



# *Panther Post*

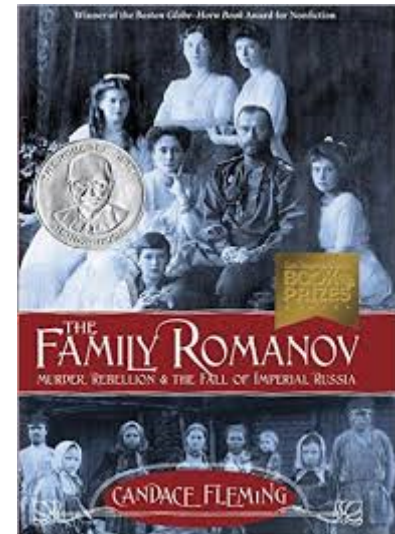
*Woodlawn High School- Baton Rouge, Louisiana*

*2015-2016 Volume 1, Number 5*

## *Book Review: The Family Romanov*

by Mya Kremin

The book *The Family Romanov* by Candace Fleming tells the story of the Russian imperial family the Romanovs, and how the Russian Revolution all started in 1917. The biography follows the family's story from how they rose to power to how it all ended when they were brutally murdered. The book begins with Tsar Nicholas, the last Tsar of Russia, inheriting the throne and how he was unprepared to do so. Fleming mentions the Tsar's four daughters, his son, wife, and the wife's magical friend, Rasputin. Other than Nicholas, the other main character is Alexandra, the Tsar's wife. Alexandra and Nicholas are unlike any other imperial couple: they are secluded and do not want the responsibility of governing Russia. They just want a normal life. However, life takes a turn when the peasants start to rebel because they are tired of living on water and rationed black bread. When the peasants realize they have a voice, all goes wrong for the Romanovs.



I highly recommend this book to people who like to read about history. The book is worth twelve AR book. *The Family Romanov* is a thrilling book that should be read to understand the Russian Revolution and the last imperial family.

# *Opposing Opinions*

## The Pros of Corporal Punishment

by Damian Jackson

What is corporal punishment? Corporal punishment is defined as physical punishment. In our case, the spanking of kids in schools.

Many people find corporal punishment wrong, but it has many advantages. By giving a physical punishment, it will immediately stop any misbehaving a child might be doing at the moment. Also, in most cases the child will learn from the immediate punishment and can stop reoccurring troubles. In a school setting, corporal punishment also has the advantages because it is not an expensive way of punishment: there is no cost to it, except maybe a paddle, and it is time efficient. It only takes a few moments to distribute the punishment. The last, but not least, advantage of corporal punishment is it makes sure the child knows who is in control. It may be the teacher, administration, or even a parent, but it shows the child they are not the one in charge and they have someone over them they have to listen to.

There are many people who think corporal punishment is wrong, and this makes it a very controversial topic. People say it can hurt a child's self-esteem, or make them think violence is acceptable. While this may be true, it only would cause these issues if the punishment is abused or overdone. When used the right way, it will only

reprimand the child and teach them to behave right, while getting their behavior to change quickly from wrong to right.

## Say No to Physical Punishments

by Rebeca Aguilar

What would you think of bringing back corporal punishment? Most people think the education system should not bring paddling back because it would affect students and parents in many negative ways, and I agree. Parents would not like to send their children to school knowing they can be really harmed. Most people think paddling sends the wrong message to students, that physical violence is the way to show wrongdoing. However, physical punishments can cause a lot of harm to a person. Some research has shown that people who were paddled as kids have less functioning brains as adults. According to the report, spanking may reduce the brain's grey matter, the connective tissue between brain cells. Grey matter is an integral part of the central nervous system and influences intelligence testing and learning abilities. It includes areas of the brain involved in sensory perception, speech, muscular control, emotions and memory. Additional research supports the hypothesis that children and adolescents subjected to child abuse and neglect have less grey matter than children who have not been ill-treated.

Corporal punishment undermines compassion for others, for oneself, and limits the mutual capacity for gaining insight. That is why now they do not let this punishment be in our daily life, not even in prisons. Sometimes this kind of punishment not only can leave your behind red and hurting, but it can also leave blood clots, broken bones, mental-health problems such as depression, suicide, and antisocial behavior. There are better solutions for dealing with misbehaving kids. People should not send the message to kids that violence is a solution to problems.

School is a place for strict discipline, but not of the physical variety. In an educational environment instructors should be creative enough to come up with a suitable form of disciplinary punishment to fit any misbehavior without resorting to the physical. Some ideas can be community service, sit-ups, essays, suspensions, signing a book in which if they have more than three signatures students would get suspended, lost privileges, etc.

## *Clubs and Academics*

### Find a Plan B

by Lillian Khemmanyvong

As a student who is about to start her/his years in college, the reports about TOPS is definitely one that puts pressure on students about how they are going to pay for school. Due to budget cuts, Louisiana has decided to modify the requirements and the eligibility for the TOPS scholarship program. The previous requirements for the standard scholarship included a 2.5 GPA, 20 on the ACT, and 19.0 core units. So far, possible changes that may occur includes raising the minimum ACT score to a 28. For many people the TOPS program was a student's ticket to college. This brings us to an even bigger conflict: what happens now? For students who cannot pay for college or are having a hard time getting to college, the TOPS program was a way to help get students out of their struggle and into school.



Although TOPS was one of Louisiana's major scholarship programs, there are other scholarships that students may apply for. For example, there are scholarships for people who are left handed,



have green eyes, or who may be shorter than everyone else or taller. Students who plan to attend a primarily Caucasian college, and they are of another race or ethnicity, may apply for a minority scholarship. Even though TOPS was many student's first choice to get into college, there are many other options they can turn to for help paying for their tuition and classes.

## Journey through *The Advocate*

by Sarah Hayden

The Newspaper staff of Woodlawn High recently went on a field trip to the Baton Rouge *Advocate's* Production center. When we first arrived our tour guide, Megan Fambrough, who was with the marketing department of *The Advocate*, took us into the reception area of the production center. We got our history lesson in how *The Advocate* started. *The Advocate* was founded by Charles Manship in 1909. Now John Georges took over the family company in 2013.



Staff putting together the final product.

We started our tour in their paper room where they store all the paper and ink. Just one roll of paper weighs one ton and the whole room of paper would last *The Advocate* about a month. Megan also told us how they get their ink. It comes through in trucks and is fed into the barrels of yellow, cyan, magenta, and black. Then we went into a room where they feed the giant rolls of paper into machines so the paper can be printed. She also showed us how they keep "receipts" of the paper they are feeding through so if something happens like a paper jam, they can go back to those receipts and know exactly what roll jammed. Then we went into the big room where we caught the tail end of newspapers printing. They print on the next newspaper with the laser metal plates. They have to use dim yellow lights on



Our tour guide Megan telling us about the rolls of paper.

the plates because the chemical solution on the plates is sensitive to white light. We finally arrived at the ground floor where the newspaper is put together and made ready to be sent out. We saw how they package them and how the ads are put in. Finally, we saw how they shrink wrapped the newspaper and organize them to be distributed. We also took time to ask her questions involving *The Advocate* such as jobs, money, and school. Overall, we had a great time learning how the newspaper is made and distributed.

## Worldwide Eggs

by Rebeca Aguilar

The world geography classes Ms. Hawkins and Mrs. Hauptman teach have been learning about Russia and the Russian Revolution. They have been talking about Nicholas and Alexandra Romanov, but society may be more familiar with Anastasia from the cartoon movie. Nicholas and Alexandra were parents to Olga, Tatiana, Maria, Anastasia, and Alexei, and they were the last Emperors of Russia. One of the topics the class talked about was how Gustav Faberge created furniture and started a tradition for the Romanov family, Nicholas and Alexandra and their girls. Gustav would design a different jewel egg every year in Easter time and he would present it to them as a gift for the Orthodox Church in which Easter is very important.

The project the students needed to create included researching Gustav Faberge and his connection with the Romanov family. They needed to recreate eggs using either sugar, sugar string eggs, or actually sugar mold eggs which the students had the option to choose how and what materials they wanted to use to decorate. There were around 180- 200 eggs on campus when the students completed the project. This is the first year the students



Several of the finished eggs are on display in Mrs. Hauptman's room.

have done the Faberge eggs. The teachers are trying to give them more insight on these eggs and the significance of what has become really important to Russia, costumes, traditions, and the Orthodox Church.

According to Mrs. Hauptman, the activity took longer than most projects because it could not be completed in an hour; it has to be completed in stages and they needed to submit the egg and do a research paper. The most impressive eggs might be shown in the library as decoration.

## Keeping Shakespeare Alive

by Mya Kremin

Shakespeare day is dedicated to the reenactment of Shakespeare's famous plays. The plays that were reenacted included *Romeo and Juliet*, *Macbeth*, *Taming of the Shrew*, and *Othello*. The scenes ranged from tragic to comedic. Each scene lasted 5-10 minutes and English classes were able to



Students engage in an on-stage fight.

attend. The talented theater class also performed a 15 minute *Romeo and Juliet* skit, which was very comedic, but unfortunately was cut short. However, it was resumed Tuesday morning during first hour; several English classes attended that special performance. Shakespeare day is a great way for theater students to show their talents and appreciate the arts. Students also get to appreciate history and the time their peers put into their scenes. It is not easy performing in front of the school, but with a supportive crowd performers were able to become the characters and keep Shakespeare's legacy alive.



Students show off their acting skills to their peers.

# FCS reaches out to Africa

by Elizabeth Roquemore

The FCS club recently received some great news! The club finished its fundraising efforts to build a fresh water well in Swaziland Africa. The FCS club, WHS students, WHS teachers, and several local businesses raised a total of \$6,600 to help a needy village have clean drinking water. It took Mr. Daniels and his FCS leaders a year and a half to raise the money, but they are so glad to be serving a needy community. Mr. Daniels has been quoted saying, “most people around the world live on less than \$1 per day and many of those people don’t have access to clean drinking water, so it’s important our students at Woodlawn High understand try to help as much as possible.” The nonprofit organization building the water well is Children’s Cup. Please visit this website to see how they help needy communities in Africa and Central America: [www.childrenscup.org](http://www.childrenscup.org) . WHS also wants to recognize the following local businesses that donated to the Water Well Project. They are as follows: Baker Printing, Rockstar Racing, Chick-fil-a, and Alexander’s Fresh Market. The well should be completed in May so be ready for some photos of the finished product before we get out of school!



FCS stands for (Fellowship of Christian Students) and for over 5 years Mr. Daniels, a social studies teacher at Woodlawn High, has sponsored the club. Everyone is invited to visit FCS if they so choose, regardless of their beliefs. FCS shares a positive Christian message, but Muslim, Jewish, and even atheist students have visited and enjoyed their experience. It is important the club follows Separation of church and state laws so the club only meets during lunch, and it is definitely optional. FCS meets once or twice per month during both 1st and 2nd lunch shifts, and they usually have snacks. The final FCS meeting of the year will be Friday April 22, and all students are invited.

The picture you see are of the \$6,600 check presentation to Children's Cup. Mr. Daniels wants to thank his FCS leaders for their sincere dedication to the club - Miles Graeser, Brian & Ryan Williams, Kathryn Candia, Katelyn Holmes, and Janelle Carwile.



## *Student Life*

### WHS Holds a Blood Drive

by Lillian Khemmanyong



Junior Gabby Figueroa and faculty member Mrs. Butcher both smile as they donate blood.

you are healthy in order to insure the patient who will be receiving your blood will be healthy too.

The blood drive, sponsored by JROTC, took place at Woodlawn High School Thursday, March 17, 2016. According to 12th grade student Ryan Williams, there were more students who volunteered to give blood than expected. For students who wanted to donate blood there are some requirements you must meet. Before you donate you must make sure you eat and drink something to keep your blood sugar level and so you will not get dehydrated. For safety reasons, you cannot donate any blood if you are sick, have HIV, high blood sugar, and your iron must be level.

In the blood drive they take one pint of blood. Due to the amount they take from your body, you have to be over 115 lbs. or else you will experience many side effects such as fatigue, nausea, and/or vomiting. It is very important that you make sure

## The Battle of the Pennies

by Alexis Martin



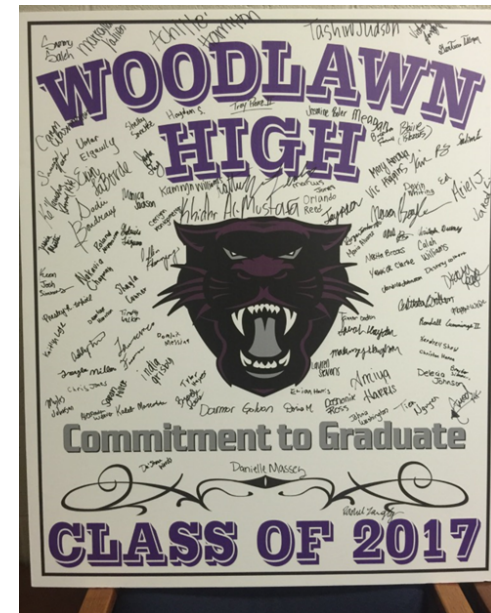
Woodlawn High School students participated in a penny wars event from February 1<sup>st</sup> through February 12<sup>th</sup>. Penny wars is a competition between freshman, sophomores, juniors, and seniors. To contribute to penny wars, a student can fill your class jars with as many pennies as possible. You can also take money away from your competition by adding any other coin or dollar bills to their jars. The more coins and dollar bills in their jar, the more money that is being subtracted from their total score. The money that the jars obtain goes towards Woodlawn High School AP student exam fees. The competition of the 2016 penny wars was won by the Woodlawn High School freshman. The freshman received one day of free dress as their prize.



## Ring Ceremony

by Alexis Martin

The senior class of 2017 had their ring ceremony on March 9, 2016. The middle section of the auditorium was filled with students anxious to get their class rings. Each junior walked up stage to shake Mr. Steven's hand and collect their ring. They were told to sign a class of 2017 'Commitment to Graduate' sign so Woodlawn could keep their memories. All of the students opened their ring boxes at once. They were instructed to turn their ring 116 times away from their hearts, and then have someone they admire, or the person who is most important to them, lock the ring by turning it the last time. The ring should be faced to where the person wearing it can read Woodlawn High School until they graduate. Once they graduate they can turn it the other way so other people can read Woodlawn High School from



their hand. The ring is supposed to remind the person wearing it to keep working hard because success is not far away.

## Night of Neon

by Fabian Coleman

The Sadie Hawkins dance was heavily anticipated by many of the students. So when the day of the dance finally came, students rushed to the office to get their last minute tickets. At the beginning of the dance there were very few people on the dance floor, but that soon changed when the DJ put on the music that everyone knew and had everyone headed to the dance floor, jumping around and dancing. He started with some throwback songs that everyone knew and then came the recent hits by artist like Young Thug, Kevin Gates, and Rich Homie Quan that had everyone on their feet. The dance was complemented by concessions provided by the school for only a dollar and free photos with a photo booth.

As the dance went on the students reported being happy with the neon theme as they were provided with glow in the dark bracelets and necklaces at the door. The windows were covered in neon paint and created a fun, cool atmosphere. The dance ended promptly at eleven o'clock and everyone was escorted by the sheriff and Mr. Capello. Everyone had a great time at the night of neon, or as it was called, the Sadie Hawkins dance.



# Mock Crash at Woodlawn High School

by Sarah Hayden

On Wednesday, March 23, 2016, the Woodlawn junior class experienced a mock crash to raise awareness about drunk driving. Students participated in this event. The Louisiana State Police Department also helped in the event.

It started with a deputy announcing the scene of the crime. A 16 year old intoxicated female was driving home with her 16 year old male friend from graduation party. Suddenly, she swerved into oncoming traffic and collided head on into another driver. The passengers were injured on impact. The driver had a neck injury and the passenger's legs were pinned under the dashboard. They were rushed to the E.R. and the female who had her legs pinned lost her legs. The 16 year old male died on impact and was put in a body bag and pulled away in a hearse.

The police deputy had to inform his mom and the emotion from the mother was intense; it was as if it really happened.

The morale of the story is that you should be careful with who you get in a car with. If you are drunk then you should call an adult to come get you. A car crash can happen to anyone. At the end of the event students received bracelets that read, "U Drink U Drive U Walk" and then we said a prayer for all those effected by drunk drivers.



# Features

## 2016 Presidential Elections

by Damian Jackson

Everyone knows that the 2016 presidential elections are coming up, and with the candidates this year, controversy comes with no surprise. In the lead right now for the Republican Party is Donald Trump, followed by Ted Cruz and John Kasich. The main candidates for the Democratic side are Bernie Sanders and Hillary Clinton. So far, the campaigning has dropped out many candidates such as Jeb Bush, Marco Rubio, and Ben Carson. The official election is scheduled for November 8, 2016, and we can expect many more changes before the polls are in, since it is still 8 months away. I am sure that more people will drop out, while a few people might even join in, like Bloomberg. Whoever happens to get elected will surely cause an uproar in the people of America.

The main choice right now is between Trump and Cruz on the Republican side, as Kasich has just recently made some waves, and Sanders and Clinton on the Democratic side. While Clinton and Trump hold the lead as of now on their respected sides, it seems that Cruz and Sanders are making their way up in the polls and are closing in on their party's candidates. I think that if the president was decided on today, it would most likely be between Clinton and Trump, and I am not sure who would win that election.





On a personal note, I do not believe that Trump should be president. He has caused so much international uproar already and he is only a candidate. If he becomes president, America will have many more international enemies than we do already. Trump has also claimed himself that he is not a politician, only a very successful businessman. Which that is great that he has had that much success, but that is not what America needs as the head of our country. If you are able to vote this November, remember to vote wisely!

## Review of *Deadpool*

by Jyron Anderson



**Cast:** Ryan Reynolds, Morena Baccarin, Ed Skrein, T.J. Miller, Gina Carano, Brianna Hildebrand

**Director:** Tim Miller

**Written by:** Rhett Reese, Paul Wernick

**Synopsis:** Based upon Marvel Comics' most unconventional anti-hero, DEADPOOL tells the origin story of former Special Forces operative turned mercenary Wade Wilson, who after being subjected to a rogue experiment that leaves him with accelerated healing powers, adopts the alter ego Deadpool. Armed with his new abilities and a dark, twisted sense of humor, Deadpool hunts down the man who nearly destroyed his life.

**Review:** If you like action, comedy, dead people, and all around fun, then *Deadpool* is the movie for you; I highly recommend it. Rhett Reese and Paul Wernick retell the story of Wade Winston Wilson, a.k.a. Deadpool, part from David Benioff and Skip Woods version in X-MEN ORIGINS – WOLVERINE. With Tim Miller at the directing helm, Marvel's new superhero movie stars Ryan Reynolds, a fact that, up to now, would likely not have been considered much of a selling point. Considering that he has played a sub-par role of the same character in Benioff's and Woods' movie, though I am almost positive that the characters are not of the same continuity. Marvel has

perfected the superhero screenplay for the PG-13 crowd, but ventured into unfamiliar territory giving *Deadpool* an R rating. I give this movie an 11/10.

## Review of *Batman v. Superman: Dawn of Justice*

by Jyron Anderson

Cast: Ben Affleck, Gal Gadot, Henry Cavill, Jesse Eisenberg, Jason Momoa, Amy Adams, Jeremy Irons, Ray Fisher, Lawrence Fishburne

Director: Zack Snyder

Synopsis: It's been nearly two years since Superman's (Henry Cavill) colossal battle with Zod (Michael Shannon) devastated the city of Metropolis. The loss of life and collateral damage left many feeling angry and helpless, including crime-fighting Billionaire Bruce Wayne (Ben Affleck). Convinced that Superman is now a threat to humanity, Batman embarks on a personal vendetta to end his reign on Earth, while the conniving Lex Luthor (Jesse Eisenberg) launches his own crusade against the Man of Steel.

Review: Firstly, *Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice* is one of the best super hero films I have ever had the pleasure of witnessing. However, the movie does have a few SMALL issues that have for some reason been





deemed detrimental to the movie as a whole, earning a 29% on Rotten Tomatoes, though 70% of the audience enjoyed it. “As a superhero flick, it’s shockingly joyless and overlong, with the two iconic crimefighters presented as angry, cranky, easily manipulated men in tights,” says a critical Ben Sin. Although, if you read Frank Miller’s *The Dark Knight Returns* (a graphic novel in which of the film is adapted from), it is very understandable that this movie is not supposed to be joyful. I highly encourage reading the novel, along with the DC comic *The Death of Superman*, before seeing the film. Knowing the origin of the movie’s plot will pretty much throw feelings of boredom out the window. Not to mention the fact that before the movie even came out people were saying the whole process of explaining the DC cinematic universe seemed sped up, but building a foundation around the two heaviest hitters in the continuity was “overlong”? Make up your mind people.

“This Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice smothers a potentially powerful story -- and some of America's most iconic superheroes -- in a grim whirlwind of effects-driven action,” says a critical consensus. This film introduced what many think is the best Batman to ever grace the movie screen, in Ben Affleck. Snyder’s take on this older, grittier, fed-up Batman is exactly what the story needed, regardless of the fanboys clinging on to his old way of justice. Henry Cavill’s role as Superman was spot on with the last movie. One thing to remember from this story line is that Clark is still new to this, so if you feel he’s “easily manipulated” throughout this film, put yourself in his position and keep in mind that it has only been less than three years since he even dawned the cape. As for the special effects for this film, I admit they can get a bit over the top when the boss fight occurs, but prior to that, the film-makers did a pretty good job keeping the CGI to a minimum. Also, realize that this story is a part of a larger picture of the already “powerful story,” so saying that DC completely screwed this up is absurd; they’re actually on track.

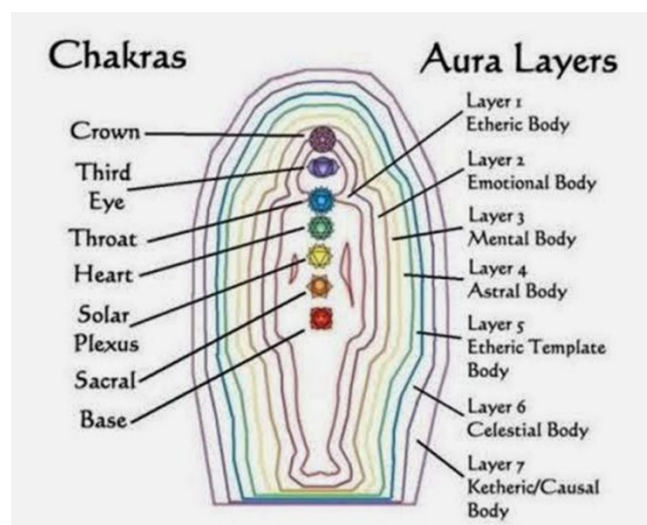
## The Human Energy Field

by Elizabeth Roquemore

You have probably heard psychics and all the mumbo jumbo people talking about the human aura. But how much of this mumbo jumbo is actually true? What is the human aura, and why is it important? The human aura in scientific research, is said to be an electromagnetic field of energy that can be detected up to 50 feet depending on a

person's physical, mental, and spiritual state. Every proton, neutron, electron, and cell create an electrical impulse. These tiny electrical impulses result in forming a magnetic energy field called the aura.

Every aura, like a fingerprint or a personality, is different. The aura is affected by our thoughts, feelings, health, and environment. When the aura has blockages, looks muddy, or is unhealthy, so is the person. This field of energy ranges from the colors of the rainbow to white or black. Depending on the color, the personality and physical wellbeing can be perceived through the aura. Have you ever happened to walk into a room and feel instantly different than what you were feeling before? Or have you ever been near an upset or ecstatic person and started to feel what they were feeling? This could be that you are being receptive of the other person, place, or object's energy. The aura needs to be cleaned and refreshed regularly to prevent any sort of negative energy from blocking the energy output. Simple ways to do this would be to meditate daily on the earth's ground.



There are seven main energy centers in the body. These are called chakras. Clairvoyants (people who can perceive more than meets the physical eye) see these centers as rotating wheels or blossoming spinning streaks. Chakra in Sanskrit is translated to wheel or discus. Each chakra has a certain location on the body and has its own relations with our physical, mental, and spiritual state. These chakras make up the whole aura and when unhealthy can and will lead to health problems.

The aura is natural and a gold aura has been seen painted on people like Guattama Buddha and Jesus to indicate divine guidance, intuition, spiritual awakening, and enlightenment. The aura is there whether seen

or not. But when conscious of it, it can be used to see and prevent disease or to simply know the energy of a person or room before taking action. People can sense the aura and when conscious and accepting of it will begin to perceive it better. Even though most are not knowing of it, everyone senses the energy or aura of things on a daily

basis. The ability to see or sense and differentiate the different energies of people will help you understand more of the person and their intentions.

## Fighting the Current

by Sierra Johnson

Baton Rouge and surrounding parishes recently experienced heavy wind and rain that lasted a few days. The aftermath of that rain caused many streets to flood due to rivers and bayous reaching flood stage. The flood stage for Bayou Manchac is 9 feet. When it crested, it reached 15.6 feet, almost twice the flood stage! The Amite River flood stage is 29 feet, and it reached 39 feet. For people living along Tiger Bend, Elliott, Hoo Shoo Too, Kendalwood, and surrounding streets, the effects of the rain were more than just a minor inconvenience. Flooding like this has not been seen in the area since 1995. Not only were streets



Corner of Tiger Bend and Elliot Rd. blocked off from traffic.



Corner of Hoo Shoo Too and Kendalwood Rd. heavily flooded.

flooded, many people were forced to pack up their belongings and either run to higher ground or wait for the water to drop and hope for the best. Unfortunately, flooding occurred in many houses, including mine. Surrounding parishes have been declared disaster areas, but Baton Rouge was not included. FEMA and Red Cross are in the area helping those in Baton Rouge who have suffered through this devastating flood.

# Arts

## The Hill

by Fabian Coleman

Growing up in the Williams house is not an ordinary thing because my whole family is full of climbers and adventurers, so that makes me one, too. My name is Joseph and my whole life I have wanted to make it my mission to be just like my dad, because he has done what many haven't been able to do: climb Mount Everest. My whole life has been spent trying to prepare for this mission, but there is one problem. I'm only 15 and my parents think I'm not mature enough or old enough yet. I just don't understand why though because my dad was only 17 when he went with his dad, so why not me? I'm more than ready for this, but they just don't seem to understand how important this climb is to me. I think that he is jealous of how I have been able to do more than he had been by time he was my age. I think I'm more than ready, so why do I have only listen to them when I know that my grandpa will let me go? When I called him he wasn't home, so I thought I would go over to his house. Just as I thought, he thinks it's a good idea and so he agrees to take me. But I know he isn't in the best shape to do this so I asked him could I bring my best friends Chris, Luke, and Josh. The good thing is that all of them like to climb like me, so they should be excited when I tell them tomorrow at school. And that was exactly their response when I asked them; the guys couldn't wait because it lined up perfectly with spring break.

The easy stuff was out of the way, but the hard part is getting out of the house and leaving with grandpa. I have to come up with a plan to get them to let me spend the night before we leave. Somehow this actually worked and we were on our way to Nepal to complete this mission with my grandpa and my best friends. As soon as we get there we can tell we are not in South Carolina anymore; I have never been this cold ever and I wish someone would have told Josh this before he showed up in shorts, short sleeves, and no coats. So each one of us had to lend

him one; he is so lucky we came prepared for the long haul up the mountain. We knew my grandpa would have to stay at the camp, so he sent one of the guides along with us since we were underage. Her name was Amanda and she told us that we would have to prepare for one of the hardest and most challenging things we had ever done. So we all had to wonder if we were really ready for this or if we were in over our heads, but I knew if we went back home then my parents would have proved me wrong that I wasn't ready for this large task.

After a few moments we were off up the mountain. Just to make sure if anybody got lost, we could contact them with walkie-talkies. So we decided we would go from camp to camp to make sure we were well rested between trips, and for a while that plan worked for us. Until the problems started to hit, like Josh and Luke started to get home sick, so someone took them back down the mountain to the ground camp. The guys I thought would stick with me the whole way have abandoned me, but I'm not going to let that stop me so me. Chris and Amanda continued up the mountain and we got closer to my goal. Now that we have gone half way up the mountain we needed to start putting on air masks so we can breathe, but then Chris couldn't handle the altitude. We stopped in a cave so we could rest and let him catch his breath. After a while we realized that was just the beginning of our problems because Amanda realized a storm was coming and we should hurry to the last camp we had passed; however, at this point I wouldn't let anything get in my way.

So I took Chris with me and we continued up the mountain, but then the storm hit and we got caught in the dead center of it. We were still going up the mountain, and that's when I realized I made the biggest mistake of my life and I ended losing sight of Chris. This was another setback and I had to really think: is this what I really want to do? As I'm looking for Chris I just couldn't seem to find him anywhere, and so as I was headed back down the mountain I got a call on my walkie-talkie. It was my grandpa saying that my parents were here and they needed me to come down from the mountain. At that moment I was thinking to myself "*If I go down then I'm grounded, but if I continue then I will be one of the few to do this.*" My ambition was too big to not complete something I had started, and so I continued to go up the mountain and after a lot of hard work, a couple days, and losing a friend, I had finally done it. I did what many have tried but have failed and I'm only 15.

Now my last thing to realize is that I eventually had to go back down the mountain. As I'm going back down the mountain, I run into Amanda and she had Chris with her. I automatically stopped to see how he was doing. He told me that he wasn't even mad about me leaving him, he was actually happy and that he didn't get lost in the



storm. He just went back down to the last camp and we both had agreed that I should do this alone since it was my mission.

Eventually we made it to the base of the mountain. I saw my parents and the look on their faces was both happy and upset at the same time, and just as I knew when I was going up the mountain, I was going to be grounded. Boy was I ever so happy to see them, but I still got grounded for a whole year for leaving the country without them or their permission. My father was happy for my accomplishment, but he said he thought I wasn't ready for this but that I proved him wrong. So after that we all went home, and me and my father started to go hiking and climbing together more often. And that is all I really needed.

## Artwork by Sierra Johnson



## Artwork by Gabby Johnson