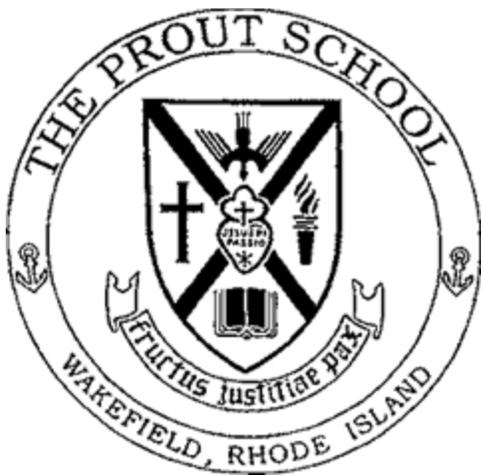


# THE CRUSADER CHRONICLE

October 2014

Volume V, Issue I



The view from Beavertail State Park Photo. Taken by Molly Marrinan on Mrs. McLaughlin's Oceanography field trip.

## The Crusader Chronicle: Reimagined

As we begin a new year, *The Crusader Chronicle* has begun a new volume. This time, we're printing on newsprint. We feel that newsprint creates a more satisfying and traditional newspaper. We are excited to hear your suggestions as we experiment with our new format. *The Crusader Chronicle* belongs to the student body, and all input is welcome.

## Spirit Week

### Returns

Kiley Knott

Ah, yes. The best time of the school year is back: when uniforms are a no-go and homework is scarce – Spirit Week. For the Seniors, it's the last chance to pull their class together and outshine everyone else, or die trying! (Maybe not die, but there will be a dramatic display of tears.) For Freshmen, however, Spirit Week is something new.

Do people really dress up for Spirit Week?

Yes. Yes, they do. Some even go to extreme lengths to win the daily costume contest and earn points for their class. At the end of each day, the school gathers to partake in events, ranging from the Lip Sync Dance Competition (in which classes dance their hearts out to a mix of songs) to Minute to Win It (students have 60 seconds to complete challenging tasks for points). The end of the week is when the pressure mounts; Friday is the infamous Battle of the Classes. All students are clad in their class color, screaming and jumping as their classmates go head to head and face to pie.

The class with the most points at the end of the week is declared the winner of Spirit Week and will live on in glory until the usual classes start up again on Monday. Just kidding. The winners will very likely remember that day for the rest of their lives. Sadly, those who come in second, third, and fourth place do not get much honor, but they will have another chance next year.

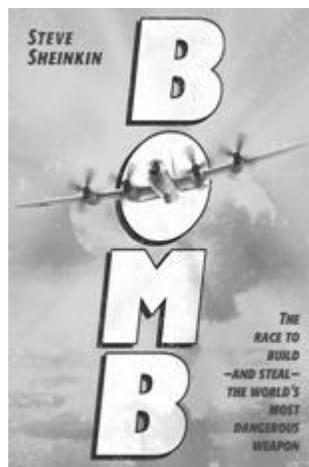
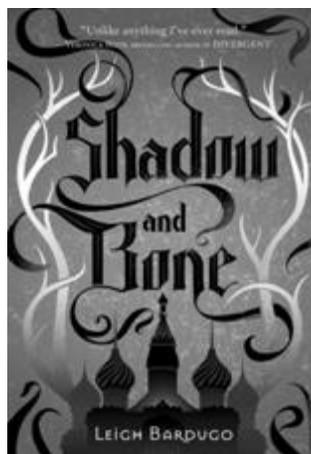
## Rhode Island Teen Book Award

Sarah Simkevich

The Rhode Island Teen Book Award was established in 2001 to encourage teens to read more books, and also to vote for their favorites. The Prout School joined in 2006 and has been participating ever since. The nominated books are chosen by a committee of Rhode Island librarians and teachers. Ms. Peloquin-Burns, our librarian, is a part of the committee. She attends monthly meetings to discuss the 60 or more different books that are being considered. In the end, the committee chooses 20 eligible books. Over the past few years Prout has been among the top three voting sites

gathering the most votes.

Ballots will be available in the library so students can vote for their favorite book. In order to vote, you have to have read three or more of the nominated titles. Some teachers even give extra credit for the people who vote! After Christmas break, be sure to stop by the library and pick up a ballot. Voting ends the week after February break. The Prout School hopes to again be the school that submits the most votes! If you have questions, Ms. Peloquin-Burns has more information. Get reading!



Books like *Shadow and Bone*, *Bomb*, *Life in Outer Space*, and *Wonder Show* have all been nominated. The full list and information are available online.

## This Issue's Quotation:

Alicia Couture

Helen Keller was known as an author and an advocate for the handicapped. She was born in Alabama and as an infant was struck with an illness that left her blind and deaf. It is believed that this illness was scarlet fever. Her parents found her a teacher whom she looked up to. This teacher, Anne, Sullivan, showed her how to communicate with the world. As an adult, Keller traveled the world, campaigned for civil rights and world peace, and published many books and essays. She became an inspiration to everyone in her lifetime through her accomplishments, motivation, and determination.

**“The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched - they must be felt with the heart.” – Helen Keller**



Helen Keller with Anne Sullivan. Photo from Wikipedia.

## Transfer Students: An Interview with Jim Yang

Kane Hall

Jim Yang is one of the a number of international students who are currently enrolled at Prout.

Q: Where did you live before coming to the United States?

A: Guangzhou, China

Q: What has your experience been like while you have been in the United States?

A: American society is much different from China's. Things like language and living environments are different.

Q: What interests you most about America?

A: The food. My host family likes to have Italian food. Every night the food is different and delicious.

Q: There are several other students at Prout from outside the United States. Were you familiar with any of them before the first day of school?

A: No.

Q: At Prout, Spirit Week is fun and an important part of the school year. Are you excited about Spirit Week?

A: Yes. I like that you wear different clothes and they differ based on what grade you are in.

Q: Besides Spirit Week, another important event in October is Halloween. However, Halloween is mostly an American tradition. Did you have anything like Halloween in your home country?

A: People in China know about Halloween, but they won't have a holiday for it.

Q: Do you like any popular American movies or television shows?

A: X-men.

## Music Reviews

Liam O'Donnell

Ariana Grande - *My Everything* – August 2014

*My Everything* is the Nickelodeon star's second album in 12 months and shows her commitment to a legitimate singing career. Last year's *Yours Truly* set expectations for this next album very high. Her successful mixture of soul and pop led people to label her as the best talent in this area since the late Whitney Houston.

This time around, she veers away from soul and goes to a blend of pop, EDM, and hip-hop. This proves to be both a gift and a curse as her new sound has caused her to kill the charts with singles such as "Problem" featuring Iggy Azalea and "Bang Bang" featuring Jessie J and Nicki Minaj. Her new sound results in an album lacking depth as a whole. Her bubblegum subject matter gets old very quickly, and many of the tracks feel like throwaways and fillers with random guest rappers.

The highlight of the album is the song "Best Mistake," performed her new boyfriend Big Sean. The chemistry between them feels very natural, which creates a charismatic love song.

Overall, Grande's second album is a venture away from her strengths, which makes the listener forget what makes her so special. Hopefully, this will prove to be just a sophomore slump, and she can fulfill the immense potential she certainly has.

The album cover for "X" by Ed Sheeran.



## Biggest Show, Smallest State

Kiley Knott

The best part about Halloween is dressing up and getting free candy – everybody knows that. Yet Halloween is only one day of the year. That is, for everyone who doesn't dress up in costumes for a living. On November 1st and 2nd Rhode Island is holding its third annual Comic-Con in Providence; it's expected to be bigger and better than all the years before – with guests such as William Shatner, George Takei, Mark Sheppard, Colin Baker, Veronica Taylor, Vic Mignogna, and many, many more!

If you love comics, TV and movies, and famous people, conventions are the right place to go. If you're looking for an awesome weekend, check out Rhode Island Comic Con. See more information at [www.ricomicon.com](http://www.ricomicon.com).

## Cross Country: 222

Matt Marasco

It is no secret that high school sports are competitive or that teams look for an edge whenever and wherever they can find one. High school athletes and coaches commonly think of being more prepared than "the other guys" when the season starts. Now most of Prout's sports programs have a pre-season program: off-ice training for hockey, hitting over the winter for baseball, and captain's practices for soccer and basketball. The cross country team takes the off season to a whole new level with the 222 Challenge. The idea is simple – run 222 miles over summer break so that when official practices start in August, everyone will already be well conditioned. This year, eight Prout athletes completed the challenge: Sam Chretien, Johnny Eckel, Courtney Moffitt, Evan and Collin Wessman, Jacob McConnell, Ryan King, and Ailsa Lehrach.

The 222 Challenge has had a noticeable effect on the Prout cross country team over the years, and the numbers show it. The year before the challenge was implemented, the team was 1-8-1. Their record jumped to 4-6 the year after the challenge was first completed and has continued to climb every year since. This year's team should pan out to have one of the best records over all. They currently sit at 8-2, and considering the 8 athletes who completed the challenge, we will probably see great results during the rest of the season.



Runners who completed the 222 challenge in 2014. From left to right, Jacob McConnell, Evan Wessman, Sam Chretien, Johnny Eckel, Ryan King, and Collin Wessman. Not pictured, Courtney Moffitt and Ailsa Lehrach. Photo by Mr. Edmonds, head coach.



Ed Sheeran – *X* (multiply) – June 2014

On his first production in three years, the British singer comes back with a more pop/hip-hop sound than his debut *+*. This album switches some of the acoustic and folk composition for R&B ballads and mainstream pop beats. That's not to say Sheeran has taken a turn for the worse. This record is still full of the bombastic romantic afflictions that made him a worldwide star over night. If anything, *X* is even more driven by the effects of love – especially the negative ones. Sheeran is simply exploring a new, darker sound that better captures harsh feelings, like heartbreak and isolation.

## Movie Previews

***St. Vincent*** – October 24, 2014 – PG13

Mike Kabai

Two words: Bill. Murray. It doesn't matter that *St. Vincent* is another generic raunchy film based on an unlikely friendship between two polar opposites. It doesn't matter that this sub-genre has been done to death in Hollywood (*Bad Words*, *We're the Millers*, and *Ted* to name a few). The film is about an old curmudgeon with questionable-at-best ethics, and an innocent, naïve boy who partner up to experience life from each other's perspectives. Since the movie poster has Bill Murray's name in big, bold letters, everyone should throw their money at this film. *St. Vincent* hits theaters October 24.

***Rudderless*** – October 17, 2014 – R

Mike Kabai

Struggling to cope with the death of his son, Sam sinks deep into depression until he discovers something special that his son left behind: a box of self-composed music and lyrics. Seizing the opportunity to cheer himself up, Sam forms a band to show the world his son's musical talents. Billy Crudup and Selena Gomez both star in this comedy-drama. In theaters now, this film is rated R for adult content and language.

***Fury*** – October 17, 2014 – R

Amanda Precopio

*Fury* is in theaters now and stars Brad Pitt, Shia LaBeouf, and Logan Lerman. The film follows an American tank crew during World War II. Brad Pitt plays the commander of the tank, and his new assistant, Logan Lerman, is a frightened, timid, young soldier. Lerman experiences the struggles of war and learns about the men fighting beside him. Although the film is centered on a small group of men, it touches on larger themes. The internal conflict of the soldier is explored, and the military commander is scrutinized as a position of prestige and duty. In truth, the presence of Brad Pitt seems to be the film's greatest feature, assuming that a film containing demanding situations will demand an actor of equal caliber. This film is rated R for violence and language.



Brad Pitt in *Fury*. (IMDB)

***The Best of Me*** – October 17, 2014 – PG13

Amanda Precopio

*The Best of Me* is another Nicholas Sparks film in theaters now. It stars James Marsden (Lon Hammond in *The Notebook*), Michelle Monaghan, Liana Liberato, and Luke Bracey. This plot is very similar to other Nicholas Spark movies. It is told in flashback, like *The Notebook*, depicting the love story, of course. Amanda is from a wealthy family, and her dad disapproves of the man she is dating. This is much like *Endless Love*, *The Notebook*, *The Last Song*, and probably many more. Like *The Notebook*, the two characters lose their love and grow older without each other. But in this movie, Dawson has a near-death experience and then realizes that he needs Amanda in his life. This plot has been done many times and, frankly, grows tiresome when the viewer can predict the ending of the movie within the first five minutes. It will most likely not sell well.



Bill Murray in *St. Vincent*. Taken from IMDB.



Michelle Monaghan and James Marsden in *Best of Me*. Taken from IMBD.

## Book Review:

### *John Dies at the End*

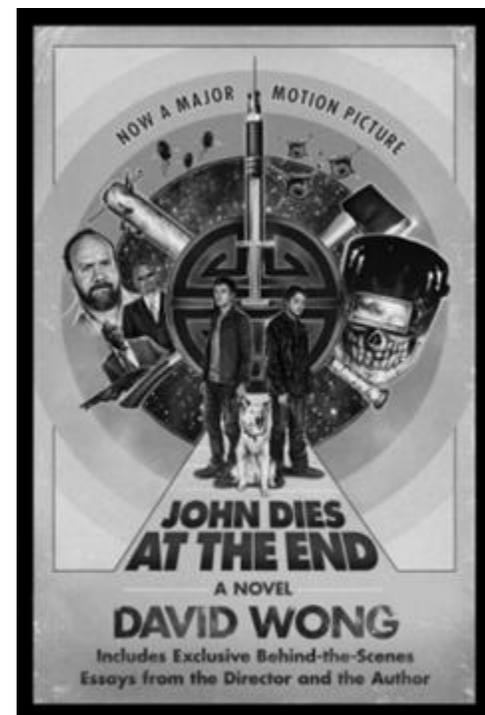
Chris Joseph

*John Dies at the End*, written by David Wong, was published independently in 2010. Wong is credited as the novel's author, and is also the novel's main character, but in reality he does not exist. Jason Pargin, Illinois native and editor of pop culture site Cracked.com, invented Wong and essentially assumed his identity during the conception of this novel, apparently for the purpose of separating this work of fiction from his large catalogue of internet blogs.

The novel's Wong has a fascination with the supernatural. What's more disturbing is that the supernatural seems to have a fascination with him. Satisfied with investigating small time paranormalities, Wong and his friend John are soon jolted out of their routine by something much more complicated – and unfortunately personal – than any haunt they've encountered before.

It should be established immediately that this is not an average novel. That should be clear from the title, which is literally a spoiler. The book, however, is so unpredictable that this mild spoiler will not bother the reader. Wong has created an amalgamation: a complicated science-fiction story that uses the language of happy internet humor – a goofy, charming friendship set in an atmosphere of suspense. At the risk of being nonsensical, Wong's story is instead carried out with laser beam precision. Although there are many moving parts, Wong is careful to keep them untangled.

In *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*, Douglas Adams successfully blends humor and science fiction. Similarly, in *John Dies at the End*, David Wong seamlessly combines horror and humor. When it's funny, it's hilarious; when it's scary, it's terrifying. Wong's tactics are varied, but the result is always brilliant.



# Halloween

## Halloween Festivities

*Catie Johnson*

In Rhode Island, there are many things to do during the Halloween season. Corn mazes and hay rides spring up all over the state, and jack-o-lanterns are aplenty. Of course, there is no shortage of haunted places filled with ghosts and goblins.

There are a great many farms in Rhode Island that offer hay rides, hay bale, corn mazes, apple picking, and pumpkin patches to find the ideal pumpkin in this time of year. Farm in Warwick, Escobar Farm in Portsmouth, Sweet Berry Farm in Middletown, Adam's Farm in Cumberland, Confreda Greenhouses and Farms in Foster, Clark Farms in Wakefield, and Riverside Farm in Charlestown, are just a few.

Some other Halloween-themed festivities include the *Trails of Terror* in Wakefield at Highland Farm. Visitors can take a haunted hay ride, or a self-guided walk on a haunted trail. There is also the *Factory of Terror* in nearby Fall River, MA. It has a walkthrough in an old abandoned factory in the historic mill district. In Providence, the *Providence Ghost Tours* are lantern-led tours through the darkened streets of the historic East Side that, according to providenceghosttour.com, include "ghost stories that will be sure to send a chill down your back." *The Fortress of Nightmares* is a walkthrough of dark tunnels in Fort Adams in Newport on the weekends of October 10-11, 17-18, and 24-26.

Also in Newport is the not-so-frightening *Newport Ballard Park Annual Pumpkin Tour* which includes a trail of over 1,000 lit jack-o-lanterns. Similarly, the *Jack-o-Lantern Spectacular* hosted annually at the Roger Williams Park Zoo runs from October 2<sup>nd</sup> to November 2<sup>nd</sup> from 6 pm to 10 pm every night. It includes over 5,000 jack-o-lanterns created by artists from Passion for Pumpkins. This year's theme is "Jack-o-Lanterns from A to Z" and will include scenes like D for Dinosaurs and J for Jungle.



## How to Choose a Costume

*Amanda Precopio*

Choosing a costume for Halloween can be stressful. For many, choosing a certain costume can be a way to show enthusiasm. However, if you have difficulty thinking of a costume, fear not. Here are some steps that might help you to choose the perfect costume.

STEP 1- Choose a theme. Your theme can be a character from TV, movies, or books. Most people find it difficult to narrow their interests down to a single costume, so this is often the toughest part. It's important to remember that too much hesitation can ruin your plans entirely, and you've always got next year.

STEP 2- Consider what materials will be needed to achieve this wonderful costume. Also, keep in mind how much money this will set you back. You can shop at thrift; used clothes usually have more character anyway.

STEP 3- Gather your materials and throw them all together in a creative way. This is usually the fun part.

If you can't make it past step 1, Google Search is one way to find a costume. Just search "Popular Costumes in 2014" and then just choose! And if you are *still* struggling to find the perfect costume, take a trip to the local retail or party store and pick out whatever costume looks the least tacky. Have a great Halloween!

### *The Crusader Chronicle.*

#### Contributors and Staff

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Chris Joseph  
Liam O'Donnell  
Mary-Elizabeth Simkevich

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Mike Kabai

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Courtney Cooper  
Amanda Precopio  
Matt Marasco

#### Freshmen

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Kane Hall  
Ericka Kotkowski  
Sarah Simkevich

THE BATTLE OF THE CLASSES IS COMING. YOU CAN USE THIS GRID TO KEEP TRACK OF THE ACTION AND WATCH THE SCORES IN REAL TIME.

A CLASS GAINS 50 POINTS FOR SCORING 1<sup>ST</sup> PLACE IN AN EVENT. THE 2<sup>ND</sup> PLACE FINISHER RECEIVES 30 POINTS. 3<sup>RD</sup> AND 4<sup>TH</sup> RECEIVE NO POINTS.

# BATTLE OF THE CLASSES: SCOREBOARD

	FRESHMEN	SOPHOMORES	JUNIORS	SENIORS
DIZZY BAT				
WHEELBARROW RACE				
SUMO WRESTLING				
THREE LEGGED RACE				
PIE EATING CONTEST				
SUMO WRESTLING				
TRICYCLE RACE				
FASHION SHOW				
TUG OF WAR				
TOTAL				