



the Lone Star Dispatch

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Elementary kids take on science experiments

Alicia Molina
Staff Writer

Elementary kids came to participate in the annual science day last week. Kids walked through the halls and went to see and participate in the different projects scattered throughout the school.

This is not the first year that Bowie has done this. According to Biology teacher Jill Harding, this has been a tradition that dates back to almost 20 years ago. Three different elementary schools came to visit on the day of science day. The students ranged from Kindergarten to second grade.

“Baranoff, Mills, and Kocurek elementary were the schools that came,” Harding said. “Around 14 classes with a total of around 308 students came in the morning and 12 classes with around 264 students came down in the afternoon.”

All Bowie students were welcome to participate in the day. They help the elementary students go to all of the different stations around the schools and students also helped with projects and experiments.

“My main job was to make sure none of the kids ate the ingredients since our experiment was ice cream dough but it was made of baking soda and it tasted super gross,” Junior Maura Evans said. “One kid did slip by my partner and the little girl just ate a spoonful of the dough; I still remember looking over and just seeing the little girl instantly regretting what she did because the dough smelled really fruity but tasted like the teeth cleaner at the dentist’s office.”

Some students have participated in science day before and have enjoyed it enough to do it again.

“Science day was fun for me because I remember when I went to Kocurek and came to science day in second grade and I remember we did baking soda volcanoes,” Junior Angelica Aguilar said. “I really loved helping out this year; it was just so much fun seeing the kids work and them getting excited over things like soap and water”

Science day was all about safety. The students who did the experiments for the kids had rules to make sure that the kids were not in any way going to be harmed.

“The rules were very strict on safety,” Chemistry teacher Denise Sanders said. “In general the experiments could not burn or cut the kids. If they used real chemicals, they all had to wear goggles.”

Not only did students participate, but science teachers did as well. They were at every station helping the kids with the activities and were supervising while in the room.

“All of the teachers helped in one form or another,” Harding said. “There were 14 different sites and we needed 14 teachers. If a teacher was not at a sight, then they helped with the overflow kids.”

Each teacher’s room had experiments based upon the subject they taught.

“Some of the projects and activities that we had were, skunks, a Venus fly trap, building stuff, peering zoo, planetarium, constellations, fish prints and all about stuff from the ocean, properties of water, hover crafts, ice cream and dry ice,” Harding said.

The experiments were done by the students and their partners. They had enough time to come up with the project and fix any errors if needed.

“We had a week to come up with the project idea. We made a putty with baking soda, water and food coloring,” Evans said. “We added Kool-Aid, lemonade, and food colorings to make the putty look cool.” ★

Light up the night



O’ Christmas Tree: The lit Christmas tree at Zilker park lights up the surrounding area and can be seen throughout downtown Austin. The tradition has been going on for 48 years. *Photo by Granger Coats*

The Trail of Lights opens after much anticipation

Granger Coats
Photo Editor

Winter wind coasts the frigid ground with a wintry chill as the lights on the tree illuminate the night for the first time.

On Nov. 9, The Zilker Christmas Tree was lit for the holidays and has been part of Austin’s holiday traditions since the first tree was sparked in Dec. 10, 1967.

Towering 155 feet in the winter breeze with a total of 3,309 lights, the glowing spectacle truly encompasses the beauty and community of the holidays.

“It brings all the Austin families together and is a loving Christmas time atmosphere,” senior Adrian Gomez said.

Zilker Park is a widely popular area in downtown Austin. The beautifully spacious recreational

area of Zilker Park, highly known for hosting the popular music festival ACL every year and best place for cooling off in the sweltering summer heat; Barton Springs. However, this time of year, Zilker is home to the holidays. The Zilker Park area boasts a beautifully glowing tree along with the Trail of Lights and Fun Run in the winter months and brings people from all over the city and beyond together.

“It makes me feel like it’s truly Christmas, I feel joyful and excited seeing all those light displays,” senior Amber Jones said.

The Trail of Lights glitters and sparkles across the street from the tree. People of all ages flood across Barton Springs Rd. into the tunnel of lights like moths to a flame. Being one of the three largest events in Austin, the Trail of Lights was attended by more than

400,000 people last holiday season and remains a cherished local tradition.

“Everything to me about it is special,” Jones said. “You see all these great light displays and they add new stuff every year so you get excited to see what’s new.”

Elves, Santas, and even small toddlers scamper under the festive two million lights at the Fun Run last Saturday Dec. 5. The 2.1 mile run is another holiday favorite that starts at the tree and encompassed the total array of displays and glimmering Christmas lights.

“Looking at all the lights was really memorable and makes you feel like you’re in a different world,” senior Danny Cruz said. “It really takes your worries away.”

The lights beautiful twinkling and dancing cast a bright, jovial holi-

day blanket on the crowds of people. Groups gather close around sharing smiles and laughs while kids stare up at the lights in wonder and amazement.

“It was really neat seeing all the lights working together to make a sort of light show throughout the whole park,” Cruz said.

For senior Michela Gero the tree lighting is a big family tradition that has been going in her family for four years.

“My family and I are at the tree lighting ceremony an hour before it starts,” Gero said. “It’s special for me because it is one thing my special needs brother loves.”

As the tree stands tall above the crowds of people looking up to admire its enchanting fluorescence, the noises of the crowds grow faint and soft as they dissipate back into the cold December wind. ★



Don’t burst my bubble: Senior Jessica Peterson helps out with Science Day in Hope Lozano’s room. The students used a hula hoop and dish soap to make this giant bubble. *Photo by Caitlin Devlin*

New absence policy in effect this year

Samantha Knapp
Staff Writer

Recurring absences have been a problem particularly among high school students and to amend this, AISD has made a change to their practice and procedures effective this year to keep students from not getting credit for the courses they are taking.

“Effective this school year no grade can appear on the summative report card for a class where there has been less than 90% at-

tendance by the student,” AISD high school assistant superintendent Kathy Ryan said. “In reviewing all of our processes, we discovered that the practice AISD had in place of excluding some absences such as notes from parents on absences that are understandable, but technically not excused by the law such as being home sick, attending a major family event, home suspensions etc., from counting in the 90% attendance number, thus in essence ‘automati-

cally’ granting appeals for those unexcused absences. Moving forward, all unexcused absences will ‘count against’ students.”

This change will affect students who don’t have at least 90% attendance and they will not receive a grade on their report card, however some students may be able to earn credit back depending on the circumstances.

“Campuses are informing their students and families, letters are being sent home. We are also chang-

ing the format of our report cards and progress reports and they will now show percentage attendance in a class to date,” Ryan said. “As far as enforcing goes, students will still need to make-up absences and/or appeal to an attendance committee, depending on their circumstances. Credit for courses will not be awarded until that happens.”

Read more: “Absences get a makeover” pg. 4

Athletics



Lacrosse season starts for the boys and girls

The teams have started practice every Monday and Saturday and the season is expected to start in the middle of February.

See page 10 for more details

Entertainment

Commercial photography students have a photo shoot Teacher’s children got their holiday photos taken as a way to teach the aspiring photographers how to deal with real models and responsibility.

See page 8 for more details

Commentary

Staff takes a stance on how school security has changed With the recent threats, the school is on high alert for suspicious activity in order to keep students and faculty feel safe on campus.

See page 6 for more details

Drawbacks of the 'Incentives'

New attendance incentives are more irrelevant than beneficial for students

Editorial

It's always important to teachers and staff that students arrive to school and classes on time and avoid being absent. Recently, starting in the spring semester of the 2016 - 2017 school year, certain incentives have been given to students in order to get them more motivation to not skip class and avoid tardies.

Though these incentives might appeal to some, many students aren't quite sure how they feel about it.

The major incentives are the availability of painting personal parking spots for seniors, exemptions on finals, and more off period opportunities.

Many current senior students feel that these incentives are unfair or don't matter because they won't get much of a chance to take advantage of them. Other students feel that the drawbacks, such as all the effort of getting these incentives, outweigh the benefits.

As far as the parking spots go, in order for one to achieve the title of "owning" a parking spot they must have at least 15 credits, have no more than 12 class period absences in the whole Spring 2016 semester and no more than four

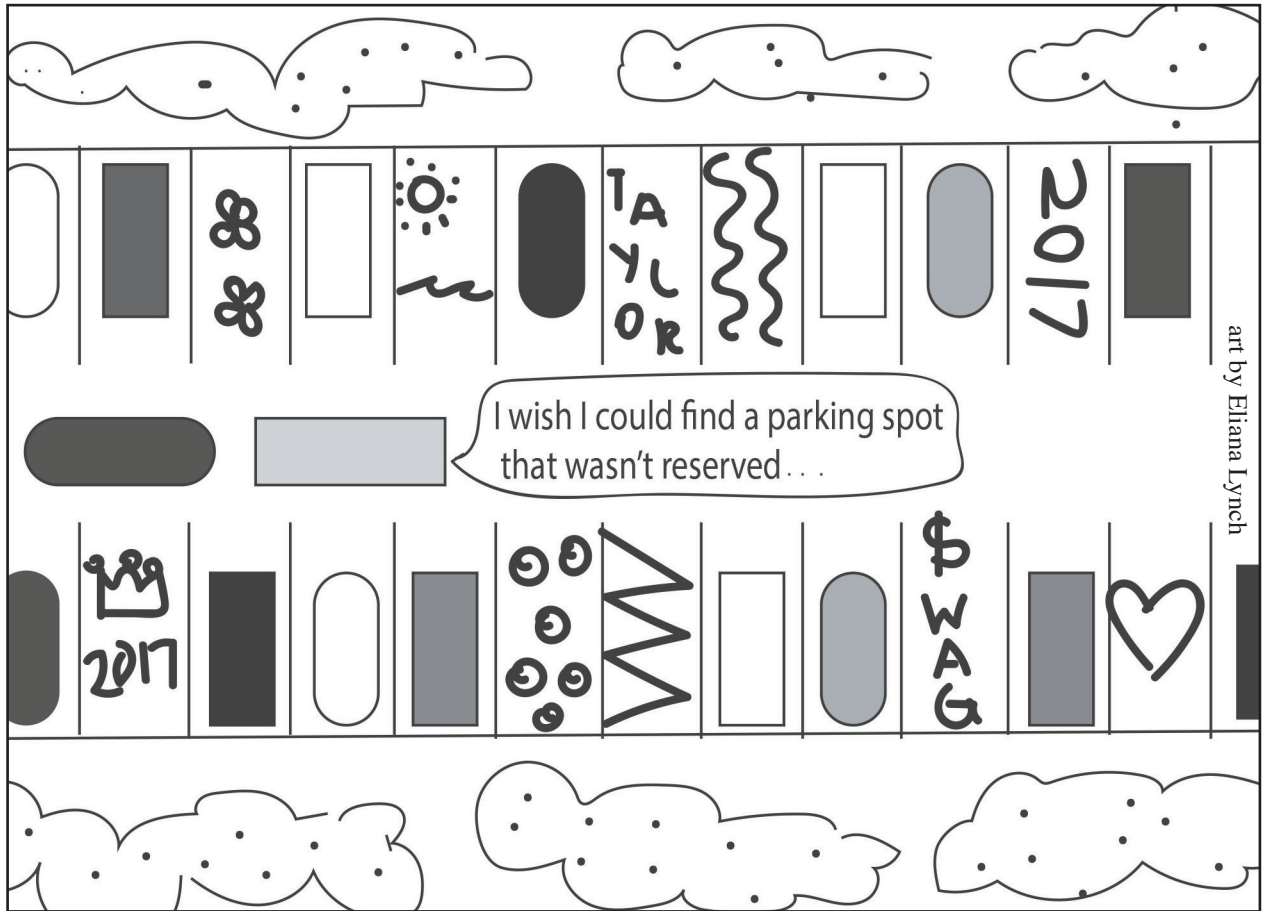
absences in a single class period during the 2016 Spring semester

Students also have to pay \$20 for their spot, plus the additional cost of getting a permit to park in the Bowie parking lot, and the cost of paint. Students find the fact that they must pay so much money for a simple parking spot isn't worth the trouble.

Parking at Bowie is already difficult enough and it's going to make it even more difficult for students to find a spot if people are reserving spots even if they aren't using them.

Bowie is too large of a school for this to work out without having major problems. Such as people arguing over spots, students having to park in the church or in the neighborhoods because they can't take other people's "territory".

Another incentive, the semester exam incentive, also brings controversy. Students are given the advantage of having the opportunity to change their grade for their final if their semester average is higher and if they have no more than three absences, to get higher than a 90, two absences to get higher than an 80, and only one absence



art by Eliana Lynch

to get higher than a 70.

The idea of being allowed to change a grade that counts as a whole six weeks is a wonderful idea, but so many people have been absent for three days already so the incentive doesn't affect them at all.

Also, students still have to take the final even if they plan to change their grade, which seems to be a waste of time. And, some

semester classes or AP classes don't count which takes out a big chunk of this incentive.

The last incentive is the opportunities for off periods. Now, this incentive isn't really about the benefits. This incentive is much more of a threat. In order for a student to be eligible for an off period, students must demonstrate acceptable attendance.

Also, if a student has poor attendance, off periods can be revoked; this incentive is a shallow idea because students already skip classes even with or without an off period.

Even though off periods don't count as an actual class students enjoy them and shouldn't be forced into taking a class that they don't need or wouldn't enjoy.

Though these incentives have a lot of benefits and motivate a lot of students, that does not conceal the fact that these incentives are slightly unrealistic and take away and threaten more than they provide.

These so called "incentives" don't have much purpose and shouldn't continue in the future of this school. ★

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Angry? Like what you read?
Confused?
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Letters must be signed, and emailed letters will require verification before publication. We will not necessarily publish all letters received and reserve the right to edit for length and clarity.

No vote no voice, kids

Kamryn Bryce
 Editor-in-Chief

In Barack Obama's most recent, and final, State of the Union address he discussed many of the hot topic issues facing the country, however he failed to focus on an issue that is directly affecting how the nation's political system is run and more importantly by who.

If you are still reading this and you're under the age of 25 then you are probably more interested in how your nation is run than most citizens in your age group. Which brings me to the critical issue mentioned above, voter turnout for ages between 18 and 25 is the lowest it has ever been since the United States Census Bureau (U.S.C.B.) started tracking the turnout in 1978. Of course that is just the statistics for the citizens in that eight year age group that are even registered as voters. According to the U.S.C.B., the congressional election turnout was 41.9 percent in 2014. This is to say less than half of registered voters are practicing their right to vote, which in comparison to the entire population of citizens in the eight year age group that are not registered this is even more concerning.

But then again most of you will have either stopped reading at this point or simply turned the words into "blah blah blah" in your mind until you have altogether decided you are bored and begin to investigate the graphics that cover this page. Which of course, is exactly my point. Politics is boring, it's boring and it doesn't even seem to affect us. Except, oh yeah it does.

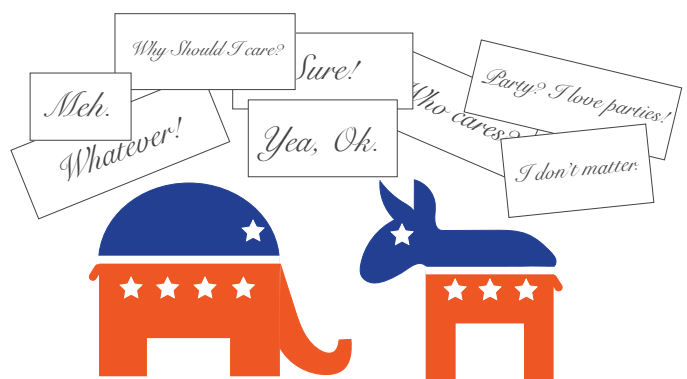
In an article titled, "10 Reasons Why College Students Should Vote", it is explained that not only does voting exercise that unalienable right you have as a citizen (pretty much the only power you have anyway), it also shapes the policy agenda. What's a policy agenda? Well, if you haven't taken U.S. Government by now the policy agenda is essentially the issues that people (you and me) bring up and go on the handy dandy laundry list the government needs to address. Another incentive the article includes for participating in the political system that essentially shapes your entire life, if that isn't one enough, is that politicians will not address student needs if there aren't any student voters. Simple as that. No vote, no say.



Still not convinced? Ok, neither was I honestly as our nation contains more than 322,762,018 people, according to an article simply titled "The Size Of The U.S. And The World As Of 2016" in the U.S. News. So why should I vote, why does my one vote matter in the grand scheme of things? Well, this situation can be compared to something as common as bullying in schools in the sense that why should I stand up for the kid and get involved when somebody else could easily step up and do it instead? Why do I have to be the hero?

If every person views themselves as the bystander, than that kid will go on being bullied without the slightest hope that people care enough to stand up for him. In the same regard, how is that same apathy applied to politics any different? Although it may be a stretch, but isn't the refusal to vote just indirectly agreeing with the idea of a dictatorship or an oligarchy. Isn't that just saying, "Uh you want to raise my taxes? Sure. Oh and you also want to ban fast food. Well, ok I can live without Whataburger I guess.?" If nobody cares then how long will it be until the system just falls apart.

I realize dooms day in the political sense is hopefully a little farther off and more difficult to obtain than just by the lack of voting in America. But the bottom line is, if you don't vote then you are just handing over your right to have a say in what you have to pay for and what laws you have to abide by. Do yourself a favor and take the two and a half minutes it takes to fill out the voter registration form, better yet even go the extra mile and prove your grandparents wrong and do something a little crazy and unexpected. Vote. ★



art by Kamryn Bryce

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New attendance policy causes confusion

Incentives for perfect attendance are worth it

Avy Friedman
Staff Writer



With the new attendance policy being enforced for the first time this spring, it has potential to bring positive change and benefits to everyone on the campus despite negative opinions towards it.

Although it will negatively affect a few, benefits will exist for the majority of the school. Attendance rates should rise and students will be rewarded for good attendance.

Many students look forward to senior year as they can now paint their parking spots. This will allow more creativity on campus, motivation to come to school more often, and will make parking easier.

Although it costs money, it should be worth it because it will be fun for many to have the freedom personalize their school life.

Distribution of the limited spots are done in a fair way involving number of absences. If a student has zero absences, then they would get first pick. Students with one absence will get second pick and so on.

All students, no matter the age, agree that finals are one of the most stressful times in high school. But with the new incentive, it provides a cushion of support to students with good attendance and grades.

All these benefits require a good attendance therefore, students will succeed will result better attendance rates as a school.

With these changes, students will be rewarded for good attendance and efforts. In the past, they were expected to work hard but treated the same as students who showed little motivation and care.

In general, attendance for students are not priorities for colleges when determining acceptances so for high schools to put a lot of pressure on it if it is not as relevant

in the future seems odd.

However, there are negative changes that will come with it. The most disliked

change is the idea that being sick will now be considered as an unexcused absence. Students do not control when they get sick and it is advised to not come to school so when their education is penalized, it is unfair. A student's education should not be influenced based on sicknesses and attendance issues. It is insensitive to disregard student's struggles and conflicts because sometimes, it is inevitable and a student may not be able to avoid it. The only excuse that is allowed is school field trips.

Luckily, there are exceptions to this new policy.

If a student is gone for a long period of time due to a serious injury, sickness or an emergency, a student can still earn credit for the classes despite the fact that they missed 90 percent of it.

There are negative aspects to the new incentive policy but there are more favorable impacts involved. ★

Painted parking spots aren't going to persuade

Samantha Knapp
Staff Writer



The recent change to AISD's absence policy sounds like a good way to keep students coming to class, but the incentives are not worth it for everyone.

Seniors for example, won't get any of the incentives other than depending on what grade they get in the class they still have to show up for the final, but their final grade will not effect them.

They won't get to participate in the other incentives like painting a personalized parking spot or getting an off period because they will be graduating and the other incentives won't be going into effect until next school year.

Juniors, sophomores, and seniors will get to participate, but freshman will not be able to because they aren't old enough to get their driver's license and won't have a car and I don't think it will really work as well as they want it to.

I think there will be a lot of issues with personalized parking spots and students could potentially fight over parking spots and park in someone else's spot.

I don't think the school has really taken into consideration what consequences will look like and how they will be carried think that they should do something else as an incentive like maybe having food trucks come to the school for lunch or possibly letting students who have good attendance pick what lunch they have as a reward for good attendance.

I think that getting an off period could be an incentive although grades and attendance go hand and hand I think grades would be a better motivator.

But, if a student is failing one of their classes or barely passing I don't think they should be allowed to have an off period because a lot of the time if the off period is sixth period they have both lunches and they go home and sleep or go to eat and they don't do anything productive that could help their grades.

I think that is a waste of time that could be better spent improving their high school career.

The biggest incentive for me is the one that has to do with the final exam because not taking the final exam based on your grade and your attendance is an awesome incentive and every class can participate in it.

I think that other students may not feel the same way and they might need the final exam grade to help them pass the class, but they don't want to take the exam.

Only wanting one of the incentives isn't worth it, they should benefit all of the students in every class and they should be willing to fix it so that it benefits every student, in every situation. ★

VS

Questions arise as Avery is charged for murder

Violet Glenewinkel
Student Life Editor



Netflix holds plenty of intriguing shows, but this past month it's introduced a new documentary. The ten-hour series, "Making a Murderer," has been taking the country and its viewers by storm. As one of the most watched shows on Netflix, reviewers are highly recommending it and it's the first thing anyone should check out the next time they browse the selections.

It begins with a man named Steven Avery who was sentenced to eighteen years in prison for an assault. Later on he is found innocent by a blood test. Years later after release, he is charged with a mysterious murder. The ten-hour series goes through every detail of the trials and court hearings involved with the murder case.

Before the DNA test, Manitowoc police department and sheriff department displayed instances of ignoring anyone else who could possibly be a suspect other than Avery, as if they were trying to prove him guilty at all costs.

"Murderer" was casted across Avery's image. The body of a woman was found on his property including items linked to the murder. But suspicions have risen. From here on out, the show includes exclusive interviews of people linked or involved with the victim, examining evidence, and the possible flaws in our judicial system.

This show is unlike any crime documentary or program I've seen. It was filmed over a ten-year period, through the

Story of Avery and his sentence behind bars after being, possibly, accused wrongly of a murder.

It's not just the show's contents and points it makes, but how it is filmed that really pulled me in at first. Every episode keeps the viewer enthralled, which is what I like most about it. Constant twists and turns, new evidence and discoveries surfacing in each episode. It makes the viewer want to keep watching to see if nonnegotiable discoveries have been uncovered to, possibly, get Avery out of jail.

The viewer gets to really know the Avery's, their stories and relationships between one another, and if had anything to do with this possible framing of Avery. Exclusive interviews are revealed and concluded by the directors. They don't leave out much of anything when it comes to giving hard evidence from suspects and people associated with the victim and Avery.

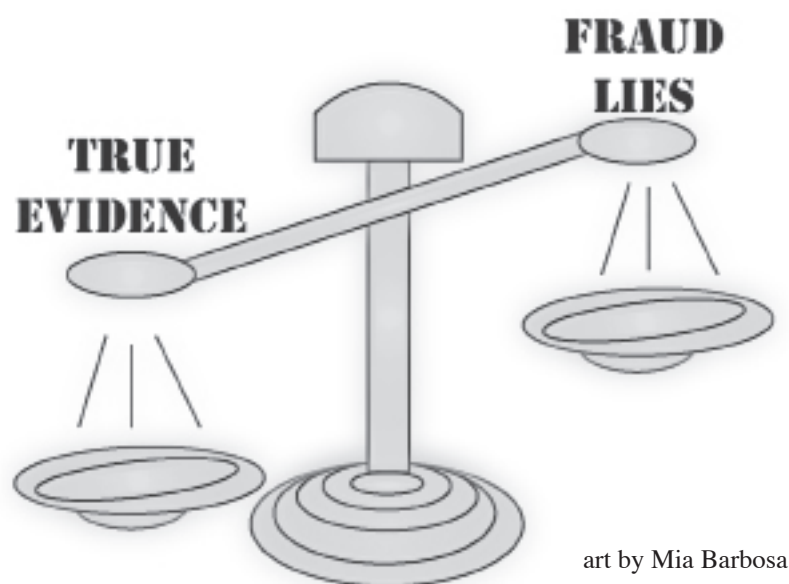
The tiniest of details are shown, examined up close and really thought through to give possible clues as to claim if this man was framed or not.

Interviews, opinions, and thoughts are shared from the police, judicial system, family members, witnesses, acquaintances, and people who worked on this case. The evidence all goes very in-depth, getting closer to finding out what really happened with this murder.

"Making a Murderer" is also getting great reviews. Rotten Tomatoes named

it a whopping 97% on its tomato-meter, which is extremely high for a documentary. IMDB rated it 9.1 out of 10 stars and Meta critic gave it an 84%.

Overall, it's a haunting true-crime show that will leave you thinking over every detail and piece of evidence involving this case. It immerses the viewer, captivating them and pulling them through ten years of investigation and research. In the end, it leaves the viewer with an opinion to the question that the country is buzzing over. Is Steven Avery a murderer? ★



art by Mia Barbosa

BULLDAWG SPEAK OUT

What would you do if you won the powerball?

9TH



Israel Ramirez

"I would definitely buy a lot of candy. I would buy my own restaurant."

10TH



Jenna Eveleth

"Buy a house, pay for collage, give to charity, buy some cats, and I would totally travel the world and buy a company."

11TH



Ben Wheeler

"I would stay in school, but after I graduate I would explore the world."

12TH



Jordan McKenna

"I would buy a house in every country in Europe."

TEACHER



Kimberly Wiedmeyer

"I would absolutely keep my teaching job, but I would take five years off to travel the world."

Soccer team 'kicks' into gear

Shelby Kelly
Staff Writer

The athletic fields were bursting with soccer players once again as the season kicked off with tryouts. The sport's winter season has started and both the coaches and players are ready to start another season.

There are four coaches leading soccer and the program consists of many players. Last year, the team made it to the first round of playoffs and now plan to get even better. The team's biggest rivals this season consist of Lake Travis, Westlake and Del Valle.

Coach Ryan Logan is ready for another good season, explaining his great hopes and expectations.

"My expectations are high, we are returning five All District Players and we have 16 seniors on the roster," Logan said.

Senior player Hayley Farr also shares her expectations for her final soccer year; she looks forward to see how the younger players will fit in.

"I am really looking forward to the younger players filling the roles of the seniors. It will be interesting to see who steps up the roles that are empty," Farr said.

Whitney Johnson, who plays holding and attacking middle, has high expectations concerning the team's goal in the future.

"Every year as a program we work to get further in the playoffs, I believe our goal this year is to get higher in district and get a first round win," Johnson said.

Bowie soccer has many strengths, which coach Logan is excited to use.

"We play physical, and should be more mature with the amount of seniors we have," Logan said.

Logan thinks Bowie will do great this year but already has some improvements set to go.

"I think we will be more focused on the job ahead of us and get further in Playoffs, I also think I have a stronger group of finishers up front," Logan said.

Farr also recognizes some areas to work on.

"There will be a lot of seniors this year and it would be neat to be a whole team, I hope to be even more family oriented, sometimes we group up because of age or grade, but I hope we can all be family," Farr says.

Coach Hoffman also shares her wisdom.

"We have skilled players that could be successful if they are willing to continue to work hard at practices and games," Hoffman said.

Farr, a veteran in soccer, gives advice on how to continue as a good soccer team member.

"Give it all you've got, you cannot hold anything back. You only have a limited amount of time for the coaches to see you. Another thing the coaches like to see is not just your talent but also your attitude. If you do not have a good attitude coaches will not want to put up with you. Be respectful and a team player," Farr said.

To be a good player you have to invest many hours.

"Soccer takes up a lot; I practice three times a week and usually have two games a weekend and most of the games are out of state, also on top of that I have to do any extra work I put on myself to practice," Johnson said.

Most of Bowie soccer players have been playing for more than just in high school.

"I have been playing soccer for a really long time, about ten years. I don't know if I will play at the college level. But I could never see myself completely giving up soccer, I love it. Being around your teammates is so much fun. Its like you have another family," Farr said.

The Bowie team members are just like family, there are many talented players, Farr points out.

"I have many amazing team members, one of them includes our goalie, who is a sophomore and is on the varsity team. She was a starter who also, like many others, I played club soccer with. There is another girl who is trying out this year and has been playing basketball the past couple of years, her name is Lexi Byone and she plays on her select team and is really good.



Stealing scores: Senior Elijah Hall steals the ball from his opponent on the Hays team. This game was very challenging as the weather was cold and players were struggling to stay warm, however they had the advantage of being on the home side of the stadium and were able to win the game. *Photo by: Granger Coats*

I am really excited to see how she does this year," Farr said.

Bowie soccer has done well and hopes to continue, Logan has some advice if you are considering to be on the team or if you're still on it.

"Pass your classes, have a physical, and touch a ball as much as you can to strengthen your skill," Logan says.

Games are already here, Coaches and players are ready to get back into the game, Hoffman is excited to get the season started.

"We start the season off with scrimmages and tournaments in early January. Our first district game will be against Westlake at Westlake on January 26 at 7:15 pm," Hoffman said. ★

Girls basketball thrives through the seasons challenges

BASKETBALL TERMS

Alley-oop

Refers to a high pass near the rim of the basket that another player dunks or tips in.

Buzzer beater

When a player takes a shot before the end of quarter buzzer but it goes into the basket after the buzzer has gone off, you would refer to that shot as a buzzer beater.

Turnover

Any of the various ways in which possession of the ball moves from one team to another.

Traveling

A violation of the rules that occurs when a player holding the ball moves one or both of his feet illegally. Most commonly, a player travels by illegally moving his or her pivot foot or taking two or more steps without dribbling the ball.

Lay up

A one-handed shot made from near the basket, especially one that rebounds off the backboard.

Information courtesy of NBA.com

art by Michelle McDonagh

Greyson Hughes
Staff Writer

The girls varsity basketball team is almost halfway through their season, with a current 11-4 record, and there are more games to win. They plan to finish off the season strongly.

"Health is always the unpredictable 'x' factor," Vickie Benson said. "If we can stay healthy, we have a really good chance to be playing excellent basketball in January and February."

With an increase in mold lately players are concerned that it could affect their future games.

Teamwork is the most important thing for getting the job done, everyone contributes and everyone works well, sometimes they won't and nothing will get done, that's why it's important that the girls get along very well or they will lose more often.

"The team has an amazing chemistry. We are like a big family and the most close-knit team I've ever been

a part of," Amber Lotz said. "We have team bonding outside of school whenever we can and just love to constantly be around one another which isn't true for a lot of teams."

A team's chemistry is an important factor of success, finals starting on December 15th hopefully will not change the basketball schedule.

With so many games to prepare for and so little hours in the day the girls are preparing for Westlake although it may be a hard game the coach sees effort in the team.

"Our team has been playing really well lately, but we definitely haven't reached our full potential," Kianna Ray said. "We have developed in so many areas, but of course, there's always things to work on. Our team is good at learning from the past."

So far this season the girls have a record of 11-4 and the players practice for their upcoming game against Westlake.

One of the most important things for the team is the school support. The students, teachers, and parents

are constantly encouraging the girls to grow and play hard and also giving them a reason to play.

"That's what I love about the team, everyone wants to play so they compete and don't slack off," Lotz said. "Coach gives us multiple chances to prove ourselves and that's what I love. If you mess up you just have to work hard and make up for it."

The coach's effort to towards the team is helping push the girls to many wins in the future. The girls love the team and they are joyful towards each other and all the support and hopefully nobody will get sick and it will be a great season. The varsity girls are playing Westlake on the 11th of December and Benson has confidence in them.

"The team does not cheat on effort," Benson said. "They understand the value and importance of giving it their all."

The coaches are preparing the girls for the Westlake game that is said to be one of the hardest games. ★

'Dawg Records

<p>BOYS BASKETBALL: Record: 6-5 Upcoming Games: Dec. 11 @ Westlake Dec. 18 @ Lanier</p> <p>SOCCER: Upcoming games: Dec. 30 v Ellison HS @ G-town</p>	<p>GIRLS BASKETBALL: Record: 11-4 Upcoming Games: Dec. 19 Tournament @ Cedar Park</p> <p>WRESTLING: Upcoming Matches: Dec. 12 @ SA Roosevelt HS</p>
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Alexander Hamilton raps

Avila Dye
Staff Writer

To anyone not familiar with the hottest show on Broadway, the combination of words “Alexander Hamilton rap musical” seems like the punchline of a joke, or maybe a bizarre game of Mad Libs. However, to the thousands of fans—among them the Obamas, Paul McCartney, and Beyoncé—of the critically-acclaimed musical Hamilton, it’s a musical masterpiece.

But not only is the show reaching some very famous eyes and ears, it’s also reaching students and their classrooms to learn the history material.

Written by Tony Award-winning writer and lyricist Lin Manuel Miranda, Hamilton seems like an unlikely hit in both its subject matter as well as its musical influences.

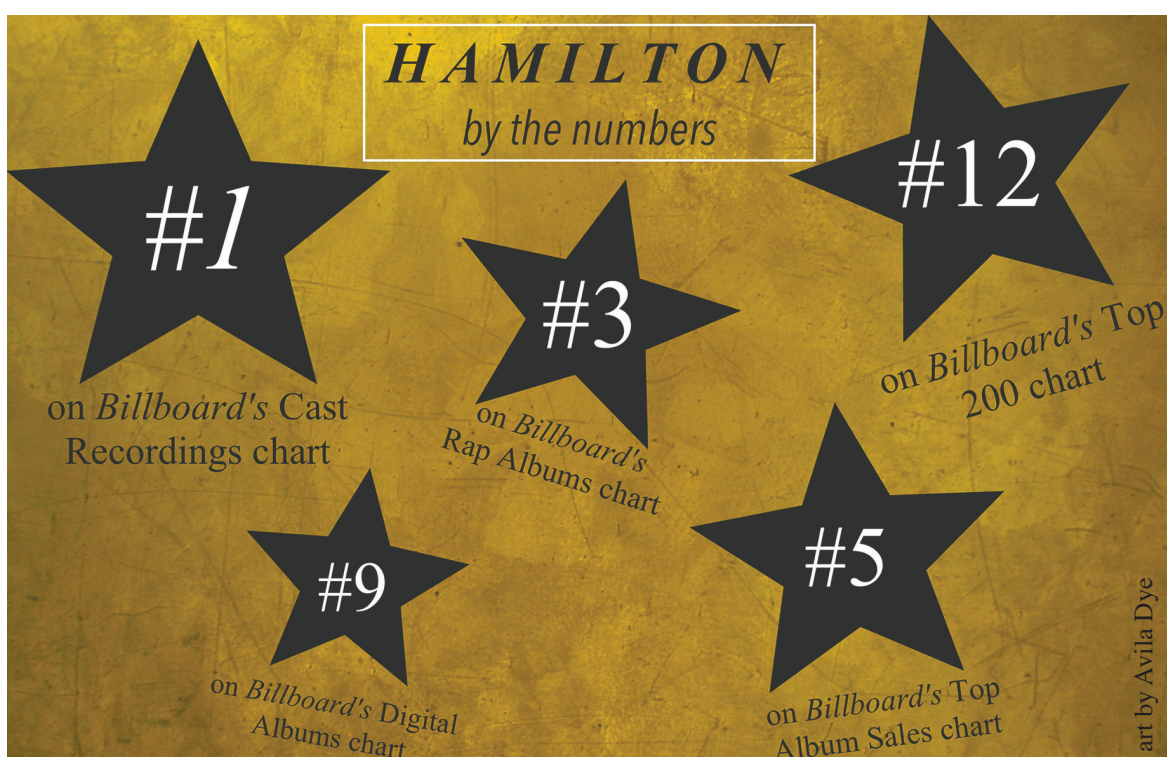
But despite the doubts of some, Hamilton has received rave reviews across the board, is sold out in New York City well into next spring, won Miranda the MacArthur Genius Grant, and, perhaps most surprisingly, is topping the rap charts alongside the likes of Drake and Fetty Wap.

“Lin Manuel Miranda creates music that is parallel to modern and old school hip hop, R&B, and rap styles,” senior Austin Hyde said. “I’d say he is one of the only people to mix rap and musicals together perfectly without making it stupid or gimmicky.”

As Miranda told The Atlantic in a September interview, Hamilton is “a story about American then, told by America now.” Though the story centers around the Founding Fathers, the cast of Hamilton is multi-racial; every principal role is played by African-American, Latino, and Asian-American actors, which is another angle that draws audiences in.

“If it was a bunch of old white men singing classically about what happened to Alexander Hamilton, I don’t think anybody would be interested,” sophomore Lauren Norris said.

However, Hamilton is more



than just entertainment—it’s also an educational tool. With its exhilarating hip hop anthems about revolution, cabinet debates reimaged as rap battles, and heart-wrenching R&B ballads, the musical is teaching its listeners about American history in a new, refreshing way.

“I think we think of history as something boring and in the past, but these were some of the most exciting years in American history,” Norris said. “It’s just really interesting and [Hamilton] makes it a lot more accessible for young, modern audiences.”

Hamilton breathes life into the dusty pages of history books by not only including big historical events like the American Revolution, but also the more personal stories of Alexander Hamilton and his peers; their petty arguments, their grief, their lost love. It uses modern music and language to tell these stories, making them more relatable for the audiences of the 21st century.

“It’s a whole other story and concept, it’s not just about telling history,” Norris said. “It’s a complex and multi-faceted story, and I think it reflects a lot of concepts and struggles that we see in our

modern lives today.”

With its educational potential, it’s unsurprising that Hamilton has made it into classrooms. Many US History teachers in American high schools have used the musical as a way to get their students interested in the subject, including those at Bowie.

“We were going to be learning about Alexander Hamilton’s financial plan as secretary of state, and so we used it to introduce the lesson,” AP U.S. History teacher Ruth Ann Widner said. “We wanted [the students] to know a little more about his origin, his story, to try to explain why he created the financial plans that he did.”

Though the subject matter combined with the style of music used for the Hamilton caused even history teachers like Widner to have their doubts about how effective the musical would be, she quickly warmed up to it upon seeing how students responded.

“I thought, ‘A whole musical on Alexander Hamilton? Who’s gonna like that?’ but I just know how popular it was with my students, even my own daughter who’s not in U.S. History loves the musical and keeps telling me about how she’s

learning about Alexander Hamilton,” Widner said. “I love that, that it’s drawing kids into a historical figure from the 1790s that otherwise they would care very little about.”

In the lesson, Widner and her colleagues used the opening number of Hamilton in which the characters sing and rap about Hamilton’s childhood as an illegitimate child in the West Indies and how he used his superhuman work ethic and talent for writing to get a scholarship in New York City, setting the stage for the events portrayed in the musical.

“They definitely loved the style, they were mesmerized by it, they were focused on it, and most of the class wanted to watch it again,” Widner said.

It’s possible that Hamilton has changed how present-day American audiences think about the history of their country, and perhaps some of them will see themselves in the story of Alexander Hamilton, someone who started with nothing and made it into a very big something, and find themselves inspired to become America’s future leaders, creators, and innovators. ★

Sci-Fi movie excites

Evan Owen
Staff Writer

The Star Wars series started in 1977, and became the 5th highest grossing movie series of all time, behind Harry Potter and James Bond. The new movie “Star Wars VII: The Force Awakens” is a sequel to “Star Wars VI: Return of the Jedi” which came out in 1983.

Some students are dressing up for the release.

“Ever since I was in kindergarten I’ve liked Star Wars,” sophomore John Martin said. “My family would go over to my grandparents house. They had the original series, and that’s the only thing that I would watch.”

Tickets have sold out almost everywhere.

“I think it’s gonna be amazing, J.J. Abrams is a great director,” Martin said. “He was able to revive the Star Trek franchise, and I think he can do it again with the new Star Wars movie.”

Some people want to show their appreciation for the series by dressing up for the premiere, costumes ranging from a simple hat or shirt, to full, realistic costumes.

“I’ve thought about buying some Jar Jar Binks ears,” Martin said. “I think it would be pretty ridiculous.”

Others, however, have another point of view on it.

“Unlike others, I’m not gonna dress up,” sophomore, Craig Johnson said. “Because it would only distract me.” ★

In Review: Mockingjay Part 2

Fuaad Ajaz
News Editor

As more of Panem turns into rubble, Katniss Everdeen and her group of people from various districts run, hide, and sneak around the capitol.

All the characters in this movie were more than unusual, which put a good twist. From the mentally ill Peeta, to the dying President Snow all of the things happening to the characters made the movie.

When the waves of tar were plummeting down towards the group and Peeta grabs Katniss and tries to throw her in the tar was where we truly saw how mentally ill he was because one minute he loves katniss and the next he hates her which

pretty much sums up that he is bipolar.

Another thing that there was a lot in this movie was death. Finnick, Snow, Coin, and the beloved Prim were just a few who die in the movie. But, the way these people die could have been portrayed better, like Prim’s. The way Prim died was just really bad. I mean she was there then gone. The scene would have been better if they showed Prim helping the kids and Katniss hugs her then Prim dies when Katniss gets on to the grounds of the president’s mansion.

The leader of the rebellion, President Coin of District 13, in part one and two acts like this kind figure that everyone looks up to. However, the two-faced lady isn’t really trying to change anything about Panem except being the president



Mockingjay which is basically the poster child for the rebellion. In this last movie Katniss had that tough personality mixed in with the nurturing mom-like personality. When she opened Peeta’s handcuffs you could see in her eyes that she almost felt sorry for him, but then when those lizards popped out she was ready to fight. The movie had a good balance of action and romance.

In the end when the audience finds out that Haymitch and Effie were a low key couple was probably one of the funniest scenes in the movie, the second being when the Everdeen family cat Buttercup comes back.

Overall, the Mockingjay had all the odds in her favor and left as a victor in her last hunger games. ★



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