

The Sequitur



NOVEMBER 2016

Clothespin Ninja – Westdale’s “Hunger Games”

By: Ramona Ribauda-Begin

Final pin: 8:02 am, November 24th, 2016. Congratulations to the final casualty of this year’s games, Hailey Cozen, but all hats off to this year’s champion: Haran Jeyachandra. I’m speaking about (of course) Westdale’s very own Hunger Games. Otherwise known as Clothespin Ninja.

Clothespin Ninja started as an idea to raise money for charity whilst also create a game that would be played by anyone who was willing to try. The rules of the game are all pretty obvious and up until a few short days ago were found posted on the 3rd floor hallway near Mr. Timm’s classroom. By scanning over the list, 3 rules should jump out at you as the most important:

Number one: from 8:30- 3:00 you can be pinned. Anything before or after does not count. You can’t be pinned on weekends, only school days.

Number two: you can’t pin someone during class time. If someone gets you while the period is still going on, you are still safe and in the game. But in the hallways between classes, you better watch your back. You should especially fear lunch, because that’s one of the easiest time to find someone.

Number three: don’t let anyone get within pinning distance, and always be alert. . . . (**Clothespin Ninja** is continued on **page 4**)

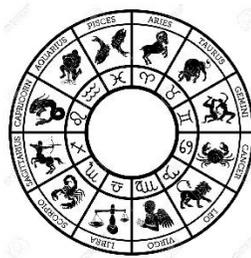
In this issue . . .

. . . an investigation of Westdale’s oldest architectural mysteries. . . .



. . . a gallery of Westdale spirit week photography . . .

“In the back of the school, at the bottom of the ramp by the tech classes, there is a brick shed where tools are kept. Now here comes the exciting part. Underneath that shed there is a heavily reinforced concrete bunker. . . .”



. . . a page of hilariously irrelevant horoscopes . . .

AND SO MUCH MORE!



OUR TEAM

In this issue:

Editor-in-chief: Morghen Jael

Staff Advisor: Ms. Baboudjian

Contributors: Esther Liu, Theodor Aoki, Hunter Brown, Talar Stockton, Justice Tomlinson, Annie Kang, Raiyan Sayeed, Megan Cyr, Eva Gabler, Ramona Ribaudobegin, Julia K. Watson, Gabe DePaul, Daniel Lane, Graeme Farrand, Vidhiya Jeyanathan, Mackenna Friesen, Sarah Sellens, Kendra Zhang, Aya Alayche, Unknown writer of the Plum Poem

@SequiturWSS



GET IN TOUCH!

Visit Ms. B in room 209 for information, or email us at thesequitur.westdale@gmail.com

We meet occasionally in room 209, and snacks sometimes make a surprise appearance! Come check us out!

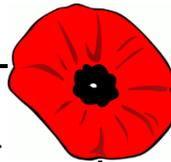


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WE NEED. . .

The Sequitur

- Journalists
- Reporters
- Authors
- Fan-fic Writers
- Poets
- Photographers
- Artists
- Amateur cooks
- Travellers
- Readers, music-lovers, TV show addicts. . .
- Outside-the-box thinkers
- YOU!



Be part of Westdale's hottest student-run publication! We always welcome new contributors!

UPCOMING FUNDRAISERS: Stay tuned in the coming weeks and months for fundraisers and events run by The Sequitur! We're looking at a raffle and silent auction, and a Westdale-themed bake sale, to name a few! More details to come.

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Hey Westdale! Just in case you hadn't realized; we're three months in! How crazy is that? Let's stop and take that in for a second. Three whole months inside these ancient stone walls, slaving away at our homework and immersing ourselves in school life.

Fall has been passing by faster than I can follow. The leaves on the tree outside my window are dwindling in number and draining in colour, and I'm sure by now we've all felt the nip of the cool air against our cheeks, hinting at the cold winter to come. The radio tells me that we're going to have a particularly chilly and snowy winter this year. This probably doesn't sound like good news to you, but I'm not sad – I'm actually kind of excited.

There's no denying, though, the characteristic dullness of November. This is always the hardest month for me to slog through (besides February, of course, although who doesn't love being single on Valentine's Day?); November has nothing particularly energizing to keep me going, we don't get any breaks from school, and there really aren't any holidays (Thanksgiving/Black Friday do NOT count. We are not Americans. And thank goodness for that). November is a crossroads, a transition into a new season. It gets lost in the shuffle sometimes. Let's bring it back to life.

Speaking of transitions: see page 9 for reactions to the election of America's next commander-in-chief. I don't want to get into it, but what I will say is that we woke up on November 9th into a new era of history. I really hope it doesn't go as badly as I imagine it could.

This issue of *The Sequitur* includes lots of other literary and photographic goodies too; we've got some poetry with an unlikely muse, a gallery of gorgeous photo submissions, and an in-depth investigation of Westdale's deepest architectural secrets. Is there really a bunker underneath the football field? Start reading on page 13 to find out!

Earlier this month, while I was waiting at the bus stop, bundled up in layers of scarfs and worrying about my physics test, I was struck with a little nugget of truth. I realized that it's important to not let the cold start getting to you – whether that cold comes in the form of the deteriorating weather, relationship drama, homework load, or just straight-up stress. You can feel the cold on the outside, but you have the power to keep yourself warm on the inside, where it really matters. You can put on all the scarves you want, but at the end of the day, it's your attitude and perspective that keep away the cold. Warm people can give warmth to others, just like how your steaming mug of tea chases away the chill. Keep smiling, whatever it takes. Leave a positive footprint in the world this month, Warriors.

Morghen Jael

Morghen Jael



Clothespin Ninja continued from page 1:

The last rule is unspoken, but it's still true. Some people are more paranoid than others, but by the very design of the game (getting a random pin), one of your friends is just as likely to get your pin as some lowly grade 9 you didn't notice in the hallway until it was too late. The sad fact is that most of your friends would gladly give you up, maybe even for free. Because of this, walking down the halls quickly becomes a ridiculously paranoia-filled experience. Whipping your head around when someone passes by, walking close to the wall so one of your sides isn't vulnerable, screaming GOTCHA at anybody who walks a little too close to you - it would be strange to see any other time of the year, but you could be one of many doing the exact same thing while there are still people in the game.

That's not even close to the full extent of what people are willing to do to survive another day. According to Mr. Timms, who is the teacher who runs the game, some kids are willing to go very far to keep themselves safe. In past games, there was a kid who climbed a tree every day in the courtyard during lunch because he thought it was safer. There was a kid who dressed up in drag to avoid being recognized and be able to walk the halls in anonymity. My personal favorite are the kids who wore morphs suits to school so the pin won't be able to stick to their clothing. It's a good idea, but at what cost? No matter what it looks like and despite the drawbacks to these strategies, they do help you survive longer.

If you didn't participate this year, you should know that despite all the craziness it's still a good time. Getting all your friends to help you plot out the best way to ambush someone? Everyone should try it at least once. Even if you get out on the first day, just helping to plot other people's ambushes is pretty fun. There's always that chance you will win, and it is for charity.

And at the very least, it does make school a little bit more interesting.

12 Pound Weights + You! – Theodor Aoki

There is a new twelve pound weight in the Westdale gym!

“Great. Why should I care?”

Well, I thought it's pretty exciting. Now there's an intermediate weight between ten and fifteen pounds, which is important.

“Why?”

Well, when you're around lower numbers like ten, twelve, fifteen, every pound matters so much more.

“So pounds start to weigh more the closer they are to zero.”

Well, no. But proportionally, we can see that as you add weight to, say, ten pounds, you are relatively adding more than to, say, fifty.

“Show me some proof.”

Well, okay: If we assume that we start with weight x and we add weight y to weight x , we see that the percentage increase from weight x is $(x + y) / x$. This equation has the interesting characteristic that as x increases, and y remains constant, the result becomes smaller due to the fact that y becomes a smaller portion of x the larger x is. Do you see what I'm saying?

“Oh sorry, I stopped paying attention once we assigned variables to weights. Did you know you could be that boring?”

Well, I didn't think it was that boring I thought it was actually pretty interesting.

“Turns out you're out of touch with the interests of the rest of the world.”

Well, dang.

“Besides, I thought it was harder to add weight as the weight became higher.”

Well, that's actually something different. You see, once you start working out, the human body stops growing as fast as you continue to work out.

“So then why is the twelve pound weight important?”

Well, I thought I just explained that.

“Sadly, I'm pretty sure you're full of rubbish.”

Well, double dang.

“There's multiple ways to write a paper, but only one way to spell it.”

^That's not relevant.

“Shut up! That's your conclusion.”

Sorry! Say it again.

“There's multiple ways to write paper, but only one way to spell it.”



Supporting local lost causes

An open letter reminding us to have some faith

Dear closed minded adults,

I don't know where I am going to be in 10 years, but does anyone? You can have fantasies, we all do. At the end of the day no one can know with one hundred percent certainty where we're all going to end up.

There are those lucky few who at least have the slightest idea about what they want to do. I've met people who want to be Oscar worthy actors and actresses, singers in a world famous rock band, New York Times bestselling authors, and life changing activists. Their drive and passion inspire and astound me daily.

There are people out there people such as yourself, who think that their ideas are too big, that they need to be more realistic. You say that they are lost causes. I understand where you are coming from. You say that out of worry. You fear that they'll end up broke with thousands of dollars in college debt from trying to get a useless degree, with no means to pay for it. It would be so much simpler if they just did a four year degree in business or something to that effect. I'm sure they appreciate your concerns, but have you ever considered this: They are just as scared as you.

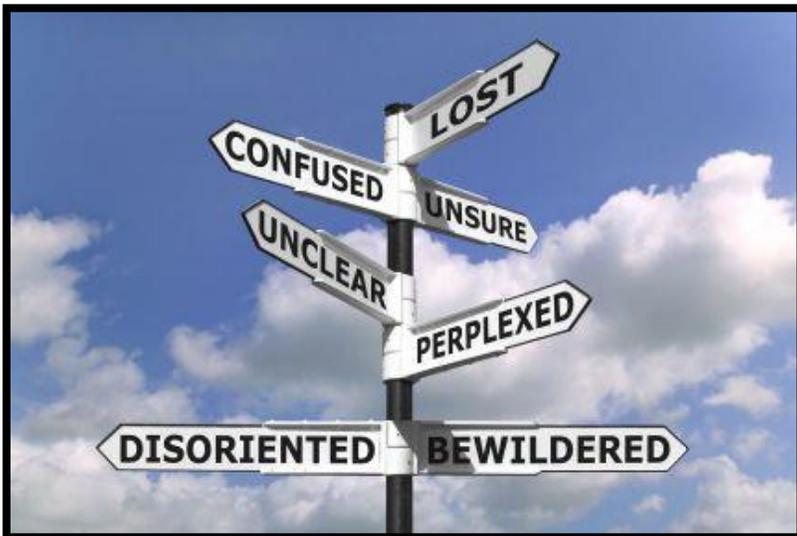
Those who have these big ideas and dreams are terrified of making a mistake. It's hard having big dreams but not being taken seriously enough to pursue them. Have you ever thought that these so called "lost causes" have once been you? You had big dreams too and just play the safe route. These "lost causes" are people who simply just no longer want to play it safe. Who are you to put them down and say that they cannot?

I strongly suggest you start taking these so called "lost causes" seriously and support them. One day they're going to take the world by storm and you're just going to be left behind.

Sincerely,

A local lost cause

P.S. To local lost causes: If the people surrounding you aren't building you up and encouraging you to to pursue your goals, find new people.



THE MONTHLY MIXTAPE

Playlists created anonymously by students just like you!

GLOOMY NOVEMBER Playlist

1. *Left Foot* – Mating Ritual
2. *Alexis Texas* – Cruel Youth
3. *That's So Us* – Allie X
4. *911* - DARENOTS
5. *Sweet Dreams* – The Arhythmics
6. *Guys My Age* – Hey Violet
7. *The Hills* – The Weeknd
8. *Starboy* – The Weeknd

NOVEMBER FOG Playlist

1. *Ava* - Famy
2. *Electric Feel* - MGMT
3. *Feather On the Clyde* - Passenger
4. *Feel Real* - Deptford Goth
5. *Forget You* - DSYN
6. *Georgia* - Vance Joy
7. *High By The Beach* - Lana Del Rey
8. *Into the Unknown* - Blackchords
9. *Josephine* - RITUAL
10. *My Own* - Whitaker

THE SEQUITUR IS ON SPOTIFY!

Follow us at [TheSequitor](https://www.instagram.com/Thesequitor) ☺

You can find these two playlists there, as well as playlists from past issues and albums we've been reviewing. We're constantly updating it, so check back often!



Have a song suggestion? Email us at thesequitor.westdale@gmail.com to let us know!



Your November Horoscopes - Megan Cyr



Aries: We all know by now that Donald Trump is the president of the United States, and you as an Aries are particularly salty about it. This month, you'll finally snap at that one Trump supporter in your class. You'll probably get suspended for it, but hey, isn't it kinda worth it??



Taurus: The universe has a funny way of balancing things out, so even with the new, super effective crosswalks by the back parking lot, this month you'll get hit by a car while crossing Longwood and lose your other big toe.



Gemini: This month, you're likely to snake your closest friends in clothespin ninja. You're a snake! It's in your nature! Embrace it, you little snake, you. Ssssssss.



Cancer: Despite your greatest efforts, you won't be able to shove 30 cherry tomatoes in your mouth at once. Don't despair though, you can totally fit a solid 23 if you try your very hardest.



Leo: Leo, It's time to step it up and learn an instrument besides from the world's tiniest violin you keep playing for yourself. My personal suggestion would be the French mandolin, and if you're feeling a little adventurous maybe the Tibetan singing bowls.



Virgo: Capricorn has been looking a lil down, Virgo. Maybe you should ask them how they are?? It's your duty as a sort of decent human being.



Libra: This month, Destiny will betray you. Not like actual cosmic destiny, but this lady named Destiny who lives six doors down from you. You'll be illegally burning some Taylor Swift music onto a CD for your friend Bill, who's too embarrassed to buy Taylor Swift music on iTunes because of society's patriarchal gender expectations, when all of a sudden a muscular FBI agent will burst through your door and snatch the CD from your clammy hands. Destiny had been peering in your window for hours, and knew you were committing digital piracy-- she rightfully ratted on you for your heinous crime. So yeah, say your goodbyes asap, because soon you'll be in prison explaining to your cell "buddy" how you're doing 13 months for fricken Taylor Swift.



Scorpio: This month is international "Scorpios are exempt from school" month!! Enjoy your month off! Also, this month's scents are soymilk and arugula lightly tossed in a lovely French vinaigrette.



Sagittarius: You honestly need to get more sleep, Sagittarius-- you say you're tired every single day, but all of US are tired of your attitude. Try getting at least 8 hours of beauty sleep; you really need it.



Capricorn: Hey Capricorn, you didn't hear it from me, but this month Virgo is going to go mad stalker on you. Even if they so much as ask how you are, you should probably run away screaming as they're just one step away from crawling through your window and stealing your dog.



Aquarius: EHHHH shout out to my fellow Aquarians, y'all will have a blessed month.



Pisces: Even though your friends will tell you not to, this month you'll insist on continuing to drink red-filter-status fountain water. You'll slowly begin to morph gills and scales, until you're fully transformed into a weird fish-human mutant thing. You'll be so ashamed of your disgusting body that you'll dive into the Hamilton Harbour, where you'll spend the rest of your life terrifying children and eating geese. You brought this upon yourself, Pisces.



The Jewel

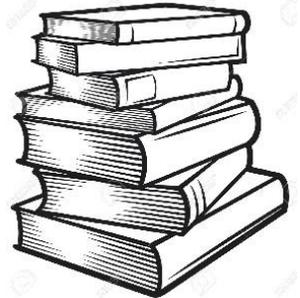
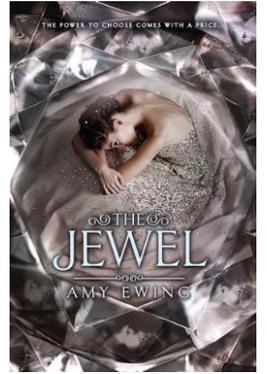
A Book Review – Eva Gabler

Amy Ewings, *The Jewel*, is an intriguing novel filled with adventure, romance, magic, and sacrifice that will leave you wanting more. The story follows Violet Lasting, a young girl who has lived in a holding facility called Southgate for people with special powers, or Auguries, since she was twelve. On her final day at Southgate, Violet is auctioned off and bought by a powerful woman, The Duchess of The Lake, who lives in the heart of the country named The Jewel. The Jewel means wealth and the The Duchess has plenty. Violet becomes the Duchess' surrogate and is forced to do whatever the Duchess desires. Her powers are used by royalty and she is treated as though she is a pest.

As a surrogate, Violet encounters many unsettling challenges but meets friends who help her get through her time in The Jewel. Along the way, things become more complicated when Violet meets a young man named Ash and they fall into a forbidden love.

The novel is comparable to others like *The Hunger Games* or *Divergent* with dystopian worlds that include a little romance which might draw some readers away. The most outrageous part of the book is the cliff hanger which will just intrigue you even more. The sequel to *The Jewel*, *The White Rose*, has been released which also is said to be a fantastic read.

The Jewel is a book you will never want to put down and one that you could read over and over without getting bored. It is a novel you do not want to miss out on- a true jewel!



November Business Horoscope

Graeme Farrand

The Business Horoscope is brought to you by Feather Weather Recon Tether. It's the modern mountain climber's dream tether that is as light as a feather and sometimes works in weather for all your spying needs. Buy it today and get it in leather.

With Christmas fast approaching, Wall Street is bound to be putting up their decorations soon. This will slow trading but is projected to increase of smell of fresh baked cookies by 34% so buy into chocolate chip now!

Every year many completely real and not-made-up businesses must deal with the government agencies saying: "You're not a real business" and "How did you get in my house?" To remedy this I suggest building a monument to the evil of man or paying and filing your taxes on time.

Lamps are projected to have a large increase in sales as the dark winter months come and who doesn't want a lamp? To invest in lamps, I suggest staging a high stakes heist of the world's most expensive lamp with a ragtag team of specialists, making sure to have a person who betrays you to add tension. Then sell the lamp to try and pay off the debt of doing the heist.



A Societal Commentary – Justice Tomlinson

Affirmative action, or “positive discrimination”, is defined as an action or policy favouring those who tend to suffer from discrimination, yet these policies can have adversely negative effects. One would see such policies enacted in the areas of education and employment. The problem with Affirmative Action is that it addresses the effect of perceived gender and racial inequalities without properly considering the cause. Affirmative Action was created with the intention to create a color-blind society, serving that purpose right up until institutions created preference systems (and quotas in extreme cases) in the name of equality. There’s no doubt that the origins of Affirmative Action had benevolent intentions, however it has become most definitely largely detrimental to gender and racial groups through its unmeritocratic nature, promotion of discrimination, and failure to allow minorities and women to thrive.

Affirmative Action promotes discrimination against any group of people it isn’t attempting to protect. Affirmative Action generally exists to facilitate success for ‘disadvantaged groups’, but can you really expect to end discrimination with more discrimination? Unlikely. And yes, it is indeed discrimination. If you’re making the decision to hire or not hire someone based even partially upon their skin colour, regardless of whether they’re white, you’re discriminating against them. Aside from the obvious moral issue of not granting someone a position because of their skin colour, Affirmative Action (and discrimination in general) most definitely enforces the idea that inferences can be made about individuals based upon race. It’s simply erroneous to assume and make discriminatory decisions on the basis that, say, all black people face the same disadvantages and that all white people have the same advantages. Is it truthfully fair to award an upper class, well off black person a position over a middle class, white, single mother? Probably not. Whether you believe it’s warranted discrimination or not, it’s discrimination nonetheless.

The notion that skin colour or gender should play a factor in employment spits directly in the face of meritocracy. While it’s noble to opt for racial and gender equality, Meritocracy is defined as a system in which advancement is based on individual ability or achievement. Meritocracy is clearly the best method of selecting the best people for a particular position, as only the most skilled are chosen to advance and assume these positions (be it a position at a University or place of employment). When race or gender become determinants on whether you are accepted into a position, it’s no longer about how qualified you are, it’s about your perceived disadvantages. Perceived disadvantages are not a good way to choose the best candidate for a job, they’re a good basis with which to create unqualified employees or uncompetitive minority students. Because race and gender have little actual sway over how well an individual can complete a job, using them during employment as deciding factors is unmeritocratic, and therefore frankly unlikely to yield the best results.

Affirmative action has not only proven to be disadvantageous to those considered to inherently benefit from some form of privilege, but also to the women and minorities that it aims to assist. Not only does Affirmative Action take away from individuals within these groups the ability to feel pride for their accolades, but has also notoriously allowed for the acceptance of unqualified individuals into Universities. Affirmative Action often provides admission boosters for students who didn’t score high enough to be admitted under regular admission circumstances, effectively setting them up for failure from the start. If one is unable to succeed without being propped up in the selection process, it’s unlikely that one will succeed when there’s no advantage afforded for being part of a disadvantaged collective. When people are unqualified to hold these positions at universities and jobs, both they and their area of placement suffer. In 1992, UCLA Law Professor Richard Sander performed a study on Universities that employed Affirmative Action programs. The year the study was taken, 51.6% of black law students would end up in the lowest decile of their classes while, while only 5.6% of white students fell into that decile. White students were also shown to drop out at half the rate of black students. Also during that year, higher numbers of black students were accepted due to admission boosters based upon skin colour background. This doesn’t necessarily prove that Affirmative Action programs directly cause minority groups to do poorly. What it does prove is that disadvantaged groups will certainly perform poorly when accepted into programs that they would not normally get into; doing this only serves to place unqualified individuals into environments where they’re unlikely to succeed. Not only do we see issues with direct



Doctor Strange

A Movie Review – Hunter Brown

The fourteenth entry in the Marvel Cinematic Universe (or MCU) hit theatres earlier this month in the form of the mystic hero, Doctor Strange. The film sports a stellar cast including Benedict Cumberbatch, Tilda Swinton, and Chiwetel Ejiofor. It follows the story of an arrogant world famous surgeon named Dr. Stephen Strange, who is hospitalized after going through a terrible car accident. The tragedy leaves his hands paralyzed, preventing him from ever performing surgery again. Determined to find a way to heal his hands, he heads to Nepal, where he hears of an advanced form of healing. His search leads him to find The Ancient One, the leader of a group of sorcerers, who teaches Doctor Strange the ways of the mystic arts. Through his training, Strange encounters some dark forces trying to destroy the world. It's up to Doctor Strange, and his fellow sorcerers, to defeat this evil and save the world.

Now, if you've heard anything about Doctor Strange, you've probably heard about the amazing visuals of the film. This movie, from a technical point of view, is spectacular! All the different dimensions, spells, and other crazy magic look stunning on screen. The effects in Doctor Strange are ground-breaking, and the team behind them deserves huge props. I know most movies nowadays aren't worth paying the extra money for the 3D effect, but this one is definitely an exception. I had the chance to see in it this format, and i can tell you this, if you're planning on seeing this movie, try and see it in 3D.

The whole cast of Doctor Strange is perfect across the board. Benedict Cumberbatch is some of the best casting in a superhero film since Robert Downey Jr. as Iron Man. Cumberbatch brings a perfect blend of arrogance and wittiness to the role while still remaining a likable hero. And no matter where you stand on the divisiveness of casting Tilda Swinton as The Ancient One, you can't deny she does a good job with the part. The woman can act. Rachel McAdams, fellow Ontarian, is in the film as well and plays a love interest of sorts to Strange. Quite a few of the comedic moments in the film come from between the two of them.

Mads Mikkelsen, who plays the villain Kaecilius, does a good job with what he's given, the character itself though is a little one-note and generic. It's not a fault of the acting but more of the writing. The character isn't given enough screen time to become fully fleshed out. This is, however, my only real critique of the film.

Overall, Doctor Strange is a fun entertaining movie that never loses your interest. I will give it four and a half out of five stars. I definitely recommend you see this movie in theaters, in 3D, if possible.



ANNOUNCEMENT – WESTDALE'S ANNUAL WINTER FORMAL

The event of the year is back and better than ever! – Julia K. Watson

Pull out your dresses and tuxes and get ready to dance. Triune is pleased to present Westdale's annual winter formal! The tickets are on sale on a first come and first serve bases and are sold in the front foyer at lunch. Early bird tickets are \$40.00 and available from November 21st- December 2nd. Regular price tickets are \$45.00 and are available from December 5th- December 16th. Formal is being held on December 22nd at Liuna station on James Street N. Doors open at 5:30 pm and dinner starts at 6:30pm. Everyone is going to be able to ditch their shoes within the first hour and dance the night away because there is a live DJ until 11:30pm. If you have song recommendations feel free to write them down on the form in the front foyer during ticket sales.

Everyone is so excited to see everyone dressed up and looking fabulous. Buy your ticket ASAP!





An Empire of Mud and Sticks

A Short Story (written before the election) – Sarah Sellens

Finally satisfied the boy sat back on his feet and gazed upon his empire. There were streets crisscrossing around him and out into the great beyond like infinite spider webs. Houses and buildings lined said streets and towered over the small people on the sidewalks below. Billboards advertised candy and movies, parks cropped up throughout the busy metropolis harbouring trees and small animals. Cars stood still and the traffic lights never changed. The people didn't move and the dogs didn't bark but it was his paradise. Lastly the most important and beautiful building stood before him. Large lawns and tall gates surrounded it while fountains and trees made up for the lack of scenery. And there it was. His future abode, his throne before his soon to be nation, the epicentre of everything. The White House. "Donald!! Time for lunch dear! Come inside!" The boy rolled his eyes and leaned forwards and placed a final figurine before the White House, himself, someone would have to rule while he ate his lunch. "Donald this is the last time I'm going to call! Come inside or no lunch at all!" The boy growled "Coming Mother!" He yelled back 'Nasty woman' he muttered. He reached over, snatched up his blond toupée, can of spray tan, and raced inside. The nation of sticks and mud would have to wait until after he'd eaten his PB&J and after all he had a company to run. "I have to ask Dad for a loan of a million dollars, he can spare it, it's such a small loan anyway," the boy reminded himself. When he came outside after lunch though it was as if the world had stopped. There, in the heart of his city, on the White House's lawn, stood a girl gazing down upon his creation of mud, leaves, and sticks, and laughed. She reached down and picked up the figurine of him, considered it, then chucked as far as she could. "Watch out Washington, Hillary is here."

Ceiling -A Poem

why are you so stared at
but never
acknowledged?
reassurance in the day;
reassurance in the night
when it rains
i am not scared
thank you.
in you i can see sunlight
and shadows
of the restless world outside
but my mind is always empty
as i continue to stare
up at you.
you know the realest version of
when i am hiding from
the world
letting the tears finally fall
behind a closed door.
you witness the wrath of stress
when it consumes me
and causes me
to lay my arms out on the bed

and stare at you
yet not consciously knowing
that you're there.
but
you also know what i am like
when i am nothing but peaceful
slumber;
nothing but
dreams
locked up in my own mind where
sometimes even i can't find them.
you are a masterpiece
of bumps and shards
and crackly paint.
you have a bit of the world inside
you:
usually calcium and sulphur and
hydrogen
one of those found in stars
so you also have a bit
of the universe
inside you.
but
you are not just science
you are what completes

a home.
you are the essence
of basic human rights.
you are the houser
of the most brilliant minds on earth
but also of the vilest.
yet you are
just
a
ceiling.



The Plum

A poem I found on the 2nd Floor

Bite after bite
Each one slower
Until there is but one left
Then they become nibbles
Nibble after nibble
Till the plum is no more.

*If you wrote this and want credit, email us!



Routine

A Short Story – Esther Liu

When it happened, it was like any other day. John opened his eyes to the same old routines, the same old people; everything was the same. The next day was essentially the same, but with one tiny tweak: John woke up late. John never wakes up late. But he didn't ponder about it, just went through his to-do list a bit quicker. But then it happened again, again, and again. The thing is, the days were exactly the same. He always woke up late at 7:07am, and his acquaintance David spilled his drink on John without apologizing, again. Everything was the same.

John didn't quite know what brought this about, but he felt like he was in a movie. A bad one, at that. Sometimes he liked to think that this is one huge universal joke that fate played on him. It was on this day, the 5th, that he decided that he hates fate.

At first, John tried to change major things, like staying in bed, but then he blinks and the day starts over again. He continued this process for a few cycles but eventually gives up. The result was always the same. After that, he tried to change a few smaller things. Like trying to dodge David's mystery liquid, or putting on a different pair of pants. The first time he got away with it, he started to cry tears of joy but got rewarded for his efforts by starting the day over again. He kept on trying, slowly getting more and more used to containing his excitement. When he went to bed, he tried not to think about how doing small things like that were normal before.

It was 6:49pm and John was taking off his mismatched socks when it happened. He heard it before he saw it, a terrible noise, a low screeching sound that installed panic and uneasiness inside of him. It only lasted for a few seconds, but it felt like years to John. He could barely move, only shuddering and wondering what horrible thing could've made such a noise. John tried to stop his shaking hands but failed. He screwed his eyes shut and gulped, bracing himself if it were to sound again. After a few seconds of tense silence, he slowly opened one eye and then the other. Blinking a few times and shaking his head, he wondered if he had just imagined that appalling sound. After a few more seconds had passed, he let down his guard, but only slightly. He pressed his eyelids closed again and opened them. But what greeted him was not only his oddly coloured socks, but something staring at him in the corner of the room. It was as if the room suddenly got darker, and the alien figure was shrouded with shadows. Its many huge and slick yellow eyes stared at him, unmoving. John was frozen and stared right back at the mighty beast's empty eyes.

They stayed like that for what seemed like days, looking at each other as if the other was the last thing that they would be able to see. This continued on until John had to blink, and when he opened his eyes again, it seemed as if the beast had gotten closer. He squinted, confused but also petrified. John rubbed his eyes to see if it would come closer, and it did. It seemed as if it was right on top of him. He swallowed as he gazed up at the huge beast, looming over him with its huge, yellow eyes, and its thin but tall frame, with multiple organs dripping out of its body. He appraised the huge, lolling black tongue hanging out of the side of its mouth as if it were trying to imitate some sick perversion of a dog. He could smell its hot, moist breath coming off onto his face and it smelled like rotting eggs and cigarette ashes. He gaped as it glared down at him, slowly twisting its head to the side as if it were confused. John could hear its harsh and ragged panting, rolling off of its cracked and peeling orange-ish lips. He could only gaze up into its glossy orbs. It had so many that they covered its large head and its focus seemed to be dancing all over the place, but the four largest eyes seemed content to threaten him with silent promises. He blinked.

John awoke to the sound of his alarm blaring sharply. He took in a deep breath and opened his eyes wide. Heaving in the air as if he had just run a marathon, he looked around wildly, like a cornered animal. After a few seconds passed, he calmed down. He almost forgot that his world would reset if something happened. John looked down and thought to himself. Why didn't it change? He could've died and yet, it didn't change. It gave him some sort of sick thrill, something different that wasn't just changing how he made his eggs in the morning. Finally, something big had happened, and he had almost gotten away with it. If he could get a little more variety, maybe he could deal with that atrocious monstrosity.

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The day went by like normal, with David’s concoction mishap and John working until 5 p.m. All he could think about at his desk for that whole day was why the cycle had ended so abruptly. He pondered for hours and hours, wondering why it had appeared. Even on the car ride home, he was going over the scene again and again. And right when he walked into his front door, he knew.

When he got home he was anxious yet thrilled that the creature would show its mutated face once more. He waited and waited, glaring at the red letters of his clock as if that would make them change faster. He kept on watching even when his eyes got tired, just waiting for it to arrive. When the clock changed its numbers to 6:49 and the monster still didn’t appear, John was ready to shout at the monster and ask for it to come out of wherever it was hiding. He was almost furious, in disbelief that the one new thing that could happen would just disappear in the blink of an eye. His face contorted into an ugly and scrunched up shape as he stomped around his small bedroom, livid. As he was about to walk right out of his bedroom door, he smelled it. That sick and truly nauseating smell was back. Once again he could feel the hot air tickling the hairs on the back of his neck in a disgusting manner. The unnerving panting. He could practically see the way the monster would be tilting its humongous head on its thin stick of a neck. Finally, it had arrived. John smiled.

He slowly pivoted his body around to face the monster, ready to stare it down again. It was just like yesterday, which somehow made John loathe it even more. But he somehow loved this monster for this, for saving him from his everyday routines and schedules. He let out a soft sigh, with a cruel and wicked smile adorning his face. He wasn’t quite sure if he would destroy the monster, or if the monster would destroy him. But at this point, John didn’t really see the difference. John couldn’t care enough to see the difference. And maybe, just maybe, both could happen. Either way, John would be content with how this ended. He gave one last smile and looked the monster right in its eyes.

He blinked.

Secret Passageways, Bunkers, Hidden rooms, and More! Are They Fact or Fiction?

A look inside the architectural history of Westdale Secondary School – Daniel Lane

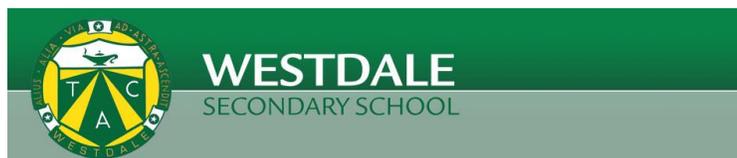
Westdale is a school with a great deal of history, some of which is rather murky. It’s not surprising that a school which opened in 1930 would have seen some interesting things and might have a few mysteries within its walls. Due to this mysterious allure, you’ve probably been told at least one of the common Westdale myths which are found within this article. If you think you can handle the truth, read on!

I would like to thank Christopher Litfin and Mr. Buyers for allowing me to interview them. Their invaluable knowledge made this article possible.

Hidden Rooms

It has been rumoured that Westdale is basically pocked with hidden rooms behind every wall. A twenty five year old post grad even told me that he and his buddies found a passageway behind one of their lockers that lead to a small room where they would frequently “sesh”, and the principal got “super pissed” at them and would pace the halls shouting, “I’m going to f***ing find you! And when I do I’m going to kill you!”. Unfortunately for everyone who would love to take advantage of such a space, it doesn’t exist. There’s simply not enough room in the school for it to exist, unless perhaps there’s a rip in the space time continuum somewhere and I haven’t been told about it.

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However, there is some truth to these myths. Firstly, because of the odd rounded shape of the auditorium there is, on each side, an eight foot by two foot deep cavity behind a couple of the lockers on each floor. Apparently, some students discovered this space and the stories have been growing in grandeur ever since. This is one of the reasons why many of the lockers facing the auditorium have been bolted shut.

Secondly, there's actually a sub-basement. You know the change rooms in the basement? Underneath that space there's a complete other floor. Originally, it was used as the change room for the caretaking staff who would take care of the furnaces way back in the days when the school was still coal heated, because believe me, you don't want to leave a fire that's burning at more than 3500 degrees Fahrenheit unattended.

Creepy Handprints



In the lighting cave above the auditorium there are several handprints with the dates and names written below them. This one isn't quite as common as some of the others, and may only be familiar among drama students, but if you're lucky you might get the chance to get a glance at these unsettling hand prints first... hand. It doesn't sound like much, but here's the unsettling thing. Most of the handprints are missing fingers. It's rumoured that in the construction of the auditorium, the ironworkers who built it went home with, in some cases most of their fingers completely gone. Mr. Buyers believes this one wholeheartedly, adding that human lives were expendable. There were no unions, no worker safety guidelines. You were lucky if you got a job. Work in the trades was often times very dangerous. People were falling from high places, chopping their fingers off and maiming themselves in many other ways on a regular basis. Not to mention that the mortality rates in those fields were through the roof, and the building of Westdale was not spared of this tragedy.

Chris Litfin held a different opinion to this mystery, “what those hand prints are, are past stage crew members. There's graffiti that I found up there when I was a student. Clearly not recently. There's graffiti up there dated 1931 and it's pretty much continuous since then”. However, if that were the case, why are the handprints clearly missing fingers?



Secret Tunnels and Sloshed Teachers

“Well, it's nowhere near as exciting as you think it is” was the first thing that Chris had to say to me when I asked him about this one. He went on to tell me that the tunnels which students have mistaken for secret passageways are maintenance tunnels for the heating pipes, and those are as he said not very exciting. If you were to take a look in the basement by the weight room, you'd see that there are little doors high up on the wall, that's what those are for.

The second place where this myth might have originated is a little bit more exciting.

Back when the school was built, the secretary's office was in room 128 where the bookstore is now, and on the opposite side of the stairwell in room 126 was the principal's office. There was actually a passageway that ran underneath the stairs from one to the other so that the principal didn't have to see or talk to any students if he wanted to talk to the secretaries.

“You know, I could actually show you, you can still see where it was. It's a lot easier to see in room 126. If you look in those rooms too, like in room 126 and in the book store in room... 128, they're done in a different style then the classrooms are and it's because they weren't classes, they were offices”.

Now, it's time to finally crack down on the biggest story of all. No, there isn't a tunnel going from the school to downtown Hamilton. That rumor has been around for a long time. There are tunnels under downtown Hamilton but they don't extend anywhere near here. Those tunnels are steam tunnels and they used to heat most of the buildings downtown. Basically all of the buildings that were knocked down in order to build Jackson Square.

“That particular rumor I know for a fact has been around for at least 40 years because I've actually found reference to it in an old yearbook and at that point the rumor was that there was a tunnel between this building and the building across the road which at that point was a pub called Patty Green's. There was a Scottish gentleman who taught Biology who would go across the road and get completely sloshed at lunch and this was a well-known thing and nobody particularly cared” -Christopher Litfin

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The Bunker

This is my favorite one of all and it’s probably the most popular myth circulating the school.

It’s believed that the storm drains in the football field are ventilation shafts for a large bunker underneath the field, but Chris clarified to me that they are in fact just storm drains that were put there because of how low the field is. He stated that they’re, “Just old storm drains. There’s nothing mysterious about that. It doesn’t connect anywhere useful. Incidentally, there’s no bunker under the football field. All the research I’ve done, there’s no mention, there’s nothing, but... there is a bunker.”

And believe me, when he said that last bit, I got VERY excited.

In the back of the school, at the bottom of the ramp by the tech classes there is a brick shed where tools are kept. Now here comes the exciting part. Underneath that shed there is a heavily reinforced concrete bunker. After stating this he reassured me that it was nowhere near as exciting as I thought it was, but I would beg to differ. When the school was first built, this bunker housed the electrical equipment because at that point in time large electrical equipment had an unfortunate tendency to explode. So, if you had such things inside buildings you put them in a heavily reinforced room so if they were to blow up, the explosion wouldn’t cause severe damage to the school or the people in it. The walls, ceiling and floor of that bunker are very heavily reinforced with more than a foot of concrete reinforced with several layers of rebar and a strong steel door. The reason why the school never had a bunker that was meant to hold people was because, firstly, the school was built after the Great War. It was a time when nobody thought there would ever again be such a catastrophic world event as the one that had just ended. Secondly, if they were to have put one in later, it would have corrupted the structural integrity of the school completely, and lastly, it would have been able to fit around fifteen people, and the school was initially built for around seven hundred students.

A Hidden Marble Staircase?

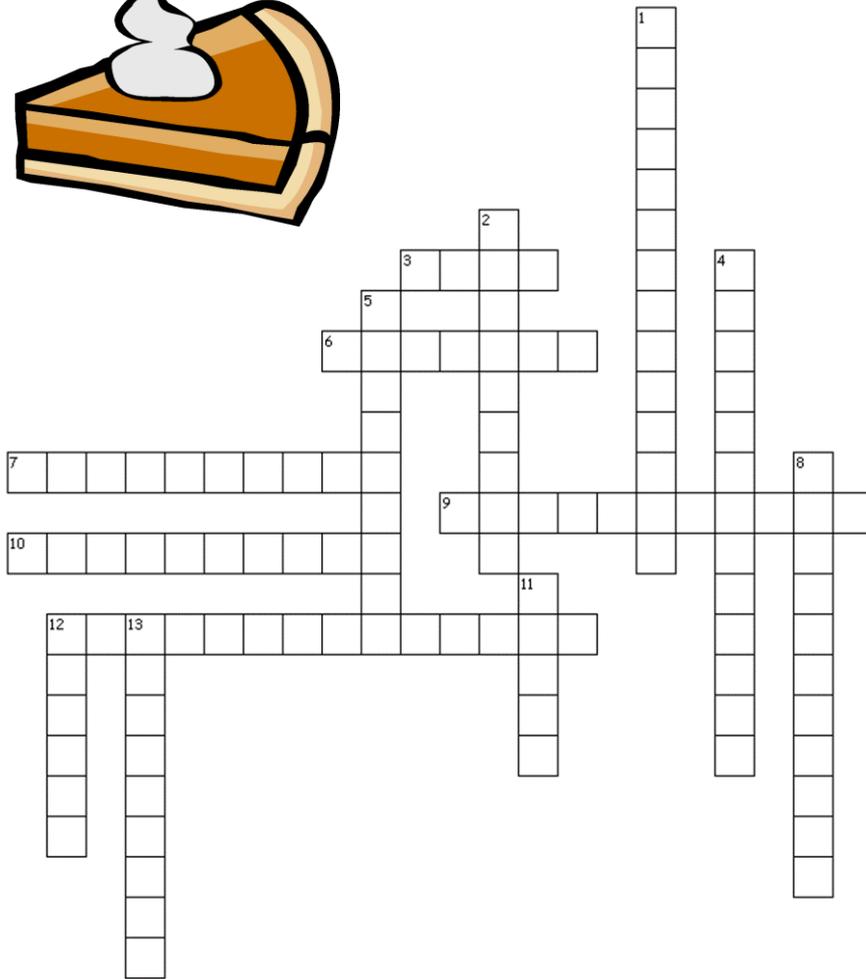
This one is actually quite simple. In the front foyer, the two staircases that lead to the auditorium balcony used to go all the way to the fourth floor because of the Cafeteria. Later on, the last couple flights of stairs were completely closed off. If you look, you can still see the corner post and base of the next flight of stairs and how the wall at the top of the stairs looks like it was obviously added fairly recently.

Wow, you actually managed to make it to the end of the article without falling asleep, I congratulate you! Good job! Now get out there and take a look around the school. Maybe you’ll even check some of these spots out and see the history for yourself. Perhaps you’ll pop into learning resources to ask Mr. Buyers some follow up questions (I strongly urge you to, he’ll talk your ear off for hours!), or you might perchance discover some of your own historical mysteries! Heck, you might even be involved in the making of the next one!



November Crossword

By: Raiyan Sayeed



FUN AND GAMES

Across

3. Medical tool experimentally found on November 8 1895
6. November 4th 1922; the day a certain Egyptian's tomb was found
7. Movember! Month of _____
9. "The name of the magnificent mollusk in Spongbob" + The name of a baby powder company that starts with J"
10. Pie made with the squash's cousin
12. The $\left[\frac{(576-422)}{14} \cdot e^0\right]$ th day of the $\left[\frac{(\cos(\pi))^2 \cdot 2 \log_2 2 \cdot \sqrt{4 + 3 \cdot 5/3}}{(2-1)}\right]$ th month

Down

1. The original "nasty woman"
2. A day when farmers commonly distributed "Hopper Cakes"
4. The birth flower of November
5. Green Party Candidate for US President (if you figure this out without looking it up, you know your politics)
8. "I will make America great again"
11. The first living creature sent into space on November 3 1957 (p.s. It was a dog)
12. Something you might have to do outside your house with all these leaves around
13. A type of leaf that all us Canadians know about!

Inspirational Quotes

Problems are not stop signs; they are guidelines.

- **Robert H. Schuller**

It always seems impossible until it's done.

- **Nelson Mandela**

I have found that if you love life, life will love you back.

- **Arthur Rubenstein**

Riddles:

1. You will always find me in the past. I can be created in the present, but the future can never taint me. What am I?

2. Feed me and I live. Give me a drink and I die. What am I?

3. Paul's height is six feet, he's an assistant at a butcher's shop, and wears size 9 shoes. What does he weigh?

Answers: 1) History 2) Fire 3) Meat

Funny (and probably cringey) jokes:

My dog used to chase people on a bike a lot. It got so bad, finally I had to take his bike away.

How do you tell a crab is drunk? *It walks forward.*

Why did the physics teacher break up with the biology teacher?

There was no chemistry.

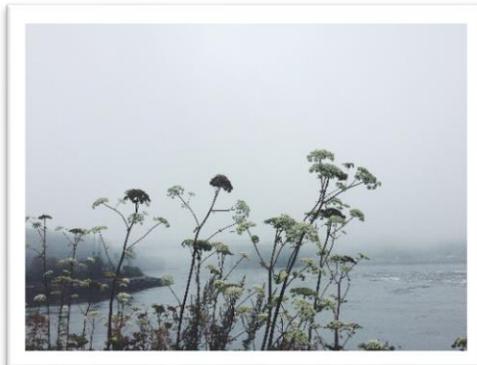


Student Photography

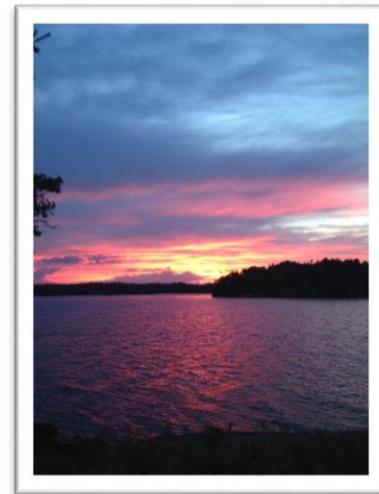
Check out our digital edition to see these in colour!



Kendra Zhang



Kendra Zhang



Sarah Sellens



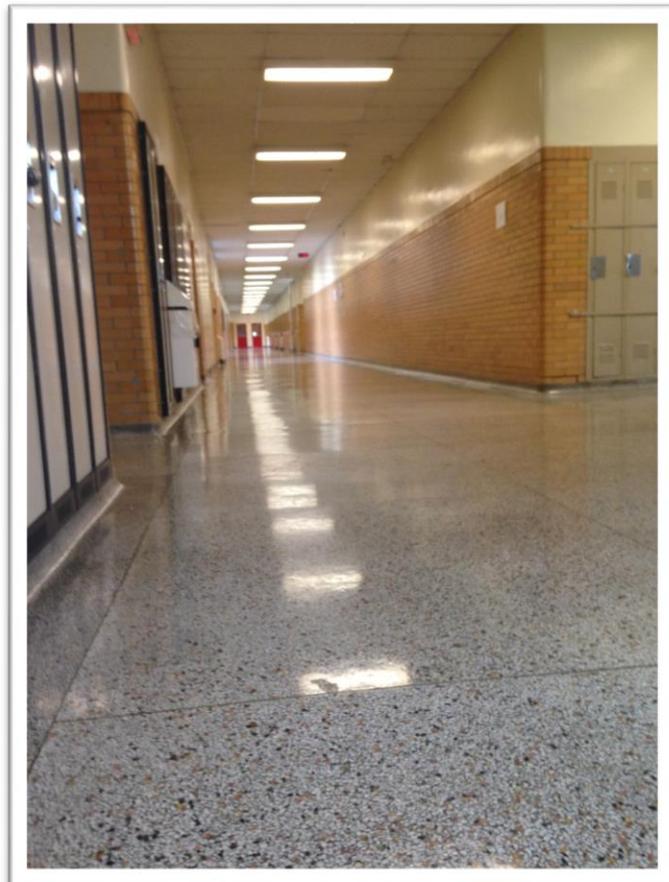
Mackenna Friesen – Mum’s Festival



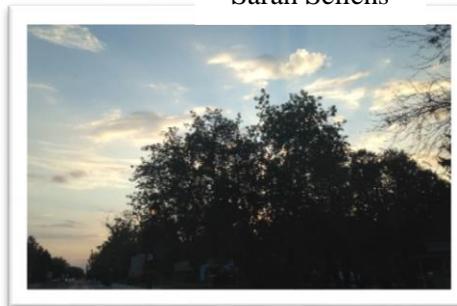
Mackenna Friesen – Mum’s Festival



Mackenna Friesen – Mum’s Festival



Sarah Sellens



Sarah Sellens

Gallery

Westdale Spirit Week Photography
(Oct. 31 – Nov. 3 2016)

Vidhiya Jeyanathan and Aya Alayche



Halloween Costumes!



Halloween Costumes!



Halloween Costumes!



PJ Day!



PJ Day!



School Spirit Day!

School Spirit Day!

