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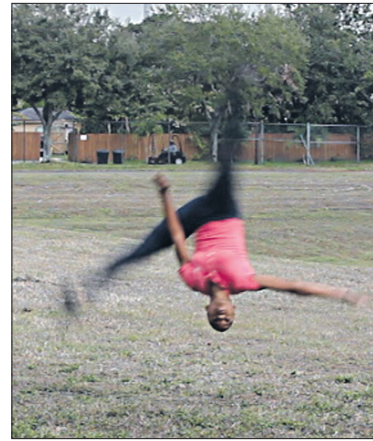
**J.HOP
TIMES**

John Hopkins Middle School
St. Petersburg, Florida



ANGELINA SAENKA | JHT

Third year's a charm
Trojans win their first basketball title since 2002.
BACK PAGE



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Sick tricks and rides
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Check out who has unusual talents here at JHMS. **PAGE 11**

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Slowing it down

Learning *mindfulness* may help you de-stress and de-clutter your life. **PAGE 3**

JHT staff

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The aim of the *J.Hop Times* is to fairly and honestly report the news, and to provide a forum for students, faculty and staff.

Here's how you can be heard

Write a column, letter or draw a cartoon (keep it clean, no profanity or name calling.) Spell and fact-check your work. We reserve the right to correct any factual or grammatical mistakes. Sign your work and bring it to our newsroom in Building 5-113.

Note: There is no guarantee your work will be published.

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For more news, go to
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A case of eighth-grade-itis

We have all heard of senioritis. In fact, the Oxford Dictionary defines it as “a supposed affliction of students in their final year of high school or college, characterized by a decline in motivation or performance.” But eighth-grade-itis is also just as real, and some John Hopkins students are already feeling its effects, myself included.

I was recently hit with a wakeup call. It all began when I was accepted into my top two picks for high schools next year. Knowing

that I would be going to one of these schools already, I decided to cut loose a little bit and stop caring so much about my grades. But then, I realized a C might not look too great on my record. With that C in mind, I realized that school isn't over yet, and it's not time to stop caring. Yeah, I know. This



AJLA KUC
JHT Editor in Chief

Emoji as a language

It all started with a colon and a right parenthesis — :) . The smiley face emoticon was the first in a now-library full of illustrated emojis people can use to communicate. But enough is enough, already. The use of emojis in conversation has gone too far.

The emoji's effect on our culture is hard to ignore. In 2015, the Oxford Dictionary named the “Face with Tears of Joy” emoji the word of the year. According to a statement on the dictionary's website, emo-

jis are a form of communication that can “cross language barriers,” and this one in particular was used the most in 2015 by brands and celebrities.

Given how popular the emoji has become, it's entirely possible for you to have an entire text conversation with your



KAYLEE PEDIGO
JHT Times Staff Writer

friend using the small digital icons. But if you want to have a rich and nuanced conversation about a serious topic, the emoji only goes so far. In the end, we must revert back to our spoken language to best explain ourselves.

Say I sent the cake and party hat symbols to a friend of mine when asked what I'm doing today. My friend may interpret it as a birthday party while I meant for it to be a party in general. There was a miscommunication and they interpreted it differently than I did. This is just one example, but if you're the type of person who uses emojis multiple times per sentence, you

might not be perfectly understood by the recipient of your message.

Using emojis when texting with our friends can be fun, but there's just no way they can replace our spoken language... not yet at least. Maybe in the future when we have a larger selection of them they can be considered their own language, similar to the Egyptian hieroglyphics. But as of right now, they are just a form of communication we use to show emotions in our posts and texts, and should be used as seldom as possible.

Now here's a dare for you: Try to text a full conversation with your friend but only use emoji to talk. Expect there to be some confusion.

Face the facts about climate change

It's getting hot in here, and that might not be a good thing. For the third consecutive year, the average global temperature was the hottest on record since recordkeeping began.

Due to climate change, the Earth's climate continues to warm, which may cause many problems down the line. *Big* problems. Rising sea levels, shoreline erosion, increased temperatures, and droughts, are among the many environmental issues we will face as a planet.

The issue will only continue to get worse under the Trump administration.

President Donald Trump's recently confirmed pick for the Environmental Protection Agency, Scott Pruitt, is likely to start undermining climate change regulations. Pruitt is a long-

time ally of the fossil fuel industry and has referred to human-caused global warming as a “hoax.”

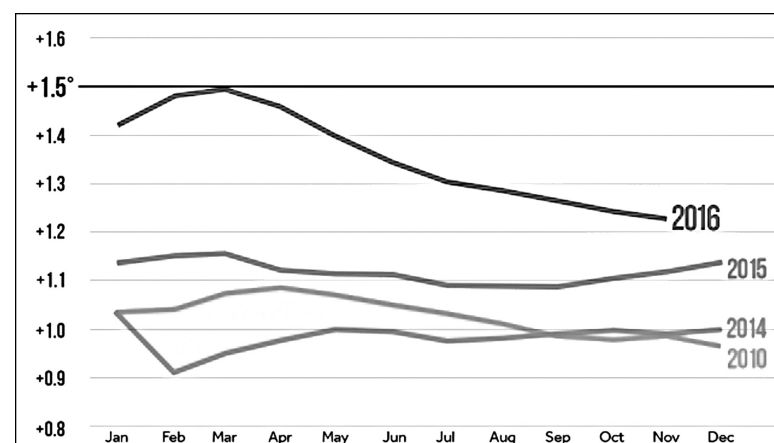
According to Myron Ebell, the leader of Trump's EPA transition team, Trump is expected to pull the United States out of the Paris climate change agreement. According to the United Nations website, the agreement “brings all nations into a common cause to undertake ambitious efforts to combat climate change and adapt to its effects, with enhanced support to assist developing countries to do so.”

It's not the first time Trump has been rumored to be a climate change denier. In the past, Trump has said in a tweet that climate change was a “hoax” created by China. He also more recently said that “nobody really knows” if climate change is real.

In addition to Trump possibly leaving the Paris climate agreement, he also has issued a new “1 step forward, 2 steps back” executive order. For every new regulation

2016 the hottest year on record

Global temperature averaged and adjusted to early industrial baseline (1881-1910). Data as of Jan. 2017. Temperature changes given in degrees centigrade.



NOAA via Climate Central

put in place by agencies, two regulations must be taken away. This plan hints at the idea of de-regulating carbon dioxide emissions and worsening the climate change issue.

Trump has made the U.S. econ-

omy a centerpiece of his appeal to his constituents. At the very least, his administration should keep in mind that the economy will inevitably suffer if ever-increasing temperatures destroy our planet.

Slowing it down

Mindfulness may help you de-stress and de-clutter your life.

BY AJLA KUC
JHT Editor-in-Chief

CLOSE YOUR EYES, and focus on your breath for one minute.

Open your eyes. How do you feel? If the theories behind mindfulness practice are any indication, you should be feeling a little bit better than you did prior to this exercise.

Studies show that middle school and high school students are more stressed out than other generations were at this age. According to The Nuffield Foundation, the number of 15/16 year olds reporting that they “frequently feel anxious or depressed” has doubled in the last 30 years, from one in 30 to two in 30 for boys, and one in 10 to two in 10 for girls.

As a response to the increased stress of modern life, schools across the country are turning to mindfulness to help students manage their stress, and even improve their academic performance.

JHMS social worker Mr. McKillop believes mindfulness practice can be a powerful tool. “It makes students aware of what’s going on,” he said.

Brooklyn, New York’s Park Slope Collegiate teacher Adam Kuranishi uses meditation with his students daily. “Meditation supports students’ transition from class to class, and it cultivates a community of compassion and respect,” Kuranishi said recently in Edutopia.

But what, exactly, is mindfulness?

Shin Buddhist priest José Tirado defines

mindfulness as, “The practice of paying attention to being where you are, how you feel, what you think, and all other aspects of being, at any given moment.”

Mindfulness can be attained through meditation and other deep focus exercises. But J. Hop eighth-grader Sophia Weaver says she doesn’t have much time to slow down and meditate, even on the weekends.

“I don’t,” she said. “I spend my whole weekend doing school.”

Chris Acosta, owner of St. Petersburg Yoga and Meditation Studio, sees how much stress young people have and thinks meditation would be beneficial.

“Many kids these days have a tendency of racing,” said Acosta, an anxious quality he didn’t notice in his own childhood.

In a survey done by MindfulSchools.org of teachers using mindfulness in their classrooms, 83 percent of teachers said they notice increased focus in students and 79 percent saw better engagement. Along with performing better in their class, 89 percent of teachers observed students having better emotion regulation.

Bringing mindfulness education to a school may have positive effects, but it does require a buy-in from the school’s community. McKillop believes mindfulness could be incorporated here at J.Hop, but “everyone would have to be on the same page. You have to have teamwork.”

Buddhist priest José Tirado believes mindfulness should be taught to children early on.

“You’re giving them tools to calm down, to notice things better, to control themselves, and thereby affect their environment better,” he said.

Sophia said she has tried to meditate before, but says it doesn’t do anything for her. “It’s boring,” she admitted. But boring as it might seem at first, Sophia does see how practicing mindful meditation could help her.

“It would bring more routine and balance,” she said. “Balancing school, while also enjoying life.”

If there’s one thing that mindfulness can teach, it is to be totally focused on one thing at a time, especially the things you enjoy.

Is there an app for that?

If you need some help on your way to finding a more balanced and stress-less life, here are a few apps to check out:

Stop, Breathe, and Think: This app opens with a quick interview where you can select words to describe how you feel, and then the app suggests guided meditations for your current mood.

Smiling Mind. Designed especially for teens.

Take a Break! This app offers short guided meditations for stress relief.

Source: huffingtonpost.com

JHT Web Editor Halle Link contributed to this story.

So how do you practice mindfulness?

It’s easier than you think to find time to slow down your crazy day and make some mental space for positive mind-body balance. Here are a few ideas:

1. MINDFUL BREATHING

This can be done standing up or sitting down. Simply be still and focus on your breath for one minute. Breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth. Let go of your thoughts about what you have to do or where you’re going next. Just let yourself be still for one minute.

2. MINDFUL OBSERVATION

Choose an object that you have around you. It can be anything that we don’t normally take the time to look at because we are busy rushing around. Sit quietly. Don’t do anything except notice the thing you’re looking at. Do this for as long as your concentration allows. Visually explore it. Allow yourself to connect with the object’s energy.

3. MINDFUL AWARENESS

Think of something that happens every day more than once, like opening a door or turning on a light. At the moment you touch the doorknob or the light switch, stop and be mindful of where you are and how you feel, appreciating that moment in time. Instead of going through the day on autopilot, taking these moments to stop and be aware brings mindfulness to your daily life.

4. MINDFUL APPRECIATION

Notice five things in your day that usually go unappreciated. These things can be objects or people. Take a few quiet minutes to simply give thanks for the little things that make up your world. Think about their creation and purpose and appreciate how they add to your life.

Source: pocketmindfulness.com

What’s in it for me?

If you think slowing things down a bit just isn’t your thing, consider these benefits to practicing mindfulness:

1. Studies show that students who practice mindfulness before an exam perform better than students who don’t.

A study published in the journal Psychological Science shows that mindfulness training can help college students do better on the verbal section of the GRE. Researchers found that those who did mindfulness training did better on working memory tasks and had higher accuracy than those who did not do the training.

2. Mindfulness practice can improve concentration.

A study in the online edition of the journal PLoS Biology shows that mindfulness meditation leads to a significant shift in how the brain pays attention. Basically, if you

can let go of random thoughts that pop into your head, you can attend to more immediate and important things and events that are happening around you.

3. Mindfulness helps reduce the symptoms of anxiety, stress, and depression.

Focusing on the here and now helps individuals become aware of their negative thoughts, acknowledge them without judgment and realize they’re not accurate reflections of reality, according to

author William Marchand, M.D. The negative thoughts become less powerful and can be released, making way for a more positive outlook.

Source: huffingtonpost.com



Catching up with Mr. Brown

A quarterly “state of the school” conversation with the principal

As the third quarter comes to an end, Mr. Brown looks back on how the year began, and what can be improved as the year continues.

How is preparation for the FSA going?

It's going well. Writing is coming up soon and we are letting the data drive us.

How many weeks of testing are we looking at?

How many weeks is forever? We start in February and have a gap until March. Then we get rolling until April.

How much classroom interruption do you think there will be?

We are going to try to limit it as much as possible but the things we will be doing are necessary. This is also the second year Dr. Chiles has been in charge of testing.

How has IB changed our school this year?

It's been a slow process. When I ask kids about the learner profiles, they don't know all of them. I think we're okay for a school that has been doing it for a little over a year.

How has Student Government Association benefited the school?

It's been good. I have met with them and I'm glad we have got kids being a voice for our students.

Do you have any spring break plans?

I'm hoping my son, who plays for Kansas State, will make it to the NCAA Tournament. I will travel to support him. If not, I'll be trying not to think about work and relax.

Ajla Kuc and Kayla Anderson, JHT Editor-in-Chief and Assistant Editor

Local TV highlights JHMS

BY HALLE LINK
JHT Web Editor

J.Hop students and staff started Friday morning, Nov. 4, bright and early at 5 a.m., welcoming reporters for the 10News live School of the Week segment. The School of the Week feature highlights outstanding schools in the Tampa Bay area.

10 News reporter Tammie Fields streamed live interviews with magnet students and J.Hop staff. “It’s impressive that so many parents got you up and got you here. It’s great,” she said.

“We go to a lot of schools, but this one is hard to beat,” she added.

“Channel 10 looks at schools and provides an opportunity for schools to shine,” said JHMS Principal Mr. Brown.

Interviewed about the magnet programs, Brown said, “It’s an opportunity for our students to be in a class that they’re passionate about every day.”

Magnet coordinator Mr. Mills believes the strength of the program comes from the access to professionals the students have. “We provide our kids content area specialists, so they have professionals that work in their field working with the kids



CHLOE MEYERS | JHT

10 News reporter Tammie Fields sets up a live interview with magnet arts students and staff during Channel 10’s School of the Week feature at JHMS.

every day,” he said.

Throughout the morning, magnet students performed musical

pieces and showed selections from the upcoming dance concert.

Students were tired but satisfied

by the end of the morning. “It was very enthusiastic,” said seventh-grader Jameel Grimes.

Marching to a new beat

BY IOANA GAGANELOVA
AND LINDSEY GAVORNIK
JHT Staff Writers

JHMS has a new band director, and he’s hitting all the right notes.

Band director Mr. Vickrey joined JHMS in January, taking over after former director Mr. Allen left to take a position on Florida’s East Coast.

This is Vickrey’s first experience teaching middle school. Prior to coming to John Hopkins, he taught music to college students for more than 20 years at schools including Eckerd College, the Player School of Music in Clearwater, and St. Petersburg College.

Vickrey is settling in to his new position, learning the ropes of leading a middle school band.

“I understand that with a new teacher, they do not know me yet,” he said. And he is trying to fix that by getting to know the students better and earning their trust.

Vickrey’s main goal for the

band is to “improve and grow as a group.” Some improvements he would like to make include recruiting more musicians—especially those willing to learn trombone and the baritone saxophone—and teaching more challenging musical arrangements. His hope is that if the students can perform more complex pieces, they will have a better chance at impressing judges at competitions.

When it comes to Vickrey’s own musical experience, he is proficient in a multitude of instruments. Though his main expertise is woodwinds, (think clarinet and flute) he also can play the piano, the saxophone, the drums, and the guitar.

As Vickrey begins his stay at John Hopkins Middle School, there’s a motto he lives by and hopes his students learn from, “Respect each other, respect everybody’s time, be goal oriented to work hard and have fun.”

That advice is pitch-perfect.



LIVIA ZEIGLER | JHT

Band director Mr. Vickrey demonstrates flute technique during Band 2 class.

Civics lesson

Visits from foreign journalists help underscore the First Amendment rights we enjoy.

BY HALLE LINK
JHT Web Editor

As Americans, the First Amendment provides citizens the right to freedom of speech, the press, religion, assembly and petition. Meeting people from other countries helps to show how these rights can often be taken for granted.

Two groups of international journalists visited the *J.Hop Times* newsroom in November as part of the U.S. Dept. of State's Edward R. Murrow Professional Journalist Program. The 30 journalists, who hailed from multiple African countries and Tajikistan, discussed many different topics with the JHT staff including their different freedoms.

Journalists from Tajikistan said the country is gaining more freedoms, including freedom of press, which will make it easier to report and write stories. "It's not easy to

be a journalist, it's difficult to get sources that you need," said one of the seven journalists.

Another challenge for the journalists is you have to self-censor yourself and what you write. One of the journalists commented, "We have to be careful not to say anything offensive in our posts," indicating that the government would be displeased with some information reported.

Most of the African journalists, on the other hand, said their countries don't have freedom of press, which makes their job harder. "It's not easy because the government controls what is said," said one of the twenty-three African journalists.

A challenge in the country Gambia is that there are a lot of unamiable sources. "You can't always confirm your sources. It's very risky," said Saikou Jammeh, the Secretary General for the Gambia Press Union.



HADASSAH EBORDA | JHT

Visiting journalists from Tajikistan talk with *J.Hop Times* staff.

Both countries differ on the view of women journalists. In Tajikistan they have a great deal of respect for women, and so for women journalists. "It's actually a lot easier for women journalists compared to male journalists. Women journalists never get yelled at in meetings," said female journalist Mehrangez Tursunzoda.

But in the African country of Chad, the situation is a bit differ-

ent. "In my country, there is a negative view of women journalists. It is seen as 'dirty work' for women," said journalist Eveline Fakir.

Not all the other African journalists shared that view in their own countries. "It's beginning to change. Women journalists get a lot more opportunities now," said the Nigerian journalist.

As the world becomes a smaller place and governments continue

to alter their stance on press freedoms, the work these journalists do is extremely important. Zambian journalist Charles Mafa expressed concern that, even though the U.S. has been good to Africa, now "they're worried they won't be able to come (to the U.S.)."

These journalists' visits to JHMS and the *J.Hop Times* newsroom are a helpful reminder of the freedoms we have as Americans.

Weekend interrupted.

Some JHMS students choose to spend Saturday mornings improving their skills.

BY SAMANTHA NEELY
JHT Staff Writer

As the second hand on the clock ticks closer and closer to 4 p.m. every Friday, most students at John Hopkins are making plans in their heads for the coming two days off. But for some, Saturday is just another school day.

That's right. School.

On Saturday.

But why would anyone actually want to go to Saturday school?

Magnet Program Assistant Principal Mills has an answer to that. "Everybody could get something out of Saturday school," he said.

See, Saturday school is a help, an aid for students, unlike the disciplinary action it once was. Some need to bring up their grades. Others want to be ready for spring testing or End of Course exams (EOCs).

Megan Ashley attends the Saturday

program. "My mom got a phone call that I had to go to Saturday school for reading," she said. "It helps you recap what you've learned from the quarters."

According to sixth grade assistant principal Dr. Chiles, of the 657 students at J.Hop, approximately 50 currently attend Saturday school every week from 9 to 11 a.m.

Seventh grade guidance counselor Ms. Cruz-Laynes said she believes at least 130 students should be going to Saturday school. She recommends "anyone who is failing and struggling," to attend the program to help improve their grades.

Reading teacher Ms. Andrews agrees there are many benefits for students in the program.

"It's a choice that will help them do better in their classes," Andrews said.

For teachers, the satisfaction of helping struggling students to succeed keeps them coming to school on Saturdays. The extra

pocket money that comes with it also doesn't hurt. The first and second teacher from each subject to come are paid, while the rest volunteer, according to math teacher Ms. Jones.

For students, Saturday school can help them succeed on tests. But not all students are sold on the idea.

"Honestly, are we ever going to say, 'What's 14 to the square root' when we're old? No!" said seventh-grader Amelia Beatty.

The lack of homework and dress code at Saturday school makes it very different from regular, weekday school. The two-hour time slot doesn't leave room for socializing or just hanging around. It's a time for focusing and improving skills.

That's one of the main reasons seventh-grader Cereniti Shedrick prefers regular school. "I get to see all my friends."

But even Cereniti agrees that "the things I didn't understand, I understand clearly" after going to school on Saturdays.

So maybe Saturday school is worth the effort for some students, even if they don't want to be there in the first place.

Celebrating African ancestry

BY CUR'NECIA MARTIN
JHT Staff Writer

A group of J. Hop students got a first-hand look at the contributions made by people of African ancestry to the United States and the world culture. In January, students from the College Reachout Program (CROP) attended the ZORA! Festival, an event that celebrates the life and work of 20th century African-American writer Zora Neale Hurston every year in her hometown of Eatonville, Florida.

This was the 28th year the multi-day festival was hosted in Eatonville, which is the nation's oldest, incorporated African-American municipality in the country. Thousands of people come out each

year to learn about the history of the town and its famous former resident.

"The ZORA! Festival was entertaining and interesting," said eighth-grader Raven Anderson.

On the trip, John Hopkins students attended workshops that introduced them to African-American culture and history, and had time to meet different people and potential new friends during the celebration.

Because in the words of Zora Neale Hurston, "It seems to me that trying to live without friends is like milking a bear to get cream for your morning coffee. It is a whole lot of trouble, and then not worth much after you get it."



KRYSTA BRAYTON | JHT

Ms. Shorter joined the JHMS social studies department in November 2016.

Creating her *legacy*

Ms. Shorter may have family ties to J.Hop, but she's making her own mark.

BY HALLE LINK AND KRYSTA BRAYTON
JHT Web Editor, Staff Writer

As Ms. Shorter joins John Hopkins as a sixth grade social studies teacher, she is continuing the teaching legacy of her husband's family. Many years ago, Shorter's father-in-law used to teach at J. Hop, back when it was called Sixteenth Street Middle School, and his mother was a principal at Gibbs High School.

But Ms. Shorter wasn't always a

teacher. Originally her background was in criminal justice, but she realized she might be able to make more of a difference in the classroom.

"I came into teaching to see the problems and help students be successful," said Ms. Shorter. "I experienced people who were in a bad and troubling state, and I just wanted to help before they got to that state."

Shorter began her teaching career in 2005 in South Carolina. After gaining more experience in

Virginia, she moved to Florida to be closer to her husband's family. In St. Petersburg, she's had positions at both Bay Point Middle and Tyrone Middle schools.

Sixth grade social studies teacher Ms. Lynch has high praise for Shorter.

"She's a perfect fit for J.Hop," she said. "She has just so much positive energy and has such a warm vibe."

It's that warm vibe that Shorter believes helps her in her teaching.

"I like to give the affirmations that (the students are) smart," said Ms. Shorter. "You have to build a relationship with kids. Make the

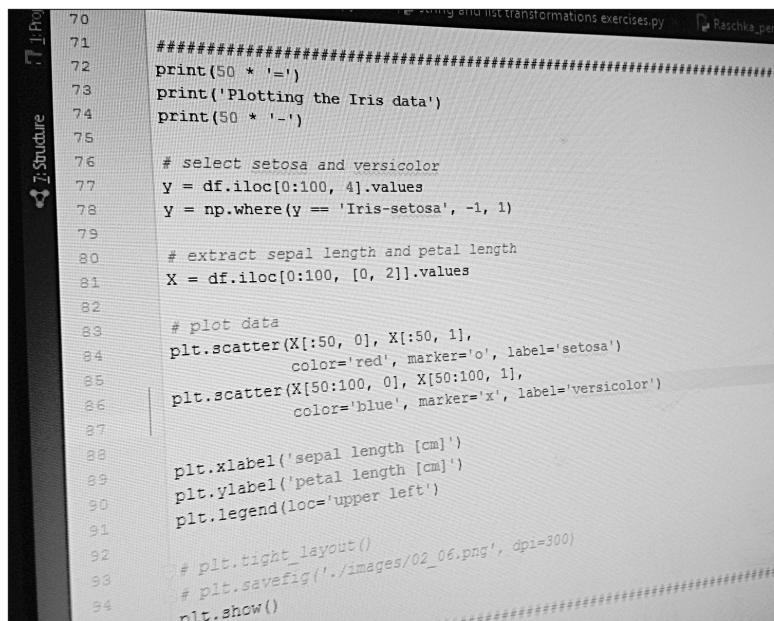
children a part of the classroom."

Shorter does this through class competitions and a reward system to show the kids they have a teacher who's willing to help them. So far her methods are working.

"She makes things fun, and she's very helpful," said sixth-grader Jamariyah Williams.

Sixth-grader Bryan Kister agrees. "My learning has improved. I'm understanding a lot more clearly since she has come here," he said.

And clearly, Ms. Shorter has already begun creating a legacy of her own at JHMS, one fueled by passion and compassion.



JHT Staff

Hello, world!

BY KAYLA ANDERSON
JHT Assistant Editor

Instead of taking Spanish, French, or German in high school, which depending on the career you are planning to go into might not be useful, maybe you should try coding, instead.

Sen. Jeff Brandes of St. Petersburg introduced a new bill that will allow high school students the opportunity to take computer coding as a foreign language. Florida will be the first state to allow students to earn foreign language credit with a coding course.

"If they're more interested in technology and computer sciences,

then this would offer them a viable option," said Sen. Brandes in a Tampa Bay Times column.

The bill will not require computer coding in school, but will provide an option for students to learn a computer language like HTML or Python instead of a foreign spoken language.

Giving students this option may encourage students to succeed in their classes because they know they'll be using the skills in their future careers.

Seventh-grader Skyler Askew believes that offering coding as a substitute for a foreign language would be beneficial to the school.

Coding may soon earn you a foreign language credit.

"Coding's a lot more useful, you can do a lot more with it," he said.

Skyler first got into coding with the help of his father, who happens to be a computer programmer. With the help of his dad and some YouTube video, Skyler was able to create a few text-based games using code. Taking an actual class, he said, will help him in his pursuit to become a professional programmer.

The bill has passed its first hurdle in the Senate, and is on its way to becoming a law.

Starting next year, first-year foreign language students will begin their classes learning "Hola", "Bonjour", and maybe even <html>.

Fish tales

The JHMS Fishing Club is in full swing for its second year.

BY ABBEY GUSSY AND BRODY BARLEY
JHT Staff Writers

Not one, not two, but 15 mangrove snappers were pulled out of Bay Vista Park by a J.Hop student.

Sixth-grader Joan Bach was having a very good Saturday morning at a meeting of the John Hopkins Fishing Club. Members like to take advantage of the parks and waterways that surround St. Petersburg.

Joan said she likes the fishing club because, "I get to brag in Bryan's (Keister) face."

Sixth-grader Jake Marshall doesn't do it for the bragging rights. He just enjoys fishing. "I like the fishing club because everyone can't fish, but the club provides (gear) for them."

And they don't just catch little fish. They get the big ones, too.

Sixth-grader Isaiah Thomas said, "The longest fish I caught was a lizard fish. It was really fun."

Club sponsor Ms. Delgado, who has been the club's leader since last year, said the Bay Vista trip was very successful. "It was fun. I got to see dolphins and manatees," she said.

She and co-sponsor Coach Starling choose a different place to fish each month.

The Fishing Club meets one Saturday per month for a fishing outing from 9 a.m. to noon, and they meet the first Thursday of the month before school from 8:30-9:20.

If you'd like to join the club, see sponsors Ms. Delgado or Coach Starling for an application.

Zydrianna Richardson and Eddie Rowe contributed to this story.



Courtesy of Ms. Bentil

Sixth-grader Joan Bach shows off her catch during a fishing club outing in Gulfport.

DONALD J. TRUMP TAKES THE OATH OF OFFICE TO BECOME THE 45TH PRESIDENT.

SWORN IN



New York Times

BY KAYLA ANDERSON
JHT Assistant Editor

Donald J. Trump was sworn in as the 45th president of the United States at 11:59 a.m. on Jan. 20 amid protests and boycotts in one of the most controversial inaugurations in recent history. Even though the inauguration took place in Washington, D.C., he is a topic of disagreement at J.Hop.

“I think that it was a sad day for America,” said eighth-grader Estella Banks. “A lot of mistakes were made, and I think we went a few steps back.”

Seventh-grader Fletcher Marshall is taking a wait-and-see approach. “I like Barrack Obama better than Donald Trump right now, but we’ll see what happens.”

Trump won a long campaign battle on a populist platform crafted to appeal to voters who

felt marginalized by the Washington elite. His “Make America Great Again” tagline struck a chord with voters all across the U.S., but particularly those in the heartland of America.

Sixth-grader Faith Pierce is supportive of our president. “Donald Trump is a great guy and he could help bring less immigrants,” she said.

Civics teacher Mr. Dickter believes time is the best measure of a president. “It’s hard to judge a presidency until you have a historical perspective,” he said.

Trump’s 16-minute inaugural address did not follow the usual calls for unity and positive action former presidents have chosen to voice. Instead, Trump attacked those in power in Washington and painted a picture of an America fraught with problems, from drug use to job loss to illegal immigration.

“The time for talk is over,” Trump

said. “Now arrives the hour for action.” A key phrase from Trump’s campaign has been to “drain the swamp”, referring to the elite who run the country at the expense of ordinary citizens.

Barack and Michelle Obama watched the ceremony, as did former Presidents Jimmy Carter, George W. Bush, and Bill Clinton, accompanied by his wife, Hillary. Democrat Hillary Rodham Clinton ran against Trump in the race to the White House.

Trump, 70, took the oath with a Bible used by Abraham Lincoln, the same Bible used by President Obama.

The new president was accompanied by his wife, First Lady Melania Trump, their son Barron, his adult children and their spouses.

Maya Patanow and Meena Snyder contributed to this story.



Tampa Bay Times

Women’s March participants gather at Demens Landing in downtown St. Petersburg on Jan. 21.

In solidarity

Crowds take to downtown St. Petersburg streets in response to Trump’s inauguration.

BY LINDSEY GAVORNIK
AND IOANA GAGANELOVA
JHT Staff Writers

Women’s rights are human rights. That was the message of the Women’s March in St. Petersburg on Jan. 21, which drew more than 20,000 people. The local march, which wound its way along St. Petersburg’s downtown waterfront, was one of hundreds of sister protests held in solidarity around the world in response to the inauguration of President Trump.

The gathering in St. Petersburg was the largest of its kind in the area. Organizer Amy Weintraub, said, “This is the first step in building a movement for people in the St. Petersburg area to get involved in social justice issues at a critical time.”

Eighth grade student Indea DeVore attended the event in Demens Landing Park.

“It was amazing,” she said. “It

puts an opinion out into the world. It was the right thing to do and it has a purpose because something might be changed for the better.”

Orchestra teacher Ms. Chambers offered her support for the march. “I think it’s awesome, especially the fact that there were zero arrests,” she said. “This shows the president that women have these rights.”

Another eighth-grader, Morgan Davis, was excited about attending the event because it was a new experience for her.

“It was good that people were standing up and getting their message out,” she said. “These types of events are important because women and minorities need more respect.”

According to estimates, more than 3.5 million marchers participated worldwide. Other protests have popped up around the country since the January protest.

Top 5 science discoveries of 2016

5 SUPERWHEAT COULD HELP SOLVE FUTURE FOOD SHORTAGE PROBLEMS.

GMOs don’t have a great reputation. However, GMOs have been on the up and up in the science world. The newest finding is something scientists are calling “superwheat,” which performs photosynthesis far more efficiently than regular old wheat. The result is a wheat that could yield up 40 percent more crop and help solve food shortage problems.

Source: Pastemagazine.com

4 DRAGONFLY 44 IS A GALAXY MADE UP ENTIRELY OF DARK MATTER.

Dragonfly 44 is an ultra diffuse galaxy in the Coma Cluster that emits only one percent of the light that the Milky Way produces (and is nearly 330 million light years from Earth). Despite the fact that it has very few stars, the Dragonfly 44 is as massive as our own galaxy. New research from the Astrophysical Journal Letters asserts that the galaxy might in fact be made up of 99.99 percent dark matter.

3 STEM CELLS SAFELY HEALED STROKE PATIENTS.

Researchers have successfully used stem cells to help chronic stroke patients see significant improvements. The patients had each suffered a stroke and had permanently lost some kind of motor skills, including not being able to walk at all. There were no serious side effects and had patients going home the very next day.

2 CO2 TURNS INTO SOLID STONE WHEN PUMPED INTO THE GROUND.

In a report from Science, researchers have discovered a new way to possibly lock away carbon dioxide beneath the earth. The idea is that you can capture CO2 directly from power plants and store it beneath the earth by injecting it right into volcanic rock. Doing this causes a reaction to occur that turns the CO2 into new carbonate materials, a process that has been sped up to under two years.

1 DINOSAUR TAIL FEATHERS HAVE BEEN FOUND IN AMBER.

Preserved in amber (fossilized tree sap) we now have a dinosaur feather that once belonged to a dinosaur nearly 99 million years ago. Researchers are thinking that the feathers once sat on the tail of a small, two-legged dinosaur called a coelurosaur, based on the vertebral outline and curvature.

Graciela Ladera, JHT staff writer



CHLOE MEYERS | JHT

The Tree Tops design group won a Most Environmental award for JHMS at the Future City competition in February. The model is currently on display in the media center.

Inspiring Leaders with Future City

BY JAIDEN JONES
JHT Staff Writers

Every city has its problems, but city leaders rarely turn to middle school students for help making things better. But maybe they should. With the guidance of science and gifted teacher Ms. Yauch, two teams of J. Hop students competed in the Future City competition with city models they engineered to help solve a city-wide sustainability issue.

For their entries, students were tasked with brainstorming, designing, and building a city that dealt with this year's topic: "Power of the Public Space".

John Hopkins seventh-grader Ella Ruff enjoyed participating in the competition. Her group's proj-

ect Tree Top received a special award for Most Environmental.

"It's cool to see everyone else's models and what they came up with," she said. "It gave me an opportunity to think creatively and get involved in city-wide issues."

Though neither of the John Hopkins teams were able to advance to the national finals in Washington, D.C., Ms. Yauch was proud of what the students were able to accomplish.

"It could have gone better," she said. "But overall they put a lot of work into it."

With the Tampa Bay area struggling to come up with solutions to their flooding and transportation issues, maybe city leaders can find inspiration in the projects of the city's youngest citizens.

JHMS bans sunflowers seeds – for now

BY KALI COHEN AND KE'NIYA BRUMADGE
JHT staff writers

Warning: One of the favorite snacks here at JHMS has been banned.

That's right, the beloved sunflower seed and all its crunchy, salty goodness has been banished. At least for now. Campus monitors Mr. Green and Mr. Williams banned the seeds after the problem of finding shells all over the floors and hallways got worse, with more students bringing them on campus.

"I think students aren't responsible enough" to put the shells in the trash, Mr. Williams said.

The reviews of this new rule are mixed.

Some students think that sunflowers seeds are good, and they should continue to be allowed on campus.

"You can't ban something we paid our money for," said eighth-grader Tierney Jenkins.

In fact, some students eat so many they are addicted to them, especially now that the seeds come in flavors, like barbecue and ranch.

"I love them," said sixth-grader Anthony Mosley. He prefers the barbecue seeds. "They taste like candy."

But others think that sunflower seeds are nasty when students drop the shells all over the floor instead of into the trash can. Nobody wants to touch slimy, wet shells.

"They are gross and nasty, my opinion, because they have spit all over them," said eighth-grader Makayla Schmidt.

School Resource Officer Hiatt said he likes to eat sunflower seeds, but not on campus. He said he is disgusted by how the students throw them everywhere. "It's not appropriate," he said. "Nasty."

Hiatt said the school ban "is a fair reaction" to the mess.

And plant operators Mr. Rich and Mr. Etheridge think the seeds are anything but sweet. "I hate them," Mr. Etheridge said. He has to pick up the soggy shells that students spit everywhere.

But that doesn't mean students have stopped eating them on campus, though, and lots of people have strong feelings about that.

"I think the students (who spit shells) should get work detail," said Mr. Rich. "Sunflower seeds are the worst thing to clean," he said, because he finds them in the staircases, the bathrooms, the cafeteria and gym. The hardest place to pick them up is on the carpets, because they stick there, he added.

So what happens if you're caught with the contraband shells? According to campus monitor Mr. Green, there isn't a specific consequence for eating sunflower seeds on campus. If you break the rule, regular school discipline policy is followed.

For this year, at least, indulging in the tasty seeds will have to wait until after the school day.

How does sixth-grader Chris Ross feel about that? "I don't eat them a lot," he said, tossing ranch-flavored sunflower seed shells onto the gym floor.



CHLOE MEYERS | JHT

Sunflower seeds, popular snack at JHMS, are no longer allowed on campus.

Your move

BY JAKARI EDWARDS
JHT staff writer

The first thing you may notice about this club meeting is that it's quiet.

Really quiet.

But don't let the silence fool you. Because that silence says the JHMS chess club has all the right moves.

Right now, all of the seven students involved in chess club are boys, but chess club sponsor Mr. Smith hopes more people join the club. "All those who want to be involved are welcome," he said, "and we are looking for girls."

Mr. Smith, who came to John Hopkins to be a mentor, was asked by family and community liaison Ms. Bowers to help out by sponsoring the chess club. He had previously sponsored a chess club at

Melrose Elementary.

You don't have to know how to play chess to join, Mr. Smith said. "I can take anyone and teach them the game."

The students in the club "all seem to know a little about the game," he added.

Sixth-grader Isaiah Thomas is a member of the club. He said he joined the club for two reasons. "You can learn how to play chess, and you can meet new people."

Mr. Smith, who works with the Sickle Cell Disease Association, enjoys his work at John Hopkins. "It's a thrill to work with kids on something new."

The chess club meets every Wednesday after school beginning at 4:15 p.m. in the media center. For more information, contact Ms. Bowers in the main office.



ANGELINA SAENKA | JHT

Chess Club member Josiah Boyd, left, shakes hands with opponent Robert Brown during a game while advisor Mr. Smith, rear, coaches players.

The show won't go on

BY SARA THORNLEY
JHT Staff Writer

It's out of this world! J. Hop students and staff will never be able to see "The Greatest Show on Earth" ever again. The Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus is going out of business. Its final performances happen this May in New York.

People at J.Hop have fond memories of the circus, including seventh-grader Branajah Merae.

"I am very sad because it was a very good circus," she said. "It was a place kids can go to have fun."

Since 1870, the Ringling Bros. circus has been a staple of family entertainment. According to a statement released by the circus, tickets sales have been declining over the years, making the operating costs unsustainable. The circus saw a dramatic drop in attendance after removing the elephants from their show after accusations of animal abuse.

Branajah thinks there is just more for people to spend their money on nowadays.

"They were losing business because people spend a lot of money on the holidays, so they don't have enough money to spend



WDBJ7 News

at the circus," she said.

John Hopkins civics teacher Mr. Dickter believes that over time, the audience has changed for the circus.

"They gave more entertainment to people back then," he said. "Because now, everyone can watch everything on social media on their stupid phones and electronics and don't need to go anywhere to see anything."

Even though this generation has access to an unlimited amount of

entertainment on their phones, there's one thing seventh-grader Demontae Gifford won't be able to experience on the Internet.

"I'm going to miss those fried Oreos," he said.

The final performance of Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey will take place at the Nassau Veterans Memorial Coliseum in Uniondale, New York on May 21. After that, the show will no longer go on, and there are no plans to bring it back.



Courtesy of Chloe Meyers

JHMS student council members Chloe Meyers, left, and Hadassah Eborda accepted the St. Pete's Promise award alongside Principal Brown.

St. Pete's Promise

BY HADASSAH EBORDA
AND CHLOE MEYERS
JHT Staff Writer

When it comes to representing the promise JHMS holds, nobody does it better than this bunch.

JHMS Principal Mr. Brown and student council members Chloe Meyers and Hadassah Eborda represented J.Hop at the St. Petersburg City Council meeting in December.

The group was invited as part of Mayor Rick Kriseman's St. Pete's Promise program, a "multi-faceted initiative aimed at turning students at-risk in St. Petersburg into students with promise," according to the city's website.

Mr. Brown introduced JHMS and explained the magnet and IB programs. Student council representa-

tive Chloe Meyers then spoke about the highlights of JHMS, including the many focus classes and awards the school has received for its arts and journalism programs.

Student council secretary Hadassah Eborda read an excerpt to the City Council from *To Kill a Mockingbird*. She was awarded the Mayor's Monthly Reader Award.

St. Pete's Promise partners with the Pinellas Education Foundation and Pinellas County Schools to invest in improving the quality of education through providing mentors, raising funds for college scholarships for low-income students, providing grants for teachers, and building relationships with community partners.



ANGELINA SAENKA | JHT

The dating game

When to start dating is a dilemma middle schoolers face. *Are you ready?*

BY IOANA GAGANELOVA
AND JAIDEN JONES
JHT Staff Writers

“As long as the boy doesn’t hurt you then we won’t have to hurt him.”

This is what JHMS eighth-grader Taylor Montgomery’s parents tell her regarding the boyfriends she’s had in middle school. They’re not too happy with it, and think she’s too young to be involved in a serious relationship. But her parents aren’t alone in their concern.

J. Hop Algebra 1 Honors teacher Mrs. Bresler says that as a teacher, she sees how courting in middle school can be a distraction for students. “Who hangs out with you, influences you,” she said. She will advise her own daughter to wait. According to a study called Dating Trajectories From Middle to High School in the Journal of Research on Adolescence, “The kids who report little or no dating, their teacher evaluations are consistently higher — and the kids who report dating more, their teacher evaluations are consistently low.”

Taylor understands why some people might be against dating at this age.

“Because a lot of drama could come with it,” she said. “People telling you stuff that’s not true as if your boyfriend or girlfriend is cheating on you or someone else trying to break you up, and it can break up friendships.”

But Taylor said even though there are some negatives to dating, she doesn’t regret her decision to start seeing people romantically.

“I mean, it felt different from when I didn’t have a boyfriend to when I did,” she said. “Because I felt like I actually had someone more close than what my friends were to me that I could go to for stuff.”

She said it could even prepare her for the real world after school.

“It helps you see what it’s like for when you’re married and stuff, being with somebody almost all the time and stuff.”

Whether or not you should date is up to you. Just be prepared to deal with all the drama that comes with it while in middle school.

To date or not to date

PROS

- Dating someone can help challenge you and influence your growth as a person.
- A significant other can provide emotional support.
- Finding out that someone likes you can boost your self-esteem.
- Dating makes you feel older and cooler.

CONS

- Dating brings about drama.
- Lots of time spent with a boyfriend or girlfriend can take away from time with friends.
- A breakup can be really hard on your self-esteem.
- Feeling older from having a relationship can lead to responsibilities you’re not ready for.

Ioana Gaganelova, JHT Staff Writer

Source: teenview.com and imom.com

Birds of a feather

If you’re looking for a new hobby, Ms. Packard will take you under her wing.

BY HADASSAH EBORDA
AND CHLOE MEYERS
JHT Staff Writers

Look up in the sky. Is it a bird? Is it a plane? Is it Superman? More than likely, it’s just a bird.

Hold on a minute. Just a bird? Okay, birds might not be as exciting as a superhero to some, but to eighth grade science teacher Ms. Packard, the impressive animals are often overlooked.

“They’re just there,” she said. “But until you look for them, you don’t realize there’s so many out there.”

Packard’s interest for the avian species started with a camera. After a trip to Fort De Soto with her lens in hands, she first became aware of the vast array of bird species.

“I find bird watching peaceful,” she said. “I just think there are so many things that we are oblivious to.”

In all, Ms. Packard could probably make a calendar with all of the birds she’s spotted in the wild. While birdwatching, she’s seen a total of 365 different species of birds; however, the Tufted Titmouse is her favorite.

For those interested in taking up

the hobby, Packard recommends venturing nearby to Fort De Soto Park near south St. Petersburg, which is part of the Florida Birding Trail. And more adventurous “birders” might go all the way to Arizona to catch some of the beautiful winged creatures in action.

When Packard isn’t teaching at John Hopkins, she also holds a position on the board of the St. Petersburg Audubon Society. The group helps to preserve wildlife and birds in the area. One of the society’s missions is to educate young people about birds. Packard thinks it’s important for people to be aware of the decline in the local bird populations.

She plans to revive a school bird watching group called Experience and Preserving Pinellas, which was postponed due to her ankle injuries. Ms. Packard says that the purpose of the program is to “try to get kids interested in things other than electronics.”

Packard believes that “from bird watching, it brings people closer.” Maybe birds of a feather really do flock together.



Science teacher Ms. Packard shows off the binoculars and hat she uses on birdwatching outings.

CHLOE MEYERS | JHT

YOU CAN DO WHAT?

John Hopkins, we asked for your unusual talents and you delivered. That's right. Your tongue-rollers, penny whistlers, and Rubik's Cubers — just to name a few — proudly answered the call. We present here, the unique, the brave, and the unusually talented among us.

Story by Jaiden Jones And Halle Link; photos by Hadassah Eboroda and Chloe Meyers

WATCH THEM

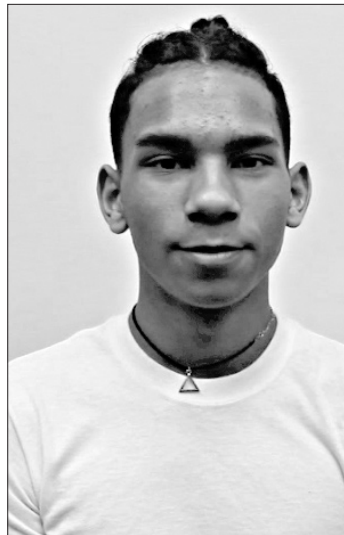
See this talented group in action at pcsb.org/jhoptimes.



Annika Fuller,
eighth grade

UNUSUAL TALENT: SINGING HIGH. VERY HIGH.

Annika is excited to go to chorus every day and not just because of her teacher Mr. Butts, but because she gets a chance to express her voice. Annika has the highest vocal range in vocal tech and is pretty proud of it. "I just started singing and I couldn't stop," she said.



Darryl Mitchell,
eighth grade

UNUSUAL TALENT: SINGING LOW. VERY LOW.

Darryl's talent is on the low end of the scale. Musical scale, that is. He is the lowest singing person in the choir. "It just came naturally," said Darryl. "I realized I had this talent when I joined choir and I learned to get with the program."



Mr. Titara, chorus adjunct

UNUSUAL TALENT: PLAYING THE HARP

Mr. Titara has been playing the harp since high school, and doesn't want to stop anytime soon. "I just thought it was the most beautiful sound I'd ever heard," he said. "I wanted to do it." "I just wanted to do it. Behind the harp I feel at peace. I feel like it's where I belong," Titara added.



Damien Mesen,
seventh grade

UNUSUAL TALENT: RUBIK'S CUBE

Damien's talent is solving a Rubik's Cube in under a minute. Damien says it took "two months of practice," to master the difficult puzzle. "It makes me feel smart, kind of, but then it's just a logic puzzle."



Keyla Franklin,
seventh grade

UNUSUAL TALENT: GYMNASTICS

Keyla Franklin is a seventh-grader who can do many gymnastics stunts, including an aerial. An aerial is a cartwheel where you don't put your hands on the ground. Although she looks like an expert on it now, it took her three difficult months to officially learn it. "It makes me feel confident," said Keyla.



Mr. Shumilak,
ABS teacher

UNUSUAL TALENT: PLAYING INSTRUMENTS

Mr. Shumilak teaches ABS (alternative bell schedule) at J.Hop. His unusual talent is playing several different musical instruments, including the Irish penny whistle, and a concertina. "Music makes me feel great. I love music, so I love making music," said Shumilak. Listening to music when he was a kid inspired Shumilak to make music of his own. "I thought, 'I could do that!'" he said.



Amira Metcalf,
sixth grade

UNUSUAL TALENT: CONTORTS HER TONGUE

Sixth-grader Amira Metcalf can also contort her tongue to make it into a bowl shape. Amira says she was "in the mirror for hours" trying to learn how to contort her tongue. "It makes me feel achieved," she said.



Talya White,
eighth grade

UNUSUAL TALENT: CONTORTS HER TONGUE

Eighth-grader Talya White's talent is a bit of a mouthful. She can contort her tongue into a bowl shape. Some might say it looks more like a four-leaf clover. "It makes me laugh, honestly," Talya said. But she doesn't usually share her talent with just anyone. "I like to keep it myself."

Sick tricks and sweet rides

BY HANAH SNYDER AND KEYLA FRANKLIN • JHT Staff Writers

After nearly two years of waiting, skateboarders in the area will be stoked to learn about an upcoming development across the street from John Hopkins Middle. Beginning in April, the city of St. Petersburg will start construction on a new skate park in Campbell Park.

The skate park will be one of the largest in the state, taking up nearly 28,000 square feet. St. Petersburg Parks and Recreation Director Michael Jefferis says the 1.6-million-dollar project will be a regional attraction. The money for the project comes from the city's Weeki Wachee Fund, an endowment fund established following the sale of two plots of land in Hernando County.

"It will provide a positive recreational experience for the folks who come in, but also bring a lot of new people into the area," said Jefferis.

The city worked closely with members of the St. Pete Skate Park Alliance to design the park, which will include a 12-foot bowl and a snake run for younger skaters.

St. Pete Skate Park Alliance founder Nick Nicks was instrumental in the cre-

ation of the park. In anticipation of the park, Nicks and business partner Rob Brown opened Anchor Skate Supply in January on the northeast corner of Campbell Park, just a block north of J.Hop.

"We're really excited for the park," said Nicks. "So far the opening has gone fantastic. We've had many customers come in."

When walking into Anchor Skate Supply, potential skateboarders are surrounded by all the gear they'll need to shred the new ramps in style. Along with hoodies, t-shirts, and hats with the company's logo on it, the store is full of color skateboard decks that can pass as works of art.

Nicks and Brown plan on working with the city in the future to help with the success of the park, possibly partnering for special events.

By building a regional skate park destination, the city hopes it will deter crime in the area.

"Appropriate park users will drive out inappropriate park users," said Parks and Recreation Director Jefferis. "Inappropriate park use could be someone who is vandalizing the park, someone who is sleeping in the park illegally after hours, and someone who is doing who knows what in the park."

Construction of the park is expected to be completed by the end of summer, just in time for prime skateboarding weather. Luckily for skateboarders old and new, Anchor Skate Supply is just a quick kick and push away for all your skating needs.

Ajla Kuc contributed to this story



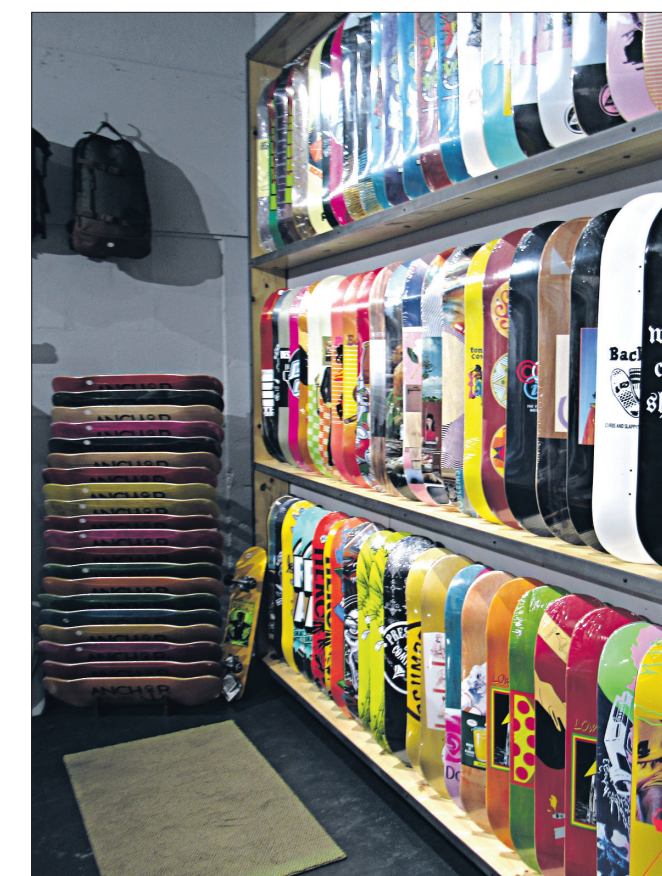
Graffiti artist Alec Grabler paints a mural on the west side of the shop.



BREANNA MACALLUM | JHT
Co-owner Nick Nicks adjusts the wheel on a skateboard.



MEENA SNYDER | JHT
Co-owner Robert Brown stands behind the main counter in the shop.



MEENA SNYDER | JHT
Skateboard decks line the walls of Anchor Skate Supply.



SARA THORNLEY | JHT
Clothes for skateboarders line the shop walls.



MEENA SNYDER | JHT

Anchor Skate Supply owners Nick Nicks, left, and Robert Brown stand outside of the shop at 16th Street and 5th Ave. S., a block from JHMS.

NEWBIES

Being a sixth-grader isn't easy. You remember. More subjects, hectic lunches, heavy backpacks, and so many unfamiliar faces. Everyone else seems bigger, faster, and stronger than you are.

Here are some thoughts on what it's like to be a sixth-grader from some of our J.Hop newbies.

Meena Snyder, Evan Bell and Sara Thornley, JHT staff writers



Anilah Newton says her favorite teacher is Ms. Forte because “she’s fun, and she isn’t a yeller.” Anilah describes being a sixth-grader as “exhausting.” She says the best part about middle school is having more freedom during the school day.

Photo by Lezley Hoffman



Kaleb Watson likes sixth grade because “you don’t have to walk in lines.” But he says that the beginning of the year was hard “because at first you don’t know where anything is.” For Kaleb, the best part of sixth grade is “science because I like doing experiments.”

Photo by Ocean Connors



For **Kylie Jones**, being a sixth-grader is “easy”. She thinks you have better teachers and classes in middle school. “Science and dance are my favorite classes because they’re fun,” Kylie says. One way middle school is better than elementary is that “you have more free time,” she said.

Photo by Caleb Jones



Jacqueline Jones thinks the best part of sixth grade is meeting new people and making friends. Her favorite class is science. Jacqueline likes middle school because you “don’t have to stay with the same teacher every day.” She is looking forward to seventh grade and “getting better grades.”

Photo by Ocean Connors



Sixth-grader **Jonathan Owens** has “art every day and gym, and that’s really good for me.” He came to J.Hop for the art focus classes. “I really like art,” he says. Jonathan thinks seventh grade will be “better” because he will have gifted class, meet new people, and have more art.

Photo by Sara Thornley



Sixth-grader **Mckayla Johnson’s** favorite class is “science because my teacher is cool.” She says middle school is hard but fun. Not having to walk in lines is one way middle school is different for Mckayla. She hopes not to “have mean teachers” in seventh grade.

Photo by Lezley Hoffman

WATCH IT: Sixth-graders talk about their JHMS experience at pcsb.org/jhoptimes.

Connecting the dots

Ms. Bowers works to engage the community in supporting JHMS.

BY KALI COHEN
JHT Staff Writer

Family and Community Liaison Ms. Bowers seems right at home at JHMS.

"I'm so proud of being part of John Hopkins," said Ms. Bowers, who has a passion for volunteering and helping people. "I really enjoy it."

Ms. Bowers has worked at John Hopkins for two years, after retiring from Duke Energy, where she spent 30 years. "I didn't like retirement," she said.

Bowers came to John Hopkins because her sister, Ms. McIntosh, is the school's MTSS.

Bowers said John Hopkins is a great place to be "because of our awards on our art, dance, music, and newspaper." The staff is great, too, she said.

Ms. Dashney, the principal's sec-

retary, thinks Ms. Bowers is pretty great, too. "She is a big help," like organizing the Great American Teach-In, where volunteers from the community come in to talk about their careers to inspire students. "It was awesome!" Dashney said. Making the Teach-In happen "is so hard. I couldn't have done it (without her)."

Dashney described Bowers in three words. "Give me a minute," she said as she thought. "Beautiful. Purple. Flower. Because you can't look at a purple flower without seeing its beauty."

Part of what Bowers does is choose volunteers here at John Hopkins. There currently are about 300 volunteers, she said, but "there is no limit; we don't turn anyone down." Volunteer jobs include tutoring students, being their mentors or just talk-

ing to them. She says the most famous volunteer at JHMS is probably St. Petersburg Mayor Rick Kriseman.

Even Ms. Bowers herself volunteers. She has logged hours at Fairmount Park, and at JHMS for the yard sale, PTSA, and SAC meetings. Bowers also mentors two JHMS students.

One of those students, seventh-grader Ashanti Jackson, said Ms. Bowers helps her out with her Pathways scholarship. "She makes sure I have my grades up...she's very inspiring," Ashanti said.

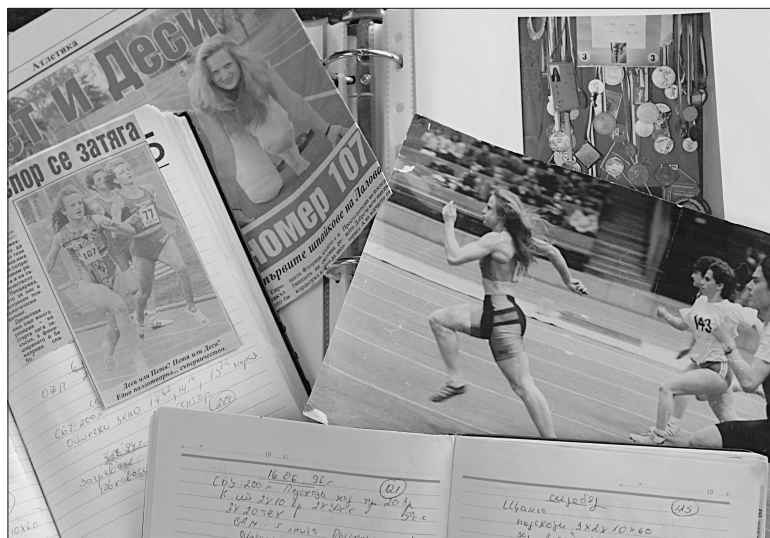
Ms. Bowers sums up her work best. "In my world, I can help people feel better, give them encouragement, find people to help them, and be their friend."

Ke'niya Brumadge and Angelina Saenka contributed to this story.



ADAM SAMSEL | JHT

Ms. Bowers is the family and community liaison for JHMS. She recruits volunteers, finds mentors, and is the link between JHMS and its families.



JHT Staff

Dessislava Gaganelova earned multiple Olympic medals in track and field for Bulgaria and the Balkans.

From medals to motherhood

J.Hop student Ioana Gaganelova has Olympic blood running through her veins. That's because Ioana's mother, Dessislava Gaganelova, earned multiple Olympic medals in track and field for Bulgaria and the Balkans. The *J.Hop Times* staff spoke with Gaganelova about her athletic past.

Donovan Glover, JHT staff writer

Could you tell me some about your background?

Dessislava Gaganelova: I was born in June 1972 in Sofia, Bulgaria, and at the age of 13 I was admitted into a sports school. That's how my sports career started. It was a special school for future sports champions called 147 Sports School General Emil Markov. Since then, I am a 26-time national champion of my country. I have also been a 3-time Balkans champion.

What Olympics did you compete in?

I competed in the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta, Georgia. It was exactly 100 years after the first Olympic Games in Athens, Greece.

Who inspired you?

Florence Griffith Joyner inspired me with her speed, and her unique, extravagant outfits. She also had long black hair that was never put up. I also never had my hair put up, although mine is blonde. Someone else that had inspired me was the best Bulgarian sprinter at the time, Anelia Nuneva.

When did you start? How long did you train?

I started at 13 years old. I trained Monday through Saturday. During the pre-seasonal preparation period, sometimes there were four practices a day for two hours each. During the seasonal period, it was once or twice a day. Because of the tough schedule, the school I attended was adjusted to accommodate the practices.

Why did you decide to leave Bulgaria for the U.S.?

Interesting question. It was because my husband came to play soccer here and I wanted us to stay together. This is why I stopped competing. I had thought that I



ANGELINA SAENKA | JHT

could continue practicing here, but the system is completely different. Here you need to pay a coach to train you, but in Bulgaria I had a personal coach and people who would take care of me, such as massage therapists.

Did you continue running when you came to the U.S.?

I tried, but it didn't work out. I couldn't find a coach. I sometimes miss running.

How do you encourage your children in sports?

I didn't encourage my children to play sports. The sport is in you. You have it naturally or you don't. I let them decide if they want to compete or not. To be a good athlete, you need to have character, spirit, and hard work. It's never going to happen if someone pushes you and you don't want to do the sport. The sport teaches you discipline, hard work, self-control, and motivation as well as many other things.

Ioana Gaganelova contributed to this story.

Movie review | 'Star Wars: Rogue One'

A dark take on the 'Star Wars' sagas


KAYLEE PEDIGO
JHT Movie Critic

Editor's note: This review contains spoilers.

Where to start with this one? *Star Wars: Rogue One*, the latest movie in the *Star Wars* series, was nowhere near what I was expecting. It was dark.

Now most *Star Wars* movies could be considered "dark" because something bad happens in them, but it's usually balanced out with some hope. But this is dark in a different way. Very dark.

Most of the characters died by the end

of this movie. In fact, I think all of them did. I loved the idea of it but they put too much into the ending. If too many things happen at the end of any movie, it throws everything off balance. If the ending is too heavy and the rest of it is too light, it ruins the movie.

There were a few light moments in the movie like when everyone came together to fight. I also liked the jokes they slipped in and the cameos that came with them. One of my favorite comic releases was the robot, K2SO. He had a darker sense of humor but it was enough to make a dark movie seem

a little fun, and the occasional funny moment can't hurt.

If I had to pick the best part of the movie, it was probably when the blind man, Chirrut Imwe, convinced his partner, Baze Malbus, to help the rebels stop the empire by sending the map. Both were wise and powerful men who fully believed in the force and used it to fight for what they believed was right. They saved Jyn and Cassium at the beginning when they were being arrested by the empire. If they weren't there then the entire movie wouldn't have happened. They

were, in my opinion, the most important characters in the movie.

As someone who loves darker movies and stories, even I know when it's too much. If all you can offer is a really depressing movie with very few jokes and only one uplifting moment, it's not enough to keep people coming.

Rogue One had so much potential as a *Star Wars* movie but it misses the mark too much. I think it's safe to say that if they had slowed down the movie a bit and taken out a couple of deaths it may have been really good.

I give *Rogue One* a 7 out of 10.

After working with Missoula Children's Theatre, Ms. Wills finds a home at JHMS.

A NEW STAGE

BY ANGELINA SAENKA
AND KAYLEE PEDIGO
JHT Staff Writers

"Every day is an adventure," said Ms. Wills, one of J. Hop's drama teachers. This is Wills' second year teaching at John Hopkins, and she said the students are what keep her going.

"Everyone has something unique to share," said Wills.

Even though she's been teaching for about 11 years, she never imagined herself in a school environment.

"It wasn't something I had planned on," she said. "Teaching just sort of came to me."

Prior to coming to J.Hop, Wills, who originally grew up in Georgia, had lived in five states. Most recently, she worked in Missoula, Montana, as a director with Missoula Children's Theater.

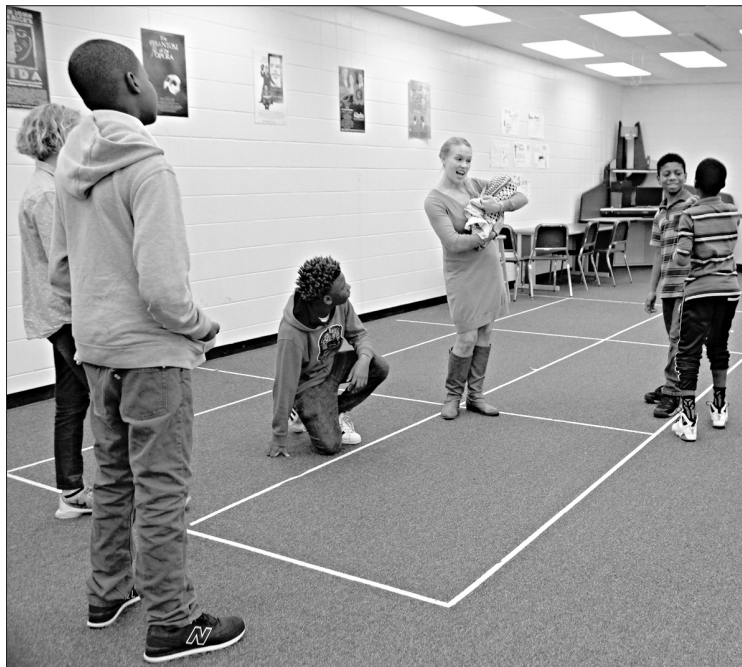
"I love the beach, and was tired of being in the cold," she said.

Fellow JHMS drama teacher Ms. Hosey believes that Wills has had a major impact on the program.

"She has brought many different styles of theatre into the program from her last job," said Ms. Hosey. "Ms. Wills is a really good director and everyone loves her."

Students agree with Hosey.

"Ms. Wills is fun and has something to do every time," said sixth-grader Jada Calhoun.



ANGELINA SAENKA | JHT

Drama teacher, Ms. Wills, center, works on a theatre exercise with her Acting 1 class.

"I like coming to class to show my creativity in my acting skills," added Kamden Hatten.

One of Wills' main goals is to teach her students to have confidence and obtain other life skills that she learned while performing in the theater. And to ensure she's able to best share her knowledge,

Wills is working toward her master's degree in Integrated Arts and Education from the University of Montana.

For Wills, every day starts with a new challenge and ends with a new surprise. "My experiences from teaching these past years are constantly evolving," she said.

Night lights

These lights might be urban legend. Or maybe not.

BY CUR'NECIA MARTIN
JHT Staff Writer

"Mini lights, mini lights, come out tonight." This may be something you hear if you happen to be wandering near Booker Creek after dark. Locals swear by the urban legend that has persisted for many years in south St. Petersburg.

There are many different takes on what exactly happens if the saying is uttered three times. J. Hop's Coach Starling believes in the ability of the incantation to summon aggressive creatures.

"My friends and I used to ride our bikes down Roser Park hill," said Coach Starling, "And the little 'Mini Lights' midgets would come out and chase us down. They would steal our bikes."

There's an ongoing debate in the community about what the mini lights are, or whether they exist at all. While Coach Starling says they were little people, some say they're little, green trolls that come out when people pass nearby. Others don't think they're living things at all, but lights that come out in the night.

Grade level clerk Ms. Brown has heard of the mini lights, but has never actually seen them for herself.

"They're some strange creature that people are talking about," she

said. "I don't even know what they are. But I did hear they come out at night."

Most communities have urban legends like these. It's hard to pinpoint exactly who starts the tall tales or for what purpose. Many people from the area have contributed their own stories on the Urban Legends of Florida website.

One repeated interpretation involves two little people living with their over-protective mother Minnie along 16th Street. The mother would unleash her children on anyone who decided to come near her house.

But like many urban legends, this one just might be a way for parents to warn their children to come inside before it gets dark out.

John Hopkins family and community liaison Ms. Bowers thinks whether it's true or not, it was able to scare her and her friends when they were growing up.

"We used to drive by this house on 49th and call out 'Mini Lights,'" she said. "We would hurry up and drive off because if they came out, they would do something bad to you."

You can try calling out "Mini lights, mini lights, come out tonight," for yourself one night. But don't say you haven't been warned.

STEP by STEP



KRYSTA BRAYTON | JHT

Seventh-grader Santasia Callaway is a drama focus student at JHMS.

BY KAYLA ANDERSON
JHT Assisting Editor

In March 2009, Santasia Callaway's life changed forever. On one fateful day, Santasia was struck by a car, which resulted in her losing the ability to walk. Though she now moves with the assistance of a wheelchair, Santasia is taking steps toward gaining back the use of her legs.

For the past two years, Santasia has been using a back brace to help her walk around her house. She wears the brace, which goes from her waist down to her feet, and practices walking for about 20 to 30 minutes every other day.

"Standing for me is like I'm up high in the air," she said.

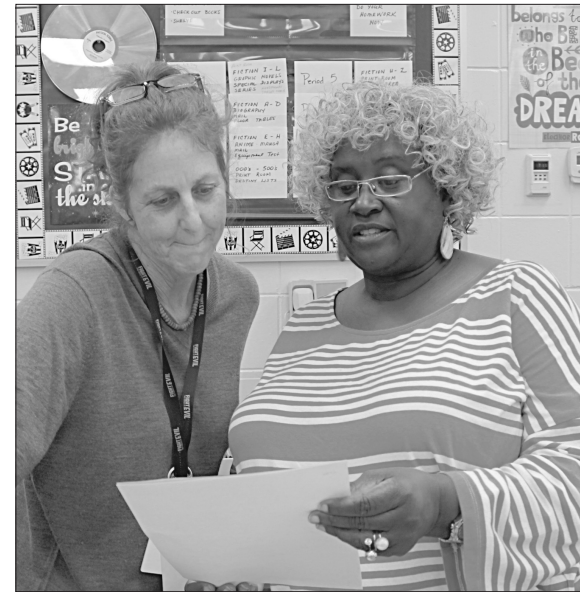
Santasia hopes that within three to four years, she might be able to walk freely without having to wear a back brace.

"I wouldn't have to push this thing so much," she said, referring to her wheelchair.

When she first started using the brace, Santasia was constantly nervous and thought that she was going to fall. She's now much more confident, and uses a walker to help keep her balance.

She said without the help and support of her family, she wouldn't have made as much progress as she has. She no longer is required to go to physical therapy, and instead works on strengthening her legs at home.

Santasia is taking the first steps in what she hopes to be many more to come.



KRYSTA BRAYTON | JHT

Ms. Bell, right, collaborates with media specialist Ms. Golden. Bell retired in 2016 and now works as a volunteer at JHMS.

Saved by Ms. Bell, again

Even retirement can't keep this teacher at home. And we're grateful.

BY HALLE LINK AND KRYSTA BRAYTON
JHT Web Editor and Staff Writer

When most people think about their retirement, they dream of not having to get up and go to work every single day.

But former JHMS reading teacher Ms. Bell isn't just anyone. In fact, Ms. Bell takes every opportunity she can to volunteer on campus since retiring from J.Hop last year.

After working at John Hopkins for the last six years of her 35-year teaching career, Ms. Bell returned this year as a volunteer, assisting new teachers with anything and everything they need.

"My goal is to do whatever I can to make the new teachers' lives and careers better," she said.

Although she's only scheduled to work Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons, Bell is willing to lend a hand if something comes up on other days of the week. While she doesn't receive monetary compensation for her time, Bell says she gets paid in "love and in the way of joy."

JHMS Principal Mr. Brown asked Bell to bring her vast experience back to work with the new teachers. "We didn't want to lose her," said Brown. "She has a lot to offer."

As a teacher new to J.Hop and trying to navigate her way around, Ms. Torres says Ms. Bell has made it a good year. "She makes you feel

welcome."

"Knowing she does this for is a difference. You know she's here because she cares. And she's always so happy," said Torres.

Not only is she appreciated by the faculty, even the students are on board. "I love her. She's a sweet, kind-hearted lady," said eighth-grader Darryl Mitchell.

Prior to teaching at John Hopkins, Bell taught elementary school for 30 years. She never thought she would ever leave elementary school, but when the district eliminated her position, she decided to test out the middle school environment.

When Bell first arrived at JHMS, the principal at the time thought she would work better with parents and students in the community. But when Mr. Brown became principal, he assigned her to work as a reading teacher.

Bell's co-worker and good friend Ms. McIntosh said that Bell "notices the little things."

JHMS faculty and students can rest easy knowing that Ms. Bell won't be settling for the standard retirement routine any time soon.

"I don't want to stop giving," says Bell. "They're going to have to tell me to stop coming, or I'll have to get sick," she said.

And just like that, JHMS is saved, once again, by Ms. Bell.

A cut above the rest

BY OCEAN CONNORS AND BRIANNA MACALLUM
JHT Staff Writers

Every year, more than 100 thousand long-haired individuals chop off parts of their mane to donate to Locks of Love, an organization that creates wigs for children suffering from long-term hair loss. Over winter break, J.Hop sixth-grader Jada Calhoun did just that. She cut off nearly 25 inches from her head and gave it to the organization.

Jada is happy to be rid of her hair, and is glad it won't just be thrown in the trash.

"I always wanted to help people since I was a little girl," she said.

Since 1997, Locks of Love has been providing hairpieces to children aged 21 and younger free of charge. The organization's mission is "to return a sense of self confidence and normalcy to children suffering from hair loss by utilizing donated ponytails to provide the highest quality hair prosthetics to financially disadvantaged children."

Language arts teacher Ms. Serne thinks Jada's donation shows her character.

"She is a very caring girl, and her donating her hair shows that even more," she said.

But Jada isn't the only person at our school to have donated their hair to Locks of Love. So did art teacher Ms. Smith. She's donated her hair three times, one time sending 13 inches to the organization.

"I really was thinking about the kids and how they needed wigs," she said. But Smith doesn't plan on growing out her hair again anytime soon.

Jada has no regrets in cutting her hair. Her hair may be used to create a wig that usually sells for between \$3,500 and \$6,000.

"I hope it can help kids without hair from being shy, and become more confident," she said.



OCEAN CONNORS | JHT

Sixth-grader Jada Calhoun donated her long hair recently to Locks of Love, a charity that provides wigs to cancer patients.

Originally Jada's black hair fell down to her knees, but now she wears it in a shoulder length ponytail.

Although she may grow her hair out again in the future and donate it to Locks of Love, Jada says she enjoys that her hair feels "light and bouncy" for now.

ARTISTIC HONORS: J.Hop art students shine in the prestigious Scholastic Art competition



HADASSAH EBORDA | JHT

Scholastic Art winners include, from left, front: Savannah Smith, Emi Santos, Alysha James, Queen Gillins and Tobi Tinnaro; rear: Amelia Beatty, Hanah Snyder, Ocean Connors, Sara Thornley, Annabelle Cannon and Sophia Weaver.

BY KAYLEE PEDIGO
JHT Staff Writer

John Hopkins Middle School is being recognized as a hub for young aspiring artists in Pinellas County. Twelve J. Hop students earned spots for their artwork in the Scholastic Art and Writing Awards ceremony and exhibition in February.

The prestigious award show selects and displays pieces of art and writing submitted by middle school and high school students. Entry into the show provides the young artists the opportunity to have their work displayed in New York, as well as the potential to earn scholarship money.

With the inclusion of 17 pieces of art, J. Hop had the most number of pieces selected throughout the Pinellas County school system. John Hopkins art teachers Ms. Bourne and Ms. Smith are thrilled by the recognition for their students' art.

"I'm very proud and honored to work with such talented students

that got accepted into the Scholastic show," said Ms. Bourne.

"I think it's a wonderful opportunity," Ms. Smith added, "Because when they get a gold key they may be able to present their artwork nationally in New York."

Seventh-grader Amelia Beatty had three pieces accepted into the show, earning her two gold keys and one silver key, or first and second place prizes.

"It feels pretty good," said Amelia. "I mean, I didn't want my artwork to go in there, I kind of like to keep my art to myself. I just don't like bragging about stuff or winning stuff."

Amelia's entries included a dress made out of coffee filters called *Cream and Sugar*, *Please*, and an ink drawing of a friend called *Shocked*. Her pieces, along with all the other winners' work, were on display at Gibbs High School throughout February.

"My friend took a funny picture and I said 'I'll draw that!'" Ame-

lia recalled about the inspiration for *Shocked*. "And I was just joking around doing that and then it won an award. It's of a kid gasping; it shows he's surprised. It reminded me of a picture of Marilyn Monroe so I thought it was funny."

Annabell Cannon received honorable mentions for two of her pieces. They were entitled *Getting Better* and *Belle*.

"I plan on aiming for silver key next year," she said. "I'm working on how I can improve on my artwork by next year when I enter the competition again."

The 12 students awarded with a place in the show include six eighth-graders and six seventh-graders. The gold key winners were Tobi Tinnaro, Amelia Beatty, Ocean Connors, Sara Thornley and Savannah Smith. Silver key winners included Queen Gillins and Alysha James. Those selected as honorable mentions were Annabelle Cannon, Sophia Weaver, Aimee Olson, Hanah Snyder and Emi Santos.

SURREAL SELFIES:

The annual student exhibit at the Dalí Museum features J.Hop artists

BY KAYLEE PEDIGO
JHT Staff Writer

When creating a portrait, a traditional artist will try to represent how an individual looks at a particular point in time. But when surrealist artists like Salvador Dalí and Frida Kahlo made a portrait, they attempted to show how a person perceives as opposed to how they are perceived.

Area middle school and high school students were challenged to create their own surrealistic portraits for this year's Pinellas County Student Surreal Art Exhibit at the Dalí Museum. Six entries from J. Hop students were chosen to appear in this year's exhibit entitled "Surreal Identity."

Seventh-grader Rayna Reissman received the top award for her piece, *My Alter Ego*.

"It has a statue in the background and a man praying in front of it," she said describing her work.

"It was based off of a picture of my friend and I standing in front of a statue at a cemetery."

Other winners from John Hopkins included Jada Calhoun, Cyann Toso, Elise Tuttle, Aimee Olsen and Jaden Green. Students were proud to be picked for the show.

"I was excited because I love Dalí's work and Dalí is my favorite artist," said eighth-grader Jaden Green.

Art teacher Ms. Smith said being included in the exhibit is a big deal.

"It's a famous show where everyone around the world comes to see your artwork," she said. "There are a lot of high school students trying to get in and the judges are very picky."

Artwork for the 2017 Pinellas County Student Surreal Art Exhibit at the Dalí Museum was on display from Jan. 7 to March 5. A reception and award ceremony was held Feb. 21.



CHLOE MEYERS | JHT

Alisha (Noel Curry), left, reads the book *Looking Glass Land* to the Red King (Sebastian Favata) and the cast in a performance of *Looking Glass Land* for Intermediate Drama one acts at JHMS.

DOWN THE RABBIT HOLE

BY ANGELINA SAENKA
JHT Staff Writer

There are a few more twists and turns than you might remember once you go down this rabbit hole. For their Intermediate Drama One Act performance, J. Hop theater students performed an adaptation of Alice in Wonderland called

Looking Glass Land by James Devita.

Ms. Hosey said they wanted to try something a little different this year.

"We ended up doing the full length play instead of the one act, which was really awesome!" she said.

This reimagining of the classic fantasy became curiously and curiously with every moment.

"The show went pretty good," said seventh-grader Madison Chartier. "We got along well, so it all just flowed really nicely."

For this whimsical and creative play, seeing was believing.

school arts

PLAY TIME: JHMS Orchestra director Ms. Chambers finds a second home with the Tampa Bay Symphony



JAIDEN JONES | JHT

Orchestra teacher Ms. Chambers plays second violin with the Tampa Bay Symphony.

BY JAIDEN JONES
AND IOANA GAGANELOVA
JHT Staff Writers

As the conductor raises his baton at the Tampa Bay Symphony and readies his players to perform, J. Hop students and staff might recognize a familiar face on stage.

That's because one of the violinists is John Hopkins orchestra teacher Ms. Chambers.

When Chambers isn't filling her days with a full teaching schedule, performance assessments, and auditions, she's often off to a rehearsal or performance as the symphony's second violin.

This is Chambers' second season as a player with the group. She was encouraged by her friends to audition for the symphony a little over a year ago.

"It took a lot of practice," she said. "I listened to the piece, found a recording, and practiced for about two or three weeks prior."

The road to earning a place with the 80-player Tampa Bay Symphony began 20 years ago when she first picked up an instrument in seventh

grade at Eisenhower Middle School.

"(Violin) wasn't something I specifically asked for. It came to me and I've done it ever since."

Over the years, Chambers has had three different private teachers who taught her everything, from correct posture to how to express emotion in playing to how to be a disciplined musician.

"All three of these teachers were remarkable women in their own ways," she said.

Chambers says that her time with the Tampa Bay Symphony has helped her excel in her own teaching. She has been able to use methods from the symphony to make the school's orchestra better and help bring students out of their shells so that they can find new interests in life.

"Art is important to have as human beings," Chambers said.

And playing with the symphony has given her new ways to express what she loves. "This is an opportunity. This is what I'm doing to help me stay in the arts world and to practice what I preach," she added.

DAY AT THE OPERA: St. Petersburg Opera Co. treats JHMS arts focus students to a musical feast

BY KRISTA BRAYTON
AND HADASSAH EBORDA
JHT Staff Writers

In opera, there are sure to be highs and lows. And there will always be a dramatic storyline.

The J. Hop performing arts students had the opportunity to experience opera in all of its pageantry. They attended St. Petersburg Opera Company's rendition of Gaetano Donizetti's *Elixir of Love* on Jan. 20 at the Palladium Theater.

The performance came complete with period costumes, full scenery, and voices that filled the downtown St. Petersburg theatre.

JHMS Chorus Director Mr. Butts called the trip a success. "It made me feel good because the students were very receptive to the performance," he said.

Drama focus student Annika Fuller, eighth grade, agreed. "It's important because kids who are interested in the arts can see the professionals perform," she said.

Unlike the tragic storyline of Donizetti's opera, the day was a triumph for JHMS students and staff.

"It's important that students are exposed to these things. It broadens their musical horizons," said Mr. Butts.



HADASSAH EBORDA | JHT

The cast of the opera *Elixir of Love* answers questions from the JHMS audience after a performance at the Palladium Theatre.



The Owls Advice Column

Breakups. They're hard, right? So how do you deal with them?

Breakups are difficult, especially when you cared about that person a lot. When the relationship ends, it is very upsetting. It can make you angry, sad, and overall, you just don't feel good about yourself. However, everything will work itself out in the end.

Remember, you probably broke up for a reason. Whenever you are thinking about the situation, just go back to the reason you broke up. You have to think about the positive outcomes, rather than the negative. Even though it might seem like everything is falling apart, it will be okay. You both just need space to evaluate how you feel.

But how do you deal with the breakup? To start, give each other space. Processing feelings can't be rushed. Also, try to surround yourself with positive people who support you. Then focus on or surround yourself with positivity and things that make you happy, like hobbies or hanging out with friends.

A big thing to avoid is social media. Since there are a lot of emotions being produced, you or the other person can say things you do not mean or would normally never say. And once that negative thing is out there, you can't unsay it. Resist the urge to comment on things that are being said or getting into an argument on social media. It never ends well. It may be really difficult, but let both of you have space and time. Then, if you both agree, you may feel more comfortable talking things through.

Everything happens for a reason. Everything will turn out the way it is supposed to. Yes, there will be feelings that are hurtful. It comes with every break up. You just have to think about the good, get through it, and count yourself wiser for your next relationship.

Until next time,
The Owls



HADASSAH EBORDA | JHT



Pet Word Search

People keep all sorts of animals for pets. Hidden below are 18 of the most popular.

B	A	D	Z	T	S	X	P	V	S	Z	J	U	M	B	G	O
I	R	E	K	A	N	S	A	G	I	P	A	E	N	I	U	G
V	J	Z	A	R	A	L	C	X	R	Z	K	O	D	A	D	S
D	F	F	A	K	T	H	S	H	Q	I	D	L	B	L	R	V
H	I	Y	I	N	S	T	L	P	V	N	P	P	J	U	I	N
X	A	D	Z	I	N	P	L	T	F	E	M	O	A	T	B	Z
R	A	H	F	A	N	E	O	E	E	X	H	N	L	N	C	E
Q	M	O	I	S	J	E	W	R	U	K	R	P	C	A	Z	B
E	L	G	K	X	J	E	R	R	S	O	E	J	H	R	F	Z
R	H	N	O	Q	A	S	A	E	I	R	T	U	I	A	R	B
R	C	A	T	D	B	N	J	F	L	J	S	R	N	T	T	D
H	A	G	K	D	S	O	A	K	Y	F	M	Q	C	U	X	R
J	M	B	L	L	N	F	J	U	G	X	A	B	H	R	Y	A
H	S	O	B	K	Q	G	J	D	G	U	H	S	I	T	H	Z
Y	K	L	U	I	H	G	D	N	E	I	C	B	L	L	S	I
L	Q	L	Z	S	T	R	A	H	O	R	S	E	L	E	Q	L
X	Y	K	A	H	E	K	U	G	B	Z	D	P	A	N	K	E



ANTS
BIRD
CAT
CHINCHILLA
DOG
FERRET

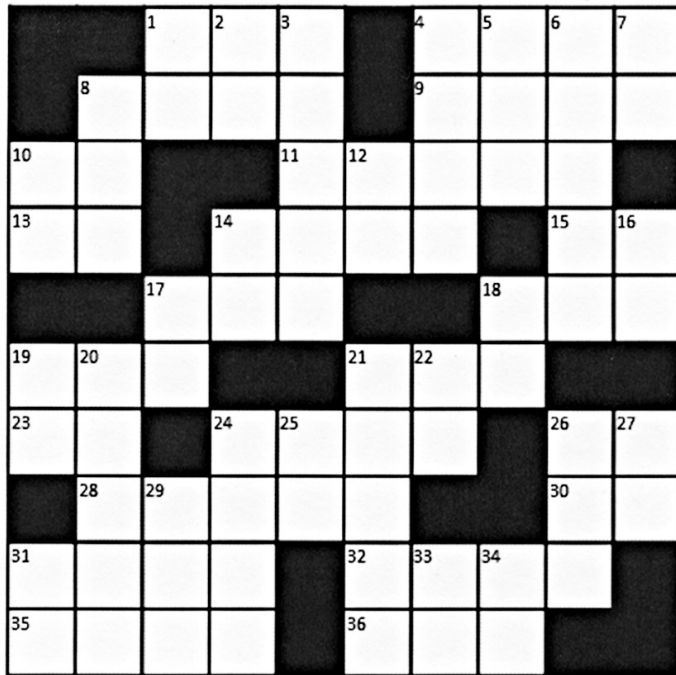
FISH
GUINEA PIG
HAMSTER
HORSE
IGUANA
LIZARD

MOUSE
RABBIT
RAT
SNAKE
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ACROSS

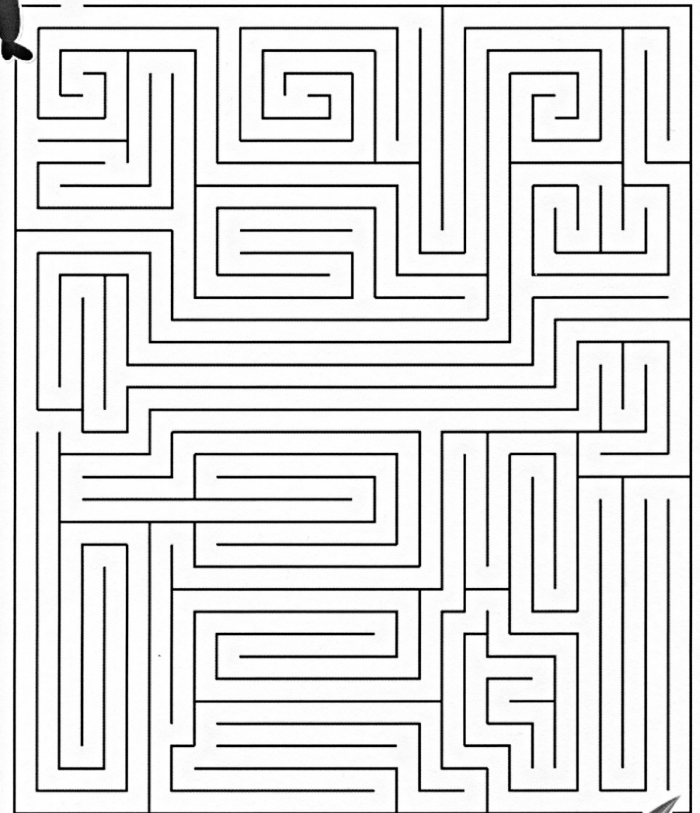
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- 15. 58 - 4
- 17. 420 - 105
- 18. 40 + 946
- 19. 219 + 501
- 21. 499 - 15

DOWN

- 23. 2 + 37
- 24. 401 + 2294
- 26. 28 + 53
- 28. 23833 - 11720
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- 12. 2 + 19
- 14. 20 + 71
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- 21. 70644 - 21249
- 22. 21 + 64
- 24. 1300 + 816
- 25. 110 - 49
- 26. 1207 - 354
- 27. 1 + 16
- 29. 54 + 210
- 31. 1 + 15
- 33. 50 + 38
- 34. 5 + 9



Happy Saint Patrick's Day



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Joke Corner

Why was six scared of seven?

Because seven ate (8) nine.

...

A boy asks his father, "Dad, are bugs good to eat?"

"That's disgusting. Don't talk about things like that over dinner," the dad replies.

After dinner the father asks, "Now son, what did you want to ask me?"

"Oh nothing," the boy says. "There was a bug in your soup, but now it's gone."

...

What do cats like to eat for breakfast?

Mice Krispies.

Doctor: Hello, did you come to see me with an eye problem?

Patient: Wow, yes, how can you tell?

Doctor: I can tell because you came in through the window instead of the door.

...

What do you call an alligator wearing a vest?

An investigator, of course!

Graciela Ladera, JHT staff writer

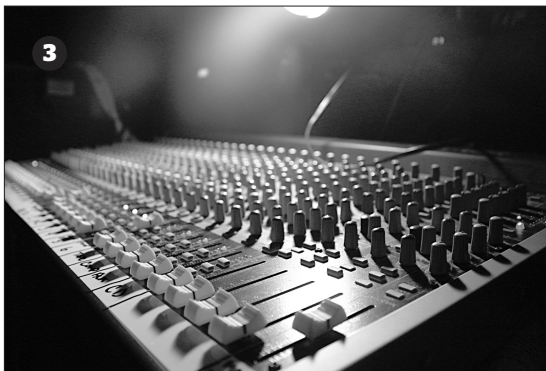
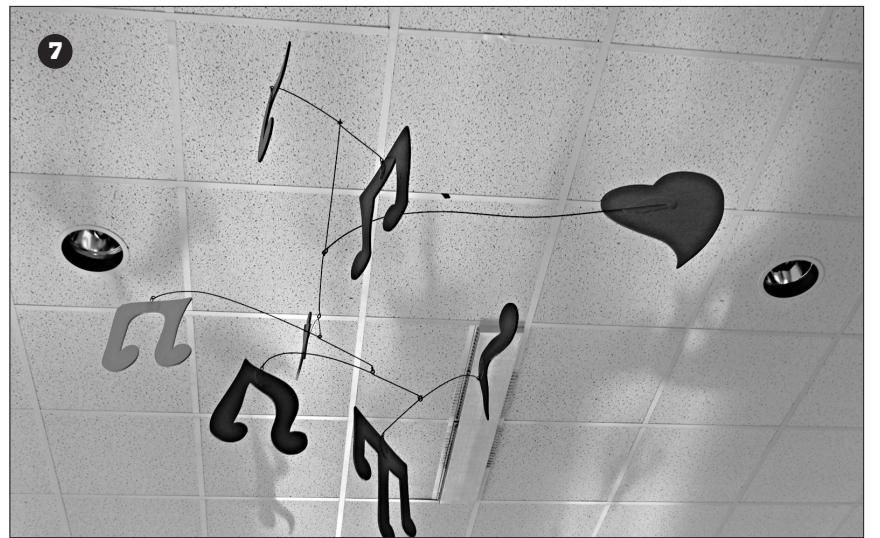
Source: laughfactory.com



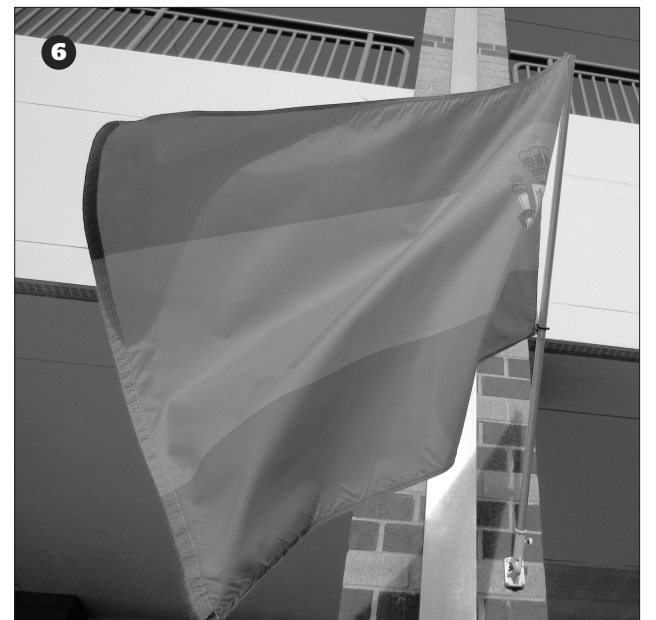
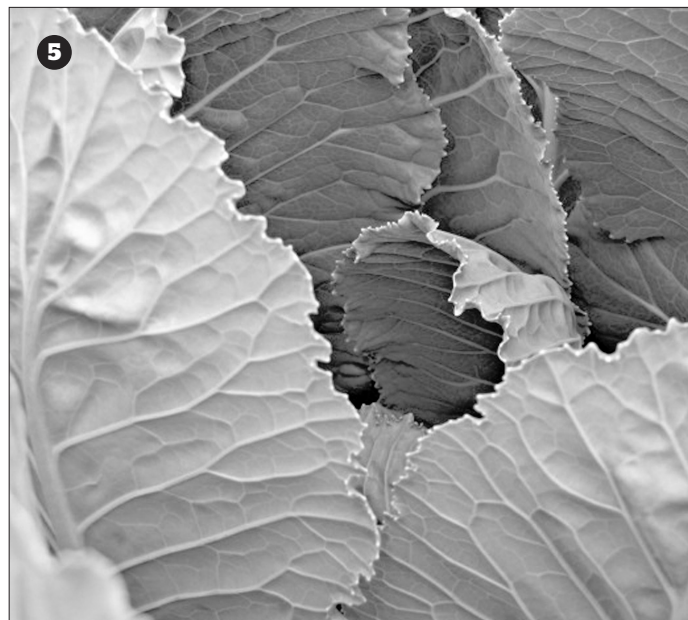
SCAVENGER HUNT



Do you pay attention in the hallways, J.Hop? If you do, it could pay off. Locate these eight places around campus. Then, on a separate sheet of paper, write where you think each of these photos was taken. Make sure you number each answer to match the photo's number. Return your list to the J.Hop Times Newsroom (5-113) by Friday, March 31. The first 10 people to have all the correct answers will be entered in a drawing. The winner will receive a \$10 Target gift card. So pay attention and get looking.



Photos by JHT Staff



Rookie captain's full-court press

BY CUR'NECIA MARTIN AND DONOVAN GLOVER
JHT Sports Writers

It all began with a vision and a ball. Lady Trojans standout player Jariya Lewis has wanted to play basketball nearly all her life.

At 5 years old, Jariya was inspired by her brother to start playing basketball. She began learning the basics of the game with her basketball coach Lisa. Her coach put her on the St. Petersburg Skills Academy (SPSA) basketball team when she was seven years old to get a feel for the game. Jariya participated in youth basketball programs at Wildwood Recreation Center, and was the MVP each year.

This year was Jariya's first opportunity to play for the Lady Trojans. She had been interested in playing in sixth and seventh grades, but didn't have good enough grades to join the team. As an eighth-grader, Jariya maintained a 4.0 GPA while leading the girls as team captain to a 5-5 record.

But Jariya wishes the team had done better. "It was a disturbing season," she said. "We had potential to do so much better."

Even though they didn't end with a winning season, Coach Forte said Jariya was an asset to the team for her ability to play nearly any position on the court, both on offense and defense.

As Jariya moves on to high school, she



HADASSAH EBORDA | JHT

Forward Jariyah Lewis led the Lady Trojans all season.

plans on trying out for the basketball and flag football teams. She hopes to play basketball professionally one day, but will settle on a career as a pediatrician as a "Plan B".

HOOP DREAMS

Trojans MVP Ray Perry travels toward his NBA dream.

BY DONOVAN GLOVER AND CUR'NECIA MARTIN
JHT Sports Writers

Raymond Perry, also known as Ray, is paving his path to a long-lasting basketball career.

It all started a decade ago for the star Trojans basketball player. When Ray was four, someone he considers to be the best player in St. Pete taught him how to play the game: his father. Since then, he's been hooked.

But now, Ray believes he's becoming one of the best in the area. "I can't be guarded," he said.

Ray is also known for having some of the best ball handling skills in middle school.

Those offensive skills contributed to the team's winning of the Disney cham-

ampionship in December, an accomplishment that brings Ray great pride. But along with being one of the best on the court, he excels off the court and in the classroom by maintaining a 3.5 grade point average.

Ray's shot at the championship almost didn't even happen after an injury last year. At age 12, Ray dislocated his hip and had to undergo six months of recovery before he could step back on the court. With the help of his father, he was able to heal up and prepare for the upcoming season.

As the leader of the team, Ray couldn't have asked for a better season.

"I think I did good," he said. "I led my team." Throughout the season, Ray



CHLOE MEYERS | JHT

Point guard Ray Perry was a team leader all season for the Trojans.

averaged 12 points per game. Next year, Ray moves on to St. Petersburg High School, where he hopes to make the varsity team. Just one step closer to playing in the NBA.

Basketball roundup



ANGELINA SAENKA | JHT

Trojan Ray Perry (10) takes a shot during a home game against Tyrone.

Boys take the title; girls develop team

BY CUR'NECIA MARTIN AND DONOVAN GLOVER
JHT Staff Writers

When the Trojan basketball team lost its first game of the season to Azalea Middle, Coach Williams knew the loss wasn't going to define their season.

"The first game of the season is anyone's game," said Coach Williams "I wasn't too worried and we had more things coming."

More things coming is right. The boys dominated in the rest of their regular season games, ending with a 9-1 record and the district championship, their first since 2002. This is Coach Williams's first championship in his three years of coaching at John Hopkins.

This year, 35 boys came out for tryouts, but 11 were chosen to represent the team with their impressive skills and grades.

"The team really jelled together as a unit and they had a lot of respect for each other," said Coach Williams.

Point guard Raymond Perry, who has been a part of the team for three years, led the team. He thought of his team members as broth-



DONOVAN GLOVER | JHT

Lady Trojan Jariyah Lewis pushes past Bay Point defenders.

ers and enjoyed playing with them. At the beginning of the season, Raymond predicted the team's success.

"I'm getting my name on a banner by the end of my eighth grade year," he said.

Eighth grade guard Collis McKenzie also believed the team would be successful.

"When we started our series off with a loss, that only made us want to hustle harder for a win," he said.

Along with earning the South County Division trophy, the boys also clinched their Christmas tournament.

As for the girls' team, the Lady Trojans ended their sea-

son with a 5-5 record. Three eighth-graders led the team: Jariya Lewis, Cur'Necia Martin, and Nadia Lewis.

Seventh-grader Cereniti Shedrick said it was a really long and hard season.

"We could have done better," she said. "For it being my first time, it wasn't a good season."

After three years of winning the district championship, Coach Forte said this season was more of a building year to improve the skills of younger players like Cereniti, so the team could win more championships in years to come.

COACH WILLIAMS LEADS THE TROJANS TO A DISTRICT CHAMPIONSHIP, THE FIRST IN 15 YEARS.

Coach Williams, kneeling, huddles with the team during a home game against Pinellas Park.



ANGELINA SAENKA | JHT



Kevin Miller (22) jumps for the tipoff in a home game against Pinellas Park.

ANGELINA SAENKA | JHT



ANGELINA SAENKA | JHT

Trojan Cortez McKenzie (13) jumps for a shot during a home game against Pinellas Park.



ANGELINA SAENKA | JHT

Javontae Howard (10) pushes past Meadowlawn defenders.



ANGELINA SAENKA | JHT

The 2016-17 Trojan basketball team poses after clinching the south district championship in the last game of the season. From left, front: Jamie Flournoy, David Barnes, Collis McKenzie, Josu White; Rear, standing: Chad Verner, Jyon Bristol, George Ortega Jr., Keyandre Sumler, Cornelius McKenzie, Ray Perry IV. Not pictured: Cortez McKenzie, Kevin Miller.

Third year's a **charm**

BY HALLE LINK AND KRISTA BRAYTON
JHT Web Editor and Staff Writer

For the first time in more than a decade, the J. Hop Trojans are champions. The boys' basketball team was victorious this season in no small part to the leadership of Coach Williams.

"I feel good from a coaching standpoint," said Williams. "You judge from your wins and losses."

In his third year here at JHMS, Williams' main goal for the season was to have the boys put academics and good behavior first. With student athletes having more respect for themselves both on and off the court, their confidence was evident in games.

"I'm really proud of them," he said. "They have mentally improved and they've learned a lot."

Prior to coaching the Trojans, Williams gained strategies as a high school basketball coach. Each season he's been here, the team

has improved with more wins. Williams said it was not only hard work but luck that they went so far.

"I think that he has pushed us harder and motivated us," said eighth-grader Collis McKenzie.

Girls' basketball coach Ms. Forte saw the effort Williams was putting forth to improve his team's performance.

"He's a hardworking coach. It was his time to win," said Forte. "He worked hard to improve the players' skills as a collective team."

Eighth-grader Raymond Perry has been coached by Williams since sixth grade, and feels Williams did a job good at encouraging him and the other players.

"If you mess up, he'll make you do it again because he doesn't want you to give up," he said.

With one district title in the books and Coach Williams in control, this may be the beginning of a Trojans dynasty.

WATCH IT
To see Coach Williams talk about Trojans basketball, and catch game highlights, go to pcsb.org/jhoptimes.