



Great Vision

Great Coverage

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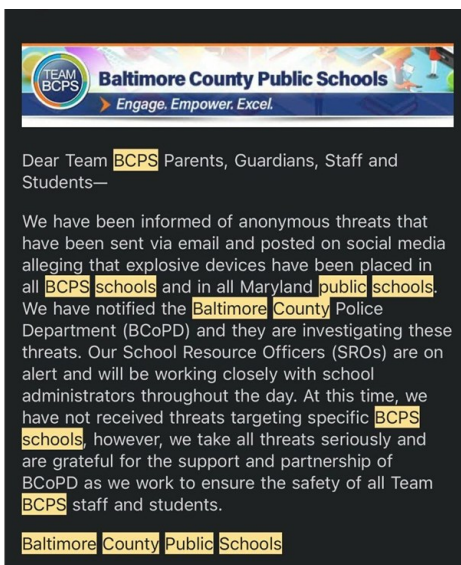
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Issue 4

Has the Time Come When Bomb Threats at Schools Are Normal?

By Kierra Richardson

On December 12th, an email went out from BCPS to inform all parents on an anonymous bomb threat. However, students in the building were not notified and continued to go on as the day was normal. The message stated that the threat alleged that explosive devices had been placed in all Baltimore County and Maryland public schools. "I feel like it wasn't taken very seriously by other people," sophomore Alexis Gamble explained, "and personally I don't think the school took it serious either because I didn't hear a lot about it nor was anyone around me informed about it, but I did hear a little about it."



BCPS message sent out to parents for the school bombing threat

In response to students being concerned about being uninformed, Principal O'Connell is taking steps to improve communica-

tion. "When the school system sends messages out to parents and staff, sometimes students may not be aware of the message. I am going to work with staff on how we can ensure students are also informed when certain messages are sent to staff and families," Principal O'Connell said.

The frequent bomb threats and school shootings start to raise the question for the normalization of these things. Many other states like Utah, Ohio, and Texas are receiving bomb threats like this in schools.

Students are expected to attend school everyday regardless of what's going on, working hard without any distractions, even if they are not fully safe in the school building. Schools are legally responsible for the safety of their students, but threats continue to happen. It makes parents feel uneasy about the protection of their children. "Yes, the world is normalizing bomb threats and school shootings for schools," senior Cameron Crocker explained, "because I hear about them a lot, almost every week compared to when I was younger, which was not as common."

Youth Truth Student Surveys reports that only 55 percent of students feel safe on school property outside the school building.

At Franklin, we practice drills for these situations to help prepare us if these things happen. The easy access into Franklin causes stress from how easy it may be to get in. Some say with the hall monitors and police officers walking around they feel safer. The additions of the hall monitors allow them to clear the hallway and make sure anyone who is not supposed to be

there is not in the hallway.

As students, are we taking the drills we do in school seriously enough? It may be a drill then, but in the world we live in, anything could change in just a matter of minutes. "I don't feel safe," Varsity basketball player Alexis Gamble described. "We might practice drills for real life situations. I feel as though they won't actually work out. Students might still disobey the drill rules. The school has easy access from many different areas, and I feel as though security won't be able to stop them." As in any public school we are now learning how anything can happen just from a social media post. It is vital for all students to learn the drills and practice them as many chances as possible to prepare for the world we live in today.



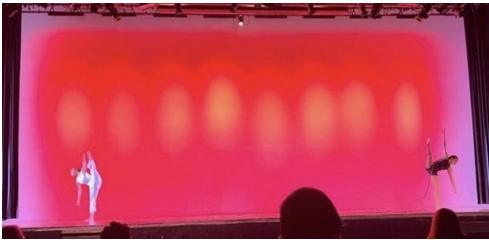
Definition of school threats
Image from doralfamilyjournal.com

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Eat, Sleep, Dance, and Repeat

By Kierra Richardson



Franklin Dance Company dancers Montana M.J. and Rochelle L. performing at the BCPS student choreography showcase.

While dance can be a form of having fun and playing around to music, dance is very different for Montana. “I knew I loved dance when I first performed on the stage,” senior Montana Mitchell-Jones explained. What she loves is “the adrenaline rush and the excitement of getting ready to show the audience what I’ve been working on and my talent.” Dance is a passion of hers through which she can express herself, show emotions, and escape from the world. Montana devotes most of her time throughout the day to dance; being one of the leaders of the Franklin Dance Company, she steps up wherever she is needed.

At the age of six, Montana began dancing, but it wasn’t until thirteen when she started in a professional setting. Since she did not participate in any other sports, her passion was put all the way into dance. Being a woman of color, Montana had her own boundaries to break apart with dance. A key role model in Montana’s life was Misty Copeland, after researching her and relating to the same things. “She didn’t start until she was 13 because she had limited resources,” Montana explained, “which was very similar to my dance journey. Misty Copeland inspired me that even though you may start your journey later than others, if you work hard and persevere through every obstacle,” you can still succeed. Her story continues to amaze Montana from all the boundaries she broke and continues to break. An artist at

first sight with young age soon transpired to dance after watching the hit television show *Dance Moms*. *Dance Moms* showed her the fun inside of dance, movements, and opened her world up to creativity of dances. “I used to copy the movements the dancers did,” Montana said.

Growing up watching the show *Bring It* sparked Montana’s interest in the majorette style of dance. She began to research about the style. “I enjoyed how the style of majorette can be fast and fluent, easily transition into slow and graceful movements in minutes,” Montana said. The historical background with creation by African Americans adds to why she loves majorette.

A normal day inside the life of Montana is usually the same with school, dance, and work incorporated. “I wake up around 8 am to get ready for school, and then around 2:25 pm, I get ready for after-school dance up until 4:30. Sometimes I may have work until 10 pm,” Montana said. With dance being a very big part of her life, she still ends up finding time to enjoy creating fashion ideas and styling clothes. Others would describe Montana as someone who is very caring and funny with a creative mind. With everything she has going on throughout the day, she is determined and works endlessly. Contemporary modern dance is one of Montana’s favorite styles of dance due to the fact that it isn’t as restrictive and repetitive as ballet. “There is no right or wrong,” Montana explained. “It’s all based on your body movement and the way you hear the song.”

Montana leads by example in the Franklin Dance Company in different situations, showing her leadership, and being strict at times. “It’s a responsibility to understand that you’re not trying to be mean; it’s for their benefit. There are times for fun and games, but it’s been stressful times where we needed to just focus.”



Senior portrait with Montana Mitchell-Jones in her Franklin Dance Company uniform.

While dancers look amazing on the stage and practice, sometimes we forget all of the stress dancers take on. Fast-paced dances, new routines, and synchronizing together can all be hard for dancers’ mental health. “Yes, dance has caused me a lot of stress, I love the adrenaline rush, but learning dances has taken me through it. I’m not a fast learner, and I’m not the greatest dancer of all time, so it was hard for me to watch my peers pick up fast and understand concepts,” Montana stated. Occasionally, we all struggle with change, whether that is learning new things or switching up from a style or moves you are most comfortable with. Montana also states that there have been points where she wanted to quit from feeling like she wasn’t good enough for the opportunities and positions she’s in, but her perseverance led her to where she is today.

As a senior at Franklin High, Montana hopes to continue dancing in college with the dance team “Motion of the Ocean” in Houston, Texas, with a strategic plan to wait until sophomore year, planning to focus on her studies the first year. “I did dance all four years of high school, and a little break would be nice. If I don’t join a dance team my first year, then I’ll definitely take dance as an elective,” Montana said.

La Navidad en Brasil y los Estados Unidos

Por Khushi Desai y Jiya Saini

La Navidad es un día festivo que es celebrado por todo el mundo. Sin embargo, en lugares diferentes, las tradiciones han cambiadas. Dos naciones con tradiciones diferentes son Brasil y Estados Unidos. En Brasil, se celebra la Navidad durante el verano. Por esto, tradiciones son muy diferentes que en los Estados Unidos. Las personas en Brasil no llevan chaqueta o bufanda, sino que llevan cortos y trajes de baño. En Brasil, se celebra la Navidad el 24 de diciembre. En la noche antes de la Navidad, las fiestas son comunes con muchas personas en la familia. Finalmente, para la Navidad en Brasil, la comida es muy importante. Las familias crean las comidas grandes para compartir con otros.



Imagen tomada de viapais.com.ar

La Navidad en los Estados Unidos es un poco diferente. En los Estados Unidos, se celebra la Navidad en el invierno en el 25 de diciembre. Las personas crean la casa de pan de jengibre, y usan un calendario de adviento. En los Estados Unidos, nosotros celebramos con "Santa Claus," pero en Brasil, las personas celebran "Papai

Noel y Bom Velhinho."

Ambos países tienen árboles de Navidad y son significantes para el cumpleaños de Jesús. Las personas reciben regalos y asisten a la iglesia. Todas las personas en la familia se celebran juntos. Otras tradiciones en el mundo son decorar los árboles, comer jamón, y recibir regalos. En conclusión, la Navidad es celebrada en maneras diferentes por todo el mundo, pero hay muchas similitudes también.

Mental Health Matters

By Christian Harris

It has come to my attention that mental health has been coming up a lot during this month of December. Some students feel like they do not have anyone to talk to while they are down in the dumps, feel like doing self-harm, or feel like no one is listening to them while they are crying out for help at school or home.

According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, "Self-harm refers to when a person hurts their own body on purpose. It is more common amongst women than men. A person who self-harms usually does not mean to kill themselves, but they are at higher risk of attempting suicide and dying by suicide if they do not get help." Self-harm, suicide attempts, and mental health are serious issues that should be recognized more.

Many of you feel trapped and overwhelmed, feel like with every move or step you take someone is watching you or someone is talking about you. Some of you are trying to fit in with the crowd to hide the fact that you are crying for help on the inside waiting for that one person to ask if you are okay.

Some students lack understanding that words have an impact on a person

more than actions do. Words stick like a piece of gum that you can't get off your shoe, so be careful of your words, and be careful of other's feelings. Remember to be who you are. Don't be afraid to show your true colors, and don't be afraid to ask for help either from a trusted friend or a trusted adult.



| talkspace

Free mental health support for BCPS high school students

Teen life can be a lot, so Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS) is providing online mental health support to high school students ages 13+, for free.

www.talkspace.com/coverage/baltimore-county-school-district

The iPad Kid Generation

By Kierra Richardson

Younger and younger kids are getting brand new electronics that allow them to be on social media at such a young age. Children as young as seven are using social media regularly, a survey finds. 'The findings don't surprise me', Diana Graber explained, the founder of Cyberwise and author of *Raising Humans in a Digital World*. "The huge number of kids using social media when they're so young- it makes me want to cry. These social media apps are not designed for children.'

Nowadays children are spending all of their time devoted to their screens and social media, especially during the pandemic, having to cling towards something to not be bored. The pandemic is still taking a toll on this generation having a lack of social events. Kids are having to grow up a lot earlier than expected with social media influencers, alcohol displayed, nudity and inappropriate content for younger ages. "Yes, younger kids are being more exposed to inappropriate content," junior Kamora Gray explained. "Since they are online, and a lot of explicit content pops up occasionally, they are more likely to be exposed."

In some cases a younger kid can end up tapping a screen for any app to be downloaded. "Kids might stumble across pornography, images of self-harm, or posts that promote disordered eating, even with Roblox," said Dr. Devorah Heitner author of *Growing Up In Public: Coming of Age in a Digital World*.

Adding screens to the lives of children is replacing everyday activities. Going out for air becomes less frequent for teens after being on social media, video games, or television streaming apps. "This generation is extremely reliant on technology," Kamora Gray stated, "because kids grow up on iPads and TikTok, and end up becoming addicted: not being able to live without it." In the new Netflix movie *Leave the World Behind* produced by Michelle and Barack Obama, we see many different examples of how reliant and attached we are with technology. In the movie, many of the main characters become clueless and

disappointed as their technology is working.

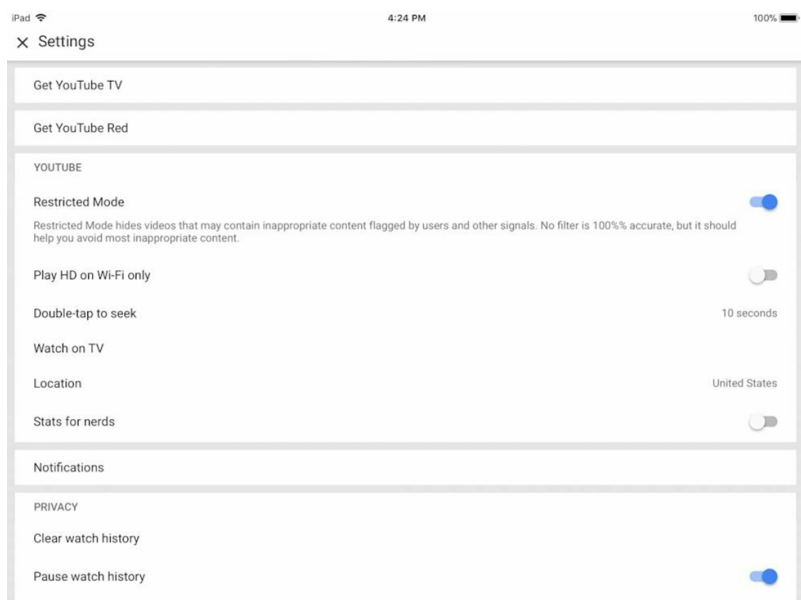
Children are now used to being online at younger ages making it acceptable for them to continue getting on and learning things way above their age that is not particularly appropriate. Apps like Instagram, TikTok and YouTube make it easier for kids to gain access to adult content. However, there are new settings on YouTube and Instagram that can restrict certain types of content and manage screen time.

Parents can start restricting content early on for the younger generation to help prevent the exposure of content. "I think 3rd graders should get social media," Kamora elucidates, "but it should be watched and monitored by parents." Limiting screen time on mobile devices is also parent's preferred option that shuts off the phone at a certain time. Using friendly search engines and safe search settings on Google can activate safety measures. Apps like YouTube Kids ensure the content to be indefinitely for a younger audience.



Apple iPhone settings showcase the screen time tab that controls when the phone will be shut off.

Photo from internetmatters.org



YouTube settings restrictive mode options for parents to enable, ensure the prevention of inappropriate content. Photo from abcnews.go.com

The Dangers of Flying Cars

By Kierra Richardson

Flying cars have been talked about for decades, going back to the early 20th century. We're all thinking about them and how they'd be one of the biggest advances in technology. Now that technological discoveries have improved even more, there are real possibilities of flying cars in the near future, but have we thought about the cons of flying cars?

There are highly convincing advantages to these types of cars with direct routes taken to a destination. The reduction of traffic definitely will make the average person feel better, not having to worry about waiting minutes to hours for cars to move. This also helps with air pollution and stress levels. Emergency responders' time can be positively impacted with faster response time, with less congested traffic. Natural disasters will have a faster response to help many gain access to safer areas. Reducing carbon footprint has always been a plan for the world from cars, and with flying cars this can reduce the amount of cars on the road leading to lower carbon emissions rather than the higher emissions from traditional gasoline-

powered cars. Less land would be required to be devoted to roads and emissions as well from the construction. "I like adventures, so flying cars would be amazing," junior Kamora Gray stated.

However, with new technologies some of the gimmicks aren't all figured out yet and still have a significant amount of challenges. "Yes, it's a lot of possibilities of dangerous accidents, crashing, landings etc.," senior Camryn Crocker said.

Flying cars aren't very cost effective. For that matter, it's still hard to build enough flying cars to have widespread usage. This higher cost doesn't appeal to everyone in the different socioeconomic classes.

The technical challenges and safety concerns are some of the biggest dangers of flying cars. Making a flying car is certainly a hard task with the design and manufacturing, meaning there are tests that must be run by others before putting them out there. Workers who must test these vehicles are putting their lives at risk to see if the flying car is in its right state. While a vehicle on land can malfunction and piec-

es may come apart on the road, in the air, if a flying car was to break, other lives would be in danger of car pieces hitting them or buildings. To make certain that these cars can operate under unexpected weather conditions, they must meet safety regulations. As always, if a flying car runs out of fuel, then there is no saying what may happen, making it destined for a catastrophe for passengers and people below. It's vital that these cars have specialized infrastructure like landing pads and charging stations. As we look to the future possibility of owning a flying car, let's remember to consider these disadvantages as well as the exciting possibilities.



Photo from cnbc.com

Album Review: *In the Flat Field* by Bauhaus

By William Taylor



Photo from post-punk.com

"Nerve ends tick in flicker book animation / One eye's closed in fear, anticipation / Will it stay shut? Will it ever open? / What if? / What if?" (from "Nerves")

With just one track, Bauhaus spawned a new genre of music. "Bela Lugosi is Dead"

is nine minutes of brooding dub-inspired tension. A year later, the forefathers of gothic rock would deliver an album of nine tracks each as dramatic as "Bela."

The atmosphere on *In the Flat Field* is oppressive. Every effect, chord, and beat is done to construct Bauhaus' vision of the world; bleak, anxious, threatening, and miserable. Frontman Peter Murphy often invokes images of gods, saints, martyrs, and myths to make the surroundings even more ghoulish.

If songs aren't drowning in their own anxiety, they're fervently manic, such as "Dive" or "St. Vitus Dance." Even "Small Talk Stinks," which is the most lighthearted song on the record, is layered with dissonant guitar, pounding drums, and undeci-

pherable radio signals. *In the Flat Field* gives you little room to catch your breath, forcing you to submit yourself to its grim psyche.

Bauhaus has always had their inspirations on their sleeve, and *Flat Field* is no exception. David Bowie and Joy Division are alive and well throughout this record, but other post-punk bands like Gang of Four can be heard on "God in the Alcove." No matter what shade of punk and rock they take from, Bauhaus still blends it perfectly with their gothic aesthetic.

With as many goth rock outfits out today, *In the Flat Field* still stands out for how theatrical and bleak it is. It engulfs everything around you in its atmosphere.

Movie Review: The Hunger Games: The Ballads of Songbirds and Snakes

By Gabrielle Unger

I'm sure you've been hearing about the new *Hunger Games* movie, *The Hunger Games: The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes*, and all the good... and bad that came with it. Honestly, even if you haven't read the book, it's still a movie worth watching. Although not perfect, this new film is definitely a great addition to the *Hunger Games* series and probably one of my favorites. There is a lot to unpack.

Starting in the beginning, we are introduced to a young Coriolanus Snow, played by Tom Blyth. Coriolanus is presented with his well-known icy blonde hair and cold blue eyes. To the audience's surprise, Coriolanus acts as a warmer, more likable version of himself than we are used to. The beginning also serves as our formal introduction to Tigris, played by Hunter Schafer. If there was one thing the director, Francis Lawrence, did right, it was this casting! Schafer's high cheekbones make her the perfect fit for a young Tigris who, as we now know, is Snow's cousin. Really, the bond between these two is the star of the show. Their interactions show the closeness between them; something so starkly contrasted in the previous movie premiering Tigris character, *The Hunger Games: Mockingjay- Part 2*, that presents her as a rebel against her cousin. This relationship was definitely a highlight of the movie.

As things get moving, we are introduced to Lucy Gray Baird (played by Rachel Zegler), a traveling singer from District 12 who has been picked to be mentored by Coriolanus. Zegler, while a great singer, leaves a lot to be desired with her acting.



Image from imdb.com

She has the emotional range of...well, a stick. This subsequently hinders the relationship between her and Coriolanus that the movie focuses on. This is not the only thing that hurts this relationship, as the rate of it does, too. The chemistry feels a bit rushed. The problem is not that they don't have any; it's that the third time they meet, they've kissed already. It's almost as if the director was worried about going too long with how little dynamic there was in this aspect of the movie. Nonetheless, Coriolanus and Lucy Gray make a good pair, and we can definitely see that in the movie. Toward the end of the movie, Coriolanus becomes who we know him to be later in his life. The portrayal of this transfor-

mation was done flawlessly. His true colors come out when he grows paranoid of Lucy Gray telling people he had his best friend, Sejanus, killed. His charm turns into rage. His screams for her in the woods are piercing, leaving you flinching with every sound. The suspense was there. We hear her sing "The Hanging Tree" but don't actually see her on the screen, scared at the fact Snow might catch her. Tom Blyth plays Coriolanus so well that you actually start to feel an ounce of sympathy as he goes crazy, remembering the good qualities (although scarce) he held in the beginning. If you're wondering which point in the movie was the best, it's safe to say it was this.

If I haven't raved enough already, there is a cherry on top to this film. One of the final scenes shows Coriolanus with his new-found coldness getting ready for his first day of work. When he asks Tigris how he looks, she says "you look just like your father, Coriolanus." That line leaves you with an open mouth. Throughout the movie, Tigris calls Coriolanus "Corio" and speaks of his father in a rather unsatisfactory manner. With this line, she signifies her disappointment in her cousin and what he has become. Her delivery was flawless.

The Hunger Games: The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes had its ups and downs. Although some parts felt a bit rushed, overall, the film kept you interested and left you wanting more. The achievement of this allots the film the label of a great movie.

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