

Meeting African American History

By Krysonia Tavares
Cougar Growl Reporter

Most people in the Boston area know about the Freedom Trail, but few have visited the African American historical sites in this same area. On February 14th, the newspaper club visited the African Meeting House on the North End to bring awareness and appreciation to this lesser known and immensely important historical site.



Growl Reporter,
Krysonia Tavares

The African Meeting House church was formed for the colored race at a time when America was segregated. The African American

community was located in an undesirable part of Boston on the side of a steep hill, in close proximity to the ports, and in the shadow of an oppressive lack of sunlight. On the other side of the hill was the affluent Beacon Hill, former home to many white elitists who still believed in slavery. Despite the fact that slavery was abolished in Massachusetts in 1783, many of the blacks were forced to live in the less desirable neighborhood, their presence unwanted except as forced labor.

Quickly, a church formed and became a safe haven for many, even establishing a school for underprivileged children. That very church is still regarded as the heart of a revolution, rooted in fellowship. Once local officials heard about this organized school at the bottom of the church, they decided to get involved, making the building next door the a school with three classrooms for students. Regrettably, they appointed



Photo by Krysonia Tavares

The African Meeting House was named the number ten “lesser-known” Black History Month Sites by CNN in February 2020. This site is one of many on the Black Heritage Trail, a 1.6 mile walking tour of on the North side of Beacon Hill and includes memorials, homes, and stops on the underground railroad.

an openly racist man as principal at the school, which quickly caused the school to descend into chaos and neglect. Once an alumni from the church’s school found out about the poor management, he and others in the church decided to reopen the church school. Many of the parents decided to take their children out of the school next door and bring them back to the church.

At this same time, the abolitionist movement was growing in Boston. The African Meeting House was at the center. As a result, local officials began to take notice of The African Meeting House once again, this time moving to integrate the school next door to the church. Quickly, this first integrated school in Boston outgrew the inadequate space.

Next door, the church served as a hub for the abolitionist movement, welcoming many speakers including Frederick Douglass. From here the important message of freedom spread to the south, bringing back supporters from states such as Alabama and Georgia. In 1863 the meeting house served as a recruitment post for the Massachusetts 54th Volunteer Regiment, the first official African American military regiment to fight for the Union in the Civil War.

Near the end of the Civil War, the African Meeting House had outgrown the small church, it moved to the South End, and the building was sold (even used as a Jewish Synagogue for several years).

Finally in the 1970s, the historical,

cultural, and political significance of the African Meeting House was acknowledged. The African American Museum of History was able to reclaim the church, this time as a historical landmark recognized by the National Park Service. More recently, when President Obama came to office, he granted \$9.4 Million to refurbish the church. The original flooring remains in place to this day.

The African Meeting House encouraged far much more than just worship. It was an educational institution, fellowship center, meeting house and catalyst of hope for many associated with the black community. It remains a symbol of empowerment and a landmark for initiating change.

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Getting Guidance on Mental Health

By Petra Dujmic
Guest Reporter

As a student at a small, Catholic institution in Arlington, Massachusetts, I've always regarded our high school to be a place of mental health awareness and respect. From my first days at AC to my last as a current senior, the importance of mental health has, in ways more subtle than prominent, been emphasized via our grade-wide "retreats," counseling services, and school masses, to name a few. Nevertheless, with the alarming increase of suicide rates among high school students (a 56% increase since 2007, to be exact according to the CDC), maximizing mental health awareness has perhaps never been more urgent. Despite my belief that our school was meeting—if not exceeding—the mental health needs of its students and faculty, I decided to sit down with our wonderful Director of Guidance, Ms. Delude, and find out, once and for all, the specific services available to those grappling with mental health concerns.

When considering the mental health services offered at AC, my mind immediately jumps to the counseling services offered to students who feel overwhelmed with their course load. What actions should students take if the A.P. homework, the track meets, and the weekly yearbook meetings become mentally burdensome? One of the most accessible methods of reducing such pressures would be to schedule an appointment with one of our kind-hearted guidance counselors. Once students schedule an appointment with a counselor, they may be referred to the staff's licensed social worker, Mrs. Kiernan. In addition to counseling with our social worker, the guidance department also works with outside agencies (such as the Wayside Agency) to refer students to day programs, hospitalization programs, or assisted learning initiatives.

But I can't give guidance full credit—the general office of administration at AC has also worked to promote more community-wide mental health awareness. Specifically, administration has

recently made it mandatory for sophomores to attend health and wellness classes, where they discuss both mental and physical wellbeing. Ms. Delude also mentioned that administration is attempting to recruit a mental health professional to address the class during World Suicide Prevention month, in hopes of informing students of the counseling resources at their fingertips as well as educating them about the differences between regular stress and symptoms of mental illness. I myself have had the privilege of hearing a mental health professional visit our school and discuss her research into medications for schizophrenia. As immigrants from Lebanon, her family had suffered hardships that might have predisposed her relatives to mental illness, and yet the openness and honesty with which she told their stories was thought-provoking and sincere.

Equally thought-provoking and sincere are the recent activities of the Arlington Youth and Safety Coalition, a town-based group that, according to Ms. Delude, has had the most lengthy involvement with mental health awareness. To

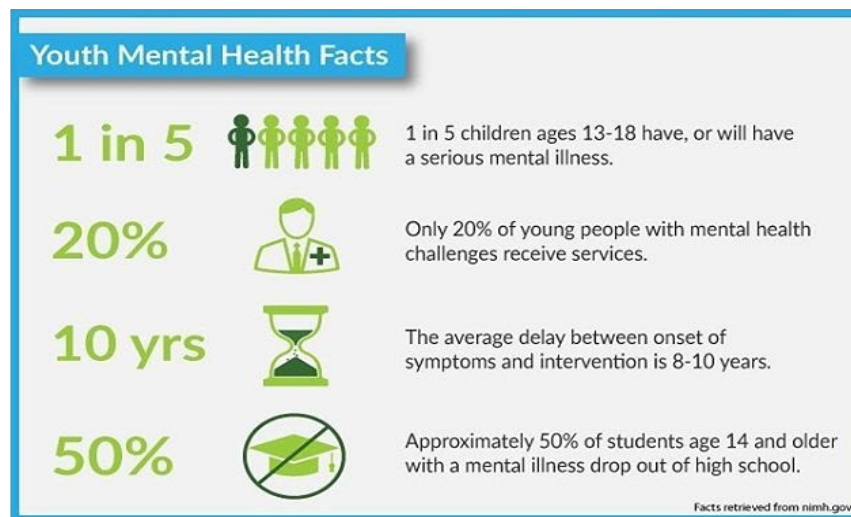
scribing the "social, emotional, and mental health resources in Town," is also available to students attending AC, and was created by an Arlington High School alumnus just three years ago.

Now, while I certainly appreciate the mental health counseling and events at AC, our school would benefit from increased community-based avenues to nurture the student body with a greater base of knowledge to undermine stigmatization. If you are interested in facilitating mental health education, first of all, I salute you, and second of all, the guidance department has made clear to me that it is always open to new suggestions on tackling this important issue. Maybe you are interested in getting involved in the mental health campaign in the larger community, in which case, I would recommend that you join the new student organization, Simply Neuroscience. Simply Neuroscience is a nonprofit organization founded by Columbia University freshman Chinmayi Balusu, with the intention of providing a workspace for students to network, collaborate, and support

one another. From writing reader-friendly blog posts to creating pamphlets on rare mental illnesses, Simply Neuroscience provides education about the biological basis of mental illness to undermine stigmatized cultural beliefs. As a writer, editor, and awareness department member at SN, I have experienced this compassionate dedication first-hand, and would highly recommend this organization to all students looking to make their voices heard in this worldwide campaign.

All in all, Ms. Delude emphasizes that no student should ever feel the need to bear the burdens of mental health concerns alone. Through detailed individual

counseling (and outside therapy referral), schedule changes, and prayer services, AC strives to place the personal wellbeing of its students and faculty first, so that no student feels silenced, ridiculed, or isolated. So if you ever feel like your life circumstances are causing genuine mental health concerns, don't just brush it off. Come down to the guidance office. They would be happy to help you out.



cater to the high school age group, the Arlington Youth and Safety Coalition advertises the Parent Support Group program for parents of young adults struggling with substance abuse. Two licensed clinicians facilitate group discussion, and while the goal of the program is focused on beating drug addiction, the support group also aims to encourage teens to express their mental health concerns openly to their oftentimes most prominent caregivers: their parents. Notably, the Arlington Youth Resource Guide, a pamphlet de-

SAD: Seasonal Affective Disorder

By Tori Caggiano
Cougar Growl Reporter

Cold inclement weather is expected when a person lives in New England. The anticipation comes with excitement for the holidays and the new year. That excitement quickly wanes when roads are covered in snow and teens are late for school. This weather, as well as the inconvenience that comes along with it, can lead to more of the population being upset or annoyed. This struggle is a real issue known as Seasonal

Affective Disorder. This is a type of depression that is caused by seasonal changes, not necessarily just the cold weather. It is known to begin and end at about the same time every year. SAD, which begins in the fall and continues into the winter months, saps a person's energy and induces restlessness. Winter months also consist of dark gloomy mornings and that lack of sunlight makes it hard for people to get out of bed and start off their day. Many studies

have shown that people with Seasonal Affective Disorder feel better after exposure to bright light.

SAD is treatable. Alfred Lewy, MD, a Seasonal Affective Disorder researcher at the Oregon Health & Science University, says that treatment is contingent not only on getting light, but also getting it at the right time, "The most important time to get light is in the morning." With spring approaching, we all might start to feel a little better.

Balancing Homework and Homelife

By Robbie Stevens
Cougar Growl Reporter

Homework has long been a struggle for students who are forced to balance school, completing assignments, and finding time to sleep while enjoying life.

The burden becomes insurmountable for many students who also seek to maintain a healthy extracurricular life. Colleges often expect students to participate in extracurricular activities while maintaining a high GPA and diverse social life. Together, these expectations will quickly overwhelm nearly all students, often forcing a choice between a happy life in school and a healthy life at home. While some may argue that this is a crucial skill in life to balance work and fun,

parents and educators cannot ignore the stress placed upon high schoolers in a way that isn't reflected in most jobs. Student lives still hang in the balance from tests and quizzes which determine the future, cause stress and strain, and drag many students down from their true potential.

A study by the National Education Association cites the growing homework trends, saying "In the last 20 years, homework has increased only in the lower grade levels, and this increase is associated with neutral (and sometimes negative) effects on student achievement." Homework can stifle student achievements, pulling down everyone who could have benefited from students at

their full potential. While homework benefits some, it can hurt others. It can be especially detrimental to students from lower income families who may be just as smart or smarter than students from high income families. They have to work long hours to support their family or watch younger siblings, leaving little time or energy to complete their homework or study for tests.

Homework may be beneficial to student learning in smaller amounts but is too often over-assigned, burning students out and limiting real-life experiences essential to the development of adolescents.

Drama Fest

Congratulations to ACDC's cast and crew of "A Polar Bear in New Jersey!" They are moving on to the semi-final round of the METG High School Drama Festival.

Accolades also go to Bridget Driscoll, Isabella Rego, and Will Mance who were recognized for excellence in technical theatre, as well as Olivia Copeland and Destiny DeMarco Davila who won All-Star-Company acting awards.

Let's give a nod to their directors too, both ACDC alumni: Maggie Kearnan '10 and Taylor Buehler '10.



Photo courtesy of Mrs. Jacquie Billings

America's Obsession with the Human Mind

By Mia Polston
Cougar Growl Reporter

There's no doubt that western culture loves to be entertained and intrigued, whether it be by sitcoms, documentaries, jokes or our devices. What happens when the new interest of America falls to the human mind? This seems to be exactly what is happening in America right now. Attendance in psychology classes in high schools and universities is at an all time high according to the American Psychology Association, "The number of high school students taking the Advanced Placement psychology test, for example, has jumped from just 3,916 when the exam was introduced in 1992 to 303,000 this year (2017)." Psychology is also in high demand here at AC, with 95 students taking the class.

With this kind of interest, people have to wonder why psychology is so popular. When

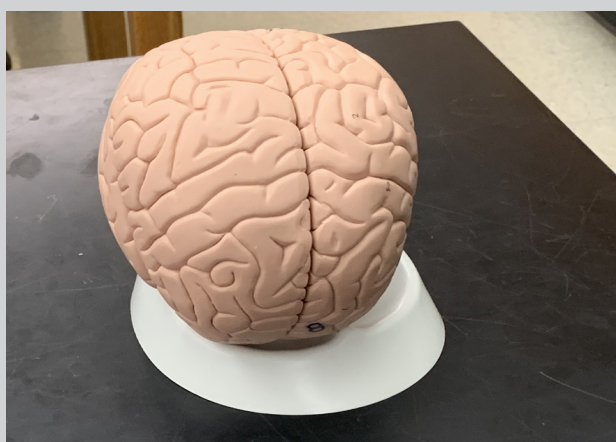


Photo by Terry Cousins

A model of the human brain used by students in Mr. Monroe's class.

I asked Mr. Naughton this question he said, "I think that students and adults are fascinated with the human mind because there is so much about what is going on inside our heads that we are not aware of and are only beginning to understand. As someone who has taught this subject for 25 years, I find that there are always new advances

that allow us to 'see' inside the mind. There will always be more unknown than known, I think." It's not hard to understand this fascination and desire to know more about ourselves, but why are people so fascinated with the extremes like serial killers, hoarders, or addictions? According to Mr. Naughton, a possible answer for this question is, "Some of this fascination comes from just natural curiosity and some, in a strange way, might be used to justify our behaviors or make us feel good about ourselves —my room may be messy but look at this hoarder. The very real downside of that is we then stigmatize the people who are suffering from very real psychological disorders."

With how interesting the human mind is to us all, remember that behind these minds that we conceive as "non-ordinary" are real people with real emotions. Though it is interesting to research and learn, we should remain compassionate and remember that there are people connected to these conditions.

Chess Club Checks Competition

By Max Mailloux
Guest Reporter

When selecting from the plethora of clubs and teams offered at Arlington Catholic High School, please keep in mind the Chess Team as a rewarding choice.

With defeats at Bedford, North Reading, and Rockport in the early season, the Chess Team typically visits or hosts matches with local high schools every Thursday after school from November through March. Competing in these matches, each contender is limited to 45 minutes to complete their game -- where the total match duration can be up to an hour and a half. Boards are also setup from 1-10 holding different point values to be totaled at the end of the match.

In the middle of the season, there is a Blitz competition at North Reading High School, where players have to complete their games in less than 5 minutes; players have a lot of fun at that fast pace, playing several games during that Blitz match.



Photo courtesy of Mr. Jim Hyland

Sally Nguyen plays against a Malden Catholic student during a chess meet at Malden Catholic.

On February 27, the Chess Team defeated Burlington 30-10, qualifying for the playoffs. Co-captains Santiago Orjuela and Ryan Nguyen won on boards two and three, respectively.

While attending these matches is the perfect means to show off skills, the Chess Team also

meets during WIN Block every other cycle in Caf 3. New members are always welcome with or without prior experience in the game — we can always teach those interested in learning to play. We hope to continue our success for the rest of the season.

Model UN Tackles a Crisis

By Kathryn Van Winkle
Cougar Grawl Reporter

From February 7 through 9, Arlington Catholic's very own Model UN team changed the world and the course of history. Participating annually, AC students understand the complexity of this conference and were committed to learning more. Individual members compete in different committees and from varying perspectives. Here is the breakdown of a crisis committee next to an ECOSOC committee.

ECOSOCs are economic and social problems which often also include environmental issues. They are larger committees which include 40- to 60 individual delegates. Each represents a country like Canada or Saudi Arabia. All of the delegates work together to create directives that get signed off by other delegates in the committee. Once there are enough sponsors and signatures, one will give the directive to the chair of the committee. The chair, in all committees, runs everything that transpires in the room. After enough directives are passed in, delegates vote on them and if the directive gets two-thirds vote, it passes. Those directives become working papers which are passed to be the solution to the issues. The committee as a whole has no limit for papers passed but at least one must be passed. The papers are often amended so everyone can agree, testing qualities of cooperation and collaboration.

On the other side, there are Crisis committees. Crisis is the most complex challenge next to specialized committees. An example was in JCC: Modena, JCCs are joint committees so delegates are put on opposite sides of an issue. The delay in these are usually people rather than countries. All in all, the same things hap-



Photo courtesy of Mr. Michael Foley

Arlington Catholic Students left to Right: Brendan Tighe, Will Mance, Christian Gomez, Connor Hill, Kathryn Van Winkle, Stella Nielsen and Lily Fitzgerald take a break from the model UN competition.

pen: delegates pass directives to deal with their issue but delegates on both sides also deal with crisis updates which can further complicate the debate; for example, the attempted poisoning of JCC Modena's entire committee. The crisis directors who assist the chairs can also send the committee into a timed crisis which shuts down the room until it is solved. On top of that, delegates can also write crisis notes to outside people and forces.

These committees are fast moving, intense and keep their delegates on their toes. They are small committees so high participation is demanded in those. If a delegate can cope with a lot of work, stress and public speaking, crisis committees are exciting.

The basic components in both committees are the passing of notes during moderated caucuses to communicate. Both committees have smaller groups that converse and work together in a non-structured environment.

In the end, all AC delegates enjoyed the energetic banter brought by FunMun (where students debate fun issues, like the best type of hat) on the last day as well as the amazing people they meet from around the country and even the world. No matter what committee a delegate participates in, Model UN teaches about diplomacy, collaboration, and problem solving with people who are different from themselves. It is an amazing experience and no matter what grade you are, it is worth giving a try.

America’s Two Tastes of Italy

By Asher Rwakiseeta
Cougar Growl Reporter

Cuisine is an important facet of Italian culture. Here at AC, the Italian program has educated students both in and outside of the classroom on all things Italy from its language and history to its iconic cooking—for example, last year Italian students took a class trip to the North End which ended with refreshments at Modern Pastry, a popular pastry shop which recently expanded, adding breakfast, lunch, and dinner items to an already full complement of Italian cakes and cookies.

However, when shopping in a supermarket or your local grocery store, there is a distinction

between genuine Italian food and unreliable American brands. “You can taste the difference,” says Mr. Guarino. “You can tell when something is made in Italy and when it’s made in the US.” Pasta brands like Prince and Ronzoni, which are produced in the US, pale in comparison to real Italian brands like De Cecco. “Take a brand like Barilla,” suggests Mr. Guarino, “They originally imported straight from Italy but now are producing all their pastas here in the United States. Like many other brands, they’ll place an Italian flag on their packaging (or in Barilla’s case they go so far as to add “Italy’s #1 pasta” to their boxes) and most people assume the product is imported from Italy.”

Some foods even have their name changed in the more Americanized products; American

“parmesan “cheese (manufactured in the US in states like Wisconsin) is very different from the authentic Italian “Parmigiano Reggiano.” True parmigiano cheese has a repetition of stamps signifying its authenticity, as does the famous Prosciutto di Parma (prosciutto from Parma, Italy) and another popular Italian brand Prosciutto San Daniele. There is a clear difference between widespread modern Italian-American foodstuffs and traditional Italian fare, but one can still find good Italian cooking right here in the Boston area. “In the end it comes down to the ingredients that make up the product. There is no substitute for authentic Italian ingredients.” said Mr. Guarino.

The Italian program at AC will once again be visiting the North End this spring and will be seeing this for themselves as they visit the local shops where authentic Italian is the only way to eat!

Lunch Time Favorites

By Niko Stathakis
Guest Reporter

Every student walks through the cafe hoping that their favorite food will be served for lunch that day.

All AC students were invited to take a survey to help make that happen. In over 200 responses, students determined that our top three favorite foods are 1) Popcorn Chicken, 2) Mac and cheese, and 3) Nachos. Although these offerings were named overwhelming favorites, there were also several students who listed these as their least favorite options.

As for least favorites, the survey showed the the bottom three cafe offerings were 13) Fajitas, 14) Hot Dogs, and 15) Korean Beef and Rice.

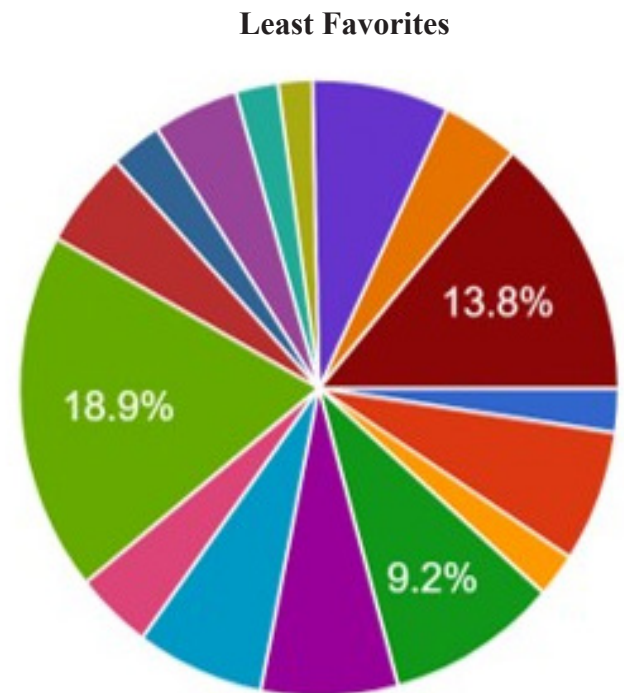
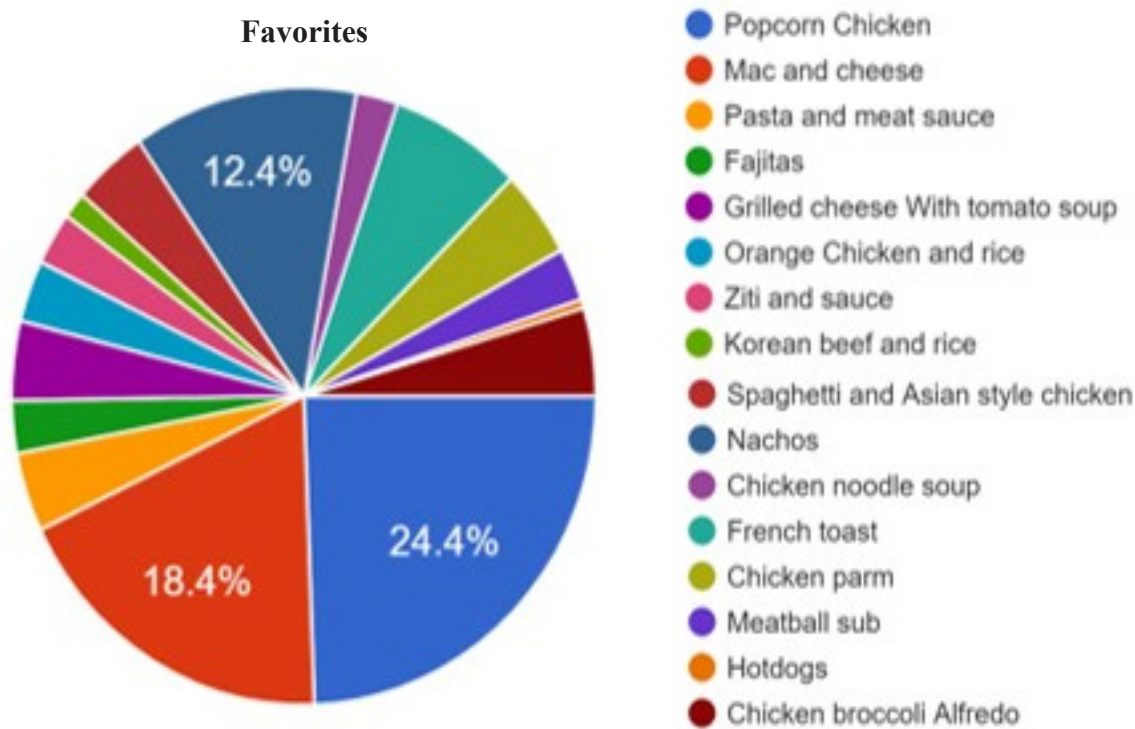
Many students also put these three options as their favorite; so, if you don’t like the food in the cafeteria on a certain day, keep in mind that the food that is being served may be someone else’s favorite.

Additionally, students came up with many good ideas on which foods should be added to the lunchroom menu, such as pancakes, calzones, and BLTs. Not only will adding food be a good idea for the students that buy lunch, but it also may be a way to get students that don’t buy school lunch to try it.



Photo by Emma Limerick

Arlington Catholic’s fantastic lunch ladies from left to right, Kathy Guthrie who has been at AC since 2016, Jeanine Mitrano, Jan Kapsalis, and Debbie Mo-doono. When asked their favorite part about working at AC, they said it is their interactions with the students. Next time you go through the line, remember your manners and say thank you to these fun, kind, and caring members of our school community.



Indoor Track

By Erin Leahy
Guest Reporter

The Indoor Track team ends the season with the great accomplishment of an outstanding record of 6-1. The team also took second place in dual meets, fourth place at the League Championship, and placed in three events at the Division Five State Relay Meet. Coach Matthew Killion stated, “Our only loss has been to Cardinal Spellman, which is

a pretty big accomplishment,” especially since the Spellman team were the 2020 league champions. In the end, each athlete played an essential role in the success of the team. Many athletes were able to beat their personal records within their races. Finishing off a season as great as this one will be tough to beat; however, Mr. Killion hopes for the next season that “many underclassmen can build on their success since we have a strong graduating class leaving.” He looks forward to a great spring season!



Left, Senior Captain Sean Kay claimed first place in the boys two-mile at the State Coaches Invitations. Below: Arlington Catholic girls take a breath after winning the 4 x 400 meter relay at the League Championship Meet. From left to right are Katherine O’Donovan, Jamie Powderly, Molly Fagan and Olivia Simmons-Normil.

Photos courtesy of Mr. Matt Killion



AC Hockey

By Reese DeVincent and Allison Brosnahan
Cougar Growl Reporters

Boys

Girls

This winter, the Cougars excitedly skated into another year of boys hockey! Ed Burns Arena was once again filled with fans who enjoy supporting the Arlington Catholic team. The boys began to turn the season around with the help of their captains, Thomas Milne and Jason Smith. Smith told us that the season “started off tough, but we turned it around and we’re hoping to make it to playoffs.” One way the boys have proved that they want to take it all home was with their huge comeback against Bishop Fenwick, winning 6-3. Altogether, the boys have worked exceptionally hard so far to make this season great and finished with a record of 9-10-1. They were extremely proud of how close they made it to the playoffs and will push even harder next year.

For the first time in four years, girls hockey began their season with more wins than losses! Their record as of now is 8-7. The team greatly thanks their coaches as well as this year’s captains Casey Conneely and Mary Cate Flynn. These two juniors have demonstrated impressive leadership, and the team is thankful that they are sticking around for another year. Flynn stated, “We are really proud of our record so far this year. This is the first time in four years that we broke .500 on our record. We are hoping to end the season on a good note and carry this spirit into next year.” In addition to boys hockey, the girls team had a huge win towards the end of the season of 4-0 against Fenwick. This huge turnaround for them was documented in an article by the Arlington Wicked Local. You can read more about it at arlington.wickedlocal.com. Search for “Former alum leads big turnaround for Arlington Catholic girls hockey.”

Swimming

By Ava Wirtanen
Guest Reporter

The AC swim team just finished a stellar season of record-breaking swimming. The team’s first meet of the championship season was at St. John’s Prep for the CCL championship which the entire team competed in. As a team, they placed fourth, but three swimmers, Sophie Zenkin, Edong Lee, and Ava Wirtanen placed in the top 5 spots. Sophie and Ava advanced to the North Sectional meet held at MIT the following weekend representing AC. Both girls had outstanding races with personal best times. Ava Wirtanen won both races and

broke a school and league record by more than 6 seconds! After a second great weekend, the girls continued to represent AC at the state championship hosted at the BU pool. Sophie placed 19th in the 200 meter individual medley and 17th in the 100 meter breast overall, and Ava placed 2nd in the 200 meter freestyle and 1st in the 100 meter freestyle. This qualifies Ava as a state champion and her banner will be up in the gym soon! After such an amazing season, the team looks forward to more successes to come and encourages other students to join the team.



Photo courtesy of Ava Wirtanen

The whole swim team paused for a photo during senior night at the last home meet held at Medford High Pool.

Boys Basketball



Photo courtesy of Mr. Christian Guarino

Girls Basketball

By Paul Neto
Cougar Growl Reporter

The Arlington Girls Basketball Program is divided into three levels: Varsity, Junior-Varsity, and Freshman. I met with Krysonia Tavares, a junior-varsity, and varsity floater. When she described her connection with the team it felt very heartfelt. At first, she started on JV and was later called up. She shared that, “I was proud that I got moved up, but at the same time it only showed that I have so much more to prove, and I was sad that I wouldn’t be playing as much with the JV team because I love

all those girls on both levels”. On JV, she was seen as a leader and really helped the team and made others feel her presence on the court. She’s a point guard, which is one of the hardest positions to play in basketball because of the weight it carries. When asked how she felt about changing teams, she said, “For JV I felt as if I was a leader and I was always trying to pick the energy up to set the bar and show what we can do, so I did my best to carry that onto Varsity, when I was called up.” Everyone contributes throughout the whole season and everyone plays her role to perfection.

Left: Senior Cam Garber starts off the game by taking the jump as the Arlington Catholic Cougars took on Saint Mary’s of Lynn in the second round of the Massachusetts Division 3 State Championship tournament. The Cougars battled hard but lost a well-fought battle. They ended the season 12-8.

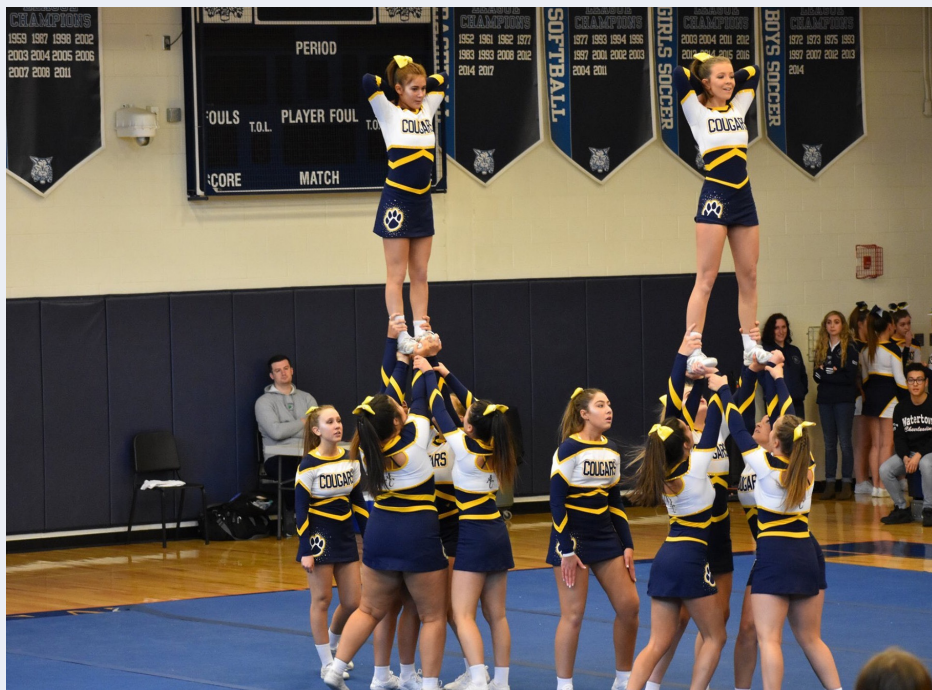


Photo courtesy of Emma Jordan

Cheer Competition

By Mia Polston
Cougar Growl Reporter

On Saturday, February 29, Arlington Catholic’s Varsity Cheerleading Competition team won second place for Division Four North at the Wilmington Wildcat Invitational! Their total score was a 69.3, only placing after the Watertown Raiders by 0.7 points.

For two senior girls, Emma Jordan and Caroline Buckley, this compe-

petition was their last performance on the AC cheer team. All of the team would like to say thank you to these amazing performers, friends, leaders, and role models. We wish them luck moving forward in life and know that they will always be a peice of Arlington Catholic legacy and their teammates’ hearts!

Mosaic Speaker Series

By Catherine Fagan
Cougar Growl Reporter

Mosaic is a student-led speaker series that explores the diverse voices within the AC community. At its root, it is a forum for student expression.

The current moderator, Ms. Seminara runs and organizes Mosaic’s events. Ms. Seminara states “I hope Mosaic will be a catalyst for student expression.” In the past, attendees have seen TED Talks, a performance by theater arts students, and creative presentations. Mosaic hopes to pro-

vide an outlet for more passionate students to share their visions and experiences. Furthermore, Mosaic encourages student empowerment and leadership. The ultimate goal of the speaker series is to stimulate deeper discussion and awareness.

If you are interested in Mosaic please come visit Ms. Seminara and attend a presentation. Mosaic always welcomes new participants and ideas. Sign up and start sharing your suggestions and thoughts.



Photo courtesy of Lindsey Roche

Mosaic series meets on alternating C-days in the library. Here, students from AP Lang discuss race. Please listen to announcements for dates and sign-up information. Proposals for Mosaic talks can be requested and submitted through Ms. Seminara.

Chick-fil-A is Now Gluten Free

By Vanessa Lott
Cougar Growl Reporter

As someone who has had Celiac for six years now, I pretty much know where to eat and where not to eat. Celiac disease is an immune disease, and if a person has Celiac disease and eat foods with gluten, her immune system responds by damaging the small intestine. Celiac disease that goes uncared for can lead to other autoimmune disorders like Type I diabetes, anemia, infertility and miscarriage, heart disease, and most commonly, intestinal cancers. The only treatment for celiac disease is the commitment to a strict gluten free diet. Fancy restaurants, foreign restaurants, places that the food primarily comes from an animal or the ground, are the easiest to find gluten free options.

The biggest no-no in any Celiac's book is fast food: the small kitchens, bread everywhere, and

most importantly, fried food. About a year ago, I got a text from my friend to a link to an article he found online, "Chick-fil-A: First Gluten Free Fast Food Chain." The second I saw the title, I ran to my mom to show her and tell her to get in the car and start driving. A chicken sandwich? With bread? Fries that were actually fried? That was gluten free? I had to see it for myself.

After giving the cashier an interrogation to make sure this wasn't a misunderstanding, I ate my first chicken sandwich with fries since the fifth grade. The bun was made from grains: sorghum, amaranth, millet, quinoa and teff, and it tasted like regular bread! Grilled chicken, some regular fries and any sauce I wanted, all gluten free without anyone noticing.

Overall, Chick-fil-A is a great place to grab some fast food if you have Celiac disease or a gluten intolerance. Now that it has become a popular chain for place for everyone, it's the



Photo by Vanessa Lott

Chick-fil-A gluten free bun with grilled chicken and gluten free fries available at the North Shore Mall.

perfect place to grab a quick bite and bring anyone to without worrying if they are allergic or not.

Star Wars: A New Hope for Redemption

By Thomas Cahill
Cougar Growl Reporter

When Disney first gained the rights to Star Wars with its purchase of Lucasfilm from its creator George Lucas, I, like many other Star Wars fans, was excited at the possibilities of new Star Wars movies. While the Star Wars saga had been surviving through books and television series, it had been more than a decade since the last Star Wars movie was released.

This excitement vanished, however, the day Disney released *The Force Awakens*. This one movie destroyed my

high hopes for the future of Star Wars. The plot made little sense, there were very few connections to the previous Star Wars movies, and above all, it did not feel like "Star Wars."

It got even worse with the release of *The Last Jedi*, whose theme of "the old Star Wars doesn't matter: out with the old, in with the new" felt like a slap in the face to longtime Star Wars fans.

In the two years since *The Last Jedi* came out, I decided that I would give Disney one final chance before giving up on Disney Star Wars entirely. *The Rise*

of *Skywalker* was that last chance, the opportunity for Disney to redeem itself in my eyes. And redeem itself it did.

Finally, Disney got the Star Wars formula right. While *The Rise of Skywalker* was far from a perfect movie, with its disjointed plot and unexplained elements, it felt like true Star Wars. There were Star Destroyers, lines taken directly from the Prequels, and climatic battles between good and evil.

The movie, which followed heroes Rey, Finn, and Poe as they faced an evil "First Order" led by Kylo Ren and a revived Emperor Palpatine, seeped with references to the origi-

nal Star Wars movie, references that were missing from the previous Disney movies. Additionally, *The Rise Of Skywalker* was able to explain many of the missing plot elements of the previous two movies in the Disney Star Wars trilogy, and, in doing so, caused the entire trilogy to make far more sense.

While some parts of the film seemed unnecessary, *The Rise of Skywalker* successfully captured the core elements of Star Wars and in doing so revived my hope in Disney Star Wars.

Parent Advice: Year End Course Selection

By Tori Caggiano
Cougar Growl Reporter

Parents, it is me again! I told you the year would fly by. As spring rapidly approaches, so do all of the fun activities that come with it. Freshmen kickball, Spring Fling, proms, and of course, summer. It may feel sudden that your child, who, just yesterday started high school, is about to pick her courses for next year.

Picking classes may seem easy, but it is important that your child picks the right courses for her learning pace, and that she chooses the classes that set her up for a good future here at Arlington Catholic and

beyond.

If your child likes presentations and wants to improve her public speaking skills, AP Seminar (and the corresponding AP Research) is an excellent choice. If, on the other hand, your student is looking into a nursing major, please consider the elective Anatomy and Physiology.

Regardless, it is surreal to think about classes for next year be-

cause finals are first on everyone's agendas. It is hard to concentrate during that last week, knowing summer is right around the corner, but each student has to remain focused and finish out the year as strong as it started. All the fun this year came with hard work and studying. While the study time was consuming, it helped each student find her own path of interests, not only academically, but also socially.



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