



FEATURES

Attention rising seniors: the English Department's new initiative with senior projects and its affect on you.



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OP-ED

We have all seen the college posts on Instagram, but should such announcements really be posted? The editorial takes a side.



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A&E

LFA theater performed *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* in February. The best photos from the show are here.



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Global poverty and income inequality: Exploring the 2019 - 2020 Head of School Symposium

By Tyler Watts
Staff Writer

Prior to his departure from LFA, Dr. John Strudwick selected the Head of School Symposium topic for this 2019-2020 school year. The subject of Inequality and Global Poverty is greatly prevalent to the issues of class and status, education, healthcare, and opportunity (to name a few) that impact the communities surrounding LFA and the lives of those within our community. This subject is arguably one of the most pressing HOSS topics in recent years as it addresses realities we all face. Given the gravity of the topic, it was a shock to many to learn that there will not be a Head of School Symposium Day reflecting on the subject.

In the past, Head of School Symposium Day was a day spent either in regular classes that covered a lesson connected to the topic, or a day in which people learned in mini-class rotations that taught about specialized aspects of the subject. This year, there isn't such a day for two primary reasons—the topic can be emotionally heavy to focus on for an entire day, and the topic is so objectively significant that it wouldn't do it justice to focus on it for a day and then store the issue away.

"I thought this was a tough topic to spend an entire six-seven hour day on; it could be draining as it's not very uplifting... some may even tune out this discussion if continued for the length of a school day," said Matt Vaughn, who is leading the Head of School Symposium Committee this year. The committee is also comprised of Chris Tennyson, José De Jesús, Jaqueline Leib, Jamal English, Erin English, and Matt Nink.

"At the same time," Vaughn continued, "what we decided to do was team up with Multicultural Day and Service Day and have more of a collaborative experience. Service Day would have service more geared toward the topic. We thought about doing something a little bit different or new, which at large I think some kids may tune out, but this way we hopefully get the best of both worlds."

Community, one of the key features of LFA, is presented in the continuous creation of student-driven service projects, and being able to connect giving back with the concepts of poverty and inequal-



Photo by Tyler Watts

Students and faculty read story submissions for the Food and Story Drive at Story Share event.

ty is an ingenious marriage of the lessons to be learned through both. The Food and Story Drive, a sophomore seminar project spearheaded by Kelly Lombardo and Andrew Zengler, encouraged the community to contribute several non-perishables to the North Chicago Community Partners Family Care Closet. The food desert of North Chicago often faces a decrease in available resources following the bounty of food provided during the preceding holiday season. The great participation in food donation was successful in contributing nearly 510 pounds of food. The story drive was the aspect of the project with more of an impact on campus, as members of the community shared about their interactions with poverty and inequity.

The Food and Story Drive was a project partnered with the Stuart Center, and the Story Share event they hosted on Monday February 19, 2020 was an evening to gather and hear submissions from the drive read aloud or to speak from the heart with personal anecdotes about family experiences and observations of society.

"It's challenging to successfully talk about this topic in a format other than stories, because then it becomes statistics or numbers on a graph, and it's easier to stay shielded from it," said Nink. It's easy to miss the humanity that we are all living through. Stories are the best

way to handle the nuances of this topic."

Listening to and picking up on the ways in which poverty and inequality impact the people that surround us is a more resonating lesson to learn in comparison to disconnected lectures or abstract figures.

"Poverty is not the state of being extremely poor or not having a lot of material items. Poverty transcends social, economic, and political elements, so it can't just mean being poor. Poverty is a mindset, a mindset that one can't help but snap into when facing difficulty." This is an excerpt from Story #33, an anonymous perspective on what the Head of School Symposium topic meant to them in relation to their own interactions with poverty. Other shared stories had themes of happiness in the face

of adversity, lessons taught by immigrant parents and grandparents, and gratitude for recognized privilege among many others.

Fostering empathy and compassion is the ultimate goal for this topic. Awareness of each other's differences in such a diverse setting as LFA will behoove each community member in making this school even more supportive, welcoming, and close-knit. Erin English attested to the potentially positive outcome of building a more empathetic community as she said, "It allows for deeper connection and it allows us to really hear each other, to see each other, and to allow us to belong here in a way that's going to make us all the richer."

"I am fortunate enough to live in a financially stable household that is able to meet my needs, as well as the needs of other family members. My mom and her four siblings grew up living close to the poverty line. Their struggle was not an unusual one for many black families living around Chicago. However, a lack of outreach and resources almost led my mom to become illiterate. If not for the kindness of others - those who dared to cross the lines of class - my family would not be where it is today."

An excerpt from a story submission for the Food and Story Drive regarding the 2019/2020 Head of School Symposium topic.

Up next on the menu: *LFA serves up new dishes in the dining hall*

By Briana Murphy
Staff Writer

The dining hall is shared by the entire school population, with some students eating breakfast, lunch, and dinner in the Student Union. The school population has noticed changes to its menu, and those changes have been met with a positive reception. For LFA students, their lunch period is a time to socialize, have fun, and enjoy food.

While the menu at the Student Union is consistently good, it can get repetitive. The menu has been cycled through for at least the past eight years. However, in recent months, the community has seen some changes--for the better. Due to the fact that the menu has to be planned for meals out in advance, it restricts the changes that can be made and can cause the menu to be repetitive. In the recent months, however, new dishes that the school population has never had the pleasure of enjoying have begun to pop up on the menu.

Simone Cathey, a three-year junior said, "I really like trying the new dishes in the dining hall because it's just something different, and I like how interesting the dishes have been recently."

Students and teachers alike have recently found themselves increasingly excited for the week's meal offerings when checking the menu sent out via email each Sunday. The menu for the week lists

breakfast, lunch, and dinner and allows students to know what they'll be having.

Senior Shaliya Heard said she "really enjoyed the lemon butter tilapia. It was delicious and was a nice subtle change from what we'd normally have for dinner and the garnish was a really nice touch that made me excited to eat it."

It is easy to see how well received the changes have been by the long lines during lunch periods. The food has been the cause of delight on students faces, and joyful conversation about the delicious new menu items.

Angelica Garcia, who plans the meals at LFA and works on budgeting within the Student Union said, "We decide

the menu based on the history of what we've served before, how well received the food has been and most importantly what the school population likes."

The process to edit the menu begins with a small sample of a dish and depending on the community's reaction. Popular dishes are added to the menu, while those deemed unpopular never make it to the menu. The popularity of the dish is gauged by the amount of food left after the dining hall and how much of it is left on the plates.

Attempts to gauge the reaction of the LFA community towards different types of food occurs through samples of different dishes during lunch and dinner. The small

samples and variety of new dishes put out during lunch and dinner have acted as "test trials" to determine what changes should be permanently implemented and which ones should pop up only periodically.

When asked about the reason behind the new changes to the menu, Garcia remarked, "I believe when you try new foods, it can take you to a new place, and it's just a better experience overall to have a variety of food."

The staff is really excited to bring joy to the community through new dishes. So make sure to enjoy the new foods that appear in the Student Union, and enjoy your lunch periods.



Students work and enjoy spending time in the Student Union during lunch.

Photo by Briana Murphy

Student exhibits contribute to a growing presence of art at LFA

By Tyler Watts
Staff Writer

Art has the profound ability to bring communities together through the shared consumption of evocative, moving work. It surrounds us every day and engages the senses to inspire us and foster connec-

tions. While LFA's curriculum requires three semesters of fine arts to graduate, select students with deeper passions and interests in these fields have taken studio work to the next level with complex and vibrant exhibitions that have recently been featured in the Student Union.

"When the Student Union was first built,

I was wondering if it would be a good place to display student work," said Lauren Fowler, a studio arts teacher. "I consider it to be the living room of LFA where everyone comes together, so I thought it would be a great place to display artwork. I talked with Mr. De Jesús, and we found a way to get some gallery walls up."

An official gallery opening was held on the evening of January 22, 2020 for Advanced Studio Art students Ani Plambeck '21 and Sky Wang '20. Although formally showcased in the lower Student Union, their work was moved up to the gallery walls the next day for all to see. The event was very well received, as Plambeck recounted.

"More people came than I expected! They engaged a lot more than I thought they would and asked me questions about my work."

The success of this first visual arts-based event and the positive feedback students received are promising outcomes that encourage growth of the visual arts program and continued usage of the gallery walls in the Student Union. Since the first opening, the 2-D Studio class showcased colorful self portraits and an interactive "create your own" station beside it. Carolyn Lu '20 also had an opening and exhibition with impressive photography work. Although her work was not produced for an LFA class, she was able to

use the gallery space due to her communication and collaboration with Fowler.

"I like it because a lot of people come to the Student Union every day, so I think it's a great space for public attention," Lu said. "On the other hand, because it's in the Student Union, it doesn't feel as official-- it's not really an 'art place'." While the Student Union serves as LFA's dining hall and thus may be perceived as a casual setting for displaying artwork, the beautiful glass windows allow for plenty of natural light to shine through and complement the art during the day.

Looking ahead, Fowler intends to mobilize the gallery walls and exhibit art all around campus.

"I think that performing arts are so dynamic... but Cressey isn't the only great place on LFA's campus to display student work," said Fowler. "I wanted to make sure [visual art] is more a part of our daily routine and a way to add a pop of surprise to everyone's day."

In comparison to performing arts, which can more easily showcase student efforts and talents, visual arts is a more nuanced field, with less opportunity for social gatherings (compared to plays, musicals, and concerts). However, initiatives such as Plambeck, Wang, and Lu's gallery openings demonstrate that this narrative is changing.



Photo by Lauren Fowler

Students were encouraged to create their own art on small pieces of paper as part of the exhibit.

A Senior Capstone project for us all:

How the Department of English Capstone Project will affect next year's seniors

By Briana Murphy

Managing Editor of Production

Almost every year, the LFA curriculum undergoes many changes to improve and adjust the students' educational experience. The changes range from altering the book choices in different courses to revising the list of courses offered. Next year's modifications to the senior English curriculum will include making all classes year-long and getting rid of semester-long courses.

The most noteworthy change is perhaps the introduction of the Department of English Capstone Projects or the "DCAP" projects which will take place within the English curriculum.

The program is designed for seniors and has been added to the English curriculum because it's the only subject LFA students are required to take all four years at the Academy, ensuring that all seniors will be included in the experience.

"DCAP" is not the official name for the project as of yet because the coining of the new edition to the senior curriculum is being discussed; however, the students will know sometime before next year.

English Dept. Chair Dr. Patrick Finnessy explained the program's intentions in the context of the four-year LFA English experience: "As Freshman we introduce them [the students] to the individual in society, the emphasis being getting to the self. Sophomore year it was looking at the individual in American society, and Junior year it's the individual in the world. Senior year is intended to have a lot more choice, and we want a student to demonstrate what they've learned in our course of study."

The "DCAP" projects are a way for seniors to show that they've grown from a novice to a master in regards to the concepts they've learned in English throughout their years at the Academy. The students are encouraged to be creative with their projects.

They will discuss what they wish to produce with their English teacher and begin planning what they'll showcase at the end of the year. If the student is taking two English courses their senior year, then they will work with both their teachers two

teachers to discuss how they can integrate the skills they've gained from both classes into a great project.

The projects won't take away from the in-class curriculum (if it does wind up using some class time, this will constitute a day or two at the beginning of the year) because the projects are to be worked on outside of class, gradually throughout the year.

In this sense, the "DCAP" curriculum is supposed to mimic a minor in college, whereas the student's English class will function like a major. The project is meant

to be a culminating body of work by showcasing all that students have learned in the past four years at LFA..

To clarify the purpose of the "DCAP" projects, Finnessy said, "As Freshman, they're novices and just at the beginning, as sophomores we're looking for competency that they've picked up what they were taught in freshman year, and they're looking forward. The idea of junior year is proficiency, and senior year we're trying to see through the "DCAP" that they've reached mastery in their own right."

Each project will be completed using a different medium depending on the course the student takes and what they feel will best showcase their knowledge and growth. Then the projects will be shown to the entire faculty and student body, so that the senior will be recognized for their work.

The way in which the project will be showcased to the school will be decided on later due to the creative freedom the seniors will be allocated. It's difficult to find a way for all mediums to be showcased.

Several aspects of the projects are still



Tyler Watts 21' and Rachel Johns 21' working on articles within the journalism classroom.

Photo by Briana Murphy

being deliberated, such as how the projects will be graded, when exactly the exhibition of the projects will take place, and what the restrictions on the project will be.

Partly due to the newness of the program, some of next year's seniors are somewhat unsure about the changes to the curriculum because it adds another layer of uncertainty to their senior year, and they're worried about the stress of major projects on top of college applications.

They see it as another obstacle put on the track towards college and are worried about how it will be graded. On the other hand, some students see it as a positive thing because it provides students with a creative outlet and gives them a glimpse of what college will be like in terms of a college minor or major.

Some of this year's seniors thought that the "DCAP" projects were an unnecessary add-on because they loved the way that the English department functions currently. Mostly because of the various electives seniors were allowed to take previously.

There is the sentiment that some seniors do wish that they could be around long enough to see what the juniors produce for the "DCAP" project.

When asked about their thoughts on the new initiative, the current juniors (next year's seniors) shared the following thoughts:

Christina Franco said, "I think that it's going to be adding a lot onto seniors' plates because we're going to be dealing with college applications at this time, and it'll add a lot of unnecessary stress. I feel like the system we had before was a good system"

Eduard Nunez said, "Although the "DCAP" has its purpose in making the students more committed to their work, I feel it only adds on to the pressure and expectations already set for the end of our senior year. Ultimately stifling our creative abilities and forcing the students to endure more work."

Abby Dandrow commented, "if they give us the freedom to do

what we want people will come up with a lot of cool things, but if there are a lot of restrictions, then I feel like people will do whatever they feel will get them good grades."

Vivi Torres said, "Personally, for shy people like me, I'm being forced to publicize myself, and while I understand that it's for our growth, I don't appreciate the way that I have to present to the whole school."

Joanne Kang felt as if the project topics were too broad, "since everyone has different strengths and the practical applications of English have such broad choices in regard to the media which we could use, people could end up being confused on what to do and end up doing very similar projects, enforcing normality"

Simone Cathey said, "I think that the "DCAP" project will be a great chance for students to express themselves, show the knowledge they gained, and it will be a good opportunity to apply what we have learned and connect it to what we will do in the future."

Brian Figueroa said, "I think that it's counter productive because I know that it's supposed to be something that we're proud of and want to showcase, but I don't enjoy presenting things to one class let alone the entire school and I feel like if I mess up it'll cause more stress than anything else."

David Oluwole said, "I think it's an innovative way to showcase the skill we've learned throughout the year and keep the moral up with the seniors."

Rachel Johns said, "As a part of the Journalism program, I think it will be really fun to create a "DCAP" project that will combine both journalism and the other English class that I will be taking, and it will definitely be a project I'll enjoy working on."

Ramya Herman said, "I'm really excited to be able to unleash my artistic abilities within my English class because while I do enjoy it, it is nice to be able use other mediums to create meaningful projects. Hopefully everyone uses their time wisely and creates something great."



Photo by Briana Murphy

James Kuhns 21' takes a look at the English courses available for seniors next year.

The importance of respecting senior privileges

By Jared Felitto
Managing Editor of Sports

Seniors at Lake Forest Academy are expected to have some special privileges. It's pretty much a general consensus in any high school that everyone can't wait to be a senior. There's something special about being the oldest in the school. Over their three years, seniors have slowly climbed the food chain and are now at the pinnacle of their high school experience--second semester of their senior year. All seniors expected to get some "special treatment" after having their eyes on these privileges for the past three years; however, some of these privileges we haven't been able to take full advantage of.

The most blatant privilege that is a nuisance to all day students is senior parking. In the past, this year's seniors have respected senior parking. They've endured the long walk from Crown to Reid. They've experienced that; now, it's their turn to be able to park closer. Juniors, even some sophomores, think it's no problem at all to take some of these spots. Really, get over yourself. You'll be able to have those spots in a few years. For now, leave those spots for the seniors. Seriously, the only thing

worse than the walk from Reid to Crown is seeing juniors (especially sophomores) hoarding all the senior parking spots.

As many of the current seniors remember as freshman and even sophomores, senior cuts in the lunch line were very much a thing. While there is certainly a time and place for this, this could very well turn into the "seniors stand up" at morning meeting where everybody takes advantage of it. Even though this would be a nice privilege for seniors, it's best to refrain from having this be accessible to seniors.

One privilege that several seniors are unaware of is that going off-campus for lunch is technically allowed; however, it has recently been brought to several seniors attention that some of their classmates have been denied access to go off campus for lunch. This privilege hasn't been as consistently granted in recent years. For the past few years, some seniors repeatedly went off campus for lunch, where as some did not. For LFA, safety is the utmost priority for its students. People venturing off campus puts the safety of those students in jeopardy- but, most seniors are turning 18 or already turned 18. Since technically the majority of seniors are le-



Photo by Jared Felitto

One of the senior privileges that is highly valued is more convenient parking.

gal adults, they should have the ability to go off campus and be able to get a little break from school and the typical food.

As tedious as these privileges sound,

Seniors in all high schools have some form of special treatment. They aren't asking for much - just to respect the few advantages that we are entitled to.

How BSU stepped into Black History Month

By Ramya Herman
Managing Editor of Global

"I thought it was terrific and a great gift to our community." The words of Head of School José De Jesús are an accurate depiction of the responses received following the Black Student Union's All School Meeting, in which eight students put on a performance to conclude the events for Black History Month.

The event consisted of a solo singing performance, a step show, and a series of social dances. Over the course of three weeks, nine students, with the guidance and facilitation of College Counselor Tenice Stegall and her fiancé Will Wesson, spent hours committing step routines to memory, making alterations, and putting together a performance worth being proud of.

During the first two weeks, the group, consisting of freshman Braeden Murray, sophomore Kathryn Githinji, juniors Briana Murphy, Ramya Herman, and Tyler Watts, and seniors Caitlin Anasi, Giselle Annan, and Shaliya Heard, worked closely with Stegall as she taught four step routines. Whilst the team worked on perfecting the steps, they also memorized lines of a poem and discussed the best way to enter, exit, and maneuver on the stage. Every person was assigned a moment in which to stand out, whether through initiating a call and response or by having an individual portion of a step.

There were also speeches assigned to different students based on their cultural backgrounds. Due to Annan's Ghanaian and Anasi's Nigerian heritages, they were given the roles of explaining the influences of African dance. Murray, who is Lake

Forest Academy's only student from Alabama, went into a brief history of step because of its deep roots in the south.

During time in which some students were practicing the step, Nicole and Mr. Wesson worked on memorizing and perfecting Nicole's solo performance of "Lift Every Voice and Sing." After most of the step was learned and the order of things had been established, the group enlisted the help of Jaiyenan English to create a mix of music which they later performed a series of social dances to, inviting the student body on stage to dance with them. This included this year's new faculty

member, Akin Mpofo, freshman Racheal Claxton, junior Victoria Tang, professional hype man Ferdoss Ibrahim, and trainer David Atas, amongst others. the participation was much appreciated and helped add to the value of the event. At the end of the semi-impromptu dance number, the students welcomed Stegall and Wesson on stage to receive flowers and signed cards in appreciation of the patience, kindness, and dedication that they had generously shown the performers. It certainly wouldn't have been a show worth watching without them.

Following the performance, multiple students reported getting compliments

and even claims that this was one of the "best All School Meetings" that LFA has experienced. While it is up to each individual to determine the level of enjoyment associated with the event, it can be generally agreed upon that there was a level of hard work and unconventionality incorporated into the expression of the cultural experiences and values of the group.

During a debrief of the performance, the hardworking steppers came together to discuss what they enjoyed. While one of the participants, Caitlin Anasi, fell ill the day of the event, she enjoyed watching and was with them on stage in spirit.



Photo by Ramya Herman

Students practice the routine whenever they can find space and freetime.

Editorial: Posting college acceptances is a frustrating social media faux pas

As a high school senior at this time of the year, it's almost a guarantee that when I log on to Instagram and view someone's story, I will see a congratulatory post celebrating their friend who got into college. These posts usually consist of a picture or two of said friend plastering the image or name of the college on top. Throw in a few congratulatory phrases and you've got yourself a typical college post.

Listen, I'm not here to bash anyone who acknowledges their friends in this way. These posts aren't inherently bad; they aren't malicious. They're simply pointless. If we were to ask ourselves why we are posting these, I don't think we could come up with a clear answer. However, if you asked me why we shouldn't post these, I can come up with a few responses, and better ways to get the same congrats across.

Put yourself in the shoes of someone who applied to that same college and didn't get in. Imagine having to open that letter and seeing the rejection. That's more than enough of a blow to the heart, but add on having to open up your Instagram and view all the stories of people who did get in? That's a tough pill to swallow. The college process is very personal, and something like this can really take a blow to someone's self confidence. It could make that person feel awful about not getting in when clearly so many people did, according to these posts right? Because even though obviously not everyone got in, you would never see peo-

ple posting rejections, only success stories- because that's what social media is: a highlight reel. It seems like we are constantly looking for things to help us project this image of our ideal selves, and this college-posting habit seems to have the potential to do more harm than good. It also begs the question: what does the person gain from posting about someone else's college acceptance? Again, if you asked most teenagers this question, I'm pretty sure they wouldn't have an answer for you.

Additionally, why are you boasting the accomplishments of someone else on an online platform? If you really were proud of them, why not just tell them in person and avoid the risk of hurting those who didn't get in? I feel like our generation has lost the ability to communicate affection in person, in an amicable way, instead turning to social media as a vice for our emotions because we are uncomfortable

expressing them face-to-face.

I'm not saying that these posts should stop. I'm just asking for us to think about why we are drawn to posting these things. Is it really because you're proud of your friend? If that is the answer, I encourage you to show that pride to them in person as well, and not just online.

Even though the negative impacts of these posts may be small, there really aren't any benefits of posting them, so the bad actually does outweigh the good. We are all fortunate enough at LFA to have amazing college counselors and thanks to them, almost all of us will get into a college. So it's not like getting accepted is some rare thing that needs to be celebrated for each individual person. Instead, let's try to voice our admiration and respect that we have for our fellow peers in person. I'm sure it will mean much more to them than any 15 second picture could.



Photo by Lilly Drury

Congratulatory Instagram posts can become annoying as they add up on feeds.

Spring Horoscopes 2020: A guide to the stars for March and April

By Tyler Watts
Staff Astrologer

Aries (Mar 21-Apr 19)— Hard work pays off. Your goals are in reach!

Taurus (Apr 20-May 20)— Don't feel attacked by criticism; accept advice from those you trust.

Gemini (May 21-Jun20)— All the world's a stage for you to perform...

Cancer (Jun 21-Jul 22)— People can't read your mind. Speak up on what's important to you!

Leo (Jul 23-Aug 22)— Something needs to change: switch it up!

Virgo (Aug 23-Sep 22)— It's time for spring cleaning. Reorganize and reevaluate, see what you discover.

Libra (Sep 23-Oct 22)— Trust your instincts and take that risk! Everything will balance out.

Scorpio (Oct 23-Nov21)— No need to brood! Dedicate more time to what makes you happy.

Sagittarius (Nov 22-Dec 21)— Confused about something? Seek enlightenment from a sage or mentor.

Capricorn (Dec 22-Jan 19)— To others, you look how you feel. Splurge and elevate that wardrobe!

Aquarius (Jan 20-Feb 18)— Share ideas with tact, be receptive to different viewpoints.

Pisces (Feb 19-March20)— Pay attention to your dreams, take time to reflect.

The Lake Forest
Academy

SPECTATOR

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Rachel Johns
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Faculty Adviser

Amanda Krause

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AWARDS

The Spectator has been awarded several prestigious journalism awards in recent years. It has consistently taken first place in competitions against schools of similar size held by the American Scholastic Press Association and the Kettle Moraine Press Association.



How is health managed?

Current preventative measures at LFA

By Mia Walvoord and Angelina Chan
Editors-in-Chief

Following the CDC's recent warning of a possible outbreak of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) in the United States, compounded by the current wave of cold and flu cases sweeping through our community, LFA is working to establish preventative measures addressing any possible outbreaks that may occur on campus. The goal is that these policies will be applicable to both current and future instances.

"Vigilant handwashing and Purell use. That's really the only avoidance," advised Head Nurse Michelle Reich, on how students could avoid getting sick. She also recommended not sharing food or drinks, and "trying as much as they can to get a good night's sleep, drink fluids, and eat well."

The Nurse's Office is additionally increasing some measures to screen students who may have flu symptoms. "This year, the flu shot has not been as effective as it has in previous years, so [there is] a very large outbreak of flu this year across the country," said Reich.

As well as screening for symptoms of the flu - such as fever, cough, and chills - Reich also keeps in mind the possibility, however low, of the novel coronavirus. "If we get those signs of flu, we would be asking and thinking of recent travel to China... [or if] they were in large airports... we'll need to be more concerned about that after Spring Break."

In response to international concern over the coronavirus, LFA has created a new committee, keeping an eye on all aspects of the situation. The committee is responsible for handling many specific tasks, including managing outgoing communications regarding the coronavirus and instituting new policies meant to promote the health of the community as a whole.

Dean of Students, Chris Tennyson remarked, "When you have a situation like we have right now, where a coronavirus emerges and creates some alarm... we have a committee that's looking at that. That committee involves Communications, and given this time of year, Admissions because of visitors to campus; it involves the Dean of Students Office and the Head of School Office, and it involves the Stuart Center as they do some travel programs, and it involves our summer session team."

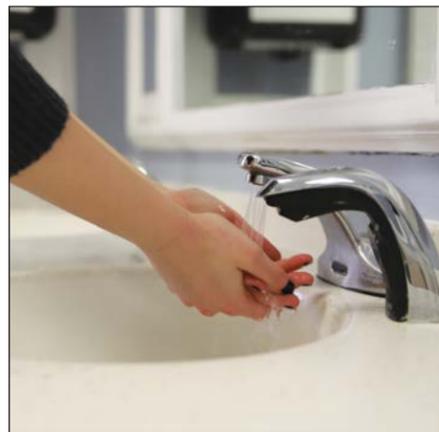


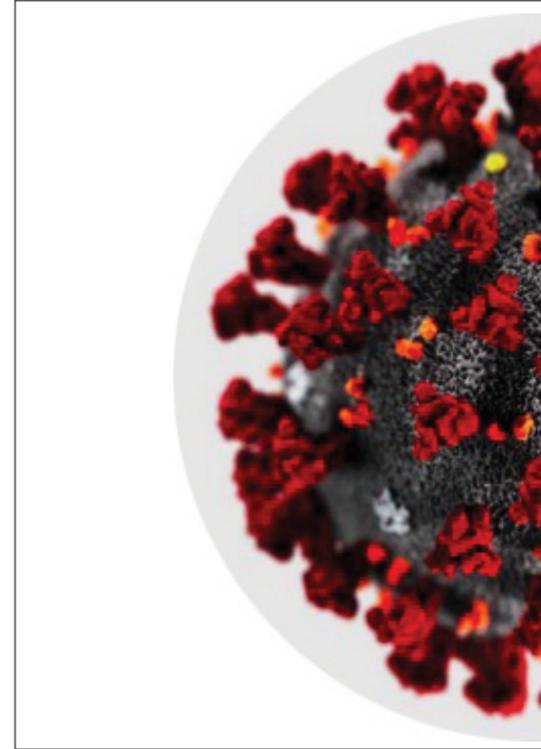
Photo by Angelina Chan
Handwashing is essential to maintaining good health.

This is not the first time the LFA has been faced with an outbreak. In fact, LFA has dealt with similar issues twice recently. The school developed some of its preliminary "outbreak policies" during the proliferation of H1N1 and SARS earlier in the past two decades. Previous experience with these cases has been crucially helpful, as LFA has recently worked to update school policies and practices promoting healthy behaviors and vigilance. For example, the school has made sure to have all students presenting with flu-like symptoms tested at local medical facilities, such as the Acute Care Center in Lake Forest.

There is still much about the nature of the new virus and its timing that have presented new challenges to administration.

In previous outbreaks, the school did not have to deal with the possible complications associated with Spring Break travel-specific international travel. Countries across the globe, including the U.S., are attempting to combat the spread of the virus by restricting movement between countries and continents. Such actions have presented challenges for members of the LFA community, chiefly in school-sponsored trips and international students who had planned to return home during the break.

"With the earlier ones [outbreaks such as H1N1 and SARS], I don't recall that we needed to think about travel restrictions and those types of things. That's why this is very new so as we come out of this, it is going to allow us to put some thought into it [in terms of setting a precedent],"



A close-up rendering of the COVID-19 virus.

acknowledged Tennyson.

On campus, however, the Nurse's Office is adding a few extra steps to further prepare the LFA community for any possibility of an outbreak.

"We've ordered additional masks, gloves, hand sanitizers. We're doing additional screening, sending day students home with coughs," said Head Nurse Reich. "We're doing a lot to prevent this spread of flu as well as anything related to coronavirus... we are taking it quite seriously."

Setting the record straight: The harmful effects of misconceptions

By Ramya Herman
Managing Editor of Global

Tightly creased paper masks covering faces from cheekbone to chin, spreading caution instead of coughing. The sight of a face mask, the sound of wheezing or sniffing, the senses being attacked by cold and flu symptoms inciting fear into anyone within the vicinity of the patient turned public enemy.

The symptoms of the recent coronavirus have surpassed physicality and transcended to deadlier conditions - panic, ignorance, and hatred. As the outbreak grows into a possible epidemic, rumors have grown along with it on several forms of media, including Instagram, twitter, and Facebook. In some cases, the virus has been twisted into the object of insensitive jokes on these social platforms, with people of Asian descent often finding themselves as the punch line.

The rumors regarding the virus are not simply forms of amusement or comic relief. A prime example of this is one of the memes which surfaced in the LFA community. An individual, by way of an anonymous Instagram account, used an unrelated photograph of students and families at a Chinese Lunar New Year event to reference

the virus. Not only are they offensive and hurtful to those whose loved ones or whose own lives are being negatively impacted by the virus, but they give way to a different matter of contagion- xenophobia. Xenophobia, as stated by Merriam-Webster, is "the fear or hatred of strangers or foreigners, something that has a way of manifesting itself in the face of outbreaks or plagues, not necessarily because of accurate origin and blame but rather the lack thereof".

Many xenophobic instances have occurred over the years, not to mention the minor occurrences that regularly impose

A notice on Instagram directing users who want to stay up to date on the Coronavirus to the CDC. The AIDS outbreak which took place in the 1980's, while a serious issue, also led to numerous jokes, many of which pointed the blame at gay men. This seemingly humorous method of taking on the outbreak led to many homosexual men being denied access to many places, beaten, and killed. These actions were taken in spite of little

scientific information supporting that a gay man was patient zero or that homosexuality was even a major factor in the acquisition of the disease, which was by no means the reality of the situation. A similar instance happened again in 2014-2016 during the outbreak of the Ebola virus, and while it

was prominent in Africa due to conditions outside of the control of many, those who should have been seen as the victims were treated with unhindered disdain and disgust. When taking into consideration that a simple Google search shows that fewer than 1,000 cases occur in the United States per year, this response put the power of misinformation into perspective.

In terms of the coronavirus, there have already been visible consequences to the misconceptions about the sickness. This includes signs barring Chinese patrons from entering businesses and stores run by Chinese people experiencing a drop in

their typical revenue.

This begs the question, what's the truth and what isn't? Some examples of the fallacies being spread are a photo of a woman eating bat soup, claiming that this was the source of the outbreak. In truth, this photo wasn't even taken in China; rather it was part of a show where the woman in question travels eating exotic and interesting foods. Another "suggestion" was that the best way to avoid the virus is to avoid Chinese people, which, outside of being outright racist, has no correlation to the virus and is instead a piece of advice generated by a false report in Australia.

With all of this fake news circulating, what about the virus is true? The facts, provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, are that anyone can get sick regardless of race or ethnicity, the risk of getting the virus in the U.S. is low right now, those who have completed quarantine or isolation are not a risk to others, the symptoms are fever, cough, and shortness of breath, and becoming sick can be prevented by taking the same precautionary measures that you would take with the flu or any other sickness.

Outside of posting facts about the virus, the CDC has initiated a partnership with Instagram that links coronavirus-related posts to the CDC website. As death rates and rumors rise, it is important to stay germ and xenophobia free, so wash your hands and check your facts.



Photo Courtesy of Ramya Herman

ged at the Academy?

Impacts on Spring Break travel plans

By Rachel Johns
Staff Writer

It comes as no surprise that the novel coronavirus, also known as COVID-19, has impacted many students' Spring Break plans.

Many international students, especially those from China (which has been the nation most affected by the novel coronavirus outbreak) have had to unexpectedly rearrange their Spring Break plans due to the outbreak. Some students have been able to arrange lodging with host families, although many hosts will be out of town, so it's not an option for everyone to stay with a local family. It can be difficult to book a hotel room at the last minute and can become expensive if they last the full duration of spring break. The same applies for hastily-arranged flights.

Some students and their families are going to great lengths to be able to see each other during Spring Break. When interviewed, Steven Sun '22, said that he had arranged a complicated plan so that he could see his family. First, his family, who currently lives in China, would travel to another location outside of the US, since they cannot travel directly. Then, they would fly to Chicago after staying in a hotel in another country after a certain number of days.

The predicament of Spring Break lodgings remains unanswered for several students who are unsure

about where they will go.

During an all-boarder meeting held at 9:30pm on March 2nd after the unexpected cancellation of all LFA Spring Break trips that afternoon, it was announced that some of the dorms will be open during spring break, with the exception of MacIntosh Cottage. Residents of closed dorms will be put in either Field Dormitory or Ferry Hall in makeshift rooms, depending on what remains open. It is assumed that Atlas and Warner will be open due to their larger populations, but residents of Atlas staying over break will have to sleep in Warner's common rooms for three days of the break because of electric work being done on Atlas. The electric work will cause Atlas to lose power for three days.

The option to stay at LFA over break will not be free, and the cost is reportedly going to be consistent with what other boarding schools are charging for similar programs. The dining hall will be open with very limited hours and options. Not many activities are expected to take place, because faculty will be on their own vacations. Times for sign-outs may also be limited. However, when there was a call for faculty volunteers to step up and be on campus in order to provide a better experience for those students needing to remain at LFA, the large offering of support will likely make Spring Break at LFA more comfortable than it could have been if administration had been stuck scrounging for assistance.

"If you stay here for Spring Break, expect it to be very quiet," said Jonathan Freeman, the Dean of Student Life, said at the meeting on March 2. In other words, it won't be anything like a typical weekend schedule.

Students have been highly encouraged to spend Spring Break with local family and friends, with Freeman saying that not staying on campus would be the "more interesting option."

The first LFA Spring Break trip to be canceled was the trip to Japan, Singapore, and Malaysia. An email announcing the cancellation was sent out on February 25th, three weeks before the trip was scheduled

to depart.

The email from Matt Nink, one of the trip's coordinators, and it stated, "It is unclear how conditions in East Asia may change in the coming weeks, and given that uncertainty we are not comfortable sending students or teachers to that part of the world at this time."

Around 20 students were planning on going on the trip, but the increasing number of cases in the areas they planned to visit were very concerning. The CDC even issued a Level Two Travel Health Notice for Japan - "Exercise Increased Caution"- and said that the US should prepare for an outbreak of COVID-19.

"We are sorry for the inconvenience caused by this decision as well as for the loss of an international learning experience," said Nink in an email on behalf of the Stuart Center.

COVID-19 has not only affected travel to East Asia. On March second, the Head of School Jose De Jesús sent an email out to the LFA Community announcing the cancellation of all curricular and cocurricular Spring Break trips. The email came as a shock to students, since many of the trips were going to places far from the worst of the epidemic, such as London, Kenya, and Dubai.

De Jesus' email said, "As of March 2, 2020, we have decided to cancel all curricular and co-curricular spring break trips. Moreover, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has recommended that all schools cancel travel programs abroad. We regret the loss of these educational opportunities, but we believe that this decision is best at this time."

The school is planning on reimbursing all payments made by students and families for cancelled trips.

The school is offering resources to help students rearrange their plans, and De Jesus wrote, "I urge you once again to bring forward any concerns or questions you might have. Please know that we are here to support you through this evolving situation."

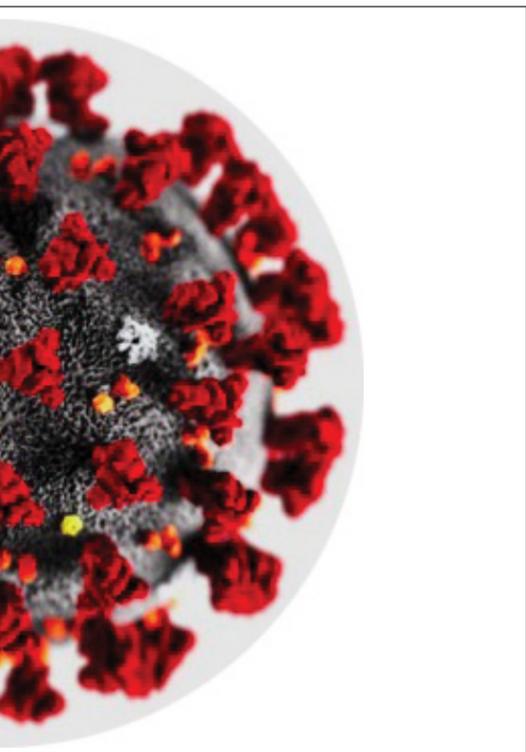


Photo Courtesy of The CDC

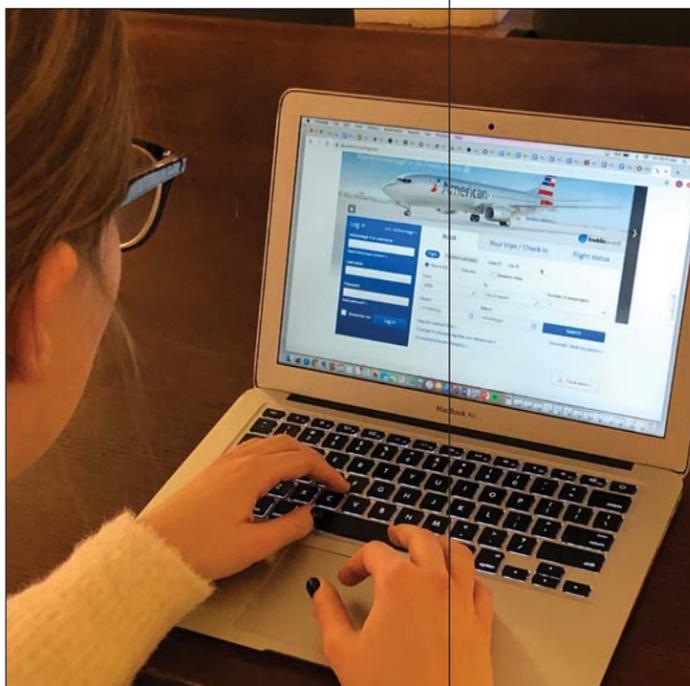


Photo by Rachel Johns

The recent Coronavirus outbreak has caused students to make last-minute plane and hotel bookings to other locations.

How LFA has handled past outbreaks

By Rohan Miglani
Staff Writer

As a boarding school, Lake Forest Academy can sometimes face various health concerns given the global nature of the school, and like a university, how half of its student population lives in such close proximity in the dorms. The global aspect of the school and the proximity of living conditions. This concern is amplified when there are outbreaks of disease around the world, for in the unlikely event a student of the school gets infected, it is paramount that no other students at LFA contract the infection.

Chris Tennyson, Dean of Students and Academic Affairs at Lake Forest Academy, said "the flu is here" when asked about viruses that students at LFA face currently. In an attempt to prevent the spread of virus-

es such as the flu, LFA tries to isolate the students as much as possible, making sure day students remain at home and boarding students remain with the nurse during the daytime.

Despite Lake Forest Academy having a plan for common illnesses such as the flu, the recency of Covid 19 (a strand of coronavirus that has emerged recently) has resulted in Lake Forest Academy creating an action plan in the event that a student gets the infection. According to Tennyson, this is not the first instance of LFA having to create an action plan against a major infection, as during the spread of H1N1 in 2009, Lake Forest Academy created a plan in conjunction with the Lake Forest Health Department in the event of a student contracting the infection, which occurred with H1N1. This resulted in LFA increasing sanitation, but also sending the student to

Lake Forest Hospital to receive treatment and to be quarantined until they were no longer contagious.

According to Tennyson, one thing that LFA has to balance is taking proper precautions, without increasing fear. Tennyson said, "Although some areas may require students who are sick to wear masks, we feel this does less good and creates more fear." Rather than taking visible precautions such as wearing masks, LFA ensures that, as Tennyson puts it, "hidden precautions" are in place. These precautions range from making sure hand sanitizer dispensers are full to ensuring the facilities staff members are extra thorough when cleaning after school.

Despite the precautions taken by LFA, members of the school community know that fear still exists. When asked about what he thinks leads to panic during disease

outbreaks, Tennyson said "the unknown is scary" as he used the example of H1N1 to demonstrate this, saying that H1N1 used to cause fear due to the lack of understanding, but today that strand of flu is used in the general flu shot thus understood and no longer interpreted as threatening.

Despite the ongoing threat of disease outbreak, Lake Forest Academy continues to stay as proactive as possible, once again working with the Lake Forest Health Department to ensure the safety of the students and faculty as much as possible. Despite all the precautions and measures put forth by LFA, the only way to ensure that disease does not spread is for each member of the community to play their part. As Tennyson put it, "washing your hands or putting on a little hand sanitizer can go a long way."

Harley Quinn takes another swing at cinema success

By: Nick Alutto
Managing Editor of A&E

When *Suicide Squad* hit theatres in August of 2016, it continued Warner Bros. new DC Extended Universe's streak of critical misses. It was the third movie in a row to have a Rotten critic score on Rotten Tomatoes and was also the third movie in Warner Bros. new comic book universe. Regardless of critical reception, the movie went on to make nearly \$750 million at the worldwide box office, becoming the 9th highest-grossing movie of the year.

Despite clear commercial success, Warner Bros. seemingly agreed with critics and opted to reboot the franchise instead of making a sequel, with *The Suicide Squad* set to debut in 2021 directed by *Guardians of the Galaxy* director James Gunn. Since they are rebooting the franchise, it at first seemed strange that DC decided to move forward with a Harley Quinn, played by Margot Robbie, spinoff from the original *Suicide Squad* movie called *Birds of Prey*. Especially since some stars of the original *Suicide Squad*, most notably Will Smith's Deadshot, have exited the franchise entirely. However, when *Birds of Prey* hit theatres it had an overwhelmingly positive 80% on Rotten Tomatoes; a total of a 53% increase from the 27% that *Suicide Squad* received. Which begs the question, what made *Birds of Prey* so much better than *Suicide Squad*? Blockbuster movies have constantly tried to raise the stakes of their plots and have been able to increase the size of threats in movies thanks to larger budgets and an extreme increase in the power and realism of visual effects, especially in the last 10 years. Superhero movies and franchises like *The Avengers* have given audiences an oversaturation of world-ending threats that people

have become desensitized to and care less about, especially if they are written poorly.

Suicide Squad has a world-ending villain in Enchantress, played by Cara Delevingne. Her character is not built up enough with a clear enough motive to create actual suspense or have the audience care enough. Broken down to a basic level, this is why *Suicide Squad* doesn't work. If you want to have a large threat facing your protagonists, then you need to have sufficient character building and compelling motives to make the audience care. With audiences being given an abundance of world-ending threats in films every year, for an audience to care, the specifics behind the plot need to be unique and compelling. The villain of *Birds of Prey* is "Black Mask," played by Ewan McGregor. McGregor's character doesn't have ambitions to take over the world, but merely to have power in Gotham. This specific goal allows there to be more build up in his motives which makes the audience care more about the plot. It makes sense why his character does what he does, his actions help further the plot not the other way around. *Birds of Prey* is also much more focused character-wise. *Suicide Squad* arguably had around five to seven main characters, many of which were being introduced to general audiences for the first time. *Birds of Prey* lasers in on Margot Robbie's Harley Quinn. It also helps that Robbie produced the movie which gave her more control in the process. Having a more focused plot allows *Birds of Prey* to avoid being exposition heavy like *Suicide Squad*, which allows people to enjoy the plot instead of being fed too much information for the movie to be enjoyable.

Birds of Prey marks what can go right in this current era of blockbuster cinema. Although it is based on a pre-existing IP, *Birds of Prey* still has a feeling



Photo Courtesy of Warner Bros.

Warner Bros promotional poster for *Birds of Prey*

of originality to it. It manages to subvert expectations by containing a very unique feeling and tone that will take viewers for a fun ride. *Suicide Squad* was too cookie-cutter, it lacked originality and tried to be too complex and high-stakes which made it neither of those things.

In a time when successful movies are mostly remakes or based off of pre-existing franchises, it is only the ones who use this format to create something wholly different that manage to stand out from the crowd and offer moviegoers a taste of something fresh.

Making a great All-School Meeting presentation

By David Oluwole
Staff Writer

Lake Forest Academy is a school privileged to have acts from all over the world perform during All-School Meetings. At times, students have slept through these performances, either because of a lack of interest or simply being tired. Faculty have tried to combat this issue by keeping the lights on, as well as urging advisors to wake sleeping students. Although students shouldn't sleep through all-school meetings, a feasible solution could be to invite speakers that students have an interest in. For the duration of my time at LFA, I have noticed that students are more attentive when they can relate to a speaker. A prime example was when Mandy Krause brought Andrew Springer, a producer and creator of *Stay Tuned*, a news source on Snapchat from NBC. Due to many students following his show, people were interested in what he was saying. Throughout my years of attending Lake

Forest Academy, there have been three All-School Meetings that have stuck with me.

The first being the DJ brought to the school by Mrs. Carter. He took the school through decades of hip-pop music, showcasing the greatness of music as well as its progression and changes throughout time. Students were able to learn more about the culture of hip-pop, as well as why it has been so influential in many communities. His performance showed the roots and boundaries of hip-pop that people aren't familiar with. The performance also contradicted the popular belief that hip-pop mainly glorifies negative ideals. Another all-school meeting that has stuck with me was the February frog hunt of 2018. House cup competitions are always exuberant, showing off LFA school spirit. This specific house cup competition was especially bubbly. With students from each house racing to put on as many shirts as possible, a majority of the student body and faculty were locked in on the event. Lastly, the Black Student Union's show-

case of dancing and singing was an astounding performance. The performance started with sophomore student Safiya Nichol singing "Lift every voice and sing", which displayed her robust vocals. Succeeding that performance was the synchronized step dance, inspired by years of African-American culture.

I was personally inspired by their performance, which highlighted a culture that not many people know about. Throughout my tenure at Lake Forest Academy, I have learned many important things through all-school meetings. Although there were many that weren't named, there have been countless inspiring acts.



Photo courtesy of SmugMug

Safiya Nichol singing "Lift Every Voice and Sing" at an all school meeting

How the new era of podcasts can keep you updated with the news

By Lilly Drury
Editor-in-Chief

When I was younger, and would be stuck in the car for a few hours driving to a tournament or practice with my mom, she would always be listening to a podcast. I remember thinking it was so weird and didn't understand how she got any joy out of listening to so-and-so ramble about topics spanning from nutrition, to parenting, to world issues, and beyond. I always just chalked it up to one of those adult things that my child mind didn't understand- like how they could stand the taste of coffee.

Well, now I find myself at the age of 18, sipping black coffee while listening to a podcast every morning. But I'm not the only one who's finally fallen in love with podcasts; it now seems that everyone and their mother has a podcast recommendation for you. Podcasts have blown up over the past 10 years. Since 2013, the number of podcasts on iTunes alone has doubled and the length and frequency of the episodes has also steadily risen. So why is this? In a world where so many mediums of entertainment are competing for our time, what makes podcasts so popular? For myself, I began getting more involved

in Podcasts once I got my license. When I began driving to school, I quickly realized that Podcasts were the best way to pass what would sometimes be an hour and a half spent in my car thanks to Chicago traffic. Podcasts are a great tool for people who have long commutes to work or school because you're able to utilize what would be wasted time to soak up new information, knowledge, perspectives on current events, and even an intriguing true crime story. You can become captivated by these topics and it helps transform the time sitting on the freeway that can seem excruciatingly long into a productive listening session.

I listen to podcasts that span a wide variety of topics such as, true crime, investigative journalism, pop culture, nutrition, and lifestyle. Whether I'm driving a carpool for my brothers, going to and from school, or getting through a workout, I can always pop on a podcast to give my brain something to work on. I've been able to expand my knowledge on so many topics that I just simply wouldn't have the time for otherwise. There are so many experts of certain fields that have begun podcasts and are offering a cornucopia of knowledge at the push of a play button. There are crime and investigative stories that will shock

you to the bone and have you at the edge of your seat- or car seat. It's a concise and easily digestible way to get information and entertainment and I personally believe that in an age where human interaction and communication seems to be dwindling

with the rise of social media, it is important to remind and immerse ourselves in long form conversation that delves deep into issues and topics that we don't have enough time to get into in our busy day to day live, something that we all need to absorb.



Photo courtesy of Creative Commons

The general breakdown for podcast listeners.

A recap of the Academy Awards

By Audrey McGrail
Managing Editor of News

The 92nd Academy Awards were presented on February 9, 2020 in the Dolby Theater in LA. This is the first time in the last decade the ceremony took place in early February – in past years they have been held later in the month. Following the precedent from the previous year, the Oscars once again went without a host, and instead opened with a musical number by Janelle Monae and a comedy bit by Steve Martin and Chris Rock.

Parasite, a South Korean film, dominated the Awards with four wins, including Best Director for Bong Joon-ho and Best Picture – the first time an international film has ever won in the category, and the first time a Korean movie has won any Oscar. The next for most wins was the film 1917, which earned three awards, including Best Cinematography for its effect of the entire film being made to seem like a continuous shot. Renne Zellweger won for Best Actress in her role as Judy Garland in the movie Judy, Joaquin Phoenix won for Best Actor for his work in the

Joker as Arthur Fleck, Brad Pitt won for Best Supporting Actor for Once Upon a Time in Hollywood as Cliff Booth, and Laura Dern won for Best Supporting Actress as Nora Fanshaw in Marriage Story.

As for entertainment, there was a performance of the animated movie, Frozen II's, most popular song, "Into the Unknown," sung by Idina Menzel (who voices Elsa in the English film) and nine other voice actresses who portray Elsa from around the world. Elton John took to the piano to perform the track "(I'm Gonna) Love Me Again," which won the Oscar for Best

Original Song, from a movie about his life, Rocketman. James Cordon and Rebel Wilson dressed as cats to present the award for Best Visual Effects. Their costumes were a nod to the very poor, widely criticized visual effects of the movie Cats, which both Cordon and Wilson starred in. By far the most surprising of the entertainment sector of the Awards was Eminem's performance of "Lose Yourself."

The viewership of this year's Oscar's of 23.6 million was 20% less than that of the previous year – making it the least viewed ceremony of all-time.



The Academy Award statuette, but better known as an Oscar.



Photo Courtesy of www.oscars.org
Bong Joon-ho holds his Oscars.

Photo Courtesy of Creative Commons

The Mystery of Edwin Drood:

LFA theater shines in a twist on a Dickensian tale



Photos by Angelina Chan

“The Mystery of Edwin Drood”, in its Wednesday/Friday cast, featured the characters of Edwin Drood himself (Flora Zhai ‘22), Rosa Bud (Lauren Salliotte ‘20), Princess Puffer (Elizabeth Campisi ‘20), The Chairman (Sophie Waimon ‘20), and John Jasper (Graham Lin ‘20)- as well as the work of a large supporting cast and crew.

LFA Varsity Football Program officially shuts down for 2020-2021 season

By Garrison Sloan
Staff Writer

On a rainy Saturday afternoon in 2019, the LFA Football team walked off Alumni Field victorious. The team achieved a 38-7 win over North Fulton High School in their final game of the season, propelling them to a 5-4 overall record. Unfortunately, we now know that that game would not just be the last of the season, but the last ever, as the decision has now been made to suspend all operations of the Varsity Football program due to low numbers for the 2020 season.

Football at LFA has been on the decline for over a decade. After several seasons of low numbers, the decision was first made to combine the JV and Varsity teams. Then, after numbers kept declining, the team switched from the typical 11v11 league to a smaller 8v8 league starting in the 2017-2018 season. While the team had more success, producing 3 straight winning seasons, the numbers kept going down. This year, with only around 10 players planning on returning and very few prospects in the incoming freshmen class, the decision unfortunately had to shut down the program.

"We created a committee about five years ago to figure out what to do with football, consisting of myself, Mrs. Gorowski, Mr. Poska, and, originally, Coach Bowkett," said Athletic Director Darrin Madeley. "We started that to figure out how to get the numbers for football back up since they kept declining. First, we decided to combine the JV and Varsity teams. Then we decided to switch to 8v8 so we didn't have to shut down the program, in the hopes that we might attract more of the student body to come and play. This year, after looking at our returning students and

our pool of applicants, it was clear we weren't going to have enough to have a functioning team. My committee gave the recommendation to the Dean's Council that we didn't have enough people to field a team and the program could not continue at LFA. They approved the cancellation with a unanimous vote, which then went to the Head of School for approval," he stated.

I talked to the Dean of Communications Grace Kim, a member of the Dean's Council to get her perspective on the matter.

"I don't think any of us personally wanted the program to go away," said Kim. "It was more based on facts and data, in that we just didn't have the numbers for it anymore. The decreasing numbers, in general, have been part of a national trend," she said.

Those national trends are a big deal. Forbes reports that high-school tackle football is at its lowest level of national participation since the 1999-2000 season. This can be blamed on a number of factors, but mainly the increasing fear of traumatic brain injuries leading parents to not want their kids to play.

I was able to talk to Head of School José De Jesús, to see his point-of-view on the situation, as he was the one who ultimately decided to cancel the program.

"I knew football was one of the concerns when I came in," said De Jesús. "I knew we had transitioned from 11v11 to 8v8,



Photo courtesy of LFA SmugMug

The LFA football team and their coaches gather in a postgame huddle after a home game.

but that the long term survival of the program was still a problem due to a lack of student interest. Going into this year, Mr. Madeley's committee originally thought we were going to have enough players to have another season, but after we saw how few students wanted to play football in our admissions pool, it was clear that it was time for us to cancel the program," he said.

De Jesús continued, stating that the lack of incoming freshman wanting to play football could be blamed in part by the fact that some local middle schools, such as Lake Forest Country Day School, have dropped their football programs, something Madeley also mentioned. This again points back to national trends of decreasing football participation.

I posed another question to Mr. De Jesús: "Do you think football will ever come back at LFA, and do you hope that it will?" He responded with this:

"I doubt that football will ever come back at LFA," he said. "If you look at the numbers, across the state and nation participation is still dropping. There's also a lot of medical evidence coming back about the dangers of playing, that may make parents a lot more cautious about letting their kids play," he stated. "In terms of whether I hope it comes back, I'm relatively neutral," he continued. "I think the hardest part of this decision was upsetting our students who were involved with the sport. If there were to be a great resurgence somewhere down the line, that would be something we would consider, but at the same time, the chances of people wanting to come play football at a school with no football program are very low."

Going back to my interview with Madeley, I asked

him what the future looks like going forward without a football program.

"I have been considering a flag football program," said Madeley. "I just want to figure out when to do it, either in the fall or spring season. We did an intramural flag football club a few years ago and the numbers were huge, so we could do like how they're currently doing the 3v3 basketball club," he said.

In terms of other parts of the football program, Madeley noted that Alumni Field, where the football team typically plays, will now be a full time field for the JV Soccer team in the fall, along with it continuing to be used by the Lacrosse and Track teams in the spring.

The Lake Forest Academy football team was one of the oldest in the state, and is a rich part of the school's history. As a member of the team, it's very sad to see it go. I've made many friends and memories thanks to the football program, and am disappointed that I won't be able to play for my senior season.

"I understand the disappointment people might be feeling," said Mr. De Jesús. "This is a program with a long history at LFA, and we've had some pretty incredible alumni that have come through the school and played, and we have some great kids currently that have played. It's always hard to have to make a decision that disappoints a community. But at the same time it was necessary to acknowledge that the future of football was in peril, and to move forward as a community."

When students arrive at LFA next August, for the first time in well over a century, football will not be offered as a sport. It's a hard reality for myself, the football team, and the rest of the community, but hopefully we can move forward, and find a solution that satisfies everyone. Maybe it'll be flag football, maybe the program itself eventually returns, or maybe we simply have to move on, but, ultimately, it's important to look to the future with optimism.



Photo courtesy of LFA SmugMug

The LFA Football team walks off of Alumni Field after a win.

Squashing the competition

By Lindsey Pearlman
Managing Editor of Features

Over the years, Lake Forest Academy has had a number of successful athletes who have gone on to play in college, and even professionally. John Tobin, an LFA senior, is one to add to this list. Tobin has attended LFA all four years of his high school career, and has played on the Varsity Squash Team since he was a freshman. He was named MVP of the team in the 2016-2017 season, and again in the 2017-2018 season. He now serves as captain of his team.

Tobin's love for squash started when he was 12 years old after joining Onwentsia Club in Lake Forest, Illinois. His mother introduced him to the sport, and he has been playing ever since. "I like squash because it's a very interactive sport," said Tobin, "it's very competitive, which makes it a lot more fun, and that is why I've kept playing for so long."

Tobin's squash career reaches much farther than LFA. He also plays very competitively outside of school. His rigorous training schedule includes training four days a week with his private coach and

working out in the gym the remaining three days of the week to improve on his strength. Although he started when he was 12, his love for the sport really flourished when he was 14 after winning his first large scale tournament.

"It was a US squash tournament in California and I won. It was close and I won in the 5th game, and that is when I got serious about squash," stated Tobin.

Over the years, Tobin has collected a number of LFA match wins, and most notably four US squash tournament wins. He is ranked amongst the top 43 squash players in the nation. This momentum that he has gained over the years is not slowing down anytime soon. While most high school athletes' careers come to an end once they graduate, Tobin's career is only beginning. After graduation, Tobin will be attending St. Lawrence University to play Division 1 squash.

"Being able to go play at a D1 school, that's ranked 14th in the country, is really exciting," said Tobin, "I'm glad I get to continue to play squash and grow as an athlete."



Photo Courtesy of John Tobin.

John Tobin '20 (right) takes home a trophy after tournament victory.

3v3 basketball finishes its first season

By Nick Alutto
Managing Editor of A&E

Around LFA there is a new winter PE this year that, even if they are not participating, everyone seems to know about. Its consistently funny and entertaining morning meeting announcements have made it famous among the general student body at LFA, and its arrival at a time when JV two basketball has been taken out as an option for athletes in the winter has led to its success. This winter PE is 3v3 basketball.

In years past, boys basketball has been a huge winter sport at LFA, since it had three teams: varsity, JV, and JV two. However, this year the JV two program was no longer offered at LFA. When asked about 3v3's relationship with the absence of JV two at LFA, Mr. Madeley said, "It was probably a better fit considering the year before it was tough to find competition for JV two... This [3v3] was more suited for them to have fun and to have a great competition."

The 3v3 basketball league met every G-day and Saturdays in the morning. On G-days many kids played in their games and practices, while on Saturdays kids who had games would come in and play. The league had an average of about 25-30 active players every week, according to league co-founder Chris Rhoades.

The success of 3v3 basketball school-wide is inseparable from their morning meeting announcements which have become famous. Whether they are taking awkward pictures with Chick-Fil-A employees or comparing some of their league's players to the greatest athletes



Photo by Nick Alutto.

Nick Shapiro '20 takes a shot at the 3v3 basketball championship.

of our time, the group of boys who go on-stage (typically Constantine Alexos, Chris Rhoades, Ed Nunez, and Ayush Vashi) always manage to garner excitement and a laugh from the LFA community.

When asked about his process in making morning meeting announcements, league commissioner Constantine Alexos '21 said, "I want our morning meeting to be something people look forward to and when we are called on the stage I hope excitement and anticipation builds. I really want them to be funny and creative. I especially love it when people come up to be after and tell me how much they love them. That really means a lot to me."

With the 3v3 league being in its first year of existence there are also some things

that people would like to see changed if the league were to return for another year.

"I would like to see more of the girls who want to join in and play on teams. I think if it's promoted so they understand that they can join and play too then they can find a lot more [players]." Said Mr. Madeley.

3v3 Player Matthew Nocella '21 said, "Solicit times and make them in stone rather than them being on the whim."

Alexos shares these concerns and when asked what he would change he said, "Next year I want to be more organized. I think it is vital to be organized and carefully plan out the year. This year we didn't know what to expect. We just went along with it and saw where it would take us. But I don't want to be re-

petitive. I don't want my senior year to mirror my junior year. I want to bring in new innovative and creative ideas and events to the people and League."

The people behind 3v3 basketball were passionate to make their club ingrained in the community of LFA. It was this passion that drove them to make the league and take on such a big project in creating this winter PE. When asked what the process was like for making a successful club at LFA Alexos said, "Everyone could do what I do. I'm not doing anything special or different. I just started, had a vision, and had passion and that is all you need to create something that can make a difference."