



Creating a legacy

COURTESY OF ZOE SCOPA

Turning the corner, freshman Heather Holt cruises to a new indoor and outdoor school record in the girls mile. Holt ran in the prestigious invitational mile at the Virginia Tech High School Invitational and competed against nine elite runners to deliver a 5:07 performance, fast enough to earn fifth place in the talented field.

newsflash

As construction winds down, school serves up new courts

After four years of waiting for construction, the tennis team finally has new courts. The team can now practice at home, making for easier logistics.

English teacher and boys tennis team coach James MacIndoe says he is “excited to have courts in our backyard. It now feels like an actual sport because it raises awareness and allows hosting home matches at Marshall.”

The courts will be available in February for the coaches and team to start using.

Student activities director Joseph Swarm believes the court will push the tennis team to achieve greatness.

“Students can watch the tennis team playing, which motivates our tennis team,” Swarm said.

The number of tennis courts has decreased from seven to six, but coaches express excitement about using them.

Girls tennis coach Dorothy Brown confirms the advantages of having a court at home.

“We have a huge logistical benefit because we don’t have to drive down to Merrifield for our daily practice, which saves us a lot of time,” Brown said. “We get better quality practices.”

—janan iranbomy



CAMILLE TESTA/RANK&FILE

Seen from behind the school, the new tennis courts glisten on a recent snowy day. Tennis team members and coaches are excited for the home practices the new courts allow.

International Night celebrates diversity

by caylin elkins

Last night, participants in the eighth annual International Night celebrated the diversity of the Marshall community, which includes students and families from over 82 different countries around the world.

“It’s a good way to show the diversity that Marshall has, especially compared to other high schools in the area,” junior George Eltzroth said.

An educational event like this one required extensive planning and organizing, led by planning committee co-chairs Annie Klockner and Nancy Garcia. They began their work in the fall, planning a meal, booths and a show.

“This is a trip around the world without the jet lag,” Klockner said.

Klockner and Garcia spent hours reaching out to faculty, the community and—with the help of social

studies teacher Sean Rolon—students who celebrated their home countries in a variety of methods.

“I like to see kids really showcasing their culture in a unique setting that allows them to be who they are and show what they believe in and what their culture is like,” Rolon said.

“This is a trip around the world without the jet lag.”

Annie Klockner

planning committee co-chair

Rolon organized the groups, set up the music lists and made sure that the show went off without a hitch.

“The students develop their own performances, often based in ethnic traditions that,

in some cases, are centuries old,” volunteer John Eltzroth said.

Countries represented at last night’s event included India, Japan, Bolivia, Spain and Iran.

“The United States is only a small part of the world,” Rolon said. “There are many different cultures, many individuals, many different belief systems in place.”

Cider Club unites Marshall one drink at a time

by raman khanna

Cider Club had its first meeting Jan. 17, with attendance larger than expected. The club, a celebration of apple cider, is expected to increase its following in upcoming meetings.

Cider Club was started by sophomore Patrick Brinza and junior Sarah Boyle. The club began as a joke between the co-presidents when they confused “cyber club” for “cider club.” They soon

realized that they were onto something, and called on Spanish teacher David Barkley to sponsor the new club.

Brinza says that he hopes to “join Marshall together as a community with cider, because everyone just loves cider, and it’s a great opportunity for people to just hang out with friends and make a school into more of a community.”

Boyle was not expecting the outpouring of support for the club from her classmates and was “really surprised about

how many people got really excited about the fact that it was cider. Cider’s great, but we didn’t know that there was so much demand.”

The club now has about thirty members, or “followers” in the cider club vernacular. Membership is not required because, as Brinza says, “We mainly hope to join Marshall together with cider.”

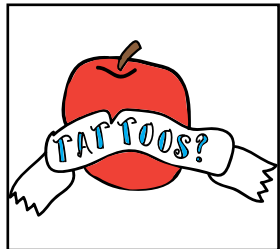
Junior Emily Daring attended the first meeting and found that it was a good outlet to meet with friends.

“I was pretty optimistic going into it, and I thought that it would be cool,” Daring said. “I mean, there’s not that much you do; you’re just drinking cider and talking to friends.”

Students who participate in Cider Club can go to the monthly meetings open to students and teachers alike.

Students considering membership, Boyle emphasized, must consider their beverage of choice to be apple cider and “not apple juice, that’s disgusting.”

Opinion: 4,5



ISABELLE OUYANG/RANK&FILE

Assigned readings for English classes almost always seem to include death and tragedy, and it is time to diversify the literature that students read.

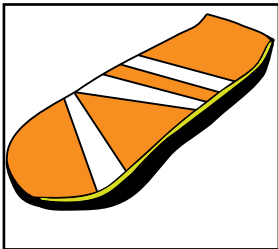
Features: 7,6



KRISTEN ZICARELLI/RANK&FILE

Kendrick Lamar’s album “To Pimp a Butterfly” was released early on Mar 16, and broke the record for Spotify streams in a single day.

Centerspread: 8,9



ISABELLE OUYANG/RANK&FILE

As R&F rings in the new year, we compare futuristic predictions for 2015 with the truth. How does the real world stack up?

Arts & Style: 10,11



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Girls varsity tennis defeated Fairfax High School 7-1 on Apr 7, marking their fifth win in six games. This is their best start in over five years.

Chili cookoff boosts morale for second semester



CAMILLE TESTA/RANK&FILE

It's not what you typically see on teacher workdays. There is a lot of bustling about; counselors sprinkle in last-minute handfuls of cheese, while teachers unload tubs of guacamole and sour cream. Someone is slicing a loaf of bread, and later, Principal Jeff Litz's 10-year-old son wheels in a cart topped with cakes. There are still people carefully setting down slow cookers with placecards like "Taco Bello's Taco Chili" and "Everything But the Kitchen Sink Chili."

Twenty-two chili dishes (**left**) were entered in this year's annual chili cookoff for teachers and faculty, and of those dishes, social studies teacher Bob Bowdey's chili won the judges' taste test.

One of these judges was Chef Devlin (**top right**), who explained his intricate judging process as follows: "Are you happy and do you not have a problem paying for it?"

Devlin also believes appearances are key.

"It has to look good," Devlin said. "If it looks good, you're already thinking, 'This is gonna be good.'"

According to Litz, this year was the first that the winner was awarded a trophy (**bottom right**), which will stay in Bowdey's department workroom for a year. Bowdey's department will need to defend the trophy in next year's competition.

—isabelle ouyang

Close quarters bring teachers together

by eve grill

As the student population rapidly increases to record-breaking numbers, the administration has been forced to get creative in terms of dealing with the availability of the classrooms.

In order to accommodate acceptable class sizes, teachers have paired up to share classrooms, becoming something resembling "roommates."

One such teacher is English teacher Julie Curtin, who has co-taught a double block of English 11/12 for three years with ESOL department chair Sharon Carser-Brown.

"When we moved into the newly renovated classrooms in the B hallway, we knew that some of the teachers would need to share rooms," Curtin said. "She asked if I'd like to share with her, and I thought it was a great idea."

Like Curtin, world history teacher Amanda Schall splits time in her classroom with social studies teacher Joseph Brannan. However, instead of two teachers being in the same room simultaneously, Schall and Brannan split time in their classroom between red and blue days.

"[Brannan] teaches on blue days and I am on red days. It's nice because we still have the room pretty much to ourselves," Schall said.

Even though Brannan and Schall are separated for

the majority of the time, they still must exhibit attentive and thoughtful "roommate" characteristics.

"When you share a room, you always have to be considerate towards your roommate," Schall said.

In contrast, Spanish teacher David Barkley has primary control of his room and only shares it when other world language teachers need the language labs. This arrangement proves to be less time-consuming than the complete division of a classroom.

"It's convenient not to have to physically move to another location during my planning periods," Barkley said.

"Another advantage is that my students always know where they can find me during the day; if I am in the workroom, it's harder for them to find me."

Curtin has found that the split of her classroom has actually benefitted not only herself, but also the students.

"We're able to conference with students at the

same time or have one person interacting with the class as a whole while the other works with students one-on-one," Curtin said.

Spending three entire school years with a fellow colleague has allowed Curtin to evolve as a teacher and build a lasting friendship with Carser-Brown.

"I feel like I've become a better teacher by working so closely with Ms. Carser. I'm able to bounce ideas off

"We are all in it together, and sharing space is just another aspect of the environment here."

David Barkley
Spanish teacher



EVE GRILL/RANK&FILE

Special education and social studies teacher Matt Hausman, left, shares room D-105 with social studies teacher Sean Rolon, right. The two have separate desks.

her and gather inspiration by watching her teach," Curtin said. "We've become really good friends over the last three years."

Barkley's room-sharing setup is different than Curtin's, but he also sees it as a net positive for the school and his fellow teachers.

"We have a tremendous resource with the language labs, and it's important that all classes have an opportunity to use them," Barkley said.

The sharing of classrooms inevitably will bring two teachers together, but according to Barkley, sharing space is a statement on the camaraderie and close friendships found in the Marshall community.

"It feels very natural to share space with my colleagues at Marshall, due in large part to the community atmosphere here," Barkley said. We are all in it together, and sharing space is just another aspect of the environment here."

The bitter controversy over candygrams

With the ban on bake sales, do candygrams bend the rules? The candygram loophole defies the purpose of a health initiative, but how else will clubs make ends meet?

by ethan zack

The psychology club's upcoming candygram sale for Valentine's Day has evoked some controversy in regards to school rules and regulations. The administration's decision to permit the sale of the small, sweet gifts has brought a certain question to the minds of many students: why are candygram fundraisers allowed when bake sale fundraisers are banned?

Candygrams are small letters, usually attached to a piece of candy, that can be purchased

by students around holidays such as Valentine's Day or Christmas. Many students use them as a cheap and affordable way to show their affection for their friends or significant others.

"I think it's sweet," freshman Holly Waters said. "I like that you can send them to friends and teachers too."

Bake sales are, as the name suggests, sales of edible goods by organizations in order to raise money. Currently, bake sales are not permitted by policy 5003.3 of the FCPS rules and regulations,

forcing organizations to search for other ways to raise money.

"This is a national situation brought about by Michelle Obama's health initiative," said English teacher Samantha Nims, sponsor of the Reveille literary magazine. "It has to do with same thing that's going on in the cafeteria as far as the cookies being changed and healthier side dishes. They want students to avoid sugar and refined foods, so they're not allowing us to do bake sales."

Technically, candy is not an exception to the rule. However,

since the details change from state to state and negotiations can be made, exceptions like the upcoming candygram sale are allowed.

Some clubs believe that candygrams and bake sales should both be permitted.

"Ultimately, I understand for elementary schools, maybe even for middle schools," Nims said. "But for high schools where there's no funding and we're talking about older children who can just walk to 7-11, I think they're cutting off their noses just to spite their faces."

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staff editorials

Tattoos: black marks on skin, not character

You probably know at least one teacher with a tattoo. Maybe you even know a couple.

In socially liberal Fairfax County, tattoos don't have to be a secret, and smaller ones—especially those located on places like the feet or fingers—are often visible, even in the white-collar workplace of a high school.

But even at Marshall, where dress codes tend to be casual and faculty members have relative freedom of expression, you've probably also noticed that teachers tend to cover up larger pieces—sleeves, say, even on hot days. Why hide body art you've paid to get?

The answer most likely lies with public opinion and the stigma surrounding body modification like tattoos and piercings.

FCPS's Student Rights and Responsibilities handbook, for instance, lists tattoos as a possible sign that students are involved in gang activities. According to the

Pew Research Center, 22 percent of adults ages 18 to 29 say the increasing number of Americans getting tattoos has been a change for the worse, and 64 percent of adults ages 65 and older agree.

It's no surprise, then, that Pew also reports that 72 percent of adults with tattoos say their tattoos are usually not visible, a percentage that is almost the same for Millennials as for older adults.

And yet the poor public opinion of tattoos comes at a time when, according to the BBC, two out of five U.S. adults in their thirties have at least one tattoo.

Why are Americans so uncomfortable with tattoos?

As the SR&R's mention of tattoos suggests, body art tends to be seen as lower-class, sometimes even criminal. This perception, unsurprisingly, harms job applicants who are automatically considered ineligible for positions requiring them to interact with clients based on tattoo visibility.

According to the National Law Review, appearance, including presence or absence of tattoos, also affects how people perceive others' intelligence, motivation, wealth and "overall capacity."

While it is impossible to stop people from making some assumptions on the basis of appearance, tattoos are especially stigmatizing of the people who bear them, despite the fact that a 2010 study at Texas Tech University found almost no correlation between having three or fewer tattoos and deviant behavior. (Additionally, the study includes as deviant behavior "regular marijuana use," which will likely raise fewer and fewer eyebrows as legalization and decriminalization barrel on.)

Tattoos say nothing about an individual's character, worth or propensity for trouble-making. In a nation where body art is becoming increasingly popular, it's a shame that those who enjoy it still face discrimination and stigma from the lip-pursers among us.

Flipped is the new norm

As a student, you become accustomed to a repetitive class structure that involves a lesson from the teacher. Then, you go home and write about what you learned or apply the lesson in a homework assignment. But today's classrooms offer something more invigorating and technologically advanced to simulate students' curiosity, and the flipped classroom experience satisfies this demand.

In the flipped classroom model, students watch lectures via video clips at home and complete homework-like assignments in class. The teacher becomes a mentor for the student, and deadlines are much more lax. Students have the opportunity to learn effective time management and either accelerate or decelerate based upon the challenge the material offers.

The flipped classroom effectively gives the student control over his or her learning while gaining the skills necessary to tackle the demands of college courses. While it's difficult to adjust to originally, it decreases student stress because of the ease of remediation, rewatching lessons, and fixing any mistakes.

Although the flipped classroom requires some adjustment, it motivates students by enabling them to pace themselves, spread work out without feeling overwhelmed, and ask questions without feeling embarrassed.

As our methods of communication change, the platforms we



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use to learn should shift as well. The way we learn has changed along with the types of media we use in school. With constant access to up-to-date information, the flipped classroom transforms the entire school experience to cater to the needs of its students.

In labs and homes alike, animal cruelty must end

by lena kennedy

As an animal lover, mistreatment of animals just crushes my heart. Confining an animal into a small space or cage, beating it to perform properly, stealing it from its natural habitat and neglecting it are some of the many cruel things humans do to animals, sometimes on a daily basis.

That's why it's important to have a club like Students Against Animal Cruelty, to keep discussing this inhumane problem. We have got to stop obsessively worrying about ourselves and think of the things we are hurting, animals included.

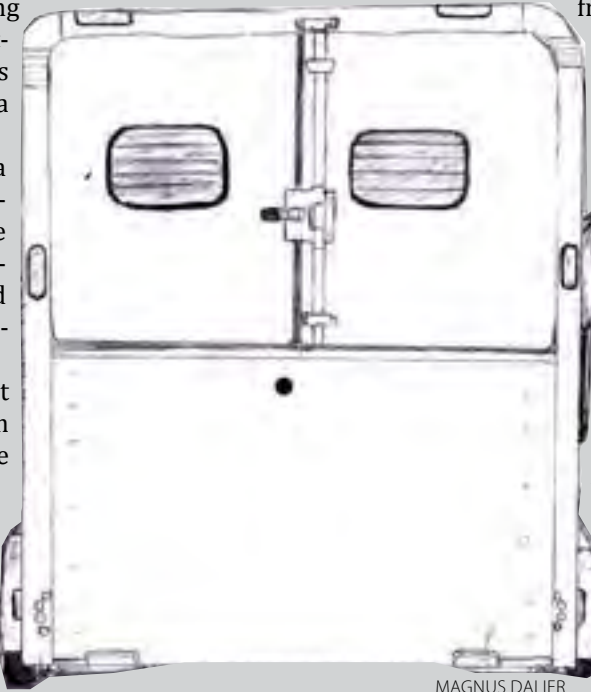
In Zambia, villagers would beat and starve their dogs to make them more aggressive so they would provide better security.

Another form of beating and starving in disguise is animal testing. In the end, it is brutal and unnecessary. Ninety-two percent of drugs that have passed animal tests don't work on or are dangerous to humans,

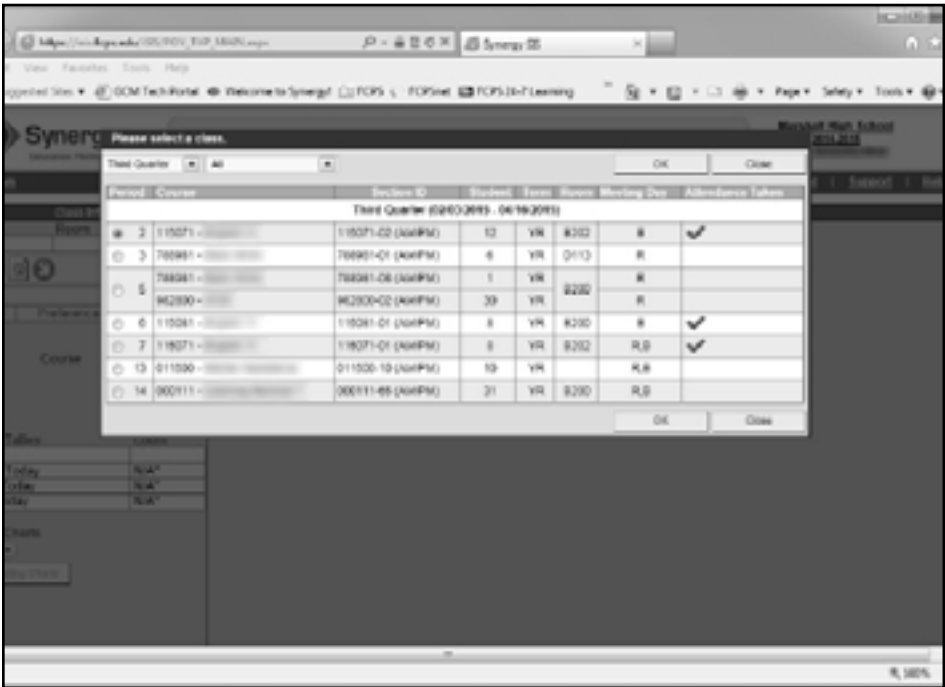
according to a fact list by the Vivisection Information Network. There is no point in burning, poisoning or crippling animals for drugs that won't even work on humans. And just one pesticide could use up to 12,000 animals, some of which are exempted from the Animal Welfare Act according to a fact list by Do Something.

I started riding horses when I was nine and now I can't imagine not going to the barn almost every day. The horse I ride, Thelma, was rescued from the slaughterhouse. She has since competed up to training level in eventing, can jump up to four feet and performs advanced movements in dressage. If she had ended up at the slaughterhouse she would have died in transit or been beaten unconscious, according to an article about horse slaughter by the Humane Society.

Animals have minds like us and hearts like us, and can feel pain just like us. Treat them how you would like to be treated.



MAGNUS DALIER



SIS, or Student Informational System, allows teachers and eventually parents to regularly monitor and check up on students' grades, attendance, and schedules.

System update to provide constant parental access to student grades

by **claire heiden**

A system that enables parents to constantly track their students' grades in a live, up-to-the-minute snapshot seems like a nightmarish feature of a future society.

However, starting in the 2015-2016 school year, Marshall parents will have access to such a feature.

Fairfax County Public Schools is in the process of implementing new software that allows every student and parent to view an active version of each teacher's gradebook, attendance, calendar, teacher notes and emergency care information.

The initiative is a technological step forward for Fairfax County.

Led by W.T. Woodson High School, Marshall is among seven Fairfax County High Schools yet to introduce the complete version.

The program, called the Student Informational System or SIS, is currently being used at Marshall to keep attendance. It went live last month. The entirety of SIS, including the live gradebook, will be released in September.

Roxanne Kaylor, the school's technology specialist, said that "the result of the SIS is transparency for students and parents."

Currently, Marshall's grading system is composed of three things: a calendar where teachers can plot assignments, a spreadsheet that calculates grades and automatically weighs depending on the course and a program that tracks attendance.

However, in classes that rely upon benchmark criteria or implement a grading curve, these grades will not be completely accurate, leaving interims and quarter grades as the most accurate representation of students' progress in the course.

Sophomore Jake Hargrove believes that the system will compound the high pressure already on students.

"It's probably just going to make kids more stressed out about constantly having better grades," Hargrove said.

However, Kaylor contends that the new program is merely an extension of what already exists.

"It's a good thing that's coming. It's going to be really nice for everyone involved," Kaylor said.

While the new system may seem terrifying, it's important for parents and students to remember that it's merely a snapshot of progress, and SIS intends only to assist students in obtaining the best grade and remaining on top of their work.

DeLong's eight-year sea voyage anchors public school experience

by **patrick mccabe**

When sophomore Katie DeLong discusses the eight years she spent living with her family on their 43-foot sailing vessel the *Alouette*, she speaks of elements of timelessness and freedom that are hard to imagine in the context of our demanding and rigorous school-dominated lives.

Living free on the open seas

From 2005 to 2013, DeLong sailed throughout North and South America and the Caribbean, through the Panama Canal, and on to Tonga, New Zealand, Hawaii, and many other locations along the way, doing whatever she and her family pleased.

As DeLong put it, "We moved when we wanted to, dictated only by the weather."

While living on the boat, DeLong was home-schooled, yet the education that she received during those eight years went far beyond what she learned through formal curricula.

"I learned to sail through experience, and as I grew older I would take on longer watches," DeLong said. "Responsibility was very important in our family; you were trusted to keep everyone safe when you were given the helm."

The learning DeLong received at sea was paralleled by what she learned while at port.

"We would begin to understand the

places that we stayed in for longer, making friends and exploring. We hiked whenever and wherever we could, with or without a path," DeLong said.

DeLong can still recall her experiences on the memorable journey; she shared the story of a clear night on the Caribbean that was perfect for sailing. DeLong and her family watched dolphins hunting a school of fish while making "torpedo-like streaks of phosphorescence in the water."

Returning to port

The eight-year voyage might have ended, but the experiences have left a lasting impact on DeLong, who acknowledges that even now it's still a culture shock to be in a high school with 2000 other kids every day.

"I feel much more aware of my surroundings and of my own knowledge. I'm also much more comfortable working, whether with my hands or on a mental problem, than I am socializing," DeLong said. "I feel confident in myself to do whatever I need to do."

When asked what she would tell someone who would prefer not to travel, DeLong said that "while I understand that traveling isn't for everyone, the experiences change how you view even the slightest things. You meet so many people, [and] hear so many stories, that it affects your outlook on everything."



Sophomore Katie DeLong has had more international experience than the typical high schooler as a result of a very atypical childhood. DeLong's eight years at sea have taught her invaluable life lessons. Though she had to share cramped living spaces with her family, which could sometimes stir up a stormy atmosphere, DeLong values the freedom a life at sea provided her.

KRISTEN ZICcarelli/RANK & FILE

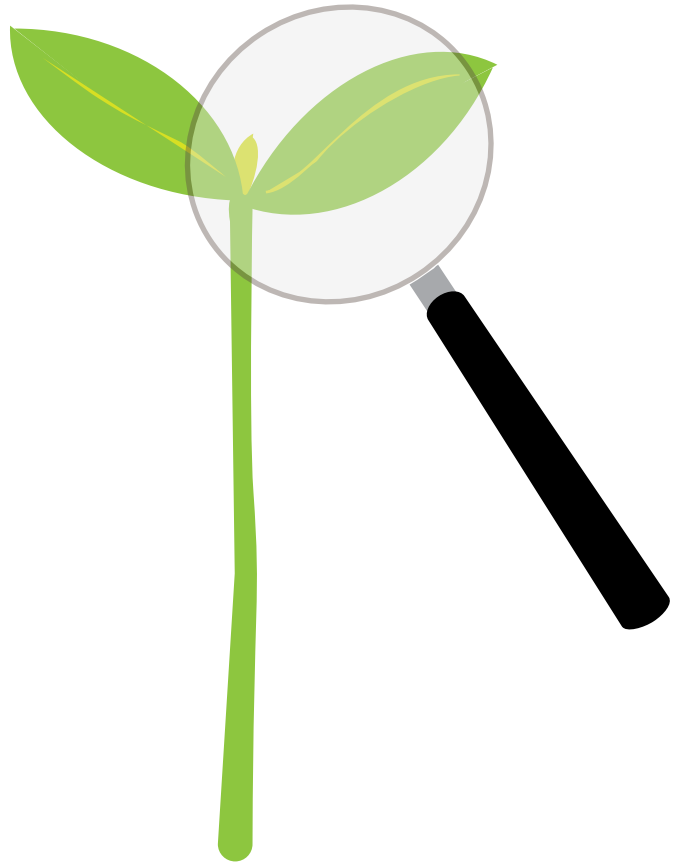


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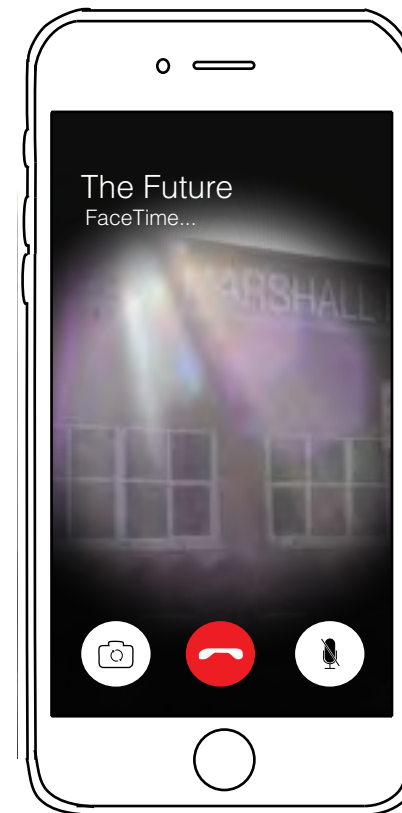




Prediction: GMOs will have the potential to improve nutrition for the malnourished

GMOs, whatever their potential, have hit a major obstacle since the CIA's 2000 report: the highly polarized debate over biotechnology and the role it should play in feeding the growing population. Additionally, despite GMO success stories in increasing crop yield such as India Rice 8, GMOs designed to improve nutritional value, from beta-carotene-producing "golden rice" to nuts designed to eliminate allergens, largely have yet to be introduced into the market.

Verdict: Not quite right



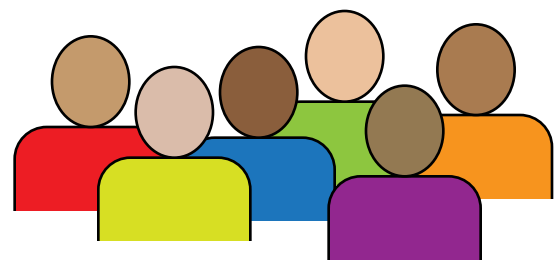
Prediction: People will make video calls

Back to the Future Part II was spot-on in this prediction. The advent of Skype, FaceTime and similar services has made video calls commonplace, even for your technology-averse grandmother in Florida. The movie showed people's personal information rolling on the screen as they spoke; in the real 2015, those facts tend instead to be on social media. However, the portrayal of video calls was still oddly accurate.

Verdict: Correct

Prediction: Food production will be adequate to feed the world, but malnourishment will persist

According to the World Food Programme, we do, in fact, produce enough food to feed everyone. But a combination of socio-geopolitical factors and poor infrastructure in developing countries leaves almost one billion people suffering from malnourishment globally, confirming the CIA's prediction in 2000. Far more people suffer from micronutrient deficiency, meaning they consume enough food to live but don't get adequate nutrition from it.



Prediction: Global population will hit 7.2 billion

In fact, according to the Global Population clock, the population is currently 7.29 billion people. Fueled mostly by growth in developing countries, the global population is startlingly close to the CIA's prediction.

Verdict: Correct

2015 then & now

Of all the quirks and oddities that make us enduringly, undeniably human, perhaps the most idiosyncratic is our irresistible urge to speculate on our own futures. Consider, after all, the sheer amount of time we spend thinking about, preparing for and counting on our own ideas of where we could be tomorrow, next week, next year.

This month, we at the *Rank & File* are thinking about all of these predictions. Should they serve as a guide for our actions and goals? Are

they simply oddities, products of their time and place? Most importantly (and shortsightedly), were they correct?

Around this page you'll find all kinds of predictions for 2015: the flippant, the optimistic, and even a handful made by the dead-serious CIA in its 2000 Global Trends report. From the sadly correct to the laughably wrong, all of these predictions form a picture of our world: our hopes, losses and boldest thoughts, nothing more or less than the human condition.

Prediction: Fashion will make a huge leap forward

Perhaps *Back to the Future Part II*'s most startling vision for fashion was the two-tie look it pioneered (and ended, as the idea never really caught on). In fact, fashion today is more retrospective than futuristic, a mod-podge of various decades' best-of lists.

Verdict: Incorrect



Prediction: We'll have hoverboards

A company called Hendo is working on a prototype hoverboard with professional skateboarder Tony Hawk. However, such a board (once envisioned by *Back to the Future Part II*) seems far from hitting the market and likely to experience significant drag due to friction. Plus, a recent hoverboard hoax on Kickstarter may have left the market a little shaken.

Verdict: Incorrect

Prediction: Cultural and sociopolitical alienation will foster ethnic and ideological extremism

Unfortunately, this CIA prediction has been prescient: al-Qaeda remains a pervasive presence in the Middle East, joined by its former splinter group, the Islamic State, in Iraq and Syria. Boko Haram continues its campaign of violence in Nigeria, and only a few weeks ago gunmen killed 12 staff members of France's satirical magazine *Charlie Hebdo* in retaliation for its irreverent cartoons of the prophet Muhammad. Meanwhile, Greece's Syriza party, while not violent, is certainly politically extreme, threatening to withdraw from the EU over austerity disagreements with its primarily German creditors.

Verdict: Correct

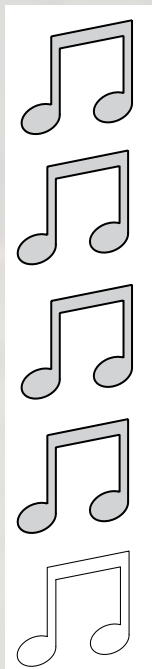
Review: Fall Out Boy grows up

American Beauty

American Psycho

by ethan zack

Megahit band Fall Out Boy's newly released album *American Beauty/American Psycho* (AB/AP) has arguably become their most divisive album yet. Released Jan. 20, the album has sparked a polarizing debate: while many people praise the changes in the band's tone, others accuse them of selling out and losing their originality.



AB/AP also pays tribute to the past by sampling classic songs on several of their new tracks. Elements from songs such as "Tom's Diner" by Suzanne Vega, "Too Fast For Love" by Mötley Crüe, and even *The Munsters'* TV theme song can be found on the tracks "Centuries," "American Beauty/American Psycho" and "Uma Thurman," respectively.

There is no denying that AB/AP is something of a departure for the band. What both supporters and detractors must accept is that style does not decide whether the album is worth listening to or not. The question is not whether it remains true to the band's roots, but whether the music itself is worth listening to.

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The answer to that question is that it most certainly is. Fall Out Boy may have traded out their traditional guitar riffs for a more modern pop-rock approach, but it works. By embracing modern themes and realities, Fall Out Boy manages to remain relevant. The songs are catchy and retain the lyrical creativity the band is known for.

All that being said, AB/AP is still far from a perfect album. The album lacks a consistent overall tone, choosing to explore various different styles. While the different concepts are interesting to listen to, they make the album feel a little disjointed.

Another issue was the nature of the album's release itself. Over half of the eleven songs found on the album were released prior to the album as singles. When the full album released, many felt that it was very short, largely because the number of new songs released at that time had been drastically decreased, further disjointing the album.

Overall, AB/AP may not be Fall Out Boy's greatest album, but judging it on its own merits proves its status as a well-made, high-quality album. This writer, at least, looks forward to the continued presence of Fall Out Boy in the music industry for years to come.

American Horror Story's latest season

can't quite meet fans' high expectations

by emma patterson

After a few months of teases and a huge buildup of fan anticipation, the first episode of *Freak Show* finally premiered Oct. 8 on FX, the season ending Jan 21.

It's clever that the new season of *American Horror Story* is named *Freak Show*, because this whole show is... well, a freak show. This show is not recommended for the squeamish or the faint of heart, but is well-suited for avid horror movie watchers (hence the word "horror" in its name).

American Horror Story has an unorthodox setup: each season tells a new story with different characters, yet it keeps many of the same actors and actresses through the series. The show makes an unusual sacrifice of plot development for more variety in its seasons. One season generally is not enough to make substantial development in a story's plot, although the writers did particularly well with *Murder House* and *Asylum*, the two seasons with the best reviews.

As someone whose favorite season of *AHS* was *Asylum*, I was very excited to see Sarah Paulson and Jessica Lange's new characters, and sad to find out that *Freak Show* will be Lange's last season with *American Horror Story*. Her new role of Elsa Mars, owner of a run-down carnival and freak house in Florida, certainly gave her a large spotlight for a last role.

While watching, I find that even though *American Horror Story* is a very gory and macabre series, it isn't exactly scary. Since it has an uncountable number of gruesome deaths, *AHS* attracts the type of viewer who knows to expect a murder or kidnapping at least once every 10 minutes. All that death can get repetitive and predictable very quickly.

Overall, I was a little disappointed with *Freak Show*; it's not as good as I was hoping. *Freak Show* focuses more on the shock value of murder than logic or the strength of the plot. This season was particularly disorganized, with the focus mainly on the minor characters, who often have the most meaningful lines of the show and, at



FXNETWORKS.COM. REPRODUCED UNDER FAIR-USE

American Horror Story: Freak Show premiered Oct. 8. While chock-full of gruesome deaths and gore, the season lacked a strong plot and well-developed main characters.

times, greatly outperform the more famous faces of the show. For this season, the story kept suddenly focusing on and immediately dropping new characters, creating unnecessary additions to the narrative and an overloaded feeling to the story.



PBS.ORG/REPRODUCED UNDER FAIR-USE

After wife Sybil (Jessica Brown Findlay)'s death in season three, Tom Branson (Allen Leech) is left to raise his daughter alone on *Downton Abbey*. The show is a visual treat but lacks depth.

Downton Abbey occupies middle ground

by isabelle ouyang

After its riveting premiere and dramatic (if awkwardly placed) plot twists in seasons three and four, Masterpiece's production of *Downton Abbey* is finally meeting middle ground.

Season five starts five years after the war. The Grantham family continues its struggle to maintain the estate while adjusting to the new social climate. Faced with the decreasing value of nobility, patriarch Robert Grantham (Hugh Bonneville) becomes increasingly terrified of losing the estate and his marriage.

This season mostly revolves around resolving plot conflicts from previous seasons: Isobel Crawley (Penelope Wilton) is entangled in a love triangle as she recovers from her son Matthew (Dan Stevens)'s death, while the Dowager Countess (Maggie Smith) reveals a past that parallels her granddaughter's romantic escapades. Under the estate, Anna (Joanne Froggatt) and

Bates (Brendan Coyle) rekindle their relationship as the police investigate the mysterious death of Anna's rapist. Daisy (Sophie McShera) seeks more than a provincial life as a kitchen maid.

Mary just barely escapes her depression after Matthew's death, only to find herself falling back into the flighty and impulsive habits of her youth. Meanwhile, Branson meets a similar mind; schoolteacher Sarah Bunting (Daisy Lewis) clashes with the Crawleys and reminds Branson of his more radical past.

As always, Masterpiece's production is spectacular. Each season manages to show the fast-changing culture of the 20s. The subtle changes in costume, particularly of the younger female characters, showcase their newly empowered lifestyles.

For a show that takes so much care in historical accuracy, the plot is lackluster in comparison. The show attempts to defy social conventions and bring up heavy topics, but its strong point is purely aesthetic.



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Dive takes backseat to swim in points, limits impact on overall team results

by anna thillairajah

It's called the swim AND dive team. But what you may not know is that diving is only worth the points of one event, compared to the 11 swimming events that generate points.

With many close results in the meets, the team has relied on the extra points from diving to put them on top.

"They really count on us to sweep; that's really the only thing we can do [get first, second, and third]," senior diver Will French said.

However, according to French and junior diver Bryce Shelton, the points don't make enough difference.

"It contributes some points, but I don't think it

contributes enough to help us make a great impact," Shelton said.

Divers like senior Mary Hagopian want their hard work to be acknowledged. "I think it should count for more than it does, because I think there's a lot more that we do than swim," Hagopian said.

Despite wanting more recognition for their work, French says he would miss the communal aspect of the team if swimmers and divers were to compete separately. While French's main event is diving, he also competes in swimming events.

"It would kind of take away from the fact that it's one big team and you have to cheer on your teammates," French said.

Senior Emily Reinhart practices her form with the guiding hand of dive coach Jennifer Perantoni after one of her 11 dives at the conference championships at Wakefield Aquatic Center on Feb. 29. Reinhart, as well as senior Morgan Stahl, senior Mary Hagopian, junior Macy Blakeley and freshman Grace Cusack, will be moving on to the regional competition. Junior Bryce Shelton placed first in the conference, sophomore Gregory Duncan placed second and senior William French placed fourth to qualify for regional competition on the boys side. Shelton, Duncan and French have also pre-qualified for state competition by scoring enough points in competition.



ANNA THILLAIRAJAH/RANK&FILE

conference update

Whether they've already competed or they're preparing for the coming weeks, the Statesmen are the ones to watch in conference competition, bringing home individual and team wins, setting records and hoping for even more.

swim & dive: boys 2nd; girls 3rd
dive champion: Bryce Shelton
100-yard fly champion: Neal McElhattan
100-yard free champion: Alex Epp
boys 200-yard medley relay school record
girls 400-yard freestyle relay school record

track & field: (Note: competition continues tonight at T.J. Middle School.)
high jump champion: Jack Geisler
girls 4x800-meter relay champions school record meet record

gymnastics: team champions
all-around champion: Morgan Stahl
(see page 14 for details)

upcoming competitions
boys basketball: round one 2/17
girls basketball: round one 2/16
wrestling: tournament 2/7

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- Marshall High Senior



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Sophomore Paul Plawin, sophomore Elijah Weske and freshman Ryan Robinson defend the Fairfax High School team during their Jan. 16 away game, which ended in a 58–36 victory for the Statesmen.

Boys basketball changes for the better

by kristen ziccarelli

The success of the junior varsity boys basketball team is dependent on their strong effort and positive attitude, rewarding them with their 6–2 record.

Head coach and counselor Josh Peters is confident in the team’s new defensive strategies. Four of their victories are from their most recent games.

“Over the past week plus, we’ve hit a new level of our execution on defense and it’s taken us up a notch,” Peters said.

The boys recently broke Langley High School’s winning streak with their new defense tactics.

“I’ve coached 50-something games here,” Peters said. “That’s got to be one of the top probably two or three defensive performances I’ve seen in terms of points allowed.”

The team, mostly sophomores, provides suggestions to improve their performance in games.

“We told Coach about our own ideas, such as putting in direct defense,” sophomore and boys JV basketball player Justin Lee said.

Peters appreciates the constructive criticism from the team, praising the boys for knowing and expressing their strengths and weaknesses.

“I love it because they are taking ownership,” Peters said. “This is their team. This is their season.”

Emphasis on effort and skill improvement, not just winning, is another reason for their team’s success. The primary goal of a JV team, according to Peters,, is to prepare the players for a spot on varsity.

“We don’t preach wins and losses,” Peters said. “It’s all about just improving as basketball players, finding our potential and doing everything we can to realize that potential.”

For Peters, observing each player reach his best is “fun to see.”

The audience, according to Plawin, also enjoys observing the team’s potential as they cheer for the success of their school.

“Most remarkable is the sophomore student section,” sophomore Paul Plawin said. “Even Coach said they’ve never seen the J.V. crowd so spirited and hyped.”

Peters noted the abundance of pride within the sophomore class.

“We’ve had some really good crowds,” Peters said, adding that last year, the freshmen class was one of the loudest he has seen during the Homecoming Pep Rally. “For a lot of our games there has been a lot of really good support.”

Deja vu: gymnastics takes a second victory

Gymnastics brought home another **conference championship**, defending their title on familiar turf. Amid this team success, individuals also excelled. Senior Morgan Stahl placed **first** on **beam, floor, vault** and **all-around**. Sophomore Kiran Sullivan placed **third all-around** and freshman Grace Cusack placed **eighth** on **floor**.



ANNA THILLAIRAJAH/RANK&FILE

Top: Freshman Megumi Matsuda-Rivero executes her beam routine as fellow teammate and senior Nadia Hawa looks on.

Bottom: After completing her floor routine at the championship, sophomore Alessandra Iannetti high-fives gymnastics head coach Charlotte Perpall.

Teachers work on multiple fronts

by patrick mccabe

The lives of the dozens of coaches who run the school’s 42 sports teams are filled with planning practices, scouting opponents and preparing for games. And if the demands of coaching were not enough, for those who double as teachers there are always their day jobs to keep them on their feet.

While the dynamics of the classroom might differ from those of a fast-paced game, the two are still intertwined, as boys varsity basketball head coach, history and anthropology teacher Dan Hale explains.

“I approach it both ways,” Hale said. “I approach coaching as a teacher and in a lot of ways I approach teaching as a coach, you know, trying to inspire”

Girls freshman basketball assistant coach and English teacher Lindsey Hardenberg also sees a strong connection

between coaching and teaching.

“Being able to do something successful in the classroom directly relates to teaching someone a concept on the basketball court,” Hardenberg said. “And I think the cool thing about coaching is that the players in some ways have more voice.”

Head coach of the varsity football team and WAT teacher George Masten also believes that many of the lessons a coach teaches can apply in the classroom as well.

“Teaching those kids to intrinsically motivate, to find something within themselves, to motivate themselves to achieve whatever it is—it’s the same thing on the field and in the classroom, so that’s something that’s very cohesive between the two worlds,” Masten said.

Coaches have also seen themselves grow and develop through their experiences of coaching and teaching.

“The older I’ve gotten the more I see winning is great, but it’s also about realizing the potential.”

Lindsey Hardenberg

English teacher



PATRICK MCCABE / RANK & FILE

Assistant Coach Lindsey Hardenbergh and freshman Audra Scheinman high-five as the girls freshman basketball team celebrates its win over Mount Vernon on Jan. 29.

“When I was younger, I was a lot more end result-oriented ... it was a lot more ‘let’s win,’” Hale said. “The older I’ve gotten the more I see winning is great, but it’s also about realizing the potential.”

Hardenberg has also seen a change in her own tone: teaching and coaching have taught her to “be less long-winded, it’s taught me to be sharper and more specific and just to get my coach voice out.”

For the many benefits that the coaches identified in their work, they also identified several challenges, and if there was one challenge that persisted with all the coaches, it was the time commitment.

“Just finding a happy medium and a balance between being able to say, ‘this time it’s football time, this time it’s school time and career, and this time is home time’ is the challenging part,” Masten said.

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