Pool Assault Investigation Reveals DPR Flaws

Annie Rosenthal
News and Arts Editor

One of the men accused of sexual assault at the Wilson Aquatic Center in November is still on the pool’s payroll, and will be until his case is resolved.

Both he and a second case of alleged sexual assault after-hours at the pool are still being investigated by the Metropolitan Police Department but have already shed light on flaws in the Department of Parks and Recreation’s management.

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

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

“One of my major concerns,” she said, “is that DPR has done far too little to assure that residents are informed about incidents and know what has gone on, to the extent permitted of course by law enforcement investigation, and informed about what they’re doing at the pool to ensure patrons’ safety.

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

Among Cheh’s complaints was the fact that notices about the alleged assaults were not posted at the pool until December 9, and that even then the notices were hard to read.

According to a public witness at the hearing, the most senior pool manager had instructed pool personnel not to respond to comments. The witness said that one pool employee had threatened to call the police if he came and asked about the incident again.

The Metropolitan Police Department captain at the hearing said that because the suspects in the case were known, MPD had left communicating with the public to DPR. When Cheh asked DPR Interim Director Sharia Shanklin why notices had not been posted earlier, Shanklin responded, “The communication that I engaged in with MPD and with the office of the mayor led me to make this decision at 2:50, or 20 percent, of D.C.'s

The Metropolitan Police Department captain at the hearing said that because the suspects in the case were known, MPD had left communicating with the public to DPR. When Cheh asked DPR Interim Director Sharia Shanklin why notices had not been posted earlier, Shanklin responded, “The communication that I engaged in with MPD and with the office of the mayor led me to make this decision at 2:50, or 20 percent, of D.C.'s

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

New Attendance Policy Causes Anxiety

Claire Parker
Managing Editor

It’s 9:15 on a Friday morning, and junior Druce Collins is standing at the front entrance of the school, just inside the glass doors. It is her first time being part of the small crowd of late arrivals held at the front entrance during first period.

Collins arrived at school at 9:08, 23 minutes late. Under D.C.’s new attendance policy, she will be marked absent for the entire 390 minute school day.

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

While technically the 20 percent cut-off under the new attendance policy is 10:03, the management software schools use called DC STARS considers one class period to be 20 percent of the day. This, coupled with Wilson’s policy of holding students who arrive after 9:10 at the door, means that a Wilson student who misses only 6.5 percent of the day is considered absent.

The policy is an attempt to curb D.C.’s truancy epidemic. While truancy rates have declined in recent years, they are still a problem. According to a study by the Urban Institute, 2,500, or 20 percent, of D.C. high school students are chronically absent, meaning they have been absent unexcused for more than 15 days. At some schools, such as Anacostia and Ballou, nearly half of the student body is chronically absent. Last year at Wilson, 282 students, or 17 percent of the student population, were truants. If the new policy had been in place last year, 1,244 students would have been considered truant, which would have made Wilson’s truancy rate

NSA Uses Apps to Spy

Compiled By Emma Busbee

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

Shooting in Maryland

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

Egyptian Military Leader is Running for Office

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

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

CONT. ON PG 3
Mayoral Candidates Talk Education With The Beacon

Maddy Taub
Junior Editor

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

Principal Pete Cahall, the PTSO, has already been a meeting with some parental concerns, they said it also may not be a full representation of the parents at Wilson.

Vincent Gray
Mayor Gray, in an email interview, says he believes that to improve the GPA and graduation statistics in DCPS, more capable teachers should be hired, the new Common Core standards must be enforced, and all schools should have modern facilities. He acknowledges the issue of education inequality in D.C., saying, "We must do more to ensure that the course offerings and extra-curricular activities are also comparable at every school."

Reta Jo Lewis
Reta Jo Lewis is a strong advocate for education. She published on her campaign website that she views education as "the great equalizer, unlocking doors for everyone in our city."

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

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

Jack Evans
According to Corey Goldstone, spokesperson for Councilmember Evans' campaign, Evans believes that learning and education should "not stop when the final bell rings." Instead, an emphasis should be placed on improving after-school activities, homework help, and one-on-one tutoring to help bridge the inequality gap between public schools.

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

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

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

Link to PTSO Survey Results Here:
http://wilsonhs.org/apps/page/index.jsp?REC_ID=1 278898&type=5&Rec_ID=8&Rec_ID=321914
### Taking a Hard Look at Self-Segregation

**Beacon Editorial Staff**

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

It is our responsibility as the Beacon staff to reach out to people from all backgrounds and we wonder if we are doing enough. While we feel that we provide equal opportunities to all Wilson students, and advertise to everyone, and are proud of the work that we do, we evidently fall short.

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

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

Wilson constantly trumpets diversity, but the disparity at Wilson isn’t always we pride.

We define real diversity as people of different races not just being in the same place—

but coming together, working together as a unified, whole community. That is our hope for The Beacon. That it can be a place where all students feel safe and welcome, without having to suppress their beliefs. We want to be able to say that The Beacon is the voice of Wilson, but are currently not.

Shanklin maintained that the school had security cam-

eras and alarms, and that pool managers and assistant manag-

ers were the only people who had access to keys. There was no on-site security personnel at the pool, as the facility only employs a guard during the summer. Po-

lice officers would only visit the site intermittently unless they received a call.

Shanklin said that surveil-

lance video tapes were not re-

erved and that DPR gave the tapes to the MPO without reviewing them. However, the alarm system had an associated feature that indicated if anyone had entered the pool fa-

cility when the alarm was armed, and according to Shanklin, these entry reviews were reported daily by the pool’s Risk Manage-

ment department. To Shanklin’s knowledge, the department had not reported any entries to their supervisors.

She said that the Risk Manage-

tment team and managers might have known that there had been unau-

thorized entries: “The reports say that we were investigating. We are going to make adjustments.”

According to Shanklin, this type of infraction would not be grounds to dismiss a manager, and that after-hours parties would be cause for suspen-

sion, but not removal, of an employee. No pool staff have been fired.

Two public witnesses at the hearing cited other management problems at the pool, including a failure to return emails from patrons, possible staff parties at MPO facilities, and a failure to return emails from patrons. Said one witness, “There appears to be a pattern where people who go along with the corruption are promoted. People who speak up, they aren’t promoted. They’re fired.”

The other witness also took issue with the wording of DPR’s notices, which said that the public had never been in danger. “Since November 9, the
**Femme Fatale: Strong Female Protagonists Are Lacking**

Angela Montero
Contributor

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

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

Out of a total of nine assigned books from English class, seven feature male protagonists, and all nine of them feature a strong male character. Four feature a woman being abused or treated unfairly, and only one, “To Kill A Mockingbird,” features a strong female character.

For a long time I accepted this lack of strong women characters on our reading list as the result of the few strong women in English literature. However, as I began to choose classic books to read on my own, I met amazing women like Elizabeth Bennet in “Pride and Prejudice” and the sisters in “Little Women.” Realized literature is not limited to male protagonists, so why are the books we read in English class? The real issue is how we define the relatability of different characters based on gender. It is perfectly normal and acceptable for a woman to read “The Odyssey,” and relate the characteristics of strong and wily Odysseus and his strengths to herself and her goals.

However, a man reading “Pride and Prejudice,” and aspiring to be like Elizabeth would be a sign of weakness. As a society we have made it unacceptable for girls to emulate boys but not the other way around. As a result, girls and boys are being deprived of some amazing characters in literature. In the two years I’ve spent at Wilson, I’ve read four assigned books in which a female character is sexually harassed or treated as inferior: “The Odyssey,” “Romney and Juliet,” “Chronicle of a Death Foretold,” and “The Things They Carried.”

The issue I have never had an English class where my teacher actually discussed the treatment of women in the book, including the rape scene in “I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings.” We treat these events like they’re normal and acceptable – or at the very least not worth talking about – when they clearly need to be discussed.

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

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

**The AP System**

Eldia Benda
Junior Editor

The AP system is broken on a national level. AP classes are another way to impress friends. Am I being forced into a standardized schedule where students are finally able to explore subjects that they’re interested in at Wilton offering a variety of AP classes shows that it is an academically focused community. AP courses will help them when apply for college.

On the other hand, lower performing students do not face increased pressure to perform unrealistically well, and they also increase the achievement gap between socioeconomic groups. Successful students, largely from higher socioeconomic standings than less successful students, end up in AP classes together, being taught by the best teachers at the school.

As a society we have made it unacceptable for girls to emulate boys but not the other way around. As a result, girls and boys are being deprived of some amazing characters in literature. In the two years I’ve spent at Wilson, I’ve read four assigned books in which a female character is sexually harassed or treated as inferior: “The Odyssey,” “Romney and Juliet,” “Chronicle of a Death Foretold,” and “The Things They Carried.” We treat these events like they’re normal and acceptable – or at the very least not worth talking about – when they clearly need to be discussed.

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

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

The AP System is broken on a national level. AP classes are another way to impress friends. Am I being forced into a standardized schedule where students are finally able to explore subjects that they’re interested in at Wilton offering a variety of AP classes shows that it is an academically focused community. AP courses will help them when apply for college.

On the other hand, lower performing students do not face increased pressure to perform unrealistically well, and they also increase the achievement gap between socioeconomic groups. Successful students, largely from higher socioeconomic standings than less successful students, end up in AP classes together, being taught by the best teachers at the school.

As a society we have made it unacceptable for girls to emulate boys but not the other way around. As a result, girls and boys are being deprived of some amazing characters in literature. In the two years I’ve spent at Wilson, I’ve read four assigned books in which a female character is sexually harassed or treated as inferior: “The Odyssey,” “Romney and Juliet,” “Chronicle of a Death Foretold,” and “The Things They Carried.” We treat these events like they’re normal and acceptable – or at the very least not worth talking about – when they clearly need to be discussed.

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

The AP System is broken on a national level. AP classes are another way to impress friends. Am I being forced into a standardized schedule where students are finally able to explore subjects that they’re interested in at Wilton offering a variety of AP classes shows that it is an academically focused community. AP courses will help them when apply for college.

On the other hand, lower performing students do not face increased pressure to perform unrealistically well, and they also increase the achievement gap between socioeconomic groups. Successful students, largely from higher socioeconomic standings than less successful students, end up in AP classes together, being taught by the best teachers at the school.

As a society we have made it unacceptable for girls to emulate boys but not the other way around. As a result, girls and boys are being deprived of some amazing characters in literature. In the two years I’ve spent at Wilson, I’ve read four assigned books in which a female character is sexually harassed or treated as inferior: “The Odyssey,” “Romney and Juliet,” “Chronicle of a Death Foretold,” and “The Things They Carried.” We treat these events like they’re normal and acceptable – or at the very least not worth talking about – when they clearly need to be discussed.

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

The AP System is broken on a national level. AP classes are another way to impress friends. Am I being forced into a standardized schedule where students are finally able to explore subjects that they’re interested in at Wilton offering a variety of AP classes shows that it is an academically focused community. AP courses will help them when apply for college.

On the other hand, lower performing students do not face increased pressure to perform unrealistically well, and they also increase the achievement gap between socioeconomic groups. Successful students, largely from higher socioeconomic standings than less successful students, end up in AP classes together, being taught by the best teachers at the school.

As a society we have made it unacceptable for girls to emulate boys but not the other way around. As a result, girls and boys are being deprived of some amazing characters in literature. In the two years I’ve spent at Wilson, I’ve read four assigned books in which a female character is sexually harassed or treated as inferior: “The Odyssey,” “Romney and Juliet,” “Chronicle of a Death Foretold,” and “The Things They Carried.” We treat these events like they’re normal and acceptable – or at the very least not worth talking about – when they clearly need to be discussed.

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

Maria Brescia-Weiler
Features Editor

Recently, in a class of mostly girls, I noticed that whenever the teacher posed a question the same hands shot up. This didn’t come as a surprise; most classes are dominated by a few students who are eager to grace the class with their knowledge, it is just the way things are. But this time I noticed something new, all but a very few of those raising hands were attached to male bodies. Throughout the rest of the period I watched and took note of this until I came up with two possible explanations for this newly-discovered phenomenon: either the boys in this particular class were much smarter than the girls, and anything short of MUCH smarter couldn’t have justified it, or the boys were more comfortable tossing their thoughts into an arena that for the girls was fraught with fear, waiting to hear them apart with gnashing teeth and sharpened claws.

The latter seemed more likely. The more I thought about this theory, the more I noticed it everywhere. In four of my classes in which 58.12 percent of my peers were girls and 41.88 percent were boys, boys accounted for 55.33 percent of the hand raises, leaving the girls with a measer 34.67 percent. When a friend looked over my shoulder and saw my first findings, he shrugged saying, “You have to remember that and-so-and-so is in this class...” And I agreed, so and-so was accounting for more than his fair share of the class’ participation. But when this same comment was pointed out by several different people about several different so-and-sos, it struck me that maybe there are simply more male so-and-sos than female ones.

Most classes contained at least two or three male self-appointed class spokesmen (and I do mean spokesmen), while I struggled to bear a comment from a girl that didn’t start along the lines of “I’m not really sure but...” or “Isn’t it...” and contain at least seven “likes.”

Most of the time when I do have something to say, an answer to share, it gets whiskered to the lucky soul next to me and it is shared with the class, it’s only through them. But if I’m completely being honest myself (and with trusty Beacon readers), part of it is probably that I’m a little bit scared. I don’t care enough about people knowing that I’m right to risk being held accountable when I’m wrong. Even now my words end up on the opinions page, only for lack of an observations or musings page.

And knowing that pains me, that I, who spent the first eight years of my education talking to my nearly-mute best friend, much to the aggravation of our teachers, have now become that girl, one of many, who hesitates. So, as a reminder to myself and similarly tentative girls (or boys), there are no limits. Nothing, absolutely nothing, will happen when you are wrong. And I think that more often than not, you won’t have to worry about that. Your silence is more selfish than any measure of boastful-nosiness.

Share your knowledge not because you’re interested in showing off but because there’s no limit to how much space for the students to participate, because your classmates can stand to

Numbers Game: How Grades Affect Students

Evam Hamlin
Co-Editor-in-Chief

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

DCPS is worrying about the wrong aspect of learning. Because of the intense pressure on teachers and students to meet certain benchmarks, the overall quality of learning has decreased. After No Child Left Behind was passed in 2002, the U.S. dropped from 18 in the world in math on the PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) to 31 in 2009. This point is being made in school if all the city cares about is our test scores? At the end of the day, the DC CAS does not define a student, a school, or a city. The desire to learn, as well as the desire to teach, should stem from a hunger for an increased understanding of a subject.

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

Students put themselves under a tremendous amount of pressure. The desire to get good enough grades to get into college intrinsically leads stu- dents to cheat, to not do work, and to skip class if it means they don’t get the grade they want. Some students even go so far as to swap an upcoming test off a teacher’s desk, or take a picture of answers that will be sent throughout other classes before the period is over, an act becoming increasingly common at Wilson.

These kinds of shortcuts cause kids to take their classes a lot less seriously. They feel that high school is pointless, because all the “real” learning is going to happen in college. Students tend to get good grades to get into good colleges, so they take hard classes. Then, if they realize that the class is too hard, they resort to cheating to help maintain a respectable grade. In the end, they come away with nothing from the class as a result of their inability to keep up.

This culture creates a bigger problem for students who feel they can’t get good grades in the first place. They forfeit before they even give themselves a chance to play.

The importance the system places on numbers hurts the school itself, too. Individual schools care so much about achieving high attendance and graduation rates that the importance they place on what students do while they are in class drops significantly. I think we should forget about the numbers. A focus on engaging and enriching teaching would allow students to grow intellectually. Standardized tests only measure a fraction of what makes school, and learning as a whole, important. Tests are indicative of some aspects of a student or school, but they merely judge students and schools by their cover and the first few pages.
Self-Segregation Still Stands at Wilson

Lauren ReVeal
Ellie Ellis
Sophie ReVeal

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

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

Recent studies by the University of Michigan found that the larger the school, the more likely it is for students to find friends of their own race. On paper it makes sense: if a student is at a school with only 100 people, they have fewer op-
tions of people to connect with, no race excluded. However, at a school like Wilson, where there are 1907 students and more than 300 per grade, there are more options for friends. Con-
sciously or subconsciously, many people tend to choose friends of their own race.

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

Some students surveyed did not know what the term self-segre-
gation meant. Others found that it was a problem at Wilson. Of its student body of 1046, 91 percent said that self-segregation was an issue at school, and 83 percent said that it was more likely to occur in a large school of 1000.

However, Wilson students did not agree on the cause of this self-segregation. They attributed it to ignorance, people feeling more comfortable with their own race, D.C.’s school bureaucracy system, and even fear. Still, 53 percent of students sur-
veyed agreed that they wanted to fix the self-segregation prob-
lem at Wilson.

Students suggested solu-
tions to the problem of self-segregation, more racially-diverse classes, and getting the school staff to understand that, across the board, people of different races have common interests and really are not that different.

“I think workshops on privi-
lege and oppression are a start,” wrote one survey responder. “Wilson usually goes along with their race,” he wrote.

When looking at Wilson, it is hard to say who among the staff of hard-working individu-
als can be credited most with keeping our great school intact. Some would claim it is Principal Pete Cahall. Others might argue that it is any one of the deans or administrators. But very few would agree.

To recognize the custodial staff as playing a crucial role in keeping the school running.

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

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

“I like to experience dif-
ferent schools,” James said. In his 18 years with DCPS, he has worked at a number of schools, including Phelps, Ballou, Ana-
costa, Coolidge, and now Wil-
son, which has been his home for the past six years.

Through all this experience, James said that the craziest moment was seeing Cahall dress up on Wacky Tacky Day. “That was wild,” said James.

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

On top of all this, he plays a major role in making sure kids get to class. “Ushering you kids to your classrooms and just working with all in general is my favorite part of my job,” he said.

His least favorite part, he explained with a chuckle, is “cleaning this joint up after y'all are done.”

Wilson is a nice school, it is where I’d like to retire. “I’ve been here 36 years, Wilson might have trouble filling the void he will leave.”

Custodian Steve James: One Of Wilson’s Guardian Angels

Ellie Melick
Staff Writer

Every January, when we come back to school, I find that the only thing that feels differ-
ent from “last year” is having to write a different number on the dates of my papers. Besides typing separately in teacher’s texts, nothing really strikes me about the end of one year and the start of another. Not all the “Best of 20...” lists and “Previews of 20...” articles, and definitely not the New Year’s resolutions I forged into the skin of a sheep. On a smaller scale, I find it can be nice to look back on the highlights of the past twelve months, instead of thinking about how we are all officially one year closer to dying.

For Wilson, 2013 brought about the usual exportation of last year’s class of ’14, but also an influx of this year’s class. One of the more dramatic tensions between past and present was the changing of the custodial staff, which we were more than happy to see go.

For Wilson, 2013 brought about the usual exportation of last year’s class of ’14, but also an influx of this year’s class. One of the more dramatic tensions between past and present was the changing of the custodial staff, which we were more than happy to see go.

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

The year was also an impor-
tant one for the entire city. Last July the streets and hotels became packed with celebrities, tourists, and Barack Obama en-
thusiasts for the President’s sec-
ond inauguration. Increasingly
dramatic tensions between po-
litical parties seemed to amplify the focus on D.C. even more than usual, although any 202er will be quick to remind you that what goes on in Congress does not by any means represent the culture of our city as a whole.

Unfortunately, national politics affected many residents of the district and the D.C. area, when the federal government was shut down for two weeks in October, causing many federal workers in D.C. to be furloughed.

City politics shaped up the year as well, with investigations into Mayor Vincent Gray’s 2010 campaign which shed light on the inner workings of our city’s government.

D.C. also suffered a grave atrocity: the September 16 shooting at the Navy Yard that left 12 victims dead, as well as the shooter Aaron Alexis. But in more positive news, every Washingtonian—as well as the entire world—was delighted to welcome the arrival of Bao Bao. This adorable giant panda was born August 23 and has cap-
tivated the hearts of little kids, high school students, and grown men alike; especially with the help of the National Zoo’s Panda Cam, which is easily accessed by the push of a single button.

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

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

Jonathan Sheu, the World History 2 and AP World History teacher, in general, I would say that self-segreg-ation occurs at Wilson. On a daily basis, at lunch, I think that self-segregation is more a function of elementary school than racial self identification.”

He said he believes that it is also based on activities, espe-
cially team sports: “There is a perception that ‘crew is white’ or ‘handball is black.’ This is an oversimplification, but to be-
come a stereotype, it has to have some truth in it.”

On a positive note, Sheu said that “[if] far more students hang out and date across group lines than when I started here in 1993. Classes are more diverse.” Still, not everything has been solved. Wilson is a di-
verse school, yet voluntary racial segregation still exists.

Staff Writers

Ellie Melick
Sophie ReVeal

Lauren ReVeal
Ellie Ellis
Sophie ReVeal

Lauren ReVeal
Ellie Ellis
Sophie ReVeal

Lauren ReVeal
Ellie Ellis
Sophie ReVeal

Lauren ReVeal
Ellie Ellis
Sophie ReVeal
**NEIGHBORHOOD SPOTLIGHT: COLUMBIA HEIGHTS**

Patrick Paniagua
Staff Writer

Columbia Heights is a neighborhood that blends sophisticated people and cultures. Bordered by Adams Morgan and Howard University, this neighborhood has seen many changes over the past 20 years. During the period in the early 90’s in which D.C. was dubbed the murder capital of the U.S., this portion of town looked very different from today. Shootings and gang activity tarnished the last of the positive image that remained of Columbia Heights.

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

On 14th Street lies a great assortment of fast food places, including Panda Express, Furr’s Guys, and Chipotle. The recent renovation of Tivoli Theatre led to the opening of a uniquely designed Z-Burger. The theatre’s former ticket booth serves as a quilo serve window for some of the best shakes in D.C., and the old balconies from the original building were kept to give it an interesting vibe. There is a significant amount of retail that just popped up with the new mall. Best Buy, Target, Modell’s and Petco are all businesses that the neighborhood needed.

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

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

Eleventh Street is home to many great locally-owned eateries. The Coupe, a 24-hour restaurant with the same owner as Open City in Woodley Park, turned the first floor of a vacant and beat-up building into an up-beat environment serving some of the best burgers I’ve ever had. Eleventh Street is also home to much smaller restaurants and bars like El Chuche that has taco happy hour on weekdays with $2 tacos. The ever changing ethnic conglomerate really adds pizzazz to the neighborhood, making it distinct from others on the D.C. map.

**GSA Hopes to Welcome More Participants**

Ava Zechiel
Contributor

The GSA (Gender and Sexuality Aligned) club has been working on many things since the school year started. Members have been trying to spread the word about the club meetings, which are on Wednesdays and Thursdays during STEP. At these meetings, the GSA talks about social justice issues including gender and sexuality discrimination. Occasionally they also talk about current events involving gay rights, or ways to improve the environment of the school.

The name Gender and Sexuality Aligned is a new name; the club used to be called the Gay Straight Alliance. The purpose of renaming the club was to make sure that anyone and everyone can feel comfortable in the club. Since the name change, it seems more people are openly talking about the club, and are more comfortable with coming out to the club. Before the title modification, people who showed up did not participate as much as they do now.

The GSA has been working with science teacher Chris Obermeyer and more recently history teacher Robert Geremia and Michael Garbus to collaborate with other teachers about inappropriate name-calling inside and outside the classroom. You may ask, What is appropriate? No one specific thing can apply to every person, so if you are unsure about a person’s gender (and are comfortable enough with them), go and ask them! It might seem awkward, but it’s even worse when you use the wrong gender pronoun.

The GSA’s number one goal is to help the Wilson community stay welcoming and easy going. It also works to help spread the word about LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning, Asexual) bullying.

The GSA wants all of the students at Wilson to feel at home; like they always have someone they know they can talk to. If you need any support, contact your counselor, or come to GSA in room 223 during STEP on Wednesday and/or Thursday. They’d love to see you there!

**Wilson Shifts to Sustainability**

Zoe Mills
Contributor

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

“People contaminate it [with the wrong materials] and that’s why it doesn’t work,” says Latin teacher Jan McGlennon on Wilson’s recycling system. Sophomore Dilara Yildiz says, “I hear the janitors just dump it in the trash,” about the materials that are supposedly being recycled by students each day.

Custodian Jose Echeona confirms her suspicion. “Well, basically the students don’t respect (the system) and throw food in the recycling bin, and we have to throw it in the trash.”

Currently, 75% of the trash generated during Wilson’s lunch period is actually either compostable or recyclable, according to the waste audit conducted by Wilson’s AP Environmental Science students and the DC Department of General Services (DGS). If students aren’t recycling and are throwing the wrong things in the wrong bin, all of those materials just end up in a landfill. And while it may play a role in giving students and teachers an even warmer summer vacation, pollution of any kind is never good.

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

Both HealthCorps and DGS will be working together to spread this new program to other schools in D.C. and make it known throughout Wilson. DGS is also offering community service hours for those who help promote the program, such as by making posters and flyers out for the brown and green and yellow bins!

The GSA is arranging a meeting for everyone to learn more about composting and recycling. Students who are interested can contact Brodie Hartman at brooke.hartmaned.gov.

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

But Tocco and DGS are determined for good results. They’re hoping that collecting these compact materials will help reduce greenhouse gas emissions. “The idea of composting is new to many people,” Tocco says, “but once they learn how easy it is to participate, it becomes a habit. We encourage all students to participate!”

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

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


**THEFT AT WILSON**

**SURVEY ANALYSIS REVEALS TRENDS IN THEFT AT WILSON**

Nathan Davis  
Co-Editor-in-Chief

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

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

However, the statistics also suggest that while Wilson students may have confidence in security in terms of theft prevention, they largely do not have confidence in school security in terms of recovery of stolen items. Of students surveyed who did report their theft to the school, 71 percent rated the school's response to their report as either not very helpful or not at all helpful. This response is supported by the fact that of those who reported thefts, 72 percent did not recover the stolen item.

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

But widespread failure to report cannot be entirely attributed to underconfidence in the school’s response system. The fact that 38 percent of students who knew the person who stole from them still did not report the theft suggests that there is more than just underconfidence. It could be a manifestation of a “no snitching” culture at Wilson. (Some variation of, “I’m not a snitch” showed up with relative frequency in the section asking students to elaborate on why they didn’t report thefts.) Additionally, the low value of items might have contributed to students not reporting items: around one in three instances of theft were valued at less than $50.

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

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

---

**STOLEN ITEMS**

$87,891 to $121,750* is the estimated value of stolen belongings at Wilson  
“total of each students’ individual assessment of loss"
Ali Rashedi, 10th

January 31, 2014

THEFT

SURVEY RESULTS

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

51% of students did not report the theft

Out of people who reported thefts...

21% got their stolen item(s) back
7% got part of their stolen item(s) back
72% didn’t get anything back

KEEPS AN EYE ON YOUR...

(MOST COMMONLY STOLEN ITEMS AT WILSON)

Keep an eye on your money, phones, clothes, bags, other items, iPods, keys.

WILSON STUDENT TESTIMONIALS

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

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

Ali Rashedi, 10th

January 31, 2014

THEFT

Interview

With

Wilson

Deans

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Emma Natzke, 12th

Ali Rashedi, 10th

Ellice Ellis, 10th

GRAPHICS BY MASON STRAZZELLA, JANE MARTIN, ELLICE ELLIS

Compilied by Lauren and Sophia Relit

Compilied by Lauren and Sophia Relit

PAGE 9
Last summer I got the opportunity to visit Scripps college in Claremont, California. It is a small liberal arts school. Scripps is on a beautiful campus about 40 minutes outside of Los Angeles. The campus is known for its nice weather, its hideaway courtyards, and its sycamore and orange trees. It consists of off white buildings and many dorms have porches or balconies. Scripps is a women’s college which would probably not be appealing to many Wilson students, but the cool part about Scripps is that it is part of a consortium of colleges with four co-ed schools. All of the schools are directly next to each other and things such as classes, clubs, sports teams, and many social events often overlap. Scripps itself is extremely small so there is a lot of interaction with professors and class sizes are small but the other schools make it seem bigger and offer more opportunities for Scripps students.

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

With 4,000 students undergraduate, Division 1 athletics, and a 6% acceptance rate, the U.S. Naval Academy is one of the top universities in the country. During the Spring of the my junior year I was invited to attend a “Candidate Visit Weekend” at the Academy in Annapolis. It started on a Thursday with an orientation and after that I met up with the midshipman I was going to “shadow.” We got a tour and after that we just hung around and did homework. Friday morning we got up at 5 a.m. and went to practice with the the rowing team. After practice we had until 7 a.m. to get ready and head down to breakfast. Although one can choose what to eat around the dining hall, the meals are very family oriented and sometimes the food is brought to the tables. After that we had a full day of classes. The classes were smaller than any class I have ever had at Wilson. By 3 p.m. classes were all done and it was time for practice again. Around 6 p.m. we were back in the rooms getting ready and heading down to dinner. The weekend I went there students went to concerts. Saturday morning we were up early again for training. Although I fell in love with the school it isn’t for everybody: plebes (freshmen) aren’t allowed to listen to music without permission; days start really early and don’t end until very late; being late is not an option; and there are uniforms. I would say this isn’t your average university experience, but still is one of the most prestigious and respectable schools in the United States.

North-eastern was the first school I visited in Boston, and I wasn’t really impressed. The school has a big campus, making up a large neighborhood largely by itself, with a trolley car track running right down the middle. The school is very technical/ engineer oriented, with students working an actual paid job in their field of study, and many Wilson students would like is that it seems to be very accepting of different interests and possible career paths. It encourages creativity. It is also known as a very liberal school, much like Wilson is.

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

Learning the A.B.C.’s.

A Bring your family
B Bring your friends
C Bring your school ID and get 20% off your entire check

www.petessapizza.com

Offer can not be combine with any other special. Discount does not apply to alcohol. Limited time offer.
My Life So Far: Amy Wopat

Helen Malhotra
Staff Writer

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

Wopat was born in Madison, Wisconsin, where she lived with her mother, father and brother until second grade when she moved to Phoenix, Arizona. Moving at a young age led Wopat to appreciate travel and the experience of different cultures, which over time allowed her to master the Spanish language. Phoenix was her first exposure to Spanish, which over time allowed Wopat to appreciate travel and the circuitous route she took to arrive at Wilson eight years ago, or about the role travel has played in her life so far.

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

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

After fourth grade in Arizona, Wopat moved back to Wisconsin and stayed there until she graduated from the University of Wisconsin with majors in Communication Arts and Global Studies. In her junior year of college she took a year abroad in Madrid, Spain, and has made a point ever since to participate in professional experiences outside of the country every four to five years.

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

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

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

Wopat had never been much of a runner and she had never run more than five miles in her life. That same year, she ran and completed the National Marathon with Wilson students. “It was one of the most fulfilling events of my life, which I never could have achieved had it not been for the motivation of my students,” says Wopat.

Because of an injury, Wopat has not been able to run as often as last year but hopes to return to her new hobby soon. Four years into teaching at Wilson, Wopat participated in the Fulbright Teacher Exchange, a program that makes it possible for teachers to go abroad for three or four months to take classes at an international university and study in local schools. On her trip, she met Julie Gloss, who was participating in the same program and who moved to D.C. two years later to teach at Wilson.

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

Erin Doherty
Sophie ReVeal
Henry Shuddler

February 7 marks the start of the 2014 Winter Olympic Games in Sochi. The Olympics are an electrifying experience for people all across the world, with over 2,500 top-caliber athletes from 88 nations competing in classic winter sports and events. The events span from February 7 to 23 with different events each day. Some of the more popular new events include alpine skiing, speed skating, ice hockey, and figure skating. This year, however, a total of 12 new events will be added to the contest to make it the largest Winter Olympics to date. Some of the more popular new events include ski halfpipe (men’s and women’s), women’s ski jumping, biathlon mixed relay, and a new figure skating team event and luge team relay. Many of these are similar to events in the Winter X Games that occur every year in Aspen, Colorado. One of the biggest stories in Sochi is the qualification of the Jamaican bobsled team to participate in the games. The Caribbean country’s two-man bobsled team of Winston Watts and Marvin Dixon had finished with a good time in their qualifying event, enough to lift them to the Olympics. It’s the first time a Jamaican bobsled team has qualified for the Winter Olympics since 2002. The story brings many fond memories of the famous Disney movie “Cool Runnings”, a tale of how four Jamaicans defied the odds to qualify in the four-man bobsled for the 1988 Olympics in Calgary. Team USA has many returning athletes in the quest for gold, such as snowboarders Shaun White and Lindsey Jacobellis, ice hockey players Patrick Kane and Jonathan Quick, and speed skater Shani Davis. Those are just a few of the 224 members that comprise Team USA who will be competing in 15 sports. Team USA started to arrive in Sochi within the next week, the news reveals possible dangers about the upcoming Games. Officials from several countries have warned visitors and athletes about potential terrorist attacks. Last month a militant Islamist group based in the Dagestan region of Russia claimed responsibility for a bombing in the Russian city of Volgograd, which killed 34 people. This group, along with three ruined female suicide bombers, has made threats to the games. The bombing in Volgograd, just 600 miles north of Sochi, confirmed the fear of Russian officials. In a recent article by BBC news, UK officials reportedly said that terrorist attacks are “very likely to occur” within the time span of the Olympics. The State Department has warned Olympic visitors and families of possible attacks, and has been making arrangements for two US navy ships to be stationed in the Black Sea. Helicopters could be deployed to Sochi if needed to protect those at the games. The precautions being put in place by U.S. officials will hopefully prevent any dangers that could occur. The upcoming Olympics in Sochi will be an important time for competing athletes, teams, and viewers around the world, but the safety and possible threats will be something else viewers can watch for.
Mr. Jacoby

Burris played for the varsity was the 33rd overall pick in the San Francisco Giants, Burris on to play at Kent State Univer and graduated in 2003. He went attended and played for Wilson lar today, such as Home Run and camps that are still popu

On December 19, Burris became ing him a minor league contract. hometown ball club was offer the Washington Nationals: his

ni Emmanuel Burris received some very exciting news from January 31, 2014

Singer is looking forward to rooting for the U.S. curling team, which has events in Sochi February 20 and 21. He has curled against a current member on
curling requires more skills than you would imagine. Singer says. Curl

Wilson Alum Emmanuel Burris: A Hit In His Hometown

Henry Shuldiner
Sports Editor

Early in December 2013, MLB infeldler and Wilson Alum

Before Alex Jacoby was the math teaching prodigy he is today, he was a dif

ALUMNS - Emmanuel Burris played varsity baseball and football at Wilson High School. During his time there, he was a shortstop on the varsity baseball team. He was also a kicker for the football team and a wrestler for the wrestling team.

Mr. Jacoby

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The contract Burris just agreed to puts him with the Nationals AAA affiliate, the Syracuse Chiefs. Hopefully, Bur ris will get the chance to prove that he belongs back in the big leagues during the Nation als’ Spring Training season in Vienna, Florida. Players in the minor leagues are often invited to join the professional team during Spring Training, for evaluation and possible promotion to the club.

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

Burris’s return to DC has caused lots of jubilant energy among past coaches, friends, and even Wilson students. “I was very happy and excited for Emmanuel,” said McCarthy. “It’s great to have him back in Washington.”

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

The Nationals should be looking forward to having Burris around, he is a very versatile player who has played almost every position professionally, except for pitcher and catcher. “It is unusual to find a player with good speed and a good arm... and [Burris] has that,” said McCarthy. “He is a hard worker, a humble young man, and he has earned all of his opportunities.”
2013’s Best Movies, Rated by the Boss

#10 The Kings of Summer

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

#9 Gravity

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

#8 Fruitvale Station

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

#7 The Lone Ranger

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

#6 Don Jon

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

#5 Star Trek: Into Darkness

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

#4 The World’s End

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

#3 Prisoners

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

#2 American Hustle

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

#1 The Wolf of Wall Street

Oh yeah, there’s a Scorcese movie coming out that was actually directed by the master himself, Martin Scorcese. This is what happens if you take an already excessive mem- ory和尚 looked trader Jordan Belfort, get Terence Winter of “The Sopranos” to adapt it into a screenplay that broke the record of most uses of the F-word in a single film, get the man behind “Taxi Driver” and “The Departed” to visualize it as a three-hour extravaganza of orgies, ruthlessness, and unheard of quantities of every drug under the sun, and put an inhumanly amazing Leonardo DiCaprio at the center of it all. The Wolf of Wall Street is the best film to come along in at least half a decade. Don’t listen to people who say it glorifies Wall Street dirty dealings. It’s intentionally over-the-top, one big example of the extravagance that caused Belfort’s downfall. The gratuitous nudity? The mammoth amount of time devoted to the drug known as the Quaalude? These are not meant to showcase how much fun working on Wall Street is. They’re meant to showcase the decadence that is responsible for our economy today. That and for Leonardo DiCaprio pulling out every stop imaginable for a performance that deserves to be remem- bered for, and this is not hyperbole, the ages. Iokes are made about his inability to win an Oscar, and while he has certainly deserved one for other things, I’m going to make a decree. If he doesn’t win his first Oscar for Best Actor on March 2, I will write a 10,000 word essay on the problem with the Oscars for The Reason. If they refuse to print it, I will upload it to my Facebook account. That is the power of DiCaprio’s performance and this landmark film in general.

“Fire Bringer” Tells Exciting Medieval Tale

Quinn Heinrich
Staff Writer

For those of you who are looking for a book to read, which I bet many of you are, I recom- mend Fire Bringer by David Clement Davies, which is one of the most obscure books I have read, but also one of the best. Set in medieval Scotland, Fire Bringer tells the story of the red deer, who lived in large herds consisting of a lord, a series of sires, and two large groups of stags, the Coope and the Out- riders. That is, until a hornless stag named Sgor (possibly the most evil character in litera- ture) enters one herd and starts changing its ways, including authorizing a massacre of all the Outriders in one single night. On the same night, a fawn is born by the name of Rannoch. Rannooh quickly begins to resemble a deer mentioned in an ancient prophecy, and forced to flee with his mother and some of his friends. Along their journey, Rannoch befriends a raven, a human, a seal, a wolf, and a reindeer, all of whom help him when he must finally fulfill the prophecy. One reason I like this book is because there are so many characters in the story. Each character who is still alive at the climax has its own moment of greatness and significance, several of which come at the perfect moment. This works because the author tells some of the story from their point of view, in addition to telling it from that of Rannoch or Sgor. Also like the way the au- thor works in the events of the story into the long and complex prophecy. In a number of cases, this leads to dramatic irony where Rannoch knows nothing of the prophecy, and the reader or another character does.

Although it does have some minor flaws (some unnes- sary passages and lack of comic relief), Fire Bringer makes up for them with exciting action, com- plex characters, and a perfect sense of timing. Enjoy!
The Hater Is Gonna Hate

Jack Price  Columnist

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

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

3. J's: Did anyone ever see that Lil' Bow Wow movie Like Mike? If Air Jordans actually would be a good idea. L. Ron Hubbard invented pants for a reason.

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

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

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

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

Wilson Players Get Working on the One Acts

Will Hamlin  Contributor

January is coming to a close, and just like every year at Wilson, that means it's time for One Acts plays. Student actors, writers, directors and producers all collaborate to put together a production of short plays that will be performed on the second and third weekends of February. This year the plays vary and complement each other well, says senior Jonah Gigli, a member of the Wilson Players, the student theater group that produces the plays. "They include a ridiculous British murder mystery, a group of elementary school boys contemplating liking girls, and two art thieves bound to fail."

The plays are always an entertaining event for the audience. The months of hard work that the actors, writers, producers and directors put in create a spectacular night. Senior Des O'Brien, a director, described how the plays come together, saying, "We start out with a couple of practices where we simply read through the script, allowing each actor to really understand their character. We then move on to rehearsals where we work on blocking, or stage movement. This is where the play really comes together. The actors are able to play off of one another in ways that are not possible when simply orating the play." O'Brien says that producing a play can be harder than it looks, but the final product is entertaining and satisfactory for the cast and audience. "Doing the plays is a long process because there are so many components that have to go into it. It takes time to really allow the plays to come into their own, but when they do, One Acts proves to be a truly unique and amazing experience."

"By the end of it, you feel a part of the One Acts family. With so many students involved, there is a lot of challenges and it can be stressful at times, but the final productions are extremely rewarding," says Gigli. So on February 6, 7, 8, 13, 14, and 15, come down to the black box to see the short plays that will be truly amusing. Doors will open at 7 pm.

Album Review: Because The Internet

Hope Willis  Staff Writer

"Because the Internet" is Donald Glover aka Childish Gambino’s second studio album and a follow-up to the emotional 2013 album “Camp”. “BTI” can only be described as a sensory overload. The songs are a calculated but chaotic compilation of synthesized rap, acoustic, electronic, R&B and jazz inspired tracks containing varying lyrical styles. "The Crawl" is a hard, superficial rap track with superb production. It’s polarized by "3005" and "Telegraph Ave", love songs with a Drake-like flow, but then challenged by "Zealots of Stockholm", which gives off a dark ambient electronic vibe. Gambino has a few guests on the album, including the acclaimed Chance The Rapper, and veteran but only recently rising star Jhene Aiko. All of these tracks are given context and relevance by a 74-page screenplay written by Glover, meant to be devoured while one listens to the album. "BTI" picks up fictionally where "Camp" left off, with a character who represents Glover, called “The Boy”. Only, in this abstract alternate universe Glover intentionally casts himself as the archetypal overprivileged youth with cliched rich people problems fused with typical youth issues (fake friends, love interests, self discovery, daddy issues etc.). He’s somewhat of a urban Brooklyn hipster rendition of Jay Gatsby.

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

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

- **Wear more sweaters**
  - Des O’Brien, 12
- **To work out**
  - Njiri Kouaho, 11
  - Zenia Zeitlin, 11
- **Gain weight**
  - Eric Viera, 10
  - Jake Radack, 10
- **Finesse**
  - Brian Keyes, 9
  - Yannick Twusami, 10
- **To ride my bike without training wheels**
  - Ellie Melick, 9
- **Ball out more**
  - Tony Fratto, 10
  - Luke Wallis, 10
- **Play soccer in college**
  - Sebastian Duque, 12
- **To get a tarantula**
  - Cameron Boucher-Khan, 9
- **To get a job and make money**
  - Shu Phua, 9
- **Eat more bagels**
  - Hannah Wyatt, 9
  - Sarah Robinson, 9
  - Allie Shwalb, 9
  - Sarah Burch, 9
  - Henry Cohen, 10
- **To become Beyoncé**
  - Zavier Northrup, 10
- **Don’t be a loaf**
  - Yana Madrid, 11
- **Write more music**
  - Lena Jones, 11
- **To be in The Beacon**
  - Hashanii Williams, 11
  - Nicole Amalembo, 11
- **To get a tarantula**
  - Cameron Boucher-Khan, 9
- **To become Beyoncé**
  - Zavier Northrup, 10
  - Don’t be a loaf
  - Yana Madrid, 11
- **To become Beyoncé**
  - Zavier Northrup, 10
  - Don’t be a loaf
  - Yana Madrid, 11