

Maroon & White

“For a better Tennessee High”

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“Kick Off” The Start of Soccer Season

By Sydney Cunningham

Last weekend, the girls' soccer team started off their regular season with a bang at the Smoky Mountain Cup tournament in Gatlinburg. At the tournament, they were grouped into a division with three other schools from Tennessee and played each team over the course of the weekend. Our Lady Vikings returned from the tournament champions for the second year in a row, with a 6-1 win, 0-0 tie, and 7-1 win to end the tournament. Back at home on Tuesday, they had their conference opener against Elizabethton. After a grueling 1-2 loss against Elizabethton in the District tournament last year, they were ready for a shot at redemption. The Lady Vikings are back at it this upcoming week with a game on Tuesday at Greenville and Thursday at home versus University High. Following that, they play Dobyns-Bennet at home on September 7. Let's wish our Lady Vikings luck for a great start to their season!



The Mighty Vikings March to Valhalla

By Ricardo Cortez-Aleman

As the rush of excitement for the fall season draws near, the Mighty Viking Marching Band and Color Guard are approaching the scene with their ambitious halftime show, “Voyage to Valhalla”. As the haunting horns play, drums echo through the stadium, and the energy of the band spikes, the show plays a fresh take on a familiar story about the Vikings, specifically where they go when they perish, Valhalla. School spirit is in the air and football season is rolling around the corner, what is a better theme for a halftime show to please the audience and intimidate the competition than our very own mascot? “We had planned to do this theme for quite some time” Mr. Semones states, “and I wanted to add some pride to the show by adding the Viking mascot, and display to the audience and competitions that we are the Mighty Viking Band.” Mr. Semones has been a band director for 17 years and has been a part of the Mighty Viking Band staff for 10. The show tells a tale of Vikings setting sail, riding into war, crashing their boat, and starting purging into war. Then suddenly, one of the Vikings is killed. The following events play out and the Vikings are sent to Valhalla, a place where warriors go when they have been slayed in combat according to Norse Mythology. While the music

itself is captivating, the striking visuals of the band and the wonderful performance of the Color Guard are a real treat to watch. “I think the show allows for a lot of characterization, it gives each member opportunities to show their skill and personality” Guard Instructor Hannah Kestner states, “and with the skill level and their work effort, this can be one of the strongest guards this school has ever had.” Along with the number of members increasing and the work put into the show, many are ecstatic about the show's potential, drum major Mattie Smith being one of

them. “Compared to past shows, last year was very good, but this one has a lot of expectations. With our visuals, our members, and our music together, we could go beyond our limits than we did last year.” As the season progresses— and more shows have been performed— the production will only get better and better. With new props to come and new music to be played, with the work effort of the staff and captivating music performed by the band. As well as stunning visuals, mesmerizing theatrics of the Color Guard, and promising potential of the show, “Voyage to Valhalla” will be



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Meet the 2022 Maroon & White Fall Staff

Editor

Nathaniel Morefield

Assistant Editor

Callie Eckley

Journalists

Hayden Arnett

Piper Booher

Joseph Burriss

Caden Cartwright

Ricky Cortez Aleman

Sydney Cunningham

Bree Eaton

Kaylee Hamrick

Ada Ritchie

Liz Rouse

Caitlin Vining

Torey Walk

Joan Weddington

Layout Team

Alex Akard

Kaylie Cunningham

Halle Mullins

Business Managers

Ryan Bunning

Lilly Chafin

Advisor

Marisel Story

Design Consultant

Dereck Shipley

"The Bearded One"



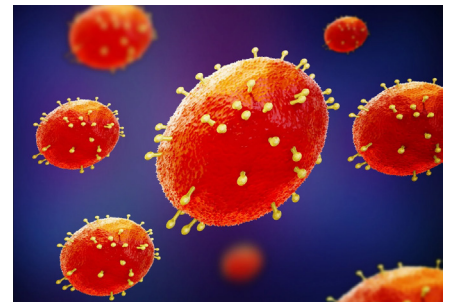
Monkeypox: How to Avoid Misinformation

By Halle Mullins

Despite its seemingly harmless name, the Monkeypox virus is nothing to laugh at. Though it can be easy to disregard the illness due to the fatigue surrounding Covid-19, it is irresponsible to ignore the facts. Monkeypox has become a global outbreak and has impacted parts of America, Europe, North Africa, Australia, and the Middle East. Though the disease is new to these locations, Monkeypox is not unknown. The virus was first discovered in 1958, but it first appeared in humans back in 1970. The World Health Organization reports that Monkeypox is a viral zoonotic (virus that is transmitted from animals to humans) disease. The virus symptoms include fever, chills, swollen lymph nodes, headache, and

exhaustion. The most recommended way to treat the disease is use of antiviral drugs and isolation until the disease is out of your system. The biggest challenge that healthcare professionals are facing with this disease is the spreading of misinformation. In the case of Monkeypox, the disease is primarily affecting LGBTQ+ individuals currently. However, the disease does not show any evidence that it is contracted through homosexual relations. Furthermore, the disease can be contracted through any close contact no matter the age, race, or sexual orientation of the individual. It is important to be educated on the origins of the virus and understand the treatment options. Miscommunication is a major problem in the health field that the world has seen the damaging

consequences of for years. We have seen this with situations such as the AIDS crisis or even Covid-19. It is more important now than ever to avoid misrepresentation and fully understand the scientific facts regarding pandemics such as Monkeypox.



New Small Group Counseling at THS!

By Ada Ritchie

The counseling office has a new opportunity to address some of the concerns and issues students are struggling with. The guidance counselors are creating small groups with 8-10 students to provide a safe setting for students and counselors to work through and process different concerns students have. The students will meet in the small groups to discuss the topics they are offering. The topics include stress management, coping with anxiety, first generation college students, conflict resolution, study skills and mindfulness. If you have any topics that you would like to be added you can mention them to your school guidance counselor. The groups will meet in the homeroom at the counseling office. Our school guidance counselor Mrs. Slagle said it's "a safe setting for students and counselors to work through and process different concerns students have." If you are interested in the small groups you can scan the QR code!

Our Very Own HOSA State Officer

By Callie Eckley

HOSA-FHP (Future Health Professionals) is an international student-led organization with opportunities consisting of competitions, leadership conferences, partnerships, and service opportunities. HOSA is the perfect pipeline for those who are aspiring for a healthcare career. Tennessee High's Pavitra Surma, a junior, is HOSA's East TN Vice President. This title enables her to work with others on the executive council to achieve both community and personal goals. A personal goal of Pavitra's is to become a veterinarian in the future. HOSA has a veterinary science competition and resources that helped her learn more about the field. Pavitra states, "HOSA also helped me develop leadership

skills which are important in any career." HOSA provides more than just academic experiences. Pavitra mentions, "I enjoy HOSA because I can network and meet a lot of new people." HOSA conferences Pavitra has attended were located in Nashville and Knoxville, and she plans to attend another one in Washington D.C. this September. HOSA is a great resource and steppingstone for any career, and there isn't a better time to prepare yourself than now. If you are interested in HOSA, you can talk to Ms. Moore or Ms. Anderson to sign up anytime. If you have any questions you'd like to ask Pavitra- whether that be about what she has learned or future plans- you can contact her using the email eastttnvp@tennesseehosa.org.

Take Out Your Wallets, The School Has a Store!

By Piper Booher

We've got some exciting news to share with you: a new shop has opened up at school! MK Leonard, involved in the store transactions, explained that CTE Director- Mrs. Pendley- introduced the idea that the school's own products can be purchased by students, teachers, staff, friends, and family. The CTE classes in question are Culinary, Digital Arts, Manufacturing, and Engineering. These classes offer a variety of items available for purchase:

-Culinary products include delicious desserts like cookies and muffins.

-Digital Arts provides stickers, shirts, hats,

-Construction and Engineering class provides cutting boards, woodwork, and jewelry.

Those excited and frankly hungry for one of those cookies will need to plan ahead by bringing cash or check, as the store is still unable to accept a card way of payment.

The shop is open during Homeroom and Third Period, and in the morning, coffee is served on Wednesdays and the occasional Friday. All of the profits will fund the classes you bought from.

To the Moon and Back!

By Bree Eaton

On December 19th, 1972 humans left the Moon for the last time until 50 years later. Now, NASA plans to bring humanity back. Paying homage to the original Moon mission, Apollo, the Artemis rocket will be launching no earlier than August 29th, 2022. The Artemis 1 mission will be unmanned, testing the ship before astronauts board. This intricate system, including the Orion spacecraft and Space Launch System (SLS), is currently the most powerful rocket in the world. Launching from Launch Complex 39B in Cape Canaveral, Florida, the Space Launch System will propel the craft into orbit around Earth. After ninety seconds, the rocket will dispose of its boosters and systems which are no longer needed. With this, The Orion spacecraft will be propelled towards

the Moon by its service module— the source of power and support for the craft. The trip to the Moon will take several days, during which NASA will monitor the craft's trajectories and the manikins on board, collecting data on what the experience will be like for the future astronauts. Upon arrival, the spacecraft will go into a new orbit, about 40,000 miles from the Moon. This orbit will last for six days, during which data will be collected and sent to Houston to be assessed by a crew in mission control. After 3 weeks, the spacecraft's final test will be a safe reentry to Earth. The success of the Artemis 1 mission opens the door for the future of space exploration. This event will open new doors for NASA and will change history, like planning to send the first woman and person of color to the Moon! But why should

we care about this? I asked one of our own science teachers, Mr. Reece, his thoughts about the Artemis program, and here is what he has to say, "There is so much more to Artemis than just a short trip to the Moon for a few astronauts. Just as my generation had a chance to grow up watching the International Space Station go from an idea to a tiny colony, of sorts, in outer space, future generations will see humans inhabit outposts on and around the Moon," he shares, "I think it will make an impact for teens to see a woman and a person of color land on the Moon. Maybe even someone here at THS will be inspired to become an astronaut and be apart of this program one day." Finally, he states, "Regardless of what country, race, or religion people come from, the idea that humankind is exploring

new reaches into Space can make all of our differences seem negligible". With inspiration from the words of Apollo 11 astronaut, Neil Armstrong, let this be one small step towards the moon, one giant leap for Space exploration!



The Issue with Modern "Activism"

By Joseph Burriss

What do Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the Covid-19 epidemic, and nearly any wildfire or climate disaster in the 21st century have in common? Every one of these events has seemingly come and gone in the public eye. Most every person knows of these events, but could only tell you details from the short period of time that the tragedy seemed relevant to them. However, despite the disappearance of these stories from social media, the issues themselves continue to pose serious problems. Many people, however, seem to know nothing about recent changes. This has to change.

I remember when Russia first invaded Ukraine in February 2022 (excluding the annex of Crimea in 2014) and major companies, social media influencers, and even everyday people changed their Instagram profile pictures to blue and yellow, made posts or stories on social media against the invasion, reposted infographics, or linked charities and articles on ways to help. This was a great start for spreading awareness and beginning to take action, yet seldom did any of these aforementioned entities' supposed "activism" go beyond these shallow attempts to prove solidarity. There is no problem with spreading awareness per se, but on a personal level, we human beings tend to pass responsibility to others in hopes that they will do the dirty work for us whilst we take credit by doing the bare minimum. This is exactly what happens in these situations. In weeks nearly all displays of support were washed away and things went back to business as usual, despite a still raging war in Ukraine with casualties continuing to rise.

The war in Ukraine is not the only issue that has been ignored. Climate change is an ever-moving conversation, yet issues like this take

longer to fix; they have less absolute moral stances to hold and no sole scapegoat to place all blame on. It seems like every few years one person in power claims to finally take action, conferences are held, and the same information on human impact on the environment which has been available for twenty years is kicked around like a worn hacky-sack, only for all hope to fade as people become disillusioned once more.

A similar issue in regards to its dogged persistence is Covid-19. Just as hope of normalcy glimmers on the horizon, a new variant appears like an evasive target leading to an endless game of whack-a-mole. In both these situations, normalcy must be forced. Humans can only care about a situation—even when it affects them—for so long until it becomes the new normal. We should not simply learn to give up on a problem because we come to the realization that it requires focused, long-term effort. Instead, we must kindle the often short-lived fire in our hearts for these events into a bonfire that will keep us warm when surrounded by the cold, uncomfortable truth as we face it head-on. Only then will change be made.

My purpose in making this article is not to force any political narrative, it is simply meant to highlight the "greater than thou" mentality held by many of us who—perhaps innocently—take advantage of tragedies to inflate our own egos. There is no inherent problem in pointing out such tragedies; awareness is obviously important. A problem arises, though, when we do not make any genuine effort to provide aid to the problem they supposedly cared about.

It is one thing to make a post about how terrible recent events are, but it is another to go out and protest, donate to legitimate causes, vote for candidates who promise to solve the

issue, or do any action at all. Many of the people with the most outreach and power choose to only make mere posts about the issue at hand, to increase public relations. Why else do companies only make posts related to pride month in countries where they know it will be a popular move, and not in those where it is frowned upon or even illegal? The answer is obvious: for the sake of image and their safety. In truth, we are all guilty to some degree, but there are better ways to go about activism. Instead of jumping on the bandwagon and making meaningless unoriginal statements, we should work towards long-term solutions. No war will be ended, no virus eradicated, no crisis averted from reposted infographics and empty statements. As high school students, we may not have the means or the ability to donate or protest. However, as a group, we can recognize a pattern of social-media activism that fails to fully respond to the issues at hand. We can break free from the chains of this meaningless cycle. truly become

invested in contemporary issues, and learn how to help not for the respect or notoriety we will gain. We should help because we are simply human beings supporting each other.

That is not to say that as high school students we always have the means or the ability to donate or protest, nor is it to say that the problem lies solely with the individual. It is the collective mind which decides how long an issue is relevant. If people only ever pretend to care about topics, then the issue goes unsolved and our world continues to get worse. I write this not with the intent of giving an easy, simple solution to this problem, as none exists. If nothing else, I hope I have provided perspective on the pattern that I see time and time again with major world events, so that you may break free from the chains of this meaningless cycle, truly become invested in contemporary issues, and learn how to help not for the respect or notoriety you will gain. We should help because we are simply human beings supporting each other.



Artwork By Ricardo Cortez Aleman

Breakfast Club

By Nathaniel Morefield

Every character in the beloved 1985 John Hughes classic film *The Breakfast Club* is a representation of a high school stereotype. There's a jock, a geek, an outcast, an introvert, and a popular girl. Each character makes assumptions about the others at the beginning of the movie, as do we, the audience. As the story continues, however, each character has a monologue showing us what life is really like in their shoes. You can't help but realize that despite what their actions show, it was not their intention. They each have complex and intricate stories that cannot nearly be explained by their stereotypical categorization. They are fully and completely conscious, with all of the good and bad that entails.

I remember once, when I was speaking with Mrs. Story, I told her that I have trouble imagining certain people having thoughts because they are so different from me. She kindly confronted me and said that in denying the consciousness of someone, I was outright de-humanizing them. I don't think I can convey in words, but surely I will never forget the shudder of guilt that ran through my body in that moment. I am eternally grateful though, for the consequent impact.

Guilt doesn't mean much, though, if not used to motivate action. Whether or not my intention was to dehumanize my peers, I have, and I have to carry that responsibility. It's not penance, exactly, but I want to take *The Breakfast Club's* example. In response to this challenge to look at the world through the consciousness of others, I intend to write this column. For every issue, I'll interview another student in our school and delve into their life. We'll discuss everything from their past upbringing to their future plans and explore what makes them unique.

I hope that can help me to look beyond the surface level of the people in our school. To truly empathize, we have to want to look deeper into other people's experiences. As Andrew says in the film, "We're all pretty bizarre, some of us are just better at hiding it; that's all." It's easy to be apathetic and make assumptions about the nameless people in our classes every day. I daresay we're all guilty of that. What matters is an intention to listen and learn—after all, we ourselves may be that seemingly thoughtless stranger to someone else. Welcome to *The Breakfast Club*.

Nobody's Perfect

By Alex Akard

You arrive to class early and go straight to your desk. Your hands are sweating, and your leg is shaking as you grab your notebook out of your backpack. The words blur together and you can feel your stomach churning as you will your mind to pay attention, but you are not alone.

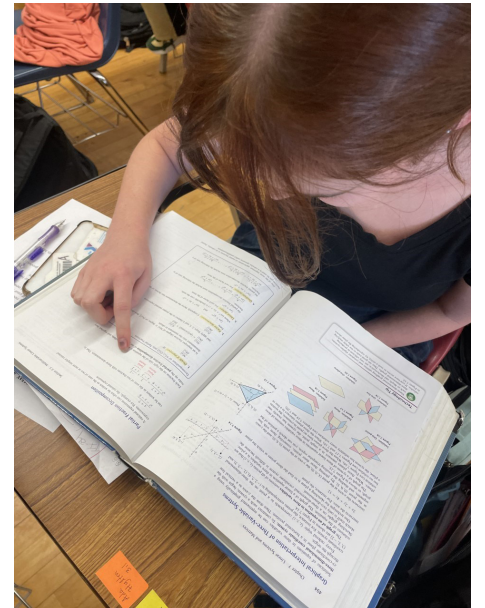
According to a 2019 Pew Research Study, 88 percent of teenagers 13-17 report they either feel "a lot" or "some" pressure about their grades. Whether that is due to internal pressure, parents, friends, college prospects, or the school system itself, many high schoolers fear grades.

Grades impact whether you graduate high school, receive admission into college, receive scholarships, and,

most importantly, whether you can exempt finals or not. Though, this is not the end of the world.

You can still go to college without a 4.0, you can still receive scholarships based on who you are and not what numbers you are, and you can still follow career paths that cater to your strengths. Also, with the new grade scale, there will be more chances to pass classes. The new grade scale follows a ten-point system, so a 90-100 is an A, an 80-89 is a B, a 70-79 is a C, a 60-69 is a D, and 0-59 is an F.

If you're still stressed, take a breath, vent to friends, and remember teachers are always around to help. And, as they say, "C's get degrees."



Mental Health Matters

By Hayden Arnett

Students shuffle through the hallways to their classes, repeatedly looking at their schedules to make sure they're going to the right place. Every time the bell rings, they let out a school-system-wide groan. To get an education, they are obliged to sit in a room full of strangers all day. These anxiety-inducing experiences are just a few of the many factors that make the back-to-school time stressful for students.

Figuring out healthy ways to manage these mental health struggles is a great way to positively uplift yourself in the upcoming school year. Luckily, there are many different ways to work through your stresses, in a way that prioritizes your mental well-being. THS' school-based therapist Amanda Weiford is employed through Frontier Health to provide health services to

THS students. She is available anytime you are having a personal issue or just need to talk.

"Healthy coping strategies," says Weiford, "is one of many ways to deal with stress, but they are different for different people." One healthy coping strategy Weiford recommends is self-care. "Self-care can prevent burnout," Weiford says. Practicing different means of self-care helps create boundaries between personal health and schoolwork. Creating these boundaries is crucial to uplifting one's mental health and focusing on things that bring you joy. Some self-care strategies include reading your favorite book, listening to your favorite artist, and watching your comfort TV series. Create time for yourself.

Another way Mrs. Weiford says to promote mental health is by "having a proper social support system." Having

someone to talk to, such as Mrs. Weiford or another supportive adult, is pivotal to being your best self. Just taking a few minutes out of your day to sit down and talk to someone you trust about what you're going through can take a load off of your shoulders and allow you to stop and take a breath.

Everyone struggles with their mental health from time to time, and creating a safe environment to talk about these topics is a positive way to support each other this school year.

However, it is necessary to define, what is mental health? The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) defines mental health as our "emotional, psychological, and social well-being." Often, struggling with your mental health can feel isolating and even embarrassing at times.

The Edible Side of Rhythm and Roots

By Ryan Bunning

It's nearly that time of year again, the time when the streets of Bristol come alive with the footsteps of thousands, and the sounds of dueling banjos fill the bars and cafes of State Street. The annual Rhythm and Roots Reunion is scheduled for September 9-11 and promises to host dozens of musical acts of various genres (not just country). With thousands of hungry music fans, comes the need for additional food options, and many vendors have jumped on this opportunity. While the list features many appetizing choices of various styles, I would like to provide some information on a selection of them. Firstly, I'd like to bring attention to the food truck known as The Pakalachian. I first stumbled across this Abingdon, VA-based truck at last year's Rhythm and Roots and I was quite impressed. The Pakalachian blends the food

traditions of the American South and Pakistan to create something truly unique. Where else can you find fried-green tomato pakoras or curry served over a bed of mashed potatoes? Next up we have Thai Town. Similarly, I first tried this vendor last year. I'd look forward to chicken teriyaki, shrimp tempura, and of course, Pad Thai. Lastly, I want to highlight Bristol Berry Bowls. I wanted to include them, not because I've tried their fruity blends, but because I have heard about their business a great deal of times, and I look forward to trying what they have to offer. I am only able to detail a handful of food stops in this article, so keep in mind that there are many more than just these few (not to mention the permanent restaurants in the downtown area). A complete list of vendors at this year's Rhythm and Roots Reunion is available on the festival app of the same name.



The Origins of Your Brain!

By Piper Booher

Earlier this month, scientists evaluated and experimented on the fossilized remains of an ancient beast that once lurked within the depths of the ocean blue. This monstrous creature was a 20-centimeter-long arthropod ancestor in the Radiodonts family that was known as Stanleycaris hirpex. Within the Burgess Shale formation with other Cambrian Creatures, there were enormous amounts of the arthropods well preserved, even with their small sizes; with 84 specimens having visible nerves and organs.

These remains demonstrate ways that S. hirpex was the black sheep of the Radiodonta family: it had a bizarre third eye and a complex central nervous system composed of 2 parts

near the dual main eyes and claws.

According to The Science Times, “fossils show that the brain has two segments - the protocerebrum is connected to the eyes and the deutocerebrum is linked to frontal claws.” What is incredible about this is that it is classified as a brain: and the first one in the fossil record at that, dating back to approximately 500 million years ago!

Now, every time you have a conversation or stop to evaluate a situation, stop and thank this incredible three-eyed Radiodont for starting the trend of complex tasks used with its primordial brain. If you would like to read up on more brief information about the Stanleycaris hirpex, the link to the article is in the QR code to the right.



Artwork By Piper Booher



Talking In the Library

By Ryan Bunning

In June of this year, Governor Lee signed a new and controversial law into effect. Passed by the legislature in May, Senate Bill 2247—or more commonly referred to as a “book ban law”—has sparked debate over how intensely the government should control our state’s school libraries. The bill has been slammed by some as government overreach or an attempt to eliminate certain topics from the school library. Others see this legislation as a necessary measure for the protection of the state’s children. The law allows objectors of library books to appeal to a State Committee, who then has the power to remove the books from some or all grade levels in school districts statewide. This allows objectors to effectively overrule the decisions made by School District Committees if the state votes differently. Opponents of the “book ban” make the argument that the restrictions have been used to target books on LGBTQ+ topics as well as literature on America’s history of racism, suggesting an attempt to shelter school children from these topics.

Perhaps affected the most are our schools’ librarians. Nashville Public

Library made national headlines after debuting library cards prominently decorated with the words “I Read Banned Books” in a show of solidarity with those critical of the bill. Ms. Silvers, a librarian here at Tennessee High, feels frustrated with the passage of the new law and views it as a potential tool for biased people to gain control over the information available to kids in school libraries. “I think it is insulting to librarians,” said Ms. Silvers in an interview, “That is their expertise. That’s what they went to school for, and in the event of a mistake, since librarians cannot read every book in the library, there is a process for evaluating a challenged book.” In her view, the state is trampling on the advice of those who are professionally trained to serve in this field.

Tennessee is not alone on this controversy-ridden field trip through the Dewey Decimal System as states such as Florida, Texas, and Pennsylvania have all appeared in countless headlines for leading the way in school book bans. In just two years, six states have successfully passed laws requiring the input of parental figures in reviewing books. Five other states are debating taking similar action.

A Glance Into Whimsicals

By Kaylie Cunningham

Oxford languages dictionary defines the word Whimsical as - playfully quaint or fanciful, especially in the appealing and amusing way. Whimsicals, a coffee shop near state street, sticks completely true to it’s name. As soon as you step into Whimsicals you are surrounded by what can only be described as a true work of art, from the chalk drawings on the menu board, to the gears, switches, and levers all around the shop. The greatness doesn’t stop at the interior design though. Whimsical’s owner and founder, Amanda Hollbrook, really brings the magic to the shop. Her shop sells coffee, waffles, premade lunch items in the case, and spontaneous specials that you can only catch if you follow their instagram- @whimsicalslc. Whimsicals is located in the Bristol Renaissance Center, on 636 Shellby street. One of the many joys of this location is the back parking lot that doesn’t require any parallel parking, making it friendly for new/teenage drivers.

Aside from the incredible staff and the beautiful building, the thing that arguably sets Whimsicals apart from every other coffee shop is the allergy friendly products. The shop serves several dairy substitutes along with gluten-free waffles made with almond milk. The reason gluten free products

are important to Hollbrook is because her daughter was diagnosed with celiac disease a few years ago. She stated that “I wanted for those people who couldn’t have what everyone else had at the table to have a chance to have that.”

Hollbrook goes further into her motivation for opening the quaint little shop, saying “Serving people is my love language. I love coffee and I love making it for people. I really wanted to build a business that did both. I can feed you and satisfy you and also show love to you. I can have you walk away knowing ‘I felt good and I felt worth something and that’s my main goal. I don’t even care if you come in here and talk to me and you don’t get anything other than me just giving you attention and love that’s all that I care about. This is an opportunity to meet new people, love on ones I know, and love on ones I don’t, and have them walk away feeling loved. That is literally the whole point of this whole coffee shop.” Knowing that there is a place I can go to feel a part of something and carry on a conversation with someone who genuinely cares and is interested in my life is way more valuable than Hollbrook could possibly know. Not a ton of people know about Whimsicals, but the ones that do gain access to a place filled with wonder and love.



Fantastic Fast Food Fries

By Lilly Chafin

Fast-food fries— a common yet delicious food we all know and love. These crispy, fried potato sticks are sold in many different establishments around the world and come in numerous different shapes and sizes. I'm sure you've wondered "Which fast food restaurant has the best fries?". It's difficult to figure out which fry, out of SO many options, is the best. After careful consideration, I have decided on 5 local fast food restaurants and compared their fries to see which fry is the finest. Each restaurant has something that makes them stand out from the rest. Pal's fries are seasoned with their very own fry salt, Bojangles has massive fries which are also seasoned with different spices, Arby's has their signature curly fries, Chick-fil-A has their renowned waffle fries, and McDonalds is McDonalds. I gathered 7 individuals, myself included, and we rated the

fries by each characteristic. These six categories are: taste, seasoning, size, number of fries, price, and texture, to see which fry is the overall greatest. The individuals chosen for this test each have their own preferences and tastes when it comes to fries, this gave some very diverse results. Traveling in 4 cars, we were each sent to one or two drive-thrus to pick up a small fry from each place. Then we planned to meet back up to taste and compare the fries. The cheapest fry was pals, costing about \$1.59. The most expensive fry was Arby's, coming in at \$1.69. But you didn't read this article for me to be talking about prices and my process— you read this for results. Now the moment you have all been waiting for, in last place was McDonalds, with a score of 6.69/10. In fourth place was Arby's with a DESERVED score of 7.34/10. In third place—as much as it breaks my heart—is Bojangles, with a score of 7.5/10. In second place, with

a very VERY close score of 7.8/10, is Chick-fil-A! And finally, with a score of 7.81/10 the greatest fries come from Pals! Winning this competition by 0.01 points. Of course, this is all subjective, so take all of this date with a grain of seasoning salt.



Aliens: Few and Far Between



Artwork By Joan Weddington

This Months Comic

Comic By Joan Weddington



Freshman Firsts and Faults

By Caitlin Vining

Welcome to Tennessee High School class of 2026! You all are officially high school students, isn't that just exciting? You're seeing new faces, and maybe some old faces from middle school. Classes have gotten bigger and better, and maybe a few of you are thinking they're harsher and harder. I bet a few of you are starting to hop into that driver's seat, now that's true freedom right there. And of course, you get to experience Friday Night Lights!

The long-awaited Friday night football games are finally here, and now you're a part of it. These nights entail dressing up, taking pictures with your friends, chanting, cheering for your friends, stadium concessions, and so much more fun. But let's face it, you are freshmen, you're at the bottom of the food chain, so you must learn the rules. Upperclassmen have already spread little whispers about the rules, but with our first home football game

approaching, it's about time you hear them all.

How to be a Fan:

- One of the most "broken" rules is the infamous seating arrangement. It goes as follows: Seniors are at the front of the student section, juniors follow behind, then sophomores and freshmen sit at the top. I know it's frustrating and you want to sit near the bottom of the stands, but the seniors waited their turn, and soon enough you'll be a senior.

- Now just because the freshmen are sitting all the way at the top of the stands doesn't mean you lose your spirit! I would love to hear some new voices intertwined with our Viking chants. Stand up, not only will you see the game better that way, but more of your classmates are going to want to interact with you.

- Dress up! Our Maroon Crew has created themes for each football game, it brings our student section together when everyone is dressed up. You don't want to be the only one who isn't decked out in school spirit.

- This is a rule I can't stress enough, be respectful to everyone participating in the game, and I don't just mean the football team. The dance team, cheer team, color guard, and band all deserve your respect as well, they practice just as hard as our football team and work to make the game more enjoyable. Respect comes in many shapes and forms. Yelling and making comments, mocking, and grabbing spirit items and/or instruments are all extremely disrespectful. Treat others the way you want to be treated.

- You are representing Tennessee High School, show the opposing school how amazing we are! Make sure you aren't yelling toward the opposing players or spirit teams.

- Clean up after yourself! Leave the Stone Castle as tidy as you found it!

- HAVE FUN!!!

Vikings Vocalize

By Torey Walk and Liz Rouse

"If you could choose a football theme, what would it be?"

"Jurassic Park": Adam Hrirou, 11th grade

"Hawaiian": Mackenzie Addison, 10th grade

"Dress Like Your Favorite Actor": Roque Ochoa, 12th Grade:

"Wear a White Shirt With a White Lie About You": Laynie Richardson, 12th

"Pink Out": Sebastian Benitez, 9th Grade

"Sponge Bob": Paige Whaly, 9th Grade

"Viking": Josh Neinast, 10th Grade

Sarcastic Summaries

By Liz Rouse

9th Grade:

Fahrenheit 451: Set in the twenty-fourth century, Fahrenheit 451 introduces a new world in which everyone is blind and tone-deaf because the government has total control. The fireman is now seen as a flamethrower; a destroyer of books rather than an insurance against fire. They are asking for a catastrophe to happen.

10th grade:

The Hobbit: In the little suburb of Bag End, there lives a hobbit by the name of Bilbo Baggins. As it turns out, an insufferable, revolting, greedy dragon named Smaug had taken all the dwarves' treasure and is living rent-free in the Lonely Mountain. Bilbo has a long adventure ahead of him.

11th Grade:

Great Gatsby: The Great Gatsby tells a "tragic" story of Jay Gatsby, a self-made millionaire. The book is narrated by Nick Carraway, who is basically just watching Gatsby be a total loser. Gatsby has many hidden secrets awaiting to be discovered.

12th Grade

Jane Eyre: The novel follows the story of Jane, who happens to be an orphan, as she battles through life's struggles. Jane has many obstacles in her life—her cruel and abusive Aunt Reed, the grim conditions at Lowood school, her love for Rochester, and Rochester's marriage to Bertha. However, Jane overcomes these obstacles through her determination, sharp wit, courage, and dumb luck.

THS Meme of The Month

By Torey Walk



201 Pennsylvania Ave.
Bristol, TN 37620

All about Cheesecake and more...

Jeffrey, Jim & Maggie



Email: tipnthescalebristol@gmail.com
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423-914-9962
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Days Inn Bristol Parkway

536 Volunteer Parkway
Bristol, TN 37620

Jaisinh Surma
General Manager

Hina Surma
Assistant General Manager

Tel: 423-968-2171
Fax: 423-968-4357
surma.daysinn@gmail.com