

Applause

Volume 27, Number 7 School of the Arts, North Charleston, SC March 2026



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From the Editor

Dear Readers,

It's already time for the March *Applause* issue, our seventh of the school year.

February was a great month, and the highlight for me was definitely traveling with the rest of the Strings class to San Francisco to perform at the National Orchestra Festival! If you'd like to read more about that, check out page eight.

This issue showcases a lot of other exciting events from the past month, such as BSU's various Black History Month Celebration, the annual boys' volleyball game, theater's success at the recent S.C. Thespian's Conference, and so much more!

I also highly recommend checking out the feature on Freshman Cole Buero, who recently performed at a major rock music convention in Anaheim, California.

We also have some great interviews, for example our "Where Were They Then?" which goes into the past of Calculus teacher Ms. Whittemore, and the "Where Are They Now?" which catches up with 2024 SOA Band Alum Parker Weeks.

There are plenty of other great articles and photos throughout, so I hope you enjoy the March *Applause*!

Your Editor,
Luciano Cusatis




Gregory Krause

Applause

since 1999, the official student publication of
School of the Arts

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Dr. Shannon Cook, Principal

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Cover by Charlotte Whitley

SOA Calendar

by Trinity Collins

Tuesday, 3/10: Classical Piano Spring Concert, RMMT, 6-8 PM

Wednesday, 3/11: Classical Piano Spring Concert, RMMT, 6-8 PM

Thursday, 3/12: MS Orchestra Spring Strings, RMMT, 6-7 PM

Saturday, 3/14: Fashion Show,

Cafeteria, 5:30-8:30 PM

Wednesday, 3/18: 8th grade Theatre One-Act-Make 'em Laugh, BBT, 4-7:30 PM

Thursday, 3/19: 8th grade Theatre One-Act- Make 'em Laugh, BBT, 4-7:30 PM

Thursday, 3/19: Senior Jazz Piano Concert, RMMT, 6-7 PM

Saturday, 3/21: Prom!!, Segra Club at Riverdogs Stadium, 7-11 PM

Wednesday, 3/25: Dance 8th grade Solos- Art in Motion, RMMT, 6:30-8 PM

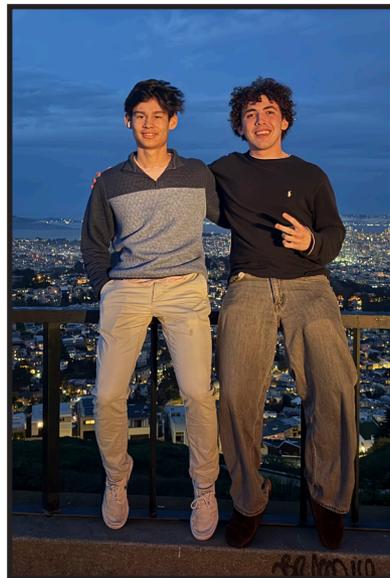
Thursday, 3/26: Dance Student Choreography Showcase, RMMT, 6-7 PM

Wednesday, 4/1: Spring Theatre Specialty Class Performance, RMMT, 4&6- 8 PM

Thursday, 4/2: Spring Theatre Specialty Class Performance, RMMT, 4&6- 8 PM



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**Freshman Cole Buero Takes
his Talents to Anaheim**

by Luciano Cusatis

Editorial: Celebrating the Lives of Cultural Heroes We Recently Lost

Already this year, the world has lost three cultural icons: Bob Weir, Robert Duvall, and Jesse Jackson. Each lived exemplary lives in very different fields, and left enduring legacies.

Bob Weir was a founding member of the Grateful Dead. Growing up in San Francisco, Weir struggled in school, but everything changed when he met Jerry Garcia, and formed the band in the late 1960s. Performing such classics as “Friend of the Devil,” “Ripple” and “Truckin’,” the Dead became a legendary touring band, uniting countless “Dead Heads” at their international concerts. After Garcia’s death in the mid nineties, Weir continued touring with various incarnations of the Dead and his own bands.

Robert Duvall built a career that spanned half a century. An Academy Award-winning actor, Duvall also directed and produced films, including *The Apostle*, a project he personally funded, breaking away from Hollywood norms, and paving the way for others to do the same. His first role was as the reticent Boo Radley in *To Kill a Mockingbird*. He also played Tom Hagen in *The Godfather*, and starred in such movies as *Lonesome Dove* and *The Great Santini*. He became renowned for researching his roles deeply, setting a standard of dedication that influenced generations of actors.

Jesse Jackson was a leading figure in the Civil Rights Movement, who marched with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr, and made two bids for the office of US president. He worked to improve the lives of African-Americans, the poor, and the LGBTQ+ community. In 1971 he started the PUSH Movement (People United to Save Humanity) and in 1984 he formed the Rainbow Coalition. Jackson was born in Greenville, SC, and never forgot his home state, often returning to support the many Historically Black Colleges and Universities here.

The lives of these three men, their dedication to different causes –artistic, social, and political– and the indelible legacy each has left, offers an inspiration for our young artists and activists at SOA.

Opinion: The Trump Administration is Ruining the Arts

by Lila Hayes

In early February, the Trump Administration announced the two-year closure of the Kennedy Center, a cultural institution in Washington, DC. This comes after the renaming of the center to the “Trump Kennedy Center,” adding Trump’s name to the center honoring John F. Kennedy.

Some predict difficulty reopening after such a long closure, even former president of the Kennedy Center Michael Kaiser, citing the loss of an audience that won’t “just sit at home waiting for those two years to pass.”

The center opened in 1971, and had its first Honors gala for artistic achievement in 1978. The 2025 Honorees were entirely handpicked by Donald Trump, catching even staff of the center off guard, and saying that he vetoed several selections that he deemed

to be too woke.

This is the type of partisan influence that is actively ruining the arts. Combined with his erasure and sanitizing of history, Donald Trump is destroying the arts as we know them.

In early February, the pride flag flying at Stonewall National Monument was taken down after an order given by Trump in a series of efforts to erase LGBTQ+ history. The LGBTQ+ community has long been a hearth for creativity and artistry, and the attempt to quietly remove the pride flag at a monumentally important site in history is a direct attack on that artistry.

Similar erasures of a truthful historical narrative have occurred regarding Black history, too. There are countless examples across public lands of the Trump administration attempting to rewrite or completely do away with crucial pieces of Black history. To name one, the order was given to remove panels at George Washington’s former home, which displayed an exhibit about the people enslaved there by the Washingtons. To attempt to erase Black history is also to attempt to erase Black culture, which has influenced every aspect of the arts, from music and fashion to dance and painting.

The attacks on minorities by the Trump administration are ceaseless, and in doing so they attack the arts. Diverse life experiences are what make art accessible for all to enjoy, but our current administration is threatening that diversity.



Lila Hayes

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Op-Ed: We Should be “Really Bothered” by Book Banning

by Ayla Hollar

One of my all time favorite books is *Speak* by Laurie Halse Anderson. It tells the story of a high school student named Melinda who begins to struggle with her mental health after being assaulted at a party, which leads to her deciding to stop speaking altogether. The raw struggle of the main character, the portrayal of teenage mental health and bullying, and the powerful ending have led to me reading this book a total of 24 times and recommending it to people constantly. So imagine my surprise when I found out that *Speak* has been challenged in several school districts across the country due to its portrayal of heavy topics such as depression, rape, self harm, and violence, which many community members believe is not suitable for a school setting. Some of these challenges have led to *Speak* and many other books being taken off the shelves of school libraries. In other words, these books have been banned.

PEN America defines a school book ban as “Actions taken against a book based on its content as a result of parent, community, administrative challenges, or in response to threatened action by governmental officials, that leads to a book being either completely removed from availability to students, or where access to a book is restricted.” As of 2025, over 22,800 books have been banned in United States public schools.

When a school or district wide book ban is implemented, it applies to all students between Kindergarten and 12th grade. The State of South Carolina has currently banned 22 books from all SC schools due to regulation 43-170. This regulation establishes a uniform procedure for all instructional materials with the goal of making sure that instructional material is appropriate as well as defining what is considered suitable for students. The information on this regulation is available on the state board of education’s website, but the terms are vaguely defined, leaving many unable to decipher the regulation’s exact terms.

At SOA, I co-run a club known as DAYLO (Diversity Awareness Youth Literacy Organization), a student-run activism club which was started at Beaufort High School and has since opened chapters all over South Carolina. We advocate against book bans, inform students on their right to read, and discuss the importance of the First Amendment and how restrictions on literature directly impact our freedom of speech. If you think that some books being taken out of the library is not a big deal or that it doesn’t affect you, you’re wrong. For some students, their access to books comes only from school and classroom libraries. While 22 books may not seem like a lot, that’s 22 books that students who cannot afford to buy books and have no access to a public library are unable to read. A noticeable pattern with book bans is that the targeted books are many times written by authors of color or members of the LGBTQ+ community, or contain material about these minorities.

Several novels appear on the American Library Association’s list of the most challenged books, including *Looking for Alaska* by John Green, *The Color Purple* by Alice Walker, and *The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison. Popular series such as *The Hunger Games*, *Harry Potter*, *Percy Jackson*, and *Captain Underpants*, have been frequently challenged for their



Ayla speaking alongside AMHS Daylo President Kate Selvitelli at ACLU’s panel for Banned Books Week

Provided

‘inappropriate’ material which includes the use of pagan gods, witchcraft, violence, offensive language, and the encouragement of violent behavior. Even picture books, meant for elementary age students have been banned; *And Tango Makes Three* by Justin Richardson and Peter Parel has been frequently challenged for its depiction of same sex parent penguins, and *Mother Goose Bruce* by Ryan T. Higgins was removed from a Tennessee school in 2023 due to its portrayal of non-traditional family roles as it centered on a male bear raising a brood of baby geese.

While South Carolina falls behind states such as Florida and Texas in how many books are banned in various districts, we are currently the leading state in the number of state mandated school book bans. Ellen Weaver, the SC state superintendent and creator of regulation 43-170 has openly opposed the efforts of students to fight against book bans. In October of 2025, a lawsuit was filed against Weaver by the ACLU on behalf of the South Carolina Association of School Librarians and three public school students who claimed Weaver was violating students’ individual rights. In a letter to the organization, Weaver said that the ACLU created a “hostile environment” using “politicized rhetoric” to oppose efforts to ban books. Personally, I don’t remember defending our right to read ever creating a “hostile environment.”

In his 1950 novel about book burning, *Fahrenheit 451*, Ray Bradbury wrote, “We need to be really bothered once in a while. How long is it since you were really bothered? About something important, about something real?” Bradbury’s words stood out to me while writing this editorial as frustration over censorship continues to rear its ugly head in my everyday life. How long has it been since you, the reader, were bothered by contemporary issues? At what point do we decide to step in? Is it after all traces of literature have been incinerated, leaving behind nothing but ash and the imprint of words long lost? Is it when the only books that fill the library are filled with black lines, meant to censor paragraphs about Evolution or Slavery? When will we, as teenagers, start to be taken seriously? Is it truly a crime for a student to read a book that discusses sexual assault or war? Are we really being harmed by the word gay in our books, or the fact that the struggles of addiction are written explicitly on the page? This so-called “inappropriate material” lays the foundation for our very education; without the ability to read, how will you understand your math homework, write essays for history, or read the lab instructions in your chemistry class?

Even if you consider reading to be a chore, I encourage you to envision a world without books. A world where novels are ripped from the hands of the next generation by leaders who claim to be keeping us safe while they allow dangerous weapons to exist without restrictions.

And the next time you pick up a book, I encourage you to consider a change of scenery while you read. A park, at the beach, or perhaps on a bench right across from the SC Statehouse in Columbia while your lawmakers decide what novels they want to ban next.



Where Were They Then? Ms. Whittemore

by Sage Stoner

Curious about her path to SOA, staff writer Sage Stoner interviewed Calculus teacher Ms. Shannon Whittemore for this month's edition of "Where Were They Then?"

Sage Stoner: Where were you born & raised?

Shannon Whittemore: I was born and raised just outside of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

SS: How did your childhood shape you into who you are today?

SW: Growing up close to Philly definitely left its mark on me. I'm not quite at the "Eagles fans throwing batteries at Santa" level, but I am fast-paced, passionate, and I'll admit I can have a little attitude if you find yourself on my bad side. I'm also the youngest of three. My brother and sister are very different people, and I grew up trying to be like both of them. I get my Type-A tendencies and love of organization from my sister, and any extroversion I have comes from my brother. Interestingly, all three of us ended up in education, which says a lot about how we were raised.

SS: When you graduated from high school, what did you do next?

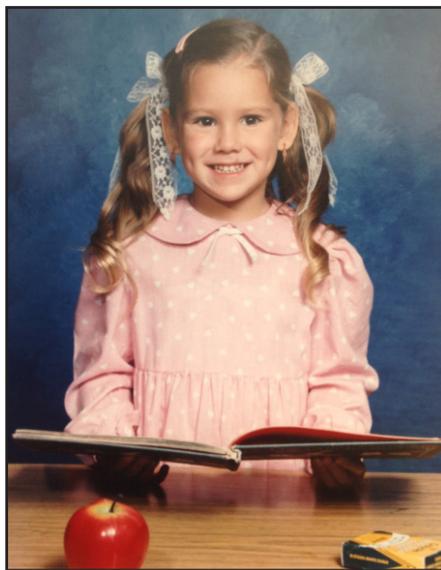
SW: After graduation, I headed to central Pennsylvania to attend Lock Haven University. A small school built on a very large hill, with an excellent math and secondary education program.

SS: What first sparked your interest in mathematics, and more specifically, Calculus?

SW: I've always gravitated toward math. I love systems, structure, and the idea that the rules you learn in elementary school still matter in high school and beyond. It's one of my favorite things that you can walk into my Calculus classroom and see complex notation and derivatives, but still hear us talking about ideas like slope, increasing functions, and minimums. What I enjoy most are problems with multiple paths to the same solution, like trig proofs in Pre-Calc, and how Calculus builds entire units from simple concepts students have known for years. Watching students realize that advanced math is just an extension of ideas they already understand is incredibly rewarding.

SS: What inspired you to begin teaching Math?

SW: Anyone who's taken my Pre-Calc class has probably heard this story by the time we reach the unit circle. Teaching was always a natural fit for me. I found myself mentoring or coaching in school, dance, and cheerleading growing up. But my Pre-Calc teacher truly shaped my path. She was knowledgeable, kind, and nearing retirement, and unfortunately, much of the instruction was copying notes and memorizing charts. When we reached the unit circle, we were told to simply memorize it.



Ms. Whittemore became interested in math at a young age

Provided

That didn't go well for me. I called my brother, talked through the trig concepts I already knew, and figured out how to build the unit circle instead of memorizing it. Then I taught it to my classmates. That was the moment I realized I didn't just love math, I loved helping people understand where math comes from. I wanted students to build concepts, not just memorize them.

SS: What were some of your previous experiences in your field before teaching at SOA?

SW: I completed my student teaching in both Pennsylvania and Ireland. Spending half a semester teaching in Ireland was an incredible experience. It exposed me to different cultures and curriculum structures and pushed me to grow independently as I prepared to graduate. After college, I moved to Charleston and joined CCSD. I taught at Burke High School for three years before moving to SOA in 2015.

SS: What brought you to SOA?

SW: I had an incredible mentor at Burke, Dr. Robert Perrineau. After two years, he joined the administrative team at SOA. When I felt ready for a change, I called him for advice, and he encouraged me to apply here. At the time, I knew very little about SOA, but he knew me well. He believed my teaching style, personality, and skill set would be a perfect fit. He was absolutely right. I'm forever grateful that he helped me find my home here.

SS: What are some bands, books, and movies that interest you?

SW: My music taste is all over the place. A shuffled playlist might jump from pop punk to Britney Spears to a Broadway soundtrack to a brand-new artist.

But one band I always return to is Mumford & Sons, and my favorite band to see live. I'm a big audiobook listener, and while I love trying new recommendations, my comfort re-listen is the *Harry Potter* series. If life feels stressful or nothing new is grabbing my attention, I'll start it

again. Currently on book 3 of the full cast version of the audio series. As for movies, I love a good nostalgic classic. Some favorites from growing up include *The Never Ending Story* and *The Labyrinth*.

SS: What are a few highlights of your teaching experience at SOA?

SW: There are so many. I'll never forget students running over to me at prom to say they actually do love trig proofs. The incredible performances and art shows I've attended over the years. And I'll always remember my classroom covered in red paint and glitter (back when we didn't have carpet) after Powder Puff or volleyball days. One of the most meaningful parts of SOA is that I've been able to share so many major life moments with this community. The impact my students have had on my life extends into my home. My son's room has a cherry π mobile hanging above his bed and sketches of our pets created by SOA grads that we say goodnight to as part of our bedtime routine.



Ms. Whittemore was SOA's Teacher of the Year in 2023

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Where Are They Now? Parker Weeks

by Dante Criscitiello

Parker Weeks graduated from SOA as a Band major in 2024, and now attends the University of South Carolina Honors College as a Civil Engineering major. He has also played guitar with many local bands over the years, and is currently a member of the group Cloud Hands.

Dante Criscitiello: As a civil engineering major at USC, what is your academic life like?

Parker Weeks: When I first came to USC, I was worried about what my work-life balance would look like, and now that I'm in my second year here, things are much better than I expected. I really like my major and environmental studies minor, and the friends I've made in engineering, as well as the extracurricular activities I'm involved in to make the hard academic work pay off every day.

DC: What do you like most about living in Columbia?

PW: While I (and many other people from around the country) would say that Columbia isn't the most awesome place ever, there are definitely some pros, especially for college students. It's super easy to find people with similar interests who are also going through college life, and the fact that the mountains and the beach are both two hours away is super nice.

DC: How has SOA prepared you for college?

PW: I didn't fully realize until I got to college that many of the skills I learned in high school band and symphony made college academic and social life a lot easier. Being creative makes you adaptable to changes and makes you stand out in the classroom, among your peers, or in anything else you get involved in.

DC: As a Deadhead, since Bob Weir has recently passed, how has that affected you?

PW: I was very sad when I found out, and it really made me think a lot about the impact the Grateful Dead has had on me throughout high school and especially college. There's nothing like meeting a fellow Deadhead and talking about your favorite shows and years, and I think Bobby's passing says a lot about not only the longevity of the band itself, but the impact they have had on



Parker Weeks played French Horn while at SOA



Parker performing with Cloud Hands at Awendaw Green on January 7th

so many people in the last 60 years.

DC: How has the Charleston Music scene helped you as a musician?

PW: It has definitely motivated me to practice guitar more. While a lot of the people I know in the music scene either major in music or do music through their school, I've had to dedicate a lot of time to learning on my own. This can be challenging, especially while balancing college life but gigging and seeing other musicians play is very motivating to keep it up.

DC: You are pursuing a civil engineering degree while also working on music; what are your aspirations for the future?

PW: I hope to pursue a career in environmental engineering. I want to be able to help companies build more sustainably and work with the environment rather than against it. One of the major benefits of a career in civil engineering is that you can generally predict your personal time, and like college, I want to continue dedicating a lot of that time to music. I hope to always have people around me who I can jam with, and even if gigging becomes less possible in the future, I plan to keep music a big part of my life.

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SOA Sinfonietta Performs at National Orchestra Festival in San Francisco

by Luciano Cusatis

In August, the Sinfonietta began rehearsing for their performance at the National Orchestra Festival in San Francisco, California. We knew going into it that it would be a stressful process, but even just before it was time to go on stage, there was a lot of uncertainty as to if we were truly ready. However, we ended up putting on a performance we were all very happy with, capping-off what had already been an amazing trip.

Though we arrived there exhausted from an early-morning cross-country flight, we were immediately rejuvenated by the beauty of the city, especially at our first stop, the Golden Gate Bridge. Strings director Dr. Selby, who is from San Francisco, told *Applause*, "I wanted to give the students a general intro to the city--Golden Gate Bridge, Alcatraz, Twin Peaks, Chinatown, San Francisco Symphony, etc. It's a beautiful city, and fortunately we got lucky with the weather." This was a great place to start, the beautiful views at the city's most famous landmark got all of us really excited for the weekend ahead of us.

Next we rode back to the hotel and then walked to the Fisherman's Wharf area for dinner. There were multiple food options but pretty much everyone opted to try In-N-Out for the first time, which everyone seemed to have the same anticlimactic opinion of "it's pretty good." There were a lot of stores there as well as a Ferris wheel, which a few friends and I decided to go on for a great view of the city at night. We then ventured back to the hotel, and after a couple rounds of *Super Smash Bros.* we got some much needed sleep.

To begin day two, we took a ferry out to Alcatraz. The island, which became a National Park in 1972, was a lot more beautiful than I had anticipated. This of course was a stark contrast to the inside, where an audio tour led us through the vast prison. The history of it all was very interesting, and there was even a former Alcatraz prisoner in the gift shop who we were able to speak to, making it all feel much more real.

After that, we went to the building where the ASTA (American Strings Teachers Association) Conference was being held, and where we would be performing the next day. We watched the Dr. Selby and the String Orchestra class present a session to a room packed full of other orchestra directors and teachers. It went over very well, and afterwards we departed to what may have been my favorite place on the trip, Chinatown.

It was such a fun environment, with tons of cool shops, cafes, and even a full fortune cookie factory. A couple of my fellow seniors and I were immediately drawn to some of the shirts in one of the gift shops, so we had to purchase them and put them on. All of us had been scrambling earlier that morning to put on the nicest outfits we could since we would be seeing the San Francisco Symphony that night, but that was quickly

disregarded in favor of this attire. After a lot of exploring and shopping, we went to dinner at a great Chinese restaurant, which everyone thoroughly enjoyed.

After this was the San Francisco Symphony. They played a beautiful program of Mozart, Haydn, and Beethoven, which served as a great reminder that we had a huge performance the next morning. So we got back, played a little bit of pool in the hotel lobby, and then went to bed knowing we had a big day ahead of us.

When we got to the rehearsal room in the morning, it all started to really set in. At this point, none of us had been able to play our instruments since Wednesday, and it was now Saturday. The music we played was very difficult, definitely the hardest I've seen in my time at SOA. Dr. Selby told *Applause*, "One piece, the Perkinson Sinfonietta, was harder and took longer than I thought would be needed to polish. This took time away from the Tchaikovsky, which was also harder than anticipated." At our final rehearsal things started out a little rough. However, with the help of Dr. Selby and all the work we had been putting in since the school year began, we pulled it together for a great performance. Dr Selby concluded, "All that being said, the students worked very hard, and their performance in San Francisco was the best they had ever done. I was extremely proud."

We all left the stage feeling very accomplished, as all of our hard work had finally paid off. We were scored by three judges, and the average score between them was 98/100. This is an incredible evaluation at the national level, and it far exceeded anything we were expecting. To celebrate, we traveled to Pier 39, where we ate dinner and explored the various shops. It was a lot of fun, and a great way to end off the trip. The highlight was definitely getting Dr. Selby to come with us into the mirror maze, where he very impressively led us through both forward and backwards. The shops had a lot of cool things to purchase, such as Bonsai Tree growing kits, which Myles Owens-Walker and I both bought (the seeds should be done germinating in about ten days so we'll see if I got scammed or not). After this, we hopped on the bus and rode to the airport, making a stop at Twin Peaks to catch one final gorgeous view of the city.

We took a midnight red-eye back to Charleston, and though we were super tired, we all shared the same sentiment of how much fun we had, and how many great memories we had made. Myself and all the other seniors agreed that this was absolutely the perfect final trip to conclude the years we've spent together in orchestra.



Strings students pose on the Golden Gate Bridge

Gregory Krause



Brian Knox

Seniors in their new attire before seeing the San Francisco Symphony



Brian Knox

The Sinfonietta bows after a successful performance



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Symphony Performs Concerto Concert

photos by Trinity Collins

On Thursday, March 5th, just three days after returning from San Francisco, the SOA Symphony Orchestra performed their Concerto Concert, with two incredible solos by **Myles Owens-Walker** and **Ava Whitener**




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SOA Dominates Annual S.C. Thespians Conference

by Rachel Wheelon

In February, a few SOA Theater majors participated in the South Carolina Thespians Conference, the largest theater gathering of the year in the state. Senior **Bryce Beasley** gave a perfect description of the competition:

“It is a joint festival of the state Thespians Conference (the state competition of the International Society) and the Palmetto Dramatic Association One Act Competition. Thespians is for the individual competitions (IC) where you can compete in several categories (solo, duet, group acting and musical theatre, playwriting, shortfilm, and several tech categories).

You are individually scored, and not ranked in the ICs. The range is *Fair*, *Good*, *Excellent*, and *Superior*. For the One Act Competition, schools get their One-Act at school before the competition scored from *Honorable Mention*, *Excellent*, *Superior*, and *Superior with Distinction*. Also, the lead actors in each One Act get ranked from *Honorable Mention*, *Excellent*, and *Superior*.”

That’s not all, though. On top of those awards, there is another called the Blair Beasley Performance Award, which selects the top ten best actors out of all the One Acts. Judges then interview them to ensure that they are not only a good actor, but a good interviewee who shows dedication to their talent and commitment to it in the future.

To say that SOA did well this year is an understatement. Around sixty SOA students attended with seventy-four IC entries. With a total of around thirty-five schools attending and a record-breaking 1,300 attendees, SOA won the most *Superiors* out of every other school in the state.

In their One Act, they also received a perfect score which Bryce says is “literally unheard of.” Theater teacher **Mrs. Horn** says that hasn’t happened in her over twenty years of going to the festival. The play received the highest award: *Superior with Distinction*.

Receiving Excellent for their roles in the show were **Dakota Townsend**, **Maxim Zakharchyk**, **Shelby Miller**, and **Beatrice Nail**. **Bryce Beasley**, **Reilly Dukes**, and **Brody Condon** received Superior.

And we’re still not finished. In addition to the myriad of awards, Bryce was also awarded the Beasley Performance Award which comes with a \$1,000 scholarship.

SOA certainly solidified their place in Thespians history. If you pass any of the Theater majors in the hall, make sure you congratulate them for their incredible accomplishments.



Theater students presenting their One-Act at school before the competition



Bryce Beasley, Reilly Dukes, and Brody Condon were all awarded Superior for their roles

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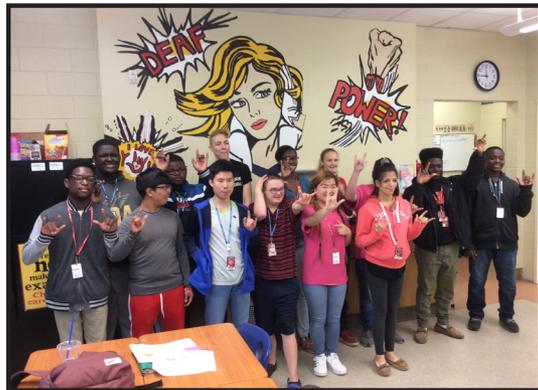
A Look at Deaf and Hard of Hearing's Collaborations with Creative Writing

by Sheridan King

A continuation of a series highlighting what the Deaf program has done through the years.

Another major that has had collaborations with the Deaf and Hard of Hearing program here at SOA is creative writing! In 2019, Deaf poet Meg Day came to visit both creative writers as well as the Deaf students. Meg Day is a very well known poet, having their poetry included in "Best American Poetry", "The New York Times", the "POETRY magazine", and more. With these poems they have won awards such as the "Barrow Street Press Poetry Prize" and the "Publishing Triangle's Audre Lorde Award".

Their book *We Can't Read This* looks at what it is like to be Deaf. "In a haunting collective voice that alternates between philosophical instruction to arresting confession, 'We Can't Read This' is a how-to on reimagining the body and language when one is denied the instruments of voice and hearing." said Cathy Park Hong. Their works are beloved everywhere, including being loved by the students at SOA.



Provided

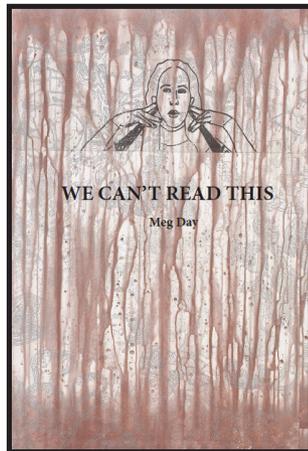
Meg Day (top row, third from left) with the Deaf students during their 2019 visit

When they came to SOA, they spoke in the Academic Magnet Lecture Hall, giving students from many areas of the school an "unforgettable experience", said Ms. Detiberous. While Meg did their lecture, 4 to 5 Deaf and Hard of Hearing Teachers interpreted for the students. Some said that the event showed that signing was "not just about accommodation, but also what anticipation and inclusion looks like".

Later in the gathering, students created their own acrostic poems. Acrostic poems are poems in which the first letter of each line spells out a word, name, or phrase when read vertically.

Meg said in their speech that they would have loved to have an environment like the one SOA had when they were younger including the amazing classes that the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Department is able to offer. They talked about how inclusion is so important, but also having that knowledge of Deaf culture, and celebrating it is also so, so important.

Their visit was clearly a very impactful one, and just highlights the amazing collaborations of creative writers and the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program. They have done amazing things combining inclusivity, creativity, and expressiveness in the words that they say and how they say it.



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Oscar Awards Predictions

by Rachel Wheelon

In one of my favorite TV shows, *Schitt's Creek*, Moira Rose is asked her favorite season to which she responds, "Awards." With the 98th Academy Award (or The Oscars) coming up in March, I am also finding that her answer is true for me as well.

While going to the theater to see a film is becoming a dying art, it's something that never fails to excite me. There's something so special about seeing a film surrounded by strangers all crunching on popcorn and slurping soda. That being said, I've had the privilege of seeing a lot of the nominated films in theater, and I'm going to predict what Oscars I see for each of them. I've divided the predictions into categories based on how confident I am:

100% Correct:

Actress in a Leading Role: Jessie Buckley from *Hamnet*
 Makeup & Hairstyling: Mike Hill, Jordan Samuel, and Cliona Furey for *Frankenstein*
 Costume Design: Kate Hawley for *Frankenstein*
 Actor in a Leading Role: Timothee Chalamet for *Marty Supreme*

Confident:

Music (Original Song): "Golden" from *KPop Demon Hunters*
 Music (Original Score): Ludwig Goransson for *Sinners*
 Directing: Chloe Zhao for *Hamnet*
 Writing (Original Screenplay): *Sinners* by Ryan Coogler

Unsure:

Casting: Francine Maisler for *Sinners*
 Actor in a Supporting Role: Jacob Elordi for *Frankenstein*
 Actress in a Supporting Role: Teyana Taylor for *One Battle After Another*
 Writing (Adapted Screenplay): *Hamnet* by Chloe Zhao and Maggie O'Farrell

I could definitely see *Sinners* receiving more awards than I predicted, but I personally think it's up against stronger films in many categories it's nominated in. While I'm hoping it doesn't happen, Rose Byrne could take the win for Best Actress even though Jessie Buckley is the only correct option in my opinion. And, you'll likely notice that I didn't have a prediction for Best Picture, and that is because I truly have no idea. While I want it to be *Hamnet*, I loved *Marty Supreme*, and a lot of other people loved *Sinners*. Obviously, these are just predictions, and the Oscars is known for throwing curveballs in its results. We'll have to wait until March 15th to find out.



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SOA Athletes Kick-Off their Spring Seasons!

by Fletcher Seminaroti

As March brings in the start of spring, a new wave of sports dawns on SOA athletes. Over the next few months, SOA Applause will be following lacrosse, soccer, track and field, baseball, softball, boy's tennis, and golf. We will also be wrapping up boys' basketball and select wrestlers as they finish up their seasons.

Raptor baseball has started the season on a winning streak, beating both Barnwell 6-2 and Waccamaw High School 5-3, as well as an impressive scrimmage against Porter Gaud High School, winning 5-0. SOA junior band major **Sam Harris**, as well as star pitcher and third baseman, has had an impressive start to the season. Harris has been playing competitive baseball since he was in 4th grade, making this his seventh year playing. When asked about his goals for the season, Harris responded, "My goal is to do everything I can to be productive for the team, at all times, even when I'm not in the game, and do anything I can to help the team's success.

Academic Magnet men's soccer has started off the season slowly, starting 1-2 with a win against Glynn Academy, followed by two losses against Waccamaw and Mauldin. **Adam Heller**, junior strings major, centerback for the Raptors, has been playing for 14 years after starting at four years old in California. Heller's goal for the season is to "Win as many games as possible, as well as to earn playing time." With a killer mindset like Heller's, the Raptors will be sure to make a comeback.

The Lady Raptors varsity soccer team has started the season off strong, tying against Porter Gaud 2-2 and going 2-1 in the popular Charleston Shootout tournament spread out over the third weekend of February. Playing a game a day, the Raptors fell short to Daniel High School on the first night, tying 1-1 before losing in PKs. The Raptors then took that loss and put it into the next two days, where they dominated both May River and Cane Bay, winning each 2-1. A notable SOA athlete was **Bridget Lee**, a sophomore vocal major, who scored a goal in all three of the Raptors' games that weekend, along with a handful of assists. Lee drifts between center forward and the wings while having played competitively for nine years. When asked about her mindset for the tournament, Lee enthusiastically responded, "My mindset was to try my best no matter what the outcome was. A lesson I learned was that even though things might be tough, if you keep working hard, you will find yourself playing good and being a good teammate."



Fletcher and his teammates celebrate after a big win

As February comes to a close, the Raptors men's lacrosse season has hit the ground running. The Raptors will play a full schedule of sixteen games, meaning they will be competing in at least two games a week over the next two months. So far, the Raptors traveled to Columbia to scrimmage Spring Valley High School, where they unfortunately fell short. On February 27th, the Raptors drove down to Bluffton High School and competed in an opening game. Led by SOA captain **Fletcher Seminaroti**, a junior creative writing major, the Raptors beat Bluffton 13-10. This game was personal for the Raptors after they fell short to the Bluffton Bobcats on Senior Night last season. Seminaroti scored 2 goals against the Bobcats as well as three assists. March is a big season for high school lacrosse, where most of the regular season games are played. The Raptors traveled to Myrtle Beach High School on March 2nd, where they beat the Seahawks 19-5, giving them a winning record for the first time in three seasons.

The Lady Raptors lacrosse team has kicked off the season with an impressive record. During preseason, they traveled up to Aiken, South Carolina, to compete in a play day, and the next week to Wando High School in Mount Pleasant. Although they failed to secure a win in the preseason, they have made a statement in the past couple of weeks, taking down May River in a tough match, 16-15, and then destroying West Ashley High School 19-2 later in the week. The Raptors then faced off against the Ashley Hall Panthers and came out on top 15-6. Notable player, **Louisa Seminaroti**, a freshman visual artist, is one of the only freshmen on varsity, and she has certainly earned her spot, scoring goals in each of her games. Seminaroti had an impressive career-high game recently, scoring 3 goals and an assist against Ashley Hall.

SOA athletes competed in the first track and field meet of the season on February 25th at Wando High School, led by SOA history teacher Coach **Austin Miller**. Coach Miller, whom you may recognize from fall issues, is not only the head coach for track and field, but also the Raptors football program. Schools from all over Charleston came to compete at Wando, including Stall, Bishop England, and Phillip Simmons. Senior band major and star thrower for the Raptors, **Cameron Leach**, earned 1st place in the shot put with an impressive distance of 12.99 meters. Leach also competed in the discus event, placing 2nd. Sophomore creative writing major **Lucille Harper** ran the girls 1600 meter and placed 2nd with an impressive 5:52.24. **Omari Wynn-Ferrel** placed 3rd in the high jump with an impressive height of 5'2". Following closely after, our athletes traveled to West Ashley High School to compete in their second meet, where Leach threw an impressive 34 meters in the discus event and placed 5th in shot put.

SOA has one athlete competing on the JV tennis team this year, an 8th-grade creative writer, **Miroslav Denev**. Denev takes the 3rd spot on the team, so far going 1-1 in challenge matches. Denev has been playing for five years now after his dad signed him up out of the blue. When asked, Denev's goal for this season is to "Stay at number 3 and to try and get as many dubs as I can."

Academic Magnet softball has started off the season slowly, with a current record of 0-3 with losses against Charleston Math and Science, Colleton County, and Hilton Head Island. Freshman band major **Charlotte Kandik** is a star hitter, leading the team in batting averages with an impressive 0.667. Kandik also has the highest IRA with a 7.88. The Lady Raptors have a full schedule this season with 17 games remaining; hopefully, they can turn it around.

Good luck to all our athletes on their Spring Seasons!

Piano Majors Present Senior Theses

photos by *Applause Staff*

Piano Majors had their Senior Thesis recitals on February 25th and March 9th, where they performed both solo and ensemble pieces. Great job Seniors!



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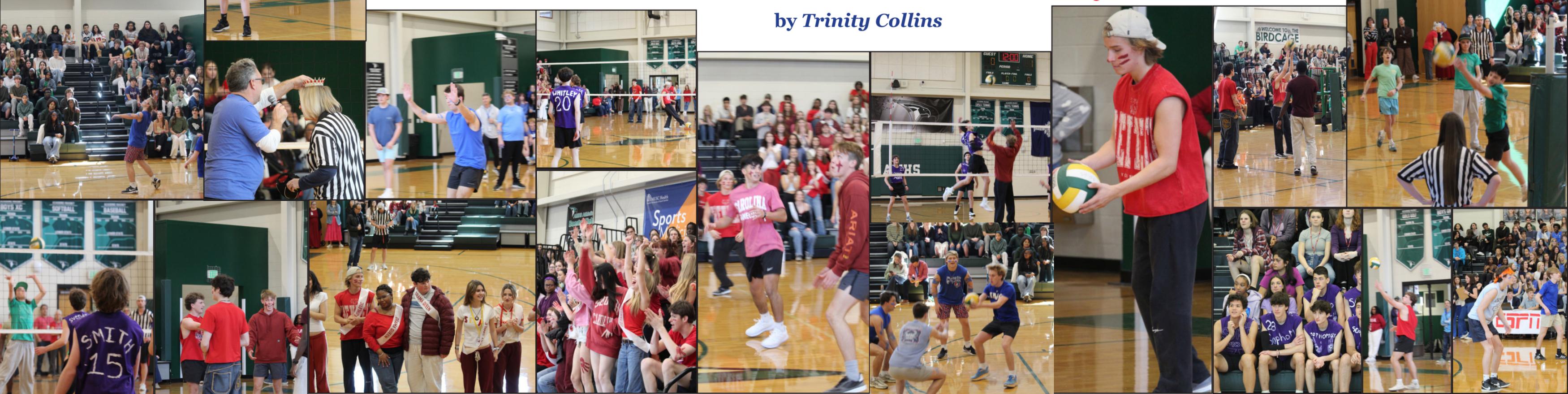


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Seniors Crush it at Volleyball!

by Trinity Collins



A Look at all of BSU's Black History Month Celebrations

by Trinity Collins

This past February, the Black Student Union did an incredible job celebrating culture through music, storytelling, food, and so much more. The presidents, **Kendyl Chatman** and **Bella-Adore Williams**, were responsible for planning events. They have had seven educational speakers, three popular For the Culture Fridays, a creative & impactful spirit week, and it all cultivated in the annual Jamboree.

The speaker events were held mainly in the AMHS Lecture Hall and the Media Center. Speakers included Live 5 News Broadcaster Raphael James, 99.7 Radio Host Geno Jones, Founder of POORRICKIDZ Demetria McNeil, Shakia Franklin from GlowTreatmentStudios, African drummer Eric Amoquandoah, and motivational speaker Chris Singleton, who spoke in the RMMT. See page nineteen for more on Singleton

For The Culture Fridays had everybody swarming the breezeway with their money out. Vendors selling food, clothes, and jewelry were Daddy's Girls Bakery, Kidogo Farms, & Kulcha Hut, A Mouthful Catering, & SweetGrass Clothing, and Food Truck Fest: Miracles Tasty Express, The Office On the Go, Mazycks Grill, Champaigne's Cakes, & The Fill Up Station, Bear Claw Cupcakes, & Kulcha Hut.

Spirit week was Feb. 23-27, Monday: M.J. vs. M.J. Who's more popular: Michael Jackson or Michael Jordan? Dress as your favorite MJ, Tuesday: Jamboree Day & Take It Back Tuesday Dress as an artist from your favorite music, art, or fashion decade (1930-2026), Wednesday, Wakanda Wednesday Wear black in memory and celebration of South Carolina's own Chadwick Boseman, Thursday: 2 Step Tuesday Cowboy or western attire + line dancing during high school lunch, Friday: Bonds Wilson Day wear royal blue and gold to honor and celebrate Bonds Wilson High School.

The Jamboree was held on Feb 24th in the RMMT and featured seven student-produced



BSU Leadership, left to right: Kent Mackey, Treasurer; Dakota Townsend, Secretary; Kendyl Chatman, Bella-Adore Williams, Presidents; Coach Butts, Advisor

Students line-dancing as apart of "2-Step Tuesday"



Students line-dancing as apart of "2-Step Tuesday"

songs, and another two by a group called Rhodium, a band recruited by **Coach Butts**, the BSU sponsor.

The set list included "For Once in My Life" and "A Change is Gonna Come," sung by **Kynisha Middleton-Gladden** and performed by the students who participated in January's All You Need is Love. Another band, coined as "Shamrock" by Coach Butts, and featuring **Kibru Stanfield** on guitar, **Shamah Norris-Rogers** on bass, **Brandon Bluett** on piano, and **Zion Stanton** on drums performed Michael Jackson's "Rock With You" with vocals by Kynisha and **Greg Johnson**, and Olivia Dean's "Man I Need," sung by **Dasiah Mincey**. Dasiah also sang "Killing Me Softly With His Song" by the Fugees, with the help of **Mr. Grant** on backup vocals. Additionally, Kynisha, Gregory, and **Jahire Wilson** performed "Candy Rain," and **Alysia Reyes** and **Alicia Valdes** sang "I Will Survive."



Mr Grant joins the students for a cover of Soul for Real's "Candy Rain"

It wasn't just music though, Creative Writers **Nora Green** and **Zoe Harvey-Prioleau** read poems by Audre Lorde and Maya Angelou respectively, and a group of Dance majors performed a piece choreographed by senior **Nathaniel Green**. This tied everything together to create a wonderful celebration of culture.

Planning it wasn't so easy, according to Kendyl, but she found a way to work it out. "My biggest focus was making sure acts were prepared, everyone knew what they were doing, and keeping my mental health straight. I noticed when I started freaking out, others would freak out."

BSU does so much at our school, and we have certainly enjoyed every moment of it. The student planners have done an amazing job, and I can't wait to see what's in store next.

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Chris Singleton Spreads Message of Love and Unity to SOA

by Cannon Gibbs

“The guy who took my mom away, his mission was one of division and hatred,” said Chris Singleton when he spoke at SOAs RMMT on February 17th. “So I literally have the opposite mission. I try to spread love and unity everywhere I go.” Singleton is the son of Sharonda Coleman-Singleton, one of the Emanuel Nine, killed in June 2015.

Singleton explained to the packed theater that he was naturally devastated by his mother’s murder, which happened while he was in college, but instead of letting it consume him with anger and grief, Singleton chose to forgive her killer. “I say love is always stronger than hate.” Singleton shared the details of his rich and challenging journey.

He grew up in Charleston, where he experienced many challenges, including racial discrimination, but his mother always steered him towards love and optimism. He was a standout on the baseball team at Charleston Southern University, working tirelessly, and he was drafted by the Chicago Cubs.

While pursuing his baseball career within the Cubs minor league system, Singleton was offered a rent free residence at a retirement home. Singleton was reluctant, he explained, as it was an odd place for a young man to live, but he quickly became friends with the residents. His charisma was contagious among his new friends. One afternoon, the other residents surprised him, attending one of his games in a large group wearing shirts with Singleton’s face printed on the front.

Two years after his mother’s passing, Singleton’s father died. This left Singleton, only 20, with the responsibility of taking care of his younger brother and sister, just twelve and fifteen at the time. But Singleton pressed on, living by the principle that continues to guide him: “Life is 10% what happens to you and 90% how you react to it.”

Singleton makes 100 stops a year at schools and other venues to spread his message of love and unity. Singleton introduced students to his trademark “unity clap” where he periodically asks everyone to clap twice together, signifying mutual support among his listeners. During his speech, he challenged the audience to get up and hug someone near them.

Singleton has done much to turn a horrific tragedy into a life mission to inspire others to practice love and unity. “Every single person should be loved and celebrated,” he reminded his SOA audience before heading to another speaking engagement at Hanahan High School.



Applause Staff

Singleton was one of many speakers the BSU brought to SOA during Black History month

More from the Jamboree

photos by *Applause Staff*



March Slang

by Fletcher Seminaroti

Each issue, our resident language expert Fletcher Seminaroti researchs the newest words around the halls of SOA. Here are some of his recent findings.

Jestermixing (v)-When someone attempts to be humorous for other people's enjoyment.
Ex: "Ty, you were jestermixing during lunch, you were so funny."

Frame Mogging (v) To stand next to someone and appear bigger or more formidable than the other.
Ex: "Wow, Athan, you really got framemogged in this photo, Cannon looks huge compared to you!"

Touse (adj)- Originally used to describe the top frat house on a college campus, now meaning anybody or anything that's the best.
Ex: "The place we're going is touse, trust me."

Louse (adj)- The opposite of touse, the absolute worst.
Ex: "Come on man, you're being louse right now"

Mush (n) A synonym of trash.
Ex: "That test was straight mush."

Chadlite (n) The big guy around, considered attractive and cool.
Ex: "Did you see that guy over there? He's got crazy muscles, he's a chadlite."

Fade Portal (n) A place to go when you leave or "fade" an event
Ex: "Yo bro, I think you guys gotta get going, time to hit the fade portal."

Teacher Cadets Update

by Rachel Wheelon

What should students be able to answer at the end of the lesson? How will you support multiple learning styles throughout your teaching?

Last February, cadets were busy creating a Lesson Plan, and these are just a few of the questions we had to answer in the process. To begin this process, we reviewed South Carolina education standards and picked one that we wanted to do our lesson plan on. Once we made our decisions, we answered these questions.



Mr. Martin reads a story to the Teacher Cadets class

While some may think presentations or worksheets are what teachers are responsible for doing, there's a lot that isn't seen. Teachers have multiple learning objectives for each standard that they teach. They have to support multiple learning styles, supply various methods of assessment, and have a comfortable knowledge of the material in order to successfully prepare and present a lesson. Each cadet had the opportunity to do this as well as present in front of the class.

In addition to this, while presenting, they had to apply their classroom management skills to the students. If someone built a lesson meant to be taught to third graders, everyone in the class acted like a third grader. This added an additional challenge for the teachers while also providing some humorous moments.

Cadets are also about to begin their field experience journey, and have already emailed the teachers they will be shadowing to introduce themselves and start the process.

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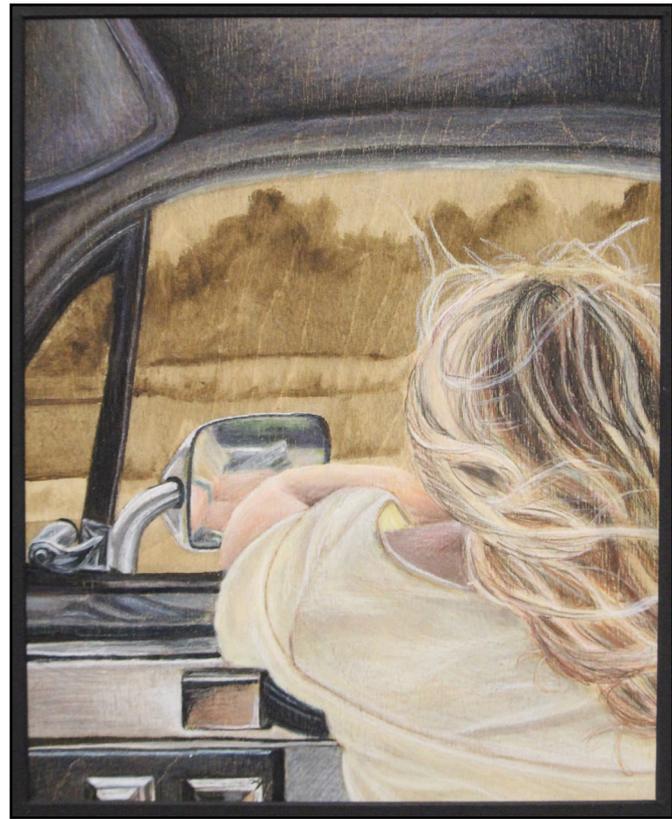
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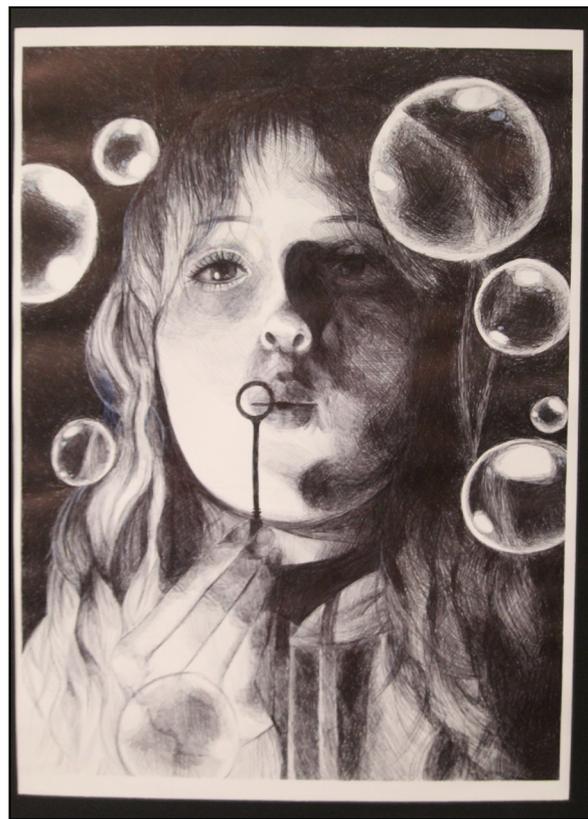
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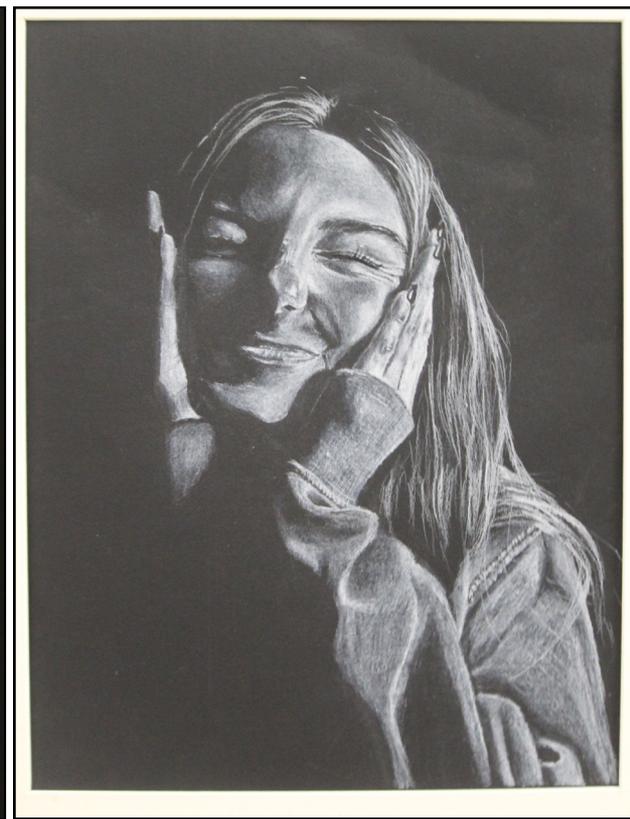




Olivia Carnecki, 11th



Annabel Grames, 9th



Lucy Kugler, 10th



Montez Wilson-Robinson, 9th



Riley Henderson, 9th

Band Students Showcase Their Talents at Senior Thesis

by Sheridan King

The Band Senior Thesis on February 10th included a wide variety of instruments, and a ton of different songs, all of which were amazing. Starting off the concert strong, **Donte Foxworth** (on Tuba) played a beautiful arrangement of “Pure Imagination” from the movie Wonka. Violin, Viola, Cello, Trombone, and Flute combined to create the melody, while Donte played lyrical arpeggios and moving lines that just made the piece overall amazing. Then, **Juvon Gilliard** got the crowd interested with his jazz tune “So What”. The melody on upright bass was entertaining, and catchy. It was such a good piece, played perfectly by all of the performers, and it was definitely stuck in people’s heads after the concert!

Unfortunately **Stanton (Calev) Harrold** was sick that night, but he is performing soon. I’m sure his song “Take the A Train”, a classic, will be amazing! Next, **Kylah Munoz** blew the crowd away with her solo performance of “Tango Etude No. 4” on flute. Combining classical music and jazz, the piece had both slow, expressive moments, and technically challenging moments. **Kynisha Middleton-Gladden** then had the audience cheering and cheering with her beautiful solo performance of “First Suite in E flat” on euphonium. The melody was recognizable, and it was played with emotion and skill.

Nadia Fox, with her clarinet in hand then delivered 6 different movements from “English Folk Song”. Each one was played with skill and precision, and the crowd, along with her classmates, loved it! Next, **Julia Bates** did a spectacular job playing “Villanelle” on french horn. Through challenging passages, Julia persevered, and delivered an amazing performance. Then, **Madison Fletcher** stunned the crowd with her performance of “Nocturne Allegro et Scherzando” on flute. Her delivery of the technical passages were incredibly impressive, and she shaped the piece into one that was thoroughly enjoyed through both dynamics and shaping.

Last but certainly not least, **Michael Kardell**, played “Cantabile et Presto” on flute. The piece changed throughout, and had interesting contrasting sections within. The ability to have such expressiveness in such technical sections is a skill many musicians want, and Michael certainly has it. All of this couldn’t have been done without the amazing skills of **Laura Ball**, an amazing pianist and accompanist that helped many of the students with their pieces and performances. Amazing job to all of the performers!



Juvon Gilliard, Bass



Donte Foxworth, Tuba



Nadia Fox, Clarinet



Madie Fletcher, Flute



Kylah Munoz, Flute



Michael Kardell,
Flute



Kynisha Middleton-Gladden,
Euphonium



Julia Bates,
French Horn

photos by Trinity Collins

therapy without all the fluff.



Freshman Cole Buero Takes his Talents to Anaheim

by Luciano Cusatis

“When Cole was about 2 years old, we placed a guitar in his lap. The strings, knobs, toggle switch and the noises were mesmerizing to him. It literally became his favorite toy.” This is what Matt Buero told us about his son Cole, a freshman Strings major, who has grown into an incredible guitarist over the years.

Cole has performed in a variety of cool shows, such as with Kiss tribute band Strutter, and recently playing at the Ronnie Montrose Remembered concert in Anaheim, California. The concert was apart of the annual National Association of Music Merchants Conference, and Cole is the first youth musician to ever be invited to perform. He got the oppurtunity to play alongside many high-profile rock musicians, and he said it is his faovirte show he’s ever done.

Cole told *Applause*, “I learned so much, it was the most professional gig I have ever had. I had no sound check, no monitors that I could hear, and no rehearsal. I couldn’t hear the band, I couldn’t hear myself. I really had to step up and be confident and that’s how it is when you play with the professionals; you have to be prepared for anything.”

Doing all these great things at such a young age provides incredible learning opportunities for Cole. His dad told *Applause*, “He’s like a sponge around someone that plays something he hasn’t played. Not intimidated by them...but intensely focused on what they are doing and learning from them.”

SOA has also helped in a variety of ways. Being a Strings major on stand up bass, he commented that it has had a lot of influence on his guitar playing, improving his finger strength and teaching a lot about music theory. His dad added, “SOA has played a big part in his learning process. Most of his guitar heroes are classically trained guitarists. Countless times I have seen him come home and play something from an orchestral piece on guitar.”

One of those heroes is Steve Vai, who Cole discovered while watching youtube at five years old. “I told my dad I wanted to play

like that and he said that I needed to be classically trained if I wanted to do so.” Cole also cited the aforementioned Kiss and Ronnie Montrose as some of his biggest inspirations. “When I was younger my dad had always loved Kiss. I instantly fell in love with the look as well as the sound. Ace Frehley has been a great example of where I get my playing style from.”

With the great things he has done as just a ninth grader, Cole continues to take inspiration from the greats and learn as much as he can. He told *Applause*, “I want to make music my career and keep it fun. That’s all music is and all music should be. I never want music to be a chore. It is the heartbeat to life and it is truly what I love.” His father shares the same sentiment, “The look on his face when he is on stage playing is the clearest sign. To me it is as if he goes somewhere else...away from stress and worry...and wants to take the audience with him.”



Provided

Cole told *Applause* that if he could play alongside one band, past or present, it would without a doubt be Ozzy Osbourne and Black Sabbath



Provided

Cole after a successful performance at Ronnie Montrose Rembered



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Cole paying respect to his idols alongside the Kiss tribute band Strutter



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Classic Album Review: *The Stone Roses* (1989)

by Luciano Cusatis

In the 90s, British bands such as Oasis, Blur, and the Verve took the world by storm. The energy, personas, and of course the music defined an era, but many overlook the group that came before them, and who were hugely influential to what became known as “Britpop.”

With just two studio albums, the Stone Roses managed to create a cult-following, and paved the way for a new era of the UK music scene. Their debut self-titled album, released in 1989 is the record that really stands out, and has been one of my absolute favorites lately.

The album kicks off strong with “I Wanna Be Adored,” a song about the desire for fame, and the cost of it. One common complaint directed towards the band is regarding the vocals from frontman Ian Brown. While I’ll admit he does have some pretty iffy moments in a few live performances, in the studio setting, his vocals sit perfectly over the Roses’ instrumentals, and this track perfectly shows that. His calm yet powerful singing brings the simple lyrics to life, and makes this song an absolute classic.

The record continues with some more great songs. I love the intro to “She Bangs the Drums,” which showcases one

of the many great basslines from the late Gary “Mani” Mournfield. It’s followed by “Waterfall,” which contains my favorite of guitarist John Squire’s riffs on the album. Additionally, the catchy hook of “Made of Stone,” the unique groove and feel of “Shoot You Down,” and so many other fantastic moments make me love this album, but my absolute favorite track is definitely the closer, “I Am the Resurrection.”

The first half of the song is anthemic, with emphatic delivery of lines like “I am the resurrection and I am the life” perfectly painting the tone of empowerment and freedom. The second half however goes into a separate instrumental jam, and shows you one last time just how talented the members of the Roses are. “I Am the Resurrection” brings together all the ideas, both musical and lyrical, from the whole album into one eight-minute long opus.

As mentioned earlier, this album was so influential to British Rock in the 90s. Oasis frontman Liam Gallagher has stated many times that seeing the Stone Roses in concert is what made him want to start a band, and you clearly see Ian Brown’s influence on Liam, especially in earlier Oasis songs.

Still, The Stone Roses remain a very underappreciated band, who deserve a lot more attention in the modern day. I highly recommend checking them out, and this album is the place to start.

Contemporary Album Review: *Darling Blue* (2025)

by Dante Criscitiello

Marcus King grew up in Greenville SC, and by

watching his father, Marvin King, a well-known blues guitarist, he was inspired to start playing himself. In 2014, a video of Marcus playing inside of a Norman’s guitar center went viral, and that’s when everyone started checking out his music and country and southern rock fans alike loved it, giving him a large following that continues to grow.

His most recent album *Darling Blue* has some of his finest work on it. This album moves in more of a modern country direction than more of his Blues/rock side of things but he does a magnificent job changing his style, it really shows his versatility. Songs like “Carolina Honey” showcase his soulful vocal abilities, yet he also has more laid back soft ballads like “The Shadows.”

This is the reason I specifically love this album, because of its plethora of different genres and how much he is willing to put out there, which differs from the way he goes about his past albums, where he usually sticks to one musical style throughout the whole thing. The exploration on this record really showcases the growth he has made as a musician.

Overall, *Darling Blue* proves that Marcus King isn’t afraid to evolve as an artist. He takes risks, explores new sounds, and still manages to stay true to the soulful roots that built his career. The album feels like a reflection of his growth both personal and musical and it shows why he continues to stand out as one of the most genuine talents in modern country and rock.

Classic Movie Review: *Stand By Me* (1986)

by Lila Hayes

In *Stand By Me*, Wil Wheaton turns to River Phoenix and asks, “Am I weird?” to which Phoenix replies, “Yeah, but so what? Everybody’s weird.”

The iconic 1986 film, directed by the late Rob Reiner, was only one of his most acclaimed. Spanning two days, Reiner weaves a story across twenty miles of train tracks and four boys on the cusp of change. The film, based on the Stephen King novella *The Body*, follows Chris Chambers, Gordie Lachance, Teddy Duchamp, and Vern Teltios on their search for a rumored dead body. As they walk across train tracks, having concocted a story for where they’ll be, viewers feel viscerally the connection between them, silence filled with the boys’ laughter if not with music.

The soundtrack alone is notable, filling the film with rock and roll classics from the 50s as the boys march across the screen. It included, of course, “Stand By Me” by Ben. E. King rolling through the credits.

The film is narrated by an adult Gordie, who mourns the loss of the unforgettable bond that the boys found that summer, which was one that could never

again be replicated between them. It’s dedicated to that intensely youthful understanding of one another that they carried into adulthood.

Stand By Me is deeply nostalgic, with an undercurrent of melancholy only halfway disguised by the boys’ preteen humor. It’s a movie that defined a generation when it was released and continues to do so. Regardless of age or life experiences, *Stand By Me* is a film that resonates with everybody who sees it.

Contemporary Movie Review: *Landscape with Invisible Hand* (2023)

by Sage Stoner

Landscape with Invisible Hand is a Sci-fi Dystopia movie that holds a message about modern-day society and the oppression of the middle and lower classes. The main protagonist, Adam Campbell, is an African American man who lives under the rule of an alien force known as the Vuvv. Adam attempts to live a normal life, but after his girlfriend’s family gets into a fight with his, things start to quickly go wrong.

M.T. Anderson, who wrote the original story, has won the National Book Award for Young People’s Literature for his book *The Pox Party*. During production, Plan B Entertainment, the producers, had to sign a second-hand contract with MGM to complete the film. The film stars Asante Blackk, Kylie Rogers, Clifton Collins Jr., Michael Gandolfini, Josh Hamilton, and Brooklynn MacKinzie in the main roles.

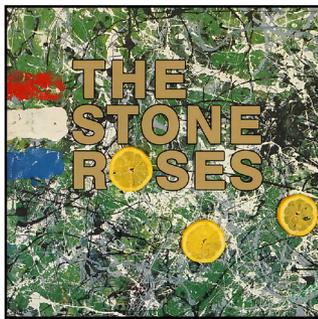
Landscape with Invisible Hand begins with Adam meeting a girl named Chloe, whom he soon falls in love with and begins to live with after he invites her family to live with him, his sister, and his mother. One of the main parts that stands out to me is how, when the Vuvv had arrived, it was explained through nodes that people wear that the governments wanted to keep them out; however, businesses made deals with the Vuvv, and eventually, all the governments let them take over. This part of the movie really hits hard because in today’s society, as multi-billion-dollar companies control basically every aspect of life, especially here in the United States. Many people on the ground are poor due to the Vuvv making labor worthless, which feels spot on today, where minimum wage jobs end up paying less and less to their workers.

Another part that stands out to me is when Adam finishes a massive mural about the Vuvv’s oppression of the middle and lower classes, on his school wall after it was shut down. The Vuvv soon arrive and inform Adam that they will make him a millionaire if he were to reproduce his work for other galaxies. When Adam agrees and shows up to a mothership to explain his art, he sees that the Vuvv have altered it to show them in a good light. This part especially shines today, where people are arrested or worse for speaking out against the government, while also trying to cover up problems or attempting to make people think that the problem is fake.

In conclusion, *Landscape with Invisible Hand* shows the problems with our society today, while also showing the oppression of the non-elite. While the movie



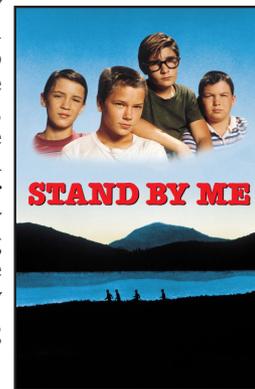
Darling Blue



The Stone Roses



Landscape with Invisible Hand



Stand By Me

is amazing, some aspects could be improved, such as trying to paint some parts as a comedy when the movie isn't supposed to be funny. If you want a dystopian-style movie, you may want to watch this one. 7/10.

Book Review: *The Librarian of Auschwitz* (2011)

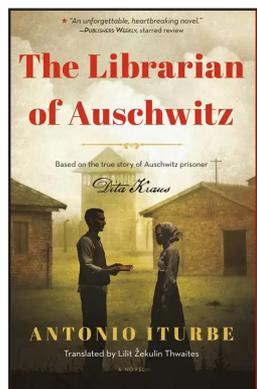
by Sheridan King

The Librarian of Auschwitz, first released in 2012 in Spanish, quickly gained popularity. Later translated into 15 other languages, the story is about a girl named Dita Kraus, a girl imprisoned in the Auschwitz-Birkenau family camp. The book is based on the true story of Dita Kraus, and reportedly is very accurate to real life. Dita Kraus (in real life) said "My memories keep knocking... But those words... demand to be heard." Her memories and the imagination of Antonio Iturbe come to create an unforgettable story.

She is trusted by Fredy Hirsch to carry and allow other prisoners (who are trustworthy of course) to have books. Just being in possession of a book can get you and others around you hurt. Dita creates new ways to carry and conceal books, and addresses new threats to the books, and knows who to avoid. Each character and their relationship with Dita is a new story, some that change in the craziest ways possible. She meets and learns many people's unique personalities and learns who to trust, and who to not.

While I was reading this, I always had a new theory about what would happen to the secret library, and the kids reading the books. Many times, my theories were incorrect as the book had some interesting plot twists. They weren't even supposed to have a school, let alone a library full of contraband books. There were countless close calls with different officers, and Dita and her friends in the camp closely guarded the secret of the school and the books.

Overall, this book is a good pick for anyone that likes historical fiction, with some more hope and stories of bravery compared to some other historical fiction books out there. While this book is still set in dark times of the Holocaust, Dita's individual story is a fun to read, and inspirational story.



The Librarian of Auschwitz

Video Game Review: *Dead by Daylight* (2016)

by Sage Stoner and Ellis Richards

Dead by Daylight (DBD) is an asymmetrical online survival horror game developed by Behaviour Interactive and 505 Games, and released in June 2016.

DBD is a 4v1 survival game where four survivors fix generators to power the exit gates and escape the map. This is while outlasting the killer, whose sole task is to catch and kill each survivor and prevent escape; Done via placing them on meat hooks. This process is repeatable, and survivors aren't out of the match until they've been hooked three times. Additionally, killers and survivors can create their own skill builds by equipping perks that give them special attributes/buffs. For example, Sprint Burst allows for a fifty percent run speed increase for six seconds

at the cost of the exhausted status effect, which acts as a cooldown until said perk can be used again. Outside of gameplay one of *DBD's* central appeals is its licensing, allowing players to use beloved characters from a variety of horror IPs and mythos. These character licenses span from classic horror icons like Ghostface, Chucky, Laurie Strode, and Freddy Krueger, to modern horror royalty like Dustin Henderson, Vecna, Leon Kennedy, Nemesis, Cheryl Mason, and *FNAF's* Springtrap. (And many more.)

I, Sage, personally only have 10 hours on this game, so I am less experienced than my co-writer. However, from what I have played, the game does an amazing job at getting you "hooked." This is because many characters, such as "The Nurse," have fun skill-intensive mechanics that keep you enthralled in the game. In summary, *DBD* provides a fun game experience that other asymmetrical horror games have trouble replicating. I would recommend this game to you and your friends, that is, if they aren't faint of heart. It earns its spot as one of my favorite games ever. 8/10.



Dead by Daylight

Ellis here, and after my total of around two thousand eight hundred seventy-five hours in game, I can confidently say...(drumroll) It's a mixed bag! *DBD* shines in its exhilarating chase-based gameplay, allowing skilled evasive "looping" for survivors and more power-based, strategic pursuit for killers. Both of these interactions are wholly enjoyable when playing either side. Evading the killer while your teammates complete all five generators is a lifetime high, while managing a devastating four-survivor shut-down within the first minute feels seriously rewarding as well! The game's issues begin to manifest in the downtime between chases, though, with monotonous generator repair, grind-heavy progression, and aggressive monetization seeming ever-present throughout the game's lifetime. Also, at a higher level, the amount of viable perks from *DBD's* pool of three hundred eighteen becomes significantly lower. Leading to uniform matches with all survivors running the same or similar perks, and killers tending to have a few that never leave their rotation. To put it simply, *DBD* balances amazingly addictive gameplay and interesting characters/lore, with a multitude of only decently executed systems and generally poor communication between its dev team and community (although this has seen definite improvement). Ellis rates it 7/10 generally and 10/10 with friends.

In summary, *DBD* has had a tumultuous and enjoyable ten-year run, and it doesn't seem to be slowing down! With continued improvement from the development team, and exciting new content like *Five Nights At Freddy's* and a second *Stranger Things* update, *Dead By Daylight* holds a lot of promise for your enjoyment; Which is why both of us recommend giving it a shot!

Restaurant Review: Metto Coffee & Tea

by Trinity Collins

Verdant cafes are all the hype these days. I mean, who wouldn't be attracted to a place with an oak tree penetrating the patio where you're drinking your strawberry matcha latte?

Metto Coffee & Tea is a cute and affordable cafe in Mt. Pleasant with a wide range of options on the menu. Upon walking in, I was greeted with delicious-looking pastries and a menu on the wall with numerous options, and a 'Coffee of the Day' sign. Once I arrived at the counter, I could see to my left a special Valentine's Day menu, listing some interesting items. The prices were just right, drinks ranged from \$2 to \$4, and food items ranged from \$2 to \$7.

I was accompanied by my two great friends, who you may know, Lila Hayes and Sheridan King. I purchased the Chocolate Covered Cherry Latte (\$5.85), Lila got the Mini Chocolate Croissant (\$2.40), and Sheridan got the Metto Acai Berry Bowl (\$11), which we all shared. The latte came frozen in a plastic cup. It tasted like a sweet cherry mocha, creamy and cold, and delightful. Lila's chocolate croissant came dusted in powdered sugar, but was simple, flaky, rich, and sweet. Sheridan's acai bowl was beautifully arranged, and generously portioned, the most impressive part was the quantity you get for your money.

Overall we were very satisfied. While nothing was really extraordinary and unique, everything was well made and enjoyable. Plus, the area is nothing to look over, just drive 2 minutes and you're at Shem Creek, 5 minutes and you make it to Old Village or Patriots Point, making these the perfect stops to go to afterward!

So if you're planning to hang out with your friends in Mt. P, Metto Coffee & Tea is the place to go, with endless options for reasonable prices, aesthetics, and nearby scenic views.

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March Horoscopes

by Ellis Richards <3

Pisces (February 19 - March 20)

Ever wanted Barbie's closet? Ok, maybe a bit too ambitious but you won't exactly be far off by the end of march! Too bad the only spencers around is all the way in northwoods mall because if I were you that's where i'd be sprinting after school everyday.



Aries (March 29 – April 19)

Decisions, decisions. A lack of decisive action may come back to bite you this month, so don't play it safe. When life asks those hard questions, consult an 8-ball or flip a coin; If you've got the money and time, hit up a fortune teller! Just know they'll try to charge you extra for additional time doing literally anything... like a hundred extra eugh.



Taurus (April 20 – May 20)

Designated introspection time! I mean don't try to rewrite your whole personality per se; just the parts that drive us all insane like loud chewing, never having your phone on silent, and cutting the lunch line. Now I know this doesn't apply to the majority of you lovely bovines, but some of yall are like fully committed to the bull bit and it's making me crazy. (Cafeteria Mac is never that serious smh)



Gemini (May 21 - June 20)

We're cut from the same cloth. So I know you've been itching to start your own House flipping channel across your socials; minus the crazy amount of millennial gray and corporate baldness that these creators are obsessed with for some reason. We can also totally do our version of Hell's Kitchen! However, I'm not too keen on letting you operate a stove.



Cancer (June 21 - July 22)

Get out! Meant in a nice way of course; all the time spent at home has been great for your grades, but now it's time to prioritize having fun. At the moment the water park is still closed and the beach is cloudy though, so for the time being I'll happily rewatch Teen Beach back to back to back with you. (If that helps you cope)



Leo (July 23 - August 22)

Test that lion-like bravery on some of the new horror movies coming out this month! We've got Ready Or Not 2, The Woman In The Yard, and The Bride. Why are you shaking your head?? How can you of all people be nervous about some scary flicks? I guess Leo should be represented by a tabby instead of a lion. I've already ordered my laser-pointer so consider your bed made.



Virgo (August 23 - September 22)

Set those boundaries! A happy home has a pretty fence and yours is currently made of glue, popsicle sticks, and velcro. I promise you'll be better off if you aren't actively doing three different people's homework. So take that first step! Get stern, or even loud. We'll be here to support you through it.



Libra (September 23 - October 22)

This month is your collective "pass go and collect two-hundred dollars" moment; considering the stars are lined up to practically throw money at you. The challenge comes from figuring out what NOT to spend it all on. I mean Canes and robux is certainly a choice but who am I to judge? (I am)



Scorpio (October 23 - November 21)

Lucky you! March is set to play out like a romantic hallmark rom-com for you fortunate few arachnids so take advantage! Chocolates get expensive fast and flowers are so copy paste; instead find the perfect scented candle from anywhere besides Bath and Body and you'll be set. "But what's wrong wi-" If you want a hot-dog scented candle be my guest.



Sagittarius (November 22 - December 21)

Look I know you aren't a picky eater and that's really cool but please- You have no reason to try McDonalds caviar. I mean you can, but then I don't want to hear about the vicious food poisoning that you're obviously about to incur. I've also already booked you an urgent care appointment in advance just fyi.



Capricorn (December 22 - January 19)

Clarity is what the clouds bring. Suffocate all the daily aches and grievances in stoic neutrality dearest statue and cut loose from the things slowing you down. I personally like to imagine my problems as a giant metaphysical crab trap! Just know your cancer friends might not take too kindly to that spiel.



Aquarius (January 20 - February 18)

Your money zone currently houses mercury in retrograde so the financial forecast is looking stormy to say the least. I can cover your groceries and all the cat litter, but I'm not helping you pay off a swimming pool! Why on earth would you buy that thing in March? I think you're taking the "Aqua" in Aquarius too seriously.



March Madness/Basketball Trivia

by Luciano Cusatis

1. How many teams are in the March Madness tournament bracket?
2. Who is the NBA's all time leading scorer?
3. Which team won the Women's March Madness tournament in 2025, led by Paige Bueckers?
4. Which college has won the most men's March Madness Championships?
5. Which country is NBA star Nikola Jokic from?
6. Who did the Dallas Mavericks draft #1 Overall in 2025?
7. Which player, who was a star for Iowa in the 2024 tournament, is the all time leading scorer in Women's College Basketball history?
8. Which NBA team set the record for most wins in a season in 2016?
9. Which NBA player scored 100 points in a game in 1962?
10. What college did Michael Jordan play for?

Answer

UNC
1. Sixty-Eight, 2. LeBron James, 3. UConn, 4. UCLA, 5. Serbia, 6. Cooper Flagg, 7. Caitlin Clark, 8. Warriors, 9. Wilt Chamberlain, 10. UNC

Callum Rennie,
11th grade Theater



Provided

10/10

1. Sixty-Eight
2. LeBron James
3. UConn
4. UCLA
5. Serbia
6. Cooper Flagg
7. Caitlin Clark
8. Warriors
9. Wilt Chamberlain
10. UNC

Beckett Carrington,
11th grade Vocal



Luciano Cusatis

8/10

1. Thirty-Four
2. LeBron James
3. Penn State
4. UCLA
5. Serbia
6. Cooper Flagg
7. Caitlin Clark
8. Warriors
9. Wilt Chamberlain
10. UNC

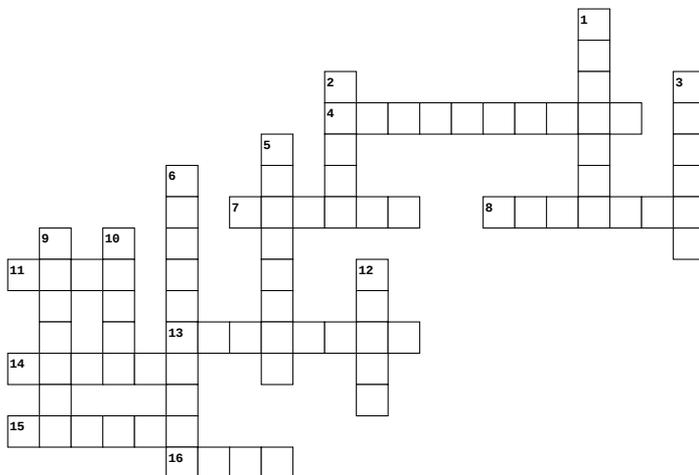
Women's History Month Crossword

by Frankey Coakley

The answers to the following all correlate to things invented by women throughout history

Across

Down



4. What can you use to flatten dough?
7. When the drive gets cold, hopefully you can turn on the _____.
8. What kind of Fiction is *Back To The Future*?
11. When it was popular, every girl had a Barbie _____.
13. A place full of fish and attractions!!
14. To prevent water and other liquids from obstructing you view, you could always turn on your windshield _____.
15. If you are in an apartment building and there's a fire, you could most likely use the Fire _____.
16. The improved Life _____, saving many in the case of water based emergencies.

1. What has a plunger and is mainly used in hospitals?
2. Go make some fresh juice with your new _____ Press.
3. What prevents the grounds from getting into your coffee?
5. Want a cold treat, but you don't wanna go out? Get an _____ maker.
6. Josephine Cochrane, to make the job of washing dishes easier for many, patented the first commercially successful _____.
9. Ruth Wakefield, a woman who created our beloved chocolate chip _____.
10. A personal little earth you can keep on your desk.
12. A knot in your hair? Best to grab your _____.

W	P	S	L	K	B	L	R	Y	R	Y	C	I	V
E	Y	E	E	S	L	I	A	T	Y	E	R	P	S
O	E	P	P	T	A	H	V	D	A	E	A	N	M
H	O	I	R	P	R	S	A	P	H	L	I	P	R
S	S	N	E	A	N	C	N	E	R	F	N	A	A
E	H	C	C	T	E	P	M	M	O	Y	B	R	H
S	A	H	H	R	Y	O	O	E	E	I	O	A	C
R	M	I	A	I	S	T	R	R	N	D	W	D	Y
O	R	N	U	C	T	O	R	A	N	N	O	E	K
H	O	G	N	K	O	F	I	L	R	A	N	S	C
N	C	K	D	S	N	G	S	D	R	L	E	R	U
D	K	C	E	D	E	O	O	U	N	E	E	E	L
B	N	D	K	A	P	L	N	P	N	R	R	C	O
S	N	L	O	Y	M	D	A	R	Y	I	G	E	A

St. Patrick's Day/Irish Word Search

by Frankey Coakley

BLARNEYSTONE

EMERALD

GREEN

HORSESHOE

IRELAND

LEPRECHAUN

LUCKY CHARMS

PARADES

PINCHING

POT OF GOLD

RAINBOW

SHAMROCK

ST PATRICKS

DAY

VAN MORRISON

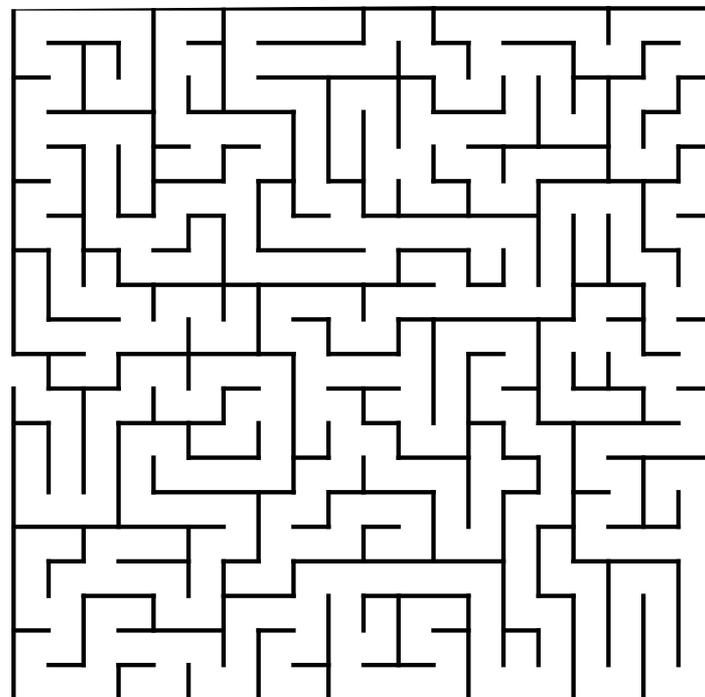
SOA Sudoku

by Frankey Coakley

		9	8					7
		1	6		4		2	
				1			4	
1				9	6	7		
	6	3			5		9	
9		2	1			3		
		8	4	3		1		
	1					2	7	
			2			8	3	



Help Ms. Whittemore Find Her Calculator!





“The Barney Theme”

Elizabeth Fields, 6th grade Band



“Bless Your Heart”- Megan Moroney

Drayton Rappel, 7th grade Piano



“Back to the Basics”- Lana Del Ray

Annie Affourti, 8th grade Creative Writing



“What You Know”- TI

Mr Grauer, Administrator



“Rough Rider’s Anthem”- DMX

Mr. Miller, History Teacher

If you could have one song play when you walk into a room, what would it be?

by Cannon Gibbs and Fletcher Seminaroti



“Welcome to the Jungle” -Guns N’ Roses

The Nurses



“Alter Ego”- Doechii

Taylor Robinson, 9th grade Vocal



“Sir Duke”- Stevie Wonder

Jonathon Osborne, 10th grade Theater



“Gasolina”- Daddy Yankee

Sam Harris, 11th grade Band



“Float On”- Modest Mouse

Niamh Carmichael, 12th grade Creative Writing