

Top 10 Things We Are Thankful For at FCS

By LEAH HARRIS '16 and LINDSAY TALEMAL '16

1. Cafeteria staff

Not only do we have such a wide and delicious assortment of food choices every day, but we also have a great cafeteria crew who cares about our health and nutrition.

2. Nurturing environment

Our teachers and our community-at-large support and encourage creative thinking, individuality and communal projects, helping students flourish at all levels.

3. Chorus and community blocks

We love having free blocks for clubs to meet, for chorus to practice, to do homework, to meet with teachers, and even just as a time to socialize.

4. Community acceptance and freedom to voice an opinion

At Friends' Central, everyone's opinion is valid and worth expressing. Expressing opinions fosters discussion, not conflict.

5. Supportive athletic staff and coaches

Our coaches and athletic directors help everyone to be the best athlete they can be. They give us advice on and off of the field or court, encouraging us to persevere.

6. Senior privilege

Privileges, such as allowing seniors off campus, show that the teachers know we will represent Friends' Central well off campus grounds.

7. Approachable teachers

We are so fortunate to have teachers around who we can comfortably turn to with questions, for guidance, or just for a chat.

8. Diverse range of classes

The opportunity to enroll in a variety of unique classes allows you to discover yourself as a person, what you are good at, and what you are passionate about.

9. Diversity of clubs

The multitude of clubs offered at FCS allows you to find your passion and maybe discover something you never thought you'd enjoy. Clubs are also an opportunity make friends who share the same enthusiasm about something.

10. Our campus

Our beautiful and well-maintained campus provides its students with many resources, including a variety of spaces for people to congregate, demonstrating our close-knit community.



Dressed to Impress

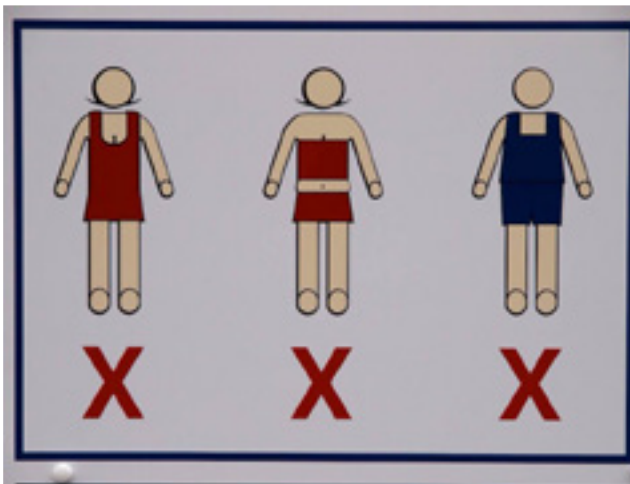
By TALIA ROSENBERG '17

On October 14th, BuzzFeed published an article titled "All The Items Of Clothing Women Have Been Told Not To Wear In 2014". In this article, there are stories ranging from a ban on leggings in a Michigan school to an expulsion of over 250 girls in a school in England for wearing skirts that were considered "too short." The excuses on each school's behalf were that these girls were "distracting" the boys, or that the dress code would "prepare them for the working world." The article tells us that, at a school in Canada, when "a girl was asked to change out of her short-shorts or face suspension," she responded by putting up posters all around school that read, "DON'T HUMILIATE HER BECAUSE SHE IS WEARING SHORTS. IT'S HOT OUTSIDE. INSTEAD OF SHAMING GIRLS FOR THEIR BODIES, TEACH BOYS THAT GIRLS ARE NOT SEXUAL OBJECTS."

While most of us might agree that there are certain items of clothing that are not appropriate for school or learning environments, girls are often penalized for wearing what they feel they look good in or what they are comfortable in. Girls have to be mindful of what they wear every day to follow their schools' dress-codes and avoid suspension or expulsion. Yet

it is rather unlikely to find boys banned from wearing certain clothing at school. Usually, it seems boys can wear most anything at school, as long as they're wearing clothing, even though one could argue that what these boys wear could "distract" girls from their schoolwork as well.

This problem reaches far outside the school zone. Girls can't walk around freely in certain places without worrying about being harassed or even assaulted. In large towns and cities, if a girl is walking home from a party wearing a short dress, she is cat-called, maybe even potentially in danger. *Continued on page 2*



Have We Lost to Sports?

By JESSICA MILLER '15

There seems to be a pattern in modern nations to rely on sports and pop culture for a successful economy. In the sports industry, businesses may take extreme measures to appeal to the public. Specifically, in August, James Rodriguez, a renowned soccer player for Monaco, was signed to Real Madrid for around 80 million dollars, and in November, the NBA signed a nine-year media-rights plan with Walt Disney and Time Warner that will raise each team in the league's paycheck to 2.5 billion dollars each year. While these are just two examples of sports deals from this past year, they demonstrate the strong, and seemingly exaggerated, mercenary interests that are pursued through sports and entertainment internationally.

Each nation shapes the way that it uses entertainment industries according to its government policies. However, although nations claim different governmental and economic values, there are evident similarities between their ultimate goals. In Philadelphia, we see Lincoln Financial Field, Citizens Bank Park, and the Wells Fargo Center as representations of a game of ownership *Continued on page 2*

FCS in Action: Service Committee

By EVA GONZALEZ '18

Come one, help all.

By being a part of Service Committee at FCS, you will be helping many people in our community who are going through tough times. While the three fall service days are over, Service Committee continues to volunteer and lend helping hands across the region.

Service Committee, led by co-presidents Hanna Lafferty and Grace McDonnell, started the year with a candy sale. They donated all of the proceeds to UNICEF, an organization that assists children around the world. (UNICEF focuses on child survival and development, child protection, and education.). Later, during the Thanksgiving season, MANNA pies were sold to help serve healthy meals to those in the greater Philadelphia area who suffer from life-threatening illnesses such as cancer, AIDS, and renal disease. Each pie helps to feed four families in need! As the holiday season continues, it's a great

time to share the spirit of giving.

The current project that Service Committee is participating in is Angel Tree. Angel Tree is an organization where you can help parents who are in jail give holiday gifts to their children. Even if you aren't able to participate in this particular service, there are many others over the year that you can support.

Service Committee is here to help you find ways to give back to those in need, whether it involves giving your time, money or friendship. While all kind gestures are even more appreciated during the holiday season, giving back is not seasonal. So don't forget to continue serving those in need all year round.

Every month, Service Committee looks to aid a different group in need. By joining Service Committee or participating in its projects, FCS community members can become more active members of society and truly make a difference. •

Dressed, continued from page 1

Is it fair that girls need to be scared to dress the way they please because boys might objectify and sexually harass them? Our generation is so focused on making sure girls don't dress inappropriately or "slutty," but no one is focusing on the root of the problem.

If boys didn't sexualize girls every time they wore low cut shirts or leggings or shorts or, well, most anything, then girls wouldn't have to worry about the effect their outfits have on males, and they wouldn't have to worry about their possible obstruction of the dress code.

So why do girls dress in a way that could be deemed inappropriate or provocative if the result is being sexualized by men? The fact is, girls don't always mean to do this. The reason people believe that girls are purposely dressing in a sexual manner is because of the standards set by society. The com-

mon thought is, since men treat women as sexual objects, women feel that in order to get noticed they must dress in a way that appeases men. The societal idea that women are sexual objects for men has aggravated this problem. In reality not all girls are waking up every morning and deciding to dress inappropriately for boys. It is unfair that women get punished for the way they dress, but really, it is worse that due to societal expectations, there could be circumstances where women feel they need to dress a certain way to maintain a social identity.

Due to the standards put up by society, and constant self-pressure, the truth is, girls do sometimes end up dressing in a less than appropriate fashion. If we fight to abolish this social standard, instead of being perceived as dressing to impress boys, the world might finally acknowledge the fact that girls dress to impress THEMSELVES. •

It's Out of This World

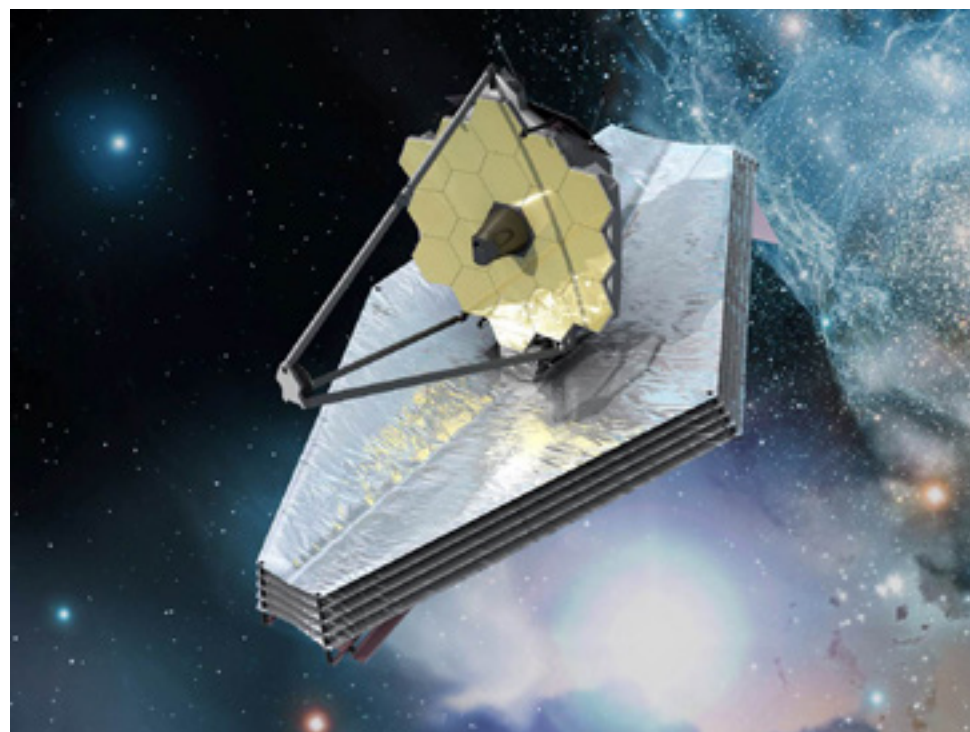
By AIDAN FITZSIMONS '17

This fall, we were lucky to have a special guest with us as part of our Distinguished Visiting Scientist Program. Dr. John Mather came and spoke to students, parents, and faculty about his work in the field of astrophysics. John Mather is a senior astrophysicist in the Observational Cosmology Laboratory located at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, Maryland. Dr. Mather is a Nobel Laureate, as he received the 2006 Nobel Prize for physics due to his outstanding work with George F. Smoot on the COBE satellite, which measures heat radiation from the Big Bang.

Mather spoke about many different facets of his research, but he primarily spoke about the James Webb space telescope, a large infrared telescope currently being developed at the Goddard Space Flight Center. The tele-

scope will use the technology of mirrors to collect data and will share that data with the NASA Flight Center in Florida. The James Webb Space Telescope aims to collect data and bring new information in four primary areas of research: light and re-ionization, the assembly of galaxies, the birth of stars and proto-planetary systems, and planetary systems and origins of life.

Dr. Mather spoke in detail about the engineering of the very complicated telescope, which involves folding mirrors, detectors, micro-shutters, and ultra lightweight beryllium optics. This revolutionary technology will help extend the discoveries of the Hubble Space Telescope in more detail. The project is working towards a 2018 launch date, and, according to Mather, they are right on track for a successful



launch. Mather stressed that, even though we are only four years away, they are still in the trial process of finding what works and what doesn't in terms of technology. If nothing else, Mather taught Friends' Central

students that mistakes are not only a part of the process, they are essential and often allow for the most interesting results possible. •

Sports, continued from page 1

and corporate sponsorship played amongst businesses in America. While our nation believes in capitalism, and combat between businesses, other nations, such as socialist Brazil, believe businesses should have equal opportunities in society.

There are almost 203 million inhabitants of Brazil today, making it the fifth most populated nation in the world. The people there face extreme socioeconomic division. While many people live there contently, there is a vast amount of people who do not. Brazil is a country abundant in natural

resources, and therefore has potential to thrive internationally. Despite that, the people at economic disadvantages often lose their faith in their country and slow down its international progression, specifically by covering it with graffiti and waste.

The struggle due to socioeconomic division in Brazil was especially prevalent at the time of the FIFA World Cup 2014. Since 2011, Dilma Rousseff, a member of the "Partido dos Trabalhadores" (Workers Party) which believes in democratic-socialism, has been President of Brazil. During

the World Cup, the government agreed to spend billions of dollars to advertise, refurbish the cities, and build new facilities that may or may not be used again. At first glance, it seems somewhat disturbing that Brazil would use its money for the sports and entertainment industries instead of using it to immediately benefit its people in need. Yet, Rousseff was re-elected President of Brazil on October 5, 2014.

Even though some Brazilians rioted, upset with their seemingly negligible influence on government spending, they ended

up instilling the same government that led to this. Brazil has given its money to these industries in large sums multiple times throughout recent years (FIFA, 2013 Summer Olympics, etc.), and will most likely continue to do so in the future. It strives to advance its technology and attract more tourists. While there were people who did not see immediate success from their country's investments, it is clear that there is hope among its people that something positive will happen because of them. •



As FCS heads off on Winter Break, Focus wants you to share some of your holiday and 2014 travel memories with us! Please send us photographs from your adventures this year to have them featured in Focus' next special issue. Any picture, whether it's from across the globe or our own city is worth sharing!

Email all pictures to focus@friendscentral.org

Films For Thought: Guardians of the Galaxy

By ALEC CLOTHIER '16

As far as the Marvel Blockbuster movies go, a new series has kickstarted massively with the iconic team of the *Guardians of the Galaxy*. This rag-tag group consists of the fearless comical Peter Quill (played by Chris Pratt), the alien assassin Gamora (Zoe Saldana), the thesaurus meat-head Drax the Destroyer (David Bautista), and featuring the duo of Rocket Raccoon (voiced by Bradley Cooper) and the humanoid tree of Groot (voiced by Vin Diesel).

These individuals unite with the main goal of vanquishing the threat of Ronin (Lee Pace), a vengeful alien out to destroy the planet of Xandar to avenge a history of war and desolation. This fast-paced movie has an unquestionable blend of comic relief, hopelessness and epic combat throughout the film that is sure to please any crowd. If you have never delved into the summer hit movies, this is the one to begin the genre with.



Truth Be Told

By ETHAN BROADDUS '18

Friends' Central honors integrity every day as one of the six Quaker principles that structures the community. This year the FCS community has pursued its devotion to this value by making it a focal point at school and inviting reflection on it. How do you think we've been doing so far to keep the values of integrity in our school?

The Honor Code Committee is a group that meets to refine and describe some of our school's central values. I talked to a member of the Honor Code Committee, Freddy Purnell, to hear his opinions on integrity. He said, "Of course not everyone can be one-hundred percent" -- as Freddy likes to say -- "integrity, but I at least make an effort." People in the FCS community should think about how they, in their daily lives and at Friends' Central, act with or without it. According to Freddy, integrity is defined as "doing what you think is the right thing to do, even if no one is around." He went on to say, "We often think about how we are honest in the FCS community, since it's our theme this year. We pick up after ourselves and there aren't any big cheating scandals, so I think we are doing a pretty good job." However, there is always room for improvement. As long as we make a conscious effort to act with integrity, something good will come out of it. Remember, do what you think is right, even if no one is watching.

Thy Liberty in Law?

By STEFAN SULTAN '15



Friends' Central students marching on Washington, D.C. on December 13th

America has always prided itself on human rights. It has aspired to guarantee its citizens the inalienable and basic rights of liberty, the pursuit of happiness, and perhaps the most important of all, life. Yet if the purpose of our government is to secure these rights for its people, then it is failing rather spectacularly. There has been a recent wave of police brutality against African Americans that has led to the unjust deaths of too many innocent people.

In order for any society to properly function, it requires a set of laws to be followed by all its citizens. Among these laws, perhaps the most important one for any society, in this case an American one, is the prohibition of killing and the imprisonment of murderers. Seems pretty straightforward, right? Unfortunately, as we have learned in the past couple of weeks, the answer to this question is no. Grand juries have chosen to not indict Darren Wilson and Daniel Pantaleo, both of whom murdered unarmed black Americans, despite evidence for both cases. Unfortunately, Michael Brown and Darren Wilson were not the only ones killed by police officers. As we know from John Crawford, Akai

Gurley, Tamir Rice, and more, this epidemic of excessive, deadly force used by the police and subsequent failure to indict those responsible for these crimes has spread from sea to shining sea.

As with most issues that we face today, the issue of police violence is rooted in something larger, in this case, institutional racism. While the United States has made significant advances in terms of race relations in the past century, we cannot slow down, for there is still a long road ahead of us. As Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie once said, "Racism should never have happened and so you don't get a cookie for reducing it." While ending racism is a daunting task, it is not impossible, and there are ways that we all can attempt to end it. We can push for equal funding and opportunities for urban and suburban school, protect the voting rights of all people, and end unjust laws that unfairly target minorities. Yet, all of this requires us to take action. It is our responsibility to push for these changes, whether we do so by protesting, writing to our congresspeople, or voting. These are actions that we all can and must take.

Artist in the Spotlight: Anne Pizzinni

By NATASHA GUY '16 and ELIZABETH RAPHAELY '16

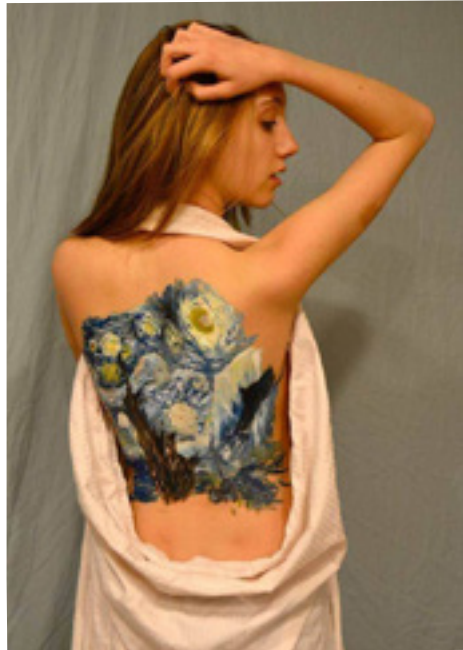
From 6th grade pottery projects to detailed sketches of the FCS Main building in Upper School art class, Anne's passion for visual art has become a vital part of her life. Her artwork includes photos, drawings, pottery, and painting. Most notably, Anne has been using people's bodies as canvases for her artwork. Her inspiration for this unique idea came to her when she was deciding what to photograph for the 2014 photography contest. Her goal was to catch people's attention, so she painted on Hannah Vickery's back a version of Van Gogh's "Starry Night" and took a picture of her version of tattooing. Anne succeeded in capturing not only the interest of her peers but also winning the school's People's Choice Award in the contest.

Since then, Anne has done many other paintings on the backs of her friends, all of whom willingly lay still for a couple of hours until the masterpiece is created. Though she has experimented with various forms of art, her preferred styles are Expressionism and Impressionism, drawing much of her inspiration from Van Gogh. Anne's artistic talents have brought her beyond the

canvas and easel.

Anne is currently enrolled in Studio Art and plans on taking Studio Art 2 in her senior year. As she begins visiting colleges, she is considering studying art and business, and even possibly venturing into the filmmaking industry.

Anne's experience with creating art is like other people's experience of going on a relaxing vacation to Hawaii: a tranquil escape from stresses and anxieties. This passion helps her transfer her energy into her work, which, needless to say, leads to beautifully crafted pieces -- on skin as well as canvas. •



Phoenix and the Phast Lane: Steven and Matt Nguyen

By ZOE GINSBERG '17 and SOPHIE BERGER '17

This year on the boys' Varsity soccer team, two brothers dominated the field. Steven ('12) and Matt ('10) Nguyen led the team to success throughout the season. Steven has played for the Friends' Central team for four years, and this year, he got to play with his best friend and brother, Matt. Steven is an exceptional captain, and his leadership shows on the field. His skills and voice on the field have inspired his teammates and his brother. When we asked Matt about his experience playing with Steven, he said, "I would say my favorite aspect about playing with Steve is the connection we have on the field. Although we fight sometimes, I know Steve has my back and I have his. He is a great soccer player, and I would do anything to play another season with Steve. I'm going to miss him next season, but I know the team next year will be in good hands." Although the team lost 12 seniors this year,

they were not discouraged. The young team played every game wholeheartedly, and their future looks bright. Even though Matt will be the only Nguyen on the team next year, he will continue his brother's legacy and emulate his leadership. •



Dear Georgia Fox: Holiday Gift Guide

Dear Georgia Fox,

Today in homeroom we picked out names for Secret Santa (aka Secret Snowflake, aka Pollyanna), and you're never going to guess who I picked - my crush! What can I give this person that would be nicer than your average Secret Santa gift-- something that signals my interest, but isn't too creepy? Please help!

Sincerely,
Secret Snowflake Admirer

Dear Secret Snowflake Admirer,

This is so exciting, and there are so many fun and different things to do! You could go the route of giving a little present every day leading up to a bigger one at the end, which could possibly even involve revealing your identity to the person. Or, you could wait to give your crush a present until the last day before break that includes a clue about who you are, and they'll have to guess. I think anything that shows you are going the extra mile should definitely get your crush attention, and then it's up to you to decide when you want to tell your crush how you feel. Whatever you decide to do, you can never go wrong with baked goods and a homemade card!

Your friend, Georgia Fox



Dear Georgia Fox,

With the holidays quickly approaching, I'm excited, but also very stressed out. There are so many people, both friends and family, that are special to me. I want to get them all gifts, but it becomes so expensive! What do you suggest I do about giving everyone a gift, while staying within my tight budget?

Sincerely,
Big heart; empty wallet

Dear Big heart,

Don't be stressed out by gift giving! The holidays are great for spending time with the ones you love, and they will love anything you give them because it comes from you! When it comes to family members, make them a very decorative homemade card with a thoughtful message, and trust me, they will appreciate it so much more than anything you can buy in a store. Then, if you still want to buy something, chip in with your siblings to pay for a gift for your parents - there's nothing wrong with giving a gift from multiple people. As for your friends, suggest doing a Pollyanna where each person brings one wrapped gift, and everyone gets to choose one to take home. This way, everyone wins by getting a nice present but only having to buy one. Hopefully this helps and will make gift giving more enjoyable! Your friend, Georgia Fox•

•Focus•

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