

PATRIOT PAPERS

National News

“Insta”gator

By Taylor Murray, Editor

For more than a decade, social media has been the leading method of influencing large groups of people. By virtue of its widespread nature, availability to the masses, and promptness to ignite discussion, social media positively impacts activism today compared to the pre-digital age.

Before social media, how did activism look? Prior to the advent of social media, protests, petition signings, and other things of this kind required a great deal of effort. It is essential for activism events to attract the right audience and to be promoted widely. The methods before social media included handing out flyers and word of mouth, which were time-consuming and overwhelming. Therefore, activism before social media was very hit or miss.

What aspects of social media improve the aforementioned shortcomings of activism before its digital inception? Social media's widespread nature, availability to the masses, and promptness to ignite discussion rids any previous shortcomings.

The flaws are eliminated since each of the mentioned aspects fills the information distribution gap. In addition, social media's algorithmic nature will help you reach the right audience.

The eye-opening year of 2020 provides a perfect example of the effects of social media on activism. Utilizing hashtags is a great way to reach the right people and increase awareness on social media. In 2020, the hashtags #BlackLivesMatter and #SocialJustice, which were either created or preexisting, stormed the Internet.

Hundreds of millions of screens were reached with videos and posts ranging from protests, history lessons to educational books; some videos were so influential they were featured on news channels.

Activism through social media is more influential and ubiquitous. The power of social media can inspire us to make significant changes, but it is up to the individual to want to make the change. Online activism can look like participating in hashtags, becoming an ally, or sharing informational content. In the words of Amy Jo Martin Founder and CEO of Digital Royalty, “social media is the ultimate equalizer. It gives a voice and a platform to anyone willing to engage”. Will you be a part of the change?



School's Effect on Mental Health

By Catherine Lackman & Sara Waszak

With 892 students enrolled in Westside High, it is no surprise that at least one of them has some mental health disorder, but it may be more than you might think. According to the CDC (Centers for Disease Control), more than 1 in 3 high school students have felt symptoms of depression in 2019. Many students feel that school has had negative effects on their mental health. The stress and anxiety from assignments, keeping their grades up, social pressure, and more have had a toll on mental health on students, and it presents itself in the student's behaviors in school. Chronic absences, sleeping in class, and missing assignments are all products of poor mental health. Talking about this is important so we notice and understand the signs of poor mental health in students.

To many kids, school is a burden. They are struggling to balance their academic workload and mental health because their assignments are too much for them to handle with the added pressure of mental health. This is causing them to not finish their assignments accordingly, making their grades plummet. This tends to make students struggling with mental health more stressed and is making their mental health even worse. According to an anonymous interviewee, "my anxiety had gotten worse over these past few years. I almost have a panic attack just thinking about all the work I must do and thinking about school, in general, makes me want to throw up." they also explained how their depression is also "worse than ever" because of the amount of stress their classes and other after-school activities put onto them.

So how can we help students struggling with their mental health? We can start by talking about healthy coping skills



and learning how to manage their

workload. Learning healthy coping mechanisms is important so people can get through challenging times and avoid coping in unsafe ways. Ways to healthily cope with mental health are writing about your feelings, making art, spending time with friends, and unlearning unhealthy habits, as well as going to therapy if you can. Your mental health is also linked to your physical health, so it is important to keep healthy and exercise regularly to keep your mental health at bay.

Poor mental health also manifests in attendance and behavior in class. Many students struggling with depression struggle with a lack of motivation, which can be seen in their attendance. A symptom of depression is oversleeping and under sleeping. This can mean students can stay up too late the night before and not have enough sleep to be able to function in school from 7:30 am to 2:30 pm, causing them to sleep in class. Some students do not even have the motivation to get out of bed and go to school, causing them to miss school entirely. If they do show up to school, they will more than likely be late because they are oversleeping or trying to find the energy to get up and get ready.

Not taking a person's mental health seriously or leaving it untreated can have detrimental effects, and many student's parents do not take their mental health seriously, tending to downplay it to "just hormones." A lot of the time if you go to the guidance counselor because you have been having trouble with your mental health, they will call your parents. If your parents do not take mental health seriously or downplay it, it leaves you out of options for adults to talk to. This leaves students with only their peers to confide in and causes them to feel like no one understands or cares for them.

Mental health is especially important when talking about teenagers. With work, school, and other things going on in someone's life, it can feel like the stress is piling up quickly. If you do not know how to take care of your health, this can make everything a lot worse. It is important to take mental health seriously and to be educated on the causes and effects of mental illness in young people, as well as how we can cope with these feelings.

I'll Make a Man (or Woman), Out of You by Ima Imoh

Do young people of America need greater discipline? That they need to uphold greater respect and duty for themselves and their country. Then mandatory military service may be the way that the United States needs to be headed. Many juveniles need direction and a guide in these growing troubling times, some others could use some disciplined training, and everyone could benefit from physical training to get into shape. The military could provide all of that for young men in the United States and get them started in the right direction. That is why there should be mandatory military service in the United States.

This feeling is not shared by all through. Mr. Matice, who has served in the Air Force, does not agree with the idea of mandatory military in the United States. Having stated that "A volunteer military will always be more effective than a military based on mandatory service because volunteers choose to fight while drafted services members are not motivated to achieve the excellence that is our military. Leave the draft for dictators." While the point is valid in its reasoning and volunteers will always be more papered and motivated to on task within the military on average than people forced to go, that does not mean that they still will not receive the same benefits.



Mandatory military service would provide great discipline to juveniles that will mature them and better prepare them for real-life and provide them with confidence. This will get them prepared for life without the help of their parents, consolers, or friends that could be used as a crutch and hold the hand of these young adults. The confidence gained will allow more juveniles to know how to carry themselves and hold themselves to a higher standard. The military will teach them to take care of themselves and not doubt themselves in various aspects of life, such as finding and getting jobs and knowing that they can aim higher in life. This will push forward the motivation and determination of these young adults to have the will to succeed and aim for a better, more respectable, level of life. Bootcamp, the routine, and the standard that the military will hold these young men also helps in this.

The training and strict schedule routine will teach them to have an orneriness in their daily lives and prepare them for the real world even if they choose not to stay in the military. It will teach them how to carry themselves in day-to-day life and to take criticism without getting mad and lashing out. They will know how to properly deal with people being aggressive to them without ending up in a worse situation. This will help juveniles in dealing with the hardships and challenges they will face in day-to-day life.

The military will give juveniles another family and a brotherhood of people they can relate to. This will provide a group of people they can rely on and provide a sense of camaraderie. It will also give them a chance to see diverse kinds of people, ideas, and cultures, letting them experience a multitude of things they may never have seen before. This could help them grow into better people, gain new ideas, and have a kinship with people they will never talk to before.

The military could be a viable option for many people to use but few people will know that it is a viable option for life until much later in life. Although to receive these benefits one must be open to it and not actively try to go against it and resist it because then it will cause problems and not gain the opportunity to grow as a person. Mandatory military service would be an effective way for young men to find their way in the world and start on the path of adulthood. That is why mandatory service is a viable and good option for the U.S to take and use, for the better meant of the people.

Unrealistic Beauty Standards

By Sanai Parks

Social media glamorizes unrealistic beauty standards. Platforms like Instagram and Twitter facilitates the idea that only certain features are deemed beautiful. Different tools are prevalent on applications (apps) to promote the very extreme beauty standards such as filters that change how one's natural face shape appears, and photoshop apps to completely edit someone's appearance.

Filters and photoshopping deceive the eye. Majority of apps that offer camera use nowadays come with features like filters. Filters are designed to morph someone's facial features to a socially acceptable image. When users feel dependent on filters for every picture or video, it may cause them to feel like their natural appearance is not good enough to be displayed.

Photoshopping can brainwash majority of people. It can become addictive because it allows people to obtain the instant illusion of perfection by re-shaping facial features, removing certain marks or blemishes, or re-shaping one's body.

How can social media negatively impact young viewers? The shaming towards body types that aren't accepted by social networking apps can often cause body dysmorphia within young women. Lots of young women will do almost anything to obtain the socially acceptable body image from "bootleg" procedures on the body to developing eating disorders. The constant act of someone comparing themselves to models on social media can result in various forms of insecurities. It may cause one to not feel like they are not enough, not beautiful, or feel uncomfortable in their own skin.

In conclusion, unrealistic beauty standards are glamorized on social networking platforms. Photoshopping and using filters can be used to obtain the extreme beauty standard but also deceive the eye. These standards can cause lots of insecurities within young women. Remember that you are beautiful just the way you are.

You do not have to fit in with the normality on social media to be beautiful, just be you.



Local News

Celebrating Black History at Westside

by Shantalyce Griffin



Dr. Pouncey, BLA Advisor

What does Black History Month mean to you? Are there any contributions you make to bring awareness to the meaning of Black History Month? For Westside High School contributions were made all throughout the month of February highlighting black history. Small tributes were made daily such

as announcing quotes from successful black leaders and displays of black historical artifacts. Larger contributions such as a live black history wax museum and a program took place.

Westside High School has tried to bring awareness and highlight black history as well as the prosperity of present black influencers. Quotes have been announced during the morning as well as afternoon announcements to give the student body and staff words of wisdom to reflect on. Displays of black history antiques have been set up on the Career, Technology, and Engineering (CTAE) hall giving a literal meaning to “walking down a hall of history.” An anonymous source has stated that “it felt like I was walking back in time,” the display gave a visual aspect of the hardships African Americans had to face in that period with having to hand-make most daily appliances.

The more impactful tributes were the live black history wax museum and the Westside’s Black History Program. The live wax museum hosted by Ms. Chiquita Walker, one of many marketing teachers working to prepare students for the real world at Westside High School was a huge success and even gained recognition from a local news station. It consisted of the student body selecting a specific African American (past or present) positive influencer, studying facts about, and dressing up as that person to later perform at the museum. The wax museum brought life to teaching and learning the significance of the historical and present activists and their accomplishments.

Westside’s Black History Program hosted by Dr. Von Pouncey included thriving African American guest speakers, fraternity steppers from Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Incorporated, one of eight historically black Greek organizations, Westside High School's very own band, and choir. A second anonymous source stated, “my favorite part was watching the fraternity members step it was cool to see and experience that face to face.” The program gave students a chance to ponder the route they want to take for their future and to carry words of wisdom from guest speakers along the way. Westside’s band gave students a steady uplifting beat to get the program started and gave a well-done performance during the halfway mark. The choir delivered a harmony worthy of a standing ovation of songs such as Total Praise by Richard Smallwood, and Lift Every Voice and Sing by James Weldon Johnson.

Westside High School has provided plenty of platforms to get the meaning of Black History Month across to all. The effort put into educating the student body in a way for them to get involved was a phenomenal technique. It has motivated many to think about morality and incorporate such teachings into their day-to-day life. Patriots throughout Westside have been moved with the knowledge of the past. There will be much more creativity in the future to get students involved and aware here at Westside High School.

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Black History Live Wax Museum



Students in Ms. Walker’s Marketing Principles course portrayed the images of individuals that contributed to African-American history, past, and present by creating a live wax museum. The student became that brand by dressing the part, acting out and educating onlookers on the facts that made the historical figure memorable.

Left to right: Hayden Tillman (President Obama), Tiyanah Loving (Ruby Dandridge) and Nhiyah Graham (Billie Holiday) Faith Turner (Misty Copeland)



Hey, Stop Right There!

By Shantaylce Griffin

Please take heed to our concerns as students. We patriots ask that when driving in a school zone you do so with caution. We understand that school drop-offs could be one of many stops you may need to make in the morning/afternoon but jeopardizing our safety to get to future destinations is an extreme we could avoid. Please understand that the accounts of reckless driving we are exposed to make us feel uncomfortable when walking to and from the school building. This is a major issue that we the student body felt a need to address to ignite a change. Now that you have heard our concern what will you do to ensure our safety?



The Battle of Aiken Civil War



Mr. Christman hones his acting skills and love of History as a reenactor of The Battle of Aiken Civil War. He portrayed a Union soldier from the 17th New York Infantry Regiment.

He offered extra credit for his students to attend the multiple day event.

This year commemorated the 157th anniversary of the Battle of Aiken, which occurred on 11 February 1865.

Pictured: Sean Medcalfe, Charles Sims, Avery Dunn, Faith Bolanos, Jayden Wright, Jasmine Graham, Kayla Quick, Jerry Teague.

Military Ball 2022

On March 5, Westside Military Ball took place at Augusta Marriott at the Convention Center. Cadets donned their service dress uniforms, ate a formal dinner, and participated in the grog bowl.



Sports

No Time for Losing

by Dr. Clark

The 2021-2022 Basketball season is in full effect. Lead by Coach Hunter, the varsity Basketball team is currently 27-3. On Friday, March 4th the team went up against Northeast High School in Milledgeville, Georgia., and the score was 73-55. Leading the charge, junior, Khalon Hudson scored an impressive 27 points. Jalex Ewing, put up an astounding block again Northeast High's attempt to dunk. The varsity team, was able to successfully advance to the state championship game where they will go against rival, Butler High School in Macon, Georgia at the Centerplex on Thursday, March 10th at 3pm.

The Patriot Paper staff would like to wish the team good luck and we are proud of you!



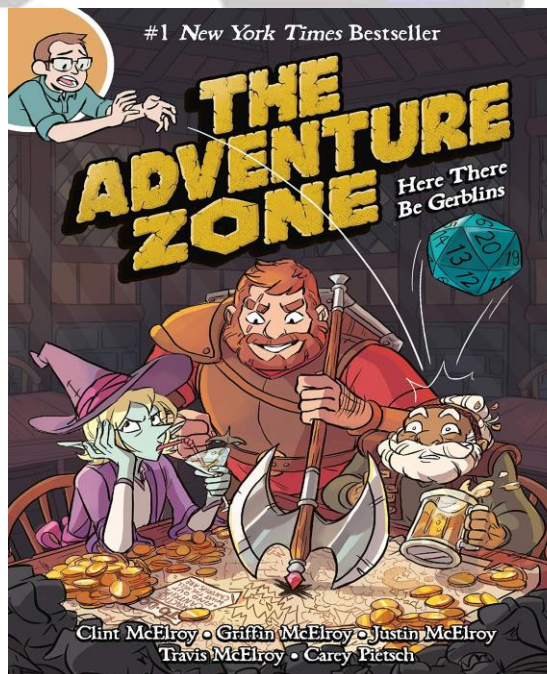
ENTERTAINMENT

The Zone for Adventure

By: Sean Fitzgerald

Do you like Dungeon & Dragons? Do you like Adventures? Then you should read The Adventure Zone: Here There Be Gerblins. The Adventure Zone book series is based on the first season of The Balance Arc. The Adventure Zone is about three brothers and their father, Griffin McElroy (The Dudgeon Master), Justin McElroy (Magnus Burnside), and Travis McElroy (Taako Taaco), Clint McElroy (Merle High-Church), and their adventures playing Dungeon & Dragons. The book itself builds on the first chapter of the podcast, Here There Be Gerblins to the first lunar Interlude.

The book begins with the introduction of the main characters Magnus Burnside, Taako Taaco, and Merle High Church. The adventurers find a cave. There is a group of gerblins inside the cave and a bugbear. After leaving the cave with a man named Barry Bluejeans they head to a nearby town. The adventurers then head to a lost mine. In the mine, they find a wizard called the black spider who tries to kill them. After defeating the black spider, the adventurers head further into the mine with two new party members. One of the party members finds a gauntlet. When he puts it on, he bursts into flames. The adventurers head back to the town. They find the party member with the gauntlet and flatten a town. They then go to a secret base inside a moon and join a secret society called the Bureau of Balance.



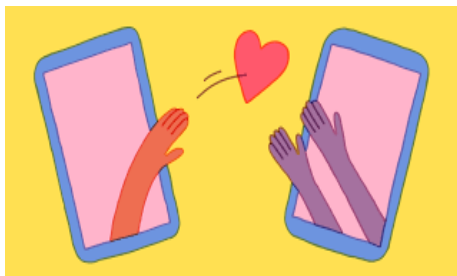
The Adventure Zone podcasts are one of my favorite things to listen to, so when I heard there is going to be a graphic novel based on the podcast, I was excited.

When I finally got the book a few months ago I was not disappointed. The art style was fantastic, the character design was amazing, and it stayed loyal to the original podcast. By far the best part of the book is that instead of having to listen to ten hours of podcast, with this book it got cut down to about one to two hours of reading.

Another remarkable thing about the book is it is for adults, in other words, there is adult humor and piles on top of piles of cuss words. The book by far has earned all the attention it has gained.

The book also has had an enormous impact on the franchise of The Adventure Zone. The reason behind this is that it got the attention of NBC to make a television show based on the book. This book is also the first of four books currently but there will be eight or nine. The current books that are out are Here There Be Gerblins, Murder on the Rockport Express, Pedals to the Metal, and the Crystal Kingdom. The books can be found on Amazon, Barnes and Nobles, Books-A-Million, or Bookshop. If you want to listen to the original podcast, the podcast can be found at Maximum Fund. Happy reading.

Data-Based Dating By: Niki & Catherine Lackman



Dating styles have changed dramatically throughout the years. Today's youth have more of an online approach when it comes to doing anything, especially dating. Why is dating mostly online? The answer is access to Wi-Fi. Wi-Fi allows people to use the worldwide web and speak to people all over the world.

Cell phones have a wide range of uses. Calling, texting, and using social media, are a small portion of what advancing technology can hold. With that comes online

dating. There are applications (apps) like Tinder or Match (you must be 18 years and older to make an account) that help you find your online soulmate. Social media applications like Instagram, or Snapchat can also help you find your forever person. That in mind, this is not always the safest approach to dating. An anonymous source said, "Online dating can absolutely be dangerous. As we all know strangers, especially on the internet, are never trust-worthy."

Online dating may not be safe for teenagers, but it is an effective way to find your significant other and stay connected with them. "Online dating is possible. There are many examples we see between influencers, where online dating worked out," an anonymous source stated. Not only has online dating proven to be an effective way of dating, but it is also a way for certain people to find others that are alike to them. For example, many women like to find significant others that have similar personalities or interests. So, if they are strong, independent women they might like to find someone on that same level.

Many people worry about the risks that come with online dating. Some risks may include online predators, online harassment, and the consequences of inappropriate messages. Though it may not be as safe as in person dating, teenagers realize those risks and be as careful as they can be. "While being as careful as we can, online dating can be possible and successful, especially in today's world," anonymous mentioned.

When asked "Do you feel online dating is safe?" anonymous said "I feel like as long as you know each other's boundaries, video chat, and meet their parents, I do not see why it would not be safe." Like stated before, many teens believe online dating is safe. "It works, its effective, and sometimes you can meet your soulmate through online dating," stated Catherine Johnson-Appleby from Greenbrier High School.

Today's youth have more of an online approach when it comes to doing anything, especially dating. With that comes online dating. Online dating may not be safe for teenagers, but it is an effective way to find your significant other and stay connected with them. "Online dating is possible. Not only has online dating proven to be an effective way of dating, but it is also a way for certain people to find others that are alike to them.

An Abroad Experience: Healthy Meals

By Marta Gill

Paella is one of the most famous foods in Spain, this is composed of seafood rice, chicken, rabbit or duck. The best paella is made in Valencia located on the southeast coast of Spain thanks to its good seafood.

The origin of paella

The origin of the paella was in the rural areas of Valencia in the XV-XVI century, at that time there was not much variety of food, so the peasants began to cook rice with ingredients that they could easily get and cooked everything over low heat.

How to get the best Paella?

Something very characteristic of this meal is the socarrat, (is the toasted rice at the bottom of the paella). Which is achieved by leaving the last moments of the paella over high heat until the rice begins to brown and becomes crispy below giving a slight sweet taste.

Ingredients for Paella

- Rice, that absorbs liquids such as bomba rice
- Crab
- Chicken
- Prawns
- Lobster
- Mussels
- Clams
- Onion
- Tomato
- Peppers
- Crocus, which gives it its distinguished yellow color
- Olive oil
- Garlic
- Chorizo



Steps

1. The fundamental part to make a good paella is the Fumet, that consists of putting in a pot with water the head and spine of a monkfish, the shells of the shrimp, prawns, carrot onion and pepper.
2. After having the fumet ready, you peel the prawns and seafood and add them with the onion garlic pepper tomato salt and pepper and an olive oil, you add it to the Paella which is where the paella is cooked.

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3. Then put the squid, clams and mussels once that is done add the rice and the fumet add crocus, let it boil for 3 min.
4. After 3 min add the prawns and parsley and let it boil until the water evaporates.
5. Finally let cook 15 minutes more and decorate.
6. Optional: you can add a little bit of lemon.

Paella is a very varied and healthy meal, but you can also change some ingredients for supplements if you are making a vegan paella. These are also the fundamental steps you must follow to make a Fideua (it is a meal similar to paella that is also Spanish).

in conclusion, paella is a meal with a great healthy, varied and balanced energy value, which can be cooked and adapted for almost any type of person.



Deep-Fried Jalapeno Popper Egg Rolls

INGREDIENTS

6 oz. cream cheese, softened
1/2 c. shredded mozzarella
1/2 c. shredded cheddar
4 slices bacon, cooked and crumbled
1 tsp. garlic powder
Kosher salt
Freshly ground black pepper
12 jalapeños, ends and seeds removed
12 egg roll wrappers
Vegetable oil, for frying
Ranch dressing, for serving



DIRECTIONS

- 1) In a medium bowl combine cream cheese, mozzarella, cheddar, bacon, and garlic powder. Season with salt and pepper and stir until fully combined.
- 2) Using a butter knife or small spoon, stuff with cheese mixture. Place an egg roll wrapper on a clean surface in a diamond shape and add stuffed pepper. Fold up bottom half and tightly fold in sides. Gently roll, then seal fold with a couple drops of water. Repeat with remaining peppers.
- 3) In a large skillet over medium heat, heat oil (it should reach 1" up the side of pan) until it starts to bubble. Add egg rolls and fry until golden, 1 minute per side. Transfer to a paper towel-lined plate to cool slightly.
- 4) Serve with ranch dressing on the side, for dipping.

WESTSIDE WORKS

Title: Halloween Graveyard

Artist: Kennedy Conaway



Home Business by Julia Rubio Servin

We have an extra business at my house which is creating flower arrangements and desserts. My flower arrangement business is making floral arrangements for customers based on their preferences and the occasion. The desserts are chocolate covered strawberries, chocolates, flan, cakes, cake pops, etc. We can sell them separate or with the flowers. After the customer places an order we then order the flowers from California-for big orders and then we make the arrangements and can deliver them to the customer for an extra fee of \$6. This business is good for me because it is about designing and decorating with flowers and ribbon and other things that make the arrangements beautiful. It is more fun than it looks and is a great way to make money. And because I can work from home it is perfect for me.

An Artist by Ruby Leon Brito

In Mexico, being an artist has its pros and cons. Some people think that if being an artist and dedicating your life to it- the artist would live under a bridge and people think the artists would become poor. But there are people who think that you can dedicate your life to it and become rich. As I see it, more people think that an artist in Mexico would become nothing and be poor. In the United States, there are more people that like art and would pay a lot for the work. Mexico there are people that do pay for art too, but it is hard to find those people. In a small town there are less reasons to become an artist because people have a closed mind while in the city there are plenty of artists making money.

Going to the Movies by Thuy (Selena) Tran

In Vietnam, the movies are similar to those in America. Some movies we have a limited age, so if you are below the age limit, they will not let you into the movie theater. Movies are censored by the government for premiers. Even horror movies must cut some scenes, but most of the time the customers like to watch horror movies from the other countries, especially the U.S., China, and Thailand. A few years ago, customers started watching horror movies produced from Vietnam. A prime time to watch movies is usually at night, I think because people work all day, so they just have time after their job. Movies have a lot of different types to watch, 3D, 4D...etc. Everyone can buy food, but the theater will not allow food we bring from home into the movie. My favorite type of movie is horror and Annabelle is my favorite movie. I like horror movies because of the sound effects, and the endings are always full of suspense.

The Shadow by Ansley Bufkin

Eline laid quietly in her room, licking her thumb to better flip onto the next page of her book when she heard her family's grandfather clock strike nine. To fill her spare time, she read mystery and horror books. To her, it was a good way to escape reality. Her father got off work at 5 o'clock each day, and would arrive home from the bar at nine. It was a routine. Eline gets out of school, walks home, and waits for his arrival. She let out a small sigh, tired from another restless night. Around the same time, nightly, she woke up from the same reoccurring night terror. It wasn't just the dreams though, she actually saw the same figure from her dream. At first, she blamed it on the books or the house. She knew it was an old house. That's why she wasn't too surprised when she started hearing things; she assumed it was just a house settling.

Earlier that day when she was getting ready for school, she saw a figure in the bathroom doorway. She blamed it on the halls being dark and her mind playing tricks. She didn't see anything distinguishable, just a black silhouette of a person. Quickly snapping back to reality, she heard her father stumbling in, she sat down on the barstool in her kitchen.

"How was work?" she asked hesitantly. "Fine" he grumbled out. He had a gravelly voice.

Similar to one of those old men in those smoking commercials. He paid her little to no attention, he was too busy with 'work' to care.

"I passed my math exam."

He grunted in acknowledgment. He never listened. He didn't care.

As she was walking back into her room, out of her peripheral vision, she saw the same shadowy figure gripping her dad's doorway and slowly disappearing behind it. Curious at what she just witnessed, she started to approach his room. Before she even made it through the door, she heard her father coming up the stairs.

She brushed it off and headed to her room; she was almost used to these figures. As sick as it sounds, she saw them so often it didn't really take her by surprise anymore, but it made her anxious.

When she first started seeing the shadow, she told her dad, "There's no such thing as ghosts," he snorted.

Then he started trying to blame it on her reading "those disturbing books." She tried for months and eventually gave up.

Throughout the course of the week, she kept having the dream and seeing the figure. It was like the movie Groundhog Day, same figure...different day. She couldn't remember all of her dreams, except she knew the figure was always after her father.

Towards the end of the dream, she always found her father glossy-eyed in his bed and always with a look of horror cemented on his face. She was always stuck in place watching the figure as it walked away. It only was after him, never her. Tonight, was different, when she got up to walk back to her room she saw the figure.

The Shadow continued

It was walking up the stairs, turning to look back at her despite it not having any distinguishable features. Normally the figure would only be around for seconds at a time. This is the first time it didn't disappear almost immediately after she saw it. It continued up the stairs, heading straight towards her dad's room.

"It's just a dream" she whispered. She grabbed one of the kitchen knives and crept up the stairs.

Making sure she didn't make any noise. The figure entered her father's room. She was stuck. "It's just a dream Eline," she whispered.

She stood there for a second to catch her breath and attempted to wake herself up. That's when she heard the bed creak and a piercing scream.

She started to run, knife gripped in hand. It wasn't a dream, she was awake. Wide awake.

She saw the figure climb on top of her father, raising its hands to stab him. She hurriedly got onto the bed and started stabbing. She kept her eyes closed so tight, she saw swirls of color behind them.

She finally stopped feeling movement, she opened her eyes.

It was still pitch black, she leaned over to turn on the desk lamp straddling the 'ghost'. When the light flickered on it was almost blinding. She looked down only to see her father with several holes littered across his chest. She didn't scream, she didn't make a single noise. One single tear managed to slip down her cheek as she struggled to get up.

Knife still in hand, she turned to the door only to see the silhouette. Looking back at her almost as if to say goodbye as it walked out into the hall and disappeared into the dark.

Artist: Shantalyce Griffin

