



The Eagle's Eye

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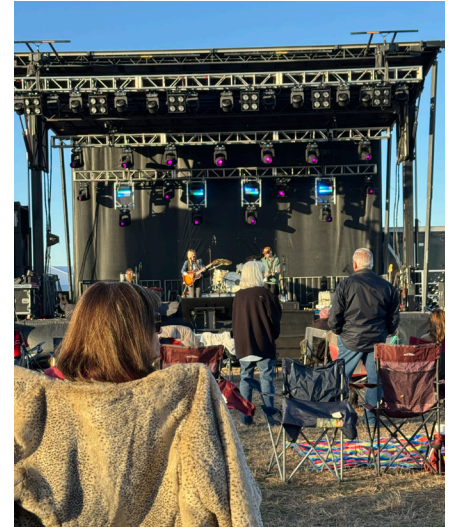


Photo Credit: Shelley Arthur

Redemption Story: A Weekend of Remembrance

By Charlie Arthur

On January 17, 2023, a tragic plane crash near Yoakum, Texas, took the lives of four faithful men from Harvest Church. Bill Garner, Steve Tucker, Tyler Patterson, and Tyler Springer lost their lives in the accident, leaving behind grieving families, a devastated congregation, and a community struggling to make sense of the loss. The lone survivor was lead pastor and ECS dad, Dr. Kennon Vaughan, who endured serious injuries but, by God's grace, lived.

His story of redemption, faith, and resurrection became the foundation for The Redemption Story, a two-day event held in Yoakum on January 18 and 19, 2025 and many of the ECS community attended. The event took place

less than 50 yards away from the crash site, transforming a site of sorrow into one of hope and renewal.

Dr. Vaughan's message throughout the event was centered on John 11, Lazarus' resurrection. In the passage, Jesus arrives at the tomb of his close friend Lazarus, who has been dead for four days. Despite the grief and doubt surrounding him, Jesus commands, "Lazarus, come out," and a man once dead is given new life. This chapter speaks to the heart of redemption, not just for Lazarus, but for all who walk through seasons of loss, pain and despair.

For Dr. Vaughan, this story wasn't just another lesson to be learned from the Bible. It was a lived experience. He had walked

through the valley of the shadow of death, carried the weight of survivor's guilt, and struggled through physical and emotional recovery. However, just as Jesus called Lazarus out of his tomb, He called Dr. Vaughan into a renewed purpose: to share the message that God's power redeems even the darkest circumstances.

The Redemption Story wasn't just a sermon, it was a community-wide gathering of worship, testimony, and revival. The first night featured worship led by Ellie Holcomb, while country artist Aaron Watson performed on the second. Attendees from the Yoakum area and Memphis gathered under tents and heard firsthand how God had turned

tragedy into triumph.

The event was not about pretending the pain wasn't real—it certainly was—it was about acknowledging loss, but not being defined by it. It was about standing in a place of suffering and declaring, like Job, "The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

As Dr. Vaughan proclaimed, "God does not waste suffering. If He has allowed it, He has a purpose for it." The Redemption Story serves as a reminder to all, not just those in attendance, that God wastes no tragedies and that His redemptive power is greater than any tragedy we could ever endure.

Letter from the Editor

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Special thanks also to Tracey Simpson and teachers for the use of photographs in this issue.



Dear Readers,

I am so glad you are taking your time today to read through the third edition of *The Eagle's Eye*; your support and encouragement is not taken lightly. Sadly, this will be our last normal edition of the 24-25 school year as our fourth quarter edition will contain the senior wills. Regardless, I hope that you will enjoy a glimpse into what's been

happening at ECS and will continue to keep up to date on our school despite no release next quarter.

I hope you enjoyed the story of Dr. Kennon Vaughan's revival conference written by Charlie Arthur on our front cover; it was a very important event for many in our community. Additionally, the final "Star of the Issue" on this page is an excellent piece, and if you're hungry for some world news, then look no further than the Presidential Inauguration and AI articles on the next page.

One of my favorite parts of ECS is the trips they offer throughout the year, and you can learn about two of those from our top writers: Riley Davis and Anna Grace Fletcher. My favorite page of each edition, however, is the quarterly review columns

written by Cooper Acuff and me. We are both sad to write our final reviews, but we are very happy with how they turned out. Next, you can find a great look into how the excellent production of Hadestown was put on, as well as a look into one of our newest offered enrichments, based on the book, *Lord of the Rings*. Finally, do not forget to check out the sports column to know how the girls basketball team and the boys wrestlers did this season.

Once again, thank you so much for taking time out of your day to give *The Eagle's Eye* a chance, and as always, don't forget to check out the memes on the back.

Your Editor-in-Chief,
Drew Shelton

Star of the Issue: Olin Giles

Interview by Wilson Mefford

This week I had the privilege of sitting down with ECS senior Olin Giles for a few minutes. Olin gave me some thoughtful answers to some challenging questions, proving that he was truly deserving of Star of the Issue.

Olin, you are taking the next steps of your journey in life at Virginia Military Institute (VMI). What is one of the things you are most nervous for and one of things you are most excited for?

One of the things I am nervous about is what is called the "Rat Line." The Rat Line is what all freshmen go through as a rite of passage for the first 7ish months

of their Cadetship. It is full of challenges and obstacles. The Rat line will test the souls of rats. However it will also help enforce life skills like time management, which is vital in order to succeed at VMI.

One of the things at VMI that I am most excited about is marching in the Presidential Inaugural parade. The parade is a very special tradition at VMI in which every cadet and rat gets to march for the President. For the next Inauguration, I will be a senior and there is a small 1 in 2,000 chance that I could be commanding the entire corps for the march.

Olin, around ECS you are known for being the starting kicker on the football team, a

dedicated student, and a great teammate. My question for you is this, What is something interesting about yourself that many people would be surprised to learn?

Something that I do not think a lot of people know is that I really enjoy cooking. I enjoy learning new recipes and trying to replicate them myself. I also love dogs; I have a four-year-old golden retriever rescue at home whose name is Tilly which is short for Matilda.

Final question for you Olin, What is one piece of advice you'd like to give to the ECS student body? Also if you want to shout anyone out feel free to do it now.

It is good to plan for things/events, but also be prepared for that plan to go sideways. When your plan inevitably goes sideways, stay rooted in your faith. Find a friend to talk to when you struggle. I will shout out Wesley Britt here because he has been that friend for me. He frequently asks how my spiritual life is, and I am really thankful for it.



World News

2025 Inauguration Makes Presidential History

by Evie Johns

On Monday, January 20, America welcomed President Trump with an inauguration ceremony at the U.S. Capitol building in Washington D.C. Although the ceremony is typically held outside, freezing temperatures forced the event to be moved indoors. The lows hovered around a frigid 16 degrees, and the temperature showed a high of only 23 degrees in the Capitol. This made

Trump's inauguration the coldest one since 1985, where the ceremony was also moved inside for the Inauguration of President Ronald Reagan. Despite the frosty weather, the ceremony was still able to continue. Trump became the 47th President of the United States, and oaths of office, which are required to be taken by the Constitution, were administered to him and Vice President J.D. Vance. Trump was sworn

in by Chief Justice John Roberts of the Supreme Court, and Vance's oath was administered by Supreme Court Justice Brett Kavanaugh. The Vice President's wife, Usha Vance, was actually a former clerk for Justice Kavanaugh. Following the oaths, President Trump gave his inaugural address to the crowd.

Another unusual feature about this year's inauguration is the format of Donald Trump's presidency. With

his first term lasting from 2016-2020, Trump is only the second two-term president of the United States to not serve his terms consecutively. The first was President Grover Cleveland, who was President from 1885-1889 and again from 1893-1897. The nation will have to wait to see what Trump does with this political revival during these next four years.

AI: A Blessing or a Curse?

by Campbell Palleria

One of the largest controversies in the world regarding the internet and technology, is the development and implementation of Artificial Intelligence, or more commonly known "AI." After being theorized and developed for the past century, AI has been emerging in daily life, such as in search engines, Amazon recommendations, and social media. Many are vocalizing concerns about how AI has been affecting students and academic integrity. For instance, students are utilizing programs such as ChatGPT,

to write essays or complete homework assignments for them. Parents and school administrators are beginning to worry how much real learning children are experiencing when the ability to cheat on assignments is so readily available. As a result of the broadening opportunities to cheat, many teachers have implemented AI policies, AI checkers, and less frequent use of technology, such as handwritten essays in the classroom. While AI raised concerns about academic integrity, AI has been developed into a useful aid in college applications.

ECS graduate, Hadassah Betapudi, along with fellow Stanford graduate, Elijah Kim, developed Esslo, which is an AI program that gives critical constructive feedback on college admission essays. Esslo does not write the essay for the student but rather helps fine-tune details on the essay. Additionally, Esslo helps eliminate the need to hire expensive college consultants by providing advice and feedback similar to what an actual trained professional would say.

In summation, AI in the classroom has been a blessing and a curse through providing opportunities



to train students into better writers and through expanding opportunities to cheat on academic assignments.

Trips

Senior Trip to SOTO

by Riley Davis

Over winter break, the seniors set off on the annual trip to Shepherd of the Ozarks in Harriet, Arkansas. While some were filled with anticipation and others with skepticism, the seniors piled into vans and buses ready to see what the weekend had in store. The class quickly got to reconnect with their peers and experience a new environment exploring caves, waterfalls, and forests as horrible phone service was a blessing in disguise that pushed students to go outside of their comfort zone. Although the weather was especially frigid, that did not stop students from polar plunging into the creek, hiking through terrain, or

meeting some friendly animals at the petting zoo. Despite the cancellation of many activities, time was well spent bonding over board games, walking around camp, and late night 'Meat and Greets' with yours truly, Kyle and Jed. Also most of the grade got to be guided through an elevated hike to a goat cave in either pouring rain or freezing conditions. While challenging in the moment, these hikes left lasting memories and funny stories to be told that made the mud and ice worth it.

Our mornings were spent cooking breakfast together and evenings in devoted worship and song, and in those times of stillness and conversation, relationships were mended, hearts restored, and souls recharged



for the Lord. So yes, while it was cold and cloudy, the love and joy that filled the cabins were enough to warm the hearts of our senior class to have one last trip together

before all going our separate ways. I think we can all be grateful for that.

ECS Students Attend Sharp Top Cove

by Anna Grace Fletcher

Sharp Top Cove is a Young Life retreat set in the beautiful mountains of north Georgia. Each year, ECS and other young life students across the Memphis area head to Jasper, Georgia to spend a long weekend of worship, fellowship and recreation. Each day is filled with fun activities along with set worship times and small group Bible studies. Sharp Top

has many fun recreational activities, such as basketball, pickleball, wiffleball, a ropes course, giant swing and much more! There are also indoor games such as foosball, pool and ping pong. Students not only get to grow their friendships with people from their school, but they also get to meet new friends from many other schools. One of the most fun things to experience at Sharp Top is

the club time. Club is when all of the schools come together in a giant room and sing songs, play big group games and hear a Bible study from a guest speaker. While students are growing their friendships, most importantly, they are growing their relationship with the Lord. My favorite moment from Sharp Top was the first club we did on the day we arrived. It was my first time at Sharp Top, and the experience

was amazing. Every day was filled with fun surprises and new experiences! I feel like I definitely grew in my relationship with the Lord. If you are contemplating going, you won't regret it!



Photo Credit: Anna Grace Fletcher

Reviews

TV Show Review: “Severance”

by Drew Shelton

Welcome back to Drew's Reviews! It pains me to say that this is my last review for *The Eagle's Eye*, but I have truly enjoyed the time I have been given to write about what I love. However, because it is my last review, I decided to switch things up and not write on a newly released movie or big Oscar contender. Instead, I would like to introduce you to my favorite show on television right now- “Severance.” “Severance” was created by writer Dan Erickson and is directed by legendary actor Ben Stiller, star of movies such as *Night at the Museum* and *Zoolander*. The show follows a string of complex plot points and

nuanced themes but is all centered around one central question, What if you never had to work but still made a living? In “Severance,” the near future setting involves one mega corporation named Lumon that has invited the severance procedure, a surgery which alters your brain so that the moment you step into work your psyche turns off and a new version of you turns on. This alternate version, or “innie” as they call it, spends their entire existence working and making money, but the moment they clock out and step outside, the normal you is put back in control and you get to go live your life free of occupational burdens. The

idea is complex, hard to grasp at first, somewhat ridiculous, but overall genius and makes for such a compelling story as you quickly realize that Lumon is not what they seem. Adam Scott plays the main character of Mark Scout alongside his severed coworkers Helly, played by Britt Lower; Dylan, played by Zach Cherry; and Irving, played by John Turturro, all giving one-of-a-kind performances that leave you charmed and intrigued with each new episode. Even with a concept as ridiculous as futuristic brain surgery, “Severance” so intensely brings up questions of morality, sacrifice and love that there is truly something for everyone within the show.

Though my favorite aspect is the show's mystery and continued questions, the editing, camera work and script are truly one-of-a-kind and mesmerize the brain in even the most unimportant scene. I can confidently say that it is the best show on TV right now, and if you start watching it on Apple TV+ today then you can get all caught up before the season 2's finale releases. Once again I cannot recommend “Severance” enough, and thank you for taking your time to read my review!

Cooper's Food Review: Hard Times Deli

by Cooper Acuff

Hard Times Deli is a sandwich shop on Marshall Avenue in Memphis. This place has been slammed with customers the past couple of weeks because it has just recently opened and is purely exquisite. You will not be disappointed with the environment as it is filled with good vibes. Hard Times pulls off simplicity like no other; especially in sandwich

shops, simplicity is the way to go.

Upon my venture, I had the opportunity to try four different sandwiches; however, my sole disappointment was that because I went late in the day, I missed out on the Spicy Italian. I started with what I expected to be my favorite: the Buffalo Chicken Caesar. This is definitely a modern and more complex take on the sandwich while still

maintaining those classic features and flavors. As someone who has eaten many buffalo chicken sandwiches, I was extremely impressed with their ability to not let the buffalo flavor overpower; the balance between the caesar and buffalo flavors were perfect. Lastly, I had the Meat and Potatoes, which is roast beef with salt and vinegar chips, the Turkey Bacon Ranch, and the Chopped Cheese.

I urge all you boring

sandwichers out there to take the leap and add this to your repertoire. Every sandwich I had was great, and I would highly suggest that you visit Hard Times and choose what sounds most appetizing as they simply do not have a bad sandwich. My pick is absolutely the Buffalo Chicken Caesar though. If there is a line out the door, know that Hard Times Deli is worth the wait!

Fine Arts

The Magic Of *Hadestown* Captivates Audiences

by Braylon Jackson



This January, the ECS Fine Arts Department delivered their production of *Hadestown*, a musical that intertwines the love stories of Orpheus and Eurydice with Greek gods, Hades and Persephone. In the story, Orpheus (played by Keller Todd) must find his way to Hadestown to rescue Eurydice (played by Meredith Rowland), while Hades (played by Cooper

Gordon) and Persephone (played by Ava Saenz) face their own challenges in their relationship.

The story of *Hadestown* develops a complex comparison to the gospel as it pushes themes such as love, loss and grief. Though love can be fulfilling and frequently offer lessons that last a lifetime, the kind of love

we show each other on earth isn't permanent. The play demonstrates how these strong connections can be broken through the relationship of Orpheus and Eurydice.

The audience was captivated by the tug of war that existed between these characters as they struggled with decisions that would impact both their lives, further mirroring the daily Christian struggle while pursuing Christ.

The music of *Hadestown* helps in understanding the plot, but also aligns with the way that we view the world. For example, the song "Living It Up On Top" highlights the joys that we experience in the world while "Doubt Comes In" exposes that we all have our own doubts in life that lead us to failure. The human soul is not perfect, and that is a theme

that this show embraces strongly. We are all broken souls but we can lean on and trust in the promise of the Lord to guide us.

Through the exceptional performance of "Wait for Me," we were able to see the talent of the crew, who, during this number, controlled the stage's incredible light features and the movements of the lights.

I must also shine a spotlight on the band. The audience has said that the inclusion of the band was not only instrumental in moving the story along, but also in heightening the moods of characters. In conclusion, I would call *Hadestown* another spectacular performance by the ECS Fine Arts Department!

Class Feature: A Survey of Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*

by Wilson Mefford

A Survey of Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* is a class that was started this year by Coach Jordan Thompson. The aim of the class was to explore the series in a way that would be perfect for people who had never read the series and also beneficial to people who had depth into which the class went. In its inaugural run, the class had one first semester class that consisted of seven senior guys. I was fortunate enough to be one of those seven, and I

can honestly say that it was one of the best experiences I've had in a high school class. Coach Thompson did a great job of explaining and teaching through what is a very difficult series of literature. He was able to make it easy to understand and exciting to participate in the class. It was an awesome break from the usual school day and an opportunity to step away from the stress and worry that typically comes

with any class. Not only did we read through the series, but we also got to watch the movies as we finished each book, which aided us in understanding the emotions of the characters and the motivations behind their actions. One of the most enjoyable things we got to do in our class was our final project. For this we were given a loose rubric that allowed us to get creative. Claude Fox and I decided that for our final project we wanted to recreate,

in film, a portion of the final movie. It took us a full week of filming and editing to finish, but we received a 100 on our final exam. If anyone reading has any interest in watching our project, feel free to ask Claude for the recording any time. In conclusion, I truly would recommend this class to anyone who wants to enjoy their next year of high school at ECS.

Sports

Success on the Court

by Dakota Breeden

Last year, the girls basketball team record for the season was 1-24. This season was a remarkable turnaround for the program as they had a record of 19-7. They beat many teams whom they had lost to the previous season including

bigger schools such as St. Agnes, St. Mary's, and St. Benedict. The turnaround even got recognition from John Varlas of the *Daily Memphian*. District play proved to be the toughest competition of the season with the

team finishing fourth in the district. Graduating seniors Natalie Regel, Elizabeth Avery, and Akuel Nyok will be dearly missed. What a great way to end their high school basketball careers!



Wrestling Makes History



by Knox Bourland

It was a successful season for the ECS wrestling program, its third season after a forty year hiatus. Led by Head Coach Brandon Artiles, the team had a full roster and competed against some top-tier wrestling programs in the city, a nice accomplishment considering ECS did not have a program four years ago.

For the first time in ECS history, the wrestling team hosted a match in the middle school gym. Also, the program has added its own wrestling room, so there is

now a place for the team to practice on campus. These are all big steps to help the team continue to grow and recruit more students to join.

The highlight of the season was having two students, eighth grader Cayden Clay, and sophomore Bryant Gengenbach, qualify for the state tournament. Bryant represented our school well, and Cayden Clay placed 5th in his weight class, becoming ECS' first state medalist! I sat down with sophomore wrestler Bryant Gengenbach and asked about his experi-

ence on the wrestling team. Here's what he had to say.

How many years have you been wrestling?

2 years

What made you want to start wrestling?

I did it once in 3rd grade but stopped for some reason. There was an opportunity for me to join last year midway through the season. I'm very glad I did.

What's the most memorable match you have had so far, and why does it stand out?

The most memorable match I've had was at regions this year. I was going against a kid I had lost to last year and I was nervous, but I pinned him in 50 seconds.

How has wrestling helped you grow as a person outside of the sport?

Wrestling definitely grows

you mentally. I feel I've become a lot more disciplined in wrestling as well in other areas.

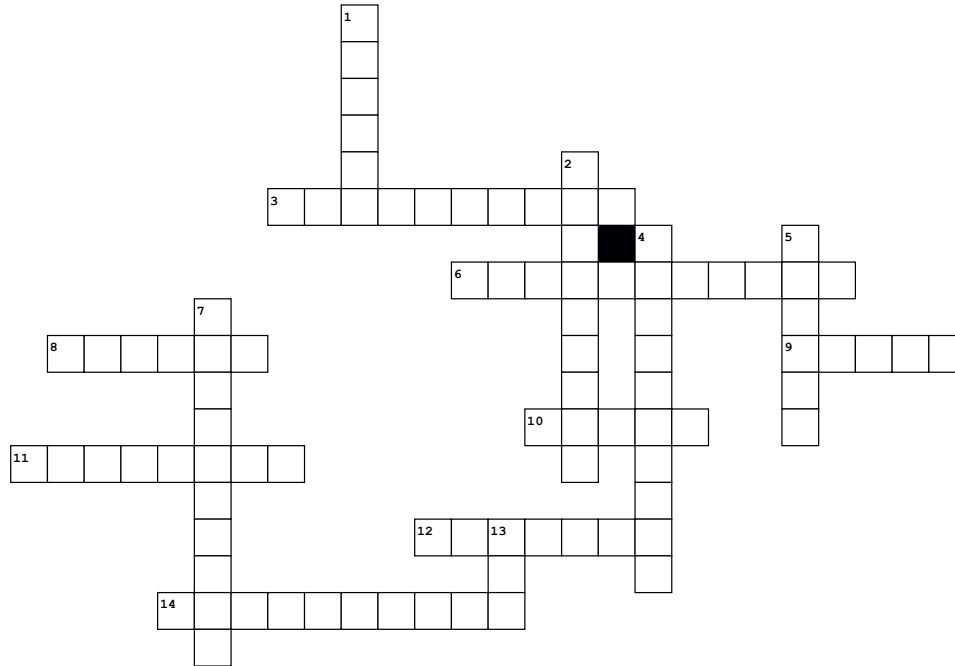
If you could wrestle anyone in the world, who would it be and why?

I'd want to wrestle the state champ in my weight class because I want to prove I can beat him.

Hopefully, Bryant will get a chance to do that over the next two years. ECS owes a debt of gratitude to Coach Artiles for helping to resurrect the wrestling program. The future definitely looks bright for the program, and we look forward to watching it continue to grow!

Fun & Games

Eagle's Eye Crossword



Across

3. Who says, "Give Him Praise"?
6. What ECS alumni is in the MLB right now?
8. What is Charles Crump and Henry House's most common saying?
9. Finish the quote: "You don't want to be in my class... ___"
10. What kind of car does Crews Yokum drive?
11. Who is Mr. Jones wife?
12. Who was the best guest speaker at announcements?
14. What did the senior boys make at SOTO?

Down

1. What college team does Mr Cummins cheer for?
2. Where is the friend group going to college?
4. Who is ECS' favorite lunch lady?
5. What is Mrs Shute's cat's name?
7. Who smokes the best food for the student section?
13. Amount of times Boys lax has beat CBHS?

When there was an explosion on campus but then we got to go the old way to lunch

