



"You are the future"

Beloved teacher, Doug Smestad, passes at 63

by Rachel Gershengoren
Editor-in-Chief

On September 17, Calhoun lost Douglas Smestad, a teacher who impacted the lives of thousands, to liver cancer at the age of 63.

Mr. Smestad was one of a kind. From his love of philosophy, his motorcycle, music, and the Renaissance, he could not have been more unique.

As one of the longest tenured teachers at Calhoun, Mr. Smestad touched the lives of students and teachers for decades. Students from the early '90s through those still in high school expressed their feelings or posted on Facebook and Twitter about the impact he had on their lives.

"Mr. Smestad was the most encouraging, supportive person I have had the pleasure of knowing," said Principal Nicole Hollings. "He gave of himself to help others all the time. I was encouraged just being in his presence. I miss him every day."

What could a teacher possibly do to impact so many students? Many students recalled that it was the little things that counted. Things like saying hello in the hallway, battling students in a sword fight, playing Renaissance music, staying long hours after school, sharing his philosophy on life, being open about his own hardships, and reminding

students every day before that bell rang how they were the future. That was a part of his daily catchphrase as his students left the classroom: "Remember, you are the future."

The reason people remember him from 20 years ago is because he taught students lessons that they will carry in the future. His compassion for others, his yearning for learning, and his passion for teaching was immeasurable. He was a man that woke up every morning and smiled at the thought of coming to Calhoun.

Senior Bianca Liriano said, "This man taught us the most valuable lessons there are: that tests don't define us, that our character is more valuable than our academic success, and that we have the power to mold our future. This impact he left on the Calhoun community is a legacy we are eternally grateful for, and I am blessed to have known such an influential person in my lifetime."

As days went by after Mr. Smestad's passing, Calhoun became a family. Together, teachers and students found ways to deal with their loss. From Ms. Hollings speaking on the announcements, to teachers sharing memorable stories, and students finding ways to console each other, Mr. Smestad's life had a profound impact that was and will not be possible to forget.

"Smes was the first person to tell me I was more than my grades. I can honestly say that I am happier with my life, both in and out of school, and it's because of him."

- Alaina Anderson
Class of '17



Mr. Smestad proudly participated in Relay for Life held last school year.

Hundreds of students, teachers, and alumni stood shoulder to shoulder enveloped in each other's arms at his funeral, listening to fellow teachers Mr. Neil Madnick, Mr. Sal Salerno, and his two sons, Ethan and Dylan, speak about him. N.F. Walker Funeral Home on Merrick Ave. in Merrick was packed with pictures, Renaissance gear, swords, and guitars that represented how rare a person like Mr. Smestad was.

An event called "A Celebration of Life" has been planned for December 22 at 7 p.m. to honor Mr.


Smestad. Students, teachers, and alumni will be on hand to share stories, music, and memories of their teacher.

When Mr. Smestad was diagnosed in February of 2014, there was an immediate outcry of support from students and faculty.


Matthew Koffler, now an alumnus from the Class of '15, began Smestad's Knights — a Relay for Life group in honor of Mr. Smestad. Koffler said, "I felt helpless in being unable to help someone who for so long had been there for me and countless others. I needed to

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Teachers among the best

by Tracy Goldman
Editor-in-Chief

A recent survey listed Calhoun teachers among the best in New York State.

Calhoun was ranked No. 39 on the list of high schools with the best teachers in the state, according to Niche.com.

The survey was based on opinions from 300,000 students and parents. Niche ranked more than 100,000 public and private schools and districts based on dozens of statistics and opinions.

What landed Calhoun's teachers such a high spot? Principal Nicole Hollings thinks it has to do with the versatility teachers exhibit in and out of the classroom.

"The staff at Calhoun is not only knowledgeable in their subject areas, but they also care greatly about students, and they strive to meet their academic, social, and emotional needs," she said.

A teacher is someone who, by definition, teaches, and Calhoun teachers, according to Ms. Hollings, extend their teaching beyond what their contracts state.

Students often are able to converse easily with teachers. Upon

entering a classroom after school ends, seldom is a classroom empty; students will pour into classrooms, talking to their teachers or asking questions in extra help.

Ms. Hollings added, "There is an adult for every student in this building."

Unlike other high schools, students at Calhoun often feel comfortable approaching a staff member, since we have "a very caring and nurturing staff."

However, getting a high ranking on a list is not entirely based on a teacher's approachability. Rather, the definition of a teacher extends much further than that.

Ms. Hollings defines a good teacher as "a master of their subject area, but more importantly [one who] finds ways to teach the material in an engaging, accessible, [and] vibrant way."

Teachers at Calhoun present information creatively. Whether it is through lecturing, a lab demonstration, or peer tutoring, a typical Calhoun student will "gain deeper understanding through many different pedagogical techniques," she said.

Success is a common word that reflects the effectiveness of teach-

ers. It is no secret that students at Calhoun perform well in testing. This could, in part, correlate to the high ranking on Niche.

"Teachers get to know their students on many levels to help them be successful," Ms. Hollings said.

This is not an environment in which a student adapts to what a teacher wants; this is a place in which students and teachers cultivate a mutually beneficial environ-

ment conducive to success.

A ranking is just a number on the surface, of course. While it is very flattering for Calhoun to be ranked No. 39, Ms. Hollings assures that it is the effort of the teachers that far outweighs the numerical placement on a list.

"I am more concerned with ensuring that our students succeed on the highest level possible," Ms. Hollings said.



(photo by Amber Lievre)

Calhoun teachers, like Mr. Sardo shown in class, ranked No. 39 in the state.

"You are the future"

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do something."

From the Molloy Relay for Life event to the very first Calhoun Relay for Life, Smestad's Knights represented more than just one man. Relay for Life symbolized the unity of Calhoun students, faculty, and parents struggling with cancer, as well as hope in a brighter future. Mr. Smestad was

never prouder of Calhoun than he was at Relay. In an article in last year's *Hoofbeats*, Mr. Smestad said, "I want Relay for Life to be about everyone, not just Smestad."

Even at his worst times, his selflessness and positivity shined through.

Even after his diagnosis, Mr. Smestad kept a positive outlook on life. Playing his guitar days before he passed, spending time with

his two sons and the people who loved him most, he knew he was surrounded by love and laughter. In a Facebook post regarding a foreboding new treatment method, Mr. Smestad said, "But like the early explorers I am heading into uncharted territory. But there is no reward without risk."

From the unfeigned conversations in the hallways between students, to school board's meetings, and Smestad's Knights member's exchanges, everyone has ideas on how to commemorate Mr. Smestad in Merrick and especially in Calhoun.

Teachers were also impacted by his loss. Not only was Mr. Smestad a huge voice in the teachers' union and a friend to many in the teachers' lounge, he was a mentor to many teachers — even those who were once his students when they were in high school.

The support and creativity from students is attestable with ideas like creating a scholarships in his name, renaming a part of the school, putting a plaque outside of his classroom, displaying his famous quotes in the building, creat-



Mr. Smestad dresses for the Senior Experience Fashion Show with Dana Reilly.

ing murals, honoring him in Relay for Life, and building up the Smestad's Knight's club.

It is without a doubt, students will not rest until Mr. Smestad gets the honor he deserves in a school that he poured his life and soul into everyday.

Although Mr. Smestad started teaching at a later age, that maturity and wisdom he had only helped him become one of the best teachers at Calhoun, a teacher that will never be forgotten or replaced. He helped create a future for students who will live on to do great things and like Mr. Smestad, will maybe one day leave a positive dent on the world.



(photo provided by Matt Koffler)

Mr. Smestad poses with alumnus Matt Koffler at last year's Relay for Life event.

Renovation plans on ice

No air conditioning, but Mac lab added

by Julia Losner
News Editor

The district continued to make renovations at Calhoun this summer, but seniors won't be around to see the most anticipated change of all.

When the school bond was approved in 2013, students and faculty were promised a slew of renovations. Among them was air conditioning, which was scheduled to be installed district-wide during the summer of 2015. Evidently, this and many other scheduled renovations, did not occur, leaving many students wondering, "What renovations will we see before we graduate?"

With no major renovations scheduled to take place during this school year, what seniors see now is the extent of the renovations that will take place during their time at Calhoun.

The rest of the student body will see many more changes to the building in the upcoming years. As Principal Nicole Hollings excitedly noted, "Next summer, we are slated to get the air conditioning!"

The air conditioning was originally scheduled to be installed this

past summer; however, there were some problems with getting approval to do construction from the state, as Ms. Hollings explained.

"In order for any school district to do bond work or any kind of construction on their buildings, they have to submit very detailed plans that pass through a series of approval points with engineers at the state, which determine if that work is indeed possible," Ms. Hollings said. "Apparently, this past year, there were so many districts statewide that submitted bond proposals that the state got backlogged. It was out of our hands. The state education department held us up. We would have liked to get the projects started this past summer, but we didn't have that power."

The plans, which were submitted last October, weren't approved by the state until mid-July. Now the plans will go out to bid, and decisions will be made as to who will do the construction. Then, the work can finally begin.

Ms. Hollings also spoke about other upcoming renovations, saying, "We're also going to be working on the bathrooms next summer, with science labs the fol-



(photos by Rachel Gershengoren)

Twenty nine computers were added to the new Mac Lab for many purposes.

lowing summer. [Air conditioning, bathrooms, and science labs] are the three major pieces of the bond," she said.

The bathrooms will be renovated at all three schools, and some of Calhoun's bathrooms will undergo drastic makeovers.

"Some of [the bathrooms] are going to be completely overhauled in this building, completely gutted, and everything new," Ms. Hollings said.

Bathrooms across all schools in the district will bear strong resemblance to each other.

"If we were the only building in the district getting bathrooms, we could really personalize it and make them unique to us, but because we are dealing with three high schools and two middle schools, they'll be similar in design. The colors might be different, but the design itself will be pretty similar," Ms. Hollings said.

While many major renovations were put on hold this past summer, some smaller projects were still carried out at like the new brickwork near the football field.

Twenty nine computers were also purchased for each of the district's three high schools, creating a Mac Lab. Ms. Hollings said the computers in the Mac Lab will

have many uses for the Calhoun population.

"They will be used by photography and art classes, in addition to academic class use by students, teachers, and tech mentors for film editing, presentations, and more," Ms. Hollings said. "The possibilities are very exciting."

Renovations, such as the 2014 turf field installation, were implemented before others due to ease of installation. Since artificial turf doesn't require engineering, electricity, or plumbing, it does not need state approval for installation.

"We went ahead with some plans; for example, we got the Mac lab and we increased the number of cameras we have which still has to be increased even more, and that is going to be soon," Ms. Hollings said. "We repainted the auditorium stage, which was not a major project, but it needed to be done. We did some cosmetic things in the building, like repainting all the walls and the hallways – finally they are all clean white."

Ms. Hollings said she hoped there won't be any more holdups with future renovations,

"I'm looking forward to the big projects that are ahead and bringing our building to the next level."



Meet the candidates

by Steven Vacnin
Staff Writer

Many high school seniors will be able to vote for the first time in the upcoming 2016 presidential election.

It is important to form your own

opinions when it comes to politics. With over 20 individuals seeking the nomination for commander-in-chief, the six names to remember are listed below.

All their policies on diplomatic relations, abortion, crime, economy, drugs, education, gun control

and immigration are listed under the names of each candidate. In order to be more informed, not only should you watch the debates being aired on Fox, CNN, etc, but you should also visit various sources such as Real Clear Politics, or even just scroll through Yahoo

News once a day.

Even if you are not yet a senior in high school, don't just adopt the opinion of your parents or friends. Make your own. The top three candidates in the two main political properties, The Republican Party and the Democratic Party.

Donald Trump

- Abortion - ban late abortion, exception for rape, pregnancy complications, incest.
- Economy - wants to reduce debt before it reaches \$24 trillion. He is a businessman; believes he knows money.
- Crime - capital punishment should be legal.
- Drugs - legalize recreational use, use tax on drugs to fund anti-drugs education.
- Education - repeal the Common Core system. States mandate education.
- Environment - climate change is a hoax.
- Foreign Policy - more sanctions on Iran, better relationship with Russia, support Israel, deal with North Korea.
- Gun Control - ban assault weapons, increased background checks, strong proponent of the 2nd amendment.
- Immigration - build a wall on the Mexican border. End birthright citizenship (no anchor babies), drones on the Mexican border. Limit new immigration.

Carly Fiorina

- Abortion - end planned parenthood. Ban abortions 20 weeks post-fertilization.
- Economy - opposes the stimulation bill, reduce taxes, less gov't regulation, more state regulation.
- Crime - Capital Punishment should stay.
- Drugs - End recreational use of drugs.
- Education - Repeal the Common Core. States mandate education. Supports "No Child Left Behind."
- Environment - Climate change is

real. Weaken the EPA.

- Foreign Policy - No Iran deal unless inspections of facilities are allowed. End ISIS through air strikes and military intervention.
- Gun Control - Strong proponent of the 2nd Amendment.
- Immigration - Pathway to legalization, not full citizenship. Sup-

Core system. Public education has become propaganda.

- Environment - Climate debate is distracting and irrelevant. Petroleum independence is needed.
- Foreign Policy - More sanctions on Iran, better relationship with Russia, support Israel. America may end like Rome.
- Gun Control - Law abiding citi-



(Illustration by Lisa Lovelidge)

ports DREAM Act.

Ben Carson

- Abortion - No abortion for convenience. Ban past 20 weeks.
- Economy - Cut every government agency spending by 10 percent. Let the economy work itself out.
- Crime - All police wear cameras to prevent racial stereotyping. No need to be politically correct, just do your job.
- Drugs - Marijuana for medical use only.
- Education - Repeal the Common

zens deserve their 2nd Amendment.

- Immigration - Create a guest worker system. Take the moral high road.

Bernie Sanders

- Abortion - Pro-choice. Keep Planned Parenthood.
- Economy - Increase government spending to regulate economy. He is a self-proclaimed Democratic-Socialist.
- Crime - Remove Capital Punishment. Improportionate number of African Americans in prison.

- Drugs - Decriminalize marijuana and start study on recreational use.

- Education - Replace standardized testing with holistic approach. Free public college tuition.

- Environment - Climate change is real. Wants complete transition to sustainable energy.

- Foreign Policy - Normalize relations with Cuba, Two-state solution with Israel and Palestine, negotiate with Iran.

- Gun Control - Mandatory background checks, Hunting is fine.

- Immigration - Pathway to citizenship, no wall, no guest worker system.

Hillary Clinton

- Abortion - Pro-choice. Keep Planned Parenthood.
- Economy - Wants bankruptcy reform, use tax dollars to improve infrastructure.
- Crime - Supports Capital Punishments with restrictions.
- Drugs - Legalize medical marijuana, wait and see on recreational.
- Education - Right to education from pre-K to college. Teach bible as literature and history, not Science and Religion. Fully fund special education.
- Environment - Devote \$100 billion by 2020 for climate change mitigation.
- Foreign Policy - Take harder stance toward Russia, attack ISIS (airstrikes only). Maintain distance from Cuba.
- Gun Control - Encourage screenings, but let local gov't regulate gun control.
- Immigration - Pathway to citizenship within 100 days. Issue Driver's Licenses to illegals. Needs comprehensive reform.

A life-changing experience

by Ronni Schweitzer
Staff Writer

On June 12, 2014, three teenagers in Israel were kidnapped and killed by terrorists. Less than 48 hours later, I stepped on a plane heading toward a country that was submerged in war.

During the summer of 2014, I was set to spend five weeks traveling all throughout Israel. Seeing as how this was going to be my first time out of the country or on a plane, I was already nervous. Hearing about the deaths of three teenagers made the impending trip even more nerve wracking.

Once I arrived at the Ben Gurion airport in Tel Aviv, I was overwhelmed by the amount of security that was present. Everywhere you looked there was another police officer observing the crowd. While I knew they were there to keep everyone safe, the threat of war was still in my mind.

After about a week and a half of traveling around the country, things were starting to feel comfortable. At one point, my group stayed at a camp in the North of Israel called Camp Koby, named after Koby Mandell, a teenager who was a victim of a terrorist attack in 2001. The camp is for children who have lost family members to terrorist attacks.

One night my group was getting ready for bed when all of a sudden an alarm started blaring. Everyone immediately got up and started running. I had no idea where I was running to, but I remember how fast my heart was beating — all of the adrenaline and fear was hitting me right away.

Once I got to the bomb shelter I was greeted with sheer panic. Yes, I was scared, but the reactions of

all of the Israeli children, some as young as 5, were what impacted me the most. Being in a bomb shelter brought back many horrible memories for all of the kids; it was extremely heartbreaking to witness that.

After we got clearance to leave the bomb shelter, they told us all to go to sleep. I remember lying in bed being terrified that another alarm would sound. I slept in my shoes that night in case I had to run; I even packed a bag to leave by the door in case of emergency. When I woke up the next morning, they informed us that the alarm sounded because a group of terrorists in Lebanon fired a missile that landed 12 miles away from the camp.

Within the course of one day, my perspective changed. Everywhere I went after that, I always made sure to be conscious of where the bomb shelters were located in relation to me. And while that fear was always in the back of my mind, it also made me realize that traumatic events have an unexpected way of bringing people together. No matter where you went in the country, you were always able to relate to someone because everyone was going through the same experiences as you. Everyone, no matter the age, knew someone that was involved in the war. While I only stayed in Israel for five weeks, the people who live there have to deal with that fear year-round.

Despite the difficulties that I faced being in a war zone, it was an amazing experience. I was able to try so many new things like riding a camel and climbing up sand dunes. Two of my favorite things were snorkeling in the Red Sea and hiking up Mount Masada. No matter where you go, it feels like



(photo by Ronni Schweitzer)

A look at a flag on the lawn of the Knesset (Israel's legislature).

you are living in a postcard; the whole country is breathtaking. The amount of culture is incredible. It is such a welcoming and lively country, and its happy attitude is infectious. It was the most incredible experience of my life, and if given the opportunity, I would do it all again in a heartbeat.

Once my trip was over and I came back home to America, I realized the general population of our country has this mentality that we are invincible. The people from

our generation didn't grow up in a war, so we tend to take for granted how lucky we are not to be faced with that. I didn't even realize that I was taking it for granted until I was exposed to that type of environment.

After having a first-hand experience in a straining situation, I am so grateful for the environment that I grew up in. When I stepped on that plane I had no idea that I was heading into one of the most amazing experiences of my life.



(photo by Ronni Schweitzer)

Visitors take a sunrise hike up to Mt. Masada, a mountain that overlooks the Dead Sea.



(photo by Ronni Schweitzer)

In Haifa, Israel's third largest city, visitors take a camel ride.



FIVE FILMS FOR FALL

by Carter Simonson
Staff Writer

As we approach the end of 2015, movies have a noticeable uptick in quality compared to earlier months.

Here are five anticipated films of the fall (that aren't "Star Wars VII," because let's give other movies some attention.)

"Steve Jobs" - Last year's Sony hack provided an illuminating look into a company with enough business problems that any journalist can sink their teeth into it and come out with a best-seller. One of the conflicts involved the pre-production of this movie, which involved "Gone Girl" director David Fincher, Angelina Jolie's proposed "Cleopatra" movie, and a revolving door of stars. The fact that this movie not only came out of this mess alive, but also great and Oscar-worthy, is enough to stoke anticipation among moviegoers and Apple fans alike.

"Crimson Peak" - Since it's October, of course horror movies are going to be in surplus this month. Between "Goosebumps," "Paranormal Activity 6," and "Scouts Guide To The Zombie Apocalypse," it would be understandable to stay home. But the one saving grace for the genre comes in "Crimson Peak." Using a Victorian-era setting, director Guillermo del Toro ("Pan's Labyrinth," "Pacific Rim") meshes the costume drama with romance and Gothic horror in a style rarely seen since Hammer Horror films. Along with a stellar cast (Mia Wasikowska, Tom Hiddleston, Jessica Chastain) and a solid R rating, "Crimson Peak" is a can't-miss proposition for people who realized that del Toro can do no wrong or people who are impatiently waiting for a gritty reboot of *Jane Eyre*.

"Spectre" - After two movies of not quite hitting the mark, "Skyfall" managed to convince mov-



(photo courtesy of www.007.com)

After missing the mark in previous movies, Daniel Craig returns as James Bond in the action-packed "Spectre."

iegers that Daniel Craig could pull off James Bond. Blending elements of action, pathos, and wit, Craig brought new complexities to his character that few prior Bond actors were able to do. Reuniting with "Skyfall" director Sam Mendes, "Spectre" looks to continue the momentum "Skyfall" had with international action, humanistic drama and Christoph Waltz. With so much promise, "Spectre" looks to continue the winning formula that made the last movie such a success.

"Krampus" - In 2007, "X2" and "Superman Returns" co-writer Michael Dougherty made his debut as a director with "Trick 'r Treat," an entertaining, creative throwback to anthology films such as "Creepshow" and "Tales from the Darkside" that centered around

Halloween traditions taken to exaggerated highs. While more or less dumped direct-to-DVD, the film managed to garner a passionate cult audience.

Dougherty's newest film, "Krampus," which is said to be redolent of films such as "Poltergeist" and "Gremlins," focuses on a dysfunctional family attempting to fight off the titular Krampus, who punishes the naughty and non-believers. With an accomplished cast including Parks and Rec's Adam Scott and Fargo's Alison Tolman, Krampus looks to continue the mix of horror and humor which made "Trick 'r Treat" a Halloween staple.

"The Revenant" and "The Hateful Eight" - The films coming out on Christmas seem like the oddest selections we've seen in a while.

With Jennifer Lawrence's latest bid for an Oscar in "Joy," the neutered NFL drama "Concussion," the "Point Break" remake, and (Oh dear lord) "Alvin and the Chipmunks 4," it's easy to understand why many would choose to stay home. That is if "The Revenant" and "The Hateful Eight" weren't coming out. I couldn't choose which Western shot in sub-freezing temperatures by immensely talented directors with entertainingly large egos I wanted to see more, so I plan to see Samuel L. Jackson square off against Kurt Russell and Leonardo DiCaprio vs. Tom Hardy, with the actors fighting hypothermia and each other.

Honorable Mentions: "Bridge of Spies," "Room," "Spotlight," "Carol," "Legend."

THE BEST OF PUNK ROCK

by Michael Trageser
Staff Writer

Pop-punk has become cool again.

With the successful comebacks of Fall Out Boy and Paramore, as well as the solo successes of ex-My Chemical Romance members Gerard Way and Frank Iero and that of torch-carrying bands like Wonder Years and Knuckle Puck, the pop-punk genre has been brought back into the spotlight.

The genre that combines the aggression of classic punk rock with catchy hooks was the soundtrack of the 2000s seemingly faded away in popularity, but has always maintained a passionate, dedicated fan base.

While newer acts are starting to gain ever-increasing traction, the best way to ease new fans in is to introduce them to some of the classics of pop punk.

Bowling For Soup - Having been around since 1994, Bowling For Soup is part of pop-punk's old guard. For anyone wondering what this pop-punk thing is all about, Bowling For Soup is definitely a great band to start off with. Bear in mind that this is the band who wrote a song entitled "Punk Rock 101!"

The band is known for their characteristic pop-punk sound and humorous lyrics sung by vocalist Jaret Reddick in his raspy, slight Texas drawl. Best known for their cover of SR-71's "1985," the band

also has a treasure trove of other great tunes including "Almost" and "High School Never Ends."

BFS is also well-known for their involvement in the Disney Channel show "Phineas and Ferb," performing the theme song and Reddick supplying the voice of Danny, the guitarist of hair metal band Love Handel, in several episodes.

Essential albums: "A Hangover You Don't Deserve," "Let's Do It For Johnny!"

Blink-182 - By far, Blink is one of the few groups who truly are synonymous with pop-punk. Songs like "All The Small Things," "Rock Show," and "What's My Age Again?" have all become standard tunes of the genre and can be recognized by just about anyone regardless of taste.

Blink-182 paved the way for other groups with their pioneering mixture of accessible melodies and fast-paced punk and are notorious for their irreverent lyrical humor. The power trio burst on the scene with their album, "Enema of The State," and continued scoring hit after hit and touring, bringing their energetic live shows around the world until taking a break years later in 2005.

Blink reunited a few years later and continued touring and recording, planning on making their next album when vocalist and guitarist Tom DeLonge quit and Alkaline Trio's Matt Skiba was bought in to replace him and is currently finishing up a new blink album with



Bowling For Soup is known for its pop-punk sound and humorous lyrics.

remaining members Travis Barker and Mark Hoppus.

Essential albums: "Enema of The State," "Dude Ranch"

Yellowcard - Formed by a group of friends from Douglas Anderson School of The Arts in Jacksonville, Florida, Yellowcard is a band who has gone through many a musical change yet is still known for mostly being a pop-punk act.

While they started playing hardcore punk and released their debut album as such, the band's direction changed when Ryan Key took over the role of vocalist. Yellowcard released another EP and album before putting out their breakthrough, "Ocean Avenue."

The album's title track quickly became a pop-punk classic and is one of the first songs to use the "getting out of our hometown" theme that has become commonplace in the genre. Since then, the group has toured consistently and has put out more albums with some teetering on the edge of more mainline alternative rock.

Essential albums: "Ocean Avenue," "Lights and Sounds"

New Found Glory - Another part of pop-punk's old guard, New Found Glory is an essential band in the genre as they helped draw the blueprint for what was to eventually come.

Known for their live performances and singer Jordan Pundik's distinctive, instantly recognizable voice, New Found Glory has influenced practically every

pop-punk band since, with their debut "Nothing Gold Can Stay" setting the standard for those who would follow.

The band is also known for their covers of other people's songs, having recorded tunes from artists ranging from Ramones to Bob Dylan to Bjork. Eighteen years into their career, the band is currently touring in support of their latest effort, "Resurrection: Ascension."

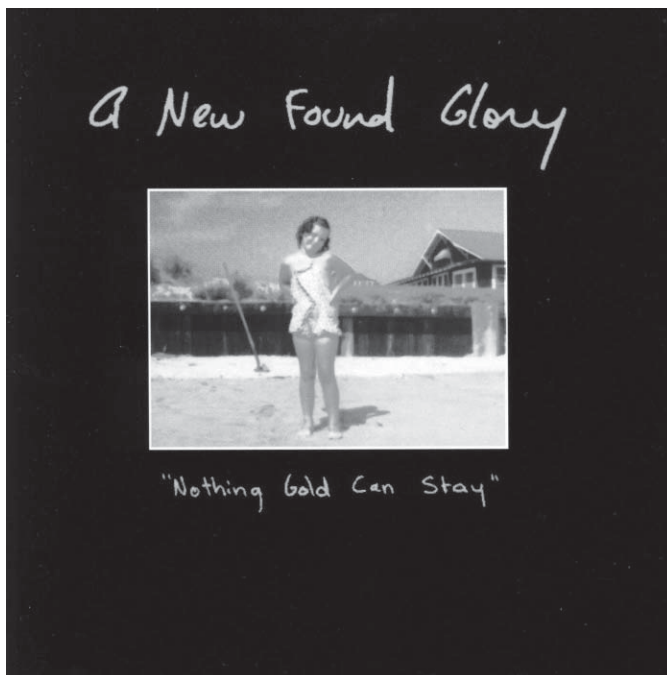
Essential album: "Nothing Gold Can Stay"

My Chemical Romance - Hands down, the most definitive band of the second wave of pop-punk is My Chemical Romance. The New Jersey-bred quintet took pop-punk's signature elements and added the horror-punk image of bands such as the Misfits, yet with the dark lyrics of the Smiths and grandiosity of 70s glam-rock.

All of these influences culminated in something truly special and unique. Ten years later, MCR's seminal album "Three Cheers For Sweet Revenge" still holds up incredibly well and could have easily been recently recorded.

Despite a short 12-year career that lasted only four studio albums, My Chem's influence on up-and-coming bands is undeniable as they forged a sound that can only be described as My Chemical Romance, which is the legacy that any band wants to have.

Essential Albums: "Three Cheers For Sweet Revenge," "The Black Parade"



New Found Glory has had an influence on many other pop-punk bands.

Remembering Mr. Smestad

by Rachel Gershengoren
Editor-in-Chief

After spending an afternoon with a couple of teachers in a classroom talking about the greatness of a man, after seeing students breaking down in the hallway about someone they never even met, and after seeing two won-

derful friends of mine deal with the loss of a mentor, friend, and teacher, that's when I realized the power that a teacher holds.

Doug Smestad was not only a beloved teacher, but he was also a remarkable human being. Although this has all been said before, Smestad woke up every morning with passion in his eyes, a yearning for

learning and a sense that teaching is what he was always meant to do.

Whether you had him as a teacher or just a passerby in the hallway, he impacted the lives of thousands, and I have witnessed that with my own eyes on the day of his passing.

As teachers and students come together to mourn the loss of a great man, we remembered him as a man with wisdom, intellect, and, of course, a great understanding of life and philosophy. I will take all that I have learned in my short time of knowing him, but he will be in our hearts forever.

Smestad always cared about others, always showed love and kindness at exactly the right times when someone needed it most.

Mr. Smestad's funeral was a night that will never leave my memory. Standing shoulder to shoulder with alumni from 10 years ago, hugging my current teachers, friends and even adversaries, everyone put behind them their judgments of others. Instead, they stood together enveloped in each other's arms listening to the words of those who knew Smes best. For me, it was like a Challenge Day moment — a moment when time stops and everyone looks at each other and sees how grateful they are to have such a wonderful com-

munity of teachers, mentors, and friends surrounding them. This moment reminded me to thank a select number of teachers and acquaintances who have helped me through tough times in my years at Calhoun.

I am excited to see what Calhoun has planned to honor Mr. Smestad, and I hope to be a part of it all. After his passing, a now-infamous petition circulated online to rename Calhoun after Mr. Smestad. Although it brought mixed feelings, I believe the ideology behind the petition was not of hatred toward our school's current name, but as a symbol of the power

Smestad had here. With over 1,000 signatures in less than 24 hours, this petition was a testament to how quickly students responded to a man who changed their lives.

Mr. Smestad will never be gone. He will always be teaching us, telling us grades don't define us, our future is in our hands, and to live life to its fullest. Smes is more than a hero; he is a man who we will all strive to become one day, and it starts with being kind to others. May he raise his sword up one last time, and may he rest in peace at last. And for everyone at Calhoun, may we always remember, "We are the future!" Let's make him proud.



Students share their memories

Nicole Baltzer, Class of '13: In AP Euro, Smes wrote us letters at the end of the year, and he ended with, "Life's an adventure and it is meant to be lived. So be not afraid of new challenges, they are simply new victories waiting to be won."

Will Rosenblum, Class of '14: I suppose it's as simple as this. He was many things to me. He was a teacher, a mentor, a second father, but most importantly, a friend. He was there for me after I was hospitalized. He was there for me after my first attempt at college didn't work out. He was there for me every time I felt like there was no one left on Earth that I could talk to. He is the reason I am who I am today. You know what the best part about it is? He knew. He knew how

much I loved him. And that brings me more peace than anything.

Nick Landi, Class of '10: I remember being a freshman in my second week of high school. My global history class went to an assembly in the auditorium. Scattered across the floor was Medieval times apparel, and with it stood Douglas Smestad.

At one point he looked at me and told me to stand up. He put a helmet on my head and asked, "Do you trust me?" I nodded, but truth was I was struck with nerves, unsure of what was about to happen. He then wielded a large sword, came charging at me and screaming a relentless battle cry. He struck me in the head, as the entire auditorium filled with laughter. I

didn't feel a thing, but it was the hardest I'd laughed in awhile.

Sarah Sandler, Class of '15: In 10th grade World History, we had to write a paper on anything as long as it related to World History, and Mr. Smestad let me write my paper on why surfing should be considered a religion. It really showed what type of teacher he was.

After I wrote that paper he called me "Surfer girl" every time he saw me in hallway or around school for the rest of high school. Even when I was a senior, every time he saw me he would say "What's up, Surfer girl?"

Marley Jay, Class of 2000: Mr. Smestad was the best teacher I ever had, and I had some really good

ones. He was exceptional at leveling with the kids in his class and making them feel comfortable and respected.

He was there at hard times, too. When my brother Tyler was diagnosed with cancer, the Key Club turned a student-talent show into a fundraiser for the Chordoma Foundation. Smes and Sal performed and I was just overcome by that support. I'll never forget it. Smes visited Tyler a few times late in his life and turned up at our memorial event, too. He cared, and he told me how impressed he was by Tyler's strength and grace.

My family later created a scholarship in my brother Tyler's memory, and Smes' son Ethan was the first recipient in 2011, which meant a lot to us.

Dana Reilly Class of '14: "As the Senior Experience Fashion Show co-intern, Ely Cabrera and I made the decision with the class input to raise our funds in honor of the first Relay for Life for Smes.

We were more than honored to do this because so many of us had previously been his students and for me, he more or less changed my life. I knew we all had to put in more effort than ever before because this was for Smes. That night, I couldn't contain my pride for the Senior Experience Class of 2014. We made Smes feel like the knight in shining armor that he was. We were somewhat able to make him feel as awesome as he always made us feel.

Theodore Topper Class of '10: There was no man in existence with the same level of intelligence and compassion, nor the dedication to the pursuit of wisdom than Douglas Smestad.

I truly believed with my heart of hearts that he was a French curator, as he had told us, sent to America to educate us on the importance of history outside of our own borders. This man opened my eyes to the fact that our world may not be as big as it appears on the outside. We knew he wasn't a Frenchman. He was an American, he was a Calhoun teacher, but above all, he was our friend.

Zach Joseph, Class of '12: The world lost an inquisitive and spectacular human being, teacher, and

friend. Douglas Smestad, your intuitive and empowering self has shaped those around you for the better (including myself). You were such a unique and loving person that this world needs more of. I will always be grateful for your words of wisdom. Your qualities as a person are a prime example of what every other teacher, student, and human being should embody within themselves. You enabled me and so many of my peers to flourish, something I will always be grateful for.

Christina Marino, Class of '08: There are many teachers that impacted me and helped me decide whether or not I wanted to be a teacher. Mr. Smestad, you were one of those teachers that made me realize that teaching was my calling. You were known throughout Calhoun and the Merrick community, and I knew that going to your class would brighten my day with your positivity and enthusiasm for teaching and life. You know what, you were right. We are the future, and you helped mold us into an amazing future for ourselves and society.

Chelsey Cohen, Class of '14: Mr. Smestad, thank you for staying at school late and teaching me new styles on guitar in your free time and for coming to every On Tour production. Thank you for being a huge influence on my music career and for always believing in me and my music.



Angela Mitsas, Class of '17: The first touching experience I had with Mr. Smestad was during Challenge Day last October. Mr. Smestad, who I had just met a month earlier, was put into my group when everyone was divided into groups of four students and one staff member.

I remember being nervous to open up because I didn't want him to think of me any differently than the rest of his students based on how emotional I was that day. I didn't want that particular experience to preface whatever relationship we would build throughout the rest of the year. When it was time for each member to share any emotional struggles that they had been facing, Mr. Smestad made no judgments but merely listened to everyone and offered them his most sincere advice.

After each student in the group had shared, Mr. Smestad opened up to the group without any qualms whatsoever. He spoke about the loss of his wife and her valiant battle against cancer. He also told us about his own struggle with the illness and its effects on his children. However, what

was remarkable was his ability to stay positive. He was a courageous knight, whether he knew it or not. All I remember thinking was that if I were in his shoes, I would be in such anguish. Mr. Smestad, however, always showed up to school with an iridescent smile and an aura of positivity and joy.

Mr. Smestad taught his students global history with a spin. He presented the information, while entertaining us. He cracked jokes about various English monarchs that weren't too bright and compared their IQs to the IQ of a melon. He would assign students in the class a specific historical figure to bring history alive in a sense. In each sequential unit, he would change his accent to fit the topic and he would always name the world map.

He chose to see the good in everyone, looking past himself and his disease and focusing more on history and the education of our youth. He was such a radiant and extraordinary human; I hope his legacy will carry on for years because although he has passed, he continues to live in our memories and in our hearts.



Least likely to ever matter

Vote for me for most likely to change the world! Vote for me for most beautiful!

These are the exclamations one could have heard a senior shout for the past month in an attempt to campaign for senior superlatives.

How does one campaign for a superlative? It boils down to a few factors: popularity, social media, and, in theory, possessing those qualities. But winning has absolutely nothing to do with applicability to said superlative. These campaigners will approach random peers they have never spoken to and tell them to vote. Once a senior is nominated, Twitter becomes a forum for declarations of "Vote for me!"

October 19 became a death date for many. This was the day seniors found out that they lost certain superlatives, and suddenly, the world stopped spinning. After all, not winning "Best face" clearly in-

dicates that one has the worst face. And these superlatives will totally be remembered in 20 years.

Why does everyone go crazy about superlatives? Do they really define you? Superlatives are not anything to be taken seriously; they are intended to be a fun aspect of the yearbook, capping off four years of high school and shining a light on people who made an impact. Recognizing someone for best dressed, for example, does not necessarily mean that the winner is best dressed. Nor does it mean that everyone else cannot dress. And one who loses this category should not feel as if he or she is a failure. Superlatives, if anything, should be compliments; they most certainly should not be catalysts for full-fledged competitions or reflections of personal failure.

Perhaps someone really is best

dressed, but did not win because he or she didn't campaign. Perhaps this fashionable person just wasn't popular.

Superlatives merely feed into the already-evident social hierarchy established in high school, highlighting exactly who has more Instagram followers and more friends. They cultivate feelings of disappointment and frustration. They make people more aware of how many friends they really have, and that is something we should dissuade, rather than emphasize.

Senior superlatives are a long-standing tradition in high schools across the country. They're fun. They let some people feel special, but should they cease to exist? Not necessarily. But campaigning for a specific superlative all across social media or the hallways defeats the purpose. Superlatives should

be voted based on who actually deserves a vote, not based on someone tweeting about it and approaching random people to vote for them. It should be a natural process where one votes for the first person who comes to mind for that superlative - not a strategic campaign that feeds into peer pressure and popularity.

The Class of '16 class is filled with so many unique individuals who have worked hard for four years and are ready to move onto their next journey. The senior class is not comprised of girls who are best dressed or boys with the best smile. It is comprised of bright and hardworking adults who have spent four years maturing into wonderful, well-rounded people.

Seniors will remember all of their high school experiences, and the addition of some petty popularity contest should not overshadow the four years spent at Calhoun.

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Volume 58 No. 1 October 2015

Hoofbeats is the official student newspaper of Calhoun High School. Hoofbeats serves as a source to inform its readers of news and events and as a forum for the students of Calhoun to express their ideas and opinions. Hoofbeats accepts letters to the editor, but reserves the right to edit or refuse the publication of submissions. Letters should be sent to the school or placed in the Hoofbeats mailbox. All letters must be signed and include a contact number for the writer. The paper also accepts advertisements for a fee, but reserves the right to refuse advertisements for any or no reason. The views expressed in Hoofbeats do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the administrators, teachers, editors, or faculty adviser.

Dislike this change

by Lara Klein
Staff Writer

Mark Zuckerberg, creator of popular social media site Facebook, recently decided to give in to popular demand and add a "dislike" button along with the already existing "like" button.

The new button will give users the freedom to voice their opinion to dislike an article that shows up on their feed or a statement someone writes in the comments. They might even use it to dislike a picture of a friend.

Think of what this could mean for online bullying. Reports of cyber bullying would sky-rocket, and this would create even more problems and more misunderstandings for schools, parents, and even law enforcement to deal with. Eighty one percent of teens say bullying online is easier to get away with. Don't we think that this number will increase if we add the dislike button to our social media? Research already shows that one million children were harassed, threatened or subjected to other forms of cyber bullying on Facebook during the past year.

This number startles me a bit and make me wonder if a dislike button is what we really need right now. Many people really don't believe cyber bullying exists because they never witnessed it or they themselves have never been a victim of it. To those people, I think you should pay attention because

it does happen. It is always out there; even if it isn't on the news or making headlines, someone is keeping it in the dark because they are afraid to speak up.

I'm not preaching the same, old assembly we hear every school year. I'm hoping to inform people that if you really have something to say, don't hide behind a computer screen or a cell phone screen; people will find you, and now it is a crime. We need to step away from the thought of having a "dislike" button. Whatever happened to empathy? Shouldn't we be teaching our youth that we should accept each other for who we are and not who is being portrayed on the computer screen?

These are questions we should be asking ourselves before putting out a negative comment toward someone else. In most cases, the instigator doesn't even know what the person who they are attacking may be going through. For instance, they may have problems with self-esteem or other personal issues going on at home that they may not want to discuss. You don't know how the person on the receiving end is going to react if they see that someone dislikes a picture of them that they might have thought was amazing.

If you have a problem with someone, talk to the person about it, and maybe it can get resolved rather than taunting them behind closed doors and then hitting the dislike button.

The French student's plight

by Julia Losner
News Editor

We've always been discriminated against. Ever since that unsuspecting day in the sixth grade when we circled "French" as the language of our choice and signed our rights away, we became second-class citizens.

Despite the best efforts of teachers and administrators, French students always seem to reside lowest on the totem pole of languages in the district.

We've always been the minority, as the class of 2017 first saw when our middle school field trip to a French cooking school was canceled due to "lack of funding." As compensation, we were taken on a trip to a Spanish restaurant with the Spanish classes, where we learned about Spanish food, language, and culture. Of course, no French students knew what was going on, since the restaurant employees weren't told that a small fraction of us had never set foot in a Spanish classroom, let alone knew how to respond to the question "¿Quieres la enchilada de pollo o la quesadilla de queso?"

Another criticism that circulated throughout the French student community was that AP French was only offered as a magnet course at Kennedy. Last year, no Calhoun students took French at Kennedy, and I don't blame them. Would you want to be late for your second period class every day because you had 10 minutes to take the 20-minute bus ride from Kennedy to Calhoun?

So you can imagine our excitement when we found out that we

would be getting an AP French class of our own at Calhoun. Finally, we would have opportunities like the Italian and Spanish students had. But then we found out the truth: Sure, we were finally receiving what we had wanted and what our parents had been asking for at school board meetings for years, but we should have known that everything comes with a price.

We later discovered that we wouldn't have a choice if we wanted to take AP French or not. Sure, it was going to be offered at Calhoun, but our choice was either to take the class or drop out of French altogether. Regulars and College French classes would no longer be offered, and French 4H and 5AP would take place in the same room, at the same time, with one teacher split between both classes. It's no wonder that some students have dropped out, abandoning the language altogether.

This is no fault of our devoted teacher, Ms. Kefaliakos, who has worked to assimilate us, saying, "I am taking into consideration the difficulty of this curriculum."

Ms. K gave up her summer plans to learn the new curriculum, but even with all of her help, many of us are still doubting our ability to succeed, having spent the last several years preparing for the College French curriculum.

Many students don't know what to do. Many colleges look for at least three years of the same language in high school, so dropping out of French or even switching to another language would alienate us from these schools. In contrast, staying with French means that our grades may drop due to the

hardships of being thrown into a class we have not been prepared for. For those of us who pay close attention to our academic performance, it appears that our sixth grade-selves have screwed our high school-selves over.

Students should have been allowed to take the course they felt most comfortable taking, but perhaps the district's initiative to increase the number of students taking AP classes got in the way of allowing us a say in this decision.

I hope that in future years the

program will be smoothed out, our numbers will grow, and the curriculum will be better aligned, but things are looking grim. I'd like to say that I'd face the hardships and still have chosen to study French all those years ago, but I honestly don't know anymore.

Now, don't get me wrong. I love French. I love the language, the culture, the food. But what our subject of choice has been reduced to isn't French. It's not even a language. It's statistics. And I already take that fourth period.

They've got spirit



(photo by Kate Derwin)

Varsity cheerleaders (left to right) Corinne Schmid, Brooke Dalto, and Rebecca Eisenberg at a football game.

Equality at the restroom

by Amber Lievre
Staff Writer

As the LGBT+ movement is gaining acceptance, restrooms labeled "unisex" or "gender neutral" have been appearing in public places, such as college campuses and more notably, the White House.

These restrooms are for the use of anyone of any gender identity. In most places, a unisex restroom would be added to the traditional men's and women's rooms. This would be in an effort to make people outside the two binary genders (male and female), and trans* individuals feel comfortable and safe while using the bathroom.

The term "trans*" encompasses everyone who does not conform to the binary genders.

Without these neutral spaces, people outside of the gender norm have to conform to one gender for the sake of the public and their own safety, commonly forcing themselves to be who they aren't or who they pretended to be before coming out.

Even trans* individuals who fall under the gender binary risk being physically assaulted when using the correct restroom for their gender. Close to 70 percent of gender non-conforming individuals have faced restroom discrimination of some kind, ranging

in severity from verbal assault to sexual assault. Is it fair that human beings have to be afraid while doing something as simple as using the restroom?

"Lots of trans people feel nervous going to the bathroom they identify as because they are scared of being beaten up," said Noah Bernstein, a senior and trans student.

The gender neutral White House restroom had been prompted by Barack Obama, hoping to keep moving towards tolerance and acceptance of those in LGBT+ community. Even with such a progressive move by the president, some more conservative states in the

country are still passing laws that confine trans* people to the wrong restroom, under false assumptions that they use their preferred restroom in order to lurk and spy. That is not the case, as stated by the hashtag popular in the trans* community #wejustneedtopee.

Campuses especially have been showing an increase in gender neutral bathrooms, due to the fact that dorming students who may not belong to a binary gender would have nowhere to go. Upwards of 150 colleges and universities now have gender neutral restrooms, a great move towards equality for all genders.

Forcing people to use the wrong restroom can be harmful, and makes everyone involved uncomfortable. Why not just make bathrooms free for all to use?

Pt./Counterpoint:

Should coaches pray with players?

Freedom of religion makes America

by Anjali Puri
Staff Writer

Have you ever turned to music, sports, or poetry when you were facing a tough day or needed some inspiration?

An assistant varsity football coach at a high school in Washington, Joe Kennedy, turns to praying after a game to boost his team's spirits and motivation.

Coach Kennedy has been praying on the 50-yard line for many years and believes that praying can be a healthy way to relieve stress and show appreciation for the game and his team - both for which he says he is very grateful. Coach Kennedy is a 20-year Marine veteran and says he would never force anyone to pray; the players decide to do so themselves.

"I'm just exercising my right. The game is over, and I just thank God for every one of these young men that are out here," Coach Kennedy said on King 5 News.

This quote expresses his genuine passion for his team and the sport he coaches, but he may face trouble for praying. This goes against the Bremerton School District's rules that address the separation between church and state. Now Coach Kennedy is facing disciplinary action for participating in a religious act as a authority figure. The school has to determine his role in these short prayers to make

sure he wasn't persuading anyone to follow his religious beliefs.

In America, we have the right to express freedom of religion and speech. If Coach Kennedy was forcing his team to participate in prayer, that would be unacceptable. But he states that praying is voluntary, and he is not looking to instill any religious beliefs in any of his players.

No one should take away someone's right to express what means a lot to them, and it's not fair to turn someone's love for God into negative accusations. We all have the opportunity to raise our hand in class, and share what's on our minds. Why can't someone be able to raise their hand to the world and be able to express themselves?

When a football team is shown in the movies or on TV, often there is a pre-game or post-game prayer led by the coach or other authority figures. This tradition is certainly nothing new.

As long as Coach Kennedy allows praying be optional, he should be able to continue his 13-second motivation booster. We should be accepting of everyone's personal views and opinions, and a simple prayer to spark hope and promise for the team is simply harmless. Let's try to take a stand against stereotypes and harsh judgments, and respect everyone even if we don't agree with their personal views.

There's no place for prayer in school

by Melissa Braunstein
Staff Writer

The athletic field of a school is not an appropriate place for one to find God; there are many other ways to celebrate a big win instead of praying.

Bremerton's school district policy states that staff should not encourage or discourage students from praying. Catholicism is not the only religion followed in Washington; many are even atheist.

Team prayer sessions exclude those who do not share the coach's belief in God or do not practice Catholicism. While the post-game prayers were not forced, they can still leave a child feeling isolated and different. A player who does not join these prayer sessions is easily noticed; imagine how he must feel while he watches other members of his team on the 50-yard line celebrating their win with prayer. Religion being practiced in schools adds to the already high amount of ostracism found in most high schools.

Not only is the coach disobeying school policy, he is also breaking many laws. The Supreme Court has declared public schools as a "religion-free zone" and many cases due to religious practices in public schools have been taken to the Supreme Court. One case includes Wallace vs. Jaffree in 1985. The Alabama legislature created

an amendment to have a moment of silence for "prayer and meditation." This amendment was passed to bring prayer back into schools.

However, this was a violation of the Establishment Clause, which prohibits the government from making any law respecting an established religion. The Supreme Court held that the promotion of prayer is not allowed in a public school, which is a government-funded entity. The actions of Coach Kennedy are unconstitutional.

A team brings together students who share the love of the sport regardless of race, nationality, ethnicity, sexuality, or religion. Sports bind students together in a different way than the school setting. Players work together to reach a similar goal, they empathize together when a player is hurt, they look after each other in the halls and celebrate together after a win. And the responsibility of a coach is to make sure no player is excluded and to make sure those mutual understandings exist among the players - not to create a setting where kids are isolated.

This coach should be removed from his placement at the school. He did not follow school policy and did not look out for the well-being of all his players. A coach should encourage friendships and respect among his players and not isolate them from each other due to religious differences.

Can the media really be trusted?

by Tracy Goldman
Editor-in-Chief

Did you know Hillary Clinton wants to have clean renewable energy for every home in the United States?

Do you know anything about any of the other Democratic candidates—like O'Malley or Webb? Of course not. Why would news networks even dream about reporting important campaign issues? After all, Donald Trump's newest outburst is clearly important for our country's future.

Does Hillary Clinton exist outside of her e-mail scandal? What prospects does Bernie Sanders actually have? What about any of the other Republican candidates?

News reporting is merely an

entertainment scheme; it's about what will bring in the most viewers. Deciding the next president should not be about viewership.

According to TVNewser, Fox News had the highest viewership for the first quarter of 2015. Fox News, more than other news stations, tends to focus on minute details that are ultimately irrelevant to our nation. To obtain numbers, Fox will tear apart Clinton and Sanders to appeal to its viewership.

On the flip side, CNN is always considered to have high ratings. CNN closely follows presidential candidates, but again, does not focus on each candidate's issues. Rather, CNN will continuously question the Socialist viewpoints that Sanders holds and mock

Trump for his statements.

According to Pew Research, 10 percent of Americans are bystanders - or detached from politics. News stories about the actual campaigns and ideas of each candidate would bore the majority of people; therefore, the news has become about the flashiest stories rather than the important ones like ISIS. A story on Trump's hair is more attractive to the public, so an average viewer will know more about random facts about Trump or Hillary Clinton's life as a grandmother rather than global stories that could impact us.

The nightly news shouldn't be "Keeping up with the Presidents." Focusing on what is entertaining about the candidates is not any way to educate people on who

to vote for. The news reports on the results of the polls, often with surprise. But they shouldn't be surprised in the slightest; after all, the results from the polls are correlated to whom the news focuses on. Trump was the focus, so his polls were high. Now, however, Trump's antics are beginning to get old, so he is becoming less popular. Clinton was faring low in the polls because all the media talked about were her e-mail scandals.

The news should keep people informed. Want entertainment? There are a lot of good television shows for that. The election is a year away, and based on solely the news network's analyses, the next President will be whoever is the most entertaining.

Starting fresh for the fall

by Samantha Koffler
Staff Writer

Going to a new school is always challenging. Whether it be from a different town, or just moving onto a new grade, students are inclined to be rather nervous.

This is no exception for the kids entering 9th grade at Calhoun — one of them actually being me. Although I knew that I wasn't taking the adjustments very lightly, I spoke to some other freshmen to see if my fears and hopes were similar to theirs.

Young students have plenty of fears and hopes for high school. For fears, there's the ever-so-classic essays, exams, and AP classes. A few freshmen I spoke with reminisced about their teachers telling them that, "This isn't middle school anymore," and reminding them that their classes end with a Regents exam this year.

Having settled into the school, many freshmen talked about changes they want to see. Most students agreed that the lack of air conditioning was basically an epidemic. Though, considering the rapidly declining temperature, I'm sure that soon we'll all be whining about how there's no heat.

Calhoun is a place where freshmen can join a new club or sport and feel like they have been at the school for awhile. An overwhelming amount of freshmen said they are playing or want to play many



A freshmen class looks on as they settle into the routine of daily lessons at Calhoun.

(photo by Amber Lievre)

different sports, from lacrosse to softball. Others spoke about joining after-school clubs like SADD, Key Club, Glamour Girls, DECA, and Science Club. As a bit of a side-note, *Hoofbeats* is always welcoming new members. If this edition of the newspaper interests you, stop by room 218 on Mondays.

Finally, freshmen talked about their expectations for Calhoun. A few said they had anticipated

four more years of middle school, but thankfully that's not the case. A few spoke about how they thought there would be more time in between classes, that instead of there being stress from math and science, it's from everywhere, and that they wanted it to be more like "High School Musical." I have to say that I feel the same.

After hearing what my peers had to say, I felt extremely better

knowing that I wasn't the only one stressing out completely.

I'm glad that we're all still trying to stay positive in some respects, and that despite juniors and seniors rolling their eyes and praying they had our problems, the Class of 2019 will prevail against all the odds, and, of course, sporadically break out into a song and dance number that will become a timeless classic for everyone.

Losing sight of what's important

by Samantha Hernandez
Staff Writer

Society seems to have a penchant for using its short term memories and focusing on issues that in the grand scheme of things don't really matter.

When we do focus on an important issue, it doesn't hold our attention for long. As Americans, we are especially guilty of this: a global disaster occurs and we feel really bad for the victims—for a week. Our minds seem incapable of focusing on topics that we think do not really concern us because it doesn't affect us. We are notorious for focusing on things that don't matter or matter a minuscule amount when compared to other issues we could be focusing on.

One example of this is the sheer number of television shows that are devoted to news regarding celebrities: "Entertainment To-

night," "Extra," "Access Hollywood," and "E! Tonight" are just a few. Add in the number of gossip rags that discuss which celebrity wore what best and the DUI some playboy got, and you have media outlets that in no way enrich our lives or make the world better.

I'm not saying you should burn your gossip rags, but you should be spending time in front of the TV or on the computer catching up on the news, figuring out what's going wrong and in what way you can change it.

Another example was one of the 'top' news stories of the summer: the questionable death of a lion, Cecil, in Zimbabwe. Cecil was part of the Hwange National Park. He attracted many tourists from Europe and was known for his majestic black mane. An American dentist, who was in Zimbabwe hunting, shot Cecil; the dentist said he didn't know it was

Cecil, but there is some questionable evidence that points to foul play. The incident caused outrage in both the U.S. and Zimbabwe. The only silver lining is that Cecil's death brought attention to endangered big cats.

People were outraged over the lion's death. Of course it was tragic, but why not show concern for humans in this world that are suffering such as kids in countries like Somalia or Syria? Cecil had his face projected onto the Empire State Building, for crying out loud. Have you ever seen a refugee from Syria projected onto the Empire State Building?

People didn't really take notice of the immigration crisis resulting from conflict in the Middle East until the death of a little boy who was trying to get to Europe by crossing the Mediterranean. Aylan Kurdi, a 2-year-old, washed up on the shore of Turkey; the

only one to survive in his family was his father.

Issues like these require our attention, not Kylie Jenner's 18th birthday. Who cares that she changed her outfit more than once, or got a car, or that she took dozens of selfies? It wasn't until a few days later people realized it was Malala Yousafzai's birthday also, but for her birthday she opened a school in Lebanon. She was focusing on the right kinds of things like advancing the education of those who need it. What was Kylie Jenner focused on?

We now have the technology to figure out what is going on in the world so much quicker. As a result, we now have a responsibility to act when we see something wrong and keep acting until we see the change needed.

Will you speak up and act next time? Will you remember that you can help? Will you do something?

Kicking off a two-sport career

by Sophy Feldman
Staff Writer

Junior Eric Stewart is helping the Colts kick their way to victory in more ways than one.

Stewart, who's always had a passion for sports, plays as both a member of the varsity soccer team and the varsity football team.

Although Stewart had always liked to play football with his friends, he could never really play due to conflicts with soccer. This season Stewart was given the op-

portunity by football Head Coach Brian Moeller to be the kicker for the football team. "Coach Moeller picked me because he knew my achievements in soccer," Stewart said. Stewart realized it would be the best of both worlds getting to play his two favorite sports. Although "the conflicts may be stressful," Stewart said he enjoys having the ability to play both sports.

Dealing with that schedule isn't easy. The junior goes to football practice after school for about 30 minutes and then goes to soccer practice for the rest of the afternoon. If ever there is a conflict, Stewart said he sticks with soccer because the football team has a back-up kicker. "My football teammates always wants me to make football [practice], and my soccer teammates always want me to come to soccer," he said. "That's what makes it difficult to handle."



(photo courtesy of Eric Stewart)

Stewart kicks off the game for the varsity football team.

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"I thought it would be a good challenge for me personally," he said. "It makes my schedule very busy during school days."

Stewart plays for the East Meadow Soccer Club, a highly respected L.I. soccer organization, and he referees for PAL Merrick Soccer. He also loves to come to the field with his brother to help him strive to be the best soccer and football kicker he can be. They practice for hours upon hours a night. He also enjoys hockey and lacrosse.

Since age 5, soccer has been Stewart's first love. He continued on to play varsity soccer as a sophomore and now a junior. Stewart loves playing FIFA soccer and fantasy football with his friends.



(photo by Kate Derwin)

Although the conflicts are stressful, Stewart said he enjoys playing both sports.



(photo by Kate Derwin)

Since the age of 5, Stewart has loved playing soccer and is also a referee.



(photo courtesy of Eric Stewart)

Stewart kicks an extra point after a Calhoun touchdown.

Girls' soccer heads into playoffs

by Olivia Schneider
Staff Writer

Playing in a top conference can be a challenge. The girls' soccer has faced some of the county's best teams and is headed into the playoffs in Conference AA-I.

After a few tough losses, the girls were able to turn the season around. The team finished the season with a conference record of 4-5-2, good enough for second place and a spot in the postseason. Their overall record for the season was 4-8-2.

They achieved their first victory against MacArthur High School. Goals scored by Marianne Cassisi, Saffron Hughes-McTurk, and Katie Healy helped lead the girls to the 3-1 win.

The captains leading the team are senior Taylor Iacono, and juniors Lauren Marinello, Olivia Levy, Dana Brown, and Gillian Stapler.

Cassisi was able to score the first goal by heading the ball into the net and also added an assist. Stapler came up big with 9 saves in the win.

Head Coach Lori Biscardi said, "Defensively, Marianne was marking the strongest player on the other team, and scored that first goal with her head, so she was a key player."

Coach Biscardi also mentioned freshman Brittany Munson, saying she, "handled the center of the field well."

The varsity soccer girls are playing in Conference I, which is solely based on skill and ability. After falling 3-0 against the No. 1 team,

Massapequa, the head coach said the team learned from their loss.

"The girls gained confidence and it really was a competitive game," Coach Biscardi said. "After playing the No. 1 team and all the other teams, going into our second half of the season we feel pretty confident."

After the win against MacArthur high school, it is obvious that the Colts are still in it to win it. The girls will automatically get a playoff spot for playing in Conference I, and there are more competitive games to come.

A major setback the team faced was multiple players with injuries. Goal scorer Saffron Hughes-McTurk recently recovered from a sprained ankle and is back on the

field to help the team. A few other teammates were unable to play because of injuries, but a lot of the girls have healed and made their return to the field ready to play; contributing to the win.

Captain Lauren Marinello, who tore her ACL earlier this year, said; "I think mine and a couple of the other girls' injuries set us back a bit in the beginning, but once the team started to play together more often, the younger kids filled the roles well and the team really clicked."

One key match-up was a game that ended in a 2-2 tie against Oceanside. Cassisi scored a goal in that game, as did Katie Healy with an assist to Iacono. Stapler had 11 saves in the net.

The girls closed out the season with two strong wins against East Meadow and MacArthur. With goals from Cassisi, Sarah Tapetto, and Rebecca Auty, the Colts beat East Meadow, 3-1. Stapler recorded 5 saves and Julia Maguel had 6 saves.

In their re-match with MacArthur, Levy scored two goals, including the game winner late in the game, to cap a great comeback. Healy earlier tied up the game to give the Colts momentum. Sophomore Christine Argentieri secured the win with 6 key saves.

Playing in a conference strictly based on ability must be competitive and fast paced. With a guaranteed spot in the playoffs, the team has lots more to accomplish.



(photo by Kate Derwin)

The girls practice on the field in preparation for their quarter final playoff game after finishing the season in second place.

Pep in their step



(photo by Kate Derwin)



(photo by Kate Derwin)

The annual pep rally brought all the fall sports teams onto the field in preparation for Homecoming. Above, the girls' cross country team (left) gathers together. At right, the Kickline team poses before performing for the crowd.



Undefeated season

(photos by Amber Lievre)

The boys' volleyball team has a flawless record and is optimistic about making the playoffs and competing for states.

by Julia Presti
Staff Writer

For the boy's volleyball team winning comes easy.

With a recent victory over Hempstead in three quick matches, the boys' volleyball team increased their record to 10-0. They are currently in first place in Conference A-III. The team is lead by head coach Justin Gioia and their three captains Sam Eggert, Christian Giannotti, and Tyler Schaefer.

Led mostly by seniors, the team has enjoyed major contributions from a transfer student from India. Their outside hitter, Gursaif Singh, a junior, has made an major impact since joining the team.

As Coach Gioia said, "Everyone on this team plays a vital role to our success this year, and I am so happy with how well the guys are

playing this year."

Everyone on the team hopes to make the playoffs this season and even compete to win states. At the rate the team is going, they are guaranteed to make the playoffs.

As Giannotti said, "We are very optimistic toward playoffs, but we are going to take it one match and one game at a time."

The competition is strong, but the boys are holding their own and winning every game. Coach Gioia said working with the team this year has been great.

"I love it. It's a lot of fun, the guys are very energetic. We play hard, but we also like to have fun at the same time and that's my personality. Come play hard but we can also be silly and joke around a little bit during practice. I always look forward to practicing with them," he said.

