favorite movies 'Jurassic Park'...I wanted to leave one of my favorite things here," she said.

The process of turn-

ing her Jurassic vision into a reality started with sketch. "I sketched it out first and then projected my drawing on the wall. Then I went over [the projection] and painted it piece by piece," she said.

Senior Abbie Raines, who has also been in the Freeman art program for four years, based her mural of a grey figure surrounded by a swirling blue sky off of a trip she took to Europe.

"I went on an art trip last summer with the Art Department to France and Italy. One of the places we went was the palace of Versailles. In that garden they had cypress trees and Greek statues and it was really pretty. I also love Vincent van Gough, so I'm doing

This project has become more than just the seniors' fourth quarter

a mix of the two," Abbie said.

The murals have already begun to leave their impact on the school. Junior Teagan Fenderson, who spends every morning before school in the art hall with her theater friends, already noticed the difference the murals have made in the hall.

"When the murals are all done, it will make the hall a brighter and more exciting environment. The white walls were bleak and sterile, and the art hall has art and theater classes in it, and so the walls should be more fun. I think they look really good so far," Teagan said.

This project has become more than just the seniors' fourth quarter

grade. This project is the seniors' final chance as High School students to leave their personal touch on their home of the past four years before graduating in June.

"Some of them have been coming in to work on it during study halls, lunch, and any time they have to work on the murals... [This project] has become important to them" said Ms. Field.



PHOTO: GRACE POWERS

**Juniors Ghinwa Hareez, Chloe Fortier, and Kara Young have all contributed to this work-in-progress located between the annex and main building**



**Junior Catherine Nelli works on her mural at Ridge Elementary for her Gold Award project**

PHOTO: PAUL SABHARWAL

# Junior Educates and Inspires With Mural at Ridge Elementary

Maggie Flournoy  
A&E Editor

In the cafeteria of Ridge Elementary, junior Catherine Nelli brightens up the room using colorful paints to paint captivating faces. Moving from face to face, she adds intricate details and is careful to not leave a space blank on her new mural of inspirational figures.

Catherine started her project with the goal of inspiring others. "I am inspired by the fight for women's rights globally, in the United States, and in my own community," she said.

Particularly, Catherine hopes her project will inspire young girls to fight for equality with men. "Most girls grow up without strong female role models and there-

fore don't believe they can accomplish goals they actually can," she said. "This is why a mural that teaches young people about incredible women who have made incredible achievements is necessary and valuable."

While the mural's main purpose is to encourage the fight for equal rights for women, the figures to be painted on the mural are not only women.

"[The mural will] depict inspirational women from a variety of different profession fields, cultures, and eras of history, as well as one or two men from underrepresented minorities," she said.

The current list of those to be included on the mural includes twelve important figures: Malala Yousafzai, Fatima Al-Fihri, Rosalind Franklin, Frida Kahlo, Maya

Angelou, Cleopatra, Sacagawea, Clara Barton, Mae Carol Jemison, Madeline Albright, Mahatma Gandhi, and Martin Luther King, Jr.

Catherine spends at least four hours every day on her mural. "My hope is that it will be done before the school year is over," said Catherine. "I want to have an assembly and bring in all the kids at the school and tell them who the women are and why I chose to paint it, and why it matters."

To paint the mural, Catherine had to get permission from the Girl Scouts of the Commonwealth of Virginia, as well as the principal of Ridge Elementary, Anna Hatfield, who is excited about the effect the mural will have on her students.

"[The Cafeteria] is a common area where ev-



PHOTO: JULIA CASSIDY

**Seniors Anna Marie Cielanski (right) and Abbie Raines (left) work on their murals in the art hall**

ery student goes every day. I wanted it here so that students would see it every day as well as spark conversations with their peers and staff members," said Mrs. Hatfield.

"This mural is important in showing students that no matter who you are or where you are from, you can make a difference. They can impact the world in a positive way," she said.

**"...I wanted to do a project that would inspire young girls using my artistic skills,"  
-Catherine Nelli**

Catherine is not only creating her mural to inspire others, but also to earn her Gold Award for Girl Scouts. The award is representative of a Girl Scout's ability to change the world, and make it a better place. It is both the most esteemed and

difficult award to obtain, and is only achievable by high school Girl Scouts.

To win the award, a Girl Scout must create a project and organize a team. Originally, Catherine debated creating a children's book, but ultimately chose to paint a mural.

"I wanted to do something that children could see every day, and that they gain inspiration and creativity from," she said. "We are surrounded by amazing murals in Richmond, and more and more I wanted to do a project that would inspire young girls using my artistic skills."

For the team aspect of the project, Catherine is working with Elizabeth Jones, art teacher at Freeman. She is mentoring Catherine while she paints her mural, as well as giving her advice and ideas.

"I check in with Catherine regularly," said Mrs. Jones. "I talked to her about the style of the mural and how she might

go about putting it on the wall, and I will be helping Catherine find National Art Honor Society (NAHS) members to help her with the mural."

"Catherine will be one of the co-presidents of NAHS next year, so this will be a great project to start the year off," she said.

Catherine's mural at Ridge Elementary is not the first out of school mural that Mrs. Jones has mentored. At Maybeury Elementary, three senior NAHS members, Mia Odic, Katherine Lawrence, and Talia Moore, completed a mural in each bathroom outside of the library.

Catherine has always been interested in art. "When we had career day in Kindergarten, I came in a smock and I put paint in a little palette the night before," she said. She now focuses on making sure her art has an impact and matters, evident by her dedication to her mural.

# Locker Makeover Raises Money for All-Star Prom

Lauren Bruns  
Sports Editor

The faded blue lockers leading up to the main hall anxiously await their creative new makeover. Students will soon have the opportunity to get involved in revitaliz-

ing the school to support a special cause.

Freeman's locker project hopes to raise money to host an All-Star Prom for all of the Henrico County high schools-- an event which gives exceptional education students the opportunity to participate in their own dance.

Students at Freeman

will be able to pay 5 dollars to purchase a single locker or a group of lockers to decorate. The only requirements are that the designs remain school appropriate and include "DSF/Freeman" somewhere.

Nicholas Cavallo, a sophomore at Freeman who helped prime the

lockers with the Freeman Project, said, "I think this is a great idea and it will help give these students a more normal high school experience. It allows them to experience what other students get the opportunity to do and allows the rest of the school to get involved."

Lockers are not being sold yet as a concrete starting date has not yet been established. It may not begin until the start of next school year.

Students will be able to pick up an approval form from the cafeteria when this becomes available. Painting will take place during specific time slots.

Laura Jones, who teaches AP US History and the Success Program at Freeman, is heading the initiative alongside Mr. Townsend, Mr. Rob-jent, and Mr. Sanders.

**"...make [DSF] feel more like a warm, welcoming place."  
-Mrs. Jones**

"It evolved out of the Jostens renaissance rally that Mrs. Q. Bailey invited several of us to attend last year," she said.

These teachers were inspired by one of the speakers, who mentioned how his school allowed students to paint ceiling spaces. "[This] made some of us think what could we paint at DSF to brighten it up and make it feel more like a warm, welcoming place," said Ms. Jones.

The ugly and mostly unused lockers act as the perfect canvas for student's self-expression. The project hopes to allow students to represent bits of themselves in the school.



PHOTO: JULIA CASSIDY

**Students from The Freeman Project painted lockers for the fundraiser with a base coat to create a clean canvas for fundraiser participants**

# Art Students Revitalize Empty Space

Grace Powers  
A&E Editor

The annex can seem like a separate world sometimes. Students must exit the main building to get to this block of ten science and language classrooms, equipped with its own bathrooms and teachers' lounge. Reentering the bustling main hallways after a class in the annex can feel overwhelming and unwelcoming. Juniors Ghinwa Hareez, Chloe Fortier and Kara Young aspire to bridge this gap with their artwork.

As a final project in Art IV, these students chose to paint a mural on the wall across from the ramp entrance to the annex. The mural highlights five diverse artists from the past and present including Vincent Van Gogh, Frida Kahlo, Ai Wei Wei, Kehinde Wiley and Bharti Kher.

"They're all inspirational in a different way. They all brought out different forms of art and diverse art from their culture especially," said Ghinwa.

Surrounding the portraits of these artists are a variety of plants indigenous to their region. The Freeman artists also

took inspiration for the surrounding design from Vietnamese pottery, typically adorned in blue and white flowers.

Another focal point of the piece is the Dome of the Rock, an Islamic shrine in Jerusalem, at the top center. The students wanted to make something to represent all cultures without being offensive or stereotypical. Each choice the artists made was aimed at reflecting diversity through an accurate representation of culture.

"Diversity can be shown through other means than skin color. It goes deeper than skin color," said Chloe.

Chloe says the message of the mural is subtle, so each person who sees the mural will be able to experience it in their own way. Even if people do not see a deeper meaning, Chloe feels the piece of art will at least be something visually appealing.

Ghinwa, Chloe and Kara started developing this project with Rebecca Field, their art teacher, in

April. Since the seniors in the art class paint murals in the art hall every year as their final project, Mrs. Field decided to seek other places for these three juniors to embellish with murals, which she thinks can positively contribute to the school day.

"Learning takes place in environments in which people feel included and people feel connected to. Art triggers critical thinking and makes people notice their surroundings" said Mrs. Field.

John Larkins, social studies teacher, submitted the idea for this mural after Mrs. Field sent out an email asking for ideas.

Mr. Larkins has a vision of creating a useable space on the platform between the ramp to the annex and the wall at the bottom of the stairs, which would include round tables, a computer bar and a charging block. Mr. Larkins believes the mural can start the process to create a group-friendly student area.

Mrs. Field also thinks the

mural will create a unifying space for the annex and the main building.

"The teachers and the students in the annex tend to feel separated from the rest of the school, so I think it's nice that [the mural] sort of welcomes people into the school and connects to those classrooms in the annex" said Mrs. Field.

When the three artists started this process, they first had to make a proposal for their design. Once the design was approved by Mrs. Field, the students had to prime the wall and sketch their design in pencil. Ghinwa said the small-scale design from their proposal changed as they translated it onto the large-scale wall. Kara, Chloe and Ghinwa are now in the process of painting in their finalized sketch, which is becoming more colorful with each day they work on it.

Prior to this project, the juniors in Art IV typically did not deal with murals, since it is a part of the Art III curriculum. Only some art students

have painted murals outside of the art hall, such as the mural in the Leadership Center. Mrs. Field says she will continue doing projects like this one with her juniors in the coming years, using the walls of Freeman as a blank canvas. She feels that students benefit from the experience of creating public art because they can hear feedback and reactions to their artwork.

Along with showcasing diversity, this mural has brought together three students who normally would not work together. Mrs. Field describes Chloe as focusing on the "grand idea" while Kara and Ghinwa are more detail-oriented. Creating this mural has allowed them to consolidate these individual skills into one piece of art. In the coming weeks, these three artists will have to work diligently to finish the mural. By the end of the year, students will have a warm welcome back from the annex every time they pass the ramp.



PHOTO: LAUREN BRUNS



## Sports Briefs

### BOYS SOCCER

**Key Player:** Henry Baird



**Season Highlight:** "The most memorable part of the season was probably when we beat Godwin."

### GIRLS SOCCER

**Key Player:** Lauren Bruns



**Season Highlight:** "The most memorable part of my season has been making the state tournament for the first time in my three years at Freeman."

### BOYS LACROSSE

**Key Player:** Easton Chucker



**Season Highlight:** "My team really backs me up on the field, making it easier to prevent other teams from scoring."

### GIRLS LACROSSE

**Key Player:** Kerry Nease



**Season Highlight:** "I played well and controlled the game against Godwin which was important because it changed my whole season."

### BOYS BASEBALL

**Key Player:** Camden Lazar



**Season Highlight:** "We beat Godwin this year for the first time in a couple years."

# Turf Season Loading....

McBride Rawson  
Design Editor

After six months of speculation about its construction, the turf field is finally coming to fruition. The turf carpet is in the process of being laid down, and the company is on track to complete the project by the July 23 deadline.

Despite delay with starting the project, the field should still be completed in time for fall sports. Suzanne Criswell, director of student activities, said, "The supposed target date is July 23. That has not changed even though they started six weeks late." With fall sports beginning July 30, there is a week to spare between the foreseen completion and the start of the season.

Construction is going well at the moment. The turf should be in place by early June, so students will be able to lay eyes on the surface before leaving for the summer.

"They are laying the groundwork for the actual turf because that will go in first. Then they will start laying the cement for the track," said Ms. Criswell.

With the turf phase nearing completion, the next phase will soon begin: laying down the new track. The cement base for the track has to cure for three weeks before they can lay the rubber, so students will see this addition at the beginning of the 2018-19 school year. In spite of rumors of

PHOTO: KATIE COOPER



Panoramic view of the stadium field construction before turf is laid.

a blue track, the surface will be "Tennessee Gray."

Hermitage and Varina, the two other Henrico County high schools installing turf fields at the moment, both opted for blue fields, so the school chose gray, our other color. The blue option was a royal blue similar to Deep Run's colors. The track will be the same color as the University of Tennessee's, and a quick search of this on Google Images will reveal exactly what to expect for the future track.

When all is completed for the new facility, it will look quite different from the old stadium field; the DSF interlocking letters logo will be on the 50-yard line, "Douglas S. Freeman High School" will be written in the center lane of the track by the

home bleachers, and the space behind the end zone and inside the curve of the track will be rubber track material—not grass.

This current construction means there will be minor changes for the general stadium facility. "There are going to be improvements so that we become more ADA compliant," said Ms. Criswell. All construction projects must comply with the standards set by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), so the sidewalk that goes to the visitors' side must be widened to 72 inches.

There will be more changes for players besides just a different surface. Seating for all sports other than football will be on the track, allowing for a wider playable space for field hockey,

lacrosse, and soccer. The fill for the turf will be a natural substance similar to that of Greenwood Park.

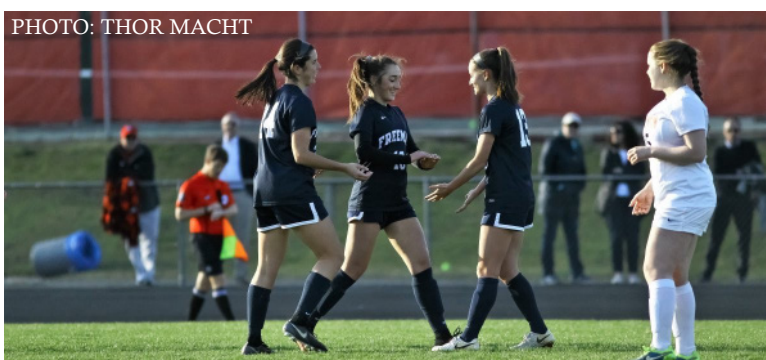
"We're not going to have rubber. We will have some type of organic fill," said Ms. Criswell. This organic fill is more similar to natural grass as is safer for athletes.

More competitions will be brought to Freeman as a result of the new facility. Field hockey will play five or six games on the stadium field, and the regional semi-finals and finals for the sport will also be hosted here.

Other sports will also be brought to the new facility. "I think you can definitely see more track meets being held here," said Ms. Criswell.

## Girls Soccer Team Scores Big

PHOTO: THOR MACHT



Girl's Soccer celebrates after a goal against Godwin.

Emme Levenson  
Sports Editor

Going into the spring season, the Freeman girls soccer team was confident that this season was going to be one to remember.

The girls soccer team is 13-2-1, with losses against St. Catharines and Deep Run, two of the top teams in the area.

The first game of the season was a 4-1 win against Atlee. "[That game] gave us a better attitude going into the rest of the season," said junior Sam Fee.

There would be more wins to come during the season. The girls soccer team beat Cosby 4-0 in the middle of the season. "[That win] showed us that we could play with, and beat, one of the better programs in the area," said varsity girls' soccer head coach Bill Bartoszek.

Although they did not have the advantage of playing on their home field, that did not stop the team from playing their best. "No matter where these girls' play, they will always rise up to the task at hand," said Coach Bartoszek. "We really have been a team without a home this year, which makes this season even



PHOTO: THOR MACHT

more special," he said.

This has been the best record Coach Bartoszek has seen in his 11 years of coaching at Freeman. He believes the successful season is due to a talented defense, which has only surrendered seven goals this season.

Teamwork has also been a large part of their success. "We've grown together as soccer players and as friends, so we all work really well together on the field," said senior Sarah Halsey.

Freshman Ashley Hemp, Ava Lohmann, Cat Pinotti, and Lauren Hargrove have made an immediate impact during the season, but "from player #1 to

player #18, I would not hesitate to insert any one of these young ladies into any situation in a game," said Coach Bartoszek.

The team also has four college commits, an impressive number which Coach Bartoszek believes shows the potential of the team.

Another big win came when the girls soccer team faced Mills E. Godwin. They had not beaten Godwin in seven years, but the team was confident they could win this year. Freeman defeated Godwin 7-0 the first time they played them, and 1-0 the second time. "Coming out on top after the losses throughout the years was huge," said Sarah.

Freeman is seeded second in the regional tournament, and will be playing in the region semifinals against Prince George, a team they beat 13-0 in the beginning of the season.

The girls are excited to be competing in the regional tournament, and hopefully, the state tournament.

"We've been working for this successful season for years now, and this is the time to show everyone what we're made of," said Sarah.

## Baseball Team Shocks the Region as the Fourth Seed and a Semifinal Finish

Emme Levenson  
Sports Editor

As the lights turned off after the first game of the season, the Freeman boys varsity baseball Team knew this season was going to be special.

The team was losing by 5 runs to Lee Davis, but came back to win the game 10-7. "[That game] set the table for how the season was going to play out," said boys' varsity baseball head coach Ray Moore.

He was expecting "a strong season, we would be very competitive and we returned a strong nucleus of players from 2017."

With a solid group of returning players and young talent in freshmen Andrew Bland and Will Lynch, the 2018 season was looking bright.

As the first of two games against rival Mills E. Godwin occurred, the boys' baseball team was excited and ready to play. "I knew we could do it and the guys understood we have a special team," said Coach Moore. The team won 2-0, with senior pitcher Camden Lazar throwing a shutout.

"We really played together as a unit and showed everybody what we could do," said Andrew.

The Rebels also defeated Deep Run and Matoaca.

Although the team had strong defense, "our biggest strength was our team chemistry," said Andrew.

The Rebels finished the season seeded fourth in the region and their record was 17-4.

"In the past few years, it's been the best team we've had," said Coach Moore.

## Boys Soccer Team Makes the Regional Tournament Despite a Slow Start

Juliana McKean  
Centerspread Editor

"Work until the work is done" is the slogan sprawled across the team shirts for Freeman boys soccer this year, and work they have. However, this season tends to be characterized by moments where the work put in wasn't necessarily reflected on the score sheet, or small errors accumulated to come back and cause issues. These moments led to four ties that almost stopped their campaign to reach the regional tournament. Despite facing these difficulties, certain moments shine through that are the product of persistence and focus at work, leading to results that the team can be proud of.

Boasting a well-rounded roster,

the Rebels appeared to be in a good spot at the beginning of the season. However, junior Jackson Berry recognizes the fault of the team as becoming comfortable too quickly. "We have a lot of potential, and at the beginning of the season we kind of took it for granted," he said.

Senior Mohammed El Abbasi voiced how at the beginning of the season he had high hopes for the team, expecting the Rebels to be second in the conference standings behind Deep Run. In retrospect, to have made this happen, he wishes that "some of the players we needed to step up would've stepped up the way they usually do."

Captain Henry Baird agrees with fellow senior Mohammed... To read more of this article visit the



# Struggles of a Track-less Track Team

Caitlin McSorley  
Editor-in-Chief

The track and field team faced a different kind of hurdle this season as Freeman's backyard is knee deep in the construction of a new track and turf field. The loss of home facilities sent the team in several different directions.

The sprinters sometimes had access to Tuckahoe Middle School's track. However, they were unable to practice some of the minor skills that are important to short distance races.

Not having a track "really affected the 4x100 relay, because for that we needed to practice exchanges, and that's hard to do without an exchange zone on the curve of the track, but we still managed to pull it off in the end," said sophomore Alex Rover.

The sprinters were also not able to practice with blocks, which are crucial to having a fast start. As for sprinters who jump hurdles, no track meant they couldn't practice hurdles, but instead they had to rely on past experiences. Sophomore Jake Perkins and senior Joe O'Connor usually run the hurdles because they have done them in past track seasons. "It definitely has put a little bit of a damper on some things but



PHOTO: CAITLIN MCSORLEY

Junior Abby Cornwell practices at Bandy Feild in Henrico.

we work around it," said Jake.

The field athletes who do shot-put, discus, and jumps had to get creative in finding safe spaces to practice.

"We don't have a circle to throw in so we just have to make do with other places around the school, like we throw behind the band room and we go over to Tuckahoe on Thursdays and throw in their circle," said junior Ernie Campbell.

Freeman jumped at Godwin on the days Godwin jumpers didn't

have practice. For those who cannot drive, the trip to Godwin is a hassle. "We have the pit to ourselves. I'm grateful, but I'd rather be at home. Having to communicate where we are going and trying to figure out rides is a huge problem, it's so much more complicated," said Alex.

"Luckily for the distance team, we can stay in the [Freeman] area," said sophomore Rylan Pearsall. However, it was no easy season for them either. Rylan described it as an "insane

amount of running."

"Usually we do track workouts three times a week, but since we don't have a track we have to run to Bandy or run to a different field," said sophomore Liza Neely.

"It's like two workouts in one. We have to run there which is like two and a half miles, and that's our warmup, then we have to do a workout there, and then run back the two and a half miles," said Rylan.

"It pushes everyone to work a little harder, which isn't bad, to achieve the goals we want to achieve," said Jake.

No track meant no meets at Freeman this year. "It's hard we haven't had as many meets or they have been far away," said sophomore Mia Garland.

The younger track members look forward to the new track. Jake looks forward to having a light color track, because it will be "cooler" than tracks that are black.

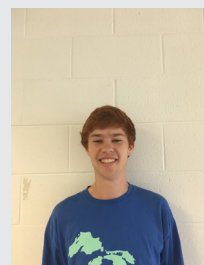
"I'm hoping it will pay off," said Alex.

Despite the obvious obstacles, Freeman still sent the majority of their athletes to the regional meet and many qualified for the state meet. Freeman sent Liza Neely, junior Cameron McCarty, Joe O'Connor, and senior Ryan McCracken to states which was held at Todd Stadium in Newport News.

## Sports Briefs

### BOYS TENNIS

Key Player: William Westfield



Season Highlight: "My season highlight was the team beating Tucker twice because we had lost to them last year in a really close match and this year we pulled through."

### GIRLS TENNIS

Key Player: Emme Levenson



Season Highlight: "Beating Godwin for the first time in 20 years. We were losing 2-4 and ended up winning all three doubles to win the match 5-4."

### BOYS TRACK

Key Player: Joe O'Connor



Season Highlight: "My favorite moment of the season was breaking Freeman's record and getting a personal best of 15 ft."

### GIRLS TRACK

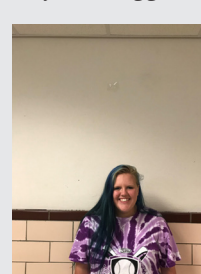
Key Player: Liza Neely



Season Highlight: "This season was really tough because we didn't have a track, but I worked hard at practice to meet my goal of making it to states in the two mile."

### GIRLS SOFTBALL

Key Player: Maggie Lithicum



Season Highlight: "The love and support on the team was amazing, especially on our senior night."

# The Future of Freeman Lacrosse

Cameron McCarty  
Sports Editor

The future is bright for our lacrosse boys.

This year the junior varsity boys lacrosse team had a record breaking season of being (10-1) with their only loss to Saint Christopher.

The team is coached by William Seeger, Mason Slaughter and Roger Schultz. They hold a rigorous practice schedule every day from 5-7 p.m. where they perform drills, condition, and practice plays. Their goal each practice is to make it better than the last, and through team oriented practices they have made this season successful.

"What made this team different was that everyone went into every game with the same mindset and that it wasn't one particular member but everyone had the same goal. They really wanted to make themselves better and wanted to make the team better," said Head coach William Seegar. Coach Seegar focuses on how he can develop the idea of self-improvement on a daily basis in his



PHOTO CREDIT: STRAWBRIDGE STUDIOS

Junior varsity boys lacrosse team poses for team picture after game.

players, he preaches this concept to makes sure they give 110 percent each practice.

Pace Fonville, Steve Ulrich, Cole Holts and Mills Fallen, were captains this year. The JV lacrosse captains have been playing since before high school, playing for travel teams and Tuckahoe middles club lacrosse team. They contribute their skills and leadership to Freeman's success this year. Before every game, the captains, make it a priority to meet as a team and make sure they are prepared for every game.

"It was a tight game until the end, which made it a more ex-

citing win," said Pace Fonville. The highlight for the team this season was when they beat Atlee high school. They came to the game unsure of how they would perform and were happily surprised when they were victorious against the Raiders. The game came tied down with 16 seconds left.

Eighth Grader Mathew McCabe scored to win the game. Atlee is known for their lacrosse program. Freeman's JV team had nothing but excitement at the end of the night when they defeated one of their biggest rivals.

Freeman found themselves winning by a lot. The coach added

a rule where they have to pass the ball around once they score a certain amount of goals. This allows them to practice and play keep away when they are winning by a lot.

The team is still young, with a good amount of the players being eighth and ninth graders. This young team has time to improve their skill before they get to varsity. Dell Vidunes is one of the stand out players who starts in most games and is a key offensive player. Dell and six other eighth graders provide a good foundation for the team. A number of ninth graders play key positions as well for the Rebels.

# Life on the Edge... of the Bench



Remy Schimick  
Online Editor-in-Chief

Game days are my days off. It's kind of nice actually, getting to rest after a week of busting your butt, besides having to tell people that you don't actually play in games.

"Did you score?" and "Did you play?" are the only questions I get asked after a game, but I think that people should be asking me and my fellow bench buddies something else. What about "How many times did your coach ask you to stop yelling offensive things?" or "How does it feel that your freshman sister starts on varsity lacrosse and you go in sometimes?" or "I don't know, something like that."

Parents always tell me 'good game' too. Did you even pay attention? Did you see me go in? I didn't.

But in all honesty, I've actu-

ally come to enjoy my role on the team. Being able to focus my pent up anger into cheering on the people that actually play has been a great stress relief.

It has also allowed me to create a real bond with players who are in the same boat. It's been such an amazing experience wanting to quit on the spot with all my teammates every time Coach Connor yells "get on the end line."

I don't know about you, but messing up is a scary, scary thing to me; however, going in with just 55 seconds left in the second half removes all possible pressure. That seemingly miniscule amount of time is the highlight of my night.

Hanging out on the bench for a season also creates some...bad habits. Some of mine would include: yelling at the ref, jumping at unnecessary times, screaming at the opposing team, screaming at my own team, etc, etc. But nobody's perfect!

I know this seems like all rainbows and sunshine, but there are a few downsides to sitting on the sideline. Putting in the same amount of work, and sometimes more, as everyone else each week while still maintaining your comfy spot on the bench is exhausting and a little bit frustrating. It's not the best feeling in the world when you can't remember the last game you played in. How-



PHOTO: REMY SCHIMICK

Benchwarmers of the Girls' Lacrosse team pose for a picture.

ever, it takes a lot to stay positive and spectate the game you're dying to play in.

Juniors Hadley Lowrie and Jackson Hanback are members of the girls' and boys' varsity lacrosse teams. Most people would agree that being a benchwarmer kind of, you know, sucks, but Hadley, a bench-warming veteran, and Jackson, the backup goalie, truly make the best of it. Even though they don't get as much experience as other players, they're still there to support and that's only one way that shows their extreme dedication to their teams.

There are still big pros to sitting on the bench, don't forget that.

"You can drink a lot of water and talk a lot of trash to the other team," Jackson said. Truer words have never been spoken.

In my personal experience as a professional benchwarmer, it can feel like your support and effort go unnoticed. But a team wouldn't be a team without the bench.

Even field players, such as freshman Kerry Nease, recognize what goes into being a benchwarmer. "They bring the intensity up," she said. "The whole team relies on their positivity and energy throughout each game."

And coach, if you're reading this...put me in. Please.



# Finale For Freeman Band Last Night's Ghost



PHOTO: NICK OUKOLOV

The four members of Last Night's Ghost pose in front of a wall.

Emily Anstett  
Features Editor

Local band Last Night's Ghost's final show at the Canal Club on May 11 brought an end to seven years of playing together.

The band first debuted when Nathan Vranas, Freeman junior, and his three friends Benjie Slone, lead guitarist, Rohan Haloran, rhythm artist, and Win Benko, bassist and vocalist, started playing in the fifth grade. Nathan himself was the drummer. At the time they were all attending Veritas School, however they are now divided between Freeman, Veritas, and Trinity.

Last Night's Ghost wrote all of

their songs with the style "like indie rock mixed with pop punk," said Nathan. The band released two albums to the public, *A Beautiful Night To Be Alive* and *Wait For Me*, to Spotify and Apple Music.

"We decided to split because we had come to a spot where we weren't super excited to do more stuff, we had all kind of lost steam with the band," said Nathan. "We are still really good friends and everything."

"I think people were sad, but I talked to a lot of people and they said they could kind of see it coming," he said.

Last Night's Ghost's breakup was a shock for many fans who had found a sense of community with the band. "When we an-

nounced it a million people like DM'd me, my phone blew up," said Nathan.

"They were the start of a really big thing in my life, like going to shows and music," said Miles Fagan, sophomore fan of the band. "It means a lot to me because they were the band that introduced me to the local Richmond scene."

While Last Night's Ghost will no longer play together, Nathan will continue to play music in a new band he has started called Astrokid.

The last show was bittersweet for all. "I thought it would be really sad, but I'm more just proud of how well we played," said Nathan. "We played a really good last show, a lot of people came."

## Avada Kedavra This New Game



Game Review:

*Harry Potter: Hogwarts Mystery*

Juliana McKean

Centerspread Editor

If you are anything like me, you've been waiting for your letter notifying you of your admission to Hogwarts to be delivered by owl for the better part of the last decade. Subsequently, if you are anything like me, you were thrilled at the prospect of a game allowing you to live your own reality at Hogwarts instead of just retracing Harry's steps or acting as a sidekick to a journey you already know all the twists and turns of.

Harry Potter: Hogwarts Mystery, a mobile game available on the app store for free (actually quite deceptively "free," but we'll get to this later), seems to offer this fantasy to players as they receive their own letter of admission and customize their appearance to their liking. The first part of the game fulfills every Hogwarts hope and dream you've ever had, as you get the chance to explore and purchase supplies in Diagon Alley, meet your very own Ron and Hermione offered in the form of a best friend named Rowan, and don the Sorting Hat in that fateful, future-defining moment.

However, the Sorting Hat experience offered the first moment of disappointment for me. While I have been sorted by Pottermore on more than one occasion and am confident in my placement in the house of Slytherin, I was anticipating and even a little bit excited with my self-interest to see if the game validated what I believed to be my correct placement.

Instead of offering a quiz or some kind of brief analysis of character, the Sorting Hat simply asked which house I wanted to be in. I, being the ever-persistent Harry Potter fan with more faith in the franchise than I should probably place, tapped Slytherin, with the expectation that more questions would follow. Instead, I was promptly sorted into Slytherin, along with my built-in best friend Rowan, and went about my merry way getting accustomed to the prefects and common room of Slytherin.

Shortly following this, your character meets Merula, a Draco Malfoy of sorts, meant to be your enemy. The first issue I had with this character was the fact that she had an annoying irrational hatred of your character, yet you don't get the chance to just ignore her like any rational person most likely would.

The second issue I had with her laid not in her character

necessarily, but the way she was characterized by the creators of the game. I am perfectly aware of the villainous reputation Slytherin has, and that makes sense considering the central characteristics of the house involve ambition and cunningness. However, there are also a multitude of non-villainous individuals who have been sorted into Slytherin and ended up being more heroic than many Gryffindors could ever hope to be. Merula, perhaps the greatest wizard to ever be, was sorted into Slytherin, as well as Severus Snape, who at the end of the Harry Potter series --spoiler alert-- arises as arguably one of the most heroic protectors of Harry.

Despite all this, and despite the fact that I chose to be a Slytherin, Merula was portrayed as a Slytherin. I believe this to harmful and slander to the Slytherin reputation to continue to show bullies and villains as the main identity of Slytherin. Why can't a villain be a Gryffindor? Their prime characteristic is courage, and oftentimes bullies are courageous, right?

The true disappointment of the Harry Potter: Hogwarts Mystery, besides lack of analysis of players and harmful stereotyping, lies in the monetization of the game that undermines the true fantasy and enjoyment of it. The game functions in a way that players have a set energy count that is used by tapping on tasks to complete them during classes or on one of the many missions you must finish in each chapter of the game.

Following the promising beginning of your Hogwarts journey, the game quickly crumbles into monotonous 90 second increments of tapping on tasks and using up all the energy, split up by periods of hours you must wait for the energy to be replenished. The only way to get around this irritating inability to play would be to purchase gems using real money, which can then be used to buy more energy.

This is an expensive endeavor, however, and for those of us who would rather not spend our limited funds on a mobile game, the game is simply a monetization of our childhood hopes and dreams. Instead of being a fun thing to play, Harry Potter: Hogwarts Mystery becomes a sad 90 seconds every couple hours of incessant tapping followed by bitterness when our tapping is halted by lack of energy.

The only positive thing that has come from this game is that it has renewed my interest in the series and led me to consider indulging in the books for the approximate 128th time. The negative effects of this game include the degrading of my passion for the series to a sum of gems I must pay for to continue spurring my magical hopes and dreams, a superficial level of analysis, and the dangerous pursuance of a stereotype.



PHOTO: JAM CITY, INC.

## What Are You Listening To?



Devin He (9)  
Take Me Out by Franz Ferdinand



Hill Yauger (11)  
I Want It That Way by The Backstreet Boys



Tazrin Rahman (10)  
Champions by Kanye West



Julia Meyer (11)  
When It Rains It Pours by Twiddle



Tyreal Jordan (10)  
No Limit by G-Eazy



PHOTO: MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT

## Try Not To Cry: Avengers Edition



Movie Review:

*Infinity War*

Warning: Contains Spoilers

Cole Ryland

Contributing Editor

There's a reason Marvel dubbed their latest film *Infinity War*, and that reason is that it plagues you with infinite sadness, anguish, pain, and destruction. Directed by Anthony & Joe Russo, *Infinity War* follows the main antagonist Thanos' conquest for the Infinity Stones, which, when all collected, he plans to use to destroy half of the universe. In efforts to prevent this from happening, the Avengers assemble and combat him and his team on a multitude of floating rocks throughout the galaxy, including Saturn's moon, Titan. However, as the title suggests, this is not a mere "heroes-save-the-day" story that ends in the peace of the galaxy being retained.

That's right. People are killed. A lot of people are killed.

Within the first ten minutes of the film, Thanos is already up to his Infinity Stone antics, and due to his brash and cold nature, he thinks nothing of taking people hostage and threatening to kill them unless information or key items are given to him. At this point of the film, Thanos is after the Space Stone, one of the Infinity Stones, which is hidden in the Tesseract. Directly after obtaining it, Thanos kills the person who gave it to him, and moves onto the next stone's location to further his sadistic murderous agenda. I am not even ten minutes into the film and key characters are already dead. Right around this point I got a lump in my throat and knew this was going to be a turbulent ride.

In the midst of Thanos's destructive wake and the Avengers' efforts to intercept it, there is an abundance of character development on both sides. For example, Tony Stark and Peter Parker are partnered together, and their father-son dynamic is furthered to a great extent. Peter makes various costly mistakes and Tony reprimands him, with his anger deriving from the fear of losing Peter. Even the villains strengthen their developments, as Thanos is forced to face a heart-wrenching and critical ultimatum. In order to obtain one of the infinity stones, he has to kill the person closest to him: his daughter Gamora. In this moment his validity was being tested to see if he truly was the cold-hearted people-killer he was made out to be. Spoiler alert - he was. Never in a film did I expect to sympathize with a grandiose

cosmic killer, but as I mentioned, this movie is a plague of sadness. So perhaps I was still infected from the events of the first ten minutes of the film.

Perhaps the most unforgivable aspect of *Infinity War* is the various lights of hope that shine all throughout, only to be brutally darkened. In efforts to strategize, Doctor Strange uses his psychic powers in attempts to envision a multitude of possible futures where the Avengers succeed in defeating Thanos. Unfortunately, he only finds one, which involved removing the Infinity Gauntlet from Thanos, which holds all the stones. This drives the Avengers to battle him on Saturn's moon, Titan. The battle seems to be going well for the Avengers until Thanos nearly kills Tony Stark, forcing them to give up their stone they had. Vision, a sentient and (in my humble opinion) lovable cyborg, is then targeted by Thanos because of the Infinity Stone he has in his head. The Avengers then make a plan to go to Wakanda, where he can get the stone removed from his head without dying. But before you could say "wait a minute, Thanos kills people. This cannot bode well but for so long," Thanos swoops in and tears the stone out of his circuit board head, effectively killing him.

I did not even get a chance to cry over Vision's death for two reasons. One, I was still coming down from the hopeful high I experienced during Doctor Strange's vision. Two, within minutes I had to mourn the losses of half of the Avengers. I refuse to sugarcoat such a death dessert; Thanos succeeds and kills half of everything in existence. I went into the theater with my feelings in a perfectly stable thread. I never expected to walk out with them twisted into a knot, ripped out, sewn back in, ripped out again, force fed, and then incinerated, all in chronological order.

Do I think you should see *Infinity War*? Absolutely. As someone who was rather disconnected from the Marvel universe since *Iron Man 3*, seeing the evolved art direction and reappearances of my favorite characters made me feel the same excitement I did when I first saw *Iron Man* suit up back in 2008. The special effects all looked surprisingly authentic as well, to the point where I had to question a couple of times if the hearts of the directors were tearing out of the viewers' chests were CGI or not. This film will run about 2 hours and 20 minutes of screen time, but is it worth it? Yes. Are you going to enjoy it? I would imagine so. But are you going to be absolutely destroyed by the end of it?

Well, let's just hope you didn't leave your feelings on the half of the universe Thanos destroyed like I did.