

## THE CHRONICLE'S POLICY

*The Chronicle* is the official student newspaper of William Mason High School.

*The Chronicle* promises to report the truth and adhere to the journalistic code of ethics through online and print mediums.

*The Chronicle* is produced by students enrolled in Journalism I, II and III.

Editorials reflect the staff's opinion but do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the school administration or the Mason City School District.

*The Chronicle* is published monthly. Call 398-5025 ext. 33103 for information regarding advertising in *The Chronicle*. *The Chronicle* reserves the right to refuse advertising it deems inappropriate for a high school publication.

As an open forum for students, letters to the editor are welcome, but are subject to be edited for length, libel, obscenity, clarity and poor taste. Letters to the editor may be dropped off in room C103 and must be signed.

*The Chronicle* is a member of The Columbia Scholastic Press Association, The National Scholastic Press Association, Quill and Scroll International Honorary Society for High School Journalists and the Ohio Scholastic Media Association.

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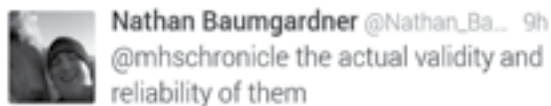
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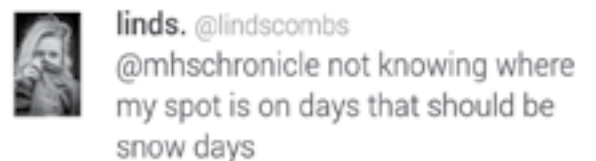
# TWEETS TO THE EDITOR



What do standardized tests not measure? #TweetToTheEditor



What's wrong with MHS parking? #TweetToTheEditor



## STAFF EDITORIAL

Civic journalism adds its voice to the media maelstrom centered on police brutality

It happened in Walmart.

Amid lurid yellow 99-cent tags and bleeps of scanned merchandise, John Crawford III, a young black man, wandered the aisles of its Beavercreek location. He chatted with the mother of his children on the phone, carrying an air rifle at his side. A police officer, called in to investigate Crawford and his weapon, shot him when he did not drop it.

Beavercreek isn't Mason, but it is only 35.7 miles away.

It's a 39-minute drive, but it only takes 39 seconds to find Walmart's online surveillance footage of the day Crawford died—four days before the shooting of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri.

A media maelstrom has enveloped cases like Crawford's—black culprit, white cop—until we no longer see police as valiant, navy suits that stand between us and danger but another potential threat. We no longer trust them like we used to, and for a man in South Carolina, the distrust was deep enough to record a fatal confrontation between Officer Michael Slager and Walter Scott.

That person has given to the public both the evidence and the power to convict an officer that may have gotten away clean—though they may still get away clean. In Crawford's case, the surveillance video was not enough to indict the officer, but media has since warped perception of the police to a heightened degree, and a forgiving public may no longer be available.

A civil journalist is responsible. That South Carolinian was there to record a video that would later circulate both Twitter and the world. The Information Age has turned us into individuals with the capability to expose all the wonders and horrors we witness—tools like CNN iReport encourage us to contribute the shaky videos we capture of burning buildings, approaching tornadoes and, of course, police encounters—leaving us wondering if this is our new responsibility: advocating change with our smartphones.

We could dispel racism in the police force all because we were there. That could lead to an indictment; that could lead to accountability.

The media may have morphed our perception of the police, but officers are scared, too. The body cameras that they begin to don are as much to weed out negligent and racist behavior as they are to prove that other police tactics were indeed self-defense. The police are still the only barrier between us and criminals, but as protestors have taken to Twitter, the streets and city halls, the entire force will remain under scrutiny.

Because any police officer could find him or herself face to face with a black criminal, and any police officer could act from racism rather than self-defense. Beavercreek is 35.7 miles away. Any of us could have been there. Any of us could have had our cameras rolling.