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# Lion Chronicles

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## #BlackLivesMatter

*By Kayla Woods (8th)*

Let me get this straight, America.

You terrorize and enslave my race for over 300 years.

You ban us from our rights and privileges for the next 100 years.

You fill two thirds of your prison cells with us.

You've disenfranchised people of color from voting for 240 years.

Equality feels like oppression.

But yet and still, you're angry when we don't applaud your history?

Black Lives Matter is an international activist movement, originating in the African-American community, that campaigns against violence and systematic racism

towards the African American people. BLM regularly protests police killings of black people, broader issues regarding police brutality, racial profiling, and racial inequality in the US criminal justice system.



It is astounding how you can watch someone be murdered and choose neutrality each and every time. Our society's voyeuristic obsession with black death and tragedy is made more apparent everyday. And so now, I would like to remind you that IF YOU ARE NEUTRAL IN SITUATIONS OF INJUSTICE YOU HAVE CHOSEN THE SIDE

OF THE OPPRESSOR, as stated by Desmond TuTu.

A white man shot four police officers, killed one, and is still alive. But Laquan. But Sandra. But Mike. But Rekia. But Matthew. But Tamir. But Eric. But Trayvon. Emmett. But Philando. But Oscar. But Jonathan. But Kimani. But Michael. But Amadou.

Imagine how it must feel to lose someone you love, have a grand jury rule that their life isn't worth a trial. Imagine how dehumanizing that is to someone. As an African American, how do I live in a world that holds so much disdain for me?

At this point and time, the answer is that, you simply can't.

## Newsflash: This is Reality

*By Sinclair Knight (8th)*

And suddenly – the Donald Trump “becoming president” jokes aren’t funny anymore.

I’d say it was a bit of a bitter irony, if I wasn’t as angry as I am now. We the people – the people of America; the land of the free and the home of the brave – act as if you didn’t see this coming. We were in denial for so long – blinded by our own ignorance – that

we had forgotten that...

Wait, what did we forget?

That Caucasians who still don’t know their privilege exist. That ignorant African Americans who forgot where they came from – where they started from in the first place – still exist.

Remember that old Caucasian lady you saw at Walmart who nearly ran over your foot, then when you nicely confronted her

about it grimaced at you and turned the other cheek?

News flash: she – they, still exist! They didn’t just up and disappear or suddenly have a nice change of heart.

We all knew what the outcome of this election was going to be – now it’s time to face the facts and move on. What will wishing and waiting for him to fail do? Last time I checked we’re all Americans, so if he fails – we fail.

## Lemonade Becomes a Cultural Phenomenon

*By Briana Claiborne (8th)*

Two words. Beyonce. Lemonade.

On April 23, 2016, Beyonce released one of the best visual albums this year. We know everyone’s more than accustomed to hearing *okay, ladies, now let’s get in formation* from the song 'Formation' being performed at the 50th Super Bowl. Not only is she absolutely amazingly talented, *and* one of the most influential African American artist of the year, crushing four years worth of "illuminati"

callings in one song, Beyonce is and has always been a big inspiration for young African American women. She has for years showed us that you don’t have to be light skinned or to fit the mold of what society wants African American women to be like or act like or look like.

During the age of Lemonade, she has continuously made a statement on black love, black power, and black lives. In her song, Freedom, ft Kendrick Lamar, many of the lyrics touch down on police bru-

tality, black oppression, and the importance of the black love and black power that followed. Throughout the song, the two take on systemic racism and injustices dating all the way to slavery in the United States. Beyoncé’s message remains clear: "We will overcome, and freedom from oppression and social ills like racism is within reach."

Amazing verses from the song as follows, these lyrics can be interpreted in any way or have whatever meaning to you: *Freedom! Freedom! I can't move /*

*Freedom, cut me loose! / Singin', freedom! Freedom! Where are you? / 'Cause I need freedom too!*

*Hey! I'ma keep runnin' / 'Cause a winner don't quit on themselves*

*I'ma riot, I'ma riot through your borders / Call me bulletproof*

The theme behind this song is liberation and self empowerment. It encourages action and aims to prompt people to take control of their futures, which is an incredibly powerful message for young people to hear.

Even though the whole song was incredible, my

personal favorite part was in the ending when she finishes the song with a simple message from Hattie White, Jay-Z's grandmother, which says:

*"I had my ups and downs, but I always find the inner strength to cool myself off. I was served lemons, but I made lemonade."*

## Chef Melody Conner: A Love of Cooking

*By Alia Durham (8th)*

**Alia:** Ms. Conner, when did your interest in cooking start?

**Conner:** My interest in cooking started when I was five years old.

**Alia:** What influenced you to start a middle school culinary club?

**Conner:** Well I wanted to start a middle school culinary club to create disciplined students.

**Alia:** What goals do you have for the culinary club?

**Conner:** My goals for the culinary club is to foster the same love of cooking that I have.

**Alia:** How do you believe the culinary club can help the school?

**Conner:** I believe that the culinary club can help the



school by creating different interests in activities—more than just sports.

**Alia:** How does the culinary club influence the young chef's grades?

**Conner:** The young chefs

have to govern themselves with discipline in the kitchen and in class. If they do this then their grades will increase from good behavior and discipline.

**Alia:** What opportunities have you been given through your love of cooking and do you think that the culinary club could get the same opportunities?

**Conner:** I have been offered auditions on the Food Network, I've cooked for celebrities, and I've spread love by feeding the masses. I think that the culinary club would be offered the same opportunities that I have been offered if they continue to work hard and practice the things they are learning.

## Life Hacks

By Briana Claiborne (8th)

Life can be filled with simple, small annoyances, but here are some hacks for your life that will make your day a little bit easier.

1. When you're almost late for school and you just can't squeeze out the last little bit of toothpaste with your hands, instead of coming to school with bad breath, just use a bobby pin. Place the bobby pin on the end of the tube and slide it forward



and it should push out the last little bits so you can come to school fresh... at least in your mouth.

2. To keep your phone charger in shape, use the spring from an old clicky pen on the ends of it and it

should stop it from bending and breaking too fast.

3. Who would think to look in an empty Chapstick tube for your lunch money?

4. Don't think your friend will return something you let them borrow? Just take a picture of them with the item to keep track of your stuff.

5. Come to school with a pencil and paper so you can do your work maybe!

## Featured Poet: Briana Claiborne

**In time.**

in time you will be fine.

years will come and you will be magnificent

in time you will be fine

the stars are working in your favor

your ethereal light will forever be a

memoir

in time you will be fine

the earth is making flowers in your prosperity

in light-years things will fall into place in your heart

## Boys Basketball: A New Start

By *Alia Durham & Corin Brown (8th)*

Our newspaper staff sat down with Mr. Barlow, our new boys basketball coach, to ask him about his experience coaching and hopes for the team.

**Alia:** Mr. Barlow, what influenced you to coach a middle school basketball team?

**Barlow:** The love of the game, the desire to compete, and the opportunity to work with young men.

**Alia:** What goals do you have for the boys basketball team?

**Barlow:** To go undefeated at home, to be one of the most defended basketball teams, and for all my boys to have a GPA of 3.0 or higher.

**Alia:** Do you think your team will make it to the playoffs?

**Barlow:** Yes, because we are going to be competitive



and to enter every game with an expectation to WIN!

**Alia:** How do you intend

to improve the team from last year?

**Barlow:** I intend to improve the team by having more individual games, work out and practice more often, and increase our school spirit.

**Alia:** How does the boys basketball team influence the student's grades?

**Barlow:** They have to study hard, monitor grades through weekly reports, and the teachers and staff can monitor their reports through open policy. Their study hall time allows them the opportunity to catch up on homework and stay on top of their academics.

*If you are interested in writing for the Newspaper Club, please see Ms. Thomas in the media center. Creative individuals who have a passion for writing, current events, and thinking big are welcome to apply.*

*We are looking for artists! If you would like your poetry, artwork, or comic strips to be featured in the newspaper, please see any member of the Newspaper Staff or Ms. Thomas with your work. All work must be original.*