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Open Circuits

Eli Sage-Martinson, Simon Dungan-Seaver
Staff reporters

Owl Open Circuits placed 42nd at the Minnesota Ten Thousand Lakes Regional robotics competition on March 2nd, 3rd, and 4th at the University of Minnesota.

After competing in seven qualification matches, the team had an average score that placed them on the lower end of the spectrum, eliminating them from the playoffs.

"I think that you can't look at the placement as an indicator of how successful our team was," science teacher Rebecca Palmer said. "In general, our robot did what we wanted it to do and our students did what we wanted them to do."

Tenth grader Zoe Gale was quick to blame the Open Circuits' alliance partners for their rank. "Our alliances sucked," she said.

During the competition, robots compete in alliances of three. The

OWL team had been hovering near the 25th place mark until, during one of their matches, their alliance partners collided and then fouled, reducing the match score to 4. The Open Circuits dropped more than twenty ranks and spent

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A day in the life of Grace

Grace Kellar-Long
Staff Reporter

FREEPORT, ME - Throughout my time here at Coastal Studies for Girls in Maine, I have experienced many things for the first time. I hiked up a mountain in below zero weather wearing snowshoes. I wrote several lab reports on biodiversity and plankton surveying. I saw a frozen ocean, and an enormous tide pool that was still full of life in the middle of the winter.



The fifteen of us on our hiking trip.

All of these things are super cool, but the coolest thing about them is that they happen every day. So I thought it would be interesting to show what a day last week was like. I think it was a Tuesday.

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The end of the app store

Athena Bolton-Steiner
Staff Reporter

On the week of March 16th-20th, the App Store was removed from some student iPads in the St. Paul Public School District. The decision was made by the Department Of Personalized Learning after getting multiple complaints from teachers and parents.

Students are now expected to download new applications through the Self Service App, where all the apps are district approved.

A lot of students and teachers wonder why the app store is being removed. "They were getting a

lot of feedback from schools that there were some concerns

with the distractions caused by the freedom of students being able to download games," said Joel Ruthenbeck, a technology integration specialist. At OWL, Games on the iPads were considered a big distraction and started to affect the grades of younger students, according to the leadership committee. Apparently, this was a feeling that was shared



Franklin driving the robot in competition

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OPEN NEWS

Regional history day

Logan Doran

Staff Reporter

On Saturday, March 14th, over 60 OWL students participated, performed, and showed off their History Day project at regionals. Seventeen OWL projects moved on to state, and eight projects went home with a honorable mention.

In the morning of regional History Day, all the participants were scheduled to present their projects to judges. While contestants are waiting to present or after they meet with the judges they are free to wander around and examine other projects. After presenting, contestants have to sit around for an agonizing three hour period as they wait for the judges to process all the results. Then they all gather as a school as the results are announced.

There were a total of 17 projects. Of the 17, three were performances, four were exhibits, six were documentaries, and four were websites. 20 out of the 29 History Day students that moved on to state last

month were in the junior division.

Over the next eight days the 29 OWL students will be working hard to perfect their projects for May 2nd.

Overall the most competitive medium was exhibits, because so many students choose to make them. Websites were the least competitive because it is the most recent option, however the amount of kids making History Day websites is rapidly increasing.

Many of the state qualifiers are living, sleeping, and breathing History Day for the next eight days. "Going over the comments from judges, and revising our script over and over until we reach perfection," said 9th grader, Sam Dale-Gau. "We also were provided with a feedback session with Mr. History from the History Day staff." As Tom would say, "congratulations to the honorable mentions!" (You're recognized for your work, but don't have to do any more!)

D2BR inspires real discussions

Atquetzali Quiroz

Staff Reporter

As you walk into the silent room, you see 12 middle and high school students sitting in a circle, inhaling and exhaling with their eyes shut peacefully. What are they doing? You're most likely wondering. Why are they so quiet?

This is the start of an everyday Dare to be Real session.

Dare to be Real (A.K.A D2BR) is a group of student leaders that get together to discuss racism, race and equity. Reading teacher Bridget Leba, who is also the Counselor for D2BR said, "Students at OWL deserve to talk about

their experiences and concerns about racial equity in a safe place." According to Bridget there are about 12 students attending D2BR. Seventh grader and D2BR member, Ed Datta said "I think Dare To Be Real is important because people need to be more educated on what they say about race, it is important to have a school that is aware of racial issues"

"It's ultimate goal is to help students develop skills to become leaders who seek to eliminate systemic, cultural, and individual racism within school

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Boys ultimate

Chua Moua
Staff Reporter

The official season for the Open World Learning Community's ultimate frisbee team, the Manatees, has already begun. Many veterans have returned for the season with the addition of a few new players, and all are hyped for the season.

Besides the new players, the team also has a new coach this year: Liam Shramko. Though Liam may be a new coach to the team, he's not really new at all.

He is an alumni of Open AND the founder and previous captain of the Manatee team back in spring of 2007, the Manatees first official season. He is an active frisbee player and currently a member of Minnesota's professional ultimate frisbee team, the Minnesota Wind Chill.

On the team this year, there are 19 veterans and three new players. As for key players this year, it will definitely include a mix of handlers and cutters. The main handlers will be seniors Joshua Lor, and Collin Marrone, and 11th graders Daniel Le-Tran, Julius Williamson, and Peter Moua. Key players at the cutter position will most

Boys ultimate Continued on page 4



Girls ultimate

Leona DeRango
Staff Reporter

Seven people on either side of the field, watching, waiting. The disc flies up in the air.

Game on.

The unique OWL sport, popularized in the spring of 2007, begins again. Ultimate frisbee has been an increasingly popular sport at OWL with around 50 people playing on the manatee. OWL has three teams of ultimate frisbee players, the boy's A team, the boy's B team, and the girl's team.

The girls team or Wo-Manatees is growing in numbers. This season they have a projected 18 people. "The more, the better," said 10th grader Siena Leone-Getten. In previous years the girls struggled to attain a reasonable amount of players for their frisbee team. Seven people play at a time on the field, and on some occasions last year players had to play with only one sub, forcing many of the girls to play for the whole game.

The Wo-Manatees have taken strides to becoming a more successful team than in the past. This is the third year of the existence of a girls team. Currently the Wo-Manatees have 13 players that attend practices and games regularly. Half of them are new players to the team. The captains this year are 9th grader Doua Ci Lor, Siena Leone-Getten, and 10th grader Paying Lor. In the pre-

Girls ultimate Continued on page 4

D2BR from page 2

and the community," said Bridget. Every session starts out with breathing exercises, directed by Mark Anderson. They start with breathing because it can help clear your mind and calm you down. Afterwards, they start a discussion on personal experiences with racism and race. They usually spend the last 5 minutes of the session discussing the highlights of the day.

Every year the D2BR groups from every school go to a conference. The conference has always started out with somebody talking or giving a speech about their experiences and their perspective on race and racial issues. This year Ruby Bridges talked about her experience as the first African American to segregate into an all white elementary school. Spanish teacher, Fiona Sheridan-McIver, who is another Counselor of D2BR, said that "listening to Ruby Bridges speak was a very powerful experience. It was



A Dare To Be Real meeting.

truly eye-opening to hear her personal story and see her as a human being who went through great challenges." After Ruby Bridges talked students split up and went to the sessions that they picked. A variety of sessions took place, including but not limited to: The shape of things (expressing race through theater), how the media portrays beauty (what is truly beautiful), whose lives matter, etc. After the sessions there was a Brother Ali concert (he is a hip hop artist and community activist).

Dare to be Real members seem to like the group because they can talk openly about race. "I like Dare To Be Real because I am really connected to this topic. I find it really important to myself and the world," said 7th grader Shayla Brooks. 9th grader, Ella King agreed. "I enjoy that everyone is able to feel comfortable and do and say what's they need to say," Ella said, "it's just a place to give ideas and solutions."

Girls ultimate from page 3

vious season of 2014 the girls team won a total of 3 games. That's two more than the year before that. "This season my hope is to have fun and win a couple games," said 9th grader Doua Ci Lor.

According to 9th grader Ella King, a new player this year, "Frisbee helps build teamwork skills, you have to rely on others to be successful in the game."



The girls' Ultimate team.

This year coaching the girls team is Jesse Peterson-Brent. In previous seasons he's coached the both boys teams.

In the opening game of the season the Wo-Manatees lost 7-9 to Moundsview. "It was a close game" said 9th grader Houadraa Lee. The manatees lead almost the whole first half. "Considering the way the first game went, I think the team has a good chance of winning some games this season," said 7th grader Jude DeRango, a new player on the team. Just as Jude predicted, the Wo-Manatees won their next game, 13-6 against Maple Grove.

At the end of the season the girls will have a second chance at playing some of the teams they played throughout the season at the state frisbee tournament held in Blaine Minnesota. It's two days, Saturday and Sunday, full of competitive frisbee playing. Last year the Wo-Manatees team placed 15 out of 20 teams.

"Ultimate frisbee is a sport that OWL has played for a long time and we should keep the legacy going," said Doua Ci Lor.

Robotics brief from page 1

the rest of Regionals trying to climb back to the top.

Open Circuits received the "be FIRST" award for demonstrating the core values of the FIRST organization-cooperation and gracious professionalism.

"I think this demonstrates that we are still a strong presence at competition, no matter our ranking," Rebecca said.

Next year, the team hopes to go to two regionals, allowing for revision of the robot between competitions. They also hope to have two robots, one to use in the competition, and one to practice on in the weeks between the final build day and competition.

Boys ultimate from page 3

likely be 10th graders Yeeling Xiong and Hue Vang, junior Dionte Brown, and 8th grader Tom Hobday.

With the season well under way, the team had its first victory of the season on April 7th at a home game against Benilde St. Margaret's. The score was 15 to 6, and there were many, many great plays by the Manatees: Hue Vang and Tom Hobday with their tremendous layout points, Daniel Le-Tran with his multiple hand blocks, and many more key plays that helped the Manatee stay in the lead.

The Manatee's second game was an away game against Mounds View's B team. It snowed and rained, but the game was not cancelled. The two teams played in the crazy weather and the Manatees won 15 to 2.

After the opening week of the season, the Manatees were in 2nd place in the league standings.

App store deletion from page 1

throughout the district. "Many teachers across the district in middle and high schools were finding students "gaming" during class hour and wanted some way to restrict this," said Ruthenbeck.

In addition to playing games, having them downloaded on to iPads makes it harder to keep track of what is installed. Also the wifi isn't as great as it could be. Storage is easier to maintain if only approved apps are installed, and used the right way, according to math teacher Damon Liberatore.

Many students noticed that their app stores were being removed from their iPads at different times, leading to speculation that high school and middle school iPads were being treated differently. "I believe they decided to go in the order that the iPads were handed out as to who would lose their App Store first. They did not want to do all of the schools at once because it does take up some bandwidth to push this out to the devices," Ruthenbeck said.

Some other students believe that the people who have banned games on their iPads were the first to lose them. Idrissa Davis, Deputy Chief of Technology Services, stated that "The only difference will be the apps that are made available to those various grade levels. For legal reasons, we can not make some apps available to students under 13." This is part of the reason the different grades lost their app stores at different times.

Most teachers at OWL seem to think that removal of the App Store is a good idea. "I guess in some ways it's good, because some kids have trouble not playing video games all the time, and it takes over their life," says science teacher Megan Hall. Spanish teacher Tim Leone-Getten agrees "I think the App Store removal will make it easier for some of the kids to focus on their work instead of taking a lot of time on the games."

Coastal Studies from page 1

I sleep on the top floor of a renovated farmhouse with the fourteen other students, in a top bunk. Last Tuesday, we woke up at 6:45 in the morning, like we always do. Immediately, everyone started putting on long underwear and heavy coats. We moved quickly, because we only had fifteen minutes to be ready to go outside. Why on earth are we going outside? Well, we are going to walk to a field next to the ocean, and sit in it for twenty minutes, without talking. This is called Solo, and we do it every day. It is a time for personal reflection and writing in our journals.

After Solo, we have time for exercise. Sometimes we go for a run, or do push-ups, which are fun, but today it is warm, so we play frisbee outside. Unfortunately, I'm the only person who really knows how to play, but we do throwing drills. One of the Resident Assistants (RAs) went to Carlton, so she helps out with the frisbee stuff.

Next, we put on regular, not super-warm clothes and get ready to start the school day. We have granola for breakfast, which is delicious because it is homemade. Then it is time to actually start classes.

My first class of the day is math. Math is pretty different, because there are only four other girls in my class, and all of our learning is self-paced. I do some quadrilateral proofs, which I am not particularly fond of, and then take a quiz. It has been a little weird adjusting to a percentages style grading system, instead of Standards Based Grading, but overall things are going well.

After Math, it's time for French. You are probably thinking, "Grace, what business do you have taking French? You do not speak it!" This is true. I decided to take French just to see what it was like, and perhaps even learn something. Today we are learning past tense conjugations of verbs, which is not as terrible as it sounds. Next I go into Study Hall, and then finally it is time for lunch. Today we are eating sandwiches and lentil soup with vegetables.

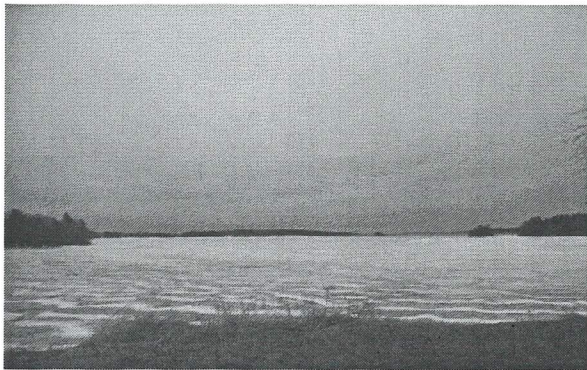
At last, it is time for the more interesting classes, which begin after lunch. These are English, History, Leadership and Marine Science, which all combine to form one big class called Coastal Adventure. Much like A and B days at Open, not every class happens every day. Today is a Marine Science and Leadership day.

For the Marine Science portion of things, we put on our coats, rain pants and other warm things, and drive out to the Freeport Town Dock, which is about ten minutes away. We are here to do some surveys of plankton. We use a probe to measure the temperature of the water (exactly 0

degrees Celsius), salinity and dissolved oxygen. Then, we drag extremely fine nets along the dock, and place what is left inside the nets in jars. After doing this several times, we head on back to the Farmhouse.

In order to see the plankton that we collected, we use compound and dissecting microscopes. There are these little diatoms, which are super cool, because they create glass shells for themselves out of silica. There are ctenophores, which are these squishy jelly-like things that look like gooseberries, and some little tiny eggs belonging to an unidentifiable species. Studies that like these are rather important, because plankton create 50% of the oxygen that we breathe, so it's nice to check up on them and see how they're doing.

Next, we transition into Leadership. We have this class in the yurt, which is a circular tent-like structure of Mongolian origin. We sit in a circle on yoga mats, and have a discussion on methods of resolving conflict. One of the methods is called fierce conversations, and it involves being serious, authentic and vulnerable during a conversation that is trying to resolve conflict. Once the afternoon classes are done, we have dinner. This dinner is special because we have a guest speaker this evening, and she will be eating with us. During dinner, which is hamburgers and corn on the cob, we mostly talk about her



My view from the solo field

current work as a biologist for EnviroLogix. After we have finished eating, we go back up to the yurt, where the speaker presents on the history of genetic sequencing, and what she is working on today. She primarily makes machines that can test if an organism has been genetically modified. Her company is working on making smaller versions of these machines that can be used out in the field. She also said that Whole Foods once asked her company for a GMO test for water! I thought that was hilarious.

After the talk is complete, we have Prep Time, when we can relax, do homework, take a shower, or do whatever it is we feel like doing. I start writing the my lab report on the plankton surveys that we conducted earlier in the day. At 9:20, we have Closing Circle. This is a time to debrief what happened during the day and make plans for how tomorrow. We also do a go-around question, usually sharing our highs and lows of the day. At last, at 10:00 at night, it's time to go to bed.

Of course, not every day is quite this action-packed, but this is just a small portion of interesting classes and experiences I have had at Coastal Studies for Girls.

Open Circuits: how it looks from the front

Eli Sage-Martinson
Staff Reporter

January 3rd. Six weeks left.

The team sits in clumps of three and four, scattered around the Idea Lab. The remains of a pancake breakfast are scattered across the tables. Students write on the whiteboards that line the walls, drawing designs for intricate machines. Rebecca paces across the center of the room, glancing at each of the blueprints in turn.

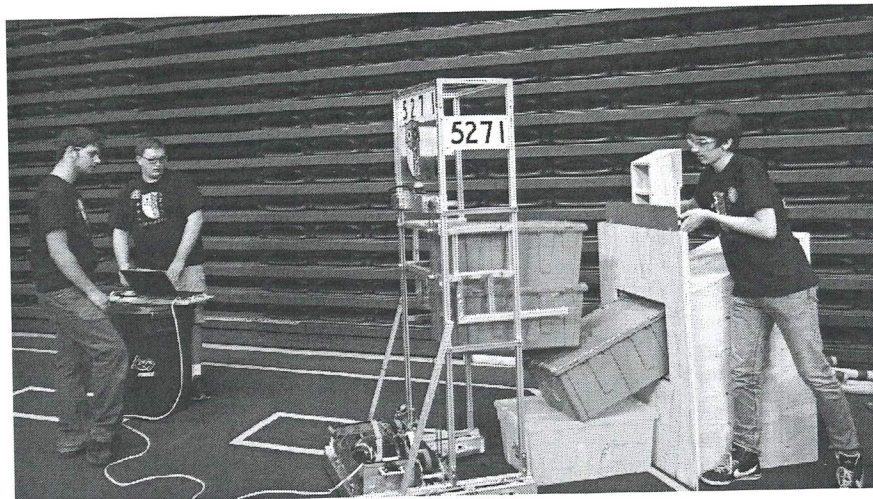
This year's challenge had been dropped two days before, on Saturday. The robotics team was already hard at work.

Rebecca calls the groups back together after half an hour. The students gather in a circle, presenting their ideas to the larger team in turn. Within ten minutes, a debate erupts over the type of lifting mechanism. Factions supporting an elevator, a scissor lift, and garbage truck-style claw draw diagrams of their ideas on the board, criticizing the others for being too unbalanced, too expensive, or too difficult to build. Tom is eventually consulted, and the team settles on an inset elevator. Someone has the idea of using the battery and circuit board to offset the mechanism's weight, belying concerns that the robot might be prone to tipping over.

With the mechanism issue decided, the team moves on to ordering parts. Several members of the build team divide the current design into a list of mechanical components. They read the list to senior Collin Maroney, who quickly finds and orders the parts online.

February 4th. Two weeks left.

A month later, the robot's due date approaches. Members of the build team crouch around the nearly-finished machine, hurriedly unscrewing the axle-holder in order to shift it upwards a few inches.



The drive team practicing before a match.

The programming team enters the workshop, laptop in hand. "We think we fixed the encoder," 10th grader Max Leifheit announces, "can we test it?" Senior Erik Youngquist glances up from his work. "Not for at least half an hour. It's going to take

us a while to get this secured again."

The senior's response is greeted with groans from the programmers. Both teams are dangerously aware of the coming deadline, and both still have a mountain of work to get done.

Stress plays clearly on the faces of the build-

ers as they painstakingly move the metal beam and on the faces of the programmers as they impatiently wait, checking over their code one more time.

February 17th. 1 day left.

On the last day before the robot must be bagged- sealed and shipped to the compe-

tition center, several weeks

in advance of the tournament- the team gathers in the music room. Silence reigns as the programmers set up their machine, aligning its wheels with the tape markings on the ground. Rebecca leans forward, watching carefully from her seat in the stands.

Robotics Extended continued on page 7



Collin controlling the robot from the driver's station.

"Alright," 9th grader Sam Dale-Gau says, crouching behind the laptop, "cross your fingers. We're testing autonomous." He takes a deep breath, tapping a button.

The robot immediately whirs to life. Its arms whirr skyward, shooting up the elevator shaft. Plastic fingers catch on the rim of a green plastic recycling can, lifting it well off the ground. So far, so good.

The robot drives forward, pushing a grey box into its slanted indentation. The machine's arms descend, setting the green bin on top of the grey tote. Its 'fingers' snap loudly into place under the tote's edge. Motors whine, lifting the stack of containers off the ground.



The robot making a 4-tote stack with an opposing team.

Task complete, the robot turns and drives itself over a carefully marked tape line.

The team cheers. The autonomous code is in working order. They will be ready for competition.

April 3rd. Competition.

The four-man drive team paces up the long ramp. Tenth graders Eli Mangan and Franklin Bajenski pull the robot upwards, wheeling a cart up the wooden surface. Bright light pulses ahead and rock music blares, getting louder and louder.

The team reaches the top of the ramp, stepping into the stadium. The stands that surround them are packed with fans. The arena, to their left, is filled with teams hurriedly preparing their robots for the game. The Open Circuits team takes their place in a box marked with blue tape. They wait as the current match progresses, robots screeching across the carpeted playing area. A buzzer sounds, denoting the end of the match.

"Come on," a referee calls, "we're behind schedule. Let's get set-up done quickly."

The drive team springs to action. Collin, Franklin, and Eli Mangan wheel the robot to the arena's entrance, shouting to be heard over the rock music as they coordinate their movements. They set the robot in a predetermined location, lowering its arms around a

recycling bin.

9th grader Eli Sage-Martinson sets the driver station on a shelf installed in front of a thick glass window marked with a blue one. To his left, the team's alliance partners set up their own stations in front of

windows two and three. Eli plugs a laptop into the field system, waiting nervously for the communication lights to turn green. He sighs as they do, stepping aside to let Collin take his place in front of the controls.

The M.C. waves the Open Circuits flag, eliciting a wave of applause from those in the stands, before moving on to the other five teams in the arena. "Ready," the announcer calls, "set, rush!"

The robots whirr to life, performing their pre-programmed autonomous code. The Open Circuits robot lifts a bin and a tote, driving across the field. The machine has successfully performed its task, but both alliance partners choked. No points will be scored.

A buzzer sounds, and Collin steps up to the joystick. Eyes locked on the field, he navigates the robot across the arena. Eli Mangan grabs a stack of totes, stepping up to a plexiglass chute. The two high-schoolers work together, Collin positioning the robot near the chute's mouth as Eli slides tote after tote down the shaft.

Once the robot is fully loaded, Collin backs up, setting the stack of boxes on a scoring platform to earn ten points. He drives back toward the chute, but the buzzer blares and the robot stops. The match is over.

April 3rd. After competition.

The team sits in the partially deconstructed pit, leaning on tables or sitting in folding chairs. They are brutally tired- it's been three long days of getting up before the sunrise- and a little disappointed with their final ranking, but hopeful as well. There's a quiet undercurrent of conversation about the winners, what worked and what didn't.

With the lessons of the past two years under their belt, next season might just be their best one yet.

Misophonia is real

Theo Sage-Martinson
Staff Reporter

Do you feel a strong rush of emotions every time you hear chewing or other mealtime noises?

If you agreed with the question above you may have Misophonia. Misophonia is a neuropsychiatric disorder that has only recently been studied and classified. In fact, Misophonia has only been a disorder for about a year. Misophonia has no known treatment. A variety of treatments have been attempted, but none with notable success. The only real solution from people with misophonia is to attempt to avoid potential sources of conflict.

Misophonia is classified on a scale from one to ten. Group one leaves the room often and is generally annoyed while group ten has violent outbreaks.

One of the worst parts of misophonia is that nearly no one knows about it. This can lead to difficulty when trying to explain it. If the person that you are talking to knows your trigger sound they almost always say "deal with it" and then make that noise in your ear. I happen to know this because it happens all the time. It's not funny and it was never funny.

"Snoring makes me want to rip my hair out," said Kim Gough, a facebook user. There are many other misophonia stories out there. I suggest you read them. They range from stories of general anger to a college student who is forced to take school online, a 14 year old who can not talk to her mother, a New York IT worker who wrote a song about misophonia, and even a woman whose coworkers had to take a misophonia awareness course.

Think before you act. Misophonia is a real thing, and for those affected can be a serious source of frustration and angst.

Fraquetball Playoffs

Tou Xai Moua
Staff Reporter

After a tiring, competitive season of broken ping pong balls, saves, and goals, the fraquetball playoffs are finally here, now the real game begins.

The playoffs are a series of games that occur each year, carefully scheduled by Commissioners based on how well you do during the regular season. If you lose your scheduled game you are out and will no longer be able to participate in the playoffs.

The playoffs start with one-game series. One-game series are the first teams to start the playoffs, they have to win the game to be able to move on. Next are the two-game series, these are the games up next on the bracket. There are usually 3 games in two-game series. To move on a team has to win 2/3 games. These series will keep on continuing and

Women's World Cup

Zhanna Dunagan
Staff Reporter

This summer I am attending the World Cup! You might be wondering if I have a time machine, because the men's World Cup was last year in Brazil and it only happens once every four years. Sadly time machines have yet to be invented, but the great news is there is another World Cup this summer in Canada. It is the Fifa Women's World Cup Canada 2015.

The men's and women's World Cups are every 4 years, one year apart. This year the Women's World Cup is hosted in Canada! This will be the seventh Women's World Cup. There are 24 countries competing in six different groups from 6 continents. The opening ceremonies are on June 6, and end the final is on July 5.

I have been asked the question of who will win this World Cup. With the friendlies (a friendly is a match between two that is not part of an official tournament) that I have been watching, there isn't one team that is going to dominate. Looking through the winners of the previous world cups, I was very surprised. Besides the USA (ranked 2nd), who has been in the top three for every World Cup, the other countries vary on where they are in their groups.

World Cup Continued on page 10



Abby Wambach in action.

eventually reach five-game series at the end of the playoffs, at which point a team will have to win 3/5 games.

The regular season has been great. Many new teams had joined and it has been a really competitive season. There are also two teams that are undefeated! For 1st lunch "Gumnut" Sam Dale-Gau and Bjorn Holm. They have not yet lost a game and don't plan on falling behind. They came really close to losing when playing against "Fire Breathing Rubber Duckies" Joshua Lor and YeeLeng Xiong, but they pulled through with wins.

In 2nd lunch "Alpha Numericals" Tom Totushek and Damon Liberatore defeated many teams including their rivals "The Flying Pickles" Chua Moua and Daniel Le-Tran

Fraquetball Continued on page 9

Fraquetball from page 8

twice,
coming out on top for the season.

The seedings for the Fraquetball season:

1st lunch

1. "Gumnut" Sam Dale-Gau and Bjorn Holm
2. "Fire Breathing Rubber Duckies" Joshua Lor and Yeeleng Xiong
3. "King Loozer" Koua Yang and Peter Moua
4. "Los Geezers" Leo Bickelhaupt and Tim Leone-Getten

2nd lunch

1. "Alpha Numericals" Tom Totushek and Damon Liberator
2. "The Flying Pickles" Chua Moua and Daniel Le-Tran
3. "Flying Cats" Maiingan Sheritt-Stone and Franklin Bajenski
4. "TnT" Tom Hobday and Tou Xai Moua

Commissioners Koua Yang, Daniel Le-Tran, and Peter Moua, started organizing games for the playoffs since Friday, March 20th.

"We weren't really sure about the bracket since a lot of teams have dropped out," says Commissioner, Koua Yang.

Teams have been dropping because of the lunch switch when 2nd quarter ended, since each teammate has a different lunch they are unable to play, which leads to the team dropping out.

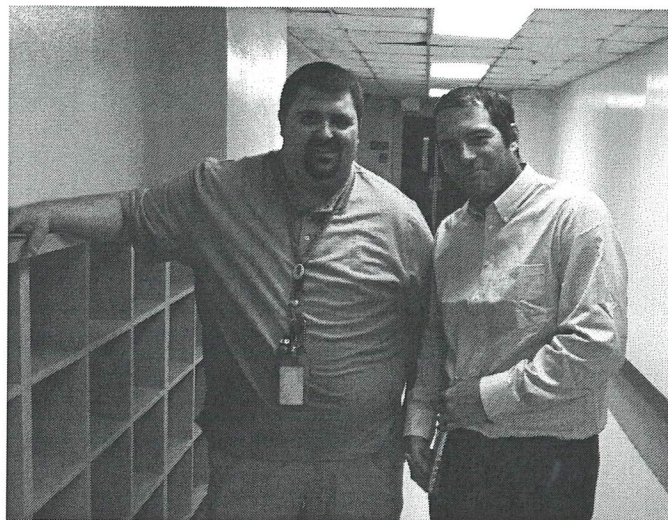
"We're gonna be at the top," says Chua Moua, feel-

ing confident for his team "The Flying Pickles", "We always do."

"I have no doubt that The Flying Pickles will do very well until they hit me and Damon's team and at which the outcome will be the same as last year," said Tom, The Flying Pickles' arch-enemy.

Even if you didn't join Fraquetball this year, you can still come support your friends.

"It's gonna be pretty intense. You better watch out for Gumnut, we're coming for you."



Defending champion Tom and his new Partner Damon.

Scott Chmura

How many years have you been at OWL?

Five years.

What are your plans for next year?

Going to Century College and hopefully becoming a teacher.

What will you miss most about OWL?

How nice the community is and how forgiving the teachers are.

What is your favorite band, book, or movie?

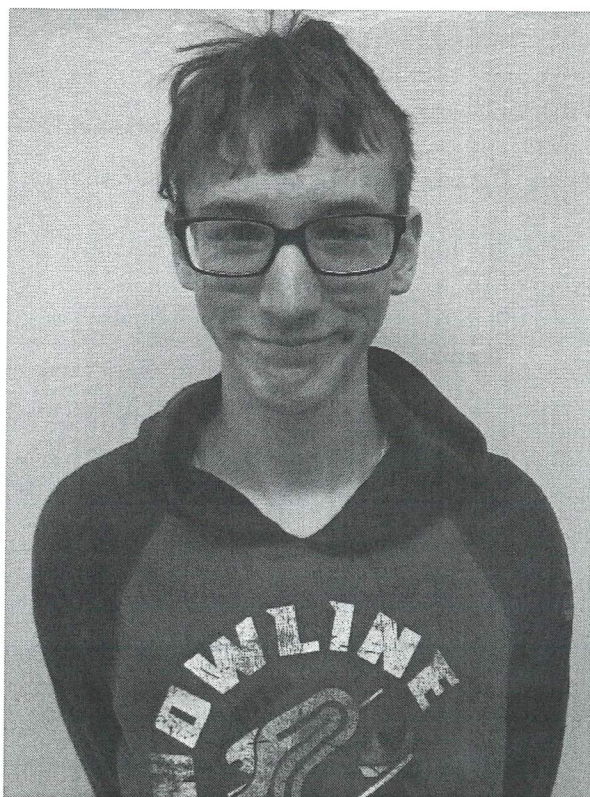
The Artimis Fowl series.

What was your favorite class in high school?

Any social studies class.

Do you have any last advice for OWL?

Shut up and do your work.



World Cup from page 8

Teams such as Sweden (ranked 5th), Germany (ranked 1st), Norway (ranked 11th), Brazil (ranked 7th), and China (ranked 16th) are like that. Other newer teams that have never been in the top four besides the 2011 world cup are France (ranked 3rd) and Japan (ranked 4th), who have a high chance at being top four again.

Groups

Groups are that one thing that could lead a very good team out of the group stage, or in fact, lead them back home. The groups are chosen at random, so you don't know who you're going to get. There are a few exceptions though.

First of all, there can't be two teams from the same geographical zone. The second exception is the organizing committee seeds 6 teams (one for each group) This year, the top 6 seeded teams are: Japan, USA, Germany, France, Canada (ranked 8th), and Brazil. In every World Cup there is usually a group of death (meaning that there is a group with at least 3 really good teams) This year, the group of death is Group D with USA, Sweden, Australia (ranked 10th) and Nigeria (ranked 33rd). 3 of these 4 teams are in the top 10 list.

Group E is going to be tough too, With Brazil, Korea Republic (ranked 18th), Spain (ranked 14th), and Costa Rica (ranked 37th), all having a few key talented players, and each has a unique style of play. They might not have the highest rankings, but the top two that move on I think will be in the list for the teams to beat! The top two teams in each group move on to the round of 16. After that is the quarterfinals, then the semi finals, the third place game, and then finally, the final!

Teams

There are a few teams that I would watch out for. France is definitely one of those teams. They are a fast team, with very technical players. They resemble Barcelona, when they are at their best, I think that they have a very good chance at winning.

Though the US is the #2 ranked women's team in the world, 2014-2015 have not been very good years. They are not seeking the scoring and beast mentality with some of these newer teams, and I will be surprised if they make it out of the quarterfinals. However, they do have scorers like forward Abby Wambach, who has scored the most goals in women's international matches, with 178, and forward Alex Morgan, who has had 49 international goals and 32 assists

in 77 matches! She will put the ball past countless goalkeepers. Midfielder Megan Rapinoe can skillfully manage the midfield and send balls into the box. They also have a pretty good bench.

Germany is another team to watch out for. They have already won two World Cups, and now with some newer players, they are looking for the gold. Wouldn't that be weird; for Germany to win the men's AND women's world cups. Brazil is another team to watch out for. Lately they have been somewhat disorganized on the pitch, but I think they will pull it all together for cup. They have Marta,

a forward who has scored 91 international goals in 91 appearances. She may be the best player in the world and has the sickest moves. They also have Christiane, forward and Erika, defender/forward, who work great with the talented Marta.

Sweden. First of all, their coach Pia Sundhage used to coach the U.S. National Team. Since she knows most of the US team, they could have an advantage. Though, the Swedish team should not be looked down upon. They have talent up front and on defense. Canada, I think, is going to shine in their country. Forward Christine Sinclair has scored 150 international goals and is one of the best strikers in the world, but they also have talent in every position. As of November, Sinclair has scored 148 goals in 214

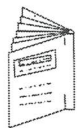


The FIFA women's world cup in Canada.

international matches.

Japan could be a threat to some other top countries too. They have a lot of small technical players who can string together counterattacks easily. Though, by bigger, more athletic teams, they could get outrun and pushed around.

Other teams to watch are Australia, Spain, Norway, China, Nigeria, England (ranked 6th), and Switzerland (ranked 19th). But who knows? Maybe a not as well known country, might come out of the sky and blow us away? We'll just have to wait and see! This summer, make sure that you turn on your T.V's and watch some soccer!



REVIEWS N' STUFF



Dragons: is there one to rule it all?

Antonio Carvale

Staff Reviewer

Dragons.

Ok losers. Let me implant a knowledge into your brain grapes. Dragons are the most badass badasses in the universe. No. That's not an opinion. It's my opinion, which is fact.

And for the record that stupidumb salmon story wasn't even written by me. It was written by my joke of an alter ego "Cartonio Antvale." The difference is that he's considerate, kind, polite and also a sociopath who pops his collar. I'm a total boss who despises people who care about me and am the human epitome of not giving a rip. Also our names are different. Antonio Carvale. Cartonio Antvale. Seriously, it's not that complicated. Grow a brain. But back to what really matters in life. Dragons.

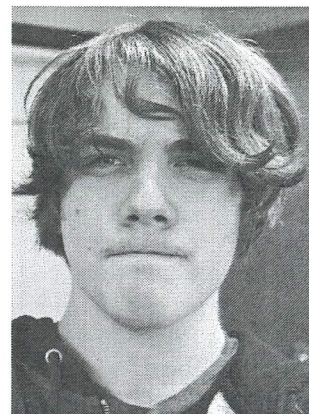
A dragon can and will defeat you. If you think you have the guts to mess with a dragon, plot twist, you don't.

Now there's about four kinds of dragons that anyone cares about: Smaug, Sapphira, the Harry Potter one and

Toothless.

Smaug. Smaug is a loser. He chills in his cave all day and just waits for hobbits to steal his stuff. The only reason anyone cares about him is because he's voiced by Benedict Cumberbatch and apparently that makes fan girls lose their minds and think it's worth caring about. He's extremely overpowered, incredibly lazy, and overall irrelevant to the Lord of the Rings movies. No, not the terrible cash grab of the Hobbit trilogy, Lord of the Rings. The good franchise.

Sapphira. Now honestly



Antonio Carvale

Staff Columnist

Dragons Continued on page 12

The app store is gone, woe is me

Simon Dungan-Seaver

Staff Reviewer

Some of you may have heard about the horrible event that rocked our safe and educational community. The faceless bureaucracy of the district has annihilated the wonderful resource known as the App Store from our iPads.

More importantly, our wonderful friends at district tech have betrayed us by destroying access to this veritable cornucopia of learning and growth. We all thought that district tech was trying to help us become well-versed in the educational environment of the App Store. We thought wrong. They are secretly aligned with the Ministry of Love.

I, like with other students, were surprised by these acts of deceit and treachery. "How dare they!?" protested an anonymous ninth grader.

Others have tried to look cool by saying that they saw it coming. "Guys. They are called "District" tech. That means that they work for the district," said Dan Sullivan, history teacher, in a snarky and condescending voice.

Some examples of things that we will lose include: new people experiencing Gang\$tar Vegas (sleeping or alive), communication skills in N.O.V.A, and reflex building in

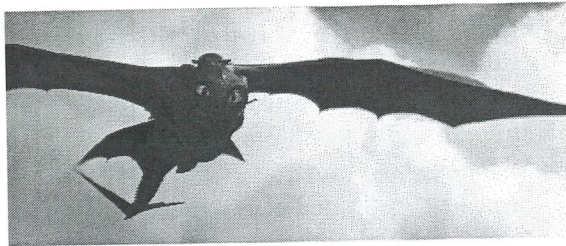
Five Nights at Freddy's 3.

Some see this as "logical" and "educational." They say that now we won't get off track in classes. That the number of N's will drop. Well they won't. In fact, they will go up. See, the App Store is a portal into a realm of education. When you lock that gate, carpet bomb it, then dance on its ruins, you effectively destroy that potential for learning. I am pretty sure learning is tied to the number of N's. Ergo, no App Store, no learning, lot's of N's.

As my friend Aragorn said before the battle of the Black Gate: "Hold your ground! Hold your ground! Sons of St. Paul, of OWL, my brothers, I see in your eyes the same fear that would take the heart of me. A day may come when the courage of men fails, when we forsake our friends and break all bonds of fellowship, but it is not this day. An hour of wolves and shattered shields, when the age of iPads comes crashing down, but it is not this day! This day we fight!! By all that you hold dear in this good school, I bid you stand, Students of Open!"

Dragons from page 11

I had no idea who the flip Sapphira was until people started crucifying me for not caring. Not Aragorn from Lord of the Rings because God forbid I do anything relevant. Eragon. The 2006 movie rocking a 16% on rotten tomatoes best remembered for how forgettable it was and its depressing CGI. So after this news I immediately sprang to the library, picked up the movie Eragon and continued to illegally torrent it on my school iPad.



I watched it. And get this. I actually moderately enjoyed it. And I hate everything. Meaning this must be truly special. The dragon CGI wasn't as sad as the rest of my life and the main dude is sorta hot. Five stars. Movie of the year.

Harry Potter dragon. Now because I'm not a total nerd I don't know or care about the movies or the books that came after the movies as an obvious cash grab. Honestly, I was bored until the 4th act of the second one with the Big snake thing to which I replied "nope, nope nope nope," ejected the dvd and threw it out the window for good measure. I haven't seen any of the other movies but there's probably some dragon in there somewhere. But until they remake the second movie without the snake thing I will spare myself the nightmares and continue to not care.

Toothless. Toothless is the only dragon that matters. Because he is A, adorable, B, may be the end of human civilization as we know it (and I respect that), and C is probably the only tolerable character in any kids movie post 1998. In case you don't know who that is you should get out my sight immediately and also listen to this piping hot slice of knowledge. Toothless's chunk of tail gets ripped off, bummer right? WRONG. His human friend Hiccup makes him a badass piece of dragon machinery making him better than Ezra. So basically he's the Ash j. Williams of dragons. Making him automatically the best dragon. Like there's not even a contest. Alright. You can all go home now. Toothless wins.

If you would like to give me anymore information about why you should be right please, write it all down on a piece of paper and put it in your pocket. Explain it to your mom when she finds it in your jeans when she's doing your laundry. Because she, being the only person in the world who might care, just like the rest of the world, does not.

Alright, later losers.

Advice for the week: You are not special.

-Antonio Carvale AKA Spartacus.

Not your average "hero"

Charon Mousseaux

Staff Reviewer

People may dislike me for saying this, but I don't like superhero movies. Yeah, that's right, I don't like superhero movies.

Now, before you all pick up your torches and pitchforks to go after me for daring to have an opinion, hear this: Whenever I see a superhero movie, all I see is the lone wolf hero that I don't care about having a fistfight with a clichéd villain that I don't care about.

"But Charon," some will say, "you watched Thor - and he is with a team of superheroes! So is the Justice League!" To that, I say yes, I did. And yes, they are. But in Thor, it all ends up as the lone wolf Thor fighting with Loki or whoever it is, because everyone else is busy or whatever. Because if everyone wasn't busy, they all could easily beat Loki or whoever together with their fancy superhero stuff! And that isn't climactic at all. Same with the Justice League.

So, why am I writing about why I hate superhero movies? Well, firstly, I actually love the idea of superheroes. They are cool people like us who save the world again and again -- what's not to love? Thing is, all these movies are either taking it too seriously or making them all just a bar fight with fancy costumes.

And that is why I love the one superhero movie (besides the original Batman, the old black and white one -- but that one is just so bad it's good) that actually did it right. And that movie is Big Hero 6.

I can hear the angry super-geeks protesting again. "But Charon, that's a Disney movie! Disney movies are all princess movies for little kids! And most superhero movies are at least rated T!"

Right, yet not right again, my little whiners. Yes, Disney is famous for its princesses. Frozen was a gigantic hit! But, it also has other movies, too. Anyone remember Mickey Mouse? Bambi? They sure aren't princesses. And yes, Big Hero 6 is only rated PG. But guess what? So is the Incredibles. A movie doesn't need a T or R rating to make it good. (It being rated PG is also a good excuse to drag your younger siblings to go see it with you -- gets you cool big bro/sis points every time.)

So let's stop rambling and start talking about my favorite movie of all time. The story starts with an illegal bot fight.

Yes, you read right. An illegal bot fight in a Disney movie. What now, whiners?

Our protagonist, Hiro Hamada was participating in illegal bot fights. However, he eventually gets caught by the police, which gives his older brother, Tadashi, the perfect opportunity to try to push his brother back to the right direction - college. Hiro decides to make an invention to get into

Big Hero 6 Continued on page 13

Big Hero 6 from page 12

the great “nerd school” that his brother goes to.

Now, I can’t say much more without giving away huge spoilers, so I’ll just talk about what the movie does well in general. After a (certain spoiler-filled event), Hiro actually becomes depressed. The movie doesn’t directly say that he is, but there is a lot of evidence to prove this point. (He doesn’t eat, pushes away help, etc.) The feelings that Hiro is feeling are also reasonable and relatable - it’s very realistic.

The movie also has good use of humor, too. One moment, it’s sad, but then it slowly becomes a funny scene. For example, while Hiro was feeling depressed, he received a message from his friends. They all wish him well, and it ends with one of them saying, “Hiro, if I could have any superpower right now, it would be the ability to crawl through this camera and give you a big hug.” This is good because the humor gives some relief between the

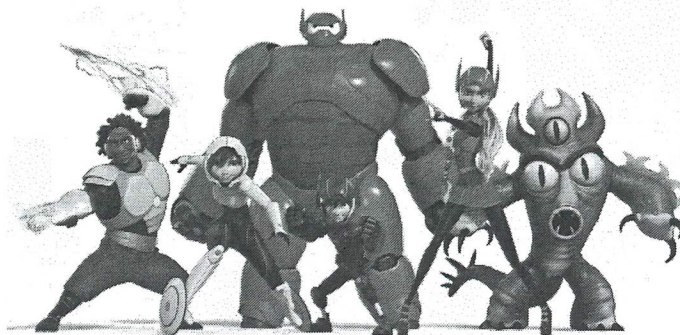
action or sad scenes.

Finally, teamwork. It wouldn’t be *Big Hero 6* without six characters, after all. With Hiro, Tadashi’s other four friends join the team, along with a robot that Tadashi built, named Baymax. And they use their teamwork to defeat the villain. No lone wolf Hiro (that was a really lame pun, I’m sorry) here.

I recommend this movie, as it is a breeze of fresh air in a genre that seemed to have no more creativity left to use. It is also the type of movie I love to see again and again, not just for the plotline, but also just to see the stunning animation!

I give this movie a 9/10, there were some small things

they could have done better, like the villain’s motivation, but it is still very enjoyable. You all should go see it so that I can talk to you guys about it without spoiling it all.



The team of heroes.

13 reasons why

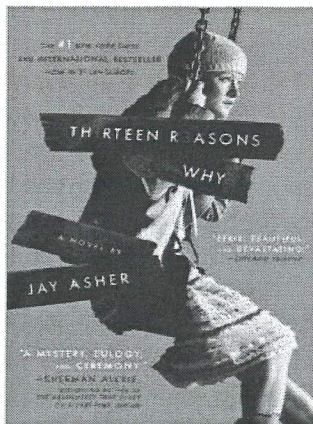
Jude DeRango
Staff Reviewer

“Thirteen reasons why”, on the surface, is a good book. It was an interesting book while I was reading it, but when I put it down and actually thought about it, and realized it was pretty moronic.

The events of the story take place in a small town called Cresmont, which has one high school, one park, and one hospital. It’s a small place, and people tend to generally know everyone. This setting helps the story’s events all come together.

The story starts with our protagonist, Clay Jensen, mailing a mysterious package. He is full of mixed emotions, which leaves the reader wondering, what the heck has happened?

Clay goes on to recount how he received the shoe box, and inside discovered thirteen tapes from Hannah Baker, a girl



13 Reasons Continued on page 14

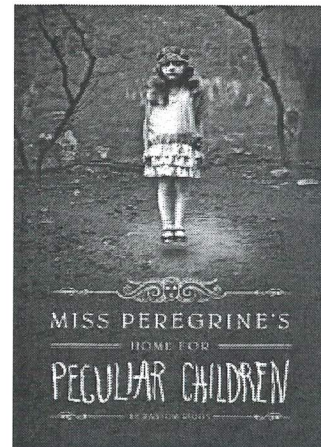
Miss Peregrine’s Home For Peculiar Children

Molly Baumgardner
Staff Reviewer

Have you ever felt like you were transported or even felt like you were in a book? You’ll feel like that when you read *Miss Peregrine’s Home For Peculiar Children*.

Jacob Portman is a 16 year old boy who as a child loved listening to his grandfather tell stories about peculiar children.

Jacob had a very good relationship with his grandfather. He loved to listen to the stories and just being around him. Once Jacob got older, he stopped believing and thought his grandfather was crazy. Little did he know, his grandfather had the power to see monsters. When his grandfather dies from an attack from one of the monsters, Jacob does not take the death very well. He gets very depressed and doesn’t want to interact with friends and family. So his parents take him to see a therapist. His ther-



Miss Peregrine Continued on page 15

Dwarf Fortress is good clean Fun*

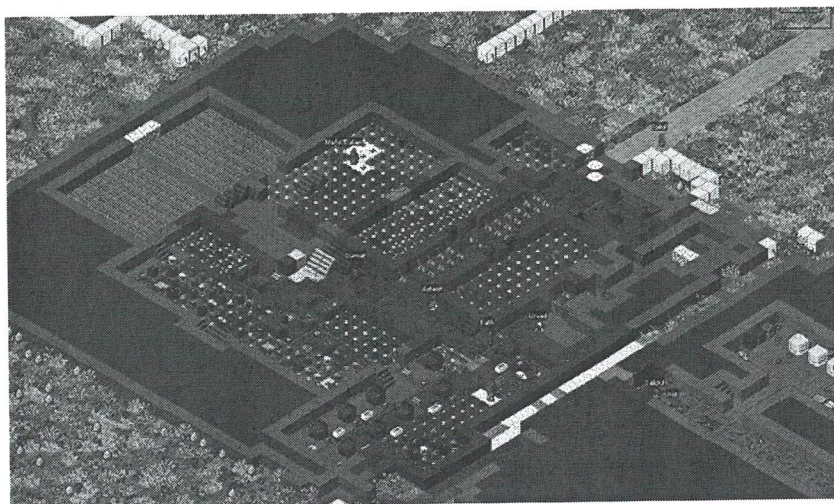
Oliver Morin
Staff Reviewer

You have arrived. After a long journey from the Mountainhomes into the wilderness far beyond, you have finally set up an outpost for the glory of all of Dwarfkind. A new chapter of dwarven history begins in this game, Uristgeshud, "Dwarffortress". Strike The Earth!

Thus begins the grand adventure of Dwarf Fortress, or DF, a single-player management game focusing on insane hairy drunken midgets with axes and their struggle to survive in a hostile world. Dwarf Fortress was developed by Bay12 Studios and released for the PC in October of 2002 for free.

The object of the game is to have your fortress survive hundreds or possibly thousands of sieges, famines, and maybe even insanity ep-

Dwarfs Continued on page 16



A dwarf fortress.

13 Reasons from page 13

he had worked with at a movie theater and had a crush on. Hannah had committed suicide a few weeks earlier.

The thirteen tapes are her form of a suicide note, holding every person who receives the tape accountable for her death. The only person spared is Clay. Hannah's story sends Clay on a whirlwind of emotions, as he follows the map provided, all over town following Hannah's tale of her death.

The tapes starts with her first reason, that Justin Foley, Hannah's first kiss, started to spread rumors about her being "easy" which led to her new reputation as the new kid in town. This one had a ripple effect on the rest of the story. Some of the other reasons didn't fit into the story. Such as number three, after a disagreement, Jessica Davis a former friend of Hannah's, hit her in the face and left a scar. And Clay's own story, number nine, in which Hannah assures him he had nothing to do with her death, and created a scene where they kissed. Which seemed invented, the reader didn't know about that even though it's from Clay's point of view, and he has a massive crush on Hannah. Some were amplified by her own emotions. Like, eleven, Jenny Kurtz gave her a ride home after a party and knocked down a stop sign, which resulted in a fatal car accident later on. At the time Hannah was drunk and didn't think to do anything about the sign. And later when she learns about the accident, she's an emotional wreck and blames herself for not doing anything.

A good amount of Hannah's points were completely justified, and a majority of the incidents were amplified by her own emotions, but I think she was thinking about it the wrong way. She tried to get to the source of each problem, saying that other people's actions, which were in some cases far more hurtful, were the cause of the way other people act-

ed. A cause and effect.

The book was a page turner, it was easy to get caught up in the emotions of the characters, and the fast pace of the story. The way the story was played out left you wondering what happens next, who the next person is, what they did. It has an aura of mystery that keeps the reader hooked.

After reading the book I took some time to evaluate it. These thoughts had been in the back of my mind as I had read it, and they surfaced then. The story had numerous loopholes and points of frustration. It's the story of an embittered girl blaming others for her death. The protagonist was shallow, just a "nice guy." It gets no deeper than that. It would have been much more interesting to read it from the point of view of one of the people that had actually been responsible, and if Hannah had had some more valid reasons for blaming other people for her death. It had so much potential to be a much better book than it was.

The way the author decided to write the story gets to be confusing. It flips between Hannah's tapes, dialogue, and Clay's thoughts. They were marked, but it was sometimes hard to differentiate one from another, and when one part of the story is especially intriguing it makes you want to skip over the italicized chunks of text and straight back into the tapes. Another thing that got in the way was that throughout the book, Clay follows her story on a map around the small town, and the constant change of scenery was sometimes unnecessary or slightly confusing.

In conclusion, it was a good read. If you want a book that keeps your interest, this is the book for you. It was good while it lasted, and it was easy to get caught up in. But don't say I didn't warn you. When you take a step back to analyze, you'll see my frustration.

Miss Peregrine from page 13

apist suggest traveling to Wales, where his grandpa grew up. He goes with his dad and around the town and strange things seem to happen.

When Jacob finds the old house, he goes through the time loop. The time loop is what protects the children from the monsters, and keeps them in their own time period in WWII. In reality they would be eighty years old or older, but they stay the same age they were during WWII. When the bombing started, Mrs. Peregrine used her powers to create this time loop that keeps the children safe. Since they're in the time loop, they keep reliving the night of the bombing, but it doesn't affect them anymore. Jacob went through the time loop when he walked through the basement of the house. He fell down through the floors and when he woke up, there were the children staring at him.

He meets many of the children from the stories his grandfather told him, about when Jacob travels through the time loop, which gives you the ability to travel through time. There he meets Emma the girl of fire, Bronwyn the strong girl, Claire the girl with the back mouth, Fiona girl of the jungle, Hugh the bee boy, Millard the invisible boy, Horace the boy with prophetic dreams, Olive the levitating girl, and Enoch the boy who brings things to life. They all work together to take down the monsters called hollows and hollowgast.

All of the characters come with their own personality. The character development is absolutely amazing! Jacob didn't ever think that he could ever have powers or could fight monsters. He goes from being a normal teenager to someone who has a special power and can fight monsters. He was a very quiet kid until he met the the children. He became instant friends with them and unlocked a power

he'd never imagine to have.

Another good example of character development is Emma. Emma and Jacob met when Jacob went through the time loop. He didn't realize it at first that he actually went through it until he met Emma. Emma is a very "do it herself" kinda girl. She doesn't like being told what to do and she definitely does not like it when a new person she doesn't know comes in to her house. Emma does not like being a damsel in distress. She'll fight for her life even when it's dangerous.

When Jacob met Emma, she believed that he was a spy. She was very stubborn and rude. But once he got to know her, she warmed up to him, and things start to change! Despite that he warmed her up, she's still stubborn at times and is super good at taking down monsters. There is so much creativity in this book. You get sucked in and you feel like you're in the book. Ransom Riggs, the author, has created a novel you can enjoy with yourself, your grandma, your mom, your siblings, your grandpa and your dad. Anyone!

Ransom Riggs created brilliant laugh out loud characters. Their personalities are unique and the mystery keeps you reading. Riggs also includes haunting photographs that he took himself. He is a brilliant photographer and an amazing author. He didn't stop either. He also wrote *Hollow City*, which is the sequel, and that came out in January of 2014. They have also released the graphic novel version of the first novel in November of 2013. The types of characters are amazing and it will be hard to choose a favorite. It's truly amazing and that's probably why they'll be making a movie out of it in 2016.

Fallout: the real Game, the best game

Yaseen Hayward
Staff Scumbag

What was made in 1997, revolutionized the RPG genre, and is still fun to play to this day? *Fallout*.

The first *Fallout* game was developed by Interplay Entertainment and Black Isle Studios. It was published on September 30th 1997 by Bethesda Softworks, the publishers of the *Elder Scrolls* games. Most kids would likely know about *Skyrim* ('cuz that stuff is real good). *Fallout 2* was released the next year and *Fallout 3* in 2008. The most recent game, *Fallout: New Vegas* was released in 2010. There were some other ones that weren't very good and I never played and like, four that were cancelled. And there might be a *Fallout 4* in the future but that's all speculation. Hopeful hope speculation.

The story of *Fallout* is fairly simple. In an alternate universe, after World War 2 the world focused on atomic

energy, and with that atomic bombs. Everyone lived happily and peacefully, hoping not to get nuked by everyone else. And then the Energy Crisis hit. Everyone went to war and started killing each other for the last few gallons of oil, the U.S. annexed Canada for their oil, and the Soviets invaded Alaska to get at it. The European Commonwealth went to war with the Middle-East for their dwindling supplies. Then it all culminated in the "Great War." Which lasted all of two hours, as the planet, save for Australia because nobody hates Australia, was consumed in radioactive fire.

The surface of the planet was lifeless, save for ghouls, people who were so irradiated that their skin falls off but they remain alive, and horrible monstrosities created for the war as well as animals who were irradiated so that they resembled Lovecraftian horrors. It seemed as though

Fallout Continued on page 17

Dining at Vizzi's

Nik Logue

Staff Reviewer

So immediately after entering the "lavish" eatery known as Vizzi's steakhouse (that's right vegans, they're out there and they're growing fast!) a "stranger in a strange land" vibe hit me. There was a group with a total of eight people sitting at my left side dressed like it was their wedding day. I was wearing a Star Wars t shirt and my favorite yoga pants.

I was waiting for so long, I could have eaten 10 bowls of ramen in that time. Finally, my reservation beeper went off and I was led by a waiter who cleared the table of its three out of four chairs, which reminded me of my loneliness.

I can't remember my incompetent waiter's name so let's just call him Leo (for obvious reasons). Ordering the drink was easy, it's good to know that Mountain Dew never changes, but that is when I had to decipher the complex code of the "lavish steakhouse". Everything was written in Italian! Plus Leo couldn't even explain the simplest foods.

"How's your sirloin?" I asked

"Uhh... It's pretty good... It comes from good cows," Leo said bluntly.

"No I'm talking about the lobster sirloin." I corrected.

"Wait... This place has lobster sirloin?"

So after arguing with Leo about what sirloin is, I was finally brought my food platter of way too fancy steak and/or lobster sirloin with amateur made french fries (that is a proud statement for every other chain restaurant ever). For a short period of time I got a kick of enjoyment by bathing my charred bread in the steak juice and adding fries to it, but then the "newlywed" diners started looking at me funny. What did they expect? They're human too, right?

I suppose I should start reviewing the food now. The steak and/or lobster hit my taste buds like wet, flavored sandpaper. It was too unfamiliar for enjoyment, but I was never more hungry in my life, so I had to just take one of my four knives and forks and just suffer through it. After five minutes after shoving the steak and/or lobster into my mouth by the pound, I was brought my check of... \$104.50! Holy crap, how am I going to pay my rent next month?!

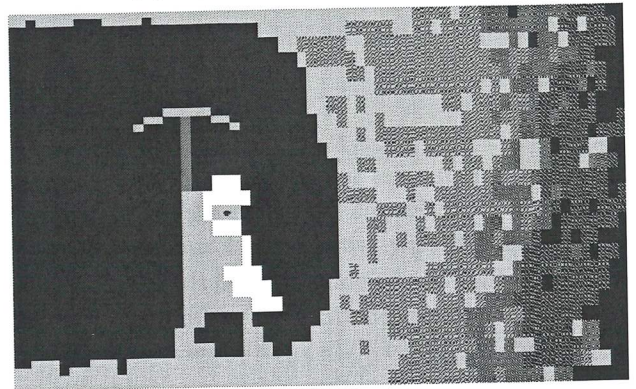
If you are reading, stay away from fine dining of any sort! Seriously, I could go buy a steak for \$6.00 and cook it my way (the better way). So all in all, who needs that "lavish" food? Not me. Instead, I'm going to Skinner's, where the waitresses call you hon and where they decorate with Christmas lights year round. It's a Minnesotan paradise of a dive bar. Good bye and good riddance, Leo!

(Editor's note: The Purple Press has been unable to confirm whether or not the aforementioned restaurant actually exists.)

Dwarfs from page 14

idemics and there is no winning screen, just a losing screen. This does NOT, however, mean DF is not fun. On the contrary, the general opinion of the DF community is that losing is Fun. (No, that's not a grammatical error. Fun differs from fun in that Fun generally involves more magma, more cliffs, and more giant walking bronze statues and/or Forgotten Beasts.) However, the game's learning curve is comparable to a large overhang, the controls are keyboard-only and the graphics are limited to ASCII text, though the game does support texture packs.

Most players prioritize learning the various keyboard shortcuts, utility programs, and practical knowledge over



A dwarf mining in Dwarf Fortress

tricks for survival, because there aren't really any tricks to learn at first. I recommend the Lazy Newb Pack for any new players. It's a different launcher for DF that includes various utilities, texture packs and settings that can take some getting used to, but when mastered can cut through the impenetrable fog of inaccessibility that surrounds the graphics, controls and interface.

I give DF a score of 3 out of 5 wheels of dwarven cheese because the amount of Fun involved is brutal when you are starting out, but when you get going you can begin absolutely OBLITERATING anything that stands in your way. Let me reiterate that Fun and fun are not mutually exclusive. Most of the fun from DF comes from hilarious failures. (To see what I mean, Google "Boatmurdered".)

Finally, some tips. First, magma solves all problems. Fire ruins the booze. Second, it's okay to kill someone and make a suit out of their skin, you just have to laugh like a madman beforehand and give the suit a name afterwards. Third, if you give a dwarf a fire he will be warm for a night. If you set a dwarf on fire he will be warm for the rest of his life. Fourth, try to do as many absurd things as possible. Building indestructible structures out of soap is good for this. So are machines that break the second law of thermodynamics. Finally, if you have started the game, you've already lost.

Thank you, and remember: Burning elves are funny. Now build a tower so tall that we can mine the stars themselves! Praise to Armok, God of Blood!

the human race was dead. But, there was a company who saw a way to capitalise on the end of the world: Vault-Tec. Vault-Tec made massive underground bunkers, called Vaults, that the remnants of humanity survived in.

In Fallout 1 you play as a resident of one of these Vaults, Vault 13 to be specific. The water chip, a device which purifies water for your Vault, has broken, and you must go find a new one. Simple enough, right? Nope.

Here's a few reasons why this game is so amazing for its time, and where some difficulty arises. For one, in Character Creation, if you don't have high enough Intelligence, you can't speak English, which is pretty funny when you shout "Zug Zug!" when you want to ask for a length of rope, or when you want to speak to a mutant and you convince it that you are its long lost child due to your pure stupidity. Then you also have a time limit for retrieving the water chip. Remember, this game is older than me and yet it keeps track of time and has events that take place on certain dates. Like, oh em gee, that's how you say that, right? Also, if you take too long the whole region gets killed by a bunch of mutants and you have to stay away from all the towns because they all got flooded with green, seven foot tall beefcakes with miniguns and laser cannons, because you were too busy punching rats in the face.

One of the main problems I have with the game: there is no tutorial for controls. You are taught about other mechanics but never the basic controls, which is a bit of an oversight. And since it is an old game they thought you could use symbols rather than words for everything. Use your words for Cthulhu's sake! How am I supposed to know "hand" means take the guy with a shotgun's favorite teddy bear so that he uses the aforementioned shotgun to make you like a saint: hole-y.

After much fiddling about I learned the tricks of the trade. You essentially have three modes for your mouse. You have "walk around mode," "touch stuff mode," and "stabby-stabby shoot-kill mode." In "walk around mode," your cursor turns into a hexagon that you can click to walk to a place or double click to run there. In "touch stuff mode," you have a more conventional mouse cursor and whenever you hover over, like anything, you get some kind of prompt. Usually an eye for looking, a hand for activating and a mouth for talking.

To get more options you have to right click to switch into "touch stuff mode" then move over to the thing you want and the hold down left click then move the mouse down to the option you want. You have to do that every time you want to use an item in your inventory. It's a bit cumbersome. The last mode your cursor turns into a crosshair and when you hover over enemies it gives you a percentage chance to hit. Then you click to make them be a hurted.

The game doesn't have a whole bunch of areas but each one is dense with people needing you to do something or other. Every mook you see has a story, especially Bob the Fried Gecko Bits vendor. I bet he's got a dark past full of vengeance, and fried gecko bits. Make sure to talk to everyone lest you have no frakking idea what to do.

The combat is very fun, though goes from as easy as elbow dropping a rat from space to trying to fight a T-Rex with a toothpick. You practically have to do that, although your toothpick is an assault rifle with armor piercing rounds and the T-Rex is a genetic monstrosity called a Death Claw, they have about the same effect. It is all turn based, you have a limited number of actions based on your Agility stat. So crank that up. You really can't go wrong with Agility because it governs almost every weapon

skill. The only ones that are not affected are Melee and Unarmed, although even Unarmed is based on Strength and Agility while Melee is just Strength.

One minor issue, and by "minor" I mean it makes the game literally unplayable at some points, is the optimization. The version I bought wouldn't run until I did a little fiddling about in the files, I had to look into a few dozen websites that were entirely unhelpful before I found a solution. But at least it's not like a Microsoft DOS game where you need two hours and a degree in programming to start it up.

The game is flawed, of course. But I had a lot of fun with it and I think it holds up to this day. I've played it a whole bunch and had fun with it. If you like RPGs and you don't mind a bit of violence and some difficult controls then you should definitely pick Fallout up on Steam. All of the games are good, so just go grab 'em all.



The cover of the original Fallout game.

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