

The Visor

Bishop O'Connell High School

Volume 57 Issue 2



Winter Sports Pep Rally

Laura McLellan

Front Page Editor

Freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors all cheered, clapped, stamped, shouted, sang, and yes, even danced at this year's winter sports pep rally. Though the pep rally began like any other, it quickly developed into one of the most memorable pep rallies in Bishop O'Connell's history.

The pep rally began with a quick spirit check, then a parade of winter sports teams. Athletes from swim and dive, men's and women's ice hockey, wrestling, and men's and women's basketball teams marched in to applause and joined their classes in the stands. They were not the only teams recognized, though. The royalettes and varsity and junior varsity cheerleading teams performed, wowing the whole school.

They also proved their talent for teaching as members of the men's basketball and wrestling teams proved they could also dance in the dance competition. Though the juniors got the point, the freshmen surprised the whole school with their dancing skill. The wrestling and basketball teams also won points for their classes in a very wobbly game of dizzy bat and free throw and 3-point shootouts. During the shootouts, a new cheer was introduced. It will be used for free throws this basketball season.

The men's hockey team also joined in on the festivities. They started by throwing bracelets into the stands as they entered. Then, they showed the whole school their shooting skill in a slap shot competition, before leaving for a game. There, they proved their skill again, winning against Langley.

The swim team also played a game, a crabwalking race the seniors won. Then, players from the two powderpuff football teams, as well as some freshmen and sophomores stepped up to complete some passes



and seniors. Throughout the whole pep rally the lead switched between the two classes, and finally, the point came down to one spirit check. Each class gave it their all, finishing in a dance-off which got the whole school to flood the court.

The judges couldn't decide who had won. So instead, the point- and the winner- was decided by a free throw made by senior Jamal King. He made it, and the pep rally and doughnuts went to the seniors.

The juniors were angry about their loss, stating that the final point was decided unfairly. The seniors countered that their win was legitimate, as the judges agreed the free throw would be fair. "It was really frustrating because our class has never won a pep rally, and we really wanted to win this one," said junior Aidan Mulcahy on the matter.

Even though the outcome of the pep rally was a disappointment for the juniors, there's no doubt that it got the whole school excited about the winter sports season. Basketball and hockey games, wrestling matches, and swim meets will go on through the winter season, and all the teams hope to see supporters in the stands. Students now look forward to the winter season with enthusiasm, thanks to the excitement of the pep rally.

and gain some points. Mixed in with all the games and competitions were the spirit checks. Students used noisemakers, chants, and even drum sections in the case of the sophomores and seniors to win, gaining points for each class.

Though the sophomores and freshmen were especially spirited this pep rally, it was apparent that the winner would be between the juniors

Senior Retreats: Faithful Fun

Quinne Otu

Staff Writer

This year the senior retreats took place from November 18 to November 20 and also from December 9 through December 11. These retreats occur every year and are a great way for both girls and boys of the senior class to get to know one another better. Through the experience of getting away and distancing themselves from

distractions like homework, social media and other different concerns, the seniors were able to make the time spent on the retreat extremely rewarding. The bus departed at 3 o'clock and the seniors were taken far into Virginia to an area called Front Royal, which is about an hour away from Bishop O'Connell. During the

long bus ride, everyone was full of excitement and positive energy. The seniors were also encouraged to bring their own snacks and food for when they became hungry on the ride or at any point of the retreat.

"We brought so much food! We had chicken, sodas and everything from gushers to foot long subs! It was really fun!" Joe Negash exclaimed with marked enthusiasm.

During the retreat, there are many different activities that helped make the experience fun and meaningful. There were many group talks that helped seniors communicate with each other and also group games that made the trip fun too! At around 10:30, Father Benetti led the seniors through a late Mass. By the end of Mass, everyone was very tired and ready to go to bed. However, students

were given the option to either go to our rooms or go to a bonfire that was serving up smores! Although this was a tempting opportunity, many decided to go to sleep instead.

"The retreat was fun and I enjoyed getting to know all of my friends better" Frankie Endo-Ondo, commented, reflecting on his personal experience of the retreat.

Many of the seniors expressed their enjoyment of the retreat and spoke about how it really helped them become closer not only to their friends, but also, more significantly, closer to God.

Erin McDonald shared her opinion of the retreat.

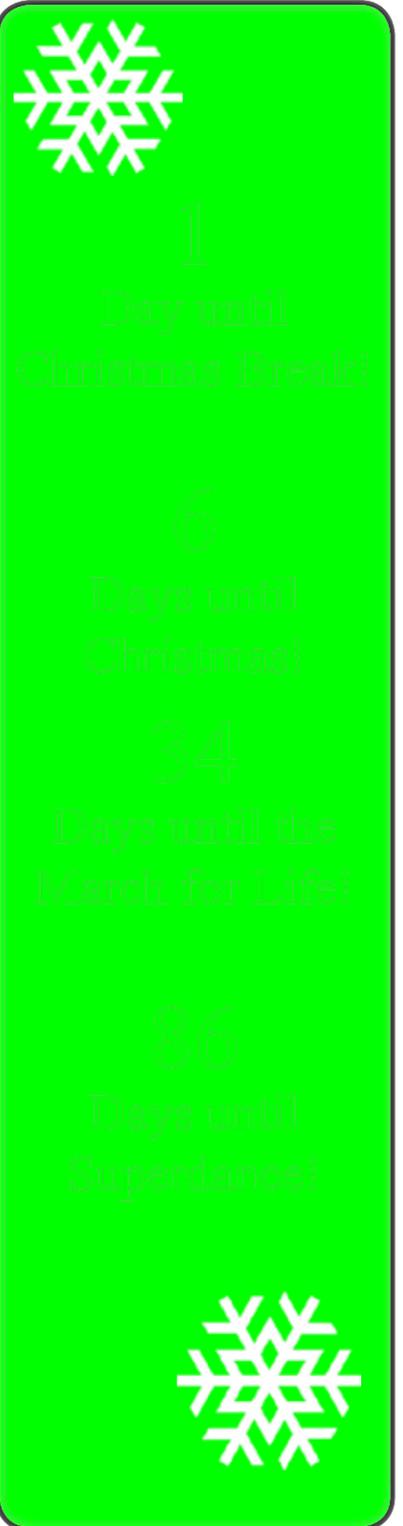
"Although it was really freezing outside, I was able to bond with my classmates and have a good time getting closer to them and to God."

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National Catholic Schools Week

Devin Christenson
Staff Writer

With over 6,500 Catholic schools in the U.S., the church community is widespread and dedicated to promoting the mission of Christ. National Catholic Schools Week will begin January 25th, a Sunday, and end on the following Sunday, January 31. During the week, Catholic churches and schools nationwide hope to increase awareness and encourage involvement within the schools. The theme this year is "Catholic Schools: Communities of Faith, Knowledge and Service." This theme cements the ideas that Catholic schools are a community within themselves and within the church, and that schools are judged by their faith, knowledge, and service. The Church takes this week to focus on the young people of the

Church and their importance. The Church also wants the secular world to acknowledge and appreciate Catholic schools' role in shaping values of these young people. Schools in the church community commend intellectual, spiritual, moral, physical, and social values for all of their students regardless of their background.

This year's mission for Catholic Schools Week harmonizes with Bishop O'Connell's personal mission statement "to provide students an education rooted in the life of Christ and to foster the pursuit of excellence in the whole person." For the entire school year O'Connell develops holistic excellence in each student, and this coming week O'Connell will join Catholic schools nationwide to cultivate communities consisting of the exemplary students it produces.

2015 will be the 41st annual celebration of National Catholic Schools Week. The National Catholic Education Association (NCEA) sports a new logo this year; a cross in the center of a multicolor circle that represents the community's close and tightly knit relationship within the church. The mix of colors coming together at the cross is symbolic of the people within the church coming together. The NCEA and U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops sponsor National Catholic Schools Week. The NCEA is made up of schools, organizations, religious education programs, and seminars. This week, specially dedicated to Catholic schools, will be celebrated through masses and gatherings where the community, united, can embrace their shared values and appreciate the schools that teach these precious values to the children of the church.



Turkey Blitz Success

Ryan Brideu
Staff Writer

A tradition of nineteen years at O'Connell, the Turkey Blitz seeks to raise money to pay for Thanksgiving meals for low-income or impoverished families. The event is spearheaded by Mr. Joe Crivella and Mr. William Bethhauser; its proceeds go towards the Gift of Peace Home

In recent years the charity has provided dinners for a wide range of families – the 2013 Turkey Blitz saw 120 families fed. This year, Bishop O'Connell raised the money to give 200 families a well-received Thanksgiving dinner. Crivella explained,

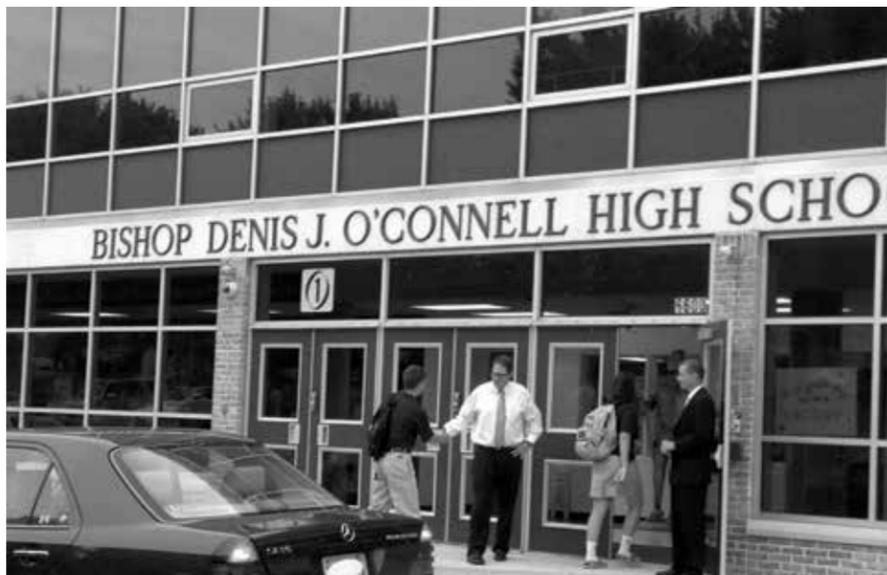
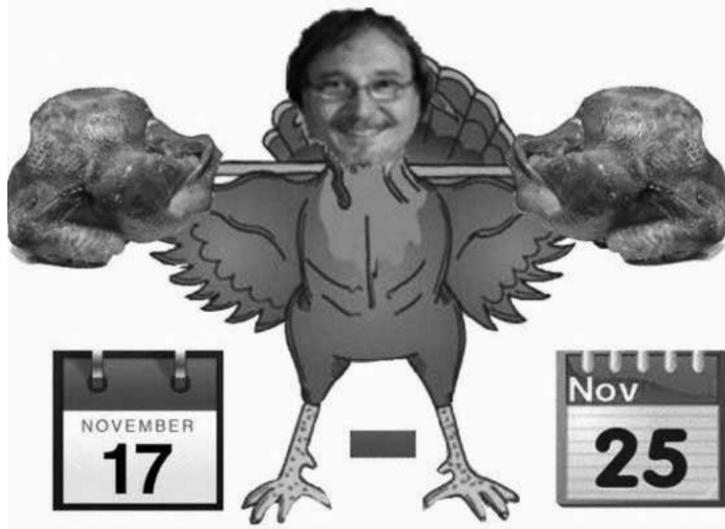
"We got a better response this year in terms of giving. I think we owe that to the more outreaching advertising, the speeches, the posters, the announcements."

The campaign certainly had more of a presence in the school this year, beginning with Crivella's annual Turkey Blitz speech after a November Mass. From there, Mr. Bethhauser's multimedia classes created posters for in-school advertising, and each theology teacher received a donation box for their students. The fundraiser ran from the 17th of November to the 25th.

At the close of the charity drive inside the school, Crivella took the proceeds to the Gift of Peace Home, opened in 1986. The Home is managed by the Missionaries of Charity, a Catholic

religious order founded by Mother Teresa in 1950 in India. The sisters' mission is to help the poor in all respects, those with no money, no family, no social support, and the like. The Gift of Peace Home in D.C. has sections for people with HIV/AIDS, medical or mental illnesses and advanced age.

Of the Missionaries of Charity, Crivella said, "Their generosity was incredible. The sisters had never heard my Mother Teresa story, so we talked about that and about the incredible efforts of the O'Connell Students. They are most appreciative of O'Connell."



Mr. Patton and Dr. Vorbach greeting students on the first day of school.

AdvancEd Re-accreditation

Diego Garcia
Copy Editor

In mid-November, a team from the AdvancEd accreditation board came to visit Bishop O'Connell High School. Last school year, the faculty of O'Connell, as well as some parents and students, participated in a "self-study" to try to determine O'Connell's strengths and weaknesses. The visiting observers were here this year to provide an objective judgment of the school in a process that involved sitting in on classes and meeting with many students and faculty over the course of a couple days. The team, which comes here every five years, represents the AdvancEd non-profit organization. Bishop O'Connell used to be a part of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) but, in 2006, SACS merged with AdvancEd, an international accrediting organization.

The team's report of Bishop O'Connell was very positive overall.

The school scored twenty or thirty points above average in all major criteria. The team was happily surprised by the strong sense of community here at O'Connell, a congenial environment Dr. Vorbach attributes to our Catholic background. However, the team's report also shows that we need to work harder in terms of data management and analysis in relation to curricular decisions. The administration already hopes to score higher in this area by spending more time with professional development programs. In addition, the age of our school facility hurt our scores in certain areas.

After such a successful review, Dr. Vorbach says that he is "very proud to be associated with (his) colleagues." He says that their remarks are "very affirming" and that it is a "point of pride for the school as a whole the way the (team) reacted to their visit in terms of their encounters with our students, their encounters with our team of faculty and staff and everyone."

The Visor
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Opinions in the paper are not necessarily those of the staff, nor should any opinion expressed in this public forum be construed as the opinion or the policy of Bishop O'Connell High School, unless so attributed.

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This issue *The Visor* presents...



A “Voice For The Voiceless”

Sara Sciulla
Staff Writer

Living life as a “voice for the voiceless,” Mr. Dale Herbst, also known as Mr. Herbst at Bishop O’Connell High School, has strived to dedicate his life to the well-being of others. With all that Mr. Herbst has achieved in his lifetime, one accomplishment stood out from all the rest. “Helping those who did not realize they had the ability to help themselves” is a prominent theme in the work Mr. Herbst has done in the past. A saintly and selfless man, Mr. Herbst shared some of his experiences with the *Visor*.

Receiving his undergraduate degree at Florida State University, Masters at the University of South Florida in Tampa, and PhD ABD at Virginia Tech, Herbst has lived his life in the pursuit of knowledge.

Growing up in Southwestern Illinois in a town named Breese, Herbst’s childhood shaped him as the person he eventually became. Because both parents worked, they succeeded in putting Dale Herbst through twelve years of Catholic education that would later influence his choices as an adult.

After gaining his Master’s in public administration, Herbst set out to climb the corporate ladder. He worked a series of corporate sales jobs that accelerated this advancement. But something wasn’t quite right in Herbst’s mind and he found that as he became more successful, he was less happy. So Herbst finally quit his sales job and decided to give social work a try. Almost instantly, Mr. Herbst found that when he began helping others, he began to feel happier as well. Herbst only then came to the realization that “chasing money for the point of chasing money” wouldn’t bring him the fulfillment in life that he craved, as compared to when he was helping others.

However, social work wasn’t all rainbows and sunshine. Herbst would end up suffering repeated heartbreak when he worked with kids who needed special care from the social work he provided in Tampa, Florida. Looking back on the life-changing decisions he had to make in attempt to help improve the lives of the troubled teens he encountered, some cases remained on his mind and continued to trouble him. A staggering seventeen former clients of his are now on parole. Checking further, he discovered that six of these seventeen former clients are facing life without parole for murders committed as juveniles.

As far as becoming too emotionally invested, Herbst commented, “If you go home and you drag your work back with you- you’re not cut out for the job. If you’re constantly thinking about your clients and their well-being you won’t succeed.” Eventually, after twenty long and fulfilling years helping teenagers in need through social work, Mr. Herbst received an opportunity to get his doctorate in education, and reluctantly left social work, commenting, “I’ve always been as inclined to education as I have been to physically helping people.”

After becoming certified to teach high school through a special program Mr. Herbst took at VCU called the “career switcher program,” Mr. Herbst dabbled a little more in education. He received his doctorate at Virginia Tech, then taught an honors class at the University as well, entitled Leadership Skills, which focused on becoming active volunteers in nonprofit organizations. This suited Mr. Herbst’s interests because he was already on the Board of Directors for two different nonprofit organizations at the time. However, he still longed to work with high school students. “I desired the reward of working with teenagers again... without the criminal aspect.”

So, Mr. Herbst wound up here at Bishop O’Connell, teaching his desired age group once again; but this time it was significantly different. Along with being a father, and the husband of the Director of College Counseling here at O’Connell, Mr. Herbst says that “the hardest job I’ve ever had and most rewarding is being a husband and father... You work at it every hour of every day.” Mr. Herbst now has two sons; one is 27 and finishing his doctorate in economics at Princeton; the other, 23, graduated from University of Richmond and is now a second lieutenant in the Army Reserves, and a corporate trainer.

As for teaching at Bishop O’Connell, Mr. Herbst has found his new assignment rewarding. “It brings joy to my heart to work with teenagers again, especially those students who have aspirations to follow the end of their journey here at O’Connell with another four years or more of college.” Herbst also observed that the 12 years of Catholic School teaching he received altered his views on life as well. The effect of the Catholic Principles on Mr. Herbst’s life was one of great importance, he commented that he now views “teaching as an extension of helping others, and I love it.” Herbst reflected and then concluded, “I can’t think of a better life



O’Connell’s Father Christmas

Kiera Wainer
Staff Writer

You have no doubt seen Mr. David Owens, more widely known as Coach O, walking around the hall in his South Carolina pants and Christmas sweaters with his characteristic enthusiasm and positive optimism. The epitome of as an advocate for Catholic education. But around Christmas he is just as well known as “Father Christmas.” For the past five years at O’Connell he has been decorating his room to help get students in the holiday spirit. *The Visor* questioned him about some of his favorite Christmas memories and traditions:

Q: What gets you into the Christmas Spirit?

A: “I don’t need anything extra. It’s just the time of year when trees seem to grow out of houses, and people are full of holiday cheer, greeting each other far and near.”

Q: Do you have any Christmas traditions?

A: “On December 6th (St. Nicolas’ feast day) I put candy in my wife’s shoes.”

Q: What makes Christmas so special to you?

A: “Family, friends, food, and giving.”

Q: What was your favorite Christmas present?

A: “A pair of Union Carbide #5 roller skates.”

Q: What was your favorite Christmas memory?

A: “We would get our Christmas tree on Christmas Eve, and I would go to sleep knowing my parents were going to stay up all night decorating the house.”

Q: What is the first thing you do on Christmas morning?

A: “Thank God for another day.”

Coach O is a special type of teacher. He shines with the light of God. Every morning he wakes up, Christmas or otherwise, and thanks God for another day. Every day is a gift and another opportunity to nurture the young Church. When a student needs him, his door is open. Name any program at O’Connell, and he has a shirt or jersey commemorating it. A bus breaks down returning from the senior retreat, and Coach O hits the road, without a moment’s hesitation. His voice fills the hall with his unique brand of energy, and he brings his enthusiasm to every home game he announces. Coach O has in his heart a special place for O’Connell and each of its inhabitants. He is a friend to many, a legend to all. Driving all the way to O’Connell from Baltimore each day, he arrives earlier than most students and teachers. Coach O is eager to improve his students’ lives. He has discovered a joy found in his harmony with Christ. This can be seen not only in his boundless energy and humor, but also in his reverence when it comes to prayer. If you do one thing today, make sure to tell Coach O to have a great day. It’s what he does for us.



A Team Effort

Rose Sloate
Staff Writer

At the end of their season, Bishop O'Connell High School's JV volleyball girls' team decided to participate in a blanket drive for Syrian refugees that took place from November 1st through the 22nd. Millions of refugees are fleeing from Syria and Iraq because of civil war violence and the negative impact of ISIL. Blankets were collected from various points in Northern Virginia and were shipped to the refugees seeking safety in Turkey.

One of the girls on the team, Ingrid Bayer, heard about the blanket drive from her mother, Suzanne Bayer, and reached out to the other girls who participated in the drive: Caroline Coon, Abby Dinegar, Isabel Ahmadiyar, and Nora Stechschulte.

"The O'Connell volleyball

team's season had just ended, and I wanted to do one final thing as a team."

Ingrid wanted to bring the volleyball team together one last time and in doing so, they all managed to make 10 fleece blankets for Syrian refugees fleeing their homes, preparing the refugees for the cold winter ahead.

The drive was completely volunteer and by participating, the girls showed that even though the volleyball season was over, the friendships they made on the team were not. Their final act as a team made a significant impact on the refugees' lives and made their long winter a little bit more bearable. With their new, homemade fleece blankets, the grateful refugees will sleep a little better knowing that they have their own guardian angels looking over them here at O'Connell.



Varsity Senior Reid Stevenson

Clap, Clap MONEY!

Sara Sciulla
Staff Writer

The Bishop O'Connell's Boys' Basketball team has set the tone for the season with their first game versus Takoma Academy, punishing Takoma 75-54. With the season only just beginning and this victory achieved, the team's season looks bright and promising. After completing a 2013-2014 Boys Basketball season with an overall score of 20 wins, ending the season on a high note, there are some obvious expectations concerning this year's squad. With outstanding players, such as Melo Trimble, who graduated on to stardom at Maryland, there was some lingering doubt that this team would be as successful as the last.

Senior Varsity player Reid Stevenson said, "I'm confident that we will have a good season, and I feel like the team has practiced hard and

are on the road to success."

When questioned about the difference in the team's players and how they get along, he replied "I feel like even though some really good players on the Varsity team left this summer for college, we still have really good team chemistry. Perhaps even better than last season."

The talented players on the Varsity team practice every single day of the week, including Saturday; and sometimes even Sunday. The team also hosts basketball clinics for underprivileged children.

Last Friday, the Varsity team demolished local high school James Madison 70-41. The game was action-packed and practically all of the visiting student section was occupied by the DJO faithful. After that exciting game the team went on the next day to dominate Virginia Academy 82-27 at home. With all these exciting high-scoring matches kicking off the season, there's much anticipation for the upcoming games.



Caroline Coon, Abby Dinegar, Ingrid Bayer, Isabel Ahmadiyar and Nora Stechschulte

Lady Knights On the Ice

Reagan Hogan
Staff Writer

The ice hockey program is undergoing a huge change for the 2014-2015 season! Flip Collins, the head coach of the O'Connell Ice Hockey program, has had a vision since he began working with the team last year to bring attention to a girls' team. The team was inspired by five students who have played travel girls' league with O'Connell Hockey since 2012, when Collins first became interested in the idea of building a program for girls' hockey. Through recruiting and contacting other schools, Brianna Murphy (the new girls' head coach) and Collins brought together a team.

Grace Fisher, one of the original five in the O'Connell program, observed, "Hockey has been a huge part of my life for about 8 years now. O'Connell fielding a girls'

team is something I could have never pictured my freshman year and I look forward to the official season next year."

The 2014-2015 season is only an exhibition season for the girls, but they will be playing in the girls' WCAC hockey league, competing against other WCAC teams like Visitation and Holton. Their first exhibition game of the 2014-2015 season was on November 30th and the O'Connell girls beat Georgetown Visitation 4 to 3. At present there are only four teams in this developing girl's league, and the new O'Connell team will only have four games this year without a lot of time to prepare. Though the teams are starting small, they are one in their hope that the league will grow into a large, established league in the future. With a great start to the season, beating their biggest competitor, the girls' hockey program is off to a great start.



Left: The O'Connell Hockey Team
Above: Juniors Maggie McLaughlin, Grace Fisher and Sophomore Sophia Marra Introduce the Girls' Ice Hockey Team at the Pep Rally



Senior Girls Conquer Powder-Puff Game 35-7

Reid Stevenson
Staff Writer

On December 5th, the annual Senior vs Junior girls' Powder-puff game took place on the O'Connell football field. It was slightly raining that day, but that did not stop the competition from taking place. Senior coach Justin Fitzsimmons led the senior team to a victory against junior coach Myles Hudzick and the junior squad. The senior quarterbacks were the dynamic-duo of McKinlee Houghland and Shannon Murphy and the junior quarterback was Maggie McLaughlin. The two elite quarterbacks on the senior squad combined for 35 points, and a stingy defense only allowed the juniors 7 points. The game was action-packed with many amazing plays and outstanding competition.

Senior coach Justin Fitzsimmons was quoted after the game, "Overall, we played amazing as a team and I am very proud of each person for contributing to this victory."

Even though it was cold and rainy, the fans and players were able to stay warm with the hot chocolate that was served at the front entrance of the stadium. The game was also covered by commentators Stephen Thiringer, Marty Knauf, and the weather man Brian Murray. They each provided accurate coverage of the game and updates on the status of the weather throughout.

Overall, many people contributed to this year's Powder-puff game, on and off the field. Both teams played their hardest and it was a fun and memorable experience for everyone, which is what made the game a huge success!



Swim Team Dives in to the Season

Reid Stevenson
Staff Writer

The O'Connell swim team has had much success in the past seasons and is anticipating another great season this year. Practicing three times a week before school, the team has strong chemistry along with a solid work ethic that will without a doubt lead them to victory in every meet. Many of the seniors are excited for the season to get underway. Elena Williams says, "I anticipate that we will do well this season! We have a strong group of seniors to lead the way." Confidence is key when you want to be successful and that's exactly what this group has acquired. The early morning practices teach each swimmer discipline, considering the early morning practices start at 6 am!

The girls' varsity team had a strong showing at their first meet, the

WMPSSDL Relay Carnival, placing 4th out of 12 competing teams.

Of course nothing would be possible without the amazing coaching staff. They are great teachers of swim and dive and they encourage the athletes to do their best whenever possible. Senior swimmer Megan Plombon said of her coaches,

"We have an amazing coaching staff. They make the practices fun and are great people to be around. They are great role models for us and are very supportive, no matter what the outcome is."

Overall, the O'Connell swim team is determined to make this the best season that they have ever had. With their strong work ethic from each swimmer and remarkable coaching staff, the team seems poised to complete another exciting and successful season.



Mens' Ice Hockey: Number One

John Patterson
Editor-in-Chief

O'Connell has been around for 57 years. Through these six decades the school has earned a treasure trove of awards commemorating the glory earned by various teams. The name "O'Connell" has been emblazoned on countless jerseys of champions and future professional athletes. Despite O'Connell's history, there are still groundbreaking achievements for teams to reach. The Varsity Ice Hockey team has earned a title O'Connell has never had bestowed on its men in the rink: Number One. For the first time in its history, O'Connell is the home of the #1 Ice Hockey team in the uber-competitive D.C. area.

The men's ice hockey team has earned quite a name for themselves. Competing in twice as many games as most of their opponents they have been twice as successful. They usurped reigning state champions Briar Wood 4-2 in a dominating conclusion to a back-and-forth battle. Also joining the club of teams defeated by O'Connell is DeMatha after a stunning 7-4 performance. In a standoff game against Langley, goalie Zach Hale held the goal while Daniel Avdioukhin snuck in the game winning point.

Senior David Ahlstrom reports,

"We are playing well this season and are improving in every game, as a team, and as individuals."

The team has been equally successful on another front. They made their program one of the most popular at O'Connell. The hockey team are the original wordsmiths that forged the epic title "The O-Zone." They manage a prolific Twitter page that keeps play-by-play updates on every game. The MVP of every game earns the most-precious blue fedora. More easily gained were the "Blue is Back" wristbands thrown out at the winter pep rally. The announcements have been graced with multiple appearances by head coach Flip Collins along with their polished dubstep video. The O-Zone has happily returned to its roots. Student attendance at games has sky-rocketed as more and more are drawn in by the team's success and quirky culture.

"This is what happens when you start winning games," reports senior Captain Luke Collins.

In armor of blue and white and proudly bearing the name "O'Connell," the men of the ice hockey team have brought a newfound achievement to the school and an exploding interest in their prestigious program.



2013-14 NVSHL All-Star Team member Zach Hale, Class of 2016. The starting goalkeeper for the Knights has had 2 shutouts this season.

Christmas Movies

Rose Sloate
Staff Writer

The lights are twinkling, the snow is flurrying and everyone is talking about their holiday plans. And one of the favorite pastimes is watching Christmas movies that never seem to get old. Settled on the couch with hot chocolate and fuzzy socks, people can be found singing along to "Rudolph" or watching a movie that has everyone giggling along. Either way, by the end of the day, as the movie ends, the question is, "What movie should we play next?"

If family is visiting for the break and a little cousin wants to pick the next movie, urge the little one towards "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer." The heartwarming film appeals to all ages and has the great message to use the uniqueness you have for

spectacular things. The movie is so incredibly cute that you even want to hug the abominable snowman! Speaking of huggable snowmen, "Frosty the Snowman" has to be the cutest snowman out there. Although the movie has a rather bittersweet touch to the ending, the animated film would definitely make you smile on a cold, snowy day.

If you're feeling a "little down," then you need a dose of "Elf." Don't worry; you won't turn into an elf. Possibly. This film will have you rolling on the ground by the time the credits roll. Speaking of movies that will make you giggle, "Home Alone" is one of the greatest holiday movies out there. The movie is maybe a touch unrealistic but that doesn't stop you from laughing when one of the robbers gets his face imprinted by an iron while trying to sneak into the house. The movie practically urges every little kid to be an evil

mastermind when left home alone so maybe take a bit of care whom you show it to.

When your parents tell you that you can't have something, it makes you want it even more, right? Well, the American comedy, "A Christmas Story," appeals to all ages because it has the child's satisfaction of getting what he wants as well as the parents' smug reaction when they get to say "I told you so." Still, along the line of older classics, the heartwarming film, "Miracle on 34th Street," touches people's hearts every time they watch it. The movie is uplifting without being cheesy, and definitely has to make it to the holiday "to be watched" list.

So the scene is set. Christmas socks and twinkly lights and a crackling fire. Bundle up, O'Connell, and smush yourself into the couch with an unhealthy amount of blankets to fend off the cold. You don't even have to feel guilty about drinking all the hot chocolate you want because hey, it's chocolate. And now you have the perfect movies to go along with it.



Toys for Tots

Selene Swanson
Special to the Visor

O'Connell is collecting new toys for less fortunate children in the NoVA/DC area through December 16th as part of the Toys for Tots program.

Toys for Tots is a yearly toy drive that begins in October and continues until late December. The drive is sponsored by U.S. Marines. The Toys for Tots website describes the goal of the program, "...to deliver, through a new toy at Christmas, a message of hope to less fortunate youngsters that will assist them in becoming responsible, productive, patriotic citizens." In 2012, Toys for Tots was listed as number 70 in the Philanthropy 400. The Lone Ranger, Ronald Reagan, and Bugs Bunny have all been part of the Toys for Tots movement in the past. Unwrapped donations can be dropped off in the red bins

located under the Christmas tree in the Underwood lobby. If you prefer to donate online, go to <http://www.toysfortots.org/donate/>. Email tgiska@bishopoconnell.org with questions. Information about volunteering can be found at <http://www.toysfortots.org/donate/toys.aspx>. The toy drive is a great opportunity for O'Connell students, teachers, and parents to get into the Christmas spirit.



Christmas in DC

Gaby Cossich
Staff Writer

The Christmas season is one of the most festive times to visit Washington DC. The



city does not fail to bring out the holiday spirit as it is brightly decked out in all sorts of holiday ornaments and decorations. One can find many

things do with all the activities and attractions available during this time of the year.

Probably one of the most well-known and popular of attractions in DC during the holidays is the National Christmas tree; its first lighting marks the beginning of the Christmas Season in the city. Each night in December, one can enjoy the various musical groups and performances happening at the tree.

Another great way to celebrate the holiday season is viewing the various local parks and other areas with beautiful Christmas light displays. More specifically, one display that will be worth the visit is the Festival of Lights at the Washington DC Mormon

Temple. This beautiful temple is covered with over 500,000 lights which are accompanied by musical performances in the indoor theater. Various house museums in the area are also festively decorated; many offer the public the opportunity to take a candlelight tour and to enjoy some seasonal music.

This year, the Washington DC area offers a special holiday event not to miss: An indoor, fully interactive, walk-through attraction made completely out of ice at the Gaylord National Resort at National Harbor. The theme this year is Frosty the Snowman, displaying some of the most memorable and favorite scenes.

Aside from the many attractions to visit, there are also various shows and live performances

going on in the DC area. This includes performances by the US Army Band at the American Holiday Festival Concert and the presentation of holiday favorites such as The Nutcracker and Handel's Messiah at various show rooms.

So try something new this year; by visiting the DC area you're sure to make lasting memories and moment with family and friends.



Christmas Playlist

Kiera Wainer
Staff Writer

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| "Santa Claus is Comin to Town" -- Bruce Springsteen | "Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree" -- Brenda Lee | "Winter Wonderland" -- Pentatonix |
| "All I Want for Christmas is You" -- Mariah Carey | "Last Christmas" -- Wham! | "Up On the House Top" -- Jackson 5 |
| "It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year" -- Andy Williams | "Christmas Song" -- Mel Torme | "Frosty the Snowman" -- The Ronettes |
| "White Christmas" -- Bing Crosby | "Jingle Bells" -- Bing Crosby | "Jingle Bell Rock" -- Daryl Hall |
| "Santa Baby" -- Eartha Kitt | "Blue Christmas" -- Dean Martin | "I'll Be Home" -- Meghan Trainor |
| "Blue Christmas" -- Elvis Presley | "Wonderful Christmastime" -- Paul McCartney | "Santa Claus is Coming to Town" -- Jackson 5 |
| | | "Sleigh Ride" -- Johnny Mathis |



Christmas Traditions Around the World

Laura McLellan
Staff Writer

The Washington DC Christmas celebration is one that the whole country anticipates. The national Christmas tree sits in front of the white house, with 56 other trees representing America's states and territories, a yule log, and a large scale model train set along the Pathway of Peace in front of the White House. These festivities have been a tradition for the country; the national tree has been put up annually since 1923. But Christmas traditions don't just come



from America. Christmas is celebrated all over the world, in many different ways.

Mexico is famous for one of its Christmas celebrations. In Las Posadas, a nine-day procession goes door to door asking for room in the "inn" for the baby Jesus, always to be turned away until the final night where the whole procession finally finds room, often in a church, and celebrates with both prayer and piñatas. A similar story is performed in Brazil called Los Pastores, about the shepherds who go to visit Jesus after his birth. In the Brazilian version, there's shepherdesses instead of shepherds, as well as a gypsy who attempts to kidnap the baby Jesus.

But Central and South America are not the only places known for theatrics. In Iraq, the bishop begins a great ceremony by bringing in a figure of the baby Jesus. He will touch a single person, who will touch one more person, who will go on to touch one more person, until slowly, one by one, the "touch of peace" spreads around to everyone at the ceremony.

Jesus's own birthplace, Bethlehem, sees thousands of pilgrims each year, especially around Christmas time. A great procession on horses comes through the town, which includes both government and church officials, a cross carried on a black horse, and an effigy of the child Jesus. The place thought to be the site of Jesus's birth is marked by a silver

star in a grotto beneath the Church of the Nativity, which is decorated with festive flags for the occasion.

Bethlehem is not the only place with a religion-centric celebration. Those in the Vatican City start their Christmas celebration by breaking a 24-hour fast with a big feast. The pope celebrates a midnight mass on Christmas in St. Peter's Basilica, which is broadcast out to St. Peter's Square for the thousands of visitors who can't fit inside.

The Canadian Catholic province of Quebec, also celebrates Christmas with a fast and a mass. The Christmas dinner is called "Reveillon,"

or waking up. It is celebrated after returning from Midnight Mass, as late (or early) as 2 am. This celebration originates in France, where the meal's composition varies based on its location. The dinner can be anything from turkey and chestnuts in Burgundy to oysters and pat de fois gras in Paris. One main component in many areas, however, is the *Buche de Nol*, or "Christmas log" cake, which has replaced the yule log it is based on.

This yule log comes from Scandinavia where it was traditionally an entire tree, whose base was placed in the hearth at the start of winter. It would be slowly fed into the fire for the duration of the season, until by the end, there was no more yule tree. The idea of the yule log has endured most successfully in Britain, where many Christmas traditions are based on greenery. Holly and ivy are hung up around doorways, in households, and all over, to raise spirits and remind everyone that spring will come again. Though this tradition comes from before Christianity, it has come to be closely associated with Christmas.

Christmas traditions happen all over the world. Cultures are different, as are their celebrations. What remains the same throughout the world, however, is the sense of fellowship and peace that comes with the celebration of Jesus's birth, something that brings the whole world together.



A Cup of Christmas Cheer

John Patterson
Editor-In-Chief

There's a reason Eggnog is only consumed during the holiday season. Homemade or bought, eggnog is high in cholesterol, saturated fat, and in some cases, Christmas cheer.

Eggnog's ingredients are similar to cake. The three primary ingredients are milk, eggs, and sugar. Different recipes have varying additions, but supplementary ingredients that show up regularly in recipes include cinnamon, vanilla, nutmeg, extra sugar, and heavy whipped cream. These are all hearty ingredients, and the resulting beverage can exceed the recommended daily limit on saturated fat and cholesterol. Alternatives like

nonfat milk and Egg Beaters can curb the nutritional toll of eggnog.

"Going low fat is only acceptable to those whom a doctor seriously recommends specifically not to partake in the fullness, richness, and happiness that is full-blown eggnog," elaborates senior Michael Gavin. "Those physically able to drink it should. Any other way is blasphemy."

This is a popular opinion: not just for eggnog, but for the holiday diet as a whole. The holiday season inspires a relaxation in dietary standards in order to maximize enjoyment at celebrations. The danger is when this attitude remains for the rest of the year. As always with dietary concerns, moderation is always the best policy. The holidays are an ideal time to indulge, but not the place to kick off a new diet trend.

Festive Eggnog Recipe

Ryan Brideau
Staff Writer

Ingredients:

2 cups whole milk
5 whole cloves
½ tsp. ground cinnamon
¼ cup sweetened, condensed milk
4 egg yolks
½ cup granulated sugar
1 cup heavy whipping cream
1 tsp. ground nutmeg (plus more for garnish)
1 tsp. vanilla extract



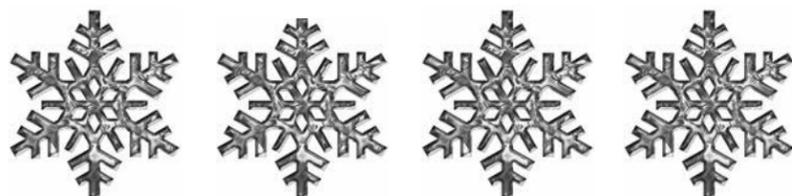
Instructions:

1. Combine milk, cloves, cinnamon, and condensed milk over low heat, in a deep sauce pan until the mixture is heated through. Slowly increase the heat to medium and bring the mixture to a low boil. Careful not to allow a rolling boil.

through. Do not bring to a boil.

5. Strain the mixture using a fine mesh strainer to catch the spices. Place in an airtight container in the refrigerator and let cool for at least one hour, preferably longer.

6. Serve cold. Garnish with additional nutmeg if desired.



Christmas at the Convent

John Patterson
Editor-in-Chief

The Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary are a defining tradition of O'Connell, and all the sisters participate in DJO's Christmas traditions. Not only do they enjoy the holiday season with the school, but also with their fellow nuns in the area. After Christmas, the sisters return to their families back in their home states. For every community the sisters are a part of, they get to spend Christmastime uniquely with each.

The entire O'Connell community enjoys the Christmas spirit, and the sisters are certainly no exception.

"I like the way the SCA decorates the cafeteria; that sets the mood for me," reports Sister Regina, Mother Superior. Her absolute favorite O'Connell Christmas tradition, however, is the teacher and

faculty breakfast put on by the PTO. The entirety of O'Connell's faculty, staff, and clergy join together for a Mass and then breakfast while the students sleep in.

"It's a removed, non-



academic setting with the people I work with."

The Sisters have their own Secret Santa and a house party on Christmas Eve. That night all the

sisters go to Mass. Sister Tracey plays the bells at St. Agnes and some sisters go to enjoy her performance. The rest go to Fort Myer as lectors and Eucharistic ministers. On Christmas Day, all the sisters go to St. Michael's

in Annandale to have dinner with the other Northern Virginia convents. 19 sisters from around the area attend every year. After dinner the Sisters return to the convent to spend Christmas night enjoying coffee together in their community room.

On December 26, the sisters split up to spend the week with their families. While Sister Elizabeth flies to her family in Indiana, the rest of the Sisters are natives of the East Coast. Sister Regina enjoys seeing the Mummers Parade in Philadelphia on New Year's Day. After spending time with their families, all the Sisters return early to the convent to prepare for another semester with their beloved students.

Father Thompson

Quinne Otu
Staff Writer

O'Connell began the new year with a new chaplain, Father Thompson. Although he has only been here for a few months, he is already excited about the school and its students. In 1999, Father Thompson attended a retreat that changed his whole view of God and the Church. This retreat changed his life and began his search for a more spiritual meaning to his life. He became inspired to be part of the ministry. In August, 2000, Father Thompson decided that he wanted to become a priest. He attended the same seminary as Father Cozy for a year, but for the rest of his education, he attended the seminary of Mount St. Mary's. After being ordained in 2006, Father Thompson became a priest at All Saints Catholic Church for 5 years, and then he became the priest for St. John the Beloved for 3 years.

He expressed his love for being part of the youth ministry as well as his dedication to guide those of the young Church.

"I want students to experience the love of Jesus in a more profound way."

He also explained his excitement for celebrating his first O'Connell Mass, which was the Bishop's Mass that took place on Tuesday, September 16. He expressed his admiration for the Bishop's feelings towards the younger members of the Church, and how he considers him to be one of his biggest inspirations.

He added that he had been inspired by the positive energy that Bishop Loverde always gives off and how it makes him want to support and serve the youth of the Church.

"I love Bishop O'Connell; it is a fantastic school. I love hanging with the students, and I always feel very welcome here."

He also stressed how much he was looking forward to getting to know all of the students here at O'Connell. He wants all the students to feel that the Church is a place where we can all reside and feel safe.



Father Thompson is ready to rock with his black stratocaster!

The Rosary: Mary's Gift of Grace

Peter Lucas
Special for the Visor

Many Catholics today miss a beautiful gift. This gift, so great in grace, is missed not because of lack of commitment, nor lack of faith, but because many do not know of the abundant graces it provides. This gift, so beautiful, has been the source of many conversions, miracles, graces, and other goodness. This most sublime gift, called a perfect prayer, given to us by the Most Holy Virgin Mary, is meant to help us grow closer to her, and therefore, by growing closer to her, we may grow closer to her most Beloved Son, Our Lord, Jesus Christ. This gift is the Most Holy Rosary.

What is the Rosary? The Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary is the meditation on the life of

Mary and Jesus. It consists of four groups of events, each event called a mystery, concerning incidents of their lives. The four groups are: the traditional Joyful Mysteries, dealing with the Incarnation, Nativity and Early Life of Our Lord; the Sorrowful Mysteries, which dwell on His Passion and Death; the Glorious Mysteries, meditating on Christ's Resurrection and Ascension and Mary's Assumption and Crowning; and the newer Luminous Mysteries added by Pope Saint John Paul II, concerning Jesus's public life and ministry. Reflections on

each mystery is followed by a decade: an Our Father, Ten Hail Mary's, a Glory Be and a Fatima Prayer. A short Rosary is a group of 5 decades, in one of the four groups of Mysteries, with several other prayers at the beginning or the end. A full Rosary consists of the 15 traditional or 20 mysteries—all 3 traditional groups or all 4 groups.

Why pray the Rosary? It may seem like a burden at first, an obstacle, just a bunch of Hail Mary's, over and over and over again. However, while the verbal prayers are very important, they are not the center of the Rosary. The heart of the Rosary is the meditation on the lives of Jesus and Mary, and the History of the Salvation that occurred because of them. Many astonishing, wonderful things

have happened to those who say the Rosary faithfully: miracles, conversions, victories, and many other things. It is a simple prayer, easy to say. The word Rosary means "Crown of Roses." Each Hail Mary we say is a rose, making a splendid crown for our most clement, most loving, most sweet Virgin Mary! We should be eager to make this prayer to her every day. It has been a source of conversion, comfort, peace, hope, consolation, and even victory, such as the famous victory at Lepanto. As most Catholics realize, Mary will intercede for us, as



Cyber-Attack on Sony

Diego Garcia
Copy Editor

On Monday November 24, just days before Thanksgiving, Sony Pictures suffered a major hack. Employees arriving to work were locked out of their computers and were faced with an eerie skeleton announcing that they had been “Hacked by #GOP.”

Still scrambling to preserve the integrity of its servers, Sony has not yet released a comprehensive press release of what exactly occurred but it has been confirmed that the company did undergo a cyber-attack. The orchestrators of this attack, which call themselves the Guardians of Peace (GOP), tried to blackmail the company, leaked personal and confidential information regarding not just the company but also its employees, took control of the company’s Twitter account, and, most importantly, leaked five unreleased Sony Pictures movies on the internet. *Fury*, *Annie*, *Still Alice*, *Mr. Turner* and, *To Write Love on her Arms* were all released on internet pirating sites. Except for *Fury*, none of these films have even premiered at theatres yet. Since the hack, the movies have been downloaded millions of times, representing significant monetary losses for the company.

In addition, the 217MB (not counting the movies) leak included private data including the financial information, Social Security numbers and account passwords of Sony employees. Reports

indicate that Sony employees have been instructed to unplug their computers and to disable Wi-Fi on their smartphones.

Many speculate that the “Guardians of Peace” is actually the government of North Korea, which has conducted cyber-attacks in the past, in response to the imminent release of *The Interview*, a Sony Pictures-produced comedy film the plot of which revolves around a pair of American media stars being asked by the CIA to assassinate the leader of North Korea during an upcoming trip to interview him. North Korean officials have been highly critical of the movie. The North Korean ambassador to the United Nations called the movie “the most undisguised sponsoring of terrorism, as well as an act of war.” North Korea has not yet confirmed or denied any of these allegations but there is some proof that Pyongyang could be responsible. The note which the hackers inserted into many of Sony’s computers has exceptionally bad grammar and their perplexing use of the hashtag in “#GOP” seems to be a weak attempt to seem well-acquainted with international media. In addition, *The Interview* movie itself was not released, possibly because North Korea does not want people watching it, let alone watching it for free. However, all the controversy surrounding *The Interview* has created free publicity for the movie. Because of the hack, some expect the movie to perform even better in the box office when it premieres on Christmas.



Christmas Comes to Tangier Island

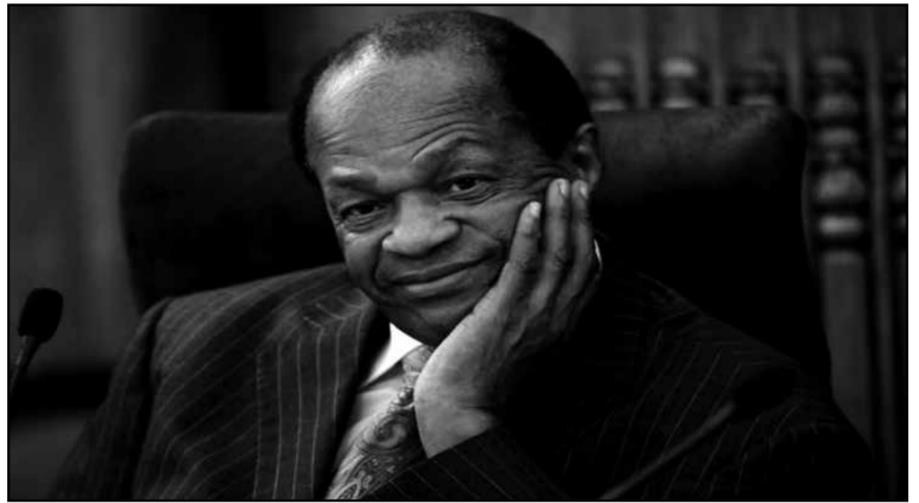
By Devin Christenson
Staff Writer

With just over 700 residents and the only possible travel between the island and the mainland is by boat or plane, Tangier Island is fairly isolated. Located in the Chesapeake Bay off the Virginia shoreline, the island is made up of 83 acres of habitable land. We are used to having up to 25 students in a class but on Tangier, the average class size in their K-12 school is 10. There are five restaurants with only one open year round. The economy is primarily based on fishing, crabbing and oystering, with tourism as the only industry.

The Pocomoke Indians were some of the first people to inhabit the island. It is most likely that they only resided on Tangier in the summer. The first known European to explore Tangier was John Smith. He is credited with giving Tangier Island its name. The British also took advantage of the island's location and used it to their benefit during the War of 1812. They used it as a staging area and a place to house troops in transit.

Chesapeake Sport Pilot School sponsors the Holly Run. This pilot school is based at the Bay Bridge Airport. Chesapeake Sport Pilot is one of the ten U.S. schools to be awarded Outstanding Flight school by the AOPA, recognized on October 4th of this year. The Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association, also known as the AOP, is the largest aviation association in the world. Many of the pilots will be meeting at Bay Bridge Airport before continuing on to Tangier.

This year, pilots will be flying there to celebrate their 45th Holly Run with the island’s residents. Due to erosion and rising water levels, evergreen and holly trees can no longer grow there. During the holiday season, the people of Tangier welcome the pilots, volunteers, and guests to their island. Pilots from all over the Mid-Atlantic region will be participating. Due to popularity, the amount of planes allowed to sign up is cut off at around 50 planes. The planes are scheduled to land about 1 per minute on the 2426 foot runway. It is these pilots that bring boughs of holly, school supplies, and presents. The pilots bring not only these gifts, but Christmas cheer.



“Mayor for Life” Passes

Diego Garcia
Copy Editor

On November 23, Marion Barry, 78, passed away in Washington D.C. Both beloved and despised by the people of our nation’s capital, Barry was one of the most divisive political figures in the history of the District.

Marion Barry has had a lengthy, tumultuous relationship with politics; one which began in his youth. Born in Mississippi in 1936, Barry showed promise even early in life—as a boy he organized a boycott of a local newspaper that was discriminating against African-American paperboys and he later became one of the South’s first African-American Eagle Scouts. At LeMoyné-Owen College, Barry became the president of the local National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) chapter and he became known for his radical stance on civil rights. While at graduate school at Fisk University Barry was arrested for participating in the Nashville sit-ins. After college, Marion Barry was elected chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC).

At age twenty-nine Barry moved to Washington D.C.. In these first few years in the city Barry began organizing projects giving jobs to the District’s unemployed youth. Programs like these are the reason many longtime Washington residents entirely credit Marion Barry for getting them into the workforce for the very first time. After the 1968 race riots following Martin Luther King Jr.’s assassination, Marion Barry took a more active role in city government and became a part of the Economic Development Committee. By 1972, he had become president of the local school board. After Congress relaxed its grip on control of Washington D.C. in 1973, Barry was elected to city council. In 1977, Barry was injured during the Hanafi Siege terrorist attack, but he soon returned to politics and was elected the

second mayor of Washington D.C.. His first term was characterized by efficiency and a budget surplus but in his second term unemployment created problems for the city. One of Barry’s high points was his speech at the 1984 Democratic National Convention. However, Barry’s third term was plagued by the arrival of cocaine into the city and the skyrocketing crime rate.

After a FBI sting operation in 1990, Marion Barry was arrested, convicted and imprisoned for cocaine possession. This incident propelled Barry into the national spotlight for the very first time. Despite all his imperfections, Marion Barry, who remained extremely popular with the minority population of Washington, was reelected mayor after his release from prison. In Barry’s fourth term the city was about to collapse financially and Congress had to take control of it from Barry to save it. Since then Barry has continued to have his fair share of controversy—alleged racism, corruption, narcotics possession, tax fraud and traffic incidents. After leaving office, Barry went into the private sector for a few years before returning to politics and being elected to represent Ward Eight on the city council, a position which he held until his death.

Marion Barry was buried on December 6, in Congressional Cemetery after a lengthy ceremony. Barry is survived by his son Marion Christopher, and by the people of D.C.. Called “Mayor for Life” by the *Washington City Paper*, Barry was the consummate politician—imperfect but lovable. A freedom fighter, a hero and an advocate for the lower class, Barry is remembered warmly by the citizens of Washington. Marion Barry’s legacy can be best summed up in a line from the *Washington Post*—“to understand the District of Columbia, one must understand Marion Barry.”



Leaving the reindeer at home, Santa Claus makes his annual run to Tangier Island delivering presents to the 100+ native children.



“It’s a Hard Knock Life!”

Gabriela Douse
Staff Writer

In 1977, the legendary musical was born. *Annie* swept the nation with its catchy music like “Tomorrow” and “It’s the Hard Knock Life” have become so well know that if the title is just spoken someone will surely start singing along. *Annie* is based on the Depression era comic strip “Little Orphan Annie.” *Annie: The Musical* was first performed at the Neil Simon Theater, previously called the Alvin Theater, and ran for six consecutive years. In 1982, the Broadway sensation was made into a movie; it received several nominations including “Best Production Design” and “Best Score and its Adaption” at the 55th annual Academy Awards. Aileen Quinn, who played Annie, won “Best Young Actress” at the Young Artist Awards. In 2011, Columbia Pictures

find her birth parents. At first, the two do not seem to bond, but after Will tells Annie a story, the two grow closer. Guy, Stacks’ political advisor, will do anything to secure Will’s position as mayor. Guy plans to stage a publicity stunt in which Stacks will reunite Annie with her parents. He approaches Miss Hannigan and asks if she will help him find a set of fake parents to present to the public at the right moment, but when Hannigan ruins her end of the deal, he later drops her in favor of hiring two actors to be Annie’s fake “parents.” Hannigan is disturbed to learn that Guy plans to leave Annie with these strangers until after the election, then abandon her on the streets. Hannigan, Will, and Annie reflect on their inner conflict through a musical number, before Hannigan goes to Stacks to tell him that Annie is in danger. Will, along with his assistant Grace, his helicopter, and the New York Police depart to help rescue



Still of Jamie Foxx, Rose Byrne, and Quvenzhané Wallis in *Annie*

announced that it would be producing a reboot of *Annie*.

Columbia Pictures plans to put a modern spin on *Annie*. Though there are differences between the play and movie, the plot is primarily the same. Several song lyrics have been altered, including “It’s the Hard Knock Life,” “I Think I’m Gonna Like It Here,” “Little Girls,” “Easy Street,” and “I Don’t Need Anything But You.” Many songs were omitted from the 2014 film, mostly due to the lyrics having to do with the 1930s. According to an article by Josep Vinaixa “Something Was Missing”, has been omitted from the film for undetermined reasons, but was later recorded by Jamie Foxx and was featured on a Target exclusive release of the soundtrack; although a favorite, “You’re Never Fully Dressed without a Smile” is no longer a character number and is now just background.

In the upcoming film, Will Stacks, candidate for mayor, and Annie actually meet each other on the streets of New York when he saves her from a speeding truck. A video was taken of his heroism, and his approval rating shoots up. Annie suggests Stacks becomes her temporary guardian to help his image. Annie also uses the publicity to help

Annie. Once reunited, Will holds a press conference announcing his withdrawal from the election and his plan to adopt Annie. Will later decides to dedicate his time and money to the city of New York, by opening a literacy center.

A very noticeable departure from the plot of the original musical is that Miss Hannigan’s brother Rooster and his girlfriend Lily are entirely absent. In the musical and in the 1982 film, Rooster and Lily posed as Annie’s parents in order to steal the \$50,000 reward offered by Warbucks for the arrival of Annie’s parents. Each rendition of *Annie* has depicted Miss Hannigan’s fate differently: in the musical, Miss Hannigan is arrested along with Rooster and Lily; in the 1982 film Miss Hannigan redeems herself, trying to stop Rooster from hurting Annie. In the 2014 film adaption, Miss Hannigan saves Annie from the fake “parents.”

Annie has been a beloved classic since it first came out. The 2014 film should be a pleasant surprise to people who have loved *Annie* since the beginning! So mark your calendars, ladies and gentlemen, for December 19th and watch an-eleven-year old Academy Award nominee, Quvenzhané Wallis, take on the role of a spunky little girl in the big city!



Still of Wes Bentley and Anne Hathaway in *Interstellar*

“Houston, We Have a Problem”

Thomas Borek
Staff Writer

Interstellar has been regarded as one of the best movies of 2014. The earth is down to its final days, and one man is called upon to join a team of astronauts to find a new earth. His name is Cooper (Matthew McConaughey), and he leaves behind his daughter, affectionately called Murph, and his son. Cooper has one mission, to save the world, and to come back to his daughter as he promised. In order to find a new habitable earth, the team must go through a wormhole to find three potential planets, all of which have NASA astronauts on them. What makes the movie so intriguing, is that a lot of the scientific elements are factual. There are many examples of how science played a major role in the writing of the movie. According to popular physicist Neil deGrasse Tyson, the massive waves that were being formed on the first alien planet were caused by orbital physics, and those are the type of waves that might be caused by a black hole. The black hole causes massive waves on the alien planet,

which kills the first NASA astronaut when they arrive on the planet. Another scientific insert, is the “tesseract.” The tesseract allows Cooper to view time as if it were a spatial dimension, which helps him save the future humans of earth by communicating with his daughter. However, this concept can be, of course, questioned. Some scenes such as the tesseract scene walk the line of science and magic. Although not all of the science is 100% true, it is very close which makes the movie more interesting.

This use of factual science is why *Interstellar* is different from other recent science-related movies. The scientists in the movie look like normal, regular, everyday people, which makes some scientists, like Neil deGrasse Tyson, happy. He is happy to see the stereotype of the wired-up, crazy old man in wild hair substituted by normal, believable human beings with families and realistic lives. The movie appears to be an instant classic that can be viewed multiple times because of the complex issues it raises. If you didn’t get a chance to see it in the theaters look for it on DVD or Blue Ray.



Jack O’Connell as Louis Zamperini in *Unbroken*

The Spirit Remains ‘Unbroken’

Ryan Brideau
Staff Writer

Four years ago, Laura Hillenbrand released a new, non-fiction novel— *Unbroken: A World War II Story of Survival, Resilience, and Redemption*. A highly anticipated film version of this story will be released in theaters this Christmas Day, starring Jack O’Connell in Angelina Jolie’s third project as a director. The story details the jarring life story of Louis Zamperini, former Olympic athlete,

and prisoner of war camp survivor. The story begins with Zamperini’s childhood, one filled with an angst and defiance that he eventually channeled into a passion for running. This passion carries Zamperini all the way to the 1936 Berlin Olympics.

Not long after his involvement in the games, Zamperini enlists in the U.S. Air Force to aid the efforts of World War II. His plane malfunctions, leaving him and two others from his crew the only survivors of the crash, stranded on a life raft where they must survive crippling

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The Hobbit's Finale

Reagan Hogan
Staff Writer

This movie is the third movie in the series and is set to be released December 17th. It has been extremely anticipated by all the fans of the series.

The plot picks up where *The Desolation of Smaug* left off. Lake Town is about to be devoured by the flames of Smaug. This movie is the last movie of the Middle Earth realm, and is being hyped by the hashtag #OneLastTime. *The Battle of the Five Armies*, the actual title, does actually have five armies battling each other in the Valley of the Lonely Mountain as well as the actual mountain. This battle is waged between the Goblin army and the Warg army, fighting against the Men of Dale, Elves, Dwarves, the (giant) Eagles and a Shape-shifter bear. This epic conclusion to *The Hobbit*



will not only complete the series but connect the prequels to *The Lord of the Rings* series that chronologically follows. It will consist of the city of Laketown being approached by the dragon Smaug, ending with the actual battle for the

original home of the dwarves in the Lonely Mountain.

Spoiler Alert: Read no further if you haven't already read the book: Smaug burns Laketown, Legolas kills Bolg (by throwing a sword and pinning him against a wall), Kili and Fili die (beheading... yikes), and giant worms participate in the battle! Geoffrey Macnab for *The Independent* says, "Peter Jackson doesn't skimp on the beheading, impaling and disemboweling." We can expect this

Hobbit Finale to really do Middle Earth justice, possibly bringing tears to our eyes, as we jump out of our seats.

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hunger, sharks, and attacks by Japanese bombers. When they finally reach land (after 47 days at sea) they are immediately captured by the Japanese Navy and taken to a POW camp, where Zamperini endures brutal torment from prison guard Mutsuhiro Watanabe. It is over two years before he is finally returned home.

The film's production began in January 2011, when Universal Pictures bought the rights to the book (they had previously acquired the film rights to Zamperini's life). It was then determined that Jolie would direct, and filming began in Australia on October 21, 2013.

According to a Today Show article posted February 25, 2011, the story is one that means a great deal to Jolie,

"I feel such a huge responsibility to get it right, because I love Zamperini so much, and because he's helped me so much in my life."

Zamperini's story is an incredible and poignant journey into the heart of World War II. In the same article, Jolie states that she feels the story is a bright light of hope for an often-troubled time.

"The world can seem hopeless and it can seem very overwhelming. But the resilience and the strength of the human spirit is an extraordinary thing." Zamperini's moving story is a testament to that.

Night at the Museum

Gabriela Douse
Staff Writer

Night at the Museum: Secret of the Tomb is the third movie and most likely final instalment in the funny and exciting saga. When the magic powers of The Tablet of Ahkmenrah, the tablet that allows the exhibits to come alive at night, begins to die out, Larry Daley, the security guard, seeks the answer in London. He takes Theodore Roosevelt, Jedidiah, Octavius, Attila the Hun, Sacagawea, a new Neanderthal named Laa, and Dexter, the monkey, and embarks on an epic quest to save the magic of the tablet before it is gone forever. They seek out Merenkahre, the creator of the tablet, to ask him how to save the tablet. *Night at the Museum* first premiered in 2006. The all-star cast made the movie quite popular. From Ben Stiller as Larry Daley, the security guard who sees the exhibits come to life; Owen Wilson as Jedidiah, an adventure seeking tiny cowboy figurine; Steve Coogan as Octavius, a Roman general miniature figure; Crystal the monkey, who always steals Larry Daley's keys; to last but certainly not least, Robin Williams as Theodore Roosevelt, a wax model of the 26th President of the United States.

Night at the Museum: Secret of the Tomb was Robin Williams' last movie. He passed away in August. Williams had a great impact on the movie industry during

a long and storied career. He starred in over 40 movies such as *Dead Poet's Society*, *Aladdin*, *Mrs. Doubtfire*, and *Jumanji*. Robin Williams was also in the previous *Night at the Museum* movies. He always brought such laughter and life to the movie sets. Sarah Michelle Gellar said in a statement obtained by the Daily News that her "life is a better place because I knew Robin Williams. To my children he was 'Uncle Robin;' to everyone he worked with, he was the best boss anyone had ever known, and to me he was not just an inspiration but he was the Father I had always dreamed of having."

Night at the Museum: Secret of the Tomb also introduces new characters played by more A-list actors like Ben Kingsley, who plays Merenkahre, a powerful pharaoh who also happens to be Ahkmenrah's father; and Rebel Wilson, as a security guard who sees all the activity that happens after hours. Ben Stiller plays the double role of Larry Daley and the Neanderthal Laa. Dan Stevens plays Sir Lancelot, the renowned knight of King Arthur's roundtable.

So if you have seen the previous *Night at the Museum's* and had a couple of laughs, *Night at the Museum* seems like the perfect comedy to add to your list of movies to see by the end of the year.



So Many Sequels: The Movies of 2015

Laura McLellan
Front Page Editor

2014 is coming to an end, and so also comes the end of a year filled with action, romance, humor, nostalgia, horror, adventure, surprises, and plenty of drama in the movie theatres. But at the end of one year comes the promise of more excitement in next year's movies.

2015 is going to be a big year for franchises. Two major franchises of the 20th century are returning, in *Jurassic World* and *Star Wars Episode VII: the Force Awakens*. Marvel Studios is in the middle of an undertaking even more ambitious than the resurrection of an iconic film franchise. Marvel has been working on a large-scale film project of interconnected stories across 22 as-yet announced movies beginning with *Iron Man* of 2008 and stretching as far in the future as 2019. In 2015, Marvel plans to release no less than three films: *the Fantastic Four*, *Ant-Man*, and *Avengers: Age of Ultron*. The latter two movies will wrap up what is called "phase two" of three that make up the whole story being made into what is referred to as the "Marvel Cinematic Universe." Fans of young adult fiction will not be disappointed by new releases this year, either. *Insurgent*, the second film adapted from the *Divergent* book series by Veronica Roth, will be in theaters

in March. The ever-popular *Hunger Games* movies, based on the book series of the same name by Suzanne Collins, will reach their fourth and final year of

film, released this November.

Even younger audiences are looking forward to seeing familiar faces on screen in 2015. *Minions*, an addition

first *Despicable Me* movie, the little yellow creatures have been a cultural phenomenon. This movie plans to explain where they came from, and how they met their overlord-employer-leader, the supervillain Gru. *The SpongeBob Movie: Sponge Out of Water*, though not the first feature-length film based on the iconic children's show *SpongeBob Squarepants*, will be the first to have CGI used in its production, something that is attracting plenty of attention. The movie is set to release in early February. Not all children's films will be based on preexisting material, however. Pixar's *Inside Out* will be a look at the emotions we all feel, and who they are. In the same vein as Disney's *Maleficent* released in 2014, some movies will retell famous fantasies for their audience. *Cinderella* is to be a live-action movie, featuring Helena Bonham-Carter as the fairy godmother. *Pan*, based on the famous children's story by J. M. Barrie, will tell how Peter made it to the fantastical world of Neverland in the first place.

Though some movies released in 2015 will be completely new concepts, many of them are based on old favorites. Moviegoers can expect to see sequels, prequels, conclusions, continuations, and retellings in theaters in 2015.



movie releases. The series closes with *Mockingjay: Part Two*, the second part of the story begun by the first *Mockingjay*

to the DreamWorks *Despicable Me* story, tells the untold tale of the famous minions. Since their appearance in the