



FABIAN TUSCHER

#### Features:

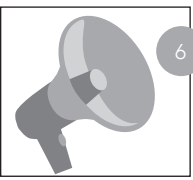
German exchange student Fabian Tuscher reflects on cultural differences.



JOHANN YOUNG/RANK&FILE

#### C-Spread:

Rank & File features the "unsung heroes" of the athletic department.



LAUREN ELIAS/RANK&FILE

#### Opinion:

Now that Trump is the president-elect, what can you do to have your voice heard?



CHLOE PIGNANO/RANK&FILE

#### Arts&Style:

Pokémon GO attempts to win back their declining fan-base with new updates.



JACKSON COERR/RANK&FILE

#### Sports:

Sports teams discuss the advantages of competing on home turf and playing with a crowd presence.

# rank&file

Wednesday, November 23, 2016  
Volume **54**, Issue **2**

George C. Marshall High School  
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Falls Church, VA 22043  
(703) 714-5511  
gcmnews.net

## Voters reject meals tax proposition

by **tenzin tsering**

While the rest of the country focused on the race for the presidency, Fairfax County voters quietly rejected a controversial proposition that would have generated about \$99m of new annual revenue for the FCPS system.

The meals tax proposition, which would have levied a four percent tax on certain prepared foods at restaurants and other businesses, was defeated 56 percent to 44 percent on the Nov. 8 ballot.

Sophomore Bryce Hase said he was happy the measure failed.

"I liked that [they] declined it because I thought that it would hurt businesses in the area," Hase said.

But junior Carolina McCabe

disagreed.

"It's disappointing students don't value what their teachers are doing for such a low salary," she said. "A small amount of money can make a big difference."

Proponents of the tax lauded it as a way to supplement the FCPS budget, which has suffered numerous shortfalls in the last few years.

Some teachers said the generated revenue could have made teacher wages more competitive with surrounding counties. Currently, FCPS teachers earn \$142,000 less than other nearby districts over a 30-year career, according to a recent compensation study conducted by Fairfax County.

English teacher Pierce Bello said he thinks the measure's failure will

perpetuate FCPS' budget woes.

"I feel like there's this opposition [between residents wanting] a great quality education and not being willing to pay for it," Bello said. "It makes it harder for teachers like me to live in the area and support [the community] where they work without taking extra measures."

But opponents of the meals tax warned it would add upon the current six percent sales tax, essentially creating a 10 percent tax on all prepared foods that would drive business away and jeopardize the prosperity of small, local eateries.

"With the meals tax it would be hard for [small businesses] to maintain their restaurants," sophomore Andrew Song said.

## news**briefs**

### Unexpected voter turnout prompts election results

An historic election took place on Nov. 8 when Donald Trump triumphed with a surprising presidential victory over Hillary Clinton, who, despite losing in the electoral college process, led the popular vote.

Clinton is the first candidate since the 2000 election to win the popular vote but lose the electoral vote.

Trump won historically Democratic states such as Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, Florida and Ohio.

Additionally, more Republican and rural voters showed up to the polls than predicted, leading to a misjudge of the electorate. According to The New York Times, 67 percent of white voters without a college degree made up the demographics for those who voted for Trump.

Over the next 100 days, Trump and Vice President Mike Pence will formulate a plan to address many controversial issues such as the deportation of illegal immigrants, selecting a replacement for Justice Antonin Scalia and fully repealing the Affordable Care Act with a Health Savings Account.

by *aqsa rashid*



GAGE SKIDMORE

Trump speaks at an event following his recent win of the presidency.

### Debate team grows; snags five wins at competition

The Debate team came home with a total of five wins from the Washington Area Catholic Forensics League debate competition at South Lakes High School on Saturday Nov. 12, with their largest turnout of competitors in the last three years.

"We've already had more students medaling in competitions and we have more people competing overall," history teacher and debate club sponsor Richard Resig said.

Since it was only the team's second competition this year, they view it as more of a learning opportunity than an actual event.

"For the other debaters this was more of a practice since it was their first debate," junior Teddy Daniels said. "So it was more to experience how a debate actually works and not just to win."

by *johann young*

## International Night celebrates diversity



MIA TOSER/RANK&FILE

Senior Archana Nakkara performs a classical Indian dance for eight minutes at International Night on Nov. 10. Nakkara wore a traditional Indian dress with assorted jewelry to display her cultural history. International Night showcased performances from various heritages, like Ethiopia and China. "A lot of times we don't really realize how much diversity there is at Marshall," senior Surya Mehta said.

**Inset:** Sophomore William Phan plays a song on the piano in his duet act with sophomore and trumpet player Ethan Nguyen.

by **mia toser**

International Night is the one evening of the year when people of all backgrounds come together to celebrate their culture's cuisines and traditions. The participants orchestrate performances in groups and individually with the intention of educating their peers about their heritage.

Volunteers distributed dishes inspired by locations around the globe, and the line stretched out the door for an hour to receive the food. Students, teachers and family members formed an assembly line along the tables to serve themselves dishes from each country, creating a diverse and tasteful meal.

The dinner received high praise from attendees, with one junior Shreeyas Satish Kumar describing the event as

"spectacular." Flute players performed a short concert to play throughout the dinner, in addition to recorded music in languages ranging from Russian to Spanish.

"The music really sets the mood," junior and Interfaith Club member Tarlan Torabi said.

After the meal everyone moved to the auditorium to watch the acts, which varied from bollywood dances to Chinese guzheng. Performers used these talents to share about certain countries and cultures that mean something to them.

"Marshall is so diverse and we have so many languages and cultures...amazing how it's one night that allows for that to be shown and represented," science teacher and organizer of International Night Marlen Penaloza said.



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IN ONE WEEK

# Makeup vs. no makeup *by gwyneth murphy and kate carniol*

## The rules

**Kate:** I am not allowed to wear makeup during the school day but I can put it back on at home or during cheer.

**Gwyneth:** I have to have makeup on during the school day and I have to apply it myself as part of the experiment.

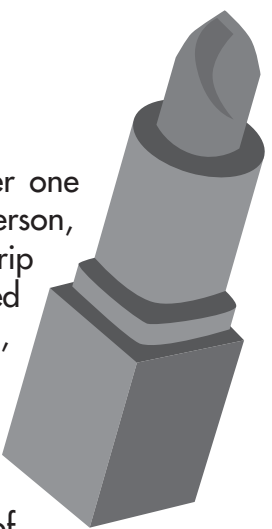
## The personal process

**K:** I dressed more casual to school because I wasn't wearing any makeup. I thought that if I wasn't putting any effort into my face I shouldn't put any effort into my outfits as well. After the first couple days of doing this, I decided to make the conscious decision to dress nicer to hopefully disguise that I wasn't wearing makeup. I was very self-conscious the entire week because I haven't ever gone to school without wearing any makeup, and I was worried people would comment about me looking tired or sick. But, I was really surprised to have nobody comment on my lack of makeup. I was definitely expecting some reaction to my natural face.

**G:** Waking up almost an hour earlier than what I usually do was a tough adjustment, but I feel like wearing makeup forced me to put in more effort toward my clothes, my hair and my sleep cycle, which is a good habit to get into. The best part of the experiment is that I actually learned a new and valuable skill, and I was more awake by the time I got to school. I learned there are different brushes for different steps, blending is important and eyelash curlers don't hurt despite the fact they look like robot claws. To be honest, the worst part was that a lot of times memorizing all of the steps and objects felt like I was studying for a science test instead of putting on makeup for the school day.

## The materials

To obtain the materials necessary to transfer one person's make up process to the other person, we went shopping. It began with a big trip to Target to get supplies, where we picked up foundation, lipstick, blenders, brushes, concealer, blush, contour, mascara, highlighter and an eyelash curler. The total cost was fairly cheap, which is unusual for makeup. We went through the process step by step to practice the full face routine one of us would be doing all week and the other one would be giving up to ensure that the process would be an exact mirror for both of us.



## The conclusion

**K:** It was nice being able to pretty much wake up, change and go during the experiment. I was able to excuse my late nights by telling myself that I could sleep in later because I didn't have to spend any time on my makeup. Looking into the future, I'll consider going some days without makeup if I'm in a rush to get to school. I learned that my physical appearance doesn't make a difference in the sense that people didn't treat me differently or dismiss me because I wasn't as "put together" as I thought I had to be.

**G:** I had a great time feeling fancier during the school week. It gave me something to look forward to when I had exams or a ton of homework. I also received good reactions from a lot of people that said I looked "glowy," which I learned is a good thing. Moving forward, I am definitely more inclined to spend time on my appearances to start my day off positively. This experiment taught me to ignore the stigma surrounding makeup and just do whatever feels right day by day.

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## Tuscher moves from Germany

*by janan iranbomy*

Junior and German exchange student Fabian Tuscher came to America this year to improve his English skills and get insight into a new social and academic culture.

Tuscher said he quickly learned the norms of the unfamiliar country, which he considered as generally more lenient.

"After a week, I realized that no one raises their hand to talk," Tuscher said. "You don't have to raise your hand, just shout out the answer."

Tuscher also noted the cultural differences that consist of stricter policies, such as the dress code.

"[In Germany], you could technically walk in wearing whatever and no one would care unless you are entirely naked," Tuscher said.

As an exchange student, he also

noticed an overwhelming sense of nationalism from American students.

"What bothers me the most is that mostly the first thing I get asked is 'how do you like the best country of the world?'" Tuscher said.

Tuscher believes that due to having social studies with a focus on the Americas, students can develop thinking that American culture is predominant.

"Here, you have social studies limited to US and that maybe results that many around the US because you are just studying your own history," Tuscher said.

Tuscher had the opportunity to play varsity football, an activity embedded in American culture, and found he spirit at his football games is an irreplaceable part of his American high school experience.

"It is such an American thing," Tuscher said. "Varsity football and Friday night spirit. You don't have that in Germany."

**\*interview conducted in German >>> see extended story online**



COURTESY OF FABIAN TUSCHER

Junior Fabian Tuscher poses in his uniform before the homecoming game on Oct. 21. "I was really excited to be there and to feel the spirit right before the biggest game of our season," Tuscher said.



# The unsung heroes

by ethan zack & johann young

*Rank & File showcases integral members of the sports department outside of the coaches and athletes*

## ● Sports managers operate behind scenes for each team



JOHANN YOUNG/RANK&FILE

“It’s a big time commitment. You have to be really committed to it. It depends on the sport, but at least for basketball, you really have to put effort into it.”

—Claire Wilson, senior

“They’re thankful that we do these things for them, because we do a lot. We wash their singlets, we wash their mats everyday, we fill their water bottles and we clean up their blood.”

—Valerie Villarreal, junior



JOHANN YOUNG/RANK&FILE

## Athletic trainers provide aid for injured athletes in need

For athletes, injuries are a common occurrence that they have to deal with each season and there are two people who help them the most when it comes to dealing with these issues. Athletic trainers Erickson Mathis and Kelsey Steele are the two primary athletic trainers that come to the aid of athletes in need of physical rehabilitation.

“We deal with rehabilitation for injuries or any other predicaments that the student athletes have,” Mathis said.

Both trainers attend every single home game for all teams for immediate attention just in case any emergencies occur or injuries happen to the players.

“Our job is to get the athletes back onto the court or fields for whatever sport they’re doing. That’s what they like to do so we’re there to help,” Steele said.

Their effort has been especially recognized by the athletes they have rehabilitated, with many players seeing their work as a positive source of moral support.

“This past year I’ve been working with them a lot because I broke my wrist,” senior Casey Lauer said. “They understand that sometimes you [have] got to play through some pain, but they let you know what’s too much.”



JOHANN YOUNG/RANK&FILE



ETHAN ZACK/RANK&FILE

## Assistant athletic director Williams manages logistics of department

With athletes very much focused on doing the best they can in their respective teams, their focus isn’t necessarily on the logistics of event coordination in the sports department. However, without individuals to structure and organize this piece of the department, not a single team would be able to function. One such bearer of this responsibility is assistant athletic director Cornell Williams.

“I’m here in support of students in their endeavours in sports and clubs and other activities, so whatever I can do to help their experience be as positive as possible in those endeavours is what I do,” Williams said.

Williams, along with director of student activities Joseph Swarm and administrative assistant of student activities Kathy Veoni, structures and organizes the technicalities required for the sports department to function. This includes managing financial portions of each sport, maintaining the field and organizing transportation to and from activities.

“We work as a team and without that, yes, it would put a lot of work into the coaches’ and club sponsors’ laps,” Williams said. “Basically, what we are here to do is just make sure that runs seamlessly so the coaches and sponsors can work on their sports and activities and not have to worry about the little things.”

The job also offers numerous positive opportunities for Williams himself to interact with the department.

“By far, my favorite thing is to go and just watch our athletes compete and go and visit all the club activities,” Williams said. “That’s why I got into it, because I like to see the peripheral of education happening.”

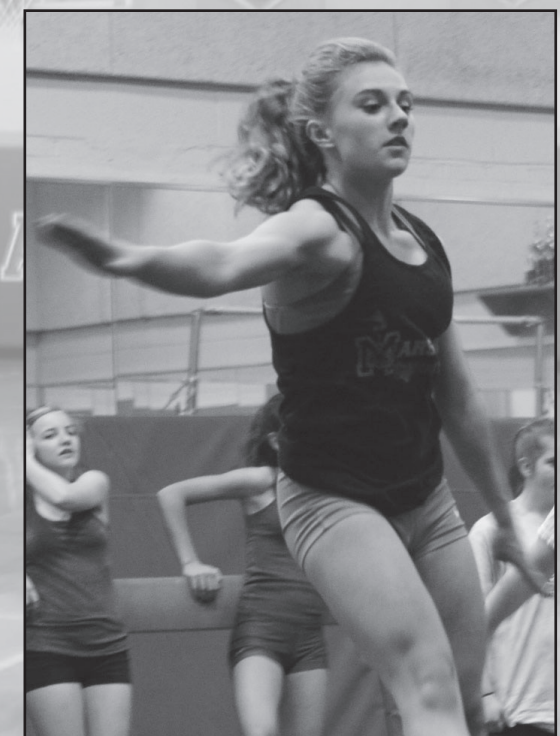
Williams believes that what he does has a beneficial impact on the athletes.

“Our greatest joy is to see the students here exceed in the classroom but also [in] things that they take on in their spare time,” Williams said.

## ● Athletes thank sports managers of their teams

“I appreciate them for their dedication to the team. They always come to each practice and their always at meets recording us.”

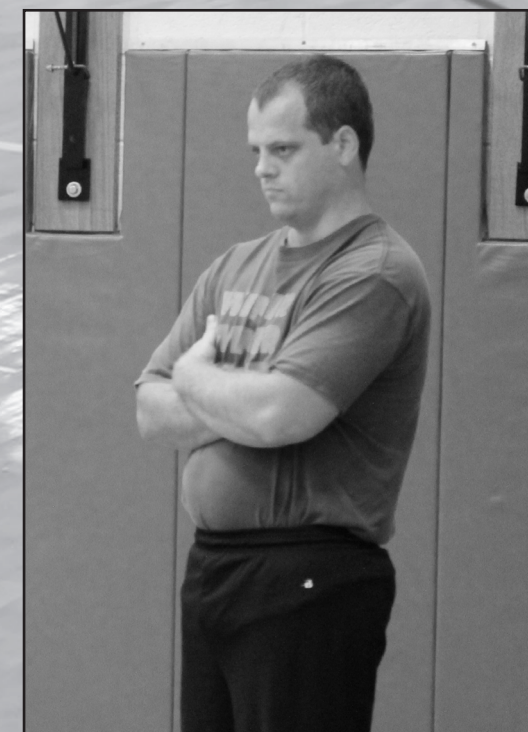
—Kiren Sullivan, senior



MIA TOSER/RANK&FILE

“They really help free [coaches] up, so we can focus on the coaching aspect instead of the administrative aspects. They benefit the athletes because it allows us to have more hands-on time.”

—Ross Naquin, history teacher and wrestling coach



ETHAN ZACK/RANK&FILE



# staff editorials

## Schools needlessly overuse paper products

Despite how much progress technology has made, we are still bound to using paper for assignments, homework and pretty much anything remotely academic. The World Institute reports that globally, more than 300 million tons of paper are consumed yearly, with Canada and the United States being the leading manufacturing countries.

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, printing and writing papers found in professional environments such as copier paper, computer printouts and notepads comprise the largest category of paper product manufacturing. The environmental impact of paper is significant for its changes in industry and behavior at both business and personal levels.

Modern technology presents items such as the printing press and the mechanised harvesting of wood, so disposable

paper has essentially become a cheap commodity. Consequently, deforestation is the biggest effect from the use of paper. A devastating 42 percent of all global wood harvest is used to make paper. In addition, paper pollution is an effect that is very evident all around us. According to David Wees of *The Reflective Educator*, the average school currently uses approximately 360,000 pieces of paper per school year. Though it may be assumed the best alternative to paper production should be simply using technology for all school work, it is not suitable to say so because not everyone would have equal access to such technology at all times.

There is still a long way to go before decreasing dependence on this product. Rather, it is fitting to say that more focus should be placed on ways to reduce the paper waste and pollution, such as recycling all paper used at school. In addition, those who have access

**Sheets of paper used in a typical school:**

**2,000** per day

**360,000** per year

**34 bil.** per year in all U.S. schools

SOURCE: WWW.DAVIDWEES.COM

to technology should be taking advantage of them to store files or notes. The way that one uses and disposes of paper products heavily influences amount of waste produced, but small efforts like recycling and reusing paper are a valuable contribution towards resolving the environmental problems of today.

## Political groups should remain vocal for future

America has a lot to purge from its system. Fear of difference, rejection of the establishment and hate and anger; the underestimated movement of the 2016 election came at an unfortunate time and cost for progressive legislation, but it was unavoidable. According to our nation's history, the anger of voters will continue to fester until released in a great upheaval of political change. This upheaval came in the form of Donald J. Trump.

Our government is at the brink of a fairly progressive shift in legislation with the work of the Obama Administration. Agree or disagree with those policies, the reality is much of what Obama passed in the last eight years is not where half of voting America sees the future.

But, Trump's big promises that carried his campaign to victory will still need to pass Congress and go from election talk to legislation. No president can realistically destroy and rebuild the entire work of an eight year administration in four years with legitimate policy and the support of all branches.

Speaking to Trump supporters, it's important to continue to be constructively critical of the government. Even if at this point it is your belief that this is the right direction for America, self check holds major importance as we continue with an inexperienced political figure. This is how we can maintain our democracy and keep our president in line, if all people watch carefully for misstep.

Speaking to Republicans who may have abstained

from voting, voted for another candidate: you have the biggest job of all. It is your duty now to unite your party and other parties to reach a compromise suitable for the majority and the minority.

To Clinton supporters or Democrats: don't be bitter, angry or resentful and further divide our already divided nation. But more importantly, don't give up, vote. We have seen great presidencies and we have seen poor ones, but it is this that makes our country strong.

Rally together until you see a government that is fair in your eyes, but do it peacefully.

Lastly, to women, the LGBTQ community, racial minorities, people with disabilities and anyone who feels underrepresented or fearful of what may happen to them or their family: stay strong. This election is merely continuation of a long fight regarding hate and discrimination against each other that started centuries before today and will likely go on for centuries after.

The U.S. is built on a foundation of sacrifice and courage strong enough to withhold anything threatens that, and it is our hope that every American will wake up tomorrow and every day after that with compassion. It is important to remember that we are not defined by the leader we select but rather what we do after that. So to everyone, we say be kind, respect others' opinions and vote.

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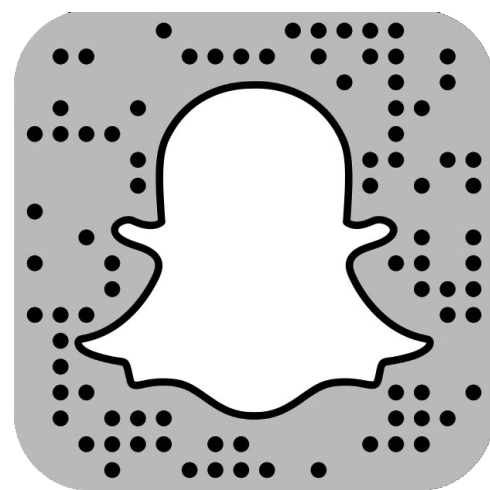
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# Arrival surprises audiences

by kate carniol

Arrival is a science fiction movie that was released on Nov. 11 and tracks the progress of linguist Louise Banks (Amy Adams) and her team as they decode and learn the language of aliens that land on Earth, called Heptapods. Banks and her team are forced to solve the mystery of their language fast before global war breaks out after China makes plans to use military force on the alien spaceships. However, as Banks starts to slowly understand the language, she realizes that it's up to her to save humanity and prevent a global war.

Overall, the movie definitely got me thinking about how I view time and the world. It sparked discussion amongst me and my friends and made me want to understand language better. I also really enjoyed the mystery to the movie. It took such a unique twist not shown in the trailers at all and kept me on my toes the entire time. When the movie ended, I wanted more. I wanted to learn about what happens next. I specifically enjoyed Louise's "flashbacks" and how they would appear randomly at

first, before becoming more frequent as she began to understand the alien language.

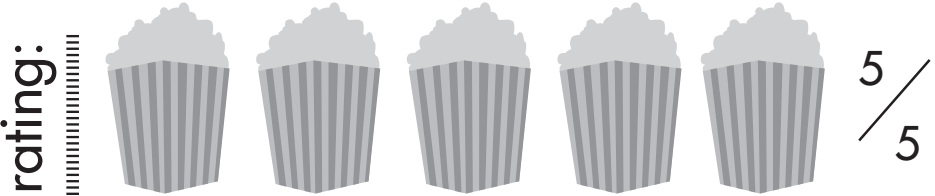
Throughout the movie both Amy Adams and Jeremy Renner give strong performances that enhanced my experience and got me involved with the plot. I felt the same fear and frustration as Banks as she attempts to break down the language in time. Renner had an incredible portrayal of theoretical physicist, Ian Donnelly and just like Adams made me get invested in his character. there portrais truly made me invested in the science behind uncovering a language due to this.

Though this may seem like I'm nitpicking, something I didn't like was the strong focus on Banks' heavy breathing whenever she entered the spaceship. I know that is a personal preference, but it was honestly annoying. There isn't much I can say against the film because it was so unique. It was an epic and intimate science fiction movie.

Through the movie I could barely see any flaws and the actors gave amazing performances. I would strongly recommend going out and watching this movie.



IMBD. REPRODUCED UNDER FAIR USE.  
Dr. Louise Banks (Amy Adams) suits up with protective gear and gets ready to communicate with the alien species featured in the movie.



## Pokémon GO usage by the numbers



45 million players in its peak on July 17th

\$600 million in pure profit since Oct 20



163,340 players on November 6 (release of version 1.15.0)

SOURCES: APP ANNIE, APPTOPIA

## Pokémon GO's quick rise and demise

by chloe pignano

Over the summer, Nintendo teamed up with software development company Niantic to produce Pokémon GO, an app that allows a user to capture fictional Pokémon in "real life" utilizing GPS and augmented reality. According to a study done by Bloomberg L.P, Pokémon GO lost 15 million players in the month of August, just one month after its initial release. Since then the game has been steadily losing players.

"One of the things with Pokémon is just interacting with other people. Battling, trading, and going out with friends just faded out, so I stopped playing" freshmen Barbara Hogendoorn said. "With no friends playing it, it got boring just by myself"

The decrease in players was caused by various issues such as bugs in the game and Niantic refusing to address many of the problems.

"There were so many crashes at the beginning, there were many days where you couldn't play. So many bugs just to be worked out" registrar Suzanna Pangilinan said. "It got boring after a while. It was just the same thing over and over and just having to deal with so many issues in the game."

To try and draw players back into the game, Niantic created Pokémon GO Plus, a Bluetooth enabled accessory that vibrates when an in-game event such as a Pokémon or a Pokéstop (a pitstop like area where players can get in game items) appears. Unfortunately,

these devices are very hard to get a hold of, most are sold out within 30 minutes of a store opening and they are sold online at very inflated prices.

Niantic is also trying to draw players back into the game by having timed events. For example, players received more in-game bonuses and ghost Pokémon were more common to catch during the week of Halloween. Recently, Niantic increased the amount of Pokémon appearing for a limited a time during the week of the 7th-11th.

"It sounds like right now [Niantic] is doing a whole lot of really cool fun stuff, but it seems like they kinda waited. I already took the app off my phone" Pangilinan said.

Although many people have stopped playing, not all players have been completely drawn away from the game.

"I play Pokémon GO as something to do when I am walking," senior David Ott said, "I don't really try to make an effort to play it [anymore]."

While stepping in the right direction by adding events, Niantic reversed its progress by adding a "speed cap", meaning that if a player is moving over 20 miles per hour no Pokémon would spawn and no items could be attainable from a Pokéstop. Essentially all playability from car or bus was taken away. By doing this, Niantic took away what gave many players their daily supplies of items for the day.

"It's just not as fun as other games that I can play

## Another app down: Vine bites the dust

by lauren elias

Vine's mobile app will be discontinued in the coming months, as announced on Oct. 27 via Vine's website.

"Vine is a place where you can express yourself in so many different ways and it's really sad that it's shutting down because it's a great, hilarious outlet for expression," junior Rachel Dickman said.

Before any changes are made to a user's content, they will be notified. Vine is also working on developing an export tool so that creators can download and save their Vines, captions and comments.

"I think [Vine shutting down] is sad because where are you going to find all the funny videos of kids falling and stuff," freshman Hala Baidas said. "I feel like [creators] will find another way to get their videos out there but it's still sad."

However, others view Vine's discontinuation favorably. This is the opinion that sophomore Isaac Feldman agrees with.

"I personally think that Vine shutting down is

a great thing because the short content on Vine is slowly killing long form content like TV shows and longer internet videos," Feldman said.

Some believe the shut down is due to a decrease in users. Last fall, 18 of Vine's most popular users met with Vine executives and demanded each of them receive \$1.2M and a few product changes in exchange for each of them producing three Vines a week. They believed that an increase in content would result in an increase in usership. If Vine declined, they would walk away from the app. Vine chose the latter.

Regardless, this shut down only entails users not being able to create new Vines through the service. Videos created prior to the shutdown will still be available to view on Vine's website, Twitter or anywhere else they have already been shared after the shutdown goes into effect.

"Vine has been a really good way for the entire community and society to become one and really interact," sophomore Cailey Dorman said. "I know a lot of my friends used it as a way to talk and be creative."



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# Crowd spirit heightens athletic potential



JACKSON COERR/RANK&FILE

Junior and varsity basketball player Ryan Robinson practices free throws during a Nov. 16 practice. Robinson has been a member of the varsity team since his sophomore year and believes the crowd’s energy leads to a better performance. “[The crowd] helps give you an adrenaline boost and that can help you play better,” Robinson said.

by jackson coerr

Sporting events are opportunities not only to display school spirit, but to boost the confidence of the teams. According to some athletes, a loud, enthusiastic crowd can play a large role in helping them perform better. The varsity football team’s games have long been the most popular games to attend, and there is almost always a larger crowd than any other sporting event.

“The crowd plays a big part in getting us hyped up for the game,” junior and varsity football player Brendan Dudding said. “When I break out for a long run, I like to hear the crowd.”

But as the season wears on, attendance tends to decline at games, leaving only die-hard fans behind. Players say that it is important to play hard regardless.

“We have to make sure that our sideline keeps up the tempo, because at the end, it’s our game [...] we still have to win the game for us,” Dudding said.

Winter sports such as basketball do not get nearly the same size crowd that football does due to spacing constraints. By the time the spring season arrives, crowd attendance at games is typically the most limited. Sports such as lacrosse,

soccer, and baseball suffer from low student body interest compared to both fall and winter sports. This affects the athletes during games, because they do not get the benefit of a larger crowd.

“You don’t feel as energetic,” junior and varsity basketball player Robinson said. “You don’t get the spark the crowd gives you.”

But an enthusiastic crowd can have a beneficial effect on the game regardless of size.

“When you’re playing, you can definitely notice the crowd,” Robinson said. “I feed off the energy the crowd gives us.”

Unlike the other athletes, the crowd tends not to be a major focus of junior and varsity lacrosse player Erik Sahlgren. In fact, it only becomes a factor for him when it is louder than normal.

“While I play, my mind is more focused on the game,” Sahlgren said. “I hear the coaches and the players, not a whole lot else. When the crowd breaches that, it’s motivational.”

The common theme throughout all three seasons is the power of crowd energy, and the positive effect it has on the players. A larger crowd equates to more spirit in support of the team, which in turn leads to greater enthusiasm and confidence within players.

## sports**briefs**

### McCormick leaves for maternity, Perpall to lead

History teacher and gymnastics coach Christie McCormick has recently taken maternity leave for her newborn. Her substitute is Charlotte Perpall, the gymnastics coach for several years before McCormick.

Assistant athletic director Cornell Williams confirmed Perpall’s return and assured that the athletics program is fully confident that the program won’t skip a beat.

“[Coach McCormick] has a substitute coach who is the former varsity coach, plus an assistant coach who will be there too,” Williams said.

Past gymnasts share the same confidence and are looking forward to their old coach take over for the time being.

“It should be a fun, successful and interesting season [because] Charlotte has coached us previously and knows how our team works,” junior and varsity gymnast Megumi Matsuda-Rivero said.

McCormick will still be making appearances throughout the season and is still the head coach, but her time-off is not expected to negatively affect the team.

“I have no doubt in my mind that she will be an amazing coach,” Matsuda-Rivero said.

by mia toser



MIA TOSER/RANK&FILE

Junior and varsity gymnast Megumi-Matsuda Rivero completes a “wolf half” during practice on Nov. 16.

### Transfer student bolsters boys basketball hopes

The varsity boys basketball team picked up a unique new player in the hopes to have one of their best seasons yet. Junior Ben Ayanian transferred from Flint Hill School to be a part of the program. The varsity head coach, Dan Hale, noticed Ayanian skills during tryouts.

“We test the players in a number of skills and Ben’s scores were very high,” Hale said. “He’s had a bit of an injury bug, but we hope he’ll be back at full speed as soon as he can.”

Ayanian took interest into the basketball program after moving schools. Returning players have welcomed Ayanian and made his transition onto the team smoother.

“Everyone is really nice and really accepting of me,” Ayanian said. “Coach Hale has done a great job helping me understand the play and concepts so I feel really comfortable with this team.”

Ayanian will be taking on the position of point guard, previously filled by 2016 graduate, Chase Barrand.

“I would be lying if I didn’t feel pressure to succeed in the program” Ayanian said “I realize a lot is expected from me this year. However, I love it, it’s exciting.”

Despite the harsh cuts that had to be made and losing eight seniors, Ayanian is expected to help fill an important role in the basketball program.

by anna zelenski

this week in

**varsity sports**

boys basketball  
**Saturday**  
at home

girls basketball  
**Saturday**  
at Flint Hill

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