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The Falcon Post

Jordan High School's student-run newspaper

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Welcome Back!

Dear Reader,

Your eyes do not deceive you, Falcon Post has returned for another orbit around the sun. As a phoenix from the ashes, we rise above, ready to bring you all the news you would ever want to hear. Thankfully, our karma was good last year and we are in similar form to before—maybe even better.

A brand new writing staff has joined us on our mission. Freshmen, sophomores, and seniors that were not here last year have found their calling here at the one and only Falcon Post to write stories just for you. And yes, there are no new juniors. Along with that, this year's Co-Editors-In-Chief, Ainsley and Ruby, send a special warm welcome to all readers new and returning.

To start the year off, we'd like to give you some insight on what you may expect to see throughout the year:

- Several updates on all your favorite sports and athletes
- Monthly spotlights on teachers and staff throughout the school
- Information regarding all school goings-on and student opinions
- Fun videos *consistently* posted on our Instagram page
- Monthly PRINTED ARTICLES for you to hold in your gentle hands
- Music reviews from the most trusted music reviewers that spend their days at Jordan High School

- Updates about all the arts shows and concerts that you don't want to miss
- Satire pieces, cartoons, and games to spice up your day
- Any changes made to school rules and regulations
- All the information you need to choose which clubs you want to join this year
- A BRAND NEW website makeover and domain

I hope you see how excited we are to spend this year with you. We sincerely hope you feel the same. It'd be a bit awkward if you didn't. What isn't there to be excited for, right? Can't wait to see you around school!

With much love and care,
The Falcon Post Staff

School News

A Ms. Taylor Holiday: How the Jordan Community Shows Support

by Emmy Grigoni, senior

"The Jordan High School community made my birthday very special," Principal Taylor said from her office last week.

On August 30th, Principal Taylor was surprised to enter the building to happy birthday wishes from Jordan custodian, Mr. Spellman. When she asked him where he'd learned of it, he smiled, saying, "don't worry about that."

As the day went on, birthday wishes from students, faculty/staff, athletic teams, clubs, and PTSA members made their way to Principal Taylor's office in the form of flowers, balloons, and beautiful hand-made cards.

"So beautiful," Principal Taylor tells me, "that I haven't taken them off of my table yet," gesturing to her round table adorned with bright, colorful messages and full vases.

While Ms. Taylor has celebrated previous birthdays at Jordan, she describes this one as particularly noteworthy because of the sheer number of well wishes she received. "It was really special," she said. "It felt like a Ms. Taylor Holiday to me, because it was numerous students, numerous teachers."

"The heartfelt show of appreciation illustrates the importance of a supportive community. Principal Taylor emphasized that support is especially crucial within a school—she attributed many educational and lifetime successes to being part of a team.

"You can't do this work alone," Ms. Taylor expressed. "There are people who know more than you do. You have to listen to the voices of all stakeholders." Stakeholders, she defined, are all the individuals that make up the school body.

"To improve your school, you have to listen to student voices, teacher voices, and parent-caregiver voices," she says.

To Principal Taylor, every person involved with Jordan High School is part of the same team, their voices equally valuable. If a person's dedication to a community can be measured by the number of messages and gifts decorating one's table, it's obvious just how much Ms. Taylor has touched this school.

If you get the chance on your way to class or during lunch, feel free to wish Principal Taylor a belated birthday. Not only will it be appreciated, you'll be contributing to something bigger than yourself: your community.

Upcoming: A Glance at October's SGA Events

by Nora Clark and Nora Wilson, sophomores



SASH Club Highlight

by Chloe Boyer, freshman

The fight to keep schools safe for everyone is a never-ending one, and that's why it's more important than ever to stand up for yourself and others. Jordan High School's SASH Club is working to do just that, one meeting at a time.

The Mission: Students Against Sexual Harassment aims to eliminate sexual violence in schools, educate students, and be a safe space to talk about delicate issues surrounding sexual assault. The club has been working with organizations like Durham Crisis Response and Stand Up Speak Out to spread awareness and make change. SASH at Jordan is a part of a national network of SASH Clubs, which itself is run under the nonprofit SSAIS, or Stop Sexual Assault in Schools.

The Method: In years past, SASH has done fundraisers, such as partnering with Jordan’s Spectrum Alliance and the Trevor Project at the Fall Market, to raise money for victims of sexual abuse and nonprofits. The club hopes to continue raising money in similar events this school year. During the month of October, SASH will be focusing on outreach for Domestic Violence Awareness Month. This will include a booth at Falcon Fest, social media posts, announcements, partnership with Durham Crisis Response and Stand Up Speak Out, and more. They have events planned in November, such as participating in the Fall Market, as well as April, Sexual Assault Awareness Month, to build community and spread their message. The club is also looking into working with Student Government, publishing a newsletter, and doing outreach programs with athletes.

Title IX: One key topic on the agenda is Title IX, with SSAIS seminars and SASH presentations planned to inform people about their legal protections at school. Title IX is a statute under the Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights that among other things prohibits sex-based discrimination and protects LGBTQ+ students. Keeping the student body informed on their Title IX rights is critical to keeping Jordan safe!

The Message: SASH wants everyone to be safe, comfortable, and respected at school, and our community is essential to reaching that goal. Any support helps them do good, whether it be spreading their posts, attending meetings, or coming to events. You can find them in Room 411 at 8:30 on Mondays, or keep up with SASH news on Instagram @jhs_sashclub and on Remind @jhssash. They’ve also been featured on the SSAIS blog, with a spotlight on the origins of the club and their goals. We hope you’ll join the SASH club in protecting Jordan from sexual harassment!

Why 70/30?

By Delany Buff, junior

In the month of May, a group of Jordan teachers and staff members, consisting of department leaders and the grading committee, organized a retreat to discuss the assignment weighting for minor and major assignments in AP classes. AP classes had been weighted like honors classes, with major assignments being 60% of the final grade and minor ones being 40%. However, the panel ultimately concluded that AP classes should switch from the previous 60/40 split to 70/30, starting in the 2024/2025 school year.

Many students were stressed when this new policy was announced and questioned whether taking APs with the new grade weighting would negatively affect their GPA. Let's take a look behind the scenes to see why Jordan made this decision.

Mr. Finger, who teaches AP Physics and AP Research, explained part of the logic behind the shift from 60/40 to 70/30 at Jordan. He says that teachers have found that Jordan graduates were often “struggling when colleges used mainly 85/15 or 90/10, we felt like we weren’t adequately preparing our students.”

This big jump from high school to college is a major reason for struggle. A large part of this is because minor assignments are often so easy to complete in high school that it's very easy to get an A or B in a class, even if you fail the tests. Another reason for the shift was Jordan’s reputation and competitiveness.

“The way colleges do...admissions is they have profiles on schools [with strengths and GPAs] and we’ve heard from admission officers that...Jordan is weak because...it’s so easy to get an A, so when kids apply from Jordan versus other schools, they’re going to look more at other high schools because Jordan’s become too easy,” explains Mr. Finger.

Although this will make AP classes more difficult, the shift will hopefully make Jordan a more competitive school and help seniors look like better candidates when applying to colleges. Mr. McDonald, one of the department chairs for the Advanced Placement program, explains the final major reason for the change: “...to create a more consistent and organized grading system,” because there has been some “inconsistency in grading distinction between honors and AP classes.”

At Jordan, there is a clear distinction between academic classes, whose division between major and minor assignments is 50/50, and honors classes, whose division is 60/40. However, there is no contrast between honors and AP courses. Mr. McDonald expresses that he, and the rest of the grading committee, believe that it is crucial to have a level of difference between honors and AP “to create a more equitable system.”

However, this new system isn’t all perfect. Mr. Valder, an AP Pre-Calculus teacher, points out a very important flaw to the change. “It puts a big emphasis on kids' ability to take bigger assessments,” he states. “Data shows that a lot of kids are not good at taking tests, so I do think that there is a disadvantage there from the standpoint of [grades]. I do feel like in AP class[es] you want that grade to be reflective of knowledge,” not your ability to take a test.

This is a very critical point because according to The University of Western Idaho, “25–40 percent of U.S. students experience test anxiety” (2023).

Mr. Valder then goes on to explain “that oftentimes at Jordan we’ve offered opportunities for kids to do test correction. As an AP...program, that is looked upon differently.”

Therefore, if kids had been given opportunities to get points back on a test all the way up until AP classes, it could dramatically skew grades and overall GPAs.

Overall, the switch from 60/40 to 70/30 for Jordan AP classes is to better prepare students for college class weightings, make Jordan a more competitive school, and to create a more equitable grading system.

As the new school year completes its first months and the new AP class weighting system falls into place, we are curious to see how it affects students' test taking skills, study habits, and college admission rates.

Works Cited

How to Overcome Test Anxiety: 8 Helpful Tips. (2023, March 14). College of Western Idaho. <https://cwi.edu/news/blog/how-overcome-test-anxiety-8-helpful-tips#:~:text=Even%20the%20most%20confident%20students,U.S.%20students%20experience%20test%20anxiety>

Arts

Theatre Auditions: Insider Info

by Sydney Sarver, sophomore

This year’s auditions for the theater program are complete! Director Olivia Bellido has cast the show Clue, which will be performed on the Jordan stage in November, as well as the musical Big Fish, coming to you this spring.

“Auditions for the musical were scary but they made me excited for next semester!” said Ava, a sophomore in the theater program. The audition process for the musical was extensive, involving several rounds of callbacks.

Curtis, a junior in the program, added, “I was lowkey nervous [about the auditions], but they were really chill. It was fun to watch the other people go.” Curtis was cast in the musical as Amos Calloway, one of the leads. You may have seen him as Lefou in Beauty and the Beast last spring.

Anyone interested in seeing Clue should stay on the lookout for ticket information in the coming weeks and be ready to see this talented cast onstage November 21st-23rd!

Short n’ Sweet | Sabrina Carpenter
An Album Review

by Noah Dillon, sophomore



Photo from Wikipedia

Compared to many other major pop albums that have been released this year, I had large expectations for this most recent project from Sabrina Carpenter. Very much because of the two bombs of singles she dropped back to back in April and June of this year. Just from the streaming numbers alone, I was impressed. Espresso has reached over 1.25 billion streams in just over 5 months of being out. The second single, “Please Please Please”, has done better, passing the 750 million mark in only 3 months. Singles are meant to be promotion for the future album, so of course the artist will pick the more solid tracks off the record, but to have your only two be that massive is ridiculous.

I think that success is definitely warranted. These two songs sound good, production and writing wise, and are extremely catchy– pretty much all you can ask for when making a pop song. The disco-inspired production on Please Please Please from Jack Antonoff sounded really fresh and unique. Jack produced around a quarter of the songs on Short n’ Sweet, and all of them are a major step up from his previous work this year. The other 3 main producers on this album, Julian Bunetta, John Ryan, and Ian Kirpatrick, all did their job on the production work and I don’t think a single song missed production wise. There’s many great instrumentals, with influences from rock, folk, R&B, and even disco, as previously mentioned. I do think the R&B should have been utilized more. The song Don’t Smile used it really well, and the purely guitar based songs got kind of repetitive on the later half of the album.

The biggest strength of this album were the hooks and choruses on these songs. If you’re trying to make a big hit, this is probably the most key element to doing so. Almost every single one of these songs has a hook worthy of being a massive hit.

Sabrina definitely has a good voice, but something about the way they mix her vocals gives them a kind of weird sound. However, it really works for some of the tones she’s going for. When she sings “Please Please Please,” it’s sung and mixed in a way that makes the lyrics really pop out. She uses a good variety of pitches and delivery of vocals, ranging from high pitch Ariana Grande sounding lyrics (Bed Chem), to very light and slow ones (Don’t Smile). Lyrically, this album can be inconsistent at times. The majority of the songs are well written. I think there’s a lot of clever verses and the majority of lyrics flow well. There are some verses, though, that really feel like they could have used some more thought. A lot of the storytelling is pretty one dimensional and feels quite general. A more clear basis on what or when a song is specifically written about could have really given some tracks more value.

OVERALL RATING: 8.3/10

Pros: Production, Hooks, Most Verses, Vocals

Cons: Some Lyrics, Song Topics

Best Song: Please Please Please

Worst Song: Lie To Girls

Creative Writing Column

An excerpt from ‘To Jump from Grace’
by CC Daniels

“Hey, Percy. I never thought about it until now, but the sky and stars are beautiful at night. Shame they’re ticking time bombs, right?” asked Colette.

“Coco...” Percival said.

“I know, but you have to admit they do look nice,” Colette said with a glint in her eyes as she looked at the stars.

“I guess. I just can’t appreciate the prettiness knowing the sky is fake,” Percival admitted.

A fake sky. The sky is fake. In a tale with its truth well known, it was foretold by the priest tribe’s god that all those who didn’t worship him would fall into a long bloodbath of war. In this tale it was said that the tribes who lost would have the star above it fall upon the civilians of the tribe. While this was true, there was a falsehood. The stars. Percival and Colette were definitely not the first to know the sky was fake, that the stars were no cosmic wonder. Artificial stars. They might as well be dangling nukes over the tribes.

Barbarians were the first tribe dead. The weird thing was that the purple star didn’t fall upon them, though technically it is still true to this so-called prophecy. “The stars will fall on the tribes defeated in the war.” The barbarians attacked the priests because they didn’t like how they forced this war upon the tribes. It wasn’t in the prophecy but everyone knew that the priests would drop the stars on the tribes if they tried to avoid the war. Even if they didn’t, nobody was taking the risk.

Sports



Connor Winstead completing a score; picture by Julian Goldberg

Birds Fall 10-13
by Ian O’Fallon, senior

The Jordan Ultimate Frisbee Team played their first game Thursday, September 12, where they lost to Chapel Hill Ultimate Frisbee (CHUF) 10-13. The game was a back and forth affair with both teams holding the lead at different points. After a rough first half, Jordan pulled ahead at the beginning of the second half. This lead did not last, as the Dirty Birds quickly let up four unanswered scores from CHUF.

Despite the loss, Jordan still had standout performances from Max Shearer and Connor Winstead. Max celebrated his birthday with 3 scores and some highlight defensive plays.

Not to be outdone, Connor put up 3 points of his own and had a standout defensive game. Jordan Ultimate has their next game Thursday, October 3, where they look to improve and bring home a win.

Garrett Road Rivalry: Fall Recap
by Phoebe Artin, junior

If you haven’t heard of the Garrett Road Rivalry, it is a newly created competition between the two schools on Garrett Road - Durham Academy and C.E. Jordan High School. Each sports season, the two schools play each other in each sport to determine who wins the Garrett Road Cup.

This fall, Jordan played Durham Academy in every fall sport except for football. August 29th was a day of success for the Falcons as the boys cross country team beat Durham Academy in their race, and the boys soccer team managed to hold Durham Academy to a 1-1 tie in their game.

Sadly, all of our other sports fell to Durham Academy in their fall cup games, many of them in close contention for the win. The girls tennis team lost 6-3 with wins at #1 and #2 singles as well as #2 doubles. The girls golf team lost in close standings with DA’s golf team. The girls volleyball team lost a tight game against the Cavaliers, 2-3. The field hockey team lost a close game with a final score of 0-1. The girls cross country team, one of the last to face off the Cavaliers, lost by a narrow margin but plan to win when they face DA next at the City-County meet.

Durham Academy won this time, but prepare for a Jordan win in the winter! Look out for more information on the Winter Garrett Road Cup once winter sports begin.

Sources: @jordanfalcons Athletics Instagram, MaxPreps



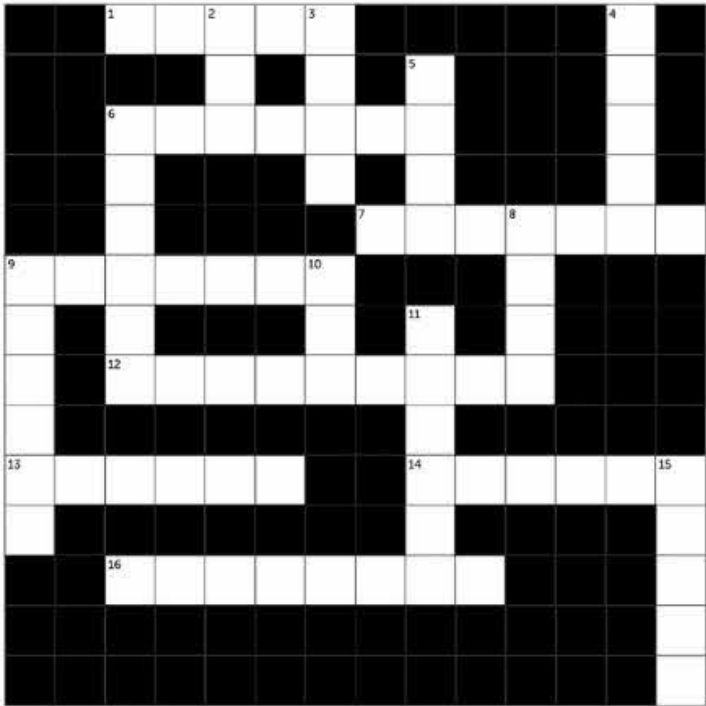
Photo from CUNY

Commemorating 9/11: A Day That Should Live in Infamy
By Delany Buff, junior

23 years is a long time. However, it is not long enough for us to forget what happened on that peaceful day on September 11th, 2001 in New York City. As the years tread on, I have noticed that more and more teachers neglect to mention the violent terrorist attack committed by the Al-Qaeda under the leadership of Osama bin Laden. It is important to recognize the involuntary sacrifice by thousands that day; from those in the planes to those in the towers. It is also crucial to understand how this tragic event shaped American security to the way it is now. Past president Franklin D. Roosevelt’s words about the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941 are relevant to 9/11: it is “a day that should live in infamy,” as it will remain a critical aspect of American history for years to come.

Games

Crossword and sudoku by Chloe Boyer, freshman



Across

- 1) Herb commonly associated with puns
- 6) Beloved Canadian dish
- 7) Syrian city replicated by Khosrau I
- 9) In Clue, one possible killer
- 12) Disease one might find on the Oregon Trail
- 13) State that joined the Union on Halloween
- 14) With 9-Down, Barbarian groups that settled in England
- 16) Celebrity actor DiCaprio

Down

- 2) The person reading this clue
- 3) Typical antagonist
- 4) Pleasant shade of purple
- 5) Organization that operates the world’s largest particle accelerator
- 6) Home to Warsaw
- 8) Unreliable
- 9) With 14-Across, Barbarian groups that settled in England
- 10) In the United States, 2,000 pounds
- 11) First name of President Ford
- 15) Jolly gift-giver

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Mia’s Survival Guide to JHS*
by Mia Pieraccini, senior

Jordan High School has been around since the 60s. Its’ walls hold years and years of history. There have been hundreds of thousands of students. Behind its rich history are many stories not frequently shared with our student body and, as a senior, it is my job to share the lore and secret history of C.E. Jordan High School with all of you readers.

My freshman year I was given sage advice from a senior who cared deeply for my safety. They told me not to drink the Falcon Milk. What is Falcon Milk, you may ask? Well, after COVID, the school was vacant. Over that year, the pipes stayed still, letting the school’s negative aura flow into them. When the lockdown was lifted and students could attend school again, the fountain water was white. This water was aptly named Falcon Milk and many still call it that to this day. Now you may be asking yourself, “it’s been years! The water is clear now! There are filters! I can still drink it. Right?” NO. The students who drank it were tragically transformed into falcons and are hiding in the ceiling tiles in room 022. So, I would like to share that warning with you– just know if you drink from the school water, it’s your life on the line.

Speaking of lives, many wonder where the 600’s hall is. The truth is, it burned down in a tragic fire and it was very gory, so much so that I cannot write the details because of how graphic and disturbing they are. The trailers are atop the fallen 600s, and in honor of said building, we called the trailers the 700 classrooms so as to not forget the tragedy of its fallen predecessor. This story has long since faded away but the ghosts of the 600s hall remain. This is why they call the 700s “the teacher graveyard.” The trailers are haunted and the ghost teachers of the 600s want their jobs back, so they scare away the teachers in the trailers. If you have a teacher in the trailers, give them a compliment or food because they are doing a great service by dealing with the ghosts.

And now a PSA: as a journalist, it is my job to be a snitch and ruin everyone’s fun time. I am sorry in advance.

The rumors about the pool on the roof have been circling for years. It was a creative form of reverse psychology that was created to keep underclassmen away from the pool. I was even told today that there’s not a real pool on the roof. That it’s just a joke you tell to freshmen.

This was coming from a freshman. This freshman was clearly just jealous that he himself could not visit the pool on the roof.

If you are an upperclassmen reading this, you understand that I have shared a guarded secret and I am sorry. We cannot hog this pool during our free periods anymore. The pool itself is lowkey disgusting due to the fact that it doesn’t get cleaned very often. Despite the odor and the brown hues in the water, it has been a great community building device that has united JHS upperclassmen for years. I now welcome all to join us on the pool on the roof to watch the water polo team play their senior night game on Wednesday.

With this new knowledge I have bestowed upon you, I wish you all the best of luck navigating Jordan High School.

***Editor’s Note:** This is a satirical piece and should not be taken seriously.

Answers

