

THE JAGS JOURNAL

The latest news and updates from the LCCS newspaper staff



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Biden's Plans for First 100 Days

by August Passafiume

President Joe Biden has a lot of important plans for his first 100 days. He has already passed many executive orders. An example is on January 20th, he signed an order that requires non-citizens to be included in the Census (counting how many people are in each state) and apportionment of congressional representatives. Basically, it's counting all the people to see how many representatives each state gets (1 representative for every 30,000 people). Many of Biden's upcoming plans will veer away from what former president Donald Trump did. Biden has to deal with climate change, racial justice, and a VERY divided country. As Biden thinks about his first months in office, he has been studying Roosevelt's model, trying to figure out how to be the best president.

Within hours of his inauguration, Biden rejoined the Paris Agreement and the World Health Organization, and he also rescinded the Trump Administration's "Muslim ban," which wouldn't allow immigration (to settle as permanent residents) from many Muslim-majority countries.

Biden's Plans, Continued

Biden's first three months in office will be about much more than just signaling a shift in tone and actions. Biden has made it clear that the new administration will be focused on two primary objectives: stopping the spread of COVID-19 and delivering assistance and support to the families that need it. By Biden's 100th day in office, he hopes to have vaccinated 100 million Americans, authorized the Defense Production Act to increase the vaccine supply, and safely reopened the majority of elementary and middle schools. Biden's aides and policy workers, (most working remotely, gathering over Google Meet) worked quickly to line up a sense of policies, all to come out within the first week. Biden has urged lawmakers to act quickly to pass the \$1.9 trillion relief package he proposed on January 14th. Biden says it will help a lot of people out of this crisis.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

by Hans Holgado

His Life and Family

Martin Luther King, Jr. was born on January 15th, 1929 in Atlanta, Georgia. His parents were Martin Luther King, Sr. and Alberta Williams King. His father was an African American Baptist minister, and his mother was a school teacher. He married Coretta Scott King and had four kids, 2 girls and 2 boys. Martin Luther King's boyhood home was on Auburn Avenue in Atlanta. You can visit his home in Atlanta to this day.

His Accomplishments

Dr. King earned a Nobel Peace Prize, a congressional gold medal, and the Presidential Medal of Freedom. In 1955, he received his doctorate degree from Boston University. That same year, he was elected president of the Montgomery Improvement Association and he helped lead the Montgomery Bus Boycott, in which people protested racist laws on buses by boycotting the Montgomery buses. He also gave the "I Have a Dream" speech during the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom in 1963.

Remembering Dr. King

Dr. King is so well-known and respected because he was an important leader of the Civil Rights Movement. His leadership was critical in the passing of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. He is remembered for his powerful speeches and his commitment to non-violent protests. Every year, we honor Dr. King's legacy with Martin Luther King, Jr. Day on the third Monday of every January, which falls very close to Dr. King's birthday.



Rioters Storm the Capitol

by Gabriela Lavarro

Recently, many pro-Trump supporters stormed the Capitol where Congress was confirming the vote for Joe Biden as president on January 6th. Trump supporters marched to the Capitol and when they got there, proceeded to break down windows and eventually make their way into the building. Five people died, including police officer Brian Sicknick, at the riot. More were injured. The Capitol was under a lockdown while Congress was evacuated.



The mob had come to Washington because of rallies hosted by Donald Trump on the 5th and 6th to support the allegations that the election had been “stolen” by the left. Upon the former president’s rallying, the supporters marched to the Capitol where Congress was confirming the electoral college vote for Joe Biden. The riot forced itself through lines of defense and made their way inside the capitol. Images can be seen of them occupying offices, rummaging through and looting desks, and breaking down windows and doors. Many were trying to locate the members of Congress and threatened to kill them, especially targeting Nancy Pelosi and Mike Pence for Trump not getting the vote.

One woman, Riley June Williams, stole Nancy Pelosi's computer and it is alleged that she might have been trying to sell it to Russia; she has since reportedly deactivated her cell phone number, social media, and fled her house in Pennsylvania. A Congress member from New Jersey named Mikie Sherrill has also reported seeing people being escorted into the Capitol by Capitol police, and there is now an investigation looking into that.

One of the Capitol police officers named Eugene Goodman is being hailed as a hero for potentially saving the lives of all the Congress members during the riot. Videos show Officer Goodman leading the rioters upstairs in the Capitol building. At a certain point, he noticed to his left the chambers where members of Congress were still being secured and were unguarded. He then led the rioters up the stairs, potentially saving the lives of Congress members. He was then promoted to acting Deputy Senate Sergeant-at-Arms and received the Congressional Gold Medal for his heroism. Recent videos have also been released of Officer Goodman saving Senator Mitt Romney from running into rioters. In the video, Officer Goodman sprints toward the senator and redirects him away from the approaching crowd.



Aladdin Jr. takes LCCS on a magical mystery tour to the Arabian desert

Here's How They'll Turn Snowy Jersey City into a Whole New World

by Maeve George

February break is only a few days away, but many of us are probably thinking a week in sun and sand would be fun. And after almost a year of distance learning, we all deserve it! While we can't get away, Ms. Jaffrey, Mr. Brown and the LCCS musical theater department is ready to take our winter blues away. In just a few weeks, the team will be presenting Disney's Aladdin Jr. -- whisking us away to the sand dunes and bazaars of ancient Arabia with some of our favorite characters: the Genie, Princess Jasmine, Abu ... and of course, Aladdin!

I sat down with Ms. Jaffrey in December to find out how they were able to put together such a big and complicated musical via Zoom in just a few short months. Here's what I found out (hint: it turns out it's a whole lot of hard work and a little bit of magic).

Maeve George: How do you do things online for the musical?

Ms. Jaffrey: The cast meets with the musical theater team on zoom every Monday and Thursday. We play some acting games and warm-up together then go into breakout rooms to work on lines, block scenes, work on harmonies and choreography. It is definitely challenging, but the whole cast seems to be vested in making this show a great one.

Maeve George: How will the musical theater team pull off scenes with dialogue?

Ms. Jaffrey: Since this is the first time we have ever attempted such a production, we might have to try a few different methods and see how they work. Right now, we are doing scene work at rehearsals on Zoom. I have blocked all the scenes on paper so that each of the cast members knows exactly where they would be on the screen and which way they need to be facing so that it will look like they are actually speaking with one another. When we actually video tape the scenes, we are thinking of using three devices: a camera for the video, a phone so that students can actually speak with one another when they are communicating with each other, and possibly a computer so that cast members can actually feel like they are with one another when they are speaking. It's kind of crazy, I know.

Maeve George: How do you do the songs and dances during the rehearsals?

Ms. Jaffrey: Singing is tough since we can't sing together. Mr. Brown has created harmony tracks for the students so that they can practice their parts on their own. We go over that at our zoom meetings and have a few confident students model the harmony parts. I teach all the choreography to the cast on zoom. Ruby Mae is our dance captain, so she helps to make sure each cast member is secure in their movements. It is definitely challenging since cast members have challenges such as wifi issues or space issues, but we are trying to work with all the obstacles.



Aladdin, continued

Maeve George: How will you actually create the performance?

Ms. Jaffrey: Magic. Ha, just kidding. First we will have students record themselves singing the songs. We will take these recordings and mix their voices together to create the finished song pieces. Then, students will send in videos of themselves acting out the scenes and doing all the dances in costume. We will then put all the videos together into the finished productions. It will be a lot of work.

Wondering when Aladdin Jr. is going to be shown to the LCCS community? You're in luck! You can be transported to an Arabian night in early March on, you guessed it, Zoom!

Out of My Mind:

5th Grade Class Discusses How People with Disabilities Learn and Communicate

by Brandon Robinson and Landon Leigh

Ms. Szecsi's 5th grade ELA class has been reading a book called "Out of My Mind" by Sharon M. Draper. They have been learning about how to accept others who may look or learn differently than them due to a disability. She is also working on setting up a Zoom with her old professor who is an Assistive Technology Specialist. Her professor will show the students some of the devices that people use for alternative methods of communication.

Ms. Szecsi explains, "Out of My Mind is a realistic fiction book about a girl in 5th grade named Melody. She was born with a disability called Cerebral Palsy, which affects the muscles in her body, usually causing them to be very stiff and difficult for her to control. This causes her to be in a wheelchair and also causes her to be unable to talk. Melody, however, has a typically developing brain and is very smart, so she has all of these thoughts trapped in her head that she wants to get out to the world. She basically just wants to be seen as a normal kid in 5th grade and have friends just like everybody else. Throughout the book, readers learn via the perspective of Melody about her struggles and triumphs as she navigates life as a 5th grader at her elementary school."

Ms. Szecsi goes on further to explain why she chose the book Out of My Mind. "I chose this book because the theme of the unit we are working on in 5th grade ELA is about learning to change the world, and I believe that if my students can learn about the struggles and hopes of people in the disabilities' community, they will be able to be allies for people with disabilities that they may know now or meet in the future. I wanted them to learn that people in wheelchairs or with other disabilities are not scary, but can be kids just like them who also just want to be understood, have friends, and fit in."

Cerebral Palsy affects over 500,000 children and adults in the United States. 1 in 4 adults have some sort of disability in the U.S. It is important to be inclusive of people with disabilities because even though they may look different or sound different from you, they can be smart, kind, and funny, and they have feelings like any non-disabled person. Ms. Szecsi informed us that her students believe the character Melody deserves more respect, and they have expressed that they would protect her and be her friend if she were a student at LCCS.

Out of My Mind, Continued

Ms. Szecsi's students are learning a lot about people with disabilities from reading this book. Anthony Scott said, "I like the book because it tells me that someone that has a disability can still be smart." Jayce Diaz learned, "people that have a disability can still do things." Alanna Reed told us, "I like the book because I used to think that people were all the same, but now that I have been reading about it and doing research, I've noticed that people have different abilities." Thank you Ms. Szecsi for bringing awareness about this important topic to our school!

Green Team Presents on Environmental Topics

by Tanay Tabhane

The Green Team hopes to help the LCCS community make more sustainable choices in helping to protect our earth. The Green Team is a club that is open to all Middle School students who are interested in environmental sustainability, led by Ms. Jaffrey. There are currently 26 Green Team members. The Green Team meets on the first Monday of every month with Ms. Jaffrey, but most of the work is done during that month independently.

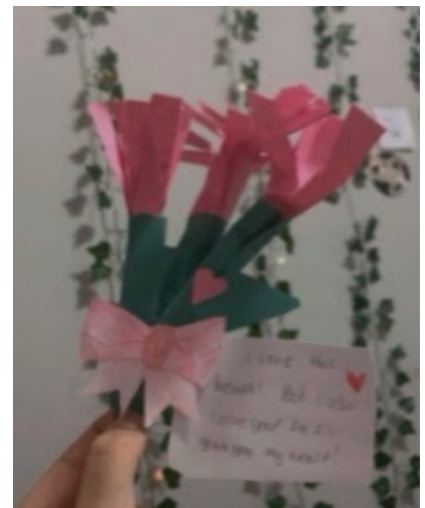
This year, the Green Team divided themselves into project groups based on their interests. They will be presenting their projects to the LCCS community on March 26th at a Protect Our Earth Fair! At this event, the Green Team will present their projects on these topics: Wildfires, Ground Pollution, Composting, Water Pollution, Liberty State Park Protection and Solar Energy. Good luck to all of the Green Team members presenting, and thank you for representing our community!

Valentine's Day Craft: Paper Bouquet

by Fatima Bibi

You will need: Tape, scissors, and pink, red, and green paper

Directions: The first thing you need to do is to cut your pink and red paper into long lines. Then, swirl the pink and red paper into a cone. After that, tape the cone so it looks like a rose. Now let's move on to the stem. First, roll your green paper into a long, thin tube. Then, cut out tear drop shapes from your green paper to make leaves. After you do that, tape the flower onto the stem. Finally, I take a piece of paper and write a Valentine's Day note to turn this cute craft into a gift! The final product should look like the picture to the right.



Our Diet

by Franciska Czerniak

During this crazy time, all we do is talk about social distancing, masks, vaccines and staying safe. Somehow we all avoid one of the most important health subjects of all - food! When I was younger my mother and father were obsessed with my diet. I never had any jarred baby food, sugar, delicious macaroni and cheese or any kind of fast food! As you can imagine, I did not like it at all. However, with more knowledge and understanding how foods affect our health and wellbeing, I am only grateful that my parents working full time jobs would get up every morning to prepare a fresh, organic lunch.

Some of my friends were not so lucky to have a packed lunch. They had to eat in a school cafeteria, which we all know is serving high-fat and sugary foods including pastries, pizza, doughnuts, muffins and cookies, often in huge portions. Lack of nutrition can lead to fatigue, decreased immunity, and risk of catching a disease. Children, like you and me, are facing long-term food insecurity and are at risk for negative developmental, psychological, physical, and emotional effects. A student who is in a bad mood could be deficient in certain nutrients or simply hungry.



Healthy food improves academic performance, and it also improves a student's attitude. The benefits of healthy school lunches and regularly eating healthy should not be ignored. Overall, students perform better when provided nutritional meals. Though the Covid pandemic has exposed a lot of problems in our food system, eating well is still seen as a "posh and middle-class concern." So, with that being said I hope that our world, mostly schools, will consider to provide and educate us about healthy and nutritious foods.

Movies to Watch in 2021

by Madeleine Schwarzer

With the new year, there are many new and old movies that are really fun to watch with your family. Here are some of them!

One of the newest movies that is great for your family to watch on movie night (or any night) is a pixar movie about a man who has a near death experience and gets stuck in the after world; you guessed it! Soul!

Boss Baby 2 Family Business is coming soon. The same kids, now older, have to stop an evil genius from teaching babies to misbehave. They have to drink a formula to turn them into babies and sneak in to wipe the misbehaving baby's memory!

Movies to Watch in 2021, continued

Over the Moon came out in fall of 2020. The story follows a 12 year old girl, who has lost her beloved mother to a terminal illness, as she struggles to build a rocket that will take her to the moon. She is rushing to make her father once again believe in the myth with the sorrow that he's also considering remarrying.

Black Beauty, found on Disney Plus, is a great family movie about a girl and a wild horse having a special bond making them inseparable. With them both losing their family, and the fact that the girl's uncle wants to sell Black Beauty, they make it through girl and horse.

Consider watching these crowd pleasers with your family. They sure all seem cool and will give you something to watch!



Memes of the Month

by August Passafiume



One for the kids...

And one for the parents (and teachers)!

**Thank you so much for reading! Happy Valentine's Day. Stay warm and safe!
- The LCCS Newspaper Staff**