

THE MLWGS *Jabberwock*

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Friday, September 19, 2014

Tablet Takeover

By Radhika Srivastava

This fall, the MLWGS chemistry department introduced a new tablet note-taking system in its classes. This is the first time such a procedure has been used.

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The tablets are cloud based, meaning that students can upload their documents and images to an external network such as Google Drive. The documents can then be accessed from any Internet-enabled device.

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Students have specific user profiles and log in with individual passwords. Up to 8 students can have a profile on one tablet. Periodic tables and calculators have been installed on the tablet itself. One of the commonly used apps is Foxit, which is a note-taking app that allows students to hand write notes.

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ness of writing.”

Ms. Jennifer Todd, another chemistry teacher, likes that the tablets allows students to see notes and images in color and in more detail.

The tablets also have other apps installed such as Evernote, Google Sheets, and Myscript calculator, a calculator which allows students to handwrite operations.

While students recognize the potential of the tablet program, this new note-taking system does have certain drawbacks. For example, learning how to use and becoming accustomed to taking notes on the tablet takes time, which can detract from classroom learning.

“I believe that the tablet program in the chemistry classes is a good and well-intended idea, but it doesn’t seem to be working out that well in the classroom,” said Austin Peters (‘17). “There are also many problems with WiFi in the chem labs, which poses a significant problem whenever we attempt to download files from Itslearning.”

Because of occasional WiFi concerns, the tablet is not always able to connect to the Internet well. As a result, the tablet may lag when being used in class or have poor calibration. This makes it harder for students to take notes quickly and concentrate on the teacher’s lecture at the same time.

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Models of Leadership

Like many students at this school, I am involved in both Model UN and Model Congress, and enjoy both. I love the charismatic students I have met and inspiring teachers I have gotten to know through both, and genuinely feel like my high school experience was made better by attending and serving at conferences.

What I don't love as much, however, is the covert competition between the two. I have heard vicious comments on both sides regarding the other, and feel that the rivalry is unnecessary. While Model UN and Model Congress have like goals and structures, they are different clubs with different missions: one to simulate the international community, and the other to simulate the United States' legislative branch. And although there are many similarities, certain aspects make one a better fit for some than others. For example, several Model Congress conferences encourage pre-written bills, which most Model UN conferences do not allow. Many Model UN committees allow two students to represent one country (double-delegations), but Model Congress conferences

allow only one student to represent each delegate (single-delegation). Although these seem like minor differences, some delegates may prefer one model better than the other; however, this does not make any one superior.

Both clubs can exist and thrive at the same time. In fact, it is ultimately better for the other if one succeeds. Positive attention for the school's mock debate simulation scene in general brings awareness to both clubs. If students from other schools enjoy Maggie Walker's own Model UN conference, they will be more likely to come back for our Model Congress conference, and vice versa. Instead of trying to show up the other, Maggie Walker's Model UN and Model Congress teams should support each other to ultimately put the school on the map for both activities. At a school for government and international studies, both fit well into the mission of Maggie Walker. For two clubs with so much emphasis on diplomacy, it disheartens me to the disdain they show for each other. It's time to shake hands and truce.

-SM

Have an opinion?

WRITE A LETTER TO
THE EDITOR

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THE MLWGS Jabberwock

Editorial Policy:

The MLWGS Jabberwock covers news events related to the school community and provides a forum for students to share their ideas. Statements expressed by columnists or in letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the views of the staff. However, all editorials are the combined work of both the Editor-in-Chief and her staff.

All members of the MLWGS community are invited to submit letters to the editor on any topic, although the publication of all letters is not guaranteed. The newspaper reserves the right to edit letters for grammar, language and length. Please e-mail letters to themlwgsjabberwock@gmail.com.

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When in Rome, Do as the Dragons Do

By Sophia McCrimmon

Many MLWGS students learn about Italy in the pages of a textbook, but this summer 31 scholars made the country their classroom.

From June 18th to July 6, made the trip to Italy and travelled from Gaeta, a town on the Tyrrhenian Sea, to Florence. Along the way they visited Rome, Bevagne, Sienna, and other memorable sites.

For many who had studied Latin or Italian, the trip was an opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of their curriculum.

"It was cool to be able to go along with the Latin texts we were reading and the history we were learning," said Mad-die Coder ('15).

The visit began in Gaeta, where students and teachers enjoyed relaxing time on the beach— and experienced some exciting moments. Ms. Todd recalled when one student started having an asthma attack on the beach after she waking up from a nap.

"Everyone on the beach started moving towards her and amassing around her to make sure that she was okay. This little Italian woman was even making her do yoga stretches to open up her



Thirty-one Maggie Walker students had the chance to visit Italy this summer, several of whom were learning Latin. Photo Courtesy of Eliza Bellamy.

Latin teacher who chaperoned the trip] wanted to show us everything in the city so we were always up really early in the morning and we didn't get back until really late," said Guy. "At one point Ms. Hefty just went 'If you stop to point out every brick in the city they will never get home!'"

Next the group visited Bevagna, a town in Umbria, and then Siena.

"My favorite place we visited was Siena because we got to become part of the Italian culture and go to the horse race called the Palio. We got a spot on the railing so we were able to watch it up close," recalled Coder.

"The Palio was a little bit chaotic. Its not like the Kentucky Derby; they don't really have a gate. They just kind of line the horses up and then say 'go'" said Guy.

"One of the things I enjoyed learning about the students was their reaction to the different sites that they see," said Ms. Hefty, a language teacher and chaperone on the trip. "We do traditional sites, like in Rome, and I see them get excited about that. Then we do some unusual things, like visiting a waterfall in Umbria and seeing the Palio, and they

get excited about unusual things as well."

Experiencing the areas they had studied led students to make their own discoveries.

"What I noticed in Rome was that a lot of the different Roman mindsets and traditions are still there, except I'm not so sure the Italians really notice it," said Guy. "I think a lot has changed since

It felt like it wasn't a day until we got lost

lungs," she said.

That wasn't the only unforgettable moment.

"One day in Gaeta we went hiking and got lost for an hour and a half" remembered Eliza Bellamy ('15).

"It felt like it wasn't a day until we got lost," said Serina Guy ('16), "We got lost on the mountain in Gaeta, and I got lost in Rome several times. We could never figure out the directions people gave us."

After Gaeta the group moved on to Rome, a city rich with history.

"Rome was kind of hectic because there was so much to see. Mr. Ross [the

If you stop to point out every brick in the city they will never get home!

ancient Rome, but then a lot has stayed the same too."

"For students, traveling is not only a physical experience where you go from point A to point B, but travelling is an internal experience," said Hefty. "They travel inside themselves while they're there, and when they come home they have time to reflect on it."

For everyone involved, the voyage was a truly special experience.

Denouncement of the Announcement

Opinion

By Pranay Vissa

We all have plans. From attending numerous club meetings in one lunch period to compensating for a 9pm arrival at home after an exhausting afternoon of sports, Maggie Walker students plan diligently, often times more than their minds can grapple with.

On Friday, September 5, the last phrases of the announcements were uttered, something that has been a lifeline for the Maggie Walker community at large. Students have always depended on the voices above the intercom, ranging from amusing to serious to informative.

At Maggie Walker, planning for the variety of activities we are all engaged in is already an immense task. For students, the announcements have relieved a fraction of the burden, as it forgives our forgetfulness by repeating the same announcement daily for the various deadlines we all encounter. Clubs depend on the announcements as a platform to entice students with catchy slogans or tasty incentives. Honor societies announce where information can be located, the forms for which are usually scattered across the school.

“Students have always depended on the voices above the intercom...”

There is only one solution: to bring back the announcements. Administration exercised their rights to use the announcements to the final deadline for



student handbook tests. Why should school-sponsored organizations be ostracized from exercising their rights as well?

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One of the earliest developments of society was language. Dispensed in textual form, it required the use of an alternate medium, paper. Today, that medium has evolved into lines of code on the internet. But language played a much larger role in its verbal form. Language gave people a method to encode sounds that entered the ear, and transmit them through the vocal chords, in an economical manner free from the limits that paper and the internet imposes.

While it is difficult to be pleased with the new system in place, at least there is a new system present. It seems that ItsLearning is slowly consuming branches within the school that previously took pride in its simplistic approach. For example, community service has leaped

onto the digital stage; but the new protocol for community service has in fact made it more accessible.

We all have to print out forms for community service..., so why not add dozens of resources and links to community service opportunities on the digital platform that students access anyways. Community service has made a bold, but effective transition. Unfortunately, I can't say the same about the announcements.

“But if I am on ItsLearning to download a document for a class, the last thing on my mind in that moment is whether I had missed an announcement for the day.”

I can't speak for the entire Maggie Walker population, but I can say from my own experience that I use ItsLearning for its purely academic purpose. And perhaps if I glance to the side of the main page, I may see an announcement that is applicable to me. But if I am on ItsLearning to download a document for a class, the last thing on my mind in that moment is whether I had missed an announcement for the day.

For the last 3 years, I have eagerly anticipated voices on the intercom at 11:30am. The status quo has changed, but I am none for the better. “Words mean more than what is set down on paper. It takes the human voice to infuse them with deeper meaning.” – Maya Angelou

The Story of Señor Quintero

By Reshini Premaratne ('16)

Some teachers, especially those who teach a foreign language, aim to create a completely authentic environment for students to learn and immerse themselves in all that is the culture and the language. However, it seems that Ernesto Quintero, the newest Spanish teacher at Maggie Walker, is doubly as prepared to make this a reality.

From Maracaibo, Venezuela, Señor Quintero comes from a big family, one that he makes sure to visit every year. Even as a high schooler in Venezuela tutoring other students in English, he knew he wanted to pursue a career in teaching. Coming to the United States in 2002 to study this profession only further cemented his ambitions in sharing his knowledge with students and better preparing them for the future. In fact, one of his favorite aspects about teaching is the people that he gets to interact with and watching them learn the necessary skills to communicate competently in Spanish.

“From Maracaibo, Venezuela, Señor Quintero comes from a big family, one that he makes sure to visit every year.”

For the past 15 years, Señor Quintero has taught at a myriad of places: most notably, Clover Hill High School and Virginia Commonwealth University. Nonetheless, he decided to assume the Spanish-teaching position here at Maggie L. Walker Governor's School because of its prestige and renown.

One discrepancy between high schools in Venezuela and those here in the United States is that amount of



Señor Ernesto Quintero, Maggie Walker's newest Spanish teacher, teaches several different levels of the language at the school. Photo by Srishti Sanya

opportunities offered to students, specifically, the extracurricular activities, such as band, chorus, the multitude of clubs, and sports teams. Of course, Maggie L. Walker Governor's School is no exception to this. In addition, whereas discipline might have been a concern at other schools, Maggie Walker students are exceptionally well behaved and “that is what [Señor Quintero] likes most.”

Similarly, Señor Quintero was pleasantly surprised by the amount of tools provided to students here; he only wishes that students would make the most of them. In Venezuela, the students have to pay for their own textbooks and are not provided access to computers in school; whereas, in the United States, those tools are readily given and ready to be utilized.

Even though he loves visiting New York to watch the US Open and traveling to the mountains because of their serenity, there are also a few things from America that Señor Quintero wishes he could bring back home, to his municipality in Venezuela, such as, the security that the government and

the police provide to American citizens. Unfortunately, the Venezuelan government is very corrupted and its citizens are not afforded the same assurance. On the other hand, though, Señor Quintero also wishes to bring to America from Venezuela the relaxing ambience and stress-free pace of life; everything in the United States moves so quickly, which is very different from some European and Latin American countries.

“In Venezuela, the students have to pay for their own textbooks...”

Although Señor Quintero has only been at Maggie Walker teaching for a few weeks now, he can already tell that the students here are like no other – not only do they live up to the name of the school, but also they far exceed expectations in their language abilities.

Fall Sports Previews

By Claire Mendelson

Last spring, Maggie Walker won the Wells Fargo Cup for the 2013-14 athletics in Group 2A. The award recognizes one school in each group classification for best overall record in VHSL state-level competition. This year Maggie Walker looks to claim more state championships and titles, beginning with the fall sports season.

Field Hockey

The MLWGS field hockey team has already won games against Freeman and Godwin, and looks to take the state title this year. Four-year varsity players Eliza Bellamy ('15) and Laura Fuhr ('15) lead the team on offense, with a strong defense led by goalie Tallie Hausser ('15). Last year the dragons fell to Midlothian for the conference championships, but the field hockey team is back



Eliza Bellamy ('16) dribbles the ball down the field during a home match against Prince George. The Dragons won 3-0. Photo courtesy of Ed Fuhr

for revenge and will likely advance even further this year.

Boys' Volleyball

The MLWGS boys' volleyball team lost several important starters from last year, but returners Zachary Jacobs ('16) and Josh Barlow ('15) will lead the team this year. Advancing in the district and regional tournaments is unlikely, but as the program strengthens, the team may well challenge for a title in the future.

Girls' Volleyball

The MLWGS girls' volleyball team had their best season yet last year, finishing with their best record in school history, 19-5. The Dragons won the Conference 33 championship but fell in the second round of the regional tournament. Despite losing many key players, this year the team looks to advance further in the tournament and claim a regional title. The girls will be led by Carley Leckie ('15), Galen Green ('15), Emma Roby ('17), and Darby Anderson ('16).

Golf

The MLWGS golf team has significantly improved in recent years, taking 3rd place in regionals last year. The team lost won of their best players, Daniel Yoo ('13), but with Tommy Snead ('16) and underclassmen players Michael Patina ('17) and Benjamin McGuigan ('17), the team possesses the ability to advance in the regional and state tournaments this year and achieve additional success in the future.

Boys' and Girls' Cross Country

Both the boys' and girls' teams are looking to make a name for MLWGS cross country again after winning state titles last year. The girls, led by Khloe Pointer ('17), Emma Call ('16), and Archana Shekharan ('17), are poised for victory in the regional and state competi-

tions. The boys also have the chance to advance, with leadership from co-captain Joseph Boyle ('15), Evan Fisher ('16) and Ryan Buscaglia ('17). Both teams won the Varisty A races at the William and Mary Invitation this past Saturday.



Emma Call ('16) and Khloe Pointer ('17) sprint to the finish at the Newport News cross country meet. Photo courtesy of Bruce Wenger

Next Week in Dragon Athletics:

- Monday, September 22 field hockey game vs Deep Run High School
- Wednesday, September 24 girls' and boys' volleyball vs J.R. Tucker High School
- Saturday, September 27 cross country girls' and boys' Varsity Invitational at Maymont Park

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