

MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE



Dana Blackhurst made questionable calls as a referee/player in the last Faculty-Student game.

Dana, The Cheater.

MITCH CLAXTON

GREENVILLE, SC - There are always different scandals in sports. However, one exists that is worse than them all: Mr. Dana Blackhurst. He is a crazy and terrible person who likes the Ohio State Buckeyes. This scandal began on a sunny day in Greenville, S.C. The birds were chirping and the grass was perfect. On that day, Mr. Blackhurst was ready to cheat the student team, the Golden Knights, out of a win in a faculty football game.

The Golden Knights were ready for a fight. The faculty team, led by Mr. Blackhurst, was ready to bend the rules to beat the kids for the first time ever. It was 28-14 at halftime and Mr. Dana thought he had the win this time around. He was celebrating and having so much fun, but the Knights had something up their sleeves.

The team's coach, Mitchell Claxton, told himself to start running the ball as much as he could. When Claxton heard his own words, his face lit up. In just two plays, Claxton ran for a full field touchdown. The score was 21-28. Then Dana they threw the ball and Claxton cleanly picked it off. However, Mr. Dana called pass interference and it was called back! The very next play he threw a touchdown to Cheerio and the score was 35-21.

The offense for the Knights were ready for another touchdown and Mitchell delivered it to Hollis Coleman but wait! Surprise, surprise Dana called another foul. The Golden Knights were frustrated but carried on. Claxton took off and dove and scored another touchdown. But wait! Yet another bologna call! Mr. Dana said Mitchell was out of bounds. The Knights lined up again and Mitchell threw it up to Bailey for a touchdown. Mr. Dana could not find a crazy penalty for this touchdown.

The score was 28-35 with barely any time left. Mr. Dana goes up for the pass and it is picked off but there is ANOTHER flag, "pass interference" on Bailey. This is crazy! Dana is a cheater and people are blind to it! Thankfully, Dana threw another pick and with 1 second left Claxton threw a touchdown! And that is how the Golden Knights overcame Mr. Danas cheating ways.



SpaceX's Falcon 9 rocket sits ready at Launch Complex 39A at NASA's Kennedy Space Center with a Dragon Space Capsule attached to its top.

Upstate Companies Helped Build SpaceX's New Capsule

VALESHKA DIAMOND

MERRITT ISLAND, FL - On December 6, 2020, SpaceX launched their 100th successful Falcon 9 rocket with a Dragon Space Cargo Capsule attached. SpaceX is located in Hawthorne, California. SpaceX is constantly improving and developing new technology to make human space exploration beyond the moon possible. Soon, they will produce the next generation of fully reusable launch vehicles. These vehicles will be the most powerful ever built, possibly being capable of carrying humans to Mars!

SpaceX was founded in July in 2002 by Elon Musk. The goal he had and still has is to reduce the cost of space transportation and to colonize Mars. In 2024, SpaceX wants to send astronauts the 140 million miles to Mars. When I interviewed my father, who consults for a company that works with SpaceX about his thoughts about the idea of going to Mars, he said, "It's so interesting how they are developing a spacecraft to travel to Mars; we currently don't have the capability, but SpaceX is constantly researching and developing new technology to help us survive there." My dad can't tell me the name of the company because it's "confidential" information. I was apprised by my father, Douglas Diamond, that "There are many manufacturing companies located here in South Carolina working alongside aerospace research companies to develop new

advanced materials for airplanes, drones, satellites and even future space travel."

One of the many advanced materials that is being developed in South Carolina for satellites and spacecrafts is a unique form of fiberglass. Fiberglass is a material that has many special properties that are well suited for the extreme and volatile conditions that a space craft endures to reach outer-space. Fiberglass, if you didn't know, is hot liquid glass forced through a tiny hole and is cooled to form a glass thread. It was discovered during World War II to replace wood in airplanes. Today, it is found in items that we use every day from smartphones to computers to cars. The many characteristics of fiberglass materials are the following: Very light, extremely strong, corrosive free, chemical resistant, electrically insulated and thermal insulator. Fun Fact - an interesting example of the use of fiberglass is it used in stealth aircrafts to obscure them from enemy radar.

Although it seems that the idea of traveling to Mars is more science fiction than reality, many people are in fact working hard to make this a reality. And in the process of making this a possibility we are benefitting from products in our everyday lives that are being created to make space travel safer and faster in the near future.

TECHNOLOGY

Haptic Feedback Technology

The Future of Gaming

MAKSIM DIAMOND

GREENVILLE, SC - Virtual reality gaming systems used to be a concept, a dream of video game players in years past. Those gamers had to placate their need for more realistic gaming with just a simple rumble in a controller. However, today, virtual reality is no longer obscured from the general public. It is now a very real part of the tech world. The general public is becoming acquainted with this type of technology and using it with video games. Virtual reality immerses the player in a 360-degree 3D world of images or environment that the player can interact within a very realistic way. The player can actually appear to be moving things, touching things, or interacting with objects in this 3D world. Even though these objects appear real, no other senses are involved. There are no smells, tastes, or actual touches. However, that is about to change, taking video games and virtual reality to a new, amazing level.

Enter the Haptic Feedback Suit and “get ready to say goodbye to your buttons.” Allow me to apprise you about the future of immersive entertainment. Haptics is the science and technology of sending and processing information through the sense of touch. In technology, it is about using touch sensations in interfaces. Examples of this are when an iPhone buzzes on vibration mode or when a game controller “rumbles” when you crash in a racing game. Haptic Feedback refers to the way touch is used to communicate with users. Now there are actually suits that can be worn with haptic technology embedded in the suit in order to actually communicate with the sensation of touch, with what is happening on the screen in a video game.

This technology is used in a vest that can be worn by the person playing the video game. Its vibrations syncs with the actions in the game. For example, as you are playing a combat game and you take a hit or boxing game and get punched, you will feel very mild vibration feedback to the area where you got hit. The haptics will turn on in the precise location where your character received an impact in the game. It is done with various modalities like small levers to simulate touch, a laser to simulate soft touch, or a small motor to feel like a vibration. There are also companies working on contactless haptic technology that do not require the player to come in contact with any surface so that means no need to wear vests or use controllers. This works by using lasers or ultrasound to create tactile sensations in mid-air that players will feel on them at various locations.

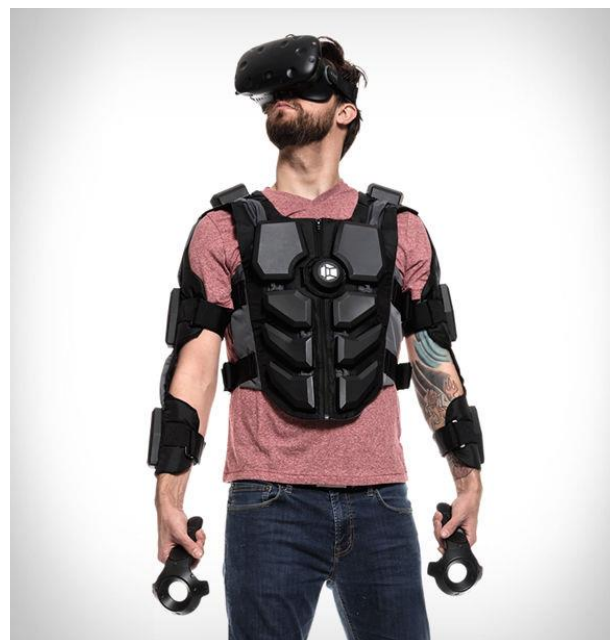


As touchscreens become more prevalent in automobiles, carmakers are beginning to invest more in haptic feedback technology.



Video game controllers like the Xbox One controller, pictured above, have haptic feedback technology embedded in them to provide physical sensations while gaming.

The use of haptics is not to make games more real but to improve the experience of the person using the device. The sense of touch has an emotional impact and this is something technology companies know is true from research. When the sense of hearing or vision is busy or overloaded then the sense of touch remains another way to communicate. This truly will be the future of “immersive entertainment.”



The Hardlight Virtual Reality suit immerses gamers in their game's digital world.

ARTS

MoMA's “Degree Zero: Drawing at Midcentury”

LILIANA GREENBAUM

NEW YORK CITY - The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) has started a new show called “Degree Zero: Drawing at Midcentury.” All the art in this show was made in the years between 1948-1961. The show will continue till February 6, 2021. The paintings were made by extremely adept artists from Latin America, Asia, Africa, America, and Europe. The artwork is spaced far apart so that you may still socially distance while admiring it.

MoMA has garnered about 80 pieces of art that will be on display. It is called “Degree Zero: Drawing at Midcentury” because these artists started with nothing, inspiration wise. They were trying to make their art different and unique. Artists persisted to completely reinvent art after World War 2. In 1953, the Japanese artist Saburo Murakami wrote, “Zero means nothing, start with nothing, completely original, no artificial meaning.”

There is artwork by Louise Bourgeois, Yayoi Kusama, Henri Matisse, Jackson Pollock, and Alfredo Volpi just to name a few. I looked at a few pictures of the art from the “Degree Zero” exhibition. All of it seems very abstract. The show reveals how the artists used drawing to start from scratch after the war. “Degree Zero: Drawing at Midcentury” allows you to notice connections between very different artists of the same time period.



Untitled by Jackson Pollock is one of the pieces on display in the “Degree Zero: Drawing at Midcentury” exhibition.

The time frame that this exhibition shows is the starting point for when drawing begins to take many different forms. These forms include abstract, figurative, and organic (organic means curvy drawing, mostly of things in nature). To go to the exhibition costs \$25 for adults, \$18 for seniors, \$14 for students, and for children and members it's free. It's also free on Fridays between the times 4 pm and 8pm. I would definitely advise going there, if ever looking for something to do in New York.

POLITICS

Georgia Remains a Battleground State in its Senate Race

ANNA BOLTON

ATLANTA – The Georgian Republican Senators, David Perdue and Kelly Loeffler, who are in a run-offs for Georgia’s two Senate seats had visits from both President Trump and Vice President Mike Pence. They also had special debates the evening of Sunday, December 6th. Not a single person there said they believed Joe Biden won the election despite having two recounts in Georgia and Biden having above 270 electoral college votes. Conservatives said that they don't believe that Perdue and Loeffler had done enough to support Trump and his efforts to overturn the election.

The recount proved Biden’s victory in Georgia making the president-elect the first Democrat to win the state since Bill Clinton, which has caused discord in the state. Trump lashed out at Georgia’s Republican governor, Brian Kemp. The president has persistently called for a special legislative session in the state to once again challenging the election results. Kemp has reportedly declined this action. On Sunday, Georgia’s Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger said that a special session to overturn the state's election results “would be nullifying the will of the people.”

Some of the voters said that they will not vote on January 5, 2021 in Georgia. “I know we have

our doubts about the last election. And I actually hear some people say ‘just don't vote,’ but my fellow Americans, if you don’t vote, they win.” said Pence at Trump's last rally in Valdosta, Georgia, on December 5th. Pence tried to stir up support for the race. Trump raised a similar message at the same rally stating, “Friends of mine say, 'Let’s not vote. We are not going to vote because we are angry about the presidential election. But if you do that, the radical left wins.’”



The stars of Disney+'s *The Mandalorian*, Din Djarin and Grogu, have rocketed the show to rave reviews.



The show has returned fan favorite characters like Bo Katan who first appeared in the animated show, *The Clone Wars*.



Star Wars creator, George Lucas (left), with *The Mandalorian* creator, Jon Favreau (right) on the set of *The Mandalorian*.

OPINION

The Mandalorian Reigns Supreme *Five out of Five Stars.*

TOPHER MASON

SAN FRANCISCO - With the best storyline of any TV series that I have ever seen, *The Mandalorian* has shot into my top ten TV shows of all time. When this series first premiered on November 12, 2019, it was just an amusing and fun show. Now, I look forward to a new episode every Friday not just for the adventure, but because the storyline has become more complex and inventive.

In the first season, the show’s story line really started to get rolling when the Mandalorian felt compassion toward one of his targets (The Child, a.k.a. Baby Yoda) and had to save him from the remnants of the Empire. From there, it only got better. They introduced new characters and twists in every possible way. They brought back old characters from the shows like *The Clone Wars* and the other classic movies and told their stories while seamlessly making them fit into the Mandalorian’s own story.

Another amazing aspect of this series isn’t just the actual story, its who made it. I think we all know who George Lucas is (the creator of Star Wars), but there is another creator in this series: The famed director and actor Jon Favreau. In 2007, he directed a little known indy movie called *Iron Man* and was the character Happy Hogan in the same movie. Today, he directs major movies like *The Lion King* and is creating more *Mandalorian* episodes.

Although I love the show, I have some problems with it. Mainly one (SPOILER ALERT, if you have not seen the second season of *The Mandalorian* than skip this section!). I did not like how Grogu (the Child) was abducted without a struggle. I also dislike the fact that Mando’s ship was blown up. It was not cool. I mean, I don’t like the thought of this either, but why not blow-up Boba’s ship also? Lastly, I cannot stand the fact that Mando let the Child get away! (And yes, I know it moves the plot along, but come on, Baby Yoda gone? He is the Co-Star of the show.)

Overall, this series has been one of my favorites of all time. The story is incredible, the acting is astounding, and the humor is genius because they use it sparingly. I also love how Favreau uses old characters and brings them into the action! Then he does the vilest thing. He makes you get attached to the characters then either kills them off or doesn’t bring them back into play. But all this to say, it is my opinion.

ENVIRONMENT

Trump Administration Attempts to Drill in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, Threatening a Vulnerable Area

WILL “SPACEBOY” BOLTON

WASHINGTON D.C. - The U.S. government is wanting to move forward with plans on drilling along the northern coastline of Alaska on 1.6 million acres of protected Federal lands called the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR). ANWR was started in 1980 by President Ronald Reagan. If the government’s plans happen, it could ruin the pristine land and the animals that inhabit the refuge. There have been many protests about saving the polar bears and the animals that live in this area. Donald Trump, the President of the United States, is trying to get the oil out of Alaska before Joe Biden gets inaugurated. Joe Biden ran against Donald Trump to be president, and Biden will be inaugurated on January 20.

Donald Trump has gotten two lawsuits filed against him. One of those lawsuits has 15 states trying to protect the ANWR. Trump wants to drill in the ANWR because it is estimated that there are 10.4 billion barrels of oil under the coastal plain of Alaska.

Right now, America has 264 billion barrels of oil, meaning that digging up the 10 billion barrels from Alaska is useless especially when the risks are so great. If oil workers spill any fuel on the ground it can endanger the ANWR’s animals. The following animals inhabit the protected land: polar bears, grizzly bears, moose, caribou, wolves, eagles, lynx, wolverine, marten, beaver, and migrating birds. “President Trump’s plan to open up America’s Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil drilling is the latest egregious example of his administration’s four-year assault on our environment,” said Fox News. The Interior Department put all of the available land on the coastal plain on the table for possible leasing, the first sale by late 2021 and the second one by 2024. This program was official under the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act that Congress passed in 2017.

“We will continue to fight this at every turn,” said Adam Kolton, executive director of the Alaska Wilderness League. She also said, “Any oil company that would seek to drill in the Arctic Refuge will face enormous reputational, legal and financial risks.” She is trying her best to threaten oil companies and convince them not to drill oil in the ANWR.

President Trump said in an interview with Fox, “ANWR is a big deal that Ronald Regan couldn’t get done, and nobody could get it done.” Donald Trump does not believe the ANWR should be protected, and is unconcerned for the bad things that can if they drill there. Under current law, the Interior Department must conduct at least two lease sales of 400,000 acres by the end of 2024. The government is under

pressure from environmental groups like an Alaska native group that does not want the government to drill because they could potentially impact the caribou.

This year has been one of the warmest years in the world’s history, and the polar ice caps have been the lowest they have ever been. California is trying to switch all of its cars to become electric. That would help, but all states have to help fix what they have done to the environment. Also, every country has to help to make a difference. China is a significant source of pollution that ruins the atmosphere.

Every person has a different opinion on how we should treat the environment. Bureau of Land Management’s (BLM), Alaska’s state director, Chad Padgett, said in a statement that oil and gas from ANWR’s coastal plain “is an essential resource for meeting our nation’s energy demands and will help create jobs and economic opportunities.” Another point of view may come from the many people that were born 40 years ago who will remember the Exxon Valdez oil spill and how it affected everyone. The Exxon Valdez oil spill was very bad. The spill covered 6.5 million miles of ocean. The next day 2,000 sea otters, 302 harbor seals, and about 250,000 sea birds died. Mrs. Sue, my science teacher, said that she remembers that no one went to an Exxon gas station for about a year. She said that no one went there because they did a terrible job at cleaning up the oil spill. They tried to use Dawn soap to help clean it up, but it did not work.

The incident happened on March 24, 1989, and the Valdez spilled 10.8 million gallons into the ocean. It happened at Prince William Sound, Alaska. Exxon got no business for roughly a year. The ship had 50 million gallons of oil, but luckily it only spilled 10.8 million gallons. If it spilled all of the oil, it would have affected 34.3 million miles. That would go around the US coastline 343 times.

We need to take better care of our environment because there is only one Earth, and we are ruining it. I think that it is unnecessary to be carrying around that much oil at one time. We are just lucky that our coast lines are not surrounded by oil. Imagine if you were a kid in Alaska and you wanted to go jump into the water, but you couldn’t because Exxon spilled 6 million gallons of oil. How mad would you be at Exxon for a) ruining the environment by spilling oil, and b) ruining the kids dream of going to jump into the water. Even if they did not mean to spill the oil, I still would not like what they did.

I do not think that Exxon meant to spill all of the oil into the ANWR region. When I first read about the spill, I wondered what the ocean looked like but you can see hundreds of the destruction.



The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is home to many animals like the moose pictured above.



The Exxon Valdez Oil Spill polluted 6.5 million miles of ocean and the coastline of Alaska.

MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE

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By Jim Holland / Ed. Rich Norris
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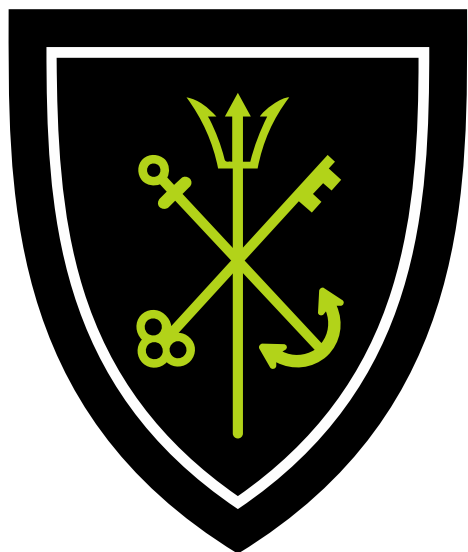
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The Chandler School
2900 Augusta Street
Greenville, SC 29605

contact@thechandlerschool.org
864-991-8443