

The MLWGS Jabberwock

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"Proof" Players Perform

**Students Aim for Edgy,
Contemporary, and Original**

Journalism Class
Jabberwock Staff Reporters

Tonight will be the first performance of the play "Proof," produced, directed, and acted by four MLWGS students. Performances are Friday and Saturday evenings at 7:30 p.m. in the auditorium.

"All the proceeds will go into the school's production fund," said Jules Siegel-Hawley ('05) who acts the role of Catherine. "So hopefully this can be an annual thing...to encourage more plays."

The tickets cost five dollars, which is less expensive than some past MLWGS productions.

"Proof," written by David Auburn, won the Pulitzer Prize in May 2001 and won the Tony award for best play the same year. The story revolves around Robert, a brilliant mathematician,



Seniors Jules Siegel-Hawley and Ranjan Khan close in for a romantic moment in "Proof." Photo by Shana Arias.

(played by Mike Rozycki) and his daughter Catherine (played by Jules Siegel-Hawley). When Robert begins suffering from a mental illness, Catherine comes to his aid but begins to worry that the illness may be in her future too.

As a romantic relationship begins to develop between Catherine and Hal, a former student of Robert, (played by Ranjan Khan), Claire, Catherine's oldest sister, (played by Nora Byrd) pressures Catherine to move to New York.

David Calvert ('05) has designed the set and will be leading the tech crew.

This is the second production of the season. "We thought that there should be a short contemporary play in the winter," said Siegel-Hawley.

"The interesting bits are the vehicle of my math and the 'no real bad guy'

factor. No one's a villain; people are just real," said Mike Rozycki. He also noted that this was the first real contemporary drama done in an area high school in quite some time, adding, "We're edgy, man."

The self-directed cast has been practicing in various venues since December.

"We've been working really hard, and I think it's going to turn out really well," said Khan.

Although this may be the last MLWGS production by the three seniors, both Siegel-Hawley and Rozycki hope to pursue careers in theater.

Audiences should anticipate a two-hour play, which includes a 15-minute intermission.

Rozycki offers a final bonus, "You get to see Ranjan shirtless."

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problems@email.com Letters to the Editor

Recently, when students go to check their web-based e-mail accounts from school computers, they find out that they are no longer able to open their home e-mails. Instead they are forced to use the e-mail service provided to all MLWGS students at the start of their high school career. Although there are some perks to having a school-account, there are definitely some downsides to having home accounts blocked at school.

For the few students who have neither a home e-mail account nor internet at home, the MLWGS e-mail account is definitely an asset. However, most students have at least one e-mail account they use for friends, family and school. It is often necessary for students applying to various colleges and scholarships to check their e-mails during lunch when the admissions offices are open. It is often a great inconvenience for those students to have to check one more account in order to ensure they are up-to-date on all their correspondences.

Checking school e-mail accounts is simple from school, but accessing them from home is oftentimes complicated. There are several different ways to log in incorrectly, and the directions are not always helpful.

One example of a very useful and noticeable improvement in the MLWGS e-mail system is the allowance of attachments to and from home-accounts. This helps a lot when students need to send documents they have been working on at school home and vice-versa. A plan to resolve this issue of blocked home-accounts is to either unblock the web-based e-mail servers, like Yahoo! and Hotmail, or work on making e-mail access from home easier.

—SS

Dear Editor,

It's a poem, and I have noticed that there has been a lack of letters to editors in the newspaper, so give this a go:

Pledge

I don't remember when I stopped
Saying the pledge every morning
When Teachers made me stand in respect
When I looked at the flag differently
I won't pledge allegiance to a flag
Because the flag doesn't even care
And it pledges only to itself
And forgets about families, God, and me
I don't cross my heart to the flag
Because it doesn't have one
And a heart is just too precious
To throw away on a piece of cloth
The only allegiance I'll pledge under God
Is my prayer I say every night
Expecting to have God on the side of the flag
Makes me want to remain seated

— Robert Hatchel ('07)

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WRITE A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

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Battling Disease With Optimism

Aileen Zhang

Jabberwock Staff Reporter

If you see a blonde waving her arms around with her eyes closed—she doesn't need rescuing, she's just dancing. Jessica Burris ('05) is a quirky, self-proclaimed nerd who has survived ulcerative colitis (UC), an autoimmune disease, causing inflammation of the intestines.

Diagnosed near the beginning of sophomore year, Burris was not worried because doctors believed she

“Basically [have] fun...when it's all said and done, that's what life comes down to.”

would get better. However, “by the time we realized UC would be a chronic thing, I had been given time to adjust...” Similar to Crohn's disease, treatments exist but not cures.

The severe form of the disease is punctuated by multiple “flare-ups,” brought on by stress, other illness, or anything at all.

Burris has been a denizen of hospitals, frequenting them a minimum of once a month from the summer after sophomore year to this past December. Since she was on immuno-suppressant drugs, any time another student came to school sick, she was in danger of experiencing serious illness.

“The steroids were the

worst part of the whole thing,” said Burris. The doctors were testing experimental intravenous drugs on her during the bad flares-ups.

Known by all as being joyful all the time, Burris can often be found prancing in the halls. Still, her close friends know she is emotionally mature.

“Emotionally I had to grow up more quickly,” said

air,” recalled Burris. “I applied knowing I wouldn't be able to go.” With so many students today working towards college as the end instead of the means, it's hard to comprehend going through the difficulties of this high school and the college application process purely for learning's sake.

“People with UC like I had it often don't finish high

ity [of the disease], I was expected to die of cancer at around age 30.”

When asked how she manages to stay so optimistic, she answered, “willpower... One day I just figured out that feeling bad for myself wouldn't accomplish anything.” She continued, “So when I felt down, I just replaced it with doing something I loved to do.”

Burris sounds wise beyond her years, living the simple phrases uttered by so many self-help gurus. She keeps positive by “writing or dancing like an idiot around my house or playing video games...”

“This is all really heavy stuff,” said Burris as she tried to lighten the mood.

“A positive attitude is absolutely key in dealing with it... and not like the poster kind, the kind you say out loud but don't really think.”

“When dealing with challenges that are recurring, no matter what they are, you have to wake up in the morning and make a proactive choice to live your life anyway,” said Burris after some reflection.

The disease is in complete remission, but “it could come back, but it could go away forever...” said Burris.

As to her future, Burris plans to do “something creative but requiring leadership...like advertising.” She wants to “basically [have] fun...when it's all said and done, that's what life comes down to.”



Burris flipping her hair. Photo by Tina Scheibe. ('05).

Burris. “I mean, I could die tomorrow and be fine with it, but it took me awhile to get to that stage.”

Even away from MLWGS, she acted like a Governor's School student.

“They [hospital staff] thought it was so funny that I would try and do schoolwork while staying there.”

For most MLWGS students, missing even one day of class can leave a daunting amount of makeup work. Jessica ended up missing one entire quarter.

“Things like college were completely up in the

school, let alone college,” stated Burris matter-of-factly. “My mother and I briefly considered the idea of returning to my home school, but I really wanted to continue the life I've planned.” She laughed, saying, “I still feel really guilty for missing classes...”

Despite all the missed time, Burris still has time to do extracurricular activities such as MLWGS Young Democrats (YD), VA YD, MLWGS Field Hockey, Dance Team, and Peer Helpers, to name a few.

“At my age and sever-

Flying Into Theatres

Ellen Hart

Jabberwock Staff Reporter

Martin Scorsese, director of such blockbusters as “Gangs of New York” and “Taxi Driver,” really outdid himself this time. The story follows the life of eccentric billionaire Howard Hughes, his filmmaking career that launched an obsession in aviation, his flying planes and crashing planes, and his eventual madness (caused by severe Obsessive Compulsive Disorder).

Leonardo DiCaprio, who starred as Howard Hughes, surprised me with a truly outstanding performance. I didn’t think highly of him before I saw this movie, and I doubted he

could pull off such a dramatic and difficult role. But his mere facial expressions could either lighten or unsettle one’s heart. The acting on his part was mediocre in the beginning, but seemed to get better and better as the movie evolved, and by the end I was very impressed.

One huge aspect of the film that kept the audience almost wary with dread was Howard Hughes’ worsening madness, which was brilliantly and disturbingly portrayed. What was especially sad about it was his desperate attempt to stay in control. A phobia of germs, bright lights, and loud crowds made it difficult for him to live in fame.



Leonardo DiCaprio as Howard Hughes. Photo courtesy of Miramax.

Hughes’ twisted perspective added a lot of the film’s matchlessness.

As for the music, it was appropriate and even ironic as its upbeat and old-fashioned jazz style correlated with certain dark, disquieting scenes. Lighting and cinematography changed periodically to agree excellently with different moods and phases the story demanded.

Cate Blanchette, although they could have probably picked someone better to look the part of Katharine Hepburn, was nevertheless magnificent in depicting the movie star’s distinct New England accent and outlandish personality. The romance between Hughes and Hepburn was charming, reviving, and thankfully not overdone.

There was one thing, however, that needed a little bit of fine-tuning. The movie was simply too long. I attribute little of its brilliance to the story itself. There actually was no real story line. It probably had

about three parts that could have passed as climaxes, so there was too much going on. Then it ended abruptly without any indication of

“Leonardo DiCaprio surprised me with a truly outstanding performance.”

what became of Howard Hughes. Many of the events about three fourths through the nearly three hour movie probably could have been cut.

Overall, though, the movie was exceptional. I now have a newfound respect for Howard Hughes, whom I had previously only heard of by name. The movie blazons witty, charming, and many times disquieting features to compose a movie you will not regret seeing.



The real Howard Hughes. Photo courtesy of Hollywood Renegade Archive.

NEWS IN BRIEF

COLLECTED BY JOURNALISM CLASS

Science Honor Society Lecture

The SNHS sponsored a lecture on the innovative field of bioinformatics by VCU professor Dr. Jeff Elhai on February 24 in club sponsor Mrs. Hick's room.

"He exposed some real problems in the world of science," said club president Chris Boswell ('05). "[He explained] the importance of creating a system with biologists that utilizes BioLingua and other computer languages."

Libertarian Awareness Month

In an attempt to increase their presence at MLWGS, the Organization of Governor's School Libertarians (OGSL) has named March "Libertarian Awareness Month."

Members will be offering students Krispy Kreme doughnuts for taking a political quiz before school. The OGSL is also organizing a debate to be held between all three political clubs at MLWGS.

New York Trip

A group of students from the Art, Art History, and Photography classes went to see the "Gates" by Christo in New York City's Central Park during President's Day weekend.

"We were very lucky to be given an entire weekend to explore the cultural hotbed that is NYC," said photography student Tina Scheibe ('05).

Carver Tutoring Program

The MLWGS after-school tutoring program serving Carver neighborhood students is in its third week, and attendance is increasing.

"My goal is to have children come every week because they enjoy it...[it should be] a place where they can come and learn, but also to have fun learning," said Rachel Savoy ('06), who organizes Thursday's program.



Mech-Techs Update

Completing their machine with little time to spare, the MLWGS Robotics Team, or "Mech-Techs," worked long hours this week to prepare for the upcoming regional competition held in Annapolis, MD, next weekend. The robot must stack tetrahedrons weighing 9 and 13 pounds, but a rule change will allow for physical contact between robots.

Pie Day

In order to celebrate "Pi Day" and raise money for the math department, Mrs. Lynn Reed and several volunteers from her classes are selling miniature pies for one dollar each in the cafeteria during lunch.

The pies, on sale both this week and next, will be delivered to students on March 14, the date on which students and teachers recognize the value pi, 3.14.

MLWGS Students Go to Supreme Court

On March 2, 2005, a group of Mock Election and "We the People" students witnessed the highest court in the land deliberate on the constitutionality of displaying the Ten Commandments outside government institutions.

Mr. Matt McGuire, co-sponsor of Youth Policy Forum/Mock Election, accompanied the MLWGS students to Washington D.C. to hear the Supreme Court debate on *Van Orden v. Perry* and *McCreary County v. ACLU of Kentucky*. The students also had the opportunity to visit Senator Allen's office to talk about the 2004 elections.

Incoming Students

Acceptance letters are being mailed today to eighth-grade applicants. This event is merely the first step in welcoming next year's freshman class. Prospective students will be able to learn about MLWGS by coming to the Shadow Days scheduled for March 21-23.

This year, the Shadow Days will be organized a little differently. Prospective students will be split into groups of four to six and will travel together around the school. There will be events held both before school and during extended lunch periods. Each group will be headed by freshman and sophomore students who have been nominated by their teachers.