



the spectator

VOLUME VII ISSUE

THE MADEIRA SCHOOL

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A Country in Chaos

How the Taliban gained control over Afghanistan

Taylor Miller '22
Staff Writer

Smoke permeated the air. Helicopters whirred overhead. Streets and buildings were abandoned. The citizens of Kabul knew it was only a matter of time before the Taliban would wreak havoc on them. Those ten days were monumental, but the months leading up to it were vital as well – and broken down, it is easier to see how these events transpired.

April 14th, 2021: President Biden announced that he would begin removing troops from Afghanistan starting in May and ending by September 11th of this year. He stated in his address that “it was time to end America’s longest war.” By that time, roughly 2,500 troops were left in Afghanistan, and around 100,000 Afghans had died in the war.

May 2021: Once the United States had slowly begun moving out of Afghanistan, the Taliban began to regroup. They strengthened the hold they had on smaller rural areas and used the lessened airstrikes to their advantage. Their attacks on smaller towns like Zabul, Ghazni, and Logar began to increase. With little assistance from the government, these towns fell to Taliban control almost immediately. The capital of the province, Lashkar Gah, was attacked and taken control of within three months.

July 2021: The United States announced that they had vacated Bagram, the most strategic airbase they had acquired in Afghanistan. It was then handed back to Afghan forces, although officials say they were given no warning that the United States was going to leave or when. Afghan authorities state that they were left with no electricity, water, or other essentials.

President Biden defended his decision to vacate Afghanistan, citing that he “would not send another generation of Americans to war.” In the same speech, he asserted that a full Taliban

“Those ten days were monumental, but the months leading up to it were vital as well – and broken down, it is easier to see how these events transpired.”

takeover would be unlikely in Afghanistan. Despite this, there was a resurgence in United States airstrikes on the Taliban as they continued to gain land. The top commander of U.S. forces in Kabul, Marine Gen. Kenneth McKenzie, announced that the United States was prepared to continue its air support as the Taliban made territorial gains.

Early August 2021: The Taliban began attacking more



Sign, Reading ‘Welcome to Afghanistan.’ Photo courtesy of Flickr.

densely populated cities. Rural areas were easier to overtake and overpower; now they were testing their weapons against bigger cities. The Taliban shot rockets at airports in Kandahar. Health officials saw injured civilians caught in the crossfire as violence intensified. The Taliban gained its first province, Zaranj, which borders Iran.

On August 8th, Taliban forces moved through Kunduz, Sar-e Pol and Takhar provinces. In Kunduz, Taliban forces overran a prison and released Taliban militants, who joined their ranks and helped. Hundreds of Afghan troops but were ultimately caught hiding out in a military base on the edge of the

city. On August 9th, The Taliban took Aybak, cementing their hold in the northern part of Afghanistan.

August 10th - 11th, 2021: The Taliban took the capital of the provinces Badakhshan, in the north; Farah, in the west; and Baghlan, 160 miles from Kabul. President Joe Biden continues to stand by his decision. United States intelligence pointed to Afghanistan potentially falling to Taliban forces in just a few weeks.

August 12th-13th: The Taliban gained control of Afghanistan’s second- and third-largest cities, Kandahar and Herat, as well as the city of Lashkar Gah in the southwest. Biden announced that he would be

sending troops back into Afghanistan to help with the deteriorating situation. August 14th, 2021: Biden sent more troops into Afghanistan to help fight the Taliban. The president of Afghanistan, Ashraf Ghani, acknowledges the advancing Taliban and assures the nation that he is working to resolve the issue.

August 15th, 2021: In the early morning, Ghani fled the country, leaving Kabul, and the Taliban took over.

In early September, the Taliban announced their new government and Prime Minister. Many are upset, as those selected are wanted by the United States or have harmed Afghan citizens. Afghanistan continues to be under Taliban rule.

Madeira’s New Normal

An overview of Madeira’s protocol changes in response to COVID-19

Safiyyah Bennett '22
Assistant Editor

Before the pandemic, students could travel throughout the dorm without masks, in-room visits between students in other dorms were permitted, and large gatherings were a well-celebrated demonstration of school spirit. COVID-19 drastically changed these norms, and student life on the Madeira campus looks very different in comparison to previous years. Last year, students had the option to either learn remotely or return to campus in Mod 4. Now, for the first time since stu-

“As of September 2021, the Madeira community has achieved a vaccination rate of more than 90%, with all faculty and most students vaccinated against the virus.”

dents were released due to the outbreak, in-person instruction



Madeira students mask up, preparing for a new normal in the classroom. Photo courtesy of the Madeira School.

all students are healthy and fully able to return to in-person learning. When returning last year, every student had to participate in mandatory two-week quarantine. This requirement is now only mandatory for unvaccinated Madeira students. As of September 2021, the Madeira community has achieved a vaccination rate of over 90%, with all faculty and most students vaccinated against

the virus, the vaccine is not yet a requirement for students, but most have already had their first dose.

Before on-campus arrival, every Madeira student was required to take and submit a PCR test to the Heath Center for review. These tests were provided 72 hours before arrival, ensuring that

has been identified as COVID positive. Everyone who came in close contact with the person has been notified of the next steps to take. Asymptomatic community members can continue their daily routine with masks worn both indoors and outdoors if less than 6 feet away from someone else. Close contact individuals will still need to take a PCR test 3-5 days after their last exposure to COVID-19.

Since hybrid learning last year, there has been a noticeable difference in Madeira’s handling of COVID-19. Campus life has changed drastically and will continue to adapt based on Virginia officials and CDC guidelines. Madeira’s COVID-19 protocols aim to keep everyone safe and healthy, while allowing a push towards some sort of normalcy in the future. In previous years, gatherings between students were encouraged as a part of Madeira’s spirit and togetherness, but this year, Madeira has been adapting to a new normal.

Masking is a huge priority for Madeira students, as the community is required to wear masks indoors, as mandated by the governor of Virginia. As of now, masks are always required indoors, whether that be during instruction, independent study, or traveling through school buildings. This extends to the dorms as well. Students will remain unable to travel within the dorm or to another student’s room without a mask, including the bathrooms and common spaces. Outdoor masking is not required under CDC guidelines, but large outdoor community gatherings are now much less frequent.

One community member has been identified as close contact as of September of this year. Due to this seemingly isolated case, the Health and Wellness Center provided feedback on what will happen if someone



every single person or company or country that exists; one person could not change every single issue that faces our world. But we are not isolated individuals. Think of classmates in classrooms that back your argument, think of perspectives shared with friends, think of any time you have had an opinion that is an echo of another or becomes echoed by others. Your voice becomes stronger as it is lifted up and shared. The fight for change is not about forcing one individual to carry each of the world's burdens alone. No one person would be able to take on every issue — no individual should ever be expected to even carry the fight for just one global issue. The fight for change is about adding the voice of an individual — your voice — to the others already speaking out, or uplifting voices that are suppressed. It is not a solitary effort. No one's goal when fighting for change can realistically be to make all of that change alone. But we are not alone. In 7.8 billion people, there are bound to be people that will stand their ground alongside you. That is how change is made — progress made by the many, rather than the few.

It can be extremely easy to feel, in our present society, that we have no significance as individuals or in our ability to make change. There are approximately 7.8 billion people on this planet, which means each of us makes up approximately 0.00000000013% of the world's population. How can we look at these truly global problems and believe, in confidence, that any of us will ever be able to make a difference? It is so easy to cave, to dismiss your own voice. But consider this scenario: an individual decides that they, being a ridiculously small part of the world's population, can make virtually no difference overall through the course of their life. Therefore, they make the choice to put no effort into changing anything. An insignificant difference, yes? Perhaps — if that individual is the only one to make that decision, that is. But if enough people believed they were insignificant enough that it made no difference whether or not they advocated for progress, there would be no progress ever made.

We, as isolated individuals, of course could not change

you listen, you will find others to fight when you must rest, and rest when you must fight. You are not insignificant. Make a difference.

you listen, you will find others to fight when you must rest, and rest when you must fight. You are not insignificant. Make a difference.



Kate Chamberlin

Justice and its role as an individual's duty have been a controversial topic in the 21st century. It is easy to open a celebrity's social media page and see thousands of people condemning them for not donating enough money and using their influence to advocate when a societal problem arises. People blame billionaires, celebrities, and many organizations for not fulfilling their obligations as influential figures to donate and help to solve issues such as extreme poverty, marginalization, or any kind of oppression.

Individuals should regard justice as their duty by focusing on their own behavior and developing goodness amongst themselves. It is by nature that people have a tendency towards benevolence and righteousness. If everyone can guarantee that one is humane, then society has — to some extent — achieved justice and relative equality. If everyone is inclined to justice and values personal development, the duty of justice has been fulfilled since these virtues can repair the community itself. Therefore, human nature is good, so people in society should create a beneficial environment and manifest them-

selves for all individuals; that is to say, people should fulfill their duty of justice by helping others and keeping themselves at a balanced and not extreme vices. In a modern world, one should aid the oppressed by keeping one's mind close to righteousness and benevolence. Admittedly, the power of the individual is not the most influential, but no matter how useful the help is, maintaining an egalitarian and moral heart can make society more stable and prevent incidents of punishment, poverty, and deprivation of others.

The government, meanwhile, should carry the duty of solving justice problems that arise in society through the implementation of distributive justice. The government should provide fair equality of opportunity and equal distribution of socioeconomic inequalities. By restricting individuals to own more than they should possess, equality of opportunity will be achieved because the oppressed people will have the chance to own more. As a result, social and economic positions should be to everyone's advantage and open to all, achieved by placing individuals in an original position behind the veil of ignorance, wherein one does not know sex, race, natural abilities, economic conditions, and social status. If everyone in the original position pursues equality, then a just society can be achieved by identifying universal beliefs about social institutions.



Candice Wang

Fast Fashion, Thrift Stores, and Sustainability

Who is allowed to make environmentally conscious purchases?

Isabelle Murdock '22
Staff Writer

Sustainability is for the wealthy. A simple statement, perhaps one that many see as a seemingly gross overgeneralization, but nonetheless something that, factually speaking, is true. Look at it this way — you need to buy a good pair of formal shoes because your last pair wore through and are literally impossible to wear anywhere, least of all your aunt's wedding. The sustainable thing to do is to find a brand that makes and sells quality shoes that are designed from recycled materials, to ensure that you are not purchasing from a seller that is (whether purposefully or not) contributing to this planet's degrading environment. But those shoes are \$250. \$300. \$400. The bottom line is that they are expensive. For a lot of people, that is not an issue; after all, this is going to be one of your only pairs of formal shoes for the next five to ten years, depending on how well they are made. But if you are living paycheck to paycheck, you do not have \$300 to throw away at a pair of nice, sustainable shoes. You have maybe \$30, or \$20, maybe even \$15. \$15 buys you the bare minimum: cheaply made shoe that falls apart in a week. You have to buy another

pair of shoes for the next formal event you have to attend. You are trapped in a cycle of consumerism, constantly purchasing from the market, and contributing to the continuation of fast fashion. You become part of the problem because you are physically incapable of doing anything else.

From here, people who want to be good to the environment begin to feel some intense guilt. People who make hundreds of thousands of dollars per year insist that it is “your fault our en-

“One's attempts as a wealthy person to be sustainable should not actively harm impoverished people, or else, frankly, that person is terrible.”

vironment is falling apart” or that “you need to buy sustainably or else you're actively hurting our planet.” It becomes a burden that one individual is forced to bear entirely alone, rather than allowing for the brunt of that weight to be carried by the industries responsible.

Looking at the situation from a slightly different angle



Clothing spilling off a table. Photo courtesy of PIXINO.

— even thrift stores aren't safe anymore! The newest trends of going thrifting to find reused, gently-loved old clothing directly impact low-income communities. One's attempts as a wealthy person to be sustainable should not actively harm impoverished people, or else, frankly, that person is terrible. The ‘cute vintage Y2K t-shirt’ a seller listed on Depop should be going to the child it was intended to fit, not struggling to wrap itself around the buyers' full-sized adult figure at exorbitant prices. And while it is frustrating at best, as worst it can be deadly — the new thrifted coat you snatched for fifteen dollars (what a bargain!) is something you can get rid of at the end of the season when it is no longer trendy. The freezing woman with two children looking for an extra bit of warmth could die without it. If we

are going to thrift, we should be buying for ourselves alone — not to resell. We should buy things in our size, things that are easy to get. Do not take all the coats, scarves, or warm winter clothing. Consider the communities who shop regularly at this thrift store; consider how wealthy patronage could send prices skyrocketing for people who make minimum wage. Poor people deserve to feel just as pretty as the rest of us do, and have just as much right to stay alive as anyone making hundreds of thousands a year.

The way people spend their money has more of an impact than they might have ever considered. There is no simple answer here — the byproduct of our capitalist nation is that regardless of how theoretical beneficial our intentions are, our actions may in fact cause far more harm than good.

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How to Submit to The Spectator

At *The Spectator*, we encourage any member of The Madeira School to submit to the newspaper. Articles submitted are subjected to a staff peer review and edit, then submitted for editorial review. Submission does not guarantee print, but it does help! Of particular interest to the staff are articles concerning the Madeira community, club news and events, and sports. Submissions should be sent to the editors or the advisor, Ms. Alston at spectator@madeira.org.

Corrections

Any corrections should be sent to *The Spectator's* lead advisor, Ms. Alston, at spectator@madeira.org. The publication seeks to always publish corrections as they come to our attention.

Disclaimer

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Madeira students do not acknowledge their wealth and it makes life for their low-income peers awful

Isabelle Murdock '22
Staff Writer

How much money does your family make a year? Three hundred thousand dollars? Five hundred thousand dollars? Six hundred and fifty thousand dollars? Maybe more? Can you conceptualize how much seven hundred and seventy-five thousand dollars is? How much one million dollars is? Do you really understand the amount of money that is? Is that even a lot of money to you?

How much financial aid do you get a year? How many people in your household provide a steady income? Have you ever had to work? Wonder when your next full meal will be? If you will have a hot shower that night? If your housing will be stripped from you?

Odds are the answer is no. Odds are you will never understand what that feels like. Odds are that you have lived your entire life completely unaware of the privilege your wealth gives you. And, given how high our tuition is and the perceived prestige of our school, Madeira is a siren's song to families who have enough money to send their children here.

As someone with parents who make enough to sit us just around the poverty line, dipping above or below depending on the year's luck, it is unbelievably frustrating to have to sit

there and listen to the problems of the wealth, your vacation plans to travel around the world on a cruise, how tiny your house is when you have a swimming pool, five bedrooms, or even a tennis court. One of your classmates was sharing a studio apartment with their mother and yet your 50-acre manor is 'small.'

To be poor at Madeira is to be isolated, surrounded by constant reminders that your lack of wealth makes you visibly distinct from your peers; peers that arrive with designer outfits and feel comfortable leaving \$600 on the floor for three months. That \$600 would buy you dinner for two months if you stretched it far enough. There is chicken stock in the fridge to eat and a rack of spices in the pantry and that is it. You are hungry. When your diet consists of water and frozen food, the

"To be poor at Madeira is to be isolated, surrounded by constant reminders that your lack of wealth makes you visibly distinct from your peers."

dining hall is a five-star restaurant with an all-you-can-eat buffet.

There is such a discrepancy in experience and no understanding that your money has given you power and privi-



Pile of one-hundred-dollar bills. Photo courtesy of Creative Commons.

lege. A previous year's survey on family income saw four or five people to mark on a class survey that they made less than twenty thousand a year. People afraid to mark themselves lower for fear of seeing a visual representation of the stark contrast between themselves and their peers. The room was quiet when the graphic was shown. People searched for their companions in low-income living because we knew what it was to survive; people afraid to search for their companions in low-income living because we

feared that if anyone found out, we would be ostracized. The bars indicating the other sections rose ever quickly towards heights of five hundred thousand dollars.

The worst part is just the simple lack of acknowledgement. This expectation that you, too, are rich; that you too grew up without the 'inconvenience' of needing more money to cover the bills, the fear that comes when you lose your healthcare. The audacity of people saying they grew up "comfortably" in their three-story homes with central air and heat,

a dish washer, and a refrigerator always stocked with your favorite snacks.

You live in your privilege. Your head is trapped in clouds soft as down feathers, contained by the cushioning of your family's money. You are content in your ivory towers surrounded by millions of dollars. You do not want to understand what it means to be poor.

Acknowledge the power your wealth gives you. You are the upper class.

Own it.

The Impact of the BBL Trend

How the newest beauty trend damages self-esteem

Josie Hale '23
Staff Writer

The BBL trend has taken over the social media platform TikTok in the past couple of months. Those who participate in the trend enact their character in everyday situations: imagine getting an Uber, ordering food, engaging in a conversation, all while overwhelmed with the unique and entertaining taste of hubris.

The acronym BBL stands for "Brazilian Butt Lift," – a procedural fat transfer operation that extracts fat from the abdomen which is then injected into the buttocks for an enhanced and very plump backside. According to Google, the key term "BBL" is searched about 200,000 times

per month. The BBL trend on TikTok includes women showing their before and after of the procedure in addition to skits. Some shared their personal experiences with the surgery, including its cost, where they travelled to get it, and their recovery process.

Thousands of women have chosen to undergo the procedure over the past couple years; the number of BBLs globally has risen 77.6% since 2015. In accordance to a study conducted by the International Society of Aesthetic Plastic Surgery. The BBL is now the most fast-growing cosmetic surgery procedure across the globe.

In the most subtle results, a BBL appears genetic, a golden ratio most associated with the most iconic sex symbols of

the past century. Since the surgery requires the removal and retransplant of one's abdomen fat, the vast majority of the nation's population can only achieve such a result through skillful photoshop or makeup. An editing app called Facetune has been able to fake that airbrushed body, which can be squeezed, smoothed, and pushed to all of one's wishes quite convincingly. The BBL, just like any of the fast-growing cosmetic surgeries, attempts to alter the way one appears when bodies are filtered through social media.

A report conducted by the Aesthetic Surgery Education & Research in 2017 found that the BBL had a 2:6000 rate of survival, giving the procedure the highest mortality rate

in cosmetic surgery. The British Association of Aesthetic & Plastic Surgery advises all UK surgeons not to perform the surgery.

The majority of these BBL-caused deaths occur at high-volume, low-cost centers in cities like Miami and Las Ve-

gas. Medical tourism also has increased since the BBL was popularized and leads patients to travel to countries like the Dominican Republic, Colombia, and Turkey searching for the procedure, as similar countries have looser regulations and lower prices.

Gen Z is continuing to popularize and pioneer a movement which praises and normalizes all body shapes and types in the media. Yet most of the media young women consume is overtly affected by the beauty standards

of a large chest, small waist, wide hips, with a plump backside. The spread of such media on Instagram and TikTok has made impressionable young people believe they must have a body that can only be achieved surgically.

A bit over ten years ago, the ideal body type for women was to be extremely thin. Girls were expected to have a thinner, flatter, and more petite otherwise known as 'heroin chic.' The BBL trend is a new form of this trend, encouraging young people to permanently cosmetically alter their bodies to fulfill a temporary beauty standard. As the nation's young women begin to come to terms with their bodies, the effect of Western beauty standards on their self-esteem stings. As more and more women, take in these videos on their 'For You' pages, it is vital to start conversations on how the BBL trend is making girls warp their view of female bodies - how it makes women lose confidence if their bodies are anything but the beauty expectations set by men. Although most videos about BBLs seem to be harmlessly funny, we must acknowledge our impressionability from social media onto ourselves, or lose our self-love to these temporary, body-morphing trends.

"As more and more women, take in these videos on their 'For You' pages, it is vital to start conversations on how the BBL trend is making us think about female bodies - how it makes us lose confidence."



TikToks based on the BBL trend feature characters in various scenario. Screenshots courtesy of Josie Hale.

Liberties, Laws, and Learning

Education in juvenile detention center

Kyra Joostema '22
Staff Writer

Education has the power to transform each student's path and development, but it is also highly inequitable, particularly considering the example of juvenile detention centers. There is a myriad of experiences youth have within juvenile detention centers due to the lack of care for each individual child in these systems. Ayanna Rasheed, a former inmate in a California juvenile detention center, experienced the educational disparities of the juvenile justice system. She recounted how most of the students were taught the same material regardless of their grade level, the teachers had little financial support, and her overall experience was counterproductive. Now a mother at age 21, she has gone in and out of the system and had to enter the child welfare system. In contrast, Eddie Chavez, another former inmate, found his experience in a detention center to be transformative; however, Eddie had access to a quiet workspace, trained mentors who helped him set goals and look for opportunities upon release, and found a community to support him. The differences between Ayanna and Eddie's experiences epitomize the inequity within the juvenile justice system.

Under the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment, all citizens of the United

States must have access to equal opportunities for education; however, the United States is the only country that sentences minors to life-without-parole. The use of such punishment is exponentially harmful to youth, communities, and the justice system. From a lack of funding to the perpetuation of systemic racism, juvenile detention centers rely on punitive measures to function, stifling growth and prolonging the cycle of recidivism. Reducing the school-to-prison pipeline must start with dedicated resources and investments given to community programs. Likewise, having states utilize the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) Model to reduce harmful systems of probation and confinement is vital to ensuring safer communities.

Education and the community that accompany it are essential for social progress, yet the quality of education within juvenile incarceration lacks constructive support. On average, youth in juvenile detention cen-

"Reducing the school-to-prison pipeline must start with dedicated resources and investments given to community programs."

ters perform 3-4 years below their counterparts in academic performance, and 40% of youth do not make progress in reading or math. At the root of this problem is the lack of dedicated budgeting



A Los Angeles County juvenile detention center classroom lesson in progress. Photo courtesy of Juvenile Justice Information Exchange.

for each student, leaving educators with no system to develop staff, buy new materials, or keep track of students' records. Consequently, only half of detention centers follow state curricula.

The disproportionate entrance of Black youth and other minority youth in the juvenile justice system compounds racial inequities. Black students are 3.5 times more likely to be placed in alternative schools than other racial groups, often without a fair justice process. With only 44% of youth returning to school after being released from custody and 1% graduating from a university, the prevalence of the relationship between a punitive justice system and educational disparities is proven.

Through the creation of more after-school programs, summer jobs, and doubling the

amount of health professionals, school systems must enact greater preventative measures and networks of support. It costs \$537 per day - about 200,000 dollars a year - to incarcerate a single child, whereas community-based programs cost only \$75 per day to operate and have proven to reduce recidivism dramatically. Most crucial is an emphasis on restorative justice in schools to reduce the school-to-prison pipeline and rates of disproportionate minority contact (DMC). Following release, adolescents need to be reintegrated into the community and transitioned away from the system through a reformatory program including mentorship. It is up to all communities to ensure that youth voices are heard, and action is taken to provide justice and pathways for incarcerated minors who have been silenced.

Good News

Mercer Thomas '23
Staff Writer

22,000 ancient trees have gained permanent legal protection in Abruzzo, Italy as progress in the fight for environmental preservation.

The youngest orangutan, Redd, at the National Zoo in D.C. had his 5th birthday party on September 12th.

Fencer Perez Maurice accepts a marriage proposal from her coach during the Olympics.

Peter Mutabazi, a man in Charlotte, North Carolina, has housed more than 12 kids in need during the pandemic

Olympian Maria Andrejczyk auctioned off her silver medal and used the money to cover the cost of a toddler's heart surgery.

Two Boy Scouts rescued a woman who was drowning in floodwaters in Columbia, Missouri.

A crowd at a Miami Hurricane football game rescued a cat that fell off the roof of the stadium.

A puppy in Northern Ireland interrupted a cricket match when he ran onto the field, caught the ball, and began sprinting away.

In Iceland, a factory became the world's first to take carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and turn it into stone.

COVID-19 is Still Around

Updated protocols of Covid-19 in different region

Lillian Xie '22
Staff Writer

Although it has been a year since the eruption of this has not yet fully eradicated has been treatment preventative measures. The World Health Organization Different regions in the world have now updated their protocols to remind people of the danger of COVID-19 and the risk of neglecting it.

In the United States with 53% of American population being fully vaccinated, the death rate of COVID-19 is approximately 8.67%. Based on the collected data from World Health Organization, over the past 14 days, the growth rate of COVID-19 has decreased by 12% and the recovery rate has rose to 97%. The latest protocols in the United States, according to CDC, includes masking at all times are executing mandate national wide. The Chinese government has also updated their policy. After the implementation of strict quarantine and masks mandate policies, the spread of COVID-19 has been declining rapidly. So far, the total number of Coronavirus Cases is around 95,083 with about 4,636 death cases and

Poster instructing viewers to wash their hands. Image courtesy of Pixabay. 89,652 people recoveries. Currently, there are only around 795 people infected and being treated in hospital while merely 1% of those were diagnosed are in critical condition. Since May of 2021, less than 150 new cases have been discovered each day. People are still expected to wear masks both indoors and outdoors according to these policies. Additionally, strict controls over travelling between provinces are still in effect. The travelers are asked to show the negative PCR report before travel. Additionally, strict controls over travelling between provinces are still in effect. The travelers are asked to show the negative PCR report before travel. In light of travelling into China from other country, quarantine are still in effect. Passengers need to be quarantine for at least 14 days in order to continue their normal life in China. Depends on different policies carried out by provinces, the longest quarantine can reach 60 days.

Spain has the highest vaccination rate with 73.3% of the population has received two doses of vaccination. Not surprisingly, the fatality rate has dropped to 1.7% and the

recovery rate has surged to 92%. Although the infection rate

"Be SAFE from coronavirus infection; be SMART and inform yourself about it; be KIND and support one another."

fluctuated before August, August and September clearly shows a trend towards fewer cases each day. The newest covid protocols do not require the public to wear mask indoors if 1.5 meters of social distance are observed. Furthermore, under the new law,

social service residents are no longer required to wear masks as long as the vaccination rate has reached 80%.

Advancement in the vaccines have been stopping the spread of COVID-19, bringing hope to people worldwide. However, it is important to remember the words of Dr. Tedros Adhanom, Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General, "Be SAFE from coronavirus infection; be SMART and inform yourself about it; be KIND and support one another." Hopefully, the restrictions on travel policy will be lifted as the situations get better.

WASH YOUR HANDS



From Russian Prison Camp, With Love

The Imprisonment of Activist Alexei Navalny

Josie Hale '23
Staff Writer

The controversial Russian political opposition leader Alexei Navalny is currently serving his 2½ year incarceration sentence from a violation relating to the criteria of his parole, domestically and internationally. Mr. Navalny, a fierce critic of President Vladimir Putin with a significant reach on social media in Russia, said the threat of jail time was made to deter him from returning to Moscow in January.

He is currently serving his time at a separate facility where he was transferred after a hunger strike. The IK-2 corrective penal colony where he is stationed is 60 miles to the east of Moscow. Through Navalny's popular Instagram account, he is informing his followers about the harsh conditions he is enduring there.

He has described that the state of his resident prison can be compared to a concentration camp. He claims that he is forced to watch eight hours' worth of State Propaganda programs with little recreational periods. Everything Navalny is viewing from outside the government is heavily monitored. All of the media he consumes, including the likes of newspapers and letters, have certain articles or pages removed.

Navalny has said in one of his Instagram posts that it was a challenge to negotiate getting religious books in his possession because of these harsh regulations.

The beginning of the end of Navalny's freedom began on January 19th of this year when Navalny and his allies released a documentary on YouTube about their investigations into the possessions of Russian officials. Such possessions included their secret mansions, yachts, private jets, as well as their extensive properties. According to a poll shared

“Although Putin denied the claims in the video, the documentary singlehandedly increased censorship of Navalny and his movement.”

by VK, 26% of Russian adults had watched the documentary “Putin's Palace” within a few days of its release. Although Putin denied the claims in the video, the documentary singlehandedly increased censorship of Navalny and his movement.

Most of Navalny's followers are not excessively dedicated - yet many see him as a catalyst for future change. With Navalny imprisoned, people are finding



Alexei Navalny speaking in 2013. Photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.

other and more diverse platforms to insight opposition against the Russian government system. The diversity of the movement proves a dangerous enemy to the Russian government.

The Kremlin might have achieved temporary success in their recent crackdown, but Russian citizens are far from abandoning their reasons as to why they support individuals like Alexei Navalny. A lot of Russians desire greater diversity of candidacy, an increasingly independent judiciary system, a fairer economy, and an end to political

corruption.

Navalny's imprisonment gave way for the Kremlin to ban his organizations for “extremism.” With that, the possibility of further protests against the government, like the ones that occurred in January of this year, was squashed.

However, in January, Navalny returned from Germany where he was receiving treatment from his infamous Novichok poisoning from the state while traveling through a Russian airport. When he returned from his five months in Germany, he received

his official prison sentence.

The Kremlin has driven most of Navalny's closest allies out of the country. A lawyer who represented both Navalny and another Russian journalist accused of treason has just fled to Georgia because of a criminal probe against him enacted by state authorities. Alexei Navalny is Russian President Vladimir Putin's greatest political foe, and his imprisonment reflects the Russian government's stance on criticism with change and bears implications for activists in the years to come.

Riots That Shook the Nation

The Aftermath of the January 6th Insurrection



Rioters storm the Capitol on January 6th. Photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.

Sydney Burgess '25
Staff Writer

September 6th was the 8-month anniversary of the Capitol riots, and even as people all over the country reflect on the events of January 6, 2021, perpetrators, victims, and supporters of the attacks continue to experience its after-effects and consequences.

One such person is Ja-

cob Chansley, the notorious man who stormed the Capitol shirtless, carrying a spear and bullhorn, and wearing a horned headpiece made of coyote skin. Chansley, who dubbed himself “the QAnon Shaman” during the attacks, pleaded guilty to the most serious charge he faced - obstruction of an official proceeding - on September 3. He struck a plea deal, and now faces up to 51 months in

prison rather than the 28 years he could have been forced to serve for the six initial charges (including civil disorder, obstruction of an official proceeding, disorderly conduct in a restricted building, and demonstrating in a Capitol building). During his plea hearing, Chansley's defense attorney, Al Watkins, claimed his client now renounces the conspiracy theories that originally led him to

storm the Capitol, and is no longer a supporter of former President Donald Trump. Watkins has championed Chansley's personal growth and cooperation, stating that he has “gone through a period of introspection” and admitted to making himself “open to the propaganda from the former president.” However, a January memo from prosecutors tells a different story - that Chansley has repeatedly lied to authorities concerning his drug use, and many facets

“Perpetrators, victims, and supporters of the attacks continue to experience its after-effects and consequences.”

of his beliefs, background, and health remain hidden by Chansley. The memo states, “...a full portrait of Chansley's apparent mental health issues—which he has publicly disseminated, and which include strongly-held, false mystical beliefs and leadership in a dangerous extremist group, QAnon, founded on an imaginary conspiracy theory—were not [disclosed by him].”

Meanwhile, John Pierce, an active advocate and lawyer of many perpetrators of the riots has been missing for nearly a week, a disappearance that is currently

unexplained. Ryan Joseph Marshall, Mr. Pierce's young associate and temporary replacement, has reportedly provided several conflicting excuses for his boss' absence. Including that he was hospitalized with COVID-19, and that he had been in a car accident. A self-proclaimed pro-Trump populist, Mr. Pierce has drawn much attention for his extreme and zealous commitment to the defense of his clients involved in the riots. He compared himself in an interview before his disappearance to an actor portraying a Spartan king, stating, “I'm like Gerard Butler in ‘300. I'm in the hot gates at Thermopylae, holding the pass against the million-man Persian army.” Since the beginning of his clients' trials, Mr. Pierce has made many claims. These range from forcing the government to disclose video footage of the Capitol and information about police officers working on the day of the riots, to subpoenaing hostile witnesses, to claiming that the riots were an inside job of the government, led by the FBI.

Chansley's trial and Pierce's disappearance are only two examples of the most recent ways the riots have and are affecting current life. More news will undoubtedly emerge during the upcoming months.

The Delta Variant's Rapid Global Spread

How the World Is Reeling from the New and Deadly Variant

Taylor Miller '22
Staff Writer

Despite the first case of the Delta variant emerging in December of 2020, it has now risen to be the highest concentration of COVID-19 cases globally. The virus caused panic among people everywhere and has paralyzed the world yet again as countries struggle to dig themselves out of the global pandemic. The Delta Variant also illustrates the inequity we have as a global community and our duty to help close the overwhelming gap.

What We Know: The first case of the Delta variant was reported in India in December of 2020. Initially, it caused no more panic than the original strain of coronavirus, but as many began to learn, the Delta variant was highly transmissible between people. Some researchers described the transmission rate of the Delta variant as being similar to a "chickenpox outbreak."

As the world would come to discover, the Delta variant is two times more contagious than the Alpha (original strain) variant. In two different studies, conducted in Canada and Scotland, the Delta variant showed more resistance to regular immune systems and caused more severe symptoms in individuals when compared to the original strain.

People who had contracted the Delta variant were

more likely to be hospitalized and more at risk of death than others with the Alpha virus. As the Delta variant takes prominence around the same time vaccines began to roll out in select countries, researchers observed the resistance vaccinated people had towards the Delta variant as opposed to unvaccinated people. With multiple tests and studies done with all current vaccines, it has been proven that the vaccine is able to provide more protection against the Delta variant.

The Effects It

"It has caused panic among people everywhere and has paralyzed the world yet again as countries are struggling to dig themselves out of the global pandemic."

Has on the World: Despite the growing research being collected about COVID, the Delta variant, and the efficacy of vaccines, the global vaccination rate is, as of mid-September 2021, only 29.4%. This is partly due to the sheer amount of smaller countries' lack of access to vaccines. In the developed countries, specifically the United States, it has been a struggle to convince people to receive the COVID-19 vaccines due to skepticism and misinformation. Despite best efforts, many still refuse to get vaccinated. As the Delta variant has shown ag-



A man holding a syringe. Photo Courtesy of Creative Commons.

gressiveness towards the unvaccinated and spreads much easier than the original strain, this lack of vaccination is worrisome.

It has also been shown to attack the immune systems of young kids and thus the rate of kids under 12 dying from COVID-19 has spiked immensely. Currently, kids make up about 12-15% of all COVID-19 cases worldwide. Though this seems like a small percentage, schools all over the world have been slowly reopening in-person classes, and aggressive laws and mandates not requiring masks and vaccines are

in place. Children under 12 are not eligible to receive any type of vaccine for COVID-19, therefore becoming the most vulnerable of the population.

With the pandemic, the images of people suffering and heart-wrenching stories about COVID-19 patients are inescapable. Currently, the global death total is nearing 5 million, with no signs of slowing down anytime soon. The Delta variant makes up the majority of COVID cases worldwide, with some countries having 93% of their COVID-19 cases being from the Delta variant.

What Can Be Done: As experts have noted, it is imperative that as much of the global population gets vaccinated as possible. It is the only way the world will be able to see an end to this deadly pandemic. Following safety guidelines provided by the World Health Organization and wearing masks in public places are imperative steps to take to keep individuals and their communities safe. Research proves that it is only possible to end the pandemic if each person works to help others. The world must work as an international body to end this pandemic.

New Disease Outbreak

Mysterious fever in India killed 68 people in one week

Cindy Shan '22
Staff Writer

India, according to the data from the Ministry of Health of India on September 7, had over 33 million confirmed cases of COVID-19 and a death count of more than 440,000 people. However, what worries citizens more is the new fever outbreak in Uttar Pradesh first reported by the Russian Satellite News Agency. The diseases have spread to at least

As of early September, officials reported that more than one hundred people were killed and thousands in total had been infected, with the number of cases increasing by approximately one hundred every day.

five other districts in the state, including Agra, where the iconic Taj Mahal is located. As of early September, officials reported that more than one hundred people were killed and thousands in total had been infected, with the number of cases increasing by approximately one hundred every day.

According to the Indian Ministry of Health, residents have reported high fever in six



An *Ae aegypti* mosquito, one of the primary carriers of the dengue virus. Photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.

areas in western Uttar Pradesh, India, and 40 of them children. Although some symptoms are like COVID-19, none of the dead tested positive. They reported having experienced high fever, dehydration, and a sudden drop in platelets. Others had symptoms of dengue fever, which is a mosquito-borne tropical disease caused by the dengue virus. India experiences dengue outbreaks almost every year, most often in the rainy season when the *Aedes aegypti* mosquitos that carry the

virus breed in the accumulated fresh water. Those who are infected show symptoms such as high fever, headache, vomiting, muscle and joint pains, and a characteristic skin rash, starting anywhere from three to fourteen days after the initial infection. Local health officials reported that twelve children died due to the fever within only 24 hours. The affected areas launched dengue fever virus testing on patients, and it had been confirmed that some children have tested positive. By Septem-

ber 7th, the fever that had confounded experts for weeks was finally identified as two separate diseases: one caused by a bacterium and the other caused by the dengue virus that officials had observed similarities to. All of the cases have been identified as infections with scrub typhus, the bacterium, and dengue.

Additionally, reports state that the local health situation was miserable even before the fever. Waterlogging and COVID-19 exacerbated

these health issues. An official in the Firozabad district said conditions in these places were "shocking." The course of this disease is about two weeks long, which only further burdens Uttar Pradesh hospitals have little to no space left. Millions of people live below the poverty line in the state with poor standards of sanitation and health care, contributing to the spread of this disease and several others.

The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has sent a special investigation team to Firozabad. In the Mathura district, after the death of a diseased child, the indignation of residents prompted the organization of a hunger strike. Shortly after the virus was discovered but before its identification, the Indian government implemented door-to-door searching for those infected so they can be kept in quarantine.

At a time when the spread of COVID-19 in India has not been effectively controlled, this disease has undoubtedly added more burden to the severe public health crisis and security issues. If COVID-19 is considered a natural disaster, then India's poor health situation can now be considered a man-made disaster.

Around the Oval



Seniors wear white for opening convocation to open the new school year. *Photo courtesy of Mrs. Southworth.*



Spirit parade lead by RAW captains take everyone towards the sorting ceremony for fun games and activities. *Photo courtesy of Mrs. Southworth.*

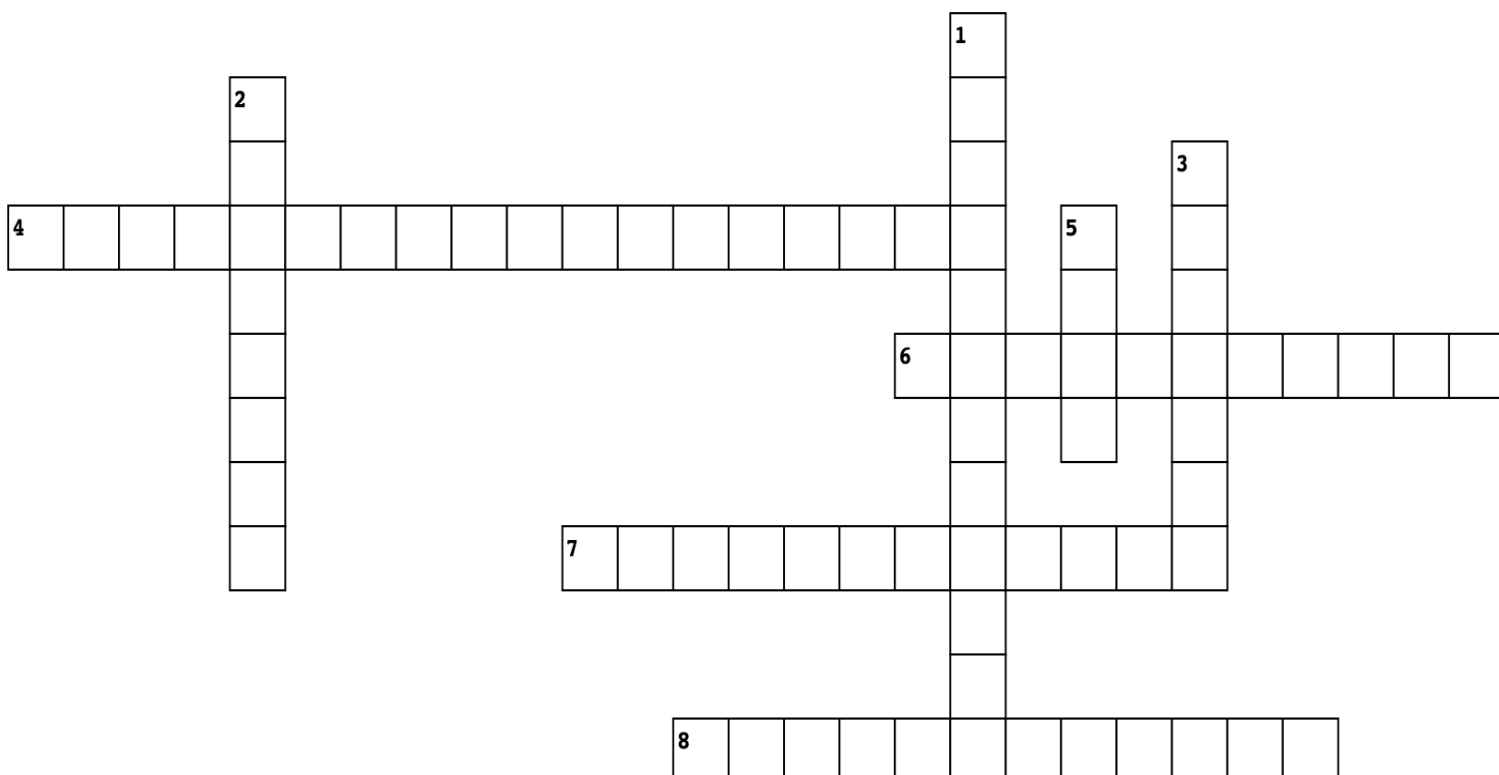


Students prepare to play a game of musical chairs and other fun games at RAW sorting. *Photo courtesy of Mrs. Southworth.*



Swing sisters getting ready to welcome in new students. *Photo courtesy of Mrs. Southworth.*

2021 Fall News Crossword



Across

- 4. new year ceremony normally held in the C/A
- 6. the two teams everyone is sorted into during orientation
- 7. students welcoming in new girls

Down

- 1. previously on Ms. Madeira's birthday celebrating Madeira's founding
- 2. the amount of roses seniors carry at graduation to signify the first boarding students at Madeira
- 3. celebration to mark a certain amount of time before graduation where seniors receive gifts from the other grades
- 5. a stretch of land on campus that people can only meet in the middle to cross

The Provision of Period Products

The Inclusion of Menstrual Products in Madeira Bathrooms

Brooke Slingluff '23
Staff Writer

For many high school students, periods are an extremely frustrating and painful time. To make it worse, there is an air of anxiety around one's ability to function at school and the access to the products needed to do so. Many students that spend the majority of their time at Madeira, whether they are a day or a boarding student, encounter moments in which they do not have the supplies they need to participate in a class or sport effectively. In an anonymous survey sent out to the Madeira community last year, one student mentioned that "when my period starts a day early, or while I'm at the Hurd, and I don't have a tampon or a pad, it would be really useful for them to be available. It really happens to anybody." This issue, which has been long discussed by both administration and students, finally has a solution in motion.

Both the Madeira community and schools all over the country have begun adding free period products to their school's bathrooms. Considering the fact that women spend over 6,000 dollars over the course of their lifetime on pads and tampons and that the government still classifies and taxes menstrual products as luxury items, this may seem like a significant financial burden – but

tampons and pads can be very affordable when bought in bulk, especially for schools with high tuition like Madeira. These products would not serve as replacements for a student's personal sanitary products but would instead act as a resource for Madeira's students in their times of need.

When asking the student body about this issue directly, 97% of the responses to the same anonymous survey agreed that it

"When asking the student body about this issue directly, 97% of the responses to the anonymous survey agreed that it would be helpful for the school to provide period products in restrooms."

would be helpful for the school to provide period products in restrooms. Community members even volunteered stories about their on-campus experiences, including one response that said, "freshman year, they had a bunch of tampons in the bathrooms, which was super useful, especially because I was too awkward to ask my peers at that point." These voices of students are important as they highlight the true significance of this issue – that providing sanitary products would help increase the comfortability levels



An aisle of menstrual products in a drug store. Photo courtesy of Pixabay.

of students during their time on Madeira's campus. This was further proven by another Madeira student who realized story that "I got my period without expecting it, and it was right before class too. I rushed to the bathroom in hope that there were period products there, but I was saddened to see that there weren't. Anxious that I would be late for class, I just used toilet paper and rushed to STEAM before I could be marked late. Embarrassed, I asked my teacher if she had any quietly, but

the entire class seemed to have heard (including a male teacher). Even though we are an all girls school, and I was lucky that all of those girls were my friends, not everyone has that luxury, and even still I was embarrassed greatly." This experience could have been easily avoided with proper access to menstrual products in bathrooms. At school, it should be important to make students comfortable while on campus and creating unnecessary stress over a period is not acceptable.

There is some concern that these resources, once implemented, would not be treated respectfully by the community. In years prior, people have misused this privilege and used the school-provided items for purposes beyond their intention, creating several issues for Madeira and its community. When the Dean of Students' office returns these products to the community, it is essential that they are used responsibly to ensure their availability in the future.

Madeira Traditions

A look into the iconic ongoing traditions of Madeira

Maya Birem-Morales '25
Staff Writer

The Madeira School was first founded by Lucy Madeira Wing in 1906, and with 115 years of operation comes a long list of school traditions.

One of the oldest and most iconic traditions at Madeira is that of the Red and White Teams. The tradition, originally starting in 1929, consists of sorting new students and staff into their respective teams and both teams competing for points. Legacy girls are automatically sorted into the team to which their fam-

Founder's Day and the Halloween Parade are two of the most adored traditions among Madeira students.

ily belonged. This event is called RAW (Red and White) Sorting. A special all-school event is held for RAW Sorting with festivities and other Madeira students cheering on the newly sorted community members.

Madeira is known for its welcoming community. When freshmen come to Madeira, they are welcomed by their SWING sister. The SWING Sister is always



Mascot Shelly Cargot striking a pose. Photo courtesy of The Madeira School.

an upperclassman who aids her assigned freshman in adapting to the new environment. Another tradition involving upper- and underclassmen is that of Ring Sisters. Seniors obtain a class ring and can bestow said ring upon an underclassman of their choice. This allows them to become a "Madeira family."

Certain traditions are exclusively for senior participation. These include the Senior Gallop, ringing the Senior Bell, Senior White Day, 100 Days, and 13 Red Roses on graduation day. The Senior Gallop takes place the day before graduation in which all senior riders will gallop on their horses across the Oval. The Senior

Bell is in the Main dorm hallway. Ringing the bell is a privilege reserved only for seniors. 100 Days is a celebration for seniors that takes place on the hundredth day before graduation. The 13 Red Roses is a tradition where thirteen red roses are carried by all students graduating from Madeira. The 13 roses symbolize the

first thirteen original boarding students at Madeira.

Madeira's mascot is a snail named Shelly Cargot. Her name creates the abbreviation S. Cargot which sounds like escargot. The school mascot dates back to 1968. She can be found at activities, sporting events, celebrations, pep rallies, etc. The snail is featured on pieces of Madeira merchandise, and the sideline cheer of Madeira is "Go, go escargot."

Finally, there are the festive traditions such as Thanksgiving Assembly and Dinner, Founder's Day, and the Halloween Parade. Founder's Day and the Halloween Parade are two of the most adored traditions among Madeira students. Madeira celebrates Halloween through the Halloween Parade. Staff and students dress up in costumes and compete in several categories such as best costume, most original costume, and funniest costume. Founder's Day was originally a celebration of Miss Madeira's birthday on May 19, but is now on a random date chosen to accommodate Co-Curriculum students. Games, food, and activities are held on the Oval, strawberries and ice cream are served to represent the school colors.

To AP or not to AP? That is the Question

APs at Madeira (and lack thereof)

Natalie Bernstein '23
Staff Writer

Advanced Placement (AP) programs are being removed from schools across the nation. Madeira once offered sixteen AP courses and now offers only eleven. This transition away from AP might seem like a general trend, but Madeira's situation is unique. Currently, Madeira offers eleven AP courses: AP English Literature and Composition, French, Spanish, Latin, Biology, Chemistry, Physics C: Mechanics, AB Calculus, BC Calculus, Statistics, and Computer Science Principles. Notably, Madeira offers no AP history or art courses.

Former Headmistress Pilar Cabeza de Vaca allowed academic departments to make their own decisions on whether the AP courses they provided were right for Madeira students. The Math and Science departments, after evaluating, came to the decision that their course material was the same, regardless of the AP level. The Art department decided to design its own course instead and created Advanced Studio Art.

The English department offers one AP course, AP English Literature and Composition, and kept the course for students who want to “dig into the literature,” according to Dr. Ward. The alternative, English IV, gives teachers and students added freedom to

explore topics that interest them. It covers a wider variety of subjects like visual arts, contemporary storytelling, and socio-cultural and historical study. AP English Language and Composition was never offered; like AP Literature, the exam tests certain English skills rather than specific subject matter. However, since

“This transition away from AP might seem like a general trend, but Madeira's situation is unique.”

English III provides students with those skills, it is possible to take the exam – students may speak to their teacher if interested.

The History department made the decision to create its own courses instead of using the AP model. While the AP model is a well-respected one, the history department feels it does not provide the student-focused, interdisciplinary, in-depth instruction desired. The exam emphasizes reading and writing skills, while the Madeira history curriculum focuses on “exposing students to the world, historical thinking skills, and cultural competency,” according to Ms. Sundberg.

Along with the history department's overall stance



Madiera students enjoying a class. Photo courtesy of Kegley.

on APs, select courses did not meet the needs of Madeira students. AP U.S. History was once offered but did not integrate well with the junior internship program. Mr. Pratt explained that AP Comparative Government was unpopular; the small history department can only offer so many courses and decided to substitute it with options students are more responsive to. Human Geography Seminar's content is still similar to AP Human Geography's (some students opt to take

the exam), but the department wanted more freedom in how to teach that material. Comparative Global Studies is an entirely different set of courses than AP World and now aligns with Co-Curriculum in 10th grade, stressing global citizenship. Replacing APs was determined to be best for the entire department.

The purpose of AP programs is to prepare high school students for college, but Ms. Mahoney states that, “all Madeira courses are college prep courses.”

Classes at Madeira equip students with important skills: critical thinking, thinking independently, and communication. The AP curriculum is seen as too restrictive by some departments and Madeira believes its staff can offer better courses. Currently offered AP courses align with what the departments want to teach. Ultimately, Madeira's goal is to offer students the best courses, experience, and skills possible, and whether APs are valuable in that quest varies course to course.

From the Freshman Perspective

A first-year initial impressions of The Madeira School



The red team chants after winning an exciting game of musical chairs. Photo courtesy of The Madeira School.

Olivia Tse '25
Staff Writer

The impact of a first impression lasts far beyond the opening interaction. A person's perception is a very powerful tool that can be harmful to future interactions. Often first impressions last through-

out a person's life. In speaking with other members of the class of '25, I feel that there is a consensus regarding our first thoughts about the Madeira community.

Everyone I have spoken with is delighted to be here and feels they have made the right choice in the tedious and stressful

process of selecting a high school. Part of this success is owed to the existing students at the Madeira School, as so many have reached out and offered their contact information to incoming students in case they have any questions or need help adjusting. These offers have proved to be very help-

ful to many, especially in the first few weeks. Whether it is greeting each other in the hall, or holding doors open, Madeira's student body demonstrates many qualities of kindness and warmth that are visible to all. Small gestures like these have lifted some stress surrounding the transition.

The faculty and staff were equally welcoming and helpful. The faculty members make an

“The ability to contribute our strengths to this community is a privilege we are all so happy to have.”

honest and strong effort to learn everyone's names and pronouns, and their compassion makes our time at Madeira infinitely more enjoyable. I don't think I have ever – or will ever – stumble across a community like this again. Madeira is unique in many ways. The strength of the community can be felt everywhere whether you are studying on the Oval, participating in a thought-provoking classroom discussion, or having a lively conversation about one's day in the dorm. Madeira's virtues express themselves in more ways than one.

Most people go into high school with many preconceived

ideas of what the next four years of their lives will look like. The typical high school stereotypes, large class sizes, and boring lectures all loom in the background of their minds. From this perspective, the prospect of high school seems daunting. However, the Madeira experience is nothing like this. This is evident to all the new students, even though they have been here for a limited time. Another one of Madeira's more striking facets is the school spirit. Madeira's pride manifests itself in many ways: The school traditions, such as the RAW sorting, demonstrated a sense of community to the first-year and other incoming students. The smiles, loud laughter, and cheers of fellow Madeira community members sparked a strong feeling of school spirit.

Many are already looking forward to the joyous traditions and events that are scheduled throughout this year. Being able to add our skills to Madeira's century-long history of capable and strong women is truly a gift. The ability to contribute our strengths to the Madeira community is a privilege we are all so happy to have. The first-year students have all been able to feel the strength of the Madeira school culture, even though new students have only been here for a few weeks.

Sportsmanship in the Summer Games

Kindness in the Tokyo Olympics

Abby Zadareky '25
Staff Writer

The Tokyo Summer Olympics have ended, but much of what occurred is worth further reflection. Not only did the games encourage the world to think of national success, but also to think of the sportsmanship shown between competitors, appreciation for veteran Olympians, and stories of bravery.

One such story of sportsmanship was seen when Mutaz Essa Barshim and Gianmarco Tamberi agreed to share the gold medal for high jumping. Barshim represented Qatar and his opponent, Tamberi, competed for Italy. Both athletes made a perfect jump in their first heat but were unable to clear the bar when it was raised to the Olympic record of 7.39 meters. The Olympians were ready to go to a tiebreaker round. Despite this, the high jumpers requested to share the gold, showing that they acknowledged each other as equals. Their mutual respect resulted in no clear winner and loser, just two evenly matched champions representing their countries.

A story of respect is that of Oksana Chusovitina, the 46-year-old Uzbek gymnast who

announced her retirement during the games. Oksana has participated in eight Olympic games and represented three countries: the Soviet Union, Germany, and her home of Uzbekistan. She was awarded a gold medal in 1992 and a silver medal in 2008. Oksana was a competitor in the Atlanta, Sydney, Athens, London, Rio, and Tokyo games but did not place. When Oksana announced her retirement and stated that the Tokyo games would be her last, the world of gymnastics had her back. At Oksana's final vault, she received a standing ovation as she took her final bow. The International Federation of Gymnastics

"The sportsmanship shown between competitors, appreciation for veteran Olympians, and stories of bravery."

tweeted that there was "not a dry eye in the house." Even though she did not come home with a medal, she returned to Uzbekistan with the respect of thousands and unshakeable legacy. Oksana's determination to play the sport she loved for thirty-three years led her to become one of the most

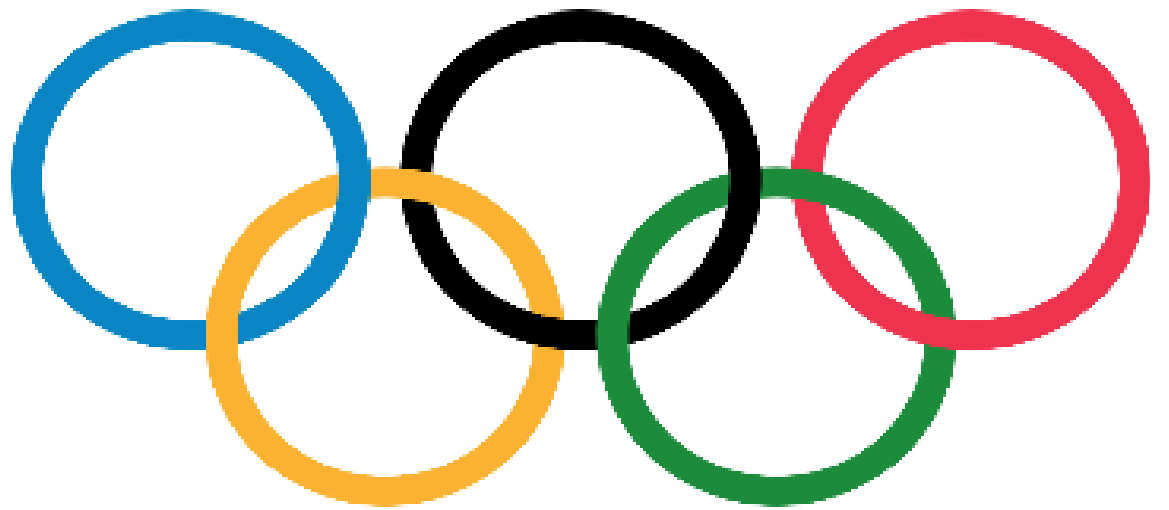
decorated and respected athletes in Uzbekistan history.

The 2021 Tokyo Olympics had more LGBTQ+ representation than all previous games combined. Tom Daley, an Olympic diver, and a member of the LGBTQ+ community, won a gold medal for Britain in Men's Synchronized Diving. Daley

gave a moving speech directed at gay youth in his press conference. "When I was younger, I always felt like the one that was alone and different and didn't fit in," Daley told the press. "I hope that any young LGBT person out there can see no matter how alone you feel right now, you are not alone. You can achieve anything."

The speech was broadcasted all over the globe, including in the sixty-nine countries that criminalize same sex relationships.

Heartwarming stories such as these ones remind young athletes of what the Olympic games are: not just shiny medals, but sportsmanship, respect, determination, and compassion.



The Olympics logo. Image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.

The Premier League 2021

The rise and fall from success



Premier League

The Premier League logo. Image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.

Emerson Jordan '25
Staff Writer

The beginning of the British soccer league, also known as 'football,' league is imperative, as a single game could make or break a team's rank. As the table stands before the international break; Tottenham Hotspur, West Ham United, and Chelsea qualify for the UEFA Champions' League group stage. Liverpool

qualifies for the Europa League group stage, and if the table stays as it is at the moment; Wolves, Norwich City, and Arsenal will be relegated to the Championship.

One of the most drastic cases so far has been that of Arsenal. Currently in last place, the London team has been facing possibly the worst year in its history. Mikel Arteta, Arsenal's current manager, claims he has been

"investing every drop of energy emotionally" into this team, and everyone is left to wonder what

"The beginning of the British soccer league, also known as 'football,' league is imperative, as a single game could make or break a team's rank."

truly went wrong. Many fans accuse Arteta of failing the team

and believe it is simply a case of gross mismanagement. An anonymous Arsenal supporter states, "An absent owner, a once great manager who lost his way, a clueless CEO, and rubbish players, is why we are a complete mess." Another belief is that the team spent so much money on the Emirates Stadium that their priorities were less on the players and more on its construction. Although there

is much confusion and blame in this situation, the general consensus is that this was not something that simply happened overnight. The team has been gradually declining over the course of many years and they have finally hit rock bottom. Arsenal has progressed from one of the most elite European clubs with the highest record of FA cup wins to a team that cannot seem to succeed.

On the opposite side of the spectrum, Tottenham Hotspur is in first place. The Spurs have not been having an easy couple of years. The team's star player, Harry Kane, was involved in transfer controversy over the summer. Kane was upset with how his team was playing and decided he wanted more. In a pursuit of trophies, he set his sights on Manchester City, and they placed a £125 million bid for Kane to move to their team. Kane believed that it was a good bid, and tried to convince the chairman of Tottenham, Daniel Levy, to accept it. However, Levy 'refuses to engage with a rival team' such as Manchester City and declined Harry's request. Eventually, Kane gave up on leaving and announced on Instagram that he would be returning to play for his team. With the comeback of their striker, Tottenham was at their best once again. Plowing through the ranks, they arrived at first place with all clean sheet games. They will certainly be a team to watch this season.

Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings

The discrepancies in Marvel's advertising for its newest film

Isabelle Murdock '22
Staff Writer

While Marvel fans everywhere crowded into theatres for the recent release of *Black Widow* – or otherwise streamed it directly from Disney+ – the newest theatrical installment of Marvel's Phase Four films, *Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings*, saw success at a slightly lower rate. This calls into question the difference in quality between the two films. Surely the reason that *Black Widow* was so successful in the box office was because it was a higher-quality film than *Shang-Chi*, but everyone's favorite movie criticism site says otherwise: *Black Widow* landed a 79% on the Rotten Tomato meter as compared to *Shang-Chi's* whopping 92% total. Then again, one must consider *Black Widow's* prior popularity in comparison to *Shang-Chi*, who up until this point was not present in Marvel's filmography, as well as the manner in which each movie was released to the world.

This final point begs the question: if *Shang-Chi* was not as well-known as *Black Widow*, would Marvel not seek to make sure audiences were excited about the movie? Why would



Simu Liu, who plays Shang-Chi, speaking at the 2019 Comic Con. Photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.

they not do a multi-platform release, or if the creators wanted to maintain the sums agreed upon in their contracts, why not push back the release date to account for the public's dwindling desire to put themselves at risk by viewing a movie live and in theatres?

Many users of popular platforms, Twitter and TikTok, believed that they had the answers. One TikTok user, Marque

-z Pereira, claimed, "The fact that 'Shang-Chi' is like the least hyped movie feels racially motivated," with others agreeing to the tune of 475,800 likes. Additionally, a consensus was reached by fans that the lead actor of the film, Simu Liu, was doing more work than the corporation to advertise the film. "Simu Liu has taken the entire *Shang-Chi* promotional campaign into his own hands at

this point," Twitter user @slick-la34 wrote. As *Shang-Chi* is the Marvel Cinematic Universe's (MCU) first Asian protagonist, their concerns are understandable.

None of this, of course, is to say that Marvel has put zero effort into promoting their newest release – on the contrary, their Twitter account broadcasts at least 100 *Shang-Chi* related posts

advertising the movie's release date as compared to surely hundreds for *Black Widow*. To many fans though, it simply seemed that the corporation was not doing enough to hype up the film, and that left them feeling discouraged and overlooked.

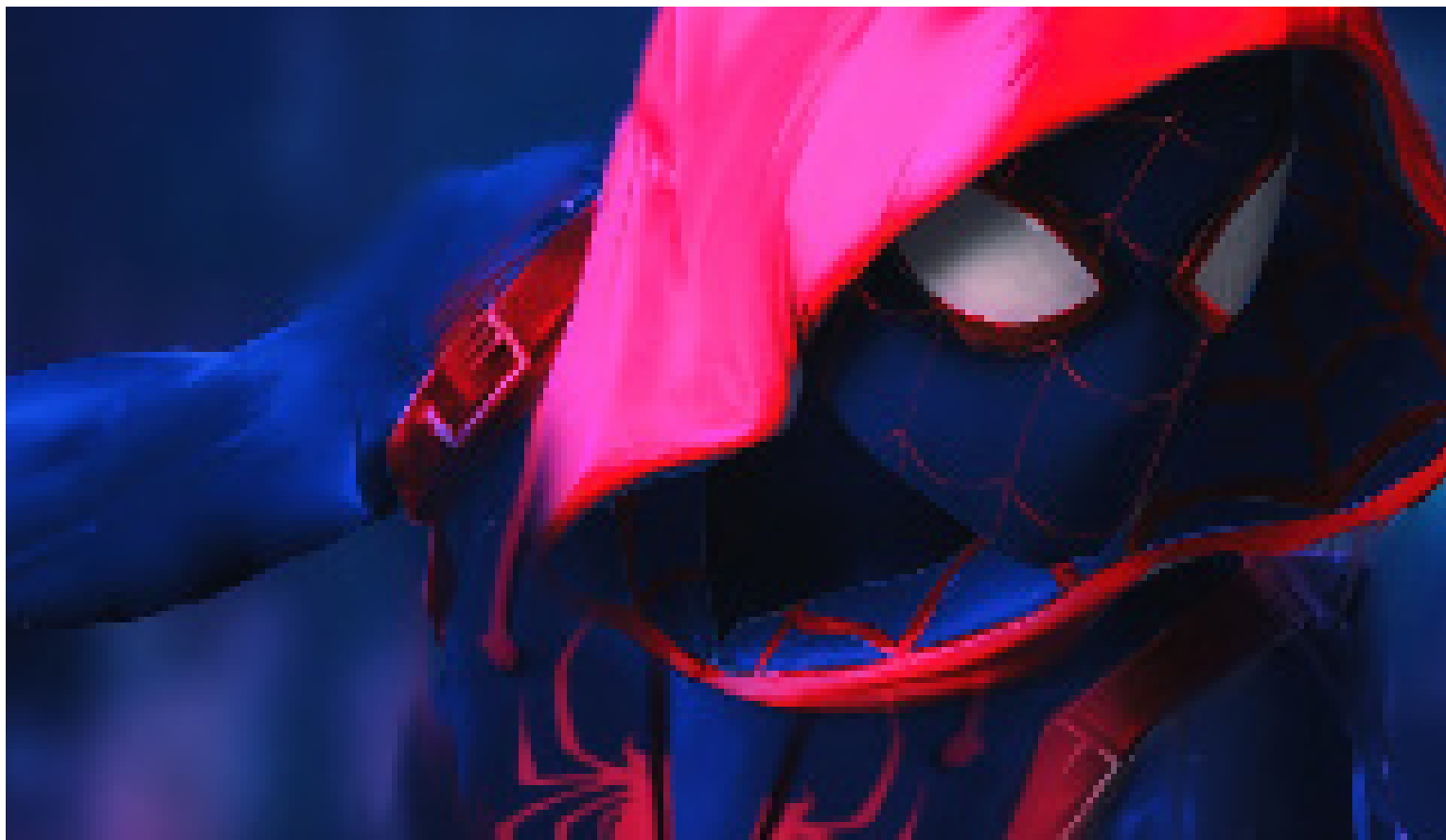
A synopsis of the movie from Marvel Studios' website reads, "Marvel Studios' *Shang-Chi and The Legend of The Ten*

"To many fans though, it simply seemed that the corporation was not doing enough to hype up the film, and that left them feeling discouraged and overlooked."

Rings" stars Simu Liu as Shang-Chi, who must confront the past he thought he left behind when he is drawn into the web of the mysterious Ten Rings organization." The film is currently out in theatres and will be released on Disney+ as early as Monday, October 18th, though the official release date is unknown.

Marvel's *What If...?* and the Disdain for Animation

Should Hollywood turn its attention to animated media?



An image taken from *Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse*. Image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.

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Staff Writer

Marvel Studios' *What If...?* has been an experiment in plot and hypothetical questions within the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU), but in a broader context, it is a successful experiment in large-scale animation. The show, which premiered on August 11th with new episodes airing every Wednesday, adapts the long-running comic of the same name to explore how the MCU would shift if one thing happened differently.

Unlike its MCU peers, it is animated. Previously, the only animated major production featuring a Marvel character had been 2018's *Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse*, a film headed by Sony that was praised by critics and audiences alike. The film has a 93% fresh score from watchers on the Rotten Tomato meter, and the sequel is eagerly awaited. Much of the adulation of *What If...?* and *Into the Spider-Verse* resulted from their respective animation styles and the creativity that they

were awarded as a result. Though ever-evolving CGI creates more options for live-action films, the options of animation are limited

"The overwhelming popularity of Spider-Verse and freedom of What If...? animation offers a compelling alternative."

only by the creativity of the artistic team.

Whether they be adaptations of novels or born on the screen, the staples of fantasy shows tend to be expansive: colossal fights, monumental landscapes, and minutely detailed characters. As well as compelling, these characteristics are expensive—millions of dollars expensive. they are done right, often expectations or attempts to show the overwhelming size of any given world fall short. Since cinema began, it has centered on live-action films, often starring well-

known names used to sell movie tickets. As with many things in the 21st century, just because that is the way it has been done does not mean that is the way it should continue to be. Many have an aversion to animation due to its ties to media geared towards children, but recently, with shows like *Big Mouth*, and *Rick and Morty*, more adult animation has been on the rise. As animation styles develop and become more complex, as in *Spider-Verse*, Hollywood and indie filmmakers alike should turn to animation to tell stories they would otherwise be unable

As animation allows new creatives and ideas to take hold, it should also be a mainstream consideration for shows like *Game of Thrones*, whose last season was roundly attacked, cost just less than \$100 million, and was overall quite rushed. Had the show been animated, the cost would have been massively reduced, and thus the proper time could have been taken to do the adaptation of George R.R. Martin's source material justice. This critique is just one of many examples of the benefits of animation. The drawbacks to a live-action format combined with the overwhelming popularity of *Spider-Verse* and freedom of *What If...?*, offer a compelling alternative. Many fans of Percy Jackson are ecstatic about Disney's upcoming live-action adaptation of *Percy Jackson and the Olympians*, but should fans and Disney consider an animated route? Only time will tell.

The Summer of Love

A review of Love Island UK's Seventh Season

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Love Island is a United Kingdom television series that follows the journeys of 20 contestants, or “islanders,” as they search for love. The rules are as follows: each contestant starts in a couple and mingles around until a recoupling, at which point either the boys or the girls may choose to pick a new partner or stay in the same couple. Dumpings occur when people are not picked to be

“The parallel between a lack of interesting contestants and the show still bringing in a record number of viewers demonstrates the domination of technology and virtual experiences in the evolving world.”

in a couple, or the U.K. public has voted them out.

The season finale boasted a record 2.8 million viewers for ITV2 - 43,000 viewers more than the previous finale. Over the forty-four episodes, an average of 4 million people were watching, making the show the most watched program for 16-to-34-year-olds during the summer. However, many viewers com-

plained of a boring season that lacked the drama they had come to expect. Many couples fell apart, especially during Casa Amor, and it was only in the later episodes that the real relationships solidified.

Looking through the eyes of the pandemic, the show's lack of connections could be a reflection of isolation during quarantine. This was the first time many of the contestants were surrounded by people throughout the day, and many conversations often fell flat. The parallel between a lack of interesting contestants and the show still bringing in a record number of viewers demonstrates the domination of technology and virtual experiences in the evolving world.

Whether couples leave finding love or not, contestants gain a massive social media following after appearing on the show, begging the question of who is genuine in their feelings. Sometimes a connection can be one in a “milliam” (if you know, you know) or it can be totally one-sided (as in the case of Liberty and Jake). Part of the intrigue of the show is the ability of the audience to participate in the journey by voting for their favorite couples and following along with their social media platforms.



The Love Island logo. Image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.

In the end, it was Millie and Liam who came out on top and won the 50,000-pound prize, plus the ultimate prize of love. The couple went through many trials, whether it be Liam getting to know Lillie in Casa Amor, the “Mad Films” night, or

conflict with other couples. Nevertheless, they both learned a great deal about themselves and matured within the seven weeks to blossom into a genuine couple, garnering the nation's support to win. After leaving the villa, it appears they are still together, and

the paparazzi photographed Millie traveling to visit with Liam.

Altogether, the show continues to hook in the loyal (and sweep in the new) viewers due to its lightheartedness, the opportunity to debate its drama, and the possibility of finding love.

Bob Ross and the Joy of Painting

A review of Netflix's Bob Ross documentary

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Staff Writer

Ah yes, Bob Ross - everyone's favorite PBS TV painter. Many have brushed past Bob whilst flipping channels on TV in the 90s and early 00s or have become one of his newer fans through platforms like Twitch or Reddit. Either way, it is nearly impossible to not know of the certain charm Ross has. Whether he is showing viewers his latest mountain painting technique, rehabilitating Squirrely Whirly Brown (his epileptic pet squirrel), or giving advice that is simple yet striking, and may even be applicable outside the small world of oil painting.

Anette Kowalski show to media as Bob's “business partner,” is in custody of all of Bob's paintings. But in Netflix's *Bob Ross: Happy Accidents, Betrayal, and Greed*, a completely different perspective on Bob's life and Anette's role is shown. Many in Bob's life, particularly his son Steve, live in fear of Anette and her husband Walt. In the documentary, Steve goes through Bob's life from its start to its tragic end- but as the documentary continues, his attitude towards Anette begins to shift. After realizing Bob and Anette were having an affair, Steve noticed changes in the Kowalskis' behavior. “Everything was tense,”

he stated. Despite personal issues, the Kowalskis continued to promote and create licensed Bob Ross products.

This process ran smoothly for a brief period before things took a turn. The Kowalskis began a sponsorship with Weber, and

“But in Netflix's Bob Ross: Happy Accidents, Betrayal, and Greed, a completely different perspective on Bob's life and Anette's role is shown.”

in doing so cut ties with their old sponsors, Gary and Kathwren Jenkins, who were Bob's friends and fellow TV painters. The Jenkins had little issue with the change until Anette began reusing their original techniques as part of her own “painting method.” Due to Walt Kowalski's former position at the CIA, the BRI (Bob Ross Inc., co-owned with Bob by Anette and Walt) had immense legal power. After Bob's wife, Jane, passed away, more and more shares of the company began to fall to the Kowalskis. By the time of Bob's cancer diagnosis and imminent demise, Anette and Walt owned nearly all of BRI. In the months leading up to Bob's death, Anette fiscally turned on



Bob Ross during a *Joy of Painting* episode. Photo courtesy of Flickr.

Bob, attempting to coerce him into giving up his naming rights. Bob refused until his passing. In response to Anette, Steve states that “she was trying to steal [his] father's own name. She tried to take everything from him.”

After Bob's passing, the Kowalski's ignored Bob's dying

wishes of Steve controlling BRI, and Steve subsequently sued the Kowalskis for naming rights. He intended to release his own line of paints and stop the “Bob Ross Certified” art instruction classes the Kowalskis had been running. Although Steve lost the lawsuit, he, along with Bob's friend and

mentor, Dana Jester, remained adamant to keep his father's spirit alive. In Florida, it is still possible to find some of Bob's spirit, living on through Steve's brush strokes, teaching a new generation of art students “happy little trees” in Steve and Dana's instructive series.