

Madison Central

UPROAR

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MC FOOTBALL CROWNED STATE CHAMPIONS

On Friday, December 3, 2021, the Madison Central football team secured its first state championship since 1999. In an absolute thriller that ended with a score of 24 – 17, the Jaguars defeated the Brandon Bulldogs for the second time this season. With a final record of 13 – 1, the team made history with an unforgettable ending to a memorable season. Jake Norris received the MVP award for his outstanding performance. Having to step up late in the season after Vic Sutton’s injury, all eyes turned to Norris. He played with heart and determination, and it no doubt payed off in the end.

Above: The football team smiles big after their victory. Photo courtesy of Olivia Heard.

STANDING UNITED FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Caroline King
STAFF WRITER

December is a month full of celebration and Christmas cheer for most, but what people do not know is that it is also Universal Human Rights Month. It is a month in which people of all religions and beliefs can celebrate their equality. In 1948, the United Nations wrote a document called the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). This document was written to define explicitly what human rights are to be protected universally. This is now a testament to what people can claim as their own universal human rights.

During the month of December, there are a few separate holidays to celebrate some of the individual universal human rights. These include International Day of Persons with Disabilities, Human Rights Day, and Bill of Rights Day. These are a part of the larger celebration of Universal Human Rights Month, and they each have a special meaning behind them.

The first day that is celebrated during the Universal Human Rights Month is International Disabled Persons Day on December 3. This day is a necessary part of Universal Human Rights Month that many tend to forget. This holiday was proclaimed in 1992 by the United Nations General Assembly Resolution. The goal is to promote the well-being and rights of persons with disabilities in all walks of life. We can raise awareness for people with disabilities in many ways, some of these include, volunteering at special needs programs, joining the Jag Buddies club at Madison Central, and taking the time to get to know people with disabilities. Anything little that you can do, will go a long way. Kellie Fox, one of the Special Education teachers at our school, said, “I think to grasp a better understanding we should always keep in mind not to pre-judge a persons’ abilities. We all have our own unique abilities and talents!” There still isn’t equality between people with and without disabilities, and that is something that this holiday aims to change.

Human Rights Day is the second individual holiday that is dur-

ing Universal Human Rights Month on December 10. This holiday was adopted shortly after the two world wars and a large migration crisis. The UDHR was not in affect yet, but it was already placing large implications against human rights discrimination. It was also beneficial that the human rights negotiations at the time were led by a woman named Eleanor Roosevelt. She was a role model for all, being that she was so passionate for this cause in a time that it was hard for many to gain rights.

Over the past few decades people have become more involved in the fight for their rights. As we have had, Black Lives Matter protests, Women’s Equality Education, and Criminal Justice Rights. Many people don’t think about all the things that people are treated unequally for, and that’s what this holiday is all about. Reid Hewitt (12) said, “I have noticed several inequalities in our society regarding the treatment of racial minorities, women, disabled individuals, members of a lower socio-economic class, and members of the LGBTQ+ community.”

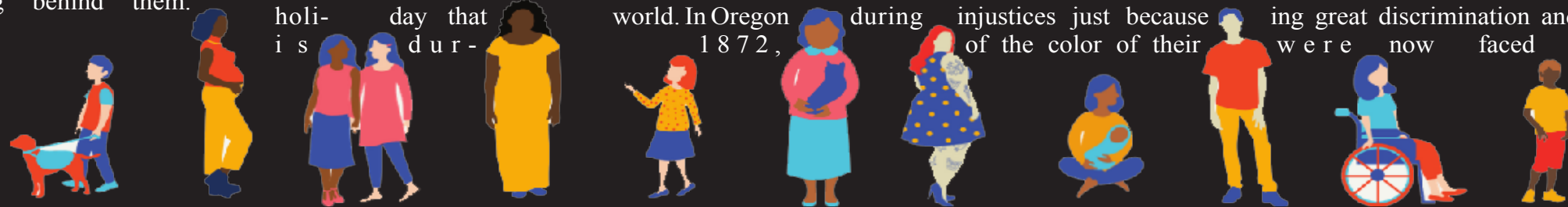
Women’s equality has always been a pressing issue in America and all over the world. In Oregon during 1872,

Mary Beatty, Abigail Scott Duniway, Maria Hendee, and M.A. Lambert joined forces to begin the campaign for women’s voting rights, this was known as women’s suffrage. After a few decades, these women pushed for the ratification of the 19th Amendment that granted women the right to vote. The ratification of this amendment was the first step in an ongoing fight for the rights and equality of women. At Madison Central, the Women Empowerment Club was recently created. Its goal is to advocate for the equality of women and to uplift and inspire the women in our community. Many students are involved in this club as it has helped many find inspiration from others to advocate for equality.

Another important source of the slow but moving fight for rights is race inequality. In 1619, a ship of slaves was brought over to the colonies because landowners needed servants to do their farming and household work. This was the beginning of a cycle that African Americans were stuck in for about 250 years. Even now, African Americans still have to deal with injustices just because of the color of their

skin. Human Rights Day includes these rights that so many people are still fighting for. This day in December is a day to remind people of what has happened in the past, fight for the rights that still need to be gained, and celebrate the victories that have already been accomplished.

Along with African Americans fighting for their rights, many people forget about the Latino and Hispanic population’s civil rights. Many of these people became a part of the United States population because of the annexation of Texas in 1845. Due to this, they were subject to discrimination and could only find low paying jobs that would hire them. Their population grew even more because of the Spanish-American War in 1898. During the early twentieth century, Mexican Americans faced extreme violence, and they were denied the right to vote. During the early 1900’s the League of United Latin American Citizens was created to protect Latin American citizens from government discrimination and to fight for their rights with a united front. In the later 1900’s, Latino and Hispanic Americans were still enduring great discrimination and were now faced



sports

Check out page 7 for information about the soccer team!



news

Take a look at page 2 for information about Bitcoin.



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with deportation. Now, even with many advances for the equality of Latino and Hispanic Americans, they still have to deal with the possibility of deportation and discrimination from the government and other citizens.

Another inequality that we face in the United States and even in Mississippi is socio-economic inequality. This is when bias of economic status causes disproportionate

social standings. This has been a pressing issue for a long time. It spans for generations, since it is hard to break the cycle. In Mississippi, this has been a very big issue. We have many towns unlike Madison that have very high poverty rates and less funding from the government. "Here in Madison, we turn a blind eye to poverty in our state, when we really need to be helping to combat the social/economic inequali-

ties to help Mississippi as a whole," said Josh Maatallah (11). Current international laws are going into effect that are addressing the economic polarization of our world and what we can do to help fix it.

The last holiday that is included in Universal Human Rights Month is the Bill of Rights day. December 15 is recognized as this day because the Bill of Rights was ratified on December 15, 1971. When the Constitution was written, it did not

really focus on the aspect of individual rights, it was more focused on the rights of the nation. Many Americans at the time wanted a list of rights that the government could not infringe on. James Madison was the one to write this list of individual rights and limitations of the government. They are the first 10 amendments to the Constitution and are known as the Bill of Rights. This day during the Universal Human Rights Month, is meant to celebrate

the recognition of such fundamental rights by our nation, and the fact that they cannot be taken away under the law.

Universal Human Rights Month is a large celebration to both show how far we have come in the pursuit of equal rights, and to bring awareness to the growth that still needs to be made. We can all work together to achieve these universal goals of equality.

Tracing the Case of Gabby Petito

Adya Praveen
CO-EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

One couple, a cross-country trek, and two missing bodies. This is the story of Gabby Petito.

On July 2nd, Gabrielle Petito started on a road trip accompanied by her fiancé, Brian Laundrie, with her heart set on a cross-country embark visiting several of the country's finest national parks and camping sites. As both Petito and Laundrie were social media influencers, they photographed their journey through pictures and videos uploaded to their social media outlets. On August 12, Petito uploaded an Instagram picture of the two at Arches National Park- the same day that a domestic problem had arisen between the two, in which a police officer was dispatched to their site. A caller had dialed 911 after witnessing Laundrie slapping Petito in Moab, Utah. According to the police report, the couple was quick to dismiss the issue, as they proclaimed that they

were genuinely in love and that "issues between the two had been building over the last few days."(CNN) This increasing tension was also revealed through the conversations Petito had with her mom, which were investigated through the police affidavit. On September 1st, Laundrie returned to his home in Florida in Petito's white van alone. Ten days later, Petito was officially registered as missing.

Since the start of the investigation, Laundrie was classified as a "person of interest" as he was the last person in direct contact with Petito before her disappearance. This suspicion only grew when Laundrie was reported missing six days after Petito's disappearance. When Petito's remains were found in Wyoming on September 19th, her death was officially ruled a homicide as a result of strangulation. Although it was found that her body had been outside for several weeks, the time of her death remained unclear as the weather conditions she was subjected to made it increasingly more difficult to pinpoint the exact date of death. Katie

Grace Barbour (10) said, "I do believe that Brian Laundrie is responsible for her murder. Considering the couple's involvement in aggressive disputes with each other in relation to the cause of death being strangulation for Petito's murder, it seems highly plausible that Laundrie is to blame." This end to the search for Petito officially initiated the search for Laundrie with a search warrant being issued for his family's home and federal arrest warrant being issued in Wyoming for debit card fraud. After nearly one month after Petito's remains were found, human remains were also found in a Florida park with Laundrie's backpack and notebook scattered nearby. According to the F.B.I., dental records confirm that the remains were those of Brian Laundrie.

In addition to the mystery surrounding the disappearance and death of the two individuals, the murder case has also sparked important conversations of domestic abuse throughout the younger generation. The single case has enraptured the public's attention, causing thousands of individuals to help debunk the crime, and as a result, initiate

wide-spread awareness of the frequency of domestic abuse. "The case initially captured my attention just because this situation could have happened to almost anyone. It has sparked the attention of the entire country, because it shines a light on how many women experience abusive relationships and the dangers that could arise as a result," said Rebecca Lu (12). Educating the public about domestic abuse brings about the rising question: could this murder have been prevented? If the police had

arrested Laundrie that day, would Petito still be alive today? "Strangulation is very typically the cause of death in domestic violence cases. It is a major risk factor for intimate partner homicide and it is often seen as occurring alongside more severe abuse."(ABC News) The patterns of domestic abuse are almost identical in the case of Gabby Petito, leading many to wonder the repercussions of our society's limited understanding and resources for abusive relationships. Petito's case will now serve as the blueprint for the future.



Above: Picture uploaded to Petito's Instagram weeks before domestic abuse incident- July 22nd.

BITCOIN: IS IT WORTH IT?

Taylor Martin
CO-EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Cryptocurrency is a medium of exchange that uses digital technology to control the flow of monetary units. Basically, it is a form of virtual money. There are a wide variety of forms of cryptocurrency, but perhaps the most well-known of all is Bitcoin. It was created by Satoshi Nakamoto and publicly launched in 2009. One bitcoin equals \$58,989.40 US dollars—as of December 1—and an estimated 46 million Americans own Bitcoin. While the price of one bitcoin is extremely high, users can also buy fractional shares of it to limit the cost.

Nakamoto originally created Bitcoin as a way to make virtual currency a reality. However, since its release it has become a controversial topic of conversation, and many experts have voiced their opinions on the positives and negatives of this cryptocurrency.

There are four main positives and four main negatives of buying into Bitcoin. The pros include

accessibility and liquidity, user transparency, independence from authority, and high return potential. Since it only takes a few minutes to transfer bitcoins, this form of cryptocurrency is extremely accessible. Bitcoins can also be easily sold at any moment. Plus, it is a bonus that they have little to no fees applied, making it pretty user friendly. In addition to this, Bitcoin does its best to ensure the safety and security of all its users. Although not completely anonymous, Bitcoin users are identified by numerical codes and can have multiple public keys. This ensures there is no public tracking, and transactions can not be traced back to the user. Despite the transactions being permanently viewable they are still kept safe from fraud due to the blockchain technology. The last two positives that draw people to the cryptocurrency are the fact that Bitcoin is not tied to any governmental institutions, and there is also the chance to make a significant amount of money if invested properly. While all of these things are good in theory, it is also important to be aware

of the drawbacks to Bitcoin.

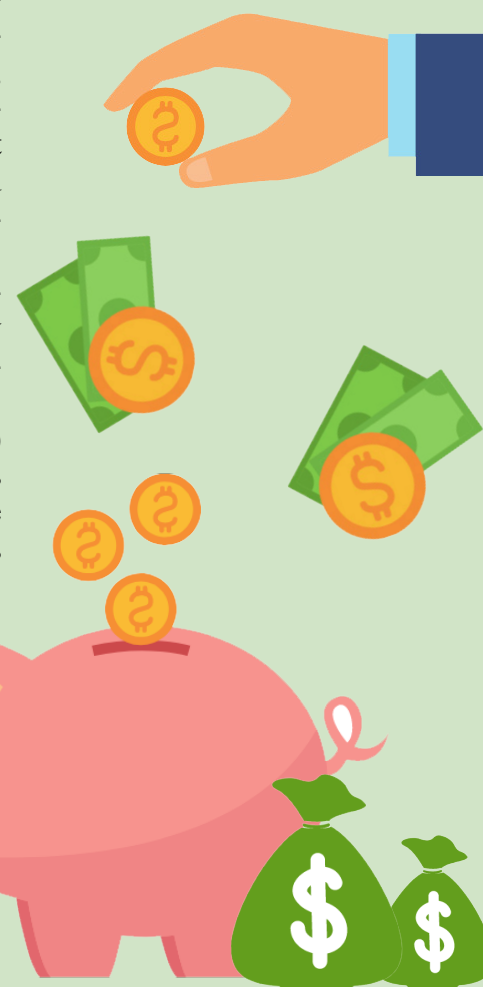
Bitcoin is very volatile, which means its value can change rapidly and unexpectedly. Since Nakamoto set a limit of 21 million bitcoins that could ever exist, its price is determined heavily by how much of a demand there is for it. News coverages can also influence the price of bitcoin, which is the same concept surrounding most investment outlets. Also, bitcoins are not backed by the government or any institution, so there is nothing to guarantee their value besides the proof established within the system. "The reason why Bitcoin is worth money is simple because we, as people, decided it has value," said Dillan Smith (12). While it is a good thing that Bitcoin is free of central control, it is also a bad thing. In a way, it is a paradoxical trait.

In addition to this, the last two cons are its limited use and irreversibility. Since Bitcoin transactions are anonymous and unregulated, there is little room for error. Transactions done through Bitcoin are irreversible and final, so nothing can be done if the wrong amount is sent or if it is sent to the wrong

recipient. When asked about how she felt about this, Claire Boykin (11) said, "I would be pretty upset if my money went somewhere it was not supposed to, and there was nothing I could do about it." There is also an issue with where you can use bitcoins. Even though there is a growing number of companies that accept Bitcoin, it is still not widely accepted. This puts a limit on where you can spend your money, unlike using a credit or debit card.

So, should people really invest their money into Bitcoin? The simplest answer is maybe. As Morgan Walberg (10) said, "Each individual has to be educated on where they put their money, as well as how much risk they are willing to take." In a very real sense, Bitcoin is like a single stock, and advisors would not recommend putting a sizable part of your portfolio into

any one company. At most, planners suggest putting no more than 1% to 10% into Bitcoin if you are passionate about it. However, it is always important to know what one could potentially be getting themselves into before investing money anywhere.



A Conversation with Leo Mei

Hannah Schossler
STAFF WRITER

In May of 2020, Leo Mei (11) took the AP Psychology exam administered by College Board. He ended up being one of only six people in the world to make a perfect score on the test. Achieving a perfect score on any AP test requires dedication and hard work. There were many strategies Mei employed when studying for his AP Psychology exam.

When asked about how he prepared for the exam, Mei replied, “The thing that helped me the most was reading the assigned textbook throughout the entire year.” Mei continued to say that he studied last-minute one month before the exam, and that he wishes he could have done his studying differently. He was very stressed about the exam but explained that every test-taker experiences stress before the test begins. Once it does, the worries, “simply fade out, and the only thing left is the test.”

When asked what he thought the hardest part of the test was, Mei said it was the various theories of development. The theories of development are an assortment of theories about how

the human brain develops over time. “Since much of psychology is still up for debate, there’s not a singular theory that is taught; we must learn several,” said Mei. He went on to explain that each theory has its own unique workings that the AP Psychology students had to be familiar with. “It is extremely easy to mix them up, which makes the section very, very frustrating.” On the other hand, Mei found that the easiest part of the exam was the section on the biological perspective of psychology.

He said that most people might have found it hard, but it came easy to him. “I found it much easier to understand how, say, action potentials work than how the conditioning of mice works,” Mei explained.

At the end of the interview, Mei stated that, “AP Psychology, is one of those courses that is absolutely essential.” He said that the human mind is a crucial part of the world, and that everyone can benefit from learning about it. Mei described how it is also important to learn about mental illness, especially in a culture that, “largely misunder-

stands and belittles mental illness.” He explained that it is of the utmost importance that we, as a society, truly see mental illnesses as what they are. Mei continued, “AP Psychology is one of those classes that will have practical use no matter what path you take in life. As humans, we are ultimately controlled by our minds; it is something that you will use no matter what career you enter, no matter what you choose to become – if not, then the world becomes a badly-written dystopian story.”



Above: Mei smiles for the camera at the press conference highlighting his achievement. Picture courtesy of Audrey Jenkins.

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12/13:
1st & 3rd Exams
(2nd & 4th Review)

12/14:
5th & 7th Exams
(6th & 8th Review)

12/15:
2nd & 4th Exams
(1st & 3rd Makeup)

12/16:
6th & 8th Exams

MENTAL HEALTH CHECK-IN

Share how you're feeling with an emoji

really great

pretty good

okay, I guess

starting to struggle

having a hard time

I need support

Band Outplays the Competition

Avery Holland
STAFF WRITER

Madison Central’s band is very highly recognized throughout the state for their astounding performances. They are known for both competition and performance at MC football games, where they keep the crowd entertained. They have participated in and won many competitions over the years, such as The Hoover Invitational Marching Band Competition several weeks ago.

The Hoover Invitational Marching Band Competition was held in Hoover, Alabama on October 23, 2021. The competition was many of the seniors’ last events, which made it quite sentimental for them. Elizabeth Goreth (12) said, “As a senior, Hoover was bittersweet. I realized that it was the last time I was going to be on the field” Goreth has been to Hoover three times and has made some of her best memories there. For Goreth, she grew up surrounded by marching bands, as her dad is the band director at MC. She said, “I have made so many new friends, and Hoover was a great farewell to my experience in the Madison Central Marching Band.” For Goreth, Madi-

son Central’s band was a great experience for her and she will miss getting to perform.

To prepare for the Hoover Competition the band practiced for 5 days a week and had afternoon practice on Tuesday and Thursdays. Natalie Deville (10) said, “This year was the first year sophomores and freshmen marched. Lucky for us there were upperclassmen that knew what they were doing.” Deville had Drew Harris (12) as her section leader, she said, “Drew helped tremendously, he was always there to hype everyone up and answer questions.” Deville believes the band works well together, and they always give it their all.

Natalie Deville loved getting to go to Hoover, Alabama and compete. She said, “Hoover was such a fun experience. It was my first time being in Hoover, and it most definitely did not disappoint. I was so happy we got all superior. Our hard work paid off, and I am looking forward to going back next year and making more great memories”. Band has always been a fun experience for Deville, as she has enjoyed meeting so many new people and engaging with her peers. Deville has become very fond of the band over the last few years. She said, “Band has been a lot of fun, I have met some great and friendly people and I am excited for the next few years”. Deville is looking forward to her next Hoover trip and her next couple of years in the Madison Central band. Emily Dunn (11) also had a

great time at Hoover. She said, “Being able to go to Hoover this year was very exciting because we did not get to do any competitions last year due to Covid-19.” The pandemic prevented the marching band from competing last year. Dunn said, “We were kind of nervous, because we did not have much of a show last year. We had to compete against bands that did have a normal marching season, which made it even more nerve racking”. Dunn was overjoyed yet shocked when MC was called for second place. She said, “I was honestly surprised but also ecstatic that we had placed second and done so well. We put a lot of hard work into the show”. Dunn has enjoyed her years in band and is looking forward to her senior year in band next year.

Band has been a huge attraction at MC for many years. They have won several competitions over the years and the Hoover Invitational Marching Band Competition was very successful for MC. Madison Central’s band students are an extremely talented group of students that work hard every day and practice daily to improve their skills. Their hard work has paid off over the years and will continue to exceed in the future.

Teacher by Day, Superhero by Night

Meredith Morrow
STAFF
WRITER

As students, it can be easy to forget that teachers have lives outside of school. Being a teacher can be hard work, especially when there are things to do outside of school hours, such as being a parent, participating in hobbies, or being a coach. These things get in the way of grading papers, having free time, and even spending time with their families.

Multitasking can be extremely stressful. Just ask Rebecca Temple, who teaches AP Language and Accelerated English III at Madison Central (MC). Temple said, "I am currently taking two graduate classes to get my PhD in English. I am also teaching a night class at Texas A&M Commerce, which all gets in the way of my day job. I look forward to Thanksgiving, which gives me a break from the chaos. Along with all this, I am also a mom of three with two dogs. I try to tell my students about my life outside of school, so they know why

some things are not graded super quick." All this to say, students must remember that teachers do other things outside of school.

Some other hobbies lots of teachers take part in include tutoring after school, teaching online, or hobbies outside of school. Another teacher who has a lot on his plate, but still manages to make time for himself is Raiford Randall. Randall, who teaches College Prep Economics (AP Macro/Micro Economics), said, "When I am not teaching, I like to participate in activities like playing the guitar, practicing martial arts, reading books, as well as go fishing and hunting. Many of my students also participate in these things, so I try to incorporate these into my lessons as often as I can. It never interferes with school hours, but I try to find time to use my experiences to help me teach."

From having to remember daily lesson plans and grading work to simply remembering students' names, teachers have it harder than most students may believe. Student teacher for Mrs. Rivera's Spanish classes, Adrian Espinoza, is originally from Merida,

Mexico and is new to MC. Espinoza loves that he has the opportunity to educate people on his culture. Espinoza said, "I love talking about the celebrations and traditions in Mexico, especially the Day of the Dead. Apart from student teaching, I am currently taking a class at Millsaps College, which does not give me time to do much else. I also enjoy bike riding, going to the movies, and running in my free time, as well as riding in our boat on the lake. Thanksgiving gives me something to look forward to, because this gives me time to go see my family."

For teachers who are new to MC, like Espinoza, it is hard for them to have much time for their family when they are adjusting to the new environment.

Though they are left with little free time, teachers at MC are much more than just educators and have many hobbies that students are often unaware of. So next time something is not graded at your convenience, keep in mind what may be going on in the teacher's life.

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COMMITTING TO THEIR FUTURE

Allie Hurt
STAFF WRITER

Here at Madison Central, we have many athletes that excel. They have all found a balance between schoolwork, sports, and extracurricular activities. At this school, we have always had many students that have been offered scholarships to good schools to pursue their specific sport. This year, we have already had lots of students who have received and accepted offers for what many students consider their dream schools.

Cassie Howell (11) is a junior at MC who is committed to the University of Kentucky. Howell has been swimming competitively for 13 years. She started swimming at four years old and has been in love with it ever since. Howell has been on the Aqua Jags swim team at MC since seventh grade. The girls team recently became state champs for the eighth year in a row. When asked what she likes most about swimming she said, "How much it prepares you for life outside of the pool. Swimming for hours at a time instills good time management, a strong work ethic, and self-discipline." Howell is very fortunate to be able to commit this early on. It has taken a lot of pressure off her junior and senior year. Howell is so excited to have her college plans already mapped out.

Another student who is committed is Blake Gunter (12). Gunter is committed to Tulane University for

football. He has been playing football for as long as he can remember. Gunter comes from a football family and began playing as soon as he was old enough. Gunter is on the MC Football team and plays Tight End, which he will also play at Tulane. He loves football especially at MC because of the camaraderie. He could not ask for better people to be around. When asked what his thoughts were about already being committed, Gunter said, "It is such a relieving feeling knowing that I have an idea for the future. I am excited for Tulane, because it is an outstanding place in an amazing city with so much opportunity. I know that I will make connections that will last a lifetime." He is excited to be doing something different. Going to Tulane is a chance for him to get away from Mississippi for a few years and experience new things.

Jake Cook (12) is a committed student from MC. He plays on our 2021 National Champion baseball team. Cook said, "I have played all of my life, and getting this commitment has been a great honor." Cook is a pitcher and plays outfield on the MC team. He is committed to The University of Southern Miss. to further his academic and sport career.

These students at our school have fit the rigorous requirements and have committed to doing their sport for the rest of their college careers. It is an honor to be able to commit to a college to participate in the sport they love.

BLAKE GUNTER

JAKE COOK

CASSIE HOWELL

Canton Lights Shine Bright

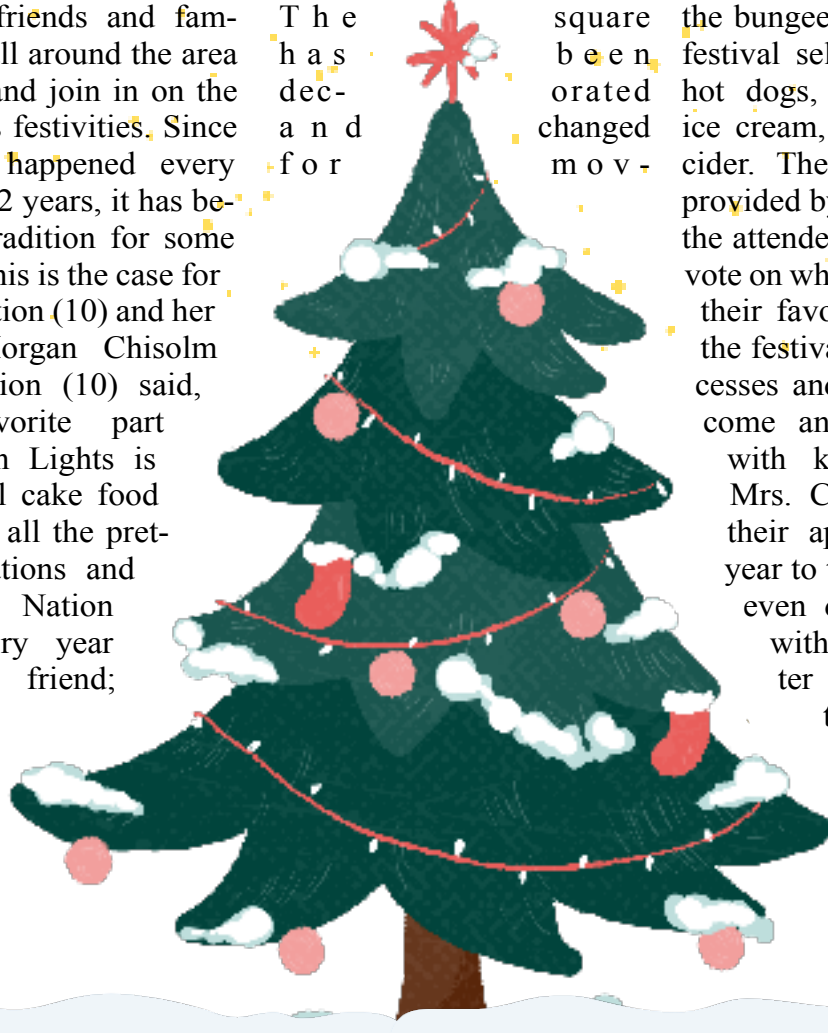
Anna Kimbrell
STAFF WRITER

Canton, Mississippi has been decorating the courthouse square in glittering Christmas lights and décor for 32 years. Every year around Christmas, the Square is decorated with lights and rides, which resemble a Christmas Village. Canton has been nicknamed the “City of Lights” because of its show stopping Christmas Festival. People from across the area come to Canton during the designated dates to eat, shop, go on rides, and get pictures taken with Santa. The festival is a perfect time to bring family and friends to the downtown area to make new Christmas time memories.

The festival initially began in 1988 with decor including antique window decorations. The event now includes 200,000 twinkling lights, parades, apple cider competitions, rides, and food vendors.

It is a fun Christmas experience that people of all ages come to attend. Ainsley Ruhl (12) went to the festival last Christmas with her friends. She said, “It was a really fun experience for all of us.” Ruhl “loved being immersed in holiday cheer while supporting a beautiful, historic part of our community.” Canton brings together friends and family from all around the area to come and join in on the Christmas festivities. Since this has happened every year for 32 years, it has become a tradition for some people. This is the case for Callie Nation (10) and her friend Morgan Chisolm (10). Nation (10) said, “My favorite part of Canton Lights is the funnel cake food truck and all the pretty decorations and lights.” Nation goes every year with her friend; many share the same ritual.

The Canton Lights Christmas Festival is held in the city’s historic square. The Greek, Revival courthouse was built in July of 1855 and went under renovation in 1995. The Canton Courthouse Square District was deemed a National Register of Historic Places in 1982 (Canton Tourism). The square has been decorated changed m o v -



ies, flea markets, commercials, and documentaries. The courthouse square has been around for over one hundred years and the beautiful surroundings give a perfect backdrop for the Christmas Festival that Canton puts on each year. The festival features rides that include the train, carousel, horse and buggy, and the bungee jump. The light festival sells funnel cakes, hot dogs, Chunky Dunks ice cream, and even apple cider. The apple cider is provided by merchants, and the attendees of the festival vote on which apple cider is their favorite. In the past the festival even had princesses and superheroes to come and take pictures with kids. Santa and Mrs. Claus both make their appearance every year to take pictures and even do a story time with attendees. After getting pictures taken with Santa, guests can go through the illuminated a r c h w a y

that leads to the beautifully decorated Christmas tree in the middle of the square. Margaret Anne Henderson (11) said “I have been going to the festival for years and every year is just as fun as the last. I love looking at the beautiful lights, especially the Christmas tree.” The lights festival is a beautifully done Christmas tourist spot that people of all ages can come in and enjoy.

This year the festival will be held from November 26 to November 28 and December 3 to December 23. Clay Mansell from Mansel Media said, “There are also a few new things that will not be announced until opening weekend.” Guests of all ages can come and enjoy the beautifully lit courthouse square for rides, food, and pictures with Santa. The square has a historic charm that attracts residents of Mississippi to keep on coming back every year to revel in holiday cheer. The Canton Lights has been around for 30 years and will continue to be here for years to come.

HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE

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Holiday Playlist



- 01 All I Want for Christmas is You
- 02 Jingle Bell Rock
- 03 Mistletoe (Justin Bieber)
- 04 Santa Tell Me
- 05 Last Christmas
- 06 The Little Drummer Boy
- 07 Winter Wonderland
- 08 Mary, did you know?
- 09 Feliz Navidad

SQUID GAME TAKES OVER THE INTERNET

Hannah Schossler
STAFF WRITER

It is the 17th of September 2021, and the television series Squid Game has just aired on Netflix. Squid Game, South Korean film director Hwang Dong-hyuk's star project, is a survival drama. In it, a mysterious organization invites 456 people, all in debt and financially unstable, to play several children's playground games to win 45.6 billion won (the equivalent of 38 million USD). If a player is eliminated, they end up with a bullet in their head or killed in some other gruesome way. The show was modest in its first week before hitting a tsunami of popularity in its second week, which led it to reach 111 million global Netflix accounts within its first 17 days.

There are multiple reasons why Squid Game grew so popular so fast. The most glaringly obvious one is that the global Internet is obsessed with it. People all over the world, not just on the Internet, have been talking about it. Ann Leyton Lord (12) said "I found out

about the show during homecoming week. A friend of mine was watching it in class when we had nothing else to do, and I ended up watching a bit of it with them." The show's bright character designs, such as the workers' signature bright-pink jumpsuit and shape mask, make the show stand out from a sea of competitors. The show also takes the dystopian fight-to-the-death concept and twist it on its head: Squid Game's dystopia is placed in a very real modern society. There is no 300-year gap between now and the main plot like there is in The Hunger Games. The dystopia is centered around a common problem in modern society – poverty and debt. The players have a simple human motivation to get enough money to pay off debts and still put food on the table. Aside from the relativity of the characters, Netflix and Hwang have also made good creative decisions regarding Squid Game. On its release, it had 37 subtitles and 34 dubs, all in different languages, which allowed the show to have a greater reach in its audience. Publishing Squid Game in 2021 is an excellent decision,

considering that media about violent and semi-violent gaming is on the rise, such as The Hunger Games, Plants vs. Zombies: Garden Warfare 2, and Splatoon.

Squid Game takes its time establishing the plot. Episode one, "Red Light, Green Light" is one of the slower episodes; the purpose of the slowness in the plot is to show the audience where Seong Gi-hun (Lee Jung-jae) and, to an extent, the other players, came from. They come from poor communities, are deep in debt, and are trying to claw themselves out. These are desperate people – people who are willing to do almost anything to get enough money to pay off debts and still put food on the table. The human motivations endear the audience to the characters, and Hwang utilizes it as a storytelling weapon; he makes the audience either love or hate certain characters based on said character's role in

the story. It makes us relate to Gi-hun, hate Jang Deok-su (Heo Sung-tae), and love Oh Il-nam (O Yeong-su).

The plot is specifically designed to get the audience engaged. Characters, from both the Squid Game workers to the players, make questionable moral decisions. These decisions are created to specifically rile up the audience and help them get invested. Austin Chang (12) said that "The twist ending was stupid, but the show has pretty interesting main character motivations." Zoe Zhang (11) said "I really love the old man [Il-nam] but I hate the tragic ending." Squid Game is

designed to both resonate and infuriate its audience. Media like this is bound to become a smash hit across the world, and Squid Game is no exception.



Where are students traveling to?

James Phillips
STAFF WRITER

As the holiday season rolls in, families come together to make the most of their time with one another. Whether it is decorating a house, riding around looking at Christmas lights, traveling to visit relatives or simply making hot cocoa, many families enjoy spending time with their loved ones and family members. Traveling during Christmas allows people to make holiday memories that will last a lifetime.

Students at Madison Central are preparing to travel for the holidays. Abigale Camp (11) is currently planning to go to the Biloxi beach for her holidays. When asked about her trip plans, she said, "Going to the beach has always been a family tradition for us. Every holiday season I visit my stepdad and all our family, and we open Christmas gifts on the beach. Ever since we started going when I was nine or ten, it has been a tradition for us." Traditions create long-lasting family bonds and bring loved ones together. Despite being known for its beaches, Biloxi has a

wide range of winter activities. Some of their activities include a craft show where you can buy and make Christmas goods, 'snowflakes in the bay' which includes snowflakes placed all across trees, so when you walk by it gives you that feeling of walking in a winter wonderland. Another activity it features is the 'Annual Gulfport Harbor Lights Winter Festival'. This winter festival was titled "Most Magical Show in Mississippi" and it was even featured in a 'Lifetime' special movie "Christmas in Mississippi". This festival include lights, attractions, and entertainment. It is deemed a very popular attraction for families to travel to during the holiday season.

Other students are thrilled to travel out of state to visit family members. Jack Henry (10) shares his plans this holiday season. "This Christmas, my family and I are visiting my grandma in Arkansas. I recently moved from Arkansas to Mississippi, and it's been a tough change for me but going there to visit is something that's very special. I'm stoked to be going and to spend time with my grandma," said Henry. Arkansas is known for its winter attractions during the holiday season. Its beautiful festive trail of holiday lights where tourists and families can come together to visit. While Jack heads out of the

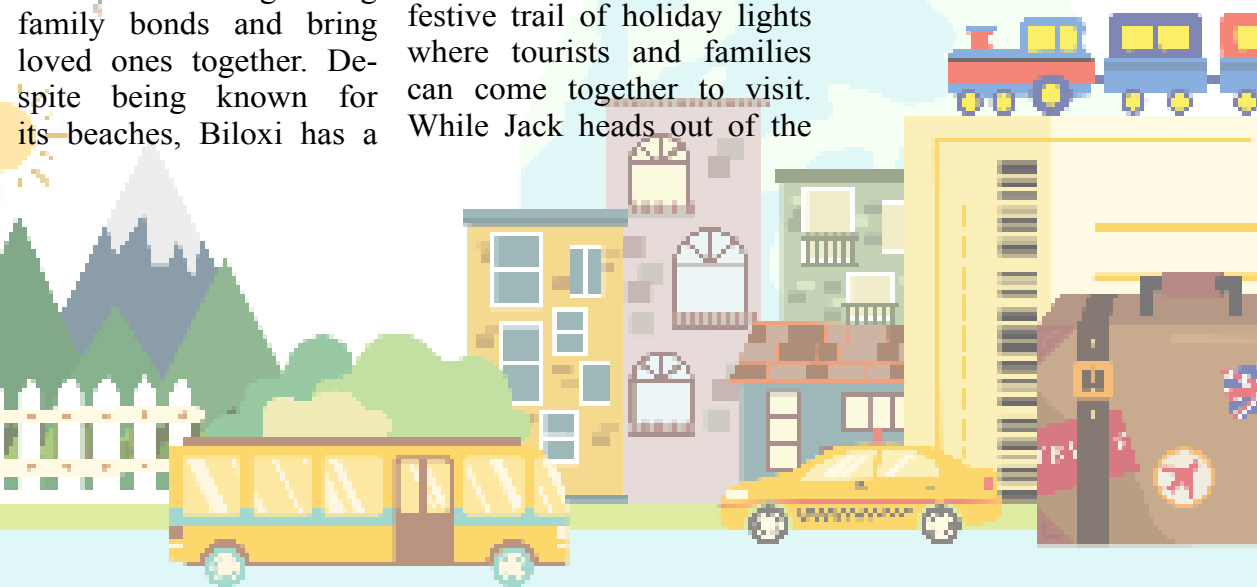
state, another student is planning on spending her holiday camping with her family. Izzy Foland (12) expresses her excitement for the upcoming season. "I am visiting Kosciusko, Mississippi for Christmas break. My dad bought land up there and we are planning to go four-wheel riding. It includes a little house on the land and all of my family is going to be there," said Foland. Kosciusko, Mississippi is a beautiful rural place for families to venture out to and enjoy their company together, while also making beautiful recollections together, and is something most families anticipate. The town has train rides, parades, and other fun activities for children and adults alike to get visitors into the holiday spirit.

The winter season brings some of the best memories. Whether they are traveling or not, one thing is for certain: students are ecstatic about their Christmas break. Regardless of what their plans are, this is a lighthearted time where friends and family come together to partake in memorable events.

"Gifts lost at sea will not be under the Christmas tree."



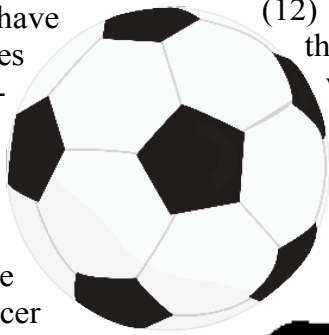
Cartoon courtesy of Walker Scott (10)
Political cartoon depicting shipping delays many will experience this upcoming season.



KICKING OFF THE SEASON

Brittan McFadden
STAFF WRITER

Coming back from an amazing season last year, the Madison Central girls' and boys' soccer teams have high hopes for this upcoming season. In the 2020-2021 season, the boys' soccer team won the state championship. This year, they are preparing for a back-to-back state title. The Lady Jaguars placed second last year, and they are working hard to win the title of state champions. Both teams have been practicing all year to be ready for what is to come.



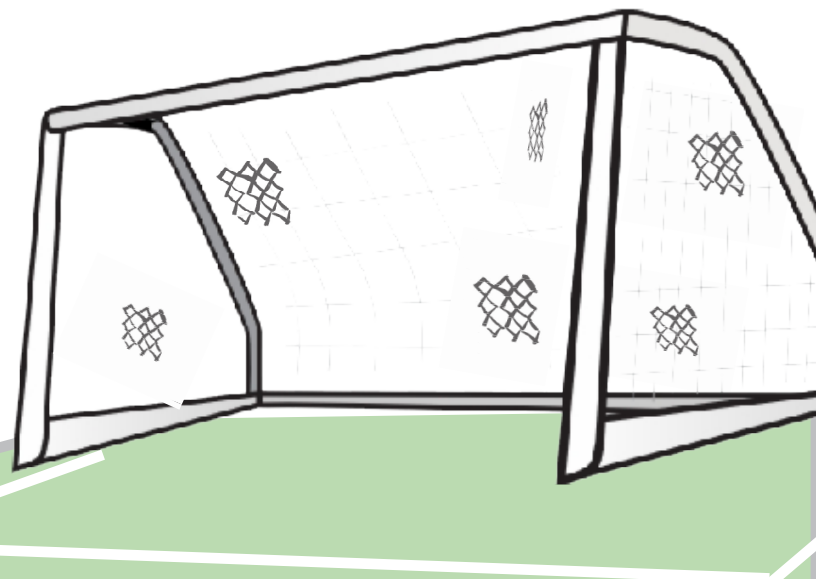
Anxious and ready for soccer season, the boys' soccer team has prepared excessively. From intense conditioning and strength training to scrimmages and soccer games, they feel as if they are on top. From a senior's point of view, Landon Parrow (12) said, "After winning the state championship, we feel as if this year is ours for the taking. There is only one way I want to end my soccer career and that is to go out victorious." With 15 returning seniors, the team has a lot of experience. Even though this is their last year to play, the seniors are working hard to help the underclassmen develop the skills they need to lead the team to championship victories in the years to come.

Last year, the Lady Jaguars came up short in their final game against Gulfport. Not only have the girls pushed themselves, but they have also set personal goals for themselves, and the team this year. Mary Jackson Brown (11) said, "Making it to state is an absolute honor. Working so incredibly hard all year and having it slip right out of your hand at the very end is a heartache like no other." Learning from their mistakes, the Lady Jaguars are motivated to give this season all they have. Hoping to end the season by receiving a ring, the team has been practicing nonstop. Brown (11) said, "This is not only a team, but a family. Our experiences have brought us closer together as well as helped us strive to give our best." The close bonds they make allow them to better communicate on the field. Coach Cecil Hinds contributes numerous hours a week to get the teams ready for the season. With some additions to the coaching staff - Coach Brad Campbell, Coach Simon Barinas,

and Coach Jose Acosta - these men help Hinds work with the teams in-season and out of season. During preseason, workouts can be rigorous. Avery Chambliss (11) said, "Cecil does everything he can to whip us into shape. When we aren't conditioning, Cecil has us doing passing drills, or ball work. Some prac-

is well prepared to carry on their state champion status.

Each person brings something unique to each team. From having pasta parties, to bonding nights, to playing with each other on the field, they grow closer. Their communication on the field is a result of their



technique and close bonds. Madison Central is so fortunate to have such talented athletes and hardworking coaches that lead us to so many victories. Now, it is time to finish off the season with not one but two state champion titles.

A State Divided by a Thanksgiving Rivalry

Meredith Morrow
STAFF WRITER

The Egg Bowl is an annual game that strikes the rivalry between two Mississippi college football teams, Ole Miss and Mississippi State. Although the two Southeastern Conference members first met in 1901, it would not be until 1927 that they would be competing for the title of the "Golden Egg". The game has taken place on Thanksgiving 23 times before and has been played each year since 1944, as it has been named the tenth longest uninterrupted series in college football history. The two rivals have met 117 times previously.

Last year, the Egg Bowl game came down to the last moments in Oxford, as Mississippi State's late comeback attempt fell short in a 31-24 loss to the Rebels.

This year, Egg Bowl Week is happening from Monday, November 22 to Sunday, November 28. This is a week that often divides families and friends into Rebels (Ole Miss) and Bulldogs (State). Die-hard Ole Miss fan, Anna Mattox (10) said, "The Egg Bowl is always one of the best games of the season for both teams because it is a chance to see which team is better. I think Ole Miss has a good chance at winning but that does not mean Mississippi State will not put up a fight." Lots of rebels along with Mattox

hope that their team takes home a victory this year.

The longest winning streak between the two teams has been given to the Bulldogs, as the team has a streak of 13 wins that occurred from 1911 to 1925. Another title given to the Bulldogs surrounding this event is the "largest victory", which was given to them for winning a game of 65 to 0. According to Athlon Sports, 2019's Egg Bowl game is classified as the best game due to the game's timing, as the Bulldogs took the lead of 21 to 20. Jordyn Thompson (10), said, "I would prefer Mississippi State to win, but I do not know who will win, because both teams have had good seasons in the past. As they have had many in the past, I know it will be a close game." Thompson is right, this is a really close rivalry when

it comes to wins. With Ole Miss having 63 wins, Mississippi State having 45 wins, the two teams have tied 6 times. In one of the more memorable Egg Bowl games back in 2019, Ole Miss wide receiver Elijah Moore scored a touchdown with four seconds left. The Rebels would only need to kick an extra point to send the game into overtime. However, after scoring the touchdown, Moore received an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty, which cost the Rebels the game. Mississippi State fans will be ready to host the rivalry game at their stadium in Starkville, this year.

Ole Miss fans are proud to take home 2020's title for the Golden Egg. Just ask Ole Miss fan, Abby Boyd (12). Boyd said, "I think the egg bowl is a good and friendly rival and it is always a good game. I am hoping that Ole Miss wins the egg bowl this year, and I think their chances are pretty good." Boyd shows her team spirit by wearing clothes that promote the Rebels, like many sports fans do. Fans of the Rebels, like Boyd, are proud to take the win of the 2021 Egg Bowl, with a final score of 31-21.



MC Swim Teams Are Victorious Yet Again

On October 22, 2021, both the boys and girls swim teams secured yet another state championship title. For the boys, it was their second consecutive state title, but it was the eighth straight for the Lady Aqua Jags. In the 36 hours from noon on Thursday to midnight on Friday, there were 22 long and difficult events that were completed. Each member of the Aqua Jags swim team gave it their all one last time, in order to achieve the season long goal of bringing back another trophy.

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