



CAROLINA MCCABE/COLUMBIAN

Fairfax County Public Schools officials, including Superintendent Karen Garza, join principal Jeffrey Litz as he cuts the ribbon at the Grand Reopening Ceremony March 25, marking the ceremonial end of the renovation era.

Grand Reopening Ceremony opens new chapter for Marshall

by patrick mccabe

Principal Jeffrey Litz cut the ribbon with a comically oversized pair of scissors at the Grand Reopening Ceremony, marking the formal end of the renovation era and celebrating what he called Marshall's new "state-of-the-art facilities."

The ceremony showcased various aspects of the school with performances by the choir and a group of flutists, as well as a TV screen showing clips of students saying "I am Marshall" in different languages. The FCPS officials who spoke at the ceremony repeatedly lauded the new building's appearance, while making it clear that they hoped to see that the full impacts of the renovation would go beyond solely physical changes.

"Although brick and mortar is not what the school is all about, we know when we have a beautiful facility that's conducive to support learning, then this wonderful school community can thrive and can flourish," Superintendent Karen Garza said.

FCPS officials also praised the various innovative and "green" additions to the building.

"I love to see that there are a number of green features ... associated with this renovation," said Sharon Bulova, Chairman of the Fairfax County Board of

Supervisors, citing the school's rooftop garden, native species courtyard and new design to reduce energy consumption. "This is cutting-edge stuff."

After the speeches by Litz and other county officials concluded, the ceremony moved outside for the ribbon-cutting.

Sophomores Shromona Mandal and David Ignacio then presented a painting of the building to Litz as a gift for the school and a representative from Samaha Associates, the architectural firm in charge of the renovation, presented Litz with a framed version of the animated building design.

After the ceremony ended, student ambassadors led guests on tours around the building to show them the new additions while the orchestra played for passing tour groups.

"It gives you a more positive vibe, just coming to school knowing that we actually have classrooms, and we don't have construction workers always running into our classrooms," tour guide and senior Prayasha Chaudhary said.

While the ceremony celebrated the end of the renovation era, minor construction work will continue for some time.

"There are still a bunch of different punch list things which still need to be done," Litz said. "It could be a year or two until we are all finished."

"When we have a beautiful facility that's conducive to support learning, then this wonderful school community can thrive."

Karen Garza
Superintendent

newsflash

Potential changes to grading system loom

County high schools and middle schools might see a range of new grading policies implemented as soon as the 2015-2016 school year, according to a message sent by deputy superintendent Steven Lockard.

New policies include propositions to restrict the 100-point numerical grading scale. For example, instead of receiving a zero for an assignment that receives an F, the lowest numerical value possible would be a 50 percent.

Other proposals include changing rules on test retakes and the methods for final grade calculations.

Currently, each Fairfax County high school can individually sort the grading system and numerical value for themselves, which could see changes. Theoretically, now students could go to any high school across the county and expect the same grading standards.

"The time is now to engage in these complex conversations and begin to consider change," Lockard wrote.

—kristen ziccarelli



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The Justin Strong GoFundMe page reached its goal of \$50,000 on Friday, and the support hasn't stopped coming.

Community rallies around sophomore Justin Lee

After sophomore Justin Lee was admitted to Fairfax Hospital Feb. 27 and diagnosed with acute flaccid myelitis, the Marshall and Fairfax communities alike rallied to demonstrate their support for Lee and his family. Help has come in all shapes and sizes, ranging from monetary support to prayer groups.

In order to help Justin's mother, Jisue Lee, pay for certain uncovered medical expenses and supplement her salary since she works on commission, a page was set up on fundraising website GoFundMe that reached its goal of \$50,000 on Friday afternoon. As of press time, the campaign had raised \$55,162.

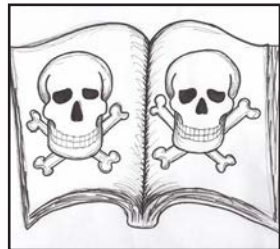
According to the Justin Strong GoFundMe page, "acute flaccid myelitis is a recently named rare new virus. There is no known treatment for it. The virus has caused damage to Justin's brain stem and spinal cord."

Soon after Justin was admitted to Fairfax hospital, he fell into (and remains in) a coma. He is currently in the Johns Hopkins Intensive Care Unit.

—patrick mccabe

Guide

Opinion: 4,5



CAROLINE MARNEY

English curricula tend to favor books that present students with darker themes and tones. Is it time to shift toward lighter subject matter?

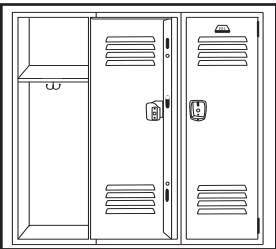
Arts and Style: 6,7



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Kendrick Lamar's album *To Pimp a Butterfly* was released early March 16, breaking the record for Spotify streams in a single day.

In-depth: 9



ANNA THILLARAJAH/RANK&FILE

A recent poll found that only six percent of students have ever used their lockers this year. Are school lockers really useful?

Sports: 10,11



MAGGIE MCADEN/RANK&FILE

Girls varsity tennis defeated Fairfax High School 7-1 on April 7, marking their fifth win in six games and their best record in over five years.



PHOTO COURTESY OF CLAIRE MILLER

From left: senior Greta Schaaf, senior Claire Miller and junior Jayna Kirk hug in Paris during the art department's 11-day trip through Europe.

Art department travels Europe, makes memories along the way

by patrick mccabe

A group of 24 students interested in the arts traveled to Europe over spring break on a trip that explored famous art museums, renowned architectural works and popular traditional dances.

During the 11-day trip through France and Spain, the group visited famous art sites such as the Picasso and the Prado Museum in Barcelona, while still visiting iconic European landmarks such as the Eiffel Tower and the Arc de Triomphe in Paris.

"It was surreal," junior William Simpson said. "It was the opportunity of a lifetime, particularly just seeing the Eiffel Tower."

The trip was lead by art teacher Michael Corigliano, who hoped that the trip would do more than merely expose students to famous works of art.

"Hopefully, for some people it will be their first time out of the country, so they will get a

chance to see the world and have the opportunity to see another place, Corigliano said. "Basically just see that there is a bigger world out there."

Junior Courtney Pore realized some distinct cultural differences between the places they traveled to.

"It was really interesting to just see the difference between the way they treated Americans in Spain and the way they treated them in France," Pore said.

Corgliano was inspired to create the trip because of his own experience in high school, during which he left the United States for the first time to go on a photography tour of Europe.

"There was a teacher who did it for me, and I [wanted] to give that same opportunity to the students that I got—that's why I did it, it's not a selfish reason," Corigliano said, adding that he wants to pass on the tradition.

Plans for a similar trip to Italy and Greece next year are already in the making.

50 years later, new museum unveils historical documents

by lena kennedy

After a year of construction and planning, the George C. Marshall Museum, a celebration of its namesake, is finally open to the public.

"It has been in the concept stage since the school renovation project began three years ago," history teacher Tom Brannon said.

The idea was born when former principal Jay Pearson brought up the fact that the school possessed historical primary source documents.

The articles, which dated back to when the school opened in the 1960s, had been sitting in a box for 50 years, along with miscellaneous other artifacts.

"We knew we had a lot of artifacts that were given to the school, and we wanted a place we could display them,"

principal Jeffrey Litz said.

Although faculty members helped with the project, it was primarily driven by student engagement.

"I believe strongly that the museum's exhibits should be student-initiated and reflect the interests of our students," Brannon said.

The group took a trip to the Foundation and Research Center in Lexington, Va. to share their vision for the museum with others and to ask for help in finding more artifacts and primary source documents.

"There is a lot of work that goes into a project like this; finding artifacts, cataloging them, and coming up with themes for the museum are just some of the aspects to creating a project like this," Litz said about the process.

Junior Rob Collie, who helped create



LENA KENNEDY/RANK&FILE

The newly opened George C. Marshall Museum includes primary source documents and other artifacts to teach students about the school's namesake. The mini-museum was a yearlong collaboration between students, teachers and administrators.

the museum, wants it to serve as more than just an educational opportunity for the school community.

"I hope this project fosters a sense of pride for not just our school, but the man behind the name," Collie said.



Senior Suzie Butterfield receives the 2015 Student Peace Award. Butterfield tries to support her peers both on social media and with kindness posters in the hallway, pointing out that "even a small, random act of kindness or simply defending someone can have a positive effect on someone's life."

COURTESY OF MARGARET ROGERS

Butterfield wins award for work on teen depression

by isabelle ouyang

Senior Suzie Butterfield was one of 23 students in Fairfax County to receive the Student Peace Award for her work raising awareness of teen depression and suicide.

The issue was personal for Butterfield, who lost a close friend this summer.

The loss was a driving motive behind her campaign.

Butterfield also emphasizes the importance of a welcoming environment. She believes that

bullying is a major concern among peers.

"I understand what it feels like to feel alone and lost—feeling insignificant and useless," Butterfield said in a press release. "I strongly believe depression in our youth is brought on from the bullying they go through on a daily basis."

Butterfield makes small actions count in her campaign.

"We put up posters," said Butterfield, who added that she makes an effort to speak out for the cause in her daily life.

After strong performance, robotics team advances to world competition

by otilia lampman

The robotics team received the Rookie of the Year Award and the High Seed Award, guaranteeing them a place at the Tech Challenge World Championship to be held in St. Louis next week.

In order to receive these awards, the robotics team competed in the FIRST Robotics Greater DC Regional at George Mason University on March 26 and 28. Forty-seven groups were in attendance.

Each team had six weeks to build their robot, beginning on the first Saturday in January.

"We had a group of 15 kids that would show up consistently working on different parts of the robot—programming, manufacturing parts, testing and designing," said graphic design and robotics teacher Patrick Ander.

But it wasn't just students and their mentors working on the robots: a Coast Guard also came to teach the mechanics of building the robot.

The team even had a corporate sponsor. According to mentor and STEM teacher Marie Farson,

starting a team costs \$6,000, a bill that was split between science and technology consultant Booz Allen Hamilton and Virginia FIRST.

This year's game was Recycle Rush, in which each team's robot must stack recycling bins and creates on of each other. After the Friday and Saturday morning competitions, Marshall

was one of the eight teams to advance into the championship round.

There, the students chose two other teams to join an alliance, then battled their opposing three-team alliance.

"You're trying to find the best combo

of teams that work with you well," freshman Julia Garbert said.

The Marshall team is now packing up the robot to send it to St. Louis; it will get there before the students arrive later this month.

The students are excited to see how their handmade creation performs at the upcoming competition.

"I programmed a robot that's going to worlds, so that's pretty hype," senior Michael-Andrew Keays said. "I'm excited to see that."

"I programmed a robot that's going to worlds, so that's pretty hype."

Michael-Andrew Keays

senior

Klass charms the class with eccentric fashion and adventurous personality

by maggie mcaden

English teacher Steven Klass claims that there isn't a single pun about his last name that someone hasn't already told him.

"I've been in classes since 1972 and I don't think that there's any joke that can be made about my name that I haven't heard before," Klass said.

Klass even said that one time a friend suggested he name his three daughters First, Second, and Third Klass because he "thought that would be a stitch."

Even Klass's hobbies tie into puns on his last name.

With an art studio in his home, Klass carves and paints various animals, then fashions them into pins, plaques, magnets, clocks and other trinkets that people request. Klass calls these animals Klas-sical Kreatures and has been making and selling them since 1986.

"I'd always been a doodler, and I was looking for something to do with the spare time," Klass said.

Among other activities, Klass enjoys hunting white-tailed deer and fishing and describes himself as a "big Nats fan."

During his time at the University of Maryland, Klass changed his major from Psychology to History before settling on English.

"I realized that my real delight was in stories and storytelling," Klass said.

From a young age, Klass was surrounded by books; although he says he appreciates all genres, he has a particular affinity for one.

"If I had to get on a boat that's floating out towards an island, I would really like to take a pile of science

fiction with me," Klass said, adding that his most recent pleasure reads were *Ready Player One* by Ernest Cline and *I Am Number Four* by Pittacus Lore.

Klass teaches two sections of English 12 and one of English 9 Honors, which tends to be particularly eventful—in part due to the students and in part due to Klass himself. From his vibrant clothing to his captivating stories, Klass knows to make English interesting, according to freshman Emma Choi.

"Not only does he teach, but he entertains us, too," Choi said. "We love his outfits—that's one highlight, looking at him, because he has really colorful outfits."

Klass has a few stories of his own and strongly believes that learning and fun go hand in hand.

"I tend to think that although school needs to be demanding and that there needs to be clear-cut standards on a regular basis, one also needs to recognize that there can be a certain amount of fun and joy in what you're doing," Klass said. "We do a lot of laughing."

On one occasion, his students bet him that he couldn't make up a rhyme that incorporated "all of the crew," as he fondly referred to his freshman class.

The result was a multi-page rhyme that Klass brought into a real recording studio with a previous student of his who had become an audio engineer.

"I gave a copy to everyone so they'd have it," Klass said.

Of course, as they often do, his class decided to take all the credit.

"Afterward they told me that I needed to thank them for the whole circumstance and I said 'Why do I need to thank you?'...and someone in the class said 'because I knew that must've been on your bucket list, Mr. Klass,'"

"There can be a certain amount of fun and joy in what you're doing. We do a lot of laughing."

Steven Klass
English teacher



MAGGIE MCADEN/RANK&FILE

In bright blue glasses, English teacher Steven Klass teaches his freshmen section. "It's always of interest to me to see the way that kids in my classes perceive things," Klass said.

he said, adding that he'd "never been in a studio before."

Klass's favorite part of teaching is the idea that everyone is involved in learning; he explained how his former student was a professor of audio engineering and gave the production of his mixtape to an intern, who then taught Klass the basics of working in a recording studio.

"That sort of feeds back into this idea of learning new stuff all the time...it was a whole learning process for everybody," Klass said.

Klass's teaching career at Marshall has lasted more than 11 years, and he still enjoys his teaching and learning.

"It's cliché, but there's never really a dull moment," Klass said.

The Ukulele brings student playwright's work to life

by anna thillairajah

A student-written script sounds more like a theatre project than the basis for a black box production, but for senior Liz Carlson, *The Ukulele* doubled for both. Both endearing and charmingly awkward, *The Ukulele* sold out all five shows.

Producing the show was unique in that the cast and directors had direct access to the playwright.

"[Liz] was very supportive throughout the whole thing," said senior Robbie Culbertson, who played Nick Santini. "Because she was there, there was a lot of room for adaptation and interpretation."

While writing a script was not new to Carlson, seeing that script come to life on-stage was a first.

"It was really terrifying, because at that point your writing isn't standing alone anymore," Carlson said.

Carlson was most worried about how the comedy would translate when performed.

"I think the problem with really big comedic pieces is that it's all about timing and it's all about delivery," Carlson said. "When I read it, I read it in the voice and the timing and inflection that I want it to

be read in, but when other people just straight up read it, they are just reading words."

Expressing the comedy was also difficult because the audience was so close to the actors.

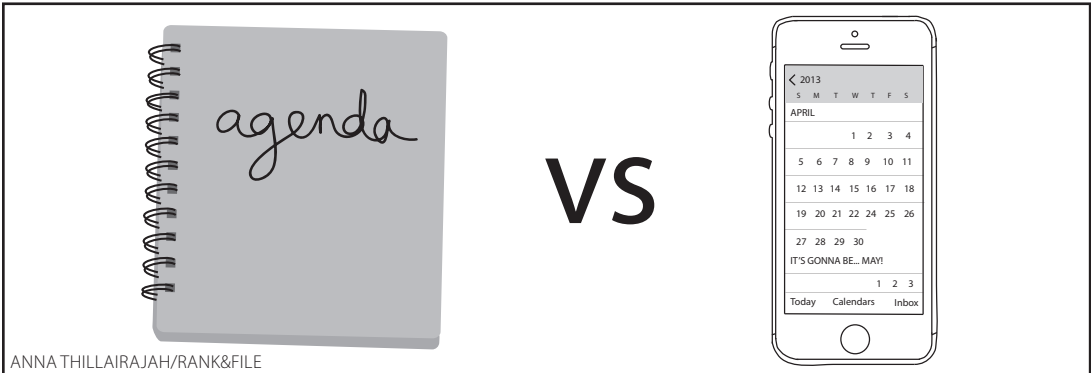
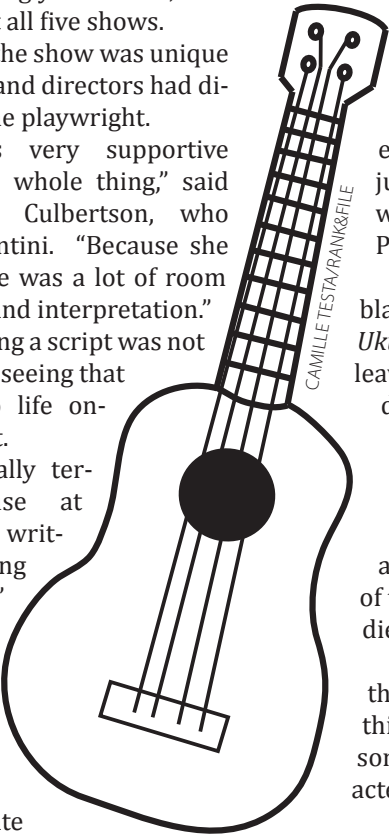
"With the audience so close it can be misleading for the actors, because the audience is directly in front of us, and we hear every laugh and every moment of silence," junior Madeline Walker, who played love interest Penelope, said.

Unlike a traditional black box production, *The Ukulele* featured a full set, leaving little space for audience seating. The surprisingly intimate setting allowed the actors to make more nuanced movements and create a deeper understanding of the characters for the audience.

"We can do things that the audience will notice, things that might reveal something about our character," Walker said.

Despite the challenges, Carlson was pleased with how the cast brought her script to life.

"Obviously nothing is ever going to be perfect or ... the way I always want it, but I don't think there was anything completely led astray," Carlson said.



Do students really use their agendas?

by paulina farley-kuzmina

Receiving the shiny new agendas at the beginning of the year tends to give the student body thoughts of productivity and hard work. But does using agendas actually improve time management, organization or academic performance?

The agendas are slightly smaller than standard printer paper and have space to write down assignments for each class every day of the week. Teachers also use them as hall passes.

But a *Rank & File* poll found that the student body is split on exactly how useful the agendas actually are. Out of 100 students, 34 percent use their agendas every day, 38 percent never use their agendas, and 28 report using them "sometimes."

"I use my agenda all the time—it's the only way I can keep track of all of the different deadlines and assignments due in each of my classes, along with reminders about my extra-curricular activities," junior Taylor Lane said.

But others disagree: freshman Rachel McFaul, for example, says she usually uses her phone instead.

"I rarely use my agenda. I don't really have trouble remembering what I have to do, but if there is something really important, I'll just put a reminder in my phone," McFaul said.

Students are also split on how helpful

the agendas are in improving or maintaining academic performance. In the same survey, 25 percent said the agendas were very helpful, 36 percent said that the agendas were somewhat helpful and 38 percent said that they were not helpful and had no impact on academics.

One reason students may not be using their agendas as intended: a format that doesn't always fit the function.

For example, according to one respondent, "[the agendas] aren't particularly helpful because there's no room to write personal activities."

Another response complained that the agendas have "very little room in the month calendar," causing this student to "tend to rely more on [their] laptop's calendar."

For those who don't use their agendas, there is still some value in keeping them instead of leaving them lost in the abyss of a messy backpack. Some teachers won't let students leave to go to the bathroom or elsewhere without a pass, which the agendas include in the back.

Similarly, going to multiple places during Learn is much more convenient with the easy access of the agendas. The survey found that the top alternative use for agendas was as bathroom or hall passes.

So if you use your agenda, enjoy it. For the rest of us—well, we'll just have to keep them around in case they come in handy.

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Rank & File is a member of the National Scholastic Press Association, the Columbia Scholastic Press Association, and the Virginia High School League.

staff editorials

Tragic books in school limit classroom scope

If you're reading a piece of required literature for your English class, chances are at least one character isn't going to make it to the back cover. In fact, it seems as though books are now required to include some discussion of mortality in order to make their way into classrooms. But does a book really have to include death and tragedy to appeal to a reader?

The short answer is no, not always. Contrary to what the writers of English class curricula apparently believe, maturity is not always synonymous with tragedy. A book doesn't have to be relentlessly depressing to tell a good, thought-provoking story.

This isn't to say that a story should be without conflict—that's what makes it interesting in the first place—just that a terrible, upsetting ending isn't always a necessity. Adult life and ideals are complex, and the literature that young adults are required to read should reflect this.

Some aspects of life are sad or difficult, and that's where books like *Night* by Elie Wiesel and *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck are necessary: to illustrate these facts by depicting heartbreaking losses or horrible events. But there are other aspects of maturity, such as identity or learning to overcome obstacles, that should be explored alongside the aforementioned themes. Books like *Good Omens* by Terry Pratchett and Neil Gaiman that deal with these additional ideas deserve just as much of a spot in school curriculum as darker books do.

Mind the Gap: Graduates find time to cultivate passions

If you asked a typical high schooler what a successful education looks like, they would most likely mention getting good grades in high school, going straight to a prestigious university and ultimately ending up with a good job. But one thing most people wouldn't think to mention is a gap year.

With the intense social stigmas that surround the college admissions process, choosing to take a gap year instead of heading directly off to college is not only a rare decision, but also one that is unfortunately frowned upon.

Gap years should not be viewed as a waste of a year, but rather as an important opportunity for young people to discover new sides of themselves before they enter college.

There should be more emphasis on persuading young people to take a constructive gap year rather than just following the beaten path of heading straight to college.

It's worth noting that a gap year is definitely not just a 12-month vacation. Studies by the University of Sydney show that the people who gain the actual advantages in college tend to be the ones who work, do service or learn a new language.

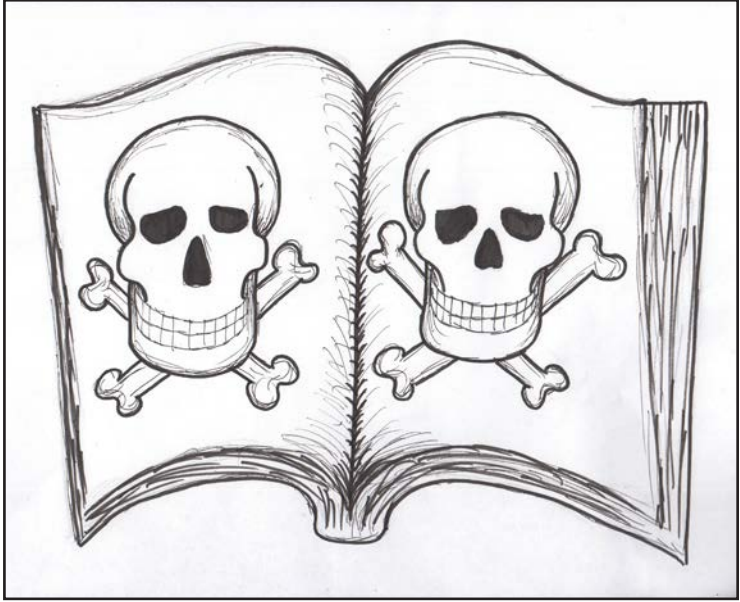
In a study done for the book *The Gap-Year Advantage*, researchers found that 60 percent of students who took gap years also reported either changing their majors in college or deciding on a major that they had not previously considered as a result of their gap year.

In an opinion piece for *The New York*

Times, Robert Clagget, a former dean of admissions, wrote that students who take constructive gap years tend to have higher GPAs than what would have been expected from their applications.

While gap years with programs such as Americorps are gaining popularity in the United States, the rate at which Americans take gap years is still far below the rates of countries such as Turkey, Norway and Denmark, where nearly half of all college students take a gap year, according to the Nordic Institute for Studies in Innovation.

If the point of college is to develop oneself and discover who one truly is, then shouldn't we be placing a greater emphasis on helping young people find themselves before they even get to college?



CAROLINE MARNEY/NAHS

This is not a call to completely overhaul the required literature list for English classes—far from it. Rather, this is a call to diversify the literature in order to better educate classes.

Many of the current books do teach important lessons and ideas to their readers, but young adults should be less worried about understanding death and loss and more focused on learning lessons that will help them better understand the world they will soon be living in. High school reading should teach students a variety of mature themes, not just the depressing ones.

P.E. must exercise creativity

Cricket, fistball, flutterguts and ringball all have one thing in common: they aren't standard sports popularized in the U.S. These sports exist all over the globe, and they are not only engaging, but also provide the opportunity to explore other cultures.

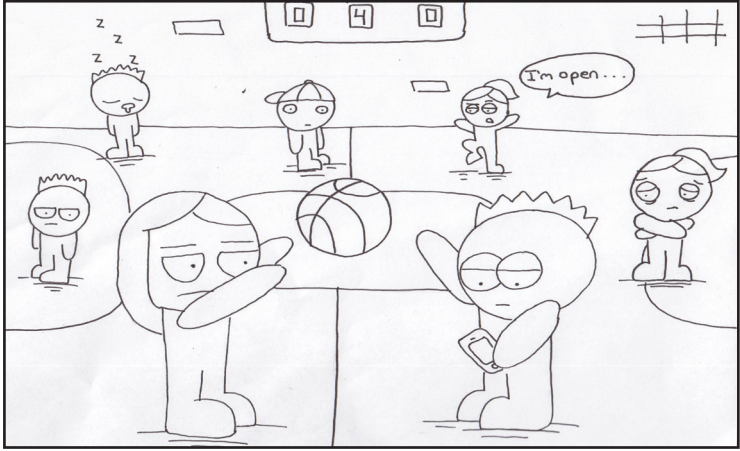
America boasts diversity and a complete blend of cultures, and yet, as a nation, we tend to focus only on a few sports. March Madness and the Super Bowl, averaging 114.4 million viewers per minute, are some of the most commercialized aspects of American athletics, and consequently, these popular sports are the ones on which P.E. classes tend to be focused—and students tend to play.

The wealth of different sports America enjoys become lost in a sea of lacrosse sticks, baseball bats and soccer balls. They drown in these more popular sports, which have become glorified as a result of the media. The youth sports industry encompasses billions of dollars a year in training, travel expenses and equipment, often to students hoping for a scholarship.

However, opportunities are scarce. For example, the odds of a high school soccer player receiving a full ride to a Division I or II School are one in 90, according to research conducted by the University of Michigan.

Year after year, season after season, students stick to these same sports; 40 percent of adolescent boys play basketball and football, and 25 percent of adolescent girls play basketball, according to a study done by the American Tennis Association based on a survey of 50,000 students a year from 2006 to 2010.

Around age 13, however, 70 percent of kids suddenly drop out of organized youth sports, right before high school, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. These standard sports begin to lose their previous appeal, and with a



LAUREN BUTLER/NAHS

growing number of students dropping out of sports and a climbing obesity rate, an engaging P. E. class becomes increasingly vital.

According to the World Sports Encyclopedia, there are 8,000 indigenous sports and sporting games in existence.

With such a wide variety of options, P. E. programs have the potential to expand their curricula beyond basic sports such as soccer and basketball and capture the diversity of the school's population. They also have the opportunity to inspire students who don't participate in traditional sports to find a new type of physical activity they enjoy.

Currently, Marshall's P.E. program is exploring pickleball, a sport invented in Seattle by Congressman Joe Pritchard and businessman Bill Bell that involves elements of tennis, ping pong and badminton. In the past, there have been only a few unique sports that P.E. classes have dabbled in, and teaching pickleball is a potential key to opening up a whole new world of varied athletics.

After all, the class is called Physical Education.

the **beef** over vegetarianism

Not worth the restrictions

Good decision for health

by caylin elkins

Vegetarianism is lauded as the savior of people, animals and the environment alike. Supposedly, just by cutting meat from your diet, you can fix both your health issues and climate change. In reality, there are a few benefits, just like any alternative diet, but there are also some drawbacks that just aren't worth the tough dietary restrictions.

Vegetarianism allows you to cut out your intake of red meat, therefore decreasing your saturated fat intake. Red meat eaten in large quantities will obviously increase your chances of health problems, but so will most things consumed in excess. Meat is a good source of essential nutrients such as vitamin B12, which helps to regulate your digestive system and can only be naturally found in animal products.

In fact, according to the American Journal of Critical Nutrition, two in three vegetarians are B12-deficient, compared to one in 20 meat eaters.

Vegetarianism doesn't do much for the environment either. Many people cite mass cattle breeding as a major contributor to climate change. But according to the World Wildlife Fund, the gases emitted while processing vegetarian options like tofu in factories requires the release of more greenhouse gases into the atmosphere than meat production does.

Simply cutting out all meat production would only decrease greenhouse gas emissions by seven percent.

A major reason most

people tread into vegetarian territory is the supposed ill treatment of animals associated with producing meat.

Don't get me wrong, I'm not supportive of animal cruelty, but that doesn't mean I'm going to stop eating meat. Plus, harvesting the vegetables you consume on a daily basis results in about six animals per acre being killed by tractors and plow trucks, according to the Journal of Agricultural and Environmental Ethics.

Additionally, a lot of land is not sustainable for crop production or is made useless due to excessive crop production. Either way, eating meat is part of the natural life cycle. If humans aren't eating it, it's bound to become the prey of some other wild carnivore.

And for those who believe it's all in the slaughterhouses, the US requires slaughterhouses to follow the regulations implemented by Humane Methods of Slaughter Act, which requires stockyards to be designed to sooth and calm the animals, and for the cattle to be completely unconscious before slaughter.

These enforced environments sound more humane than letting a wolf attack a cow fully awake so it frantically experiences its demise.

Vegetarianism is a choice based off your own morals. The important thing is to be educated about this diet, and to let it shape your life and who you are without forcing it on anyone else.

by lena kennedy

The issue of how good or bad vegetarianism tends to stir up a lot of controversy. Personally, I only eat chicken and fish. I don't restrict my diet for religious reasons; it is a personal choice.

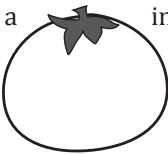
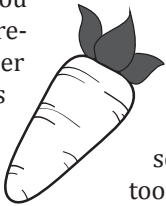
No one is forcing me to not eat certain meats.

When I was in seventh grade, our class took a trip to a farm. We were camped out right next to the slaughter houses. You could clearly hear the squeaking and screaming of the animals as they were electrocuted, as well as the whimpering when the process went wrong, leaving them injured but alive. The next day we were served

sausage and I went to bed hungry. I have not eaten red meat since.

A study by the Department of Agricultural Engineering at Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology evaluated the effect of pre-slaughter on meat and showed that cows that had been beaten or whipped into submission no longer yielded high quality meat. This treatment results in wasted meat and therefore is a useless process that harms livestock without doing anything to improve the product.

The argument that vegetarianism isn't healthy is ridiculous, as there are many other foods with the necessary nutrients to replace what vegetarians



Teenage depression requires increased attention from school admin and peers

by claire heiden

When people talk about suicide, they tend to offer too many euphemisms to mask the dire nature of the problem. It's reduced to being a permanent solution to a temporary problem, an easy way out or a final cry for help.

Edging around the word and its implications only furthers the stigma surrounding mental illness and suicidal urges. Mental illness is seen as weak; those who struggle with them are labeled as crazy.

And yet when people take their own lives, we rally behind them promising changes in our behavior and eternal niceties in their honor. Then, we revert back to our prior habits of ignoring the problem and continuing stereotypes.

In the eighth grade, after battling depression and bullying, I attempted suicide. In what I thought was my final statement, I implored my friends and loved ones to be open-minded and recognize how their actions could hurt other people.

Then I went into silence. Instead of taking my cry for help as an opportunity to become better individuals, people whispered about how I was crazy. Instead of using my own experience with conquering mental illness and overcoming urges, I remained quiet

out of fear of the backlash from my peers.

This silence around suicidal urges is flawed. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention surveyed students in grades 9 to 12 nationwide and found that 16 percent of students had seriously considered suicide. Moreover, 13 percent actually made a serious plan.

Recent tragedies from Fairfax, McLean, and Langley have amplified the need for a revolution in mental healthcare and counseling among youth. While FCPS has launched an investigation into the causes of suicide and implemented depression screenings, they could be doing more to help vulnerable youth.

Fairfax County's youth survey, which is administered to eighth, tenth and 12th-grade students, reported that 32.6 percent of 12th-graders in 2013 experienced depressive symptoms. Furthermore, almost one in four female students and one in nine male students stated that they had seriously considered suicide in the last year.

While I commend FCPS on their initiatives to investigate adolescent depression and anxiety and their attempts to provide resources for teenagers in distress, we need to address the core factors behind teenage mental illness.

>> see online for extended version

depression and suicide in fcps

sophomores:

31%

reported having **depression**

19%

reported having seriously considered **suicide**

seniors:

33%

reported having **depression**

18%

reported having seriously considered **suicide**

SOURCE: FAIRFAX COUNTY YOUTH SURVEY

tweets

i think the later start is nice, but traffic will be worse in the the morning and afternoon so it doesn't seem to be worth it



Rachel Heymann
Senior
@aftcrnoon

I need more sleep in the morning and im glad im gonna get it



Ethan Epstein
Sophomore
@ethaneps

As a student-athlete, school will end later, practice will start later, and we'll be awake later than ever doing homework



Logan Murtha
Sophomore
@loganmurtha

letters

Music department deserves larger audiences

At this school we have great turnouts for all of our events, both sporting and other student endeavors; however, within that category I personally feel like our music departments are overshadowed. Don't get me wrong, our spring musical always has great attendance. I'm not talking about that kind of musical performance: I'm talking about out orchestra, choir and band performances. Our musical ensembles practice very hard all year long and constantly win awards, yet the audience is usually empty in the performances. All three groups play professional level music, and I think it would be great for our student body to try and attend at least one concert throughout the year. Just so they can get a taste of what all the musicians in our school work so hard for and to support their fellow statesmen not only on the field, but also in the auditorium.

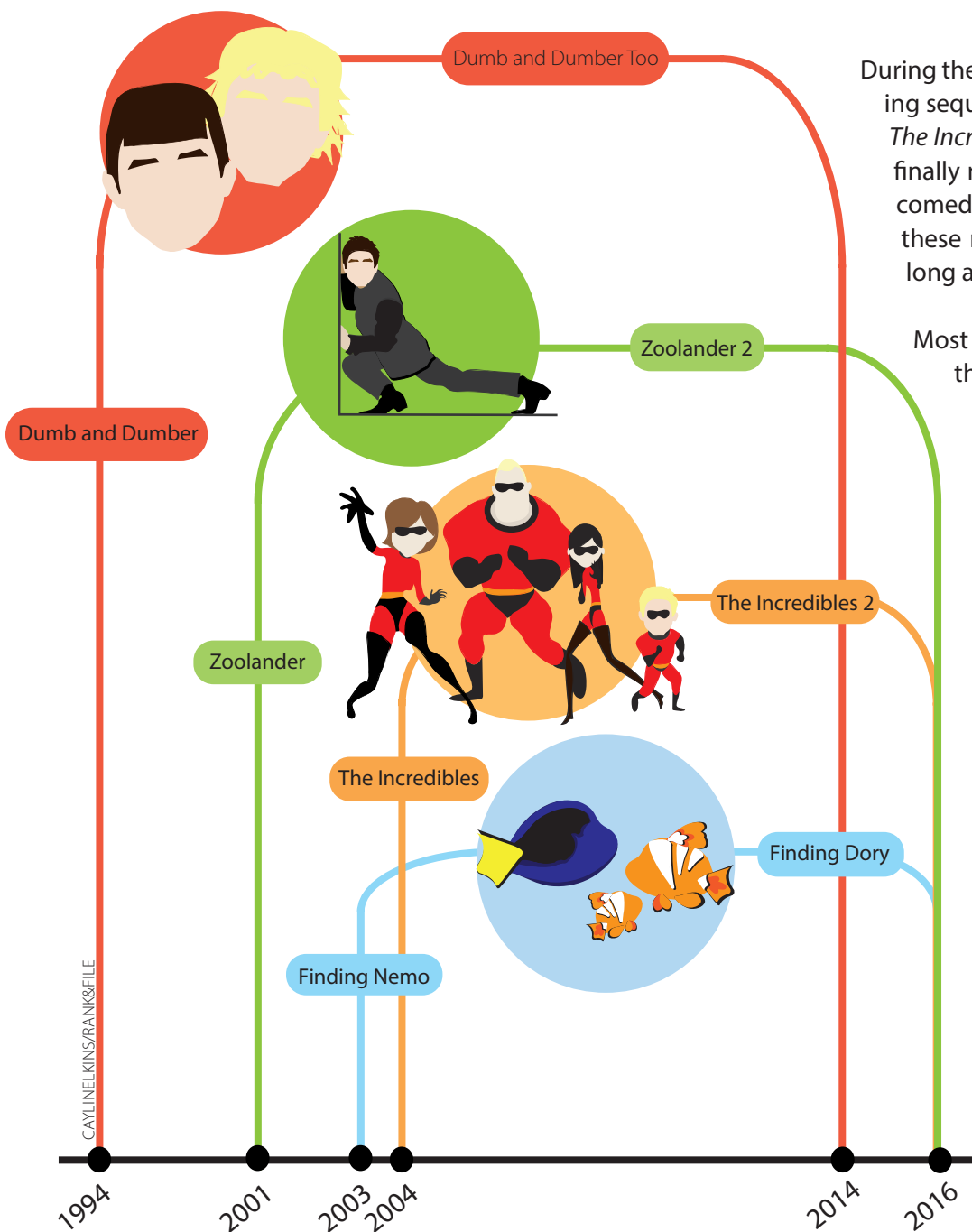
Robbie Culbertson
Senior

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there's more where that came from!

years after the originals, sequels crop up

by ethan zack



During the past couple years, Disney has created quite a lot of interest after announcing sequels to some of their older movies, such as 2003's *Finding Nemo* and 2004's *The Incredibles*. Last year, a sequel to the classic 1994 comedy *Dumb and Dumber* finally made its way to theaters. And just a few weeks ago, the stars of the 2001 comedy *Zoolander* announced that a sequel is due next year. Every single one of these movies is over a decade old, so why are they getting their follow-ups so long after their initial releases?

Most popular movies today are planned with sequels in mind. Franchises like the Marvel Cinematic Universe have their sequels planned years and years in advance, sometimes before the original movie is even released. In fact, the argument could be made that a lot of today's sequels didn't even deserve to be created, including the sequel to the lackluster 2013 horror comedy *A Haunted House* or the sequel to the critically-panned 2013 animated film *Planes*. But then again, movies such as *Boyhood* or *Interstellar* are created to stand on their own, each a unique piece of art rather than a planned installment in a story.

The movies with these long-overdue sequels do not fit into either of the two aforementioned categories. They were not created to be standalone features, but the creators did not see a reason to produce a sequel when they were originally released. The possibility existed but was not executed at the time.

The actual reason for these sequels is the legacy each original movie has left in its wake. Young kids growing up today still enjoy and reference movies like *The Incredibles* and *Finding Nemo*, while older audiences fondly remember the laughs they got from movies like *Dumb and Dumber* and *Zoolander*. These movies retain such a large following that making a sequel is guaranteed to be a financial success for studios. Thus, the studios have no reason not to greenlight sequels to older movies, regardless of whether the new installments are artistically necessary to the franchises.

Kendrick Lamar tackles controversial topics

by emma patterson

March 16 was a good day: a day off from school, the day I got my permit and for me, Christmas arrived early.

Rapper Kendrick Lamar's highly anticipated third studio album *To Pimp a Butterfly* was accidentally released on March 16, over a week earlier than it was scheduled to release on iTunes and Spotify. Within the first day he set the global record for most streams through Spotify in one day: 9.6 million. Lamar fans have been waiting anxiously for a followup to his 2012 masterpiece *Good Kid, M.A.A.D. City*, and excitement soared when he revealed plans for it last year.

To Pimp a Butterfly surpassed my expectations for Lamar's development as an artist. I appreciated *Butterfly*'s bold, funky, unapologetic and jazzy sound, which blends perfectly with Lamar's intense tackling of social commentary.

Funky and poetic songs like "King Kunta," "For Free? (interlude)," "u," and "Wesley's Theory" use older samples and references to past soul hits to show that this album was not radio-friendly, but soul-friendly music.

Lamar specifically references this decision in the outro of "King Kunta," rapping, "Now if I give you the funk, you gon' take it / We want the funk." Lamar also uses the samples to try to bring back people's roots alongside his own spoken account of the current state of black culture.

Much to my dismay, a lot of people didn't like this album, claiming it wasn't the same as the previous one *Good Kid, M.A.A.D. City*. My point is that on first listen, this album may seem to cover the basics of racial unrest, but it's not that simple.

Lamar delves into deeper subjects: his career symbolized as a caterpillar in the streets that survived and turned into a butterfly—the representation of all things good about the caterpillar—through an internal struggle and discovery of hope, creativity and talent, all in a poem

he wrote for Tupac to hear.

In my own interpretation, the caterpillar views the butterfly as weak and wants to pimp it out to its liking, and thus the *To Kill a Mockingbird*-esque *To Pimp a Butterfly* was named. The very first line in the album in "Wesley's Theory" summarizes this idea: "When the four corners of this cocoon collide / You'll slip through the cracks hoping that you'll survive / Gather your wind, take a deep look inside / Are you really who they idolize? / To pimp a butterfly."

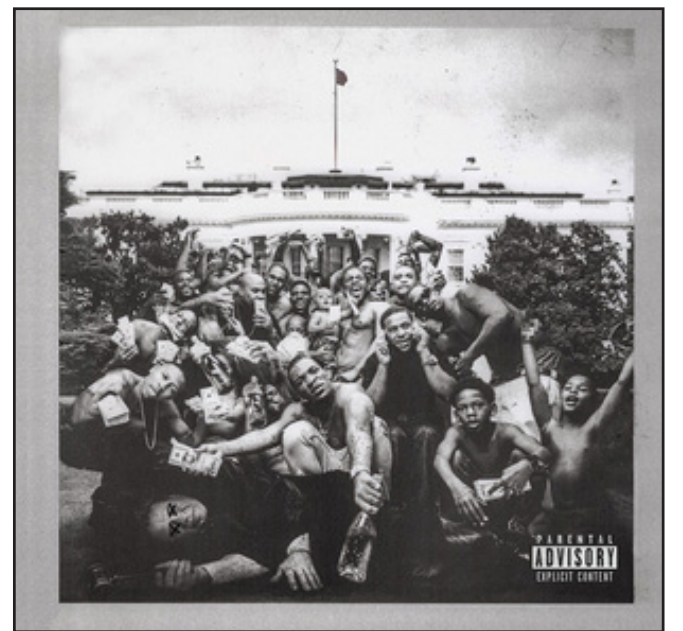
Lamar definitely outshines other hip hop artists like Drake by mastering an uncomfortable topic for other rappers and fans in an unconventional way. In "u," Lamar writes about his insecurities, his habit of drowning his depression with drinking and the darker parts of himself from the song "i," as he talks to himself about his depression.

To Pimp a Butterfly has been lauded by many, including myself, as the perfect album. Lamar's use of funk effectively ties him to his roots and provides context for his account of current society. This album deserves to be listened to as a whole every time, and in my opinion sounds best if you have about an hour and thirty minutes of truly quiet, uninterrupted spare time.

Butterfly is hailed for its connection between soulful roots and modern hip hop, but the true genius comes from Lamar's rap prowess and lyrical mastery of conveying his feelings through references to politics and history.

To Pimp a Butterfly ended perfectly, with Lamar speaking to Tupac Shakur from beyond the grave, taken from a somewhat obscure Swedish interview from 1994. It is seemingly revealed that the whole album was Lamar was reciting a poem to Tupac.

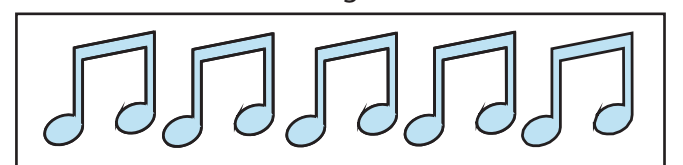
As if hearing Tupac's voice again wasn't enough to cause fans to shed a tear, the track ends with Lamar calling out for Tupac, who has already gone. He has left his fans and Lamar to find our own answers; Lamar asserts that we cannot keep looking to the past for help, as we



KENDRICKLAMAR.COM REPRODUCED UNDER FAIR USE

To Pimp a Butterfly's album cover reflects Lamar's discussion of political unrest and racial prejudice by depicting a group of young African-American men in front of the White House.

rating:



have to be the ones to save ourselves.

However polarizing it may be, *To Pimp a Butterfly* is undeniably a great album. There is a certain respect that this album deserves in its message and the effort put into making it that most people should give even if it seems basic at first.

It is exactly what hip hop needed, and will most likely be unsurpassed in hip hop albums to come. Lamar has long since passed the realm of talented rapper and become one of the most celebrated rappers of all time for his two brilliant albums.

review



JOHN FLEENOR/ABC/TNS

Louis (Randall Park) and Jessica Huang (Constance Wu) are Eddie's first generation Taiwanese parents, who move from the city to the suburbs.

FOTB: Fresh-faced perspective

by heather dunbar and isabelle ouyang

When Chef Eddie Huang wrote his autobiography *Fresh Off the Boat: A Memoir*, he couldn't have known that his Taiwanese family would win the hearts of television viewers across America just two years later. He couldn't have known this fact nearly two decades earlier in his formative childhood (when the book-turned-show takes place).

The show *Fresh Off the Boat* adapts Huang's salad days in the Floridian suburbs of Orlando. An older, fictionalized Huang narrates with humor and verve the struggles of his first generation family.

Fresh Off the Boat stands out due to its dauntless approach to topics like immigration and race. Not since, well, ever has an Asian family been represented on American television with the same critical and far-reaching success (though comedienne Margaret Cho's *All American Girl* came close).

While stereotypes are a large part of

what makes the show funny and relatable, they are never the crux of the joke. Rather, the show pokes fun at the absurdity of a deracinated family in an unfamiliar terrain of rollerblading soccer moms. What seems normal to one family is absurd to everyone around them, and vice versa.

Perhaps the show is a milestone in Asian representation, but *Fresh Off the Boat* has stumbled in and out favor with Asian Americans, most notably Chef Huang himself.

The show's official Twitter account posted an advertising graphic that claimed everyone's "a little fresh off the boat," which featured simplistic depictions of different ethnicities in headwear that ranged from sombreros to bamboo hats. Huang rapidly replied to the tweet to express his distaste over the graphic. The post was deleted soon after the resulting conservation that followed about how reductive it seemed.

review

>> see extended version online

Netflix gains popularity, pulls power away from cable networks

by heather dunbar

Binge watching has been a popular practice for a while now and is understandably becoming more common and acceptable with each new series Netflix offers for streaming.

The concept of hunkering down to switch off your mind for a while and sit through three seasons of your favorite program is definitely more alluring than tackling daily tasks. It's a quick way to catch up with whatever show your friends won't stop chattering about, and an even quicker way to fall behind in a class or five.

Netflix certainly seems to be aware of the pull of binge watching, as they surveyed their viewers on the subject with

Harris Interactive back in 2013. An impressive 73 percent of respondents reported watching only two to six episodes of a show in one sitting, rather than entire seasons.

This is probably why 73 percent of Netflix viewers also reported having positive feelings toward binge streaming television rather than feeling guilty.

When compared to Netflix, traditional cable television seems to be falling flat. Sure, you can fill up your DVR with reruns of *Friends*, but there's only so

much room.

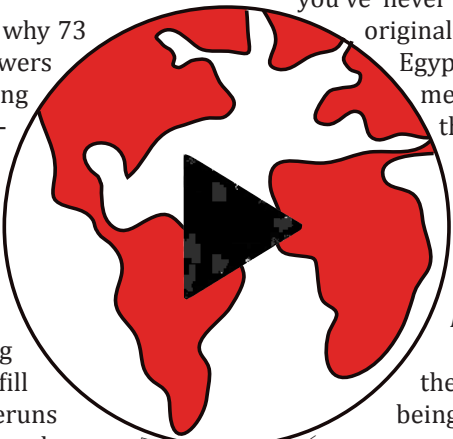
This media provider even goes beyond offering your old favorites (along with a multitude of unsuccessful films you've never heard of) by acquiring original content. *The Square*, an Egyptian-American documentary film, received three Emmy awards in 2014. Netflix also picked up *Arrested Development* for a fourth and fifth season and very successfully remade *House of Cards*.

Through these shows, they've moved away from being just a "generic video company that streams all types

of video," as they state in their Long Term View page.

The way in which Netflix drops original content, making entire series available all at once, also works in the company's favor, allowing for both binge watching and bigger media events than a traditionally released series garners. Rather than attract media attention for each episode as they're released, traditionally on a weekly basis, the flood of new content creates an unproportionally massive event, as seen with Netflix's critically acclaimed *Orange is the New Black*.

Our society continually craves quicker, more accessible ways of consuming content. Netflix, along with other streaming companies, is rapidly surpassing cable television because they fit that demand.



ETHAN ZACK/RANK&FILE

Insurgent continues dystopian trend, provides fast-paced watch

by raman khanna

The film *Insurgent* was released March 27, just as we began spring break. It is the second film of the *Divergent* series based on the books by Veronica Roth and starring Shailene Woodley (whom some might remember from *The Fault In Our Stars*) and the British heartthrob Theo James.

Personally, I tend to dislike dystopian and futuristic movies and books, since they often lack substance and tend to be shallow. However, *Insurgent* overcomes this mold by presenting a robust and unique plot line along with a strong female lead.

Behind the scenes, Robert Schwentke took charge as director and brought the action that he was known for in his movies *Flightplan* and *RED*. This level of action was really important in *Insurgent*, as the plot revolves around the struggle of a Abnegation girl who struggles to learn who she is, and the intensity and almost suicidal recklessness that make her a Dauntless. This action-packed plot gives emphasis to the powerful and strong character of Tris. Neil Burger, who directed *Divergent* (the first film of the series) brought the seriousness and emotional aspect that was crucial to the first film, but would have destroyed the integrity of the rest of the series due to

the loss of the action that was necessary to the plot.

The biggest concern that I had going into the series was that the movie would not be like the book. Although the screenwriters did leave out some characters and scenes, this only enhanced and streamlined the process, because often times while reading *Insurgent* the plotline moved slowly and was frankly quite boring. The movie moves through the plot a lot quicker, while at the same time keeping the viewer engaged and interacting with the effects.

I don't often go to watch movies in the theater, but this movie was a must-see: the action and graphics were impeccable and the plot was solid. However, I would recommend you skip the 3D version—save your money and avoid the cheap attempts to scare the audience.

Although there were many good aspects of *Insurgent*, it lacks character development and features some weak acting. Overall, it is a powerful movie (especially if you are a fan of the books) and is the latest dystopian story line that has us hooked and obsessed with the characters and movies.



review

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- Marshall High Senior



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lockers

What was once a cherished rite of passage has become almost obsolete in our own halls.

by raman khanna

Lockers have long been a major icon of the American high school. But their popularity has declined to such an extreme that if you ask any student in the hallway where their locker is, they most likely won't know where to start looking.

One of the scariest (but also one of the most exciting) parts of middle school was the lockers. Students spent countless hours practicing on combination locks in anticipation, and lots of lockers jammed before finally learning the best way to store supplies so that a binder wouldn't get caught in the door. Lockers offered students a convenient place to put their bags, coats and valuables before going to class.

But for some reason, the locker frenzy that we all had in middle school no longer exists.

Now, seeing a student using a locker is remarkably rare. In fact, most students do not even know where their locker is located, much less its combination. Cindy Blakeley, director of Student Services, was able to provide some insight on the change.

"I think that the problem is that we stopped using lockers for awhile because we didn't have enough, and then there was just a lot of upheaval when the whole renovation happened," Blakeley said.

The idea of carrying around backpacks seemed to stick, even after the renovation started winding down. By that time there was little that the administration could do to encourage their use because, as Blakeley put it, "the whole culture changed."

For example, freshman Mohit Sahgal said that he always uses his backpack rather than his locker.

As Sahgal puts it, "It is more convenient [to use my backpack]. If I take my backpack I can carry all of my binders and all of the books that I need, but if I use my locker then I have to keep going back."

In most television shows and movies about a high school, it's not hard to find a scene set in front of a row of lockers or a clip of a character stopping by to pick up a textbook.

According to the *LA Times*, however, in the 1970's lockers became symbols of a darker side of high school:



ANNA THILLAIRAJAH/RANK&FILE

students started using them to store alcohol and drugs, which led several school districts around the country to tear them out. More were demolished after the tragedy at Columbine High School, as administrators began to worry that lockers could be a good place to store bombs or deadly weapons.

In contrast, instead of demolishing or tearing out lockers, Marshall has recently added more of them as a part of the new renovation.

Sophomore Maya Chatterjee, however, believes that "lockers at this school are basically useless; nobody uses them," and that "it is a waste of the school's money to have lockers, and they should stop adding more in."

However, for now, they are a part of this school, and that's not necessarily a bad thing.

There are a lot of very good arguments for using lockers. Not having to carry heavy backpacks around all day takes a load off kids' backs.

In fact, new research says the heavy bags that children and teens carry around all day are leading to chronic back pain and spinal disorders. According to Dr. Lonnie Zeltzer, director of the pediatric pain program at UCLA, backpacks "place a strain on certain muscles that causes kids to hold their bodies in certain ways and

creates muscle and ligament pain."

Lockers also offer security, and they can provide students their own space to keep their things. Blakeley thinks that lockers are important because students should be able to have "a place to keep [their] stuff and store things, and not have the burden of carrying all of it around, almost like having a home base."

Not only does not having lockers increase the weight

on students' backs, having bulky bags in the classroom can be a inconvenience. Teachers in the science department have an issue with bags in the classroom, especially during labs. And other teachers find that bags reduce already-limited space, with many sharing classrooms this year. Either way, teachers can get frustrated with all the bags coming into the classroom, leaving less room for learning.

Additionally, students support for lockers can be found among athletes who have equipment and may find their lockers more useful.

"[My locker] has a lot of space for me to put my stuff before practice," JV girls lacrosse member and sophomore Eram Mallick said.

Student Services is doing all that it can do to motivate students to use lockers by giving freshman their locker assignments in the summer as a way to excite them, along with several other campaigns.

In response to the lack of locker usage, Blakeley says that "[students] don't use them, and I don't like that ... and I feel sad that kids don't use them, but if they don't need it, and they don't want it, I don't think that I should force that on them."

statesmen weigh in

84% don't know where their lockers are

10% only know the general location

6% know where their locker is and have used it.

This means, according to our poll:

2391 lockers at this school

2008 lockers have never been opened

Data from R&F survey of 115 students at A Lunch

the payoff

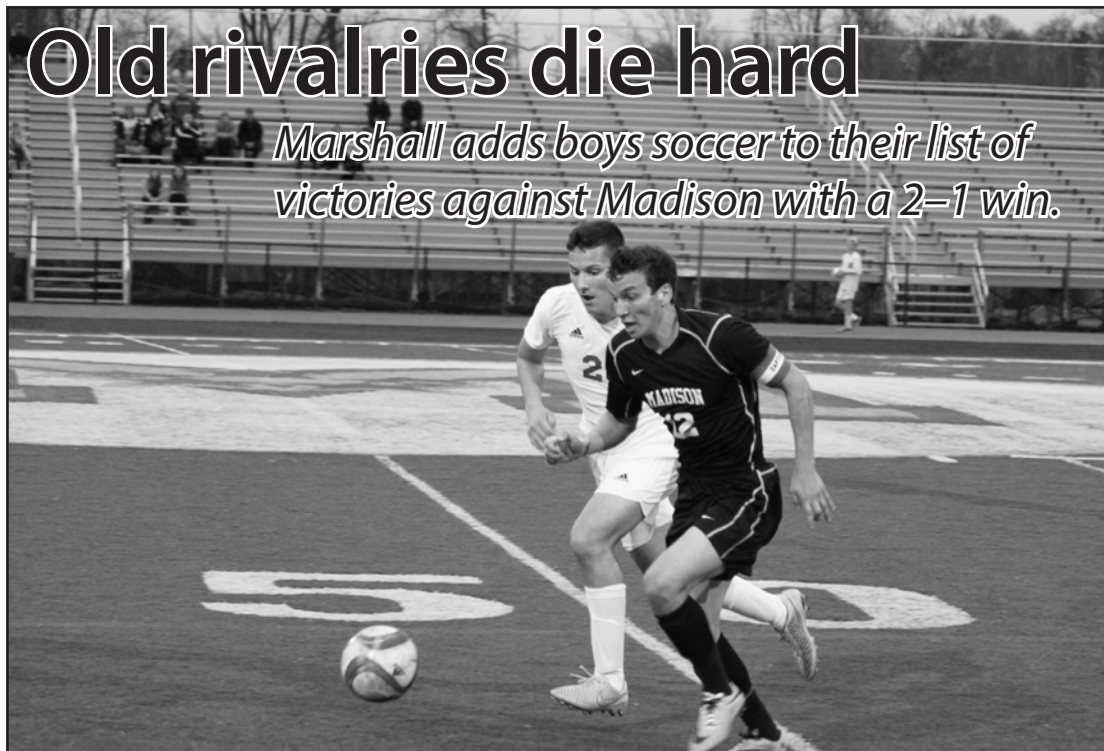
ditching lockers for carrying around heavy backpacks all day may be convenient, but can lead to chronic back pain and spinal disorders



ANNA THILLAIRAJAH/RANK&FILE

Old rivalries die hard

Marshall adds boys soccer to their list of victories against Madison with a 2-1 win.



ANNA THILLARAJAH/RANK & FILE



Top: Senior Nick Langkau races to defend against Madison striker Stephen LaRow. Despite a chance to go up early in the first half, sophomore goalie Nabil Milani blocked a penalty kick from LaRow.

Bottom: Looking for a forward pass, sophomore Jacob Wacht works the ball across centerfield. The storied rivalry made for an exciting game and elicited an onfield celebration following Marshall's win, redemption after last year's

March Madness sets records with nailbiters, inspires risky betting

by anna thillarajah and camille testa

You know that March Madness pool you put a couple bucks into? You probably didn't think much of it, but participating in gambling is illegal.

That's right, illegal. When it comes to March Madness or the Superbowl, illegal gambling is kind of like jaywalking: it's against the law, but no one really cares if you do it anyway.

According to the National Council on Problem Gambling, sports gambling is the most popular type of gambling for ages 14 to 22.

Betting on the Superbowl is one thing, but it's interesting that so many people are willing to put down money on an event noted for its insanity and upsets (it's called March Madness for a reason).

Year after year, brackets are busted, yet people continue to bet money, hoping to get a lucky break.

In addition to its crazy reputation, there are over 9.2 quintillion possible brackets for March Madness. Granted, you don't need a

perfect bracket to win, nor will some of them be picked. But with such a big pool of choice, picking a successful bracket gets a little dicey.

And most people who submit a bracket aren't exactly experts on college basketball. According to the Harris Poll, for those that follow more than one sport, 32 percent said that the NFL was their favorite sport to watch, while college basketball came in at a measly three percent.

Not only do people have to make 63 separate decisions instead of just one, they often don't have good background knowledge to rely on, making betting even riskier.

This year was hectic, particularly in early rounds. In fact, according to ESPN, the first day of the 64-team round this year set records, with the most games determined by only one point in a single day in tournament history.

By the end of the round of 64, there was only one perfect bracket intact out of the 11.57 million submitted in ESPN's Tournament Challenge. So just think about those odds next year when you buy into a March Madness pool.

JV baseball faces tough season start, young team

by rana attia

The first junior varsity baseball game of the season was March 24 against Madison and resulted in a tough 7-1 loss. The team is largely inexperienced, but they are working to overcome this obstacle.

Despite the loss, head coach Pat Tarr sees significant potential for the team with the less experienced underclassmen.

"I think that we, for the second year in a row, have a strong freshmen class, which is why we have strong potential baseball players out there," Tarr said.

The team is picking up technical skills quite easily, even though they did not have as much time as they wanted for practice due to inclement weather. The practice time rescheduling forced them to practice with the varsity team in the gym.

"We've worked hard on the basics and implemented some of our strategies," sophomore Bo Hann said. "Our pitching staff has had plenty of bullpens and we've got a

lot of swings in the cage."

Though the JV team doesn't have the most experienced players, it gives the underclassmen a chance to lead and work together, according to sophomore Nick Monfort.

"Our sophomores this year have matured from last year, and the freshmen are really stepping up this year," Monfort said. "I'm really proud of the team so far; Marshall baseball will have success for years to come."

Sophomore Owen Schaefer believes that team has proved to be incredibly diligent.

"The baseball team in general at Marshall is a pretty friendly group of guys and I would say that is true for this year as well as last year," Schaefer said. "The environment has stayed pretty consistent, which is work hard and play together."

Freshman Brendan Dudding is eager to further his baseball skills.

"I just really look forward to putting everything I have out on the field and learning from the great coaching staff we have here at Marshall," Dudding said.



MAGGIE MCADEN/RANK & FILE

Sophomore Steven Baker bats during a difficult 3-10 loss to Stonebridge HS. The team started the season with a difficult schedule, playing only teams from the VHSL 6A class. The team will face their first conference opponent April 17.



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SOURCES: ESPN, WALLETHUB

Spirit pack debate pits expenses against promise of team unity

by eve grill

When it comes to spirit packs, athletes jump at the chance to sport their team’s logo around their community and at school.

However, the highly regarded advantages of spirit packs come with a hefty price tag that may deter some athletes from purchasing the packs.

Perspectives on the expense of the spirit packs vary between athletes.

Sophomore and three-season track runner Logan Murtha acknowledges the high prices, but sees them as a benefit, as the profits will eventually help the athletic program.

“They’re a little pricey, but I don’t look at that as an issue, since the proceeds go to the Boosters, which benefits us,” Murtha said.

P.E. teacher, freshman football coach and assistant swim and dive coach Matthew Hochstrasser shares similar views with Murtha that the costly prices are in fact worth it.

“I believe they are worth the price that

athletes pay for them,” Hochstrasser said. “It gives the athletes a uniform they can wear in and out of school to show their support and commitment to the team or school.”

Despite the unity and comradeship spirit packs bring, some people believe the prices are just too high.

Sophomore and returning varsity soccer team member Margaret Lister agrees with the idea that spirit wear promotes team morale, yet believes that the appeal would be greater if the prices were decreased.

“I think that they’re great and show the team as a whole, but they’d be even better if they cost less,” Lister said.

Regardless of the high prices, spirit packs continue to be a major motivating factor for students to participate in school sports and are widely popular among the collective student-athlete body due to the school spirit they encourage.

“I think it’s really important that teams look like a unified group on and off the field, court, track, etc,” Murtha said. “It encourages support and focus long before you start playing, even if you do an individual sport.”



PHOTO COURTESY OF KATIE HERBOLSHIMER

The varsity field hockey team wears custom-made spirit shirts on their way to the state tournament in November. The team wore their jerseys when they arrived at the competition and continued to sport matching apparel from spirit packs throughout the tournament. The apparel presented the team as a unified whole.



MAGGIE MCADEN/RANK & FILE

Top: Sophomore Natalina Koludrovic runs to return a serve during warm-ups.

Bottom: Senior Dany Chaillo leaps mid-serve to deliver the ball to her singles opponent in a match against Fairfax High School. Chaillo won her individual match, helping her team to a 7–1 victory. As a senior, this is Chaillo’s first year playing on home courts for practices and matches, finally restoring the meaning to home-court advantage.

sports profile

class: 2017 years of experience: 8
sport: softball



MAGGIE MCADEN/RANK & FILE

Sophomore and junior varsity softball player Alex Stenseth prepares to field the ball at her game against South Lakes High School on April 9.

Next door neighbors can impact your life in more ways than the occasional hello: they could be the ones who kickstart your sports career. For sophomore and junior varsity softball player Alex Stenseth, her neighbors helped steer her off the path of soccer and onto to that of softball.

“It’s kind of a funny story,” Stenseth said. “My next-door neighbors played t-ball and they were really into it.”

When her parents signed her up for t-ball Stenseth began to love it.

Playing on a school team was

a new experience for Stenseth after previously participating only in local leagues, but throughout her softball career, Stenseth enjoyed an individualized edge.

“I love going up to bat and hitting the crap out of the ball,” Stenseth said. “It’s like you’re the star of your own theatre play.”

The 2015 spring sports season is Stenseth’s second year on junior varsity. Last week, their team won against Langley High School, adding to their 11–3 record.

“I love being able to say, ‘This is our team; don’t mess with us,’” Stenseth said.

—kristen ziccarelli

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