

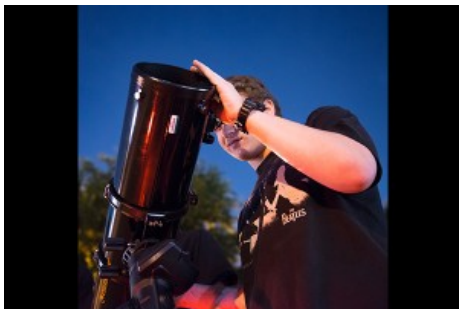


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## Stargazers Watch Astronomy Club

FEBRUARY 28, 2015 11:30 AM 0 COMMENTS

By Haley Yates



Senior Max Foole uses the science department's new Celestron Advanced VX telescope to look at constellations. Photo by Haley Yates

Science teacher George Hademenos created a buzz around the school last year when he was selected to do research on a NASA mission. Now, he is using his knowledge of space to teach a new astronomy class.

Hademenos said the district has strongly encouraged expanding the academic opportunities to all students, particularly those rooted in science. This year, student interest was sufficient to justify offering the class.

"There's always the challenge of making a class interesting to the students and getting them engaged," Hademenos said. "I think that if that interest is already there, it makes my job that much easier, having something to work with. They come in expecting to learn about different things they see in the universe, and I'm there to make sure that I give them the tools, resources and information to better understand the universe."

The students learn about their view from Earth, and where they stand within the Solar System, the Milky Way Galaxy and the ever-expanding universe.

"It's more than just a science class, because Dr. H cares about us so much," senior Audrey Brown said. "Even though there's no curriculum, it's going pretty well since he's making everything up as we go."

In one project, the students develop and plan a science experiment that will be transported to the fringes of space and conducted within a microgravity environment.

"Everything is so fun because Dr. H is so excited about teaching," Brown said. "He's really interactive with us, and we're all bonding as a class because we're the only astronomy class."

When Hademenos agreed to take over the class, he approached Principal Charles Bruner and asked if he could acquire a telescope for the class. Bruner agreed to provide the resources for him to purchase one, and Hademenos did the research and found what he thought was best for the class – a reflector telescope that uses mirrors instead of lenses.

"It would be a shame to have an astronomy class but not a telescope, probably the one instrument that you would need to really get a lot out of the class," Hademenos said.

The telescope he chose focuses on a specific light source and reflects it through the tube, then the image that you see is created. Reflecting telescopes are lighter and require less upkeep than refracting

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telescopes, which can cause aberrations with the image because it bends the light as opposed to reflecting it. On April 30, Hademenos met with a group of students at the school and used the telescope for the first time.

"It was an amazing experience," senior Taylor Mills said. "Just looking up and seeing stars and different things that you can't see with just your eyeball."

The group set up around 9 p.m. and put different coordinates into the telescope. It would then redirect to the part of the sky where the coordinates matched, showing the image. Sometimes the coordinates would be on the other side of the earth, and it would point at the ground.

"It's amazing what you can see looking up through this piece of equipment, and you're looking at things that are millions of miles away," Hademenos said. "This is where it opens up an appreciation for the universe and what all is out there."

They were able to identify several star clusters, the upper part of the Big Dipper, the Polaris star, and possibly a planet. Hademenos hopes to get a device that allows students to place their phone on a platform, and the image in the telescope will appear on their screen.

"I was really impressed with the first go through of that, and I'm really looking forward to getting equipment that allows more kids to utilize it," Hademenos said.

Not enough students signed up for the class next year, but the telescope can be used in Earth and Space science next year.

"I'm hoping this class won't go away," Hademenos said. "I think it just needs time to build. I'm hoping the word will get out, and hopefully it will gain sustainability in the years to come."

For now, the class is slowly growing, and as Hademenos gets the word out, he hopes it will become part of the senior class offering.

"Dr. H is so motivated, so even if you don't like space that much, he always pumps us up in class," senior Juliet Wallace said. "It's really cool to be a part of the first [astronomy] class ever at Richardson."

Hademenos said it's the undiscovered parts of the universe that make the class fun, and space worth learning about.

"It is what we do not know that will spur generations of inquisitive and curious scientists to develop methods, strategies and approaches toward gaining a further understanding of the universe," Hademenos said. "It is my hope that at least one, if not more, of those scientists are sitting in my astronomy class."



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Six Art Magnet students were accepted to display their art at the Dallas Museum of Art.

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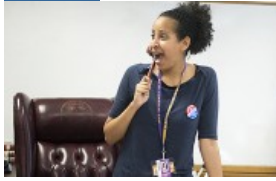


### Theatre Magnet Begins Production of Second Year

By Chase Karacostas Stepping out onto the stage for the last time Sunday night, senior Jacob Redmon began singing the opening song for this year's spring musical, "Footloose." Unlike in past years, the spring musical was the second musical of the year. The Theatre Magnet put on two musicals this year – a fall musical, "Bat Boy," and a spring musical. Some students, like senior Chelsea Blocker and sophomore Nathan May, had the chance to perform in both shows. "It's [...]"

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### Peer Internship Program for an Interview

By Chase Karacostas Senior Hosanna Yemiru walked into Hope Cottage, a non-profit teenage pregnancy crisis center she found through Peer Internship Program for an interview. She wasn't asked about her work ethic or her past experience, but simply if she felt passionate about the work the center does and the issues that they face there. After spending four years in the Law Magnet, Yemiru decided to complete an internship to broaden her experience in fields connected to law. "I wanted [...]"

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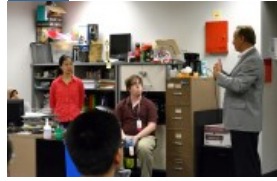


### Photography Magnet Students Nagged

By Anne Garsea After writing to the Richardson Civic Art Society and lobbying for a photography portion to be added to the annual fall high school contest, Photography Magnet students nagged three of the four top awards for their use of editing and creativity in their submitted work. The contest was open to sophomore, junior and senior photography classes who wanted to enter a piece. There weren't many guidelines; the photo just had to be appropriate to display in a [...]"

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NEWS



### Entrepreneurship Club Founded

By Caroline Cluiss Although they never got a "small loan of a million dollars" like presidential candidate Donald Trump, juniors Emily Chen and Nisreen Alqaisi still want to become entrepreneurs. In order to fulfill this dream, Chen and Alqaisi co-founded a club called SecondGen, which aims to guide students through the process of starting a business. Over the summer at a software competition, Chen met Bobby Thakkar, a junior at Allen HS who started an experimental club for students at [...]"

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### Desperado Team Welcomes New Director

By Heiress Smith As the students of the Desperado team walked inside the familiar room with their friends on the first day of school, they were greeted by an unfamiliar face-Jacklyn Simone, the new director of the Desperados at Richardson. "I was so excited and so nervous at the same time," Simone said. "The second I got the job I was ecstatic, and then I got off the phone and I thought to myself, what did I get myself into?" [...]"

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