

## Speech & Debate Wins State – Once Again

By Reese Sullivan

Unlike other academic teams at our school, speech and debate is an activity designed to provide a platform for different types of competitions, from public address to categories like spontaneous argumentation and parliamentary debates.

Speech and debate also encourages students to research current issues. It emphasizes a focus on teamwork and leadership. Student Charlie Parker shared his interests in the world of debate. “I enjoy debate because I get to interact with people from different schools and hang out with people in different rounds,” he said.

There are many different ways to become involved with debate. The first step is to take the class during Term 1. Students in grades 7, 8, and 9 can take the class, which teaches the proper understanding of what speech and debate is all about.

Debate Coach Jeffery Miller is extremely proud of his team and their overall performance this season.

Miller explained the role that his classes play in our school's larger debate program. “I walk students through how to compete in different activities,” he said. If a student's interest continues after taking these introductory course, they are allowed to try and compete for a spot on the debate team, which potentially leads to the state competition.

Miller compared debate to track and field. “Debate is similar to track and field; just because you are on the track team doesn't mean you run,” he said.

Debate is a year round commitment, but most of the debates are held in the fall and winter months.

This year's team had the most students rank Top 3 in their events at the state tournament in the history of the program.

According to the American Debate League, speech and debate is an activity associated with developing superior communication and critical thinking skills. It is also the most direct and practical way to overcome one's fears of public speaking.



Photo Credit: Contributed to The Blue & Gold

## Meet Centro Hispano Marista

By Reese Sullivan

For around 2 hours on Tuesday nights, Marist teachers volunteer for a program called Centro Hispano Marista to help adult Hispanic and Latino students earn their GEDs.

A Provincial of the Society of Mary, Reverend Ted Keating was the original leader who brought the idea of this program to Marist. Fr. John Harger, who was the President of Marist at the time, welcomed the idea proposed to the board in 2011. Classes were first offered in the fall of 2012.

Currently, former Marist President Fr. Bill Rowland is the President of Centro Hispano Marista and leads the organization alongside Dr. Leticia Valencia, the director of Centro.

Each class takes 6 to 12 weeks to complete. In addition to the class hours, students have a weekly average of 6 hours of homework in order to properly prepare for their classes.

Earning a GED provides a

wide range of job opportunities to the graduates and helps them improve their career chances. Along with supporting their career goals, Centro also provides an outlet for community building and fosters belonging among the students.

This bridge even extends to home life, where Centro students are able to connect with their kids who might be learning similar material in their own schools.

Centro Hispano Marista is a non profit organization, which demonstrates that Marist to be more than a high school. Marist is a well-rounded, diverse institution which has made education for all the foundation of its mission. This program represents another perspective into the Marist community and demonstrates its passion for formulating a wider family dedicated to learning.

Robotics teacher Christopher Michaud volunteers as a math teacher for the Centro Hispano Marista program. Michaud

started teaching math in 2015 and describes his students as, “hardworking and intelligent individuals who balance the adult responsibilities of raising children, working, and a going to school.”

Michaud hopes to continue to dedicate his time to this program and feels greatly rewarded for his impact to his community.

Jose Gregory, a history teacher for both Marist and Centro Hispano Marista, shares his love for Centro. He describes the program as “chicken soup for his soul.”

Gregory is deeply gratified by the opportunity to help advance these students' potential and career goals. “The program is an opportunity to directly help my own community and those who might be marginalized,” Gregory said.

Since 2012, Centro Hispano Marista has helped more than 400 adult students earn their GEDs and graduates approximately 30 students per year.

## A New Club for AAPI

By Megan Latham

Our school introduced five new clubs this year. One of those clubs is the Asian and Pacific Island Affinity Group or the AAPI Club.

The AAPI Club is for people who want to learn about different Asian and Pacific Islander cultures. Like many affinity clubs, this focus involves trying different snacks from the cultures, sharing experiences, and bonding as a group.

The most important aspect of the club is for members to share experiences growing up as an AAPI.

The club meets once a month during activity period. Sometimes, the club has different meeting themes, such as Hindu Heritage Month, Mental Health Month, or the Lunar New Year.

The Lunar New Year celebrates the beginning of a new Lunar Year. In many parts of Asian and across many Pacific Islands, the Lunar New Year is celebrated by decorating houses and shopping in open-air markets. On Lunar New Year's Eve, families enjoy a feast of symbolic dishes.

On February 9, the AAPI Club celebrated the Lunar New Year on campus with its first after-school meeting. Students and families celebrated together with a potluck.

The AAPI Club has 31 members, five officers, and four grade-level leaders.

## Sophomores Take On America

*America: The Conference urges tenth graders to think beyond the classroom*



Photo Credit: Brian O'Connor

By Emma Schramm

On February 9, 2024, the sophomore class came together on the second floor of Ivy Street Center to participate in this year's America: The Conference.

The conference is an all-day annual event held just for the sophomore class. Led by teach-

er Robert Shaw-Smith and held by the English department, the conference prompts students to consider ideas they want to share with the world, specifically about aspects of American culture, cuisine, entertainment, athletics, history, and more.

Members of the sophomore

class spent weeks preparing a presentation about some aspect of American society that interested them. Other students took other jobs, such as playing music between presentation times, running the technology needed for presentations, coordinating with the panel and guest speaker, and helping arrange lunches.

Out of the many memorable presentations of the day, some included “Buc-ee's: The True American Dream,” “The McDifference,” and “LeBron and His Legacy.”

America: The Conference was a transformative experience for many students, as for some it was the first opportunity they have ever had to share their interests and observations about American life with their peers.

The idea for the original event began to formulate after one of Shaw-Smith's freshman classes presented a museum of Hold-

en Caulfield, the protagonist of JD Salinger's 1951 novel The Catcher in the Rye. After Shaw-Smith realized that students responded well to sharing their own ideas on a certain topic, America: the Conference was born.

Shaw-Smith shared his hopes for the annual event.

“We're trying to get them [the sophomores] to think, ‘Hang on, what do I want to say about the world, and where can I say it?’,” he explained.

“Students . . . attend classes,” Shaw-Smith continued, “and what I want them to understand is that there is a real excitement in a conference, and they don't usually experience that in school.”

## Share the Sacrament

Staff writer Clara Laskowski delves into the honor of serving as a Eucharistic Minister. Turn to page 2 to learn what Clara discovered.

PAGE 2



Photo Credit: Brian Collier

## Cross Town Rivalry

Staff Writer Maggie Foster explores the long history behind the Marist - St. Pius X rivalry. When did it all start? Where does the rivalry currently stand?

PAGE 3



Photo Credit: Contributed

## La La Got You Down?

Staff writer Ella Weber takes a second look at the 2016 film La La Land. Was the ending really as sad as everyone says? Turn to page 4 to find out.

PAGE 4

## Tenth Graders Set To Be Confirmed

By John Elrod

As the spring approaches, many students, particularly those in the class of 2026, find themselves closer to confirmation. Over the past few months, they have gone through a long process: attending sessions on numerous weekends and even going on a weekend-long retreat earlier this year.

The process of being confirmed is as important as actually receiving the sacrament, and many sophomores have been anticipating confirmation more and more as the process goes on.

"I'm feeling very excited," said student Bryson Seebach, a member of the class of 2026, who is preparing to be confirmed. Seebach attended sessions at Christ the King Church since August of 2023, where he and other young Catholics have learned the values and motives of being Catholic, and how confirmation helps us become closer with God by confirming our membership to the Church after baptism.

Bryson also attended the Christ the King confirmation retreat on the weekend of February 3, where he and others gained a deeper understanding of Catholicism through talks given by peer leaders and small group discussions.

"Getting closer to God and understanding Him better is something I've always been wanting in life," Bryson said.

For the students being confirmed, the confirmation ceremony is on the horizon, coming with a mixture of excitement and nervousness. When asked what he was most looking forward to, Bryson said he was excited for the ceremony, and the possibility of it making him into a more devoted Christian.

Before becoming confirmed, students must choose a patron saint that reflects what they stand for most, and choose an adult close to them who will serve as their sponsor, guiding them through the confirmation process and appearing with them at the confirmation Mass.

For most sophomores seeking confirmation through Christ the King, the sacrament is scheduled for late April, giving students and their families plenty of time to prepare for this new stage in their lives.

## Mass Ministers

By Clara Laskowski

In March 1971 the National Conference of Catholic Bishops created the role of Extraordinary Ministry to allow laypeople to have roles in the Church. This group serves communion to the Marist community at daily and all school Masses.

Each year, all Catholic juniors receive an application. If the junior proves interested, there is an interview that follows the application. Following these steps, the prospective minister attends training and participates in a reflection on the importance of the Eucharist.

Student Grace Maloney explained why she wanted to be an Extraordinary minister. "I wanted to do it to strengthen my faith and be more involved in campus ministry," Maloney



Photo Credit: Contributed

## Students Study and Serve, All At the Same Time!

By Megan Latham

Students at our school complete service hours to qualify for graduation. As early as Foundations, students learn how to complete a service project together as a class.

In grades 9-12, students complete volunteer hours that vary based on their year. Ninth graders complete 8 hours, sophomores and juniors complete 10 hours, and seniors complete 12 hours.

Some of the hours need to be "direct service," where the people, places, or animals who are the focus of the service are actually present. Service is considered "indirect" when the people, places, or animals are absent.

One of the past Foundations projects was Trick or Treat Hunger. Trick or Treat Hunger is an annual project that supports the Atlanta Food Bank. Students collect donations the night of the event by going door-to-door. Food donations are then delivered to the bank where they can do the most good.

According to Campus Min-

ister Mary Ujda, Reach for Excellence and Buddy Baseball are two of the more popular direct service projects.

At Reach for Excellence, the program's goal is to provide students with college prep courses and leadership training that leads to students having success in life. Adults or students who volunteer at Reach for Excellence tutor the students, deliver presentations, chaperone trips, or lead workshops on particular subjects.

Buddy Baseball is a baseball league for children with disabilities. Buddy Baseball takes place at Northside Youth Organization, or NYO, and Murphy Candler Park and has a yearly spring and fall season. Students volunteer to be a buddy and assist a player during games.

A popular choice for indirect service is Writings to the Elderly through Christ the King. Students write handwritten letters of love and encouragement that are then delivered to the elderly at Christ the King.

Student Kate Owens says her favorite place to volunteer is the

Sandy Springs Solidarity Food Kitchen. Owens signs up as an assistant food shopper and hands out prepackaged food and produce.

According to the 2021 United States Census, 60.7 million people, or 23.2 percent of Americans, volunteered 4.1 billion service hours.

Including service hours logged during the weeks of summer, Marist students volunteered a grand total 9,682 hours last year, a small but important contribution to the national numbers.

Community service an important part of what it means to be a good person, helpful American, and faithful Catholic.

Public service is such an important part of our character that President Ronald Regan signed into law the King Holiday Bill in 1983, the first national holiday dedicated to volunteerism and community service.

During a recent Martin Luther King Day celebration, 1,800 people volunteered 5,000 hours at Hands On Atlanta.

## The Nature of Nazareth

*Sophomores head into the wilderness to grow closer to God and one another*



Photo Credit: Contributed

By Nic Lancelotta

On February 2, sophomore students drove nearly two hours to reach Life Teen Camp Cove Crest in Tiger, Georgia. This Catholic retreat site is perfect, featuring plenty of nature to explore and also includes John Paul the Great Theater, Mary's Chapel, Cole House, and many

more spots for prayer. Sixty sophomores go on the Nazareth retreat and are led by 34 juniors to guide them. The retreat is also designed and organized by Campus Ministers Nik Rodewald and Brian Freil.

The Nazareth retreat and school retreats in general help bond the community together. During the retreat, students are placed into random small groups where they will make new friends and bond with classmates that they may not normally talk to.

The retreat is structured around five major themes. These themes include acceptance, encouragement, humility, forgiveness, and service.

The junior students educate the sophomore students about these five aspects and also give insight about how these themes work in their own lives.

Mason Hubbard shared his personal experience on the retreat. "The Nazareth retreat was a great way to connect with my friends and get to know people I did not talk to as much," Mason said.

As the only sophomore retreat, Nazareth is a key part of our school's campus ministry program. Learning from up-

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person would have to partake in training again. Learning how to properly administer the Eucharist, where things are, and the importance of the Eucharist is all a part of that training.

Extraordinary Ministers are used at every mass and assist in making the Mass run more efficiently. Freil explained how "we all have a role to play in Mass" and "Eucharistic Ministry is a way to exercise that role."

Each year, all Catholic juniors receive an application. If the junior proves interested, there is an interview that follows the application. Following

# Tennis Starts Swinging

By Nic Lancelotta

Former Athletic Director Tommy Marshall is currently leading boys tennis with a 4-2 record, and Coach Jose Gregory is leading the girls team with an undefeated record, as of March 1.

Tennis might be overlooked at times, but the team has a large community of passionate players. Player Ryland Hoover shared why he loves the sport so much. "Tennis is a great sport that you can play for your whole life," Hoover said.

Many may not know what goes on during a typical practice since the tennis courts sit high above much of the campus. Player Erik Johansson gives us some detail on what goes on up on the courts. "In a typical Marist practice, we start off by jogging and stretching. Then, we grab a partner and warm up. At the end of practice, we play points or sometimes matches," Johansson said.

Tennis is also one of the most mentally challenging sports that the school offers. Johansson testified to just how difficult but rewarding tennis can be. "The hardest part of tennis is staying focused. In tennis, it is very easy to lose a lead. The best part of tennis is hitting a winner. They boost your confidence, especially when the whole team is cheering."

The game of tennis is very unique in terms of its point system, and one term used above is the term "winner." The term "winner" or "ace" is simply when a player hits the ball over the net, and the other player can't return it, or the ball bounces twice.

Another interesting term is the term "bagel." This term is used when a player wins 6-0 against their opponent.

Our school is known for excelling in our academics but also in sports. Tennis is a sport that has done exceptionally well at our school.

The girls have won an outstanding 26 state championships with their wins occurring from 1981 to 2022.

From 1979 to 2022, our school's boys tennis has won state on 19 different occasions.

# Track Runs for Continued Success

By Kate Owens

If there's one thing the track and field program knows well, it is success. Track and field is legendary here at our school with 9 state titles and 6 runner-up finishes, as well as over 15 Division 1 athletes since 2018.

Still on fire after bringing home the cross country state title in the fall, the distance team, led by Coach Clark Rivers, is set to have a very successful season. In preparation for the season, they have been running in freezing temperatures since the beginning of December and traveled to Alabama for an indoor preseason meet, where personal records abounded.

The rest of the team, including the sprinters, pole vaulters, high jumpers, long jumpers, and



Photo Credit: Brian O'Connor

# The Marist vs. St. Pius X Rivalry

## A rivalry that spans five miles also spans generations

By Maggie Foster

Marist and St. Pius X are two of the oldest and largest Catholic schools in the Atlanta area. As one might imagine, the athletic rivalry between our two schools has a long and lustrous history.

On a fall day in 1962, a football game now known as the "Fish Bowl" took place. St. Pius X won or tied 12 of the first 14 games. After athletics started to develop at our school, however, Marist won the next 26 of 27 matchups.

Still today, the varsity football team competes for the Fish Bowl trophy each year.

This is an ongoing rivalry that has stood the test of time. There are generations of families who are involved and will continue the tradition.

It started and continues to be the most prevalent in basketball and football. Marist tends to dominate more in football while St. Pius X dominates more in basketball.

Marist went on a basketball hot streak from 1981 to the mid-

1990s. The most recent Marist - Pius matchup took place on February 16, 2024. The varsity boys lost 47-53. The girls varsity team won 61-22.

Pius student JD Foster shared his experience with this historic rivalry. "In my particular sport, basketball, I truly believe that Pius has a leg up on Marist in this rivalry," Foster said.

The reason why this rivalry has lasted so long is because people strongly identify with either school. It becomes a part of them before they even attend one school or the other. The rivalry is based on school spirit as much as athleticism.

Marist student Reese Sullivan believes this rivalry starts as early as elementary school. "Even before I attended Marist, my previous school, OLA, had this very prominent rivalry which divided the school," Sullivan said.

A similar experience is shared by St. Pius X Athletic Director Tim Mooney. "Long before my time here (I'm in my sixth year),

I actually learned about the rivalry back in 2000 while coaching football at Rhodes College," said Mooney.

Another aspect of the rivalry includes students, alumni, teachers, staff, coaches, and people who know other people who go or work at the other school.

Marist athletic director Derek Waugh shared a favorite moment from his time as a Marist basketball player. "As a player, I remember we almost lost my senior year in basketball on the road, but a game-sealing dunk and landing in their student section was about as hyped as I ever was as a player," said Waugh.

In 2022, student Afton Mosley blocked Pius' winning field goal attempt in overtime to win the region title, one more dramatic moment in this long-lived rivalry.

# Golf Calls for Personal Drive

These athletes work alone to improve and achieve their personal best



Photo Credit: Creative Commons 2.0

By Clara Laskowski

The golf team has begun their spring training and preparation for the 2024 season. Coach Kevin Moore is the coach of the boys varsity team while Coach Samuel Gough is the coach of the girls varsity team.

These team are some of the stranger ones at our school.

more, have already set 34 personal records in their first meet.

Track is not only a physical sport that involves constant training but also a mental sport involving determination and perseverance. Student Caroline Rogers, a top freshman distance runner, explains her enthusiasm for the sport. "My favorite part about track is running in the race, when I actually get to see where my hard work has gotten me," Rogers said.

Truly representing what it means to be a student-athlete,

members of the track and field team are disciplined, resilient, and fearless leaders.

Additionally, the team camaraderie is unmatched. Whether it is celebrating after the state competition with a team frozen yogurt outing, buying matching slippers at Buc-ee's after a travel meet, or having the same people by your side every day to train with, track and field builds a welcoming environment where teammates always have each others' backs and form lifelong friendships.

# Off To the Races with T&F

By Ryan Hewitt

February 9-10, were the first regular season meets of the 2024 track and field season, and our team delivered.

On Friday, the distance runners left school early and traveled to the Annual Parkview Distance Kickoff in Lilburn. Overall, there were 25 personal records and 10 brand new runners. Three runners achieved MileSplit US Second Team standards.

The next day, the rest of the track & field team traveled to the Hawthorne Wesley Invitational. Nine new personal records were set across sprints, jumps, and pole vault, and this was their first meet for six different runners.

Twelve different athletes finished in the top 8, scoring points for the War Eagles. Nicole Barrios claimed 3rd and 6th in the 800 and 1600, and Handley Greeley finished 5th in the 300 hurdles, running a 51.28. In triple jump, Piper Gotch and Della Canale placed 4th and 5th, respectively.

Overall, track and field crushed the competition in their first meets of the regular season. Coach Matt McMurray had nothing but good things to say. "The team was full of displays of heart and determination" and "all the hard work put in this offseason was rewarded," McMurray said.

While the season has only started, things look great for the track and field War Eagles going forward.

Good luck to all the athletes that will compete throughout the season. Hopefully, the future holds many dominant performances.

tion is that the athletes get in individual work at their own clubs or courses throughout the week," Moore said.

The teams held tryouts at North Fulton Golf Course this year. The coaches look for good golfers, of course, but Moore highlighted another priority. "The key thing we look for is consistency," he said.

The coaches also review the athletes' scores each tryout round and evaluate their swings. The coaches want people that fit the culture of the program. "We hope for players who support each other," he said.

Though golf is focused on personal statistics, there is still a team aspect to the sport. Student Jane Bennett shared her love for the game. "The best part of golf at Marist is the people I've met" she said. "There are only six of us so it's been fun getting to know each other."

Marist golf is a sport that takes individual dedication. The athletes must be driven to work hard on their own outside of school. Due to this individual aspect of the sport, Moore said, "We want guys that are willing to get better on their own."

The team plays in competitions all over metro-Atlanta. A few of their biggest include the Granger Open in LaGrange and the Larry Gaither Invitational in Columbus. Five or six players compete in each tournament. This roster comprises only is about 1/3 of the team, so the choice is selective.

From 1999-2003 the boys won five consecutive state championships. This streak was their longest at the state level.

You too  
can write for the  
newspaper.  
Watch your inbox to find  
out how.

## Why Failure Is Better Than Success

*Living at the top of the winner column can take you only so far*

By Alex Bok

"A loser is someone who has never lost."

In a society that is so focused on winning, nobody talks about how someone has to lose in a game. It is one person vs one person or one team vs another, and only one can come out victorious. When that team loses, it feels like the losing team gets more criticism than the winning team does praise.

I believe that it is better to lose than win. When you lose, you know that there is somebody out there that is better than you, and that awareness forces you to go out there and work harder.

While winning is fun and exciting, there will always be someone out there who is better, faster, smarter, or stronger than you at any given endeavor.

Losing forces you to keep going.

When someone loses, you can tell what type of person they are by how they react to it. They can sit there and complain, make excuses, and quit. Or, they can put their head down and work harder, striving to reach the top of the win column. Losing builds character.

In a society where everyone gets a trophy, the more you lose the stronger you will be compared to the average person. Failing is a part of life, and no one wants to experience that feeling. It is one of the worst feelings that I have ever experienced, but I am a better person today because of how much I have lost.

I have lost way too much in my life, and I am embarrassed by it every single time. Losing has not, however, stopped me from enjoying my life. In today's world people are so focused on themselves that they do not care how much you lose; they are too focused on not trying to lose themselves.

I am not saying that I want people to lose and want to see people fail. I love watching others and myself succeed because it is such a beautiful thing when others, who have worked so hard, achieve their goals and more.

Losing makes the winning feel a lot better.

## "Yeah! Yeah! Yeah!"

By Emma Schramm

There's a genre of music you might describe as "underground," meaning you won't find it on Spotify, Apple Music, or even on the first YouTube search.

Buried deep into the music catalogues of the past and forgotten by collectors and connoisseurs comes "garage rock," the progeny of the British Invasion of the 1960s.

Enamored by the popularity of English acts such as the Beatles, the Rolling Stones, the Hollies, the Zombies, and many more, American teenagers formed their own makeshift rock-n-roll groups by the thousands. But contrary to the polished, slick sound of the great beat bands, garage songs were often recorded by amateur musicians with shoddy equipment and strange, nonsensical songwriting known as "anti-lyrics."

Despite the sheer number of these groups, very few songs were actually recorded and virtually no information was saved. The genre died out around the late '60s, but thanks to YouTube uploaders and compilation albums, plenty of songs can still be heard.

As an archivist myself, I've put together a list of my top ten favorite garage songs for listening:

10. "I Know" was recorded



Photo Credit: Contributed

ed in 1966 by the Illusions, who were mostly remembered for having terrible management and their own television show, Let's Go.

9. The Forsaken's "Babe," recorded in 1966, is of dubious quality and unintelligible lyrics, but it's hard to say no to those harmonies.

8. "Hello, My Darling" by the Hickory-Stix (1964) is an early example of garage, boasting a voice smooth as honey and a gorgeous instrumental.

7. Bobby and the Farraris' "In the Morning" (1965) is an exemplary piece of Massachusetts gold with the booming vibrato of its lead singer.

6. "I Know Different" was recorded in 1966 by the Troyes, who were successful enough to have their own album of origi-

nal songs called Rainbow Chaser.

5. The Rites of Spring's "Why (?)" was recorded in 1966 with chipper bell sounds alongside a typical garage instrument, the organ Farfisa.

4. "Ode to the Wind" by Danny and the Counts in 1966 is one of the most well-known singles in the genre and a great example of one of the many garage groups from El Paso, Texas.

3. The Excels' 1965 "It Isn't So" is the lyrical embodiment of a summer night with a xylophone and harmonica to match.

2. "Everything is Blue" by the Mad Lads in 1967 has relatively nonsensical lyrics about general teenage heartache. It is redeemed by a great instrumental and exquisite harmonies.

1. "Come with Me," recorded by the Barons in 1966, has its first and only appearance on a comp album called Lost Souls. Hardly anything is known about the group itself except that they were most likely from Arkansas. Still, it is my favorite garage song to date.

These are only ten out of the thousands of garage songs ever recorded, but maybe you'll find one you like! Good luck, and happy listening!

## Why I follow Formula 1, and Why You Should, Too



Photo Credit: Creative Commons 2.0

By Maggi Foster

Formula One, more commonly known as F1, is a motorsport where there are ten teams, each with two drivers and one or more reserve drivers.

Formula 1 takes you all over the globe, from the United Kingdom and Brazil to Singapore. Some of the most famous tracks are Silverstone in England, Monza in Italy, Monte Carlo in Monaco, and Spa-Francorchamps in Belgium.

Up front, you see high-speed races with drivers going as fast as 200 mph. Behind the scenes, you get all the drama from driver contracts, FIA penalties, the constructor's championship, car launches, and much more.

I got into Formula 1 thanks to the Netflix show Drive to Survive. The show is a documentary series that follows the Formula 1 season. The show started

in 2019, and season 6 is set to premiere on February 23, 2024.

The Formula 1 season starts around late February and goes to late November with a spring and summer break worked into the schedule. During the winter off-season, teams work on building new "liveries" for the upcoming season.

Formula 1 is one of the most interesting sports I have ever watched, and I think it gets overlooked because it is not a generic sport in the US. Formula 1 is so much more than racing. The drama that unfolds during the season and during the off season is so exciting to follow.

A typical Formula 1 weekend, excluding the Sprint Race weekends, consists of two one-hour practice sessions called Free Practice 1 and Free Practice 2. Then, on Saturday, there is one more hour-long practice

called Free Practice 3.

Finally, there is a qualifying session in the afternoon. Sunday is the big race, and most races happen during the day, but there are a couple of night races.

For example, a very well-known driver, Lewis Hamilton, announced a couple of weeks ago that he will be leaving the Mercedes at the end of the 2024 season. Hamilton has been a part of the Mercedes team for over ten years, but he now plans to drive for Ferrari.

Another exciting factor of Formula 1 racing is the Sprint Races that happen throughout the season.

During the 2023 season, there were 6 Sprint races, and to qualify for each race the drivers competed in a Spring Shootout. A Sprint Race is a 100 km race that lasts around 30 minutes, and the top eight drivers score points.

The FIA Formula 1 World Championship had its first race in 1950, and it was hosted at the Silverstone track in the United Kingdom.

Since the start of Formula 1, there have been 58 drivers from the United States. Only two Americans, Mario Andretti and Phil Hill, have won the World Drivers' Championship.

There is currently a single American driver on the grid, Logan Sargent.

## Why the End of La La Land Isn't Sad

By Ella Weber

If you know me, you may know that I am a huge fan of the 2016 movie musical La La Land, directed by Damien Chazelle.

There are many aspects about the film that make it exceptional, such as the gorgeous soundtrack by Benj Pasek, Justin Paul, and Justin Hurwitz. There's Emma Stone and Ryan Gosling's acting, and the beautiful cinematography of Los Angeles.

My absolute favorite part of the movie, however, is the meaningful ending. Several times in my life, I have talked to a friend about my love for this movie, only to have them respond, "but the ending is so sad!" Well, I'm here to tell you why it's not.

Audiences feel sad that the couple breaks up in the end, but I don't agree, due to something I call the "double movie theory." I believe that this movie is not one movie but two.

The first movie is about romance; the second movie is about achieving your goals. The first movie ends when Stone and Gosling's characters, Mia and Sebastian, have their first kiss in the planetarium.

The film then proceeds to do something called an "iris out," where the screen blackens by closing into a black circle. Right after, the movie opens up with a circle, an "iris in," on Mia writing her one-woman play. From this point forward, the love story deteriorates.

A chief difference between the two movies in La La Land that proves their independence is the incorporation of the music. In the first movie, the characters dance in the streets, completely unaware that they are singing in the middle of traffic. In the second movie, the characters only sing in appropriate situations, such as at the piano in the apartment. The first movie is a musical; the second is a movie with music.

Once La La Land is understood as two distinct storylines, the ending of the movie is no longer sad.

Since the first movie ends with the couple together and the second ends with them succeeding, the characters fulfilled their desires each time.

To me, there is nothing sad about this conclusion. I feel that this movie shows that romance is not the end game for everyone. Mia and Sebastian chose their careers over each other because success made them the most happy.

I appreciate that La La Land portrays a different angle than many romantic Hollywood films. Two extremely talented people moved forward with their careers instead of their relationship, and the best part: they are happy!

This film represents the epitome of Hollywood. Hollywood means doing whatever it takes to succeed and to make it in the industry – just like the meaning of La La Land. The characters are in beautiful Los Angeles, struggling to make ends meet, but the second their opportunity comes, they take it.

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