Rocky Hill Spelling Bee Champ

By: Sakshi Narula
Staff Writer

Can you spell Pantheistic? Raffae can! On March 7, 2015 6th grader Raffae Chowdhury participated in the Montgomery County Regional Spelling Bee. Raffae had a big competition and out of many hard rounds, he took home the trophy. While on stage he mentioned how his English teacher, Mrs. Rye, would be proud of him and proud she was. It is challenging for people who participate in the spelling bee because they have to learn many hard words. When they get up to spell the word they can get nervous. Raffae worked hard to get to where he is now and he deserves the trophy. Spelling bees consist of many words that you have to study, and giving up hours of your challenging middle school day to practice them. Raffae studied very long and hard, and he is representing Rocky Hill very well.

Raffae’s win can really help him a lot. This was an incredible opportunity for him and he seized it. He is now going to compete in the National Scripps Spelling Bee in May. The Spelling Bee is going to be held at the Gaylord National Resort and Convention Center. Raffae was awarded a 6 night stay at the Gaylord Resort during the spelling bee week! He was also awarded an enormous Merriam-Webster dictionary, an online subscription to Encyclopedia Britannica for a year, and a set of coin proofs (which are special early samples of certain coins), from the US Mint! He is very fortunate to come this far and if he makes it into the finals we might see him on ESPN.

Raffae wrote a short essay on how he first got interested in spelling bees and how he did so well. Raffae wrote...

“I first got interested in spelling in 2nd grade when our school announced that there was a spelling bee. I did the school spelling bee two years in a row. Despite staying in the competition up to seventh grade words, I never won. I never did it again until this year! With me being in middle school, with a couple years of advanced English classes, and lots of reading for pleasure under my belt, I decided to enter the spelling bee. Mrs. Rye told me I scored the highest among all her classes! I didn’t think I would win the school spelling bee. Mrs. Rye told me I scored the highest among all her classes! I didn’t think I would win the Regional Spelling Bee. She spelled her word incorrectly and I spelled my word right. The word was Osomum. Then, I had to spell just one more word correctly to win the Spelling Bee. Otherwise, the two of us had to start another round of spelling. The pronouncer gave me a word to spell - Pantheistic. I was not familiar with the word, so I looked it up in the dictionary. Raffae certainly deserves it. Congratulations to Raffae and good luck at Nationals!”

We all wish Raffae the best. We are proud of what he accomplished. This is an amazing feat and Raffae certainly deserves it. Congratulations to Raffae and good luck at Nationals!

The 14th Annual Willpower Game on “The Hill”

The 14th Willpower Game will take place on Friday, May 8, 2015. Be a part of this awesome program that has raised over $100,000 for Susan G. Komen, Pan CAN, and The Childhood Brain Tumor Foundation. There is something for everyone! 5pm-7pm: Dinner, Silent Auction, moon bounces, dunk tank, and more! 7PM: Parents vs. Staff basketball game and Principal’s challenge! Donations taken at the door. Tickets for sale that evening for the moon bounces, etc. Join us for an evening of fun for the whole family!
Drones: A Blessing or A Curse

By Ronak Tallar
Staff Writer

What do you think about drones? Are they safe or are they dangerous? There are many different points-of-view, but recently, many events have occurred to change how people think about drones.

At about 3 AM on January 26th, 2015, a man was shot in the head by an unidentified, off-duty employee for a government intelligence agency. The incident occurred on White House grounds. However, it wasn’t until the next morning that he learned that he had in fact landed on White House grounds.

Immediately, he called the Secret Service, and began cooperating with an investigation into the incident. The drone that he used was not a small drone that could be used for terrorist attacks. A spokesman for a geospatial-intelligence agency named Don Kerr said that the employee who was flying the drone was using a “personal item.” The employee was not named.

Although planes are not allowed in the airspace near the White House and it is illegal to operate a drone in Washington, it is unclear whether the man will be charged with a crime. The drone is the latest safety concern at the White House. It occurred four days after Officer Michael Slager of Charleston, South Carolina, shot an unarmed black man, who died. Officer Michael Slager’s decision to shoot an unarmed black man, who was actually running away. If that is the case, then we still have a lot to learn about racial tolerance and racial equality.

The shooting of 50 year-old Walter Scott in South Carolina has once again raised questions about policing and the decision to use deadly force. Speaking to reporters after the incident, North Charleston mayor, Keith Summey told reporters, “When you’re wrong, you’re wrong. And if you make a bad decision — don’t care if you’re behind the shield or just a citizen on the street — you have to live by that decision.”

The video showing the shooting of Walter Scott in South Carolina helps us to know what really happened, but you have to wonder what the case would be if someone had not caught the shooting on tape. As the facts emerge in this case, we have to remember that a life has been lost. There was the issue of the broken tailight and the suspect running away. Does his action warrant him being shot to death?

The recent riot in Baltimore following the death of Freddie Gray in police custody on April 19 has brought us back to the same issue of police actions and how to try to prevent them. It is a matter of making the right decision, not just on the street but in the courtroom as well.

Editorial Page

What Have we Learned?

Ms. Katie Odey
Supervising Editor

After the recent shooting of an unarmed man in South Carolina, most of us gasped with the expressiveness. The death of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri sparked a nationwide debate over the issue of race and policing. It seemed to evoke Dr. Martin Luther King’s words: “Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.”

We teach our children to do the right thing. It is a matter of making a conscious decision to do what is right even if no one is watching or video taping. When we value the lives of others, we will learn to help and not destroy them. More importantly, we will learn to do the right thing.

The other major problem is a question that many people are starting to ask. What if drones become a new threat? What if about five to ten years from now, everybody has their own personal drone? The new technology is becoming so vital to people that everybody seems to have their own piece of technology. What if people start misconceiving drones (like people with personal social media) and use it not only to spy on other people, but to try to hurt or bully other people? That could become a major problem that people desperately want to avoid.

To prevent things like this from happening, the FAA is passing major drone laws. According to an article in the Associated Press, drone industry officials have said that they are teaming up with the government and model aircraft hobbyists to launch a safety campaign. The campaign includes a website: www.knowbeforeyoufly.com which advises both recreational and commercial drone operators of FAA regulations and how to fly their unmanned aircraft safely. “In just a few days, kids old and young will unwrap presents, and many of them may be tens of thousands — will have unmanned aircraft,” Michael Toscano, president of the unmanned vehicle association, said in a conference call with reporters. “This technology is very accessible and in very high demand, but information on how to fly safely isn’t readily available.”

“People want drones, and it’s our job to create a safety campaign,” Toscano said.

Technology is changing the way we think. We’re at a vital crossroads, and we have to decide whether we let technology rule us or rule technology.

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The Man With Many Faces

By: Aleysia Varghese Staff Writer

Mr. Lucas, is a fun, exciting, exuberant, responsible teacher, who teaches 7th grade. Mr. Lucas is very exuberant and sings, dances, and lets students interact with the famous, Mr. Buck. The Wildcat ROAR was fortunate enough to get an interview with the great world studies teacher, Mr. Brian Lucas.

TWR: How long have you been teaching?
Mr. Lucas: I have been teaching for 24 years.

TWR: Why do you feel about being nominated as teacher of the month?
Mr. Lucas: I am honored to have been selected for teacher of the month. Thank you for thinking of me, for I am very lucky to work with such great students and staff members here at Rocky Hill Middle.

TWR: What makes you so special? Mr. Lucas: I feel special because of all the love that my mom and dad have given me throughout the years. I also feel special because of my wonderful family at home: Michelle, Kelley and Braydon.

TWR: What would you like your students to know about you? Mr. Lucas: I want my students to know that I care about them and that they can come talk to me about issues other than World Studies. I have a dog, two chickens and an old red pickup truck. I enjoy hunting, fishing, camping, gardening and doing yard work. I am currently the President of the Maryland Horsehoe Pitcher’s Association, so if you are interested in pitching in tournaments go to horseshoepitching.com and find out some great information. I have pitched in two World Horeshoe tournaments and many State Championships. Finally, I am the biggest Pittsburgh Steelers Fan, this side of the Mississippi. (Pirates and Penguins too)! If you see me in the halls around Rocky Hill, please say “Hi.”

TWR: What is one lesson that you have learned many lessons throughout your 24 years of teaching 3rd, 5th, 6th and 7th grades. However, the one that sticks out in my mind the most is to always have a bright light on when getting dressed for school. I came into work one morning to discover that I had two different colored socks on and that my tie did not match my shirt. Another lesson that I learned early on in my career was NOT to bring wild ringed-necked pheasants into a classroom. Yeah...they like to fly. Just saying.

TWR: Why did you become a teacher?
Mr. Lucas: I became a teacher because I wanted to make a difference in people’s lives. My dad, aunt and uncle were teachers and I had a lot of memorable teachers throughout my life that affected me as a person. I enjoy helping students realize their potential and guiding them in the right direction toward success.

TWR: What other schools or grades have you taught?
Mr. Lucas: I starred my career in Frederick County teaching 3rd and 5th grades at Monocacy Elementary. I also taught the same grades at Cedar Grove Elementary for eleven years. From Cedar Grove, I moved to Fields Road Elementary School in Gaithersburg. Mr. Maruskin graduated to middle school at Rocky Hill. I love my job very much and hope to be here for a long time.

By Anusha Chinthalapale

Sam Moore Blood & Toy Drive

“we are each of us angels with only one wing, and we can only fly by embracing one another” ~Luciano De Crescenzo

By Shelby Wilson

According to the Pediatric Brain Tumor Foundation website (www.curethekids.org), “Everyday, 13 children in the United States are diagnosed with a brain tumor.” In addition, the Pediatric Brain Tumor Foundation states that “This is one of the deadliest forms of childhood cancer.” In order to save these innocent children impacted by brain tumors, research and funding are desperately needed. Organizations such as the Pediatric Brain Tumor Foundation and The Childhood Brain Tumor Foundation located in Germantown, Maryland, work passionately to support and raise money for patients and families who are impacted by childhood brain tumors.

On August 2011, Sam Moore lost his hard-fought battle against brain cancer. In honor of Sam Moore’s remembrance and courage, Ms. Tippett organized a blood and toy drive here at RHMS. This year on February 10th, 2015 the toys that were collected were given to children who are currently going through treatment for pediatric brain tumors.

This blood drive demonstrates commitment to saving children’s lives and bringing them love while they are going through treatment. Together we can all be angels for another by raising money and reaching out to kids like Sam Moore. As Mr. De Crescenzo said, “We are each of us angels with only one wing and we can only fly by embracing one another.” Let us embrace one another to make a difference in the lives of children who are ill and need a lot of love and compassion.

When Spring Has Sprung

The way you know, Spring has sprung, Are by the bees, Buzzing around.

The way you know, Spring has sprung, Is by the sun, Shining hard and bright, Upon our soon-to-be tanned skin.

The way you know, Spring has sprung, Is when the crickets chirp, Peacefully, As you drift off to sleep, Dreaming, Of another day, When spring has sprung.

By Anusha Chinthalapale

Wildcat Counselors

“‘The Door is Always Open’

By Shelby Wilson

February 2nd to 6th is recognized as National Counselor Week. Our team consist of Mrs. Arce, 7th and 8th grade counselors, Mrs. Kiernan, counselor services secretary Mr. Maruskin, 7th grade counselor Mr. Marvel, 6th grade counselor Mrs. Reed, and Mrs. Yi the 8th grade counselor. One brief look at our Rocky Hill website and we can see that they care immensely about us as students. Their motto is, “Our door is always open.”

I had the privilege of interviewing Mr. Maruskin, a 7th grade counselor, some questions about his job as a counselor.

The Wildcat Roar: “What is your favorite part about being a counselor?”
Mr. Maruskin: “My favorite part about being a counselor is helping and supporting people. Being there for students when they’re not at their best.”

The Wildcat Roar: “What do you enjoy most at Rocky Hill?”
Mr. Maruskin: “The students and the staff. The friendliness and kindness of the people create a wonderful atmosphere.”

The Wildcat Roar: “What skills do you believe a middle school student needs to become the best person they can be?”
Mr. Maruskin: “Learning from mistakes and how the students are going to make things better from their mistakes. Also learning how to advocate for yourself and being kind.”

The Wildcat Roar: “How would you describe a normal day for a counselor?”
Mr. Maruskin: “There is no normal day for a counselor, everything changes hour by hour. There are different things that happen every day.”

The counselors at Rocky Hill have many things to do. They make 6th grade orientation videos for the upcoming 6th graders as well as new student tip sheets so that our school year and the beginning of our middle school career is a success. They also allow you to ask for help with notes that you can write, and once the counselors receive them they will come and talk to you. Our counselors are great resources for students who need SSL guidance.

We don’t need a special week to thank the counselors for the amazing work they do for us. We can say “Thank You” anytime for helping us find our way through school and life. Giving us guidance to choose right from wrong and helping us through situations that might make us feel uncomfortable are worth saying thank you all year long.

Thank you counselors for your care and concern. We appreciate it. We will take your care and support and use it for the future that lies ahead of us.
“Brooklyn! Get up, what happened? Are you okay?” I jolted awake and my hands flew to my head. There was a high-pitched humming resounding in my head and I was unable to stop it before looking up at my roommate, Eleanor. It was just a nightmare... “Brooklyn, are you okay? Oh my god, you’re waking up. Wait here, let me get you some water.” As soon as she finished her sentence, Eleanor ran out of the room. I looked over at my alarm clock that read “9:42 AM” and quickly realized that I would be late for my first class.

“Here, Brooklyn.” Eleanor handed me a cold glass of water, “what happened?” She sat down beside me, and I pushed myself into a more comfortable sitting position. I racked my brain trying to find the reason for my incessant screaming, but all that I could recall was a fragile girl curled up on her bathroom floor.

“I don’t remember much, but the image of a girl crying on a bathroom floor keening poppin’ off my head.” I tightened my fingers around the glass before drinking the entire contents. My eyes were completely black, but there was blood on the ceiling. My eyes were completely black—I couldn’t even see a hint of the vibrant green eyes that were present just a few minutes ago. What was happening to me? What was wrong with me? I clenched my hand into a fist as I felt another bout of screaming start to overcome me. I could hear the whispers of my nightmares.

“I’m glad that she wasn’t here when you woke up. She’s a pain, she was still my baby sister.”

“My stomach ache got worse—”

“Okay, weirdo, get yourself together. I’m going to go use the restroom, I have a stomach ache and a headache.” I turned to walk away before looking over at my roommate.

“Okay, okay, we gotta go.” I jolted with the sudden realization that it was already 5:00 PM and quickly realized that I would be late for my first class.

“Let me go get you some water.” As I watched her as she left for a class that I was already late to.

“Hey! Brooklyn, wait up!” A familiar voice shouted from behind me. I abruptly turned around and the person began to talk to me and I began to drop all of my papers. I grumbled to myself before squattting down to pick up my papers. Hands appeared from above and I looked up to see who it was.

“I grinned, the troubles of my day of classes was over to his car. My day of classes was finalize by his help before replying. “Yeah of course, come over to my place so we can study for our AP Horticulture exam.” I gathered my papers with Michael’s help before replying. “Yeah of course, come over around 5.” Michael gave me a thumbs up before turning around and jogging over to his car. My day of classes was finalize by his help before replying. “Okay, okay, we gotta go.” I jolted with the sudden realization that it was already 5:00 PM and quickly realized that I would be late for my first class.

“I glanced over at the clock again, “5:00 AM” and there was blood on the ceiling. My eyes were completely black—I couldn’t even see a hint of the vibrant green eyes that were present just a few minutes ago. What was happening to me? What was wrong with me? I clenched my hand into a fist as I felt another bout of screaming start to overcome me. I could hear the whispers of my nightmares.

“Okay, weirdo, get yourself together. I’m going to go use the restroom, I have a stomach ache and a headache.” I turned to walk away before looking over at a smiling Michael.

“Yeah, okay, we gotta go.” I said before shoving my duvet off of my legs. I quickly pushed myself forward and got out of bed by only to fall to the ground—my knees buckling underneath me. Eleanor grabbed my arm before my knees could slamming into the plush carpet. I felt a flash of recognition of the situation I was in.

“Surely dozed them off from playing video games. I’ve obviously does not have to be published. If you want to take it to the next level, try writing a story on your own without your phone, and enjoy a good book. Sometimes it’s good not to look at the screen on your electronic device and look at the covers of a good book. Reading is proven to be good for your brain, and broadens your vocabulary. When choosing a book choose one that is not too easy or too hard for you to read, then skim through the pages to see if you like it. If you want to take it to the next level, then you can write your own story. Obviously does not have to be published, but you can share it with family and friends. Try writing a story on Fanfiction just for fun if you want. Curl up in a comfy and quiet place without your phone, and enjoy a good book. Even if you like comic books or manga, that is still reading! Some people may not like reading, but others do. Reading has provided people with enjoyment for a long time. Just because technology is taking over, it does not mean you have to stop old habits. If your parents ask you what you are doing, it would sound better to say you are reading a book instead of playing Club of Cains. Not every single book is a good one, but at least try some out. So next time you are about to pick up your phone, try picking up a good book.
**Writer’s Corner (Continued)**

**Are Movies Losing Creativity?**

By Arpan Banu

Chief Editor

What are some of your favorite movies? “The Hunger Games?” “Twilight?” “Divergent?” You probably already know this, but these movies are all based on books. Why do I bring this up? I’ve come to the understanding that Hollywood movies are completely losing their creativity. Yes, the movies are still heat their butts, but they’re all just based on books. Just take a look at this year’s nominations for Best Picture at the Academy Awards. Three out of the eight nominations for Best Picture were based on books. “The Theory of Everything” (“Traveling to Infinity: My Life with Stephen by Jane Hawking”), “The Imitation Game” (The Enigma by Andrew Hodges), and “American Sniper” (American Sniper by Chris Kyle) were all based on books.

But that being said, it’s a shame that they wouldn’t be nominated for best picture. Because if they weren’t good, they really shouldn’t be based on a book. Not that I’m going against any of the movies these days. Video games, short films, and even small picture books are movies now! For example, one of the Best Picture nominees for the Oscars was Whiplash, but of course what is it based on? A short film also called Whiplash “Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day” was originally a picture book. “Need for Speed” was based on a video game! Why is it that Hollywood is so desperate to get topics for movies that they’re relying on the plot of a video game for a movie? Hollywood needs a makeover because its creativity is going straight down the drain. So Hollywood, please get some more creativity because your movies are getting a prisoner’s favorite punctuation mark? A period. It marks the end of his sentence!

**Cheesy Joke**

By Ananya Chintalapale

Mozzarella, Parmesan, Cheddar, Pepper jack, Gouda, Bleu, Gorgonzola, American, Provolone. These are all cheeses, and they don’t get the respect they deserve. People just walk into a school and say, “I like cheese.” Do you know where cheese originated? Do you know, who invented cheese? I thought not. You are not a true cheese lover until you know these. So get ready to really be the ultimate cheese lover!

Cheese was invented in Europe, around the time of the Roman Civilization. The earliest evidence of cheese making was in 5,500 BC, in Kuyaviy, Poland. The practice was spread from country to country with the help of traders. The earliest cheeses were thought to be sour and stinky. The earliest cheeses were made of sheep and cow milk mixed together. At about the time the cheese story had reached Greece, Homer’s famous poem The Odyssey had been published. In the story, though, there was a reference to cheese. Believe it or not, scientists are still trying to pinpoint the approximate time the cheese had been invented, using the information provided.

Cheese is very popular down in areas near Arizona. This is how they make cheese. First, a healthy cow is milked. The cow must be healthy; that includes weight, grass intake, height, etc. Next the milk is put into a pot and curdled. Basically, the milk is warmed up till it is spoiled. Then, the milk is put into a mold and is left sitting there for 48 hours. Once that is done, it is sent to be refrigerated for 24 hours. Finally, get ready to eat cheese! So after you have read this, you have achieved the level of ultimate cheese lover. Be free to stroll into school tomorrow and say “I like cheese.” Because you have earned that right to love cheese; for now, you know everything about it.

**Painful Puns**

By Ananya Chintalapale

- Why didn’t the herb do his homework? Because he wasn’t very good at thyme management!
- What did the doctor say to the man who cut his left side off? “Well, I guess you’re all right now!”
- What kind of award did the person who invented the door knocker get? A Nobel prize!
- What is a prisoner’s favorite punctuation mark? A period. It marks the end of his sentence!
- Why were the police called to a daycare? Because a three-year-old was resting a rest!

**Remembering a legend: Selena Quintanilla Perez (1971-1995)**

By Kayleigh Nelson

Staff Writer

March 31st, 1995 in Corpus Christi, Texas, Selena was shot by her best friend Yolanda Saldívar at a "Days Inn" Hotel and, passed away soon after due to blood loss. Yolanda was a fan of Selena from afar and then convinced Selena's father to start a band together. At about the time the cheese story had reached Greece, Selena was shot near her neck and limped into the lobby of the hotel. Her last words were, “Yolanda Saldívar.”

The whole world was shocked, especially Selena's family. Selena's fans grieved the loss. Selena was a popular Mexican - American singer during this time with the nickname "Selena y los Dinos" because her family formed a band together. Selena had an extremely beautiful voice and sung mainly in Spanish. Before her death, however, she started working on an English crossover album, with songs like “I Could Fall in Love” and “Dreaming of You.” Selena was kind and funny. She would often crack jokes because she enjoyed her job and she took pride in what she did. She married a man named Chris, even though her father forbade it, but he came to love him as a son. Chris was in both Selena's band as well as her family's. Selena started singing at around three years old but her father Abraham discovered her talent when she was nine years old. She started to sing while her brother and sister were playing instruments even though they would all rather play outside. They started performing at weddings, birthdays, and fairs. Her father used to own a restaurant and she sang there too, but it went out of business. Selena was taken out of school in the 8th grade because her touring was interfering with her education. However, she still found a way to graduate high school.

Selena often talked about how important it was to get an education, doing your best in school, and taking it seriously. As Selena got older she was getting more popular but she still kept herself grounded by going to regular stores like Walmart. Selena's albums were selling like hotcakes, and she even broke Mariah Carey's sale records! Selena would have been one of the biggest stars around if she were still alive. Selena loved her fans with all of her heart, and she never refused anyone an autograph. Selena also said “Always be sure that the impossible is possible.” She worked hard to get where she was, and she also worked hard as a singer. One of Selena's top songs was “Como la Flor” which translates to “Like the Flower.” Some fans still support Selena today, even though this year will be 20 years since she passed away. Selena was a normal person just like you and me who loved Olive Garden and had a huge collection of beautifully decorated eggs. She was, and continues to be a huge role model to girls. Even though she is not on this earth anymore, she will always be in people’s hearts. Much love to Selena’s family, friends, and fans.
When the opponents were set for this season, the NFL announced that the new defunct team, Montreal Expos, would relocate to Washington DC. The team was called the Washington Nationals.

In the battle of the New York teams, In August, the Nationals completed the best record in the MLB, 19-8. During this hot stretch, the Nationals won ten straight games, with six of those wins being walk-off victories. The Nationals surge continued in September, as they clinched the NL East with a 3-0 victory at Turner Field on September 16th. For the rest of the season, minor league players showed in the league, and solid hitters like Anthony Rendon, the team got off to a red hot start.

In May, the Nationals struggled heavily. Star players, such as Ryan Zimmerman and Bryce Harper, Adam LaRoche, Gio Gonzalez, and Doug Fister were out with their own injuries. Without these players, the Nats played poorly, with a record of 11-15 in May. However, the team made a comeback in the months of June and July, as they got their star players back. They also had relief pitcher Tyler Clippard represent the team at the 2014 All-Star game. Despite losing Ryan Zimmerman to injury in July, the team did something sensational in August.

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As the 2014 NHL regular season is drawing to a conclusion, many eyes are focused on the incoming NHL playoffs. Right now, the “beasts of the east (Eastern Conference)” are the New York Rangers. The best team in the Western Conference is the Anaheim Ducks. This has been a genuinely surprising season in the NHL, and if you think about it, it is only the beginning.

One of the biggest surprises this season is that the New York Islanders and the Nashville Predators, two teams who heavily struggled in the 2013 season, are at the top of the standings in their conferences. Nashville is two points behind the Anaheim Ducks for the Western Conference lead. Islanders fans are very glad that they traded for goaltender Jaroslav Halak in the offseason. Halak set a franchise record when he won his 33rd game of the season against Philadelphia.

Other surprises include the fact that the Calgary Flames, who were the third worst team in the Western Conference, have quietly snuck into the playoff picture. Another major surprise is that the defending Stanley Cup champions, Los Angeles Kings, are currently out of the playoffs looking in. There are many other teams who didn’t qualify in 2013 who have a great chance at competing for the Stanley Cup this year. The Washington Capitals, led by star left winger, Alex Ovechkin, currently have a wildcard spot in the Eastern Conference, and are nine points behind the conference leading New York Rangers. The Capitals not only have Ovechkin, but Nicklas Backstrom, who leads the NHL in points and assists.

As we get closer to the playoffs, we also have to analyze the threats that will be in the playoffs. For starters, the Rangers have Rick Nash, who is second in the league in scoring. They also have a star goaltender, Henrik Lundqvist. The Ducks, on the other hand, have Corey Perry and Ryan Getzlaf, and there is no surprise that they are leading the Western Conference. The Boston Bruins have a brilliant goaltender named Tuuka Rask. The Capitals have the league leading goal scorer, Alex Ovechkin.

According to Joe Beninati, “Alex Ovechkin is unstoppable right now. Nobody covers him and he just drives it past each and every goaltender he faces.”

The Montreal Canadiens and Chicago Blackhawk have playoff experience, the Islanders are on a hot streak right now, and the Nashville Predators have been unstoppable all year long. There are many dangerous NHL teams in the entering playoffs, and there is no way we can tell right now who will end up hoisting the treasured Stanley Cup trophy.

The NHL regular season is close to ending, and very soon, all the games will be over. There will be team’s Frees that have made it into the playoffs and teams that have not made it. For them, the future is uncertain.

The future for the Redskins is starting. With the edition of new General Manager Scott McCloughan, the changes will be astonishing. The Redskins are entering this offseason with lots of concern. Who will be starting for the quarterback position, what will the Redskins do with the cap space they have, and who will Scott McCloughan draft in this upcoming draft?

The Redskins defense was last in opponent completion percentage for quarterbacks. Jim Haslett was to blame and consequently fired from the Defensive Coordinator Spot. The team only put up 36 sacks, while Ryan Kerrigan had 13.5 sacks alone. Redskins signed LB coach Joe Barry to the Chargers. This wasn’t McCloughan’s choice, but they will see this season. Redskins cut Defensive Lineman, Stephen Bowen, and Barry Cofield. The Redskins signed Ricky Jean-Francois after those cuts. Jean-Francois was drafted by McCloughan in the seventh round by the forty-niners. The Redskins also signed DeANGELO HALL to an extension. However, he may not be starting at cornerback position. The Redskins announced they will not resign Strong Safety Brandon Meriweather. He plays poorly, dangerously, and unfairly. Another Safety, Ryan Clark, announced he was retiring. With that, Redskins are in need of the safety position. The Redskins currently signed Safety Jeron Johnson, who was drafted by McCloughan. He spent a few years in Seattle as a backup for Kam Chancellor and Earl Thomas. The Redskins are possibly not signing Brian Orakpo to another contract. Orakpo had only half a sack and was injured on and off the field. They don’t want to sign another defensive man who is turning thirty. Trent Murphy took his spot and he has proven to start. Brian Orakpo went to the Titans. He said both he and the Redskins need a fresh start. Terrence Knighton signed a one year, $4 million dollar contract. With more additions to the defensive line, DT Stephen Paea signed a contract. He had a career-high six sacks this season with the Bears. Redskins re-signed Colt McCoy. McCoy still has a chance to prove himself starting Quarterback. Niles Paul reached an agreement with the Redskins. He had his career-high season with many wonderful catches. Cornerback Chris Culliver wants to reunite with the Redskins after a tremendous season with the 49ers. McCloughan drafted him, and he came back from an ACL tear in the 2013 season. They have lost Roy Helu to Raiders, losing their third down threat. WR Leonard Hankerson went to the Falcons, but he and Kyle Shanahan will reunite.

The Redskins offense needs some work. The offensive line let 58 sacks. Tyker Polumbus let out 16 sacks at right tackle. Desean Jackson and Pierre Garcon take up a lot of the cap space. Redskins announce that if they sign Robert Griffin III, they will have the league leading goal scorer, named Tuuka Rask. The Capitals have the league leading goal scorer, Alex Ovechkin.
Sam and Dean Winchester are two of the CW’s finest characters. These two—played by Jared Padalecki and Jensen Ackles—star in the CW TV show Supernatural. Maybe it’s the suspense factor or the terrifying scenes, but this show appeals to all. When the show first started off, it aired on the WB, but was soon part of the successor of the CW’s lineup. The show aired its first episode on September 13, 2005 and received 5.69 million views. The pilot was shot in LA, but the episodes are now generally shot in Vancouver, British Columbia. Some episodes are shot in other locations for the pilot. The pilot was about the Winchester boys and how they got to where they are today. Sam Winchester, the younger brother, quit the family business of hunting monsters to study at Stanford. Dean Winchester continues hunting monsters with his father, John Winchester.

The pilot begins with the death of Sam and Dean's mother from when they were younger. It then fast-forwards to present time and Sam's girlfriend, Jessica, dies in the exact same way as his mother, Mary Winchester. This causes Sam to get back on the road with his brother to continue on with the family business. There were many concepts on how to start the show, but the one that prevailed was Jessica's death and the Winchester brother being raised as hunters.

When asked about the reason for choosing to audition for Dean, Jensen Ackles answers, "When I read the script, Dean just jumped out at me. With that character there was always a bit more comedy, and a bit more recklessness, and it just appealed to me more . . . I found a character that I really enjoy playing.” Jared Padalecki chose to audition for the role of Sam Winchester because he liked the idea of being the 'reluctant hero'. Padalecki had worked with two of the executive producers before, so they had urged him to audition.

Extras:
- The characters Sam and Dean Winchester were originally to be named Sal and Dean Harrison.
- The show's name Winchesters was chosen due to the Winchester mystery house.
- The Winchester brothers' birthplace was Lawrence, Kansas and when Kripke was asked why, he stated that it was due to Stull Cemetery located in Lawrence.
- Dean's car, a 1967 Chevroletp Impala, was included in Supernatural as its “trusty steed”. “We say it's a modern American Western — two gunslingers who ride into town, fight the bad guys, kiss the girl and ride out into the sunset again. And we were always talking from the very beginning that if you're going to have cowboys, they need a trusty horse.”

The series creator, Eric Kripke, worked on developing the show for ten years before it actually came to television in 2005. The show started off with a basic plot—weekly monster and some drama off to the side, but soon became something totally different. The show began to focus more on the relationship between Sam and Dean rather than spotlight on the monster aspect. Kripke conveys that “it's always been a show about family.” The Winchesters' brother road trip and hunt monster, earning money off of credit card frauds, pool hustling, and poker winnings. The show's synopsis takes a turn after it zeroes in on angels and demons instead of just monsters.

Originally, Kripke had only planned out three seasons, but soon expanded the show to five. Actor Jared Padalecki and Jensen Ackles then signed on for seasons six and seven as well. The show is currently on its tenth season and they've already renewed it for the eleventh season. Since the first season, there have been many other series regulars. Crowley—played by Mark Sheppard—and Castiel—played by Misha Collins—are also two characters who are crucial to the plot. Misha Collins and Mark Sheppard were cast into the show because the producers wanted to bring in a Christian aspect into the show—thus creating the roles of angels and demons. Misha Collins was made a series regular during the fifth season and Mark Sheppard was made a series regular during the tenth season.

Jensen Ackles was initially asked to audition for the role of Sam, but chose to go with Dean instead.

The Learning Impact

By: Anusha Chintalhalapale

Schools start early, and homework is a must, so students must be able to adapt flexibly around education. Students come home from school and they want to chill out for a little bit. They go onto their phones or watch the TV for about ninety minutes. Then, comes the homework. Depending on the amount of home work a student has, they could be up for an hour to over four! The following things are a must for students to do, if they want to have a relaxing afternoon.

Create A Time Management Schedule! Becoming a master of time management is the first step for reaching relaxation. Create a timetable of when you will relax and when you will do homework. This is the start of nipping those extra hours of sleep.

Drop The Phone! It’s almost an impulse to reach for your phone right after you're in bed. Charge your phone away from you; you can always look at it on your ride to school. After you get into bed, your body starts to release toxins. When you pick up your phone, it gives off radiation, sending those toxins right back into your body.

Eat A Nap! If you have had a stressful night before, consider taking a nap after school. It’s almost like recharging your brain. When you sleep, your brain gets back energy that it used during the day. The earlier you sleep, the earlier you’ll have more energy.

Take A Nap! If you have had a stressful night before, consider taking a nap after school. It’s almost like recharging your brain. When you sleep, your brain gets back energy that it used during the day. The earlier you sleep, the earlier you’ll have more energy.

Eat Break Fast! Break fast is an overtreatment. You hear people say, “It’s the most important meal of the day!” Those people were wrong. School starts early and students sleep late. But grabbing a granola bar before you sprint out of the door is not enough. Eat something earlier or wake up earlier. Eat some French toast, or an omelet. After all, it is the most important meal of the day.

By: Lahori

What does it mean to be nice? Pleasant, agreeable, satisfactory, as the dictionary might define it, yet each person has a different idea of nice in their mind. What's obvious though, is that being nice, or kind, is a positive trait. Now of course, in our society there are many clichés, one of the most famous being "nice guys finish last." Sure enough, as our lives progress, as our generations develop, it seems that people just don't seem to appreciate a stranger either, compliment doesn't have to be obvious, just throw it into a conversation. It doesn't have to be a stranger either, compliment your best friend! And if these compliments really improve a person's day, that person will be inclined to complement other people themselves.

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Why Do We Yawn?

No matter how hard we try not to yawn, we still do. Nevertheless every time we do so, we end up hearing a couple other yawns following after ours. In some degree, it kind of creeps yet it still amazes some of us humans. An oftentimes explanation goes somewhat like this: When we are on the verge of collapsing face flat on our desks, we yawn, causing our mouths to open wide. When we do so, we suck in oxygen-rich air. The oxygen enters our bloodstream and wakes us up. It sounds pretty convincing at first, because it’s better than “because we are tired” excuse, but shockingly this explanation is just one huge fat myth! The real mystery behind this case lies in the human body’s most complex system our brain.

“The human brain takes up 40 percent of the body’s metabolic energy, which means it tends to heat up more than other organ systems. When we yawn, that big gulp of air travels through to our upper nasal and oral cavities. The mucous membranes there are covered with tons of blood vessels that project almost directly up to the forebrain. When we stretch our jaws, we increase the rate of blood flow to the skull. And as we inhale at the same time, the air changes the temperature of that blood flow, bringing cooler blood to the brain,” Andrew Gallup says, a psychology professor working at SUNY College at Oneonta.

In other words, when we are stressed, yawning helps cool down our brain. It’s like when we are playing sports, when we are exhausted we could explain as to why we usually yawn during nighttime or when we wake up. Before we fall asleep, our brain and body’s temperature rises to its highest. And when we fall asleep, it steadily declines. When we wake, our temperature rapidly rises, causing us to yawn. Scientists have yet to pinpoint as to why we feel refreshed after a big hearty yawn, but some say it’s because we feel more efficient and observant.

Yawning is Contagious!

Humans in a way have a great bond. Even if we aren’t related we still feel that connection, that emotion. It’s what connects us humans. When we see someone get hurt, no matter what, humans will feel empathy. It’s what makes us cry when something bad happens. When we see someone smile or laugh, we have the urge to laugh as well. Partially because what we just happened to see amused us, but mainly because humans have the ability to understand and feel another individual’s emotions. The same thing goes for yawning. Smiles, laughs, cries, and yawns are all contagious – in a good way that is.

Along with being contagious, yawning is easily complied. Sometimes, even reading the word “yawn” can activate our brains and automatically you will find yourself yawning.

So the next time you find yourself in a yawning-situation, think about what is happening around you. Maybe your classmates will end up yawning too, who knows? Well, then, everyone will start yawning, and next thing you know the room is going to be echo-filled with yawns and laughter!

Music Box

When I open the box
A ballerina twirls
And I hear a heavenly melody
I slowly fall asleep
Dreaming of great things
Picturing myself in a fantasy
Whatever emotions I feel
This melody is always there for me

By Kayleigh Nelson

The Past

Back in the day in the United States they did not have television, phones, computers, video games etc. Also families had to work hard to survive, and support their families. Families had no phones, and they only had to work extra hard. Only the middle-class or wealthy went to school. Others had to help their families or were limited in their education and opportunities. In the rare occasion they did go to school, it was in poor condition and could be limited. Even then, they didn’t have non white schools. In order to create change, The NAACP was formed in the early 1900’s. Although African Americans were not slaves anymore, they still suffered from the adverse effects of racism. Since electronics were out of the question during these days, children would play the piano, go outside, play games or talk with family and friends. Since there were less distractions, children expanded more in school and families spent more time together. We want to send an e-mail or text to someone? Handmade letters were the way to send a message to someone in those times. People were involved in their religious activities and were expected to be gentlemen. However, it was hard to be a women, and still get their voting rights until 1920, and

Empowered Girls Making a Difference in Our Community

Boys are stronger, faster, and more athletic in sports. Is this true, or just another stereotype? Many of us know that this stereotype is false, that girls are just as fast, as strong, and as powerful in sports or other athletic activities as boys. Unfortunately, some people still refuse to think of girls as powerful. Girls and women were once thought of as weak, but we have come a long way from home. Women were once thought of as weak, but we have come a long way from home. Just think of Mo’Ne Davis, who was the first girl to win and pitch a shut-out.

Girls Fit for Life is a club that Rocky Hill provides to empower girls and make them stronger and healthier. We had the opportunity to sit down with a member from the club and hear her input about it. Our source would like to stay anonymous. TWR: Do you like being in the girls fit for life? Student: Yes, I do because it pushes me and enables me to try different things. TWR: What do you usually do in the club? Student: The club has affected me in many ways since I started participating. I have been able to learn more things to improve my core strength, run at a steady pace, and feel better about myself. Also, I am more confident and not afraid to try my best because of surrounding peers. TWR: Who started the group? Source: Ms. Tippet started the club. TWR: Does Ms. Tippet give you feedback back on how to run better or anything like that? Student: Ms. Tippet gives us a lot of tips on how to improve on stuff such as push-ups, lunges, or even running positions.

We thank our source for her information. She is only one of the 12 empowered girls who are participating in the club. Girls who participate in this club are going to become role models for younger girls who are looking forward to participate in the club. Keep representing girls!
Current Issues

2016 Elections

By Arpan Barua
Chief Editor

Yes, it is only 2015, but it’s never too late to start talking about this upcoming election. With this term being Obama’s last term, we get to see both parties battling it out for their party nod. But this year some questions arise.

There are some very compelling stories for the election, especially on the Democratic side. As Hilary Clinton has announced her candidacy for the presidency, many believe that she is eventually going to oblate all of the other candidates in the Democratic Party because of how much power is in her hands. I feel like she scares people off so much that nobody wants to run for president. On the Republican side, there has been no one who has decided to run for President because of Hilary’s intimidating presence. But you might be wondering, why are you so confident in Hilary getting the Democratic nomination? It’s mainly because of how much power she has. As a former Senator, First Lady, and Secretary of State, she has one of the most extensive backgrounds in politics today. Also, a lot of people are truly hoping for a first woman President just after we got the first African-American President. It could be nice to have the first woman President to break another barrier, but only voting for someone that is a woman could be a little amiss. For those who do want Hilary to win, yes, that’s absolutely fine, but before you go campaigning for the next woman President, listen to what she has done. Honestly feel presidents shouldn’t be in power with so many scandals and investigations. She has allegedly funneled money from the Clinton foundation into her own funds, hid emails from security, lied about the Iraq War in front of Congress, and apparently has her own internet server in New York. If all of these rumors are true, then it is important that we weigh in this information fairly. A person truly shouldn’t be running for the most powerful position in the free world with so many scandals and controversies. But what is going to happen is those people who truly don’t follow politics will still vote for her because she is a woman. We shouldn’t vote for people just because of gender. This can prove to be ignorance. We need to look at her objectively as a candidate, rather than someone who represents breaking the barrier.

On the Republican side, the field will soon be packed. Senator Ted Cruz is the first person to decide to run for President, and a flood of more will soon be coming. Many Republicans feel with Obama now gone, they all have a shot. With Senator Cruz’s incredibly eccentric right wing thoughts and ideas, many love or hate him. But, Cruz might still have a chance because of his extremely right wing style. Even though Democrats might not agree with him, a confident set of ideals will help this country make firm decisions, something that hasn’t happened quite often in the past several years.

With the 2016 election coming up so soon, it will be exciting to see news coverage of all the candidates and their platforms. Make sure to keep up with the news!

Propaganda Takes a Toll

By Anusha Chinthalapale
Editor

Propaganda has the ability to convince the simple mind of an average world citizen. Think 1940 for example, we are in the midst of World War II. In the US, the propoganda posters are fairly effective. Here comes the famous Uncle Sam, as he requests men to volunteer into the US army. Unfortunately, most men want to stay closer to home to protect their families, and of course, the great depression is sweeping through the nations. The most convincing poster of this time is most likely the one with the woman with the maxim, “We can do it!” This poster, surprisingly, recruits many women to act as nurses for the army.

The reason for this is because women were looked upon as inferior to men. If they were given the opportunity to be of help, to be a hero, they were going to take it. Regrettably, propaganda has taken a turn for the worse in Germany. Still 1940, but instead of boosting their citizens up, they make a mockery of them (Jewish) or turn them against others. Out of the most interesting posters found, is a picture of a type of “killing machine.” It advertises jobs for low paid employees to work in a camp, gassing, killing and torturing Jewish people.

Propaganda is still very much alive today. It can be found at almost any and every street corner, here, in the US. Shampoo commercials, for instance, use the girls with the thickest, darkest hair and shows the girls using their brand of shampoo. Covergirl, is probably the brand with the most propaganda to unveil. Every month, they get celebrities, that are naturally gorgeous, using their brand of makeup.

Every month, they get celebrities, that are naturally gorgeous, using their brand of makeup. They’re just throwing away their hard earned money, on a ripoff t
By Aakriti Mahajan and Anumna Anan Tech Edition

In a couple of years, we will most likely have to learn how to drive. Well, it’s possible now with Google’s self-driving car. All you have to do is sit back, relax and let the car do the work. Google released its first model of the self-driving car in May of 2014. The most unique feature about this vehicle is that it does not need a steering wheel or a brake pedal. Google’s software is so advanced that the car does not need these features for functionality. Many of us are probably debating whether a self-driving car is safe, considering the scenarios where something could go wrong. However, it may be a relief to hear that most of the technology behind the car is based upon older software that has been tested multiple times.

The heart of the technology in this vehicle is its main software known as LIDAR. It has multiple responsibilities in providing the driver convenience. With a laser and around sixty sensors, the software is used to project a 3-D map that detects road hazards within two hundred miles. There is also a windshield camera which helps a driver see what is right in front of them along with multiple radars that sense nearby vehicles. If that is not enough to make you interested, there is even a GPS system that uses Google’s maps to search for a route, analyze driving speed and give accurate locations. In December of 2014, another model was released of the car with a few differences from the older model. According to Wired, "The obvious differences are the addition of real headlights and the design of the LIDAR vision system, which now sits flush on the roof, instead of on roof-mounted supports." The car definitely has some interesting features, but one must remember that the car’s main purpose is for functionality. This is one of the reasons why the vehicle’s maximum speed is only twenty-five miles per hour. Also designers are continuing to work out minor issues relating to the vehicle’s safety and design, such as passenger safety on the road during unsafe weather conditions.

Google’s self-driving car can benefit people’s lives in various ways. Think of disabled Americans that may also have the desire to drive a car on their own. Also, if you aren’t as skilled with driving, you can let the car do all the work. Plus, you wouldn’t have to pass your driver’s test. Another reason to switch to a Google car is that you won’t have to worry about being ticketed by a traffic police, which saves money and time! How about the struggle of perfect parking? You wouldn’t have to worry about it with Google’s car because the computer is set up to drop you off at your location and park at the nearest available space. However, there are a few cons to this amazing self-driving car. You may be surprised with the car’s extreme cost. The equipment of the vehicle is priced around $150,000 with a LIDAR system costing around $70,000. The total cost is estimated to reach around $220,000, almost an unreasonable amount of money for any American to invest on a car. Many people argue that self-driving cars may cause accidents. According to a disabled-world.com, "Google claims these cars will be even safer than human-driven vehicles, simply due to the lack of human error. Computers will not get tired or distracted and the company claims to have already tested them out on over 300,000 miles of road, without one single incident. How about drunk drivers? "A Google Car could also cut deeply into the number of drunken driving deaths by about 10,000 related deaths a year..." says Ron Medford. Anyway, human error results in more accidents than accidents that occur because of machine caused errors. Why not spare one life caused by a machine instead of ten caused by human error? A few other sources argue that driverless cars can glitch and cause serious damage. Google’s self-driving car doesn’t run on gasoline, because it’s electric. This would hurt the gasoline industry, but would also be a step towards a better environment. Google’s self-driving car offers various convenient options for the passenger and has many safety aspects such as multiple sensors, radars, software and cameras that detect road hazards. We can expect almost everyone to take advantage of these self-driving cars in the next couple of years.

By Aakriti Mahajan and Anumna Anan Tech Edition

Have you been using any sort of Google account lately? Well, Google Docs may be one of them. Google Docs is a convenient way to work on your files while keeping them organized at the same time. MCPS teachers are promoting the use of this fabulous application due to its easy accessibility from school and/or home.

A major reason Google Docs is starting to become very popular in MCPS is because of its simple way of sharing documents with others. Most students prefer to have a teacher, parent, or friend edit their writing pieces. Instead of having to email someone to edit documents, one can easily use the share settings in their Google account to invite others to comment or edit any document. Google Docs also provides students a better use for their educational email addresses, which will help keep them organized with school work and due dates of assignments. Remember those times when you were working on an assignment on Word, but forgot to save your hard work? With Google Docs, a draft automatically saves every three to four minutes so you will never have to worry about completely starting over on an assignment. There are also a few interesting features on Google Docs that you may not have known about. When you are working on any document on Google Docs, a toolbar is displayed above. If you click tools, you are given various options such as ‘spelling, research, define, translate document, etc.’ A lot of these options are presented to a user in word, but Google Docs takes it to another level. The “define" option is more upgraded than the thesaurus on Word. Users are given multiple definitions of words, along with synonyms. The research option is definitely one of the most unique features. One can simply click on "research" and do a Google search on the side of the document, along with searching for images, and searching for synonyms and definitions of words through an online dictionary.

When talking about accessing Google Docs from home, we must keep in mind that there are MCPS students that do not have internet access at home. Think of being that student, while everyone is ahead on the assignment, you are the only one behind. A student from Glasgow Middle School struggled when her teacher told her class to work on a homework assignment online. “I see my friends do their work, and I struggle to get the access I need. It makes me sad,” says the student. Isn’t this unfair to her? According to a survey, "more than 90 percent of Fairfax households with children have home computers". But what about those 10 percent of students who can’t work on online assignments at home? This is clearly not fair to them and the problem must be addressed. Students who don’t have access to a computer find various ways to get hold of one. Some go to their local library after school and use the computers available there. Others give up their lunch time to use computers at school. Ying Wu, a student from Sturt High School, grew up without having access to a computer. "There’s a kind of a wall, a barrier to the world”, she states. Although she lacked a computer, she earned a 4.2 GPA from her school’s International Baccalaureate Program. What a accomplishment! Google Docs is a convenient way to type and edit documents. Its unique and upgraded options make it a useful application for students. However we must take into account that there are students who do not have access to a computer or electronic device. MCPS needs to advocate for a solution that can solve this problem, so these students do not constantly have to worry about searching for computer access. Hopefully everyone will have the opportunity to take advantage of Google Docs in school and at home.
Entertainment

The Power of Chocolate

By Sophia Oprecio
Staff Writer

Chocolate, smooth, sweet, decadent, rich, flavorful and full of love. Chocolate is powerful because of all these things and so much more. When we eat chocolate our taste buds become a river of deliciousness and our hearts beat with joy. For many, unraveling chocolate is like unwrapping a present on Christmas morning!

If you’re a chocoholic you should check out the website www.thechocolatestore.com. On this site you’ll find the most scrumptious facts about chocolate. Believe it or not “Cocoa powder was created in 1828. In addition according to the Chocolate Store.com, mass production of chocolate and the availability of it came about during the Industrial Revolution of the nineteenth century.” For those of you like who an extra kick of caffeine, according to the website, “a one-ounce piece of milk chocolate contains about the same amount of caffeine as a cup of decaffeinated coffee.” Amazingly the candy factory website points out “Americans consume 2.8 billion pounds of chocolate each year, or over 11 pounds per person.” Now that’s a lot of chocolate!

Chocolate and love go together like a hand in a glove, especially on Valentine’s Day. Chocolate, soft like a cloud, velvety like a new exquisite piece of silk what more could you ask for – especially on a day like Valentine’s Day! Go to any grocery store and immediately you are overwhelmed by all the delectable chocolate. Once you eat chocolate on Valentine’s Day your imagination goes wild and you feel like you’re traveling on a chocolate cloud to a land where everything is made out of chocolate. If you listen closely, you can also hear the soothing sounds of playing harps and choirs of angels singing HALLELUJAH!

When you think about chocolate, all you can think of is how good and delicious it is! It’s extremely hard to resist one of the most precious things created on this earth. Chocolate is so powerful it helps us feel better!

When it’s eaten it puts a smile on your face and after you’ve had a bad day and it’s always there for you. So maybe it’s not the best source of our important nutrients for our body but it sure does taste good! Never the less, it gives you nutrients for something that is so much more important; it heals, cleanses and nourishes the soul. So when you eat that silky chocolate get ready for the playing of the harps and choirs of angels singing HALLELUJAH that will ultimately lead to a whirl wind of the most gigantic chocolate tornado you’ve ever visited!

A Delicious Recipe for all the Chocoholics:

My Mom’s Easy Chocolitiss Dream Cake!
Prepare one box of dark chocolate cake mix according to box. In addition to the ingredients listed add 1 teaspoon of vanilla, 2 Tablespoons of milk and 1 box of chocolate pudding mix & 1 teaspoon of chocolate fudge.

Bake cake according to the directions on the box.

Allow cake to cool and ice the cake with your favorite chocolate icing. Cover cake with chocolate shavings if you dare!

The Fantabulous Cross Country Adventure of Mrs. Rye

By Mrs. Rye
(One and Only)

Driving across the country to see my oldest son, Tyler, was certainly an adventure! Tyler recently moved to Denver, Colorado, and when asked by my son to deliver his fourteen year old Jeep to him, my husband and I first exclaimed, “Yikes!!” After thinking about it and getting the Jeep a bit of a makeover at the car shop, we let Tyler know that we were up for the challenge and set off on our 27 hour, 1,700 mile, four day drive from Maryland to Colorado.

Along the way we stopped in St. Louis, Missouri, and saw the Gateway Arch. We also experienced the Great Plains of Kansas and all of its vast, never ending farms. Wheat fields that went on for miles and miles, thousands of cows, windmill fields (air power), and even a few buffalo were seen along the way. After visiting Dodge City, Kansas, we were able to say that we “got out of Dodge” and when we entered into Colorado, I said to my husband, “Kent, I don’t

The Gateway Arch

1,700 Miles from Damascus MD to Denver, Colorado

Mrs. Quinn’s Australian Adventure

By Mrs. Quinn
(The Queen of All Outdoors)

Mrs. Quinn and her husband traveled to Australia for 3 weeks over spring break, to visit their daughter who is a goalkeeper, playing professional soccer in Melbourne. The plane ride was VERY loooooong. It is 5 hours to Los Angeles and then another 15 hours to Melbourne!!! They bashed themselves in Melbourne, since that is where their daughter lives, but traveled to Port Douglas and Sydney. Port Douglas is a tropical resort area. While in Port Douglas they snorkeled the Great Barrier Reef and explored the Daintree Rainforest.

One of the best parts was when they were able to snuggle with the koalas at a wildlife preserve!!! In Sydney, they climbed the Sydney Harbor Bridge - all 1,390 stairs and climbed up 450 feet above the water. They visited the iconic Sydney Opera House. Just outside Sydney, they hiked the Blue Mountains. While in the Blue Mountains, they rode the world’s steepest railcar back up to the top of the mountain. It went up the mountains at a 52 degree angle, backwards, and there were no seatbelts!!! In Melbourne they traveled the Great Ocean Rode and saw spectacular coastlines and beaches. One of most impressive places they stopped at was the 12 Apostles.

These are extremely old and very large rock formations right along the beach. They also saw lots of wild koalas and kangaroos! Of course they watched their daughter play 2 soccer games (1 win and 1 loss). The Aussies also use some different words than we do in the United States. For example – we say ketchup, they say tomato sauce, a parking lot is a car park, a friend is a bifféd mate, and they always say no worries for don’t worry about it. Besides all the gorgeous places they visited, the one thing that stands out the most, is how kind the Australian people were to them; very friendly, generous and accommodating. Although they had a trip of a lifetime, they were glad to be back in the USA!!