



# Woodrow Wilson High School THE BEACON

December 13, 2013

3950 Chesapeake St. NW Washington, D.C. 20016 | www.thewilsonbeacon.com

VOLUME 77 ISSUE 4



Photo by Sarah Torresen

LET IT SNOW! - Winter wonderland at Wilson. Snow storm on December 10 closes DCPS.

## In The News

**1** Nelson Mandela, former president of South Africa, died December 5 at the age of 95. Mandela was imprisoned for 27 years for protesting apartheid. He was released in 1990 and went on to become South Africa's first black president, as well as the country's first democratically elected president. He was a major force in ending racial segregation in South Africa, and has been hailed as one of the most influential people of the last century and an international symbol of compassion and forgiveness. In his eulogy, President Obama said that Mandela "belongs to the ages."

**2** Last Thursday, December 5, the United Nations passed a resolution to send 6,000 African troops, in addition to 1,600 French troops, to try to end the conflict in the Central African Republic. The central African country's president was ousted in March, and since then, Muslim and Christian rebel groups have been fighting for control in a conflict that has affected more than half the country's population, killing and displacing thousands of people. The resolution also calls upon wealthy nations to provide economic support for the African troops. So far, the U.S. has contributed \$40 million, and the European Union \$50 million.

## School Boundaries To Be Redrawn

**Claire Parker**  
Managing Editor

D.C. public schools will soon undergo the biggest transformation they have seen in several decades. The boundaries and feeder patterns that shape the schools will be scrutinized and changed, and Wilson's are no exception. The changes, which will be developed and proposed over the next few months by an advisory committee under the Deputy Mayor of Education's office, will go into effect for the 2015-2016 school year.

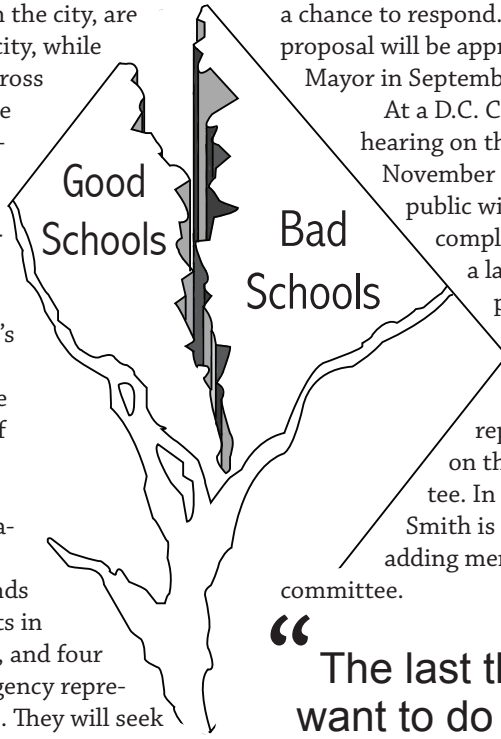
The school assignment policies in D.C., which include boundaries and feeder patterns, and establish the right of children to attend neighborhood schools, have not been altered in 40 years. But the city and its school landscape have transformed since the 1970s as a result of neighborhood and demographic changes, the emergence of the charter sector, several rounds of school closures

and numerous renovations. Schools like Wilson and Deal in Ward 3, often lauded as the best in the city, are over capacity, while schools across the city are underpopulated.

Deputy Mayor of Education Abigail Smith's advisory committee consists of 16 community representatives with backgrounds or interests in education, and four District agency representatives. They will seek community input through local focus and working groups, an online forum, and meetings with community mem-

bers. The committee will release recommendations in the spring and communities will be given a chance to respond. A final proposal will be approved by the Mayor in September 2014.

At a D.C. Council hearing on the issue on November 15, some public witnesses complained about a lack of transparency in the process and a lack of Ward 7 representation on the committee. In response, Smith is considering adding members to the committee.



“The last thing we want to do is split our city down Rock Creek Park.”

-Muriel Bowser

The issue has prompted discussion about which core values are most important to D.C. residents, whether they are proximity, diversity, safety, cost efficiency, or equitable access to quality schools. Matthew Frumin, a member of the advisory committee and long-time Wilson parent and advocate, said that so far, the committee has focused exclusively on how to prioritize these values.

Across the board, those invested in the issue have stressed the need for quality schools across the city. In the city's current state, disparities in quality of schools remain rampant, and some public witnesses and councilmembers expressed concern that D.C. is becoming divided along Rock Creek Park. “The last thing we want to do is split our city down Rock Creek Park,” said Ward 4 Councilmember Muriel Bowser.

CONT. ON P 2

Graphic by Jane Martin and Mason StrazzeIla

## Rape Claims at Pool Investigated

**Annie Rosenthal**  
News and Style Editor

Since the last week of November, three women have come forward claiming to be victims of sexual assaults that occurred at the Wilson Aquatic Center, which is run by the D.C. Department of Parks and Recreation. The Metropolitan Police Department is investigating the claims.

The first allegation came on November 26, from a 23-year-old Prince William County woman who claimed that two men she knew from Facebook brought her and a friend to the pool for an after-hours party and then raped and beat her in the

locker room. A police report says that the woman was intoxicated and does not remember the incident but was told later by a witness what had happened. The employee told police “that he knew the victim was intoxicated” and had sex with her.

According to the woman's uncle, after assaulting her, the men drove her back to her home in Woodbridge. “She got thrown out of the car with her bra off, had no clothes on -- they took her home about four or five o'clock in the morning,” he told ABC7. Family members brought the woman to a local hospital where they say she received treatment for neck and hand

injuries.

On Tuesday, when the Metropolitan Police Department began its investigation, visitors to the Wilson pool were asked to leave without an explanation. However, the Wilson swim team practiced on Tuesday morning, before the attack had been reported.

Members of the team say they didn't notice anything unusual. “It seemed like business as usual. If I hadn't heard about it I wouldn't have known that it had happened, actually,” said junior Paul Rock.

Since then, two more victims have come forward to say they were sexually assaulted at

the Wilson Aquatic Center. Both victims are teenage minors who say that a pool employee and another man brought them to the pool on November 9, after hours. There is no confirmation that these were the same men allegedly involved in the November 26 incident.

According to The Washington Post, one pool employee has been fired and another has been suspended. No arrests have been made, but the investigation is ongoing.

Ward 3 Council Member Mary Cheh has expressed frus-

CONT. ON P 2

# Parents Demonstrate Mixed Feelings

**Maddy Taub**  
Junior Editor

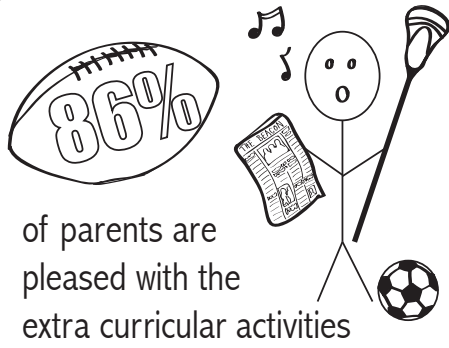
The PTSO administered a survey this fall to all parents and guardians at Wilson, asking them to weigh in on Wilson's effectiveness as a school. Results were mixed from 311 respondents.

Ninety percent were satisfied with the diversity of Wilson and 86% were pleased with the wide assortment of extracurricular activities and sports. Sixty-seven percent of respondents were also happy with the safety and security that Wilson provided. Wilson was given a thumbs up on communication overall, with 85.38% of respondents choosing yes on whether or not they thought the school does a

good job of communicating to families. They used Principal Cahall's weekly message as an example of effective communication.

Respondents were unhappy with class sizes, 65% thinking the sizes are average or below average. While most were content with Wilson's safety, respondents did mention the need for increased reinforcement of the rules at Wilson and for bullying prevention programs.

Freshman Ali Bauman agrees with most of these assessments of Wilson but feels that some issues may not be as important or prevalent as parents think. "I understand that class size is a concern of some parents, but I do not feel that it affects my learning," she said.



of parents are pleased with the extra curricular activities

Graphic by Jane Martin

These concerns have already prompted discussion. The PTSO and LSAT parent and teacher representatives met with Principal Pete Cahall and other administrators to go over the results and determine what steps can be taken to improve Wilson and make it into the school that all the parents, teachers, and administration envision.

# Pool Assaults

FROM P 1

tration at the lack of transparency in the cases. "I want a full report," she told The Washington Post. "What officials knew, when they knew, who the people who work there are and how they were hired. I haven't gotten any response yet."

"MPD is looking into the situation. That's all we can say," a representative from the Department of Parks and Recreation told The Beacon.

Pool staff members have been restricted from discussing the case, but John Stokes, the Parks Department spokesman, told the Washington Post that his office will release a memo to post at the aquatic center with details. A Parks Department spokesperson also told NBC News4 that "safety is our top priority."

# Boundaries

FROM P 1

The boundaries question has also raised tense discussion about race, class, and gentrification. Ward 3 Councilmember Mary Cheh said "The school boundary issue is very sensitive -- it's politically sensitive, it's racially sensitive, it's sensitive in terms of income groups, along every sort of metric you can think of."

No proposals exist yet, and it is too early to tell how changes will affect Wilson and the school system as a whole. In the end, "the school choice and school assignment policies we ultimately adopt will result in greater clarity, stability, and continuity for families," said Smith.

"This is a complicated issue," said Councilmember David Catania. "It's important that we get it right."

A more in-depth version of this story can be found at [www.thewilsonbeacon.com](http://www.thewilsonbeacon.com)

## Wilson News In Brief by Claire Parker

### Ms. Hara Welcomes Baby Boy

After-school coordinator Sheilla Hara has a brand new baby boy. Valentino Martin was born at 6:07 on November 29. "He has so much personality already and I'm amazed each day!" she said.



Photo courtesy of Shiella Hara

### Debate Team Argues Its Way to PA

The Wilson Debate Team traveled to Scranton, Pennsylvania on December 7th to participate in the Electric City Invitational. All debaters did well, with juniors Daniel and Ryan Katz finishing with a solid 3-3 record and sophomores Miro Furtado and Rachel Page breaking to octofinals.



Photo courtesy of Rachel Page

### Mental Health Lectures to Occur

Beginning in January, the Wilson Library will host a speaker series for parents on Mental Health. The series, organized by Jessica Wasserman, will center around ways of recognizing and handling depression, substance abuse, and instances of bullying among teenagers. One speaking event will occur in January, one in February, and one in March, all from 7 to 8:30 pm in the library. See the Wilson website for details.

### School Communications Amped Up

Lena Frumin, Wilson's new Media Center Assistant, hopes to facilitate communication between the school and students by using a service called Constant Contact. The service, paid for by the PTSO, allows the school to send messages like Principal Cahall's weekly message and other important information. Anyone can sign up for the service through the Wilson website. Frumin signed parents up for the service in the beginning of the year, but does not have many student emails. "I would really love for students to sign up for it so they can know what's going on," she said. In addition, if the students have school information they want parents, staff to know about, send it to [wilsonhighschoolptso@gmail.com](mailto:wilsonhighschoolptso@gmail.com) to be included in the weekly Sunday email or intermittent missives.



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# Common Application Problems Cause Stress

**Emma Buzbee**  
Staff Writer

Everybody hears the frightening tales of senior year – the first half is arguably the most stressful, hair-pulling time of one’s life. This year, for many high school seniors, the nerve-racking experience of applying to college was made all the worse by technological glitches in the Common Application.

The Common Application, or “Common App,” is an online program used by over 500 colleges and universities all over America. Students write one main application which they can send to any of the participating colleges they are interested in through the Common App website, cutting down the application load significantly.

But this year, just when seniors were beginning to send their first applications, numerous technical problems confronted them. Application fees

had to be paid multiple times, screens froze, and documents could not be uploaded.

Essays were a particular issue. As senior Emme Wosco-boinik said, “It [the Common App] is kind of confusing--the whole thing. It took away indents and sometimes deleted sections of essays.”

According to Sandy Bean, Wilson’s College and Career Center coordinator, “The Common App was not using/communicating using Naviance.” However, she seemed mostly unconcerned, saying, “There were no specific instances [of students missing deadlines] because college awareness was high. Many [including Dartmouth, Columbia, and Northwestern] pushed back initial deadlines.”

Ms. Bean added that she believes it is important to keep technology issues like this in perspective as there are more than 4,000 colleges in the U.S. and only 500 use the Common

App.

One alternative program is called the Universal College Application. Though it provided the original technology for the Common App, it is now a company of its own. Company spokesman Christopher Wagner said this program differs from the Common App because it gives students the ability to choose what elements to include on their application and has “excellent customer service.”

Many schools such as Harvard, Princeton, and Cornell have joined the Universal College Application this year, citing both its flexibility and the absence of technological difficulties that plague the Common App.

Scott Anderson, policy director for the Common App, apologized for the online frustrations, saying “We are fully committed to guiding each applicant and recommender to a successful submission.”



Photos by Isabel Gloss

# Filipino Club Raises Money for Typhoon Victims

**Rachel Page**  
Junior Editor

Typhoon Haiyan swept through the Philippines over a month ago, leaving a death toll of 5,924 and counting. The typhoon, another name for a tropical hurricane, destroyed cities and villages south of the country’s capital city, Manila. Weeks later, many survivors remain without proper housing, food, or medical care, much of which is difficult to transport to more isolated areas of the island chain. At Wilson, students in the SGA and the Filipino club have taken up the call to action to provide aid to the typhoon victims.

The Filipino Club is a new addition to the docket of Wilson extracurricular activities. It was

founded this year by science teacher Christina Sandoval. In her classroom, 10 to 15 students meet every Thursday and Friday at STEP to talk about what is happening in the Philippines in their native language. “It’s a place for the students to remember where they came from,” Sandoval explains.

The club has been fundraising more actively within the school in recent weeks to raise money to send back to the Philippines. Although none of the members know anyone who was personally affected by the typhoon, they still feel it is their responsibility to help. “We want to send things for them,” says junior Mary Janel Cardenas. “We are one family.”

In fact, even before the typhoon the club was collecting donations in the Macomb neigh-



Photo by Isabel Gloss

**FOOD FOR THOUGHT - Filipino club organizes bakesale for typhoon relief efforts.**

borhood to send to the Philippines. The disaster occurred just

as they were going to send them out. Now, the club is holding

bake sales after school to raise additional money for typhoon victims.

The Filipino Club has made itself more visible to the rest of the student body through fundraising, but that is not all that it is. “We want to teach others,” says Cardenas. Part of this education, perhaps, is that there is more to the Philippines than just a typhoon-- that this tragedy may be a call for us to open our eyes to a different part of the world, but it is in no way an excuse to close our eyes again once the disaster has passed.

The Student Government Association has also fundraised for typhoon victims by hosting a “change war” between the different classes at Wilson. The grade which donates the most money in select change jars will win a prize from the SGA.



**CHANGE WAR -** Last week, the SGA collected in money in the atrium in an effort to provide relief to people that were affected by Typhoon Haiyan. The typhoon shattered the lives of thousands of people in the Philippines last month.

Last issue’s Athlete of the Month photos were taken by Joey Keegan. In the issue the photos were not credited. The entire Beacon staff offers their apologies.

## Calling All Opinionated People!

If you’re mad, upset, pleased, startled, bamboozled, or just want your voice heard, come to the Beacon Office (Room C210) on Tuesdays at STEP or email [beaconchiefeditor@gmail.com](mailto:beaconchiefeditor@gmail.com) to sign up for your very own opinions article.

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## Public and Private Schools Measured Up

**Erin Sternlieb**  
Opinions Editor

Wilson's closest high school neighbors are all private schools. There are almost 10 within just a few miles of Wilson, all extremely different. While class size, diversity, and structure are a few among many notable differences between public and private schools, I've always wondered what is it that for up to \$40,000 more a year private school students get in their education, that my public school classmates and I do not.

Wilson's brand new renovation, with state of the art art classrooms, labs, library, gyms and pool is equal to, and even surpasses the quality of many other private schools in the area. So it isn't that private school kids get better facilities.

What it ultimately comes down to, the great advantage of private school is class size. Talking to many students who had attended both public and private schools in their lives, this was the one common thread. Private schools offer significantly smaller class sizes, which allows students to better focus in class, and enhances teacher-student relationships.

Adam Young, a junior at The Field School, who attended Wilson his freshman and sophomore years says that in a smaller school environment, "students are able to be more than just another student." Adam says that this has made him feel more comfortable asking questions and seeking out teachers for help, and while admitting this is possible at public schools too, "it is much harder."

Junior Jessica Schwalb at Georgetown Day School agrees. "Private school gives more opportunity for close and personal teacher-student relationships, independent study, and access to specialized classes and curriculums." In a big public school, with teachers teaching upwards of a hundred students, it is easy for students who aren't extremely self-motivated, to fall through the cracks.

Public school comes with its own advantages. In a larger school environment, students learn to fend for themselves.

Many Wilson graduates report that their unique experiences at Wilson make them feel better prepared to handle real life situations, while not everyone feels as prepared as private school students to handle rigorous college curriculum.

A larger school means more opportunities for programs, extracurriculars, and more diversity.

So is private school inherently better? Probably not. Although studies and educators may argue that smaller class size is crucial to effective education, what matters most is the individual.

Private schools can better cater to students with more specialized needs and interests, but a large public school like Wilson can be phenomenal for highly-motivated students who benefit—and may even learn better—in a large, diverse environment, and a "do-it-yourself" attitude.

Unfortunately private school is a luxury that very few can afford, despite the individual needs and preferences of students.

## Hall Notes are Ineffective

by Sophie ReVeal

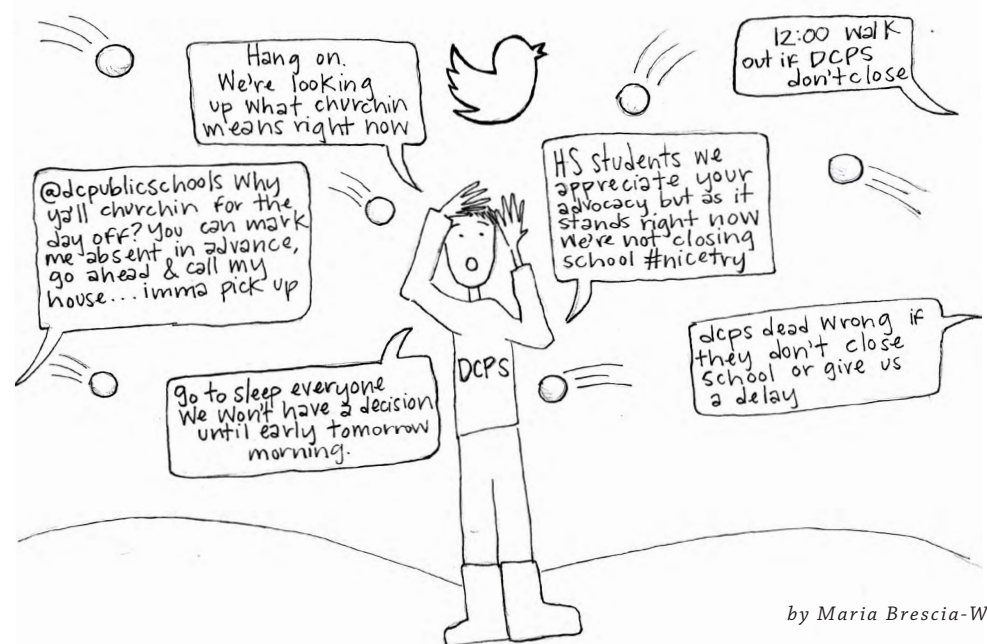
The tardy to class procedure at Wilson is useless and results in more negative outcomes than positive. The tardy policy is in place to insure students get the maximum instructional time. Although the intentions of this system are good, it actually creates problems with the student missing more of class.

One of Wilson's biggest problems is the tardiness to class. If a student is not in class, they can not learn, and if they come in late they distract other students. Assistant Principal Mary Beth Waits explained that Wilson's number one priority is punctuality. She also said that although it might have its problems, the current system is an effective way to address tardiness. It is the student's responsibility to be on time, and the system for dealing with it can't be blamed if the student misses more of their class.

When a student arrives late to class they must have a note from wherever they were coming from. If they don't have a note, and usually they do not, they are sent back out and told to return with one. The student has to track down an administrator, explain why they are late before returning to class with the note, a timely process. Many students have to follow this procedure every day and agree that it is pointless. Freshman Patrick Mulderig, has been late coming from his music class (where they can't hear the bell) more than 5 times this year. The policy, he said is, "not effective because I miss more class time for something that is not really my fault."

A change to the system is entirely necessary and could be done very easily. Either the student is marked tardy and told to stay in class, or they can get a note during STEP or after school. This way, the student will miss less of class, while still following the policy Wilson has already set. The irony of a tardiness policy that makes more students later to class needs to be addressed.

## DCPS and High School Students Get Feisty On Twitter



by Maria Brescia-Weiler

## Break Boundaries To Support Diversity

Staff Editorial

Wilson's changing racial and socioeconomic demographics have been a hot topic at the school for the past decade. The conversation will only become more intense when boundary changes being developed by the Deputy Mayor of Education's Advisory Committee are released this spring.

An increase in more affluent and often white upper Northwest families and Wilson's recent renovation, combined with the slow elimination of out-of-boundary students admitted into the school, have prompted some parents who would previously have sent children to private schools to consider a cheaper alternative with comparable academics. This shift caused the traditional demographics of Wilson to begin to change in potentially drastic ways, and this change will be amplified by the upcoming boundary changes.

When boundaries and demographics shift, we must maintain the unique Wilson identity we know, which is built on diversity, inclusion, open-mindedness, and awareness of our city and our community. As Principal Cahall reminds us in our student planner, we seek to exemplify "the model urban high school in the United States," with a mission to "create unity from our diversity."

We are worried that when boundaries change, Wilson will become a predominantly white, upper-income school. We acknowledge that boundary change will be necessary and the boundaries may need to shrink, but we want an explicit way for students' opinions on these changes to be heard. But we urge the advisory committee to make preserving diversity, both racial and socioeconomic, their top priority. Wilson's students' wide range of backgrounds and experiences creates a vibrant school community and a dynamic learning environment. It prompts interesting discussion in the classroom, unlikely interactions, and important friendships.

Diversity is an essential value of every DCPS school, not just Wilson. In order to produce well-educated students who understand the world around them and are open to different perspectives, schools must continue to cultivate diversity.

Matthew Frumin, a Wilson parent and member of the Advisory Committee, believes that in order for Wilson to maintain its quality, the Wilson community needs to actively work to boost the quality of other schools. We "should be supporting [other schools] in spirit and supporting them politically, so it's not just everyone out there trying to solve their own issues, but so it's actually people from around the city supporting each other so we have a successful system in all parts of the city."

We agree completely. It is our duty as Wilson students to support and advocate for other schools, and to be involved in this boundary change process. By making other schools better, students do not have to fight to go to Wilson and our hallways need not be packed. Helping other schools will also help boost diversity throughout the whole city by making it realistic and possible for families who previously only considered Wilson an option to consider other schools as well.

This not only ensures the quality of our own high school experience, but extends it to students across D.C. It will allow us to achieve our common goal: a quality education for everyone in the city.

THE BEACON

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The Beacon is published monthly by students of Woodrow Wilson High School, 3950 Chesapeake St. N.W., Washington D.C., 20016. Unsigned editorials and cartoons are the views of the staff; personal commentaries reflect the opinions of the writers.

Our mission is to provide an accurate representation of the diverse views, opinions, and concerns of the students of Wilson High School. We aim to serve as the voice of the students. Through responsible, ethical journalistic practices, we strive to provide thorough, reliable news coverage of issues relevant to Wilson.

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The Beacon welcomes all student and guest contributions: articles, photographs, art, commentary, and letters to the editor. All submissions can be sent to beaconchiefeditor@gmail.com, and become property of The Beacon.

The Beacon is a public forum created for the purpose of expressing the views of and providing information to the Wilson student body. Thank you for reading The Beacon.



Eboni Ellis

ASK EB

Ask your questions at ask.fm/TheWilsonBeacon

**Q** Everyone is stuck in the “bae” stage but doesn’t want a boyfriend or girlfriend, why do people want a relationship, but don’t want the title that comes along with it?

**A** Relationships in high school can be a beautiful thing, but can also be overwhelming. People can be uncomfortable with the commitment that comes along with a relationship, so that is probably why distinct titles in relationships have gone away. Titles come along with EN-titlement in a relationship which really can stress people out. You or your partner can then feel obligated to one another or each other’s things (social networking/phone passwords, gifts, etc.). Entitlement can easily ruin the fun of a relationship. Also, if you and that person are bonding well and having a successful talking or “bae” stage, you should pretty much know where you stand without a title. Just make sure that your feelings toward having a title and entitlement are expressed so your significant other knows how you feel about the situation, and so you can see their reaction! Good luck and I wish you the best in your relationship, and if it doesn’t work out, don’t stress; there are many fish in the sea!

**Q** What do you do when your boyfriend finds out that your ex is still on your line (in contact with you)? Should I tell my current boyfriend the truth or risk him finding out on the back end and potentially losing him?

**A** Unfortunately, you are in a situation where whatever you decide to do might not have a pretty outcome. Depending on your existing relationship with your ex, it isn’t a crime to still be in contact with him. You can still be good friends that just like to talk every once in a while. If this is the case, I feel like you should let your boyfriend know as a heads up so he won’t be upset if he finds out otherwise. But if your ex is trying to rekindle old flames and get back together with you, maybe you shouldn’t let your current boyfriend know right away so it doesn’t turn into a lot of drama or chaos. Put it this way, would you rather have your boyfriend mad at your ex for hitting you up? Or mad at you for not telling him? When I was once in this situation, I just let my current boyfriend know to avoid any trouble. If he is understanding, he might get mad at first but then brush it off once he realizes that he is your boyfriend now and already is more important than your ex.

**Q** Recently I have found a new fascination with female beauty, I’m pretty sure I like girls now and I’m not sure whether it’s a phase or if I’m actually bi-sexual?

**A** No matter how you might classify yourself, Wilson is such an accepting place; you’ll be fine! It’s perfectly fine to openly like girls, or to keep it personal until you are completely sure of your sexuality, but if you need coping mechanisms, or people to talk to, there are many helpful resources at Wilson such as the Gender-Sexuality Alliance. And there are many students and teachers that will be there for you. I’m sure you are not alone and you should not feel bad about your fascination.

Class Length Drains Student Attention

Aidan Caldwell and Elias Benda  
Staff Writer and Junior Editor

Ninety minutes is a long time. A professional soccer game lasts 90 minutes, two new episodes of Breaking Bad take 90 minutes, you could fly to Chicago in 90 minutes. At Wilson, our class periods (excluding period 1) are 90 minutes long, and sitting in class for that amount of time is not easy, effective, or productive.

In the United States, 1 in 5 high school boys and 1 in 11

high school girls has ADHD. A Centers for Disease Control report released this fall describes ADHD as a disease that “makes it difficult for kids to pay attention and control impulsive behaviors.”

It seems contradictory to have such long classes in a country with this high of a number of students who can’t focus in class.

Mark Custer, a 10th-grader at Wilson said, “I find myself paying close attention for only two-thirds of my classes.”

I, too, often fall asleep in

class and will zone out after an hour, which affects my grade and behavior. If this is a pattern of behavior for students at Wilson, then long class times are not the answer.

Many teachers agree that classes are too long, and hinder students focus. Social studies teacher Stephanie Beer says, “90 minutes is too long, but 45 is too short. Ideally I would like classes to be 60 minutes.” Many teachers struggle to plan an effective lesson that lasts 90 minutes and keeps students’ attention.

The long periods may also

have students disrupting class, making it difficult for the teachers to teach. If both students and faculty are struggling with the length of classes, there should be a change.

I propose having each class for one hour. This should be enough time for teachers to fulfill their lesson plan, while making sure students do not get too distracted. We need a more effective class period, and that starts with a more productive allotted amount of time.

TOP 10 LIES WILSON STUDENTS TELL THEMSELVES

1. Mr. Teffera knows my name
2. Sophomores are pretty much upperclassmen
3. Ski goggles are necessary today
4. Wilson can’t give me a court date for missing class
5. Not all deans are football coaches
6. Fat Trel is coming
7. I’m about to switch out of that class
8. Half days mean I have to go to school
9. Fort Reno is the move
10. I’m not about to loaf this advisory

# Paparazzi Princesses Grace Our Halls

**Duane Talley**  
Contributor

Two special guests came to the Wilson library during fourth period on November 15.

Lil Wayne's daughter, 15-year-old Reginae Carter, and Birdman's daughter Bria Williams, also 15, came to talk about their new book "Paparazzi Princesses," which was released in the summer. The two celebrity daughters told students that they were inspired to write the book because they felt the need to tell their story.

"Paparazzi Princesses" is the story of two teenage girls with celebrity parents and their experiences with the ups and downs of life. It is a fictional book but it is also partially based on the girls' own experiences.

Reginae and Bria are god-sisters who grew up together. They enjoy hanging out with friends, going to the movies, going to video shoots, traveling and meeting celebrities. They dislike hearing rumors about their parents.

Both girls are freshmen at a private high school in Atlanta, Georgia. One wants to be a

doctor while the other wants to be a radiologist and get into the music business.

At the presentation, they said the hardest part of writing the book was actually finding the time to get together and write because of their parents' busy lives. They ended up writing it during summer. They also explained that they are planning to write another novel soon but are still coming up with a new topic to write about.

"Paparazzi Princesses" could make a good Christmas gift.



Photo by Pamela Gardner

**FLASH FLASH - Reginae Carter and Bria Williams pose with Wilson Students Uyanga Mungunchimeg and Feven Zer after their talk on their new book.**

## Freshman Academy: Creating a Smaller Wilson for Smaller Students

**Conall Rubin-Thomas**  
Staff Writer

Many students think that ninth grade is a tough year – a new school, new classmates, more homework! In response, DCPS and Wilson have teamed up on a program to ease students into their freshman year and still improve grades. This program is called the Freshman Academy.

Featuring smaller classes (usually less than 20), a small team of dedicated staff, special programs such as field trips, incentives for good grades and teacher/student mentorships, the goal of the program is to create a community within the school to promote academic success. DCPS wants to ensure that freshmen can earn all the credits necessary to move on to 10th grade.

At Wilson, six teachers and an administrator make up the Freshman Academy staff: Algebra teacher Emanuel Asomugha; English 1 teacher Alicia Hunter;

World History 1 teacher Kristin Kowalew; Biology teacher Jonte Lee; reading teacher Wanda Samuels; and Algebra support teacher Jacqueline Beliveau. Assistant Principal Mary Beth Waits is the Academy Coordinator. The staff say they work closely together to focus on the needs of the students in the Academy.

The Freshman Academy is new to DCPS. "It is part of a DCPS initiative to provide first-time 9th-graders with closer support in both their academic studies and social/developmental adjustment to high school," Waits wrote in an email.

Eight other D.C. public high schools also have Freshman Academies, but the Wilson Freshman Academy is different.

At Wilson, only selected ninth graders attend in the Academy (a total of 57 students) whereas at other schools, all of the ninth graders are in the Academy.

The origin of the Freshman Academy is simple: national

school success statistics show that ninth grade is a crucial year for a student in high school. DCPS aims to raise the number of students who graduate from high school, and studies show that failing even one course in ninth grade leads to a drop in graduation rates.

Last June, DCPS decided to primarily focus on ninth graders. Administrators created an "Early Warning Indicator" system that ranked each student coming from a D.C. feeder middle school based on their academic performance, attendance, and behavior.

Most students in the Academy were thought to be at risk due to their middle school performance in at least one of these three areas. Other students in the Academy need smaller class sizes or teachers with whom they could have a personal relationship to help them navigate a school the size of Wilson.

The teachers and staff in the Wilson Freshman Academy say it can be inspiring. "I spend

a significant amount of time formally collaborating with the other teachers and administrators on the Freshman Academy team, on curriculum planning and evaluation, as well as extracurricular programs, field trips, and parent involvement," said Kowalew. "The most rewarding part of being involved with the Academy is watching students grow throughout the year. I am also inspired by the creativity and commitment of the teachers and administrators I work with on the team, which helps me grow as a teacher."

Freshman Academy faculty meet every Wednesday during fourth period to discuss their successes and challenges and to conduct common planning. Teachers sometimes make home visits to assist in their efforts.

Overall, the program at Wilson appears to be a success. "Based on the Early Warning Indicator data from DCPS, 88% of the students in the Freshman Academy were at risk academically at the end of eighth

grade. Data from their the first advisory report cards this year show that 28 students in the Freshman Academy earned at least a 2.0 GPA, including six students who earned Honor Roll with 3.0 or better," Waits noted. "That's 50%, an increase of 22% in terms of academic success."

This increase is due in large part to the staff who are working to make sure that all of the students learn and move on to their sophomore year. But it is also the result of an incoming class working hard to learn and succeed. Whether DCPS will continue the funding and training for Freshman Academy at Wilson and its other schools is uncertain, but the Wilson Freshman Academy staff hopes it will. "It is the goal of the staff in the Freshman Academy to have 100% of our students be successful and report to Wilson next year as 10th graders," Waits wrote. "We think that our experience this year will enable us to be more efficient and successful next year."

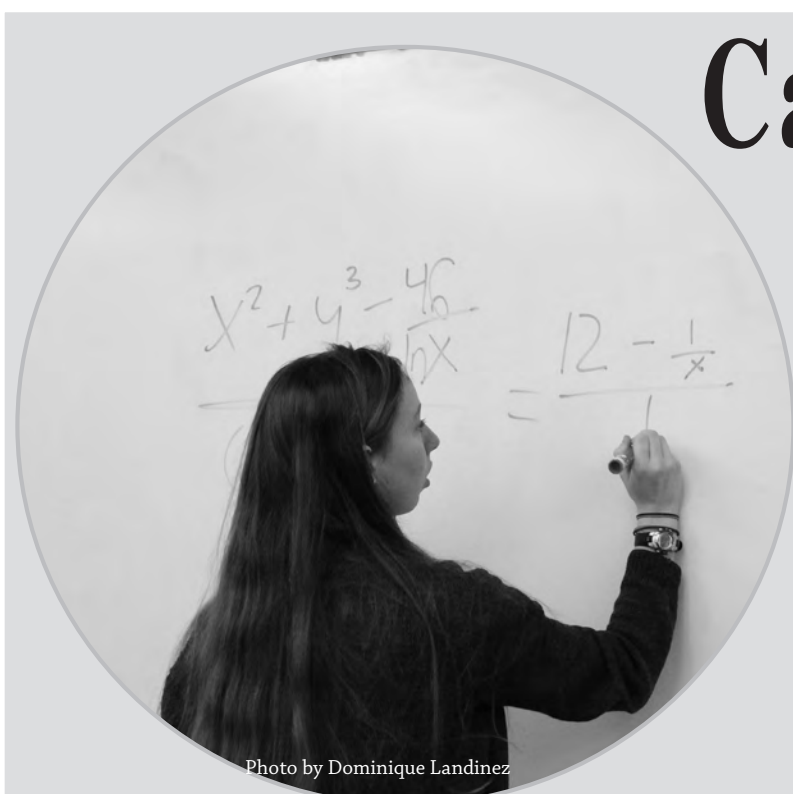


Photo by Dominique Landinez

## Calling All Math Lovers

by Maddy Taub

Is your life feeling kind of pointless but you can't find the derivative of these feelings? You may want to think about joining Math Club.

The club was started last year by seniors Helen Keshishian and Bridgette LaFaye. "We love math and thought we should provide math help outside of the Math Center for people who need it," Keshishian says.

The club meets every Friday in teacher Alex Jacoby's room, 429. Anyone can come, but you should definitely consider joining if you love math and love tackling difficult math problems. You may even have the chance to try to solve some math problems sent in from colleges offering scholarships to those who solve them.

Most people in Math Club have either taken or are taking Calculus, so they can help you with all levels of math and will love to help you study for tests and do homework.

Still trying to decide if it is worth your time? Senior Eileen Connor sums it all up: "Basically [Math Club] is pretty relaxed. We help people with math and we talk about math, and of course we eat Oreos."

So whether you enjoy math or not, Math Club is worth a quick look. Maybe you will even start integrating it into your weekly schedule.

**SHARPEN YOUR PENCILS - Math club member Eileen Connor helps students prepare for their upcoming tests. The club meets every Friday in Room 429.**

# Neighborhood Spotlight: WOODLEY PARK

by Ellie Mellick



Photos by Nico Artiga-Oliver

Nestled between the low-key food establishments of Cleveland Park and the hustle and bustle of Adams Morgan, Woodley Park is one of D.C.'s finest and friendliest neighborhoods. Home to the free Smithsonian National Zoo, as well as many of Wilson's coolest students, Woodley Park is a perfect mixture of cheerful row houses and unique city-life establishments.

The main commercial section of Woodley sits on a few blocks of Connecticut Avenue, between the William Taft Bridge (just south of the Cleveland Park Library) and Calvert Street NW.

Here you can find an array of food options, including a Fro-Zen-Yo, a Chipotle, and three Indian restaurants sitting directly next to each other. Both Umi Japanese Cuisine and Tono Sushi are excellent choices for

East-Asian fare.

Woodley Park also boasts the more upscale District Kitchen, and the ever-popular Open City, a 24-hour diner and bar with delicious Americana grub and expertly crafted coffee and hot chocolate drinks.

Woodley is also home to some unique shops, like Via Gypset, an elegant consignment store located on Calvert Street.

And of course, D.C.'s free

National Zoo is located in Woodley Park, the perfect place to go for a run, observe the giant pandas, and stroll through the mesmerizing Zoo Lights, a December-long holiday light show.

On tree-lined, hilly streets with charming row houses and flowers, families and young and elderly couples alike call the slopes of Woodley their home. You will also find dogs and their owners out walking at all times

of the day, as the many dogs living in Woodley all have owners they have to walk.

Woodley Park is one of D.C.'s most delightful neighborhoods, and it is very easily accessible by the Red Line (Woodley Park/National Zoo/Adams Morgan stop) and the 96, X3, and L buses. Any time you come to Woodley, you're bound to find comfort in the warm and happy streets.

## College Visits Reviewed by Peers

### Tufts

by Elias Benda

Tufts University is a beautiful school. Located outside of Boston, the main quad is surrounded by trees and big, old school buildings that hold classes and offices. It is a very private campus, yet it feels fluid with the dorms. The freshman and sophomore dorms are located directly inside the main campus, while the housing for upperclassmen surrounds the outside of the campus and is based on interest. The students seemed very intelligent and focused on activities and school events and organizations. The social life did not seem to be overwhelming at all, if not somewhat absent. Most of the students raved about the school itself and there was a sense of agreement about a feeling of academic interest.

As a Wilson student, Tufts might feel somewhat tame and manicured. The school itself is not very diverse, and students from D.C. may feel weird having to travel a decent distance to go into the city to party. The relatively small size of the population, campus, and location may be new for students coming from Wilson as well. I liked the school, but it definitely gave off an overall feeling of sheltered perfection.

### University of Oregon

by Hannah Taub

I visited the University of Oregon last spring break. To get to the school, you have to drive for about two hours from Portland, the biggest city in Oregon, to Eugene, which has a population of 157,986. Living in a college town like Eugene is probably a big transition from our urban D.C. lives. The first thing I noticed about the campus was the BIKES. There were bikes everywhere, locked to every pole and fence in sight. (But not to the trees, because that's illegal there). The second thing I noticed was the GREEN. There were so many trees, lots of grassy areas, and moss. (It rains a lot in Oregon, so moss is prevalent). The buildings on campus were a nice mix of old brick halls and more modern, glassy structures. The school has a very athletic feel (the founder of Nike went to Oregon), but there is also a hippie, outdoorsy vibe. I think most Wilson students would like it at Oregon a lot, because everyone seems to be very laid-back and friendly.

### University of Vermont

by Sage Ryan

The University of Vermont is a medium sized state school located in Burlington, Vermont, which was named the #1 college town in America by "Travel and Leisure". UVM has a lot to offer, from over 150 student organizations on campus to its Division 1 sports teams. This university offers 100 different majors and 81 minors, allowing a student to excel in any area they take interest in. As for class size, about 50% of classes are between 20-49 students, so as a freshman, you probably won't have to worry about intimidating lecture-style classes. As for the surrounding area, UVM is perfectly nestled between the Adirondack and Green Mountains, perfect for a student who likes to take advantage of nature. Burlington is not a city, but also not a tiny town, so you'll always have something to do and you'll never be lost!

### University of Michigan

by Nathan Davis

After spending a weekend at a friend's house at the University of Michigan, I came away with the feeling that the school would be a great fit for a lot of Wilson students. From my experience, Wilson students are self starters and know how to navigate a bureaucracy to take advantage of opportunities. From the students I talked to, the size of Michigan could, at times, make it difficult to get involved in activities or get help from professors, but they also mentioned that Michigan students were in general very motivated to seek out and work for whatever they needed. This attitude fits directly in with that of a lot of Wilson kids: do what needs to be done to be successful.

The difficulty that Michigan's size poses is on that Wilson students are equipped to tackle, and the fact that Michigan's programs cover so many disciplines, attract a variety of students, and are some of the best in the country across the board make it a place where a Wilson student could flourish.

# My Life So Far: The Haworth Sisters

**Zach Essig**  
Contributor

Sophomore Victoria Haworth and her sister and best friend Eleanor, a freshman, have recently moved for the ninth time.

Both Victoria and Eleanor were born in the District of Columbia, but "it gets a little complicated after that," said Victoria, chuckling. "We've moved nine times internationally and most recently come from Istanbul." The sisters have lived in the United States, Singapore, Indonesia, Australia, Hong Kong, and Turkey. The driving force behind all of this moving? Their dad's job.

"Shh, don't tell anyone, but our father is a secret agent..." Eleanor joked. "In all seriousness, our father works for the World Bank, and his job moves us around because the regions he works with change."

What does it feel like to constantly move? How do you establish roots, traditions, friends? "We grew up traveling and moving all the time, and have loved it," Eleanor said. "Leaving almost everything behind and starting again was normal for us. Our favorite place was probably Istanbul, maybe because we remember it the most, but also because our family fell in love with the culture and way of life there."

Their travels opened their eyes not only to the world and people around them, but also to their relationship as siblings. "Since we moved around so often, in each place we started off at home trying to get ready for our new school. For the first month or so we would only have each other, so we spent a lot of time together, which made us become very close," said Victoria, as she looked over at



Photo by Isabel Gloss

**SOUL SISTERS - Victoria and Eleanor Haworth have been around the world and back again, yet their friendship remains the same.**

Eleanor. "But we really became close in our most recent location: Istanbul, Turkey," added Eleanor. Neither sister could put their finger on why Turkey

fostered such a strong connection between them. "I guess maybe because we were able to really enjoy our time there and understand each other more," Eleanor said.

"But don't be fooled, we still do have our 'occasional' fights just like all siblings," Victoria quickly added with a cheerful grin.

Here at Wilson these sisters are a dynamic duo that have become fully involved and invested in Wilson life, academics, and culture. They both ran cross country this fall participated in Wilson's Ethics Bowl team. Furthermore, they plan on participating in more Wilson-sponsored activities as the year progresses.

In short, these sisters have circled the globe more than once; they are veterans when it comes to international travel. And as they said, who knows where they will be in a year from now, but all we can do is hope that they can stick around, because they make great additions to the Wilson student body!

# Internet Blocks Affect Instruction

**Greg Kopetsky**  
Staff Writer

It's a frustrating feeling. You're in the library on a slow Monday, finally printing a paper you worked on all last night and this lunch period. Your eyelids feel heavy, you're hungry, and your neck hurts from craning over your notes for the past hour. There are five minutes left until fifth period, and all you need to do is to log onto your favorite website: Twitter,

Facebook, Youtube, etc. You groan as the dreaded tab appears "Lightspeed Systems" and then the DCPS logo, and then "Sorry \_\_\_\_\_ not available."

Why are websites blocked anyway?

The Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) was enacted by Congress in 2000 to "address concerns about children's access to obscene or harmful content over the Internet," according to the Federal Communications Commission website. The federal law mandates that all computer

systems receiving funding from the government, chiefly schools and libraries, must comply with certain requirements. DCPS is one of the many entities that receive funding via the E-rate program run by the FCC. As a result, all DCPS schools block websites which the FCC have deemed inappropriate or unsafe for minors.

But CIPA serves another purpose: to preserve bandwidth. In other words, if the law was not in place, everyone would be on Youtube and Twitter, which

would reduce Internet speed to a crawl.

According to David Rose, Director of Educational Technology and Library Media at DCPS, complaints regarding the restrictions are not uncommon. "Approximately once a school day I hear complaints about websites being blocked," he said, adding that teachers are allowed to submit requests for any website to be reevaluated.

At Wilson, teachers have encountered complications with the system. Graphic arts teacher

Alexandra Stryker said she faced a problem recently. "About a month ago," she wrote in an email, "I couldn't grade or open any of my assignments from the Edmodo.com website. I realized DCPS had inadvertently listed Edmodo as a spam site and had disabled downloading until I brought it to their attention."

Currently, the DCPS Office of Teaching and Learning is working on being able to administer different filter policies for different age groups.

Lesser-known Holidays

DECEMBER						
Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
1 Eat a Red Apple Day	2 National Fritters Day	3 National Roof Over Your Head Day	4 Wear Brown Shoes Day	5 Party Day	6 Put on your own shoes Day	7 National Cotton Candy Day
8 International Children's Day	9 National Pastry Day	10 HUMAN RIGHTS DAY	11 Noodle Eating Day	12 Ring a Bell Day	13 Ice Cream Day	14 National Bouillabaisse Day
15 National Lemon Cupcake Day	16 National Chocolate Covered Anything Day	17 Maple Syrup Day	18 Bake Cookies Day	19 Oatmeal Muffin Day	20 Go Caroling Day	21 Look on the bright side day
22 National Date Nut Bread Day	23 ROOTS DAY	24 National Egg Nog Day	25 National Pumpkin Pie Day	26 Boxing Day	27 National Fruit Cake Day	28 National Card Playing Day
29 National Pepper Pot Day	30 National Bicarbonate of Soda Day	31 ONLY CAT DAY				

Graphic by Maria Brescia-Weiler and Lauren ReVeal  
Information: <http://www.holidayinsights.com>

December has been, is, and always will be the holiday month. From Christmas to Chanukkah/Hanukkah to Kwanzaa, this month is packed with holidays with origins from all over the world. However, there are many more December holidays which are not as commonly recognized by the public. Of the 31 days in December, 17 days are nationally recognized as food- and drink-related holidays, 10 are activity-based, and 2 are serious holidays regarding world issues. Most, if not all of these strange traditions really make you scratch your head, and wonder about how they would be celebrated here at Wilson. Would the average Wilson scholar lace up his/her own Jordans as opposed to having a friend do it for them on national put-on-your-own-shoes day (December 6)? In England, Boxing Day (December 26) is about gifts for servants; at Wilson, National Boxing Day could mean more school fights in which the entire school gathers around to catch 15 seconds of fighting and fifteen minutes of security guards breaking it up. The possibilities are endless on these odd holidays. Take a look!

by Matthew Smee



# Former Wilson Student Continues Activism Overseas

**Annie Rosenthal**  
News and Style Editor

"New breasts, less wrinkles, no hair."

These are the words Anna Viemose, ex-Wilson student and 17-year-old Danish citizen, sees every day on the train on her way to school, superimposed over an image of a surgically-altered naked woman.

In Copenhagen, Denmark, where Anna lives, these advertisements for the Danish plastic surgery company, Nygart, are everywhere - on buses, trains, and billboards. They are inescapable.

Many of you who were here last year will remember Anna Viemose: bubbly, blonde, clever, and opinionated. What you might not know is that almost overnight, she has almost become a Danish feminist icon.

Last year as a sophomore at Wilson, Anna wrote an award-winning opinion piece for *The Beacon* about the unhealthy message the Wilson dress code sent students, particularly curvy girls.

She moved back to Denmark this past summer after living in the U.S. from sixth through 10th grade. It wasn't long before the Nygart plastic surgery ads started to bother her, especially after a recent political debate over whether or not breastfeeding in public is acceptable.



Anna Viemose

"The ads were sending this message that it's totally fine to see a naked body in public as long as it's a 'perfect' one. But we're not allowed to show off natural bodies...I saw [the ads] everyday when I went to school, and I started thinking about how much their message was influencing me, even though I didn't want to let it. I would start subconsciously repeating their motto to myself as I took the Metro every day. Then I noticed that I was doing that, and I got really angry," she wrote in an email.

Anna translated this anger into words. She wrote an opinion article about the effect the ads have on her and other women, highlighting a conversation she had overheard between two men standing in front of a Nygart ad about how breastfeeding in public is gross because new mothers' bodies are unappealing.

She emailed her article to a major Danish newspaper called

Politiken and asked them to publish it. To her surprise, they did.

Right away, Anna's article became a major topic of discussion in Denmark. Within a week, she was interviewed three times for TV and once for radio.

The article was published just before local elections were scheduled to occur, and when political candidates saw the uproar the Nygart ads were causing, they clamored to "call dibs" on the issue and make banning plastic surgery ads from public institutions a part of each of their campaigns. Advertisements for cigarettes and other products considered unhealthy are already banned in Copenhagen, as are commercials with religious biases.

Anna attributes a lot of the success of her article to the liberal climate of Denmark.

"In the U.S. there's a lot of extreme and very opposite opinions, while the Danish opinion spectrum doesn't span that far. I don't think you'd meet anyone in Denmark who would actively fight against equal rights for anyone. The U.S. on the other hand also has a lot of strong fighters - it's just more extreme there than it is here."

Although she says most of the feedback she's received has been positive, Anna has received some criticism. "A lot of people think that I wrote the article to be like 'Hey, look how difficult

it is to be a teen girl, we have all these insecurities, poor us.' Like an interviewer once kept asking me leading questions to get me to say I felt insecure. I don't feel insecure. I feel angry," she wrote. "I'm angry that I have to, as a 17-year-old...constantly get the message that I should not be able to think of myself as good enough. I'm not hugely insecure. But I do feel like I am constantly being told that the right thing to do is feel insecure."

Additionally, Anna says people often assume that she is opposed to plastic surgery as a whole. But, she says, that is not the case. "I'm not against plastic surgery. I'm more concerned with these commercials, and I think we should be more careful about the messages that we send out in the public space. I just think we should teach women and girls that they are allowed to love their bodies the way they are, and to promote a healthier self image."

She notes her experience of being interviewed on the radio with two other young guests, both female fashion bloggers who had had plastic surgery, as an example of the proliferation of the idea that surgically-enhanced bodies are better than natural ones.

"What was weird was that every time the other two were talking, they were laughing and joking and the radio host was friendly towards them. When

the camera turned towards me, the conversation suddenly became extremely serious. So essentially, I was the boring, prudish one - which I don't mind that incredibly much, except for the message that that sends out: when we were talking about changing your body, it was fun and filled with laughter, but when I tried to advocate that we should be allowed to love our natural bodies, it was boring and serious."

When the interview was over, the host went over to the other two women and told them that she had also had plastic surgery, and the three of them bonded and laughed while Anna "was the boring lone one in a corner who didn't want to change [her] body."

Anna says that she is proud of the effect her article has had. She has started a blog, and plans to continue writing in the future, as well as advocating for women's rights. "I haven't exactly decided what I'm going to do yet, but I'm very passionate about this subject, and I think that the big fights as well as the smaller ones are important," she wrote.

When I asked her how she thinks the experience has changed her, she replied, "It made me feel like I wasn't just a child sitting in her room whining. I feel like I actually did something and it's nice to realize that I can."

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# ATHLETES OF THE SEASON

By Michael Knapp



Photo by Brian Angel



Photo by Isabel DiRosa

The athlete of the season for boys participat-

## ROSS PENDERGAST

country coach, Patrick Osteen.

ing in fall sports is Ross Pendergast. As a senior and captain of the team, Pendergast helped lead the cross country team to its fourth consecutive DCIAA city championship team title. Pendergast also impressed individually, posting a personal best 5K (3.1 miles) race time of 16 minutes and 48 seconds. Along with his personal best time, Pendergast also placed fifth at the regionally renowned Oaklands Invitational, a race consisting of close to 300 runners and over 40 teams.

While Pendergast had one of the most successful seasons of any DCIAA runner in recent years, it is his ability as a leader that truly impressed head boys cross

captain of the team, he was a true leader in every sense of the term," Coach O'Steen said. "His leadership and hard work helped to bring us our fourth consecutive DCIAA City Championship team title. It has been a pleasure to coach Ross and see his improvement over four excellent cross country seasons."

Pendergast excelled this season as both a runner and a leader. These qualities led to individual success, and team success in the form of a DCIAA championship. The senior captain is in the process of making a decision on where he will be running on the collegiate level.

## MADELINE CISZEWSKI

The girls fall athlete of the season is senior rower Madeline Ciszewski. Ciszewski is a captain of the Women's Crew Varsity Eight and has helped lead a rejuvenated girls crew team during her time at Wilson.

Ciszewski is looking to build on her past success as she moves out of the fall season and into winter training, preparing for the rigorous spring schedule.

"Maddie's work ethic sets the highest standard for our crew," said head coach Angela Wunderli. "She values working hard and appreciates the results that come from finishing strong and never giving up. Her

teammates benefit from her natural leadership as she motivates and helps them to achieve their best."

One thing Wilson crew coaches constantly stress is the importance of working hard year-round as a rower, as crew more than any other Wilson sport takes a full year's commitment.

As the crew team moves out of a successful fall season, they will be rallying behind Ciszewski during this year's winter training.

Look for Ciszewski to lead the girls in another successful spring campaign.

## SGA Considers Banning Redskins Clothing



Photo Courtesy of Lisa Spearman



Photo by Lamek Khasay

**Alex Dorosin**  
Contributor

Although the public controversy over the Redskins' name has been going on for years, it was not until a couple of weeks ago that the topic became an issue at Wilson.

It began with a complaint to Principal Pete Cahall. A student claimed offense at seeing so much Redskins clothing in the Wilson hallways. Cahall kicked it back to the students, saying he wanted to let the student body make the decision on the ban, letting the SGA administer a vote. Several key questions have come to light.

There was a meeting earlier this year involving all SGA members and any interested students. Both sides presented arguments. Then they used a service to conduct the vote where voters could text in a code for whichever side they supported and the votes were automati-

cally counted.

The outcome of the vote was to not ban Redskins clothing, with a 4:1 ratio of those who opposed the ban to those who supported.

However, not all students were given the opportunity to participate in the vote, as not all students were aware the vote was going on.

In fact, less than 150 people participated in the vote according to senior class treasurer Todd Allen-Gifford. "[There was] not as much student participation as we probably would have liked, maybe because it was not a particularly important issue to most students," said Allen-Gifford.

It is a tradition for staff to come to school dressed in burgundy and gold the day after a Redskins game. So far, most staff members have not had the option to voice their own opinions.

Administrative Aide Lisa Spearman said that although

she believes the name should be changed because it is offensive, until the name is changed officially, "Fans should be able to support the team, regardless."

There is a popular belief that the name "Redskins" is offensive and that there are some students who would like for it to be banned.

If Redskins attire was to be banned, it could create a rebellion movement of kids purposefully wearing it to school to protest the ban. However, while it is not banned people will most likely continue to complain that the name is offensive and bothers them.

Each option could have potentially troubling repercussions.

Even with the student body electing to not ban Redskins clothing, there is no good option currently on how to deal with this complex issue. As it stands, there will be no ban on Redskins attire.

**HAIL TO THE REDSKINS - Both staff and students boast Redskin clothing.**

**SPORTS**

# Basketball Team Shoots for A Winning Season

**Brenton Petty**  
Contributor

After a disappointing loss to Coolidge in last year's DCIAA semifinal playoffs, the varsity basketball team is back and rejuvenated, expecting nothing less than a championship title. With the addition of two former WCAC (Washington Catholic Athletic Conference) transfers, senior Khyree Robinson and junior Miles Gilette, along with returning starters Brenton Petty, Dimone Long II, and Larry Holmes III, the Tigers are hoping to make a postseason run.

"Before I got here, everything about Wilson was the football team and I want to help change that," Robinson said.

The Tigers' motto this year is "Team over talent," said Assistant Coach Angelo Hernandez, who is in his fifth year of coaching at Wilson. "Last year we had a lot of guys who could score the ball and that's all they wanted to

do," Hernandez said. "But this year we have guys who want to play together and at times pass too much."

One disappointment going into this year is the absence of senior Michael Knapp, who was coming off a year of not playing and was expected to be a key contributor to the team. He is now out indefinitely with a back injury.

"Mike is family and will always be family and a part of the team no matter what," said Head Coach Andre Williams, who also coached Knapp's older brother Jackson. "We just hope he can make a comeback middle of the season," Long said.

Wilson got off to a strong start to the season, beating South Lakes High School 66-56. They have tough games coming up in their schedule, including schools like Roosevelt (ranked 13th in the area by The Washington Post), Coolidge (16th), and DeMatha (17th).

# Championships in Review

**Sophie ReVeal**  
Staff Writer

The Wilson fall sports championship games were a great reflection on all the teams' seasons. Both the boys and girls varsity soccer teams, the boys and girls cross country teams, and the girls varsity volleyball team won city titles in their respective championships.

## Varsity Soccer

On November 2, both the boys and girls varsity soccer teams played in the city championship games at Cardozo. The girls faced off against School Without Walls, and after a plethora of goals, the game ended in an 8-1 victory for Wilson. "We had a great season and we [had] an awesome group of really strong players that have bonded a lot over the year," senior Eileen Connor said. "It was a great way to wrap up the season, beating Walls."

The boys game against Bell, which was played slightly later, was a well-fought battle in which the Tigers were victorious. With a shutout by goalie Henry Shuldiner and goals scored by Adam Pine and Sebastian Duque, the game ended in a safe 2-0 score. "We fought hard all season and our hard work paid off," said freshman Mati Cano.

## Varsity Volleyball

The varsity girls volleyball championship game was played at H.D. Woodson High School on November 19. Wilson played Banneker, and the Tigers won each set by at least nine points. The volleyball team had a more competitive season than previous seasons because of a recent improvement in some DCPS teams, including Banneker.

"There was a lot of school spirit, and many Wilson students came out to Woodson to support us," junior Susannah Newell said. "It was another amazing championship and it couldn't have gone better. We wouldn't have been able to win without our dedicated coaches."

## Cross Country

The boys and girls cross country teams ran a 5K, or 3.1 miles, at Fort Dupont Park for their city championship. Wilson ran against numerous schools including Roosevelt, Walls, and Dunbar.

With freshman Mayim Lechrich leading the way, the girls won spots one through five, claiming the city championship title. It was the first time in 20 years that the girls have claimed all five top spots. For the boys, senior Ross Pendergast claimed second place, helping the boys' team win the DCIAA title as well.

## WINTER SPORTS SCHEDULES

HOME GAMES ONLY  
CHECK WEBSITE FOR FULL SCHEDULES  
[www.thewilsonbeacon.com](http://www.thewilsonbeacon.com)

### SWIM TEAM

Jan 15 5:00 vs St Maria Goretti @Wilson  
Jan 29 4:45 vs Bishop McNamara @Wilson  
Feb 5-8 TBA Metro Championships @Wilson

### WRESTLING

Dec 21 @ Sidwell  
Dec 27-28 Tournament @ Damascus  
Jan 9 vs St. Johns @ Wilson  
Jan 16 vs Model @ Gallaudet  
Jan 29 Sidwell Tri Match @ Sidwell  
Feb 4 @ St Anselms  
Feb 12 vs Mclean @ GDS

### Boys Basketball

JV		
12/14	Freire Charter	4:00
12/16	Dunbar	4:00
12/18	Eastern	4:00
1/7	Bell	4:00
1/24	E.L. Haynes	7:15
1/25	Phelps	4:00
1/27	V.A. Academy	6:00
2/4	Bollou	4:00
2/6	Cardozo	4:00

### GIRLS BASKETBALL

12/18 6:00	vs Eastern
12/27-29 6:00	Title IX Christmas Tournament
1/7	vs Bell
1/15	Capital Christian Academy
1/25	vs Phelps
1/17	vs Roosevelt
2/6	vs Cardozo
2/15	vs Dunbar
2/14	vs Bollou
2/8	vs Coolidge

ALL @Wilson

### VARSITY

12/18	Eastern	ALL @ 8:00 pm
1/4	DeMatha	
1/7	Bell	
1/17	Roosevelt	
1/25	Phelps	
2/4	Bollou	
2/6	Cardozo	
2/11	SWW	
2/15	Dunbar	

Illustrations by Maria Brescia-Weiler and Nathan Davis

# Carving Up the Turkey Bowl

**Nell Bayliss**  
Junior Editor

It has been a tremendous season for Wilson's varsity football team. Overcoming the adversity of last year's upsetting ruling that prevented them from playing in the championship, the Tigers proved that they were not just a one-year wonder. This year the team qualified to return to the Turkey Bowl against a strong H.D. Woodson team.

After losing to Woodson earlier this year, Wilson knew the Bowl would be a challenge. The game was clearly momentous for Wilson, as evidenced by a large, enthusiastic fan turn-out. To signal game time, the captains lined up and linked arms.

Early on, it was clear Wilson was going to have to play their hardest to win. Woodson came out with a strong defense, forcing Wilson to run the ball. In the first quarter Woodson was able to get a strong lead with a rushing touchdown from Jai Carson, which created momentum for the Warriors. Wilson was not able to score until the end of the second quarter with a 35-yard pass from Scot Beumel to Maurice Carter, leaving the score at half-time 13-6 Woodson.

Coming out after halftime, the Tigers played well, with the de-



Photo by Bela Ortiz

**THINK FAST!** - Quarterback, Scot Beumel, throws a warm-up pass to a teammate at the Turkey Bowl. Wilson fell to H.D. Woodson 25-13.

fense coming up with a fumble recovery and an interception by Daniel Robinson. The Warriors still controlled the game, with a 50-yard pass from Rashad Cooper to D'andre Payne in the

third quarter, making the score 19-7 Woodson.

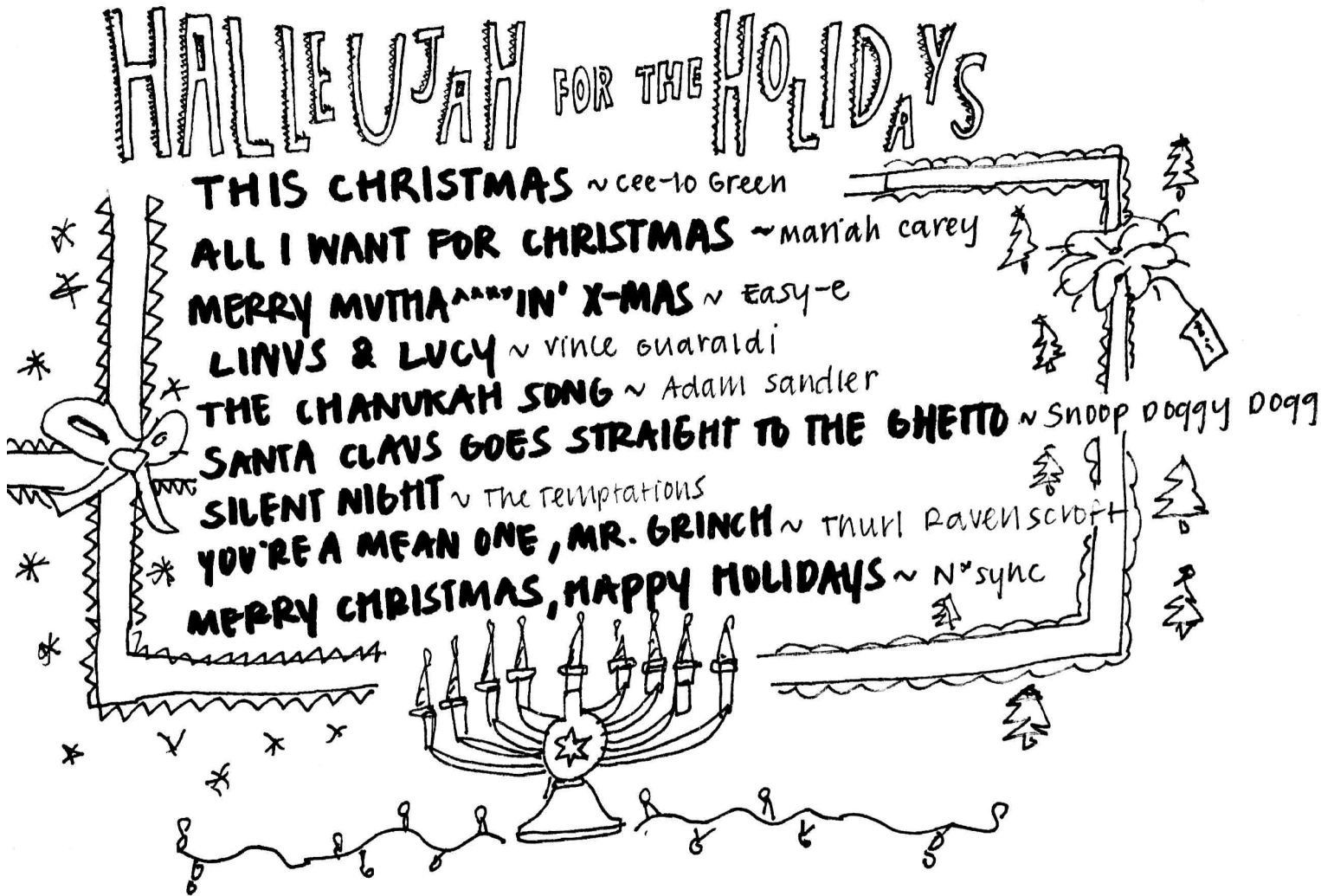
During the fourth quarter the Tigers put up a fight with a rushing touchdown from Abdul Adams, but ended at 25-13.

Even though the Tigers came up short in the championship game, they had a historic season as the first Wilson football team to play the Turkey Bowl in 22 years. The Tigers proved to the

city that Wilson is a new threat in D.C. football.



Photos by Bela Ortiz  
Graphic by Jane Martin  
and Mason Strazzella



Playlist by Nell Bayliss

# Fear and Clothing



## Same Difference

Jack Price  
Columnist

Humans love the idea of being unique. Even during those not-so-infrequent instances when the government reminds us that anyone who looks or acts different than us is probably a terrorist or an illegal immigrant trying to steal our jobs, we Americans will tell anyone within earshot how unique, how nonconformist, how individual we are.

That is a bunch of bullfeathers.

Everyone is the same. We all die, we all eat, and according to Ms. Bean, we all are destined to end up at UDC. We all harbor fairly similar desires—a house that doesn't have any parents in it, a group of friends who aren't annoying, a secret underground lair full of vintage Helly Hansen snowsuits—and the fact that we all want to be different only further illustrates how similar we all are.

Take, for example, the idea of personal style. Everyone, regardless of whether they put a ridiculous amount of time into dressing or no time at all, is crafting a physical manifestation of their character that they wish to present to the world.

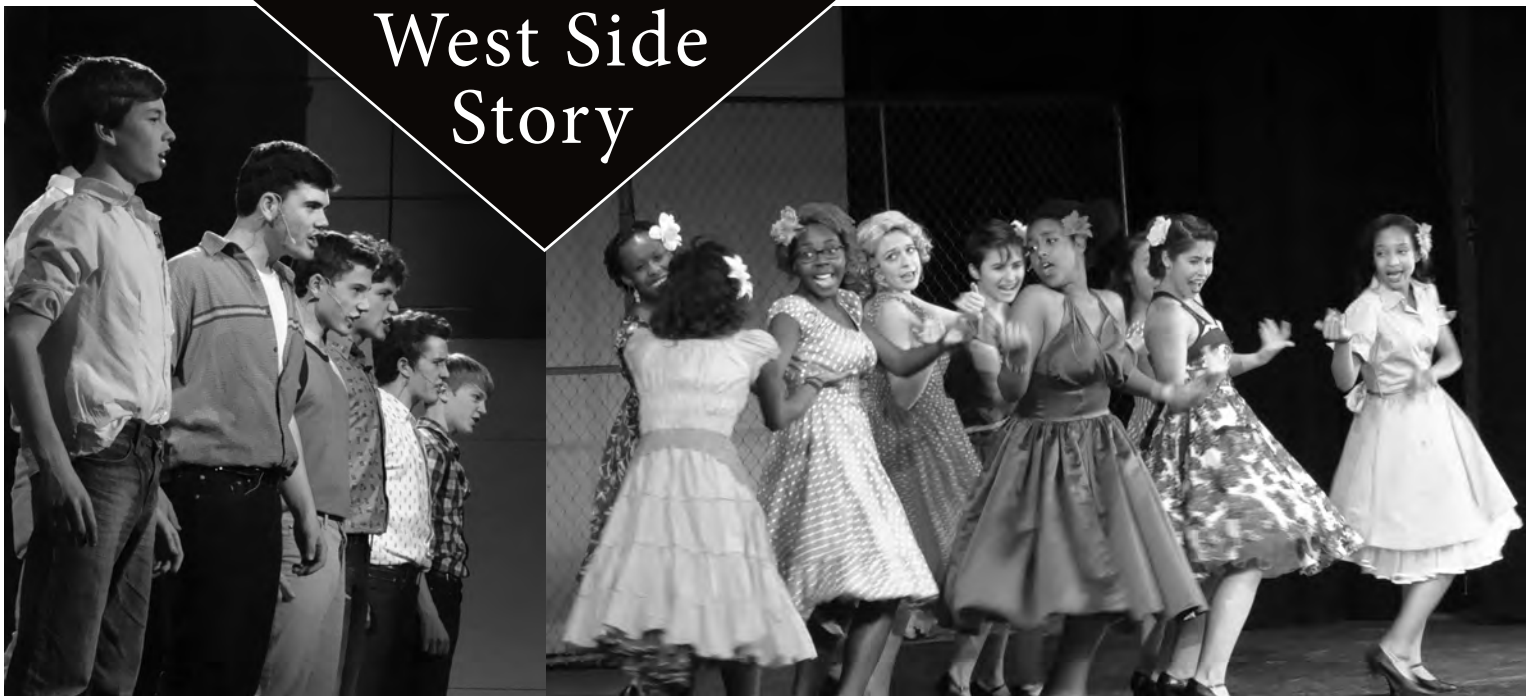
As different as they seem, a girl who wears those strange lacy mushroom stockings and Doc Martens has the same goal in mind as a boy who wears Coogi down to the socks like he's Mr. Cahall: To present their peers with an idea of who they are, or want to be. That's why I dress like a ninja/paleontologist.

Big Business long ago figured out that people wanted to be different, and used that desire to sell everything from cars to Camels.

Today, the individualist ideal sells Apple computers, rap, and pretty much anything at Urban Outfitters. Everyone buys these products, wanting to be different, and then becomes despondent when they realize everyone they know bought the exact same purple penguin-with-sunglasses tee from Urban. Very despondent indeed.

In the end, people need to come to terms with the fact that there is someone out there just like them, except evil, and they will someday have to murder that Bizzaro them and assume their identity.

## CURTAINS CLOSE on West Side Story



Photos by Judy Licht

**¡AMMÉRICA!** - Pictured above Jets and Shark girls enjoy their final performances of West Side Story. "We had a really good show to share," says Ben Topa, who played Tony.

Megan Bell  
Staff Writer

A three-month long process culminated in November as the fall musical, "West Side Story," came to life. Both the large number of boys expected to try out and the plot of "West Side Story" inspired Director Harriet Bronstein to pick the show, which has an abundance of male roles and addresses issues that she felt would resonate with the Wilson community, such as racial tension and gang activity.

The musical is a challenging one; the vocal music is complex and difficult to sing and the orchestra music is complicated.

"West Side Story" involves an immense amount of dancing—more than Bronstein had ever done in a show—and Wilson's production had three different choreographers, each responsible for a different aspect of the dancing.

However, the intense rehearsals and multiple choreographers paid off. "The choreography and ensemble were really impressive," said junior Sarah Marion.

The orchestra was able to tackle the complicated music, which includes classic show tunes such as "Tonight," "America," and "I Feel Pretty," by incorporating members of the

broader community.

The 18-piece orchestra was composed of Wilson students and teachers, college students, neighbors, a student from another school and even a parent of a cast member. "I think everyone was thrilled to be able to play the music, which is some of the most beautiful music written for theater," Bronstein said. "The orchestra worked out great."

The Cappies, student reviewers from schools around the city, also gave the show rave reviews, naming Yana Madrid's vocal skills as Maria and the chemistry between the Jets as highlights.

For cast members, the

rehearsal process was one of the best parts of the production.

Ben Topa, who played Tony in the musical, said that his favorite things about the play were the opportunity to meet new people and the final performances. "We had a really good show to share, which we all took great pride in," he said. "Hearing the applause from the audience was so rewarding because we knew that our work had turned into something really great."

Judging by the number of people leaving the show humming the tunes, the audience thought it was pretty great too.



# Rated R

By Jackson Ross

## HIDDEN GEMS OF NETFLIX

In conversations with people about Netflix's streaming options, I notice something: people mainly use Netflix for TV shows, not movies. When I ask them why, the almost universal response I get is that movies take too much time. I don't know why they think that watching a two-hour film takes up more time than 90 episodes of *Parks and Recreation*, but I'm not going to get into that argument. If you search hard enough, you can find some great movies hidden beneath all those TV shows. Here are some of my favorite hidden film gems that Netflix just happens to stream.

### *Flirting With Disaster (1996)*

Ben Stiller has played some pretty outlandish characters: Derek Zoolander, Tugg Speedman, Chas Tenenbaum, but none of them would make you think he can give a subtle, restrained performance and still be very funny. Yet he shines as a neurotic adoptee who goes on a road trip to find his real parents, accompanied by his wife, baby, and a seductive adoption agent. Along the way, he encounters everything from mutilating carjackers, aging Deadheads, two ATF agents who happen to be a gay couple, and more. Accompanied by other hilarious people such as Josh Brolin, Lily Tomlin, and Mary Tyler Moore, it deserves to be counted as one of Stiller's best films.

### *Brick (2005)*

Most people these days couldn't define film noir no matter how hard they tried. It's an old-school genre; a great mystery, a cigarette-smoking private eye trying to crack the case, the femme fatale who may or may not be on the protagonist's side. All of these concepts are great, but it seems they died fifty years ago. Writer-Director Rian Johnson took a risk not only by making a classical noir in the 21st century, but by setting it in and around a high school. What teenagers these days talk like Humphrey Bogart? Who cares? A young Joseph Gordon-Levitt nails the tough-guy talk as a social outcast who finds himself in an underground drug-running operation in his school, all while he tries to discover who murdered his ex-girlfriend. Watching *Bricks*, it becomes obvious that he would go on to become a big star.

### *The Vicious Kind (2009)*

This small indie film has one of my favorite protagonists in any medium of entertainment. Caleb Sinclair (Adam Scott, Oscar-worthy) is a messed up person. Between spouting endless misogynistic one-liners and berating everyone around him, he finds himself in a conflict with his brother's girlfriend. He's calling her a whore and threatening her life one minute, profusely apologizing and attempting to flirt with her the next. As dark as it can get, it still finds time for great humor, particularly when Caleb's awkward friendship with his slow-witted co-worker is displayed. Even if the misogynist aspect worries you, see it for Scott's breathtaking performance.

### *In Bruges (2008)*

What is Bruges? It's a quaint city in Belgium, filled with beautiful paintings, gothic architecture, and, in this movie, two Irish hitmen on a leave of absence. Colin Farrell won a Golden Globe for his hilariously childlike performance as the younger of the two, who spend their vacation running into overweight Americans, petite drug dealers and a dwarf actor who takes horse tranquilizers and spouts Charles Manson ideals, all while under the watchful eye of their psychotic boss (Ralph Fiennes). All of that, combined with the music, thick accents, over-the-top violence and plethora of curse words, gives the film a surreal aspect that makes it even cooler.

## The Man Who Came to Dinner Debuts

**Brian Keyes**  
Contributor

Wilson students, it's that time of year again, when a small group of dedicated thespians get together to put on a play all by themselves. This year, the fall play comes to us in the form of a comedy, "The Man Who Came to Dinner."

This play is about a radio star named Sheridan Whiteside in the 1940's, who slips on a patch of ice outside the house he was going to visit for dinner. He is left bedridden, and slowly takes over the house in a charismatic fashion.

This year, the play is being produced by the Wilson Players, spearheaded by Jonah Gigli and Nathan Davis, both seniors. When asked what it was like trying to produce a play, Gigli responded, "It's challenging, stressful at times, and it's really my first year doing it, and me

and Nathan are the most experienced people to do it, but it's challenging."

Gigli and Davis also produced the student-run production of the 24 Hour Plays. Gigli expressed confidence in how the play will turn out, saying, "The set looks nice, the layout is cool, and I have a lot of confidence in the lead, Michael Bayliss."

When Lynn Spears, the play's director, was asked what the best part of the play would be, she replied, "All of it. It starts out full tilt boogie and stays that way."

Sophomore Michael Bayliss, who plays Sheridan Whiteside, talked more about how the cast works as a whole, saying, "Every part is important, I mean I know Whiteside is The Man Who

Came to Dinner, but everyone helps contribute and it's more about the house and the people in it."

Performances will be in the Black Box theatre at 7 P.M. on Thursday, December 12th, Friday, December 13th, and Saturday, December 14th. Tickets are \$3 for students and \$7 for adults.



Photo by Evan Hamlin

**CENTER STAGE - Michael Bayliss plays Sheridan Whiteside in the Players' upcoming performance.**



Lisa Truong



Sarah Bass

## artists' corner

Compiled by Annie Rosenthal



Joseph Rosas



CJ Edwards



Sarah McCreary



Jane Martin

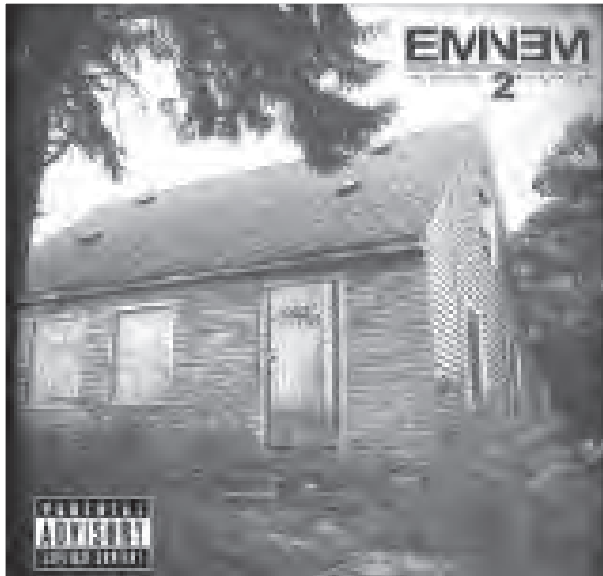


Laryah Randolph

# MUSIC REVIEWS

By Hope Willis

EMINEM



“The Marshall Mathers LP 2” is Eminem’s eighth studio album and the long anticipated sequel to the 2000 album “The Marshall Mathers LP”. It’s been a turbulent time for the rap titan: “Them last two albums didn’t count. ‘Encore’ I was on drugs and ‘Relapse’ I was flushing em out,” Eminem proclaimed on his last album, aptly titled “Recovery.”

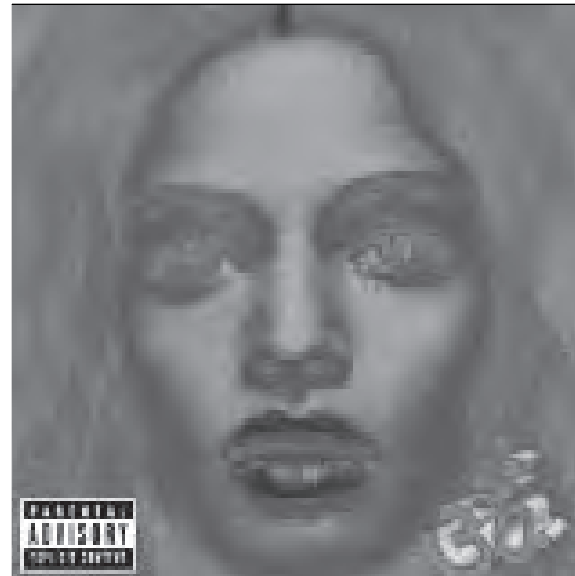
“Recovery” was intense, with Eminem explaining himself while trying to re-establish his rightful place in the hip-hop kingdom.

“MMLP2” is fierce and everything that its namesake promised it would be. He raps arguably harder than ever with rapid-fire delivery and bluntly clever triple entendres paired with mind blowing, over-your-head lyrics.

The tracks that most show off these skills include “Rap God,” “Berzerk,” “Wicked Ways,” “Rhyme or Reason” and “Evil Twin.” Still, on “MMLP2” Eminem gets personal with sentimental tracks like “Headlights.” The song is an ode to Debbie Mathers, his longestranged mother, and in it he goes as far as apologizing for his platinum record “Cleaning Out My Closet.”

Eminem is still maturing, learning and using his newfound wisdom to continue to polish his skills. “MMLP2” isn’t a breath of fresh air; it’s a nostalgic, asphyxiating cloud of toxic smoke forcing you to remember what rap is in its rawest form.

M.I.A.



“Matangi” is a Mahavidyas, the Hindu goddess of “spoken word and supernatural powers,” and also a play on of M.I.A.’s real name: Mathangi. This is the English-Sri Lankan musician’s fourth studio album.

M.I.A. sticks to her experimental genre while forcing Eastern and Western culture to collide and coexist stunningly. She accesses her roots and uses them complementarily.

On “Matangi” you can hear tribal vocals, primitive drums and screams that transition and lace themselves over catchy M.I.A. vocals, electronic sounds you would hear on a Dillon Francis track, all backed up by a deep hip hop bass.

“Warriors” is similar, with its use of cultural instruments accompanied by warm rhythms.

“Matangi” is very accessible, drawing us in with its familiarity, but then M.I.A. brings us into her unique world with her lyrics and strategic beat composition. Most of the tracks such as the noteworthy “Bad Girls” are downright danceable, head bob-able and jam-worthy.

“Matangi” is fun and easy to love, with a subtle layer of depth for people who care to look for it.

## Fashion in the Hallidays

Compiled by Isabel Gloss



# KIDS IN THE HALL

December 13, 2013

Compiled by Isabel Gloss

## What is the worst or best gift you've ever received?



Unicorn T-shirt (best)  
**Jordyn Byers, 11**  
**Joseph Roberts, 11**



My friend melted a candle and rolled it into a ball (worst)  
**Olivia Bray, 10**



Jar of pickles (worst)  
Nothing (worst)  
**Olivhea Milligan, 11**  
**Silvi Weiser, 12**



iPod, laptop, phone (best)  
**Mayim Lehrich, 9**  
**Nora Parisi, 9**  
**Kimberly Manalong, 9**



Tickets to a concert and a lizard (best)  
\$300 for shopping (best)  
**Avi, 11**  
**Ice, 11**



A doll in an egg (worst)  
A giant red poncho (worst)  
**Hannah Taub, 12**  
**Natasha Timmons, 12**



Eli Manning jersey (you decide)  
**Angel Escobar, 9**



Karate belt holder (I don't take karate)(worst)  
God of War II (best)  
**Darnee Hunter, 10**  
**Gabrielle Hayes-Gorham, 10**



Ca\$h (best)  
Socks (worst)  
**Chandler Kent, 12**  
**Erika Hinkle, 12**  
**Harper Randolph, 12**



Xbox (best)  
**Michael Jones, 10**



\$500, a dog, and a cat (best)  
**Nathan McMullen, 10**  
**Logan Segraves, 10**



Drake's concert (best)  
(shoutout to Emma who hooked me up)  
**Devin Rivera, 11**



iPod and laptop (best)  
**Ava Zechiel, 9**