



# Merciette

## Mount Mercy Academy

SECOND QUARTER: 2016-2017

### Winter in Buffalo

by Megan Michalski

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When it comes to winter in Buffalo, the weather is mostly snow and cold. Although most people wish to escape the cold winters of Buffalo and spend weekends locked inside their homes, there are many more fun and exciting things to do in and around the Buffalo area.

Although it may sound like an activity for younger children, the sleigh rides at Hidden Valley Animal Park are fun for all ages. In a sleigh, pulled by two horses, you travel through the beautiful valleys and also, you are able to feed the animals. The animals on the farm include camels, cows, bulls, zebras, llamas, bison and ostriches. The animals are everything but shy and they will come up to your sled and even eat the food right out of your hands.

Downtown, at Canalside, the fairly new outdoor ice rink is open on weekdays and

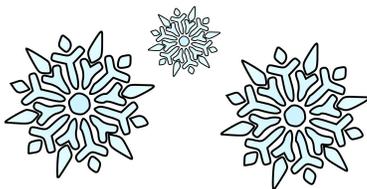
weekends. Even if you are not a skater, it is still fun to sit outside with friends and cheer them on while they skate. After skating, Tim Hortons is only about a one minute walk away.

Don't like the work of taking a sled, carrying it and walking up a big hill? No big deal! At Hidden Valley Tubing Company, there are twenty-two tubing lanes with vertical drops up to 100 feet. You can race and slide down the slopes in single snow tubes or ride along with friends in multi-person tubes. Whatever the case, Hidden Valley Tubing offers loads of fun!

Although it is inside, escape rooms have been popping up all over Buffalo. For one hour, you are locked inside of a room and you have one hour to escape by solving mysteries, puzzles and by finding clues and hidden ob-

jects inside of the room. Escape rooms are very fun and a great way to put your mystery solving skills to the test. Gaming centers are also popular in Buffalo. Places like Rocky's and Dave & Buster's are full of exciting games like go-karts, laser games, bowling and of course, arcade games. Although a night at an arcade can be pretty expensive, affordable prices are all over the website for these fun activities.

Even if being outside isn't your thing, there are still plenty of activities inside like go-karting, bowling and solving puzzles and mysteries. Outside, there are just as many fun things to do like tubing, sleigh rides, and ice skating. During the cold months of winter, Buffalo offers a variety of activities for people of all ages!



### Mercy Christmas Concert

by Grace Ippolito

Mount Mercy Academy had yet another amazing turnout at the annual Christmas Concert which took place on December 20, 2016. Mr. Kirisits, Mount Mercy's talented and dedicated music director, was proud of all of his students that participated in the concert. The concert started off with the Freshmen Chorus, then the Handbell Choir, Women's Choir, Magic Belles and finally, Pure Magic Show Choir. All of the ladies were excited to show off all of their hard work and they are ecstatic about performing in Anaheim, California this spring!

Soloists Audrey Welsby and

Sarah Brown shined in the spotlight for the night. Audrey covered "Infant Holy, Infant Lowly," by the Polish Carol and arranged by M. Brown, along with the help of the choir chimes consisting of Elizabeth Colton, Brynn Covington, Megan Cycon, Diana Henshaw, Kayleigh Mighells and Clare Smokowski. Sarah Brown also covered "White Christmas," recorded by Kelly Clarkson. All of the ladies did an amazing job and everyone in the audience was impressed.

All of the months of preparing for the concert were definitely worth it. Pure Magic has been rehearsing since August and the rest of the girls started in September.

Three to four months of singing, ringing, dancing and hard work paid off, though. The concert was a success and so were the mini shows some of the groups performed at before the concert. The girls and Mr. K are excited to see what happens next as they all prepare to compete and do well in Anaheim, California this April.





# Editorial: Mercy Girl's Guide to Donald Trump

by Allyson Pfeil

**DISCLAIMER:** This is an opinion piece and in no way reflects the views of the administration of Mount Mercy Academy.

As you all know, our 45th President (Donald Trump) was just inaugurated. His policies and personal beliefs, however, are questionable and controversial, and this has been cause for much opposition throughout the country. So, what *are* his policies and beliefs, and how do they tie in with the Five Critical Concerns of the Sisters of Mercy? Is he Catherine McAuley-approved?

## 1. To Reverence the Earth

Trump believes that climate change is a hoax perpetrated by the Chinese, despite scientific evidence that says otherwise. He also supports fracking, which is a method of gas mining that involves firing high-pressure liquid chemicals at rocks to force open cracks. This is a huge concern to the environment due to its potential to destroy local water supplies.

## 2. To Stand in Solidarity With Immigrants

Where do I begin with this one? His very first campaign speech included the following claim about Mexican immigrants: "They're bringing drugs, they're bringing crime. They're rapists." Trump then proposed the idea of building a wall on the Mexican-American border to keep out immigrants. He then claimed that he would make Mexico pay for the wall. He also promised mass deportations of undocumented immigrants instead of reforming the citizenship process to make it easier and quicker. In addition, Trump believes that the United States should not take in Syrian refugees because he believes that they are members of ISIS, which he claimed to know more about than the *generals do*, before he was even elected. That is, before he was even getting intelligence briefings.

## 3. To Practice Nonviolence

Donald Trump wants to increase the size of the military and thinks that all countries should have more nuclear weap-

ons. He also supports the use of torture (Trump wants to bring back "a hell of a lot worse than waterboarding") and hinted at invading Iraq *again* for their oil at his first press conference the day after he was sworn in. His foreign policy, he claims, puts "America first." In his inaugural speech, Trump said that he wants to renew existing alliances with foreign countries and form new ones. However, he is clearly willing to use force if he believes it necessary.

## 4. To Deepen our Response to Racism

Donald Trump praised New York City's "stop and frisk" policy, which targeted and profiled people of color by allowing the police to stop anybody on the street who they may think to be suspicious. It "just so happened" that the police thought that predominantly black and Hispanic people seemed suspicious. Trump also proposed the idea of a "Muslim registry" for American citizens and banning anybody of the Muslim faith (read: mostly Middle Eastern people) from entering the country in an attempt to lessen the chances of the U.S. being attacked by ISIS.

## 5. To Embrace our Particular Concern for Women

I've saved the worst for last. Trump has quite the reputation of being misogynistic. In 2005, Donald Trump was recorded having a conversation with Billy Bush on the set of *Access Hollywood* that contained rather explicit and unsettling stories of encounters Trump has had with women. He brags about trying to seduce a married woman, claims that he "just starts kissing them" without bothering to get consent, and says that women let him do anything to them because he's famous. After this conversation was released in October 2016, eleven women came forward with sexual assault allegations against him. He called them liars and threatened to sue them for slander, although he has no actual case (I recommend checking out [this article](#) detailing why).

Trump also faced backlash for his treatment of FOX News anchor Megyn Kelly after she asked him a question he did not like at one of the first Republican presidential debates. He said that she had "blood coming

out of her eyes...blood coming out of her, wherever" in a clear reference to the stereotype of menstruating women being overly emotional and angry. He has told female reporters that they don't know what they're talking about, that they would not have their jobs if they weren't beautiful, and even decided to attack actress Meryl Streep after she called him out during her acceptance speech at the Golden Globes. His best comeback was to call her "overrated," despite calling her one of his favorite actresses in 2015.

In short: sorry Donald, it's a "no" from Catherine.



## MERCIETTE STAFF

Shea Halpenny, *Editor*

Grace Ippolito, *Editor*

Allyson Pfeil

Alison Marabella

Mary Bala

Emily Burns

Bridget Hayes

Megan Michalski

Maggie O'Malley

Serene Alraziqi

Kyra Slaughter

Mrs. Weld, *Advisor*



## Mary's Medical Minute: New Year's Resolutions

by Mary Bala

Start the new year off right with resolutions that will benefit you. Every year people try to attain lofty goals to kick off the new year. Unfortunately, statistics show that only about eight percent of those people who set such high goals actually achieve them. Dr. Marciano, a psychologist who specializes in behavior modification and engagement, is a fan of making goals that are "SMART." This is a system, used by many doctors and teachers, that works to make your goals specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound. Making sure you follow a "SMART" plan will make it easier to keep up with your goals throughout the whole year.

A few helpful hints can make all the difference. First, it is good to make your goals specific. Saying "I want to get good grades" is very different from "I want to achieve first honors, or above a 95 average." It is important to make your goals tailored to your needs and desires. This will also help to make sure these goals are really what you want, and not set to compete with others. If you start comparing your goals to others you may get discouraged and your goals may never be reached.

Next is the measurable compo-

nent. Having a measurable goal allows you to track your progress and helps you to know when you have finally reached your goal. Knowing where you started, and where you would like to end up can help you create checkpoints, or steps of progress. When you meet these checkpoints they count as little victories, motivating and propelling you to the finish line.

The next step in the "SMART" plan is making your goals achievable or attainable. Instead of setting unrealistic goals, start small and work toward those major changes. If you set a small goal, you can achieve that and allow your momentum to lead you into achieving more and more. These little goals sure add up! These goals should push you to reach them, but not too much to the point of giving up. To help with this step, you can look to your family and friends for support. Any goal is easier to reach when you have a strong support system behind you. It's important to remember that you're never alone.

Next is the relevancy of your goals to your life course. When you construct new goals it is important to make sure they align with previous and future goals. Having goals that line up with your current, and long term goals keeps you on a single track to success. Creating con-

flicting goals will only strain the process, and pull you in different directions making it harder to complete them all.

Finally, goals need to be time-bound. This means you need to set a date for the completion of your goal. This step is very important because without a time frame, there is no urgency. If you tell yourself you have all the time in the world, you will never start working to that goal, or it will come to you at a much slower pace. With that being said it needs to be reasonable, expecting to lose 20 pounds in a week is simply impossible. Make sure to give yourself enough time where you don't feel stressed out because you have to much to complete in such little time.

Of course, these are just a few tips, and success does not always mean following them all. When it comes to meeting goals we all work at different paces and often our goals differ from those of our friends and family. Most importantly, you need to do what you're comfortable with and what works for you. Remember, if it doesn't work out the first time, don't give up! You can always re-evaluate your plan and start from scratch. Hard work and determination will ultimately triumph in the end.



by Emily Burns

## Study Tips

Many Mount Mercy students are preparing for midterms and regents and they may feel a lot of stress with approaching the second semester. They may feel like they have a heavy workload and a lot of pressure to get their grades up or keep them up. While some stress can be good to keep students motivated, too much stress can leave them feeling overwhelmed. Some good ways for students to handle stress is by stepping back to look at the big picture of what they have to do, prioritizing the things they need to get done, and making time for themselves to



relax.

First, it is very important for you to step back and look at what you need to get done, so you can sort out your thoughts and avoid getting overwhelmed. Next, you should make a list of everything you need to get done, and prioritize what you need to do, so you can get the most important work done first. Finally, it is important for you to make time in your day to relax, so you are not becoming overworked. While school is very important and should be a top priority, students' mental health should also be a top priority, so it is important you take time to unwind.

When it comes to studying for

exams and tests, it is important for students to figure out what works best for them, whether it is making flashcards, a study guide, creating study groups, or just reviewing notes to remember them. It is hard for students to succeed in school without a lot of time to study, and making sure they are comfortable with the material in class. Above all, it is important to remember that while you may feel stressed now, you will be able to get done what you need to get done, and everything will work out at the end of the day.

*"The greatest weapon against stress is our ability to choose one thought over the other" -William James*

## Nancy Reagan: More Than a First Lady

by Alison Marabella

While people around the United States and the world recognize Nancy Reagan as the widow and former First Lady to Ronald Reagan, she was quite the phenomenon of her day. Her childhood story was unique. She was given the name “Anne Francis Robbins”. Anne was nicknamed “Nancy” from her youngest days. Once Nancy’s father left the marriage with her mother, she went to live with her aunt and uncle in Maryland. Nancy’s mother married Loyal Davis, a neurosurgeon from Chicago and Loyal who eventually adopted Nancy and gave her the last name Davis. Hence, her official name became Nancy Davis Reagan.

Although the 1940’s may or may not seem too long ago, based on facts, the world was much different than it is today. The roles of women today were non-existent in the 40’s. Back then, it was rare to hear of a female attending college let alone earning a degree. But Nancy Reagan threw ordinary to the wind. She graduated from Smith College in 1943 with a bachelor of arts degree.

She found her first acting job through her mother’s friend. She landed a nonspeaking role in the production *Ramshackle Inn*. Later on in 1949, she ad-

vanced her career by signing a seven year contract with MGM Studios. Even though she made a big step with MGM Studios, she slowly worked her way up to playing major roles. Eventually, she was blacklisted and some warned she might be a communist sympathizer. The original blacklist threat was for another woman with the same name as her. She contacted Ronald Reagan, as he was involved in the entertainment industry, to help straighten things out. It was at that moment of time that the pair fell for each other. They were married on March 4, 1952.

Ronald Reagan served as governor of California for two terms before making a run for the White House. For some time, Nancy refused to take on the role of being the next possible First Lady, but eventually gave in. In 1980, Ronald Reagan won the elected office of President of the United States after losing his first election race to Gerald Ford.

Once Nancy Reagan officially became the First Lady, she received negativity from the press. She was accused of not caring about people suffering from the recession as she remodeled different parts of the White House. However, she left a legacy to the American people when she

started her “Just Say No” campaign. The campaign was aimed to help eliminate drug abuse. Ronald Reagan was successful in signing the “National Crusade for a Drug Free America” act. Throughout Nancy Reagan’s efforts, she visited rehabilitation and prevention centers.

Once the presidency was through, Ronald and Nancy Reagan moved to Santa Barbara, California. They spent much of their time dedicated to the Nancy Reagan Foundation which was aimed towards preventing after-school drug use.

While Nancy Reagan outlived her husband, her legacy is too strong to be surpassed. She passed away on March 6, 2016. Nancy was laid to rest beside her husband at the Reagan Presidential Library.

Nancy Reagan’s life served as an inspiration that women can do anything they put their mind to. She carried the wit to state her opinion no matter what the opposition said. Individuals around the world remember her as the wife and First Lady to Ronald Reagan, the 40th President of the United States. For others, it is her fierce personality and strong will.

## Dear Catherine

*Q: Dear Catherine, I am just beginning to apply for jobs. However, I have applied at numerous places and have not heard anything back from the places I applied to. I am worried that I did something wrong or that no one will hire me because of my lack of experience. I desperately need money so I need a job ASAP. What should I do? -Another Broke Girl*

A: Dear Another Broke Girl, I completely understand! I am recently applying to jobs myself and it is not an easy task. I also have never had a job before so I do not have a lot of experience. However, you know that at Mercy we are required to complete service every year. Use that to your advantage! On your applications, try to mention that you have completed “x amount of hours” and mention that you can provide documentation of all your work. However, my number one tip is this: do not get discouraged. A friend of mine waited almost two months until the Tops she applied to called her for her interview. I understand the desperate need for money, but you just have to be patient. Just because no

one has called you yet *does not* mean no one will. Just hang in there and I wish you the best of luck in the job search!

*Q: Dear Catherine, I recently met this really nice boy at a football game. He was super nice to me and we have been chatting for a month now. I have a small crush on him and was trying to find a way to tell him. However, before I could, my friend began telling me about a boy she had a crush on. It was the same guy! I didn’t know what to say to her. I’m still not sure what to do! I am a little bit mad at her, but at the same time I know it’s not her fault. I don’t know what to say to this guy or to my friend. What should I do? -Love Triangle*

A: Dear Love Triangle, boys are confusing, especially at this age. Teenagers are confusing period. The first thing I must say is: DO NOT BE MAD AT YOUR FRIEND. Never ever fight with your friends over a boy (unless she purposely does it to be mean; then you stop talking to that person). She didn’t know it was the same guy; like you said, it wasn’t her fault.

Do not be angry at your friend for something she was not aware of. Secondly, get that boy out of your life. Obviously, if he is willing to have conversations (which I am assuming include some flirting) with two different girls at the same time, he probably isn’t completely interested in either of you. If someone cannot be completely interested in you and *only you*, do not keep that boy in your life. What should you do about all this? Tell your friend and stop talking to that boy. We are all young. We will all have different partners come in and out of our lives. It happens. Some of us might even choose to not get married at *all*. At the end of the day, it is your life. You choose what to do. But you do not have to choose now. Focus on Chem homework and telling all your friends the funny joke Miss Luhr told your class. Boys aren’t important right now. Your friends, family, and your education are. Go make things right with your friend and forget about that boy!