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# SUMUS LEONES

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March 2020

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## Spring Break Down Over Virus Fears

By Nina Jobanputra, Sophomore

With several thousand deaths worldwide and more than 600 confirmed cases in the United States as of March 10, the Coronavirus is the talk of the world. While students are both excited and anxious at the prospect of school closing, they also fear that someone they know might be infected.

Coronavirus was first seen in the news in November with the first case in Wuhan, China. Since then, the virus has spread throughout the country and the world, hitting places like South Korea, Italy and Iran with major outbreaks.

As the number of cases climbs, so does the impact of the virus on some of the students' plans for the near future, including spring break. Some advanced language classes host trips to countries that speak their language of study. This year, the two trips scheduled were to China and France. Unfortunately, due to the concentration and the increased risk of infection, the teachers and the school decided to cancel the trip to China.

“There were several main factors [that led us to cancel the trip] number one was student safety, student health and then we looked at sort of the fact that it was initially the city of Wuhan and then it was the entire province of Hubei and then it was the entire country that was under travel restrictions,” said Chinese and Government teacher Mr. Liu, one of the organizers of the trip.

The school and the teachers knew that student health had to always be the top priority. “We [decided to] cancel the trip very soon after the coronavirus first [started to] become an issue. And second factor was financially we wanted to make sure we would get back as much of our

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money back as possible. That would mean that we would not want to wait to make that decision,” said Mr. Liu.

On the bright side to those who were planning on attending the trip to China the school “plan[s] on going next year. Normally the trips are [scheduled] for every two years, but basically, hopefully this will not be an issue next year, but basically the same trip will happen. We are just postponing it for a year,” Liu added.

That means that most of everyone that was planning to go this year, will hopefully get to go next year. Except for the seniors who will have unfortunately already graduated by that time.

Will Mader, a sophomore who had planned to go on this trip said, “It stinks. It’s terrible what’s happening over there, a lot of seniors really were looking forward to it.”



During the spring break of 2019, students visited Morocco as part of their Arabic studies

# Field Trip Fairness

By Ella Hankins, 8th grade

Like most schools, Washington Latin plans field trips every year for students. Field trips are a great way for students to use the knowledge from the classroom and apply it into real world situations. Although the purpose of field trips is for education, they can also be fun, just ask anyone who has visited Echo Hill, an annual trip the seventh grade takes. Field trips have many benefits, benefits that the eighth grade has not been able to reap yet this year.

Unlike every other grade, this year the eighth graders have yet to go on a field trip. In the past, eighth grade has not been a grade where many field trips occur, but there is usually one in the fall and one or two in the spring. The most well known field trip the eighth grade takes is the visit to the D.C. Superior Court. The students spend a day watching different trials in order to get a sense of how court works in the real world. This field trip is perfect because it coincides with the play *Inherit the Wind* which is read by the students in English class during their justice unit. However, not only is the eighth grade done reading “Inherit the Wind,” but also done with the justice unit. So why have they not gone to the D.C. Superior Court or had any field trip?

Whatever the reason is for the lack of field trips the eighth graders have noticed, and they aren’t happy about it. Eighth grader Devyn Scott said “I’m a little bored I guess. Going to school everyday to just learn is just boring. That’s boring. There is nothing to look forward to. Going on a field trip and doing something new... is refreshing.”

Fellow eighth grader Willa Roemer said “you get to take some of the load off, like we just had the PSAT, we have a lot of work, we have a lot of stuff going on. Field trips would be beneficial to our class.”

According to the faculty, the lack of field trips has nothing to do with behavior. Mr. Kelly, director of the middle school, was hopeful about future field trips, based on past experiences. “I think we had a great, great, experience with you guys going to Echo Hill last year. I think we had a great experience when you guys went to the escape rooms last year too.”

According to Ms. Dena Kolb, who organizes the field trips, the lack of field trips is simply because of unusual circumstances that caused the planning for this year's trips to be “a little tricky.” She went on to explain that the eighth grade takes around two trips per year, the first being in the fall and the next in the spring. The fall field trip is related to what students are learning in their U.S. History Class. For example, last year’s eighth graders went to the Native American Museum, but that changed once last year’s history teacher left. The fall came and went without a field trip.

Ms. Kolb, Mr. Kelly, and Ms. Bradley have been working to see if there is a possibility that the trip can still occur, but it brings its own challenges.

Although Washington Latin has small class sizes compared to many schools in the city, one hundred students is still too many to take to the D.C. Superior Court at one time. In the past the grade was split up into two groups to solve this problem. One group, about fifty students, would go to the court while the other did a history related activity, then the next day the groups would switch. Although there is a possibility that the other group could do an activity not related to history, none have been planned. The trip to the D.C. Superior Court is “off the table” as Ms. Kolb put it.

Even though there are no official field trips planned yet, the eighth grade should not lose hope. Eighth grade science teacher Ms. Barlev and Latin teacher Ms. Sisk both have ideas about field trips, including a possible field trip for English class to replace the D.C. Superior Court trip.



Eighth graders last year during the popular Echo Hill overnight trip

# Who is your Political Twin?

By Zoe Edelman, Junior and Josie McCartney, 8th grade

The 2020 Democratic Primary has seen dozens of candidates come and go in the past year competing for the nomination, following several major candidates' dropouts between December and early March. The major remaining candidates are Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont and Former Vice President Joe Biden.

Following the quickly dwindling field, many Americans are stumped about who they will vote for following their favorite's departure. Partially, this is due to the particular policies, mannerisms and looks presented by the candidates. Despite the unique aspects of each candidate, some members of the Washington Latin community could see connections between their very own community members and the possible democratic elect.

Eighth grader Caroline Ball talked about one of her classmates saying, "Elias [Baldwin] reminds of Pete Buttigieg because I think they look alike and I think he kind of talks like [Pete Buttigieg]."

Elias said, "I guess out of all of them I'm most similar to him. I agree with a lot of the stuff he says and I think he's a smart guy."

Middle School Director Mr. Kelly said one of his eighth grade students reminded him of a certain "meticulous and precise" candidate. "Ella [Hankins] reminds me of Elizabeth Warren because she has a plan for everything," Mr. Kelly said, referencing one former candidate Senator Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts who had a plan for seemingly every issue on voters' minds.

When she heard this Ella said, "I have to agree. I think I'm very precise and meticulous, but I don't always have a plan."

On the high school side, senior Zoe Dickerson said that classmate Benny Weinberger gave off "Bernie vibes." She likened the two by explaining that in watching debates "when Bernie Sanders has something to say... he'll say it," and when Benny has something to say? "He'll say it- no matter what."

For Benny's part, he seemed pleased by the "cool" comparison, starting, "Bernie Sanders is a crazy old man, and I'm also a crazy old man in spirit."

English teacher Ms. Foley's Bernie Sanders comparison was not to Benny, but to Arabic teacher Mr. Porcelli, as he and Sanders are both passionate, informed and like to debate. She did create a contrast between the two, asserting that "Mr. Porcelli has serious people skills, whereas Bernie Sanders is so focused on his message that he sometimes alienates people."

Regarding Ms. Foley's comments, Mr. Porcelli seemed to first suspect the comparison stemmed from names, specifically, "my first name is Sander and his last name is Sanders." He elaborated on the connection, explaining, "I'm definitely passionate about my ideas so there is a comparison there." Mr. Porcelli then expanded, stating that despite both being "ideologues," Mr. Porcelli himself is "also really interested in exactly how things will happen and I feel like I'm much more compromising." As far as compromising goes, he noted that the Sanders campaign has its reasons for often standing firm, "to define his space in the democratic party," and that he sees the actions of Sanders' 2020 campaign as less compromising than his 2016 campaign. "I like to think of myself as a pragmatist. I want to get things done, and if I have an idea, but you have an idea too, we can meet in the middle and come up with something that would actually work."

She also added that head of school Dr. Smith reminded her of former candidate Elizabeth Warren, both because of their shared New England background, but also because they "always have a plan for everything." Beyond that, both leaders have layers, as they "get things done, but [have] a secret sense of humor that comes out from time to time."

For her part, Dr. Smith seemed pleased with the comparison, saying, "I'm glad to be compared to Elizabeth Warren, and I'm impressed with her." Additionally, Dr. Smith noted, "I look forward to sometime before I leave this planet for there to be a female president."

Junior Niko Davis decided to throw in his two cents on the matter, comparing junior Paul Mwombela to republican Donald Trump, explaining, "he is a lot like Donald Trump with all of his comments."

Paul, upon hearing the likening, smiled in agreement. "I think I'm very similar in how I present myself at school," he explained, "I joke around a lot at school, and I like to be a more than life character, and I think that is what Donald Trump is." Paul further added that to him, Donald Trump is "much more a character than a man." Explaining the comparison, which he deemed a compliment, to be funny, as "that's my goal in being in school, because that's how I make it fun"



# A Hole in the Wall

By Mary-Kate Wilson, Senior

Inside the conference room on Latin's second floor, framed photos line the walls, photos which may appear strange or insignificant to passersby. They depict a mis-matched assortment of buildings: churches, a community center, a grand yellow house. One frame houses a photo in which if you look close enough, you can see the blue stone detailing across its tall windows.

Although a familiar site to many veteran teachers at Latin, less than 70 current students ever attended classes at this location, known by many names, such as "the old Latin," "the old campus," or simply, "Upshur."

This year's senior class is the last group of Washington Latin students to have attended the school on 16th street, but no current seniors actually took classes within the building. Instead, many will remember being stuffed inside of the M.E.U., or Mobile Education Unit: a rectangular trailer that contained 5 classrooms and two bathrooms, positioned directly next to a fenced-off blacktop.

When asked about memories from Upshur, many seniors erupted into laughter, reminiscing about old teachers and experiences. Students shared a few significant instances, and as they spoke with one another, stories began to weave themselves together.

"I remember a few times Mr. Burke could hit the wall so hard that the clock would fall down," Remarks senior Zoe Crute.

"The clock in the next room would fall down!" Insists Kim Montpelier, through laughter. "Oh! Benny kicked a hole in the wall," she remarks, "and you could see inside, in the second week of school."

"It was the first day of school," says senior Benny Weinberger. "They had us all line up on the back wall of the MEU, and I was bored because I think they were calling names or something, and I'm at the end of the alphabet. So, I was kicking against the wall. And I was like, 'You know what? It's a wall, nothing is gonna happen.' But," he sighs, "it was the MEU, so I was just tapping it, and all of a sudden my heel goes through the wall. And I took it out, and there was a big hole there, and it was there for the rest of the year."

Many seniors and teachers have similar stories about the easily-destroyed classrooms and lack of proper facilities at the Upshur campus. Upper school English teacher Mr. Hultgren remembers suffering through several plumbing incidents that overflowed from the girl's bathroom in the MEU directly into his classroom. "The water flooded in and got a bunch of my books wet and I had to dry them out."

“Temperature was weird on the old campus,” Says sixth grade science teacher Ms. Dobler, “It was always way too hot in my room. I remember people would come in and would just be sweating like crazy, because there was no real air conditioner to keep you cool.”

“I am very thankful for the new campus, but I think the old one built a lot of character,” she says, “I think the students who were in the old campus appreciated the new campus a lot more than students who never saw where we came from. And I think that part of that’s because they saw all the obstacles.”

Mr. Hultgren agrees. “I think what I appreciate about the MEU, and what a lot you appreciate, is that it makes it easier to appreciate moving into this building. The first year that we were here, in these hallways, we knew that we had been through something together.”

Senior Zoe Crute also acknowledges the reality of leaving the old campus for a building that we can rely on to be dry, safe, and stable. “I feel like people take this building for granted now, because it was the only building they ever knew. Even though we were only at Upshur for one year, we still felt the impact of leaving.”



Seniors visit the old campus, reminiscing on the good and the bad

# Political Cartoon

By Ellie Anderson, 8th grade



# Happenings Before Break



The Government class took the DC courts for the DC Circuit Court Historical Society's mock court program, at which Senior Luke Tewalt was named "Outstanding Advocate"



Washington Latin's Middle School swimmers made waves at the St. Albans swim meet



The Upper School Quiz Bowl team attended a competitive tournament in Baltimore, with Seniors Shelby Ferncrombie, Harry Hirsch and Oliver Stevens earning a spot in the coveted playoff round



Sophomore Kayla Park won Washington Latin's Poetry Out Loud competition, boosting her to another victory at the DC-wide competition