

# The Tower

JOHN ADAMS HIGH SCHOOL


**THURSDAY, APRIL 21<sup>ST</sup>, 2016**
*John Adams High School's Student-Produced Newspaper*
**Are our social media sites selectively focusing on Western tragedies?**

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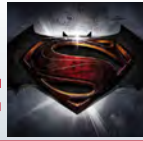


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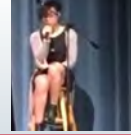
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# THIRD ESTATE

ALICE GOULDING • REPORTER

Sitting in on a practice one Thursday afternoon, it was clear that Third Estate was just as much a friend group as it was a group of performers. Between each song, the members would stop and converse, joking around about the music and their performance, as well as broader topics like their classes and this year's Republican presidential candidates. The band was practicing one song for the majority of the time. Though this sort of repetition seemed a bit tedious, everyone appeared to be enjoying themselves.

Third Estate was originally composed of juniors Mark Anella, Tye Happ, Ben Hawkins, and Spencer Higgins, all close friends. They formed to participate at Teen Night's Battle of the Bands. "At first it was just for that, but we've really enjoyed playing together and stuck with it," said Happ, who doubles as both the drummer and host for all of the band's rehearsals. Since then they've added seniors Zach Bombon and Morgan Garber, who serve as the band's main vocalists.

While the band has changed over time, one thing has remained constant: the unyielding support from the community. "Other students have always been very receptive to our music," said bassist Hawkins. "I don't think we would have made it this far without them." In addition to students, Third Estate has felt monumental support from their parents. "Without them, we would have had no way to meet up to rehearse, or transport our instruments, at least until we all got our licenses," said Anella. "And we owe a titanic 'thanks' to the Happ family for allowing us to practice at their house and eat their food."

Third Estate – an allusion to the party representing the lower classes during the French Revolution – is still in awe of their Tower Rock successes. "We are essentially painting ourselves as representatives of the common people," said Anella in reference to the band's


*Third Estate, post-performance at Tower Rock*

name, and represent the common people they did. Third Estate won Tower Rock handily, coming in first with a vast majority of the votes, and securing a performance slot during JA's 75th Anniversary Celebration.

"Our genre is hard to pin down," said Bombon during a break. "I think we naturally like to play alternative rock because of our instrumentation, but we're also pretty influenced by EDM [electronic dance music]." Their music choices seem to reflect the band's overall unity. "As a whole we enjoy similar music," added Hawkins, "but separately I think we listen to a lot of different artists, so each of us has a variety of ideas to bring to the table."

Garber, whose powerful vocals wowed all those present at Tower Rock, was the last member to join the band. "I perform with another band at my church every week and I've also written my own music in the past," she said while the band was warming up. "I'm also in show choir, which is where I met the rest of them. It seemed like a good fit." That sentiment is held by many in the JA community. "I love Third Estate," said James Matheis, a junior at Adams. "They look and sound really professional."

After winning Teen Night, the band was contracted to produce a music video and complete a recording session with a professional studio. Up until this point, Third Estate had been per-

forming covers, for logistical reasons. However, that is about to change, according to Happ. "Right now we are working on some original pieces and keeping in touch with the studio and we plan on recording and filming this summer" said Happ. "Keep your eyes and ears open for a hit single and music video from Third Estate!"

However, beyond the summer, it is unclear what will happen to the band. Seniors Garber and Bombon will be graduating this May, and both are planning to attend IU Bloomington this fall. "Who knows?" said Happ, laughing. "Drums are pretty cool. These people are pretty cool. I'm not overly concerned about the future."

That being said, Third Estate still has many goals in mind. "I'm personally hoping Mayor Pete will be [at the 75th Anniversary Celebration]," Anella joked as the practice ended. "He once told me that he was in a band in high school, just like us, so maybe one day I can grow up to be like him." Anella also hopes that the band continues to flourish, adding, "Us performing is such a great chance to show our appreciation for Adams High School, the learning institution that has guided our growth from freshmen into the successful upperclassmen we are today."

While the future holds many uncertainties for the band, Higgins surmised the overall feeling pretty well: "I hope J. Seitz likes our band."

THE JOHN ADAMS

tower

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*The Tower* is a student-run newspaper publication and a voice for the Adams student body and staff. Editorials submitted must pertain to Adams lifestyle, student/staff opinions, or local issues. Editorials must be sent to [slewis@sbcsc.k12.in.us](mailto:slewis@sbcsc.k12.in.us), or submitted physically to room 1831 or mailed to John Adams High School, 808 S. Twyckenham Dr.

*The Tower* thanks the *South Bend Tribune* for printing services.

We at *The Tower* also request that readers consider donating to help pay for the printing & production of our newspaper. Your donations will help the growth of a voice for the local community; your help and contributions are greatly appreciated.

# TOWER ROCK

NIKI HAKIMZADEH • REPORTER

As few people know, the John Adams Tower is a self-funded newspaper. The South Bend Tribune graciously allows us to print our newspaper at their office for 174 dollars per issue. Our only source of funds to make payments for our biweekly printing of issues comes from ads and donations. This year, The Tower decided to hold a music festival, Tower Rock, as a fundraiser to help support the newspaper for the rest of the year.

Tower Rock was held on March 24, 2016, in the auditorium. The night consisted of a battle of the bands/performers to determine the best musical talent at JA via democracy.

The event was MC'd by Spencer Higgins, who also performed several times.

The performances throughout the night varied greatly, from performances by the Adams show choir, to a teacher parody made by JA's own teachers, Mrs. Fisher and Mrs. Meijer, to the highly acclaimed JA band, Third Estate. However, unlike other JA events, Tower Rock was open to students from any school. We welcomed students from local South Bend schools like Riley and Clay, along with students that came as far as Brandywine High School in Niles, Michigan.

Concessions were sold throughout the night along with a table for donations. Towards the end of the night there were also open mic performances by several talented vocalists such as Adriana Santiago, Flannery Whitmore, Mary Garcia, and more. After all of the votes were counted, the band Third Estate won first place, the duet by Amia Weatherspoon and Spencer Higgins got second place, and the boys barbershop quartet got third.

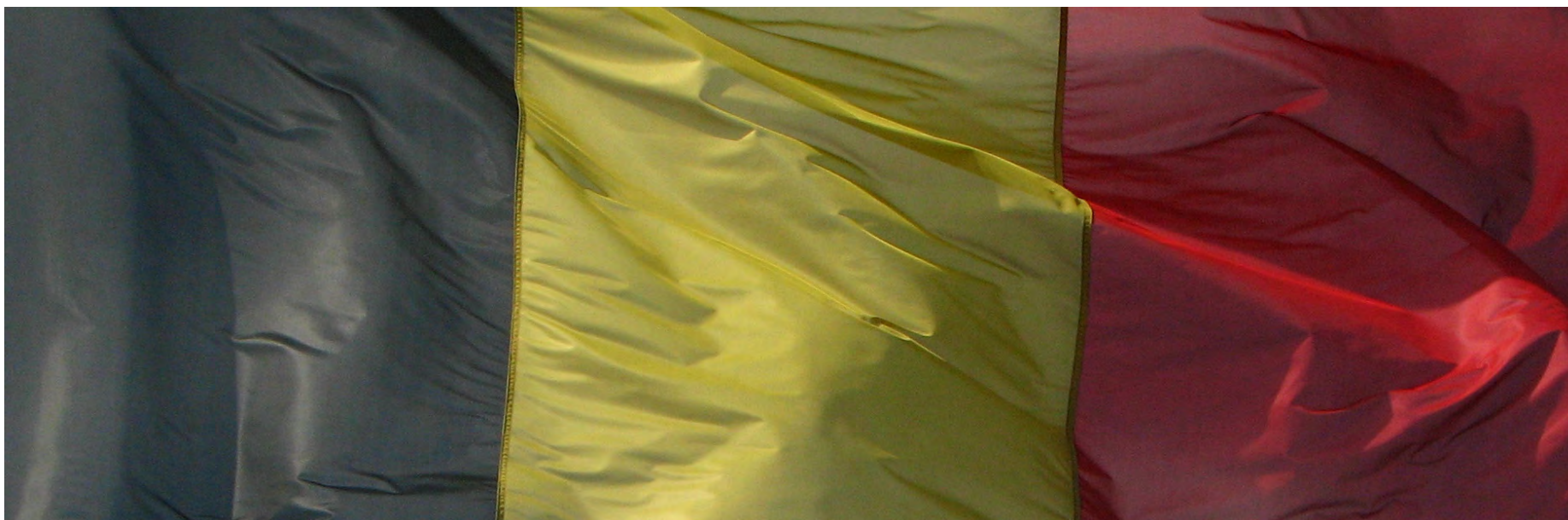
By the end of the night, The Tower raised 1,270 dollars and sold over 100 tickets. The Tower plans to keep Tower Rock as an annual event to continue raising funds for the newspaper. Many students that attended this year say they look forward to attending again next year. Sophomore and Tower Rock performer Dylan Shema said, "It was a lot of fun listening to different talents and I would highly recommend it." Fellow performer and JA senior Mary Garcia agrees, "I went because it seemed like a fun new way of showcasing Adams talent while supporting a good cause. I really enjoyed seeing all the different performers demonstrate their talents through different types of music. I'd defi-

*... A fun new way of showcasing Adams talent while supporting a good cause. I really enjoyed seeing all the different performers demonstrate their talents through different types of music. I'd definitely recommend to others.*

nately recommend to others."

Along with the Adams students, the guests from other schools also enjoyed the event. Abby Crothers, a sophomore from Riley High School said, "I went to Tower Rock because I knew people from other schools that were going and it just sounded like a cool experience. I enjoyed it, especially the bands and I'll probably go again next year." Jordan Omari, a sophomore from Clay High School, agreed, remarking, "It was cool and I really enjoyed [Third Estate] they were most definitely my favorite."

Whether you're a student or a teacher from any school, the Tower encourages you to come out to this annual event in the years to come and support your local school newspaper!



# BRUSSELS AND LAHORE: GLOBAL OVER-AND UNDER-REACTION

KAITY RADDE • LIFESTYLE EDITOR

*One week. Two terrorist attacks.*

The first was in Brussels, Belgium, with two bombings at an airport and one at a metro station. Over 30 people were killed and 300 more were injured, 61 of them critically. Aided heavily by world media, the United States and Europe descended into a mix of anger, mourning, and most notably, panic and paranoia.

Parts of the reaction to Brussels were inspiring and comforting. World leaders banded together with messages of solidarity, cooperation, and dedication to democracy delivered loudly and clearly, and they were echoed by their citizens. Belgian nationals were featured in videos and articles explaining why terror didn't have to mean an end to Belgium's acceptance of all.

But when politicians vowed to defeat the enemy, it was still elusive and frighteningly vague - terrorism at large, rather than a tangible entity - and even when it was defined slightly more specifically as ISIS, there was no clear indication of what would change. They took this tragedy as an opportunity for political grandstanding; their messages of unity

were followed by claims that more attacks were imminent, fueling the fire that the people behind these attacks endeavored to set.

The media became an ISIS recruiter almost immediately. Horrors grab our attention, put us on high alert, make us afraid and sick to our stomachs; how could news outlets resist the money they could make off of such news? They blared the panic ISIS wished to spread through a megaphone. They aided politicians in justifying legal measures that would infringe upon civil liberties. They didn't bother to remind people of the idea that any society that gives up a little liberty to gain a little security will lose both and deserve neither.

The world's knee-jerk reaction is to broadcast its righteous anger, but what we fail to understand is that a quieter reaction doesn't equate to ignoring the problem. It would show the terrorists that we, as a world united, can mourn with our heads on straight. It would be lighting candles quietly. It would be world leaders thinking clearly about what would actually be effective in defeating such a unique threat and keeping their citizens as safe as possible while maintaining civil liberties instead of reacting immediately and publicly. It would be those same leaders who are making empty claims of unity actually coming together for a joint plan to achieve their common goal.

Then, on Easter Sunday, came the second. A suicide bomber killed over 70 and injured hundreds more near a playground in Lahore, Pakistan. One would think that an attack that targeted and killed mostly Christian women and children soon after our nation declared that ISIS was committing genocide would have as much, if not more, coverage

by the mainstream media and commentary from politicians as the Brussels attacks did.

However, the non-Western nation of Pakistan received practically nothing in the way of support compared to Brussels. Only a fraction of the world leaders that offered solidarity to Brussels offered the same to Lahore, and an even smaller number of celebrities did.

The victims of these attacks, if no one else, deserve a happy medium. Radio silence toward Lahore is calloused after the reaction to Brussels, but that reaction was dangerous in and of itself. Both of these attacks made me and countless others sick to our stomachs. When attacks like this happen, it's a natural reaction to feel a surge of fear and anger, and it's natural to get swept up in the wave of battle cries and rhetoric. Trust me, I get it - after the Charlie Hebdo shooting last year, my twitter feed was nothing but political cartoons and #JeSuisCharlie, and I was no different from half of the people I followed. Maybe the next time a tragedy like this occurs, though, we can mourn privately and know that we are connected to the rest of the world by our feelings and convictions rather than by hashtags and retweets. Then, we won't have to chalk up one more for the guy with the bomb.

# BATMAN V. SUPERMAN: THE SUPERHERO MOVIE WITHOUT A HERO

MARIAH RUSH • NEWS EDITOR

RATING: THREE STARS

The premise sounds promising to any superhero fan- two fan-favorite characters, polar-opposites, going against each other in a battle for justice. Superman (Henry Cavill), a superpowered alien hero standing for truth, justice, and the American way, against the vigilante billionaire, Batman. Although the latter is more of a dark, anguished, lurking in the shadows type, both heroes are standardly against killing. However, in *Dawn of Justice*, both superheroes resort to an absurd amount of violence, and the Dark Knight uncharacteristically kills his fair share of people. This is just one of many problems I, and many critics, had with *Dawn of Justice*.

Admittedly, standards for this movie were higher than usual- Ben Affleck was tasked with the difficult job of stepping up as the new Batman, filling Christian Bale's shoes. Zack Snyder, pressured to redeem himself after his dark *Man of Steel* in 2012, perhaps

tried a little too hard. It does not appear that he learned from his mistakes, as *Dawn of Justice* turns patriotic and heroic Superman into a dull, depressing 'hero'. This, coupled with the fact that there is almost no true heroism in the whole film, adds up to a hero blockbuster that has lost the qualities of a hero plot. Nevermind the fact that Superman is now a brooding, dark figure, which makes the movie Dark Hero v. Even Darker Hero. Snyder somehow makes it possible for the heroes to only fight for their own desires- Superman to save Lois Lane (Amy Adams) and his mother, Batman to stop Superman

from supposedly "destroying" the good hero name. With Batman acting as a judge, jury, and executioner with his enemies, neither hero is very uplifting. In a cruel twist, this movie is called *Dawn of Justice*, when no real 'justice' is served for anyone. There is no dawn. It appears as if we have yet to see the dawn of this so called 'justice'.

Neither hero works to save the day, which eliminates the feel good moment that are superhero movies' bread-and-butter- they thrive on it. We, as moviegoers, love the cheesiness of a good, wholesome hero (or in Batman's case, the brooding underdog) saving the day for the good of mankind. Without those moments, the superhero industry will falter and flounder.

All in all, the movie was not unenjoyable to watch, and I can always ignore a few problems with superhero movies. But I can not ignore another major fault- this one being, the amount of plot. I am not quite sure what the main conflict in the film was...Lex Luthor, played as a frighteningly erratic boy-billionaire (Jesse Eisenberg), is originally introduced as the central villain, but with about 30 minutes to spare, a new villain is introduced, summoned by Lex Luthor himself- Doomsday. Doomsday, coupled with the forced entry of Wonder Woman (Gal Gadot) in order to set the scene for the Justice League, adds an insurmountable amount of

plot for one two-and-a-half hour movie. Somehow there is also a side conflict with human trafficking? Doomsday and Lex Luthor, as crucial Superman universe villains, deserved much more than sharing screen time with one another, a feat that may not be as wrong if Batman had not

been also trying to kill Superman throughout this. With an ending that is sure to surprise, *Batman v. Superman: Dawn of Justice* has all the right ingredients, but somehow, the end result is not up-to-par. Snyder tried for the ultimate comic book lover's dream movie, but ended up with an overstuffed, dark, sadly un-heroic movie. This superhero movie is lacking what superhero movies do best- fun.

*Zack Snyder, pressured to redeem himself after his dark Man of Steel in 2012, perhaps tried a little too hard. It does not appear that he learned from his mistakes, as Dawn of Justice turns patriotic and heroic Superman into a dull, depressing 'hero'.*



# COME SEE MIDSUMMER!

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## AMIA WEATHERSPOON

TOWER ROCK RUNNER-UP

MARIAH RUSH • NEWS EDITOR

Sophomore Amia Weatherspoon showcased her jaw-dropping voice at Tower Rock on March 24. Despite singing for as long as she can remember, Amia had never sung in front of an audience, let alone in a competition before. However, her nerves didn't stop her from going on stage because she likes "to entertain people."

Weatherspoon performed the song "Hallelujah" with Spencer Higgins at her side on the

guitar. "Singing at Tower Rock was a little scary at first but once I got into the song I forgot that I was even on stage." Amia continued, "Having Spencer there helped a lot too."

Amia's performance took the audience's breath away and caused the crowd to go silent with awe. The voting results at the end of the night confirmed what many already knew: Amia has a stunning voice. Amia earned second place, and only trailed Third Estate by a small margin. "I didn't even know Tower Rock was a competition until I saw the ballots." Amia confessed, "It was just fun for me."

Amia is a member of the JA Show Choir, so anyone who wants to hear her perform again but can't wait until next year's Tower Rock should attend Spring Fling on April 29 at 6 PM. Amia loves to sing reggae, "especially Bob Marley," and has been greatly inspired by Frank Ocean. To no one's surprise but to everyone's relief, Amia's passion for singing is something that's here to stay: "I'll never stop singing but as far as it being my career, I doubt it. That would be nice though."

# SOFTBALL PREVIEW

SAMANTHA JANKOWSKI • REPORTER

The John Adams girls softball team has always been decent these last couple of years, but for this season the girls feel a sectional victory in their midsts. The girls opened the season with a 7-5 nine inning win over Class 3A ranked number 1, S.B St. Joseph. The Lady Eagles won a hard fought battle after making a double play to win the game. It was a huge win and a huge accomplishment for the team. Halle Meredith and Taylor Meehan both went 4 for 4 leading their team to victory over Ft. Wayne Carroll 19-5 in 5 innings. They then continued a strong opening to the season with a 4-0 record; the girls hope to continue to keep this streak alive. Varsity captain Brittany Martens's goal for the team is to win sectionals and go far into regionals. Halle Meredith states, "We have great team bonding and I know that will help our run in sectionals."

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# ROCK THE VOTE

## THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

AIDAN REILLY • EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

As the 2016 election continues and Indiana's May 3rd primary moves closer to us every day, John Adams High School took a new, innovative, and laudatory step: mass registration. As the current election cycle has been enshrouded by debauchery, ranging from petty insults to scathing – and consequential – bigotry, Adams represented the election's antithesis: pragmatism.

A few weeks ago, every Adams senior

attended a program dubbed 'Rock the Vote'. The program, formally known as the League of Women Voter's High School Voter Registration Project, included guest speakers Mayor Pete Buttigieg, City Councilmember Jo M. Broden, and the Indiana League of Women Voters State President, Lisa Plencer. Comprised of inspirational speeches, anecdotes, and videos, the program had one goal: register all eligible voters for the upcoming election. The program had five distinct goals to teach:

1. *The importance of voting*
2. *Why your vote matters*
3. *How elected officials affect your life*
4. *What forms of I.D. are required at the polls and how to obtain that I.D.*
5. *Registering eligible voters*

The League's President, Lisa Plencer, says, "My only personal goal is to continue to find ways to help the League grow in its relevancy. I believe it speaks volumes that our organization has remained a trusted leader in non-partisan voter service for 95 years. I never cease to be amazed by the wisdom of the women who have come before me and those with whom I serve."

95 years ago, at the doorstep of women's suffrage in the U.S., Carrie Chapman Catt, President of the National American Woman Suffrage Association, recognized that the time for educating the women who were about to win the franchise was in order. She said,

"The League of Women Voters is not to dissolve any present organization but to unite all existing organizations of women who believe in its principles. It is not to lure women from partisanship but to combine them in an effort for legislation which will protect coming movements, which we cannot even foretell, from suffering the untoward conditions which have hindered for so long the coming of equal suffrage. Are the women of the United States big enough to see their opportunity?"

Plencer continued, "The goal of the League of Women Voters is to empower citizens to shape better communities worldwide." She cites 100% voter registration as the ultimate goal.

The League and Adams' actions are nothing but commendable: the impartial demonstration that was Rock the Vote stayed away from politics, focusing purely on the student. The League and Adams used their position of authority for only good – to inform Adams students of the importance of voting, participating in democracy, and standing up for what you believe in.