Gandhi once said “Be the change you wish to see in the world.” The king of pop Michael Jackson echoed the same message with his song “Man in the Mirror.” There’s also the widely accepted statement that if you want something done right, you have to do it yourself. Wise words, my friends, each and every one. Heed them and prosper.

This past school year has been rife with complaints from all demographics of the Webb community. From teachers complaining about lazy students, to students complaining about oppressive rules, to administration complaining about skirt lengths, we’ve had double the average amount of Honor Council cases, half the average number of senior privileges and a day hasn’t gone by without a student rolling their eyes at some Webb rule, tradition, or event. Our once idyllic school community built on trust and honesty and positive student-teacher relationships is supposedly on a downhill slide. But read carefully what I have to say: Just do something about it.

It really does come down to Sawney’s old saying, “Don’t be a spectator. Take a hand in the game.” Please refrain from rolling your eyes. If Sawney’s words bother you, just remember: Michael Jackson AND Gandhi both agree. Of course, as teenagers, we’ll complain about anything at any given moment in time - but why sit around and whine about the shortfall of community foundation when we literally hold the power to change things if we truly try? You’ll be surprised how many people are willing and even itching to help, and how much respect you gain from peers and faculty for being the one to make it happen. We often get so bogged down in all the stress and tedium of academia that we take for granted the opportunities we have at a school like Webb. As Webb students, we have the power to create our own classes, start our own clubs, and even pull together our own concerts. Teachers aren’t the only ones allowed to give talks in chapel, either! There is so much opportunity for community growth that has yet to be tapped into.

Stepping into a leadership role doesn’t have to be hard. All it takes is an idea, and someone who will see it through to the end. As a student body, we need to start taking action and getting involved, whether that means playing a song at Webbstock or starting a new club or taking five minutes to play Frisbee in the Dell. Maybe it means making a whole bunch of chapel announcements, or talking to teachers and students you’ve never spoken to before. But the important thing is this: Community isn’t something instilled by a handbook or a pledge or even a tradition, no matter how hard they try to define our student culture. Community is created by students who see something they want to change and take action. If we want an environment that caters to what we want, we have to be the caterers.

Go forth and embody that combination of Gandhi and Michael Jackson. Start your own traditions and take a hand in the game. I want this school to be an environment where people come together, a place where people connect with and support one another. In the face of a constantly evolving culture at Webb, I am here to encourage you to go out and make things happen. Be the change, be the man in the mirror, and do it yourself. Because you can.
Franklin Fights GSA

by Meredith Miller

What do a bunch of LGBT supporting teenagers have in common with ISIS? Most people would struggle finding an answer, but some local Christian protesters think otherwise. The teenagers in question are students at Franklin County High School in Winchester, and their new Gay-Straight Alliance has gotten people all riled up.

I spoke to a GSA member, Allie Faxon. Allie told me that the club was “turned down several times” and that they were told to call it an “anti-bullying club” or a “diversity club.” She claims that they were compared to tons of things, including ISIS and the Bloods.

According to their Facebook page, the club is “for straight and gay dedicated to stopping the dehumanizing of people for their sexual orientation.” However, since the club’s creation in January, the school has been plagued with “straight pride” signs and protesters. Technically, the club is protected by the Equal Access Act, but that isn’t stopping hoards of angry churchgoers and parents who have forced the fate of the club into the hands of the school board.

A rally was held on March 7 before the school board met. Supporters of the club, some of whom traveled all the way from Colorado, campaigned for the club’s continuation, and opponents insisted that it be shut down. In response, several FCHS teachers have put up small rainbow flags in their classrooms to signify a LGBT safe place, but some protesters argue that if these small flags are allowed, then all sorts of signs and symbols (gang signs, signs supporting white supremacy, religious symbols, and so on) should be allowed as well. On February 21, the student activists posted that 4 of their 5 club signs had been torn down.

The director of Franklin County Schools, Amie Lonas, is all for the club. According to WSMV.com, Lonas said, “It’s not necessarily talking about sexuality. It’s more about being accepting of others and the differences that we all have.” However, protesters remain. One protester, John Wimley, a parent of a FCHS student, even created an anti-GSA Facebook page; however, it has since been deleted. Winley has also commented that he is highly considering homeschooling his kids if the club is not removed.

On March 14, we met several of the FCHS GSA members, including Joshua Daily, who is extremely friendly and would be happy to answer any questions you might have. You can find him on Facebook or DM him on Instagram @joshua_dailey.
On Thursday, April 21, Aly Edwards gave arguably the most significant senior presentation of the school year. However, it was also the senior presentation with the smallest audience. Edwards’s research presentation defined terms related to gender and sexuality, reporting solely cold facts through an unbiased presenter. Despite this strictly informative quality, the sixth and seventh graders were prohibited from attending chapel. These middle-schoolers (along with the majority of the sophomores, freshmen, and eighth graders, who were unable to be present due to standardized testing) were robbed of their opportunity to be informed on a factual topic that is incredibly significant in modern society.

A conversation with Mrs. Tabetha Sullens, head of middle school, materialized the reasoning behind this blockade not to be the school’s disapproval of the subject, but instead to be an attempt to alleviate parental concerns and complaints later. Mrs. Sullens did get the opportunity to watch the presentation before making a decision and was impressed with the evident handiwork and professionalism shown. However, due to previous parent complaints regarding this and similar subjects being exposed to the middle-schoolers, it was decided with the approval of Mr. Broadhead that it would be best to be cautious.

Reasons for such caution arose from an interview with parents of a sixth grader. Having seen other senior presentations this year and not having been familiar with this particular presenter, these parents were concerned that the presenter might fail to take into account the age and maturity of the younger members of the audience. Although the parents felt that the presentation was relevant, they felt such topics are more appropriately discussed at home, preserving parental choices about how to discuss sexuality with their child(ren).

Both confusion and disapproval of keeping the younger students from this presentation came from freshmen Chelsea-Starr Jones, saying, “The world is changing, and middle schoolers need to learn how to cope and integrate.” Jones explained that people, including young children, hear about gender and sexuality everywhere nowadays, so children need to be educated about the world around them.

Sharing similar views was senior Zoe Speer, a close friend of Edwards, who strongly attested to the maturity, reliability, and unbiased nature of Edwards’s presentation. Speer described the situation as “taking the choice away from the middle-schoolers,” which did them a great disservice because “knowledge prevents people from having ignorant opinions.” Both Jones and Speer expressed that middle-schoolers deserve to know this information and deserve to make their own decisions based on what they know.

Edwards’s herself saw this senior presentation as an opportunity to introduce these topics in a controlled setting where it would be safe to discuss. Edwards stated that this presentation would have had the greatest positive impact on the middle-schoolers, saying, “This is the time in people’s lives where they start to figure out what they believe and who they are.” Her goal was for as many people to be exposed to this information as possible, especially the middle-schoolers because they are young and are often only exposed to this information through bias and discrimination. Edwards hoped that this would allow for the younger students to encounter the information in a form that is factual and isolated from harmful prejudice.

This senior presentation was an extraordinary opportunity for the entire Webb community to hear and hopefully grow closer to understanding different gender and sexual orientations. However, because of the wall that parents are building, students are blinded to the realities of the world and are forced to live in harmful ignorance. These children are subjected to the preconception that all people are supposed to be a certain way. When they finally grow up and get around that wall, they are likely to be just as narrow-minded and intolerant as their parents.

Every child deserves to be aware of the different genders and sexualities that they are likely to encounter in their lives. They deserve to know the different ways that they could define themselves. Our student body had this opportunity, and it was utterly wasted. Fortunately, Aly Edwards would be happy to talk to anyone interested in further discussing these issues.
On The Recent Increase In Liberal Writings In This Publication  
by Anonymous Patriot

It has recently come to my attention the number of articles in the Webb School’s *The Oracle* concerning the furthering of liberal ideas and principles has been on a steady increase. To a self-respecting heterosexual, white, male conservative such as myself, I find this very troubling. And by troubling, I mean intolerable.

One must wonder how we have come to this low point. The Webb School of Tennessee was originally founded on the proud principles of our beloved founder Sawney Webb, and his logical ideas of Confederate liberty. Can we forsake the cherished, peculiar institutions that he supported (save the unnecessary idealism of “equality” and other such nonsense) to the fabled Webb School of California?

It seems that every time I open up our school’s once respected news publication, my eyes are assaulted with such liberal, hippie garbage as “gender” and “sexuality.” God, I am disgusted. Must I remind the student body that our newspaper is seen by children in middle school, who shouldn’t even know what a penis or a sexuality is? What would even happen if 12-year-old boys knew that vaginas existed?

A closer look should be taken at the source of the problem: the writers and contributors to *The Oracle*. It is a widely known fact that these literary barbarians are, in fact, communists. You heard me. Communists. Communism. The devil’s government. In our very own school. These people, if I can even call them that, are nothing but rambunctious hooligans. Just look at their hair. Disgraceful.

And they do not even try to hide their ungodly ways. During the last quarter, as part of this fine school’s ingenious junior project program, one of them held a fashion show to the general school public in which models wore the clothes of sin, or “cross-dressed.” These perpetrators to society should not only be removed from *The Oracle*, but the school itself, to prevent good Christians such as myself from getting aroused by a man in a short skirt ever again.

To conclude, we must save our beloved Webb School from the trash heaps of “societal reform” articles, and bring us back to a better time, in 1870. Webb can be great again. I leave you, valued white male reader, with an idea and a solution: build a wall around Webb and make Cascade pay for it.

The Senior Slide  
by Kelty Shroyer

With the end of the year very much in sight, the phenomenon known as “Senior Slide” is in full effect, and most, if not all seniors are feeling its pull. The degree that it affects individual students varies; however, this year it has ranged from one student who only recently started skipping particularly difficult problems on his math homework to another who has reportedly been in a comatose, vegetative state of laziness since early March, stumbling zombie-like into her classes only to lie in the middle of the floor, snoring loudly.

It has even seemed to extend to some juniors, to the chagrin of all of those faculty who teach the junior class. The senior teachers have come to expect it, though, and Mr Barrett in particular has been force-feeding his students coffee just to keep them awake through class periods. Unfortunately, this has appeared to have been counterproductive, as the caffeine somehow seems only to speed the process by which lazy seniors slump at their desks.

Interestingly enough, this sudden drop in productivity seems to only affect seniors during the school day, while they’re at classes. Indeed, in all activities outside of the Webb School, the seniors seem livelier than ever. Betting pools have started, with people speculating on when this slide will end. Will these poor, lethargic, worn-out seniors miraculously regain their energy right before senior survival? Will they remain half-conscious all the way through Mr. Wofford’s annual trek through Mother Nature’s backyard? Or will their lackadasical lifestyle last all the way through the summer? Only time will tell.
Man Dislikes Watching Thought-Provoking Shows

by Andrew Cooper

Last Saturday, local paint mixer Bud Tugly was overheard talking with his co-workers about his movie and TV show preferences.

“I mean, I like war movies and serious stuff like that if I’m in the right mood, but there’s nothing wrong with something that doesn’t challenge my beliefs and make me question the meaning of life,” Tugly laughingly explained. “Sometimes, I think we’re all better off not knowing all the horror that goes on in this world. If it doesn’t affect me, then what’s the point? I feel the same way about the news. If it involves any other country than America, I don’t want to hear it.”

Bud then furthers his justification: “Honestly, I have a physically demanding job, and when I get home, I just want to sit back and think about nothing. It’s almost as if I don’t have enough energy to make myself question my opinions and become more educated. It’s funny, because my favorite movies are always ones that challenge my beliefs, but they’re also ones that I never want to watch in the first place. Take Concussion, for example. I never would’ve watched it if it weren’t for my girlfriend. You wouldn’t think that there was that much corruption in such an all-American sport like football. Pretty interesting stuff, actually. That being said, I do love a good classic happy-ending movie in which no one dies, all the good guys win, and all the evil guys end up in jail. All masterpieces.”

At press time, Tugly was seen streaming Trailer Park Boys and Futurama while eating a bag of Cool Ranch Doritos.

Friends: Why We Keep Them Around

by Lucas C. Wiesemann

1. Texting you to make sure you’re not dead when you miss class
2. Making you laugh with cringe-worthy puns
3. Cheering you on at all your solidly mediocre performances
4. Answering your phone calls at 4:00 in the morning
5. Listening to your melodramatic problems for the fifth time in a day
6. Telling you that you look hot when it’s a hardcore sweatpants day
7. Helping you believe that your problems are real problems
8. Being the first ones to laugh when you fall down
9. Being the first ones to help you back up
10. Reminding you that you’re awesome by telling you that you suck
On Parties, Politics, and Partisanism

By Ethan McNabb

People don’t even have to turn on the news to know that the upcoming presidential conventions are going to be absolute hornets’ nests. With the distinct possibility of the bombastic business mogul Donald Trump and former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton (who was under investigation for compromising national security) going head-to-head in what is sure to be a no-holds-barred political bloodbath, most people are caught in the vitriol, mudslinging, and racial tension that this year’s election campaigns have brought out in the public. Politics are interesting now, for sure, but it’s worrying that this political entertainment is coming in a time where America needs a leader who can unify the whole country, and not just the bigger half. This year’s campaigns have divided more than unified.

Why? It’s because a lot of people are angry at a lot of different things. Republicans are mad because the government is completely stagnant, and their party (who has the Congressional majority) refuses to unify. Democrats are mad not only because Donald Trump exists and is a serious contender in this presidential race, but also their most likely nominee, Clinton, has a historical tendency to be less than trustworthy.

The last few years have built up racial tension, fear of terrorism, and economic discontent into gigantic proportions, and the candidates have taken extreme positions on both sides and claim that they will uproot the status quo. However, this really alienates a large portion of people. I like to think of myself as a moderate, because I actually listen to all points of view across the spectrum. I’m sure a lot people here at Webb think the same way (except for when it comes to Trump, who is largely dismissed by the majority of people I know), because we’ve been taught or are being taught to in our literature, democracy, and persuasive writing courses.

The problem with today’s society is that people rarely look at all sides of an argument. Quite a few political activists on both sides completely disregard the fact that the opposing party has any valid points. Rather pathetically, this is most clearly visible in our legislature. Y’know, the people whose JOB is to consider all possible viewpoints because almost all of them represent a mix of different ones. But jobs don’t matter, because this is politics. The majority of legislators tend to disregard actually looking at problems certain bills represent and simply vote whatever way their respective party headquarters tells them to. I don’t need to say much in order to illustrate how bad that is.

Politics - Continued on Page 8

Kaleidoscopic Explorations

by Siree McRady

“Travel is the only thing you buy that makes you richer,” an unknown author once said. Without travel, the world would be nothing. There would be hardly any reason to live, and life would simply be dull. Travel is what sets people apart from each other. When people go out and experience the world, every time they see something, it adds to who they are. People are made from their experiences.

The people in our world may have done a lot of traveling already, and we may have social media to link us all together, but that doesn’t mean it is okay to stop traveling. Travel is an important part of our daily lives. Not merely traveling down the block or to the next town, but rather travel to other parts of the world and being exposed to other cultures is what is really valuable.

When people have the courage to go out and explore areas once unknown to them, they have the opportunity to learn about other cultures. They begin to question life and how they have been living theirs. Travel is a great way for people to figure out who they really are. People can discover what they are good at, can find new likes and dislikes, and can be shown what they truly find important in life.

Embarking on a journey helps increase awareness about certain parts of the world and shows how diverse the world we live in really is. When people travel, they see how other people live their lives. Sometimes it can be hard to remember that outside of where you live, there are thousands of other people who know nothing about you or your troubles. When people travel, they have the chance to see that they are not the only ones living in the world. This helps people become more empathetic and feel more compassionate towards others.

It is so easy to get caught up in our own lives. Sometimes all we need is to just slow down, travel, and enjoy the world outside of our own little safety bubbles. Travel helps us broaden our horizons, better understand the world as a whole, and better understand who we are and who we want to be as individuals.

I would like to leave you with this quote by Samudra Gupta: “[Travel] is the pursuit of a million ideas and the realisation of one. It is rekindling the latent childlike inquisition that resides deep down in the pits of our minds, hidden under the veils of our daily abstractions...Travel unravels the beauties and the beasts of a world unfamiliar. It’s a kaleidoscopic adventure with a spectrum of colours, a host of possibilities and one eventualty, momentary bliss.”
On the proposed abolition of salads - and a solution to the problem

by M’Kenzy Cannon

Like every sane person under the sun, I recognize and appreciate the values of eating healthy. I love walking into Whole Foods and staring at all the colorful fruits and vegetables and golden grains of organic rice. I love to stand in the fresh greens aisle, letting the mist machine simulate the feeling of walking through a perfectly air-conditioned jungle inhabited by granola hipsters and wealthy-healthy soccer moms.

Yes, I recognize and appreciate the values of healthy food.

But let me tell you.

I hate salad.

It’s not that I hate eating salad, oh no. You might see me, on occasion, standing awkwardly in the salad line at lunch, loading my plate with loose greens and dried cranberries and balancing so as not to let the kamikaze baby tomatoes roll onto the floor. I love greens, I love dried cranberries, and I love baby tomatoes. I even love them mixed together and doused lightly with some vinaigrette.

But, like I said, I hate salad.

Yes, ladies and gentlemen, I believe salad to be the most poorly engineered food on the face of planet Earth, a perpetuated social construct based on a tradition of health-food obsession and a sad excuse for a lunch.

Salad comes as an abundance of problems. First of all, whose idea was it anyways to put a bunch of leaves in a bowl to eat with a fork? That’s ridiculous. Leaves weren’t meant to be eaten with forks, they’re meant to be eaten naturally, with our hands and faces like we did before forks were even invented. Secondly, what’s the deal with all the bits of food we throw in there with the leaves? After adding salad dressing, all the little nuts and cranberries and carrot chunks sink to the bottom of the bowl, only to get eaten last in a soup of ranch or raspberry vinaigrette. Gross.

And don’t even get me started on the baby tomatoes. How can we as mere mortals be expected to get these things onto our forks?? And by the time you finally DO manage to pierce through one of these juicy additions to an already ridiculous dish, they just ooze and squish in a way that completely ruins any of their previous appeal.

It’s basically impossible to create a bite of salad that contains a perfectly homogenous microcosm of itself. One cannot simply fit a stabbed leaf, carrot shred, and baby tomato onto one fork, much less simultaneously balance some thinly sliced almonds or a freakin’ crouton on there. By the time you’ve finished eating the salad, you’ve used up more calories physically wrestling the meal onto your fork than you did by actually consuming it. There must be an end to this madness.

I propose a new deal in the American health food craze. Forget clumsy lettuce shreds and unruly roly-poly tomatoes. Instead of lots of little leaves jumbled together in a bowl, why not use two or three BIG leaves to satisfy all your salad needs? Think tacos, but healthier, vegan, vegetarian, and gluten free! No more salad dressing soups. Fold them up like burritos, and never worry about having to aim a fork at a baby tomato ever again.
Politics - Continued from Page 6

The last eight years have shown us the consequences of partisanship and congressional deadlock for all to see. It’s actually kind of hilarious in a sad way when you think about it. Congressional compromise is only the reason we have our Constitution, and yet the members of the entire modern government continually behave like 1st-graders and refuse to even listen to each other (they probably make pouty faces, too, I’m inclined to believe anything at this point).

So, how do we fix this? The trend in thought seems to be that we can’t do that much, as we are a small, mostly friendly community in a sea of hatred and tension, but I feel that there is a lot we can do. The first thing is to take a new objective look at the candidates. I know that feels impossible, but just disregard most of what you’ve heard about them, do your own research, then make your decision based on your beliefs. This is a political way of saying “Neither of the likely nominees will be what you want, just deal with it and pick the lesser evil”, because whining about either Trump or Clinton is not going to make either of them go away, unfortunately. But the “your” part of “your opinion” is very important here. Don’t just listen to obviously liberal TV shows or obviously conservative talk radio and automatically accept what they say as truth.

The second important point is to share this way of thinking with people you know. Yes, a good amount of people will only listen to their gut feelings, but many others are more dynamic. So talk with them, and ask them why they support their favored candidate. In these conversations, try to find policies that both of you agree need to change, and then share those with others. Why? Because finding the common ground is what bipartisanship is all about, and if the general public starts to think in this manner, the legislature will have to catch up.

In short, give an example to those outside of Webb. To your parents, to your friends, and to other adults. Show them that collaboration is the way forward, and do what your legislature is too childish to do.

Words with All the Vowels Submitted by Jim Sherwood

- Facetiously
- Dialogue
- Bivouacked
- Eunoia
- Adventitious
- Anxiousness
- Questionnaire
- Nefarious
- Gelatinous
- Gregarious
- Reliquarious
- Mendacious
- Abstemious
- Vexatious
- Miscellaneous
- Sacrilegious
- Ostentatious
- Mustachioed
- Insouciance
- Querríamos

Oracle Contributors

Connor Anderson
Ethan McNabb
Siree McRady
Meredith Miller
Jim Sherwood
Kelty Shroyer
Lucas Wiesemann

Editors-in-Chief
M’Kenzy Cannon
Andrew Cooper

Faculty Sponsor
Neil Barrett

Face Off: Andrew and M’Kenzy