



Ship Life



Wawa opens in Chambersburg

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Opinion Editor

Wawa has expanded into central Pennsylvania, bringing with it charitable donations, a promise of more locations to come and, of course, coffee.

The convenience store chain, known for its sandwiches and hand-crafted drinks, opened its first Franklin County location on Jan. 23 with a crowd that lined up around the building despite a temperature of 3 degrees.

to get food and coffee," Strickland says. "It's like a treat for us."

The Chambersburg location is certain to bring visitors who have taken road trips similar to Strickland's, but they, too, may have a Wawa coming to them.

According to a press release from the store, Wawa has plans to open 12 more stores in the South-Central Pennsylvania area this year.

Some of the towns named

who was present to discuss the store's contribution to their mission.

"Wawa is one of our generous donors," Evancho says. "They've been partners with us over the last 23 years, donating over \$123,000. And as they're expanding their footprint, they're bringing Wawa into the 27 counties that the Central Pennsylvania Food Bank serves."

Also present to accept a



Jayden Pohlman / The Slate

Customers exchange smiles at the opening of the Chambersburg Wawa.

Wawa's general manager, Cassandra Robinson, and mascot, Wally Goose, had the honor of counting down the door opening for the cold customers, the first 100 of which were given a free Wawa "coffee and connections" t-shirt.

One of those customers was Dakari Dinish from Chambersburg, whose birthday lined up the grand opening. She has been looking forward to this day for nearly three years.

"My first Wawa I went to was in Ocean City, Maryland," Dinish says. "When I actually got food from Wawa, it was in Frederick, Maryland. That the next closest one, it's about an hour from here; I looked it up before I came."

Like many birthday celebrations, this one, too, was a family affair. Dakari's daughter, Angela Dinish, was present to celebrate the birthdays as well.

"Are you crazy?" Angela responded to being asked what brought her out to the celebration. "It's because of the Wawa grand opening, and I needed their Wawa coffee, because they are the best."

Tony Strickland, also of Chambersburg, states the store is an experience for his family as well.

"Me and my family would actually drive to Frederick from Chambersburg just

in the press release are Williamsport, Hanover, Lewisburg, Coal and Northumberland counties."

How does a location for a future Wawa get chosen? Area manager Tony Davis describes the research that starts the process, up to two years ahead of a store opening.

"We have a solid real estate department that does all kinds of studies and sees what markets are not saturated," Davis says. "They look for brand recognition, and the brand recognition we've had in Central PA has been just beyond expectations."

What fuels that recognition? Davis says, like the t-shirts imply, it is the connection they foster with their customers.

"It's all about our people and our values," he says. "We have a crazy culture. We take care of each other. We'll learn our customers by their buying habits, time of day, what they buy. We'll learn their names and just no other retail out there does it like we do."

The connections go deeper than their customers, as Wawa brought charitable donations with them. One of Wawa's guests on opening day was Kir Evancho, a giving officer at the Central Pennsylvania Food Bank,

donation for the Ridge and valley region of the Special Olympics was Dominic Johnson, an athlete within the chapter, who said, "These funds and the upcoming in-store campaign at Wawa will go a long way to support our athletes in the future."

"Our customers range in age from eight to 72 and have the opportunity to compete with many sports fans this year," Johnson says. "Without the change to travel or to be at places, I never would have imagined being here."

That community connection was on display as the store hosted a "Hoagies for Heroes" competition at the event that say Chambersburg's police and fire departments face off in a hoagie building competition. The police officer beat the firefighters 21-14 to bring home a trophy.

In the audience to watch his town's first responders was Chambersburg Council President Allen Coffman, who said that his father used to go to a Wawa in New Jersey when he was a student. Now, he has a Wawa in his own community.

"They're going to be good neighbors to us because they really have community outreach," Coffman says. "I couldn't be happier that they're here, and we wish them a lot of success here."

Fashionably Slate: The influencers' influence

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In recent times, TikTok's future has been placed into the hands of the unknown. As of 2024, the popular app had accumulated more than 1.9 billion active users. From an American perspective, more than 170 million users had downloaded and participated on the app.

Over the course of the past few years since TikTok's creation almost a decade ago, several users have become largely influential in specific niches. For example, there are influencers for sports-related, "bookish," makeup, music, game-related, news-related and—most notably—fashion content.

Fashion content has always been popular online. However, fashion content became extremely heightened once TikTok rose to its social pedestal. Millions of individuals relied on TikTok influencers to elaborate on recent trends, desired pieces, new aesthetics and unique looks.

One of my personal favorite fashion influencers is Wisdom Kaye (@wisdm8). He creates interactive videos that discuss the prices of clothing items, best and worst outfits, specific pieces and their fluidity, controversial fashion choices and much more. I have always been inspired by his fashion sense because, even though it is different from mine, his passion is undeniable.

A good influencer knows how to influence, hence the name. The passion for a subject is what leads to influencing others. I have always been influenced in fashion from social media. Though I have a style that is my own, I have succumbed to trendy items in hopes of understanding the appreciation for such trends.

The TikTok Shop became viral over the past year because of its ease

in distributing trending clothing pieces. They sold other items, but the fashion industry played an enormous role in the success of the shop. In early 2024, the shop was known for its advertisements about shapewear bodysuits. As time went on, they began to advertise other stunning pieces such as sundresses, cheaper versions of Ugg boots and two-piece lounge sets.

Each user's For You Page is different, as its algorithm is organized based on your primary interests. It is possible that my algorithm showcased clothing because I love it, and it is possible that another user's algorithm rarely advertised anything. Nevertheless, I am aware of the influence that multiple users created surrounding fashion.

Before TikTok's influence on a fashion basis, Instagram and YouTube were successful in pushing content for outfits and overall aesthetics. However, it wasn't often that the influencers showing the clothes and accessories would link those pieces to their posts. It was as if social media was real life; when we walk past somebody on a street, they do not have a lingering tag above their head that links their outfit. TikTok, however, normalized the ability to easily access certain pieces.

For example, when a user liked a pair of platform Converse, a Miu Miu purse lookalike, tortoise-shell bluelight glasses, gold ring sets with a custom initial or an off-the-shoulder, pink sweatshirt, they could go to the caption of the influencer's post or the link in their Bio to order the same items, or they could find other interesting pieces.

Without the realm of TikTok influencers, fashion may become more difficult to keep up with for trending aesthetics or new releases. These influencers created a

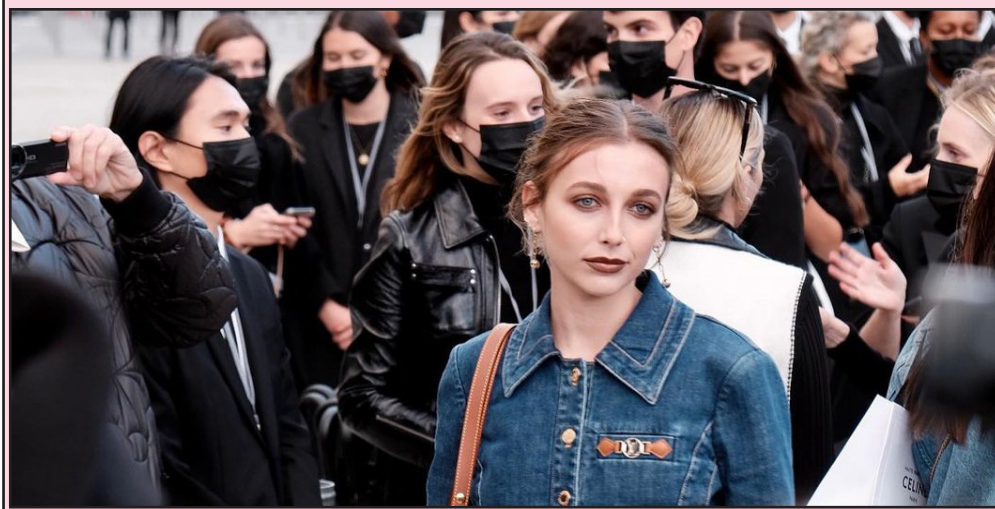
world in which their fashion-related decisions were welcomed and appreciated. In a way, TikTok is like a news channel. Lots of people—whether it is always factual or not—rely on TikTok to access simple news. Some of this news included fashion choices or information about different brands.

Before the communication of TikTok's potential banning, I enjoyed reading about brands' new collections and the inspiration behind them. I thought it added life and reasoning to what was being dropped to consumers, including myself. Without TikTok, those stories would be harder to distribute. Hopefully, another platform will take the handles and steer us back to the influences we know and love.

Long before TikTok, YouTube was a social phenomena. Thousands of people gained leverage posting long videos about the things that they were passionate about. I have always loved YouTube because it offers a space for everybody to flourish. My hope is that if TikTok does get banned, YouTube will make a comeback to showcasing the fun parts about fashion and others' favorite forms of content.

Regardless of what the future holds for TikTok, the app was and is a powerful tool for the generation with cell phones. People found their hobbies, interests, identities and jobs through the app. Nonetheless, our inspirations and newfound selves will consistently live outside of the app.

We have been shaped by millions of others without knowing it; TikTok brought strangers together without realizing it. We'll still always be interlinked, and I think that is a very cool fact. There is always going to be a gold-hardware belt that keeps us in the loop.



Courtesy of Flickr

Influencer Emma Chamberlain attending 2021 Paris Fashion Week in Paris.

The man behind the camera

Jada Lee
Guest Contributor

Trey Paul is a freelance photographer with a "creative eye."

"One thing that I hear a lot is that I have a good eye. Which is the only thing that really kept me going," Paul said.

Paul values feedback from both peers and mentors, but he knows is always his harshest critic. Paul says he

constantly searched for ways to enhance his work even if it was just by a small increase.

"A lot of my best work is work that I didn't really like at first and I'd really obsess over the details," Paul said.

He is a former athlete at Shippensburg University, and his background in sports fuels his competitive nature.

"My goal is to be better than before and the competition...I can be just as good, if not better," Paul

said.

Regardless of how the goal is met, Trey Paul's main focus is the end goal. Despite his accomplishments, he has continued to spend time properly defining his own style. Paul remains "picky" with detail.

Paul works toward achieving his goals. He takes on tasks without compensation when necessary. Over the past three and a half years, he has

dedicated time to defining his personal style. He maintains a strong focus on details and precision in his work.

From there, he continued to incorporate a sharp and rich style to his photos. Paul's images are made with "deep, soulful colors that evoke a series of emotions."

"Sometimes you have a vision for what you want but you don't know how to create it," Paul said. "That's what cost me a lot of long hours."

He referred to himself as a perfectionist that will go to the furthest extent just to get to his desired look.

"A lot of what the public sees are things that I've spent hours on behind the scenes just to get that look," Paul explained.

Paul began learning about Adobe's Photoshop, Lightroom and Premiere programs during his senior year of high school in a production class. However,

the course wasn't what drove his passion for photography.

What started as a shared hobby with friends grew significantly, leading Paul from a high school classroom to working with college students, all before owning his own camera.

"Once word got around, everyone was so amazed with the work that had taken place," Paul said.

Read the full story at
theslateonline.com.