



What is the press pool - and why should you care?

PAGE THREE



2



ADAMS

Tower Rock runners up: Amara Ball and Ben Hawkins

4



NEWS

How the election's outcome will affect the Supreme Court

5



NEWS

"Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them" lives up to the hype

8



SPORTS

A look at the girls swimming season so far

ZACK FERNANDEZ: TOWER ROCK'S VICTOR

DAVID ENGEL - REPORTER

The Tower would like to congratulate Zach Fernandez on winning the 2016 Tower Rock Music Festival. He rapped two original pieces, "Oh Lawd" and "Importance." Each drew applause and captivated the audience with their lively beats and lyrical genius. I recently sat down with Fernandez and inquired about his music.

When Fernandez began to discover rap, he mainly listened to Eminem's "Recovery" album of 2010. From there, he turned to Drake, specifically "Take Care." These artists inspired him. According to Fernandez, "They made an impact on [his] life." Then, he turned to the hip-hop of the 1990's. "I studied it," said Fernandez. "How they wrote, their messages... I mixed it all together to create my own message, promote the things that I want to promote."

This led him to compile his first album, "Exhibit Z." Exhibit Z was meant to be "accessible to teenagers." The album was primarily written to, as the name implies, exhibit his ability to produce and share music. This purpose, however, was also meant to convey a message. Fernandez explained, "If we try hard enough, we can be anything we want. We all have the potential to succeed, to be better than our predecessors." With Exhibit Z, Fernandez was able to show people that he could not only rap, but that others could also chase their dreams, even if they seem far-fetched.

After Exhibit Z, Fernandez was feeling a bit lost. He wanted to keep producing, so he created "Silence EP." In it, his message is one of doubt, yet hope. He portrays a character who is famous and wealthy, yet unhappy all the same. This

character goes on a journey of self-discovery and realizes that he can attain happiness through God. The character mirrors the struggles of Fernandez himself, who realized, with the help of friends and family, that the key to satisfaction lies with God. "While praying, I sometimes experienced overwhelming silence." The namesake of the EP comes from the power this silence bore on Fernandez's life and his music.

After Fernandez found himself through his religion and God, he released his most recent



album, "XX" (pronounced "X's"). This was his most personal album, as he mostly talked about his life. "It was somewhat of a continuation of Exhibit Z. On the album cover, it's me with two x's over my eyes in paint, and there is paint splattered across the cover. There are things that distort how you view society. The paint represents this." XX was very different from Silence EP. "In Silence, I talk about a character. In XX, I am the character. It's about me; how I act in the world... how I'm still finding my way." With XX, Fernandez wanted to showcase his life as a

teenager trying to discover his path; his way in the world. He found himself with Silence, and with XX, he was trying to find his way.

At Tower Rock, Fernandez performed two tracks off of XX. "Oh Lawd" and "Importance" were the two highlights of the event. "Importance" is a deep, lyrical song. "It was a track I wrote contemplating my high school experience as a freshman. There were popular people, and one can get caught up in that group. I realized that you're missing out if all you care about is fitting in." He provided an example that is all too common in today's society. "People often prioritize likes on Instagram and social media. It doesn't matter how many likes you get; only your character and who you are as a person [matters]." Fernandez himself uses social media as a tool to distribute his art, ideas, and messages, but "Importance" is all about being yourself.

"Oh Lawd" was meant to be as hype as possible. "I wrote it to flex my rap ability; hip-hop is kind of like survival of the fittest; I had to show people that I was capable of surviving in the music world." In cohesion with XX's message, "Oh Lawd" comes from Fernandez's personal experiences. This track was definitely a crowd favorite; the audience roared when he was finished.

Fernandez is obviously a talented musician. When asked if he would consider music as a career, he said, "It's a possibility. Music is a passion, but I have other ambitions." Specifically, he is interested in the sciences - perhaps a medical degree. Even if music isn't an occupation, he would still enjoy producing on the side. "Music impacted my childhood and adolescence," he explained. "I don't want to aimlessly chase it, but I still want to pursue my dreams."

Fernandez has a SoundCloud account, which is where he displays his music. If you'd like to hear all of his work and see his album covers, go to www.soundcloud.com/zachisenigma. He plans to release new tracks and albums, and his SoundCloud will surely be heavily visited by listeners and fans.

THE JOHN ADAMS

TOWER

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AMARA BALL AND BEN HAWKINS: TOWER ROCK RUNNERS UP

ALICIA KOSZYK - REPORTER

Amara Ball and Ben Hawkins were the runner up performers at this year's Tower Rock. Amara Ball, a junior, sang the song "Clown" by Emeli Sande, while senior Ben Hawkins accompanied her on the piano. Both performed last year as well; Hawkins' group Third Estate won first place, and both performed with the barbershop quartet, which came in third place.

Performing again this year at Tower Rock was a must for them. "I definitely wanted to participate and have fun playing music like how I did last year," said Hawkins. Ball agreed, adding, "I really love singing and a lot of my friends were doing it also, so I thought it would be a lot of fun." When signing up for Tower Rock, the duo decided to perform together this year. "We have been in choir together for years, but I never heard her sing individually," said Hawkins. "So when I finally heard her sing while we practiced, I was blown away."

In the days leading up to the big night, the rehearsals went great for the two, according to Hawkins. "When Amara and I went to a friend's

house a couple days before the performance and played it together, that's when I knew it was going to be something special." Ball concurred, going on to say, "Ben is a really talented musician and it was great working with him." When it finally came to the big night, the pair wasn't nervous at all. "I'm so used to performing so I wasn't too nervous, especially once I started singing," said Ball.

Music has played an important part in each of their lives since they both were young. Hawkins recalled, "Ever since I was little, I've performed for piano, choir, and band. I started taking private piano lessons in the 1st grade. And I have competed in ISSMA contests since 6th grade. I've always loved performing." For Ball, singing also runs in her family: "I've always been singing for as long as I can remember. My parents also sing and they've exposed me to a lot of different music growing up." When asked if they would consider music as a career of theirs, Ball said, "I've had the opportunity to perform in many shows and take voice lessons. I am definitely considering it as a career. It's what I love to do the most so it would be amazing if I could do it as a profession." When asked that question, Hawkins has a different type of answer - "I probably won't make a career out of it or anything. I just enjoy singing, dancing, and playing music with friends. It's always been a passion, but I don't plan to make a career out of it."

Overall, the pair seemed to have a great time at Tower Rock. Ball concluded, "I would definitely do Tower Rock again next year, it's a really fun experience."

PROTECTIVE PRESS POOL: WHY SHOULD I CARE?

KAITY RADDE - ASSISTANT EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Since the election, journalists have been left unsure of what their relationship with the White House will look like under a Trump administration, as Trump's distaste for the media has been apparent throughout his campaign and continuing after Election Day. Many Americans are unaware of what a protective press pool is, and even fewer understand its importance in the eyes of the vast majority of journalists. Therefore, we find our central question: does it matter if the President goes to a seemingly menial event like a dinner and members of the press - and, colloquially, the American people - don't know?

A press pool is a group of news media organizations that pool their resources such as footage, reports, and photographs to share with the public, as certain venues often do not accommodate all interested journalists. The White House press corps, perhaps the most famous press pool in America, is a group of media correspondents. All members of the White House press corps are briefed by the White House Press Secretary multiple times a week. Often times, a smaller number of these journalists are assembled and granted special access to high-profile events where open access for a large number of people would be difficult. These journalists, referred to

as the White House press pool, then share their information and footage with the rest of the press corps.

The press pool is logistically the best solution for both the media and the President. Costs are split among outlets, and footage is shared from limited-access events. Rather than constantly being surrounded by a horde of reporters, the President is accompanied by a select few who report back to the rest of the press corps. However, its omnipresence has much more to do with freedom and accuracy of information than convenience.

In the words of an open letter penned to Trump by a collection of journalists and inde-

the press pool protects is future generations. The press pool - and corps at large - serves as America's handpicked group of eyewitnesses, preserving the objectivity of the historical record. Pool reporters were present at events ranging from JFK's assassination in Dallas to the Florida school where George W. Bush first learned of the September 11 attacks in 2001. Without them, countless questions would be left to the imagination - or worse, fabrication. How did the President react to a tragedy or a crisis? A success? What was the first thing he did or said? How was he doing, physically or emotionally? Even today, in the age of instant transfer of information thanks websites like Twitter and

Snapchat, the press pool has access to the President where the vast majority of America can not - on Air Force One or in the Oval Office, for example.

While the idea that members of the press should have to accompany the President to mundane events like dinners and golf outings seems absurd to some, no one knows when a crisis will arise

and the press will be needed to preserve the truth for the American people both today and in the future. If the next national or global crisis occurs while the President is on a golf course or a plane, the press needs to be there - even if the odds are that they'll just be watching the President golf.

Press pools are the most practical way to ensure that the American public receives the accurate information it deserves. Whether you are a fan of the media or not, knowledge of what is occurring within our government is still crucial, and a press pool guarantees that knowledge.



pendent press advocacy groups, the journalists argue that the American people "deserve to know what the president is doing. [A press pool] isn't about access for the press itself, it's about access for Americans in diverse communities across the country." The general idea is that an informed media creates an informed public. A press pool guarantees that journalists are with the President at all times, ensuring that the truth is recorded rather than the reports of White House aides and staff, which would almost certainly be biased toward the President and preserving his legacy.

Another equally important audience that

SUPREME COURT VACANCY

OPINION

KAITY RADDE - ASSISTANT EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Since the death of conservative Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia last year, the Supreme Court (SCOTUS) has been short one Justice due to the mostly Republican Senate's refusal to vote on President Obama's proposal, Merrick Garland. In spite of the fact that President Obama, who, according to the Constitution, has not only the right but also the responsibility to appoint a Justice to the Supreme Court, they asserted that the next POTUS would be a more accurate voice for the American people.

In all likelihood, their real motivation was hope for a Republican president who would appoint a Justice who aligned with their beliefs and agendas. They were lucky- if the victory of an anti-establishment candidate who calls himself a member of their party can be considered luck. Donald Trump pulled off an upset that virtually no one predicted, and if he hadn't, his opponent Hillary Clinton would have likely appointed a far more liberal judge than President Obama tried to.

The fact that the Republican's gamble paid off for them does not change or mitigate the fact

that they neglected their Constitutional responsibility to at least conduct a vote - and hopefully, in the name of democracy, a pragmatic one. Before the 1980s, the process was largely apolitical: Justices were approved by the Senate based upon their capability, not their perceived political leanings, though Presidents have always chosen Justices who they believe aligned closely with their beliefs. In recent decades, however, the role of the SCOTUS has become increasingly politicized, with nominees drawing lobbyists to the Senate to approve or reject them and causing media speculation about the types of decisions they would make. Therefore, Senators are more likely than ever to vote based on party than pragmatism - especially if they're up for re-election.

Though this explains the fact that the average time it takes to approve a Justice has more than doubled and questioning time has quadrupled, the Senate doesn't generally refuse to vote at all, and it doesn't frequently deny nominees, either. This case is more of an indication of America's political climate - a climate where bipartisanship is blasphemy - than a reflection of the validity of President Obama's choice. And while the Senate has the responsibility to do its duty whether its constituents like it or not, the people are partly to blame. Republican voters who applauded this action only encouraged the Senate's pandering, and Democrats would have done the same. Until the American electorate finds candidates who care about the United States more than their parties and themselves,

this problem of party and popularity over duty will persist.

The culmination of this problem is President-Elect Donald Trump. Many voters saw him as a change from the Washington elite, which is certainly true, but they misguidedly assumed this would mean that the problems associated with career politicians would evaporate and that the President would be more in touch with everyday Americans. Now, America and the world will watch as the loose cannon that is our President-elect nominates at least one, if not three, Justices over the course of his term. Even for Republicans and conservatives, this should be nerve wracking. The alt-right, which is synonymous with white supremacy and encompasses the KKK, Neo-Nazis, and Breitbart News, has definitively become the conservatism he publicly aligns himself with and appeals to. This is not - or, at least, was not - the right that mainstream conservatives vote for, but it might be the right that Trump tries to place in the SCOTUS. However, he did release a list lined with mainstream, socially conservative judges while campaigning, but his actions and changes of policy since the election give no indication that it was anything more than a tool to help him win the election or that he will adhere to it.

The bright spot for everyone but the alt-right is that approval takes a two-thirds majority, not a simple majority. Republicans only hold 51 out of 100 Senate seats, and even Republicans who endorsed an apparently alt-right lunatic for president may not be willing to approve one for the SCOTUS, which shapes everyday life for Americans far more than the President does with its rulings on social issues. Therefore, if future President Trump would like to get any of his nominees past their hearings, he will need to pick someone who is well-qualified and relatively moderate.

While many of us here at Adams have good reason to be apprehensive about our futures under a Trump administration, we all need to remember that one man cannot and will not be able to destroy the things we hold dear - equality, freedom, tolerance, even the Supreme Court - unless we, the people - including the "we the people" in Congress - allow him to. Does he have the power to nominate whomever he would like to the highest court in the land? Yes. But does he have the power to circumvent the Senate? No.

America may be able to put a grossly unqualified man in the White House, but she can't put one on the SCOTUS without the compliance and cooperation of a bitterly divided Senate.



FANTASTIC BEASTS AND WHERE TO FIND THEM

OPINION

CASEY CARROLL - COLUMNIST



If you have been wondering why all the Potterheads have congregated in the past week, then I have your answer. On Nov. 18, the “Harry Potter” spinoff, “Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them” was released. The release caused the new movie “Doctor Strange,” grossing \$17.5 million in the box office, to fall into the second slot while “Fantastic Beasts” took over as number one at \$75 million. This movie has been anticipated for a long time, causing the film to make more money than the rest of the box office top ten combined.

Set 70 years before Harry Potter and his friends arrive at Hogwarts and around the time of the Grindelwald attacks in Europe, the plot follows Newt Scamander, a magizoologist. Scamander, played by Eddie Redmayne, leaves his home in the United Kingdom and travels to America to continue his work of caring for endangered beasts. Unexpectedly, he is sucked into the drama of the wizarding community in America. Scamander, accompanied by ex-Auror Tina Goldstein, her sister, Queenie Goldstein, and a No-Maj (American word for Muggle or non-wizard) named Jacob Kowalski, who came into contact with the Wizarding World after accidentally mistaking Scamander’s magical briefcase for his own, frantically run around New York City to find Scamander’s creatures and the source of the city’s peril before it is too late.

The word ‘amazing’ doesn’t even begin to describe “Fantastic Beasts.” The special effects seen in the scenes with the different beasts and the magic used throughout the film were impeccable. Both much-loved spells and a few characters known in the “Harry Potter” world make appearances or are mentioned throughout the movie. The main character, Newt Scamander, is an extraordinary character that you will instantly fall in love with. His quirky demeanor is adorable, and I recommend not seeing this movie if you aren’t prepared to fall

in love with and obsess over a fictional character. The rest of the characters were interesting, had depth, and left viewers wanting to learn more. “Fantastic Beasts” will be a series of five movies, so be sure to look out for the movies in the years to come.

The movie is based on the textbook “Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them” by J.K. Rowling, which appears in the Potter books and films as a textbook written by Newt Scamander on the Wizarding World’s many creatures. The film features beasts such as the Bowtruckle, a small, twig-like creature that guards wandwood trees and excels at picking locks; the Thunderbird, a flying beast that can sense danger and create storms as it flies; the Niffler, a long-snouted, burrowing creatures native to Britain with sticky-fingers; the Demiguise, a peaceful, ape-like herbivore with the ability to turn invisible when threatened and see the near-future; the Billywig, a small, vivid sapphire-blue insect with wings on its head which allow it to spin as it flies and delivers stings that cause giddiness and levitation; and Swooping Evil, a large, butterfly-like creature that emerges from a small object. If you are interested in acquiring extensive knowledge on these creatures and the many more the magical world has to offer, then I recommend reading the textbook.

On Nov. 19, J.K. Rowling came out with the original screenplay of the movie, available at most stores, which you should go buy if you want more information on the plot and characters seen throughout the movie. Even if you

haven’t seen or read the “Harry Potter” series, you would enjoy and be amazed by the effects, plot, and characters used throughout the movie.

In conclusion, it doesn’t matter if you’re a Hufflepuff, Ravenclaw, Slytherin, Gryffindor, or Muggle - seeing “Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them” is an experience that everyone should have and is definitely worth the money to see in theaters.

The Tower is now available online (mobile-friendly). You can now access printed issues from this year, articles that will appear exclusively online, and a contact page for user feedback.

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THE PEOPLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA DECIDE: MISINFORMATION IN THE 2016 ELECTION

OPINION

ALICE GOULDING - MANAGING EDITOR

This election cycle, more than any other, should have been driven by information. An estimated 78 percent of Americans have at least one social media account, according to the data site Statista, which is an all time high. However, subscriptions to newspapers like The New York Times and the Wall Street Journal have plummeted, signaling that Americans are more likely to learn about current events from sites like Facebook and Twitter than actual news publications.

Scrolling through these sites in the past year, I have come to find that my news feed is saturated with posts by politicians, posts about politicians, articles analyzing these politicians, and, believe it or not, articles analyzing posts that analyze politicians. In public we tend to veer away from conversations about the election for fear of appearing impolite; on the internet, people feel more open and willing to express even the most extreme views, which is perfectly fine until these opinions can no longer be supported by facts. Unfortunately, these posts and the beliefs expressed in them often stretch, bend, or falsify the truth altogether.

On a site such as Twitter, information is much more accessible to users than on other social media platforms. Anyone with a Twitter can tweet, both to the general public and directly at someone, making conversation – and disagreement – flourish frequently. News sites and political figures frequently use Twitter as a way to report breaking news and keep followers in the know with live coverage. This makes it incredibly easy for fake news to spread – one false news story can be tweeted and within a few hours can have several hundred thousand retweets and favorites, reaching an audience in the millions.

This election cycle alone, President-elect Donald Trump tweeted links to or cited several false stories about his opponent or her staff, all of which were shared by thousands of his followers. His son, Donald Trump Jr., shared an article from the website abcnews.com.co (the actual ABC News site is abcnews.com) that claimed Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton was paying off people to protest at Trump rallies. ABC called Trump Jr. out for the false information and he quickly deleted the tweet, but not before it was picked up by several online syndicates.

Perhaps the most misleading example of misinformation are parody accounts – accounts created to pose as the person they are mocking by tweeting satirical versions of their beliefs and opinions. For instance, a fake account for former New York City mayor Rudy Giuliani tweeted that Trump had performed poorly in a debate, and Meet the Press actually used it in an interview with the actual Giuliani to call him out on a discrepancy. They later apologized for the gaff, but the effect still remained: if the account could fool NBC, who's to say it hadn't fooled all of its followers as well?

Facebook, the larger culprit for this spread of misinformation, functions on a much more personal level – we choose who is allowed to view what we post, and whether or not we want to see what they are produc-

ing, even going as far as to create private groups, in which only members (who typically all agree on the same platform of issues) share information that seems to both bolster their candidate and party's platform, and tear down their opponent's. At one point this year, two articles involving the Pope were circulating Facebook simultaneously. One claimed that the Pope endorsed Trump, the other, that he condemned him. The former was confined to right-wing pages, while the latter was most popular amongst the liberal forums. Neither grouping of private pages knew that the other article existed because it was being spread behind these privatized walls, and neither had anyone within their groups to point out that they were fake, because no one disagreed with the opinions laid out in the respective articles.

I suppose this is how misinformation grew and altered during this past campaign season. In one of the most divisive elections to date, both sides were looking for facts to prove that their opponent was either a lying fraud or a xenophobic sexual predator. Either way, when an article or a tweet arose that supported that position, they would share and retweet – sometimes without even reading it – to prove that a platform existed that supported their argument. People then believed them because we have an expectation that what we read in the news should be true. In reality, that expectation should only be extended to publications like the New York Times and the Washington Post, who actually hire dozens of editors and fact checkers, not these new, less traditional online sites that seem to be replacing them. Perhaps that's why the newspapers are failing and the election turned out as it did.

MATCH THESE QUOTES!

QUOTES

1. "Worrying means you suffer twice."
2. "I'm going to steal the Declaration of Independence."
3. "That's my secret, Captain - I'm always angry."
4. "To announce that there must be no criticism of the President, or that we are to stand by the President, right or wrong, is not only unpatriotic and servile, but is morally treasonable to the American public."
5. "I see you're drinking 1%. Is that 'cause you think you're fat? 'Cause you're not. You could totally be drinking whole if you wanted to."
6. "Why are you the way that you are?"
7. "If I had to have a stripper's name, it would be Equality."
8. "Huge Ackman? That doesn't even sound like a real name."
9. "When you can't make them see the light, make them feel the heat."
10. "I'm a damsel, I'm in distress, I can handle this. Have a nice day."
11. "Sucking the marrow out of life doesn't mean choking on the bone."
12. "What in Megyn Kelly's America are you doing?"

PEOPLE

- Bruce Banner ("The Avengers")
 Napoleon Dynamite ("Napoleon Dynamite")
 Newt Scamander ("Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them")
 Schmidt ("New Girl")
 Ronald Reagan
 Michael Scott ("The Office")
 Mr. John Keating ("Dead Poet's Society")
 Ben Gates ("National Treasure")
 Leslie Knope ("Parks and Recreation")
 Theodore Roosevelt
 Meg ("Hercules")
 Sir Lancelot ("Night at the Museum 3")

ANSWERS: 1C, 2H, 3A, 4J, 5B, 6F, 7I, 8L, 9E, 10K, 11G, 12D

RACHEL CASPER AND SPENCER HIGGINS: TOWER ROCK'S THIRD PLACE

TAYLOR WALDRON - REPORTER

November's Tower Rock Music Festival proved to be a winning year for show choir students. The vast majority of Tower Rock performers were show choir students, which is a class available by audition that performs throughout the year. For many of them, Tower Rock is a great chance to exercise their creativity and personal music style. "It's nice to utilize our other musical skills and collaborate with each other," Casper said. "This was our first time performing a duet." Higgins agreed. He said, "Tower Rock is the only music festival-type-thing, and we don't have a talent show we have so it's great".

Casper and Higgins had never collaborated before, marking Tower Rock as their first attempt at a musical union. "[Rachel and I] were sharing memes one day, and [she] told me she wanted to perform at Tower Rock this year. She asked me to perform with her and I thought, 'Heck yeah!' said Higgins.

For third place winners senior Spencer Higgins and junior Rachel Casper, Tower Rock was a respectable achievement for the both of them. "We're really proud that we placed this year," said Casper. "Yeah, I think I deserved first, but..." joked Higgins.

Neither Casper or Higgins are strangers to the Tower Rock stage. This was Higgins' second year as MC for Tower Rock. With his inherent charisma and well-timed jokes, Higgins is always a crowd favorite. Last year, Casper performed with a show choir group. When asked to compare last year's Tower Rock to this year, Casper said, "Although the turnout for Tower Rock was smaller this year, it made me less nervous to perform." It was perhaps Casper's calm demeanor that helped the two secure their third place win.

The duo performed two songs during the festival. Their first performance was a witty rendition of the popular 1999 hit, Smash Mouth's "All Star," substituting borderline rap for singing. The song was well-received as a bit of comic relief from the plethora of woeful ballads that were previously performed. "The song is a bit of meme," said Higgins. "As leader of meme club, I wanted to represent."

Their second number incorporated Casper's stunning vocals and Higgins' proficient piano accompaniment. They performed the R&B classic, Alicia Keys' "If I Ain't Got You." The crowd went wild for Casper's flawless pitch and Higgins' fluid piano riffs. "I chose this song because I think my vocal range really works with Alicia Keys' songs and 'If I Ain't Got You' is one of my favorites," said Casper. When asked about participating in Tower Rock again, Casper said, "Yeah, I'll probably perform next year, however I won't be able to find such a gifted accompanist as Spencer." Spencer Higgins will also be releasing a mixtape this winter featuring Vice President of M.E.M.E. club, Bennett Stuver. It will be available via SoundCloud.

Casper and Higgins will be performing together again at the Show Choir Winter Concert on December 4 at 2:00pm. They will be performing the Christmas classic, "O Holy Night."



MARY CLAIRE BURNETT: SENIOR SPOTLIGHT

HUNTER MELANSON - REPORTER

The ultimate goal for most high school level athletes is to play the sport they love at the next level; NCAA. While receiving offers from Division 2 or Division 3 schools is quite the achievement, only a few athletes are met with the opportunity to compete at the Division 1 level. One of John Adams high school's very own, Mary Claire Burnett, is among those athletes who have reached that pinnacle of success. Burnett has committed to play soccer and study at Western Michigan University, an NCAA Division 1 school. The Tower reached out to her to learn more about her overall experience with playing the game she loves.

Burnett has been playing soccer for over a decade. She officially began playing club in sixth grade, for the Indiana Invaders and Jr. Irish. From there she went on to play in an elite league in Indianapolis, as well as for the Olympic Development Program state team. Not only is Burnett achieving all of the goals she set out for herself, she is also receiving a scholarship to play the sport she loves. This is not by any means an easy achievement. "To get recruited to play a D1 sport of any kind is very difficult," Burnett said. She explained that contrary to popular belief, most coaches don't just come to you. "I sent hundreds of emails to coaches, made a highlight video of myself, and went to tournaments to be seen by coaches," she said.

WMU, located in Kalamazoo, Michigan, was ultimately her choice because it fulfills all of the aspects she looked for in a college. "It is a D1 state school and not too far from home," Burnett explained. In addition she said, "I love the coach and there is a lot to do around the beautiful campus."

Burnett, however, could not have achieved these goals without her amazing teammates and coaches at Adams. They helped her realize that she "needed to find a team and coaching staff that [she] felt comfortable and confident with." Burnett continued with, "Coach Mac was inspiring and motivating. She helped me believe I can do anything I set my mind to." In addition, she explained how her years of playing for travel teams "literally pays off" when it comes to getting scholarships and playing in college. This is because all of the skills she learned and exposure she had gave her an edge with coaches.

"My advice for any younger players who want to take their game to the next level is to play with all your heart and to lose faith in yourself," said Burnett, who acted as a role model for her teammates. "You have to put the time in off the field to get to where you want to go. Never lose sight of why you love soccer," she said.

GIRLS SWIMMING

MARIAH RUSH - EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

John Adams Women's Swimming (JAWS) is unlike many other sports here at Adams - a handful of swimmers have two-a-days, the work the girls put in is unparalleled, and they are truly a close-knit team. Swimming is also, technically, an individual sport, although each swimmer's place factors into whether they win or lose a meet. As assistant coach Lynn Kachmarik says, "Swimming is an individual sport, although we come together as a team... it's exciting to watch them do their personal best."

However, from talking to these girls, you wouldn't think that the sport is mostly individual. Before meets, they spend most of their time talking or grabbing food together. If you talk to the swimmers considered to be the "fastest" on the team, you would not guess that they are the record-breakers of the pool by the way they talk or by the way they interact with the rest of the team. They talk mostly of the team and their happiness at being a part of it.

Stephanie Portolese, a senior captain, went to state her freshman and junior years and has broken multiple records for Adams (200 IM and 100 breaststroke). Instead of talking about

herself, she gushes about "the family" she is a part of and says, "We like to have a good time, but we also are successful and work hard.... It's not about winning, it's about going as far as we can as a team." Junior Kaity Radde describes the team as becoming a more "jointed endeavor" in which swimmers from all ends of the spectrum have come together, and their team of upwards of thirty girls has become stronger for it. Assistant coach Kachmarik says, "They all really care about each other regardless of their ability."

The closeness of the team is apparent from talking to Camille Soenens, a senior foreign exchange student from Belgium. Upon joining, Soenens says, "The team was very welcoming, I directly felt like a member of the "swimming family." Whether a race is going good or bad, JA swimmers can be sure that their teammates will cheer them on no matter what. "I love how we all push each other and whatever you do on your race during a meet, you can be sure that the team will be there to cheer you up," Soenens says. The boys swimming counterpart, JAMS, is even known to attend the girls meets in support; it appears as if all the swimmers at JA are one team, one family.

The amount of work the team puts in is another factor that make JAWS unlike other sports. Along with the two-a-days, the girls push themselves in every practice to become better. "A lot of people don't like to put in the work, but you can tell what you're getting out of it," Radde said. The girls' friendliness may be due to the fact that their

workouts bring them together. Soenens says, "I feel like because the practices are very hard, we all support each other all the time."

As of the week before Thanksgiving break, JAWS has a record of 2-2. With Sectionals in early February, we are sure to see plenty of success for JAWS this season.

WORLD SERIES

SPENCER DANT - CONTRIBUTOR

History has been made. The Chicago Cubs won their first World Series since 1908, a 108 year drought without victory. As a Cubs fan, I can proudly say that I was able to attend game three of the seven game series. In a time where there is so much negativity in the world, the World Series brought the whole nation together. It was nice to have the break from all the drama and sadness. People couldn't go anywhere without seeing or hearing something about the Cubs, especially being so close to Chicago.

During game six of the NLCS game, my dad and I decided that if the Cubs won, we would go see the World Series. The Cubs ended up winning that game 5-0 but it was still nerve-racking to watch because the Cubs had come so far. As soon as the end of the game was in sight, my dad pulled up his laptop and searched for tickets. He purchased two tickets before the Cubs won because he was optimistic and because they were so far in the lead. As soon as the game was over, we both shot out of our seats and hugged each other because we were going to see history in the making.

On October 28, we arrived at Wrigleyville several hours before the game. There were so many people in Cubs gear that it looked like a sea of blue. People were almost bumping into each other it was so crowded. The screams and shouts of all the die hard Cubs fans made me feel special. My dad and I went into Wrigleyville sports to get some souvenirs for ourselves and others, and people were shoulder to shoulder. Everybody had the same idea that we had. We somehow made it out alive.

Once we were inside and in our seats, we instantly befriended the Cubs fans around us. The whole experience touched all of my senses. I could see all the Cubs fans, hear the fans singing along, smell the stadium food, feel the energy, and taste the ballpark hot dogs. If you have never been to a baseball game, the hot dogs aren't like normal hot dogs. Something is different and makes it a whole lot better. The game was crazy and kept everybody on the edge of their seats the whole time.

The Cubs ended up losing that game 1-0, but it was incredible either way. I got to spend time with my dad who is my best friend; I got to have a once in a lifetime experience; and I got to be a part of history. The Cubs ended up coming back from a 3 game to 1 lead to win the World Series. I will never forget that day for the rest of my life.

