



# THE ROAR

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Photo courtesy of @MikeWard1701

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Photo courtesy of elisfkc

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# Trump’s “fire and fury”

Controversial first year passes with January for Trump, Republican Party



Photo courtesy of Gage Skidmore

By Courtney Kirby

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January 20, 2017, marked the transition from a liberal executive branch to a conservative one as Donald Trump was inaugurated into the office of the US President. America observed a shift from a Democratic eight years under Barack Obama to a term by Trump which, from the beginning, has been painted with Republican agendas.

The 2017 calendar year ended with a 38.5% approval rating of Trump’s presidency, according to Pew Research Center (PRC) - almost a ten percent drop from the beginning of the term. The year marked record low support for Trump, according to *The Economist*, the lowest of any American president in polling history. Trump ended his first year in the Oval Office seemingly without the overwhelming support of the American people.

So far, Trump’s achievements, according to *The Washington Examiner*, have been lauded with as much criticism as celebration. Regardless of the reception of his actions, Trump has delivered - or attempted to deliver - on his a number of his campaign promises, continuing with much of the rhetoric he used on the trail.

High on his list has been the construction of a border wall along the US-Mexico border. While prototypes have been put

forth, no concrete action (both figuratively and literally) has been made toward the wall, according to *Newsweek*, even after Trump threatened a government shutdown over the matter on August 22, 2017.

Perhaps ironically, the first-year anniversary of his presidency was punctuated by a government shutdown, reported by CNN, after both parties failed to reach a functioning compromise on CHIP and DACA. Trump and Republicans lay blame on the Democratic Party for the shutdown, opinion that is majorly contradicted by polls, such as by the PRC, which popularly place the blame with Republicans.

Even in the shadow of a special investigation into possible Russian collusion, Trump has still been able to spur controversy, particularly through his use of his Twitter account. In one of the first of many attacks on the media, Trump called it the “enemy of the American people.”

Among a number of other polemical proclamations, Trump also notably spurred contention in his public struggle against Kim Jong-un. At the center of his recently proposed National Security Strategy is his emphasis of “America First” in American foreign policy. However, his exchanges with Jong-un have only become more explosive - notably as time has gone on.

On August 8, 2017, Trump announced

in a conference (and later Twitter) that North Korea’s threats would be met with “fire and fury,” hoping to bring comfort to a nervous country. However, according to *The Washington Post*, this instead ignited more fear.

The President additionally impacted the country through his support of multiple pieces of legislation. According to the *New York Times*, Trump adhered pulled hard to repeal the Affordable Care Act (ACA) in his first months in office, only partially succeeding after several failures to pass a repeal in Congress. The complete overhaul has been shelved for a time.

Also on his and the Republican Party’s plate was its tax plan, according to *The Hill*, which has been passed by the Senate and is set to be passed by the House. The bill does include a strike down to the ACA individual mandate - one of Trump’s campaign promises - which required uninsured individuals to purchase healthcare.

Throughout his first year as President, Trump was the subject of much discussion and controversy across news outlets and social media platforms. With the amount of (contentious) action in 365 days, the Trump’s behavior may yet cycle as America looks into another three years. Whether or not his numbers show the support, Donald Trump will continue to with the power he wields holding the office of the POTUS.

# 6-year-old makes millions in one year

By Mihaela Manova

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Last year, 6-year-old Ryan made \$11 million on YouTube. In twelve months, with the help of his family, Ryan accumulated 10 million subscribers on his channel, “Ryan ToysReview.” As is implicit in the name of his YouTube channel, Ryan gained popularity by reviewing toys for other kids to watch. The child was named in *Forbes’* list of highest paid YouTube entrepreneurs, tying with the comedy channel “Smosh.”

According to *The Washington Post*, Ryan began with an “unremarkable 15-minute video about a Lego train set.” AOL said the progress for Ryan’s channel was slow until July of 2015, when his parents uploaded a “video[that] featured Ryan opening and reviewing a ‘Giant Egg Surprise’ box containing over 100 toys from Pixar’s Cars series. It currently has close to 800 million views.”

Comparatively, Ryan’s videos reach the popularity of music videos, many of which

achieve hundreds of millions of views; e.g., the video for “Wildest Dreams” by Taylor Swift, which has 590 million views, is more than 200 million less than the number of views on Ryan’s second-most popular video.

Nonetheless, Ryan - with the help of his parents - has created more videos, one of which is at 1 billion views (and counting). The video featured Ryan exploring a water slide and opening giant surprise eggs. According to *The Verge*, his channel has an audience of 10 million, which estimates to be about \$1 million in total ad revenue.

In an interview with *Inc. Magazine*, Ryan’s mom noted her son’s new celebrity status: said, “‘When we’re out in public - either at a toy store or Target or grocery shopping... people recognize him and he gets very excited.’” Because of privacy and security, *Inc.* explains that Ryan’s family has not put their last name(s) or location on the channel.

However, even observers who do not know of Ryan’s channel are able to see the

young fans that he has accumulated. With his help, sales of toys have increased.

Jim Silver (CEO of Toys, Tots, Pets, & More) spoke with *The Verge* about Ryan’s influence: “If a product gets 10 million, 20 million views, and you see Ryan loves it, or other kids love it, it has a huge impact at retail. He’s the youngest success that we’ve seen.”

“It’s really shocking that a six-year-old can do that,” Mitchell McManis (10) said. “I know I wasn’t doing that when I was six.”

*The Washington Post* inspected Ryan’s “about” page on his channel, which states that the family donates a large portion of the toys to charity.

In the end, Ryan’s channel has shown that success can come to anyone at any age in the age of social media. His following and young fans have shown support for the 6-year-old on his path to being a legitimate, if young, entrepreneur. Even the youngest of people can achieve status by the number of views on a Youtube channel.



# Tesla “Model 3” production slows, ideas do not



Photo courtesy of @MikeWard1701

By Caroline Ginder

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Staff Writer

In recent years, technology has shown us that electric cars and self-driving cars are not far out of reach. Companies like Tesla, first retailer of electric cars, makes the idea of owning one of these cars of the future a real possibility.

Take, for instance, Tesla’s Model 3: a sleek sedan that can go from zero to sixty miles per hour in 5.6 seconds. The most basic build of the model includes 220-mile battery range, glass roof, front and back trunks and a key accessed via phone app. At \$35,000 for the most basic model, Tesla is now making appeals to more people - the \$136,000 price tag of previous models attracted a smaller, more affluent audience. That being said, if a customer wants to personalize his or her Model 3, he or she can spend up to \$20,000 with different upgrades, including a longer battery life.

According to *The Week* magazine, the Model 3 uses a lithium ion battery. There are two battery options for the

model, one that goes 220 miles and another that goes 310 miles between charges. According to Tesla, the model takes twelve hours to completely charge at 220 volts.

To top it off, there is a 15-inch computer-like screen that controls seat heat, music volume, air conditioning, battery level, shifting gears, and windshield wipers. There is no gauge cluster with the speedometer, which means the screen holds the speedometer. According to *Jalopnik*, these features and others are why the Model 3 is called the car of the future.

There’s one problem, though: production is extremely delayed for this model. According to CNBC, in late 2016, 500,000 people pre-ordered the Tesla Model 3. Tesla promised early on that the car would be delivered to the customers by the end of 2017. With only 75 of those cars on the streets now, Tesla has pushed back that date to late 2018. This hiccup in production has raised some concerns for customers and car gurus.

According to *The Washington Post*, Elon Musk, the CEO of Tesla, said Model 3 is in “production hell.” In a conversation with business analysts, reported by CNBC, Musk claimed the problem to be focused within the car’s battery modules. He said there are four production modules for the battery, and one of those modules is having operating problems.

The subcontractors of that system impeded production which resulted in a loss of money and efficiency. Musk revealed his company’s plans for getting back on track: a quarterly goal of 5,000 cars made weekly by March 2018.

Even with that proclamation, people are weary of the prospects. Tesla has frequently failed to deliver on their

promises, muddying exactly when customers will get their cars. According to *The Washington Post*, there is no way of guaranteeing delivery date, but Musk appears confident with his late 2018 prediction.

Some believe that the Model 3 is the downfall of the company, and for some car companies, a problem of this size would indeed be detrimental. However, Tesla has revealed plans to move forward with new models and ideas.

For example, Tesla is coming out with a second-generation Roadster. First produced in 2011, this new rendition of the sports car will go from zero to sixty miles per hour in 1.9 seconds - 3.7 seconds faster than the Model 3. According to *The Verge*, Musk “wouldn’t confirm the top speed” of the Roadster, “but hinted that it was above 250 mph.” According to Guinness World Records, the world record for the speed of a car is 277.9 miles per hour. This Tesla vehicle holds almost-literally record-breaking potential.

Another groundbreaking concept proposed by Tesla is the “Nikola One, “an electric semi-truck that, among other feats, is capable of going up to 500 miles between charges. According to Tesla, the truck will save an upwards of \$200,000 on fuel over the truck’s lifetime. Tesla is taking orders for the truck, though none will be delivered for at least two years. According to Forbes, large companies like UPS and Anheuser-Busch have reserved about 400 trucks.

Tesla and its CEO’s new concepts are proving that they are not down and out because of their backed-up Model 3 production. They are here to stay and make environmentally safe and fast cars.

# Life expectancy drops for second consecutive year for US population

By Patrick Seroogy

@lovelandroar

Editor-in-chief

A report published in December of last year by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) observed a decrease in life expectancy for the second year in a row - the first downturn in more than two decades, and the first back-to-back declines in more than half a century. With growing numbers of deaths from drug overdose, the data may be indicative of the growing opioid epidemic in the US, and, alternatively, may also reflect findings of a stagnation of human lifespan as a whole.

According to the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), housed within the CDC, life expectancy (definitively, the average for a population) at birth was 78.6 years for the US population as a whole in 2016, a drop of 0.1 years from 2015. This decrease, while nominal, is statistically significant. This was a continuation of a decline from 2015, which decreased 0.2 years from 2014’s projection of 78.9 years. According to CNN, the last multiyear downtrend recorded was in 1962 and 1963.

For men, life expectancy dropped from 76.5 to 76.1 years, a decline of 0.2 years in both 2015 and 2016 after 2014 where it peaked. For women, life expectancy stayed the same between 2015 and 2016 at 81.1 years, after a 0.2 year-drop in 2015 from 81.3 years in 2014.

According to the NCHS, while the top ten causes of mortality in America remained the same, there was an uptick in the fatality rate of “unintentional injuries.” A factor of this was the more than-64,000 deaths from drug overdose in 2016 - a 21% increase over the year before - a majority of which were opioid-related.

Bob Anderson (chief of the mortality statistics branch of the NCHS), while hesitant to call the decline in life expectancy a trend, according to CNN, is nonetheless concerned to see it. He said he is particularly perturbed by the amount of drug overdose deaths in 2016, which may yet increase.

Data collected for the year of 2017 is “still quite provisional, but it suggests that we’re in for another increase” in drug-related deaths, Anderson said. “If we’re not careful, we could end up with declining life expectancy for three years in a row,” a phenomenon which has not occurred statistically for the CDC since the Spanish Flu pandemic approximately 100 years ago.

“While the opioid crisis has undoubtedly been tragic - and for good reason - federal complicity in its perpetuation is often overlooked,” **Riley Owens (12)** said. According to the *The Washington Post*, federal enforcement of

legal drug distribution has weakened, eroded by industry lobbying. Undercut funding and ability has contributed to the spread and use of illicit opiates by the limitation of agencies such as the Drug Enforcement Administration to monitor and act on them.

At the same time as this decrease in life expectancy, there is new evidence that human lifespan may cease to rise altogether despite continual advances in science, industry and medicine. There has long been a debate over the existence of a natural barrier to the span of human life, according to *History.com*, but recent scientific research suggests humans have reached, or will soon reach, the peak of their biological lifespan and physical fitness.

A study conducted by researchers at Paris Descartes University in France, published in the scientific journal *Frontiers in Psychology*, gauged 120 years’ worth of historical records and previous research to survey the pace of change in human factors such as athletic performance, height, and lifespan. The scientists observed these factors to surge in the 20th century in ways that mirrored scientific and medical advancements, but these improvements appear to have slowed significantly in the past several years.

According to the study, human physical abilities appear to have leveled, turning to data collected in “the last three decades [which] suggest that heights have plateaued among high-income countries in North America and Europe.” The researchers say that genetics are the cause, echoing the idea of a natural limit to human lifespan, suggesting that it may have already been reached.

According to the study, adult height averages in some African countries have even decreased in the last ten years. The head of the study, physiologist Jean-François Toussaint, pointed to environmental constraints, saying biological life expectancy can only regress from its peak.

Not all agree with that conjecture, however, instead suggesting that human lifespan has no traceable limit. According to biologist Siegfried Hekimi at McGill University in Canada, it seems to be that, statistically, “lifespan is increasing in response to better living conditions for those people whose living conditions keep getting better.”

Upturn is a pattern that may yet occur with the CDC’s projection of life expectancy at birth for the US population in 2017 and beyond, even with the prevalence of the opioid crisis. Or, alternatively, it may decrease, reflective of a larger trend (that is, downtrend) for human lifespan as a whole. Either way, the issue is one that warrants further investigation toward positively impactful resolution for the population.

## News Briefs

By Alyssa James

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General Editor

There will be an Athletic Boosters meeting on Monday, February 5. This meeting will be held in the high school cafeteria, starting at 7 PM.

The deadline to register for the March 10 SAT test is Friday, February 9. Registration can be done on [sat.collegeboard.org](http://sat.collegeboard.org).

The Show Choirs Showfest will take place on Friday, February 9, at 6:30 PM, and Saturday, February 10, starting at 10 AM. It will take place in the high school auditorium and main gym.

There will be a Music Boosters meeting on Monday, February 12 in the high school media center. This meeting will begin at 7 PM.

The LHS Big Band Concert and Dinner will take place Saturday, February 12 at 6 PM in the high school cafeteria. The stage and jazz band students will be hosting the annual spaghetti dinner, followed by performances by the bands.

The Loveland City School District will be closed on Monday, February 19 - Presidents’ Day.

The LHS Wind Symphony/Symphonic Band concert will take place on Tuesday, February 27, at 7 PM in the high school auditorium.

There will be a College Credit Plus parent meeting held in the high school auditorium on Wednesday, February 28, beginning at 6 PM.

Peggy Johnson (LHS principal) will be hosting a senior parent meeting on Wednesday, February 28, at 6:30 PM in the high school cafeteria. This meeting is intended to review the expectations for seniors approaching graduation, as well as answer any parent’s questions.

The LHS Robotics Team 4050 received the fourth highest score in the world on Saturday, January 6! They achieved this score at the state qualifier competition in Cleveland, Ohio, and will be advancing to the FTC Robotics State Championship in February.



# Celebrity politics far from desirable for public office

By Patrick Seroogy

@lovelandroar | Editor-in-Chief

January 20, 2018, has come and gone, and with it passed the first year of the only President of the United States (POTUS) whose main qualification for political office was, decidedly, that he had no pertinent qualifications. Whatever one’s opinion of President Donald Trump, there is no disputing his bearing as the first to assume the presidency with no prior military or government experience.

While the idea of a political outsider is refreshing to some, there are some foregone issues with celebrity-turned-politicians jumping into such positions of the American presidency. An “outsider” in Washington, there to “shake up the establishment,” usually implies that person has some level of political involvement and knowledge with which to shake it up at all - something of which the President, objectively speaking, is almost invariably devoid.

And with a significant number of celebrities considering or actively running for national seats of public office in the present or near future (Oprah, most recently, comes to mind), it is necessary to consider their background experience - that is, their lack of it. Electing non-politicians, primarily on the basis of popularity, to such high offices without the knowledge and skills to implement the policies for which they have campaigned is not a better alternative to “conventional” politicians, no matter how unpopular.

According to *The Guardian*, celebrity politicians are nothing new, nor are they “uniquely American.” In the US, before 2016, there were such candidacies as former governor of California Arnold Schwarzenegger’s (2003-11), and wrestler Jesse Ventura’s as governor of Minnesota (1999-2003). A B-list Hollywood actor, Ronald Reagan, even made it to the US presidency after two terms as California’s governor.

Outside of the U.S., a porn star actually made it into the national Italian parliament, according to *The Local*. An action movie star served as the president of the Philippines from 1998 to 2001, according to the *New York Times*,

and an internationally renowned football player was just recently elected president of Liberia.

In the case of celebrity politicians - at least in America - most, if not all, of them (preceding Trump) gained some political/governing experience at the subnational level before running for a national office in Congress or the White House. However, in the past few years a number of celebrities have openly considered or “flirted with” running for office, according to CNBC: Mark Zuckerberg and Dwayne Johnson for the presidency; Robert “Kid Rock” Ritchie and Tim McGraw for the Senate. A run for US president in 2020 by Oprah has been a buzz in the news cycle as well.

However, the base on which they would (or do) stand is inherently flawed. According to *The Guardian*, “in a political system where money and name recognition are key factors in winning elections,” as was Trump’s advantage once he came into the national spotlight, “celebrities are well-positioned” to succeed - which is exactly the issue

Once elected, the campaign of a celebrity that was run primarily on the basis of popularity and name recognition (and perhaps tantalizing proclamations of “draining the swamp” in Washington, among other things) does

not prepare him or her for a position, especially the US presidency, that ultimately requires knowledge and know-how that he or she does not possess. It could argued that one could learn “along the way” or supplant practice with advisors, the lack of political experience of a candidate will prevent his or her duties from being executed effectively, according to *The Atlantic*.

One need only take a single look at the tumult of the Trump administration - misinformation, special investigation, and, more recently, government shutdown - headed by a business magnate and former reality TV star (among other traits), to see this in action.

It is not like the popularity of political outsiders is not understandable. Politics is one of the most universally disliked groups of professions, with only 17% of the US population approving of Congress (as of December 2017), according to Gallup polls. The two main US political parties have become increasingly polarized, pandering to the most vocal and radicalized of their supporters (namely donors and primary voters), according to the *Wall Street Journal*.

The media are not much help in this regard, giving national platform for the most radical politicians and ignoring moderates. This is where people such as celebrities come in, often as “political outsiders,” often pushed by donors who live in similar celebrity bubbles, according to *The Guardian*. They may hope, or be hoped to, “save” or “fix” the system that is “seen as inefficient and insulated.”

However - as has been established to be the pattern - celebrities without prior governmental experience often lack the ability to implement the policies or actions that they have promised or presented. In a manner similar to Trump, they often view success in politics more as a matter of winning elections than implementing policies one of the traits rendering them unfit for office. Celebrities or other such well-known but inexperienced individuals are not better alternatives than actual professionals in public station simply because of a lack of attractive options among uninspiring, but qualified, professional politicians.



Photo courtesy of Karl-Ludwig Poggemann

President Obama meets President-elect Donald Trump in the Oval Office on November 10, 2016, two days after the presidential election. Obama left the White House with nearly twenty years of political experience under his belt; Trump entered it with none.

# GMOs, biotechnology effective in use

By Claire Krabacher

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2017 saw a lot of debate over the ethics of genetically modified organisms, or GMOs. Although they have been negatively marketed, they have undeniable benefits such as decreasing the need for pesticides and combating hunger.

A GMO is any kind of organism that has been altered or changed by genetic engineering. This change, in simple terms, is made by taking a gene out of one organism and putting it into another. Many foods we eat and products already contain GMOs: soy, rice, papaya, and many things with additives or preservatives. However, according to the Pew Research Center, 57% of US adults believe that genetically modified (GM) food is generally unsafe.

The idea that GM food is unsafe generally stems from marketing misinformation, according to the *Scientific American*. GM foods have been mis-marketed as a hybrid between two organisms. For example, one of the first misunderstandings about GMOs surrounded one type of GM tomato. Scientists put a gene from a fish into a tomato to create a product that was freeze-resistant. Pictures of fish-shaped tomatoes and images of disgusting “fishy” tasting tomatoes were plastered everywhere. Although these images drive the non-GMO argument, they are hardly scientifically accurate.

To cite Ross Keller of the Genetic Literacy Project

(GLP): “inserting a fish gene into a tomato does not make a tomato ‘fishy’ in the same way that humans cannot breathe underwater. We share some genes with fish, but that doesn’t make us fish.” The GLP’s mission is to help the public and media understand the science and impacts of the growing industry of agriculture genetics and biotechnology. Understanding the science behind genetic engineering keeps these technologies, like gene editing and replacing, from being misused.

GMOs were originally used by farmers to address problems in their crops like insects and weeds. Genes that facilitate herbicide and insect resistance can be inserted into crops like corn and soybeans to grow them more efficiently.

Dr. Peter Goldsbrough, a plant pathology professor at Purdue University, attests to the positive impacts of GMOs on agriculture: “[Farmers] may [be able to] use less insecticides or make simpler choices for herbicides. [GMOs] are tools that have been made available to farmers that help make production of their crops more efficient and in some cases less expensive.” This makes the final product on the shelf less expensive for the consumer and reduces the need to use excessive pesticides.

However, some are concerned that GMOs are unsafe and bad for the environment. According to biotechnology expert Josh Arnold, this is not necessarily the case. He said that GMOs are tested extensively for safety and allergen

potential before they go to market; that includes their risks to humans and livestock, as well as their impacts on wildlife and the environment.

GM food also has positive humanitarian impacts on issues like world hunger. With a growing global population, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN estimates that we need to grow 70% more food by the year 2050. Developing countries have been turning to GM crops to feed their people more efficiently. For example, rice naturally photosynthesizes through a process called the C3 “pathway.” However, there is a different, more efficient pathway, called the C4 “pathway”. The C4 pathway utilizes different types of cells within the plant to complete the steps of photosynthesis, which allows the plant to do photosynthesis more quickly and have a larger crop yield. This kind of genetic modification allows farmers to produce more of their crops without having to use more land.

GMOs have a largely untapped potential to do a lot of good, despite the general belief of their perceived risks. Genetic engineering and biotechnology are growing scientific disciplines and an increasing number of farmers are relying on genetic modification to make their crops more efficient. Since this technology will be increasingly used in the future in many fields, such as agriculture, it is important to understand the science and be aware of how society functions to benefit from them.



# Final exams: before or after break?

## Having exams before break benefits students

By Courtney Kirby  
*@court\_kirby | Staff Writer*

Winter break is meant to be just as it appears: a break. But, for Loveland High School students, it was a time for studying and stressing, with final exams being moved until the last week of the quarter, as opposed to the previous pre-break exam schedule. Instead of spending time with family and friends or taking time to prepare themselves for the next semester, LHS students were bogged down with the looming threat of the biggest tests of their semester hanging over their heads.

The change affected all students, as a time previously spent headed out for various activities with families, something already shortened by the ever growing amount of work faced by high schoolers, now was spent flipping flashcards and highlighting notes in preparation for the exam week. Now, not only do students have to spend their winter break preparing, but there is also no time between first semester exams and the start of second semester. And for seniors and juniors, who have been under the previous schedule for multiple years, the change is likely to affect how the upperclassmen head into the latter half of the year.

Not only does the adjustment take away from personalized time, but extended breaks are proven to cause students to forget crucial information for finals, according to *Pre Med* magazine. Already having to ingrain a semester’s worth of information proves hard for students, but taking a two week period without interacting in a

classroom can prove disastrous for many young learners.

Additionally, students are at a further disadvantage when taking exams post-break as the class teacher often isn’t available to provide assistance studying. Even with new advances in technology allowing for student-teacher communication through email, most of the faculty packs away their work email for the duration of break, leaving students with questions and no answers. This can lead to incorrect information ingrained into brains, which forces class time to be devoted to un-teaching and re-teaching, both of which prove to be untimely processes.

Additionally, according to Harvard university’s *The Crimson*, having exams before break is beneficial for CCP students. With many local colleges starting back Monday, January 8, students involved with CCP will now have to juggle between the beginning of their college classes and high school exams in the same week. With the old schedule, CCP students were able to finish exams and begin their courses without the two overlapping, which provided them with a much needed recuperating period.

It is easy to see the psychological effect of exam week on high school students, no matter when it falls. Taking up twenty percent of a final grade and including information given out over a five month period of time, students pull out all of the stops for finals in order to do the best they can. Since students exert such an enormous amount of energy preparing for the week-long excursion, the schedule used should be the one most convenient for them.

## Having exams after break benefits students

By Kayla Gibbins  
*@lovelandroar | Staff Writer*

As the holiday season rapidly approaches during the month of December, the last thing students want to have on their minds is the stress of final exams. December is a hectic time, and trying to cram finals in before the break is less effective. Placing finals at the end of the semester rather than after winter break is ultimately the decision that will have the best impact on students.

One major benefit of scheduling finals after break is that students will have that extra time to study. The break allows students to space out their review, rather than cramming it all into the nights before the tests. The break from school also gives students more time to plan study groups and review sessions outside of school, so they can benefit from the knowledge of their peers, and get some extra help specific to the class. Students also have more time to digest and plan their study strategies, so they can interpret more information rather than trying to consume a semester’s worth of information at a rapid pace.

While many students may not use this extra study time available, a break before finals may also benefit their scores. Winter end of course exams are already in December, and students, especially underclassmen who have more of these exams, work rapidly to prepare for these tests. Teachers may alter lesson plans to get in all of the necessary information for the test, and after this hectic learning, students shouldn’t have to jump straight into a stressful review schedule for finals.

If students are being prepared for two major tests that affect their futures in the same month, it will be very draining for both students and teachers. Additionally, taking a break from excessive studying can increase focus, according to *Psych Central* writer Rick Nauert PhD, and winter break provides the perfect opportunity. Placing tests after break allows students to have time to de-stress, which is beneficial to creating a good mindset for taking the test.

Additionally, placing exams after break works better with the calendar. If exams are before break, there is an awkward amount of time before the semester change when teachers must continue to teach, even though final exams are over. As a result, students either rush through new material without understanding it before the end of the course, or that extra time is wasted. Placing exams at the end of the semester also makes the schedule more balanced with spring exams, where there is no extra time after exams. With the exams in the new year, there is also a built-in period of time before exams when teachers have time to wrap up teaching and review, as opposed to December exams when review can be crammed in or even left out.

While the idea of being finished with exams before break may be inviting to those who would like to completely check out on winter break, there are ultimately more benefits to placing exams after the break. The delay in exams benefits the study plans of students, their stress levels, and the schedule of the school year. Exams are better off in the new year, to round out the semester.

# Culture changing in light of sexual harassment allegations

By Caroline Ginder  
*@carolineginder7 | Staff Writer*

Sexual harassment is an issue that has been around for generations. Due to sexual harassment claims against big-name celebrities and personas in the US, the topic has more recently resurfaced in the national spotlight.

Accusations against hundreds of men like Matt Lauer, Kevin Spacey, Harvey Weinstein and Jerry Richardson have flooded headlines. Even the President of the United States, Donald Trump, has been accused of sexual harassment.

Although there have been sexual harassment claims against women too, the claims are more common against men. According to *USA Today*, one reason for this may be that men occupy the majority of upper level, powerful positions in the workplace.

Power dynamics are at the root of many sexual harassment cases. This occurs when one person has influence or control over another. In many cases, it is between a boss and a person in a lower position. *Time Magazine*, responding to Matt Lauer’s case, said that “the relationship was still an abuse of power.” This seems to be a common theme everywhere, not just Hollywood and Washington D.C.

Many of the sexual harassment cases in current news are from events that

happened years ago. So, why are so many accusations coming up now? One answer is momentum. Ideologically speaking, momentum and courage are contagious. Even in the evolving culture of American society and workplaces, Sexual harassment has happened for decades. It still happens, every day. The reason there are not more reports of sexual harassment is fear. In cases where victims did talk, often times they were paid to settle.

We see this in the government. There is a fund called the Congressional Accountability Act (CAA), facilitated by Congress. According to *The Hill*, this fund gave \$15.2 million in compensation to 235 harassment complaints between 1997 and 2014. And before people could lodge a complaint, they had to go through mandatory counseling for up to thirty days, after which there begins a required “mediation process.”

However, the floodgates eventually opened. In late 2017, *Times* magazine published an investigation of alleged sexual harassment claims against Harvey Weinstein, hundreds of which were reported. CNN called Weinstein’s allegations the tipping point against sexual harassment - even naming the pattern that followed the Weinstein Effect.

This sparked the #MeToo hashtag on social media, which, by its use, is meant

to encourage victims of sexual harassment to speak up. According to *Mashable*, on October 15, 2017, #MeToo was “retweeted” 109,451 times. That was in one day. A more recent account has put #MeToo at 1.7 million retweets.

Other, even more current campaigns include “Time’s Up.” This undertaking, initiated by big-time Hollywood women like Shonda Rhimes and Reese Witherspoon, is designed to give every victim a voice. While the media focuses primarily on stories involving celebrities and government officials, Time’s Up is open to all people. The campaign’s website says, “from movie sets to farm fields to boardrooms alike, we envision nationwide leadership that reflects the world in which we live.”

According to *Fortune* magazine, one of its goals is also to make new legislation for people with repeated accusations against them of sexual harassment. The group would also like to provide legal defense for victims of sexual harassment, with a starting legal defense fund of \$13 million. An additional aspect of the Time’s Up movement is for women to wear black dresses to the Golden Globes, a subtle touch that symbolizes the movement against sexual harassment. This campaign intends to raise awareness about sexual harassment and give victims a special

community.

With thousands of victims coming forward about sexual harassment, people have been listening. Workplaces are changing: according to the *Chicago Tribune*, a program to minimize sexual harassment was created by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission not long before the Weinstein scandal. Corporations are also adopting more streamlined systems for reporting sexual harassment.

According to *The Hill*, the Senate recently introduced a mandatory sexual harassment training for Senators and aides. There are thousands of complaints of sexual misconduct in Washington D.C. (indirectly proven true by the aforementioned CAA fund), and lawmakers hope this training will help prevent further sexual harassment.

As for the powerful men accused of sexual harassment, many have been fired from their positions and all have a tarnished name. *The Today Show* fired Matt Lauer within 35 hours of the report of his own sexual misconduct. Weinstein as well was fired and was forced to step down from his company’s board.

Harassment, unfortunately, occurs often. However, by creating a, in some respects, more open culture where people can talk about it, perhaps it will happen less. These are hopeful steps in the right direction.



5

Entertainment

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Page Editors: Sam Greenberg, Grisha Tackett

Top five memes of 2017

Popular memes prove most memorable of past year



Photo courtesy of The Guardian

Photo courtesy of Know Your Meme

Photo courtesy of theCHIVE

Photo courtesy of Know Your Meme

Photo courtesy of Know Your Meme

By Sam Greenberg

@samhgreenberg | Staff writer

To make a list of the top memes of 2017, it is necessary to recall what memes really are. Memes are not just silly or sometimes inappropriate pictures we send to others via the web, they hold much more value than that. In the past decade the meme has become a staple across the web - a cultural icon. The *Smithsonian Magazine* accurately describes memes as “complex units, distinct and memorable - units with staying power.”

Looking back on 2017’s rich selection of memes, it was hard to condense it to a list of five. I scoured different websites, poured over digital documents, each with their own rankings of the year’s best internet memes. With the help of rankings from *NYMag*, *Complex*, *Mashable*, and other sites, I did my best to compile a five-part list of my own opinion (in no particular order).

**1. White Guy Blinking**

The “White Guy Blinking” meme was one of the year’s best memes because it was very relevant to the chaos that was 2017. This past year included countless absurd moments in politics, pop culture, social media, etc. which caused similar

blank, confused reactions on our own faces. According *Know Your Meme*, this popular internet GIF originated from the reaction podcaster Drew Scanlon had to a comment from one of his friends while they were playing a video game. The GIF has been around for nearly two years, but it was not until February 2017 that it resurfaced on Twitter and gained popularity.

**2. “Cash Me Ousside”**

It was on September 15, 2016, *The Dr. Phil Show*’s YouTube channel uploaded a video in which then thirteen-year-old Danielle Bregoli uttered her now famous catchphrase, “Catch me outside, how ‘bout that?”, popularly stylized as “Cash me ousside, howbow dah?” Bregoli’s mother turned to Dr. Phil with hopes to find a solution to the teen’s “out of control” behavior. Despite the video being released in 2016, it was not until January of 2017 that the craziness of Ms. Bregoli became viral. The most popular post relating to this meme was posted on January 5 by the popular Facebook page “Digital Memes.” The post featured a heading saying “When somebody says ‘how about you save some pizza for the rest of the group.’” above Bregoli’s quote. According to *Know Your*

*Meme*, the Facebook post received over 75,000 shares and 14,000 likes. With her new fame, Danielle Bregoli has started to pursue a career in music and is rumored to have a reality show in the works.

**3. Roll Safe**

The “Roll Safe” meme features a man tapping the side of his head, with a sly grin and a side-eyed look. This picture has been used to accompany some type of logical fallacy or “life hack.” For example, the Twitter user @RyanWindoww posted the picture with the heading, “You can’t be broke if you don’t check your bank account.” Or, as seen in the picture above, “If you’re already late... Take your time... You can’t be late twice.” According to *Know You Meme*, the original picture of the man comes from the character Reece Simpson, a character played by British filmmaker and actor Kayode Ewumi. The name “Roll Safe” comes from the nickname of Ewumi’s character, Roll Safe. The “Roll Safe” meme is a staple in 2017 meme culture and will surely stick around social media timelines in 2018.

**4. What in Tarnation**

In February of 2017, the image of a cowboy hat placed over random things

began to surface. Often heading the cowboy hat were the words, “what in tarnation,” sometimes stylized (in a more “edgy” manner) as, “wot n tarnation.” This began to transform into other captions that played on the “what in tarnation.” Examples of this completely odd trend include, “wot ‘n hydration?” with the hat photoshopped over a water bottle, and “what in standard deviation” (pictured above). . The “What in Tarnation” meme is a great example of how completely random and silly a meme can be. “To me, the ‘What in Tarnation’ meme is more than a meme, it’s a culture,” **Jack Laudick (10)** said.

**5. Mocking SpongeBob**

A meme which *The Daily Dot* called the “the most insulting meme of 2017,” Mocking SpongeBob was almost certainly one of the year’s best. There is something about SpongeBob that brings about nostalgia. The *Nickelodeon* series, which has been going strong for almost twenty years, continues to make an influence beyond the television screen and onto our social media timelines. “I think it’s one of the few memes that can be parsed by someone with a low knowledge of meme history,” **Simon Grome (10)** said.

An unqualified review of the best Songs of 2017

By Sam Aldrich

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Every year wraps up with the best in music providing their personal declarations of the best in the past year’s music. While I am by no means an expert in music, this is a personal review of the best music of 2017.

In order to determine a preliminary list from which to choose, the lists from “Billboard’s Best songs of 2017: Critics Picks” and “*Rolling Stone*’s 50 Best Songs of 2017” were analyzed to find the songs that made it on both of these lists.

The remaining 22 songs were then carefully analyzed for overall impression, originality, danceability, quality of lyrics, and whether or not it can be easily sung in a normal person’s vocal range. These remaining songs, in no particular order, best met the requirements and were better suited to the personal preferences of the author.

As a disclaimer, nothing about this analysis was done with any regards to the musical complexity or professional quality due to the unqualified nature of the judge’s experience.

**1. J Balvin and Willy William - “Mi Gente”**

The instrument that starts off the song “Mi Gente” establishes an infectious rhythm from the beginning of the song, practically forcing the listeners to start dancing along with it, stopping only when the singers call out “freeze.” Unfortunately for many people this may be the only part of the song that can be sung to, as the majority of the song is in Spanish. In spite of this, the song keeps listeners moving too much to care with the unique sound of the music and contagious movement.

**2. Calvin Harris feat. Frank Ocean,**

**Migos - “Slide”**

“Slide” has a very laid back nature at the beginning with a simple piano in the background, but then almost-instantly switches to a more upbeat portion before reaching a happy medium when the main vocals begin. While Ocean may have a lower voice than some listeners, the chorus is still easy enough to sing along to. The song is not as energetic as many songs on the radio but nothing about the song inspires a listener to remain still.

**3. Portugal. The Man - “Feel It Still”**

“Feel It Still” exists in the range outside of what a normal human being should ever be able to produce, but it pairs well with the lower music instead of being abrasive musically. The song is easy to dance to with an obvious beat and enough change in the different sections of the song that it does not become monotonous. The lyrics are repetitive but have enough content to be easy to follow without too much redundancy, making for a great song with an infectious nature.

**4. 21 Savage - “Bank Account”**

The music in the background contrasts the percussive rhythm that accompanies it in much the same way the different parts of the lyrics contrast with one another, switching from very rough phrasing to a more flowing portion, and then back again. This song is not ideal for dancing due to the more lethargic nature of the song, but “Bank Account” is fairly catchy, regardless. As with other songs of this nature, the ability to rap is necessary in order to join in, but for those who cannot, this song gives more than enough to simply listen to instead.

**5. Arcade Fire - “Everything Now”**

From the moment the vocals begin, the

listener is transported to a slow motion video montage from an old movie that has been watched a thousand times. “Everything Now” has an infectious cadence that almost forces someone to start moving along. The singing is easy enough for the average car-singer to keep up with, and the entire song gives itself perfectly to a dramatic lip sync performance.

**6. Lil Uzi Vert - “XO Tour Llif3”**

The soft background music sounds almost like a child’s music box which contradicts the more rhythmic vocals and the harsher tone of the lyrics. The chorus is relatively simple to keep up with, but without the ability to rap, the verses are somewhat difficult to keep up with. Despite this, the song itself still keeps the listener moving through the infectious patterns.

**7. Drake - “Passionfruit”**

Without having heard other songs by Drake, this song seems very different from commonly played songs in 2017. “Passionfruit” has a very laidback tone, with still a good rhythm to it. While it does not inspire one to violently fling himself or herself around the room, it maintains a subtle movement that could easily be paired with mundane activities like doing the dishes. The song is easy to sing along to and extremely repetitive, making it fairly catchy and easy to remember.

**8. Selena Gomez - “Bad Liar”**

The song begins with an interesting combination of clapping and an unidentified string instrument (likely a guitar of sorts) that establishes a nice movement to follow while listening to it. The lyrics are catchy enough with an overly redundant chorus, but you can tell that Gomez is most certainly “tryin,” and her vocals definitely support this. While the

song is fairly high, it gives those without a naturally high singing voice an opportunity to break out into obnoxiously high-pitched singing, while those with higher voices can sing along. The song is different from some of Gomez’s other, more upbeat songs, giving a good contrast to ones of previous years.

**9. Ed Sheeran - “Shape of You”**

From the moment the instrument that sounds like a xylophone starts playing, the listener is instantly compelled to move to the beat. This is maintained throughout the song as it develops into a catchy rhythm. While the chorus is fairly repetitive, the verses do their job of breaking up any sense of overt repetition. The song maintains a reasonable range, making it fun to sing along to, even if a song about trying to woo a girl is hardly new (especially for Sheeran).

**10. Harry Styles - “Sign of the Times”**

Before listening to the song there was an expectation of the puny, prepubescent voice Styles shared with the world from his early days in One Direction. Instead, “Sign of the Times” presents Styles in a voice that is miraculously higher, but also simultaneously more mature. Unfortunately, this makes it somewhat harder to match Styles’ voice, but the redundant nature of the chorus allows any listener to easily squeal along to the easy going tone of the song. “Sign of the Times” has a nice contrast from beginning to end instead of the frequently monotonous songs that plague the radios. However, this song does not provide the energy that would inspire one to jump around dancing, but instead provides a slow sway by which one could passionately lip sync to after losing their voice trying to match Styles’ vocal range.



# Stars say “yes” to black dress

By Anna Svitkovich  
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There has been plenty of truth-telling in Hollywood this year. After a multitude of women spoke out against Harvey Weinstein’s sexual misconduct, a movement was launched. The “Me Too” and “Times Up” movements have taken the US by storm, used to help demonstrate the widespread prevalence of sexual assault and harassment.

Thousands of women across the country went on social media and told their stories of being sexually harassed. Multiple actresses including Brie Larson and Lena Dunham praised those who came forward. Men in Hollywood were being exposed by a united front of powerful women. However, men and women walked arm in arm down the red carpet on January 7 during the Golden Globes, where Hollywood came together like never before.

The Golden Globes are known for fashion moments, but this year’s moment made history. According to the Hollywood Foreign Press Association, a statement like this has never been made before. All the stars wore black, men and women alike. Most wore a “Times Up” pin. The question on the red carpet was not “*Who* are you wearing?”, but rather “*Why* are you wearing?”

Sarah Jessica Parker was among the women who started the idea of wearing all black. “I’m incredibly excited. I’m impressed by the work that’s being done,” she said in an *E!* Interview. “It’s an honor and a privilege to work among women that I’ve admired for so long... and to see them do the sort of work and commit themselves is really quite something.” Parker was among the many women and men at the show who support raising awareness for this ongoing problem in all workplaces.

It was not just the black dresses causing commotion. During the broadcast, some noticed that many of the women walking the carpet were wearing emerald green jewelry. While most thought it was a coincidence - or a nod to Angelina Jolie’s iconic 2009 Oscar look - some

picked up the true meaning. According to *Vogue*, “in history, emeralds have been interpreted many ways, from representing love to standing for ideas of renewal and healing.” So, stars are not only speaking out about the sexual misconduct itself, but portraying their support through every inch of their outfits.

However, jewelry was the lesser accessory of the evening. Most of the female stars did not have their normal arm candy, but rather activists of the women’s movement as guests. Michelle Williams brought the creator of the “Me Too” movement, while Emma Stone brought the legendary Billie Jean King, whom she played in her most recent movie, *The Battle of the Sexes*.



Photo courtesy of @TIMESUPNW

The red carpet was only a segment of the real show of the night, however, which also included many more stabs at gender equality. Seth Meyers, the host for the night, opened the show by saying, “Hello ladies and remaining gentlemen!” The rest of his opening monologue consisted of jokes about this year in Hollywood, some less sensitive than others. He also included a “Jokes Seth Can’t Tell” portion of his lecture where stars like Jessica Chastain, Billy Eichner, and Amy Poehler chimed in about the subject.

The presenters also brushed past the subject. Natalie Portman presented the “Best Director” category, which

happened to be made up of all men. After her co-host stated he was “honored” to be presenting the category, Portman stepped in front of the microphone to say “And here are the all-male nominees...” Her comment stirred laughter, yet was completely serious.

Multiple actresses turned their acceptance speeches into a pledge for “Me Too” and “Time’s Up.”. Elizabeth Moss, who won “best actress” for her role in *The Handmaid’s Tale*, voiced praise for the show’s book and its author, Margaret Atwood, and a call to action for young girls everywhere.

“We no longer live in the blank white spaces at the edge of print,” Moss said “We no longer live in the gaps between the stories. We are the story in print, and we are writing the story ourselves.” She proceeded to thank other actresses and women who have stepped forward and spoken out against sexual harassment.

Oprah Winfrey also gave an amazing speech empowering young girls after receiving the Cecil B. Demille Award. Her speech did not dwell on the past, but rather stated her excitement for the future of gender equality. “So I want all the girls watching here, now, to know that a new day is on the horizon! And when that new day finally dawns, it will be because of a lot of magnificent women, many of whom are right here in this room tonight, and some pretty phenomenal men, fighting hard to make sure that they become the leaders who take us to the time when nobody ever has to say ‘Me too’ again,” Winfrey said. Her speech was inspiring enough for people around the country to start calling for Oprah to run for president in 2020, as seen on Twitter along with other social media platforms.

Now, other award shows have not had the same black-dress trend, yet some stars have continued to wear there “Times Up” pins. Many women (and some men) still continue to dedicate their speeches to the movement. However, the Golden Globes are just the beginning of the conversation happening around the world: to end sexual harassment and gender inequalities.

## Jumanji brings humor to new year

By Olivia Piziali  
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On December 20, 2017, *Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle*, a modern take on the ‘90s original it is based off of, was released in theaters. 22 years after the original, the series returns with a star studded cast and plenty of laughs to go around. Many fans of the original were curious to see how this adaptation would play out especially after the death of Robin Williams, who starred in the original. The film has garnered a huge success earning \$36 million on its opening weekend and has made over 520 million dollars worldwide, according to *Box Office Mojo*.

The movie takes place twenty years after the original *Jumanji*, in the year 2016. The movie following four high schoolers - nerdy gamer Spencer Gilpin, jock Anthony “Fridge” Johnson, popular girl Bethany Walker, and wallflower Martha Kaply - after they each are placed in detention together. The characters’ (each an oddball in his or her own right) punishment, as a result of their actions, is to clear out the basement of the school. In the process, they discover the multiplayer action-adventure game *Jumanji*.

They decide to take a break from cleaning the basement and play the game for a bit, but what they do not know is what is coming for them. The teenagers select their characters, however, they are magically transported into the game (with some movie magic, in more ways than one) and into the bodies of the avatars each one chose.

Spencer chose Dr. Smolder Bravestone, a tough muscular explorer played by Dwayne Johnson. Fridge chose Franklin “Mouse” Finbar, a short zoologist played by Kevin Hart. Bethany chose Professor Sheldon “Shelly” Oberon who is an overweight, male cartographer played by Jack Black. Lastly, Martha chose Ruby

Roundhouse, a gorgeous martial art expert played by Karen Gillan. They each chose characters who are polarizing opposites of themselves.

While it is cool to see the teenagers become metaphorical polar opposites of themselves, I found the whole concept to be very stereotypical. The teenagers follow typical stereotypes in movies, namely the nerdy guy who loves video games, the (less-than-intelligent) football player, the snobby, pretty girl, and the shy girl with no friends. I did not like that at least one character had to be pretty. I wanted to see a more fair representation as to what our society looks like. Beauty and brawn is not the only thing that our society has become.

Throughout the course of the movie, each player has to battle his or her weaknesses, facing obstacles to his or her character and ability along the way. The characters face a new challenge each “level” in order to move on to the next one. Each player has three lives, which they start to lose lives through various means. If they lose all their lives, their character dies off. I really loved the moments when each character was able to show strength and weakness, sometimes at the same time in a humorous manner. In contrast to the appearance of the characters, the film explores a more realistic approach of human imperfection. The only character that is an exception to that idea is Johnson’s, Smolder Bravestone, who has no ostensible weaknesses.

This movie is perfect for moviegoers who love to laugh but also want some action. The actors perfectly play their *Jumanji* alter-egos and teenage selves exquisitely. Jack Black delivered a remarkable back-and-forth between an intelligent middle-aged man and the teenage girl - Bethany - “playing” him. *Jumanji* is the film to watch for the whole family and is the perfect figurative punch of laughter to start off 2018.

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# Show Choir competition season!

## Show Choir groups travel to regional tournaments around Cincinnati

By Claire Wallace

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Staff Writer

On Saturday, January 6, By Request, Allure, and Revolution participated in Show Choir Preview Night at Loveland High School (LHS). This performance night allowed students and the community a sneak peek at the 2018 Loveland Show Choir performances before the start of their competitive season. Shows which were virtual sell-outs again this year, were headed by **Mr. Miller (Choir)**, the director of all 3 groups. He is joined by assistant directors **Donna Bernstein**, **Chloe Jackson**, and **Nancy Wagner**, along with choreographers **Jared Voss** and **Tori Burns**.

By Request is Loveland High School's mixed group. The group has an award-winning history, having earned grand champion, best vocals, best choreography and best band multiple times around the tri-state area. Most recently, the group won grand champions at the Beavercreek Midwest Show Choir Classic. This year, By Request's opener featured a medley of 2 songs, "Never Close our Eyes" by Adam Lambert and "The Other Side" by Bruno Mars. The show finishes with a fast-paced, energetic rendition of Jimi Hendrix's "Fire." Soloists this year include **Paige Miller (12)**, **Kaylee Michael (12)** and **Adam Paddock (12)**.

"I'm super excited for this upcoming season because I love the show and performing is so much fun!" **Caroline Wagner (10)** said. The dresses this season are matte gold for the first few numbers, and the guys wear dark grey suits which is switched out with a grey sweatshirt and embellished hoodie. The girls' second costume is a sparkly flowing orange top with jeans.

Allure, LHS' ladies-only choir, opened their show with "Who Do You Love" by Marianas Trench, followed by a ballad called "How to Return Home," by Brian Lowdermilk and Kait Kerrigan, respectively. Their closer was "Lucky Strike" by Maroon 5. Featured soloists this year are **Skylar Belieu (10)**, **Nicole Young (10)**, **Paige O'Donnell (10)**, **Anna Geiger (9)**, and **Sophia Horrigan (10)**.

For some, Allure captivated the scene from the moment they hit the stage in ombre finish dresses in shades of pink

and blue. "The jumpsuits are so fun," **Lexi Walton (10)** said. "I think they make everyone look fabulous. They are so sparkly too!" A costume change featured dazzling sequined jumpsuits in hues of red and gold.

The ladies are also looking forward to their upcoming competitions. "I'm really excited because after each performance, in front of different audiences, you get this amazing feeling of accomplishment," **Carson Sarver (10)**, a member of Allure, said. "And the competitions are fun because you get to hang out with your friends; it's great for bonding as a group."

With this year being only the fourth the group has been in existence, Allure has burst onto the show choir scene in a big way, having won grand champion, best choreography, best vocals, and best band at competitions in the past 3 seasons. They most recently won the unisex division at the Beavercreek Midwest Show Choir Classic and qualified for the mixed group finals at the competition.

Revolution is the mixed group from Loveland Middle School (LMS), featuring grades 6-8. Revolution's competition show boasted high energy tween songs such as "Perfect Day" from the movie *Legally Blonde*, a remix of "Umbrella" by Rihanna, and "Somewhere Over the Rainbow" which is originally by Israel Kamakawiwo'ole. Their show closed with the song "Cruisin' for a Bruisin" by Ross Lynch, Grace Phipps, and Jason Evigan.

They had a boys-only number, which was performed to the song "California Girls" by The Beach Boys, and a girls only number, performed to "California Gurls" by Katy Perry. The girls wore sparkling blue and green dresses for the first part of the show, and pink tropical print dresses for the second half. The boys wore tan suits and switched into blue hawaiian shirts.

This year, Loveland Show Choirs started their official competition season on January 12 in Beavercreek, Ohio. In the following weeks, they travel throughout Ohio and Indiana to various competitions, with a longer trip planned to a Chicago area competition in March. The competition season ends locally in late March with the Fairfield Crystal Classic competition.

All three groups assist in hosting Showfest, a popular

competition for local and regional show choirs that serves as a major fundraiser for the groups. This year, Showfest is scheduled for the weekend of February 9-10. While Loveland Show Choirs do not compete during Showfest, they do offer exhibition performances near the end of each night. The final chance to catch the award-winning groups is at their annual fundraiser in May, which is set to feature songs by Elvis Presley.



Photo by Shane Harden

**Lexi Duff (10)** and **Calloway Hefner (10)** of By Request perform during Show Choir Preview Night. The official season started on January 12 with a competition in Beavercreek.

# Valentine's Day deserving of more praise than hate

By Alyssa James

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Editor



Photo courtesy of Alex Crick

Valentine's Day, the stereotypical holiday when couples buy cheesy gifts for each other and single people loathe the love in the air, gets more discrimination than it deserves. People who aren't in relationships seem to hate the holiday before even giving it a chance; but in reality, anyone can happily celebrate despite their relationship status on February 14.

For those in a happy relationship, it's simple. Take one step into the seasonal aisle at any Kroger or Meijer and the piles pink and red boxes of candy, flowers and stuffed animals are endless. It can be easy to get caught up in the stress of life and neglect to take a little extra time to really appreciate your relationship; Valentine's Day sets aside a day just to celebrate endless love for one another.

On the other hand, approaching Valentine's day single can make it hard to appreciate the holiday that's all about

love. However, just think about it: love is not subject to relationships. Therefore, this holiday can be used to celebrate the love of both friendships and family as well.

For example, "*Galentine's Day*," the twist on Valentine's Day to celebrate the girls is the perfect way to enjoy the day with friends. *Galentine's Day* serves as a great excuse to get dressed up and go out to dinner with no romantic relationship drama.

Celebrating your family on Valentine's Day is just as important. It can be as simple as surprising your mom with flowers, giving your grandparents chocolates, or even helping a younger sibling with his or her own Valentine's box.

If it weren't for Valentine's Day, there would be no elementary school parties with elaborate boxes and creative cards and candy for everyone. The "Valentine's party" is something that children everywhere look forward to celebrating.

Regardless of appreciation for loved ones of all sorts, this can even be a holiday for self-appreciation. Treat yourself! It can be difficult to remember to take some extra time to appreciate yourself, but it is important, nonetheless, and Valentine's Day is the perfect opportunity. Go shopping, get yourself chocolates, or spend the night watching movies and taking the break that you deserve.

Sure, there are circumstances that make up a bad Valentine's Day. Whether it's a recent break-up or an overall bad day, that doesn't make it a bad *holiday*. With so many reasons to love life and so little time to step back and truly appreciate the sources of your love, it is important to fill the one day of the year intended for this with nothing but happiness.

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# Basketball band has long history, bright future

Kayla Gibbins

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Loveland High School (LHS) basketball games are highly frequented events. Between the action of the game, the roar of the crowd, and the new pre-game light shows, a lot happens at both the boys’ and girls’ home games. Adding to this experience is the LHS Basketball Band, sitting in the stands and providing a soundtrack of “pep” tunes for the games. The basketball band has a long history at Loveland. When **Mr. Geoffrey Miller (Music)** was hired four years ago, he took over the Basketball Band from **Mr. Bernardo Lopez**. According to Miller, Basketball Band used to be a mandatory activity. It was first required for the Concert Band, and then the torch was passed to the Jazz Band. Under Miller’s direction, however, Basketball Band was made into an extended extracurricular activity available to all band students. “If you force a kid to do anything, they don’t want to do it,” Miller said, “[but] if you make it really fun, they’re dying to do it.” Miller said, explaining the switch to an extracurricular basketball band.

“Everyone can do it,” **Quinn Caney (12)**, a trumpet player in the Band, said, explaining the openness of the new extracurricular in comparison to the other Bands. Since Basketball Band is open to more band students, more are able to participate. The only rehearsals for Basketball Band occur right before the the games, so the schedule for Basketball Band is much less time-consuming than other band extracurriculars. As a result, more kids are able to get involved in band, especially those who do not have room in their schedules for other band extracurriculars such as marching band. The band plays a large variety of songs at each game. Student favorites include; “Take on Me,” “Rock Lobster,” and “Vehicle.” Miller has noticed that pop songs are not the only popular tunes at Loveland. “Throwbacks work really well here at Loveland, which I dig,” he said. “Loveland loves a good throwback.” According to Miller, a version of the “Cupid Shuffle” was even a suggested tune for the band. Students join Basketball Band for a variety of reasons, the most popular of which seems to be the sense of comradery among the students. “I joined Basketball Band because Marching Band was

over and I really enjoy hanging out with Marching Band people and a lot of them do Basketball Band,” **Jacob Aldrich (9)** said, a clarinet player in his first year of Basketball Band.. “I joined Basketball Band because my friends raved about it to me the year before I joined,” **Grace Holiday (11)** said. Holiday and other students know band extracurriculars for the sense of family that is fostered among members, and the Basketball Band does not seem to be an exception. Students are also fans of how much fun the games are, and the special memories created within those stands. “My favorite part [of the games] is when the whole band starts confusedly yelling after something big happens during the game, and we have no idea what’s going on because we were distracted trying to decide what to play next!” Holiday said. It seems the band kids flock to Basketball Band for the friends, and stay for them as well. Though the Basketball Band has changed throughout the years, it has been present in the high school tradition for many years. It is an activity with a long legacy, and students’ efforts to increase school spirit through music go a long way in the enclosed gym. This organization is one to keep an eye on as it grows and evolves alongside the student body and community.

# Student athletes wish for new pool at high school


Anna Svtkovich

@asvitty | Staff writer

Loveland Athletics are a huge part of the spirit that drives the entire Loveland community. Tiger Nation works hard to make sure every sport is cheered for, along with help from Spirit Club and the Athletic Department. The Girl’s Soccer Team received constant support and resources during their road to the state championship. The Boy’s and Girl’s Tennis teams were gifted brand new tennis courts in 2016. The list of encouragement from Loveland’s Boosters goes on and on, though there is a question that needs be asked: where is the swimming pool? Swimming is one of the most important sports at the school. Like every other athlete, the swimmers lift in the weight room and practice almost every day. Last season, swimmer **Sarah Klenke (11)** qualified for the State Competition. Alongside other state-level victories in past years, Loveland High School (LHS) could be looking at even more statewide success for its swim teams in its future with a pool to host longer and more numerous practices,. During the winter, these athletes are up for 5:00 AM practices almost every morning. However, most of them have to leave their houses at least a half-hour earlier to drive a longer distance than if they were to practice at the high school.

In fact, swimmers who can drive cannot go straight to the facility they are practicing at, but rather have to drive to the high school and then wait for a bus to arrive at 4:30 AM to drive them there, due to athletic regulations put out by the Athletic Department. **Nami Cannon (10)**, one of the leading swimmers on the girl’s team, lives only a few minutes from the school. “I have to leave my house at 4:15 in order to make the bus at school when we practice,” she said. “If we had a pool at the school, we wouldn’t have to waste time driving. I could sleep another half hour!” Cannon continued to say that if Loveland built a pool there would be no need to practice in the morning. “The reason we practice in the morning is because most of the facilities we practice at like Blue Ash [YMCA] or Sycamore [High School] are not available after school this time of year because other schools already have them booked.” Cannon said. She also believes that if the school were to build a pool, more people would want to join the swim team. “I encourage my friends to join our team so we have more members, but nobody wants to wake up that early in the morning, especially when the temperature outside is in the single digits.” Cannon’s older sister **Aya Cannon (12)** said the pool could be used for recreational purposes as well. “The pool could be used during the summer, open to


the public, while allowing the swim team to have a place to practice all year round,” she said. Both she and Nami said that the school would also gain revenue because more people would want to attend more meets, along with some cash from concessions, spirit wear, etc. Money is a significant obstacle for the construction of a pool to overcome. Due to the recent addition of new tennis courts in 2016, among other things, the Athletic Department is not looking to spend more money on another big project so quickly. According to *Fixr*, an indoor pool would cost around \$100,000 and possibly more, depending on what features the school wanted to include. Another issue for the Athletic Department would be where to put the pool. It cannot go on the field where cross country warms up because that area is technically a park, owned by the city. A few other suggestions have been the field where band practices and the field behind the school parking lot. However, band will protest putting it on their practice field, and there has been talk of expanding the parking lot for the incoming classes, which are some of the largest LHS has seen. Many have stated that the pool would not have to be large, just big enough to fit a competitive swimming pool with a few sets of bleachers and a locker room. But a pool will take up enough space to cause a debate, just like any other stadium that has been built.




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# College football playoff should expand for more teams

By Sam Greenberg

@samhgreennberg | Staff Writer

With the College Football Playoff (CFP) already four years old, the argument to expand to more than four teams is becoming stronger. By including only four teams, it is without question that certain teams who have a shot at winning a national championship are being left out.

The CFP replaced the Bowl Championship Series (BCS) National Championship in 2014. The championship, which began in 1998, consisted of two teams selected by a series of polls and computer rankings, a process which proved to be controversial. Sports fans and analysts were skeptical of the national championship being awarded to the winner of a single postseason game. This led to the implementation of a College Football Playoff with four teams, in which a team needed to win two games to win the title, as opposed to one during the BCS era.

One of the major downsides of a four-team playoff is the possibility of excluding legitimate title-contending teams. Especially with the five major conferences - ACC, Big 12, Big Ten, Pac-12 and the SEC - one team from a major conference is destined to be left behind. Expanding the playoff would prevent that from

happening and allow for a more diverse pool of teams representing different conferences to vie for a title.

In an apparent attempt to defend the four-team setup, College Football Playoff executive director Bill Hancock said to CBS Sports, “scarcity breeds passion.” In a way, he is right. Allowing only a select few to compete for a national championship stresses the importance of the college football regular season.

Some fans, however support the existing system. "Keep it as it is and the kinks will work out," **Mr. Damewood (English)** said about the prospect of an eight team playoff. "Are we giving out participation trophies or championship trophies?"

One loss can be detrimental to a team's shot at winning a national championship. However, because one defeat can ruin a team's season, what is stopping a college from purposely scheduling weak teams? By choosing to play "cupcake" teams, a school can avoid a loss and not have to go through their conference play worried about adding a second loss to their record.

For example, last year Ohio State lost an early game to Oklahoma adding a loss to their not-even-one-month-season. The OSU-Oklahoma showdown was a treat for fans, who were eager to see two powerhouse teams face off. For OSU football administrators, it could have been

a wakeup call. Had they scheduled a weaker team and won, they would have finished the season with one loss and likely earned a bid to the CFP. Now, OSU front office members might be hesitant to schedule another Oklahoma.

If this trend were to happen with other teams, the excitement of a non-conference matchup between two powerhouse teams would be no more unless the CFP expands to more teams. With an expansion, teams would not be apprehensive about adding a loss to their record and would not worry about scheduling tough non-conference opponents.

The act of an underdog proving doubters and odds makers wrong and shocking the sports world is truly beautiful and inspiring, and something the CFP lacks. Joe Thomas of *Sports Illustrated* brings up the point: "How would you like to be a MAC team, knowing in training camp you are already eliminated from the national title race by virtue of the conference your school signed up for?"

To sum up, the College Football Playoff needs some sort of change. "I think they should do a six team playoff where the top two teams get a bye into the semis," **Ben Westley (10)** said. Whether it is six, eight, or another number of teams, a change is necessary so college football can continue to stay exciting, and leave the redundancy of a four-team setup on the sidelines.

# UCF football goes from 0-12 to 13-0

By Grisha Tackett

@TheRealGrishaT8 | Staff Writer

The University of Central Florida (UCF) Knights outlasted the Auburn Tigers in the Peach Bowl on New Year's Day, leading them to a perfect 13-0 record. Head coach, Scott Frost, led the team to a 34-27 victory. UCF quarterback McKenzie Milton shocked the football world by throwing for 358 yards and two passing touchdowns. The win, however, left many skeptics wondering why the Knights were not considered more seriously for a playoff spot. Those four slots were granted to the teams of Clemson, Oklahoma, Georgia, and, controversially, Alabama.

Heading into the Peach Bowl, many analysts doubted the Knights' ability to compete with a high-tier team such as the Tigers. Auburn is a part of the SEC, which is historically known as a tough, elite conference. In the past ten years, seven teams from the SEC have won the national championship. According to ESPN, this Peach Bowl was the third time both of these teams have faced off, with Auburn winning the first two. Analysts also cited that because the Knights were in an easier conference,



Photo courtesy of elisfkc

Head coach, Scott Frost, led the Knights to a perfect 16-0 season. Earlier this season, he accepted a head coaching job at Nebraska for the 2018 season.

they weren't prepared for a challenge.

The win left many UCF fans upset and confused as to why the Knights were denied a playoff bid. Many analysts claimed that the main reason was because of their easy schedule. Their schedule did not include a single team from big-name conferences such as the SEC, the ACC and the PAC 12. While they did beat teams such as Maryland and Memphis, their schedule mostly included lower-tier teams.

“[UCF] should’ve been ranked in the Top 10 - it’s just hard to judge how good they are when they don’t play any good teams,” **Greg Ballman (11)** said about the Knights. “It’s partially their own fault for not scheduling more competitive games. They’re definitely not Top 5 and can’t compete at that level.”

**Sam Krimmins (11)** also took to defending the playoff committee. "UCF is not nearly on the same skill level as any of the four teams in the playoffs," and "It doesn't matter if they are undefeated: they play community college teams."

Perhaps understandably, head coach Scott Frost felt insulted by these opinions. "To us, it appeared like it was a concerted effort to keep us a reasonable distance away from the top four to avoid controversy," he asserted.

In protest, UCF athletic director Danny White proclaimed the Knights as the true national champions and gave the entire coaching staff generous bonuses, and gave the entire team championship rings as well.

"We have a heck of a football team, and the reason we do is because we have great kids who work very hard," he later told *Sporting News*, "and I don't think it's being represented by the CFP committee."

Scott Frost stepped in as head coach back in 2016. In 2015, the Knight's led an 0-12 record, losing every single game they played. In just two seasons, Frost turned the 0-12 into a perfect 13-0. During his first season, the Knights finished third in their conference and had a 6-7 record. UCF finally put their name on the map after their perfect 2017 season and inspired many across the nation. Frost will be leaving the Knights during the 2018 season. He will instead take over as head coach at Nebraska, a Big 10 conference team.

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# Superbugs causing super problems

By Madelyn Crowley  
@lovelandroar | staff writer

Anyone who has ever had pneumonia or strep throat, among other common bacterial infections, has most likely treated these diseases with antibiotics. An antibiotic is a powerful drug administered to destroy and slow the growth of bacterial infections. However, what may not be common knowledge is that these same antibiotics that are intended to be used to fight bacteria are actually causing the bacteria to fight us.

According to Live Science, the term “superbug” first appeared to the public some time after 1970. Back then, it was employed to describe pollution-eating microbes, but today it means something more injurious to humans. A superbug, simply put, is a bacteria resistant to antibiotics.

One may ask, how do these bacteria resist such strong drugs meant to obliterate them? The answer is a straightforward one: members of the general public have abused these antibiotics to the point where the more antibiotics that are used, the more resistant the bacteria become.

Viral bacteria are able to build resistance to antibiotics due to the presence of specific genes that is carried to various other bacteria in the body, extending to them the effect of resistance to different antibiotics. Some of these genes include the NDM-1 gene, which is an enzyme that shows up in pneumonia and urinary tract infections and can be acquired by common bacteria..

This enzyme creates resistance toward carbapenem (among other antibacterials), an antibiotic which is often used as a last resort when other ones do not work. In addition to NDM-1, another commonly known resistant bacteria is MRSA, which has been a problem for years because

it does not respond to most antibiotics, making common illnesses even harder to cure.

It is little wonder that the average

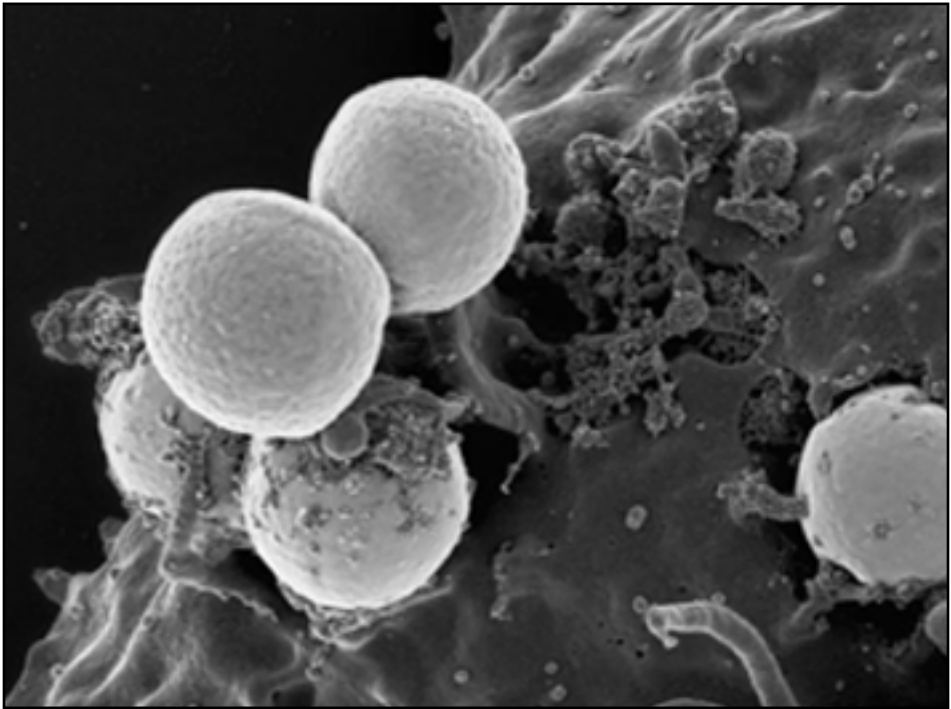


Photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

consumer chooses to buy antibiotics for illnesses that can be treated without them. The instant gratification, so to speak, provided by these antibacterials means choosing to overload the body with ineffective medicine rather than waiting for the body’s immune system to procure its own resistance to the sickness. .

It is counter intuitive to use antibiotics in such a way because over time, the body will become sicker and weaker due to the increased resistance of bacteria that develops as a result. The stereotypical image that pops into some people’s minds when they think of a superbug may be of a giant, perhaps insectoid organism that grows inside the body. Only part of this is true. Rather, it is many tiny bacteria that

are forming a band of resistance, which some may argue is even scarier.

According to professor of infectious diseases and microbiologist Peter

medical world that have prolonged life and made diseases that were once without cure easily medicated with antibiotics and other forms of medicine. However, some of these diseases are now becoming impossible to treat - according to Collignon, in the developing world, more than half of the infections caused by common bacteria have evolved to be untreatable.

What does this mean for cold and flu season? Winter is generally the inception of certain illnesses, when it seems like everyone is sick. It is just what happens. But what if the cause for rampant, widespread illness is actually due to something more substantial?

Most of the sicknesses in the winter are viral infections for which antibiotics are unnecessary and ineffective. One of the observations the average person has to make when they are sick is if he or she has a bacterial infection. The rule of thumb is that most colds are viral infections. The symptoms of the common cold are a cough, runny nose, and sore throat, all of which will eventually heal after about a week. If a cough persists beyond the normal healing period, over-the-counter medications will work just fine.

Also, simple precautions during the sick season like avoiding other sick people, eating healthier, and getting a sufficient amount of sleep are all simple ways to avoid sickness early on. However, many people do not do these things, perpetuating the sick season and the growth of the superbug.

Disease will always exist, but today it is counterintuitively becoming harder to prevent, even with advances in science and medicine. Society will be profuse in common bacterial infections that have progressed to be difficult or impossible to treat due to the increased resistance of bacteria in the body.

## Transparent phones soon to be made possible by graphene

By Mihaela Manova  
@lovelandroar | staff writer

A new material has been introduced to the world market that can possibly change all electronic devices. Under the name of graphene, it is labeled by Futurism as the “material of the future.” A single layer of this material is two hundred times stronger than steel and still highly flexible. War technologies have the potential to evolve, as well as the introduction of ultra flexible and transparent phones. The material was extracted by Andre Geim and Konstantin Novoselov in 2004 at the University of Manchester, while their discovery started making headlines in the tech community last year.

This revelation was extracted from the simple graphite used in pencils. According to the University of Manchester, “graphene is the world’s first 2D material. It is the thinnest material possible as well as being transparent.” The material is an effective conductor of heat and electricity, while also functioning as a strong barrier.

One of the most remarkable features about this, found in research conducted by the City University of New York, is the discovery of diamene, two superimposed layers of graphene that, together, are averaged to be stronger than diamonds. According to Newsweek, “Bullet-proof vests made up of graphene are just one example of how this material has the

ability to be a game changer.”

The University of Manchester poses the question: “How will it help the world?” They answer by talking about the versatility of graphene, such as how it can help for new water purification technology in developing countries while giving consumers “flexible, durable, semi-transparent phones.” According to TheNextWeb, graphene is now used by one of the biggest companies in the world, Samsung, which is “inching closer to making better batteries thanks to using graphene instead of lithium, which currently powers most phones and electric vehicles.” Apparently this breakthrough with graphene will make a phone “recharge fully in 12 minutes.”

The inventors - Geim and Novoselov - won The Nobel Prize in Physics in 2010 for their discovery, as stated by Scientific American. As a result of their success and exploration in new technological advances, the University of Manchester wrote about how they welcomed groups from around the world to learn and explore this material.

The positive takeaways from graphene are the possible use of transparent and flexible devices, new impervious barriers, and the possible end to the danger of polluted water in underdeveloped nations. The future of technology, wars, and struggling nations may depend on the use and exploration of this material. Going into 2018, new changes and revelations can be expected that deal with graphene.

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# Legend of Loveland “frogman” lives on

By: Madeline Crowley and Claire Krabacher

@lovelandroar Staff Writers

The legend of the Loveland Frogman has perpetuated over decades through alleged sightings of a frog or lizard-like creature near the Little Miami River. The creature has been described as being about three to four feet tall, with leathery skin, and having the face of a frog. According to sightings, the creature walks on its hind legs and appears to be about sixty pounds.

Reported sightings include one in 1955 by a businessman leaving a bar, and one in 2016 by a couple playing *Pokemon Go*. However, the most detailed reports were from two police officers who said they saw the creature on a clear March night in 1972. The story has been passed down over the years, and there are multiple renditions about that event, of one of the first sightings of the Loveland Frog that took place on that night.

According to *Week in Weird*, the mystery of the Frogman may have originated in the time the Native American Shawnee tribe inhabited the regions around the Little Miami River. They were aware of a frog-like monster, a creature that they called the *Shawnahooc*, or “river demon,” described as “a bipedal reptile living along the banks of the river.” The frog threatened the native tribes, but a battle with the natives ultimately forced it into hiding. When European settlers drove Native Americans off of their land, the “river monster” was said to return to the banks of the Little Miami to torment the new residents.

The ominous frogman has been rumored to lurk in the eerie waters of the Little Miami River. According to **Mr. Zinnecker (fantasy & sci-fi)**, the first recorded sighting of the Loveland Frogman was in 1955, when a businessman who lived in Loveland at the time was leaving a bar around 3:00 AM, and reported seeing three grotesque, up-right amphibians walking on the side of Twightwee Road. Other versions of the sighting include that the Frogmen were under a bridge.

According to Zinnecker, the next sighting was in 1972 when Loveland Police Officer Ray Shockey was driving along the Little Miami River. According to the book *Unexplained!* by Jerome Clark, the Frogman is a “a four-foot-tall, frog-faced biped with textured leathery skin.”

Zinnecker actually knew Officer Shockey because he taught his son, explaining that he was a police officer for 30 years. “[Shockey] thought it was a dead animal so he got out to move it and the thing stood up and jumped over the guardrail,” Zinnecker said.

Shockey continued to the police station where he got another officer, Mark Mathews, involved. In a 2016 interview, Mathews told *WCPO*, “Naturally, I didn’t believe him...but I could somehow tell from his demeanor that he did see something.” Mathews began to believe Shockey when the two returned to the spot and apparently found scrape marks leading down the hill into the river. Zinnecker suggested another officer saw and attempted to shoot the creature at some point, but this information is unconfirmed.

The Frogman was once again allegedly spotted by Sam Jacobs and his girlfriend while playing *Pokemon Go* near Loveland Madeira and Lake Isabella, according to *WCPO*. “We saw this huge frog near the water....Then the thing stood up and and walked on its hind legs.” Jacobs told *WCPO*. “I realize this sounds crazy, but I swear on my grandmother’s grave this is the truth.” It is far from confirmed that this couple actually saw the Loveland Frogman, but Jacobs claims he had never seen anything like it before.

There is much skepticism surrounding this legend, many believing that the sightings have been fabricated or that the Loveland Frog has been mistaken for some other non-mythological creature.

“My guess is that it began as some kind of practical joke [and that the story has been somewhat overblown],” Zinnecker said. However, the legend of of the Loveland Frogman yet persists,

The popularity of the Frogman’s legacy seems to have has grown and lived on throughout the years, with the legend inspiring things such as the annual “Loveland Frogman Race,” a recreational basketball team called “The Loveland Frogmen.” There was even a musical created about the Frogman - *Hot Damn! It’s the Loveland Frog* - a bluegrass musical that was performed at the Cincinnati Theater Festival in May of 2014. The story is not limited to just the small city of Loveland, even having gained national attention over time Websites such as *Wikipedia* and *Snopes* have both published synopses of the infamous Frogman.



Photo courtesy of *Unexplained!* by Jerome Clark

The Loveland Frogman stands captuerd in headlights in an illustration. The illustration was made by Ray Shockey’s sister after a “sighting” of the creature.

## Slime and fidget spinners, among others, controlled 2017

By Mihaela Manova

@lovelandroar Staff Writer

In any given year, there are a multitude of trends that catch the crazed fancy of the general public. 2017 was no exception: Slime, fidget spinners, rose gold, and dabbing were among the top trends of last year.

Slime was - hyperbolically - all the rage in 2017. Many kids would go to the local craft store with their parents to buy supplies for homemade slime. According to *ScienceTrends.com*, “in order to make slime, you need Elmer’s glue, food coloring (any color you prefer), liquid starch, baking soda, and borax powder.” There were various types of slime, ranging in different colors and textures. Some popular slime varieties were fluffy, crunchy, or regular old squishy. The most popular type of slime in 2017 was glitter slime. Glitter attracts everything, so it would often turn into a huge mess for parents, but kids loved it nonetheless.

Another popular trend, well-liked by kids but used by all ages, was, most definitely (and inevitably), fidget spinners. Although they were popular with some, they were not with others. “Fidget spinners were my least favorite trend of the year. They were very annoying,” **Maria Reich (11)** said. According to the *New York Times*, studies have shown that “fidget spinners offer a therapeutic aid for children with ADHD and anxiety to help relieve stress.”

In the summer of 1993, a Florida inventor named Catherine Hettinger invented an ancestral prototype of the modern fidget spinner to help with her daughter being diagnosed with an autoimmune disorder. At the time, Hasbro declined to go ahead with her invention. Eventually, small manufacturers then decided to market endless variations of the spinners.

Most fidget spinners are three-prong or a snowflake-shaped device made out of plastic or metal that are fitted with a ball shaped bearing in the center allowing them to easily be spun by someone’s fingertips. Next time you see one, pick one up; start spinning; and enjoy endless amounts of fun.

Another trend, one that continued into 2017, was the “dance” move of dabbing. Since 2015, this popular dance craze has been sweeping the nation. People of all ages, from five-year-old kids to eighty-year-old grandmas, are seen in Internet videos dabbing, whether to some music at a party or unprompted.

For the (still) unaware, a dab is basically where people drop their heads into the bent crook of their slanted arms, often while raising their other arm out straight in a parallel direction. (Do not be surprised if you still see people dabbing in celebration or at weddings or parties in 2018).

Lastly, a trend that controlled not only the Cincinnati area but the whole country was Fiona the Hippo. Some people may not classify Fiona as a trend, but she may as well have been. In case one does not know, Fiona was born two months premature at the Cincinnati Zoo, where she still resides. According to *ABC News*, she weighed only 29 pounds, when a typical sized baby hippo weighs anywhere between 55 to 120 pounds.

The popularity of these trends made 2017 what it was in the social media world. There was much adversity, controversy, and hardship last year, but these trends - edgy or cringey as they are - made the year more enjoyable and worthwhile, bringing positivity and laughter to a time of struggle. Here’s to hoping more trends like these appear in 2018 to make that year as great as entertainment 2017 proved to be (in some manners, anyway).



Photo courtesy of flickr.

Fiona the hippo wades in her enclosure at the Cincinnati Zoo. Fiona was the first hippo to survive being born 6 weeks prematurely, and she recently celebrated her 1st birthday.

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New Year’s resolutions demonstrate goals of self-improvement

By Claire Wallace  
@lovelandroar Staff writer

Welcome to the first month of the new year! Are you feeling that not much has changed, and the only thing that is different is how often you write the wrong date on a paper? Traditionally, people all over the world make vows, or “resolutions,” on New Year’s to themselves to attempt to make a significant change in their lives during the coming year. If a person is determined, they might have success with their resolution. But for most people, New Year’s resolutions do not actually pan out.

A person might start off strong and with good intentions, and begin the year by crushing resolution goals. A few weeks in, however he or she may become lazy and end up slipping back into old habits, ultimately giving up on his or her resolution and thereby making no change at all.

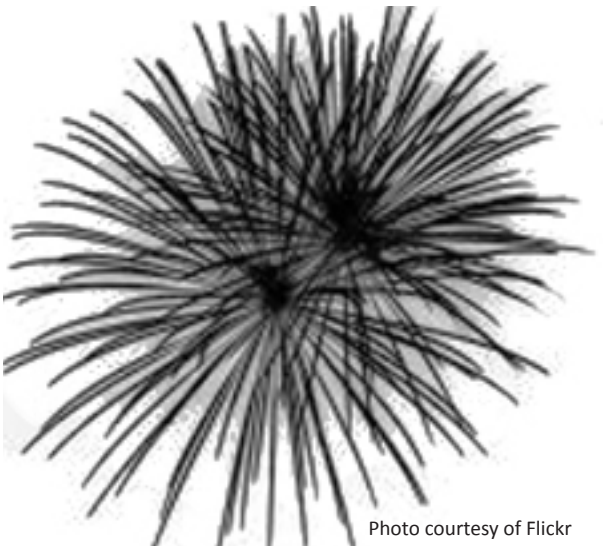
You might be thinking that there is no easily attainable way to stick to a New Year’s resolution, but there are small things a person can do to make the resolution stick. According to *Fox News*, “setting small attainable goals or finding someone to keep you in line with your goals” helps you to stay on top of your goals.

Another suggestion is to focus on progression, rather than perfection. This means taking measurable baby steps toward your goal, and not just expecting to completely change a habit on the very first day of the new year.

“I’ve never really completed my resolutions, but I have a wish bracelet and I wished my resolutions on it. I think it will motivate me during the year,” **Carson Sarver (10)** said. If you haven’t come up with any resolutions yet, it

is certainly not too late to start! Here are some ideas:

- Getting better grades
  - Studying more
  - Getting a job
  - Saving money
- Striving to make a varsity team (extra practice, or joining a club team could help)
- Or, alternatively you could complete a project that has been on the back burner for quite some time. “My only New Year’s resolution is to actually start driver’s ed,” **Sophia Horrigan (10)** said.
- Some students might not choose to participate in resolutions, saying they are too much effort with all of their other responsibilities. “I’ve never really made resolutions,” **Julia Bayer (10)** said. “They’re too much of a hassle and seem pointless.” It is understandable why many students have no resolutions, but some students simply call them by a different name.
- “I haven’t made resolutions, but I [do] have personal goals that I set kind of as a reset for myself for the New Year,” **Eva Sturm (10)** said. No matter what you call them, these “resets” are not as pointless as they may seem. They allow people time to view past, potentially unhealthy or ineffective behaviors and habits and come up with methods for correcting them.
- But exactly how did we start making resolutions for New Year’s? According to *The Sun*, “[Resolutions] can



be traced back to ancient times, and even early religious traditions.” People ranging from the ancient Babylonians, the Romans, and those living in medieval England all made some sort of goal for the new year, in between Christmas and when the calendar switched to the next year.

All of the traditions are meant to be a reflection on self-improvement. Common resolutions today involve being healthy, working out regularly, and eating healthier, especially after all of the cookies and treats during the holiday season. Overall, New Year’s resolutions can steer people back on track toward their goals and passions for the New Year. They can be successfully started - and completed - if one simply stays focused.

Artistic Expertise: stringing it all together

Strings classes reflect artistry of music and student achievement

By Sam Aldrich  
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The Loveland High School (LHS) music program features two orchestra classes taught by **Rachel Bierkan (music)** that demonstrate two different levels of strings music. These classes are one element of the high school’s music program that help to expose students to different types of music.

LHS’ orchestra classes are an extension of the strings curriculum taught at the middle school (LMS), also directed by Bierkan. Those classes help teach the basic skills and abilities necessary to properly participate in the high school music courses.

Each class offers instruction in a variety of strings instruments that make up the musical compositions displayed in the classes’ concerts. These instruments, while fairly similar in appearance to the untrained eye, each have a very distinct sound that comes together in the musical compositions.

The Chamber and Strings Orchestras are divided by auditions based on skill level. This helps ensure that the students are in an environment best adapted to suit their abilities. The music and difficulty of techniques differ between the courses in order to differentiate between the two different ability levels.

Strings Orchestra is a performance-based class that helps students who are newer to their instruments in order to allow them to further enhance their skills. When “trying to learn music that I haven’t seen before or is a bit more difficult than usual,” **Sophie Plomoritis (9)**, a member of the orchestra, explained, “you have to go at it measure by measure.” According to Plomoritis, this is a method of teaching that allows students in Strings Orchestra to digest the material in a way that helps them to be



Violins are one of the many instruments students use in the LHS Orchestras. These instruments have been an integral element to the previous Orchestra performances.

successful.

Strings Orchestra performs several times throughout the year at their concerts in the school as well as Ohio Music Education Association (OMEA) state evaluations. However, Strings, as the entry level course for strings students, provides a bridge in instruction to the Chamber Orchestra class.

According to Bierkan, Chamber Orchestra is the highest level of instruction for strings instruments. This class provides students with instruction at a higher level of difficulty for students with more advanced abilities. Chamber Orchestra is also performance-based, with regular performances at both LHS and other performance opportunities outside of the school including OMEA state competitions.

In the past, Bierkan has also led smaller groups of students in minor performances in the high school’s lobby on Friday mornings. These features include small group ensembles that play for the students before classes start. The groups change from week to week and often feature an array of instruments, the performances include several songs that showcase the abilities of the student participants. This is another example of the performance opportunities found through the orchestra classes.

The school district’s orchestra program provides students with ample opportunities to advance their musical education through the application of strings instruments. The classes give many different approaches to the exploration of musical growth and the ways in which music can be explored. This aspect of the district’s music program provides many opportunities to students interested in pursuing them. The opportunities vary in order to accommodate many different interests in order to get many students involved in Loveland’s orchestra program.