

## New Teachers Learn To Go With the Flow

By Emma Schramm

Every Marist student remembers how hard it can be to start fresh in such a fast-paced environment.

There are countless things to learn and a hectic schedule to memorize in such a short amount of time. Not to mention all the school work, extra-curriculars, and student life events to keep up with.

Everyone has a personal anecdote of that time they came in at 7:30 on a late-start morning, or when they walked into C-230 instead of C-320, but often times we forget how difficult it is not to be a new student at our school but a new teacher.

One new faculty member on campus is our new Dean of Students, Reginald Brady.

Hailing from Bishop McNamara High School in Maryland, Brady held many roles: English teacher, Dean of Students, and Interim Principal.

"I have been very pleased with the reception I've had from both students and faculty since coming here," Brady said. "The students have been extremely polite and a great deal of fun. Working with the students has definitely been the best thing about being at Marist."

Another friendly new face around school belongs to our President, J.D. Childs. From Oakland, California, Childs started his teaching career with religious studies, but he eventually became a principal for two years and a president for five.

Upon coming to our school, Childs says that one of his main goals is to meet all staff members and learn about who they are.

"I really believe that teachers are Marist's super-power . . . They care a lot and are passionate about their subject matter," he said. "We're really fortunate here at Marist."

Childs also shared some observations about the student body since starting his first fall here on campus.

"What I love to see most is when folks around here get out of their own box, out of their own comfort zone, to include other students, and to be kind . . . I'm excited to continue seeing that commitment from Marist students."



Photo Credit: Brian O'Connor

## School Youth Share Bold Ideas During Conference

By Juliet Powell

For the first time ever, Marist School hosted a TEDx event in Woodruff Auditorium on October 6, 2023. What is TEDx, you might ask?

TED is a nonprofit organization dedicated to sharing revolutionary ideas to encourage connection, imagination, and innovation. Did you know that TED stands for Technology, Entertainment and Design?

Similar to TED, TEDx is an event that local communities can host independently, where speakers share live TED talks with their communities. "TEDxMaristSchool is one of the 3000 events held annually in more than 150 countries!" said Alessio Toniolo.

Inspired by a passionate conversation between a student and teacher, Toniolo organized the event. Believing that Marist "lacked a dedicated medium for students to share and explore

their diverse interests," Toniolo knew that TEDx would provide a way for our school community "to explore our passions and inspire one another."

Along with Toniolo, other Marist students and faculty worked together to make the inaugural TEDxYouth@Marist-School event a success. Lea Macauley filmed and edited the videos of the talks, which will be posted on the TEDxYouTube channel.

The event hosted five student speakers of different grade levels and interests: Taylor Gitonga, Whit Kester, Ephrata Tesfaye, Alec Issa, and Juliet Powell.

The speakers spent months polishing their talks, from creating interactive slides to writing and memorizing their scripts. Months of hard work culminated in the big event, when the speakers presented their talks in Woodruff Auditorium during

the activity period.

The topics were as varied as the speakers' interests. Tesfaye, for example, spoke about intersectionality and the feminist movement spanning across cultures and races while Issa shared his research into stress mindsets.

Kester presented his talk on the "viability of steam powered transportation in our modern world, and how steam could lead to a greener future." Kester described the experience as "fairly casual" and commented that "the smaller audience was nice."

Thanks to everyone who put in the work to make the first TEDx event a success, the event left a dramatic and enlightening impression on our school.

Hopefully, our school will continue its relationship with TEDx and host more of these inspiring and innovative events in the future.

## Purple Out for Mental Health!

By Alex Treanor

Nearly 19% of high school students have seriously contemplated suicide, according to the Jed Foundation.

Nineteen percent!

That translates to almost 1 in 5 adolescents, which includes our school peers.

Despite the widespread nature of these challenges, however, a stigma continues to surround mental health, which prevents many students from reaching out for help.

In an effort to raise awareness for mental health, students of all grades flooded North Atlanta's stadium with purple for the October 19th football game.

The purple represents hope, support, and encouragement: all of which are important parts of the solution towards mental health issues.

Mental health issues stem from pressure. Whether it's from parents, friends, or schoolwork, such pressure should be taken seriously. It is not embarrassing to talk to a counselor or to take a break from homework for a night.

On the other side of it, be the friend who asks if someone is truly okay and follow up with people if they say they're feeling depressed. Small exchanges of kindness may not mean much to you, but they could mean the difference between life and death for someone else.

Don't just wear purple to show your support for mental health. Go out into the world and make it a reality.

## Spanish Club Celebrates a Wider World

*This club welcomes everyone while spreading the joys of Hispanic culture*



Photo Credit: Brian O'Connor

By Ella Weber

Some may look forward to Spanish Club for the delicious snacks that come along with the meetings, but this group has more than tacos and churros to offer.

From their meaningful book drive in December to their His-

panic Heritage Month celebration, the Spanish Club is spreading Latin culture in the most enjoyable ways possible. One might even call it ¡Divertido!

Led by co-presidents Nicole Barrios and Becca Jose, the club aims to teach the student body about different cultures in Span-

ish speaking countries while creating an unforgettable experience for all members.

Nicole Barrios joined Spanish Club as an eighth grader, and her enthusiasm has never wavered. "The club is the most memorable experience during activity periods" Barrios said. For Jose, the club's welcoming atmosphere is what makes it special. "It's the loving environment and all of the new friends [she] made," she said.

All five Spanish teachers are involved in Spanish Club, helping organize the events planned by the officers. Getting to know the teachers is an added bonus. "They are the most genuine people you will ever meet," Barrios said. From learning in class to chatting during tutorials, the Spanish Department welcomes everyone.

The club's first event of the year happened on October 12th.

The annual Hispanic Heritage Block Party returned stronger than ever, with exciting activities such as limbo, dominós, and dancing. Delicious empanadas, pastelitos, and chips and salsa were also available.

Looking ahead, the club will be holding five more events this school year, the soonest being the Fiesta para Día de los Muertos on October 27. Jose believes that the club's events excite a lot of people because of all of the "activities, food, and traditions incorporated."

The 2023-2024 school year will be no different. Spanish Club continues to be one of our school's most popular clubs as they help spread awareness for Hispanic and Latino culture across our campus.

## Camp Curiosities

Public Relations Officer Stella Chambless reports on Camp 3790, where upper classmen led the ninth graders during a day-long retreat.

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Photo Credit: Brian O'Connor

## Volleyball Talk

Staff Writer Clara Laskowski interviews members of the varsity volleyball team. Who knows what those War Eagles might share with The Blue & Gold?

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Photo Credit: Brian O'Connor

## Encomium to Doorbells

In our Opinion section, Contributor Mariana Thomas takes our understanding of doorbells to a whole new level. Don't miss it! Read it today.

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## To Live As a Lamp for Christ: The Marist Way

By Beck Janki

The Marist Way is often referenced in just about everything we do here at school, especially the way a student is encouraged to live.

Not only is it a class known as a “right of passage” all students take in 7th grade but it is a foundation of learning and community building by all teachers for all students.

Through the five pillars of The Marist Way—prayer, community, learning, service, and vocation—students are taught to follow God “to think as Mary, judge as Mary, feel and act as Mary in all things.”

The foundation is a call to all of us in the school toward a manner of living, modeling one’s spirit after Mary and Christ.

Some like to describe the word “Marist” as linking Mary and Christ. The word “Marist,” in fact, is composed of the first three letters of Mary’s name and the last three letters of Christ’s name.

We might compare Mary and her Son to the image of an oil burning lamp. Mary is similar to the clear glass that protects and surrounds flame. The glass is an important part of the lamp, of course, but easily overlooked.

People see right through Mary to find Christ. One might intend to look at Mary but that person ultimately looks upon Christ.

These connections are brought to life by the phenomenal work done by campus ministry and the theology department, and all those who advance the school mission.

According to Marist Way Director Michael Coveny, the goal is to make sure that, as time goes by, “Marist School never lets go of the values shared by the Society of Mary and the Marist Fathers and Brothers.”

The Marist Way ushers Mary’s mission into the future by serving as the glass surrounding the flame for all those willing to look. It serves as a way for our school to remain grounded in its founding principles.

## Meet Fr. John

By Camille Gipson

After teaching at Marist for a cumulative 16 years previously, Father John Ulrich has returned to this year for a third time as our school chaplain. Father John is a friendly and compassionate presence in our school community, and he encourages attendance of adoration on Fridays during activity period for students wanting to grow their faith. Below are some excerpts from a recent interview:

**Why did you decide to become a priest?**

I went to Catholic school almost all my life, and we always had a lot of really wonderful priests and nuns as teachers, and I really admired so much their love of their faith, their concern for people, and their desire to be helpful, and I was always inter-



Photographer: Brian O’Connor

## Behind a New Addition to Marist School

*An engraving of Saint Peter Chanel has a story to tell*

By John Elrod

Returning students arriving to campus at the flag circle may have noticed a new adornment to the rear wall of the Chanel building: a stone engraving of Saint Peter Chanel that was installed in early September.

What many people may not know, however, is the backstory of the engraving, which originates in Bedford, Ohio.

Bedford, a suburb of Cleveland, was home to Chanel High School, a private Catholic school started by the Marist Fathers and Cleveland Archbishop Edward Francis Hoban in 1957.

For over fifty years, the school continued to grow and develop, with the Marist Fathers eventually giving control of the school to the Diocese of Cleveland in 1973.

By 2012, however, financial problems and low enrollment led to discussions about shutting down the school, with it finally closing in 2013.

Even though the school had

closed for good, many alumni of Chanel High School who had very fond memories of their time there were unwilling to allow the memory of their alma mater fade away.

In addition to creating the St. Peter Chanel Foundation, which aims to continue the philanthropic work that the school was known for, a number of significant items from the school were preserved by alumni. Many of these items ended up at the Marist School, including a painting of St. Peter Chanel, a marble engraving of the Virgin Mary, and of course, the stone panel of St. Peter Chanel that now adorns the Chanel building.

The panel engraving of St. Peter Chanel began to be removed from its original home around two years ago, prior to the school building’s demolition in 2020.

Through the work of several St. Peter Chanel alumni, the panel was removed with mini-

mal damage and transported to Atlanta by alumnus Jim Caputo and his wife.

This past September, the panel was lifted and set on the outside of the Chanel building, with it being formally dedicated on September 10th.

A number of Chanel High School alumni attended the heartfelt dedication.

As one might expect, a number of Marist brothers and priests worked at St. Peter Chanel High School, with a number of them having also worked at Marist, showing the connections between our own institution and theirs.

And with the engraving of St. Peter Chanel now at our school, we can all be reminded of St. Peter Chanel’s life and his sacrifice for his faith. We can reflect on the Society of Mary’s purpose and statement to the world, as well as our mission to “Seek What is Above.”

## 3790: Climbing, Bracelets, and More!

By Stella Chambless

Named for the address of our school, Camp 3790 brings the ninth grade class together before they embark on their high school journey.

Earlier this term, ninth graders made their way to Sojourn Adventures, where they rock climbed, played games, and participated in team bonding exercises. Facilitated by members of the senior class, groups engaged in discussions aimed at bringing these students closer together.

They built friendship bracelets, made sandwiches for The Sandwich Project Atlanta, and wrote letters for the elderly through Christ the King Church.

Apart from grade-wide bonding, camp 3790 also provided opportunities for older students to connect with younger ones. Leader Lyric Hoff had nothing but good things to say. “Camp 3790 was a great experience for me as a senior getting to know the freshmen,” she said. She loved “being able to take part in their welcoming process to Marist.”

The ultimate goal of the camp is to welcome new students while strengthening old bonds from middle school.

Engaging in service together in gave the ninth graders a chance to work towards a common goal. Service is a core value of our school, and these projects made the day about more than the Marist community.

It introduced the ninth grade class to our values at Marist, and likely to one another as well.

## Pray and Play: 2023 Damascus Retreat

*Seventh graders and upperclassmen share and discuss school values*



Contributed | The Blue & Gold

By Caroline Palmer

On September 23, our school hosted its Damascus retreat.

The Damascus retreat, open to seventh graders and led by upperclassmen, allowed new students to form relationships and make memories. While a spiritual retreat, the retreatants also played games.

Upon arrival, retreat leaders led the groups in games on the front field, including ships and sailors and sharks and minnows. Following the games, retreatants were split into small groups led by the upperclassmen and held in small-group locations.

A unique aspect of the Da-

mascus retreat was the “trust walk.” On the way to their small group locations, retreatants were blindfolded and guided by their leaders around campus.

The seventh graders were encouraged not to talk and instead to rely on their peers and leaders to guide them. The walk built trust between the small-group members and served as an icebreaker before group discussions.

In small groups, the retreatants made spiritual maps of the high and low points in their lives and discussed their spiritual journeys. They also learned about the significance of the Damascus story from moderator Erin Paul.

Retreatants enjoyed Moe’s burritos for dinner, were led in meditation by moderator Sarah Conn, and explored the campus in a school values scavenger hunt.

Retreat leader Erin Davis reflected on the importance of the retreat. “It’s a good way for seventh graders to get an introduction to Marist . . . The activities showcase different sides of the community that you don’t see during orientation or in passing. It’s an in-depth look at Marist life,” Davis said.

To end the day, families joined retreatants for Mass, and small group members received blessed retreat pins.

At our school, each grade level enjoys the chance to attend a retreat designed for their particular needs in mind. For the seventh graders, the newest students on campus, this retreat fit the bill.

The Damascus retreat provided leaders, students, and their families an introduction to Marist life and an opportunity to make connections.

ested in teaching.

There’s so many opportunities as a priest to be a part of people’s lives, from birth all the way up until death . . . It’s just been a very rewarding life for me.

**What was an important moment in your spiritual journey?**

The most rewarding moment was in 1976. I made my final vows here in the chapel at Marist.

**What do you like to do in your free time?**

I like to walk. I like to work in



Photo Credit: Brian O’Connor

the garden, and to read. I like to cook. I have a really good chicken pot pie recipe that the guys at the rectory really like.

**Is there anything else you would like the school as a whole to know about you?**

Just how pleased I am to be back. I freely admit I’m too old to teach a class now; I’ll be 76 in February. But I miss that regular contact and learning students’ names. I have the yearbook open, and I try to learn a couple of names everyday.

**What would you say has stayed**

**the same about Marist since you left?**

Well, basically the spirit. By and large, it’s just a wonderful group of young people. There’s so much energy and excitement. And a certain pride in our school, which is really important.

## XC Ends Season With Class

By Cosette Lane

Throughout the summer and fall, the boys and girls cross country teams trained incredibly hard in preparation for their season that would end with the 6A state championship on November 4th.

On the boys side, Tommy Latham led the team. For the girls, Ruby Little led the team. The team practiced and trained on the Marist front field and track as well as occasionally at a trail along the Chattahoochee River.

The team put in a massive amount of work into their training, devoting hours everyday over the course of the summer and the fall to achieve their goal of winning the state championship.

Starting the second week of June, the team began conditioning with two hour practices each morning, starting as early as 7 or 8 a.m. As Coach McMurray always says, "success for the season starts with the summer."

During the fall, the team practiced Monday through Friday with meets on Saturdays. Both the boys and girls started the season strong with a girls victory at Starr's Mill, and the boys placed second.

One of the biggest successes of the season was a boys and girls team victory at Coach Wood. Tommy Latham won the meet on the boys side, and it was the boys' first win of the season.

On November 4th, the day that the team had been waiting for all season arrived: the state championship.

The boys raced first. Tommy Latham led the team in the race, finishing first. Liam Hanemann finished second for Marist, placing 5th in the race, and Andrew Stricklin finished 10th. The boys had a total of 59 points, winning the competition.

Then came the girls. Ruby Little placed third followed by Stella Chambless in 5th and Caroline Rogers in 6th. The girls won the race with a score of 49 points.

Overall, both the boys and the girls had incredible seasons, both ending with state championship victories.

## Football Sweeps Rivals

By Alex Bok

The varsity football team had the hardest 5-game stretch in the program's history this season, playing the 2nd best team in 6A, the number one player in the class of 2025, and a top-30 team from Alabama.

The War Eagles currently sit at an outstanding record of 9-1 and are the 8th-ranked team in 6A, all the while being the smallest team in the 6A classification.

Inside this amazing 9-1 record were three massive wins over well-known cross-town rivals:

First, Woodward Academy traveled up to Hughes Spalding Stadium for the War Eagles'



Photographer: Brian O'Connor

## The Touchdown Taco

*From the student section at sporting events, one can behold the Southeast's tastiest mascot*

By Beck Janki

Marist athletics is a well-known brand across the country, perhaps even the world.

The discipline, effort, and trust that is woven through each one of the teams on campus is something few other programs can match. The energy around sports, ranging from football and basketball to soccer and cross country, is something unprecedented.

This energy is underscored by a Taco. Yes, a taco. The Touchdown Taco.

This piñata represents the dedication our students feel towards one another, and the unwavering support and screaming voices that are put on display weekly, from the stands, from the bleachers, and even from living rooms, where fans stream events from home.

The taco has been quite the hit in recent years, although its origin story is a mystery to some. "I have no clue how the Touchdown Taco was created or why

it became a thing," said Athletic Director Derek Waugh. "I think it is hilarious. It fits right in line with Marist students having a great sense of humor."

At this point, the Taco is famous around the state. If it's in the stands on the day you face the War Eagles, odds are you're going to lose.

Waugh is a firm believer. "We have one of the best student sections in the state of Georgia and probably the only food mascot in the Southeast," he said.

Since its inception, the Touchdown Taco has been cared for by a small group of senior fans who are dedicated and spirited at all events. Speaking with these leaders themselves, they believe the taco "really brings out our student body with something that's fun for all."

This group prides itself in attending as many sporting events as possible as the group considers it an honor to show support for their classmates.

The Touchdown Taco ini-

tially gained its fame from the Instagram account. Garnering interactions from the Marist community for their "Almost Friday" posts and pictures published after a Friday night win, the Taco took on a life of its own. While the Taco has always been in the hands of the seniors in the student section, the whole student body has been united by it.

As inherently irrational as the Taco seems at times – it is a papier-mâché food item after all – it does have a way of firing up the crowd and giving everyone another great reason to cheer on the War Eagles.

The seniors have made it known that the Taco is something they hope to pass on to the next class of rising seniors so that they too can keep the spirit alive.

The Touchdown Taco is something they hope to see when they return, long after they have graduated.

## One More Home Run Season!

*Fun traditions enhance this team's performance on the field of play*



Photographer: Maggie Briesacher

By Cosette Lane

Beginning their practices on July 31, the Marist softball team had an excellent season. Throughout fall and summer, the girls practiced and played on the Marist softball field. Their record was 23 wins, 10 losses, and 1 tie.

The team is very tight-knit

and enjoy many fun traditions during the regular season and playoffs. One only needs to visit the team's Instagram page—including its 270-people following—to find a collection of senior shout-outs and player interviews using a mini microphone.

What the Instagram page and the fun traditions don't reveal,

however, is this team's tremendous work ethic and their reluctance to let any practice, warm-up, or game go to waste.

Softball super regionals were located on the Marist softball field during the school day. According to Mary Catherine Stanley, the Veterans Game was especially fun because many teachers allowed students to leave class to watch. "The energy was awesome," Stanley said.

The team does many different types of practices. Julia Nackley's has her favorites. "Situational drills that help for the game and Friday yoga with Ms. Eaglen," Nackley's said. Mary Stanley said that the team also occasionally has practices without coaches, which helps them to bond as a team.

The fun tradition, however, don't stop at the Instagram page. One is decorating the locker room for senior night,

which, according to Stanley, is "so much fun for the juniors and underclassmen to stay late" and is always exciting to see the seniors' reactions. Another tradition that Nackley loves is dance parties in the locker room before region games. A few dance steps helps to alleviate the pressure of the big game.

The softball team had a batting average of .374 this year, which is higher than Nicky Lopez's .277 average—and Lopez has the highest average of all the players on the Atlanta Braves.

Junior Kennedy Mosley led the team in home runs this year, with 19 total.

Overall, the team had a fantastic season and can't wait for next fall.

at home against St. Pius since 2018.

In the iconic "Fish Bowl" rivalry, the game featured two talented tough defenses and a lot of triple option. Marist was the only team that scored the whole game and shut out Pius for a 17-0 win.

As a result of the Fish Bowl win, Marist won the region and will now fly into the playoffs on a 9-game winning streak.

Finally, Marist played against St. Pius X at home for their senior night and the first time

## Volleyball Takes On 6A

By Clara Laskowski

The volleyball team worked hard this season, leading them all the way to the elite eight in 6A.

The Lady War Eagles ended the season with a 25-15 record, playing Pope, the number one team in the region. The team members shared a close bond that led them successfully through the entire season.

The Blue & Gold reached out to interview a few of the players:

**What do you do before the season to prepare?**

"Every year, before the season, we get a list of physical challenges and exercises we have to do. They help us to get into shape over the summer," said Addie Alford.

**What was your favorite game this season?**

"Definitely beating Pius at Claws for a Cause. Pius beat us four times last year, and this year was the first time Coach Longoria has ever beaten Pius. We beat them twice that week, and it was nice to finally win against them," said Carly Kritzer.

**Do you have any superstitions before games?**

"If we do well in a game, we try to wear whatever hairstyle we wore that game to keep up the winning streak," said Claire Schepp.

**What was your favorite thing about this season?**

We had a Barbie theme this season. We had a real Barbie and would dress her up and bring her to all our games. She was like our mascot," said Addie Alford.

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can write for  
the newspaper.

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inbox to learn  
how.

## Visit Novo Cucina Soon!

By Ryan Hewitt

Located in the heart of Dunwoody, Georgia, Novo Cucina is a modern, yet homey, Italian restaurant. It is very popular among Dunwoody residents, and I decided to dine there this past weekend.

My table was in their beautiful sun room, lined with French doors to let as much natural light in as possible. Because it was cold that night, they also placed space heaters at each door.

Quickly after I sat down, the server stopped by my table to offer me water and take my appetizer orders. I decided to order the polpetta, or meatballs and arancini, small fried risotto balls with sausage.

The appetizers were delicious. The meatballs melted in your mouth and were covered in rich tomato sauce with creamy ricotta. The arancini were perfectly golden brown, and the sausage was wonderful.

After my appetizers, I ordered a Caesar salad and, for my entrée, their Rigatoni alla Salsiccia, which consisted of rigatoni pasta with a sage cream sauce, sweet Italian sausage, and Parmesan cheese.

When my salad came, it looked delicious. The focaccia croutons and dressing were obviously homemade. The salad was very good, but I do wish that there was more dressing on it because it was a large salad.

After finishing my salad, the server brought out my entrée. The rigatoni was perfectly cooked, and the sauce was perfect. It was creamy, but it still tasted of tomatoes. The sausage complemented the sauce wonderfully. This pasta was by far my favorite dish of the night, and I will definitely be ordering it again.

After I finished my pasta, I decided to stop by the gelato bar to see the flavors. After sampling a few flavors, all of which were delicious, I settled on white chocolate raspberry, one of my personal favorites.

It was very tasty. The raspberry swirls mixed in did not overpower the white chocolate, and the flavors of both were perfectly balanced with one another. I wish I could have had more flavors because they had so many flavors which all looked appetizing.

Overall, my dinner at Novo Cucina was an overwhelmingly positive one, and I will definitely be returning the next chance I get.

## Daisy, the Newfypoo!

By Nicole Salkaus

I have received many questions about my dog Daisy. I wanted to share with everyone some insight into therapy dogs and the good they can do.

Daisy and I are certified through the organization Alliance of Therapy Dogs and are members of the CAREing PAWS organization.

Therapy dogs are different from Service and Emotional Support Animals.

Therapy dogs are trained to provide comfort, companionship, and emotional support in various settings, such as schools, hospitals, nursing homes, and even in disaster areas.

Therapy dogs are certified by organizations to ensure they meet specific behavioral and training standards. Alliance of Therapy Dogs, for example, certifies both the handler and the dog to ensure they meet specific standards for behavior, temperament, and training.

Therapy dogs need to be very comfortable around all kinds of people, for instance, so confirming those behaviors is part of the certification process.

One important difference between therapy and service dogs is access rights. Therapy dogs do not have the same legal rights as service dogs. They are not granted public access rights under the Americans with Dis-



Contributed | The Blue & Gold

abilities Act.

Service dogs tend to be highly trained to perform specific tasks for one individual with disabilities. They undergo extensive training to respond dependably to the commands and needs of their owners.

Emotional support animals provide comfort and emotional support to one individual with a mental health condition.

Emotional support animals require no specialized training for tasks but should behave appropriately in crowded public spaces.

There is currently no official certification in place for emotional support dogs.

We are beginning to see more and more therapy dogs in schools for several good reasons:

Therapy dogs help reduce stress, anxiety, and loneliness

by offering companionship and attention.

Interacting with therapy dogs has been shown to have physical benefits, such as lower blood pressure and reduced heart rate. Petting a dog can release endorphins, natural mood lifters.

Spending time with a therapy dog can alleviate stress and promote relaxation. A therapy dog like Daisy can be especially helpful during exam weeks.

Daisy is a Newfoundland and Poodle mix. That's why I call her a Newfypoo.

She was born on April 24, 2020.

The Newfoundland is a member of the working dog group. They are known as "nanny dogs" due to their affinity for children.

Newfoundland's have webbed feet and are known for their exceptional water rescue abilities.

The Poodle is known for its superior intelligence and swimming abilities.

Daisy's favorite toy is her red Frisbee. She loves to go to school and twirls in the air when I grab her leash to come.

Daisy and I volunteer at a senior memory care center on weekends.

Daisy loves to have her ears rubbed. She loves to watch TV. She sleeps in a Tempurpedic bed at night and thinks the middle cushion of the couch is entirely hers.

## Doorbells

By Mariana Thomas

Doorbells. The real ones. You know, the ones from our childhoods. Before they had cameras or speakers that screamed through static. I'm talking about the ones with chipped paint. The ones worn raw from years of use. The ones where your finger fits perfectly in its groove. The ones whose melodious song seems to call out "Hello! I'm here! I'm here for you!"

I used to love doorbells. The mystery of what lies behind them. The anticipation.

Doorbells sound like summer. Not just any summer, but a hot humid summer night. Your hands are caked in dirt and sticky with sweat. These kinds of doorbells and those kinds of nights encouraged ding-dong ditching. They didn't care if our grubby hands touched them. And so, we did.

I grew to know the slight inflections to my neighbors' doorbells. The different tunes or rings. Some shrill and some flat. Our favorite was the one-of-a-kind old lady up the street whose doorbell hummed to the tune of Yankee Doodle. It was all music to us.

On Halloween night a doorbell was the access point for us and sweet treats from people with even sweeter smiles. Each house brought mystery. What's behind that door? Could it be the elusive king-size bar?

Between my brothers and I, it was always a fight of who got to ring that sacred doorbell. The significance of those reverberating bells was not lost on us, no matter how little we were.

"Don't open the door to strangers" cautioned mothers everywhere, and while I understand not opening to strangers, I'll never understand why we stopped opening our doors to strangeness.

Doorbells are a sign of the undiscovered. A person, a package. In school, a bell represents the changing of classes. The beginning of something new. In our monotonous lives, doorbells are our interruptions, our reminder to break free from our molds and open our doors to the unknown.

I think that a love of doorbells is what makes growing up so hard. By the time we were old enough to be the people opening the doors, the bells had stopped ringing, and the world beyond our doors appeared much smaller. No more Christmas carolers. No more boogie.

Now, doorbells have cameras and speakers. The mystery of what lies behind our doors has been spoiled. Why would you get up to answer the door when you can just check your phone? The melodious song of "Hello! I'm here! I'm here for you!" has turned into dissonant "What is the purpose of your visit?"

Our craving for personable connection is what makes us human. In the past decades, it seems as if nothing can satisfy it. So we invented apps in hopes that they will improve our lives. Instead of walking outside we simply say "Alexa, what's the weather like?" Instead of opening our doors, we just check our cameras, and you remember those strangers our mothers warned us about. Well, we befriend them online in hopes that they will fulfill our need for connection. And they don't. And we never realize that it's not real. None of it is real.

## Nolan's Oppenheimer: An Explosive Theatrical Event



Atlas Entertainment & Universal Pictures

By Marshall Lisenby

Oppenheimer is acclaimed director Christopher Nolan's most recent blockbuster film, released in late summer of 2023.

It is a biographical thriller that follows the life of J. Robert Oppenheimer, a Jewish American during World War II who uses his mastery of quantum physics to develop the first atomic bomb.

Filed on IMAX in high resolution, Nolan takes you on a wild ride through his three-hour film, imbibing you with his stunning scenery and snapshots, as well as plunging you through tense, heart-stopping moments. He leads you through the creation and detonation of the first atom bomb.

Starting in Oppenheimer's youth, you peer into his untameable mind as he struggles with the quantum world and then battles with political ideol-

ogies that disrupt his career as a professor at the University of Berkeley in California.

Soon, he finds himself in the middle of something greater than he can imagine as he becomes the head mastermind behind the Manhattan Project, overseeing the construction of Los Alamos and the development of the never-before-conceived nuclear bomb.

From start to finish, this movie has you hooked, anxious for the next scene and development as the scientists and theorists race against the clock.

The climax of the film, the well-anticipated explosion, is a moment nearly unrivaled in cinema and a scene that must be experienced in theaters.

The heartbeats and breathing amplify the tension and fear that builds with the passing storm as the clock ticks down. Then a bright flash of light and silence.

A silence that seems to last forever, keeping you on the tips of your toes, drawing you in as you watch the flash of light spread across the landscape, and then, seemingly out of nowhere, a thunderous boom, shaking the seats, echoing through the theater, creating an out-of-this-world immersive experience for the moviegoer.

These crafted, awe-inspiring scenes give birth to a cinematic experience like no other.

While many contest that the movie's length, dominated at times by the persistent arguing of the court cases, bore the audience, they merely buttress the growing tension the movie builds to and serve as a secondary plot that amplifies the conclusion.

Oppenheimer, in my opinion, ranks at the top of Nolan's long list of films. I'd recommend all to embark on the tumultuous journey that entails in the three-hour saga.

For those who consider moments of the film dull and confusing, I encourage you to rewatch the movie, as the plot and beauty of the film are best enjoyed and understood multiple times. I guarantee that at the film's end, you will find yourself consumed by a flurry of emotions: confusion, amazement, and fascination, which will leave you yearning to come back for more.



### EDITORS

Beck Janki

Cosette Lane

### PUBLIC RELATIONS

Alex Treanor

Stella Chambless

### CONTRIBUTORS

Emma Schramm

Juliet Powell

John Elrod

Caroline Palmer

Camille Gipson

Clara Laskowski

Alex Bok

Ryan Hewitt

Mariana Thomas

Marshall Lisenby

Dean of Student Life

Nicole Salkaus

### Photographer

Maggie Briesacher