



Woodrow Wilson High School THE BEACON

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Pool Assault Investigation Reveals DPR Flaws

Annie Rosenthal

News and Arts Editor

One of the men accused of sexual assault at the Wilson Aquatic Center in November is still on the pool's payroll, and will be until his case is resolved. Both his and a second case of alleged sexual assault after-hours at the pool are still being investigated by the Metropolitan Police Department but have already shed light on flaws in the Department of Parks and Recreation's management.

On December 16, Ward 3 Councilmember Mary Cheh and At-Large Councilmember David Grosso met with the interim director of the DPR, a captain from the MPD Special Investigations Branch, and two public witnesses in an extensive two-hour DC Council Committee on Transportation and the Environment Public Roundtable. The purpose of the hearing was to discuss the circumstances surrounding the incidents at the aquatic center and DPR's response.

Councilmember Cheh expressed frustration about DPR's limited communication with the public about the incidents.

"One of my major concerns," she said, "is that DPR has done far too little to assure that



Photo by Isabel Gloss

CRIME SCENE - The Wilson pool is the site of two alleged incidents of sexual assault in November. The investigation is ongoing.

residents are informed about incidents and know what has gone on, to the extent permitted of course by law enforcement investigation, and informed about what they're doing at the pool to ensure patrons' safety.

"The alleged incidents and DPR's response to them appear to me to be somewhat emblematic of gaps in security and management generally."

Among Cheh's complaints was the fact that notices

about the alleged assaults were not posted at the pool until December 9, and that even then the notices were hard to read. According to a public witness at the hearing, the most senior pool manager had instructed pool personnel not to respond to comments. The witness said that one pool employee had threatened to call the police if he came and asked about the incident again.

The Metropolitan Police De-

partment captain at the hearing said that because the suspects in the case were known, MPD had left communicating with the public to DPR. When Cheh asked DPR Interim Director Sharia Shanklin why notices had not been posted earlier, Shanklin responded, "The communication that I engaged in with MPD and with the office of the mayor led me to make this decision at

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In The News

Compiled By Emma Buzbee

NSA Uses Apps to Spy

The NSA and British intelligence services mine data from smartphone apps such as Google Maps, Facebook, Twitter, and Angry Birds to collect users' personal information, according to *The New York Times*. The NSA claims that they do not target "ordinary Americans."

Shooting in Maryland

Last Sunday 19-year old Darion Aguilar entered the Columbia Mall in Maryland and shot two people before killing himself. As *The Washington Post* reported, Aguilar's quiet personality and love of cooking gave no indication to peers and relatives of an apparently troubled mental state.

Egyptian Military Leader is Running for Office

According to *The New York Times*, Egypt's military-backed government, disbanded after public protests three years ago, is set to make a return. Field Marshal Abdul-Fattah el-Sisi, the military leader responsible for taking the country's first freely-elected president out of office, is running himself and seems certain to win.

New Attendance Policy Causes Anxiety

Claire Parker

Managing Editor

It's 9:15 on a Friday morning, and junior Druex Collins is standing at the front entrance of the school, just inside the glass doors. It is her first time being part of the small crowd of late arrivals held at the front entrance during first period. Collins arrived at school at 9:08, 23 minutes late. Under D.C.'s new attendance policy, she will be marked absent for the entire 390 minute school day.

The policy, known as the 20 percent rule, is part of DC Municipal Regulation 5-A21, effective for all D.C. public schools as of June 2013. The policy defines being present as being "enrolled and registered for at least eighty percent (80 percent) of the full instructional day," and mandates that students who miss more than 20 percent of the school day be marked absent for the entire day.

While technically the 20 percent cut-off under the new attendance policy is 10:03, the management software schools use called DC STARS consid-



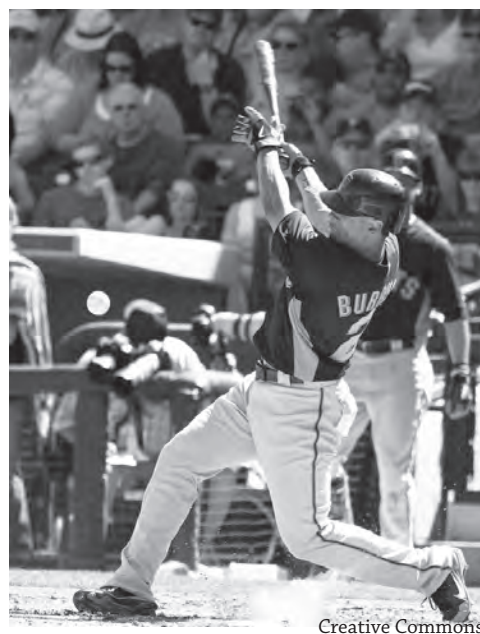
Illustration by Maria Brescia-Weiler

ers one class period to be 20 percent of the day. This, coupled with Wilson's policy of holding students who arrive after 9:10 at the door, means that a Wilson student who misses only 6.5 percent of the day is considered absent.

The policy is an attempt to curb D.C.'s truancy epidemic. While truancy rates have declined in recent years, they are still a problem. According to a study by the Urban Institute, 2,500, or 20 percent, of D.C. high school students are chroni-

cally truant, meaning they have been absent unexcused for more than 15 days. At some schools, such as Anacostia and Ballou, nearly half of the student body is chronically truant. Last year at Wilson, 282 students, or 17 percent of the student population, were truant. If the new policy had been in place last year, 1244 students would have been considered truant, which would have made Wilson's truancy rate

CONT. ON PG 3

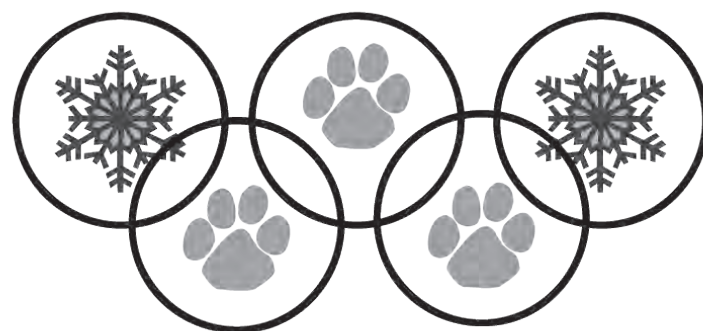


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OUR MAN MANNY
- Wilson alum is hitting the minors. Emmanuel Burriss will be joining the Nationals minor leagues for the upcoming season.

STORY on P. 13

Check out an Olympics preview and more Tiger sports on pgs 11-12



Follow Up on PTSO Survey Results

Maddy Taub
Junior Editor

The Parent Teacher Student Organization surveyed Wilson parents in the fall to assess their satisfaction with the school. By the last Beacon issue, there had already been a meeting with Principal Pete Cahall, the PTSO, and some administrators to review how to best address the issues that parents have raised.

A new policy of setting aside part of Parent-Teacher Conference Day for meetings made by appointment is one of the survey suggestions that will now be implemented.

Cahall has been addressing in-depth some of the main topics of concern in his Weekly Bulletins. In the past five weeks he has gone into detail on class size, Edline, communication between parents and students,

lack of student preparedness, and counseling. Also, he has been addressing different issues raised by the survey in his weekly message to parents.

While the survey does help school officials to understand some parental concerns, they said it also may not be a full representation of the parents at Wilson.

“Four hundred and forty-three parents responded, and al-

though that is good, it is not even half of the parents,” said Instructional Coach Linda Wanner. “With that said, we were glad to hear from the parents and we welcome their criticism and suggestions for improvement.”

A summary of the results has been posted on the PTSO page on the school website.

Link to PTSO Survey Results Here:

http://wilsonhs.org/apps/pages/index.jsp?uRECID=127889&type=d&termREC_ID=&pREC_ID=321914

Mayoral Candidates Talk Education With the Beacon

Emma Buzbee
Staff Writer

Say the word Washington, D.C. to anyone and a vision of America’s famous democratic buildings pops into mind. What often gets overlooked on the national scale is the government of D.C. itself. But to its residents, nothing could be more important than the upcoming mayoral election and its effect on education.

According to a Washington Post Poll before the 2010 elections, 89 percent of registered Democrats believed education to be a key issue in their voting decision, in comparison to the still high 80 percent this year. The focus on education was especially sharp in 2010 due to the controversy regarding the Fenty Administration and Michelle Rhee. Though many liked Rhee’s tough attitude and modern renovations for schools such as Wilson and Deal, citizens in poorer wards thought she favored affluent areas like Northwest. Mayor Gray won thanks in part to opinions such as this, yet only 38 percent feel he has done a good job improving schools. This is significantly lower than his ratings in attracting businesses and decreasing crime, giving fellow democratic primary competitors such as Councilmembers Muriel Bowser (Ward 4,) Tommy Wells (Ward 6,) and Jack Evans (Ward 2,) a chance.



Vincent Gray

Mayor Gray, in an email interview, says he believes that to improve the GPA and graduation statistics in DCPS, more capable teachers should be hired, the new Common Core standards must be enforced, and all schools should have modern facilities. He acknowledges the issue of education inequality in D.C., stating, “We must do more to ensure that the course offerings and extra-curricular activities are also comparable at every school.” Gray blames complications and a lack of clarity with the school boundaries system on the fact they “have not been revised in a comprehensive way since 1968.”

Photo by Annie Rosenthal



Vincent Orange

According to his 2012 election website, Vincent Orange is responsible for the creation of the “Educational Policies for Third and Eighth Grade Students Act of 2005.” This bill, enacted in 2006, created graduation requirements for third and eighth graders. Orange’s reasoning behind the legislation was that simple regulations early on can be beneficial to students’ futures. Acts like this can be very important in “early childhood education to reverse the devastating trend that is negatively impacting the quality of life for our young people and the residents of the nation’s capital.”



Andy Shallal

Andy Shallal believes education in D.C. is dropping to unacceptable lows but disagrees with conventional solutions to this problem. According to his website, Shallal thinks that in public schools today there is too much emphasis on standardized tests and obedience. He vows, if elected mayor, to improve schools by including parents, nurturing creativity, and increasing access. But the main issue, in Shallal’s mind, is the blame put on teachers for issues like poverty and unstable home lives when they are brought into the classroom. “Blaming DCPS [teachers] for student standardized test scores is like blaming hospitals for illness.”



Tommy Wells

For Councilman Wells, the best ways to improve education for high school students in D.C. involve motivation through job training, hands-on counseling to at-risk kids, and easier access to better schools. He said that to achieve his goal of 80 percent on-time graduation, when he becomes mayor, Wells would contribute \$100 million to youth programs. His goal would be for every student to have the opportunity to have an after-school job or job-certification for future work. Wells thinks every family with an at-risk student should have their own provided counselor or social worker. He believes the current school boundary problems and contradictions exclude families from good public schools. It is his personal wish that all students be within a 10-minute walking distance of a quality elementary school, as this will lead to higher attendance.



Muriel Bowser

Councilmember Bowser of Ward 4 has contributed three bills on the subject of education. As she explains in an email interview, she was responsible for the Kids Ride Free Program, which gives students with DC One Cards free public bus transportation after school. One bill, the “DC STEM Fund,” issues grants to non-profit groups to improve STEM education and training for D.C. citizens. Bowser believes for our city “to remain competitive, we need to prepare our youth and older residents for the modern workforce.” The final bill, “Alice Deal for All,” is designed to improve the standards of middle school education across the city, to create “high-quality opportunities in every ward,” and to “keep students on a path to success.”



Carlos Allen

Carlos Allen’s campaign website says “educational excellence is our city’s best long-term economic development strategy.” But Allen feels that this is not occurring due to poor early- education programs and a school system with too many outdated policies. Allen proposes the creation of public pediatric wellness centers with a well-equipped staff to go with it. Allen also believes new teachers to be vital, so one of his solutions is more rigorous student-teacher training. Allen believes that DCPS has been hurting itself with constant arguments between teachers and administrators that “have destroyed morale and negatively impacted an entire generation of students.”



Reta Jo Lewis

Reta Jo Lewis is a strong advocate for education. She published on her campaign website that she views education as “the great equalizer, unlocking doors for everyone in our city.” But Lewis also recognizes that in D.C., this nice idea is not always reality. To fix education inequality and improve schools in general, she promises to advocate for better teachers, include parents in the learning process, and create new programs for adult education.



Jack Evans

According to Corey Goldstone, spokesperson for Councilmember Evans’ campaign, Evans believes that learning and education should “not stop when the final bell rings.” Instead, an emphasis should be placed on improving after-school activities, homework help, and one-on-one tutoring to help bridge the inequality gap between public schools. Councilmember Evans’ other strategy to decrease inequality is providing more jobs for D.C. residents, something he promises if elected mayor. An increase in jobs would then lead to “more money to invest in communities, [so] parents won’t need to apply through a competitive process, because they will have a quality school in their own neighborhood.”

Tardy Policy Leaves Students Out in the Cold

FROM PG 1

73 percent.

"I think [truancy] is a real and chronic problem for some students," says Principal Pete Cahall. "I think being late is a bigger problem. And there's a direct correlation between a student's attendance and their academic achievement. Those kids who have a higher rate of being absent, there's a direct correlation to them having below a 2.0."

Consequences for truants can be severe. After a student's fifth unexcused absence, a letter is sent home to their parents, and they are supposed to meet with their student support team. After the 10th absence, students receive a warning letter from the Metropolitan Police Department, followed by a court referral after their 15th absence. Out-of-boundary students can be sent back to their neighborhood schools if they accumulate 10 unexcused absences in a year.

Sophomore Anthony Bass, standing next to Collins at the front entrance, says "I think this [policy] is ridiculous because I only miss one class and I'm absent for the whole day, so there is no point in me coming."

Collins, after finding out about the policy, says "I'm very shocked. I can't believe that. That's so stupid." She agrees with Bass that the policy incentivizes students who arrive late from coming to school at all.

"Parents have called and complained about [the policy]," says DCPS Director of Student Attendance Andrea Allen. "They wanted us to explain why that rule is in place. And our position is it's the law and that's what we adhere to."

Cahall believes the policy

has encouraged parents and students to document absences, but thinks it is unfair to Wilson students since the skinny period of the class schedule is at the beginning of the day, meaning Wilson students have less time to get to school than students at other schools with block schedules do.

After the first semester of the school year, Wilson is feeling the effects of the new policy. Already 801 students have five or more unexcused absences, 397 have reached the chronic truancy level, and 207 require court referrals. But Wilson does not have the support staff to take action.

"It's a crazy policy because we don't have the tools to implement it," says Cahall. "The impact on the school has been the amount of manpower and hours that it takes [to implement]. There are all these things that take time and people. We would need 20 people to do what they're asking us to do."

Cahall says he has been fighting the regulation and searching for ways to "trick the system." For the second semester, he is thinking about using the CAS machines where students swipe in to time-stamp students instead of using STARS. Another proposal is to hold students who arrive after 9:10 in a tardy hall in the cafeteria and mark them tardy to first period instead of absent.

"It's a regulation that cannot be implemented with fidelity," says Cahall. "I don't necessarily have a problem with the policy, whether it's 20 percent or 40 percent, but the fact is we're penalizing kids, parents, and resources for the school."

Pool Assault Investigation Ongoing

FROM PG 1

the time of December 6, actually, and once that decision was made, on December 9 after approval, we placed this notice in the Wilson Aquatic Center."

She added that DPR had not received any inquiries over social media about the incidents and that there had been no substantial difference in the number of patrons who attended the pool after the incident. "What we have done completely over this time has been very intentional and deliberate in an attempt to keep the public safe and to not engage them in an emotional or psychological feeling of not being able to engage in their leisure activity in our sites," Shanklin said.

Cheh responded, "I think that the choice that you made was the wrong choice and it was unnecessarily delayed, and as a result, people were left in the dark and confused. And it doesn't show what I think would be the appropriate way you would communicate with the users of a pool and allow rumors and allegations to grow and fester in a community and all the while you stand silent. And I don't think that it was because MPD was silencing you. It was because you made that decision yourself."

After posing questions about DPR's delayed response, Cheh and Grosso questioned Shanklin about the circumstances that allowed pool employees to host after-hours parties.

Shanklin maintained that the facility had security cameras and alarms, and that pool managers and assistant managers were the only people who had access to keys. There was no on-site security personnel at the

pool, as the facility only employs a guard during the summer. Police officers would only visit the site intermittently unless they received a call.

Shanklin said that surveillance video tapes were not reviewed daily, and that DPR gave the tapes to the MPD without reviewing them. However, the alarm system had an associated entry report that indicated if anyone had entered the pool facility when the alarm was armed, and according to Shanklin, these entry reports were reviewed daily by the pool's Risk Management department. To Shanklin's knowledge, the department had

not reported any entries to their supervisors.

She said that the Risk Management team and managers might have known that there had been unauthorized entries: "The reports show inconsistencies we are investigating. We are going to make adjustments." According to Shanklin, this type of infraction would not be grounds to dismiss a manager, and that after-hours parties would be cause for suspension, but not removal, of an employee. No pool staff have been fired.

Two public witnesses at the hearing cited other management problems at the pool, including a failure to return emails from patrons, possible staff parties after hours, and a system of solely internal hirings. Said one witness, "There appears to be a pattern where people who go along with the corruption are promoted. People who speak up, they aren't promoted. They're fired. They're transferred."

The other witness also took issue with the wording of DPR's notices, which maintained that the public had never been in danger. "Since November 9, [the

two suspects] have been around hundreds if not thousands of children. I don't know how DPR can say that the public was never in danger," he said. "My neighbors have kids, they swim at the pool. I would never be able to forgive myself if something had happened to them."

His concerns are particularly relevant, as two of the alleged victims of assault at the pool were minors.

Councilmembers Cheh and Grosso both emphasized the need for a more proactive approach to communication and the resolution of management issues at DPR. In an interview with The Beacon this week, Cheh said she has received a report that she requested of the changes DPR plans to implement, not only at Wilson, but at all DPR facilities. She has also met with Shanklin repeatedly since the hearing to discuss improvements.

Cheh says that changes include public notices about job openings and implementing weekly meetings of staff at all facilities to go over rules. She says that she has been impressed with DPR's efforts to improve, but that there are still issues to resolve.

"We have to get back to something that was more vigorously followed in the Fenty administration, which is performance measures," she said.

Shanklin explained that DPR views the recent events as an opportunity to improve, saying, "We recognize that there are areas for improvement and this incident has brought to light an ability for us to say very definitely we are not going to passively just continue to act with disregard of what these protocols and practices state. Our staff are also going to hold themselves highly accountable for enacting the work that keeps the public safe."

"Managers might have known that there had been unauthorized entries"

OPINIONS

Taking a Hard Look at Self-Segregation

Beacon Editorial Staff

Over the past few years The Beacon has struggled with the question of diversity and how to ensure that we have a diverse staff that reflects the entire school. As a newspaper, we want to remain unbiased, while being able to cover all realities of the school from different perspectives. Yet we find that year after year our editorial staff is all white (and mostly female). We know this isn't due to a lack of writing talent, and are fairly certain it isn't due to a lack of interest.

It is our responsibility as the Beacon staff to reach out to people from all backgrounds and we wonder if we are doing enough. While we feel that

we provide equal opportunities to all Wilson students, and advertise to everyone, and are proud of the work that we do, we evidently fall short.

The reality is that people join the activities that their friends are involved in, and we go to a school where friend groups often seem to split along race lines. [see feature, page seven]

Although this is a social norm, and not just a Wilson problem, it is still unacceptable.

Wilson constantly trumpets diversity, but the diversity at Wilson isn't always real diversity. We define real diversity as people of different races not

just being in the same place--but coming together, working together as a unified, whole community. That is our hope for The Beacon. That it can be a

place where all students feel able to express their beliefs. We want to be able to say that The Beacon is the voice of Wilson, but are concerned that it is currently

just the voice of a few.

Here at Wilson we have the chance to stop excusing this problem as a systemic one. It is easy to say that this separation, this segregation, isn't a personal choice, that it's just how Wilson works, how DCPS works, how

the system works, how society works. It is easy to blame the underlying issues, and "the system," but that isn't getting us anywhere.

It is easy to just go with what feels comfortable, but if we want to start making progress and bridging gaps in the world; if we say that we are for diversity and equality in the world, we need to start by branching out--right here and now.

We, The Beacon, are going to make a commitment to reach out to more people, to start hosting more meetings, making the paper accessible to anyone and everyone who wants to participate. Every first Thursday of the month we will host a Beacon fair in the atrium, so mark your calendars. Even if you are not interested in participating in

"Although this is a social norm, and not just a Wilson problem, it is still unacceptable"



Eboni Ellis

ASK EB

Ask your questions at
ask.fm/TheWilsonBeacon

Q What are your ideas on a Valentine's Day date—something affordable and not too much? It's just a crush not my girlfriend (yet).

A Valentine's Day has now become such a big deal when it could be so simple. For your date you need to focus on making her happy instead of impressing her. Going ice-skating is what first comes to mind; it is a cute and fun outing that can really spark a lot of chemistry. The outdoor ice-skating rink in downtown Silver Spring cost only \$8 for skating admissions, which is a good price. You might even want to think about paying for her ticket. Also, there are a lot of food places in that area where you can grab something to eat after you skate; Chipotle, Noodles and Company, Chick-fil-a, Potbelly, Fuddrucker's, etc. This nice little Valentine's Day date could turn into an unforgettable night. I hope everything works out. Good luck!

Q I like this boy, but we're really good friends. Should I tell him and potentially ruin our friendship?

A You should definitely tell him. It will not ruin your friendship, but it might be a little awkward after that. Telling him that you like him could really open a new door, especially if you guys have been friends for a long time. The best relationships start as friendships. You two should already know a lot about each other and letting him know how you feel would allow you guys to develop a foundation and grow. He probably already likes you too, but boys have way too much pride, so he's not going to ever tell you. In a worst case scenario, he ends up liking another girl and you never told him how you felt. You would probably be really upset. I've been in this position before, and it was pretty weird breaking the ice about our feelings for each other, but it did work out in the end. Please do not be scared, nothing beats a try!

Q I'm a senior and my parents and I are in a dispute over what I should do after high school. Should I listen to them or follow my dreams?

A Parents are parents for a reason. They have lived longer and have more experience. On the other hand, you will technically be an adult after high school so it is ultimately you who will decide what to do with your life. Decisions like this are tough. A parent's advice is always helpful because in most cases they want what is best for you. If they are encouraging you to go to some form of higher education after high school, you should consider it. An education is always something you can fall back on. However, if you are passionate about a different dream, and it's something positive, you should really try to talk it through with your family so they can understand. At the end of the day, it is your life to live, so I say do what is going to benefit you the most and more importantly make you happy.

Femme Fatal: Strong Female Protagonists Are Lacking

Angela Montero
Contributor

In a world with a population that is more than half female, it makes sense that there would be a lot of roles for women characters in books. Today, a woman searching for a strong female role model in literature doesn't have to spend too much time looking.

Despite this, in my two years at Wilson I have only found two inspiring female characters in the assigned reading for English class, while I am constantly assigned books with strong male protagonists.

Out of a total of nine assigned books from English class, seven feature male protagonists and all nine of them feature a strong male character. Four

feature a woman being abused or treated unfairly, and only one, "To Kill A Mockingbird," features a strong female character.

For a long time I accepted this lack of strong women characters on our reading list as a result of the few strong women in early literature. However, as I began to choose classic books to read on my own, I met amazing women like Elizabeth Bennet in "Pride and Prejudice" and the sisters in "Little Women." I realized great literature is not limited to male protagonists, so why are the books we read in English class?

The real issue is how we de-

fine the relatability of different characters based on gender. It is perfectly normal and acceptable for a woman to read "The Odyssey," and relate the characteristics of strong and wily Odysseus and his strengths to herself and her goals.

"As I began to choose classic books to read on my own, I met amazing women like Elizabeth Bennet in 'Pride and Prejudice'"

However, a man reading "Pride and Prejudice," and aspiring to be like Elizabeth would be a sign of weakness. As a society we have made it acceptable for girls to emulate boys but not the other way around. As a result, girls and boys are being deprived of some amazing characters in literature.

In the two years I've spent at Wilson, I've read four as-

signed books in which a female character is sexually harassed or treated as inferior: "The Odyssey," "Romeo and Juliet," "Chronicle of a Death Foretold," and "The Things They Carried."

At Deal we read "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings," in which Maya Angelou is raped by her mother's friend. Rape and harassment are incredibly important topics, and there is nothing wrong with assigning books with this subject matter for school reading.

What is wrong is ignoring the issue. I have never had an English class where my teacher actually discussed the treatment of women in the book, including the rape scene in "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings." We treat these events like they're normal and acceptable-- or at the very

least not worth talking about-- when they clearly need to be discussed.

We need to stop and take notice of the inequality of women in books we read and how it is reflected in the world around us.

It should be shocking and offensive to be able to say that I have read more books in which a woman is abused or raped than I have in which a woman is strong and independent. Yet most people don't even notice this. What does that say about how we as a society view women? It is crucial that we acknowledge this as wrong and work towards a better representation of women. Books don't just reflect our lives; they also impact them and can have a lasting influence on our world.

PRO The AP System CON

Zach Fullerton
Contributor

Advanced Placement courses allow students to expose themselves to more rigorous classes with more meaningful content. One of the best things about these classes is that they are always optional. And many AP classes do not require pre-requisites. For those who don't know what AP is, it is a program run by College Board which provides courses of college rigor to high school students. In May, students nationwide take AP exams for each AP course they take. These tests are graded from 1 to 5, from worst to best respectively. The tests are usually \$85 per test, but thankfully here at Wilson they are paid for us.

AP classes do not exclude any type of student. It only requires a student willing to apply themselves. The classes aren't designed to take because of friends, or because of the college credit that some schools offer. These classes expose students to a stricter work schedule and allow them to explore content they are interested in.

I have taken, or am enrolled in a total of seven AP classes. I take them because of the academic challenge they offer. APs are some of Wilson students favorite classes, because after years of

being forced into a standardized schedule students are finally able to explore subject matters they are interested in. Wilson offering a variety of AP courses shows that it is an academically focused school, willing to give students the attention they need to succeed in any field.

Wilson itself is a diverse school with students and staff from different backgrounds, however the AP classes don't always reflect that diversity. Often, but not always, AP classes contain a majority of students from a higher socioeconomic background. I would not associate this to a lack of equal opportunity, instead I would blame a social structure that associates AP classes with being for "A" students. It's widely understood that it is often parents in wealthier families that push their kids towards rigorous classes.

Advanced Placement courses are not for everyone but they are not selective either. They are offered to everyone. The purpose of AP classes is not to separate, segregate, or track the school, but to offer challenging opportunities to any student willing to take them. With the right amount of focus anyone can not only participate in the classroom, but succeed on the AP test later in the year.

Elias Benda
Junior Editor

The AP system is broken on a national level. AP classes are another way that students in America are faced with increased pressure to perform unrealistically well, and they also increase the achievement gap between socioeconomic groups. Successful students, largely from higher socioeconomic standings than less successful students, end up in AP classes together, being taught by the best teachers at the school.

On the other hand, lower performing students who do not take AP courses end up with a less challenging curriculum in a system that does not favor them. This gap is part of a pattern; the number of AP courses available has increased in the past 20 years, and according to the Center for Education Policy the socioeconomic achievement gap has increased in the past few decades as well.

For students whose parents lack a college education, it can be much more difficult to understand and navigate the college process, and the same goes for AP classes. We are blessed that test fees are covered for us at Wilson, because imagine some-

one from a low-income family trying to be a high achiever -- the more AP classes they take to get ahead, the more the combined price of their tests would go up.

All of this effort and expense would be worth it if the AP tests were an acceptable standard, but in many ways they aren't. More and more, colleges are not giving credit for AP courses or are raising the bar for the grade required to receive credit. The lack of a coherent standard for acceptance puts students in a shoot-or-miss position; they assume the pressure of AP courses in the ever-decreasing hopes that the courses will help them when applying to college.

The more AP classes, the more pressure on students to perform. As a whole, AP tracking puts students, their peers, their teachers, and their community at a disadvantage. College courses are not meant for high school students, who may lack the time, capacity, or resources to fully understand the subject.

Those who are pressured into taking the classes end up being dragged down by bad grades, while those who do well, willingly or not, support a system that harms their peers.

THE BEACON

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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 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.

In This New Year, Resolve to Speak Up

Maria Brescia-Weiler

Features Editor

Recently, in a class of mostly girls, I noticed that whenever the teacher posed a question the same hands shot up. This didn't come as a surprise; most classes are dominated by a few students who are eager to grace the class with their knowledge, it is just the way things are. But this time I noticed something new; all but a very few of these rising hands were attached to male bodies.

Throughout the rest of the period I watched and took note of this until I came up with two possible explanations for this newly-discovered phenomenon: either the boys in this particular class were much smarter than the girls, and anything short of MUCH smarter couldn't have justified it, or the boys were more comfortable tossing their thoughts into an arena that for the girls was filled with lions waiting to tear them apart with gnashing teeth and sharpened claws.

The latter seemed more likely.

The more I thought about

this theory, the more I noticed it everywhere. In four of my classes in which 58.12 percent of my peers were girls and 41.88 percent were boys, boys accounted for 65.33 percent of the hand raises, leaving the girls with a meager 34.67 percent. When a friend looked over my shoulder and saw my tallied findings, he shrugged saying, "You have to remember that so-and-so is in this class."

And I agreed, that so-and-so was accounting for far more than his fair share of the class' participation. But when this same comment was pointed out by several different people about several different so-and-sos, it struck me that maybe there are simply more male so-and-sos than female ones. Most classes contained at least two or three male self-appointed class spokesmen (and I do mean spokesmen), while I struggled to hear a comment from a girl that didn't start along the lines of "I'm not really sure but..." or "Isn't it..." and contain at least seven "likes." *I think like water is like a symbol for like life or something.*

Though I found it extremely troubling, I fault neither gender for this gaping gap in participation. Yes, the boys could talk a little less to create space for the girls, but it isn't their job to coax their counterparts out of their shells like bewildered turtles.

And yes, as a girl, I get that sometimes it's hard to force yourself to participate. I don't think of myself as shy or quiet (in fact, the main take away from my elementary school parent teacher conferences was that I should talk less), but I too find myself hesitating to participate, and when I do I drop "likes" like its my job.

My conscious explanation is that I either genuinely don't feel qualified to answer the question posed or that I'm not pressed to show off what I know, but content to let someone else, someone more eager, do somersaults for the class.

Most of the time when I do have something to say, an answer to share, it gets whispered to the lucky soul next to me and if it is shared with the class, it's only through them. But if I'm being completely honest with

myself (and with trusty Beacon readers), part of it is probably that I'm a little bit scared. I don't care enough about people knowing that I'm right to risk being held accountable when I'm wrong. Even now my words end up on the opinions page, only for lack of an observations or musings page.

And knowing that pains me; that I, I who spent the first eight years of my education talking exclusively for my nearly-mute best friend, much to the aggravation of our teachers, have become a girl, one of many, who hesitates.

So, as a reminder to myself and similarly tentative girls (or boys); there are no lions. Nothing, absolutely nothing, will happen when you are wrong. And I think that more often than not, you won't have to worry about that. Your silence is more selfish than any measure of boastfulness.

Share your knowledge not because you're interested in showing off but because there's a reason teachers encourage students to participate, because your classmates can stand to

Numbers Game: How Grades Affect Students

Evan Hamlin

Co-Editor-in-Chief

Numbers matter in DCPS. They define success or failure, whether you are a high school student or the superintendent. In the past 10 years a much greater emphasis has been placed on test scores as an indicator of success or failure. Students continually fret over grade point averages and class ranks. This obsession with numbers and statistics is what is wrong with the school system.

DCPS is worrying about the wrong aspect of learning. Because of the intense pressure on teachers and students to meet certain benchmarks, the overall quality of learning has decreased. After No Child Left Behind was passed in 2002, the U.S. dropped from 18 in the world in math on the PISA (Programme for International

Student Assessment) to 31 in 2009. What's the point of being in school if all the city cares about is our test scores? At the end of the day, the DC CAS does not define a student, a school, or a city. The desire to learn, as well as the desire to teach, should stem from a hunger for an increased understanding of a subject.

If you forget test scores and focus on quality of learning, teachers and students will have a much more enriching academic experience. When the focus is shifted from the test to the content of a class, everything else comes naturally.

Students put themselves under a tremendous amount of pressure. The desire to get good enough grades to get into college ironically leads students to cheat, to not do work, and to skip class if it means they get the grade they want.

Some students even go so far as to swipe an upcoming test off a teacher's desk, or take a picture of answers that will be sent throughout other classes before the period is over, an act becoming increasingly common at Wilson.

These kinds of shortcuts cause kids to take their classes a lot less seriously. They feel that high school is pointless, because all the "real" learning is going to happen in college.

Students need to get good grades to get into good colleges, so they take hard classes. Then if they realize that the class is too hard, they resort to cheating to help maintain a respectable grade. In the end, they come away with nothing from the class as a result of their inability to keep up.

This culture creates a bigger problem for students who feel

they can't get good grades in the first place. They forfeit before they even give themselves a chance to play.

The importance the system places on numbers hurts the school itself, too. Individual schools care so much about achieving high attendance and graduation rates that the importance they place on what students do while they are in class drops significantly.

I think we should forget about the numbers. A focus on engaging and enriching teaching would allow students to grow intellectually. Standardized tests only measure a fraction of what makes school, and learning as a whole, important. Tests are indicative of some aspects of a student or school, but they merely judge students and schools by their cover and the first few pages.

TOP 10 THINGS WILSON ADMINISTRATORS DID ON THEIR SNOW DAY

1 CRACK THE NEW WILSON BEANIES

2 UPDATE MYSPACE

3 SELL CHRISTMAS GIFTS

4 CANCEL GYM MEMBERSHIP

5 NOT GO OUTSIDE

6 MAKE A THIRD INSTAGRAM

7 GET A SHAPEUP

8 TWEET AT DCPS ASKING FOR A SNOWDAY

9 THINK ABOUT WILSON

10 TRY TO SELL ROOKIES ON DMV ADDICTED TO ALL THINGS FRESH

Self-Segregation Still Stands at Wilson

Lauren ReVeal
Ellice Ellis
Sophie ReVeal

There is no rule in American schools today that says that people of different races have to sit separately from each other. However, self-segregation still occurs in schools. Wilson is no exception.

Self-segregation is when people separate themselves from those who are different, intentionally or not. Self-segregation is a common phenomenon that changes students' personal experiences and views regarding their school.

Recent studies by the University of Michigan found that the larger the school, the more likely it is for students to find friends of their own race. On paper it makes sense: if a student is at a school with only 100 people, they have fewer options of people to connect with, no race excluded. However, at a school like Wilson, where there are 1709 students and more than 300 per grade, there are more options for friends. Consciously or subconsciously, many people tend to choose friends of their own race.

The Beacon decided to test this theory by surveying a random sample of students during lunch and through social media.



Graphic by Mason Strazzella, Jane Martin, Ellice Ellis

Some students surveyed did not know what the term self-segregation meant. Others found that it was a problem at Wilson. Of students surveyed, 64 percent said that self-segregation was an issue at school, and 81 percent said that it was more likely to occur at a large school.

However, Wilson students did not agree on the cause of this self-segregation. They attributed it to ignorance, people feeling more comfortable with their own race, D.C.'s school boundary system, and even fear. Still, 53 percent of students sur-

veyed agreed that they wanted to fix the self-segregation problem at Wilson.

Students suggested solutions such as having all-grade activities, more racially-diverse classes, and getting the school itself to demonstrate that, across the board, people of different races have common interests and really are not that different.

"I think workshops on privilege and oppression are a start," wrote one survey responder. "White privilege is impossible, as a white person, to fully under-

stand, but introducing the concept at an early age might shift peoples' minds to the dynamic between the oppressor and the oppressed."

Sophomore Michael Jones said that he sees segregation in the groups that people hang out with. "It doesn't really affect me that much because I expect it to happen. I do prefer more diverse groups, but, at the end of the day, people are going to want to be around people with similar interests and experiences and that usually goes along with their race," he wrote.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Congressman John Lewis, and many others have worked tirelessly for equal rights in schools and all over the country. Segregation has plagued the U.S. for generations and lingers on as personal preference through groups at schools, including Wilson. Wilson is a diverse school yet people are still segregated by races.

Jonathan Shea, the World History 2 and AP World History teacher, wrote in an email "In general, I would say that self-segregation occurs at Wilson. On a daily basis, at lunch, I think that self-segregation is more a function of elementary school than racial self identification."

He said he believes that it is also based on activities, especially team sports: "There is a perception that 'crew is white' or 'basketball is black.' This is an oversimplification, but to become a stereotype, it has to have some truth in it."

On a positive note, Shea said that "[f]ar more students hang out and date across group lines than when I started here in 1993. Classes are also more diverse." Still, not everything has been solved. Wilson is a diverse school, yet voluntary racial segregation still exists.

Custodian Steve James: One Of Wilson's Guardian Angels



Photo by Joey Keegan

Greg Kopetsky
Matthew Smees
Staff Writers

When looking at Wilson, it is hard to say who among the staff of hard-working individu-

als can be credited most with keeping our great school intact. Some would claim it is Principal Pete Cahall. Others might argue that it is any one of the deans or administrators. But very few recognize the custodial staff as playing a crucial role in keeping the school running.

You've all seen them; they walk around at STEP, picking up trash and making small talk with students, but there is much more to their job than just this. We had a chance to sit down with one of our school's custodians, Steve James, and learn a bit about his life and job.

James grew up in D.C. and attended H.D. Woodson, where he played football, basketball and was a member of the swim team, which occasionally practiced at the Wilson pool. Little did he know, he was swimming at the school he would work for and love years later.

"I like to experience different schools," James said. In his 18 years with DCPS, he has worked at a number of schools, including Phelps, Ballou, Anacostia, Coolidge, and now Wilson, which has been his home for the past six years.

Through all this experience,

he still claims that the craziest moment was seeing Cahall dress up on Wacky Tacky Day. "That was wild," said James.

From 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. every day, James keeps the atrium, the cafeteria, and the kitchen clean. He is easy to spot in either a Washington Redskins or Green Bay Packers jersey. "The Skins [are] my number one, but I still like the Packers as a number two," he said. He loves talking football with anyone who will listen.

On top of all this, he plays a major role in making sure kids get to class. "Ushering you kids

to your classrooms and just working with y'all in general is my favorite part of my job," he said.

His least favorite part, he explained with a chuckle, is "cleaning this joint up after y'all!"

"Wilson is a nice school, it is where I'd like to retire."

If he ever does, Wilson might have trouble filling the void he will leave.

2013 IN REVIEW

Ellie Melick
Staff Writer

Every January, when we come back to school, I find that the only thing that feels different from "last year" is having to write a different number on the dates of my papers. Besides trying to adjust to the new digit, nothing really strikes me about the end of one year and the start of another. Not all the "Best of 20__" lists and "Preview of 20__" articles, and definitely not the New Year's resolutions I forget about within a week. On a smaller scale, I find it can be nice to look back on the highlights of the past twelve months, instead of thinking about how we are all officially one year closer to dying.

For Wilson, 2013 brought about the usual exportation of last year's class of '13 to balance out the influx of this year's freshmen. This school year's graduating class proudly took their place on the throne of seniority, which means--especially as we enter the second semester--that you will not be seeing any of them at school unless they absolutely have to be in class for something. So basically, you will not be seeing them at school.

Wilson extracurriculars had a great 2013. We saw an exceptional musical, "West Side Story," put on with the help of lots of students, parents, and staff. Last March the Wilson robotics team became the first D.C. high school to ever go on to the World Robotics Championships

in St. Louis, Mo. And just in 2013 alone, the boys varsity soccer team, the girls varsity soccer team, the varsity football team, the varsity volleyball team, the girls varsity lacrosse team, the girls varsity softball team, and the boys varsity baseball team all won their respective DCIAA championships. Basically, Wilson kicked it all over the place.

The year was also an important one for the entire city. Last January the streets and hotels became packed with celebrities, tourists, and Barack Obama enthusiasts for the President's second inauguration. Increasingly dramatic tensions between political parties seemed to amplify the focus on D.C. even more than usual, although any 202er will be quick to remind you that

what goes on in Congress does not by any means represent the culture of our city as a whole.

Unfortunately, national politics affected many residents of the district and the D.C. area, when the federal government was shut down for two weeks in October, causing many federal workers in D.C. to be furloughed. City politics shaped up the year as well, with investigations into Mayor Vincent Gray's 2010 campaign which shed light on the inner workings of our city's government.

D.C. also suffered a grave atrocity: the September 16 shooting at the Navy Yard that left 12 victims dead, as well as the shooter Aaron Alexis. But in more positive news, every Washingtonian--as well as the

entire world--was delighted to welcome the arrival of Bao Bao. This adorable baby giant panda was born August 23 and has captivated the hearts of little kids, high school students, and grown men alike; especially with the help of the National Zoo's Panda Cam, which is easily accessed by the zoo's website.

So as we say goodbye to one year and welcome in another, it is important to look back on the events--good and bad--that defined our city and our world. Even if most new gym memberships have gone unused and I still write "2013" on all of my papers, we as a community have no reason to expect anything but greatness from the rest of 2014.

NEIGHBORHOOD SPOTLIGHT: COLUMBIA HEIGHTS

Patrick Paniagua
Staff Writer

Columbia Heights is a neighborhood that blends sophisticated people and cultures. Bordered by Adams Morgan and Howard University, this neighborhood has seen many changes over the past 20 years.

During the period in the early 90's in which D.C. was dubbed the murder capital of the U.S., this part of town looked very different from today. Shootings and gang activity tarnished the last of the positive image that remained of Columbia Heights.

After the grand opening of Target in the new mall and condominiums in Columbia Heights in 2008, things improved. The streets were cleansed of a majority of the negativity and violence.

On 14th Street lies a great assortment of fast food places, including Panda Express, Five Guys, and Chipotle. The recent renovation of Tivoli Theatre led

to the opening of a uniquely designed Z-Burger. The theatre's former ticket booth serves as a quick-serve window for some of the best shakes in D.C., and the old balconies from the original building were kept to give it an interesting vibe. There is also a significant amount of retail that just popped up with the new mall. Best Buy, Target, Modell's and Petco are all businesses that the neighborhood needed.

Thirteenth Street is a quiet residential street in Columbia Heights. There is not much commercial space on the street, hence the absence of businesses.

The newly renovated Cardozo High School on 12th Street has brought a new crowd of highly-invested teachers to the area who are out to help those kids who need them.

Eleventh Street is home to many great locally-owned eateries. The Coupe, a 24-hour restaurant with the same owner as Open City in Woodley Park, turned the first floor of a vacant and beat-up building into an up-



Photo by Nico Artiga-Oliver

LIGHTS IN THE HEIGHTS - The recently renovated Tivoli Theatre is one of the most glamorous attractions in Columbia Heights. The neighborhood has a lot to offer, from large retail stores to locally owned eateries.

beat environment serving some of the best burgers I've ever had. Eleventh street is also home to much smaller restaurants and

bars like El Chucho that has taco happy hour on weekdays with \$2 tacos.

The ever-changing ethnic

conglomerate really adds pizzazz to the neighborhood, making it distinct from others on the D.C. map.

GSA Hopes to Welcome More Participants

Ava Zechiel
Contributor

The GSA (Gender and Sexualities Aligned) club has been working on many things since the school year started. Members have been trying to spread the word about the club meetings, which are on Wednesdays and Thursdays during STEP. At these meetings, the GSA talks about social justice issues including gender and sexuality dis-

crimination. Occasionally they also talk about current events involving gay rights, or ways to improve the environment of the school.

The name Gender and Sexualities Aligned is a new name; the club used to be called the Gay Straight Alliance. The purpose of renaming the club was to make sure that anyone and everyone can feel comfortable in the club. Since the name change, it seems more people are openly

talking about the club, and are more comfortable with coming out to the club. Before the title modification, people who showed up did not participate as much as they do now.

The GSA has been working with science teacher Chris Obermeyer and more recently history teachers Robert Geremia and Michael Garbus to collaborate with other teachers about inappropriate name-calling inside and outside the classroom. You

may ask, What is appropriate? No one specific thing can apply to every person, so if you are unsure about a person's gender (and are comfortable enough with them), go and ask them! It might seem awkward, but it's even worse when you use the wrong gender pronoun.

The GSA's number one goal is to help the Wilson community stay welcoming and easy going. It also works to help spread the word about LGBTQA (Lesbian,

Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning, Asexual) bullying. The GSA wants all of the students at Wilson to feel at home; like they always have someone to talk to. If you ever need any support, contact your counselor, or come to GSA in room 223 during STEP on Wednesday and/or Thursday. They'd love to see you there!

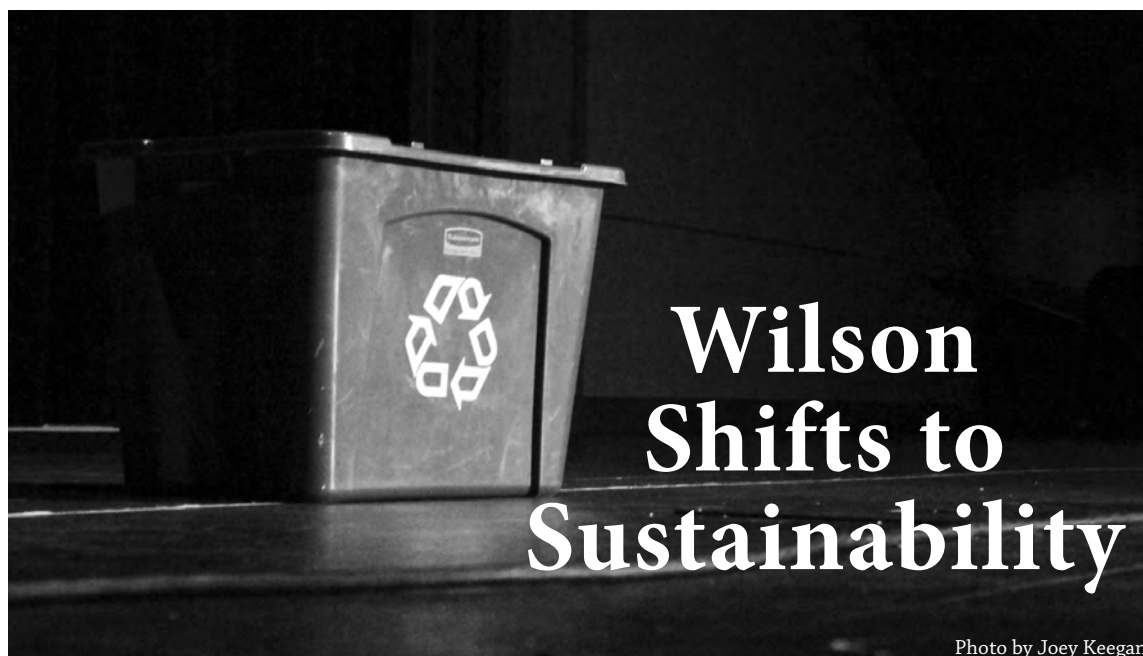


Photo by Joey Keegan

RETHINK RECYCLING - Wilson begins its pilot composting program. The program was arranged by the Department of General Services and encourages Wilson students to compost and recycle.

Zoe Mills
Contributor

Many students are unaware of what they're throwing away and where, every day, whether they're eating lunch or crumpling a piece of paper and tossing it in the brown trash bin in the hallway.

"People contaminate it [with the wrong materials] and that's why it doesn't work," says Latin teacher Jan McGlennon on Wil-

son's recycling system. Sophomore Dilara Yildiz says, "I hear the janitors just dump it in the trash," about the materials that are supposedly being recycled by students each day.

Custodian Jose Echeona confirms her suspicion. "Well, basically the students don't respect [the system] and throw food in the recycling bin, and we have to throw it in the trash."

Currently, 75% of the trash generated during Wilson's lunch

period is actually either compostable or recyclable, according to the waste audit conducted by Wilson's AP Environmental Science students and the DC Department of General Services (DGS)

If students aren't recycling and are throwing the wrong things in the wrong bin, all of those materials just end up in a landfill. And while it may play a role in giving students and teachers an even warmer sum-

mer vacation, pollution of any kind is never good.

Because of this extreme waste, a new pilot composting program arranged by DGS began on Tuesday, January 21, taking place during STEP in the cafeteria, atrium, and kitchen. Both students and staff members are now expected to use the bright yellow collection bins to deposit materials like leftover food and used paper products (i.e. napkins, paper towels, paper bags) that can be composted.

Both HealthCorps and DGS will be working together to spread this new program to other schools in D.C. and to make it known throughout Wilson. DGS is also offering community service hours for those who help promote the program, such as by making posters and flyers out of recycled materials. Students who are interested can contact Brooke Hartman at brooke.hartman@dc.gov.

"So far student feedback has been positive," says Micheline Tocco, the head of the new program and a big supporter of composting and recycling.

But Tocco and DGS are determined for good results. They're hoping that collecting these compost materials will help reduce greenhouse gas

emissions. "The idea of composting is new to many people," Tacco says, "but once they learn how easy it is to participate, it becomes a habit. We encourage all students to participate!"

A common phrase that almost everyone has heard is: "Even you can make a difference," just by recycling one thing or tossing your leftovers in the right bin. While this is true, it takes a great deal of awareness to make the kind of difference people are looking for. In implementing this composting program, the idea is to make environmental awareness more common and easier to follow.

In addition to the compost bins, recycling bins in the hallways are for separating everything else: trash in the brown bins and recycling in the green ones. This is so that no one needs to have a second thought when throwing something away. But what happens if you're not sure what you can recycle? It ends up in the wrong bin. To make it easier, here are some commonly-used things that can be recycled: glass, paper, cans, and plastic. Remember to look out for the brown and green and yellow bins!



Photo illustration by Joey Keegan

THEFT AT WILSON

SURVEY ANALYSIS REVEALS TRENDS IN THEFT AT WILSON

Nathan Davis
Co-Editor-in-Chief

On Tuesday and Wednesday, January 14 and 15, The Beacon administered a survey focused on understanding the experiences of the Wilson student body with theft. Analysis of the data from the 945 responses we received painted a picture of an environment where theft is widespread and where students approach the issue with some apathy.

Of those surveyed, 61 percent reported having been stolen from at least once, a clear, but not overwhelming majority, despite the fact that only 53 percent of people are afraid of having things stolen from them. This discrepancy could be accounted for in a variety of ways. Perhaps Wilson students take more precautions with their belongings after being stolen from and derive a sense of safety from their own personal measures. Perhaps Wilson students are confident in the school's ability to stop theft before it happens.

However, the statistics also suggest that while Wilson students may have confidence in security in terms of theft

prevention, they largely do not have confidence in school security in terms of recovery of stolen items. Of students surveyed who did report their theft to the school, 71 percent rated the school's response to their report as either not very helpful

or not at all helpful. This response is supported by the fact that of those who

reported thefts, 72 percent did not recover the stolen item.

Disappointingly, this lack of confidence manifests itself in the large percentage of thefts that go unreported (51 percent, according to the survey results). The vast majority of the comments The Beacon received on why students didn't report the theft was underconfidence that Wilson would be able to help them recover the item

But widespread failure to report cannot be entirely attributed to underconfidence in the school's response system. The fact that 38 percent of students who knew the person who stole

“71 percent rated the school's response to their report as either not very helpful or not at all helpful”

from them still did not report the theft suggests that there is more than just underconfidence. It could be a manifestation of a “no snitching” culture at Wilson. (Some variation of, “I’m not a snitch” showed up with relative frequency in the section asking

students to elaborate on why they didn't report thefts.) Additionally, the low value of items might have contributed to students not reporting items: around one in three instances of theft were valued at less than \$50.

The results also shed light on possible improvements. While 69 percent of seniors and 64 percent of juniors surveyed had been stolen from, only 47 percent of freshmen surveyed had been. Of course this is largely related to seniors having spent more time at the school and thus having a bigger window of opportunity in which to have been stolen from. However, the magnitude of this gap could very well suggest that improvements have been made in the theft prevention system as a whole.

STOLEN ITEMS

**\$87,891 to
\$121,750***
is the estimated value of
stolen belongings at Wilson

*total of each students' individual
assessment of loss

SURVEY RESULTS



61% of Wilson students have had things stolen from them at school

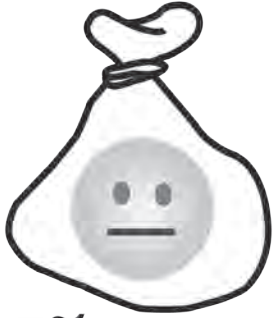
51%

of students did not report the theft

Out of people who reported thefts...



21% got their stolen item(s) back



7% got part of their stolen item(s) back



72% didn't get anything back

Interview With Wilson Deans



Hernandez



Barnes

Compiled by Lauren and Sophie ReVeal

1. 72 percent of students who reported the theft did not get their stuff back. Why do you think this is true?

Barnes: "I don't know about that because... if there's a theft that's in the view of the camera, we have a 9/10 rate of returning the items to them."

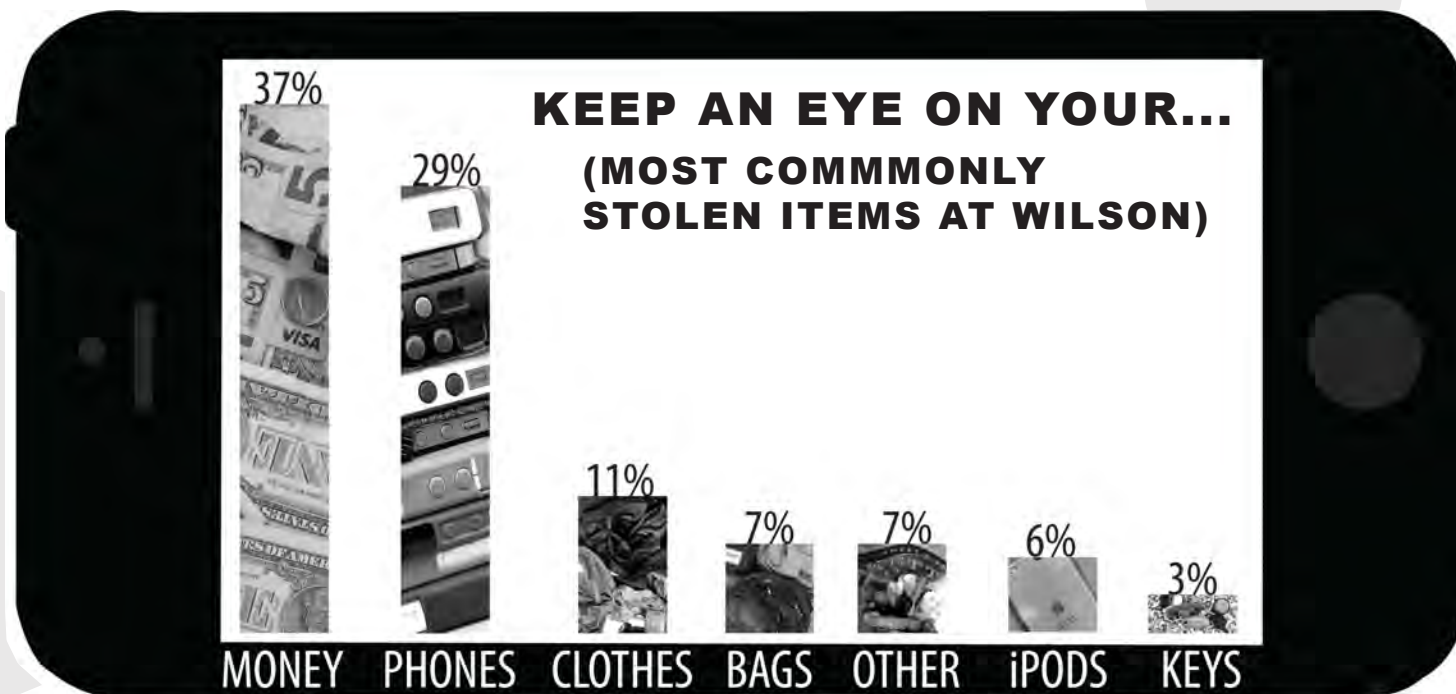
Hernandez: "It depends on the item that was taken and where it was taken from. If a student has something stolen and they don't notice it until hours later... there is nothing we can do."

2. 54 percent of freshmen have not been theft victims, but by the time they are sophomores that number drops to 38 percent. Why is there such a large change?

Hernandez: "Freshmen stay around freshmen. They aren't as careless with their things. [Sophomores are stolen from because they hang around] maybe people they don't need to be hanging with."

3. What is the best way for students to recover their things?

Hernandez: "Report it right away. To an admin, or security. Because then we can do our best of recovering the item... Usually it's reported right away and we have a good turn around... That turn around time has to be on point."



Graphics by Mason Strazzella, Jane Martin, Ellice Ellis

WILSON STUDENT TESTIMONIALS

When I was a freshman 4 years ago, I got the iPod with the cameras for Christmas. It was in my bag at the front of the class, and I went to the door of the room; when I came back it was gone. They also took my monthly passes; I had at least 2 of those stolen within that year, so that's a little over \$300. It doesn't end there. My friend got me a coat for Christmas that year, and I wore it to school and left it in a class, when I went back a few minutes later it was gone. That one was my fault but it still sucked walking home in the middle of winter in a t-shirt. By sophomore year I got a new iPod and went to the other end of the class, and when I came back it was gone. The people around my bag were my friends so I asked them about it, and they're the ones who stole it, so luckily I got the iPod back but didn't notice until later that they also took my metro pass and gum. That's already over \$500 and it wasn't even 2 years. By my junior year I decided I wasn't going to leave anything anywhere because Wilson students will steal anything. I made it to March when I left my Galaxy SIII in the bathroom. It was a minute later when I came back and it was gone so I went to security to ask if they could check the cameras for me. The guy told me there was only one person who was in the bathroom between the time I left and the time I came back so he went and talked to her. He came back and told me, "She doesn't have it." So I asked "Oh you searched her?" He said "No I didn't check her. She was an adult. She said she didn't see it."

Senior year I haven't had anything stolen because I don't leave anything anywhere unless someone close to me is watching it. So yeah I'd say it's a pretty big issue.

Emma Natzke, 12th

At around mid September last year I was walking down the stairwell to leave school when I saw one of my friends arguing with another Wilson student. I remember my friend saying "Please give me my phone back!" but the other student refused. While watching this happen I pulled my phone out to try to take a picture of the student taking the phone, so I could show it to an administrator so they could get my friend's phone back. The student saw me trying to take a picture and quickly came up to me and snatched my phone. I tried to chase after him, but I lost him in the crowd of students. After this happened I went to the security office and told them my situation, they contacted my dean and the police to see if they could find my phone and the student who took it. We tried using Find My iPhone but the phone was turned off. Luckily, the photo that I took came to my computer and it was a clear enough shot to determine who the student was. I printed this photo and showed it to my dean and he said he would take care of the rest. The administration forced the student to return the phones. To my understanding the student also received a long-term suspension.

Ali Rashedi, 10th

So far, during my two years at Wilson I've had two items stolen. One, my iPhone 4 and the other, the money in my wallet. The first incident where my phone was stolen occurred after school. Initially I didn't report the incident to the school and just told my parents, who filed a police report, and after two weeks, I was still without a phone. A couple phone-less weeks later, my sister noticed a random email in our group chat, and I came to the conclusion that the email, which was the person's first name and last name, was from the person who had stolen my phone. I then reported the incident to my dean, and he recovered my phone instantly. After the whole drama was over my dean told me I should have reported it in the first place, and I would have gotten it right back. I followed this advice on a later occasion when 70 dollars was stolen out of my wallet during a chemistry lab, but it proved to be false.

Ellice Ellis, 10th

Scripps College

by Emmie Wascobainik

Last summer I got the opportunity to visit Scripps college in Claremont, California. It is a small liberal arts school. Scripps is on a beautiful campus about 40 minutes outside of Los Angeles. The campus is known for its nice weather, its hideaway courtyards, and its sycamore and orange trees. It consists of off white buildings and many dorms have porches or balconies. Scripps is a women's college which would probably not be appealing to many Wilson students, but the cool part about Scripps is that it is part of a consortium of colleges with four co-ed schools. All of the schools are directly next to each other and things such as classes, clubs, sports teams, and many social events often overlap. Scripps itself is extremely small so there is a lot of interaction with professors and class sizes are small but the other schools make it seem bigger and offer more opportunities for Scripps students.

One of the most interesting things that I learned about Scripps that Wilson students would like is that it seems to be very accepting of different interests and possible career paths. It encourages creativity. It is also known as a very liberal school, much like Wilson is.

With 4,000 students undergraduate, Division 1 athletics, and a 6% acceptance rate, the U.S. Naval Academy is one of the top universities in the country.

During the Spring of the my junior year I was invited to attend a "Candidate Visit Weekend" at the Academy in Annapolis. It started on a Thursday with an orientation and after that I met up with the midshipman I was going to "shadow." We got a tour and after that we just hung around and did homework. Friday morning we got up at 5 a.m. and went to practice with the the rowing team. After practice we had until 7 a.m. to get ready and head down to breakfast. Although one can choose what to eat around the dining hall, the meals are very family oriented and sometimes the food is brought to the tables. After that we had a full day of classes. The classes were smaller than any class I have ever had at Wilson. By 3 p.m. classes were all done and it was time for practice again. Around 6 p.m. we were back in the rooms getting ready and heading down to dinner. The weekend I went there students went to concerts. Saturday morning we were up early again for training. Although I fell in love with the school it isn't for everybody: plebes (freshmen) aren't allowed to listen to music without permission; days start really early and don't end until very late; being late is not an option; and there are uniforms. I would say this isn't your average university experience, but still is one of the most prestigious and respectable schools in the United States.

U.S. Naval Academy
by Mariah A. Bayon

College Reviews

Northeastern

by Elias Benda

North-eastern was the first school I visited in Boston, and I wasn't really impressed. The school has a big campus, making up a large neighborhood largely by itself, with a trolley car track running right down the middle. The school is very technical/ engineering/ business-minded, and comes off as so. The campus tour was much better than the orientation, which portrayed the school as gaudy, fake, and "pressed." I personally didn't feel as if I would relate with anyone who went there, but I understand that others could. One aspect that didn't interest me but seems cool was their Work-Study program, in which students work an actual paid job in their field of study, and include their experience and connections as a part of their college experience that can help them in the future.

University of Virginia

by Rio Osborne

Being the son of a UVA alum has led to my interest in being a Cavalier since I was born. I have visited the university several times for football and lacrosse games, legacy weekends, alumni weekends, black alumni weekends, and overnight visits with current students who also have legacy at the school. Anyone who has been to the University of Virginia can tell you that there is a preppy atmosphere on campus. The students show their "class" and "scholarly" behavior by wearing button-down polos, khakis, and Sperry's around university grounds no matter what time of the week or year, even to football games. After meeting many UVA students I learned that many of them weren't as elitist as they appear; over 65 percent of the students come from Virginia, and many come straight from public schools. I concluded that the way the students dress and the attitude they have is caused by the idea that they will all some day become successful and live the life of an elitist. The school seems to be very diverse for a top-notch institution, but the social scene is far from integrated; the fraternities are very divided based on race. Students of different races still do mingle and create relationships, they just seem not to party together. Many of the qualities of UVA's social scene are similar to Wilson's. Also, both schools are public and both attempt provide a quality education for a low cost.



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My Life So Far: Amy Wopat

Helen Malhotra
Staff Writer

Almost every student at Wilson High School knows who “Maestra Wopat” is, either by having her as a teacher or hearing her daily “Get to class people!” in the morning. Despite the many things students have learned from Spanish teacher Amy Wopat, almost none have gotten the chance to learn about the circuitous route she took to arrive at Wilson eight years ago, or about the role travel has played in her life so far.

Wopat was born in Madison, Wisconsin, where she lived with her mother, father and brother until second grade when she moved to Phoenix, Arizona. Moving at a young age led Wopat to appreciate travel and the experience of different cultures, which over time allowed her to master the Spanish language. Phoenix was her first exposure to Spanish, because there were language classes available at her elementary school.

After fourth grade in Arizona, Wopat moved back to Wisconsin and stayed there until she graduated from the University of Wisconsin with majors in Communication Arts and Global

Studies. In her junior year of college she took a year abroad in Madrid, Spain, and has made a point ever since to participate in professional experiences outside of the country every four to five years.

Wopat next traveled to Ibarra, Ecuador for a year with a volunteer program called World Teach, teaching English at both the local university and the local high school. Her Ibarra teaching experience was fulfilling, she said, because of the creative freedom given to volunteer teachers in the classroom, and led to her decision to pursue teaching.

Wopat moved to Los Angeles where she taught both Spanish and World History for four years at a small school in South Central L.A. One year she took five of her L.A. students to Spain during their spring break; on the same trip were 10 students and two teachers from Wilson including Wilson’s former Director of Academics Jeffrey Schultz. Wopat kept in touch with Schultz.

She went to Middlebury College for her Masters and spent time abroad in Mexico and Spain. Afterwards she volunteered on projects for six months in Cochamamba, Bolivia



Photo by Joey Keegan

UNA VIDA INTERESANTE - Besides teaching in DC, Sra. Wopat has traveled throughout the Latin American world. The Wilson Spanish teacher also completed the National Marathon with Wilson students in 2010.

to educate domestic workers on their legal rights. “Many domestic workers were unaware of their rights and as a result were taken advantage of,” Wopat says.

Through her contact with Schultz, she moved to D.C. in August of 2006 to teach at Wilson. Wopat says, “The two things that are most important in order for me to be happy and successful are having diverse students and having supportive colleagues, and I definitely get those things by teaching at Wilson.”

In 2009-2010, Wopat and Italian teacher Simona Spicciani-Gerhardt sponsored and coached Wilson’s first Teens Run DC club. Prior to starting the club,

Wopat had never been much of a runner and she had never run more than five miles in her life. That same year, she ran and completed the National Marathon with Wilson students.

“It was one of the most fulfilling events of my life, which I never could have achieved had it not been for the motivation of my students,” says Wopat. Because of an injury, Wopat has not been able to run as often as last year but hopes to return to her new hobby soon.

Four years into teaching at Wilson, Wopat participated in the Fulbright Teacher Exchange, a program that makes it possible for teachers to go abroad for three or four months to

take classes at an international university and study in local schools. On her trip, she met Julie Gloss, who was participating in the same program and who moved to D.C. two years later to teach at Wilson.

Wopat summarizes the impact of traveling on her life: “If I had to define the most important things to me, they have come through my travels, like getting to know culture and people first-hand and making everything that you learn in the classroom real. You can learn so much about facts and history, but until you’re able to see how people experience that in their daily lives, it’s not as interesting or as powerful.”

BLACK HISTORY MONTH FEB 2014 WILSON SPECIAL EVENTS

| | | | | |
|---|---|--|---|---|
| <p>FEB 3 STEP - ATRIUM Black History Cupcake Challenge</p> | <p>FEB 4&5 English Classes Brainstorm of Black Authors</p> | <p>FEB 7 1:45 - Library Black History Movie: The Great Debaters</p> | <p>FEB 7 Breakfast - 8am Jazz/Neo Soul in the Atrium</p> | <p>FEB 7 BLACK BOX 12:30 & 2 Celebrations of the Oral Tradition with Baba C and the Wilson Poets</p> |
| <p>FEB 7 Breakfast - 8am Blues Music in the Atrium</p> | <p>FEB 12 STEP - ATRIUM Famous Black Scientist Contest (SciMaTech)</p> | <p>FEB 13 1:45 - Library Black History Movie: Gifted</p> | <p>FEB 13 Breakfast - 8am R&B/Gospel Music in the Atrium</p> | <p>FEB 21 BLACK BOX Pd 4 - 12:09 Guest Speaker Erich Jarvis (Black Scientist) "Vocal Learning" (Reserved for science classes)</p> |
| <p>FEB 19 BLACK BOX Pd 4 - 12:09 White Like Me Documentary by Tim Wise</p> | <p>FEB 19 1:45 - Library Black History Movie: Ghosts of Mississippi</p> | <p>FEB 19 Library Pd 2 & Pd 6 Free Minds A Poetry Writing Workshop</p> | <p>FEB 21 BLACK BOX Pd 4 & Pd 6 Stereotyping Short Films by Wilson Students</p> | <p>FEB 28 STEP - ATRIUM Greek Step Show</p> |
| <p>FEB 26 Choir Room Pd 4 & Pd 6 Tunes of the Civil Rights Movement</p> | <p>FEB 27 STEP - ATRIUM Black Greek Speaks History of Black Greek Letters</p> | <p>FEB 27 1:45 - Library Black History Movie: Tap</p> | <p>FEB 28 Breakfast - 8am Hip Hop Music in the Atrium</p> | |

Wilson Athletes Honored in Seasonal Recognition

by Sophie ReVeal

Every fall, winter, and spring, *The Washington Post* comes out with an All Metropolitan list of the best athletes in the DMV area for each sport based on statistics and overall athleticism. For the fall season, the *Post* named four Wilson scholars for honorable mention. These students were Asia Amis for girls cross country, Acey Calhoun for football, Alexis Coates for volleyball, and Adam Pine for soccer.



Photo by Joey Keegan

Senior Acey Calhoun was selected for the defensive section of the All-Met football team. "I did better last year than I did this year because [last year] I played all the games," said the star linebacker. "This year I missed three games because of college visits and my injury." Calhoun was also in *The Post* when he committed to Louisiana State University for track and field.



Photo by Joey Keegan

Senior Adam Pine was named to the soccer section of All-Met. With 12 goals this season for the Tigers, including the first goal in the DCIAA championship win over Bell, Pine was the leading scorer for Wilson. Pine also played kicker for the football team, and was named to the All-DCIAA team.

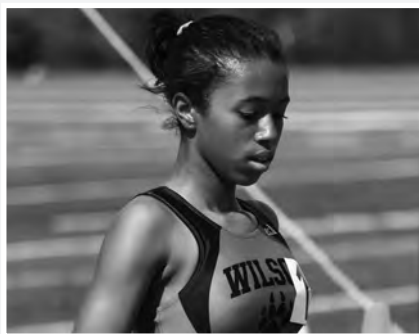


Photo by Isabel Gloss

Sophomore Asia Amis was delighted to see herself in *The Post*. "I was actually very excited because I wanted to be in it last year but I didn't make the time for it," said Amis. The cross country star's time for the 3-mile was 21.27 minutes, which was one of the leading factors in her selection for honorable mention.



Photo by Joey Keegan

Junior Alexis Coates, captain of the volleyball team was awarded honorable mention for her outstanding season. "It's a blessing to receive such an acknowledgement and I'm excited and proud to have received it," said Coates. "It gives me a sense of satisfaction that all my hard work isn't going unnoticed, and I know that without God and my coaches that receiving All Met wouldn't have been possible."

Looking Ahead to the Olympics

Erin Doherty
Sophie ReVeal
Henry Shuldiner

February 7 marks the start of the 2014 Winter Olympic Games in Sochi. The Olympics are an electrifying experience for people all across the world, with over 2,500 top caliber athletes from 88 nations competing in classic winter sports events and games.

The events span from February 7 to 23 with different events each day. Some of the most popular winter sports events include alpine skiing, speed skating, ice hockey, and figure skating. This year, however, a total of 12 new events will be added to the contest to make it the largest Winter Olympics to date. Some of the more popular new events include ski halfpipe (men's and women's), women's ski jumping, biathlon mixed relay, and a new figure skating team event and luge team relay. Many of these are similar to events in the Winter X Games that occur every year in Aspen, Colorado.

One of the biggest stories in Sochi is the qualification of the Jamaican bobsled team to

participate in the games. The Caribbean country's two-man bobsled team of Winston Watts and Marvin Dixon had finished with a good time in their qualification heat, enough to lift them to the Olympics. It's the first time a Jamaican bobsled team has qualified for the Winter Olympics since 2002. The story brings many fond memories of the famous Disney movie "Cool Runnings", a tale of how four Jamaicans defied the odds to qualify in the four-man bobsled for the 1988 Olympics in Calgary.

Team USA has many returning athletes in the quest for gold, such as snowboarders Shaun White and Lindsey Jacobellis, ice hockey players Patrick Kane and Jonathan Quick, and speed skater Shani Davis. Those are just a few of the 224 members that comprise team USA who will be competing in 15 sports.

As teams start to arrive in Sochi within the next week, the news reveals possible dangers about the upcoming Games. Officials from several countries have warned visitors and athletes about potential terrorist attacks. Last month a

militant Islamist group based in the Dagestan region of Russia claimed responsibility for a bombing in the Russian city Volgograd, which killed 34 people. This group, along with three rumored female suicide bombers, have made threats to the games. The bombing in Volgograd, just 600 miles north of Sochi, confirmed the fear of Russian officials. In a recent article by BBC news, UK officials reportedly said that terrorist attacks are "very likely to occur" within the time span of the Olympics.

The State Department has warned Olympic visitors and fans of possible attacks, and has been making arrangements for two US navy ships to be stationed in the Black Sea. Helicopters could be deployed to Sochi if needed to protect those at the games. The precautions being put in place by U.S. officials will hopefully prevent any dangers that could occur.

The upcoming Olympics in Sochi will be an important time for competing athletes, teams, and viewers around the world, but the safety and possible threats will be something else viewers can watch for.

Wilson Special Olympics Team Headed to Nationals

Erin Doherty
Junior Editor

The Winter Olympics are just around the corner, and athletes from countries around the world are making their final preparations. Locally, athletes on the Wilson Special Olympic team are starting to look ahead to their own games. At the end of the school year, the team will compete in the National Special Olympics Games in New Jersey in a number of different sports, including soccer, volleyball, track and field, and bocce, according to biology teacher Sissella Tucker, the team's assistant coach.

Last May, the Wilson Special Olympics team won the D.C. Olympic Games soccer tournament with a mix of special Olympians and unified players, athletes who play competitive sports for Wilson. With this victory, the Tigers earned the opportunity to compete in the National games with four Special Olympians and five unified players. On June 14, the team will travel to New Jersey, staying at Princeton University's campus while they compete against

Special Olympics teams from across America. If the team does well and wins, they will compete in the International Games in 2015.

For now, the team will focus on their upcoming scrimmages and practices, and "[I] hope everyone can come cheer us on as we try to bring the gold medal back to Wilson for the second time," said Tucker.

The games are still months away, but the Wilson Special Olympics team is planning on participating in Special Olympics events sponsored by the District. On Friday, February 7, a group of Wilson students plan on attending the "Special Olympics D.C. Cool Schools Polar Bear Plunge" at Catholic University, with planned activities such as swimming in outdoor pools, enjoying food and beverages, interactive sessions with kids and adults, and overall fun. The "Plunge" brings together kids and adults and will raise money for D.C. Special Olympics teams and for future Special Olympics in the District. If you are interested in participating in the Polar Plunge, contact Ms. Tucker for more information.

Roosevelt Trumps Wilson in Late Thriller

Ben Gutman
Staff Writer

For those of you who are looking for a book to read, which I bet many of you are, I recommend *Fire Bringer* by David Clement-Davies, which is one of the most obscure books I have read, but also one of the best.

Set in medieval Scotland, *Fire Bringer* tells the story of the red deer, who lived in large herds consisting of a lord, a series of captains, and two large groups

of stags, the Corps and the Outriders. That is, until a hornless stag named Sgorr (possibly the most evil character in literature) enters one herd and starts changing its ways, including authorizing a massacre of all the Outriders in one single night.

On the same night, a fawn is born by the name of Rannoch. Rannoch quickly begins to resemble a deer mentioned in an ancient prophecy, and is forced to flee with his mother and some of his friends. Along their journey, Rannoch befriends a

raven, a human, a seal, a wolf, and a reindeer, all of whom help him when he must finally fulfill the prophecy.

One reason I like this book is because there are so many characters in the story. Each character who is still alive at the climax has its own moment of glory and significance, several of which come at the perfect moment. This works because the author tells some of the story from these characters' points of view, in addition to telling it from that of Rannoch or Sgorr.

I also like the way the author works the events of the story into the long and complex prophecy. In a number of cases, this leads to dramatic irony where Rannoch knows nothing of these events but the reader or another character does.

Although it does have some minor flaws (some unnecessary passages and lack of comic relief), *Fire Bringer* makes up for them with exciting action, complex characters, and a perfect sense of timing. Enjoy!

Math Teachers *On Ice* by Erin Sternlieb

Mr. Singer



Photo Courtesy of Jeremy Singer

SINGER SWINGING - Math teacher Jeremy Singer has more talents than just graphing and calculating. His other passion lies in the olympic sport, curling.

You may know Jeremy Singer as the friendly precalculus and economics teacher, but he's also a curling aficionado and has been curling throughout the past 13 years. Singer first learned about curling in the book "101 Stupid Things To Do in DC."

According to Singer, curling requires "a great mix of physical and mental activity." In each curling match there are eight ends (ten in the Olympics), which are essentially periods. In an end, each member of the team, called a "rink," throws two large stones with handles. Of four team members, the "lead" throws the first two stones, the "second" throws the third and fourth stones, the "third" throws the fifth and sixth, and the "skip" is the captain, deciding the strategy and delivering the last two stones. The lead and second both sweep the ice in front of the stones. Singer plays in two different leagues: in one, he plays lead and in the other, skip.

Curling requires more skills than you would imagine. Singer says. Curlers "need to have a good sense of balance and the ability to develop a natural rhythm." Teamwork is also essential "since all four members of the team have to work together to make a shot work," he says.

Singer also emphasizes the social aspect of Curling. "It is very bad form to just leave after a game without spending a few minutes socializing," he says. Curling is also very unique in that all ages can play together. In Singer's league, there is a team with a 65-year-old man, his 40-year-old son, and his 11-year-old granddaughter.

Singer is looking forward to rooting for the U.S. curling team, which has events in Sochi February 20 and 21. He has curled against a current member on the men's roster for Team USA. Singer predicts that "the U.S. mens team is going to struggle to win a medal, but the women have a really good chance of doing well."

Be sure to tune in on February 20 and 21 to cheer on your country. You never know, you may be inspired. It's never too late to start curling!

Mr. Jacoby



Photo by Joey Keegan

BLADES OF GLORY - Mr. Jacoby struts his stuff on the ice. Figuring skating combines grace and physical endurance, featured by one of Wilson's finest.

Before Alex Jacoby was the math teaching prodigy he is today, he was a different type of prodigy: a figure skating prodigy. Jacoby began skating as a little kid. After his dad took him to a free ice skating lesson, Jacoby was "hooked" and continued skating for thirteen years, until he graduated high school.

Figure skating might not seem like a real sport, but is in fact an extremely difficult, rigorous, complex and competitive sport. There are various levels of competition, not just the Olympic level, as Jacoby is quick to point out. Unlike other sports, figure skating does not just require raw physical strength or coordination, but the ability to look graceful while performing a strenuous task. Skaters spend hours everyday on the ice, the cold adding a unique challenge.

For Jacoby, his favorite part of skating was "the speed and control moving over the ice -- frictionless travel is the only way to go," he jokes. To be a good skater, or just to have fun, Jacoby says all it takes is "good knee bend, some willingness to keep trying even when you keep falling, and a tolerance for the cold."

It might seem that teaching a baffled group of teenagers and soaring across the ice on skates have nothing in common, but today Jacoby can still draw a lot of parallels between skating and his job as a math teacher. Not just the physics aspect involved in skating ("the momentum, friction, energy, and collisions"), but the discipline that both require. In both skating and math, Jacoby says "the only way to perform well under pressure is to practice endlessly." Skating taught him "that failing is a necessary part of progress."

Watching figure skating competitions is not Jacoby's favorite part of the sport (he cites the annoying announcers). But he recommends that, if you plan on tuning in to watch the Sochi figure skating events on February 9, 12, 14, 17, or 20, you "imagine yourself as the skater you're watching -- imagine what it would feel like to do what they're doing."

Wilson Alum Emmanuel Burris: A Hit In His Hometown

Henry Shuldiner
Sports Editor

Early in December 2013, MLB infielder and Wilson Alumni Emmanuel Burris received some very exciting news from the Washington Nationals: his hometown ball club was offering him a minor league contract. On December 19, Burris became part of the Nationals Organization.

Burris was born and raised in the District. He competed in various local youth programs and camps that are still popular today, such as Home Run Baseball Camp, Northwest Little League, and DC Dynasty. Burris attended and played for Wilson during his high school career and graduated in 2003. He went on to play at Kent State University in Kent, Ohio. Drafted by the San Francisco Giants, Burris was the 33rd overall pick in the 2006 draft.

During his time at Wilson, Burris played for the varsity

squad all four years, usually at shortstop. He was coached by Wilson's former Athletic Director and head baseball coach Eddie Saah. Saah said about Burris: "He was an Athlete, in other words he could play more than baseball, he could play any sport. He could have been the quarterback for the football team if he wanted to." Saah also said that he used Burris at almost every position, as an outfielder, catcher, and relief pitcher.

In the summer of his junior year at Kent State, Burris travelled to Massachusetts to play summer ball in the prestigious Cape Cod Baseball League, which has sent over 300 players to the Major Leagues. Burris helped his college team, the Orleans Firebirds, capture the 2005 league title and was named MVP of the championship series. "That's when the MLB teams started calling, the White Sox and the Red Sox and so forth," said Saah.

After being drafted, Burris worked his way through various minor league teams in the

Giants farm system and was named the starting second baseman for San Francisco on April 1, 2009. Burris was the first product of the DC Public School system to play in the Major Leagues in 38 years, the previous being Vince Colbert, a graduate of Eastern, who pitched three seasons for the Cleveland Indians beginning in 1970.

Over the next few years, Burris was repeatedly relegated to minor league teams and then was finally called up by the Giants to play. On November 8, 2012, Burris elected free agency.

On November 21, 2012, Burris signed a minor league deal with the Cincinnati Reds (similar to the one he recently signed with the Nationals). He played the 2013 season with the Reds Triple-A team in Louisville.

The contract Burris just agreed to puts him with the Nationals AAA affiliate, the Syracuse Chiefs. Hopefully, Burris will get the chance to prove

that he belongs back in the big leagues during the Nationals' Spring Training season in Vienna, Florida. Players in the minor leagues are often invited to join the professional team during Spring Training, for evaluation and possible promotion to the club.

Burris is a great example of success on the baseball diamond and is an inspiration for ball players all over the district. Coach John McCarthy, director of Home Run Baseball Camp, met Burris when he was seven years old. "I was running a program called Elementary Baseball in the Shaw neighborhood, and he came to practice one day and asked me [if he could] participate and I said sure," said McCarthy. Burris went on to work as a coach for McCarthy in his teenage years at Home Run Baseball Camp, and the two developed a strong relationship.

Burris's return to DC has caused lots of jubilant energy among past coaches, friends,

and even Wilson students. "I was very happy and excited for Emmanuel," said McCarthy. "It's great to have him back in Washington."

Saah was also thrilled when he heard Burris would be coming back to DC. "I was very happy for him," explained Saah. "I told the Nationals they should draft Manny in the MLB draft [in 2006]. I told them he's got speed, he can help you in the eighth and ninth innings, and he'll be bringing at least 500 people to the stadium each night."

The Nationals should be looking forward to having Burris around, he is a very versatile player who has played almost every position professionally, except for pitcher and catcher. "It is unusual to find a player with good speed and a good arm...and [Burris] has that," said McCarthy. "He is a hard worker, a humble young man, and he has earned all of his opportunities."



Rated R:

by Jackson Ross

2013's Best Movies, Rated by the Boss

#10 THE KINGS OF SUMMER

Teen movies these days aren't teen movies. They're artificially fantastical romances populated by hunks of wood that can't act. "The Kings of Summer" goes back to basics, in more ways than one. Embarrassed by their parents (including Nick Offerman, displaying impressive dramatic chops), three boys decide to run away into the Ohio forest and build a cabin to live in, forgoing any sort of human contact except their own. Spurred on by beautiful direction and deliciously wacky dialogue ("Maybe we can disillusion him. A bear with no purpose in life may be easier to take down"), this movie serves as possibly the closest thing we'll ever get to a Calvin & Hobbes movie.

#9 GRAVITY

Alfonso Cuarón should be one of the biggest names in film. He easily would be if he made movies more regularly (his last one was in 2006), as the few movies he has made, including "Children of Men," the third Harry Potter, and select others, are all modern classics. To put it simply, Gravity Cuarón straight-up revolutionized how effects-driven movies are made. From the 12-minute opening shot of Sandra Bullock and George Clooney, the only two with more than a few lines, he has created the most intense, scary sci-fi film since "2001: A Space Odyssey."

#8 FRUITVALE STATION

"Fruitvale Station" is a deeply revealing examination of race in America with a true story to back it up, filled with gut-wrenching material that solidifies it as a movie you should watch once just to experience its power and then stay away from forever. I chose "Fruitvale Station," one for its raw portrait of modern racial tensions, and because it didn't need a ton of A-listers to tell its story convincingly. The fact that it was written and directed by a first-timer, Ryan Coogler, and starred the up-and-coming Michael B. Jordan is quickly forgotten as the two work in tandem to create the most fully realized, human character to grace 2013's screens.

#7 THE LONE RANGER

Yes. "The Lone Ranger." History will vindicate me, or vilify me. It could go either way. You want to know why, ask me in the halls, and we'll both discuss it like civil, albeit opinionated adults.

#6 DON JON

Jon Martello may not be as real a character as "Fruitvale Station's" Oscar Grant, but he's by far one of the more original characters to come along in a while. By writing, directing, and starring in this lovably wacky tale of romance and Internet porn, Joseph Gordon-Levitt has, in my opinion, quickly become the best triple-threat since Woody Allen in his prime. His ability to use such an outlandish character to work wonders on our emotions and thoughts on relationships in general is so astounding, you wonder how more veteran supporting actresses like Scarlett Johansson and Julianne Moore (both delivering their best performances in a long time) reacted upon reading the script for the first time.

#1 THE WOLF OF WALL STREET

Oh yeah, there's a Scorsese movie coming out that was actually directed by the master himself, Martin Scorsese. This is what happens if you take an already excessive memoir by crooked trader Jordan Belfort, get Terence Winter of "The Sopranos" to adapt it into a screenplay that broke the record of most uses of the F-word in a single film, get the man behind "Taxi Driver" and "The Departed" to visualize it as a three-hour extravaganza of orgies, ruthlessness, and unheard-of quantities of every drug under the sun, and put an inhumanly amazing Leonardo DiCaprio at the center of it all. The Wolf of Wall Street is the best film to come along in at least half a decade. Don't listen to people who say it glorifies Wall Street dirty dealings. It's intentionally over-the-top, one big example of the extravagance that caused Belfort's downfall. The gratuitous nudity? The mammoth amount of time devoted to the drug known as the Quaalude? These are not meant to showcase how much fun working on Wall Street is. They're meant to showcase the decadence that is responsible for our economy today. That and for Leonardo DiCaprio pulling out every stop imaginable for a performance that deserves to be remembered for, and this is not hyperbole, the ages. Jokes are made about his inability to win an Oscar, and while he has certainly deserved one for other things, I'm going to make a decree. If he doesn't win his first Oscar for Best Actor on March 2, I will write a 1,000 word essay on the problem with the Oscars for *The Beacon*. If they refuse to print it, I will upload it to my Facebook account. That is the power of DiCaprio's performance and this landmark film in general.

#5 STAR TREK: INTO DARKNESS

The two "Star Trek" pictures that J.J. Abrams has made in the past few years have come under a lot of scrutiny for attempting to make "Star Trek" more mainstream than it should rightly be, and to an extent I can understand that. However, I also understand that plenty of Trekkies are such rabid traditionalists that even the American Tea Party might tell them to be more open to change. Filled with great performances and clever twists and turns, "Star Trek: Into Darkness" rises above a summer full of dim-bulb CGI bores that give blockbusters a bad name. Plus, Benedict Cumberbatch continues to prove his success is just as much due to talent as it is to clinically insane Tumblr worshippers.

#4 THE WORLD'S END

Edgar Wright is a comedy maestro. You will find none that simultaneously spoof and pay homage to cinema classics as brilliantly since Mel Brooks circa "Blazing Saddles." "The World's End" is no exception, following a group of middle-aged British friends, led by Simon Pegg (marvelous as an alcoholic screw-up) as they return to their hometown to complete a pub crawl they attempted as teenagers and strange circumstances lead them to suspect something sinister happened after they left. Want proof that Wright is a fantastic director? Watch a scene from this movie where the five friends fistfight a group of teenagers, all from the perspective of one friend on the ground as he crawls underneath legs, making his way to a bathroom stall. If only we could see a "Hangover" movie with that much effort put into it.

#3 PRISONERS

On paper, the plot of "Prisoners" seems hackneyed and trite. Two little girls go missing in a small Pennsylvania town, and as a straight-laced detective tackles the case, a grieving father launches his own investigation. But thanks to a twisted script by Aaron Guzikowski and director Dennis Villeneuve instilling every moment with subtle darkness and dread, "Prisoners" is a chilling mystery in the same league as "Mystic River" and "Zodiac." Once Hugh Jackman's father goes off and kidnaps a potential suspect, it's the darkness that sets it apart. Its unrelenting abrasiveness pays off in the long run, if you can stand a few torture scenes that are shockingly intense in terms of brutality.

#2 AMERICAN HUSTLE

David O. Russell's consistency has made him one of my favorite filmmaker working today. How he managed to go from the loose-screwed romance of "Silver Linings Playbook" to this crime-comedy romp in only a year is impressive enough. The fact that he's honest enough to radically dramatize the true story of con artists and the FBI teaming up to entrap New Jersey politicians, but then to open the film with a title card reading "Some of this actually happened" demonstrates even more. Add an unrecognizable Christian Bale acting as the successor to Robert De Niro in several ways, a hilarious supporting cast of Bradley Cooper, Jennifer Lawrence and more, and the best soundtrack of the year, and you have one of the best Scorsese movies that Scorsese never made. It was going to be my number one, until I realized...

"Fire Bringer" Tells Exciting Medieval Tale

Quinn Heinrich
Staff Writer

For those of you who are looking for a book to read, which I bet many of you are, I recommend *Fire Bringer* by David Clement-Davies, which is one of the most obscure books I have read, but also one of the best.

Set in medieval Scotland, *Fire Bringer* tells the story of the

red deer, who lived in large herds consisting of a lord, a series of captains, and two large groups of stags, the Corps and the Outriders. That is, until a hornless stag named Sgorr (possibly the most evil character in literature) enters one herd and starts changing its ways, including authorizing a massacre of all the Outriders in one single night.

On the same night, a fawn is born by the name of Rannoch.

Rannoch quickly begins to resemble a deer mentioned in an ancient prophecy, and is forced to flee with his mother and some of his friends. Along their journey, Rannoch befriends a raven, a human, a seal, a wolf, and a reindeer, all of whom help him when he must finally fulfill the prophecy.

One reason I like this book is because there are so many characters in the story. Each

character who is still alive at the climax has its own moment of glory and significance, several of which come at the perfect moment. This works because the author tells some of the story from their point of view, in addition to telling it from that of Rannoch or Sgorr.

I also like the way the author works in the events of the story into the long and complex prophecy. In a number of cases,

this leads to dramatic irony where Rannoch knows nothing of these events but the reader or another character does.

Although it does have some minor flaws (some unnecessary passages and lack of comic relief), *Fire Bringer* makes up for them with exciting action, complex characters, and a perfect sense of timing. Enjoy!

Fear and
Clothing



The Hater Is Gonna Hate

Jack Price
Columnist

1. College Sweatshirts: Nobody likes a braggart. So society tells us, but society also tells us to wear every single chain even when we're in the house. Society is suffering from a case of mild dementia today, so I'm going to fill in and break it down for you: Please take off your college sweatshirt.

2. White People In Shorts: I cannot think of a single reason someone would think wearing shorts in 19-degree weather would be a good idea. L. Ron Hubbard invented pants for a reason.

3. J's: Did anyone ever see that Lil' Bow Wow movie *Like Mike*? If Air Jordans actually gave you special basketball powers and helped you find your foster dad they would be really cool, but instead they just crease and make you look like everyone else in your D.C. History class.

4. The Winter's Tale Film Adaptation: I don't know if any of you urchins have read Mark Helprin's novel *Winter's Tale*, but it is very gully and not at all like the mawkish adaptation starring Colin Farrell and that guy who looks like Russell Crowe.

5. School Shootings: According to ThinkProgress, there has been a school shooting on seven of the 14 school days so far in 2014. As Congress and President Obama continue to ignore the impending crisis, more and more children die, and waking up for school becomes just a little less appealing.

6. Priorities USA: The Super PAC Priorities USA took all the fun out of the Democratic primary by saying they planned to throw their support behind Hillary Clinton in the 2016 presidential campaign. Luckily, rumors have surfaced that they plan to retract their support and bequeath it to the first rapper who can use the term "Super PAC" in a song without referencing marijuana.

7. Savoy: I have no clue/don't care about the Norwegian band/American hotel Savoy, but according to the twitter page @dmvconfession some Georgetown Prep student made out with Malia Obama at their concert last Saturday. This makes them important, and me sad. WHERE ARE THE MALIAS OF YESTERYEAR?



Maude LaVaute



Ice Rongsawad

artists' corner

Compiled by Annie Rosenthal



Sam Lindenfeld



Hope Willis



Queenie Madrid

Wilson Players Get Working on the One Acts

Will Hamlin
Contributor

January is coming to a close, and just like every year at Wilson, that means it's time for One Acts plays. Student actors, writers, directors and producers all collaborate to put together a production of short plays that will be performed on the second and third weekends of February.

"This year the plays vary and compliment each other well," says senior Jonah Gigli, a member of the Wilson Players, the student theater group that

produces the plays. "They include a ridiculous British murder mystery, a group of elementary school boys contemplating liking girls, and two art thieves bound to fail."

The plays are always an entertaining event for the audience. The months of hard work that the actors, writers, producers and directors put in create a spectacular night. Senior Des O'Brien, a director, described how the plays come together, saying, "We start out with a couple of practices where we simply read through the script, allowing

each actor to really understand their character. We then move on to rehearsals where we work on blocking, or stage movement. This is where the play really comes together. The actors are able to play off of one another in ways that are not possible when simply orating the play." O'Brien says that producing a play can be harder than it looks, but the final product is entertaining and satisfactory for the cast and audience. "Doing the plays is a long process because there are so many components that have to go into it. It takes time

to really allow the plays to come into their own, but when they do, One Acts proves to be a truly unique and amazing experience."

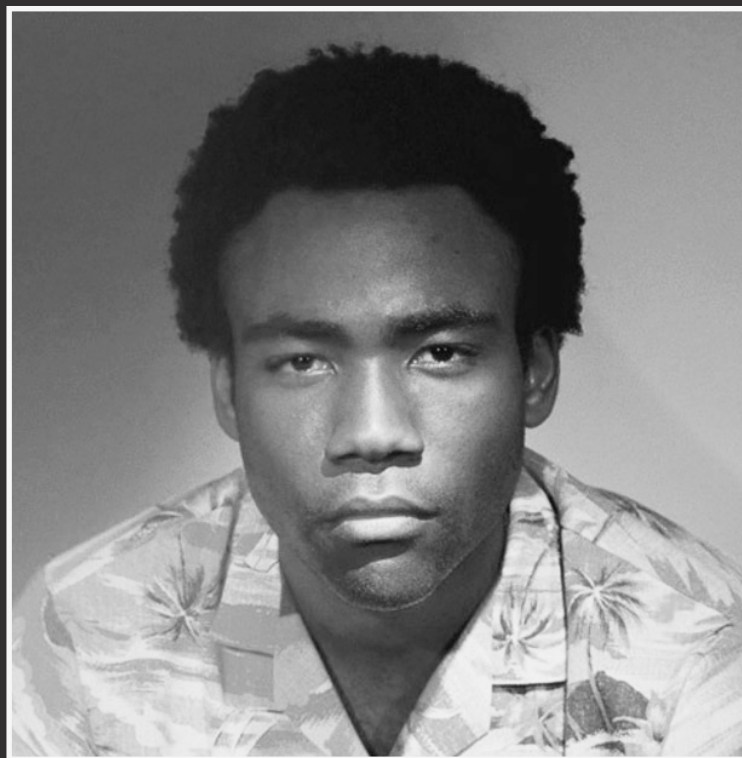
"By the end of it, you feel a part of the One Acts family. With so many students involved, there are a lot of challenges and it can be stressful at times, but the final productions are extremely rewarding," says Gigli.

So on February 6, 7, 8, 13, 14, and 15, come down to the black box to see the short plays that will be truly amusing. Doors will open at 7 pm.

Album Review : *Because The Internet*

Hope Willis
Staff Writer

"Because The Internet" is Donald Glover aka Childish Gambino's second studio album and a follow-up to the emotional 2012 album "Camp". "BTI" can only be described as a sensory overload. The songs are a calculated but chaotic compilation of synthesized rap, acoustic, electronic, R&B and jazz-inspired tracks containing varying lyrical styles. "The Crawl" is a hard, superficial rap track with superb production. It's polarized by "3005" and "Telegraph Ave", love songs with a Drake-like flow, but then challenged by "Zealots of Stockholm", which gives off a dark ambient electronic vibe. Gambino has a few guests on the album, including the acclaimed Chance The Rapper, and veteran but only recently rising star Jhene Aiko. All of these tracks are given context and relevance



by a 74-page screenplay written by Glover, meant to be devoured while one listens to the album.

"BTI" picks up fictionally where "Camp" left off, with

a character who represents Glover, called "The Boy". Only, in this abstract alternate universe Glover intentionally casts himself as the archetypal overprivileged youth with cliched

rich-people problems fused with typical youth issues (fake friends, love interests, self discovery, daddy issues etc.). He's somewhat of a urban Brooklyn hipster rendition of Jay Gatsby.

The screenplay is funny and satirical as well as introspective. It doesn't miss a chance to make fun of party culture, the luxe lifestyles we aspire to, hipsters and 20-something millennials, blindly-followed trends, love, the chips on our shoulders and the general angst that teenagers have.

"BTI" is symbolic of our fast-track thoughts and light-speed lifestyles that stem from technology and the internet. "BTI" itself is beautiful, with all of its complex winds and turns. Even as seemingly non-sequitur as it is without the accompanying script, somehow, some way, the songs manage to stand on their own.

What was your New Years Resolution?

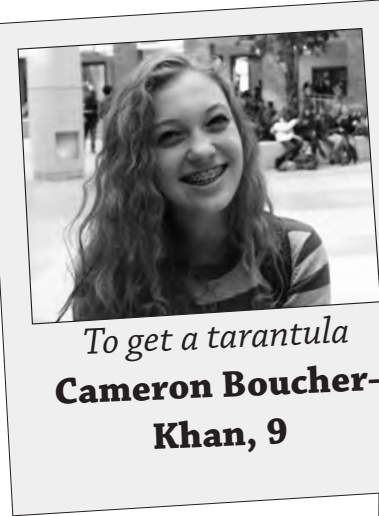
Compiled by Will Hamlin



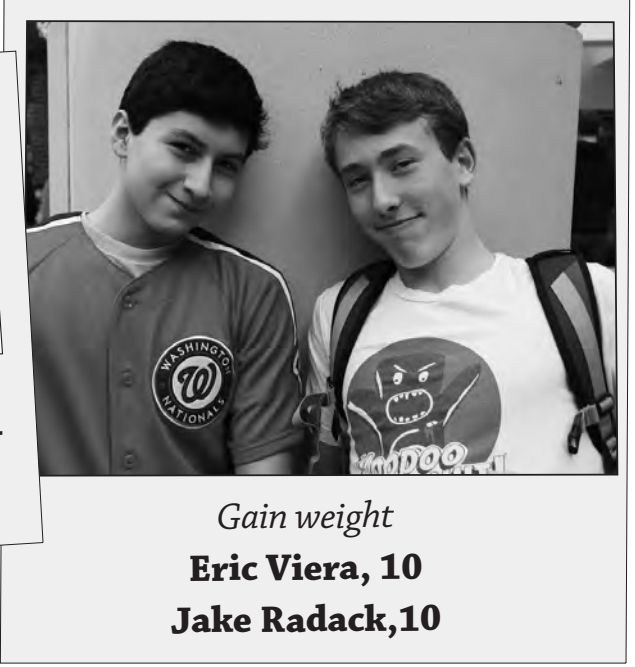
To ride my bike without training wheels
Ellie Melick, 9



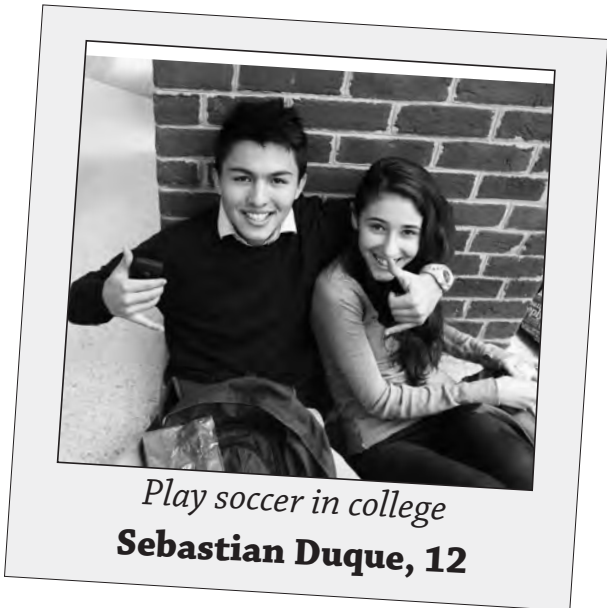
Write more music
Lena Jones, 11



To get a tarantula
Cameron Boucher-Khan, 9



Gain weight
Eric Viera, 10
Jake Radack, 10



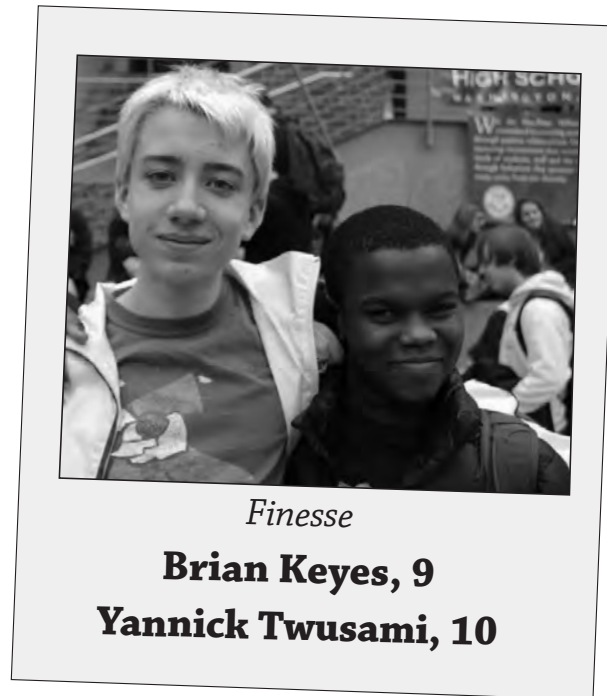
Play soccer in college
Sebastian Duque, 12



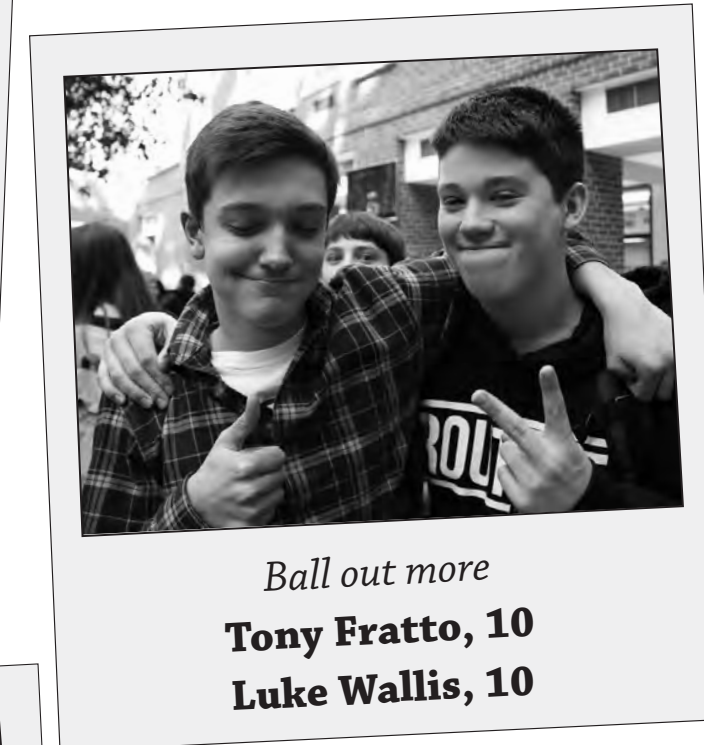
To work out
Njiri Kouaho, 11
Zenia Zeitlin, 11



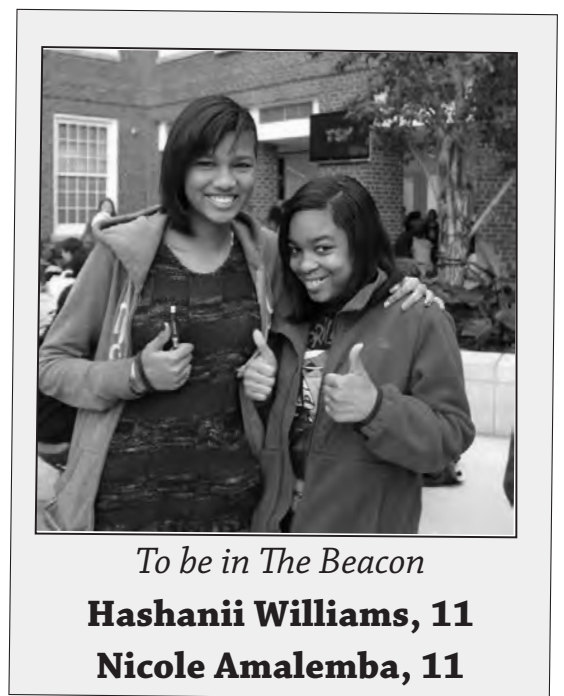
To get a job and make money
Shu Phua, 9



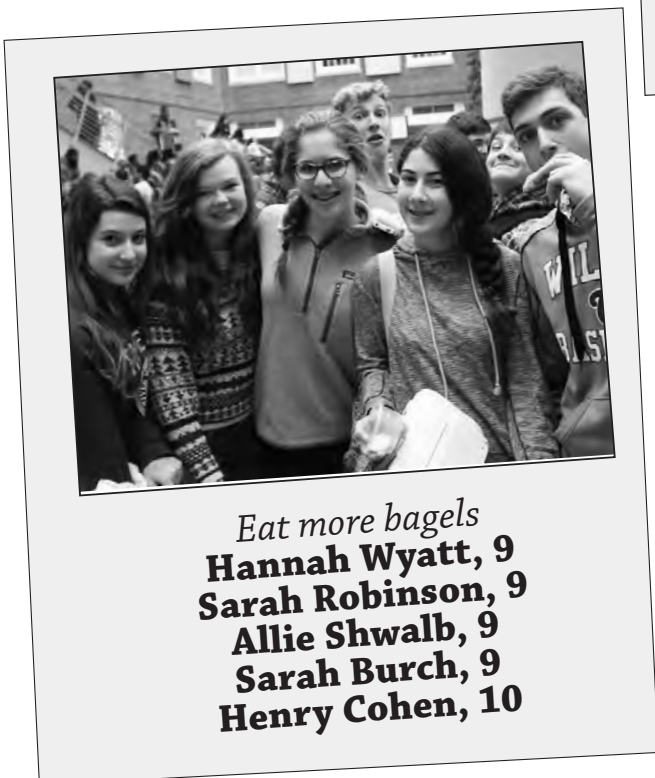
Finesse
Brian Keyes, 9
Yannick Twusami, 10



Ball out more
Tony Fratto, 10
Luke Wallis, 10



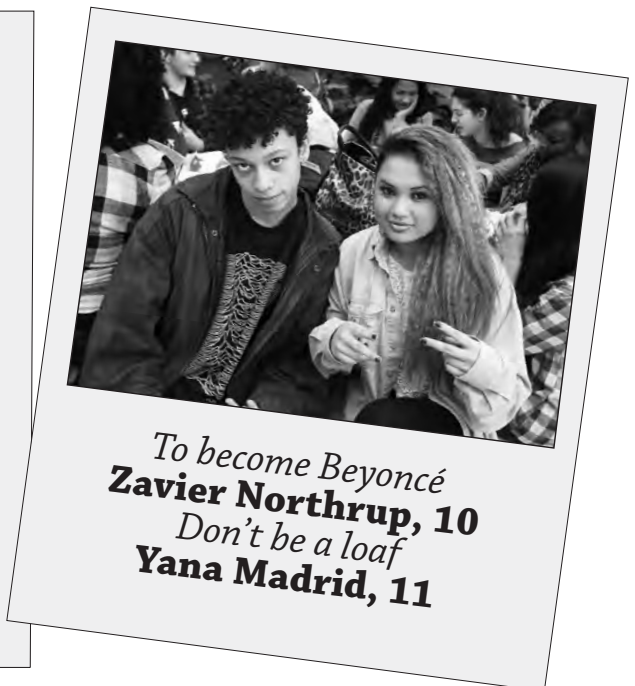
To be in The Beacon
Hashanii Williams, 11
Nicole Amalemba, 11



Eat more bagels
Hannah Wyatt, 9
Sarah Robinson, 9
Allie Shwalb, 9
Sarah Burch, 9
Henry Cohen, 10



Wear more sweaters
Des O'Brien, 12



To become Beyoncé
Zavier Northrup, 10
Don't be a loaf
Yana Madrid, 11