

Madison Central

UPROAR

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Reporting Modern Conflicts

Sheridan Burke  
STAFF WRITER

In the earliest hours of the New Year, two deadly assaults were carried out and shocked the nation. The attacks combined left 15 people dead and 42 injured. In-depth investigations conducted by news agencies, police departments, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) are currently ongoing as the nation attempts to understand these brutal acts of violence.

The first of the two attacks was carried out from 12:45 a.m. to 3:15 a.m. on January 1. The assault began when a man suspected to be Shamsud-Din Jabbar was seen on closed circuit television (CCTV) tapes leaving a drink cooler, which was full of improvised explosive devices (IED), in the middle of congested crowds of partygoers on Bourbon and Peter Street, New Orleans. Almost thirty minutes later, Jabbar proceeded to do the same with another cooler on Bourbon and Toulouse Street. Then, approximately fifty minutes later at 3:15 a.m., Jabbar drove his rented Ford F-150 into crowds of hundreds of people celebrating the New Year, taking at least a confirmed 14 lives and injuring 35 others. Soon after, Jabbar crashed the rental car and was killed in a shoot-out with New Orleans police. The attack has been labeled by the FBI as a premeditated, violent attack which stemmed from political influences. While Jabbar’s motives behind the attack are not known with full certainty, he aired political grievances in a series of videos posted on facebook hours before the attack. Accord-

ing to Cable News Network (CNN), Jabbar is quoted as having said he wanted headlines to, “focus on the war between believers and disbelievers,” however it is unclear as to the meaning behind his words. Jabbar was born and raised in Texas, and his family members are said to be shocked by his actions, as there were no prior signs of violence from him. Jabbar was in the United States military and served in Afghanistan from 2009 to 2010. It has been questioned by news outlets if Jabbar developed post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or other mental health issues from his time in Afghanistan, potentially contributing to his actions. Similar concerns have been raised in the conversation surrounding the Las Vegas cyber truck attacker.

The second of the attacks occurred several hours later in front of the Trump International Hotel in Las Vegas, Nevada where a man by the name of Matthew Livelsberger intentionally exploded a rented Tesla Cybertruck to supposedly make a political statement. At approximately 8:40 a.m., Livelsberger detonated an IED made from gas tanks, fireworks, and camping fuel in the truck bed of his Tesla Cybertruck. In doing so, Livelsberg injured seven bystanders, but not before he shot and killed himself inside of the vehicle. According to CNN, Livelsberg documented his travels from his residence in Colorado to his final destination in Las Vegas in a series of letters obtained by the police. In one of the letters he wrote, “This was not a terrorist attack, it was a wake-up-call. Americans only pay attention to spectacles and violence.” The political statement the attacker meant to make is unclear, however, several of Livels-



Image of a memorial left on Bourbon street for the New Orleans victims. Photo courtesy of the Louisiana Illuminator

berger’s close friends and his ex-girlfriend told news outlets he unwaveringly supported Donald Trump, Robert Francis Kennedy Jr., and Elon Musk. They additionally reported that Livelsberger was severely depressed and suffered from PTSD, developed during his time in the military. Livelsberger also wrote in a letter he needed to “cleanse his mind” of the lives lost of people he knew and “the burden of the lives he took.” The investigation is still ongoing, although officials are starting to suspect the explosion was an extremely public and sensational form of suicide. In light of the two overt displays of mental illness in relation to the United States military, people have begun to question the government’s treatment of veterans in regard to the mental health crisis. “Many veterans have said that the Department of Veterans Affairs does not meet their needs,” wrote Morgan Trusty (11). “It is clear that whatever healthcare benefits are being provided are not enough.” The Department of Veterans Affairs denies more than half of its claims every year. In 2023, almost 400,00 claims were backlogged. The aid provided by the department it-

self is sufficient, that is, if a veteran is permitted to access it. These attacks starkly reflect the current political climate seeing as both perpetrators issued statements prior to the attacks about having to commit a showy act of violence to get their views across. “Over the past decade, polarization has increased significantly throughout the United States,” wrote Bruce Pang (10). “Social media platforms often push extreme views for engagement and people get stuck in echo chambers that reinforce extreme views. This lends itself to a broader trend of political violence being more normalized as a valid method of protest.” The prevalence of political unrest has undoubtedly contributed to an increased violent nature of United States politics. This is, in part, due to the fact that both sides of the political sphere seem to feel disenchanted by their ability to facilitate change within their government. Americans feel outcast by their own government. Evidently, Pang is not alone in his view that social media may be a factor in violent acts such as these. Cam Ogletree, one of Madison Central (MC) High School’s teachers at the Engineering Academy and Advanced Placement Computer Science Principles, expressed a similar belief on

the role social media plays in contributing to violent or extreme actions. Ogletree articulated, “I do believe in free speech, but I also believe that the internet, especially social media, has led to too much hate speech and access to influencers who may inadvertently affect mentally disturbed, delusional, and/or unhappy people who act out in violent ways.” On social media, mental illness is either too emphasized or completely ignored. It can have negative effects on those predisposed to or suffering from an existing mental health issue. The FBI is conducting an ongoing investigation into the tragic events which took place on New Years Eve. The country will continue to mourn those whose lives were lost in such senseless acts of violence. These traumatic events are ones the United States government will recover from, continue to improve upon, and learn from the factors which created the environment for these violent acts to occur, and work to prevent tragedies such as these in the future. In the future, one would hope that no one loses a loved one in a brutal, fruitless political statement.



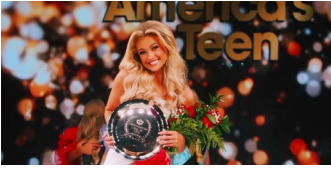
Sports

Check out page 7 for information about the soccer and softball.



News

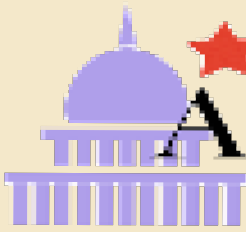
Take a look at page 2 for an article about the Manhattan traffic tolling.



Feature

Check out page 3 for information about our Mississippi Pageantry.



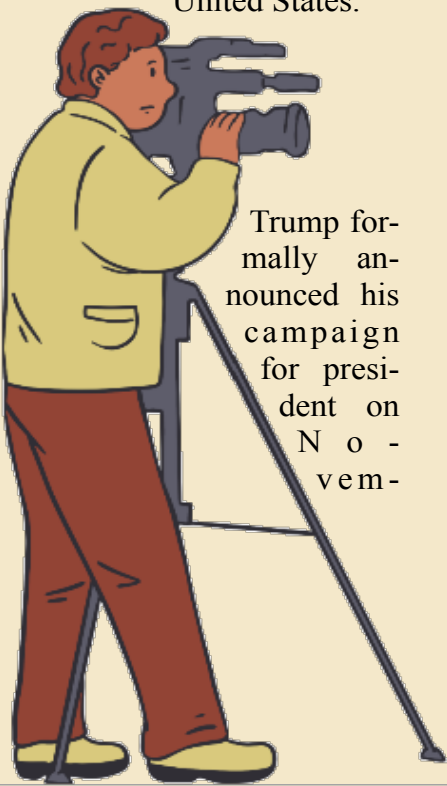


# Appearing at the Inauguration



**Violet Daniels**  
**STAFF WRITER**

On Monday, January 20, 2025, the United States inaugurated its 47th president, Donald Trump. Congress certified his win with 312 electoral votes on January 6. Trump makes history with his win as he is now the second president to hold two non-consecutive terms, meaning he has two presidential numbers, 45 and 47. The only other person in American history to hold two non-consecutive presidential terms was Grover Cleveland, who was the 22 and 24 president of the United States.



Trump formally announced his campaign for president on November

ber 15, 2022 and was formally nominated by the Republican party in July of 2024 at the Republican National Convention. The main themes and policy initiatives Trump stressed during his rallies and campaign were very similar to his policy agenda in 2016. from going into force. President Trump captivates the masses and is the first person in 40 years to win all seven swing states. Unlike his 2016 win, Trump won both the popular and electoral vote, this was the first time the Republican Party won both votes in two decades.

On the day of his inauguration, President Trump untraditionally held the ceremony indoors due to the freezing temperatures. Trump was accompanied by his wife, Melania Trump, their son, Baron Trump, and his two other children, Donald Trump Jr. and Ivanka Trump. Many influential and wealthy people, such as Elon Musk, Jeff Bezos, and Mark Zuckerberg, were among the crowd. Musk has explicitly shown much support for Donald Trump throughout his campaign and now presidential term. Musk was also nominated for chair of the Department of Government Efficiency.

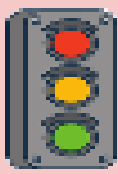
Donald Trump’s campaign, inauguration, and second term have already made history. He has and will continue to make a significant impact on the trajectory of our nation.



Above: Donald Trump’s speech on Inauguration Day.  
Photo courtesy of the Brookings.



Above: Donald Trump.  
Photo courtesy of the Jobaaj Stories.



# Manhattan Traffic Tolling



**Thomas Pound**  
**STAFF WRITER**

On January 5, 2025, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) instated a toll on most traffic in lower Manhattan. The purpose of this toll is to decongest the high traffic of a densely populated area. This is a good thing because the current traffic in Manhattan is inefficient and harmful to the environment, and people have taken notice.

The toll will be in effect from 5 am to 9 pm, and it will be distributed online by E-ZPass. If one does not have an E-ZPass account, they will be sent an increased toll in the mail.

The

charges adapt based on the vehicle and the time of day. The price ranges from \$1.05 to \$21.60 for the day. For most people, it will be cheaper to use public transportation than to use a personal car, and some discounts and exemptions will be offered for low income or disabled individuals.

The traffic is slow, and it almost never speeds up. When speeds drag, so does everything else.

Ambulances, taxis, buses, and personal

vehicles all contribute and suffer from the congestion in lower Manhattan. Lower speeds mean less work is done: employees are late, taxis are stuck, and food delivery cannot get anywhere. The sluggishness of traffic is an issue that can be fixed by simply having less cars on the road,

which is why the MTA is instating the fee. By car-

pooling or taking public transportation, you’ll save time and money.

This toll will not only help to save the cityscape. The MTA also wants to install these new tolls for the sake of the environment. Manhattan produces 287,000 tons of carbon dioxide (CO2) every year. This is horrible for the environment. Green house gasses like CO2 trap heat in our atmosphere and accelerate global warming, which has resulted in to violent storms and rising tides. New York City pledged to reduce CO2 emissions by



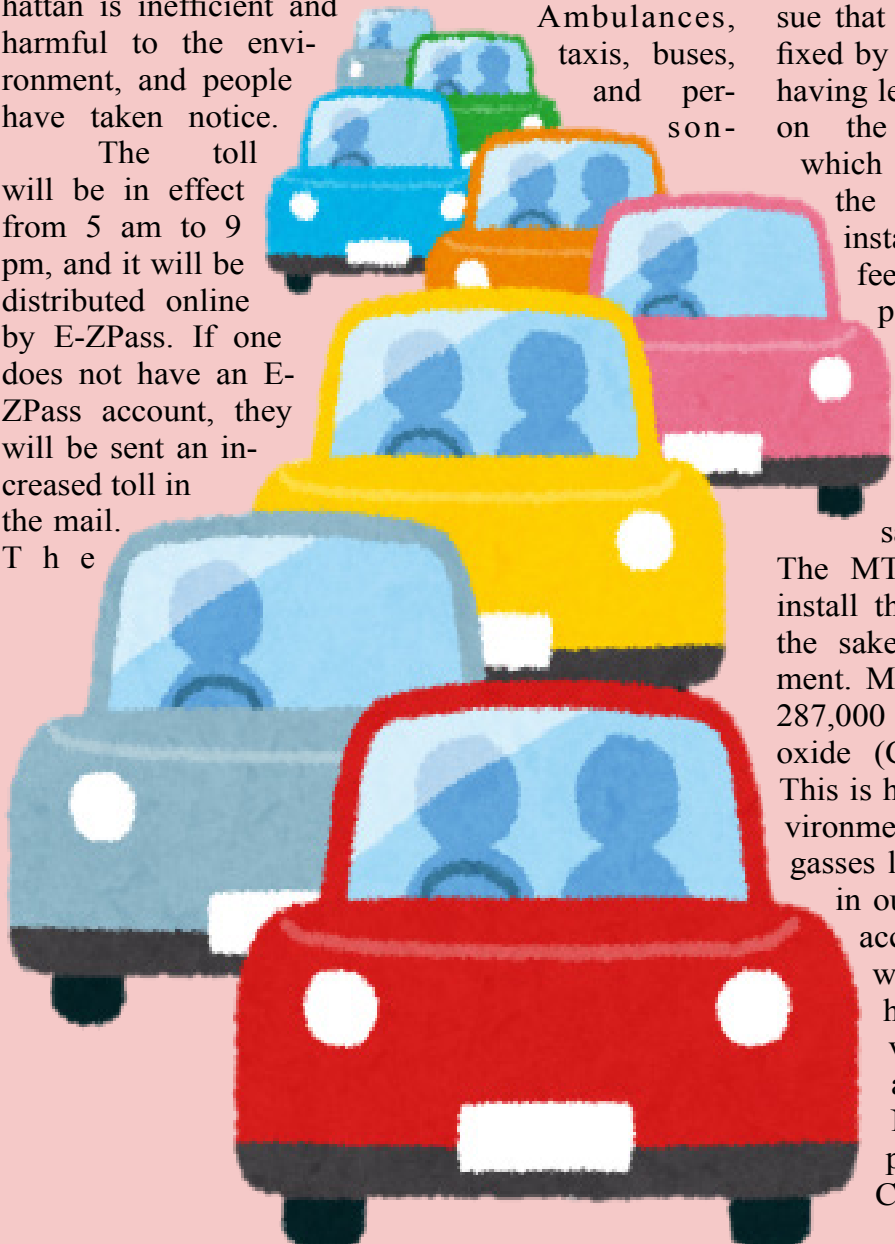
Above: traffic congestion through New York City.  
Photo courtesy of Los Angeles Times.

80% by 2050. This is a great step in the right direction.

Manhattan’s traffic has been a problem for a while now. In the past 20 years, the average speed of traffic in lower Manhattan has decreased from 9.1 mph to 7.1 mph. Whether one has lived there or just visited, people have noticed how horrid the traffic is. Enya Lin (10), who used to live in New York, said, “Everyone honked at each other, and it is like there is nothing to guide traffic.” Bailey Lockhart (10) agreed, saying, “People were almost hitting each other and running red lights, all you could hear were the horns.” This goes to show how dangerous and awful the traffic can get. People should not be left afraid due to overcrowded

streets. Aaron David (11), recently went on vacation to New York. He talked about a bus tour he went on. He said, “We got to look at things because the bus would be stuck in traffic. It was all so slow moving. I do not know how people get things done.” The toll seems very necessary as more and more testimonies are heard. As Lockhart put it, “It is just horrible.”

Hopefully, these tolls will achieve what they need to. The congestion of lower Manhattan harms everyone involved. The MTA is looking for new solutions by instating the first ever anti-congestion zone in America. Hopefully this new tactic will increase efficiency, help the environment, and aid in the ease of transportation in Manhattan.

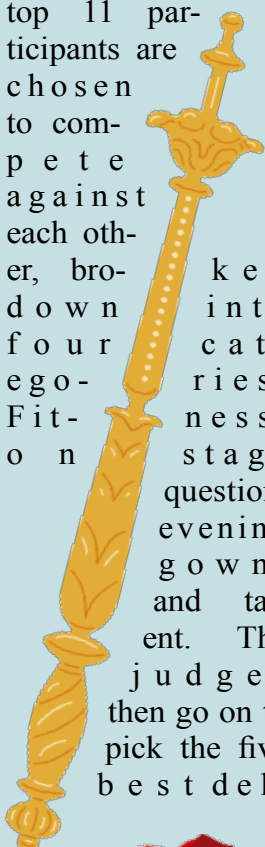




# Featuring Mississippi Pageantry

Harley Mcfadden  
STAFF WRITER

Each year the Miss America organization holds a competition for 52 women representing each state, including Washington D.C. and Puerto Rico. Many preliminary competitions take place before announcing the top 11 competitors. The top 11 participants are chosen to compete against each other, broken down into four categories. Fitness, stage question, evening gown, and talent. The judges then go on to pick the five best del-



egates. The top five competitors are chosen to move on to the last section before Miss America Teen is announced. Background and experiences alter preparation for this life changing event, Mississippi representative Brooke Bumgarner stated, “I had the best time representing Mississippi at Miss America’s Teen, and I know that my time and involvement at Madison Central (MC) helped prepare me for this competition in so many ways. MC gave me creative outlets, challenged me to new limits, and made me a better person, and I know I wouldn’t have been able to confidently represent our state without my high school experience.” A lot of preparation goes into becoming physically and mentally ready for this competition. These girls go through the process of hiring a personal trainer, walking lessons, public speech lessons, hiring a makeup and hair artist, and more. All of which are just a minimum of how much

goes into competing for this opportunity. There is more to this event than just your outside appearance, but also what is in your heart and what has brought you to want to strive so hard for this opportunity. Lulu Gussio (10) said “As much as people enjoy watching this competition, thinking about everything that goes on behind the scenes is truly amazing. It is about so much more than what you put on stage.” Those close to each competitor make a huge impact on them, including friends, parents, and siblings. Not only is this an amazing experience for the delegates but also for their family and friends. Claire Bumgarner (11) said, “As the sister of one of the competitors in Miss America Teen it has been an experience I will never take for granted. Watching my sister live her dream has set the bar high for our family and pushes me to remember I am capable of more than I think. These delegates are role models for girls all over the country and I could not be more proud as her sister.” To know there are



little girls out there who want to achieve the same goal as all of these competitors is truly eye opening to how much your success affects all the eyes watching you.



Miss America Teen is Above: Brooke Bumgarner Submitted by Brooke Bumgarner

experience for all. Each girl is there for one common goal while also doing what they love and making many cherished friendships. More than just a beauty pageant, it is a platform that empowers young women to showcase their talents, intelligence

and compassion. As we continue to support and recognize each of these individuals we contribute to the future where every young woman feels valued and inspired to be the best version of herself.

# DANCING INTO THE SEASON

Hannah Evans  
STAFF WRITER

The beginning of the second semester brings with it the opening of the show choir season. The Madison Central (MC) Show Choir, also known as Reveille, consists of tenth through twelfth grade girls and boys. Leigha Nix has been the Show Choir Director since Reveille started, with Kristy Brumfield as the Assistant Choir Director, Bradley Davis as the choreographer, and Courtney Melton as the stage crew director. Stage Crew creates and sets up the backdrop for Reveille’s performance and makes sure everything goes smoothly, so Reveille can perform to their fullest potential. In the show choir they sing, dance, and also travel to compete against other show choirs like Nashville for Nationals and Biloxi. Last season, Reveille finished third at

Nationals, and they’re hoping to rank even higher this year. The first performance is the showcase at Northwest Rankin. This allows Reveille to get feedback on what they can improve before competitions start. Throughout the season Reveille goes to many different schools such as Brandon, Biloxi, Jackson Academy Show Choir Invitational, and NorthEast Jones to compete. Reveille also has their own performances at MC. Reveille has a night in the auditorium called “Reveal”, where they perform for the family, friends, and staff. At Reveal, they show off their hard work, with full music, choreography, hair, costumes, and makeup. Aaron David (11) said, “I love Reveal night because it is so much more relaxing than our competitions so me and my friends get to have fun while performing.” Since the team is not getting scored, they like to take this time to let loose and have fun. Nix said, “Reveal is fairly simple since it is just our sneak peek show and it is in our Auditorium. Deep South is so much fun but one of the

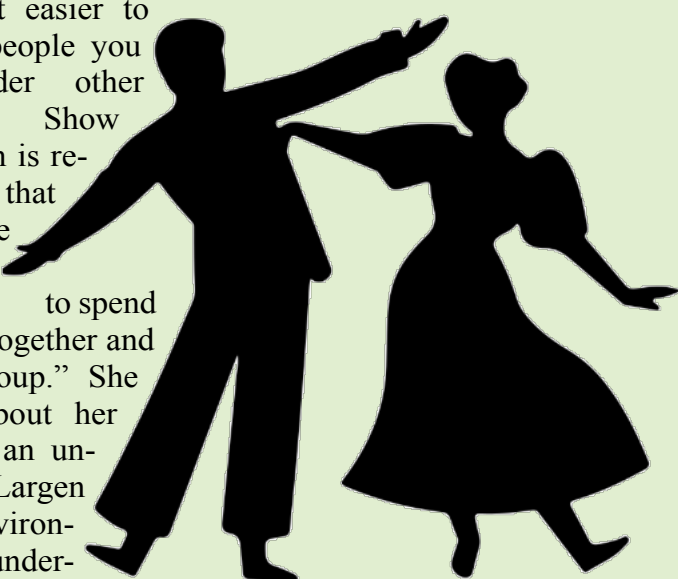
most tiring things we do. Planning for months, setting up, hosting, performing, and cleaning everything up all within a few days is exhausting, but extremely rewarding.” Nix stated how Reveal is more not as time consuming as Deep South. Madison Central’s Reveille also hosts their own competition called “Deep South”. This year, it takes place on Saturday, March 1. Aaron David (11) said, “To perform at Deep South is a huge rush of adrenaline, and to host it is a little more relaxed compared to regular competitions. David stated that performing at home is not always as easy as going to another school or traveling out of town. Reveille goes out of town every year for their big Nationals competition. Reveille is currently getting ready to travel to Nashville on March 20 through 23. Last year Reveille finished third at Nationals and is trying to reclaim Top three or get a higher spot. David said, “I am most excited for the Show Choir Nationals competition because we will have the opportunity to see so many different show choirs from all sorts of states perform.” David has had great experiences with Nationals in the past. Nationals is stressful at times, but it is all worth it with the fun Reveille

in Nashville. Reveille does a great job at balancing hard work with fun team bonding. Show choir is a wonderful opportunity to connect and meet new people. Hannah Mardis (12) said, “I have made so many friends through show choir and it’s so fun being able to perform with them. My time in the Show Choir I will definitely cherish forever from the friends I’ve made to the memories I’ve learned. Mardis stated how the Show Choir taught her more than how to be a good dancer. It has helped her grow as a person and have lasting friendships as she leaves high school. Ruth Largen (10) said, “I have definitely made a lot of friends and especially with upperclassmen. Since we are all together it makes it easier to get to know people you wouldn’t under other circumstances. Show choir as a team is really strong and that is crucial. We need to be pretty close to spend so much time together and grow as a group.” She also talked about her experience as an underclassman, Largen said, “The environment as an under-

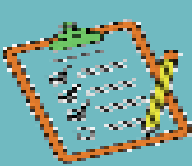


classman is nothing but welcoming. Our seniors set the example, and our juniors follow suit. So we perform at nothing less than the standard they live up to. I am so grateful for all of them.” Largen’s first year on Reveille has been nothing but great, especially with the upperclassmen to help her out, and how important it is for them to have a team bond and trust each other.


Reveille is a wonderful team that prioritizes hard work, team bonding, and amazing performances. As they get ready for their next event MC can’t wait to support them on their road through the competitions and to Nationals.







# Managing the School



**Jenny Nyugen**  
CO-EDITOR IN CHIEF

To run efficiently, many schools like Madison Central (MC) rely on a hardworking team of people to work behind the scenes. The librarians and office workers are always there to lend a helping hand and create an organized, supportive, and welcoming environment for both the students and staff. While they may not always be in the spotlight, these individuals contribute to MC's daily success.

The school library is often seen as a quiet space for studying, borrowing books, and socializing. However, the librarians and information technology (IT) workers bring a deeper impact for

their visitors. The IT workers help work out more difficult issues with the school's overall network, maintenance, security systems, and more. The librarians support students in their academic pursuits and assist with research, solve common computer issues, and teach students how to evaluate sources. The librarian, Jessi Parisi, commented, "Being able to help people with so many different things in research and computers is the part I love the most as a librarian." With years of experience, Parisi and Erika Terrell have encountered an array of unexpected problems and handle them accordingly for students and staff to have a less stressful day.

While the library provides intellectual aid and state testing, the front office, administration, and Student service is where the logistical work happens. Our front desk attendants, Noelani Capel and Kimberly Hogsett

juggle countless tasks to ensure that everyone is accounted for. From managing the attendance for over 1400 students to addressing problems or computer mishaps, they still manage to complete all tasks with a smile. Capel stated, "My favorite part of the job is being able to chat with the students. I help make sure that the attendance is being done right. If the attendance is off, please be patient." Handling the attendance of all the students is not for the weak, and it requires skills such as organization, problem-solving, and communication. Through MC's office workers, they help deliver messages, run errands, and organize material to aid the school staff.

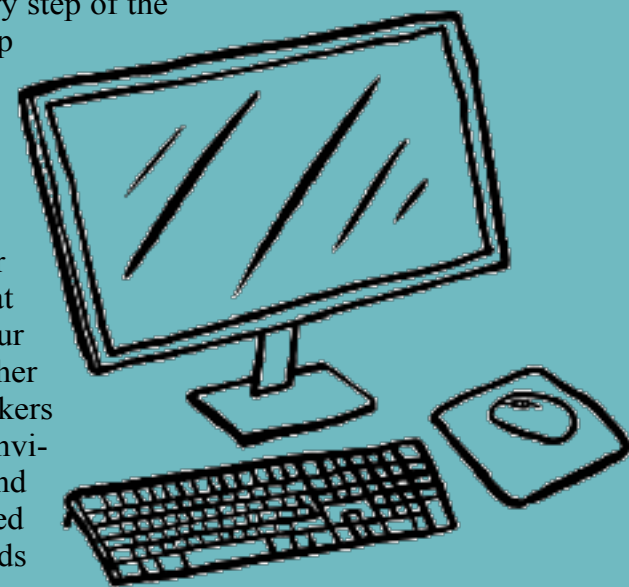
The front office and library have workers who help with the workload within the job. These students sign up for electives that help around the school with staff to make a difference. The student library and office workers help deliver papers and

information to students and teachers all over the school to alleviate the workload of the school staff. When there is not as much to do, the students focus more on their schoolwork or help other teachers in the school with events. Former library worker, Ravleen Kaur (12), stated "I used to run around for tasks, organize books, and assist other students that came in. This year, I am on the other end and love using the resources that they have provided me with." The school will be there every step of the way to help students graduate and give the necessary resources for those that seek it. Kaur and many other student workers enjoy the environment and have fostered great bonds



with the librarians and staff.

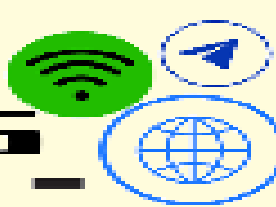
The library and front desk staff help with inconveniences that students or teachers may have every day. On a student's next visit to the library or office, make sure to give thanks to the school staff that are there to help at any moment.



**While nearly half of Americans make New Year's resolutions, only about 25% of people actually stay committed to their resolutions after just 30 days, according to Columbia University. And even fewer, less than 10%, accomplish their goals. Let's beat that statistic!!**



## Wrapping Up Apps

**Thomas Pound**  
STAFF WRITER

After the Spotify wrapped debuted in 2020, other apps have released similar advertising to draw attention to themselves. Apps like Airbnb, Starbucks, Goodreads, Letterboxd, and even Crumbl have joined the wrapped trend. These apps recorded a personalized list of statistics, created fun awards and titles for users. This annual recap is normally distributed in December and January for viewers to see.

The "King of Wrapped", Spotify, has been creating these summaries for four years now. It gains a lot



attention on social media as users look at

each other's

stats. A Spotify user, Isaac Kelly (11), said, "I enjoyed looking at other people's wrap on social media and seeing what they listen to." With a vast audience and multitude of subscribers, Spotify has popularized this trend. This changed when, in 2024, the Spotify wrapped had complications with delivering information for many users. Kelly said "I felt like my top five were just inaccurate. I was disappointed with the lack of any theme and the weird genre names."

While this year's Spotify wrapped was largely frowned upon, it still is one of the largest apps to use a wrapped so far.

Airbuds, a widget music app, has also participated in this trend. It tracked many of the same things that Spotify did, however, recently it was better received and overall more informative. The app followed up on top artists, microgenres, how long one has listened, one's top album, and more. In addition, Airbuds added an exciting advent calendar feature, where statistics were locked behind timed walls. The Airbuds wrapped was overall better at tracking fun statistics for its users.

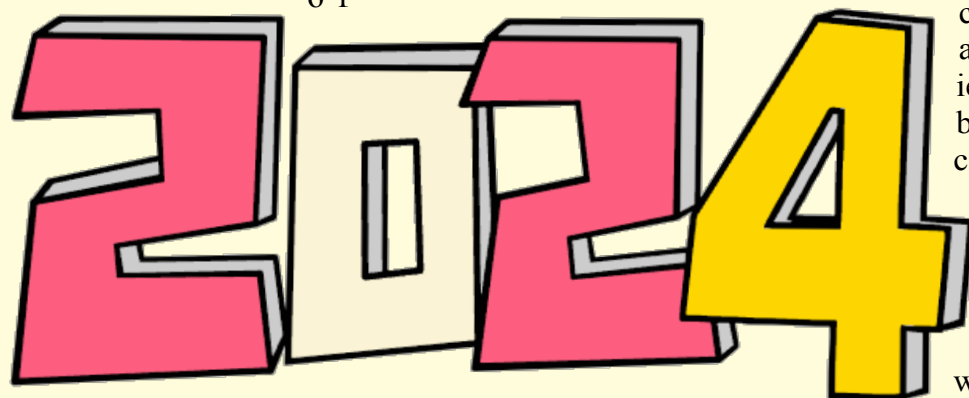
Aside from music, other apps have been made to track one's consumption of things. Letterboxd,

a popular app used to catalogue the amount of movies consumed by a person, came out with a wrapped. It tracked topics like the milestones of movies watched, how

many films were watched, when one watched films the most, and top movies. Jack Mattingly (11) said, "I am very proud of my wrapped, but I did better last year." Mattingly had 360 films logged in his account this year. Wraps can create an incentive to consume a lot of media, so that one can share with others their thoughts and opinions. It is a contest, almost.

While wraps can push one to consume media, they can also push one to consume cookies and coffee. Both Starbucks and Crumbl released wraps. Hannah Kraman (10) said, "It tracked my Crumbl points and the cookie that I tried the most. It was interesting to see how many visits I made." She thought it was fun to look at. Statistics are appealing to look at, especially when they are about oneself. This is definitely a factor in the enjoyment of looking at a wrapped.

From music to movies to cookies, app's wrapped show the statistics and the silliness of the competitions of today. They help to sum up people's year in a fun and easy way to understand. They are entertaining and slightly competitive. They bring a little joy and friendly competition as friends share their statistics, which is what most people need as a new year begins.







# Viewing Movie Magic



Elijah Lindsly  
STAFF WRITER

In today’s fast paced entertainment landscape, it can be challenging for audiences to keep up with the latest releases. With new movies and TV shows arriving in theaters and on streaming platforms each week, deciding what is truly worth watching often feels overwhelming. From big budget blockbusters to buzzworthy series generating online chatter, there is no shortage of entertainment options for this year.

One of the most anticipated animations and best movies to be recently released was Sonic 3. The movie follows Sonic, Knuckles, and Tails after they reunite to battle Shadow, a mysterious new enemy with powers unlike anything they’ve

faced before. With their abilities outmatched in every way, they seek out an unlikely alliance to stop Shadow and protect the planet. The movie had a 340.2-million United State dollar (USD) budget and the movie will have grossed as of January 7, 350 million USD worldwide. The film having an 86 percent on Rotten Tomatoes, 7.2/10 on IMDB, and a four out of five on Common Sense Media with such high scores many walked out with a great impression. Rivers Spooner (11), one of the many students at Madison Central who saw Sonic, said, “I found the movie very entertaining, especially during the first portion. The fights were intense and explosive, making it a thrilling watch. Overall, it was a very enjoyable experience.” Since Sonic three is one of the best films of 2024 there was no doubt that the number two horror movie of 2024 and best horror film of 2025 so far is Nosferatu (2024). This movie follows an estate agent named Thomas Hutter who travels to Transylvania for a fateful meeting with Count Orlok, a prospective client. Nosferatu (2024) had a 50 million USD budget with a worldwide gross of 103.5 million USD. The film is one of the highest rated new generation horror movies with a 85 percent on Rotten Tomatoes, a 7.7/10 on IMDB, and a 4/5 on Common Sense Media. High Tech Video Production teacher Devin Cooper stated, “The horror elements and the uncomfortable situations were very well executed. The cinematography was intense, and the sound design was amazing.” This year has been successful in the movie industry so it is no surprise that the television (TV) world has been just as successful. One of the most anticipated shows since its initial release is Arcane. It had its fans waiting for just under four years to release its second season and the fans were not let down. Arcane is about two sisters who fight on rival sides of a war between magic technologies and clashing

convictions. The newly released season had a 250 million USD budget with them only breaking even on their budget. The show has a 9/10 rating on IMDB with roughly a 95 percent metric score. Arcane was so loved by viewers, and season two gave the epic conclusion all fans have been waiting for. Another show fans had been waiting for since its massive pop off and release in 2021 was Squid Game, a Korean dystopian; survival; horror; thriller. Hundreds of cash-strapped contestants accept an invitation to compete in children’s games for a tempting prize of 48.6 billion won, but the stakes are deadly. With the show only having a 84 million USD budget it is estimated by Netflix to make 5.19 billion USD. The show has an 8/10 on IMDB and 88 percent on Rotten Tomatoes. When asked about the show Joel Springfield

(10) said, “I believe season one is still better but season two was not short of amazing. It was funny until the last episode which left off on a cliffhanger.” With two already amazing tv shows into the transition from 2024-2025 it is exciting to see what else is in store for new media. The beginning of 2025 is packed with must watch entertainment. From the action of Sonic 3 and the suspense of Nosferatu (2024) to the return of fan-favorites like Arcane and Squid Game. With the release of new media every day there is no shortage of good media for everyone.







# TikTok ban

There has been talks of TikTok being banned for the past year. It was officially decided to be banned in the US on January 19. However, the ‘ban’ lasted less than 24 hours, for it is now back and working on the app. TikTok is not back on the app-store yet, so users who deleted it cannot access it still.



# Catching a Glimpse



Mattie Hodges  
STAFF WRITER

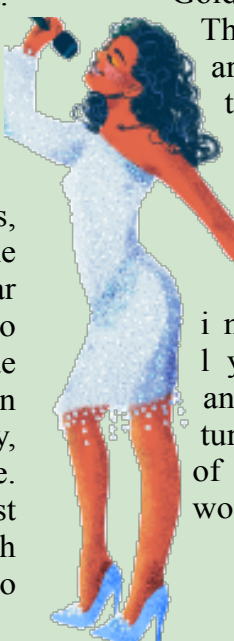
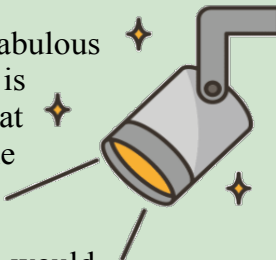
The Golden Globes is an annual event that celebrates the best in film and television. It is one of the most anticipated awards shows in the entertainment industry. The event brings together infamous actors, directors, and producers known for their outstanding work. The Golden Globes are a prestigious award ceremony that brings the glitz and glamour that Hollywood is all about. The Golden Globes continues to captivate audiences worldwide with its mix of heart-felt speeches, memorable moments and dazzling red carpet fashion. This event

has been around since January 20, 1944, and it has never failed to impress the world. The fashion that comes along with it, shocks the world every year. Celebrities walk the red carpet in stunning designer outfits, showcasing the latest trends and styles. Connor Quinn (10) stated, “The fashion at the Golden Globes is unlike any other. I love how you can never predict what the celebrities are going to wear, yet it is always classic and unforgettable.” Fashion is always evolving with time, but the Golden Globes and the Grammys do fashion unlike anyone else. Some celebrities keep it trendy and others keep it classy and timeless. The Grammys is the highlight of the Music Industry’s year. This annual ceremony honors outstanding achievements in various music genres. It recognizes artists, songwriters, producers, and engineers for

their exceptional contributions to the music industry. Artists from all over the world are brought together for one night to honor and recognize each other’s biggest achievements. Some artists nominated are Beyonce, Taylor Swift, Billie Eilish, Kendrick Lamar, Sabrina Carpenter, and many more. Mahagony Bennett (10) stated, “I am most excited to possibly see Sabrina Carpenter win. I feel like she has really come a long way and everyone enjoys her music because it is so fun to listen to. She is so sweet and seems so thankful for being nominated.” Carpenter, like many others, has had a record-breaking year, and her fans are excited to see her at this year’s Grammys. Bennett also stated, “She is also nominated in so many categories so that is even more exciting for her, I would love to see her win in any category.” On Sunday, February 2, artists of all genres will come together for this special night.

Winning a Grammy is considered a significant milestone in an artist’s career, and it is a huge achievement. No matter who wins, it is a great honor to be nominated for a Grammy. The Golden Globes and The Grammys are both known for their host. This year Nikki Glaser hosted the Golden Globes and she was phenomenal. Hosts are hired for comedic relief to ease the nerves of nominees and other watchers. Glaser did a phenomenal job. Betsy Ball (12) stated, “She was perfect. She was funny without being disrespectful and her stage presence was great. She was the first woman in history to solo host the Golden Globes, and I am excited for the Golden Globes next year because she is signed to host again.” Nikki made history hosting the Golden Globes award ceremony, and she was unforgettable. Trevor Noah is set to host the Grammys for the fifth time in a row. He has also

done a fabulous job and is good at what he does. The Grammys would not be the same without him, he is funny, and a charmer, qualities anyone needs to be a good host. Both Nikki Glaser and Trevor Noah are reliable, loveable and most of all non-controversial. Both these events are looked forward to by the whole world. The Golden Globes and The Grammys are captivating to anyone no matter the age. They provide monumental moments in Hollywood, and they capture the beauty of what Hollywood is all about.







# Love is in the Air



Amy Page  
STAFF WRITER

Valentine’s Day, also known as the holiday of love, is a world-wide celebration on February 14. Notes expressing admiration or even edible gifts are given out, all to demonstrate appreciation for loved ones. The holiday revolves around love in all its many different forms and has created warm memories for many people around the globe. Valentine’s Day has experienced vast change throughout the centuries, however, it has always had tenderness at the very center. The modern-day celebration of Valentine’s Day is vastly different

from the origins of the holiday that date back to ancient Rome. The earliest pioneer to Valentines Day, Lupercalia, was commemorated through animal sacrifice and hitting civilians with the animal’s hide to promote fertility and good health. Around 495 CE, Pope Gelasius the first outlawed the practice of Lupercalia and is credited with replacing the holiday with the Feast of Saint Valentine. Valentine’s Day would not have become the romantic celebration one recognizes in the modern day until around the 1300s. Presently, this holiday has many traditions and memories that are much tamer than those of Lupercalia. When asked about her favorite Valentine’s memories and traditions, Scarlett Sullivan (10) said, “One of my favorite Valentine’s memories is walking down the stairs and seeing the

little gift baskets with candy that my parents made for me and my siblings.” Sullivan’s experience demonstrates the spread of love and appreciation that this holiday perpetuates. Although in the past Valentines and its forerunners did not always have the best execution, the amicable intention stays constant as the holiday progresses throughout the years. For many, Valentine’s Day holds many fond childhood memories of decorating shoeboxes and receiving sweet treats from loved ones. Many show affection towards a Valentine by gifting bouquets of red roses, baked goods, or heart shaped candies. Many also celebrate through hosting a plethora of events like charities, parties, or having a simple date night. When Maggie Mckenzie (11) was asked about her experience in Valentine’s parties she said, “I really enjoy going to events like galantines parties where everyone

dresses nicely, and we all hangout. I also got to attend the Rosa Scott Valentines Day dance in ninth grade and that was particularly fun” Friends and schools alike promote the spread of affection between groups of people through the hosting of events like galantines or dances. The congeniality that is dispersed during Valentine’s Day works to bring people together and create a sense of unity. However, sometimes the holiday can bring some levels of discourse and can even divide ideologies. In recent years, a discussion over whether asking to be one’s valentine is even necessary within relationships. Zachary Miller (10) was asked about his opinion of the matter and said, “I do not think it is necessary because you have already shown that you love each other every day.” Many differ and claim it is necessary for the holiday while some people like Miller

find it redundant. Through this discourse, Valentine’s Day remains a holiday celebrating unity with or without confirmation of a Valentine. For all the aspects that fall under criticism, Valentine’s Day makes up for it in the way the celebration brings a general pleasantness within the masses. Hand-written notes, thoughtful gifts, and beloved foods are given between loved ones all to express their appreciation for one another. The celebration of love has gone through transformations, however, well wishes would remain at the very heart of it all. In every language, religion, and sector of the world love is a continuity through Valentine’s Day.





## VALENTINE FLOWERS

BUY PAPER FLOWERS DURING LUNCH AND SEND IT TO A FRIEND, LOVER, OR ADMIRER. FLOWERS ARE \$0.25





# Loving the Lilypad Cafe



Harley Mcfadden  
STAFF WRITER

On 111 N Wheatley St, Ridgeland sits the Lilypad café. This restaurant is an organization made with the purpose to train and employ individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities to give them the work experience necessary to obtain employment with other businesses. Lilypad works with other restaurant chains to send their employees off to work in those restaurants. The employees get to go on nature walks, hold arts and crafts sessions, and attend social gatherings or picnics. It served as a memorable experience for both adults and children. Lilyanna Swafford (10), “The workers are always ready to help you, and they have a wide variety of snacks and drinks to choose from on their menu. I would recommend taking a trip at least once, but you will be back for more.” With a plethora of menu items, it is a pleasurable experience to support and enjoy a delicious meal. Emma Grace Edwards (11), “The owners of this

organization have opened this café with the hopes of changing lives, and I would say they did so. This is a nonprofit café with top tier customer service inside the restaurant.” The Lilypad is a popular spot for community events and gatherings. Various activities and festivals are held here, bringing together residents and visitors. Some of the many events hosted here consist of live music nights, open mic nights, themed nights, book clubs, and seasonal celebrations. Marie Elise White (12)

said “The Lilypad is such a sweet experience. People with disabilities get to shine in a work environment that makes them feel loved and included. It is a great organization, and I cannot wait to see where it goes from here.” The community at this café is like no other. This organization and environment has something for everyone. The Lilypad is a place where memories are made and connections are formed, making it a cherished spot for all who visit.



Above: the Lily Pad organization. Photo courtesy of Queen City Newsfeed



## LillyPad MENU



<b>starters</b>	<b>salads</b>	<b>sandwiches</b>	<b>paninis</b>	<b>desserts</b>
Deviled Eggs, LP Dip trio, the Glory Pad	Turkey chopped, Chef, Garden of Grace	Roasted Turkey & Cheddar, Chicken Salad, Southern Smiles BLT	AWS Cubano, Turkey Reuben, Chic-A-Brie Bryan, Portbello Reuben	Cookies, Floats, Brownies, Icecream, Icecream stuffed Cookies







# KICKING OFF SOCCER SEASON



Emily Hodges  
STAFF WRITER

Cold weather, hot chocolate, warm blankets. Soccer season is back. The boys and girls have been practicing since the summertime and have had after school, in school, and some weekend practices to prepare for the current season. Although it may be cold out, soccer is still a very entertaining sport to watch. It is the most popular sport to watch and play in the world. The passion, resilience, and hard work is used to push through games no matter the circumstances. The boys' soccer team has had a successful season so far. They have had 11 wins-2 ties- and two losses so far this season as of January 28, 2024, and for district play they are 6-1. Soccer is

a sport that is heavy on connections. If you do not have chemistry with your teammates, your team will not be able to succeed even if the talent is there. The boys have worked together during pre-season to get close with their teammates. By doing this, they have formed chemistry on and off the field. One of the senior captains Braden Buchanan (12) explained, "When the team comes together after a big win, it is a feeling like no other. We bond together whether it is in the locker room or at somebody's house. It has been a fun season so far." Coaches, teammates, mentors, parents and more have helped these players get to where they are today. In addition, there are clubs here at Madison Central (MC) dedicated to helping the soccer team get prepared for their games as well. Soccer Sweethearts and Women Empowerment Club are two clubs that dedicate their time and effort into giving boys and girls soccer players snacks and drinks. Soccer Sweethearts only have girls in the club. They are expected to make four

goodie bags for one to three soccer players that the girls 'adopt'. The bags include a salty snack, sweet treat, and a handwritten note, but many go beyond that for their sweetheart. Mary Katherine McIntyre (12) stated, "The bags we make are created out of love. Soccer Sweethearts are excited to be there for each player, and the players show appreciation towards us." Each Soccer Sweetheart spends time and makes the effort to ensure that the boys have something to look forward to before their big games. For the girls' soccer team, Women Empowerment Club also puts together mixed goods for the girls to share. The club reaches out and provides different snacks and drinks so the girls soccer team can also be prepared and encouraged for their games. Both clubs offered at MC are dedicated to serve the soccer team. The lady jaguars have had a great season so far as well. Although some teammates are out with injuries, they are still succeeding within their season. Kinsley



Above: Ethan Duarte.  
Photo courtesy of Baleigh Adams

Yearick (10) "This season was supposed to be our "rebuilding year" because of all the injuries this year, but we have exceeded the expectations. The seniors have done a really good job at keeping us all together and have had great leadership within our team." Overall, the girls team has shown incredible resilience this season. As of January 22,2024, they have eight wins -two ties -and two losses this season. Through the hardships, these girls have built a strong bond with each other as teammates

and friends, which has led them to a successful and memorable season. Both boys and girls have a promising ending ahead. It is promising that both teams make it through playoffs and onto the state championship. The soccer state championship is on February 15 at Ridge-land High School.





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### February 21, 2025 @7pm&February 22 @5pm





# Starting Softball Season



Madie Moseley  
STAFF WRITER

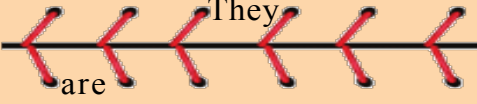
Softball season is up and running. The girls first play February 8 against Germantown and Petal in a jamboree. This season there are 11 home games, and 12 away games. There is a total of 25 girls on the team. The team is led by four coaches, Thames, Stokes, Baldwin, and Matthews, the

team is ready to start the season strong. The team practices every day during fourth and eighth block. During the season, they practice during those blocks and continue until around 5:30. They also practice outside of the season and throughout summertime. The practice includes three jogging laps around the bases, stretching, working on throwing and agility , or whatever else the coaches have planned. Ella Tierce (12) said, "This season we have been relaxed but determined at the same time. We've been out there having fun but putting in a lot of work." Practice is what allows for the team to have the most successful season they can. The members of the team are very tight knit, fun memo-

ries together as a team through events like: the big little reveal or team lunches and dinners. The big little reveal is between underclassmen and upperclassmen. The upperclassmen are the bigs, and the lower classmen are the littles. During the big little reveal, the bigs stood behind their littles and then the littles turned around and saw their big. Emma Fletcher Perry (10) said, "Off the field, we love to go to dinner together. It is a great way for us to bond and hangout, not involving softball." The team has brought all the members close together. Many of the girls have been on the team since seventh grade. Like Kayden Dunn (11) said, "I been on the team for 5 years. I have loved growing in the game and meeting some of my closest friends on the team." It is amazing to hear about how close a team can be. A team can deepen friendships. Softball games

are unique. The ball used is bigger than a baseball, the field is smaller than a baseball field, and only underhand pitches. Softballs and baseballs differ in size, circumference, and weight. A softball weighs between 6.25-7.00 ounces and a baseball weighs between 5.00-5.25 ounces. With underhand pitches, the ball is released while the hand is primarily below the ball, making it harder to swing. A game is seven innings typically lasting around 1-2 hours. In softball, nine players are on the field at a time. This is one factor that is similar between baseball and softball. Another way that is similar is the batting order. Batting order is sequenced by the coach, and they decided who they are. Softball and baseball are two very different games, with a few similarities to connect them. The Madison Central (MC) softball team is ready to have a great season. Last sea-

son, the softball jags finished the 2024 season with 13 wins and 14 losses after a first round playoff series loss to Hernando. They are ready to beat that record, with a new team and fresh players.





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