Andy Weir, author of The Martian, speaks to SLUH community

BY JOSHDUB REZNIKOV

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The night began with an hour of pizza and The Martian trivia from followed by a video conference with Weir at the telephone. Students voted on the questions using phones or iPads, and Weir was asked the top-ranked questions. Then, for the last ten minutes of the night, the microphone was passed throughout the crowd so that students could ask Weir their own questions. "After listening to him, I think careers in STEM are much more interesting because there’s so much you can do," said freshmen Paul Gillam. "It’s not just working behind a computer; you can actually write books and do other things like that. It’s more accessible than I realized." "Weir took lead on the project because of his love for the novel and his love for English and science. "Ivan suggested the book at one of our meetings and he had a really high level of interest in it," said science teacher Kathy Chott. "He insisted on contacting Andy Weir and I thought ‘This is great. A student is helping to work on the summer reading program, and that’s what it should be like. It was a community effort rather than saying ‘okay everyone, this is what you’re going to read.’"

"I’m really into both English and science, and he found a way to cross them when there’s not a lot of overlap," said McIntyre. "I look up to him, so it was fun to get to talk to him."

Although SLUH has a history of hosting all-school assemblies with the author of the summer reading book; the process was changed this year. Partly because Weir is afraid of airplanes, and partially because the Science Department was looking to try something new, they decided to instead host a video conference with Weir.

"We wanted it to be a fun thing for people that wanted to be there; we didn’t want to force people to come," said McIntyre.

The event had resoundingly positive feedback largely because of four things: the relaxed atmosphere, the night being optional, and not mandatory, the night being open to the whole SLUH community, and, of course, the free pizza. "People would get excited when he said things and you could feel it," said McIntyre. "If there were just a bunch of us sitting in rows in the Commons, that wouldn’t have happened as much. Letting people decide if they wanted to do it or not was the best way to get an excited group.

Whether SLUH will continue this trend of discussing the summer reading book with an optional event rather than a required event is unclear. "While the video conference worked well for this year, the situation will need to be reevaluated each year.

"It depends how much the whole community needs to hear the message. This year it was the right choice to have a video conference, but it depends," said Chott.

Chillaxing to Belleville

BY LARRY CONNOLLY

The St. Louis U. High chess team suffered a 16-5-13 loss to Belleville West yester-

day to third at the annual meet of the regular season.

Freshman Paul Gillam played board two, sophomore Connor Worley played board five, and seniors Jorgo Good- welle, Miles Quigley, and Michael Brennan played boards one, three and four, respectively.

Although Worley won board five, Gillam won board two, and Brennan played to a draw on board four, it was not enough for the team to win outright against Belleville.

Junior Will Kelly, a normal board one or two player for the team, was able to play since he couldn’t make the start. "The fact that we didn’t have more people to choose from makes me very emotional," Kelly said. According to Kelly, Gillam capitalized on a fork, which is when a player puts a piece in position to attack two pieces without any way for his opponent to take it. This led to the team’s most valuable win of the meet.

"Paul had a pretty aggressive attack going, which definitely cost him his defenses," said Kelly. "It was a nail biter for a bit but the other guy didn’t have a very strong attack so it was kind of like Paul had a slight edge the whole time. He was playing very well—anything he did, I would have done," Brennan held his oppo-
nent back with just a draw, typically an infrequent occurrence at chess meets. Letting people decide if they want to come on the rope for a long time and is probably overall the better chess player," said Brennan. The game was nasty, brutish, and long. It was a hard-fought chess game.

"It was another close match, you know. We’ve had a lot of them recently," said Ste-

imgur.com. "The younger guys have had a strong showing and we’ve been playing some strong players!"

"The team was looking to win its last two games of the regular season in order to get the playoffs, but the loss against Belleville West dashed those hopes. They will be playing Belleville East Wednesday, and hope to fin-

ish off the season with a win."