Ali Baba Production is Magical!

Ali Baba and the Magic Cave

By Andrew Kaplan

The 2012-2013 junior school production, Ali Baba and the Magic Cave, was a great success. While many viewers said that they witnessed the best junior school play ever at MBA, a greater success was the growing of the students as actors. Each and every member of the cast worked tirelessly day in and day out to perfect his/her role, whether the scene was important or minor.

The hour long show features a young Arabian boy, Ali Baba (Tony Huang), thousands of years ago searching for the king’s treasures that his evil uncle, Uncle Cassim (Andrew Kaplan), has stolen with his fellow thieves, Badoura (Harrison Kidd), Bo-Badoura (Ben Rosenthal) and Bo-Bo-Badoura (Isaac Sedek). Ali Baba eventually captures the thieves and is greatly rewarded by the guards (Chris Hawkins and Bryce Ardisson) and the captain of the guards (Turner Johnson), but he could not have done so without the help of his best friend, Morgiana (Katie Wilkins), and his three other friends, Jake Evans, Henry Rhodes, and Tony Neuhoff.

The young cast came into the show new to theater, but left as knowledgeable thespians with the confidence to perform as great actors on the stage. The tech crew, led by Jack Brandes, Mark Lillard, and Matt Braun, served as experienced leaders for the tech newcomers, Patrick Butner, William Gilliland, Will Trotman, and Harrison Avery.

The show went smoothly and fluidly, but no part of the show could have been completed or perfected without either of the two directors, director Dr. Seay and assistant director Mr. Berry. The actors all appreciate both teachers’ hard work and diligent time spent to help the actors perfect the show.

The show was a hit and compared to last year’s production, Johnny Tremain, in terms of success, and it was interesting for me to be in two plays of such drastically different natures. Many believe that Ali Baba was the best MBA junior school show for the last few years.

The junior school show featured many laughs as well. The actors were well cast by the directors and executed their lines flawlessly. From a fellow actor’s point of view, these young thespians set the stage this year, for their high school theater days to come.
Curtain Call!

Andrew Kaplan as Uncle Cassim

Katie Wilkins, Jake Evans, Tony Neuhoff, and Henry Rhodes

Ms. Catherine Hollifield as Mama

Turner Johnson with Bryce Ardisson and Chris Hawkins
The wonderful cast and crew of Ali Baba and the Magic Cave

Harrison Kidd, Ben Rosenthal, Issac Sedek, and Tony Huang

Ali Baba gets a little help from his friends.

The wonderful cast and crew of Ali Baba and the Magic Cave
This year’s Geography Bee, which is held annually (usually around the time we get back from Christmas Break) was a success. It is a great opportunity for students who have a passion for geography or just want to give it a try to compete in a tournament. It is similar to a spelling bee in that contestants are asked different questions and have to give an answer. However, the questions are related to geography: things like places, biomes, landforms, countries, boundaries, names, and titles. The format of the contest is pretty simple. In the preliminary round, everyone gets seven questions, and you may know the answer to the one asked before yours and the one asked after, but not the answer to the question you receive, so there is some luck involved. Next, the top ten contestants move on, and it is the same process except on your second miss you are out. Then, the final two contestants go on to the championship round where each person is asked the same question, and it continues until there is a winner. Each round has a theme, such as physical or political geography.

This year there were several seventh graders in the final rounds, including Yosef Howard and the winner, Mac Roberts, which is not the usual case, says Mr. Russ, who spearheads the event. This year’s winner, Mac Roberts, will go on to represent MBA at the state competition on April 5th. The state competition has a similar format, only there are about one-hundred people from all over and from many different schools there to compete.

When I interviewed Mac, he said he felt good about state and was ready. For those of you who are thinking about participating next year or are curious about what some of the questions are like, here are a few that Mac answered: He identified Mexico as the home of White Sands National Monument; Alaska is the last Frontier; Belize does not border the Pacific Ocean, and that a treeless biome in high altitudes is tundra. Mac also answered that the Philippines are home to the rice terraces of Luzon; Baltimore is on the Chesapeake Bay, and the Pearl River forms part of the boundary between Mississippi and Louisiana.

I interviewed Mac to find out a little bit more about why he participated and where his passion for geography came from. He told me that he participated this year because he has had an interest in geography ever since a third grade project in which he was assigned a state, and in researching for that project he developed a passion for looking at maps and studying geography. He said most of his knowledge about the earth and different places and names, and he said that he just visualizes a map in his head and pulls information from that. Mac told me that he had participated in a geography bee last year at BGA, so he did have some experience, but mostly he just likes to look at maps and the varying geography of place.

This year there were twenty-two participants, and after learning about the bee and what it’s like, hopefully some of you current seventh graders will participate as eight graders in the bee next year, and remember it does not always have to be the guy with the best grade who brings home the win. The Geography Bee is a great competition for those who have a passion and a hobby for geography and this year, like most was a great success.
Microbes Attend Science Olympiad

By Mike Miccioli

On February 16, MBA competed in the Regional Science Olympiad competition hosted by TSU. The day had a rough start when at 6:35 a.m. the bus didn’t have enough seats for all of the team. While on the bus, a sharp turn sent Kevin Wang’s award-winning instrument flying into Tony Ding. Fortunately, Tony came away unharmed. In an unrelated event, while Tony was walking on a sidewalk, he slipped and skinned his knee. He was noticeably limping for the remainder of the day. Once the team arrived at the university, they settled in and began to prepare for the events. The layout of the campus proved to be a little confusing when the team tried to navigate between buildings, but everyone seemed to make it to all of their events. Disarray continued when there wasn’t a room for the Sounds of Music event, and the Science Olympiad volunteers raced to find a proper room. For lunch, TSU provided mouthwatering fried chicken, and the rumor was that the Harpeth Hall girls attempted to take more than their fair share of it. After all of the events had concluded, MBA medaled in nine out of fifteen different events. These awards included a gold medal in Boomilever, led by champion bridge builder, Brinton Hoover. A resilient Tony Ding also earned a gold medal in Shock Value. Will Grana achieved a silver medal for MBA in the event of Helicopters. Mousetrap Vehicle, which was led by Patrick Butner, also earned a silver medal. Tony Ding achieved a silver medal in Road Scholar. In Sounds of Music, Mike Miccioli, the team, and senior advisor, Kevin Wang, won the silver medal. Matt Braun earned bronze medals in both Keep the Heat and Water Quality. Lastly, Tony Huang achieved a bronze medal in Write It/Do It. Unfortunately, the MBA Division B Team (Grades 7-9) placed 3rd as a team behind Harpeth Hall and Brentwood Middle School, who finished 1st and 2nd, respectively. Only the top two teams moved onto the state competition. Although MBA will not be advancing, the team has high hopes for Science Olympiad in the next few years to come.

Photos Courtesy of Dr. Michael Marro
Mathcounts: Chapter Competition

By Ben Rosenthal

On a snowy February 2, the MBA Mathcounts team headed to the Adventure Science Museum, only to find out that the competition had been cancelled and moved to February 9. So, one week later, the team put their Chapter Championship title from the previous year on the line as they packed up their calculators and headed to Piedmont Natural Gas. Going in as overwhelming favorites, but with a team depleted of three of its starters from last year’s team, the team was confident but ready for a challenge. However, no one on any team could foresee the difficult test and controversy that would ensue.

First came the sprint round. Working as individuals, the team competed well initially, averaging around twenty of thirty problems at the halfway mark. The problem was the rate slowed dramatically after that point, and the problems became extremely difficult, especially for the usually straightforward chapter competition. We finished the set, but then we began to freak out, wondering if the other teams had struggled to the same extent that we had. To put it in perspective, Tony (who usually gets near perfect to perfect scores) left one question blank, and missed five others.

Then it was time for the target round. This round is made up of eight questions, given in sets of two. The first three sets had relatively few issues; Tony and I both got all of the questions correct. In the last set of questions, the second problem was somewhat simple, and an answer could be found after more struggle than the first sets but still somewhat with ease. The seventh problem, however, was difficult, especially given the time parameters. No one on the team got the correct answer, and few in the competition in general got it right. Mrs. Qian showed us how to get the answer on the Tuesday after the competition, but we still did not understand the problem correctly until then.

The team round was the final round, and the most controversial. We started well, working as a team to tackle the most difficult problems. I found some problems beyond my mental capacity, but Tony Huang borrowed Tony Ding’s method and strategy from last year to complete them. Tony and I did problems six to ten, while Jack Sullivan and Micah White did one to five. We turned in the set filled out by Tony, our team captain, felt confident, and hoped we could defend our title yet again.

At last it was time for the results. Anticipation filled the room as the long-awaited results were to be announced soon. First, the individual winners: the top four who would be guaranteed a spot in the state championships regardless of team results. I came in third with a score of thirty-five, and to no surprise, Tony came in first with a thirty-eight. Then came the team results. They announced the teams again from fourth to first, but only the top team would advance. I will save you from any stress this intense competition may have caused you… we won. However, although the test may have been over, the problems for our team were not.

We noticed after receiving the results that we won by an extremely narrow margin. Even one more correct answer by either Woodland or by MLK could have pushed us into second. Also, our team score was an incredibly low score of twelve of twenty. To put it lightly, Mrs. Qian was furious and wanted to know how it could have taken place. Worse yet, Tony and I were responsible for all four of our missed questions. After some deliberation and speculation, we have learned from our mistakes, and this type of situation will not happen again. We are committed to correcting our mistakes and to winning in the state competition this spring break.
MathCounts: State Competition

By Tony Huang

On Saturday, March 16, the MBA MathCounts team consisting of Tony Huang, Micah White, Jack Sullivan, and Ben Rosenthal traveled to the Adventure Science Center to compete in the Tennessee State MathCounts Competition. Going into the competition, the team hoped to do as well as the MBA team from last year. After the Sprint, Target, and Team Round Competitions were finished, there was a lunch break. After the conclusion of the lunch break, the Countdown Round began. The Countdown Round at state is a single-elimination part of the competition where the top eight individuals of the written competition compete to see who can answer math questions the fastest. After a long battle, Tony Huang emerged as the winner of the Countdown Round. Then the results of the competition were announced. The MBA team won the state championship again, while Tony Huang won the individual championship. This win means that Mrs. Qian will once again be the coach of the Tennessee MathCounts team at the National Competition, which is in May. The MBA MathCounts team hopes that next year’s team will win the state title again, and we wish them the best of luck.

No Theme, No Pressure, No Doubt: Non-Mixer a Huge Hit!

By Jack Brandes

February’s non-mixer mixer will go down in Junior School history as one of the most memorable MBA/Harpeh Hall events. The invitation to the 8th grade mixer was extremely vague, only stating the basic details. Not knowing what to expect, huge crowds from both schools arrived to an energetic dance scene with none other than DJ Travis behind the table. The music, lights, and refreshments all came together to make the party fun. The music was a great mix of modern pop and classic party songs. To make things interesting, tons of lights and lasers were set up to compliment the music perfectly. Some angel from above came down and prepared a bountiful feast of sodas and endless Chic-Fil-A sandwiches and minis. For many people, the extraordinary food helped everyone have an easy, relaxed time with the ladies from Harpeth Hall. Friends from both schools will agree that the mixer was a huge success and will set a standard for events in the future.
Congratulations on a Job Well Done!

Junior Honor Society Inductees

Jack Anderson  Alden Ferguson  John Morphett  Jackson Satz
Jack Benson  Hamilton Garber  Joe Moxley  Mack Smithing
Jack Carey  Jack Hayles  Tom Peters  Riley Steanson
Logan Cashwell  Brad Hornsby  Will Peters  Peter Taylor
Asher Curnutte  Tony Huang  Drew Powell  Brian Thomas
Matthew Dobson  Warner Lamar  Collin Ragsdale  Cole Thornton
Reilly Dodd  J.P. Mappes  Luke Rochford  Noah Wamble
John Dugan  Joe McMahan  Ben Rosenthal  Alvin Zhang
Vincent Zhang
ON THE HILL

The New Dining Hall: Welcome to Hogwarts

By Hamilton Garber

Late February, and our long awaited dining hall is now open. The wait was certainly worth it. The new hall is nothing short of excellent. Many new features have been added, but the main one being the extra space. The space in Frist Hall was cramped and malformed, but the new dining hall’s design and layout perfectly supports a horde of three-hundred plus hungry adolescents. Another great thing about the new café is the abundance of food. No longer are complaints heard from dissatisfied high-school students about a lack of food. There are many new and improved features in this one-of-a-kind dining hall.

First, one may ask what is new in the form of food? Much and little would be an appropriate answer. SAGE dining still runs the hall and provides the same base lunch offerings, but there are some obvious improvements. Yes, there are still SAGE classics like their famous chicken patties and ah, yes, pasta, but one new feature is a brick oven pizza station. Of all the improvements in the new dining hall, this one seems to be most popular among the students. The whole serving area has been spaced out, so now the fear of running into a teacher with your tray full of fresh spaghetti sauce has dwindled. Another amazing add-on is a brand new Panini press, where students can take their dull, old sandwiches and spice them up with some quality Foreman grill marks. Finally, there have been two new milk taps added to the drink area. “Whoever thought to put those there deserves a solid high five,” (MBA student, overheard at drinking area).

Another change is the classic hot breakfast from MBA. There are still old favorites like buttermilk biscuits and hash browns, but the main attraction for the new breakfast is the omelette bar. The brand new bar allows you to form a fresh omelette with a plethora of ingredients. The breakfast continues to be a school-wide favorite.

The final aspect of the dining hall is the aesthetic appearance. Generally, it is very pleasing. In the serving area, there are new lights that change color. These lights are pleasing if you are into that psychedelic stuff. The hall itself is about 300 feet long by 100 feet wide. The ceiling in the hall has arched rafters with beams that provide support and are absolutely stunning. The tables themselves are about 50 feet long and 3 feet wide, and they run 3x3 along the main area. Occasionally, there is a tenth table that is placed at the head of the hall for special guests. There is a fireplace behind this table, filled with cannonball-like spheres. The entry way is paved marble with the MBA seal near the front entrance. The students said goodbye to the old TV and waved in the new projector. The screen is huge, and the projector is suspended from a retractable box on the ceiling. The TV continues to play ESPN, but only on certain days. On other days, the screen is retracted, revealing a quote from Shakespeare.

To sum it all up, the dining hall is great and is a major improvement from Frist Hall. All that is left is the new dining hall’s name, which has not been determined. SAGE dining will continue to serve the MBA students in their brand new stomping grounds.
SCENES FROM S.T.E.M. Day

By Hamilton Garber

What do you get when you mix hormones, a day off from school, pizza, girls, and SCIENCE? You get S.T.E.M. (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) Day! It is a day to show off your prowess in construction, saving the environment through board games, and other superfluous tasks. In the wise words of Thomas Dolby, we were all “blinded with SCIENCE!”

First, we loaded into the buses and headed down to Harpeth Hall for the day. We were split off into groups at stations where the girls were already waiting for the fun (science) to begin. Then, we were given the task of dropping an egg onto a paper capsule. We were trying to see how high we could drop it from without it breaking. My team got an astounding score of 15 inches with our foolproof, copyrighted Nest® technological design. Next, we moved to another table with Mr. Bullington for a good old-fashioned game of Science Pictionary. If you do not know what Science Pictionary is, chances are that you had no childhood, and/or you were raised by wolves. The words ranged from Earth Science terms to classic IPS topics. Some class-wide favorites were buoyancy, polarity, and density.

Next, we moved to a station with thin sheets of tin foil. Our goal was to make a boat of tin foil and have it remain afloat on top of water carrying the precious scientific cargo: pennies. The creative “box” design was destined for success. We held a whopping twenty-two pennies. This station was fun, and the science kept getting better.

The next station was a memory experiment. There was a tray with assorted objects on it. These objects ranged from notebook paper to chocolate-mint candy. Our group broke the record with 23 out of 23 objects remembered. The next station was an exhilarating board game, Hydropoly! The basis of the game was to get to the end by making decisions. There were several different scenarios with unique decisions, but they mostly narrowed down to saving the environment or earning money. The clear answer was, of course, science.

The final station was a tower-building competition. We had to build a tower out of the most efficient construction matter: note cards. The object was to build the tower as tall as you could in order to support a plastic frog. Our team had little to no success with this activity, but we were not discouraged nonetheless.

Then it was break. We ate pizza for lunch, and once we were finished, we were split up once again. This time, we heard from a speaker in Harpeth Hall’s auditorium. This woman worked at Nissan and was a proud owner of a Leaf, the obvious best car in the world. She detailed the Zero Emission Policy displayed by each and every leaf. Then, we even got to go outside and get inside one. By this time, it was almost time to leave.

After a long day of science, we finally headed back to the Hill to finish out the day with some basketball in the small gym. Seventh graders sure know what to look forward to next year.
S.T.E.M. DAY

Top of the Hill
March 28, 2013
Test Your Knowledge of MBA
Big Red Trivia Questions

By Jake Evans

1. What year did MBA’s first team sport start playing? (Name the sport and the year)

2. What MBA varsity sport holds the longest win streak ever, and how many games was it? (Name the sport and the number of games)

3. Who was the first ever foreign exchange student to study at MBA, and what country was he from?

4. How many headmasters has MBA had including Mr. Gioia?

5. When and where was Montgomery Bell born?

The first student to bring the correct answers to all five questions to Jake Evans and Mrs. Roberts receives a $15 gift certificate to The Big Red Store. (Editors and staff of Top of the Hill are not eligible to participate)
The Hula-Hoop: Strange Anomaly or the Herald of Death?

By: §

For years the blue hula-hoop has plagued the courtyard outside of Massey. Many gentlemen have looked up at its aberrant position up in the trees and have wondered to themselves, “Hmm… I wonder how that got up there? Meh, it’s probably nothing and certainly not worth thinking about any longer. On another note I wonder if we’ll have pasta today?” Most students at this point walk away, not thinking about it a moment longer. I wondered the same thing until one day when I found a mysterious tape recorder on my front lawn. The following is the recording that changed my life: Hello, if you are hearing this, it means the world may end soon. My name is unimportant, but let’s just say it’s Hingle McCringleberry. I first decided to research the hula-hoop itself and traced its manufacturers. When questioned about it, they said that there was nothing extraordinary about it; they only said that the nearest Toys-R-Us had sold it. When I then questioned the retailers about it, they described the man who had bought it as “average height, average hair, average voice, and average clothing.” He then proceeded to slap me while screaming “Forehand! Backhand!” and so on. As you can see, that description didn’t really help me out all that much, so I was still stuck at square one. Also I was in more pain than at the beginning of my search. When some of my fellow gentlemen were questioned, they all claimed to have put it up. Again, I still had no leads. My luck turned around when I found myself in the company of two men named T.J.A.J.R.J. Backslashinfourthefifth and J’Dinkalage Morgoone. Both men belonged to the same religion of Nuwaubianism. Without getting into details, some Nubwians are known to have schizophrenic tendencies. These tendencies were confirmed when the two gentlemen claimed that, “We used the hula-hoop to imprison Stormageddon, Dark Lord of all, and cast it into the tree because if that hula-hoop were to ever touch the ground, he would be released and wreak havoc on the known world.” This awkward rambling continued for an hour or so, until I deemed it appropriate to end the interview after J’Dinkalage said that they were going to be late to the asylum if they stayed to talk to me any longer. As I left the room thinking, “I just wasted two hours of my life talking to two loons,” I could hear them shouting, “Luigi we must get to the Mushroom Kingdom, quick down the pipe!” I didn’t feel safe publishing this report out of fear that someone would lock me up for telling such an absurd story, so I hope you can do that for me. Thank you kind soul, and please… get rid of the hula-hoop.

I will never look at the hula hoop the same. No matter how many lacrosse sticks try to take it down, it will always be this campus’ biggest mystery.

CREATIVE WRITING CONTESTS: WIN MONEY!

Jesse Hill Ford Short Story Contest
Who: 7th and 8th graders
What: Short story composed during the current school year.
Length: 3-8 pages, double-spaced
Prize: The best short story wins $150!
Due: Wed., April 10th

Turn in a printed copy and also e-mail a copy to Mrs. Roberts.

The Rascoe Bond Davis Creative Writing Contest
Categories: Poetry and Fiction
Prizes in both categories: 1st $50, 2nd $35, 3rd $10
Turn in a printed copy and also e-mail a copy to Mrs. Roberts.
Junior School Entries Due by Wed., April 10th.
Meteor Explodes over Russia!

By Asher Curnutte

On Friday, February 15, a meteor entered our atmosphere, sped down to earth, and exploded over Russia, catching the population of the town, scientists, and the world off guard. This meteor was believed to have been fifty feet across when it first entered the earth’s atmosphere, and it exploded about fifteen to twenty miles off the ground. The whole incident only lasted about thirty seconds, yet it still caused damage. Meteors hit the earth every day, but almost all burn up initially entering the atmosphere, and the ones that do make it down usually land in some unpopulated area. According to one of NASA’s officials, events like this one occur once every one hundred years, and the fact that this meteor exploded over a populated area is just unlucky.

The meteor was believed to have weighed ten thousand tons and come from the asteroid belt, which is located between Mars and Jupiter. The meteor traveled at around nineteen miles per second and left a blinding white streak in the sky as it burned brighter than the sun. It also produced a deafening bang and an explosion equivalent to the Hiroshima atomic bomb. Some people claim to have found debris from the explosion, but the only known impact was a twenty foot wide hole found in a frozen lake, located about fifty miles outside of the town. Oddly enough, this meteor was not the first to affect Russia. In June of 1908, a huge meteor struck Russia in Siberia over the Tunguska river, producing one of the largest recorded impacts in history. Shock waves were felt miles away, and people heard the bang miles away from impact. The meteor that hit February 15 produced the largest impact since that 1908 event. While the incident startled many, it was more an odd occurrence than a catastrophic disaster. Nevertheless, the damage was still considerable with about one thousand people injured with most of the injuries resulting from airborne debris and broken glass from the shock wave. Of the numbers injured, two hundred were young children.

The damage occurred in the town of Chelyabinsk in Russia’s Ural Mountains, where buildings trembled and glass shattered; around two hundred and seventy buildings sustained damage. The meteor hit about 9:20 local time, so most people were out and about, and dashboard cameras on residents’ cars captured the entire event. The images captured produced multiple videos, which were all over the Internet soon after the event.

For the meteor to reach that close to earth and cause any damage at all is a very rare occurrence, and that it was captured on video for the world and scientific community to see is pretty amazing. Because this event was so weird and unexpected, some of the Russian people who witnessed it came up with speculations that it was a UFO that shot down the meteor. This belief stems from witnesses who say they saw a small black dot which also appears in some of the videos. They say the black dot is the thing that blew up the meteor, but the Russians are known for their speculation and odd assumptions. While damaging in nature, this peculiar and random event, was pretty remarkable and interesting. Predicting when and where the next major meteor will hit is impossible; we just do not know enough about space and its many puzzling pieces to predict such an event. However, the chances of a massive meteor hitting earth and causing mass chaos or even extinction are small enough that on a day-to-day basis, it is definitely not something to worry about. Luckily, this space rock was not big enough to end the world like the one that knocked out the dinosaurs, but it was still a very interesting incident.
The Story Continues . . .

Part Three

By Anonymous

“Oh my Gosh! This fish is humongous! I NEED HELP!” screamed Jake.

Luke and Rob jumped up from the camp fire; Jake’s rod was bending into a U.

“Hold on, Big Pappa Daddy’s a fighter!” said Rob.


Eventually, Jake beached Big Pappa Daddy. It was massive, thicker than four baseball bats put together. The fish was murky brown and croaked louder than a barking dog. Jake had never seen a bigger catfish.

Luke looked at it with an awed gaze and said, “Dude, we’ve been trying to catch that fish for at least five years. You are AMAZING!”

They took a picture of the fish and released it back into the stream. For the rest of the weekend, the boys had a wonderful time telling stories, canoeing, and fishing. By the time the boys had to leave the beautiful beach on the stream, Jake was fully accepted into his group of friends, and he was feeling like he was on top of the world.

Summer dragged on in its special way. Jake and his friends played everyday. They swam, threw ball, and did all other cool activities. They were gone from dawn to dusk. Before Jake knew it, school was starting up.

The school was big because the whole county was zoned for it. Through all of Jake’s accomplishments, which were going into the spooky cave and catching Big Pappa Daddy, Jake was becoming popular. Of course Jake’s fish story had been exaggerated, but that did not stop people from knowing him, even if he did not know the other people. Jake only had that first group of friends, but he kept getting stares from other students.

One day at lunch, while the guys were laughing, they saw a lonely kid. He had just moved before school and was looking for a place to sit with his tray of food. He was just like Jake when he first moved to town.

“Oh alright . . .”

The conclusion to this serialized short story will be in the May 28th edition of Top of the Hill.

March 28, 2013

is

MBA’s 2013 Grandparents’ Day!
Dr. Love’s Spring Fever

By Turner Johnson

Dear Dr. Love:

Valentines Day has come and gone, and I really screwed up this year. I thought that it would be fun for my girlfriend and me to go to a movie and then get something to eat afterwards. She was fine with the plan and very excited. I knew that she loves Titanic, so I thought it would be fun if I could have the theater set up just for us. Unfortunately, all they had was Titanic 2. I figured that it might be something like the first one, and that she would enjoy it. I was terribly wrong. It was the single worst movie I have ever seen. After the movie, we planned to go to a new Chinese restaurant. Much to her dismay, I had forgotten to make reservations, so instead we had a “nice” Valentines Day dinner at Captain D’s. This Valentines Day was a disaster, Dr. Love; how can make it go more smoothly next year?

Signed,
V-Day Victim

Dear Victim,

The first way to fix it is to take her to a better movie. Seriously, Titanic 2? I am not sure what went through your mind when you thought this movie would be any good. Second, make reservations a good time in advance, because no one wants to eat drive-thru seafood on a special night like Valentines Day. Make your lady feel special, give her something nice, buy her some Crocs, anything to tell her you care about her.

Dear Dr. Love:

This Spring Break I went to the beach with my family. It was a lot of fun. I got a tan, worked on my beach body, got swoll, met some girls, and had some good grub, but I was really awkward around the girls. I would try to show off like my friends, but I am clumsy and often fall. I tried to show them how well I could surf, but my pants fell down. Both of these things were very embarrassing for me. I would like to go back next year and not humiliate myself; how do you recommend that I do this?

Signed,
Surfs Pantless

Dear Surfs Pantless,

Well first off, you do not need to impress anybody, just have fun. There is a really good chance that you will never see those girls ever again, so just be cool. Have a great time, meet new people, show off your 6-pac, eat some good food, and most importantly of all, be yourself. FYI, you may want to rethink surfing or buy a better pair of board shorts.

In the next issue of Top of the Hill, Dr. Love will address the pros and cons of having a summer only girlfriend.
By Drew Powell

If any of you haven’t yet watched *Nashville*, I suggest you don’t. It is an extremely drama-filled show, almost like a soap opera. The characters are so confusing, and it’s hard to keep up with each one. The characters are Juliet, who is the country sensation, Rayna, who is an older country star intent on making a comeback, Deacon, who played guitar in Rayna’s band but now goes on tour with lots of other people, Scarlett, who is Deacon’s niece and moved to Nashville to make it as a country singer, and Avery, who was Scarlett’s boyfriend until he left her and the band for a solo career. The characters are in a huge love triangle in which Juliet loves Deacon, Deacon loves Rayna, and Rayna loves her husband, Teddy, who is cheating on her. There are many other drama-filled moments such as when Juliet is caught shoplifting, or when Teddy gets caught cheating by his daughter. In my opinion, even though the show puts Nashville in the national spotlight, the city is portrayed negatively. First, not everyone in Nashville has a southern accent, but every character in the show has the most exaggerated, fake and horrible accent I have ever heard. Maybe a few of them are real, but Clare Bowen, who plays Scarlett, is from Australia, and her accent can’t be real. The show also depicts Nashville as a town full of secret hatred and lies. For example, when Juliet and Rayna have to go on tour together, they act like they like each other on stage, but they each hate the other and begged not to have to go on tour with the other. The show also makes Nashville’s citizens look like people who only party and don’t work. At least one character goes to a party of some sort in every episode.

*Nashville* is filled with jealousy and cheating. I already told you that Teddy cheated, but Rayna cheated on Teddy once. During the season, Juliet had at least three boyfriends, and then her husband that has not been in a single episode files for a divorce. One of the most jealous characters in the show is Avery. Avery was dating Scarlett, but because he thought she liked another guy in their band, he dumped her and left the band for a solo career.

*Nashville* is probably a very enjoyable show if you aren’t from Nashville, but because I am, I feel like the series makes Nashville look really bad. Nashville is a great city, and it is completely different from the city portrayed on *Nashville*.

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The Top of the Hill is looking for writers for the upcoming May 28th edition. The staff meets every Tuesday during break in Mrs. Roberts’ room (M21). All are welcome!
There is a comic book series that shines a new light, or a new darkness, on the idea of zombies. This famous franchise is known as Robert Kirkman’s The Walking Dead. Anything can happen, and the rule of “main characters never die” does not apply to this bone-chilling comic. Nobody knows what caused the apocalypse that turned millions of people into zombies, and nobody knows how many survivors are left. The vague details of the cause and how many living people there are on the face of the planet is one of the many things that keep the series interesting. Kirkman also creates the zombies or “walkers,” without any special abilities unlike the video games Left 4 Dead 2, or Call of Duty Black Ops II Zombies, which gives the story a realistic twist. The main character, Rick, wakes up in a hospital after getting hurt during a job as a policeman. Soon after, he realizes that the whole city is overrun with undead creatures that are neither dead nor alive. The only reassuring thing that happens is that he finds several survivors who point him to Atlanta, Georgia; he then proceeds to head towards the city in an attempt to find his family. On the outskirts of town, he finds a large camp of survivors who turn out to be housing his son (Carl), his wife (Lori), and his former police partner, Shane. Survival becomes the main goal of the group, and everything seems to be turning out fine until they are faced by a terrifying night raid from the walkers. After this event, things go completely haywire for the group. Just in case anyone wants to read this series, I will not go any further into the plot to spoil your experience. If you want a psychologically horrifying, creepy, and chilling comic book series, or if you just like zombies, I would recommend The Walking Dead. If you are interested in checking them out, the first and fourth books can be found at the MBA library. On a rating scale of one to ten, I would give this series an eight for the stunning, suspenseful, and emotionally captivating performance it played on my mind.
Season Catch Up for

*SPOILER ALERT*

The Walking Dead

By Jackson Maradik

The TV series, *The Walking Dead*, created by Robert Kirkman, features the adventures of the main character, Rick Grimes, who wakes up in an abandoned hospital weeks after the outbreak of a zombie epidemic. At first, Rick believes it is a horrific nightmare but soon finds out, with the aid of survivors, Morgan Jones and his son, Duane, that this nightmare world has become the new reality. Rick also learns that his wife and son have fled their hometown in suburban Atlanta. When he finds out about a possible refugee camp nearby, Rick sets out, and *The Walking Dead* storyline begins.

Rick arrives in Atlanta to find damaged cars, debris, and dead bodies everywhere. He soon learns that the city is not at all deserted, but overrun with “Walkers” (Zombies). Rick connects with another live human named Glenn who helps him survive. He then learns that Glenn is part of a group that is camping outside of Atlanta that just so happens to include his wife, Lori, and his son, Carl. After narrowly escaping Atlanta with Glenn and a couple other survivors, Rick is overwhelmed at the sight of his family together again. To Rick’s surprise, his best friend, Shane, is also a member of the group. While Rick was seemingly dead, Shane and Lori had an affair that makes Shane jealous and Lori regretful. Rick does not figure this out until later. Some other main characters that Rick meets at the camp are Daryl Dixon, Amy and Andrea (sisters), Jim, T-Dog, Carol, her daughter, Sophia, and Dale. During a nighttime fish fry, a herd of Walkers stampede the camp. Jim and Amy get bitten and eventually die. The group then decides to leave camp and head towards the Center for Disease Control. The CDC turns out to be a dead end with only one doctor remaining. They soon have to leave because the CDC’s generator runs out of fossil fuels. Both the doctor and a character named Jackie stay behind figuring that dying in the CDC is better than getting eaten alive. The rest of the group, under Rick’s leadership, remains mostly intact but still struggles to find safety.

At the start of Season Two, Rick comes up with plan for the group to head to Fort Benning, Georgia, to a possible new refugee center. Along the way, the group is sidetracked by a herd of walkers and the girl, Sophia, goes missing. While searching for her, Rick, Carl, and Shane come across potential food - a deer within killing range. Carl creeps up behind it. Unknowingly, another human named Otis is following the same deer. Otis takes a shot which goes directly through the deer hitting Carl in the chest. The men carry Carl to where Otis lives to seek medical treatment from a doctor named Hershel. Carl is in need of special medical equipment, which Hershel does not have. Shane and Otis decide to search a nearby medical center that has been overrun with Walkers so that they can get the equipment that is needed. They grab the equipment but are spotted and chased on the way out. It is clear only one will survive, so Shane decides to kill Otis in order to save himself. After this incident, Shane is never the same person. Hershel performs the operation with the right equipment, and Carl survives. At this point every member of the group (except Sophia) is camped out at Hershel’s farm. New characters introduced are Maggie and Beth, Hershel’s daughters, and Patricia, who is related to Otis. As Rick’s group begins to feel more comfortable at Hershel’s farm, the search for Sophia continues. Glenn finds out that Hershel is keeping a barn full of Walkers because he believes he can possibly heal them. Feeling unsafe, Shane opens the barn doors, killing Walkers one-by-one. Surprisingly, Sophia comes out of the barn as a Walker, shocking the whole group. Rick has no choice but to kill her. More drama in Season 2 takes place when the group discovers that Lori is pregnant, and both Shane and Rick think they are the father. Also, after a gunfight with another band of survivors and walkers, a man named Randall from the other group is left behind. Shane and Rick argue about what to do with Randall, but eventually Shane secretly kills him in the woods. Rick then stabs Shane in the stomach, killing him. After the death of Shane, a gigantic herd of Walkers (continued on page 20)
invades the farm, causing everyone to flee, though Patricia dies. Andrea is separated from the group but is able to survive when she comes across a girl named Michonne. Rick then tells everyone a secret that the doctor at the CDC told him last season: Everyone is already infected with the virus. Whether they are bitten or not, they all will turn into zombies eventually.

Season Three begins with Rick’s group searching for shelter. Fortunately for them, they come across a prison that has a killable amount of Walkers inside. After a successful entrance to the prison, unsuspected Walkers cause the death of T-Dog. Basically, most of Season Three is the struggle between a town of 79 survivors, called Woodbury, run by a man called the governor, and Rick’s group at the prison. Lori gives birth to her child in the prison but dies during childbirth leaving Rick and Carl astonished. Andrea and Michonne are found by the governor and taken back to safety at Woodbury. Soon Woodbury finds out about the prison, and both declare war on each other. Currently, both sides cannot seem to come to an agreement on how to end the war. They both know lives will be lost but continue to disagree on treaty terms. Currently, Season Three has not ended as it seems the war between Woodbury and the Prison is just beginning.

The Walking Dead captivates both older and younger people by telling a seemingly realistic storyline of what a zombie apocalypse would actually be like. The show not only has zombie survival but also has many socially dramatic events which make it so enjoyable to watch.

**Peter Taylor’s Top Ten Classic Rock Songs**

Classic Rock - (n.) - (class- SIK rak); 1. A period of music beginning in 1964 when the Beatles first arrived in America and ending in the early 1980’s with the rise of the hair metal band; Characterized by loud, blues influenced music with emphasis on guitar solos, large amps, and rocking songs (adj.) Songs and bands that exemplify(ed) or perform(ed) music of this type. Bands such as the Police, though active during the era, are not classic rock bands due to their style.

1. “Stairway to Heaven”- Led Zeppelin
2. “Hotel California”- The Eagles
3. “Layla”- Derek and the Dominos
4. “Yesterday”- The Beatles
5. “Gimme Shelter”- Rolling Stones
6. “It’s a Long Way to the Top (If You Wanna Rock and Roll)”- AC/DC
7. “All Along the Watchtower”- Jimi Hendrix
8. “Like A Rolling Stone”- Bob Dylan
9. “Mississippi Queen”- Mountain
10. “Going Mobile”- The Who

Why is it that people like me love science fiction movies so much? Is it the sometimes-accurate portrayals of near or far future technology? Is it the exciting plots, action sequences, and invigorating special effects, or is it the subtle portrayals of humanity’s flaws and its curiosity and sense of wonder? While one could argue all of these, I think that the real reason science fiction is so popular is the escapism. Even for a brief two hours, we can live in a world that is not our own, fly in spaceships, travel through time, and interact with creatures beyond our wildest dreams. These movies truly characterize what makes science fiction so great. Not only are these movies fantastic science fiction movies, many of these are simply some of the greatest films ever. Each film is listed by title and director.

1. *Star Wars Episode V: The Empire Strikes Back* - Irvin Kerschner (George Lucas co wrote the script, produced it, and created the whole story of *Star Wars*, but Irvin Kerschner actually directed *Episode V*)
2. *Blade Runner* - Ridley Scott
3. *2001: A Space Odyssey* - Stanley Kubrick
4. *Star Wars Episode IV: A New Hope* - George Lucas
5. *Aliens* - James Cameron
6. *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* - Steven Spielberg
7. *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Kahn* - Some Dude
8. *Inception* - Christopher Nolan
9. *The Matrix* - The Wachowski Brothers
10. *Alien* - Ridley Scott

Honorable Mention (In no particular order):
*Back to the Future*
*The Terminator*
*Star Wars Episode VI: Return of the Jedi*
*Star Trek II: The Wrath of Kahn*
*Planet of the Apes*
**Mass Effect: A Reflective Analysis of the Original Trilogy**

By John Dugan

BioWare has always been a well-known and highly respected developer in the video game industry with many illustrious role-playing titles on its resume, such as *Knight of the Old Republic, Neverwinter Nights*, and *Baldur’s Gate*, but BioWare took a huge step forward when they released the first act to their most ambitious franchise yet in 2008, *Mass Effect*. The game was like no other before it. *Mass Effect* successfully fused video games with the cinematic style of film by capitalizing on the advantages of both. Players had the ability to control their characters to their liking in video games for years, but *Mass Effect* implemented features like the dialogue wheel and player choices that took the idea of a role-playing game to the next level. The first *Mass Effect* was such a success that it spawned two sequels, *Mass Effect 2* in 2010 and *Mass Effect 3* in 2012. Now that the trilogy has concluded, players are able to reflect on the series.

The first *Mass Effect* holds a special place in the hearts and minds of all those who have played it. This game introduced a completely new world to the player. *Mass Effect* is set in the 22nd century, when humans have discovered interstellar travel and are part of a galactic community of new species filled with culture, history, and individual customs. From the start, the player is able to create his very own Commander Shepard that is completely controlled by the gamer’s imagination. One of the first unique elements about the game is that it gave the player’s Shepard a voice, which is something that was very rare in games that came before it. The presentation and style of the game really immersed the gamer in each species and historical lore the game introduced. The first game placed you up against an unknown enemy that threatened the entire galaxy, which added to the grandeur and sense of urgency during the game. Each new squad mate the player encountered in his or her adventure garnered the interest of the player. Although the writers at BioWare may have drifted into the common trap of cheesy dialogue and plastic, somewhat unrealistic characters, the effect of interactions with characters never left the player feeling like he or she was just trapped inside a melodramatic B-movie. With all of the original *Mass Effect’s* minor faults aside, this game opened a new world of the gaming experience to players.

Even before the success of the first game, BioWare began planning for its sequel to the first *Mass Effect*. *Mass Effect 2* is an example of video games crossing into the art category. BioWare completely revamped their formula by improving graphics, dialogue, gameplay, story, and character development. The gameplay of *Mass Effect 2* was streamlined to enable any type of gamer to enjoy it. Some people accused this action of “dumbing down” the RPG elements of the game, but nevertheless, it created one of the most complete masterpieces in all of video game history. While the original *Mass Effect* introduced the entire world of the game to the player, *Mass Effect 2* went in a different direction by focusing on the development of Commander Shepard and the ones around him. *Mass Effect 1* was all about going up against a threat on a galactic scale where everyone is watching the main character and hoping on his or her success for their survival. On the other hand, *Mass Effect 2* was all about the individual. *Mass Effect 2*’s story has Shepard working in secret to stop a threat that is widely unknown to the galaxy. The mission he undertakes is considered a suicide mission where the likelihood of survival is slim. *Mass Effect 2* also presents the player with even more ethical dilemmas where the lines of good and evil are blurred. From the start, Shepard awakens to find out that the System’s Alliance (the human power on the galactic stage) seemingly turned its back on him, and now he is forced to work with a controversial pro-human faction, Cerberus. Something that *Mass Effect 2* successfully did was referencing choices, characters, and events from the first game. Decisions the player made in the first game are very influential on the feel of the game in *Mass Effect 2*. The writers at BioWare did an excellent job of fleshing out each and every squad mate that Commander Shepard had on his crew. Trust, courage, comradery, and morality are overlying themes that are exemplified in *Mass Effect*. *Mass Effect* continued on page 23
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Effect 2. It was constantly asserted that the only way Shepard could succeed in his mission is if he gains the trust and assurance of his entire squad. Shepard overcomes this challenge by earning their loyalty through helping them with lingering problems that exist in their individual lives. By the time the player is faced with undergoing the “suicide mission,” he or she is emotionally invested with the crew and truly cares about their fate. Based on the gamer’s decisions throughout the game, the outcome of the mission can range from complete success to utter destruction. The anticipation for the mission builds the entire game and does not disappoint once the time has come. Mass Effect 2’s ending is the perfect conclusion to such a great game. Great downloadable content was also released like “Lair of the Shadow Broker,” which is regarded as one of the most worthwhile downloadable content ever produced. Mass Effect 2 is by far my favorite game in the series and has become a watermark to what I consider a true video game masterpiece.

BioWare considered the first two games of the Mass Effect franchise one large preamble to the final game in the trilogy, Mass Effect 3. This game focuses on the war that Shepard and his team prepare for all throughout the first and second game against the Reapers, the super advanced synthetic-organic species that exists to harvest all space-faring civilizations in the galaxy every 50,000 years. Earth is the first planet attacked, and Shepard reluctantly leaves the fight to gather war assets from all species in the galaxy to defeat the Reapers once and for all. Mass Effect 3 contains many story arcs that focus on politics grown from an ancient distrust and hate of the idea of the definition of life. The former is exemplified in a conflict between three species over a controversial biological weapon deployed on the Krogan by the Salarrians and Turians due to a brutal rebellion by the Krogan hundreds of years ago. The weapon, coined the “Genophage,” hampered successful birth rates, and the player is faced with the decision to either cure the plague or not. After the player discovers the history of this seemingly “just” plague on the war-torn Krogan throughout the second and third game, the answer to this problem does not seem so clear.

The definition of life theme is explored during another story arc between the Quarians and Geth. The Quarians are a species that was forced to leave its home world hundreds of years ago because of the hostilities with the artificial intelligence it created, the Geth. The Geth were actually the primary tools of infantry by the main antagonist of the first game, Saren, and were thought to be one-dimensional grunts to those who controlled them. This notion was soon disproven as the truth behind the Geth and Quarian conflict is revealed by Shepard, mainly in Mass Effect 3. Once again, Shepard is eventually faced with choosing a side in the matter. The choice is elevated considering that there is a Quarian on Commander Shepard’s squad during the majority of the series. This section of the game is one of the strongest thematic experiences in the entire series as it is filled with heavy emotion, morality, and uncertainty.

Sadly, the most criticized endings to the series, but rather it would consist of multiple distinct conclusions to the series. The controversy garnered enough steam to incite a Better Business Bureau investigation on BioWare, which was ruled in their favor. BioWare responded to the problem by releasing an Extended Cut to the ending that gave the players more explanation and closure to their unique adventures in the Mass Effect universe. A final answer came from BioWare about closure when the last DLC for Mass Effect 3, “Citadel,” was released. The content, adding a huge amount of closure to the characters, left gamers wondering why it was not included in the first cut of the game. Nevertheless, “Citadel” returned the trust of Mass Effect players back to BioWare.

The Mass Effect series is a fantastic feat in all of video game history despite its faults. All three games rank amongst the greatest of all time, and rightfully so. My favorite thing to do when I have time to boot up my Xbox is to play through the entire series once more just to experience the games again. The Mass Effect Trilogy is not like any other game that came before it, and games that try to replicate its style pale in comparison. Even though the trilogy has concluded, and Commander Shepard’s journey has ended, BioWare has already announced plans to produce a new Mass Effect series in the near future. I recommend this series to anyone with a console or PC.
Classic Movies Revisited: 
Casablanca

By Peter Taylor

In this installment of Classic Movies Revisited, I’m going to take a look at a personal favorite, Casablanca. The winner of three Oscars for Best Picture, Director, and Screenplay, Roger Ebert has said that Casablanca is “probably on more lists of greatest films of all time than any other single title, including Citizen Kane. Though Citizen Kane is generally considered a better film, Casablanca has much more mass appeal and is much easier to enjoy. Still, film scholars can find plenty of critical aspects to discuss about the film. Casablanca is a fantastic movie and my candidate for greatest film of all time, but what makes it so great? Is it the concise but extremely effective plot? Is it the lovable and memorable characters of Rick, Ilsa, Lazlo, Sam, and Louis? Is it the rock solid direction or fantastic dialogue, which is possibly the best of any movie? There is only one answer: all of them.

The movie, Casablanca, takes place during 1941 in the city of Casablanca, Morocco, the final link in the journey to escape from Fascist Europe to America. Rick Blaine, a bitter American expatriate, who is fantastically played by Humphrey Bogart, runs an upscale café and attracts various clientele who are locals, German and French Officers (French officers who side with the governing Germany), refugees trying to get to America, gamblers, smokers, and drinkers. Before Ugarte is arrested, he gives Rick letters of transit, which are required to leave the country and are priceless to any leaving refugees. However, Rick’s old lover, Ilsa, who is played by the attractive Ingrid Bergman, and her husband, Victor Lazlo, walk into his bar (“Of all the gin joints in all the towns in all the world, she walks into mine”), seeking to leave the country, and Rick must choose between his love for Ilsa or to continue the fight against the Nazis.

I have not done the plot of Casablanca justice. While it is not a thriller by any means, it is exciting and will have you wondering how it will turn out until the final scene on the tarmac, possibly one of the most famous ending scenes in all of movies. There is not a single bad performance in the film. Paul Heinreid as Victor Lazlo is often called out as not being great, but it’s hard when you’re being compared to Ingrid Bergman and Humphrey Bogart, two of the best actors of all time, who both delivered their best performances in this film.

Of all the great aspects of the film, I believe the dialogue to be the best part of it. The dialogue is not only clever, snappy, and occasionally humorous, but it fits each character and falls into place beautifully. You really feel as if these are real people talking, not characters spouting out lines. Casablanca has probably the largest amount of memorable quotes from any movie; the most famous ones probably being “Here’s looking at you, kid,” ‘Play it again, Sam,” and “Louis, I think this is the beginning of a beautiful friendship.” Each line has a timeless air to it, and despite the age of the dialect, the movie’s dialogue will never grow old.

In terms of technical aspects, Casablanca is not necessarily brilliant or innovative as much as it is rock solid. Michael Curtiz’s direction is excellent, using minimal and well-placed shots to convey the story instead of using a story to showcase the shots. The rich black-and-white cinematography is still fantastic, despite its age, and it will always be a pleasure to look at it.

The film only gets better with age, and I believe that the universally appealing film will never go out of date. Is Casablanca the greatest movie of all time? YES.
On February 11, I had the privilege of interviewing Vanderbilt’s head baseball coach, Tim Corbin. Coach Corbin has a Vanderbilt team that is expected to go all the way to the College World Series in Omaha, Nebraska this summer. Here are his answers for the many questions I had for him.

**Ben Coulthard:** I know preseason rankings don’t mean anything because you haven’t played any games, but what are your thoughts of being ranked so high?

**Tim Corbin:** I think it’s indicative of the kids we have coming back, and the respect that we have in college baseball more than anything else, because it’s basically public opinion when someone ranks you in the course of the year. But for a preseason ranking, it’s guys coming back, having older leadership, two big recruiting classes put together, and people see ability on our roster.

**BC:** Does that put added pressure on the team or does it give them a goal to work towards?

**TC:** With the departures of the two coaches, Johnson and Holliday, who’s coming to take their places this year?

**TC:** We’ve got Travis Jewett, who is our hitting instructor who works with our outfielders, and he’s from Arizona State out West, and our pitching coach is a guy named Scott Brown who came in November, went back to New York, and came back to Nashville in January. Coach Brown is from St. John’s University. He was there for nine years, and he’s a qualified guy for his job. I’ve known both of them for a long time, and they’ve adapted well.

**BC:** What do you see them bringing to the team?

**TC:** New personalities, and I think that’s always good. They both have plenty of energy and a good sense of humor, which is important with college kids; they make it fun. Travis is a bundle of energy and is good with the hitters, and Scott is the same way. He’s got a quick smile; he’s demanding, but at the same time, he’s a good ear for the kids and listens well. I think we’re lucky to have them. They’re both great coaches and I think they’ll help us in a lot of ways, not only on the field, but also being great mentors for the kids.

**BC:** What led to the decision to change the field from grass to turf?

**TC:** You probably know because you live here, it’s because of the weather. More than anything else, it was the fact that we could get on the field in November, December, January, and February when we really needed to. Take for instance the last four weeks, we’ve had some rain, we’ve had snow, we’ve had cold weather, but we haven’t been rained out once and it hasn’t slowed us down one bit. If I could give you one word on why we changed, it’s development. Being able to develop our kids every day without missing a day.

**Interview continued on page 26**
SPORTS

Interview continued from page 25

BC: Tell us about some players who we may not have heard of yet who are going to be breakout stars this year?
TC: You’ve heard a lot about our starters from Gregor to Kemp to Navin to Lupo and Kemp and Yastrzemski, but you probably haven’t heard of players such as Joel McKeithan, a shortstop who’s going to get to play a lot. Then you’ve got Vince Conde who played third base last year who’s also going to play a lot. We’ve also got freshman such as Dansby Swanson and Xavier Turner who are two left side infielders that have the chance to impact our team a great deal. We’ve got another freshman outfielder, Rhett Wiseman who’s going to be a good player. Then there are sophomores such as Johnny Norwood and Will Cooper who are ready to take a step forward in the outfield. Then there’s Chris Harvey, who didn’t play much last year, but is one of only two catchers, so expect to see him on long stretches. Also look for Walker Buehler, Tyler Ferguson, and Carson Fulmer who are freshman pitchers looking to help. One guy who’s been here already but is ready to take a large step forward is Phillip Pfeifer, who’s a sophomore. I think he’s going to be pretty good.

BC: How do you go about recruiting players who want to come to Vanderbilt?
TC: Well, we sell the school itself as being one of the finer institutions in the country academically, we sell Nashville as being a quality city, and we sell how we develop our players into becoming fine baseball players for the future because I believe all these kids have aspirations of playing beyond college, and I think that’s very important to them. We also pride ourselves on showing them how kids develop in our program, and I think it’s why kids come to Vanderbilt, and it’s why kids don’t sign professional contracts, because they see they can develop for three or four years before going off and playing again.

BC: Getting to go to Omaha for the first time in 2011, talk about that and compare that team to this year’s team.
TC: I think they’re a little different because we had some older pitching in 2011, and we had guys with more experience then than now. Positionally and talking about experience, I think this year’s team is favorable because we had the Westlakes and Casalis and Espositos in 2011, but we also had some freshman and sophomores like the Gregors and Kemps and Harrells and Yastrzemskis. That team, I didn’t know we had lots of power, but there was more than I expected. This year’s team, I’m really not sure about the power, but I know we can run, and I know we can put together a string of good at-bats.

BC: What’s the best piece of advice you’ve ever been given?
TC: Just to enjoy the moments that you’re coaching, because I think the days can just run into each other when you’re doing what you’re doing, and I think at my age right now, just to be able to enjoy the kids every day and enjoy who they are and what they do rather than look ahead on what we’ve got to get done has been the one internal piece of advice I’ve heard. The ability to enjoy it is something that’s been conveyed to me by more than one person before.

BC: What would your advice for aspiring baseball players be from a coach’s standpoint?
TC: I’d say if you really enjoy the game a lot, get on a good team where you have the opportunity to play at school and also get a chance to play over the course of the summer. The other thing I would say to an aspiring baseball player is to play other sports. I think playing other sports is important, I think it helps your baseball abilities, even if you’re not playing baseball, because when you’re playing other sports, I think you’re learning how to be an athlete, and I think athleticism is very important in becoming a baseball player. I think if you are willing to put in time and invest in the game, the game will pay you back, so it’s like a bank, and that’s how you have to treat it.

BC: If someone were to have told you that you were going to be coaching a Top 5 nationally ranked college baseball team 15 years ago, what would you have told them?
TC: I probably wouldn’t have believed them. I’ve always wanted to coach, but I believed I would be in high school and would have been perfectly fine with
it. But I’ve been able to grab onto the right people, and situations happen to grab onto me. I’ve been a hard enough worker to reach dreams, but this was a dream, and I’ve been able to go to the College World Series as a coach. I don’t take it for granted, and there isn’t a day that goes by that I don’t appreciate what I do.

BC: Who’s your favorite baseball player, past or present, and why?
TC: Roberto Clemente because he was a tremendous player. He had a flare for the game that was different. I also love watching old footage of Stan Musial and Ted Williams. Carl Yastrzemski was my modern day hero as a youngster. I loved to watch him play. Today, my favorites are former Vanderbilt baseball players. From Alvarez to Baxter to Flaherty to Minor to Price, whoever makes it to the big leagues, those are my favorite players.

BC: If you weren’t a baseball coach, what would you be?
TC: I’d probably be in the military, or at least want to be in the military at some level. I know I would have had to have started that process a long time ago, but that would be my second choice behind coaching baseball. Then outside of that probably in criminal justice, something like the FBI. But I don’t think I could ever take myself away from sports, because I had a feeling I would always be in sports.

BC: Talk about what it was like starting out coaching at Presbyterian University and working all the way to Vanderbilt.
TC: I learned a lot of great things at Presbyterian. We had no budget and the first year, we played twenty-five games, all on the road. We didn’t have much of a roster; we had to build a field from scratch. I think there are a lot of things people take for granted that we couldn’t. We used balls until the seams broke on them, and that was a real thing. We had to borrow catcher’s equipment, and we had to borrow for bats, but what it did was, it taught me a lesson on not taking things for granted and being thankful for what we have, and I want to convey that to the kids because they do get a lot of gear here, and they do have nice facilities, and I want them to know that. However, the real lesson was a holistic way to coach baseball. We did the laundry; we did the study halls, and we coached the pitchers, the catchers, the outfielders, and the infielders. I honestly think it may have been the best experience of my life.

BC: Do you and James Franklin help each other recruit players for each other’s sports?
TC: We do. I send my players over to him, and I go over there with him on recruiting visits and recruiting nights and talk to his kids. I really enjoy him because he has a passion for his kids and a passion for doing well here at Vanderbilt. He’s one of those guys who does not take no for an answer. I just like his style. You can tell he’s a winner, and he passes that along to his kids. He’s got tons of confidence and it’s controlled. I really like him.

BC: What are your favorite restaurants in Nashville?
TC: Oh boy, we have a bunch that we like. We really like Sam’s, Gold Rush, McCabe’s, Flemings on special occasions, Brown’s Diner, Logan’s Roadhouse, Pizza Perfect, Mafiaoza’s, and Corner Pub. Those are probably our favorites. Not all of them are elaborate, but we like to go to the privately owned restaurants, so we can connect with the community.

BC: Do you have a pregame ritual before every game and practice?
TC: I leave the house about 5:00 each morning and put scouting reports together, eat Chipotle for lunch, and put my PowerPoint together for the kids to see the scouting reports. Then we go out on the field, and I hit fungos to the shortstop and first baseman and just trying to get the kids ready. During the game, I coach third base and make notes. That’s the routine I’ve had for about the last nineteen years.

BC: What are your favorite restaurants in Nashville?
TC: Oh boy, we have a bunch that we like. We really like Sam’s, Gold Rush, McCabe’s, Flemings on special occasions, Brown’s Diner, Logan’s Roadhouse, Pizza Perfect, Mafiaoza’s, and Corner Pub. Those are probably our favorites. Not all of them are elaborate, but we like to go to the privately owned restaurants, so we can connect with the community.

BC: Do you have a pregame ritual before every game and practice?
TC: I leave the house about 5:00 each morning and put scouting reports together, eat Chipotle for lunch, and put my PowerPoint together for the kids to see the scouting reports. Then we go out on the field, and I hit fungos to the shortstop and first baseman and just trying to get the kids ready. During the game, I coach third base and make notes. That’s the routine I’ve had for about the last nineteen years.
Top 10 Super Bowl Commercials
By Ben Coulthard

While most people were partying with friends or watching the game for enjoyment, I was one of those people watching the game, but I was also paying close attention to the unsung heroes of the Super Bowl: the commercials, from the big producers of advertisements of Coke and Doritos to the dark horses of Taco Bell and Oreo. (Note: These commercials are in no specific order of favorites.)

1. Audi - Prom Night: This ad was a good example of the rebellious child trying to get the prom queen, who was, by the way, really out of his league. Dad tells his son to go have a good time, and lets the son take the Audi for the night. So the boy decides this is his night and gets a small bit of swagger. He rushes into the prom, finds the prom queen, and kisses her, much to the chagrin of the prom king, who proceeds to punch Señor Rebel right in the eye. Overall: 8/10

2. Hyundai - Gather A Team: This commercial was one of the more popular ones of this year. The young “boy” gathers his group of “man” friends after being told to gather a team to play football against the bully. He gets the two lifting heavy weights, the one in the welding factory, the one wrestling grizzly bears, and the one rescuing the man from a fire. Best line? The bully asks, “Touch or tackle?” The “boys” cut him off by simultaneously saying, “Tackle.” Overall: 9/10

3. Oreo - Whisper Fight: Oreo had a very good showing producing a “Top 10” worthy commercial; something very unheard of: the classic “Cream vs. Cookie” debate, but with a twist. In a library, two friends get in a fight over Cream vs. Cookie, but they whisper at an appropriate library level. This sparks a debacle of all the patrons. Chairs are thrown, bookshelves tipped over, fires started, but no one raises their voice a single time, not even the police with the bullhorn. Overall: 9.5/10

4. Doritos - Princesses: No surprise that Doritos cracked the “Top 10” this year. This commercial was pretty funny, if you ask me. Daddy is going to the front door to let his buddies in for the big game, but his daughter wants him to play princess. He brushes her off, but she then pulls out the bag of Doritos, instantly getting Daddy to come play princess. Daddy’s buddies come in wondering what the holdup could possibly be, but then join the fun. Overall: 8.5/10

5. Bud Light - Voodoo: This commercial was actually a joint commercial. Since the big game was in New Orleans, Bud Light decided to do two commercials involving a voodoo master. The first has a man gathering one of the players on his team’s sweaty sock, some hair of a comb, and some of the Superdome’s grass. The other has two guys take their friend’s chair to the voodoo master. However, the chair belongs to a fan from the other team, so the two guys want the chair jinxed. Stevie Wonder does a good job as the voodoo master in these commercials, just well enough to earn: Overall: 9.5/10
6. Got Milk - Rock Got Milk?: Dwayne “The Rock” Johnson and his kids start off the day eating breakfast, but find out they have no milk! “The Rock” proceeds to chase after the milkman trying to get milk but can’t catch up to the truck. On the way, many helpless citizens (and cats) need his help, but he proceeds to do his own thing and finally gets the milk. Overall: 8/10

7. Taco Bell - Viva Young: Taco Bell produced what was one of my favorite commercials of the year with this commercial. The old people prevail with a night on the town, from swimming in the pool, to lighting snappers on other people’s porches, and dancing in the dance club, and all their antics are set to the tune of Fun’s “We Are Young” in Spanish. They end up at Taco Bell at the end of their night. Overall: 10/10

8. Budweiser - Clydesdales: In a Super Bowl where many companies try to make funny commercials, Budweiser made a sensitive commercial where a man raises one of the Budweiser Clydesdales from birth, only to see him leave to join the other horses. Three years after the horse leaves, his owner sees the Clydesdales are coming near where he lives, so he goes to see his baby (eventually named Hope by the Twitter-verse) in the parade. However he thinks Hope doesn’t see him, and he is very dejected, but Hope comes running down the street. This moment is a real tearjerker not only for me, but for all viewers around the world. Overall: 10/10

9. NFL - Leon Sandcastle: NFL created a real hit when “Neon Deion” Sanders hears his colleagues talk about how great the rookie class of 2012 was, so he decides to re-enter the NFL as “Leon Sandcastle.” He wows the scouts at the NFL Combine and eventually is drafted number 1 in the 2013 NFL Draft where Commissioner Roger Goodell says, “Have we met before?” Overall: 9/10

10. Tide - Lucky Stain: Tide makes an impressive commercial where a 49ers fan is watching the big game with one of his buddies when he spills salsa off one of his chips, creating a stain looking like Joe Montana. He instantly frames the jersey and creates “Montanaland” where fans can come check out the stain. However, while he is engulfed in the fame, he comes to look at his jersey only to find his wife washed it because, “There was a stain on it!” Turns out, she is a Ravens fan. Overall: 9.5/10

Many companies got lucky with a big bang with their commercials with this year’s Super Bowl and hope to do the same next year.
**Super Bowl and Pro Bowl Survey**

By Mark Lillard

1. Who were you rooting for in the Super Bowl? (No fair weather fans)
   - 49ers        40%
   - Ravens     60%

2. Are you glad the Ravens won?
   - Yes  63%
   - No  37%

3. What was your favorite Super Bowl ad?
   Most were either the Go Daddy, Doritos, Taco Bell, or the Leon Sandcastle NFL Network commercial

4. Were you a fan of Ray Lewis?
   - Yes  53%
   - No  47%

5. Did the power outage affect the game in any way?
   - Yes  76.5%
   - No  23.5%

6. How would you rank Beyoncé’s halftime performance? (1 being low and 10 being high)
   - 1.   12%
   - 2.   2%
   - 3.   6%
   - 4.   4%
   - 5.  13%
   - 6.   9%
   - 7.  13%
   - 8.  14%
   - 9.   9%
   - 10. 18%

7. Do you like the Pro Bowl?
   - Yes  35%
   - No  65%

8. Would you care if they cancelled the Pro Bowl?
   - Yes  15%
   - No  85%

9. Should the Pro Bowl be moved to mid-season like the All-Star breaks in the MLB, NBA, NASCAR, and NHL?
   - Yes  49%
   - No  51%

10. Should there be more to the NFL All-Star week like the MLB Home Run Derby or NBA Dunk Contest? What are some of your ideas for All-Star NFL events?
    Notables- Longest field goal, longest pass, 40-yard dash, pass accuracy, WR catch, Celebrity Game
The 2013 “Harbaughbowl” between the Baltimore Ravens and San Francisco 49ers was a game that will not be forgotten anytime soon. Jim Harbaugh was the younger of the twins who was expected to win with his 49ers, but older brother John and his Ravens weren’t planning on letting the little brother win this Bro Bowl. Joe Flacco was this year’s Super Bowl MVP, with 66.7% completion, 287 passing yards, and three touchdown passes. The halftime show was an amazing performance put on by Beyonce. She impressed viewers around the country with the illusionary lights of the stage. The majority of junior schoolers rated the show an eight out of ten. Just after halftime, Jacoby Jones returned the second half opening kickoff for 108 yards. This play seemed to make it almost impossible for the 49ers to make any type of comeback, but just as all hope seemed lost, the lights in the Superdome went out. There is no definite reason for the power outage, but it gave the 49ers just over thirty minutes to readjust and relax a little. 76.5% of the junior school agreed that the power outage affected the game in a great way.

After the power outage, Tarell Brown stripped Ray Rice of the football to lead the 49ers in a 17-0 run to cut the score all the way to 28-23, but with the Ravens still winning. As the game was winding down, older brother John made a great play call when they were punting from their own end zone, by telling punter Sam Koch to delay in the end zone, holding the football for as long as possible and take the purposeful safety. After the 49ers made a great effort to come back, the Ravens’ defense was too much for them, and so the Ravens took home the trophy with a final score of 34-31. In the junior school, students’ Super Bowl opinions were recorded through a survey. 60% of the junior school was hoping that the Ravens would win, and 63% were glad that the Ravens won. There was a four-way tie for the best Super Bowl ad: Go Daddy, Doritos, Taco Bell, or the Leon Sandcastle NFL Network commercial. As for Ray Lewis, 53% of the junior schoolers are Lewis fans. Most of these polls had very small margins, which shows the great amount of respect for both teams.

The NBA All-Star Weekend

By Henry Rhodes

This year was another amazing all-star weekend. There was laughter, smiling, and groaning as the West played against the East in every basketball contest imaginable. On Friday there was the Rising Stars Challenge as Team Chuck beat Team Shaq once again with Kenneth Faried scoring 40 points for King Charles and was named MVP. Also on Friday, there was the Sprite Celebrity Game with comedian Kevin Hart winning the MVP for James Harden’s team for the second straight year. Also, at half time Kevin Hart raced Usain Bolt, and Kevin won because Usain thought he had to dunk on the other end, and he had a great dunk.

On Saturday there was the Sears Shooting Stars where Team Bosh with Chris Bosh, Swin Cash, and Dominique Wilkins won. Later in the night, Damian Lillard (Portland Trailblazers) beat Jrue Holiday (76ers), Jeff Teague (Hawks), Brandon Knight (Pistons), Jeremy Lin (Rockets), and Tony Parker (Spurs) to win the Taco Bell Skills Challenge. At the Footlocker Three-Point Contest Kyrie Irving (Cavaliers) with 23 points beat Stephen Curry (Golden State Warriors), Matt Bonner (Spurs), Steve Novak (Knicks), and Ryan Anderson (Hornets).

In the last event on Saturday, Terrence Ross (Raptors) beat Eric Bledsoe (Clippers), Jeremy Evans (Jazz), Kenneth Faried (Nuggets), Gerald Green (Pacers), who was the previous winner, and James White (Knicks) for the Sprite Slam Dunk Contest. On Sunday, Ne-Yo and John Legend opened the game before it started. The starting lineup for the West (Captain: Chris Paul) was: Chris Paul and Kobe Bryant in the backcourt, fellow Laker, Dwight Howard, was the big man down low, and Kevin Durant and Clipper, Blake Griffin, made the front court. For the East was: Rajon Rondo (hurt), Dwayne Wade (captain), Carmelo Anthony, fellow Heat Lebron James, Kevin Garnett, and Chris Bosh. Bosh took the spot of Rondo in the starting line-up, and Kyrie Irving took the spot of Rondo on the team. Paul got the MVP, and he also made Chris Bosh look stupid by dribbling between Bosh’s legs. Overall, it was a very entertaining weekend, and I cannot wait until next year.
An Interview with Coach Wims

By Will Weaver

Many students of the Junior School do not realize that our own Coach Wims has a storied career in baseball that includes coaching two Cy Young winners. I was given the opportunity to interview Coach Wims for Top of the Hill.

Personal Career:

Will: When did you begin playing baseball?
Coach Wims: I started as a kid when I was seven years old. I had played before, but at seven I played organized baseball. I played on a lot of different teams. I played through middle school, high school, and college, so I’ve been playing a long time.

Will: Where did you play in college?
Coach Wims: I played baseball at Belmont University.

Will: What position(s) did you play?
Coach Wims: I played shortstop, second base, and third base, but my main position was shortstop.

Will: What is your fondest memory as a player?
Coach Wims: That has to be when my 15 year old All-Star team finished third in the Babe Ruth World Series in Mobile, Alabama.

Will: Can you describe the best play you have ever made?
Coach Wims: I was playing shortstop, and a ball was hit towards second. As I ran to get it, it took a bad hop and went in the other direction, to my right side. I caught the ball with my bare right hand and threw the runner out at first.

MBA Career:

Will: When did you begin coaching?
Coach Wims: I started out as a volunteer assistant with the summer baseball team from 1991-1992. Then, I started coaching the high school and microbe teams in 1993. I was an assistant coach for the high school, but the head coach for the microbes.

Will: Which was the best team you ever coached?
Coach Wims: I coached two MBA teams I thought were very similar and were probably the two best overall teams I have been a part of at MBA. They were the 1995 team and 2004 State Championship teams. However, the 1993 State Championship team had quality players and several great players, including R.A. Dickey as the number one pitcher and Coach Mike Anderson as the catcher.

Will: What is your favorite coaching moment in your career?
Coach Wims: That’s a tough question because over the years I have been coaching I have had many memorable moments, and it is not always when we have won games. The most memorable moments are the day-to-day interaction and relationships the players and I built during their time at MBA.

Will: Who are the best players you have ever coached?
Coach Wims: That would have to be R.A. Dickey and David Price.

Will: Did you believe, when you first coached them, that they would ever be as good as they are now?
Coach Wims: I thought both R.A. and David had the skills and talent to play major league baseball, and I knew they would be successful. As you know, both of them have continued to work hard and improve their game at the highest level to become the best players in the world at their positions.

Going Forward:

Will: Do you have any words of advice for this year’s high school and junior school teams?
Coach Wims: It is important to go out each day to practice, work hard, and focus on how you can help your team be successful. If you take care of your individual responsibilities and put the team first, you will have a productive and fulfilling season.

Will: Would you rather play baseball or eat chili?
Coach Wims: I would play baseball first, then eat chili after the game.
BIG RED SPORTS

Microbe Varsity Hoops’ Strong Season

By Will Warren

The final buzzer of MBA’s Microbe Varsity Basketball team’s exciting season sounded a little over a month ago. From whistle to whistle, our team practiced and played good basketball.

We started the season with a four game win streak and did not suffer the first loss of the season until the semifinals (against Lipscomb) of the Overbook Classic. Worse than not winning the Classic though was our loss of Ty Chandler due to his unfortunate ankle injury. Even though Ty was unable to play in all of the Classic, he was still named to the all-Classic team. Thankfully, Will Hoffman filled in during Ty’s absence - down low and on the boards - until Ty was fully-recovered.

After the Classic, our team played in the Oakland Christmas Tournament, where we advanced to the Championship game and came up short to the host Oakland Middle School. Will Nutter and Drew Weikert were selected to the All-Tournament team.

A few of the highlights of our regular season were instant classics. One highlight was the MBA overtime win at CPA. After the Lions tied the game up 27-27 with less than ten seconds left in regulation, MBA outscored CPA 12-0 in overtime to win 39-27. We also had two come-from-behind wins against Ensworth. Even though we started the fourth quarter of our first meeting with visiting Ensworth down 32-39, we outscored them 30-9 and won 62-48. In our second meeting, Ensworth had a 39-32 lead again to start the fourth quarter. This time, though, it was a much tighter game, and we did not enjoy the home court advantage. MBA had a 46-45 lead with under a minute left in regulation, but Ensworth made a go-ahead three-pointer to take a 48-46 lead. Not to be denied, MBA inbounded to Jackson Owen, who hit a clutch, game-winning three-pointer with less than ten seconds left, and MBA won 49-48, for the season sweep.

Our team had good depth at all positions and could beat teams with great defense and different offensive game plans. We had great ball handlers with Michael Lee, Will Nutter, Jackson Owen, and Jack Hayles. We had Ty Chandler, Will Hoffman, and Cal Rieke to clean up the boards. We also had great outside shooting with Jack and Brad Hornsby (the trifecta twins), Haden Wachtler, and Andrew Weikert.

We finished the regular season strong and entered the HVAC Tournament with good momentum and confidence. Our season ended with a strong run to the HVAC semifinals, where we lost to a good FRA team, finishing with a 15-8 record overall. Despite the loss in the HVAC semifinals, the season was successful, and all of the players on this team improved together.

Thank you again to all of the coaches - Coach Jackson, Coach Davidson, and Coach Davis, and for all the support from the crowd. The future of MBA’s basketball looks bright. Roll Red!!
Swimming: Perseverance Produces a Strong Season’s End

By Drew Powell

The microbe swim team had a crazy season this year. With practice times being changed constantly, bus shortages, and a new coach, the season was certain to be different. At the beginning of the season, we were told that Coach Dobbs, the coach from the past years, was not able to coach us this year. Our new coach would be James Loveless, a retired swimmer from Syracuse. Then the team was told our practice times would be three times a week from 7:15-9. We had many people quit the team because they couldn’t work with these hours. We weren’t going to have many swimmers to begin with, but after many swimmers left, we were left with only eighteen swimmers. We were able to move our practice times to 4:30-6:00, but we still remained with eighteen swimmers. Even though Coach Loveless was our “coach,” he couldn’t come to our practices, so our practices were run by coaches at the JCC. Another problem was that we could only fit fourteen people on a bus to practice, so we had to make up a schedule to get everyone equal practice dates.

Our first meet was a meet at the JCC against J.T. Moore and USN, but the meet was called because of lightning. Then we had the XCEL meet at the ISC, Indoor Sports Complex, in Williamson County. We had great swims, including a 1st place finish by the A medley relay team by less than a second, but we lost to BMS by a little over 100 points. The next meet was at Ensworth’s new swimming complex against Ensworth and USN. We won that meet, winning almost all of the events and sweeping the boys’ 50 breaststroke. Our final meet was the championship meet at Ensworth again. We came into the meet knowing it would be a battle for second place, because we had so many sick swimmers. Ford Ray had to scratch his 100 butterfly because he was too sick, but he then could swim in three relays. We had great swims including a 1st place in the 100 back by Hudson Dobbs, a 4th place in the 100 breast by Drew Powell, and an 8th place in the same event by Jackson Maradik. The medley team got 2nd overall as well as the free relay team. Going into the final event we had to get 5th place or better in the 400 freestyle relay to clinch second place. When our final swimmer touched the wall, we looked up to the score board to read, “MBA 3rd place.” With a third place result, we secured the second place finish in the meet. It was a great way to end the season.
Wrestling Rocks the Mat!

By Riley Steanson

At the beginning of this season, the wrestling team was composed of thirty-three wrestlers. At the end of the season, the wrestling team had forty-four wrestlers. This year was the first time in Coach Shone’s seven years of coaching that the wrestling team grew as the season progressed. The first half of the season is well explained in the last issue, but for those who did not read it, I will give you a recap.

The HVAC season for the wrestling team went very smoothly with a 5-0 record in the conference and a championship title. Then the team got into a few matches that involved teams outside of the conference. The team traveled to a tournament in Mt. Juliet and did fairly well for an advanced tournament. That all occurred before winter break.

The real fun happened after winter break. January seemed to be the month of cancellations. Three matches and two tournaments were cancelled throughout the month. The first match cancelled was against Baylor, at Baylor. That would have been a trip to go on. The team then had a schedule of three straight matches against Nashville Catholic, West Wilson, and Murfreesboro Elite. The wrestlers lost to Nashville Catholic, but defeated West Wilson at home. The second match that was cancelled was against Murfreesboro Elite. Apparently half of their team quit, and then the remaining half was injured. In other words, they did not have the wrestlers to start. The team then traveled down to McCallie to compete in the Tornado Duals. This tournament had elite teams from Tennessee and Georgia. Some of those teams included Ocoee and Soddy Daisy. MBA did its best to do well in this tournament but did not place as high as we wanted. That was the final true match or tournament that MBA participated in as the rest of the scheduled matches and tournaments were cancelled due to weather or lack of teams participating.

The team finished off the season with a match against Nashville Catholic. This match was just for fun and did not really count in the record books. In the first ten matches, the referee flipped a coin to see who would get the second period choice, and the coin landed on green every time. Nashville Catholic was green, and MBA was red. On the eleventh match when the referee flipped the coin it was red. MBA wrestled well and coach liked what he saw.

The team had a celebratory banquet on the first Monday of February to commemorate a strong season. It was marked by pizza, soda, awards, and a speech by Jed Griffin about the amazing coaches. That was it for this wrestling season, but no doubt, there will be another story to tell next year.
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