

The Rookery

The School Without Walls Student Newspaper

Vol IX No. III

Rook-er-y (n.): A colony of penguins

www.swwrookery.com

DECEMBER 2024

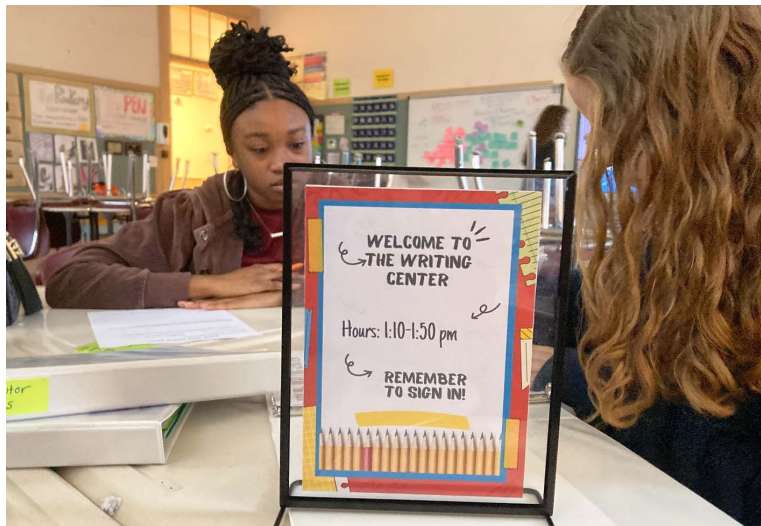


PHOTO BY ZOE FISHER

WRITE, RINSE, REPEAT - Upperclassmen tutors support freshmen at newly introduced writing center

Walls Writing Center Debuts

Peyton Chada ('28)
Staff Writer

This school year, humanities teacher Laura Webster founded the Student Writing Center, held in Room 127, which began offering students services on December 2. The Student Writing Center, run by juniors and seniors at the School Without Walls, aims to assist the freshman class in humanities-based activities.

As part of running the center, seniors and juniors have the

primary responsibility of offering input and guiding questions in order to support students in any phase of the writing process. Tutors will also earn community service hours and can mention their participation on college applications. Senior Esmé Takacs ('25) when addressing her possible involvement in the writing center said, "That resource could've helped me get better at writing when I

see WRITING on page 2

Senior Project Overhauled to Ease Workload

Gabi Goldberg ('25)
Staff Writer

Senior Project, a cornerstone of the School Without Walls curriculum, underwent significant changes in advance of the 2024-2025 school year aimed at both easing the burden on seniors juggling college applications and developing students' argumentative skills. The structural changes, including a summer break from project work and the removal of the mentor requirement, were designed to streamline the process and better accommodate students' busy schedules. However, the adjustments also brought new challenges, particularly with deadlines coinciding with college applications.

According to the School Without Walls website, senior project serves as the "culmination of academic experiences at School Without Walls," which is why it's taken in the final year. This sequential approach appears to be effective. Xavier Miller ('25) noted, "We've been doing



A student works on a research project - photo via Unsplash

this stuff for all four years." Beginning in freshman year with introductory research assignments, students progress through sophomore speeches and the AP Language and Composition course, laying the groundwork for the senior paper, presentation, and product.

Changes to the program have been frequent in recent school years. In the 2020-2021 school year, the curriculum was revised to emphasize academic skills and incorporate scaffolding to strengthen students' research abilities. The changes also ensured that all students had equitable access to feedback and resources. Then, the curriculum was overhauled again in advance of the 2024-25 school year.

A significant shift came this year when the class transitioned from a research-focused project to one centered on argumentative writing.

see PROJECT on page 4

Standardized Testing Scores Once Again Required

Siena Lenerz ('28)
Staff Writer

As applications roll into different colleges nationwide, some seniors are struck by a sudden change in requirements for certain schools. After a major shift to test-optional policies during the pandemic,

this year some colleges are returning to test-mandatory policies, prompting both relief and worry from Walls students. The colleges with these requirements include MIT, Harvard, Yale, Brown, and Dartmouth. 122 other colleges have stated they will return to doing so in the 2025-26 admissions cycle.

Colleges that have reintroduced test-required policies have explained that test scores "help admissions officers evaluate a student in context and predict first-year college grades," according to the University of Arizona. Dartmouth President Sian Leah Beilock stated that

"Standardized test scores are an important predictor of a student's success in Dartmouth's curriculum, and this is true regardless of a student's background or family income."

Students have had mixed reactions to the broad reintroduction of test requirements. Some students

worry that policies that require test scores cause outsized focus on one number. Mae Tuggle ('26) argued that "Because there are so many factors that go into testing, I don't think it's all about how much you know or how smart you are, so tests

see TESTING on page 5

Walls to Administer More Field Trips, but How?

Bayla Halper ('28)
Staff Writer

If you search School Without Walls on your average commercial search engine, the SWW DC Gov. school profile will be one of the first things you find. It provides an overview of the school, a brief history, and several achievements. It concludes this description by saying that Walls uses "the city and the world as a classroom for students."

SWW plans to enforce that thinking this year with an increased number of field trips

and guest speakers in their classes. One field trip or guest speaker per semester, per class, to be exact. The hope is that by allowing students to study in real-world settings, they will grow academically, while also being exposed to learning done outside the classroom.

"Students should have meaningful opportunities to connect what they're doing outside of class [to the real world]." Said Adam Vrooman, who was a teacher representative at the LSAT (Local School Advisory Team) meeting where this objective

was discussed.

He explained that "the goal of guest speakers is to try to ensure that students have plenty of real world connections and opportunities to make significant parallels between what they're learning in class and experts in the field". Mr. Vrooman additionally added that this could help students "gain a more diverse perspective of a topic."

Given that SWW is situated in a hub of museums and monuments, this should,

see FIELD TRIPS on page 6

Walls Hosts First Open Mic Talent Show

Mila Appelbaum ('28)
Staff Writer

Walls students have always demonstrated their talents through performances in shows and concerts. This year has given students another opportunity: a Talent Show. On Thursday, Oct 24, students had their first opportunity to showcase their skills in an open mic event, where they presented poetry, guitar playing, singing, rapping, monologues, and more.

Simone Abiy ('28) hosted the open mic because she

"wanted to try out public speaking." She shared, "At first I was nervous, but then it was fun because the audience was engaging."

Liv Tyndall, the new Theater department director and the organizer of the Talent Show, explained that the open mic serves as a place for students to test out or showcase creative work they've been developing. "This is a great place for that because there are no stakes besides getting up and having fun with everyone."

A standout performance, according to Ms. Tyndall, was

see TALENT on page 2

10 Years Later, Grace Carter Revisits Time at Walls

Tyne McNamara ('28)
Staff Writer

We know Walls as it is today, but students in the building now will never know what Walls was like a decade ago. However, the experiences of alumni can offer a better understanding of what Walls was like and how it shaped one woman in particular: Grace Carter, a member of the Class of 2015.

Carter is currently a third-year PhD student at the University of San Diego, studying Biomedical Science. Before pursuing her PhD, she earned her bachelor's degree from Elon University (no association with Elon Musk, as she pointed out).

Carter largely attributed her experience at Walls to opening her eyes to possibilities in science and, more broadly, her career path.

Much of what Grace reflected on about her time at Walls may still ring true for students today. For example, Grace and her friends' favorite breakfast and lunch spot was the deli across the street. In her words, "That place probably took thousands of cumulative dollars from me." Another similarity she mentioned was the strong music department. Grace spoke about the popularity of choir, orchestra, and stage band. She herself was one of the singers and recalled her time in it as "really fun." She also reflected on her ensemble's

success, saying, "I would like to think we were pretty good. We did win an award when I was in it at Disney World, so that was pretty cool."

Still, much has changed in ten years. For instance, the sheer number and variety of clubs were not as prominent back then. Speaking about the club fair, she reacted to the amount of clubs now by commenting, "People had clubs, but I wouldn't say that you would be in, like, yeah, five clubs. That would be pretty, I think, rare."

In addition to the increase in clubs, there have been some faculty changes over the years. When asked about a favorite teacher, Carter answered, "Mrs. Blessing, who was also my crew

coach, was amazing. [...] That class, I remember, was so awesome. She just got me really excited about [history]." Today, instead of teaching history, you might catch Mrs. Blessing teaching AP Psychology at Walls.

The difference a decade makes for a school is both significant and fleeting, but it does make one wonder—what will the Walls we know today look like ten years from now? •



PHOTO BY KIM WALKER VIA ELON UNIVERSITY

LOOKING BACK - Alumnus Grace Carter reflects on SWW Experience

Humanities Department, 10 Sophomores Revive England Trip Tradition

Georgia Murphy ('26)
Staff Writer

Despite living in the nation's capital, students at School Without Walls often forget their role as global citizens. Washington, DC, is partnered with 15 sister cities, including Sunderland in the UK—its only non-capital sister city. After years of student exchanges with Sunderland, the program was discontinued in 2014. Over fall break, ten sophomores revived this iconic tradition.

Chaperoned by humanities teachers Shakir Ghazi and Laura Webster, the students spent eight days in Sunderland and three days in the Lake

District. In April 2024, ten British students will travel to DC and stay with their Penguin counterparts.

Most participants first heard about the program in late winter of their freshman year. Ms. Webster promoted the opportunity to her freshman classes and arranged for an announcement to be read over the loudspeaker.

Interest in the trip was high. Sam Broquard ('27) recalled, "I was really excited about the fact that it was an exchange program where I [could] go to school in England [and] bring kids back." Many students attended an interest meeting later that week.

Due to the demand, Mr. Ghazi established an admis-

sions process. Applicants first filled out a form to express interest, including a short essay on why they wanted to go to England. Next, they completed a survey assessing decision-making skills and moral reasoning. The chaperones then selected ten students.

After being accepted, students submitted information about their living situations and family dynamics to facilitate pairing with British exchange students. Once the logistics—such as payment and itinerary—were finalized, the group fundraised to help cover costs initially paid out-of-pocket.

Plans proceeded smoothly until July, when DCPS announced changes to its inter-

national travel policy. The trip faced potential postponement or cancellation. Ultimately, DCPS approved the trip but required students to stay in a hotel rather than with their exchange partners.

To prepare, the group met every Thursday morning to build camaraderie. Alex Gonzalez-Shalla ('27) shared, "[Mr. Ghazi] wanted us to bond more as a team."

Upon landing at 6:00 a.m. London time (1:00 a.m. DC time), the group embarked on a three-hour walking tour of London, carrying their luggage the entire time. Broquard remarked, "It was cool to see London...but it was exhausting."

In Sunderland, the group stayed at the budget-friendly Magnum Hotel near the River

Wear. Gonzalez-Shalla described it as "nice" despite its simplicity, and many students echoed this sentiment, noting they were just happy to be together.

The students spent eight days in Sunderland, embarking on a different excursion each day. Highlights included a visit to Edinburgh, where Ms. Webster admired the "beautiful" scenery and a double rainbow, and Durham, where students explored the Cathedral of Cuthbert and the historic castle. Broquard noted, "It was a good mix of learning and fun."

During this time, students also met their British counterparts. Gonzalez-Shalla

see ENGLAND on page 5

Talent Showcase

from page 1

Tomas Parodi's rendition of "Psycho Killer" by Talking Heads. "It's like a weird vibe to perform at an open mic, and I had so much respect for him getting up there and doing that. It was really cool. I really liked how he chose that song, got up there, and did it, and led the way."

At the open mic, several scheduled performers didn't show up, leaving empty spots that were, in the spirit of community and bravery, filled with spur-of-the-moment karaoke performances. Ms.

Tyndall mentioned, "We had a karaoke phenomenon at the last one, which was great and really cool, and we can totally make a venue for that, but we would love [more] prepared performances."

Some of the impromptu performances included Evelyn Webster's ('28) surprise performance of "Love Is An Open Door" from Frozen. She said, "The audience was very supportive and made me feel uplifted and positive about the Walls community." Vivian Astmann ('28) performed a ChatGPT-generated rap about being a freshman. She decided to perform after realizing there were open spots, explaining, "No one else was going, so I took initiative and decided to just do it, to make memories."

The plan is to continue the open mic as a monthly event,

with performances scheduled for a Thursday or Friday during the last two weeks of every month.

Ms. Tyndall noted, "Unofficially, [Mr. Mathews and I] were thinking we might have a showcase of some kind at the end of the school year." This showcase would feature the best acts from the open mic, formatted like a talent show.

Ms. Tyndall closed by emphasizing the value of the open mic space: "It's a really great space to try things you might be scared to try. It's not just for students to make a fool of themselves; it's also for teachers. See what others can do at this school and show what you can do yourself. So I encourage people to sign up!"

Writing Center

from page 1

was a freshman and I think it's a great opportunity now." She continued, "What interests me is finding various resources that could help people improve upon what they already know when it comes to writing."

Freshmen will receive feedback on their writing, which are accepted at any stage of completion, to tutoring sessions. Over the course of the school year, students will work on improving their writing and building connections with upperclassmen.

Regarding the program, Webster noted, "The peer tutor will lead you through a

conversation that helps you give feedback on your own writing." This approach may appeal to students, as tutors focus on guidance rather than harsh criticism. Students interested in becoming tutors can discuss training opportunities with Webster.

The Writing Center will be open before school and during lunch. Several juniors and seniors have already volunteered to assist freshmen students. However, the Writing Center is still accepting volunteers and will continue to do so throughout the school year. To become a tutor, students should visit Laura Webster in Room 127 for further training. This opportunity benefits both upperclassmen and freshmen, providing roles as tutors and mentees. •

Students Rave over CHROMAKOPIA

Cecile Nougá-Ngog ('28)
Staff Writer

On Oct. 28, Tyler Gregory Okonma, professionally known as “Tyler, The Creator”, released his seventh studio album, CHROMAKOPIA. The album, a combination of R&B, jazz, and hip-hop, featured Daniel Caesar, Teezo Touchdown, GloRilla, Sexxy Red, Lil Wayne, Latoiya Williams, ScHoolboy Q, Santigold, Lola Young, and DoeChii. Ada Eversmann ('28) noted, “I loved the addition of GloRilla and Sexxy Red. They sounded really good with Tyler’s style of music.”

The album, whose title was likely a reference to a Greek root connoting color of varying purity and intensity, had fourteen songs in which Okonma explored the responsibilities and expectations of getting older, his growing fame, and his changing perception of his parents. A notable throughline throughout is Okonma’s reflection on his childhood, especially his mom Bonita Smith’s influence on him as he entered adulthood. Eversmann ('28) said, “I think the main theme definitely has to do with his mother, who is the narrator in the back of a lot of the songs, giving him advice. While he doesn’t directly answer her in his songs, he shows the influence that she has had on his life.

In Like Him, the twelfth track on the album, Okonma explores his changing perception of his father. Ava



PHOTO BY JESSIE MOSS

RECORD LISTENING - Tyler, The Creator sends waves through Walls

Barcelona ('25) explained, “Like Him was written after Tyler realized his father, whom he’d hated for not being in his life, actually wanted to be in his life the whole time. The song is emotionally charged and honestly felt really vulnerable, which made it hit harder for me.” Eversmann added, “My dad has been present my whole life, but I still feel like I can really feel his emotions in his songs, even though I haven’t experienced what he has.”

Favorite tracks among students included Noid, Darling, I, Judge Judy, Hey Jane, and Take Your Mask Off. An anonymous senior noted that, “Noid stood out for how different it is from other Tyler work. The sample of the Zambian band was so cool and worked very well.” Barcelona ('25) added, “I loved Noid on my first listen. The sample was fantastic, and the guitar was a really interesting departure from

his usual sound. Barcelona further noted that “Judge Judy and Hey Jane took me a little bit to get into, but I think the storylines in both were well-fleshed-out—I think Tyler portrayed his relationships with women in a way you don’t often see with more traditional rap artists.” Jett Morad-McCoy ('26) said, “Take Your Mask Off was probably the best lyrically.”

Following the resoundingly successful article, students are excited to see more from Okonma. Eversmann explained, “I want to hear more of his storytelling, which I think he’s really good at,” Eversmann’s words reflected a common sentiment. Finally, Barcelona expressed, “I don’t know what direction he’ll go next, but he always found a way to evolve, so I’m interested to see.”

If you liked the album, Tyler, The Creator, was coming to the Capital One Arena on April 1, 2025, to perform CHROMAKOPIA—so snag tickets while you can! •

Your Guide To Holiday Shopping in 2024

Juliet Grillot ('28)
Annabel Holt ('28)
Staff Writers

In DC, residents celebrate a variety of holidays during this season. While each holiday has unique traditions, they all involve gift shopping. School Without Walls, with its diverse community, is a rich source of holiday shopping recommendations to make the season’s festivities enjoyable—and manageable.

Christmas, celebrated by many SWW students, drives the bulk of holiday shopping, from gifts for family and friends to decorations. One student, Sophie Fetsch ('26), explained, “Christmas encourages me to buy a lot of stuff for friends, family, myself because of the sales, and some of the kids I babysit.” She shops at local hubs

like Georgetown, Target, and Tysons Corner, which offer the variety needed for selecting gifts across age groups and interests. Fetsch estimates her holiday spending reaches around \$1,000, and she keeps an eye out for sales and promo codes to make the most of her budget.

For a community-focused shopping experience, Evelyn Webster ('28) recommends the Brent Elementary School Holiday Sale, which offers wreaths, Christmas trees, dreidels, and hot cocoa. Supporting local fundraisers like these can benefit both the community and the shopper’s holiday spirit.

For those in search of Christmas trees and wreaths, stores like The Home Depot,

see HOLIDAY on page 6

Advisory Mindfulness

Matilda Bliss ('28)
Staff Writer

This year, School Without Walls has implemented a mandatory 10 minutes of mindfulness at the beginning of advisory. Students sit and note their day, taking a breath and a moment to think. It can take a weight off their shoulders for a moment and give them an opportunity to take a moment for themselves. Still, students have varying opinions on this change.

Maggie Schonebaum ('28) expressed her aversion to this new system of tracking mental wellbeing, “I don’t think it’s helpful. We already don’t have a lot of time to work on things so I feel like it should be optional.”

Marlie McCoy ('27), has a similar perspective, “I don’t like

see MINDFULNESS on page 6



PHOTO VIA DCPS

DISTRICT RECOGNITION - DCPS announces Townsend as teacher of the year

Jazzmyne Townsend, DCPS Teacher of the Year, Impresses and Inspires

Audrey Poinboeuf ('28)
Staff Writer

This Oct. 3, Jazzmyne Townsend was honored with the DCPS Teacher of the Year award. Townsend, now a K-5 ELA instructional coach at Stanton Elementary, has been teaching since 2010.

Townsend was surprised with the award at a National Book Month Celebration ceremony at Stanton Elementary. Reflecting on the moment, she explained, “I knew that I was a finalist for the award but did not know that I had actually won... I was overcome with emotions, joy, excitement, and lots of happy tears.” The award, presented by Mayor Muriel Bowser, included a \$7,500 cash prize.

The honor, awarded by the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE), is given to a teacher making exceptional contributions to student success both inside and outside the classroom. Mayor Bowser, Interim State Superintendent Dr. Antoinette S. Mitchell, and DCPS Chancellor Lewis D. Ferebee presented Townsend with the award at the ceremony.

Winners of DCPS excellence in teaching awards, like Townsend, are honored annually at the Standing Ovation for DC Public Schools. No Walls faculty has been honored at the event since 2020, when principal Syliva Isaac received recognition. Considering the context of high esteem in which Walls faculty are generally held within DCPS, Townsend’s award may seem all the more impressive.

In addition to her teaching career, which included positions at Randle Highlands Elementary and Friendship Public Charter School, Townsend founded “My Sister’s Keeper” at Randle Highlands. This program supports girls in building friendships, growing in

confidence, and developing life skills. Her work has helped girls in and out of the classroom, fostering a strong sense of community.

Townsend relishes her time in the classroom, continually building relationships with students. “Over the last 16 years,” she said, “I have had some of the most amazing and rewarding experiences being a classroom teacher... and am honored to have built relationships with the most amazing students and their families.”

Her teaching style prioritizes individual connections with students and staff, focusing on small-group instruction and supporting her colleagues. She notes that she also enjoys engaging with students informally, such as at recess.

Ms. Townsend has made an exceptional impact at every school where she’s taught, both within DCPS and beyond, as her dedication to meeting students’ needs is reflected in programs like “My Sister’s Keeper.” She credits her success to the students and colleagues around her, saying, “I get to learn with the best students in the world.” She particularly values the Stanton community, describing it as a place where students and teachers thrive together.

In addition to teaching, Townsend is also the author of the children’s book Hattie Leads the Way, inspired by the life of Harriet Tubman. The book introduces young Hattie, a character based on Tubman, who learns resilience and courage in the face of challenges. When creating this story, Townsend aimed to present Tubman’s legacy in a way that young students could understand and relate to. Inspired by Townsend’s example and writing process, two of her students have since published books of their own.

Walls students interested in nominating a teacher or faculty member who has left a similar impression on them for an Excellence in Teaching award can do so via the DC Ed Fund website. •

Delectable & Devious Deli Endeavors

Leah Levy ('25)
Eve Reborn ('25)
Theo Weller ('25)
Senior and Puzzle Editor
Senior Editor
Senior Editor

When most Walls students visit the deli, they purchase one of just a few options. Maybe a bacon egg and cheese, Sun Chips, or Doritos. However, as Walls students looking to take the red pill and stand out from the crowd, we found it our journalistic duty to explore some of the most obscure items up for purchase at the deli. Putting our taste buds on the line, here are our takes on the most random snacks we could find at the deli.

Shrimp Crackers

Leah: As soon as the bag was opened, the vile smell of artificial shrimp clouded around us. The chips had an ideal crunchy texture, but the fishy taste was very unnatural. The crackers had dark red spots that, along with the overall taste, were definitely off putting.

Eve: As someone who doesn't eat seafood, I wasn't sure what to expect from this random snack. Although I can't tell you whether or not it tasted

like shrimp, I can say it did not taste as bad as it smelled. The flavor was relatively mild but still well-flavored.

Theo: If it weren't for societal food norms, I feel shrimp crackers would be one of the more popular snacks out there. However, there is something jarring about a crunchy, chip-like snack having a seafood taste. Shrimp crackers are a great snack, but I'm not sure if American society is ready.

Taco Corn Nuts

Leah: These well-seasoned corn nuts tasted exactly like white people taco night. They're tiny, but packed with flavor. I liked them a lot more than I thought I would.

Eve: The seasoning of these was accurate to the taco labeling and added a nice flavor. However, the corn was a little dry for my preference and by the time I finished chewing the taco flavoring had long disappeared.

Theo: Corn nuts are my value pick. For \$2.29, corn nuts offer a similar taste to the more widely-known Doritos and the bag is filled to the brim, making them a great way to fill the end

of the lunch period. Corn nuts are disturbingly hard, though, so weak-toothed consumers should exercise caution.

Aloe Mango Drink

Leah: While the flavor of mango overpowered any taste of aloe, this drink was very refreshing for an 80 degree November afternoon. The aloe pulp created a chunky texture for this otherwise smooth drink, but if you don't mind pulp then you will enjoy this!

Eve: Despite the large aloe label on the front, aloe did not have much presence in the drink except for the occasional chunk of aloe, which I can't say I was a fan of texture-wise. The mango flavor overpowered the drink which if you're a mango lover like myself made the drink quite enjoyable despite its misleading packaging.

Theo: The reports of chunky pulp motivated me to abstain from consumption.

Chunky

Leah: Raisins and peanuts are two of my least favorite food groups ever. I appreciate that they did not completely overpower the chocolate, but I

could not get over both raisins and peanuts being in this one chocolate bar. Unless you're old or actually eat stuff other than the chocolate in your trail mix, I guess you might like Chunky bars.

Eve: Although these chunky chocolates weren't too bad they by no means would be my chocolate of choice when walking into the deli. I couldn't taste much raisin or peanuts which allowed me to like it better, however the chocolate had a very heavy creamy texture that may be preferred by some but was not necessarily my favorite.

Theo: It is safe to say I will not be purchasing chunky chocolates. The texture is synonymous with the name: chunky. As if the mushy feel of the chocolate wasn't bad enough, the raisins make the "treat" a true chore to eat.

Oreo Popcorn

Leah: This was the perfect sweet and salty combination. Despite the lack of actual oreo flavor, I thought that these had a good ratio of popcorn to icing/frosting/oreo topping. I didn't get any of the real oreo pieces that are advertised for

this product, but this is a simple snack that you can't really go wrong with.

Eve: Of all the snacks we tried this was higher up in the ranking, however, it didn't live up to my expectations. The snack was very sweet and had a somewhat weird appearance. Although, it did offer a nice balance of salty and sweet with a little crunch.

Theo: This one was intriguing but underwhelming. The chocolate-popcorn combo does have potential, but neither the chocolate—which loosely resembles animal droppings—or popcorn's taste was strong enough to make this a standout. The popcorn was also undeniably stale, but that may depend on the luck of which bag is purchased.

Sardines

Theo: Abandoned by my colleagues, I was forced to try the sardines alone. I was not thrilled to find that the tin was about 50% liquid and 50% sardines, but was surprised by the taste. It was quite similar to shrimp or shellfish. At the very least, walking out of the deli with a tin of sardines in your hand will impress your peers and establish you as a veteran Walls student. •

LifeSmarts Club Empowers with Practical Trivia

Rhea Powell ('28)
Staff Writer

LifeSmarts, a trivia club that has been present at Walls for around three years is getting a revamp. Now led by Ishaan Pabla, an SWW alumnus who graduated in 2024, the club aims to help students become better educated consumers while offering rewards and benefits along the way. The trivia includes a variety of question types with different time limits for who can answer and when.

LifeSmarts was created to teach students how to be savvy consumers in a fun and engaging way. Free for middle schools and high schools across the country, as well as internationally, LifeSmarts is part of the National Consumers League, an advocacy organization dedicated to educating consumers, advocating for their interests, and building alliances to ensure their voices are heard. Students focus on five key areas of research and questioning: Consumer rights and responsibilities, the environment, health and safety, personal finance, and

technology. According to the LifeSmarts homepage, "The goal of LifeSmarts is to create consumer-savvy young people who will be well-equipped for adult life in today's complex, global marketplace." The program encourages students to learn enthusiastically about these topics by offering competitions with rewards.

Students meet on Wednesdays after school to learn and practice until 4:45 PM in room 224. Coaches receive free resources from LifeSmarts, which include quizzes, videos, retired competition questions, vocabulary lists, group activities, and questions of the day. Students use these resources to coach themselves. Members practice and learn facts about the five key areas, then participate in online trivia competitions. High-scoring students may have the opportunity to travel and participate in larger-scale trivia events.

Ana Martinez, a Spanish teacher at School Without Walls and the current sponsor of LifeSmarts (having recently taken over from Kristen Kelly), believes the program offers great value to students. She

explained, "All the questions asked are really interesting because students will use this information in their lives. They're not questions that don't mean anything. They're all practical, like, 'After how many miles should you change your oil in a car?'"

Members begin with online trivia competitions and move on to district or state levels. Winning teams advance to the LifeSmarts Championships. This is where it gets interesting: the organization pairs teams with other schools, creating "brother" or "sister" teams. Martinez explained, "You stick with them just for the competition and do some challenges together, but then you compete on your own with your own team." The program offers a unique chance to forge lasting friendships.

Beyond the practical benefits, LifeSmarts provides students with valuable awards and opportunities including scholarships, internships, and job opportunities. LifeSmarts club is seeking new members. Interested students can seek more information from Ms. Martinez. •

Project

from page 1

writing. Previously, students could engage in data collection and STEM research. However, the updated curriculum emphasizes persuasion and rhetoric. While students still learn how to write a research paper, opportunities for hands-on research are limited unless they take the AP Seminar/AP Research track.

This shift has sparked some discontent among students whose older siblings had a different experience. Angelina Ramirez ('25) observed, "The class has changed a lot of the guidelines. For my sister, it was a research paper, but now it's an argumentative paper."

The additional time also gave students a chance to relax before the demanding fall semester. With most seniors applying to at least one school early—and many submitting multiple early applications—deadlines ranged from October 15 to November 15, with the majority due on November 1.

However, the summer break led to a delayed start for the senior project. In prior years, students began the school year with a topic and annotated bibliography in hand. This year, students spent the first few weeks reviewing research basics and didn't start writing

their papers until October.

The timing of assignments created additional stress. The annotated bibliography was due on October 9, the paper outline on October 15 (coinciding with deadlines for UNC-Chapel Hill and UT-Austin), and the first five pages a week later. The rapid pace of assignments, combined with the looming college deadlines, intensified the pressure.

Another notable change was the removal of the mentor requirement. In the past, students had to find an expert in their chosen field to provide guidance. This policy faced criticism due to mentors being "unreliable" or failing to "adequately assist students." Most seniors welcomed the change, appreciating the flexibility. "You can still get a mentor if you want one, but now it isn't required," noted one anonymous student.

Overall, the changes have been met with a positive response. Students appreciated the summer break and have found the class manageable. "It's not that hard," remarked Ian Springer ('25), noting that staying on top of assignments is key. Sapp agreed, comparing this year's experience favorably to her sister's, saying, "She seemed more stressed last year than seniors are now." The latest overhaul appears to be a step in the right direction. •

England

from page 2

admitted, “We were worried [the British kids] might be mean...but they were really nice.” Greenhalgh observed an uncanny resemblance between the American and British pairs, describing them as “twins” in appearance and personality.

One memorable night, the group joined their British counterparts for a beach bonfire. Gonzalez-Shalla reflected, “It was [nice] just getting to know them.” Students also attended classes at Monkwearmouth Academy, where they encoun-

tered playful stereotypes. Greenhalgh said, “[They were] yelling stereotypical American stuff like ‘give me your lunch money’ or ‘say soccer.’”

After their time in Sunderland, the group traveled to the Lake District, a national park in northwest England. Ms. Webster described the area as having “gorgeous, classic British hillsides [with] sheep everywhere.” The group used this time to decompress and bond in a quieter setting.

Their final days were spent at the Lakes Hostel near the national park. For

many, this was a highlight of the trip. Gonzalez-Shalla, an only child, shared, “[It was like a] family moment for me...I’ve always wanted siblings, and...for those three days, it felt like I had some.”

Participants left the trip with stronger connections to one another. Broquard remarked, “It was great to bond...I still see them in the hallways, but I miss having that constant group.” Greenhalgh agreed, noting, “It was nice to get to know people I didn’t normally interact with.”



PHOTO BY ALEX GONZALEZ SHALLA

WALLS TO WESTMINSTER - students pose for a photo in London

Standardized Testing

from page 1

aren’t always able to show your full abilities.” Tuggle added that, “Being test-optional isn’t harming anyone, because it still allows students to submit their scores. Overall, I think it’s harmful to the student population.” Kailas Campen (‘25) agreed, “I think the change will negatively affect people who aren’t great at standardized tests, and I hope schools will place less weight on it than they have in the past.”

Students have spoken about the added pressure that the requirement gives them. Now, their SAT score will be compared to the score of everyone who applies to that college, not just those who choose to submit it. Wesley Freed (‘25) said, “It adds a lot of pressure to be in that top 50th percentile,

because at that point, getting an above average score on the SAT is basically a requirement.” Adding in a required SAT score puts more pressure on students to perform well, and not all students are good test takers. This is a major issue for many students, with academic skills outside those tested, and the SAT is known to favor majority white, educated students with families who have been to college, according to the NEA.

Other members of the staff and student population at Walls pointed out the good that can come from this change. Soren Nguyen, (‘27), said “I think it will be good for a lot of people, because the SAT is a test, and it’s not as subjective as other parts of college applications,

like essays.” There is data to support this. David Leonhart, from the New York Times, says, “Research has increasingly shown that standardized test scores contain real information, helping to predict college grades, chances of graduation and post-college success.” With grade inflation, standardized test scores can be an equalizer to help admissions officers accurately predict how a student can handle the workload at their university. Furthermore, the article explained, researchers say “test scores can be particularly helpful in identifying lower-income students and underrepresented minorities who will thrive.”

The new test requirements are also viewed as a positive

change from some members of the faculty. Kathryn Moore, the freshman counselor, says “Test scores are more predictive of a student’s future success in college than even high school grades, which is one of the main motivators for colleges to return to test scores.”

On the other hand, some teachers agree with students’ aversion to test requirements. Laura Webster, a humanities teacher, pointed to the fact that there are vast inequalities when it comes to the accessibility of testing. She said, “I do not necessarily think that it is the best way to capture a student’s potential and attitude for higher education.” She added, “There’s going to be biases. The better background knowledge you have, the

better reading skills, so it is going to be essentially luck based on the exam.”

The SAT is not the best way of measuring academics, and with the reinstated requirements, many may find themselves in a situation where they have to submit something not necessarily reflective of themselves as a student. However, many understand why the colleges are implementing this. Webster argues, “[Colleges] want to standardize and have a sense of what an ‘A’ means in one school versus the other, and there is a lot of grade inflation in schools.” She finishes, “I think it will really depend on how they actually use the SAT as a measure in deciding between applicants.”

Electric Car Club Zooms Into the Future

Matilda Bliss (‘28)
Rebecca Frost (‘28)
Staff Writer

Students across DC are looking toward the future and exploring ways to keep the Earth healthy. At School Without Walls, the electric car club allows students to explore sustainable technology, engineering, and teamwork, all while advocating for green energy solutions.

DCPS electric car clubs aim to combine hands-on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education with real-world sustainability applications. As climate change awareness grows and the automotive industry transitions toward greener technologies, Anthony Mundle (‘25) shared his opinion, stating, “These clubs are an opportunity to prepare students for careers in automo-

tive construction and adjacent engineering fields.” He added, “This is the future of transportation, and it’s exciting to watch other students engage with these emerging technologies. We aren’t just learning; we’re actively contributing to solutions for real-world problems.”

Each June, electric car clubs from schools across the district line up their DIY cars to race. Their goal is to complete as many laps as possible in the shortest span of time. Students have the chance to put their hard work to the test in races, competing against other schools’ electric vehicles. Hofmann shared an anecdote from last year’s competition, saying, “The best part about the competition is seeing our ideas come to life.”

This year, the electric car club is building an entirely new car, drawing from previous experiences. Hofmann provided insight, stating, “This year we



MILES AHEAD - electric car club members work on their latest model

PHOTO BY ZOE FISHER

are building a brand new car out of carbon fiber. It’s a lot of fun, so we’re doing design, development, and building the whole thing.” Gideon added, “Once the car is finished, everyone gets a chance to drive it. The race is structured for driver swaps to make sure ev-

erybody gets that opportunity.”

This club is not limited to those interested in STEM; it also offers a chance for anyone to try something new. Hofmann continued, “We are open to anyone at any level of skill or experience...we just have fun, and you get to drive a car around, even

if you’re a freshman and have never driven a car in your life.”

Students interested in joining should attend meetings after school on Tuesdays and Thursdays in Room 127 and at the loading dock near Commons C.



PHOTO VIA @SWW_GSA ON INSTAGRAM

PROMOTING INCLUSIVITY - The GSA poses for a photo at their first meeting of the year

Revived GSA Seeks to Provide Safe Space

Ronan Shah ('28)
Staff Writer

Walls has revived its Gender-Sexuality Alliance (GSA)! Senior Niamh O'Donovan has relaunched the club after a two year hiatus.

The GSA seeks to provide a welcoming environment for all students, offering opportunities to connect with peers while also advocating for the changes they want to see in the school community.

GSA clubs, which started over 30 years ago, were created to be safe havens, offering LGBTQ+ students a supportive and affirming space in the school environment.

Today, GSA clubs continue to provide such spaces for students of all identities, while also encouraging advocacy to ensure everyone feels safe and valued in their schools.

O'Donovan ('25) founded the club because it didn't exist when they were a freshman and shared, "I really think it could have helped." They also wanted to "create a system for a club that could last after I graduated."

Co-President Emonn Bowie ('28) said, "GSA creates a community where students can feel safe and comfortable. I love the activities, and I really like the people in GSA—they're nice and fun to be around."

Members of the GSA enjoy community-building ac-

tivities, such as trivia and Pictionary, which help students relax, make friends, and bond in a comfortable environment. Camille Metzler ('28) said the GSA provides LGBTQ+ students with "a community and a safe space," while Abby Dannenberg ('28) shared, "It's a great way to unwind after a long week with fun activities and bonding games."

"We can create the change we want to see at our school," O'Donovan explained. They have many goals for the GSA, mostly centered around advocating for the LGBTQ+ community at SWW.

Ultimately, O'Donovan says, "I wanted to benefit our LGBTQ+ students."

Walls Navigates Field Trips

from page 1

hypothetically, be relatively and realistically achievable.

Even so, there are unexpected ways teachers could follow the guideline, without having students leave from, or someone come to, the classroom.

Pre-recorded speeches, TED Talks, connection via email, video submissions, and virtual field trips are all possibilities that fit within the loose guideline. However, not all students are thrilled about this possibility.

"I don't think that things such as virtual field trips or TED talks are the same as a traditional field trip." Said Emmon Bowie ('28) "I don't think they have as significant of an impact on students."

Although the idea of a field trip done inside the classroom

may not be as appealing to some students, the consensus regarding the objective is positive.

"Field trips are really fun, and it's nice to get out of the school building," said Audrey Hayes ('27). She added that "guest speakers can inspire students on what type of person they want to be when they get older. Field trips can also expose students to inspiration."

Walls students agree that field trips can be a unique experience that prompt further academic and social development. As well as that, the goal of one field trip or guest speaker per semester is completely reasonable. For that majority, we can hope that this idea is implemented, and that we have an increased number of out-of-classroom learning opportunities in the near future.

SWW Responds to 10 Minutes of Mindfulness in Advisory

from page 3

it at all, it doesn't really affect anything but the mindfulness is a waste of time, its stops them from doing work they want to complete, but it doesn't affect you outside of class."

The purpose of the ten minutes is to help students stabilize themselves, reflect on how their week has been going, and become more conscious of who they are and any emotions they may be feeling. During a hectic day, it's a great approach to simply take a moment to themselves and relieve all the pressure. Based on how the students are reacting to the mindfulness, it is clearly a widely disliked and unappreciated policy, maybe even creating

more stress for those who really do need that extra 10 minutes to focus on their priorities.

Chelsea Dargba ('26) said she "noticed that a lot of kids just try to get it done and move on real quick, a lot of kids wish it was just a study period where they can get things done." Even if students take the time to reflect, the period is not truly effective since students are being forced to do it nor do they enjoy the 10 minutes of silence.

Other students were more ambivalent about the new programming. Zahra Dinkins ('25) explained, "It's good and bad in some instances. In that sense there isn't that much of a problem with it."

Generally, teachers seem to split with students on the

subject and see mindfulness programming more positively. Math teacher Carole Philip shared, "I think it's a good thing because it just gives you 10 minutes of nothingness exactly, it just gives you 10 minutes to think, sit, or chill." So through her eyes, these 10 minutes are really influential to your mood, it gives you a moment to breathe through the noise and just focus on yourself.

Among students, the sentiment remains that it's a lot to ask 600 students to all take 10 minutes out of their busy schedules every Monday for mindfulness. Students and faculty can expect continued back and forth on the efficacy of the programming. •

The Rookery's Holiday To-Do List

from page 3

Lowe's, and Ace Hardware offer ample options, as do Meadows Farms in Falls Church, VA, and North Star Christmas Trees in Beltsville, MD.

Hanukkah, another holiday celebrated around this time, is a Jewish holiday that is celebrated for eight days and eight nights, starting on the 25th day of Kislev in the Hebrew calendar which happens to coincide with Christmas this year. Nadia Kallmer ('26) mentioned that for Hanukkah, she shops primarily in Georgetown at stores like Urban Outfitters and Sephora, where she finds gifts for friends and family. Hanukkah also involves traditional items such as dreidels, menorahs, and

candles. Ida Laitin ('28) noted, "You can get them at any Target or Walmart because it's a pretty popular holiday." Other students mentioned that Rodman's and the Girl Scouts are convenient sources for Hanukkah supplies.

Kwanzaa, a cultural celebration honoring African-American heritage, focuses on family connections and handmade gifts. Craft stores like Michaels, as well as online platforms like Etsy, are popular sources for Kwanzaa gifts, especially those that allow customization and personal touches.

For all holiday shoppers, DC also features special events like the Downtown Holiday Market, open from Nov. 17 to Dec. 23, which offers unique gifts and

treats, as well as Enchant at Nats Park, running from Nov. 24 to Dec. 31. Enchant includes ice skating, a Santa meet-and-greet, and a market with an array of holiday items.

Finally, managing the costs of holiday shopping can be crucial. Apps like Honey, Rakuten, and Simply Codes can help shoppers find promo codes and discounts. These tools can make holiday shopping more affordable and help balance thoughtful giving with financial responsibility.

Whether you celebrate Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, or any other holiday, DC has a wealth of stores and events to help you complete your shopping and enjoy the season. Happy Holidays, SWW! •

Walls Basketball Teams Stay Optimistic

Nadia Kallmer ('27)
Staff Writer

Being an athlete at Walls doesn't come without challenges. The basketball players are no exception, facing their own set of obstacles going into the 2024-25 season. As Walls does not have any athletic facilities, members of the two basketball teams have to travel on public transportation to their practices. Last year, the girls' team practiced at Luke C. Moore Alternative High School in Brookland and the boys' team practiced at the old Banneker.

This year, however, there is a different challenge. Both teams have late practices at the newly renovated John Francis School, and will often have to

share the court. To make matters worse, John Francis is only an elementary and middle school, so the court isn't full size for high school.

Girls basketball player Lili Dietz (Power Forward '28) explained that the small practice area makes it hard to work on realistic-game situations. She said, "the main issue with our practice situation is we have to share a small court with the boys which minimizes the things that we can practice, such as fast breaks or full court games."

However, as boys basketball player Isaac Wallsten (Small Forward '27) added, this unique situation has created and

see BASKETBALL on page 7

Girls Soccer Team Builds Success with Bonding Traditions

Rebecca Frost ('28)
Ellie Olesh ('28)
Staff Writers

The School Without Walls offers a variety of sports for all students, but the girls' soccer team stands out for its close-knit atmosphere. The team's commitment to bonding activities has helped maintain a sense of unity and camaraderie through the years, which players believed was essential to their success on and off the field.

Team bonding is crucial for sports teams to reach their full potential. Without it, teams often struggled with underperformance due to a lack of cohesion—a vital component of team sports like soccer. The girls' soccer team at Walls took this seriously and incorporated a variety of bonding traditions, from team sleepovers and lunches to game-day rituals.

Ava Martin ('27), a player on the team, emphasized the importance of these activities, saying, "Yes, it brings the team closer together and builds team chemistry." Fellow player Ruby Summers ('27) added, "Team bonding helps everyone play better together because if you're friendly with people off the field, you work better together on the field."

Beyond performance, team bonding helped players form friendships. Martin agreed, adding that she also loved the annual team sleepovers, which had become a memorable tradition.

These bonding activities included many small but meaningful traditions: post-practice runs, stretching circles, team TikTok videos, "team sisters," paper plate awards,

and team hangouts where the whole team would meet up for fun activities, such as getting boba. One especially beloved tradition was "Secret Psych," where players were assigned a teammate to secretly encourage before a game, leaving notes and treats to lift their spirits. The most famous tradition, Secret Psych, lets each player feel supported before every match.

This year, the team's dedication to bonding activities was rewarded with a special opportunity: as former DCIAA champions, they attended a Spirit team practice. The Spirit is a world-renowned women's professional soccer team featuring players like Trinity Rodman of the U.S. women's national team. This experience was inspiring for the Walls girls' soccer team and a reminder of the heights they could reach.

The team's close bond has undeniably paid off in performance. The Walls girls' soccer team won the DCIAA championship last year and reached the semifinals in this year's DCIAA tournament, as well as the quarterfinals in states. Reflecting on the impact of their bonding traditions, Summers, "Our team is really well-connected because we do our team bonding, and I think that's why we work so well together." Martin agreed, adding, "And that's why we win."

The success of the girls' soccer team has inspired other teams at Walls to incorporate similar bonding traditions. As the girls' soccer season wraps up, they can be proud of their hard work and the strong foundation they've built through these cherished traditions. •

Walls Ultimate Frisbee Places in Two November Tournaments

Zoe Fisher ('25)
Editor-in-Chief

November 2-3 was a big weekend for the School Without Walls ultimate frisbee team. The mixed-gender Flightless Bird Squad split into boy and girl matching teams to attend two tournaments.

Due to an away tournament in Pennsylvania, the numbers for Girrafficus, the local tournament, needed to be higher. So, the girls staying in the DMV combined to attend a college tournament at George Mason University instead. Girls from Washington Latin and Montgomery Blair high schools joined the Walls girls to play in six games throughout the weekend. Every team Walls played against had college students, except for one that consisted of GMU alumni, many of whom are semi-professional players now.

Saturday was challenging for the girls, losing every game by 4-13, 2-13, and 5-13. On Sunday, the girls returned stronger, losing their first game on Universe Point, scoring 5-6. The girls then played the alumni team, losing by 2-14. Their final game was tied until the last five minutes, ending with a score of 7-10. The DMV girls came in last place in the tournament.

Meanwhile, the Walls boys dominated Girrafficus, the local high school tournament. Walls had a slow start, losing their first game 10-12. This was the only game they lost as they scored 15-1, 15-3, 15-4, and 15-4 over the next couple of days, ending the tournament in first place.

Some girls expected to do better in their tournament, as Augusta Kankel ('25) predicted they would "win one or two games." Sadie Greenhalgh ('27) disagreed, saying, "Going into the tournament, I didn't expect us to win, since we were going up against college students." It was challenging to gauge the skill level of the college athletes before the tournament, as some start playing in middle school and others start during college, but it was clear this was a high-level group of players.

Still, many Walls girls agreed this was a valuable learning experience. Greenhalgh shared, "I think we learned a lot more and got a lot better by playing people who were better than us, and I didn't expect that much growth." Over the weekend, the girls worked to learn from their opponents, as Kankel said the tournament "helped me realize some of the skills I need to work on."

The boys also noticed room for improvement in their playing. Theo Mores ('26) said,

"I felt as if we could've won our first match in the tournament." The boys attributed this loss to the team needing to warm up and lacking energy in the morning. Felix Bobowski ('25) explained that the boys' ultimate success was because, "unlike our previous tournaments, we quickly bounced back, building vital team chemistry that propelled us to eventually win the whole thing."

This may be the end of the Fall ultimate frisbee season, but it is not the end of the year for the Walls ultimate team. Many players will continue playing by participating in DC's High School Indoor League from February to April. Players will also start practicing again with Walls in March.

All Walls students are welcome to join the Flightless Bird Squad, regardless of their experience with frisbees. Bobowski pointed out, "Frisbee is one of the few sports that is completely gender-inclusive and as cheap as a pair of cleats." Not only is frisbee easy to pick up, but it is also very welcoming. Kankel added, "frisbee is a great way to make new friends and interact with people you wouldn't otherwise." But most importantly, as Greenhalgh put it, "frisbee is super fun!" •

Connections Without Walls

Leah Levy ('25)
Puzzle Editor

Find nine groups of four SWW-related items that share something in common. While some words may fit into multiple categories, there is only one solution for the entire puzzle.

Category Examples:

Trig Functions: Sine, Cosine, Tangent, Secant

Standardized Tests: PARCC, SAT, NMSQT, ANet

G	HANUKKAH	PAUL	BASKETBALL	21ST	SO
SCHULZ	FR	L2	DEAL	BRIGGS	33
CHEER	MASON'S	KWANZAA	WIZARDS	H	INDOOR TRACK
HARDY	NATS	MCGLENNON	ANDY'S	CAPS	OYSTER-ADAMS
NEW YEAR'S EVE	22ND	42	CHRISTMAS	SR	COMMANDERS
DUKE'S	JR	STUART-HOBSON	POKORAK	SWIM	S2

Basketball Faces Obstacles

from page 2

strengthened connections with other teammates. "That chemistry definitely shows up on the court," said Wallsten. He also noted that facing a challenge different from what any other school they play faces gives them confidence. Furthermore, Isaac said that everyone is grateful for Athletic Director Kip Smith "for constantly finding us practice locations—he works extremely hard to do it, and we recognize his efforts and how much more he has to do because of the situation."

Despite the challenges, both teams have high hopes for

the season. Dietz ('28) is excited for the season to start, saying, "I'm looking forward to playing with everybody, to see where we're at as a team and how we can improve as we progress." She feels optimistic about a potential playoff run, saying, "we have a really good base, I think it just depends how much we really want to."

Wallsten ('27) is confident this will be the "best season in Walls basketball history." He added, "We have great coaches and a very talented group with a lot of chemistry."

Ultimately, both teams must learn to work together and develop strong foundations if they want to be successful. •

"Lit Crossword"

Leah Levy ('25)
Puzzle Editor

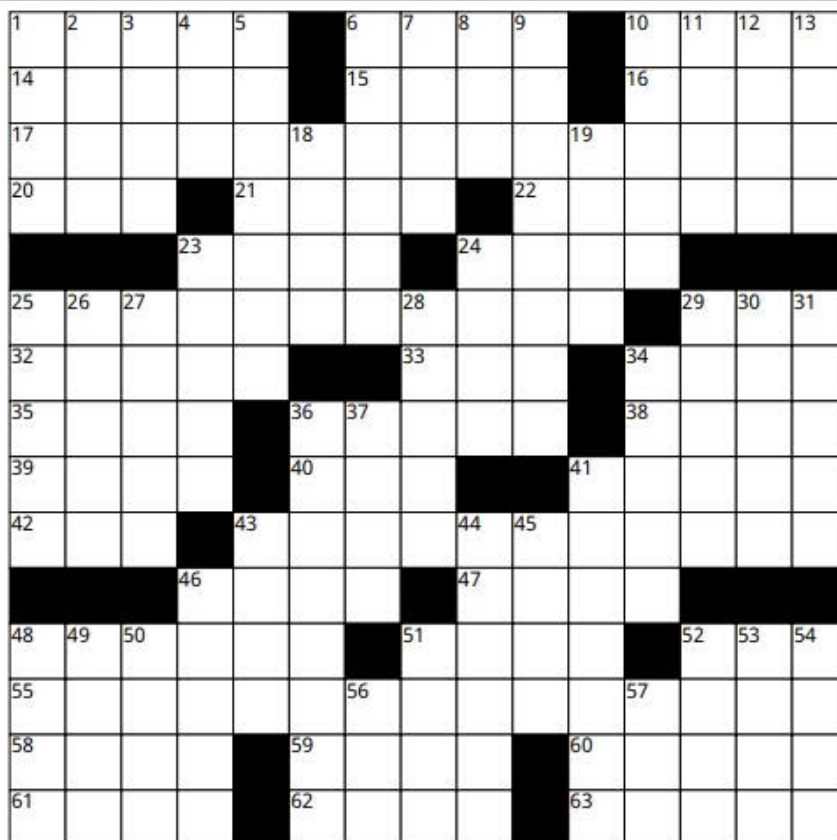
ACROSS

- 1 Including on an email
- 6 Where an SWW student must live
- 10 Sister trio rock band
- 14 Speaker's output
- 15 Walking stick
- 16 Against
- 17 Fire safety technique, or 55-, 25-, and 43-Across together*
- 20 Snakelike fish
- 21 Melt fish
- 22 Equestrian's seat
- 23 "Yes, yes" in Madrid
- 24 On a tight schedule
- 25 Event of Black Monday*
- 29 Letters before an alias
- 32 Clip wool from
- 33 Miner's find
- 34 "Beware the ___ of March"
- 35 Egg holder
- 36 Trigonometric ratios
- 38 Applaud
- 39 Nickname for Brianna
- 40 School fundraising org.
- 41 Home of Acadia National Park
- 42 "Holy ___!"
- 43 Pastry with a swirl*
- 46 Cry of dismay
- 47 Not straight

- 48 Flat, geometrically
- 51 Took to court
- 52 "Much ___ About Nothing"
- 55 Grand Central, for one*
- 58 Prefix with skeleton
- 59 Bone: prefix
- 60 Sing like Mason Ramsey
- 61 Distort, as data
- 62 Art Spiegelman's Pulitzer-winning graphic novel
- 63 Sister nickname

DOWN

- 1 Lawyer's assignment
- 2 Adorable
- 3 Person you look up to
- 4 ___ in the bud
- 5 Divine level
- 6 Widely recognized
- 7 California wine valley
- 8 Genetic material
- 9 Once-a-decade information gathering events
- 10 Eaton and Key's feeder middle school
- 11 Give ___ to: approve
- 12 "C'mon, ___ be fun!"
- 13 5,280 feet
- 18 Sign of auto body aging
- 19 Short run
- 23 Enjoy the rink
- 24 Exposed



- 25 Rachel Maddow's network
- 26 "Holding Out for ___" (Bonnie Tyler song)
- 27 Hem again
- 28 Saoirse of "Lady Bird"
- 29 Rapper's improvisation
- 30 Reeves of "The Matrix"
- 31 Colorado ski resort
- 34 Quitter's comment
- 36 Meeting place after a political debate
- 37 "Pay ___ mind"
- 41 Days without the everyday class

- 43 Blacken on the grill
- 44 Corrupt practices
- 45 Track event
- 46 Set to keep the food warm
- 48 The "P" in POTUS, for short
- 49 Tall and thin
- 50 White House staffer
- 51 SoCal school for the Aztecs
- 52 Lends a hand
- 53 Female deer
- 54 The first "O" in YOLO
- 56 Cool ___ cucumber
- 57 You, in French

CONTACT US
@theswwrookery@gmail.com

FIND US
www.swwrookery.com

The Rookery

Editors-in-Chief: Zoe Becker ('26) and Zoe Fisher ('25)

Managing Editor: Jessie Moss ('26)

Senior Editors: Georgia Murphy ('26), Eve Rebora ('25), Carlotta Rother ('25), Theo Weller ('25), Brady Woodhouse ('25)

Digital Editor: Layla Rethy ('25)

Puzzle Editor: Leah Levy ('25)

Resident Artists: Lucy Byron ('25) and Niamh O'Donovan ('25)

Staff Writers: Helen Albert ('28), Mila Appelbaum ('28), Vivian Astmann ('28), Fe Menna Barreto ('28), Matilda Bliss ('28), Sowmya Boominathan ('28), Peyton Chada ('28), Amelie Dyczewski ('28), Rebecca Frost ('28), Amelia Gibson ('28), Gabi Goldberg ('25), Sadie Greenhalgh ('27), Juliet Grillot ('28), Venya Gulati ('28), Bayla Halper ('28), Annabel Holt ('27), Mitchell Kasdan ('27), Ida Laitin ('28), Siena Lernerz ('28), Astrid Leppig ('27), Tyne McNamara ('28), Cecile Nouga-Ngog ('28), James Neuroth ('28), Neve O'Connell ('26), Ellie Olesh ('28), Masha Pavlova ('27), Rhea Powell ('28), Alana Quarles ('26), Ronan Shah ('28), Mae Tuggle ('26)

Faculty Advisor: Shakir Ghazi