



## COME MARCH ALONG WITH US!

BY JASON LEWICKI

The dead of winter has passed, and even as I write this, we grow ever closer to the beginning of spring. I like a nice snowy day as much as the next guy, but even I think we've gone a bit too long without a nice *warm* day, am I right? Luckily, it seems like our good groundhog friend Punxsutawney Phil didn't see his shadow this year, so those warm days might be just around the corner.



At the time of this article's publishing, that being the beginning of March, we've all had a little over a month to get settled into our new classes this semester. The change may have taken some getting used to for a number of us, but it's remarkable how simple repetition can make even the unusual become the norm. I hope that this semester goes well for all you fantastic readers out there, and even if things seem tough, there's *always* a reason to keep going.

Whether you're new to MHS or a returning student, we're glad to have you. Here at our school, we have all sorts of avenues through which to connect with the students around you and show your Spartan spirit. Join a club! Attend a sports game! Support our theater program! Read our newspaper! These and more are just some of the ways you can have fun, meet new people, and make new memories here at Milford High School.

**WEST  
STREET  
JOURNAL**

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# THE TIME T🕒 CHANGE

By Payton Burke

I surely can't speak for the rest of my age group, but daylight savings time has always just been there, and I never gave it too much thought until very recently. Sure, there was the annual complaint at the loss of sleep, followed by the 'extra' hour of sleep come November. But why do we do this? The complaints about having to reset clocks might be largely gone with the digital age, but why do we keep up this practice? Merely for tradition's sake?

Daylight savings time was instituted by the Standard Time Act in 1918, with which the federal government was able to establish the boundaries between the US time zones. This system was later built upon with the Uniform Act of 1966 to create a uniform system across the US, though the system has been altered since then, with the most recent instance being in 2005. So, for students this system has always been there; it's all we know.

What exactly does it do, though? Well, daylight savings was originally established to conserve energy and resources and optimize the sunshine the US receives in a day. The switch nowadays happens at night to create a seamless transition for the large majority of the population. Ultimately, the biggest difference is in our sleep schedules, with people losing an hour in the spring and gaining it back in the fall. Is this biannual internal clock reset really worth it?

In 2022, Senator Rubio brought the Sunshine Protection Act to the floor of Congress. Had it passed, the act would have switched the US entirely to daylight savings time, meaning US clocks would no longer "fall back" each fall. Congress cited numerous benefits that could result from this act, including a decrease in motor accidents, with traffic patterns being slightly off from nocturnal animals and an increase in visibility during typical traffic patterns, a reduction in energy costs, and more. However this would also cause sunsets in the summer time to be as early as 6 and winter sunsets to be as late as 8:30. People would be waking up in the dark more in winter mornings, which could prove dangerous in communities that feature heavy snowfall, as the morning sun can help melt snow and ice, leaving morning commuters to drive on dark icy roads.

Like most issues our country faces, there is no perfect answer, and it's up to each person to form their own opinion. However, who doesn't love long summer nights? For now, I think I agree with the House of Representatives that not many have thought the issue through seriously, and for now we need to slow down to take that time before making any major decisions.

# Cryptid Catalogs I

*Bigfoot, a thorn in cryptozoologists sides*

By Isabel Lamb



One of the most well known names in cryptozoology, Bigfoot is something that most people are familiar with to some degree. This familiarity can reach a point where it can overshadow other cryptids, causing sightings to be falsely filed as a Bigfoot encounter.

But what is Bigfoot? Put simply, Bigfoot (as well as his many aliases) is a tall and furry humanoid, often seen in woods, marshy areas, and other places where nature runs rampant. His colors range from black all the way up to a brown-orange fitting of cinnamon, and even gray-streaked on occasion.

He has an impressive tally of aliases: Sasquatch, Yeti, Yowie, Bushman, and even the Virginia-specific Woodbooger, to name a few. Unfortunately, this variety of names, in addition to how well-known he is, can cause other cryptids to be misidentified as him, which is quite the source of anguish within the cryptozoologist community.

Right to the east of Mount St. Helen is a gorge that has been dubbed Ape Canyon, where one of the most well-known Bigfoot sightings occurred. In the summer of 1924, a group of gold prospectors emerged from the wooded area with quite the tale in tow: The men had been traversing the forest when they encountered a group of seven-foot-tall ape-like creatures. One of the men shot at one of the creatures three times, and watched it fall off the cliff. They returned to the cabin at which they had been staying, and claim to have later been attacked by the ape creatures, who threw boulders at them and their cabin. Their proof came in the form of 14-inch-long footprints, and one decimated cabin.



*(Continued)*

The origin of the name Bigfoot is certainly no mystery, as it was named for the sizable footprints it left in its wake. The beast was named in the 50s by a collective of people writing articles around the time of its original popularization, and the name they bestowed upon it was certainly no misnomer. Now, Bigfoot isn't the only moniker given to large ape-like creatures; there are several regional variations with differences ranging from strictly the name, to colors, to 'moral alignment' (for lack of a better term), to climate. The most well known of those are most likely the Yeti and Sasquatch, the former being the wintry version and the latter being virtually the same as Bigfoot.

Bigfoot can be seen in every state in the US, but sightings are more concentrated in Washington, California, Ohio, Florida, and the Texas-Oklahoma border. Ranging from 6-10 feet in height (and sometimes taller), it's hard to miss one traipsing through a campsite or backyard, but the earthy colorations make him a bit harder to spot in a heavily-wooded area.

One of the most well-known and widely-recognizable images captured of Bigfoot is from the Patterson-Gimlin film, captured in Northern California in 1967. The authenticity of this film has been tested time and time again from both sides of the argument - real or fake - with naught in terms of conclusive results either way. Filmed by Roger Patterson and Robert Gimlin, the two men had almost inverse thoughts on the footage. Patterson held to the end that it was real, while Gimlin denied all involvement and avoided talking about it at all. Reportedly, Gimlin even suspected that Patterson had fabricated it and had used Gimlin as a witness to prove its authenticity. Nearly thirty-seven years later, a man by the name of Bob Heironimus claimed to be the one in the film, having donned a lifelike suit to resemble the monster of (now) legend. The jury is still out on whether or not the film is authentic, as far as I can tell.

I hope you enjoyed the first entry in a (hopefully) long-continuing series of articles on cryptids and cryptozoology.



# DUNGEONS & DRAGONS CLASS GUIDE: THE PALADIN

"COWARDS DIE MANY TIMES BEFORE THEIR DEATHS; THE VALIANT NEVER  
TASTE OF DEATH BUT ONCE."

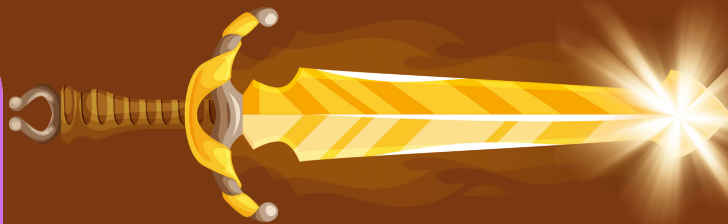
- WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE, JULIUS CAESAR

## What Is A Paladin?

A Paladin is a sacred warrior, a wielder of divine fury driven by honor and duty to fulfill the word of their deity, by any means necessary. A Paladin might swear to be a valiant protector of the innocent, an impartial steward of order, or a ruthless conqueror that makes right through might, but the oaths of a paladin differ only in their tenets, not their importance to the Paladins who follow them. Paladins can channel the power of their conviction to heal the sick and wounded, smite foes with brilliant radiant strikes, and fill their nearby allies with bravery and strength. If you want to stand tall like a mighty pillar of stone against the waves of chaos and evil that darken the world, the Paladin is the class for you.

## What Types of Paladins Are There?

A Paladin draws their strength from their Oath, a code of honor that they swear by and promise to uphold. These Oaths are the Paladin's subclasses, and each provides its own tenets and fabulous secret powers to those who are loyal and brave enough to dedicate their lives to them. Three of the most well-known Oaths can be found in the Player's Handbook: the Oath of Devotion holds its followers to the highest standards of compassion and honesty, granting those brave souls the ability to repel Fiends and Undead and ward themselves and their allies against being charmed; the Oath of the Ancients motivates its followers to protect and uphold the beauty of the world, imbuing those faithful servants with the power to restrain enemies with spectral vines and only drop to 1 HP the first time they would otherwise be dropped to 0 from an attack; finally, the Oath of Vengeance drives its followers to relentlessly pursue retaliation against those who have wronged them, empowering those furious warriors with the strength to focus their hatred on a single enemy and close off a fleeing foe's escape. More Oaths can be found elsewhere, but these three all serve to demonstrate just how diverse Paladins can truly be.



## How Does A Paladin Work?

Right off the bat, let me just say that Paladins are strong. They're built to be near-unstoppable juggernauts that can really give and take hits like the best of 'em. With their d10 Hit Die, proficiency with all types of armor and weapons, and a special pool of HP known as Lay on Hands that they can draw upon to heal themselves or others, Paladins make stellar tanks. At second level, though, Paladins really get interesting: not only do they gain the ability to cast spells using their Charisma modifier (though, unlike other spellcasters, Paladins can only cast up to 5th-level spells), but they can also use one of those slots to use their signature ability, Divine Smite. Divine Smite adds an extra 2d8 radiant damage to a weapon attack, dealing an extra d8 to Fiends (devils, demons, and the like) and Undead (zombies, skeletons, and their ilk), and yet another d8 for every spell slot above 1st-level that you expend to use this ability. Divine Smite lets Paladins deal crazy amounts of damage in a single turn, and any who think you're little more than a stuck-up goody-two-shoes will learn the hard way that good is not always soft. Later down the line, Paladins gain even more abilities: they can attack twice in a single turn, exude an aura that grants them and their allies an immunity to fear, and remove the effects of spells on either themselves or their allies with a single touch, among other features. The Paladin is a very powerful class, able to take lots of damage, deal lots of damage, heal and buff allies, and even use their stellar Charisma to navigate social situations with ease.



## (CONTINUING FORTH!)

**What Does A Paladin Represent?**

The Paladin is a class that tends to have a specific identity associated with it. Anybody who's heard of it tends to assume that every single Paladin is a righteous, morally upstanding, lawful individual who is literally contractually obligated to always do the right thing. Indeed, that's how they used to be: In earlier editions, anyone who played a Paladin had to always be Lawful Good, a character alignment that demonstrates a rigid adherence to the virtues of goodness and order, or risk losing their powers. In 5th Edition, however, things are a bit different, as

Paladins can now be, in theory, whatever alignment a player wants them to be. However, to simply treat a Paladin as any other class would be somewhat uninspired; no matter where your Paladin falls on the morality spectrum, you should still have a pretty good idea of what exactly your Paladin is meant to be and do, and what their Oath specifically entails. The European code of chivalry and the Japanese bushido code are both famous historical codes of honor that a player could use as inspiration to give some real substance to their

Paladin, or they could go nuts and really get creative with it. You could play a Paladin who serves a court of fairies and has an Oath consisting of nonsensical and fairy tale-esque tenets, an aging war veteran Paladin who swore their Oath as a bucket list, or even a Paladin seeking inner peace whose Oath is basically a self-help checklist.

Despite what some cynical and pessimistic individuals may say, the virtues of honor and duty don't have to be basic or naive; they can instead be motivators that drive your Paladin to do truly legendary things.

**Why Should You Play A Paladin?**

Oh man, if you thought I was a Certified Monk Enjoyer, I might as well have a master's degree in Paladin Enjoyment Studies. I love these guys in all their radiant butt-kicking glory, and they're probably my favorite class. They're powerful in combat, they make excellent medics and support characters, they do exceptionally well in social situations, and above all, their aesthetics are simply immaculate. I could gush about this class all day; they're really just **incredible**. But this is just MY opinion. Some people hate Paladins; they think they're boring, or that they're overpowered, or that those who play them tend to be overbearing self-righteous jerks who think that playing a morally good character gives them the right to boss their allies around and get huffy when they don't do exactly what they're told. Anybody who plays a Paladin like this, though, is doing it wrong (unless the character is explicitly meant to be like that and is meant to chill out and grow as a person over the course of the campaign, but even this would take some finesse to pull off well). A Paladin is intrinsically tied to duty and responsibility, and any who defy those values while playing a Paladin are just asking to have those fabulous secret powers stripped away from them (yes, that can still happen in 5e, so make sure you know what your Oath is). In the hands of a player who knows what they're doing, though, a Paladin can be a truly phenomenal character to both play and play alongside.



# The Theory of Poetry

by Malakai Ramirez

Most people's understanding of poetry is that it is simply saying some stuff in a really fancy way, usually by rhyming. Since most people aren't very interested in poetry, that idea describes it well enough; however, it clearly does not encapsulate the nuance and nature of the artform. What I want to do here is provide what I think are some necessary points to know about the topic of poetry.

But first, since poetry is an art, I must offer some thoughts about art in general. We're all familiar with the concept of communication. After all, it's what I'm doing right now: I'm showing certain symbols on a screen in a specific order that we've all collectively learned represents a corresponding idea. In speech, one does the same thing with sounds made by their throat, mouth, and breath. These are words, but this is only one small form of communication. In general, communication is simply conveying ideas to others. It is the nature of ideas to be vague and abstract, and so words are used to give a name to them in order to simplify them and communicate them directly. In this sense, there are no words in art.

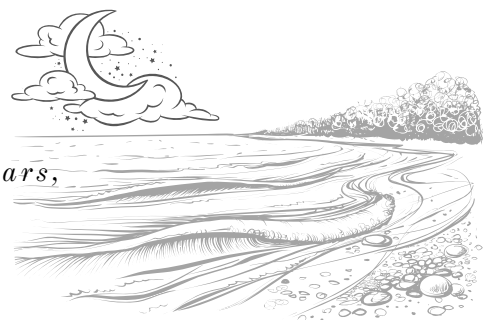
Art is the communication of ideas exactly as they are, vague and abstract. Engaging with a piece of art generates in your mind something that you can't quite put a name to and can only describe with some risk of sounding nonsensical. Even creative writing works in this way since, though it involves the use of words, the art is present in the ambiguities within their meaning. For example, here is a very simple phrase: She was both happy and sad. This statement makes no logical sense because happiness and sadness are definitionally exclusive, but it does make sense semantically. This is because the *meaning* of the words are abstract enough to coalesce into a more sophisticated mode of perception in our minds.

Each piece of art has a purpose; otherwise, why make them? Each story you read, each song you hear, each painting you see, and each movie you watch has been meticulously crafted by the artist to make you feel certain feelings and think certain thoughts, and it should if the artist is good at what they do. The artist achieves this by employing psychological methods working at the subconscious level. It is important to note that artists are not expert scientists who do their tricks intentionally, or at least not in the way that you think. You don't need to have a PhD in psychology to understand that the scene of a dark-lit room or the sharp scratch of a violin instills fear in you. It just does, and artists exploit perceptions such as these to powerful effect.

A painter might brush with very dark yet soft colors to produce a gloomy scene. A musician might employ a rapid rhythm and loud sounds to energize the listener. But what does the poet use? I think the best way to understand poetry is by example: to dissect a poem and see the many components of a poem and methods of the poet. The following is *Meeting at Night* by Robert Browning, a fairly short piece that's the best example of poetry that I know of.

*the gray sea and the long black land;  
and the yellow half-moon large and low;  
and the startled little waves that leap  
and the fiery ringlets from their sleep,  
as I gain the cove with pushing prow,  
and quench its speed i' the slushy sand*

*then a mile of warm sea-scented beach;  
three fields to cross till a farm appears;  
a tap at the pane, the quick sharp scratch  
and blue spurt of a lighted match,  
and a voice less loud, through its joys and fears,  
than the two hearts beating each to each!*





Let's analyze this poem piece by piece. First, this poem is a story, but it's not obvious. There are no complete sentences, nor is there much visual imagery, but this is on purpose. You can't really see anything at night, so since this poem takes place at night, the poet chose to omit any descriptive visual details and leave the visual imagery vague. Since vision is pointless at night, you're forced to rely on your other senses, and so does the poem. You smell the ocean and the beach. You hear the sound of waves, of sand, of taps and scratches and heartbeats, and not just figuratively.

As you read the poem, you can literally hear the sounds in the story. This is made possible through the use of alliteration, onomatopoeia, and rhythm: Onomatopoeia is a literary device where a word makes the sound it itself represents, and alliteration is a literary device where the same sounds are repeated over and over again. This poem utilizes both very well. The *l*'s and *t*'s on line three produce the choppy effect of little wavelets hitting the shore. The *s*, *ch*, and *sh* sounds on line six are the sounds of the boat nosing onto the beach. This poem also makes effective use of rhythm.

Rhythm is what sets the pace of the poem. Rhythm speeds the poem up, slows it down, and moves you along through the story. It does this by making use of the accents within the words of our language. An accent is the length of enunciation of a particular syllable. The words *photograph* and *photographer* are accented differently, which is why they sound different. There are many different classifications of accent patterns in the formal study of poetry, but that would take forever to explain. For now, just know that the standard pattern is one that simply alternates between accented and unaccented. A good example of this is line five, where, if I exaggerate the accents, you can hear it more clearly: *AS I GAIN the COVE with PUSHing PROW.*

This poem sets its own rhythm, beginning slowly with many accents on the first line that suggest a prolonged gliding over the calm sea. On the ninth line, the rhythm also adds to the alliteration and onomatopoeia so that you can literally hear the taps and scratches. The poem mostly follows the standard pattern, but quickens near the end: *and a, through its, than the*; this is the beat of a pulse which is very fitting for a love story. This pulse slows back down in the final line: *two hearts, beating, each to each*. Just like the story the pace eases you in at the beginning which then rises to a climax and slows to a satisfying end. It is also important to know that a good poem should keep the rhythm natural and in flow or else it will become a distraction, unless that is what you're going for. Remember, *everything in art is intentional*.

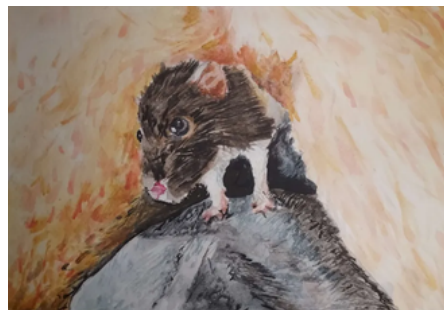
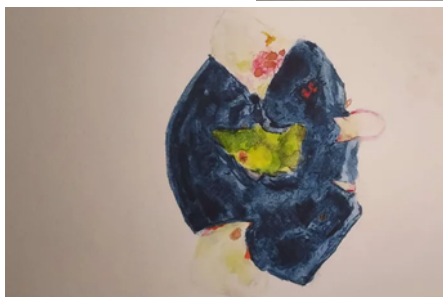
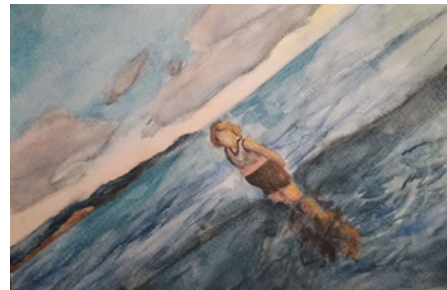
The last component I want to bring up is one that has probably been on your mind: Don't poems rhyme? It's important to understand that rhyme not only includes our conventional understanding of alternating between similar-ending words at the end of every line, but also concerns any order of correspondence between similar-ending words at the end of any line. If you want your poem to be performed with the lyrical effect that is common to poetry, then you should follow the usual types of rhyme. However, some poets choose to not be so lyrical, including Browning. He chose a different rhyme scheme. If you were to mark the last word of the first line A, and then mark all of the words at the end of the other lines that rhyme with the original word with the same letter, and then do this for the other words that rhyme with each rhyming group of words being represented by their own letter, then you would find the rhyme scheme of the poem. When this is applied to the above example, you'll clearly notice that it does in fact have a rhyme scheme that would simply be called *ABCCBA*.

All of what I have shared with you: rhyme scheme, rhythm, onomatopoeia, alliteration, imagery; they are all vital components of poetry. But what even is a poem? I have waited this long to give you a definition because I felt that it was important for you to understand the concepts and methods behind poetry and art in general. A poem is a written piece where its visual and auditory structure contribute to its meaning. Unlike prose, poetry is not just about the semantics of the words, but also of their placement and spoken performance, both of which generate special, subtle, and intentional thoughts and feelings within you.

That is really all there is to know about poetry in order to do it well. In the formal study of poetry there exists a complicated taxonomy of poems based on the number of lines and stanzas, the length of the lines and stanzas, the number and length of lines within stanzas, rhyme schemes, accent patterns, literary devices, and... well, the list goes on. None of these are rules, however, they are only suggestions; just put some thought into it and you are basically all set.

# WEST STREET GALLERY

OUR FEATURED ARTIST THIS MONTH IS BRADY CROSSMAN!  
MATERIALS USED: WATERCOLOR PAINT



IF YOU WANT YOUR ART FEATURED HERE IN OUR NEXT ISSUE, CONTACT [JLEWICKI@MILFORDK12.ORG](mailto:jlewicki@milfordk12.org)!



# CONVAL UNIFIED BASKETBALL GAME

ON FEBRUARY 2ND, OUR STAR-STUDDED UNIFIED BASKETBALL TEAM WENT HEAD-TO-HEAD AGAINST CONVAL IN A GAME THAT THRILLED THE AUDIENCE WITH ITS NUMEROUS TWISTS AND TURNS. DESPITE THE SPARTANS' NARROW LOSS, THEY STILL FOUGHT HARD AND REALLY GAVE CONVAL A MATCH THAT I'M SURE THEY WON'T SOON FORGET. GREAT JOB TO ALL, AND KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK!







Our world needs strong leaders. At Milford High School, we believe that high school students can be great leaders now, as well as in the future. This is why we elect our student leaders every year so they can learn how to best serve your needs. Get to know them and don't hesitate to reach out to them.

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We are a group of students who are striving to report school events as well as feature fun stories and topics for the reading pleasure of the Milford High School student body. Feel free to submit your works, ideas and opinions.

**JASON LEWICKI**

[jlewicki@milfordk12.org](mailto:jlewicki@milfordk12.org)

Editor-in-Chief

**PAYTON BURKE  
MALAKAI RAMIREZ**

**ISABEL LAMB**

**MUSIC MAN**

Staff Writers

**MRS. KATY HEIDER**

[katy.heider@milfordk12.org](mailto:katy.heider@milfordk12.org)

Advisor