

Ian Clennan	Kristen Tibbetts	Alex Dowd	Mia Terminella	Mira MacLaurin	Max Rhodes	Janssen Transier	Gabby Sherwood
Owen Scales	Jordan Bibby	Maryanna Tollemache	Alex Lynch	Jimmy Walker	Madison Catalano	Alvino Carbajal	Jean Patton
Lilly Brown	Cynthia Maldonado	Brooke Miller	Sydney Buford	Mark Lopez	Linden Henry	Sydney Denmon	Liana Smoot
Alica Scott	Cotton Stone	Henry Winter	Shaine Rozman	Van Soisson	Lilah Guargana	Desaray Trevino	Madi Andrews-Moreno
Ava Barrett	Ciara Medrano	Sam Werkenthin	Carter Torn	Sarah Slaten	Mabel Kahlor	Dexter Canning	Olivia Campa
Tosh Arora	Sami Gade	Jazz Aguilar	Angus Sewell	Anishka Vogl	Marlena Taylor-Adair	Jasmine Barrera	Elizabeth Elizondo
Stephen Shearer	Amelia Paul	Paulo Zambarano	Stella Shenkman	Jack Wayne Cooksey	Makena Mailer	Shelby Wangler	Gage Bausman



## news

03 As soon as online school started, so did concerns that a lack of equity would undermine it. Find out what Austin ISD is doing about it.

04 While it is a popular storyline that the COVID-19 pandemic has been a great help to the environment, climate scientists say it's one that simply isn't true.

## people

10 In the final installment of *Rhodes Traveled*, find out how our intrepid travel writer and two friends traveled around the world without ever leaving Texas.

18 While the COVID-19 pandemic has inflicted great harm all over the world, it's also provided Maculity pet lovers the stay-at-home time to train new puppies.

## a&e

09 Test your vocabulary and spelling ability as you relive the best moments of the spring semester in this encore edition of the **Shield** crossword puzzle.

20 Learn the story behind math and computer science teacher Daniel Vega's latest album, the history of his music career and how it relates to his teaching.

## sports

21 Senior Shaine Rozman on how she fell in love with volleyball and how her passion for fashion has enabled her to help others during quarantine.

23 Soccer captain Cynthia Maldonado discusses what makes a good team leader, why she loves Mac soccer and her plans for college and beyond.

## opinion

25 *Shield* columnist Elisha Scott endorses *Project Daisy*, Instagram's pilot program to prevent users from seeing how many likes a post has received.

26 District officials may not have realized it, but when they shifted Social and Emotional Learning lessons online, they made them much better for students.

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National Honor Society junior Rachel Plotkin and sponsor Jane Farmer move decorated socks into the bin for the National Honor Society sock drive. The prepared socks were then taken to homeless shelters around Austin. The sock drive, a longstanding NHS tradition, that includes a holiday tree made out of bound National Geographic magazines is just one of the ways that Farmer made the library a place where students felt at home. After 38 years as a librarian, 13 of them at Mac, Farmer is retiring. To read more about her impact on the Mac community and her future plans, see page 19.



QUARAN-TUNES: Senior Miranda Lewis released her debut EP, "2345" while stuck at home because of COVID-19. The EP has four tracks, along with a couple of music videos. Lewis says quarantine has given her "way more time" to make music and be more creative. To find out more about what Mac musicians have been up to while on lock down, please see page 7. Photo courtesy of Miranda Lewis.

## save the date

- May 30 Mac Senior Studio Tour
- June 01 Individual cross country workouts begin
- June 08 ACC fall registration opens for returning students
- June 15 Virtual graduation ceremony
- June 15 ACC fall registration opens for new students
- June 22 AISD Board of Trustees regular voting meeting

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The Knights soccer season ended before their playoff run could begin, but Cynthia Maldonado, shown here battling district foe Dripping Springs, isn't done with soccer. In an interview with the *Shield*'s Anna McClellan, Maldonado confirmed that she will try out for the Texas State team. She even joked she would be the water girl if need be. She also shared that she hopes to coach soccer when her playing days are over. To read what else she had to say about her soccer past, present and future plus how she balances soccer, choir and school work, please visit page 24. Photo by Jay Plotkin.



# Leveling the virtual playing field

*Acknowledging that online classes lack equity, district takes action to create it*

**ALYSA SPIRO**  
staff reporter

On April 6, Austin ISD students, parents and teachers took the plunge into the new world of remote learning.

A foreign concept to most AISD students and parents just weeks earlier, remote learning has quickly moved to the forefront of our educational experience. The multiple issues embedded in the shift from in-person to remote learning have required district administrators to act quickly with an eye towards obtaining equity among students and families across the district.

## **SPREAD CHROMEBOOKS, NOT CORONA**

Remote learning relies on access to a functioning device connected to the internet. But how can students participate in remote learning if they don't have the technology they need?

Thanks to the Everyone:1 program, an AISD initiative to provide all eighth- through 12th-graders with free Chromebooks and chargers, many middle and high school students already have their own district-issued Chromebooks.

Despite this success, AISD still faces a pressing equity problem; a vulnerable population of third-through seventh-graders who lack Chromebooks. And while AISD is working to deliver Chromebooks to these elementary and middle schoolers, high school students who have lost their Chromebooks or left them at school have also faced delays while waiting for replacements.

Instead of making Knights wait their turn, McCallum administrators have taken matters into their own hands. Following the extended-spring break, McCallum administrators went on a rescue mission to deliver Chromebooks to Mac students who left theirs at school before spring break so they wouldn't be forced to wait to receive a replacement device.

"We've made contact, or attempted to make contact, with every single McCallum student," principal Brandi Hosack said on April 30. "Right now we have a 97 percent success rate of students logging into BLEND and doing their course work. We know there are a couple kids who aren't engaging, and we don't know if that's a technology issue or not. But we've sent out technology surveys, asked who needs what, asked who needs a hotspot. We're trying as best we can to help the needs where they are."

According to the Austin ISD Food Services Facebook page, As of May 5, AISD has delivered more than 15,000 Chromebooks.

Because the district also recognizes the importance of access to reliable Wi-Fi, the district is placing Wi-Fi-equipped buses in high-need apartment complexes and neighborhoods Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

As of May 6, the district has positioned 110 Wi-Fi buses across the district.

AISD has also partnered with Capital Metro to



*The Austin ISD Food Services crew at Anderson High School did not let heavy rain dampen their spirits as they distributed lunches on May 12. Anderson is one of 18 AISD curbside meal sites located throughout Austin. The sites are open Monday-Friday from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Any child under 19 is eligible to receive daily breakfast and lunch Monday-Thursday, with weekend meals distributed on Fridays. The meals are cooked by staff in AISD kitchens, then chilled so students can reheat the meals at home. The meals include protein, grains, fruits, vegetables and milk. The sites offer a vegetarian option and compostable cutlery by request. Photo by Dave Winter.*

provide additional hotspots for students in need of reliable Wi-Fi access. On weekdays from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., Capital Metro will be sending MetroAccess buses to help support AISD initiatives.

On top of district-wide efforts, McCallum is taking additional action to provide more Mac students Wi-Fi access in their households. Recently, McCallum administrators handed out Wi-Fi hotspots to families who reported not having internet access on a school-wide survey.

"Ever since high school kids have gotten Chromebooks, a limited number of hotspots have been available to us, because having a Chromebook makes no difference if you don't have any Wi-Fi," Hosack said.

## **WHAT'S FOR LUNCH?**

In some households, reliable access to food is a given. But across the country, over 22 million students participate in the national free lunch program. In AISD, 53 percent of students receive free or reduced lunch. According to a study by the Brookings Institution, one in five U.S. children

under 12 are going hungry during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Despite schools being closed, AISD is committed to keeping the steady flow of food coming into households that need it.

AISD has implemented a curbside meal-pickup station at 17 locations across the district and is delivering lunches to neighborhoods via AISD school buses. The meals include protein, grains, fruits, vegetables and milks. Vegetarian meals are available and food is provided until it runs out.

In a May 10 AISD Facebook post, the district announced it has served over half a million meals during campus closures. On average, over 14,000 meals are being served daily.

On April 6, AISD was forced to suspend weekend meal service.

However, 18 days later, on April 24, AISD resumed distributing weekend meals. Plans for the summer have not yet been announced.

## **"A" FOR EFFORT**

Despite the many steps AISD has taken to promote equity in the online classroom, leadership

*Ana Rosa Tenorio and Ivan Ramos, AISD transportation employees based at Nelson Field, unpack Chromebook chargers to be bundled with Chromebooks at Anderson High School on May 12. Anderson is one of five locations hosting curbside computer services Monday through Friday from 9:30 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. Services are also available at Austin and Crockett high schools and at the AISD Performing Arts Center. Photo by Dave Winter.*

acknowledges that a remote learning experience is in no way comparable to an in-person one. Consequently, district leadership has implemented a system where online classes shouldn't be graded in the same way that traditional classes are.

Instead of letter grades, the district has adopted a pass or incomplete grading system. Spring semester grades will not affect grade point averages or class rank. Hosack sees a silver lining in this new grading policy.

"We can, and we should be more open-minded about how school is done," Hosack said. "I think we'll take the best parts of this thing, and hold on to them, and make some sort of hybrid with the old and the new. Grading is a part of that. This is really putting a spotlight on if our grading processes are equitable. Are we grading for learning? Are we grading for behavior? What are grades, really?"

Equity will continue to be an issue as AISD looks to the fall. In an email sent to parents on May 1, the district announced a proposed \$22 million investment in technology and blended learning.

"Life has changed, and these investments support the future of teaching and learning in Austin ISD," Superintendent Paul Cruz wrote in the email. "We will return to our campuses with increased staff and support and ideas of how digital tools can complement our face-to-face instruction."

Although AISD hasn't announced any definite plans of what the 2020-2021 school year may hold, this message hints the even when the pandemic ends, the district and its schools will not be returning to the ways things were before COVID-19 changed everything.



# Has pandemic been good for the Earth?

*Climate scientists warn that COVID-19 is harming the environment more than it is helping it*

**LUCY MARCO**  
staff reporter

You may have heard that the pandemic has been good for the environment, cleaning up the canals in Venice as one example and basically allowing the Earth to heal while the humans are all cooped up indoors. That's a popular narrative throughout the world, but determining whether these changes are positive or negative in the long run requires a much fuller investigation of how the pandemic has affected the environment.

With a decrease in traffic and air travel, you might think that there's been a decrease in air pollution and toxin emissions. And according to Catharine Fraser, Clean Air Associate with Environment Texas, this is partially true.

"Some of the most common pollutants from cars and trucks—so I'm thinking of ozone pollution or nitrogen oxide pollution, particulate matter—has decreased in some capacity without the usual amount of cars and trucks on the road."

Texas State Climatologist and professor of atmospheric sciences at Texas A&M, Dr. John Nielsen-Gammon, supports this finding saying that carbon dioxide emissions, in particular, are down.

"Transportation is one of the major contributors to carbon dioxide emissions, between one-fourth and one-third of total CO2 emissions. And that has gone down significantly. Air travel has gone down by more than 50 percent. Vehicle travels, cars and such, has gone down by around 50 percent."

But unfortunately, that isn't the whole story. Transportation is only one source of environmental harm. There are others: manufacturing for example.

As Fraser points out, "The Environmental Protection Agency announced mid-March that they are going to no longer require companies to monitor and report any illegal emissions events at facilities."

Because there will be no required monitoring, there will also be no way to determine what invisible pollutants are going into the air, compounding the problem in places like Houston's petrochemical corridor, where oil refineries and chemical plants are so renowned for being dirty that they are part of a tourist attraction known as the "Toxic Tour."

Dr. Matthew Berg, a climate resilience scientist in Houston, says that while skies might be clearing over Los Angeles and Delhi, "at the same time, things like power plants are still generating pollution, because we're all still at home and actually using more electricity than we used to because everyone is home all of the time."

And climate change hasn't been given a break during the shutdown either.

"In the short term, we see a decrease in emissions," Nielsen-Gammon said, "but in the long run, it puts off our transition to a low carbon economy."

Part of this delay is because of the impact the virus is having on our economy. Not only does it reduce traffic, but it reduces the amount of money and resources available to work on climate solutions.

Another impact, Nielsen-Gammon notes, is the inability for nations to meet in order to work on the



*The decrease in transportation emissions has been a positive environmental impact as normally busy streets like Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard just south of the UT campus (left) have been virtually devoid of traffic. Photo by Henry Winter. While there has been a reduction in transportation-related carbon dioxide emissions, there also has been an increase in trash (right) headed to landfills as a result of a pandemic-necessitated sedentary lifestyle. Photo by Lucy Marco.*



***"In the short term, we see a decrease in emissions, but in the long run, it puts off our transition to a low carbon economy."***  
**—Dr. John Nielsen-Gammon, Texas State Climatologist**

Paris Accord.

"The next follow-up meeting ... in which the countries were supposed to hash out details of implementing their proposed reductions, was just postponed by another year, unfortunately."

The virus has also caused a higher production of waste headed to landfills.

"Now that folks are home, they are taking more trash out, so they have been overloaded," Fraser said.

But other issues have surfaced as well, like the big increase in plastic bag usage.

"One thing that's interesting is that earlier this year and even late last year some cities had banned plastic bags, which was great," Berg said. "But now some of those same cities, because of the pandemic concerns, have said you can ONLY use plastic bags because we don't trust the ones that you bring from your house."

Dr. Berg points out that the pandemic has caused a complete reversal, moving away from excessive plastic use to society thinking, "I want everything covered in plastic because that way I can trust that there's no virus on it."

Berg said that another detriment to the environment is the increase of food waste at farms.

"Because we're not eating out as much, a lot of dairy farmers, in particular, have gotten calls that no one is able to store or buy the milk, so they are being told that they have to go dump their milk

because otherwise, it will go bad because no one is going to buy it," he said.

Berg further explains that the case with dairy is similar to traditional crops.

"People have to pick the crops because they can't use machines, and not a lot of people want to go out, they are concerned about going out, they aren't allowed to go out and work. So a lot of the food is going bad on the plants before it can even get picked."

And it's not just agriculture that has been hit by a precipitous drop in consumer demand. The fashion industry has also been hit hard with the debut of spring collections coinciding with the shut down of social gathering and economic activity.

Berg said that with retail displaying their spring collections while their stores are closed down, their experience is parallel to agriculture and dairy farms. With spring collections sitting unsold in closed stores, "there's a question of what to do with all of this unpurchased stuff."

In the bigger picture, the disruption in our economy and the resulting waste that's created by that disruption has a more profound effect on climate change and air pollution.

"Even now you hear people saying that they just want to get back to the way things were," Berg said, "but if we do, this little blip and reduction in emissions won't even matter because we're just going to go back to where it was."

The pandemic's effect on the economy will also have an environmental impact, Neilson-Gaimon says, because the government will have less money to spend on climate solutions.

To put it another way, Katharine Hayhoe, atmospheric scientist at Texas Tech University, says that the environmental gains we've seen with COVID-19 won't make a long-term difference.

"Pandemic-related carbon reductions are likely to be short-lived and insignificant in the long-term because they've been achieved by unsustainable actions."

While climate experts conclude that the pandemic's overall effect on the environment is bad, there may be a silver lining to be found in a newfound appreciation for the natural environment.

With the pandemic and shelter-in-place, bored is a word that comes to mind for a lot of people. With little else to do than go outside on walks and to hang out, Berg says that a growing number of people are understanding the importance of nature and appreciating it.

"I think if you're being forced to just interact through the internet, that's not enough to fill you up," Berg said. "I think we've all reached the end of what is entertaining and what is exciting and we're bored and hungry for a lot more. When we're surrounded by news, news, news, and when you go out into nature, just the silence, the birds and breeze, is super calming. So it just kind of lets you get a little more strength to do another day and do it all over again."

While he stressed the importance of not overcrowding the parks once quarantine is over, he remained hopeful that one outcome of the pandemic might be that people do a better job of understanding that parks that aren't just sports fields but rather a resource that we should make a staple of daily living.

We should "integrate parks and natural spaces into everyday life all of the time," Berg said.

Fraser agreed that spending time outside is beneficial for both mental and physical health.

"Before all the trails shut down in Austin, it was amazing to see how many people were outside, and I think that has been a similar story across the country. People are going on walks again. So I think there is a new appreciation for nature," she said, "and actually we just launched a mini campaign called Greener Together, where we're compiling resources for folks to get outside and connect with nature in a safe way while we're all apart to help foster that connection."

So how do we transition the lessons of this difficult time into long-term, sustainable improvements? According to Hayhoe, the answer is to make changes to our daily life in order to protect the environment once the economy and social interactivity return to something more like normal operation.

"The solution is not to shut down the economy as we've seen in the last few weeks," Hayhoe said. While "falling oil prices and recovery packages may divert attention and resources from climate action and clean energy," Americans can still make choices that will make a big difference.

"Sustainable solutions are to use our energy more efficiently, be less wasteful, and figure out how to get our energy from other sources."



# News in a FLASH

Here's our rundown  
of some of the top  
Mac news stories  
from the past month

## Veteran adviser Weber to join MacJournalism

During a first-period Zoom call on Monday May 11, members of the newspaper and yearbook staffs received news that next fall, MacJournalism will have not one adviser but two co-advisers. Veteran journalism teacher and publications adviser Jena Weber will join current adviser Dave Winter on the MacJournalism team starting this fall.

"I am most looking forward to the collaboration aspect of working with Mr. Winter," said Weber who advised the newspaper and yearbook at Austin High School for the past four years and the yearbook, newspaper and broadcast program at Small Middle School for the 13 years before that.

"I've always done all of this on my own," Weber said. "I am excited for the things we can accomplish when we both bring our expertise to the table."

Winter is excited, too, and not just because he needs the help.

"I have been very lucky at Mac and before then to work with people who are extremely committed to the publications and the important role they have on campus," Winter said. "Ms. Weber is like that, too. She is a first-rate adviser, but she doesn't just know her stuff. She is great at building rapport with her students and with enabling them to



Jena Weber did her student teaching at McCallum under longtime journalism teacher Rhonda Moore so this fall will start Weber's second tour of duty in Room 134. Photo courtesy of Jena Weber.

do great things with her as a guide."

We at Mac Journalism are excited to work with Ms. Weber, and cannot wait to see what the future holds for all of us.

— Anna McClellan

## Adamson realizes dream while doing good deed

Ms. Adamson and her daughter got to experience something truly special on Sunday May 10. After visiting her son, an EMT who has been on the long road to recovery from COVID-19, Adamson saw something in the news that caught her eye.

"I saw that if we take food to the Circuit of the Americas for the Austin Food Bank, then we could drive on the track," Adamson said. "We both got super excited to go."

Infatuated with Formula One since she was young, this was an opportunity that she couldn't pass up.

"The only sport I like more than F1 is high school football," Adamson said. "I used to just lay on the floor and watch it with my dad."

The experience, Adamson said, lived up to her expectations.

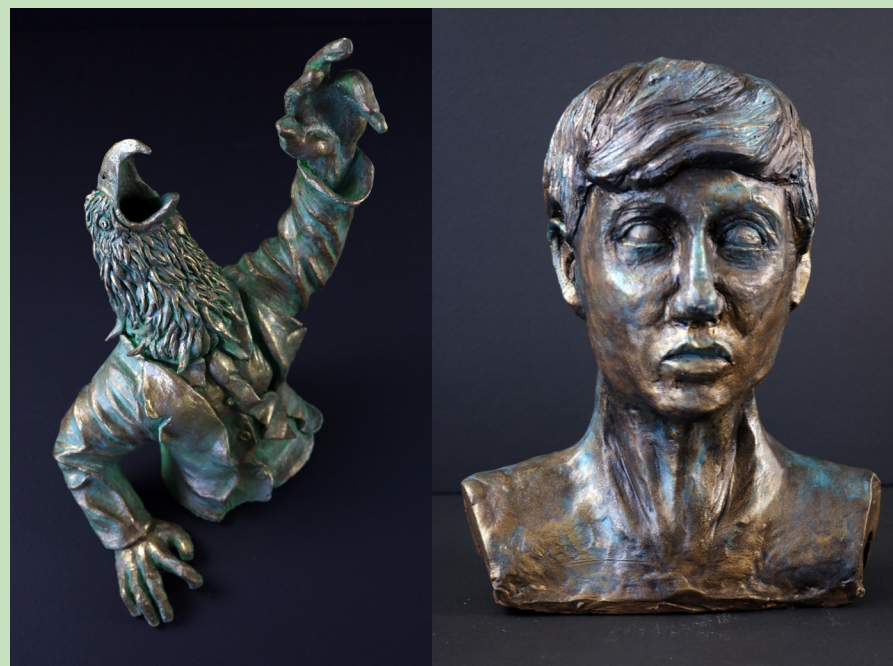
"The event was super well-organized. It took us an hour and a half in total to drop off food, drive on the track and leave. I was amazed. You got to go through the tunnels and everything, we saw every car from Ferraris to mini vans."

Driving on the track was a dream come true, and Adamson couldn't be more grateful to those who organized the event. "Everyone was so appreciative of people dropping off food," Adamson said. "It was so neat that it happened on Mother's Day. It was so exciting."

—Javier Vela



**MOTHER'S DAY MOTOR SPORTS:** When Adamson learned she and her daughter could ride the only Formula One track in the U.S. on Mother's Day, she made sure it happened. COTA officials reported that the event raised over \$200,000 in donations, which would provide over 1.6 million meals to the Central Texas community. They also said that more than 20,000 people and 400 dogs participated at the event in 7,000 vehicles. Photo courtesy of Adamson.



**PREPARING FOR THE PRIMARIES:** Senior Ben Juenger's VASE state gold seal-winning sculpture "Avian Official" (left), addresses political divisions with the country. Freshman Callan Spence's sculpture "Decrepit" (right), also earned a gold seal for being judged among the top 100 pieces in the state competition sponsored by Texas Art Education Association. Mac had 26 other pieces earn superior ratings. Images courtesy of Jeffrey Seckar-Martinez.

## Juenger, Spence capture Gold Seals for placing among top 100 pieces in state VASE judging

The McCallum visual arts faculty received the results from the State Visual Arts Scholastic Event, or VASE, on April 27. Although the artists who qualified for state were not able to attend the event in person like their predecessors in years past, their submissions were still judged.

Thirty-seven of the 89 Austin ISD pieces that advanced to state VASE were created by Mac visual arts, and 26 of those 37 pieces came home with superior ratings, a score of 4.

Nine more submissions were recognized at the state level. And two Mac artists, senior Ben Juenger and freshman Callan Spence, received a coveted gold seal for placing among the top 100 pieces at state VASE.

While Juenger wished he could have attended state VASE in person, he was still pleased when he got his results back.

"With the year ending in such a weird way, it's nice to get some good news," Juenger said. Through his gold seal sculpture, "Avian Official," Juenger wanted to represent some of our

nation's struggles with "internal division and political polarization" over the past few years.

"The toxicity of modern politics is something that really bothers me, and I wanted to create a piece to show its destructive effects," Juenger said.

Alongside Juenger, freshman Callan Spence also earned a gold seal and said he was honored to be able to achieve such a high award in his freshman year.

"It feels amazing to test my art skills on a state level," Spence said. "I'm really thankful for my teachers guiding me along the process of making this piece. I couldn't have done it without their support."

Congratulations to all of the McCallum artists who qualified and received awards at State VASE. Your hard work and skill has paid off, and all of us at MacJournalism salute your collective excellence. To see the complete list of McCallum VASE winners, please visit our online platforms at [macshieldonline.com](http://macshieldonline.com) and our Instagram account, @macjournalism.

—Gabby Sherwood

## MacI wins three ILPC Star, 98 individual awards

The Shield newspaper and Knight yearbook combined to earn five Tops in Texas awards and 98 5A Individual Achievement Awards, the Interscholastic Press League Conference announced virtually on May 2. All three publications (Shield, Shield Online and Knight) also won Star Awards for the second year in a row. This year, both The Shield and Shield Online won Gold Stars and The Knight, a Bronze Star. It is the first time in program history that it has won two Gold Star Awards in the same calendar year. Shield visual arts editor Bella Russo won 15 5A Individual Achievement Awards for

her writing, photography and design, breaking her record of 11 from last year. When asked about her achievements, however, Russo was quick to focus attention back to the entire staff.

"Not only is everyone incredibly talented and driven, but they have been the most fun people to work with, which definitely helps when we are staying at school till midnight to finish the paper on time," she said. "Everyone on staff is a team player, and I think that shows in the quality and variety of our content."

—Kristen Tibbetts



# What's not to like about Project Daisy?

Nearly 3 out of 4 Knights oppose Instagram plan to conceal like counts

GRACE NUGENT  
staff reporter

"He loves me...he loves me not" goes the age-old childhood game, which involves picking petals off a daisy to find out if one's love interest loves them back. Now, it's mostly a cliché, played by 9-year-olds hoping to figure out if their third-grade romance will blossom into something more than awkward eye contact and sharing animal-shaped erasers.

While its use as a romance indicator may have waned, the daisy has survived as a symbol of childhood innocence but it's taken on an entirely different context in the colorful high-tech world of social media. Project Daisy is the name for the movement to eliminate public like counts on the social media platform Instagram.

Under the new management of Adam Mosseri, former overseer of the Facebook news feed, Instagram may undergo substantial and controversial changes. Mosseri came to Instagram in October after founders Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger clashed with Instagram's parent company, Facebook and its chief executive Mark Zuckerberg. With the split, dozens of employees left and the two once separate entities became connected by teams of engineers and project managers intent on rebranding Instagram to the subsidiary-sounding "Instagram from Facebook."

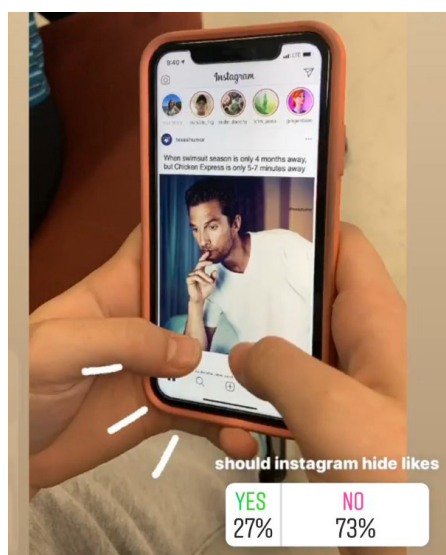
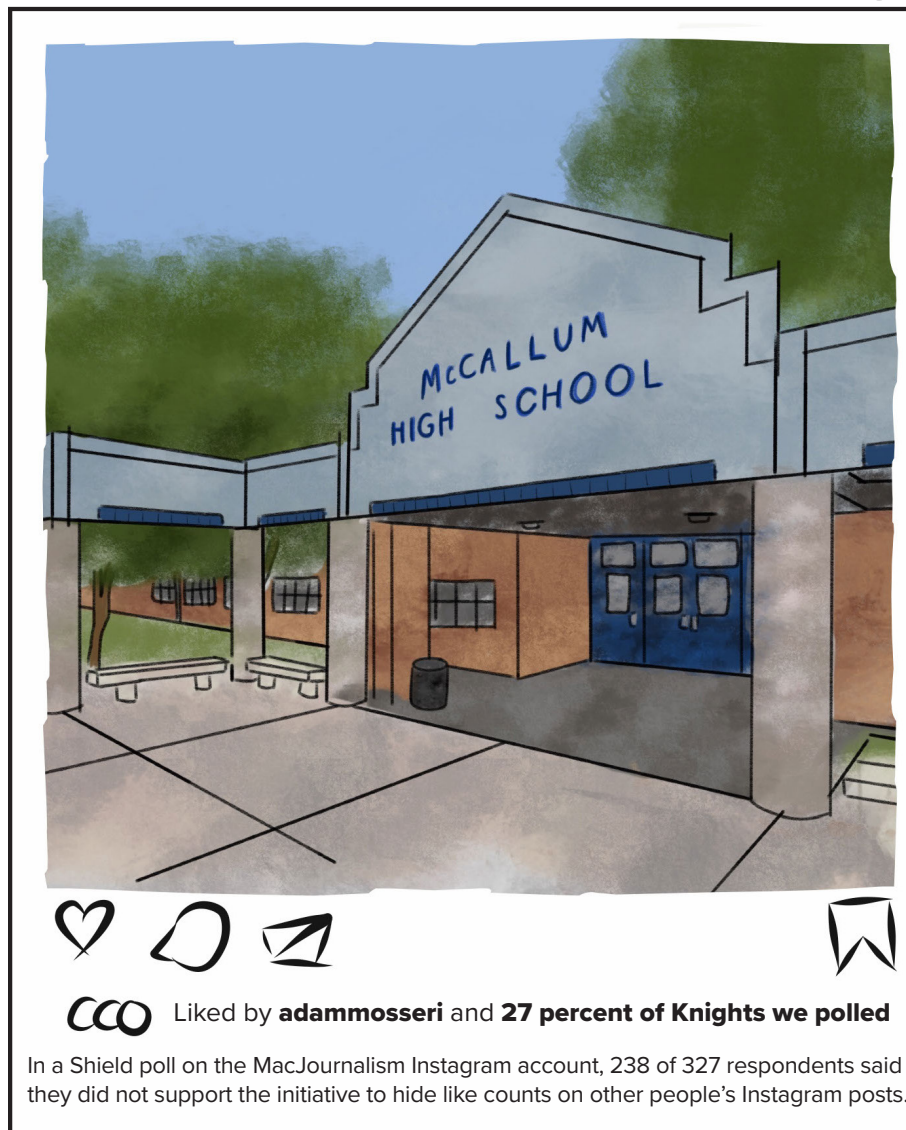
Skeptics had a field day with the news of Mosseri taking over, as obsessive Insta users were concerned if the relationship with Facebook would tarnish the app that has created a generation full of hashtagging, selfie-taking, influencer-aspiring social-media production and consumption machines.

In an interview with Amy Choick of *The New York Times*, Mosseri said he kept being paranoid that the world would turn into an episode of *Black Mirror*, the satirical dystopian anthology series about tech-disasters. One particular episode haunts Mosseri in which characters rate each other on a scale one to five stars leading to devastating consequences.

Likes are seen as the underground social-media currency that affects everything from cooking videos to the influencer community to the next celebrity pregnancy scare. While the Instagram is assessing the permutations of the effects of Project Daisy, the "dogfooding," internal tech slang for testing, process is being tested out with a selected group of users.

Mosseri hopes that the implementation of this new plan will show the world that Instagram has learned from the pitfalls of its parent, Facebook, and that Instagram is taking steps towards recognizing and helping its users ameliorate the highly corrosive pain that can accompany social-media use.

The company has not decided whether or not it wants to eliminate counting likes entirely. It may indicate when a post becomes hugely popular by indicating that it has passed a benchmark number: tens of thousands of likes or hundreds of thousands of likes as examples. But this decision will not affect the average teenager would never



approach that threshold and is more worried about that "day at the beach" post being liked only by close family members.

"We should have started to more proactively think about how Instagram and Facebook could be abused and mitigate those risks," Mosseri told Choick. "We're playing catch-up."

The company is trying to make "a less

pressurized environment" with users being able to see who likes their own post but not the like count of other people's posts. Their goal is to stop the comparison and make Instagram feel like less of a competition.

In a poll on the MacJournalism Instagram feed, 27 percent of the 327 followers who responded said that Instagram was doing the right thing by hiding like counts. The vast majority of respondents, 238 (73 percent), voted that Instagram should leave like counts visible on all posts.

Senior Kathryn Chilstrom was in the minority supporting Project Daisy.

"Social media is damaging enough," Chilstrom said. "Having a certain number of likes on a post is very detrimental, sometimes even without us knowing it."

The potential impact is significant considering how much time teenagers spend on social media. According to a 2015 Pew Research Study, 92 percent of teens go online in some way every day, and 24 percent of daily users are "constantly on social media" to the point where they consider it a full-blown addiction.

The issue of social media addiction has even found expression in mainstream entertainment. In the 2017 film, *Ingrid Goes West*, director Matt Spicer and his co-writer David Branson Smith created a movie concept based on actual Instagram

stories they followed. In the film, a mentally unstable young woman portrayed by Audrey Plaza squanders her recent inheritance in the pursuit of a seemingly perfect Instagram obsession played by Taylor Sloane.

Spicer said in an interview with *Indie Wire* that he hoped the movie "led to a larger conversation about Instagram and the effect it has had on our culture."

The film also explores the umbrella topic of much of the socializing done in our lives that revolves around digital platforms.

According to Smith, the movie's protagonist relies on social media as a "way of interacting with the world, building a community and building friendships, but it's made of nothing. She's the manifestation of our worst impulses on social media."

The same reliance on social media in the real world, finding a person's self-verification and worth through social media, is what prompted Mosseri to launch Project Daisy.

Junior Matthew Vargas says he understands the social media harms that Project Daisy is trying to address.

"People can use social media to hide behind a mask that they have created by the content they post," Vargas said. "For example, if someone is posting all these photos of them on vacation and having a good time, they're only showing you 'the truth' about what they want you to see. You aren't really able to see the true things happening behind the scenes."

Vargas, a decorated Blue Brigade officer and McCallum dance major, sees a utility for social well beyond seeking the validation of likes. He utilizes social media to showcase and market his dancing career.

Using the platform Instagram, Vargas shares his solos and dance routines and says that if there wasn't social media, it would be very hard to get his name and his dancing out into the world. He stresses that he does so because you never know who might come across your social media account and offer you the opportunity of a lifetime. Vargas thinks that likes should stay visible to all but that people must be cognizant of their social media usage.

Junior Alex Melendez agrees with Vargas that Instagram and other social media platforms can be used to connect and communicate effectively with others. Despite acknowledging these benefits, however, Melendez also fears that social media can negatively affect teenagers' mental health with exclusion and cyberbullying.

"People can get very addicted to it and when someone sees others post on Instagram getting more likes and comments, it can cause feelings of depression and self-deprecation," Melendez said. "It also is a vehicle for cyberbullying because you can be anyone behind a screen; it's not face to face."

As Instagram is testing out this new format it is unclear when this appearance will be rolled out for all users.

"I almost feel like this would be worse," Vargas said. "By taking away the Instagram likes, you're taking away the feedback from someone's posts and the validation certain people get, for some people that's the only thing to help them along with nice comments and encouragement on the posts."



# Mac musicians respond to COVID-19

*The shelter-in-place order caused by the coronavirus has inspired a seven-week virtual jam session*

**SCARLETT HOUSER AND  
OLIVIA CAPOCHIANO**  
staff reporters

It has been seven weeks since the Shelter in Place order has been given. Seven weeks since Texans have had the collective realization that we are now left to our own devices on how to spend our lives. For the musicians of McCallum and beyond, it has been a golden opportunity to do what there is often little time to do: practice and create more music.

McCallum musician Marlee Foster, who uses the stage name Merlin, has embraced the change. Instead of simply enduring being locked at home, Foster has turned quarantine into a creative convenience. "I've had a lot more free time. Whenever I have an idea for a song, I can just start working on it. I've been able to work more on my style and find new influences for my music," Foster says. "I've been working on more R&B stuff."

Mac musicians have also been working on expanding their skill set to music production, and hope to be able to release music from home. Foster has even continued to record professionally (with the proper safety precautions).

"Recording studios in Austin are still operating," Foster said. "Luckily, whenever I'm in the studio it's only me and two to three other people, so we can keep our distance."

Of course, as everyone has discovered, quarantine has its own set of disadvantages. Due to the self-isolation, Foster has found it difficult to get guidance from their peers.

"It's hard not having all the people at McCallum, though, because if I needed help with a guitar part or something I could just ask a friend to figure it out with me."

Cleverly, Foster has found a solution...

"I've been having fun doing virtual jam sessions with some of my friends where we just share the songs we've been working on together."

Isobel Buffum-Robbins, a junior, attends these "virtual jam sessions."

"We have a lil' group where we all get together and play each other music we've been working on, and because we can't do it in person we've been groovin' on FaceTime," Buffum-Robbins says.

As for her own music, Buffum-Robbins has been able to write more songs with all her free time, including one about missing her friends, although she describes it as "just messing around."

For other artists, musical projects can finally be finished, and many have been avidly releasing their polished efforts into the world. With new albums from bands such as The Point, singles released from senior Jazz Aguilar, and an EP from senior Miranda Lewis, it is safe to say that there has been a surplus of songs to listen to for all of the music lovers at McCallum.

For Aguilar, the quarantine has been a great chance to work on songs, and not to mention, release her song "Kamikaze," onto platforms such as Spotify and Apple Music. Aguilar recorded "Kamikaze" around March, with Electric Factory records with Flip 45 bandmates Riley Edwards and Isabella Demoss, along with senior Ian Clennan on the drums.

You might recognize the Weezer and Tracy Chapman-inspired tune from when it was played at Valentine's Day Coffeehouse. Since releasing



"Kamikaze," Aguilar has been "writing daily" and polishing new songs in preparation for a full album: Distant. She also plans to release a music video for "Kamikaze" once COVID-19 is regulated enough to "allow [her] to work."

Miranda Lewis has released her first EP, titled "2345," under the stage name Blue Hare. Her EP has four tracks, which can currently be found on SoundCloud. Quarantine has played a part in the production of the EP, as it has given her a chance to "make way more music." Lewis's music has been inspired and influenced by a multitude of artists through the decades, including "early '90s" Cat Powers and Nick Drake.

Along with immersing herself in her favorite music and releasing her new EP, Lewis has also released two music videos to accompany her songs

*EXPLOSIONS OF NEW MUSIC: Shortly into the early days of quarantine, senior Jazz Aguilar (above) released her debut single: "Kamikaze." The energetic tune was recorded with the help of her bandmates Riley Edwards and Isabella Demoss, along with drummer Ian Clennan. Aguilar has been using quarantine time to write her new album, as well as to work on a music video for her already-released song. Photo by Risa Darlington-Horta. Seniors Jack Montesinos and Joe Roddy (left), members of the band "The Point," have recently released their second album, "Ihop." The album, inspired by the hardships and their personal experiences of quarantine, can be found on Spotify and Soundcloud. Photo courtesy of Montesinos.*

"Shoebbox" and "Pendulum."

The videos are filled with fuzzy twisting shots that add to the atmosphere and vibe of the song specific to the video. The video for "Shoebbox" features wide focus shots of a sepia-toned countryside, a starry night, and the trailing lights of a highway at night.

True to its name, the "Pendulum" video includes a long exposure shot of a pendulum swinging across the frame. The artist herself sits behind the swinging necklace, against a black background. For Lewis, the music videos are another way of expressing herself, and she describes the videos as being "a really fun process for me. I just like seeing how things come together, plus I'm really into film so it's a version of that."

"Ihop" is the title of The Point's new album, which is on platforms such as Spotify and SoundCloud. The breakfasty-sounding album happens to be written specifically about what one might call "the quarantine experience."

Band member and McCallum senior Jack Montesinos describes the album as being "solely inspired by the lock down and isolation away from people we love being around." Montesinos

especially misses the time spent at bandmate Joe Roddy's house to work on music, saying there's "nothing better than that."

But what the band misses the most is being able to play live. The band created their newest album by sending each other recordings of themselves playing and singing.

"Joe mixed the album after we finished [the recordings] to release," Montesinos said.

Despite the sadness around missing friends and the general freedom of being outside, Montesinos has had a chance to experiment with listening to and writing with new styles of music. Montesinos has been writing songs with his newfound inspirations, in which Roddy has been playing some piano parts. Montesinos hinted that his experimentation "might even make an album idea for the Point."

What can be taken away from these artists is that quarantine is not a pause on regular-life, but just an obstacle that can be worked around and perhaps, in The Point's case, something from which to draw inspiration.

Give some of this new music a listen, and maybe you'll find yourself writing your own ballad (or anthem) about quarantine!



# The hindsight of 1918 is 2020

*Over a century ago, an influenza outbreak taught the world to beware a pandemic's second wave*

**SAMANTHA POWERS**  
staff reporter

The number of coronavirus cases continues to rise worldwide as governments pursue a solution and civilians wait patiently in self-quarantine. In Austin, many businesses are shut down; others have turned to curbside pickup and online orders, while others still have opened their dining rooms to 25% capacity in accordance with Gov. Abbott's April 27 announcement that partially reopened Texas businesses on May 1. Social distancing is encouraged and the stay-at-home order has been renewed.

As the world attempts to cope with a global pandemic, it is important to turn to the past in order to be prepared for the future.

A pandemic is nothing new. The world has dealt with them steadily since the Antonine Plague in 165 C.E. killed 5 million people, according to MPH online. The Black Death, which ravaged the world from 1346 to 1353 C.E. and produced a death toll of between 75 and 200 million, is still regarded as one of the greatest tragedies in human history.

Most recently, the world battled the influenza pandemic of 1918, better known (inaccurately by the way) as the Spanish Flu. Revisiting the 1918 pandemic provides valuable insight into how societies have reacted to pandemics historically and what consequences have resulted from those reactions. Studying the 1918 pandemic can help us avoid the mistakes of the past and be better prepared to face COVID-19.

Historically, societies have struggled to treat and control the spread of pandemics. In 1918, medicine was much less developed than it is today, and sanitation was much poorer. Governments had fewer resources to put toward the effort to control the spread of influenza.

"The big cities were very, very crowded in working-class areas," said Jeremi Suri, a history professor at the University of Texas, "and people lived in very unsanitary conditions, and they did not understand germs in the way we do today. So it was much harder for people to keep clean, and it was much harder for them to socially distance."

On top of that, World War I consumed the focus and energy of world leaders. Soldiers were being dispatched all over the world, and the global travel required to stage a war greatly contributed to the spread of influenza.

"World War I was what actually was the main mechanism by which the virus spread," Suri said. "It started in Kansas, it was called the Spanish Flu only because Spain did not have censorship of its news coverage. It was censored in other areas. But it started in Kansas, it spread to Europe on a military ship, and then it came back. So, it was spread by the war."

World War I didn't just spread the 1918 influenza, it hindered the ability of countries to respond to the crisis. According to Kristen Wachsmann, a McCallum AP World History teacher, the war overwhelmed world governments.

"Because the Spanish Flu outbreak occurred during the end of World War I, I think the world was uniquely under-prepared to respond to the crisis," Wachsmann said. "The Great War' taxed countries' finances, infrastructure, people and morale. While a pandemic is always difficult to manage, the historical context of war made it much worse."



*FROM ONE BATTLE TO THE NEXT: British World War I Soldiers wear medical masks amidst the influenza pandemic of 1918. UT history professor Jeremi Suri explained that influenza reached Europe on a military ship due to World War I. "It started in Kansas, it spread to Europe on a military ship, and then it came back," Suri said. "It was spread by the war." Photo originally accessed on the RV1864 Flickr account. Reposted here with permission under a creative commons license.*

In Austin, the first influenza case was reported in the Camp Mabry barracks on Sept. 27, 1918. It quickly spread, multiplying to 900 cases within a week, according to The Austin American Statesman. On Oct. 8, acting governor, R.M. Johnson, prohibited all social gatherings.

When the first coronavirus case in Travis County was reported on March 12, the city of Austin took much less time to respond. The very next day, Austin ISD canceled school and people began to self-quarantine. This quick response is likely the reason that a week after the first case was reported, there were only 58 coronavirus cases in Travis County, according to the City of Austin website.

The quarantine in October 1918 lasted for about a month before the ban was lifted. During that time, many local businesses suspended their activity. Most of those businesses are gone now, but a few still-standing local businesses lasted through the Spanish Flu in 1918, including the Paramount Theatre, Avenue B Grocery, and Scholz Garten. Suri explains that although it was a strain to have local businesses closed down, the lifestyle back then was more accommodating to the self-sufficient aspect of a quarantine.

"Austin was a smaller, more rural community at the time," Suri said. "So, many people in Austin at that time were not as dependent as we are today on food from grocery stores and all sorts of other things. People were actually a little more self-sufficient. Their lives were disrupted, but they tended to feel a little less in peril, a little less at risk at the time because the city was less dense and people were a little more self-sufficient."

Today, in the era of COVID-19, conditions in Austin are more severe due to the density of the population. In the last 100 years, Austin's population has grown from 34,876 in 1920 to 926,426 in 2016, according to the U.S. Census Bureau and the City of Austin. In the metro area, the population is estimated to be over 2 million in 2020.

Due to the size of this population, health experts estimate that the quarantine will last four times longer, with many experts speculating that the quarantine will be lifted in the summer before returning in response to a second wave in the fall. At present, Gov. Abbott is slowly allowing businesses to reopen to partial capacity, while Mayor Adler and Judge Eckhardt extended the stay-at-home order to the May 30 for Austin and June 15 for Travis County.

On April 24, Prof. Suri predicted that restaurants would be the first to open, which was proven correct on April 27 when Gov. Abbott announced that restaurants, among a few other businesses, could open to 25% capacity. Prof. Suri also predicts that a second wave in the fall will bring more closures.

"I don't think we're going to have football games, but we'll probably be going to restaurants and things of that sort," Suri said. "The libraries will open. But we have to be prepared for other kinds of closures thereafter because you get a second wave, usually in the fall, from the disease, and we'll see it go up and down."

The first wave of the influenza pandemic occurred in the spring and summer of 1918 and passed over Austin without incident. It was the second wave in the fall, however, that hit the city hard. This pattern of the second wave being more lethal was true nationwide. Although the underdeveloped methods for reporting disease makes it hard to tell how many people died in each wave, it is evident that the second wave was most lethal in the U.S., according to the CDC.

A possible reason that the second wave was more lethal in 1918 is that not enough precautions were taken during the first wave. Wachsmann believes that by opening up the state of Texas too soon, a possible second wave of COVID-19 could be more lethal than the first. Gov. Abbott's decision to steadily open Texas back up to partial capacity could be harmful to Texas.

"I think that Gov. Abbott opening the state of

Texas against the advice of public health experts could make a second wave more significant," Wachsmann said. "In terms of the outbreak, Texas' percentages seem relatively low compared to other states like New York and New Jersey. This could be a reflection of many things including size of urban centers, population density and access to testing. It is possible that Texas's low numbers are a false comfort to leadership and the general public. I am concerned that this false confidence will put more people at risk moving forward."

Dr. Mark McClellan of Duke Medical School is on Gov. Abbott's team of medical experts advising him on how best to face COVID-19. He believes that this virus is a reminder of our vulnerability as a society to disease, even in the era of modern medicine.

"Even if most people get vaccinated, you sometimes have to get booster vaccines after a while, and sometimes the vaccines don't work," Dr. McClellan said. "So I think we're going to have to be careful for a while about this virus, and I think this is a good reminder that there are viruses that come along, we've had previous epidemics like SARS and H1N1 Flu, both of those happened within the last 20 years, so I think we need to be more careful to prevent something like this in the future."

Prof. Suri shares the sentiment that we must acknowledge our vulnerability to disease. He explains that in the modern era, humans tend to believe that the passage of time has made them less vulnerable, and this mindset can be very harmful.

"I think what we're learning with the coronavirus is that even with all the medical capabilities we have, a virus is still a very powerful thing," Suri said. "We should not believe, as we might have believed 10 years ago, that we, as human beings, have conquered viruses; we have conquered pandemics. ... That's what we call the Hubris of Modernism, thinking we're so much better today than we were before."

Suri believes that this hubris can be especially harmful in young people, who can become carriers if they are not careful to take the proper precautions and socially distance. He explained that the influenza pandemic in 1918 proved most lethal to young people in their 20s because of a lack of pre-existing immunity. Now, the coronavirus is proving to be more dangerous for elderly people, but the danger young people were once in must not be forgotten, Suri said.

"Students want to be careful that [they] don't become carriers of it to [their] parents and grandparents," Suri said. "And that's the point I often make to my students at the university. Don't be complacent about [the spread] because even if you get it and survive, you then pass it on to others. People who are older, particularly in your family, they're the ones who could really die from this. And so you have to think about not just your own health, but the health of others and the risk you expose others to today if you become a carrier of this virus."

Today, leaders like Abbott must make some important decisions on how best to protect the safety of their citizens. During this time, it is telling to look back at how the city of Austin and the world handled a pandemic more than 100 years ago. Some things, we can improve on, and others, we can learn lessons from that we can put into practice as the world continues to grapple with this global crisis.

—with reporting by Anna McClellan







# A world tour around Texas

*My spring break trip lead me through Paris, Athens and Moscow without ever leaving the state*



**RHODES TRAVELED**  
by Max Rhodes

I had always wanted to go on a big road trip with my friends. Not just a day trip where we all pile in with whoever has the biggest car and go to San Marcos or something, but a real multiple-day road trip. We had toyed with the idea as early as freshman year, not seriously of course, but it was something fun to think about. Fast forward to senior year and we still haven't made any decisions. One day I was looking at a map of the state and was amused by the names of towns that copied other bigger cities or countries. The classic example is Paris Texas. But there are more. Athens, Texas. Moscow, Texas. Palestine, Texas. The list goes on and on. It was the perfect road trip.

How would you like to tell your friends that you went to Athens, Paris and Moscow over spring break? So after recruiting two friends and copious amounts of planning, on March 14, we embarked on our Texas World Tour.

Most of the places we would go to were pretty small. And that was kind of the whole idea, to explore small towns that no one would consider a destination. The common theme was the name of each place, I had done no prior research on whether or not any of these places were actually worth visiting, they were just chosen because of the name and proximity to one another. The towns we would be visiting ranged in population from over 10,000 to under 1,000. Our first stop on day one, **New Berlin**, was definitely one of the smallest.

## ICH BIN EIN BERLINER

New Berlin has a population just below 500, and is a few miles east of San Antonio. It's not on any major highway, so no one just wanders in there. No one except us, that is. The two friends I convinced to go on this trip with me were Seth and Jeremiah, and we agreed that we should try to get a picture with the city limit sign of each of the places we visited. Anyway, New Berlin was very small and probably doesn't see a whole lot of tourists. We pulled into the town center and saw all three of the public buildings: a barbecue restaurant about the size of a garden shed, a grain and feed store, and what we assumed was a convenient store. The feed store was not what I was expecting, as it was designed with an open garage where you would drive your truck through and have them load hundreds of pounds of feed on it. No place to go inside. It was only 10 in the morning so we thought to try our luck at the convenient store. Only problem was that it was actually a bar. Inside were two people, an older woman who was probably the owner of the bar, and a large man with a white beard and black cowboy hat. The woman was very friendly toward us, and assumed we were



*My two partners in crime, Jeremiah and Seth express their appreciation for a statue at Everman Park in downtown Abilene. Photo by Max Rhodes.*

students from UT San Antonio. We talked with her for a minute, then purchased a few sodas and went on our way. The whole time the man in the cowboy hat did not say a word but watched us very closely.

As we got back in the car, and I was looking for the directions for our next stop, two huge trucks pulled up on either side of us. Now, my Honda Pilot may seem like a big car when I'm trying to park somewhere in the city, but it was dwarfed by these trucks. We made it to I-10 and headed east. We had a few more stops that day, but none were as interesting as New Berlin. We went to **Columbus** and **Weimar** before settling in for the night in a Super 8 in **Nederland**, right on the gulf coast to the east of Houston.

After a lovely hotel breakfast we hit the road. We stopped in the towns of **China**, **Cleveland** and had lunch near **Moscow**. They were pleasant little towns, but not all that exciting.

Our next destination was no small town, but the ruins of a huge abandoned sawmill deep in the woods. The **Angelina National Forest** to be specific. Now before we set off there were two main things I was thinking about. First, the mill is in a national forest, not private land, so we would not be trespassing on someone's property and run the risk of being shot at. And the second was that when I looked up "Aldridge Sawmill" on Google maps it offered directions. So nothing to worry about right? Google maps had been good to us so far, so certainly we would have no trouble getting to this place. My God was I wrong.

## OVER THE FOREST AND THROUGH THE MUD

Pulling out of the parking lot of our lunch spot we soon got off the bigger state highway and continued on smaller two-lane highways. I

would think to classify these as farm-to-market roads, as there really wasn't anything along them but houses, but the speed limit was still 65. Now by I-35 that sounds pretty slow, but these roads were not very wide, and had lots of twists and turns. And so deeper and deeper we went into the woods and began to leave civilization behind us. I began to notice fewer and fewer public buildings, like gas stations and restaurants, and even less traffic. Even at the beginning I saw plenty of cars going in the opposite direction, but not one going the same way we were. By now we were going down roads that obviously people only went down if they lived in here.

Then the map told me to turn right, and the road was absolutely not paved, and looked a little sketchy. Not giving thought to the possibility that there may have been another way I pushed onward, hoping it would get better. It did not get better. This was obviously some service road that only high clearance vehicles could traverse, but by that point it was too late to turn back. We had to push onward. I was going no faster than 5 mph. Mud was flying into the open window. The poor car kept bottoming out and producing the cringe inducing sound of rock hitting metal. This was a road meant for a Jeep not my 15-year-old Pilot.

Finally it was over. We crossed paths with a much nicer looking dirt road. I stopped the car and got out to look for any damage. I'm not really sure what I was looking for but other than being completely coated with mud it looked alright. I was pretty sure this new road would take us there but I was not willing to damage our means of escape anymore than I already had with more bad roads. So we continued on foot. Looking back on where we came from, there was a no trespassing sign. For the road that we just came from. No trespassing. Do not go that way,

was the way we had just gone. Good Lord what did that map just put us through?

Continuing down the real road toward the sawmill I began to see reassuring signs like graffiti on the trees and broken beer bottles on the ground: people had been here before. We walked down the dirt path through the dense woods as I tried not to think about what I had done to the car. It was very quiet out here, no sounds of traffic, just the wind in the trees and the birds. After five or so more minutes of walking we could see the big stone ruins amongst the trees. There were maybe three or four shells of buildings, each about 25 feet tall and all of them covered in graffiti. There were big trees growing inside the buildings, and many of the walls were covered with vines. Jeremiah said they looked like ancient temples in Thailand. We explored the ruins for half an hour or so then started back to the car. I was still worried about long term damage to it, but it was nice to know there was a better road to leave on.

When we got back to the car I was greeted by a large piece of plastic that had half broken off and was lying underneath the car. It was part of the lower engine cover. After looking a little closer I realized that it couldn't just be re-attached, that it would need to come off. After some more inspection I realized that it would be very difficult to remove. And so I grabbed the pair of pliers from the trunk and crawled down on the sandy forest floor to work at these little plastic bolts keeping the back half of this huge piece of plastic on the bottom of the car. After cutting my knuckles, sufficiently coating my hands with engine oil and getting nowhere, I decided it would be best to cut my losses and cut the plastic. Fortunately, I brought my knife with me and slicing it off was not all that difficult. Now I was hot, sandy and



oily, but at least the car could be driven again. But our problems were far from over. Leaving from the way we came was not an option, and none of us had any phone signal. Fortunately the map was still loaded on my phone, and although it couldn't give us directions we could navigate manually. So I gave my phone to Seth and we slowly started along the road.

Eventually we got to a paved road, and still without any phone signal we made our way back to the highway. I stopped right before we got on and looked at the car one last time. It was filthy. The windshield had still not been properly cleaned, and there was mud up to the mirrors. But other than that it looked road worthy. At least I sure hoped it was; we still had more than 100 miles to go to reach **ATHENS**. This had been a stressful day, and I was just ready for a hassle-free evening. But a hassle-free evening was not what I would get.

## WHAT BRINGS YOU TO ATHENS?

We pulled into the dingy-looking Super 8 in Athens, and I went to get our room key. The man checking us in pointed out that I was only 18. "Is that a problem?" I asked him. "Yeah, it's company policy that you can only reserve a room if you're 21." Fearing that we would have to spend the night in the car, I pressed him a little further. The man agreed to let us stay for the night. "I'm not just gonna throw you out on the streets." When I was booking the hotel rooms online a week before there was never any mention of such an age restriction, but I guess they do things different in Athens. I asked him if he knew of any good burger places in town. He asked if we were going to stick around tomorrow, as just about everything was closed on Sunday night. I said yes, while being fully aware that we would be leaving as soon as possible the next day. He told us a few locations that I proceeded to immediately forget. Then he asked us "So what brings you to Athens?" His tone was more accusing us of making a poor decision as opposed to genuinely curious. "We're going on a road trip around Texas." I responded as he gave me the one and only room key. "OK" he responded, "but why Athens?" We explained to him the theme of the trip, about which he seemed uninterested.

Seth wasn't feeling well, so Jeremiah and I set out to get some hamburgers for him. Miraculously there was a place open, but it was almost a mile away, and I was absolutely not going to drive any more that day. Needless to say by the time we got back that burger was stone cold. Tomorrow would be easier. Although considering what we had been through today easier wouldn't be hard to achieve.

We were eager to leave the next morning, so we wasted no time getting the car packed up. That day we went to **Flint, Pittsburg, Bogota, Detroit** and **Reno**. Nothing significant to report on these places, except that I bought a cowboy hat in Reno. The real excitement was in **Paris**.

## BIENVENUE AUX VOYAGEURS

Paris would be the one of the biggest cities we would be staying at. And we got there with plenty of time in the afternoon to explore. Paris is known for the miniature Eiffel Tower with a big red cowboy hat on top, and the cool town square.

We got to the tower, which is right next to some event center and a veterans memorial. This is the first place we had been to so far that looked like it had made an effort to provide something for out-of-towners to enjoy. There were things like informational plaques and big metal letters that spelled out the city name that visitors could



pose for a picture in front of. Yet we were the only ones there. After seeing our fill, we hopped back in the car and drove to the town square.

The square was not around a courthouse, as most small towns have it, but rather a small park with a fountain. Music was being played from speakers on the light posts, and there were several antique shops and cafes along the square. And not a soul in sight. Paris has more than just one block of interesting buildings, unlike most of the other places we had stopped at, so we enjoyed exploring for a while. There were more "tourist" oriented things here, like little parks with various musical instruments to amuse children. Or high school seniors. We had dinner at a burger place right off the square, and were surprised to see a good amount of people in there. They had some insane burgers there, like one with three different kinds of meat. I guess you don't go on a road trip to lose weight.

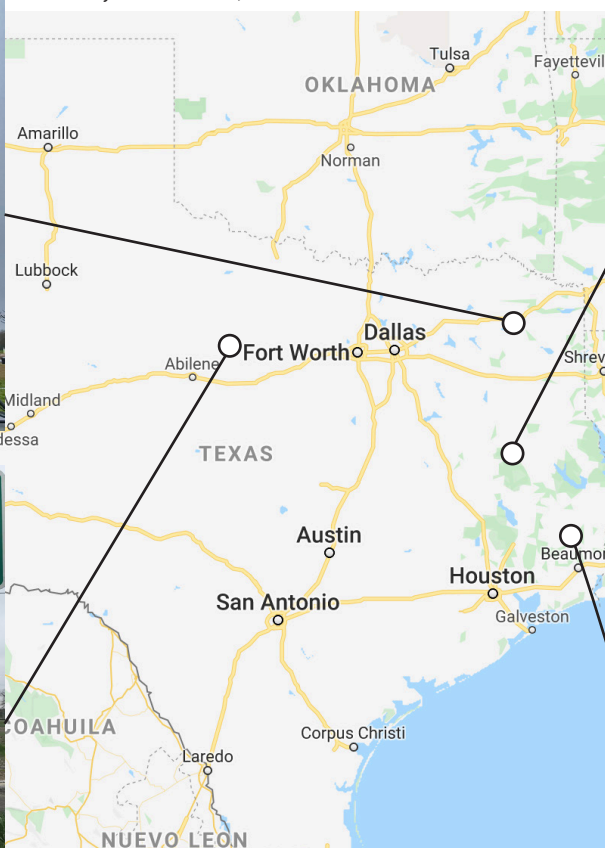
Back at the hotel after some discussion with the parents, we agreed to cut the trip a day short, as things were starting to get pretty bad with the coronavirus. We were reasonably safe out in the middle of nowhere, but it was best not to risk it.

That morning, after a lovely breakfast at the Paris Bakery, I got to look forward to driving through Dallas and Fort Worth. It would be fine, but after driving hundreds of miles on the little state highways through the forest, the huge interstate through the prairie was a bit of a sharp contrast.

## ART DECO BIG IN BRECKENRIDGE

After our conquest through the Metroplex, we finally made it to **Breckenridge**, just in time for lunch. Breckenridge was one of the few places I actually knew about before planning for the trip, as it's near Fort Griffin which I visited a few years ago. Now Breckenridge isn't huge, about 6,000 people live there, so we were very surprised to see a

Photos by Max Rhodes, Seth Wittenbrook and Jeremiah Zoric



10-story bank tower right off of main street. It was by no means modern, but most towns don't have any buildings over three stories. Before getting a closer look we stopped at a barbecue place for lunch. As soon as we turned off of main street we were on the outskirts of town. The barbecue restaurant, only a block away, sat amongst empty lots and a field with some horses in it.

After our meal we explored the town a little. Getting a closer look at that tower I saw that it was actually quite old, probably from the 1930s. Around town were lots of murals painted on the side of the old brick buildings, and they were huge. One with some football players on it was easily 15 feet tall and 30 long. At the other end of town was the courthouse. Unlike most of the other courthouses we had seen, which were constructed in the 1880s, this was more in the art deco style. Now we could see a connection. The two biggest buildings in this relatively small town were built around the same time. Breckenridge must have found some source of wealth in the 30s, constructed the buildings, then fallen on hard times. Knowing the region it was probably oil-related. Who knows for sure, but Breckenridge was definitely more interesting than expected.

We made the short trek to **Abilene**, our spot for the night. Although not named after any other city or country Abilene was pleasant enough, and we had a good time wandering around the downtown. I got myself a pair of cowboy boots to go with the hat I bought in Reno, and let me tell you they were not cheap. 150 bucks, and they were one of the cheapest pairs.

We found ourselves back at the hotel with some time to spare that evening, so Seth suggested we walk to a park. Stepping outside I thought that might not be the best idea. Over the course of the evening, jet black clouds had begun to sweep across the sky, and by that point, the sky was nearly completely covered. So instead we just walked around near the hotel. Now, Abilene has a highway loop around it, and our hotel was on the outside of the loop. That



meant there really wasn't a whole lot out here. We passed some diners, a Walmart and a huge Coca-Cola distribution plant. Then we made it to the end of the sidewalk. Now there was nothing, just the road and the dark prairie. There was not much traffic, and it was very, very quiet. Every minute or so the sky and ground would be illuminated by a flash of electric blue lightning. Then the wind began to pick up. Just when we were about to turn back Jeremiah spotted something moving across the street toward us. It was a tumbleweed. A real authentic tumbleweed. Both Seth and Jeremiah were so excited by it that they had me take their picture with it. We walked back to the hotel, and not five minutes after we got back, it began to rain very hard.

The next day we packed up, and as they weren't offering breakfast at the hotel, we soon hit the road. The plan was to have lunch in **Fredericksburg** then head home. The two-hour drive was pretty uneventful, just more prairies. Finally we got to Fredericksburg, and immediately we saw something we had not seen the entire trip: tourists.

They were everywhere. We had gotten used to being the only ones visiting the town, but now we were not alone. We had lunch at some German brewery, which was probably one of the better places we ate over the past five days. I didn't give any thought that this would be the last restaurant I would eat at for a very long time.

Then we drove back to Austin. Our senior trip was over, and although we were a little disappointed it had to be cut short, we had to acknowledge that we were pretty lucky to get to do this at all. And boy did we have a good time. Cutting parts off of my car in the middle of a forest will be something I won't soon forget.

And with that we end the final installment of Rhodes Traveled. Thanks everyone, it has been a fun three years.



# When going to Mac is a family matter

Arredondos can trace their McCallum roots three generations; Lockhart lineage goes back four

**SAMANTHA POWERS**  
staff reporter

McCallum means different things to different people. For some, it is a safe space to be creative and pursue the arts. For others, it is a stimulating academic environment brimming with learning opportunities. For others still, it is a place to make connections with friends. But for some students, McCallum is more than a school: it's a part of their family.

## The Lockharts

Senior Faith Lockhart and sophomore Corey Lockhart are siblings and fourth-generation McCallum students. Their great-grandmother Cynthia Landrum attended McCallum way back in the '50s, and according to her, a lot has changed since she walked the halls as student. She often reminisces with Faith Lockhart, her great-granddaughter, telling stories of her time as a Mac student.

"She has told me different stories, like Blue Brigade and cheer used to wear long skirts instead of these short, weird miniskirts now," Lockhart said. "Everything was so different back then."

Lockhart is sometimes surprised by her great-grandmother's stories.

"I think she was on Blue Brigade or cheer, which is super weird," Lockhart said. "I don't see her doing that now."

As unimaginable as it may be to Lockhart that her great-grandmother paraded around with a ponytail and pom-poms, what's even more drastically different is how the demographics of the school used to be.

When Faith and Corey's great-grandmother attended McCallum, it was still almost completely segregated. There was only one black student in attendance as a result of the first wave of integration in Austin's high schools, which brought a total of 13 black students into the district. Luckily, one of the changes to McCallum and high schools across the nation after their great-grandmother left was integration, and school populations are much more diverse now.

## The Arredondos

The second multi-generational McCallum family is the Arredondos. Emmy and Liliana Arredondo are former McCallum students, and their sister, junior Mia Arredondo, is a current student. The sisters' mother, uncle and grandparents also went to Mac. Their grandparents met in



McCallum alumna Cynthia Landrum poses with a date in December 1955. Landrum's great-grandchildren, senior Faith and sophomore Corey Lockhart, are current McCallum students.

elementary school and proceeded to go to school together through Lamar Middle School and McCallum High School until graduation. Mia Arredondo describes how her family remembers the schools.

"Sometimes they say that it hasn't changed," Arredondo said. "When I went to Lamar, they were like, 'Oh, wow, the lockers and everything look just the same.'"

Arredondo says that the reason her parents wanted to send her to McCallum is so she can receive the good education her family received when they attended. Not surprisingly, Arredondo takes full advantage of the opportunities available at McCallum. She's a member of the orchestra and a piano student.

"[My parents] just said they really liked it; my sister really liked it," Arredondo said. "I don't know, it just seems way better than the other schools."

Mia Arredondo and her mom Courtney have one former teacher in common: Mr. Whiz, who still remembers teaching Courtney.

"He found [my mom] on Facebook a year ago and wished her a happy birthday," Arredondo said. Evidently, this family has left an impression on McCallum High School.

The Lockharts also say they attended McCallum because they value the education available here. It's important to their great-grandmother that they have the same opportunities she had.

"It's meaningful to her that I went here," Faith Lockhart said. "It's really meaningful for my grandparents, too. [My grandmother] wanted the best for me, to be here ... for a better education."

Although Lockhart's parents and grandparents went to Lanier High School, she and her brother returned to their roots by attending McCallum. Lockhart appreciates the support system she has at McCallum, especially when she doesn't always feel supported in her life outside of school.

Lockhart has grown closer to her brother Corey and she also feels supported by her favorite teacher, Mr. Martin.

"I think my favorite teacher here is probably Mr. Martin because when I'm doing a really good job, he gives me credit," Lockhart said. "I don't really have very many teachers or my family to give me credit on things. When I'm doing a good job, he's like, 'Good job, you did so well.' It's so nice."

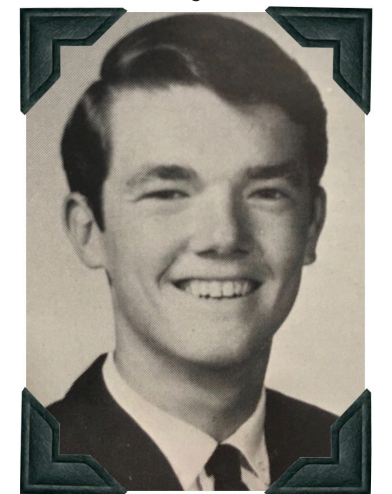
These multi-generational McCallum families believe that whether you're a Blue Brigade dancer in the 1950s or an orchestra student in 2020, McCallum has something for everyone.

Mac has served as a cornerstone for both the Lockhart and Arredondo families through decades and generations. Who knows? Maybe someday, a child of these current students will walk through McCallum's doors and discover for themselves just what McCallum has to offer.

Junior Mia Arredondo poses with her grandmother, Barbara Walter, at her 17th birthday celebration. Walter attended McCallum High School in the 1960s with her future husband, William King. The two sent their children to McCallum, and now their granddaughter Mia Arredondo attends as well.



The first generation of junior Mia Arredondo's family to attend McCallum were her grand parents Barbara Walter [left] and William King [below]. The two attended Lamar Middle School and later McCallum together in the 1960s, where they started dating, and would later send their children and grandchildren.



BELOW: Courtney Arredondo (first row, second from right) strikes a pose with her tennis team. Arredondo attended McCallum in the 1980s and '90s with her brother, following in the footsteps of her parents, who attended the school in the 1960s. Arredondo has two daughters who are alumni, and a third, Mia, who is a current student.







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The people, places, trends and  
events that made an impact during  
our freshman year face the people,  
places, trends and events that are  
shaping our lives now as seniors.





Zion Flores



Amanda Moore



Alexa Fannin



Astra Elliott



Blair Kinsey



Cassandra Hartle



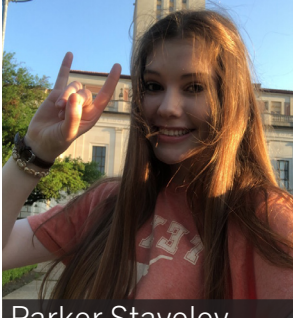
Chloe McDaniel



Shanta Graves



Ruby Del Valle



Parker Staveley



Parker Nichols



Ollie Thornhill

LUCY ABRAMOWITZ : Oklahoma City University  
 JIOVANI ACOSTA: Unknown  
 JAZZ AGUILAR: ACC  
 SAHARA AHMED: Unknown  
 TESLIM AKINSANYA: Unknown  
 ANDRES ALCALA-GUTIERREZ: ACC  
 JOSUE ALCERRECA: Unknown at press time  
 MANAR AL MOLA: Texas State University  
 GRACIELA ALVAREZ-SCARBOROUGH: Unknown at press time  
 SABRI AMRANI-KHALDI: Unknown  
 CHLOE ANDREWS: University of Texas San Antonio CAP program then UT Austin  
 MADISYN ANDREWS-MORENO: Ball State University  
 MADELYNN ANGLE: Unknown at press time  
 CAROLINA ARELLANO: Georgetown University  
 JONAH ARIAS: University of North Texas/ACC  
 ASJHA ARNOLD: Texas State University  
 TOSHAAN ARORA: Penn State  
 ELISSA ATKINSON: Texas State University  
 DANIELLE ATWOOD: Unknown at press time  
 SENOVIA ISABELLA BAKER: Unknown  
 JASMINE BARRERA: Unknown at press time  
 OMAR BARRERA: Unknown at press time  
 AVA BARRETT: University of Texas  
 GAGE BAUSMAN: Southwestern University  
 ISABELLA BAYETA-SPINUZZI: Texas Tech University/ACC  
 LEAH BECK: ACC  
 KALYN BENAVIDES: Unknown at press time  
 CHRISTOPHER BENITEZ: Unknown  
 ETHAN BENNETT: University of Oregon  
 JACKSON BENNETT: University of Arkansas  
 THOMAS BENNETT: Undecided  
 EMMALINE BENSON: University of Arizona  
 REYNALDO BERNACKI: University of North Texas  
 JOSHUA BETTON: Iowa State University  
 JORDAN BIBBY: Wellesley College  
 GRACE BICKNELL: UT Austin/ACC  
 DUVAL BINGHAM: Lawrence University  
 JULIA BLACKMOND: Rhodes College  
 TENIA BLANTON: Prairie View A&M University  
 DANIELA BODOH: Texas State University  
 CHARLEIGH BONFIGLIO: Unknown  
 CAMERYN BORMAN: Seattle University  
 ALYSSA BOSSTICK: Unknown at press time  
 NEO JACKSON BRAMLETT: Unknown  
 JAKOB BROADERS: ACC  
 EMMA BROOKSHIRE: Gap year  
 CALEB BROWN: Texas Southern University  
 LILLY BROWN: UT Austin  
 TYLER BROZ: Texas State University/ACC  
 LILY BRYAN: University of North Texas/ACC  
 JHMAD EMMANUELL BRYANT: Unknown  
 SAM BUFORD: The US Naval Academy  
 SYDNEY BUFORD: University of Arkansas  
 CALVIN BURGART: Colorado School of Mines  
 NATALIA BUTKI: Lane Community College  
 CLAY CABES: Tarrant County College  
 SONOMA CAMOZZI: Unknown at press time  
 OLIVIA CAMPA: UT San Antonio  
 DEXTER CANNING: Texas State University  
 ZACHARY CANTU: Unknown at press time  
 SALVADOR CANUL: Texas State University  
 ALVINO CARBAJAL: Trinity Valley Community College  
 EDGAR CARBAJAL: Unknown at press time  
 CASSANDRA CARRIZALEZ: Texas State University, ACC  
 JACOB CASTILLO: Unknown at press time  
 NOAH CASTILLO-WEST: University of Oregon, Lane Community College  
 KRYSTAL CASTOR: Unknown at press time

MADISON CATALANO: Virginia Tech University  
 KELTON CAUGHEY: Ole Miss university  
 ESTEBAN CEDILLO: Unknown at press time  
 JAMIE CERVANTES: Unknown at press time  
 JONATHAN CERVANTES: Unknown at press time  
 GERARDO CESPEDES-SUGIA: Unknown  
 JULIAN CHEE-GARZA: University of Houston  
 ELLA CHEESAR: Gap Year  
 KATHRYN CHILSTROM: Ripon College  
 TOMAS CHU: St. Edward's University  
 IAN CLENNAN: St. Edward's University  
 SANDRO COLANTONIO: Unknown at press time  
 KASEY COLBORN: Unknown at press time  
 ANI COLLINS: Texas State University/ACC  
 NICHOLAS COMPTON: UT Arlington  
 ELISE COOK: Leeds Arts University  
 JACK WAYNE WAGNER COOKSEY: Louisiana State University  
 ELIZABETH COPELAND: Colorado State University  
 CARTER CORDES: University of North Texas  
 KIT CORNEY: Loyola University  
 MAX CRAIG: ACC  
 AALIYAH CRUZ: Texas A&M University/ACC  
 KATE DAVERN: CU Boulder  
 COLE DAVIS: The University of Alabama  
 ZACHARY DAVIS: Montana State University  
 MAKAYLA DEGOLLADO: ACC  
 TYLER DE LA GARZA: Clifton Career Development School  
 MARIKO DELOACH: American University  
 ANGEL DEL VALLE: Texas State University  
 RUBY DEL VALLE: University of North Texas  
 ISABELLA DEMOSS: Trinity University  
 SYDNEY DENMON: Prairie View A&M University  
 SARAH DERION: University of North Texas  
 MAHALI DOMINGO: Savannah College/ACC  
 ROSE DOTSON: Texas State University  
 ALEX DOWD: Boston University  
 TATIANA DRAKER: Unknown at press time  
 AVA DREW: Southwestern University  
 JEAN GABRIEL DUFAU-MCARTHY: Unknown at press time  
 JONATHAN DUNBAR: Rice University  
 AIDAN EDMONDSON: Unknown at press time  
 RILEY EDWARDS: Unknown at press time  
 SAMUEL EILER: Unknown at press time  
 ELIZABETH ELIZONDO: Concordia University/ACC  
 ASTRA ELLIOT: Texas Women's University  
 SEBASTIAN ESCALANTE: Colorado Mesa University  
 KAREN ESPARZA: St. Edward's University/ACC  
 JESSE ESTALA: Unknown at press time  
 IZZY EVANS: California Polytechnic State University  
 CHARLOTTE EVELYN: Austin College  
 KAYA FAGERSTROM: Belmont University  
 ALEXA FANNIN: Prairie View A&M University/Cisco  
 ANGEL FELAN: Unknown at press time  
 APOLLONIA FERRANTE: ACC  
 CONRAD FINOS: UT San Antonio  
 DEVIN FISHER: Unknown at press time  
 ELLA FITZPATRICK: UT Austin/ACC  
 ANGELINA ANDREA ELICE FLACK: Unknown  
 ZION FLORES: University of North Texas  
 DAVID FORADORI: UMass Amherst  
 EDWARD FOTINOS: Unknown at press time  
 ZOLTAN FREEDMAN: Loyola Marymount University  
 JAKE FRIED: Unknown at press time  
 SAMANTHA GADE: Hardin-Simmons University  
 JESUS GALINDO: Unknown at press time  
 MOLLY GARDNER: Texas State University/ACC  
 GRACEYN GARZA: Pace Manhattan  
 REYNALDO JESUS GARZA-GONZALEZ: Unknown  
 JOSHUA GERNERT: UT Austin/ACC

WEATHERLY GIBLIN: The Fashion Institute of Technology  
 KYLA GIBSON: Texas State University  
 GENESIS GIORDANO: Unknown at press time  
 RICHARD GIRO: UT Austin  
 ISABELLE GOMEZ: Unknown at press time  
 ELIAZAR GONZALEZ: Unknown at press time  
 MERCEDES GONZALEZ: UT San Antonio  
 MARISA GOODSON: Southwestern University  
 SHANTA GRAVES: ACC  
 ABBY GREEN: PACE Program at UT Austin  
 CLAIRE-LILY GREENBERG: University of Oregon  
 JESSIE GRIFFITH: Unknown at press time  
 ZOE GRIFFITH: Pace University  
 LILAH GUARAGNA: Pace University  
 DIEGO GUZMAN: University of West London  
 VALENTINA GUZMAN: Arizona State University  
 JULIANA HABEGGER: Unknown at press time  
 DARYL HALE: University of Utah  
 SYDNEY HALL: Laguna College of Art and Design  
 HUNTER HAMLIN: Unknown at press time  
 LIAM HANNON: Colorado State University  
 GEORGIA HARRINGTON: Brown University  
 CHRISTIAN HART: Unknown  
 CASSANDRA HARTLE: School of the Art Institute of Chicago  
 MARSHALL HAYNES: Missouri University of Science and Technology  
 MAYA HEIDEL: University of North Texas  
 LINDEN HENRY: Texas Tech University  
 RUBY HENSON: Columbia College  
 MIA HERNANDEZ: ACC  
 RICHARD HERNANDEZ: Texas State University  
 KRISTEN HERRERA: Unknown at press time  
 SKYE HOSPOD: UT Austin  
 PRESTON HOWARD: Undecided  
 GABRIELA HUERTA: Unknown at press time  
 JADEN HUGENBERGER: Unknown at press time  
 HUDSON HUMPHREY: Unknown at press time  
 ELI HUSTED: Texas State University  
 ELLA IRWIN: UT Austin  
 DALTON JAMES: ACC  
 CHASE JOHNSON: UT Austin  
 RALEIGH JOHNSON: Texas State University/ACC  
 KIEN JOHNSON-DYE: Employed  
 JALI JONES: Hawaii Pacific University  
 LIA JONES: UT San Antonio  
 TOWNES JONES: University of North Texas  
 TRAQUAN TYREON JONES: St. Edward's University/Blinn College  
 WILLIAM ATTICUS JONES: Unknown  
 CORA JORDAN: Belmont University  
 MARC ANTHONY JUAREZ: Unknown  
 BENJAMIN JUNGER: UT Austin  
 MABEL KAHOR: Texas State University  
 ANNIE KATZ: Unknown at press time  
 GRIFFIN KELLY: Unknown at press time  
 MATTHEW KELLY: UT San Antonio  
 DEANDRA RHIANNON BARR KERMANI: University of North Texas  
 COLE KERSHNER: Chapman University  
 MUHAMMAD AREEB KHAN: ACC then Texas State or UT  
 BYRON KINARD: Sarah Lawrence College  
 ZACHARY KING: UT San Antonio  
 HARPER KINGSLAND: Southwestern University  
 BLAIR KINSEY: Rhodes College  
 SOPHIE KNIFTON: University of Chicago  
 AURORA IVY KRESHA: Unknown at press time  
 DANIEL JOSEPH LADD: Unknown at press time  
 MEMPHIS LAMONT: ACC  
 KEALLY LANGE: Unknown at press time  
 FRANCESCA LEBARON: UT Austin/ACC  
 ABIGAIL LERMA: Ohio Northern University



Janael Copeland



Julia Blackmon



Lia Jones



Zach Napier



Natalia Butki



Skye Hospod



Miguel Pavon



Mahalia Domingo



Lucy Smith



Liam Hannon





Cole Davis



Conrad Finos



Apollonia Ferrante



Daniela Bodoh



Eli Husted



Eliana Schumann



Franchesca LeBaron



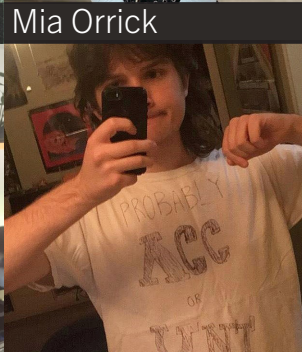
Desmond Roldan



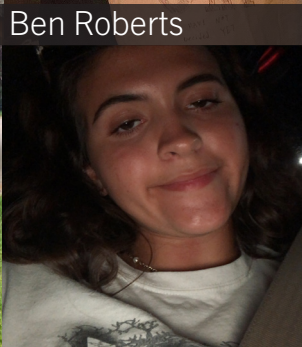
Sam Eiler



Mia Orrick



Ben Roberts



Lena Wilson

BRYN LEWIS: Northwest Vista College  
MIRANDA LEWIS: Employed  
JOSEPH LIMON: Unknown at press time  
OWEN LINDER: Unknown at press time  
FAITH ROSE VISAGE LOCKHART: West Texas A&M/ACC  
ASHER LOEWENSTERN: University of Oregon  
LUKE LOFTON: University of College Dublin  
MARK ANTHONY LOPEZ: UT San Antonio  
LOUIS LOR: Peace Corps  
WALTER LYLES: Western Washington University  
ALEXANDER LYNCH: University of Denver  
MIRA MACLAURIN: UT Austin  
MEIRIONA MADDY: Sam Houston State University  
MAKENA MAILER: Texas A&M University Commerce  
CYNTHIA MALDONADO: Texas State University  
TOMAS MARRERO: UT Austin  
CADE MARRIOTT-VOSS: University of Puget Sound  
CONNOR MCCLEARY: Unknown  
AUGUST MCCOLLUM: Texas Tech University  
TRINITY MCCOURT: UT San Antonio  
RILEY MCDANIEL: University of North Texas  
CYAN MCDAY: Unknown at press time  
LUKE MCGEADY: Unknown at press time  
DUNCAN MCLELLAN: Texas Tech University  
DAVID MEDELLIN II: Unknown at press time  
CIARA MEDRANO: Texas Tech University  
CATIE MENDIVIL: Keynon College  
BROOKE MILLER: Texas State University  
GRACE MILLIGAN: Southwestern University  
SARA MILLIKEN: UT Austin  
BENJAMIN MILLS: Texas Tech University  
MADISON MILLS: Unknown at press time  
JACK MONTESINOS: Texas Christian University  
AMANDA MOORE: Drexel University  
ROCIO MORONES VELAZQUEZ: University of Texas at Austin  
JONATHAN MUENCHINGER: Louisiana State University  
DEXTER MURPHY: Texas State University  
LOUISA NAJAR: Unknown at press time  
KATIE NALLE: UT Austin  
ZACH NAPIER: Texas Tech University  
LA'NIA NEWSOME: Temple College  
DANIELLE NGADEOUM: Unknown at press time  
CHRISTINE NGUYEN: Texas A&M Corpus Christi  
SEAN AUSTIN NICASTRO: UT Austin/ACC  
PARKER NICHOLS: Colorado Mountain College Leadville  
ENA MELLAN NOLAN: Unknown at press time  
KADEN NOWAK: ACC  
GABRIEL OBRAGON: Texas A&M University/ACC  
OLIVIA OLSON: Unknown  
MIA ORRICK: DePaul University  
ANTONIA ORTIZ: Bryn Mawr College  
IVY ORTIZ: Texas State University  
HOLDEN OTT: Colorado School of Mines  
KIRSTEN PACOTTI: Texas State University  
LILY PARKER: Kansas State University  
VATSAL PATEL: Unknown at press time  
YASH PATEL: Unknown at press time  
JEAN PATTON: Knox College  
AMELIA PAUL: University of Alabama  
MIGUEL PAVON III: University of Texas  
ISABELLA PEREZ: Unknown at press time  
SKY PEREZ: Texas State University  
GABRIEL PEREZ-OMAR: University of North Texas  
JANET PEREZ VENCES: Texas State University/ACC  
MILES PERKINS: Gap year  
CONNIE PIERCE: Texas State University  
CLIFTON PIKE: Northern Arizona University

ROBERT POOL: St. Edward's University  
PEARL POSS: Savannah College of Art and Design  
GRAHAM PROTZMANN: Lewis and Clark College  
ROSALINDA ALEXANDRA PUENTE: Unknown at press time  
WYETH PURKISS: Unknown  
DIANA RANGEL-GARCIA: Undecided  
LUCAS RASCO: ACC  
NATHANIEL JAMES RAY: Sam Houston State University  
AUDREY REESE: Sam Houston State University  
MAXWELL RHODES: University of North Texas  
SAMUEL RICHTER: Lewis and Clark University  
DIEGO RIVERA CRUZ: Texas State University  
BENJAMIN ROBERTS: University of North Texas  
CASH ROBINSON: The University of Oregon  
JOSEPH SETH RODDY: UT Austin/ACC  
ABIGAIL RODRIGUEZ: UT Austin  
JULIE RODRIGUEZ: ACC  
MARY ROE: Regis University  
DESMOND ROLDAN: Texas Tech University  
STEPHANIE ROTHHAAN: ACC and freelance art  
PAYTON ROSS: UT Dallas  
BELLA ROTHENFLUE: Filmmaker  
SIMON ROYDER: Texas State University  
DILLON WAYLON SAMUEL ROYER: Unknown  
SHAIEN ROZMAN: Pratt University  
STEFFIE ANGELINA RUIZ NAVARRO: Unknown  
AUSTIN LUKE RUMMEL: ACC  
RION SALDANA: Texas State University  
MATTHEW PAUL SALGADO: Unknown  
GABRIEL SALINAS: Gap year to visit schools  
OLIVIA SAMMON: DePaul University  
ARANZA SANCHEZ: University of Amsterdam  
TAKAI SATBERRY: Trinity Valley  
WESLEY SAVAGE: Unknown at press time  
OWEN SCALES: University of Michigan  
WINNIE SCHMID: St. Edward's University/ACC  
SARAH SCHNEIDER: University of Oregon  
MAX SCHULTZ: ACC  
ELIANA SCHUMANN: Northern Arizona/ACC  
ALICIA SCOTT: Sam Houston State University  
DANIELA SERNA: Gap year  
STEPHANY SERNA BENITEZ: Texas Lutheran University  
ANGUS SEWELL MCCANN: UT Austin  
JOSHUA SHEAR: UT Austin  
STEPHEN SHEARER: Texas Tech University  
FINN SHEHAN: The Fashion Institute of Technology  
STELLA SHENKMAN: Pace University  
AYLA SHEPPARD: Unknown at press time  
SAMUEL SHERRILL: Colorado State University  
GABRIELLE SHERWOOD: Baylor University  
ALEX SHIEBER: DePaul University  
SAVANNAH NICOLE SILVA: Enlisting in the Army  
RYAN DEREK SILVA CASTILLO: Ringling College of Art and Design  
TRISTAN SIMON: Gap year  
SARAH SLATEN: UT Austin  
VYOLET RAVEN: UT Austin/ACC  
CLAYTON MATTHEW SMITH: UT San Antonio  
JULIA KAY SMITH: University of Wisconsin  
KATLYN LYA SMITH: Gap year  
LUCY ADDISON SMITH: ACC  
WILLIAM PETER SMITH: Unknown  
LIANA SMOOT: Texas A&M Corpus Christi  
DAVOR SOBIN: University of El Paso  
VAN SOISSON: University of North Texas  
JAMES SOLIZ: Unknown at press time  
ANDREW DE'MARQUS SOLIZ-WASHINGTON: Unknown at press time  
ISABEL SORIANO: Unknown at press time  
NIKLAS KOHL SORTO: Arizona State University

ABIGAIL STAUFFER: Unknown at press time  
PARKER KATHERINE STAVELEY: UT Austin  
CLARA STEIN: University of Colorado  
ZACHARY STEINER: Unknown at press time  
LILY STIMMEL: University of Houston  
COTTON STONE: Habitat for Humanity  
JACKSON SUTTON: Super Senior Transitioning  
ELLIOTT SWEAT: ACC  
EMI TAKAHASI PALACIOS: Unknown at press time  
KELSEY TASCH: Unknown at press time  
MARLENA TAYLOR-ADAIR: UT Austin  
MURIEL TAYLOR-ADAIR: Rice University  
MIA TERMINELLA: The University of Hawaii  
LEASIA THOMPSON: Texas State University/ACC  
VALERIE THOMPSON: School of the Arts Institute of Chicago  
OLIVER THORNHILL: University of North Texas  
KRISTEN TIBBETTS: UT Austin  
MARYANNA TOLLEMACHE: Molloy College  
CARTER CHARLES TORN: Texas A&M University Commerce  
DYLAN TORRES: Unknown at press time  
JENNIFER TORRES AQUINO: Unknown at press time  
JESUS TORRES-MARTIN: Unknown at press time  
JANSSEN TRANSIER: Pace University  
DESARAY TREVINO: Unknown at press time  
JORDAN TRIMYER: University of Oregon/Southwestern Oregon Community College  
RUBEN VALDOVINOS: St. Edward's University  
IXCHEL VASQUEZ CASTANEDA: UT Austin/ACC  
FRANCISCO VAZQUEZ RICO: Unknown at press time  
KAY VILLARREAL-MENDEZ: Unknown at press time  
ALYSSA VILLHARD: Unknown at press time  
RYAN VINCENT: Unknown at press time  
JIMMY WALKER: Eckerd College  
YESHUAH EPHEBUS WALKER-BROWN: Unknown at press time  
SHELBY WANGLER: Lonestar Community College  
REAGAN WELCH: Americorps  
SAMUEL WERKENTHIN: Texas Tech University  
PARKER WHEELER: Texas A&M University  
KAILEY WHITE: Colorado State University  
SEOUL WHITEHEAD: Pratt University  
JAYLEN WILBOURN: Point Park University  
MATTHEW WILLIAMS: Unknown at press time  
ANISHKA WILNER: Gap year  
ISABELLA WILSON: Colorado State University  
LENA WILSON: Arcadia University  
WHALYN WILSON: Unknown at press time  
WILLIAM WILSON: Unknown at press time  
HENRY WINTER: UT Dallas  
SETH WITTENBROOK: UT Austin  
LOGAN WONG: Unknown at press time  
ERIKA WOOLLETT CHIBA: UT Austin  
AMARI WRIGHT: Lamar University  
DAZHANE YANCEY: Huston-Tillotson University/ACC  
GWYNETH YEAGER: Oberlin College  
CLARA YOUNG: University of Arizona  
PAULO ZAMBARANO: University of Kansas  
IVAN ZAPLATAR: ACC  
IRVIN ZAVALA JAMES: Unknown  
JEREMIAH ATTICUS ZORIC: Texas State University



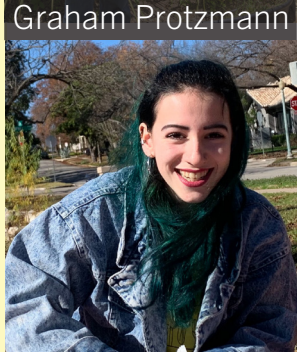
Gabe Obregon



Gabriel Perez-Omer



Graham Protzmann



Gwyneth Yeager



Jonathan Dunbar



Jakob Broaders



Jackson Sutton



Jackson Bennett



Cora Jordan



Harper Kingsland



# SENIORS SOUND OFF

## WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE MCCALLUM MEMORY?

“Mr. Cowles greeting me through the halls with a smile.” —Angel Del Valle  
“Playing Fortnite with the AP’s during finals week.” —Alvino Carbajal  
“The last show of this year’s cabaret, my friends and I had a ton of fun performing.” —Lucy Smith  
“From my junior year.” Franchesca LeBaron  
“That one morning raccoons were roaming the halls.” —Marisa Goodson  
“Mr. Garrison greeting me with a big smile, hiding a dead rat behind his back.” —Rose Dotson  
“The rats.” —Jordan Trimyer  
“Getting to cheer at the Alamodome.” —Miles Perkins



“Singing at Coffeehouse and everyone was waving their lights on their phones.”  
—Cora Jordan



Photo  
by Bela Tapperson



“Going to DC with newspaper and going to Asia with Mr. Anderson.”  
—Julia Kay Smith



Photo  
by Javier Vela

“Pieing my dad in the face multiple times at the Pink Week Pep rally.”  
—Henry Winter



Photo by Stella Shenkman

“The football games and pep rallies.”  
—Elizabeth Elizondo

“Taco Shack!” —Amanda Moore

# unexpected

# nostalgic

# memorable

# ska

# bittersweet

# bet

# exciting

# short-lived

# ONE WORD

# TO DESCRIBE SENIOR YEAR?

# rollercoaster

# chill fast

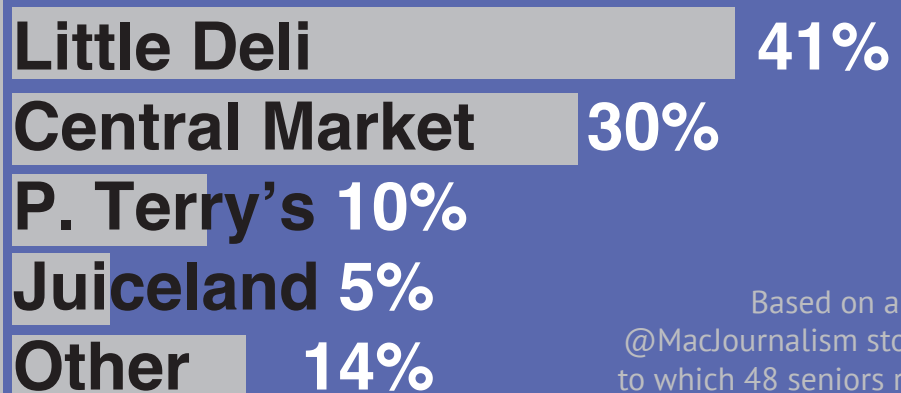
# legendary

# lit

# awesome

## FAVORITE PLACES FOR OFF CAMPUS LUNCH?

Photo by  
Elisha Scott



Based on a  
@MacJournalism story survey  
to which 48 seniors responded.



# Sixteen going on school staff

*In unconventional way, Principal Hosack's teen years prepared her to be the leader she is today*

**MADELYNN NILES**

staff reporter

A girl, no older than 17, walks nonchalantly through the halls of her old, small town high school. She glances down at her beat up Doc Martens, red flannel, and considers the schoolwork she must complete before her big game that evening. She passes a few friends, waves and laughs, and turns up the volume of her headphones, Nirvana filling up her world and drowning out everything else. She smiles. Who could she be, this mysterious high school student so full of drive and '90s fashion trends?

None other than McCallum's new principal, Brandi Hosack.

The staff and student body know only a certain amount about the new permanent principal. Brandi Hosack came from a different school where she was also the principal. She is an advocate for leadership and has installed new procedures at McCallum to encourage students to become leaders on campus.

But what about her favorite alternative band from teenagehood? Or the way she got accepted into college through her stellar softball skills? Growing up in a small town in Texas, a completely different version of who we know as our principal existed, driving around town with her friends and teammates and jamming out to Radiohead and Pearl Jam. From quirky after-school hangout spots to the fashion and atmosphere of her tiny high school in East Texas, Hosack's teen life taught her both lessons that apply to her role as a principal and ideas she invites students at Mac to consider during these formative years of their lives.

Between softball, basketball and volleyball, Hosack spent the majority of her free hours on the field, the court or in the gym.

"In middle school, I played ... well no, I attempted to play trumpet, but it was like screeching cats in my house," she said with a laugh. "But in high school, everything centered around athletics. ... I made good grades, I was in NHS and all that, but sports was really what I did."

Hosack described her overall high school experience as "walking the line" with her coaches, mother and her long-term goals keeping her in check to maintain academic success.

"I was internally motivated to ... get good grades because I wanted scholarships. I wanted to play," she said. "So I don't really think that, other than wearing clothes that my mom didn't want me to wear or listening to music that my parents didn't approve of or dating a boy that they didn't particularly like, that it went much



further than that," she said.

Further reminiscing, Hosack said that the other major component of her high school experience was, of course, the fashion of the era.

"If you didn't own a pair of Doc Martens, you weren't cool. If you didn't rock grunge, then you weren't cool," she said. "So I absolutely got the Docs and the flannel, and that's really what reminds me of high school."

She also expressed her glee regarding the return of these trends.

"Are you kidding me? I just bought a new pair of Docs the other day!" she said excitedly. "I was like 'They're back! I can have them again!'"

While Mac students have the after-school and weekend options of going to local restaurants, enjoying the live music scene or countless other city-centric activities, Hosack had a more limited selection.

"There was nothing fun to do," she said. "There was a movie theater with like four screens; we were a small town."

She and her friends, however, identified an alternative.

"It doesn't happen anymore, but back then we went to what was called The Square."

The Square, Hosack described, was the block bordering her high school, composed of four stop signs and

countless memories.

"You would pass each other really, really slowly and have conversations, which is so crazy to even think about, because it was what we thought was normal," she remembered, laughing. "Maybe you met somebody new, or you saw your friends, or you saw the person you didn't like, or whatever. I can't tell you how much gas, how many miles and how many hours I spent just circling The Square."

The charm of small town East Texas, however, did not extend to all aspects of her high school life, and the status quo came as a certain rigidity among the students.

"Conformity was an expectation," she said. "If you didn't fit the norm, then you were othered, pushed aside, or it was noticed that you were different, and different wasn't OK then."

She recalled the student environment being "vanilla," and said that the distinctions between her classmates, in complete contrast to what students at Mac are used to



*Top: Senior Aranza Sanchez talks with principal Brandi Hosack and assistant principal Gabriel Reyes on the first day of school. Photo by Anna McClellan.*

*Left: As an honor graduate from Athens High in East Texas, Hosack wore an NHS stole and an honor graduate sash with her cap and gown. "I made good grades," Hosack said, "but sports was really what I did." Doc Martens and Nirvana were also high school staples. Photo courtesy of Brandi Hosack.*

today, was minuscule.

"The spectrum of differences was not very deep. You are maybe one degree of separation from anybody else ... and none of us really knew any better at that point."

Hosack described her experience at Mac and her experience as a high school student as "night and day," expressing extreme gratitude for the diversity and differences found at the school serves as principal.

"[My high school was] dramatically different from McCallum, where it's OK to be who you are, and in fact it's celebrated for you to be unique in your own way," she said. "The depth of understanding in people your age at McCallum is so different, and I love that you guys can be who you are and are unapologetic for that, and I wish I would've had that in high school."

She said that, in fact, that her experiences in high school guided her to adopt the leadership she practices as principal in an unexpected way. Her prior experience teaches her not to base McCallum experiences upon her own.

"I did what I was supposed to do in high school," she reflected. "I made straight A's, I played sports, I never got in trouble, and I think when I first started teaching, I was heavily shaped by that because I couldn't understand ... how come every student couldn't just do what I did? And then I kind of realized, oh! It's because they're not all like me — that's a

very egocentric way of looking at things."

She described how she made a goal to steer in the complete opposite direction from these ideas.

"I think there are students that are like who I was, but I don't think that's the norm. I don't really think there is a norm, honestly. ... It was a very small box that I fit into at that point. I think a very small percentage of students would say they are like I was. I fit one mold, and every student fits a different mold, and in fact I wish I would've pushed my boundaries a little bit more in high school."

Despite this regret, Hosack said that some of her fondest memories are from her teenage years, and she encourages students to truly soak up each moment of their high school experience.

"This is the truth: a lot of people say that they wish that they could go back to college and do it all over again. And that may be true for them, but the truth for me is that I wish I could go back to my senior year of high school and do it over and over again," she said, smiling upon reminiscence.

"I know that you guys are just dying to graduate and get out of here and go about your life, which is fantastic and you should want to do that, slow down just for a little bit and enjoy it, because there will come a day where you look back on it and wish you could go back. Don't rush through it, it will come to an end sooner than you think."

In this time of isolation and uncertainty, perhaps this message can be taken more to heart than ever. Ms. Hosack's words can be applied to every situation we encounter — not only in a school setting, but each moment spent with our family, each Zoom call with our friends and teachers, and each silly trip around The Square.

*"I wish I could go back to my senior year of high school and do it over and over again."*

**—Brandi Hosack**



# Adopting affords a new leash on life

*Pandemic prompts a proliferation of puppy parents as people opt to stay paw-sitive during ruff times*

**ALYSA SPIRO**  
staff reporter

People like dogs.

Especially Americans. Americans really, really like dogs.

According to The Harris Poll, 62 percent of Americans own a pet (in comparison to about 25 percent of Europeans). Nine in 10 American pet owners consider their pet to be a part of their family.

Enter COVID-19 quarantine.

The result is predictable and hard to miss. In the past couple of months, dog adoptions and purchases in the United States have increased a whole lot. Shelters and breeders are being emptied. Madeline Yeaman Arnold, the spokesperson for the SPCA (Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals) of Texas, told *The Daily Beast* that there has been a 100 percent increase in pet fosters.

This mega-boost in dog adoptions can be seen among our very own Mac staff, who like many other Americans, have hopped onto the dog-adoption train. And warning, this so-called train may just melt your heart, so if your house and local grocers are low on paper products you might want to stop reading this story right now.

Still here? Don't say we didn't warn you.

It's no secret that having a puppy is time-consuming. With a new-found abundance of time thanks to COVID-19 quarantine, Mac teachers saw the perfect opportunity to bite the bullet and welcome a puppy into their homes.

Piano teacher Kate Wiley is now the proud owner of an eight-week golden retriever named Zoe.

"We [my husband and I] were planning to get a golden retriever once school got out for the summer," Wiley said. "But since I'm home all day, we thought now would be great timing."

Coach Brandon Grant, who just adopted a six-week-old Great Dane named Crackerjack (nickname: Jack), found himself in a similar situation.

"We have always loved Great Danes," Grant said. "Ours passed away just over a year ago, and we have been wanting another ever since. With my usual busy schedule as a coach, it has never been a good time to train a puppy. We saw the quarantine as an opportunity for me to be home for at least a couple months to train Jack the right way. I think people see quarantine as a great opportunity to give a home to a dog and have the time to train the dog they adopt. It's one of the few silver linings to this pandemic."

For other teachers, the decision to adopt wasn't so obvious.

"My wife has been wanting a puppy for some time now," said English teacher Eric Wydeven, the new owner of a 11-week year old Shih Tzu named Clementine. "Until recently, I have been content with a two-dog household."

With his wife's birthday coming up, his daughters constantly begging for a new puppy and media reminders that quarantine is the perfect time to adopt, Wydeven caved.

"When are we ever going to get this opportunity again?" Wydeven said. "We're—by law—restricted to our quarters. My defenses were weakened. I finally acquiesced."

During quarantine and self-isolation,



*Meet Zoe, Crackerjack, Clementine and Oreo, all of whom have been adopted by McCallum faculty members during the COVID-19 quarantine. It's part of a nationwide spike in dog adoption in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. People have more time to take care of and train dogs, and they need the social, emotional and mental health benefits that come from pet ownership. Photos courtesy of the puppies' parents.*

widespread worries about maintaining social and emotional health have risen. For many, bringing in new puppies to the household has acted as a solution to these concerns. Counselor Daniela Galvan's "solution" is pretty darn cute: a two-and-a-half-year-old blue healer named Oreo.

"I don't have kids and only live with my fiancée, so I definitely felt like I needed something else that would be keep me productive and would help my mental health. I thought that a puppy would be a great way to get both benefits," Galvan said. "It feels very helpful to have a fur baby to cuddle with and love on during these times of uncertainty."

Wydeven and his family's morale has increased exponentially thanks to Clementine and her shenanigans.

"In a time when so much seems dour and scary, it is a wonderful thing to just sit back and laugh at this goofy little creature who seems jolly and excited by the new world she is experiencing," Wydeven said. "Our life in quarantine has changed dramatically since Clementine moved in to our house. There is more laughter, more walks outside, more ideas about things to do (my youngest even sewed a little skirt for her a couple of days ago), and in general, more good feelings."

For Wiley, meeting all of Zoe's needs has forced her to increase her productivity during quarantine.

"Zoe keeps me on a schedule," Wiley said. "I'm now going to bed at a certain time and waking up before eight every morning."

With all this time on their hands, these Mac staff and their dogs are having a grand ol' time. From playing with toys to learning basic

*"The laughter and joy [Clementine] has brought to our sequestered existence far outweighs any pee puddles she could put on the floor."*

**—teacher Eric Wydeven**

commands, there's never a spare moment with these new pups.

"Because Oreo is still in the process of getting all of his vaccines, he can't go outside, so we've been doing a lot of playing with toys inside," Galvan said. "His favorite activity is definitely chasing a stuffed alligator that squeaks. There's been a lot of potty training (which he's doing great on!) and a lot of napping! Apparently puppies do sleep quite a bit."

Potty training is quite the popular past-time.

"With Jack, we've been having lots of potty breaks," Grant said. "The little dude loves to drink water, so we are going outside on a regular basis to prevent accidents in the house. We started taking him for walks this week, and he wasn't particularly thrilled about the leash; however, Jack has warmed up to it and even got to experience playing with a few dogs in our neighborhood, which he was overwhelmed with joy about."

So would these new puppy owners recommend

adopting a quarantine puppy? Yes. Yes, they would. But with great privilege comes great responsibility. Galvan stressed the importance of conducting proper research before adopting.

"Before adopting a puppy, DEFINITELY do a lot of researching on puppies in general, training them, and behaviors you may encounter," Galvan said. "Also do in-depth research on the specific breed of puppy you are getting, so that you have an idea of how good they do around other dogs, kids and their overall energy levels. Make sure that you can financially take care of one in the moment! Vet fees, food and materials (kennel, toys, etc.) can add up quickly. It is definitely not a decision to take lightly since you want to make sure that you give that puppy a forever home and not just a temporary one. So definitely be prepared."

For the skeptics out there, Wydeven has some words of advice.

"If you have been considering getting a dog, now is a great time to do it. Though I was initially reluctant to take on a third canine life, I now can't imagine our house without her," Wydeven said. "The laughter and joy she has brought to our sequestered existence far outweighs any pee puddles she could put on the floor."

Grant could not express agreement with this sentiment any more enthusiastically.

"DO IT! We [my family] are huge dog lovers and there couldn't be a better time to give a pup a good home," Grant said. "It's also a great way to take your mind off the negative things going on in the world."



# After 38 years, 'perfect' librarian to retire

*Nobody 'screams McCallum' quite like Jane Farmer*

**ELLA IRWIN**  
Knight design editor

She was in 10th grade, but on the first day of school, Anna Nagle felt more like a freshman. That's because Anna's first day as a 10th-grader was also her first day at McCallum.

"Coming in as a new sophomore is really tricky," Anna said. "Everyone else has already found their groups of friends."

Luckily for Anna, when she entered the building on Day 1 she ran into Mac librarian Jane Farmer.

"The first person I interacted with on the first day of school was Ms. Farmer," Anna recalled. "She greeted me with a chipper hello and a smile when I shuffled into the library before school."

Anna chatted with Farmer and with first-year librarian Jain Thompson and almost immediately, McCallum seemed like a much less intimidating place.

"They were more than just librarians. There were super fun to talk to and exchange book recommendations with," Anna said. "In fact, the McCallum library and staff has left such an impact on me that the first thing I thought about when school got canceled was, 'But I have to give my library books back!'"

Anna wasn't alone in offering high praise for Farmer and Thompson on April 21, National Library Workers Day. Expressions of appreciation came from every corner of the virtual campus today.

Principal Brandi Hosack sang the praises of Jane Farmer and Jain Thompson at the morning Zoom faculty meeting on April 21. "From the bottom of my heart, you make the library a space where kids want to be every day, and it's not like that everywhere. Jane and Jain, you are exceptional."

Assistant principal Andy Baxa offered a similar sentiment in an email message to the Maculty. "Both of these women are amazing to work with and are willing to go above and beyond. Whether you need a quick book recommendation, help on a research project, Chromebook repairs or just a friendly face to break up the monotony, you can always turn to Jane and Jain."

Celebrating Farmer's contribution to McCallum was especially important on this year's National Library Workers Day because after 13 years at Mac, librarian Jane Farmer is retiring.

"Over my past 31 years [as an AISD school librarian] I have learned a lot throughout that time," Farmer said. "However, my husband and I have decided that we want to leave Austin after 42 years. It has only treated us well throughout



*THE JANE AND JAIN SHOW: Principal Brandi Hosack observed National Library Workers Day by singing the praises of Jane Farmer and Jain Thompson during the faculty's morning Zoom meeting on April 21. "From the bottom of my heart, you make the library a space where kids want to be every day, and it's not like that everywhere." Photo by Dave Winter.*

those times I have enjoyed it so much, but time has come for us to move on."

Former principal Mike Garrison, who was Farmer's principal for a dozen of those 13 years, echoed the sentiments of this year's admin staff.

"Mrs. Farmer can peddle those books and take care of Mac students better than any librarian out there," Garrison wrote in reply to a MacJournalism Instagram post celebrating National Library Workers Day. "She's the best."

Replying to the same post, English department chairperson Diana Adamson agreed.

The Mac librarians are "absolutely the best in the world," said Adamson, who went on to thank Farmer and Thompson "for always making the library welcoming and fun for the kids and the adults."

One way that she and Thompson achieved that welcoming vibe was the incessant decorating that occurred in the library.

"The Halloween decorations were super duper cool," Anna Nagle remembered. "There was a Frankenstein's monster cutout, lots of ghosts and pumpkins everywhere and a spooky Kermit the Frog. It wasn't exactly scary per se, but definitely made everyone feel a little bit more festive."

Anna also vividly remembered the Banned Books display in September.

"The Banned Books decorations were really fun, too, since I hadn't known how many of those books were actually banned," she said. "Some of my favorites, like *Things Fall Apart* and *Ready Player One*, were on the [Banned Books Week] shelf, and I remember asking Mrs. Farmer about them."

"These are banned? Why?"

"No clue," Farmer said. "They're pretty good."

The same could be said for Farmer's career as a librarian but only if you are fan of understatement.

She began work as a librarian at two elementary schools, but after 18 years, she wanted a change. When she arrived at McCallum, Farmer did not know what to expect from high school students but was greeted with warmth.

"Our students are so good," Farmer said. "One of my most memorable

moments was in the library. I needed help with moving boxes, and I asked for help to just see if like one or two kids would help and out of nowhere, so many students got up and gave a helping hand and that just really showed how amazing this high school is."

Anna Nagle will tell you that

just as often Farmer often was the one providing the helping hand.

Anna was so apprehensive about competing in the Battle of the Books reading quiz bowl that McCallum hosted that she considered quitting the team, but Farmer wasn't having it.

"She knew I was really scared of actually competing, but she also knew I still wanted to be involved, so she

convinced me to join the hospitality team, and at first I was nervous," Anna said. "I didn't know anybody else on the team, and I was really dreading the day of the competition and hoping everything would go smoothly. The day came and Ms. Farmer handled every little hiccup so professionally."

In trademark fashion, the library was fully decked out for the occasion with a welcoming blue and silver color palette that greeted competitors warmly while in a non-threatening way reminding them whose library it was.

*"[Jane Farmer] is exactly the kind of librarian I want to be, the way she sees the world, and the way she puts that into library practice is just perfect."*

**—Jain Thompson**

"We decorated the library and competition space and literally made it scream, 'McCallum!'" Anna remembered. "She even bought us all bandannas to unite the team. In a way we ourselves were also McCallum decorations, since we were all wearing blue and silver. When all the teams walked in,

we formed a 'line of welcome,' where we all greeted our competitors and welcomed them to the McCallum library. Even though we didn't win, it was so much fun to watch all of the work that we did pay off. Mr. Farmer led the charge wonderfully, and she gave me one of my favorite memories of sophomore year."

Anna isn't the only new face in the library that Farmer has welcomed with

open arms. English teacher Jennifer Wood still remembers how Farmer made her feel welcome when she joined the Maculty.

"I still feel new here to MAC in many ways, but Jane made me feel like I was at home the moment I walked into the library," Wood said.

First-year librarian Jain Thompson can also relate to being the newest person in the library, but with Farmer's encouragement, she and Thompson have become the literary version of Batman and Robin this year.

"[Working with Ms. Farmer] is a dream come true," Ms. Thompson said. "She is exactly the kind of librarian I want to be, the way she sees the world, and the way she puts that into library practice is just perfect."

Ms. Thompson will be applying to fill Ms. Farmer's position this fall.

"You can't predict the future so I hope Ms. Thompson will be here," Farmer said. "I believe that change and consistency is really good for an institution and her being here will help that out for Mac."

Ms. Farmer will be moving north of Dallas and will enjoy her time off peacefully.

"I have no plans for right now," Farmer said. "Getting the school year done, getting a house, selling a house, and spending some time quilting. Then I will think of working."

Although Ms. Farmer is excited to have some more time off. She will miss being surrounded by students.

"[I will miss] interacting with students, because I hope to be working, but I don't know I will be working with students," Farmer said. "I really love watching the growth of students. Especially seeing those come in as freshman and then seeing them as graduates they are just amazing young people. That's probably my favorite event graduation. Just getting to know them and watching them grow."

Since the in-person graduation has been postponed to Aug. 13 thanks to the ongoing pandemic, Farmer, like the rest of us, will focus instead on the virtual graduation ceremony being planned for June 15.

"I wish nothing for Mac students but the best of luck!" Farmer said.

As McCallum's resident queen of Chromebooks and a librarian with a reputation for effectively bringing online resources into her library, Farmer is more than capable of making a virtual graduation ceremony work.

It will be an adjustment next year for Mac to function without Farmer.

"I am so sad she is leaving," Wood said. "It makes me tear up, but I know how excited she is for the future. She's earned this incredible freedom that lies ahead for her."

*—with reporting by Jack Hester, Gabby Sherwood and Dave Winter*



# It took Vega 4 years to make 'Decade'

*COVID-19 disrupted his life, but it also gave math teacher time to finish his long-awaited album*

**JANSSEN TRANSIER**  
co editor-in-chief

When current math and computer science teacher Daniel Vega started work with lead vocalist Charlie Day on the six-track album *Decade*, the world was still mourning the deaths of David Bowie and Prince, Donald Trump was making the late-night talk show circuit, you could still find crowds of people in the park hunting for Pokemon with *Pokemon Go*, and the class of 2020 was in eighth grade.

But now, after four years of work, the new album is finally ready.

The roots of *Decade* can be traced back to 2008, with the formation of Vega's first band, Zlam Dunk. Vega made music with Zlam Dunk for six years, releasing a studio album and touring the country several times.

"We broke up around 2014, because we were all transitioning to different parts of our lives," Vega said. "I got married, and we were all getting out of college and moving into real life."

After the breakup of Zlam Dunk, Vega continued to make music, forming a new band, Desert Culture.

"I had a lot of fun in that band, but it wasn't as aggressive as Zlam Dunk, and it didn't have the same post-punk sensibilities, which was the music I was more interested in making," Vega said. "That's what made me start writing the songs that appear on the new record."

Vega said that "this album has been a long time coming. I've been working on the songs since around 2016, but when you have a full-time job and a life, music kind of gets put on the back burner."

The album has been a long process, with Vega beginning to record the songs in 2018.

"I kept slowly working on it until it finally got mastered in January of this year," Vega said. After that, Vega decided to wait to release the project until after SXSW, so the release wouldn't be overshadowed by the festival. But with SXSW canceled and the country on lockdown thanks to the coronavirus pandemic, he decided that now was the time.

You might think that putting out an album when you are well-known math and computer science teacher at a fine arts school might make Vega a little anxious, but he tries to minimize that by reminding himself why he's making music in the first place.

"I'm always a little bit nervous when I release something new," Vega said. "But for me, I just try and tell myself if that's what I want to do, and I like it. I don't really care what other people think of it."

For Vega, the music will speak for itself.

"I never wanted to be the band that had to beg for attention," Vega said. "I just try and focus on having fun, and I've found that people respond to that."

The new album is deeply personal for Vega, who describes it as a "love letter to that period in my life, and the people who were a part of it."

As far as songwriting goes, Vega tends to approach music as solving a problem.

"As a drummer and a math teacher, my songwriting process is super logical," Vega said. "I usually start with chord shapes to try and determine the mood and feel



ABOVE: Daniel Vega plays the drums with his band Zlam Dunk during the band's third tour. Vega said he wasn't sure where and when the photo was taken but his best guess was that it was in Philadelphia in 2011. "It was the longest tour we ever did," Vega recalled, "roughly five weeks on the road, living in a van and crashing on floors. Best time of my life, other than getting married and teaching at McCallum obviously." Photo by Danny Garcia (Vega thinks). INSET: Crooked Numbers (Charlie Day and Daniel Vega) recently released a new album *Decade*, which Vega describes as "a love letter to that period in our lives, and to all the people who were a part of it." Photo courtesy of Vega.

for the song, and then go from there."

To help balance his logical side, Vega lets his creativity run free when he is writing lyrics.

"Musically I'm very logical, and everything is super orderly," Vega said "But writing lyrics is where I let myself be more creative and give myself fewer rules."

Originally, Vega intended to pursue music as a career.

"My major in college was sound recording and technology, so I was actually a music major."

In his junior year of college, however, Vega had an epiphany.

"I realized that if I was a recording engineer I would be working 15-hour days, and it's also not a job you need a degree for," Vega said. "I think I could've done that and had a great time, but I wanted to have a normal life and eventually get married, so I decided that I needed to pivot."

Vega decided to stick with his original degree plan, rather than change majors, and in 2011 he graduated with a

degree in sound recording and technology. It wasn't until the next year that he stumbled upon his passion for teaching.

"I was working a temp job, when I sort of randomly found out about a program to get alternatively certified to be a teacher," Vega said.

From there, Vega taught at the Alternative Learning Center, or ALC, for four years.

"That job was honestly a lot of fun, and very

eye-opening," Vega said. "It really taught me to be patient, because I've dealt with some of the most difficult students you can imagine."

While it was a challenge, it also gave Vega an opportunity to grow.

"I was able to learn their stories," Vega said. "It showed me that a lot of those kids are difficult because they have a really difficult life, and most of it is out of their control. It really taught me to be empathetic; all those kids are really great, and so much stronger than I was at their age."

Although he changed career paths, Vega still tends to think in terms of music.

"As a teacher you come across so many different stories and emotions, and then as a musician, you can try and translate those emotions into a song, and it really helps me walk in their shoes," Vega said.

Vega's ability to do that is confirmed by senior Henry Winter, a student in Vega's AP Computer Science class who has had Vega as a teacher for the past two years.

"One of his biggest strengths is that he really listens to students," Winter said. "He's very down to earth, and he tries really hard to help his students understand."

Vega also makes an effort to bring music into the classroom whenever he can. "Whenever we are taking a quiz or a test Mr. Vega always puts on music," Winter said. "He's really into music, and I think he has the ability to appreciate a lot of different types of music."

He doesn't just appreciate many types of music. He records them. His latest release, *Decade*, speaks to his broad music taste. The record opens with "Decade I" and "Decade II," a raw and emotional tribute to times past, with dark guitar and synth lines backed by a dance-pop influenced rhythm section. On the

next track, "Dead Set (Moving Forward)," the tension that was built by the opening tracks starts to release. Booming, grimy vocals set over a heavy, chugging, drum beat contrast with a melodic synth line that looms ominously in the mix. On the next track, "Foundation," Vega takes a chance to let his lyricism shine, while he seems to reflect over the changes he's seen in himself and his surroundings over the past decade. With the second-to-last track, "Salvage," Vega seems to epitomize all the sentiments expressed earlier in the album, both lyrically and musically. The high-energy drums contrast starkly with the somber lyrics and dark melody created by the bass and the guitar. This contrast creates a very unique sound, and bobbing your head to the infectious rhythm while listening to the vulnerable and emotional lyrics kind of feels like dancing at a funeral. *Decade* closes with "Heat Depression," a short, mostly instrumental track that showcases Vega's ear for melody with a beautiful synth line that sets the perfect tone to end the album.

Listening to *Decade*, it might be hard to believe that Vega was not always an accomplished songwriter. But, like everything, Vega believes it just takes practice.

"It takes a long time. I've been making music for 17 years and just in the past three years have I really started to get it."

As discouraging as this may sound, Vega sees it as an opportunity.

"That really just means you can do whatever you want. You have complete freedom," Vega said. "Just know that the only way to get better is to keep trying. ... Being in a band is one of the most fun things you can do," Vega said. "Don't worry about being able to sing; if you have something to say, say it."

Vega is leaving Mac at the end of this school year. We wish him well in his future pursuits musical and otherwise.



# Rozman does it all in style

*Versatile varsity co-captain committed to playing volleyball, studying fashion at Pratt next fall*

**BELLA RUSSO**  
staff reporter

Volleyball coach Amy Brodbeck's favorite memory of Shaine Rozman is the day that the middle hitter and team co-captain showed up for practice in a skirt. To those who know her, this is extremely in character for the fashion designer, volleyball player, artist and student council member, who has a special talent of making people laugh. The senior is set to attend Pratt Institute in New York City next school year, where she will study fashion design and play NCAA Division 3 volleyball.

Rozman dates her love of fashion back to when she was 10 years old. Creating her own looks, however, wasn't something she got to try until her junior year, when she jumped in headfirst and created a line for the annual Benefit Fashion Show, themed Paradigm.

"[My first piece] was the piece that I did for the McCallum fashion show last year," Rozman said. "It was this a-line color block dress. Yeah, that was my first piece I ever made, and it took me like two months. It was a mess."

Through Rozman's chic, athletic wear-inspired line, it seemed clear that she had managed to merge her artistic and athletic interests seamlessly. Despite it being her introduction to sewing a clothing collection, she made a strong showing.

"It was definitely a lot of work and very stressful, but I was third place last year; I tied with Sydney Buford," Rozman said. "I kind of always knew that I wanted to be in fashion, but that was definitely a confidence booster, I think."

Rozman went on to design a line in friend and classmate Julia Kay Smith's fashion show "Influence" last fall, where they, along with friends, senior Sydney Buford and St. Stephen's senior Anna Nasi, debuted original lines and raised more than \$4,300 for the Girls Empowerment Network. When the McCallum Fashion Show rolled back around in February, Rozman, now a design veteran, won second place.

Rozman's volleyball career is also longstanding. She began playing the sport in fourth grade and fell in love with it.

"I definitely love volleyball," Rozman said. "I think it's like the most fun thing ever. Whenever I play volleyball, the time just flies by, and I have so much fun."

Coaches Amy Brodbeck and Nicki Northcutt remember their first impression of Rozman at a MAC pre-tryout clinic as goofy, yet undeniably naturally talented.

"I think Brodbeck immediately recognized her potential and talent, and of course, Coach Brodbeck was completely right," Northcutt said.

That year, Rozman made the freshman A team, where she built up her reputation as a fun and positive teammate. She even became the team's official "fashion captain," who informed the players on what to wear before home games. Her sophomore year she played under Northcutt on the JV team. Then, she got her first taste of varsity play when she was pulled up to play in the district playoff matches that season. At this point, it was clear that she was no longer the same athlete who had tried out as a freshman. Her coaches, and



the rest of the program could see that she had developed the focus to match her athleticism.

"Being her coach, I had the privilege of witnessing a goofy young lady become a mature yet still funny, creative young woman," varsity coach Brodbeck said. "Competitiveness is an understatement when it comes to Shaine. Mark my words: she may be fun, but she wants to win. Her leadership is admired by not only her coaches but her teammates as well."

Her junior year, she would make the varsity team and continue on to become a team captain her senior year (along with co-captains senior Liana Smoot and juniors Preslie Boswell and Sophia Henderson).

"She absolutely was such a good, positive leader," Northcutt said. "She just is completely focused from the beginning of the match to the end of the match, which is something that I never would have expected from her just as a goofy eighth-grader."

Spring break of her junior year, Rozman toured Pratt and other New York City colleges, looking for one that combined a robust fashion program with a respected volleyball program. At Pratt, she talked with head coach Louis Sepulveda, and got an inside look at the program. Then, later in her club volleyball season, Sepulveda came to watch Rozman

Rozman's teammates gather for a picture in the library on Feb. 26 after watching her sign to play for Pratt's volleyball program. Varsity volleyball coach Amy Brodbeck said that Rozman's leadership as a team captain "is admired by not only her coaches but her teammates as well." Photo by David Winter.

Shaine Rozman (center) accepts flowers from Byron Kingsley (left) and hugs fellow designer Julia Kay Smith (right) after being announced the second place winner of 2020's annual McCallum Fashion Show, Scrapbook. Rozman and Smith also debuted lines earlier in the year at their own benefit fashion show that raised \$4,300 for the Girls Empowerment Network. Photo by Risa Darlington-Horta.

play and knew she was the right fit for their team.

"He went and he saw me play," Rozman said, "and then after I played, he was like, 'OK, we're gonna offer you this scholarship, and we definitely want you to be on our team.'"

After that, Rozman said the choice was easy. Not only had she found the perfect school, but she had fallen in love with the location as well.

"Pratt is definitely the obvious choice," Rozman said. "When we went to New York, I was like, 'I love it here.' It's definitely where I want to be, minus the climate. I hate the cold, but I'll get used to it [because] I love New York, and it's so cool."

Although she is looking forward to joining a new team and throwing herself into fashion next year, there is a lot at McCallum to miss.

"I'll definitely come away from McCallum with a ton of friendships. I've made some of my best friends on the [volleyball] team," Rozman said. "Whenever we're together, we just have so much fun. I can't imagine my high school experience without volleyball."

She also credits the school with helping her evolve, finding her focus and her passions.

"Thinking about the growth that I've had, starting freshman year I was so different than I am now. I was not really passionate about anything," Rozman joked. "You can also tell by my



Senior middle hitter Shaine Rozman spikes the ball during the varsity's 3-2 playoff loss to McCollum on Nov. 5. Photo by Bella Russo.

style. It's changed a lot. I don't know what I was wearing freshman year, but it was not cute, I can tell you that. I think it's just really interesting that McCallum itself has shaped me into who I am."

If McCallum has shaped Rozman, the reverse could also be said about her shaping McCallum. She has been incredibly involved, from heading the environmental committee of the student council and organizing volunteer cleanups to showing off her talent in pottery throwing on the school's ceramics Instagram account. One thing is for sure, her attitude and infectious sense of humor will be missed.

"I just feel like Shaine is one of those rare people that you cannot not like," Northcutt said. "She just radiates positive energy, and she is very sincere. There's nothing artificial about her. She leads by example, and so when people see her focused on the court, and when people see her wanting to win, they just fall into that because she's just inspiring to watch."

Rozman has been keeping busy even during the coronavirus shutdown. The fashion designer is using her time and talents to design and produce handmade masks with the local business Mapenzi. For each purchase, the company employs a seamstress in Uganda and provides her with the materials to make masks for her own community.

As for next year, Pratt staff is expecting to reopen to some extent next semester, even if there hasn't been an official word. If all goes to plan, in the fall, Shaine Rozman will start the next chapter of her life doing what she does best: combining her passions and spreading her signature joy to the big city.

"I'm looking forward to the fashion program at Pratt and getting to learn more in-depth. I'm good at making clothes, I guess, but I don't really know all the things that go along with it, and I'm still learning now how much there is to learn," Rozman said. "I'm excited to be in New York and to be getting to learn all of that in the fashion capital of the world."





MORNING, NOON, AND KNIGHTS: Coach Honeycutt-Searle “kicked off” her 30th season as director by observing her team and looking for any necessary last-minute tweaks on the morning of the 2019 Taco Shack Bowl. The Blue Brigade performed its kick routine to “Hey Baby” by Bruce Channel. Blue Brigade rehearses most mornings during the fall and throughout the competition season in the spring. Photo by Caleb Melville.

# Sweet as honey, tough as nails

After 30 years at Mac, Honeycutt-Searle reflects on fears, happiness, family

If you’ve ever been out to portable city (before the pandemic of course), then you probably know where P-10 is. It’s the location where health classes are taught, as well as where you are sure to find several Blue Brigade or girls soccer team members at varying times throughout the day. It’s Coach Nancy Honeycutt-Searle’s classroom. Coach Honeycutt-Searle, or “Honey” as many know her, has been directing the Blue Brigade for 30 years. Since she’s celebrating a major anniversary this spring, we thought it an appropriate time to ask her to sit for a Proust Questionnaire. Named after French writer Marcel Proust, the Proust Questionnaire is a series of 35 questions meant to gage the personality and values of the answerer. Reporter Anna McClellan put the Proust questions to Coach Honeycutt-Searle and here is what the legendary teacher, coach and drill team director had to say.

What is your idea of perfect happiness?  
 “To me perfect happiness is being content and thankful with what God has given me, my family, my health, my career.”  
 What is your greatest fear?  
 “My greatest fear is disappointing those who are close to me and those who depend on me.”  
 What is the trait you most deplore in yourself?  
 “My lack of confidence.”  
 What is the trait you most deplore in others?  
 “Lack of empathy.”  
 Which living person do you most admire?  
 “My mom.”  
 What is your current state of mind?  
 “Resiliency (is that a state of mind??) I’m an optimistic person so my thoughts lately have been ‘we will get through this and be stronger.’”



A MOM TO ALL: Honeycutt-Searle poses for a picture with Class of 2009 Blue Brigade and girls soccer captain Margaret Wilson Busa. Photo courtesy of Wilson Busa.

## PROUST QUESTIONNAIRE

What do you consider the most overrated virtue?  
 “Success ... how do you measure someone’s success?”  
 Which words or phrases do you most overuse?  
 “‘You’re killing me Smalls!’ (from *The Sandlot!*).”  
 What or who is the greatest love of your life?  
 “Besides my husband of course, I would say my daughter. Knowing she is a part of me and raising her into the young woman she is today. She is the one person who has been through and felt my darkest times ... a divorce, the death of a spouse, cancer ... as well as finding the joys in life like another chance at love and being cancer-free. She’s my best friend.”  
 When and where were you happiest?  
 “Sitting on the deck in my backyard in the mornings before it gets too hot and the day gets too crazy!”  
 Which talent would you most like to have?  
 “I wish I could sing!”  
 What do you consider your greatest achievement?  
 “Being respected for what I’ve done as a teacher and a coach. Anyone can do a ‘job’ to get paid,

but making a difference in that job to me is what counts, regardless of the hours or the pay.”

Where would you most like to live?  
 “Ouray, Colo. ... it’s this little town dropped down in the mountains; it’s the coolest place!”  
 What is your most treasured possession?  
 “My wedding ring.”  
 What is your favorite occupation?  
 “Coaching and teaching of course!”  
 What is your most marked characteristic?  
 “I think that I’m kind.”  
 What do you most value in your friends?  
 “Honesty, loyalty and laughter.”  
 Who is your hero of fiction?

“Dorothy in *The Wizard of Oz*, no matter how hard things got she just kept going!”  
 Which historical figure do you most identify with?  
 “Helen Keller ... not that I have had the struggles she did, but in the fact that no matter how hard her life got, she never gave up. She not only survived, but she made a difference and by doing that she influenced others to do the same.”

Who are your heroes in real life?  
 “With the current situation going on in the world today, anyone who steps up and shows kindness toward others, especially those less fortunate, not for their own gain but to truly help others, those are heroes to me.”

What is it that you most dislike?  
 “Disrespectful behavior.”  
 What is your motto?  
 “Life isn’t about waiting for the storm to pass; it’s about learning to dance in the rain!”

—interview by Anna McClellan  
 We asked two of Honeycutt-Searle’s current students to speak about what makes her a special teacher and coach. Their answers are in the sidebar at right. We also published three feature profile stories about Honeycutt-Searle on our website, one for each of her three decades as Blue Brigade director. Check them out at [macshieldonline.com](http://macshieldonline.com) by clicking on the “MACulty at Work” tab in the People section.



MULTI-SPORT: Coach Nancy Honeycutt-Searle been coaching Blue Brigade for the past 30 years, and she also coaches girls soccer. Although Honeycutt-Searle was formerly the head coach of the varsity team, she is now assistant coach for the varsity and JV teams. Here she coaches the girls varsity on Saturday, Feb. 1. The team was down 1-0 at halftime, but after some inspiring words from Coach Honeycutt-Searle, they were able to come out on top, 3-1. “Honey is always supportive, no matter what,” junior soccer player Avery Miller said. “Every time I come off the field, she makes sure I’m OK, and if I’m down, she puts me in the right mindset to play my best. She always makes sure to point out the things people are doing great and helps them find ways to do them even better.” Photo by Anna Bausman.



ALWAYS A HELPING HAND: Blue Brigade director Nancy Honeycutt-Searle helps junior Matthew Vargas adjust his costume, moments before his solo routine at the Austin Dance Classic at Vandergrift High School on Feb. 29. “She is kindhearted but when she needs to be tough on us she will,” Vargas said. “She is just the best all-around coach and person you could meet at McCallum.” Vargas not only went on to win the solo competition in the public large school category; he was also selected to be the last of three call-backs to perform their solo routines during the awards ceremony. Photo by Dave Winter.



# Knights stick together, look ahead

*Just 11 games into season, baseball team sees its quest for a 10th straight title end before it starts*

**GRACE NUGENT AND ELLEN FOX**  
staff reporters

What is a team sport supposed to do when the team can't assemble?

This is a question that athletic programs everywhere have had to ask in the face of the coronavirus. McCallum baseball is no different. When the jerseys are cast aside, the post-game Chick-fil-A trips stop and "Party in the USA" is no longer screamed in celebration, it's hard not to think about the season that could have been.

All spring sports teams have had to face a season cut short, but baseball suffered more than most. Their path pre-coronavirus had been one that was anticipated to end in the regional playoffs, and when COVID-19 hit town, the team was just about to start district play in search of a 10th consecutive district title.

On March 12, the day before the first COVID-19 case was detected in Austin, the team played and won what would be their last game of the season against nationally ranked College Station. Now, with the season lost and no more games to be played, they are navigating what it means to be a team when you can't be together on the same field. Varsity head coach Brandon Grant explains how this is playing out for the team.

"Part of baseball season, what makes everything a family, is how much of a grind it is physically and mentally," Grant said. "The game situations are what fosters those relationships with the kids. With the virus the way it is, our kids can't get out and throw together; they can't really do anything together."

Though it's tough to stay motivated and connected without having a season to look forward to, Grant says that the team has found a way to maintain a sense of both.

"It's hard to still see the team environment, but I think everybody knows that everybody is getting some form of individual work in themselves," Grant said. "They know they owe it to their teammates to be doing something as well. ... I think that's kind of our team concept; you better be getting your work in because you owe it to the other guys and because if you don't someone is going to pass you up."

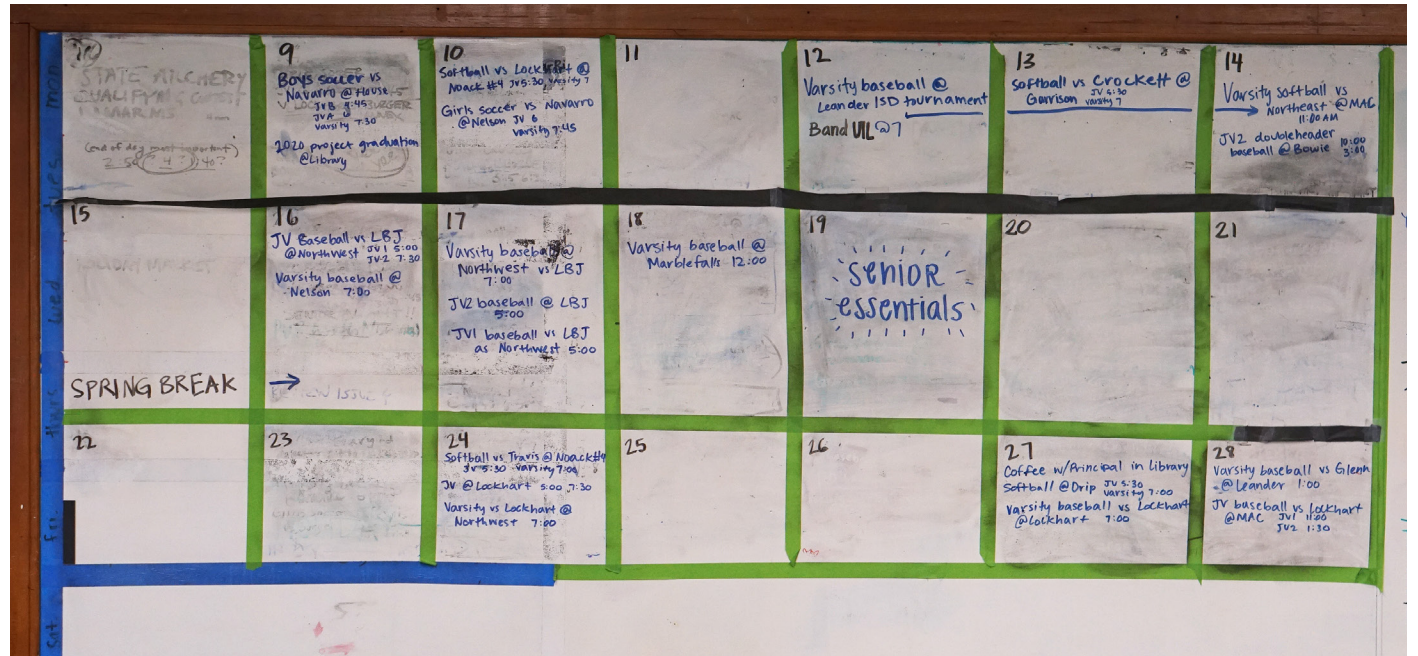
Though there isn't much in the near future for the team to look forward to, they still savor the 6-1 victory over College Station.

"[College Station has] a very high caliber program, and for them to roll out their two best arms against us was an insane challenge for that group," Grant said.

There were several standout players in the game. Senior Marc Juarez keyed a three-run fourth inning with a line drive single that drove in two runs. Junior Trini De La Garza went 4-for-4, and junior Easton Salinas, 3-for-4. Junior Connor Boggs belted a solo home run. Senior Cole Davis threw two shutout innings to start the game.

While these Knights all contributed to the victory, Grant says that one senior player stood out the most in that game.

"To see Fabian Castillo go out there and just battle ... he's been tested before, but not like that, ever," Grant said. "To work through that



*UNFINISHED: The photo assignment calendar in the journalism room sits unattended, exactly the way the photo editors left it on March 12. It has become a record of all the games that were meant to be played and covered and a reminder of the year that could have been. Photo by Dave Winter.*

lineup with the efficiency that he did, especially after his first pitch went 400 feet over the fence, to bounce back and handle that lineup of kids that'll be playing college baseball in a couple of years [was great]."

Castillo pitched five innings in relief of Davis. After giving up a home run to the first batter he faced, he threw shutout ball, allowing only one hit and walking no one with two strikeouts.

"I was very impressed with Fabian stepping up," De La Garza said. "[It was] one of the best pitching performances I've ever seen."

Winning this game was big in the moment. Little did the Knights (7-3-1) know that it would be their last game of the season and the last high school game ever for the team's seniors. The victory against a highly respected out-of-district opponent with a playoff pedigree now serves as an indicator of where the baseball program could have gone had the season played out.

"That's what we've been telling the kids for years," Grant said. "We are not Austin ISD, in the sense of what AISD baseball represents: winning the district, struggling in the playoffs. That should not be us; that can't be us in the future, so we look to separate ourselves from that stigma," Grant said.

"You know, it's all speculation, but I think we were gonna compete for another district title no question. ... There's no other teams that throw talent around like College Station did, and you know we took their No. 1 and No. 2 [pitchers] to work. High hopes for what it was gonna be, and I think this team was gonna be an easy two, three rounds deep playoff team and probably a 10th district title in a row."

Departing senior Jay Castillo expressed that winning the games won't be the only thing that will be missed.

"I love all the memories we made together," he said. "We all got along so well; the energy was unforgettable on and off the field. I'm going to



*ENDING WITH A BANG: Coach Grant leads his team in the "Yes chant" to celebrate Mac's 6-1 win over nationally ranked College Station on March 12 in what would be the final game of the season. The Cougars were state champions in 2014 and boasted two D1-bound pitchers, but the Knights didn't let their opponent's pedigree intimidate them. Behind a "monster" pitching effort by junior Fabian Castillo and multiple-hit games by Trini de La Garza and Easton Salinas, the Knights won the game handily. "I was very impressed with Fabian stepping up and pulling us through," De La Garza said. "[It was] one of the best pitching performances I've ever seen." Photo by Grace Nugent.*

miss when we would win home games and then all of the boys would hang after."

Thanks to COVID-19, this year's season is over. The seniors will be sorely missed, but the promise and the talent that this year's team demonstrated over the 11 games they were able to play has prompted excitement and anticipation for next year for the players who will return to finish what the 2020 team started.

"When I took the job here and started working with those guys, I knew that the sophomore class then was something special," Grant said.

"Those guys will be seniors next year, and while it's heartbreaking to lose our seniors from this year, Cole Davis, Jay Castillo, all of them, there is a little bit of hope for next year because that class is huge and loaded with stars," Grant said.

"Yes, I have very high expectations for next year's group. ... It'll hurt losing a couple of those seniors, but I think the freshman and sophomores are ready to step up and fill those spots. We're really excited about what's coming back; that's the thing to look forward to. ... I don't think we'll miss a beat."



# Senior a coach on the pitch

*A soccer player for life, Maldonado aspires to play at Texas State, to coach eventually*

**The Shield:** Do you enjoy being captain of the soccer team?

Cynthia Maldonado: Of course I do!

TS: What's the best part?

CM: The best part definitely is the team looking up to me and knowing that I'm there for them. And that they can come to me and I'll help them out with whatever they need.

TS: How long have you been playing soccer?

CM: Since I was 4.

TS: What are the most important things for a captain to be able to do?

CM: A captain should definitely be connected with the team, they should not be hated; they should be supportive in everything, and they should have a really nice tone that [makes their team] know that you're there for them. Like on the field, if your screaming at them their gonna not want to come with you and confront you. Be confrontational.

TS: You're also a choir major, right?

CM: Yes.

TS: How do you balance soccer, school and choir?

CM: It's kinda hard, especially [in the spring] since it's UIL, soccer season and school. So I kinda just have to talk to all my teachers and be like "Hey, I have this and this going on, can we split time?" And they're usually helpful [and] agree.

TS: Do you hope to play soccer in college?

CM: I do! I am going to try and try out for the Texas State team. If not, I'll try and be the water girl for the first year!

TS: What's your favorite part of being on the soccer team?

CM: Just the team in general. I love everyone. Everyone is so supportive and loves soccer. It's like we're a big ol' family.

TS: What's your favorite memory from Mac soccer?

CM: Not to be that person, but beating Drip. It was definitely the highlight of my years.

TS: Is there anything that will stick with you as you go into college and beyond?

CM: Yeah, just how to coach people, since that's what I want to do in the future, coaching people. Just knowing that, who you are as a person really affects how people see you.

TS: Has being a captain changed you in any way?

CM: I wouldn't say that I've changed; I've just been myself and people have rolled with it.

TS: What is unique about this soccer team?

CM: We're all short! That's definitely not helpful but we're pretty strong, and we talk to each other, we know how to pass, we're just well-coordinated.

TS: If you could tell your freshman self anything, what would you say?

CM: Don't get any concussions! Nah, I'm playing. I would tell myself that it's OK that I might not have made the team that I wanted to freshman year, because I was on JV but

## SPORTS PROFILE

that it definitely was necessary to become who I am today.

TS: What advice do you give your teammates and future McCallum soccer players?

CM: Stay humble. Be loving, caring, support each other. Keep being who they are now.

TS: How has the pandemic changed the soccer season for you? What has it's biggest impact been?

CM: Soccer season wise, it prevented the team from playing in playoffs, and the biggest impact has been my everyday life. I used to always be busy, but now I'm stuck at home.

TS: What were you hoping to see the team do in playoffs?

CM: I was hoping we would at least make it to the third round and hopefully go even further.

TS: And what has this whole experience been like for you?

CM: As a senior during this time I keep thinking about all the stuff we didn't get like the past seniors. My experience has been me just trying to make due with this and try to keep myself busy at home.

TS: How have you been staying connected with the team?

CM: We have a group chat that we'll occasionally text on, but [we] mostly [meet] on Zoom [on] Tuesdays.

—interview by Anna McClellan

*"Everyone is so supportive and loves soccer. It's like we're a big ol' family."*

—Cynthia Maldonado

## SPORTS BRIEFS



### Junior softball standout gets creative to stay in softball shape

Junior Megan Shieh checked in with MacJournalism on April 2 to share that she crossed making a bucket off her extended spring break bucket list. Why a bucket, you ask? "I made a bucket to sit on over the extended spring break ... because I missed sitting on buckets like we do in softball. The end to the season was hard. Especially since it ended with a close loss to LBJ." Shieh decorated her bucket to show off her admiration for Justin Bieber, her favorite musical artist. While she is missing softball and eager to return to the diamond, Shieh is not discouraged nor is she sitting around and sulking about her shortened season. "At least we can say we fought hard. My friend and I came up with a workout schedule to do together. We focused on strengthening our cores and running. That will help me stay in shape when we can get back in the weight room and on the field."



### Senior Alex Lynch one of eight All-Centex All-Star swimmers

Senior Alex Lynch capped off his stellar Mac swimming career on April 9 by being named one of eight Austin American-Statesman All-Centex Boys Swimming and Diving All-Stars. His award will be presented by legendary Olympic gold medalist Michael Phelps in a streaming event that will premier at 6 p.m. Thursday, June 18. The Statesman cited Lynch's silver medal in the 5A 100 breaststroke and his fourth-place finish at State as part of McCallum's 200-yard freestyle relay team. Lynch also holds the school records in four individual swimming events as well as being on the school-record setting 200 IM relay team.

**MALDONADO MIGHT:** Back on Jan. 21, Cynthia Maldonado and the Knights took on the Elgin Wildcats for a 5-1 preseason victory. Photo by Caleb Melville.





Some users have found that their Instagram is being used to test the removal of likes and the numbers have been removed, only leaving [...and others] on their peers' posts. "Focus on the photos and videos you share, not how many likes they get," Instagram said in a tweet. The campaign to remove like counts from Instagram posts is a much-needed and positive change. Photo by Elisha Scott.

# Dear Instagram, likes are pointless

*Because likes only exist to addict you to social media apps, the time for them to go away is now*

**ELISHA SCOTT**  
people editor

When I think back to the fifth grade, I can't really remember the curriculum, the class trips or even the field days all that much. What I do vividly remember, however, was getting Instagram.

I remember my older sister convincing my mom to let me download the app on my iPad and her showing me how to use it. Looking back at it, I was really too young to have social media, and I was one of the last in my friend group to get it. I was only 11 in the fifth grade. That's a lot of trust to put into an 11-year-old.

But I don't blame my parents. I place the blame with the money-hungry companies that advertise popularity and "coolness" with their apps, with every follow, and every like. Kids eat it up and parents feel pressure for their kids to be 10 going on 17. That's how we've found ourselves with generations of people posting a photo and staring at their lock screens, waiting for each like to roll in.

Some companies have begun damage control since realizing the error of their ways. One of the biggest changes came from a statement by Instagram announcing that the dynamic of giving likes on your peers' posts might be very different in the future. The proposal involves taking the number value off of Instagram posts so that you can only see the number of likes on your posts.

An tweet from Instagram's Twitter feed announcing this initiative urged the public to "focus on the photos and videos you share, not how many likes they get."

Some users, myself included, have already

seen this change take place as Instagram's way of testing this possible new change.

Now, when I open the app, under the photo, it lists the name of one person who liked the photo followed by "...and others." The number of likes is unknown. There is still some distinction made between mere users and influencers and celebrities. When a post gets a huge response, Instagram replaces "...and others" with "...and thousands [or millions] of others."

For most posts by us regular people, however, it's "and others" and that's it. The uniform message helps to draw your attention away from the response to post and toward its actual content instead. By only showing "who" instead of "how many," the user is able to focus on the photo and the people who liked it instead of the number: quality over quantity.

Even though I don't post on it very often anymore, Instagram remains one of my favorite forms of social media due to its usefulness, versatility and options for privacy. Unlike some other apps, you can use it for business purposes, and it allows you to almost "collect" your memories without taking up all the storage on your phone. It's like a virtual scrapbook.

As I've gotten older, however, I've started to see the toxic side of the app. I question why likes are even a thing in the first place. We teach the younger generation not to care what others think and to be themselves, yet we send mixed signals by spreading the message that it matters if someone likes the photos we post.

In a 2019 video titled "Dear Girls, You're Ugly," which streamed on Instagram, YouTube, and other social media platforms, creator Prince Ea equates Instagram to a "digital drug dealer." He further compares a like to a hit of a drug, saying

*"Likes...don't earn you money unless you're a Kardashian or someone of similar 'worth.' They don't earn you points. They don't amount to anything. They're used as a symbol of popularity."*

"the more you get, the more it takes to keep the feeling rushing back, so it's no coincidence that you then double tap."

He uses the video as a way to spread his message that social media likes should not be how we gauge popularity and that the edited and filtered photos posted by others should not be how we determine beauty and self worth. "They're in the business of addiction."

The comparison between drugs and social media is spot on. These apps draw you in with the hopes of getting you addicted. Why do you think other apps like Snapchat show you how many views you have? Or Twitter? Not only likes, but retweets as well.

But there is no point to all these numbers. Likes, views, and retweets don't earn you money unless you're a Kardashian or someone of similar "worth." They don't earn you points. They don't amount to anything. They're used as a symbol of popularity. That's what these companies want

you to think so they can suck you into their world of 'How many likes did I get? How popular am I?' You do nothing with them but compare how many you get to how much everyone else gets. That's the only way they know how to draw people into their apps, to challenge their social status and tell them that this app can give it a number value.

I have a friend who still texts me every time she posts a photo to ask me to like it on every account I have access to, and when she doesn't get enough, she deletes it. It makes me sad how she and so many other people can get so upset over a number.

I definitely can't argue that I'm not on social media way too much or that I didn't get it because the rest of my friends had it, but it changes as you get older.

When I was 11, it was just a fun way to share cheesy, and since regretted, memories with captions that had way too many emojis, but now it's become a popularity contest.

When you're a teenager in high school, your "image" seems a lot more important than when you were starting middle school. They know this, so they reel you in and convince you to download it when you're young and naive. You probably downloaded it just for fun, but by the time you're old enough to realize the true intentions of the app, you're already addicted.

That's why this change is so important to the mental health and well-being of today's youth. This is just the first step to bringing the real value of sharing memories with your friends, family and peers back.

Because in the end, it is the app itself that's starting the issue, but it's the likes that are creating the addictions.



# Hopefully #mindfulAISD is here to stay

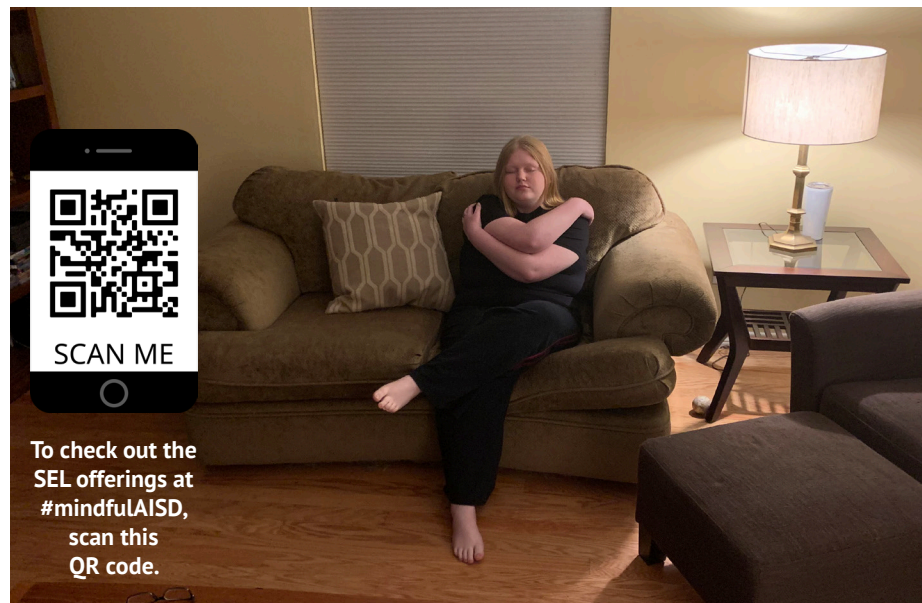
*Coronavirus has given us a better form of SEL. When the virus leaves, the new method shouldn't*

## SHIELD STAFF

Before we were under quarantine, you'll remember that McCallum had begun to implement Social and Emotional Learning classes during flexible instruction time, or FIT, and class time. Students responded to these lessons with varying degrees of enthusiasm; some students poured out their hearts leading to a whole-class discussion and moment of connection while other students were made uncomfortable by the whole experience. It was a good idea that needed to find its footing in terms of execution. The quarantine and resulting switch to distance learning, however, have produced a much better SEL delivery method in the form of online SEL YouTube videos.

There were a couple of problems with in-person SEL classes, a major one being the social pressures of high school. For many students, being in a classroom full of acquaintances is not the best environment to promote the kind of growth that SEL is aimed at achieving. As much as students seem to be open to the idea, there is always an air of judgment around sharing about yourself in front of a jury of your peers. The switch to online delivery due to coronavirus, however, makes SEL sessions private. The online classroom is a much better place to encourage mindfulness because it removes the social pressure and enables students to reflect freely and without interruption.

Another problem with in-person SEL was having to fit it into the crowded bell schedule. There was a lot of confusion and stress surrounding SEL while school was in session, especially among seniors who had their first period off. Oftentimes, it was mistaken for FIT and seniors, who had not heard the announcements, ended up in the wrong place



To check out the SEL offerings at #mindfulAISD, scan this QR code.

*MINDFUL MOMENT: Anna Fox practices one of James Butler's techniques featuring mindful stretching. In the video, Butler, an AISD mindfulness and SEL specialist, explains that this stretch, called the "pretzel/crossing the mid-line," aims to "get the right and left sides of our brain to communicate" and "releases oxytocin in our brains which helps us feel calm and happy." The video and many others can be accessed on YouTube under the hashtag #mindfulAISD. Photo by Ellen Fox.*

at the wrong time due to that confusion. There was also the issue of teachers having to dedicate a certain amount of class time to SEL. At times, having SEL induced the very stress the lessons were intended to relieve. For example, in art classes, where class time is used to complete projects, SEL would sometimes come on the same day that a project was due, and the lost work time on said project induced stress, both worsening the student's mental state and their ability and willingness to focus

on and participate in the SEL activity.

When the pandemic struck, obviously the old form of SEL was not viable as there can be no in-person meetings. The district was wise to realize that the social uncertainty and dissociation many are feeling, also due to the pandemic, make the lessons about self and community more important than ever. Whether the district and the McCallum SEL team considered that the new delivery method was an improvement over the old way doesn't

really matter. When Mindful Moments began to appear on BLEND notifications, it was the beginning of what should be the new normal for SEL at McCallum. These moments are videos uploaded onto YouTube featuring teachers and speakers from all over AISD, each day giving a mini-lesson on mindfulness and SEL, and can be found on YouTube under the hashtag #mindfulAISD. The videos include stretches, breathing techniques, introspective questions and more, all relating to mental health and self management.

Having SEL online takes all of the issues of the former version out. There is no judgment, no air of ridicule, and no confusing time issues, only you and a guided moment of reflection. This method also allows students to have as much or as little SEL as they want. In the classroom, some students wanted to take SEL seriously and others simply didn't, which made it that much harder for the ones who did want to get something out of the session. When the students choose to participate, the online version guarantees that students will be able to get as much out of it as they wish to get.

As much as the new SEL is better suited to McCallum life than the old one, it's not perfect. It's a great substitute, especially while in quarantine, but it is missing the element of other people that was a strength of SEL. Perhaps a small group, or an anonymous message board could be made available for people to answer questions that would usually be posed during classroom SEL lessons to form that feeling of a connection with peers. Regardless, with all of the bad that has come out of coronavirus, the new form of SEL class is a very good thing, and when we all march back to school we are hoping that it remains in place and does not leave us when COVID-19 finally does.

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Letters that are critical of the newspaper staff's coverage of events or that present information that may stimulate heated debate will be published.

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Key for crossword puzzle: 1. Spring. 2. State. 3. Hotel. 4. Excalibur. 5. District. 6. Scrapbook. 7. McCallum. 8. Senior. 9. Elective. 10. Percussion. 11. Dance. 12. Football. 13. Sweepstakes. 14. Women's. 15. Gig. 16. Track. 17. Distance.



## MORE LOCAL COVID-19 COVERAGE



Photo by Dave Winter.

Local eateries cautious about  
resuming dine-in services

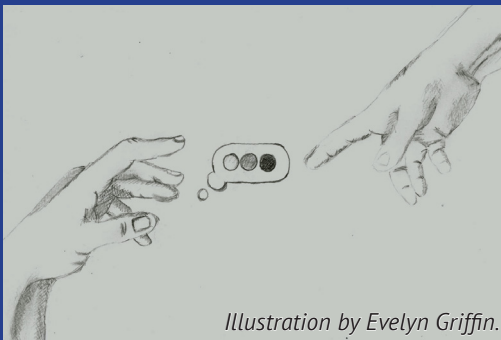


Illustration by Evelyn Griffin.

Staying connected (from a distance)

Images from 2011  
Knight and courtesy  
of Lindsey Wagner

## from the BAND HALL



Denver ICU nurse  
Lindsey Wagner,  
Class of 2011,  
describes her  
experience fighting  
on the front  
lines against the  
coronavirus



## to a COVID-19 HOSPITAL UNIT

Photo by Angus Sewell McCann.

Which one of these gifted, hard-working musicians  
is Austin ISD's first All-State pianist since 1976?

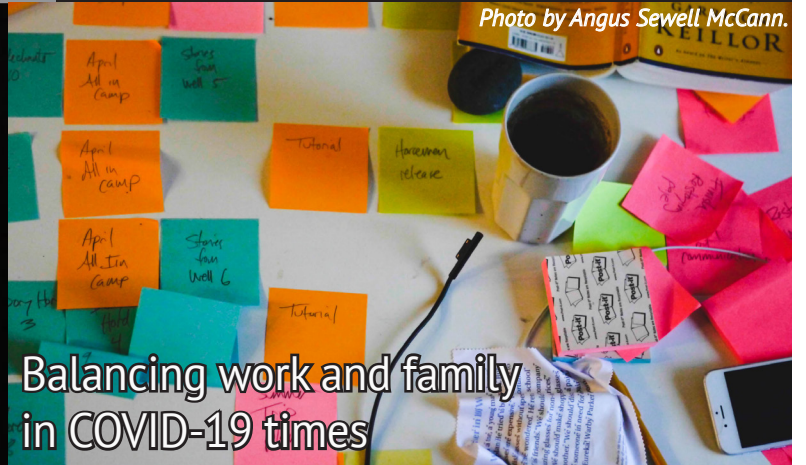


A

Bruno  
Mars

B

Luke  
Lozano



Balancing work and family  
in COVID-19 times

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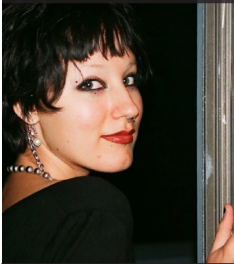




Clara Young



Seoul Whitehead



Elise Cook



Parker Wheeler



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Lucy Abramowitz



Catie Mendivil



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Clayton Smith



Lily Bryan



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Isabella Demoss



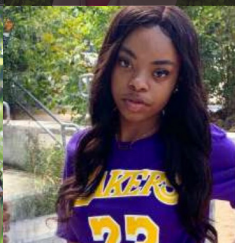
Rey Bernacki



Lucas Rasco



Mary Roe



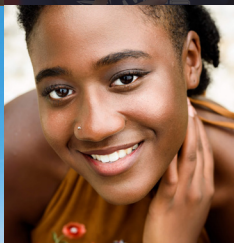
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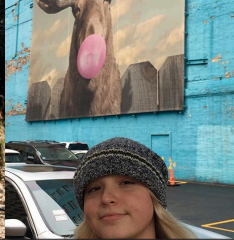
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Izzy Evans



Sam Sherrill



Ruby Henson



Josh Betton



Joshua Shear



Caleb Brown



Daryl Hale



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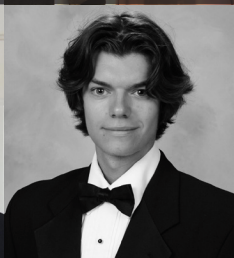
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