

FOCUS

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1101 City Avenue Wynnewood Pennsylvania 19096

Phil Me In

By Maya Rosenberg '14

There is a new member in our community! Phil Vitale, an East Stroudsburg University graduate, is now our new Athletic Trainer. He replaces Kristen, who left earlier this year to embark on a new journey. Though Kristen has been dearly missed, Phil is perfect for the job! Beginning as an engineer, Phil ended up switching to nursing, eventually getting into an Athletic Training program which really interested him at the time.



new trainer, Phil.

He “fell in love with it” and has been an athletic trainer ever since.

Phil also fell in love with both the athletic facilities at Friends’ Central and our community. He says he “could not ask for anything better.” His favorite things about Friends’ Central so far are the the “fun”, “great”, and “cool” kids. Phil is a really nice guy, and loves talking to students so if you stop by while he isn’t busy, I’m sure he’d love to converse! We all miss Kristen a lot, but she has left the Friends’ Central athletes in great hands with our



A jazz quartet played for fcs faculty for charity, raising

Advice For Seniors

By Hilda Njanike '13

“One foot in the door: one foot out.” We are beings in transition: we seniors. We are in the process of wrapping up twelve years of our life and embarking on a new adventure. This adventure, however, requires a strenuous amount of thought and effort so that we are inclined to turn our back on the past and only concentrate on what is ahead. Many of us are ready; ready for different people, new experiences and a change of scenery. That’s apparent in the way we sometimes respond to our teachers or the unsavory state in which we leave the back of the cafeteria after lunch.

urge us to not to forget the family and home we have in Friends’ Central right now. We will never be high school seniors or a part of this community in the same way ever again. In the next few months, you will begin to realize the finality of small actions or events and “This is the last time I will ...” will become an all too familiar phrase among our peers. Soon, we will regret having taken the present which is “The Present” for granted.

We might all be surprised, whether pleasantly or not, to find that what we are rushing towards is not anything like we imagined it. At the core, college is school; a school where you learn to be an independent and productive member of society. It is not a never- ending

education. The struggles we endure in order to get there call upon skills which we will need to succeed in life. I have yet to meet anyone who is not struggling to balance the varying aspects of senior year and the stress which seems to be mounting as opposed to subsiding; but if we take deep breaths and confront our giants head on, they will not stand a chance. I am certain that each and everyone of us will manage to get into college, dwell on fond memories, and win that (insert sport here) championship simply by confronting each day with appreciation and determination simultaneously.

Russian Around

By Kate Forrest '14

Last year, Lindsay Saligman packed her bags and hopped a plane that would take her to a new home for the next 5 months -- Russia. Lindsay has always been interested in learning about other people, their cultures, and languages, so studying abroad as a sophomore seemed like the right thing to do for her. While some people may think that going to a foreign place not knowing anyone could be terrifying, for Lindsay this adventure was well within her comfort zone. At the beginning of the interview Lindsay began, “I chose Russia because it was mysterious, and somewhat inaccessible.” This is true; you do not hear of people coming home from family vacations in Russia too often. Lindsay’s host family consisted of a mother, father, 17-year old daughter, and a 24-year old son who lived at home. The



father had been in the army, and her mother worked at a medicine factory.

Lindsay told me that it took a while to convince her parents to let her go, but they knew that traveling the world and being introduced to new cultures are her passions. When Lindsay first arrived in her new home, it was minus-30 degrees outside. “I waited on the train platform for 5 minutes before my host family had arrived to get

me. I wasn’t necessarily scared. I was just taking it all in,” Lindsay told me. Lindsay went to Russia not knowing any Russian, and no one knew any English as well. “It was hard to communicate at first, but that is what made it so interesting and fun. You can not learn a language well without being fully immersed in it,” Lindsay explained. After her 5 months abroad, Lindsay can speak Russian as well as she can speak Spanish. She is verging on fluency in both languages. One of Lindsay’s goals in life is to become fluent in a few languages. Being well educated and a great speaker in English, Russian, Spanish, and French seems like a pretty good start!

One of Lindsay’s favorite experiences in Russia was

News for New Students

By Peter Dissinger '14

At every school, there’s an insider scoop about the things you need to know in order to survive freshman year or your first year here. At Friends’ Central, there are different ways that you can learn the ins and outs - whether from your peer mentors, a teacher, or a friendly upperclassman. Of course, figuring out a school can take a long time. So here at *Focus*, we thought we’d give you a head start on getting to know your new environment.

1. Go to Student Council events. Lots of people go and the events are well planned and really fun.

2. Don’t be afraid to join clubs and sports teams. Both are great ways to make friends outside of your grade and enjoy yourself.

3. There is a Student Wireless network at school, which means those of you who have iPods and not iPhones do have the ability to access the internet as well.

4. Make sure to befriend your teachers! They are willing to help you with anything and love to strike up friendships with their students.

5. Get to lunch early. Not only do the lines get massive, but sometimes the best meals can go quickly (like the Chipotle Chicken Sandwich - if you haven’t had it, try it).
6. Finals are not nearly as dreadful as some upperclassmen advertise them to be so don’t spend your time anxiously awaiting them.

7. Always have some extra money on hand at school. There’s usually a bake sale or a cool fundraiser going on that offers delicious treats.

8. Writing a five paragraph essay is easier than you would think. Your teachers will help you get through your first few papers and you’ll have lots of help along the way.

9. Go to at least one basketball game. The team is incredibly fun to watch and they have some pretty cool tricks up their sleeves.

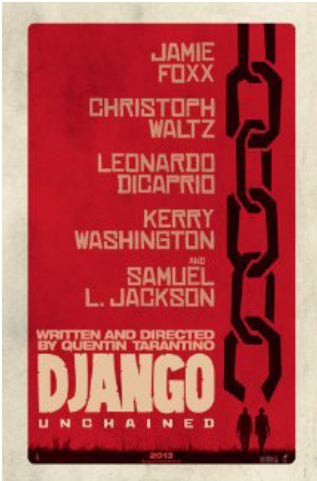
10. Being a freshman can actually be fun (aside from the occasional taunt from an upperclassmen) - it all depends on how you approach your first year in high school!

Holiday Season Films

By Peter Dissinger '14

1.Django Unchained (Dec. 25th)

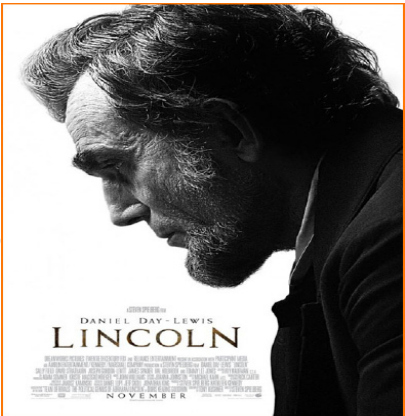
If I go to see any movie in the next two months, I will be going to see Django Unchained. Quentin Tarantino comes back firing with his new action-packed, revenge flick about Django (Jamie Foxx), a slave in America, who is freed by a bounty hunter (played by Christoph Waltz, who you might know as the Nazi Officer from Inglorious Basterds). They go on a Tarantino-inspired killing spree to find Django’s wife and kill the slave owner who has captured her. While Tarantino’s tendency to create really strange and comic movies (Pulp Fiction, Kill Bill, Inglourious Basterds) is not for everyone, I happen to love his style. The trailer really caught my eye and I am excited to see Foxx and Waltz act together.



meets Tiffany (Lawrence), who is equally troubled and mysterious. Tiffany offers to help Pat get back together with his wife if he performs with her in a dance competition. But soon enough an unexpected chemistry develops between the two and they embark on an emotional journey together (that isn’t just platonic). The cast is star studded (Robert De Niro and Chris Tucker), the lead actors are some of my favorites, and it was filmed in Upper Darby (Llanerch Diner anyone?)! What’s not to like?

4.Lincoln (Nov. 9th)

Another Steven Spielberg ambitious epic, the title tells all. Starring Daniel Day Lewis as Lincoln, Lincoln tells the story of Abraham Lincoln’s last few months in office before his assassination. Recently on “60 Minutes,” Spielberg previewed his new movie. He noted that the movie does not have his traditional special effects or massive actions scenes. Instead, it focuses on the intense dialogue between Lincoln and his closest companions. Spielberg alone is enough reason to go to see this movie, but the premise has a lot of promise and if anyone has the ability to pull off such a complicated story, it’s Spielberg. If Skyfall doesn’t interest you, then Lincoln is a solid backup for that weekend.



2.Skyfall (Nov. 8th)

James Bond is one of the most iconic movie characters to ever grace Hollywood and the series of Bond films has grossed over five billion dollars worldwide. The most recent addition to the list of actors who have played 007 is Daniel Craig. His first 007 film, Casino Royale, is my favorite James Bond movie. Quantum of Solace, his secon film, was not as successful as its predecessor (although it was still a cool movie) and more complicated and confusing. But the movie industry has bailed us out again! All of the plot from Craig’s first two Bond movies has been thrown out the door! In Skyfall, Bond comes back from the dead after a mission gone wrong in Istanbul to find that his boss, M, is under review by the government for her botched handling of



Bond’s mission (many other agents died). Soon enough, M orders Bond to go on another mission to kill a terrorist claiming ties to both M and Bond. While on the mission, Bond is forced to question his loyalty to M after he discovers secrets of her mysterious past. Bond movies are always well done and full of high octane action; if you’re a Bond fan, then it’s definitely a must-see.

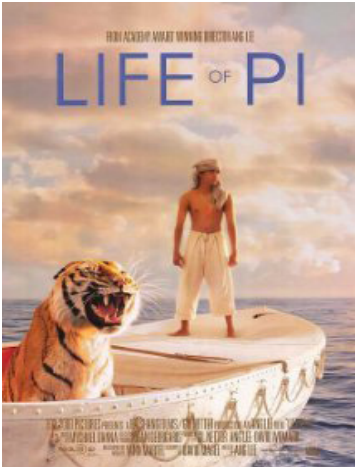
3.Silver Linings Playbook (Nov. 21st)

Last year, there was a lot of buzz in Philadelphia about a movie being shot in Upper Darby (right near us!) starring Bradley Cooper and Jennifer Lawrence. The movie is about Pat Solatano (Cooper), who has gone back to live with his parents after spending 8 months in a state institution. Recently divorced, he has struggled to get over his ex-wife, but then he



5.Life of Pi (Dec. 14th)

Seems like the Freshman lit curriculum has been getting a lot of attention this past year. Almost everyone at FCS has read and analyzed the story of Pi, a boy from Pondicherry, India, who gets shipwrecked on his way to America. We learn about the remarkable tale of Pi’s survival with the Bengal tiger, Richard Parker. While this story turns out to be possibly fake (and somewhat more pleasing to our stomachs than the cannibalistic version), Pi’s fictional story is still worth all 200-something pages of the reader’s attention. It will be interesting to see how Ang Lee recreates the fantastical scenes from the book (think carnivorous algae, the gruesome deaths of the other animals on board, etc.). Lee has a good track record as a director (Hulk and Brokeback Mountain) and this is another movie that has a lot of promise. If you’re really into Life of Pi, or are curious to see how directly it relates to the book, then the movie is definitely worth the trip.



Honorable Mention: Flight (Nov. 2nd), starring Denzel Washington; The Hobbit (Dec. 14th); and The Impossible (Dec. 21st) starring Ewan McGregor and chronicling a family’s experiences in the Indian Ocean Tsunami of 2004.



Reflections on Service

By Isabel Nardi '14



“This year at Friends’ Central, I chose a service that I knew absolutely nothing about. I wanted an adventure and a challenge, so I just signed up for something that I’ve never heard of before. The service that I picked was Bethesda Project/Riverbend. At these projects, I learned much about both myself and the greater Philadelphia community. I discovered that through helping others, you receive the rewarding gift of gratitude from those whom you have helped. It really makes a difference. Next time I go back, I’ll try to do even more to help the people that need it.”
-Alex Kalman, 10th grader

“My service was Habitat for Humanity which was doing interior work on a house in Philadelphia. I went into the service having no experience at all, and could definitely say I was out of my comfort zone. However, I soon felt that I was working to my full capacity: literally transforming a room, and learning some new skills.”
-Zander Bashaw, 11th grader

“I was at Broad Street and City Team Ministries and we did work such as serve food and give clothes to the people in need. It felt really good

knowing that you can help someone in need and through your work can really change someone else’s life.”
-Mark Charamella, 9th grader

“I was at the Bethesda house and Riverbend. At Bethesda we had to clean up the house that mentally ill women were living at. It was great to interact with them because it was something that I really don’t have experience in so it was really amazing and it definitely broadened my perspective on what is really important.”
-Samara Bradley, 10th grader

“I went to Broad Street Ministry and City Team Ministry for my service. The days I spent at each place were amazing. I felt like I was making an impact, and the people I met were so inspirational. Service taught me not to take things for granted, and that even people who seem like they have nothing can really have everything.”
-Kate Forrest, 11th grader



From Russian on Page 1

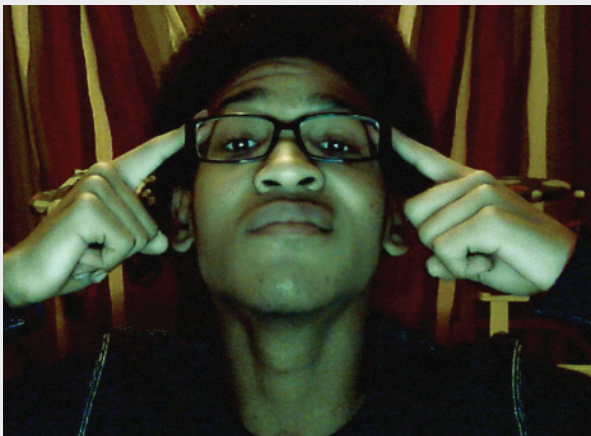
the time her host family took her to the small town of Dacha in the summertime. Dacha is the equivalent to the towns of the Jersey Shore for us, but much smaller. A typical day in Dacha for Lindsay consisted of waking up, weeding and working in the garden, going swimming with her host sister and other teenage friends, watering the plants in the garden, and then finally going into the Banya. The Banya is a Russian sauna. But it is not your typical hot sauna. In the Banya, you are not allowed to wear clothing. This is where Lindsay and her host family would shower. After washing her hair and body, Lindsay’s host mom would take a large spiritual branch and hit Lindsay on the back repeatedly with it. Now I know this may sound strange at first, but this act was actually a ritual for the Russians and represented the cleansing of the soul. The Banya was one

of Lindsay’s favorite parts of Russia because it introduced her to something so strange and unfamiliar, yet intriguing. While living in Russia for 5 months was fun, and at times unnerving, Lindsay recommends studying abroad to anyone and everyone. If you are interested in this, feel free to talk to Lindsay who would more than happily tell you about the trip and her amazing experiences in Russia.

Artist in the Spotlight

By Saoirse Hahn '15

Aqil Rogers: Rapper



Friends’ Central students are exposed to a multitude of activities throughout their time here, but one student has stood out for his interest in rap. While most of us are hanging out with friends, senior Aqil Rogers (‘13) is often busy writing lyrics. His interest in hip-hop started in eighth grade, when friendly rap battles with friends during music class sparked a newfound interest. After realizing the excitement and fun that rapping brought to an otherwise dreary day, Aqil began to dedicate more and more time to the art form. On an average weekend, Aqil says he can spend more than a few hours developing the lyrics to a song, as well as the music to accompany it. When asked about how he comes up with his lyrics, Aqil says that “a lot of the rap lyrics I write actually come from poems I’ve made...then turn I them into raps.” In writing his lyrics, Aqil tries to maintain a steady balance between content and wordplay, but knows that this is no easy task. The rappers that inspire Aqil range from Childish Gambino to BoB, giving him a wide range of music to draw upon. Aqil says that ultimately, his love of rap comes from its ability to allow him to express himself creatively, “playing with words and putting them together in a way that makes the crowd go crazy!”

Phoenix in the Phast Lane

By Max Ginsberg '14

Sam Stein: Boys' Soccer



The Varsity Boys' soccer team is having its best season since winning the Friends League Championship in 2004. This is due in large part to Senior Striker, Sam Stein. Stein, one of the three captains of the Boys soccer team, is one of the team's biggest threats. He is currently one of the team's goal scoring leaders and has led the team to the Friends League Championship game. On the field, Sam is a super dangerous and multifaceted player. He currently has twenty goals on the season and is getting closer and

closer to reaching the fifty-career goal marker (which is equivalent to 1,000 points in basketball). But Sam doesn't just score, he is also a great passer with great vision and wins tons of headers in the midfield. It is safe to say, the team goes as Sam goes. Over the course of the season, Sam has also been named Main Line Athlete of the week. Hopefully Sam and the team can bring home the championship! We wish Sam the best of luck with college soccer as he moves on from Friends' Central.

Fiona Lawson: Water Polo



The Girls Phoenix in the Phast lane athlete for this month, is senior girls' water polo player, Fiona Lawson. Fiona started the first ever Girls water polo team which is now in the middle of its second season. Fiona has been playing water polo since the sixth grade and is an avid swimmer who competitively swims on the team in the winter. Fiona is a fierce competitor and the consummate team player. Captain of the water polo team and friend of Fiona, Al-

legra Armstrong, praises Fiona when she states, "Fiona is an amazingly versatile player. If you have the ball and are under pressure from an opponent, the ideal thing to do is to pass the ball to Fiona and she will take care of the rest. She keeps a cool head under duress and somehow knows exactly what strategy to use to score." We are very happy for Fiona and the girls water polo team for completing another season and wish her the best of luck in college next year.

Artist In the Spotlight

By Sophie MacFarlane '15

Lauren Callans: Dancer



With the holidays quickly approaching, I'm sure that many of us are beginning to think about our holiday traditions. One thing that has been present in many Christmas family traditions is going to see the Nutcracker ballet. Lauren Callans, a dancer here at FCS, is actually going to be able to partake in this tradition when she dances in The Haverford School's version of the Nutcracker on December 2nd! Lauren, a star dancer, has been dancing since she was 4 years old. She dances at Radomile Academy of Dance, along with Jordyn Karliner '14, where she doesn't excel at one type of dance, but takes jazz, modern dance, ballet, pointe, lyrical and hip hop classes. Although she does many different styles of dance, she says that her favorite type of dance is jazz, because "it's the most fun, and it's not as strict as ballet; you

can be more fluid. And you get to dance to fun music!" Lauren also added that on top of all of this, she was just asked to join a dance company called Opus 2, which is a company that focuses on modern and contemporary dancing. Unbelievably, Lauren dances around 16 hours per week. She says that the key to dancing at such a high intensity with such a huge commitment level is "making sure that you really love it and are fully committed to dance. It's hard to do something so often if you're not into it! It's also really important to maintain good technique or else you will get injured." Good luck to Lauren as she continues her dancing, and good luck to her as well in the Nutcracker! If you would like to attend, it is at Haverford Boys School at 1 or 6 pm on December 2nd!

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