



STILLWATER AREA HIGH SCHOOL

5701 STILLWATER BLVD. N OAK PARK HEIGHTS, MN

THE PONY EXPRESS

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2022

SAHSPONYEXPRESS.COM

ISSUE 2 VOLUME 68

PONY BREW

The **Pony Brew** class taught by Jon Hinzman, provides students opportunities to build **real-world experience** and practice **social skills** in a work setting.



PROVIDES JOB EXPERIENCE



Photos by Thomas Cass

Special education teacher Jon Hinzman helps run the Pony Brew. A student empties used k-cups into a bucket of coffee grounds.



Paraprofessional Patti Cowell helps students with their jobs in the Pony Brew. Students help run the Pony Brew before school and during the first three class hours of the day. Students run the class by themselves as they take orders, refill stock, make change, and deliver orders to students and teachers. Special education students gain real world experience from this class.



Photo by Ella Belland

Security guards look the cameras around the school on a computer.

School safety affects learning environment

REECE BASTYR
Social Media Editor

"I do feel safe because I think this is a caring community and that's what it takes. Every environment can be safer and we should always strive to do better," Assistant Principal Shelly Phernetton explained why she feels safe in the school. She oversees safety and security by making sure all areas in the building are secure.

Having the right protocols is one of the most important things for keeping a building and a large group of people safe. Without everyone knowing what to do and how to do it, nothing would flow. Part of Phernetton's job is to oversee safety and security. Safety can be a thing that is overlooked because people assume they are safe, but in a confusing world that cannot happen, especially in a school.

She looks over everything from the "physical safety of the building and the grounds and having enough lights in the parking lot." Phernetton explained she deals with everything that, "might be connected with the safety of the people," within this building.

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ONLINE EXCLUSIVE



PHOTO BY AVA BIEDERMAN

School board candidates share future vision

Two new school board members were elected on Nov 8, while maintaining three incumbent members from the previous term. Returning Board members Pete Kelzenberg and Alison Sherman will serve a four-year term alongside new members Eva Lee and Andrew Thelander. Beverly Petrie will be finishing her remaining 2 years from a resigned board member in 2021.

It has been said that the board is now more ideologically aligned than in the past, which changes the dynamics of meetings and the efficiency of policymaking.

"I have no problem sharing my feelings or my thoughts with any other board members and just having the back-and-forth conversations, and I believe in their integrity," board member Pete Kelzenberg said. This goes to show that the boards in the past did not have room for constructive criticism and overall accordance.

"When we have a disagreement, it's going to be a respectful disagreement." *Continue reading at sahsponyexpress.com*



CREATIVE COMMONS PHOTO BY BILL POHLMANN

Twinkle carnival comes back

HO! HO! HO! The holidays are around the corner bringing back the Twinkle Carnival to Stillwater. Bundle up and get ready for the twinkle lights and Santa downtown in December.

Santa comes into town full of joy and excitement for the younger children along with Disney characters such as Elsa and Anna from the movie "Frozen".

Modern day Santa was a monk whose name was St. Nicholas. St. Nicholas was believed to be born in 280 A.D in Patara, near Myra in modern day Turkey. Legends say that St. Nicholas gave away wealth and traveled to help those who were poor and sick. St. Nicholas gained popularity as he was known as the protector of children and sailors. Over time, St. Nicholas turned to modern day Santa, who delivers toys to those children on the good list.

"It is special for the kids, seeing the kids be super excited about Santa is nice," junior Olivia Thieman said.

The Twinkle Carnival is an event hosted at Lowell Park to celebrate the holidays and decorate the downtown area with tons of beautiful lights. *Continue reading at sahsponyexpress.com*

1:1 technology program helps students access online learning

GRACE CHENEY
Photography Editor
Copy Editor

This November, the elementary, middle and high schools received new Chromebooks for each student through the 1:1 technology program. This is due to schools' quick transition to online learning because of the COVID pandemic.

The 1:1 technology program was funded by the technology levy in 2022. A levy is something voters approved, and it got voted on in a special election.

Principal Robert Bach said that there were specific questions about technology when the voters were voting. This made sure that there was a certain amount of money that was going to be devoted to the technology. Once that got approved, the money went towards the 1:1 devices.

The purpose of the 1:1 technology program is that each student has access to some sort of electronic device. Kindergarten and first-grade students are the only exception and get one iPad per every two kids and these devices are used to support in-class instruction. Second graders through fifth graders received clamshell Chromebooks that will be in-class tools for each student and will only be taken home when needed. Sixth graders through twelfth graders received the two-in-one touchscreen Chromebook that will go back and forth between students' homes and the school.

"As we move more and more instruction to digital platforms, we have

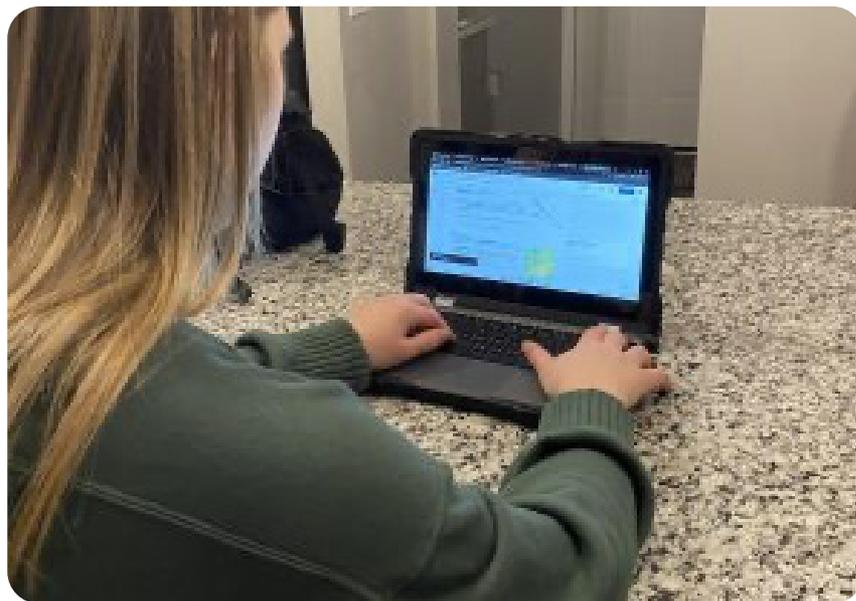


PHOTO BY GRACE CHENEY

A middle school student works on a new Chromebook provided by the school. Thanks to the 1:1 technology initiative she is able to work from home.

to make sure that kids have access to that. [The 1:1 initiative] is a way of ensuring that all students have access to it," Bach said.

Online learning has slowly started to evolve ever since 1989 when the University of Phoenix started using one of the first online services. Then the pandemic happened and everything turned to online learning so quickly that students, parents and teachers did not have time to react to the change. The pandemic is one of the main reasons everything has moved online and instead of going back to how it was, schools are pushing forward with more technology-

based curricula. The only problem with that is that not all students can afford or access a device to do their online learning when they are not at school.

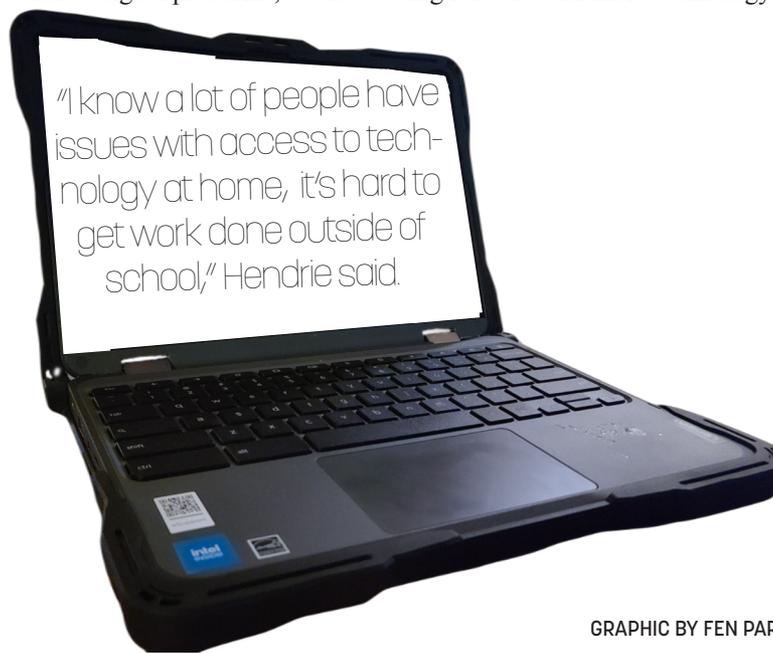
An article on the Stillwater Area Public Schools website stated, "With our Universal Access (1:1 technology) program, a student can access their learning when they are out ill, on vacation or simply working on a class project on the weekend."

The new program allows students to have access to a device whenever they need one and they do not need to worry about the cost or availability of the device.

The school has an acceptable use policy. Students acknowledge that they understand the acceptable use policy, which is covered in the fifth-hour class meetings at the beginning of the year. This policy is put in place so students do not misuse or mess around with the new devices.

"We understand and accept that there is going to be a certain amount of wear and tear. So typically, our stance has been if something breaks and it is accidental, we figure out ways to cover that. If it breaks as a result of horseplay or a result of other negligent behaviour then we wind up taking that up with students and families," Bach said.

Every student having access to a device will likely decrease the number of missing assignments because "now there is no reason not to be able to do your homework as long as it is online," junior Grace Hendrie said.



GRAPHIC BY FEN PARHAM

"I know a lot of people have issues with access to technology at home and it is hard to get their work done outside of school and some people use it as an excuse to get out of doing the work," Hendrie added.

The devices will help students stay on track with classes and missing assignments. They will have access to all school websites (e.g., Schoology) from home. This benefits the teachers and the students.

There are many cool things about the new Chromebooks for sixth through twelfth graders. The computers can convert into a laptop, tablet, tent and stand. It has an all-day battery life and an optional touchscreen pen for sketching and taking notes. The school also provided a protective case to make sure that the computers stay as safe as possible when being transferred back and forth.

"I really like how [the Chromebooks] are touch screen," eighth grader Brynne Laska said.

The touchscreen part of the Chromebook is probably the most popular component of the new computers for students. This allows hands-on learning while still being

online. Some students already have personal computers that they bring from home and do not need the computers that are being supplied.

Hendrie said that the new technology "only benefits people who need the computers. Having everyone take a computer is kind of a waste of resources because people are going to take them and never touch them."

There is a good amount of people who already have computers, but "I feel like most kids will use them," Laska said.

Some students might have their personal computers, but they might be old and slow, or they might be broken. The new computers might just be more appealing to students too rather than their personal computers. The computers are getting the most use from students who desperately need them, though. The new Chromebooks are necessary for a successful online learning environment.

Students get to keep the computers for the duration of their high school years. Students will never have to worry about having access to computers or online work again thanks to the technology levy and the 1:1 initiative.

The prevalence of technology

- More than three quarters of the nation's school districts are now using online learning to instruct students
- According to the Pew Research Center, 92% of teachers say that the internet has a major impact on their ability to access content, resources and materials.
- According to a CompTIA study, nine out of 10 students indicated that using technology in the classroom would help prepare them for the digital future.

Jocelyn McBride shows her musical talent through multiple ensembles

LAVENDER SCHLETER
Social Media Editor

Senior Jocelyn McBride is a fantastic music student, participating in both Concert Orchestra as a violinist and Concert Choir as a soprano one.

She is involved in not only the standard choir and orchestra, but also the extracurricular musical activities offered, which include Con Amici Orchestra and Vagabonds. These are exclusive to only those in the top of the orchestra and choir programs.

McBride started having an interest in music from a very young age. Her family, especially her mom, was very inclined in music, teaching her and her siblings to play piano.

She would “always sing around the house.”

Her siblings were also involved in the arts, including playing instruments and participating in choir.

An interesting fact about McBride is that she did not join choir until her senior year of high school.

“I have not really been in choir before. I think I was in fifth grade choir. And then no experience since then,” McBride said.

One of the choir teachers, Angela Mitchell, who directs Concert Choir and Vagabonds, was impressed with McBride’s skills, especially since she did not have much experience before this year.



PHOTO SUBMITTED BY JOCELYN MCBRIDE

Senior Jocelyn McBride plays her violin in Concert Orchestra. She is a second violin and participates in this class everyday during fifth hour.

“She is overall a very good musician,” Mitchell explained.

“She is used to being a string player, but string players often have really beautiful voices. She just innately sings in tune and then she has the ability to read music, which puts her up into a level that makes her ready for Vagabonds,” Mitchell added.

Her orchestra teacher, Ryan Jen-

sen, was also impressed by her skills over the last year.

“She is willing to take risks and she understands that being a violinist is being willing to learn from your mistakes,” Jensen explained.

“Throughout the course of last year, I feel she has really accepted herself and come into her own as a person and violinist,” Jensen added.

Throughout the years, even if

McBride has not participated in choir, she has attended a lot of their events because her siblings were performing in them. This is something that really pushed her to audition for choir this year.

“Something about choral music was just always really impressive and touching to me,” McBride explained. “I think that inspiration of listening to it for years and finally feeling like I wanted to, helped me.”

Even if she does not plan on having music as a career, she hopes to incorporate it in any way she can. Either as just a hobby or something she does when she has time.

“I really hope to continue. At the very least, I will probably take my violin with me to college and just play for fun,” McBride said.

“I also hope to go somewhere where I can audition for an ensemble or join a choir again,” McBride added.

McBride is a talented musician that the Concert Orchestra and Concert Choir are fortunate to have. She has so many talents and contributes a lot to the music department.

Jensen proved this point when he said, “Jocelyn’s awesome. She is great. She has just been really awesome to have in orchestra. I am going to be sad to see her leave at the end of this year.”

Avery Lorinser continues playing lacrosse

MAYCIE NEUBAUER
Podcast Reporter
Distribution Reporter

“Ever since I started getting serious about lacrosse it has always been a goal for me to play in college,” senior Avery Lorinser said.

In the fall of 2022, Lorinser announced her commitment to Northern Michigan University (NMU). Lorinser has decided to further her lacrosse career and play at the collegiate level.

For many, the fall of senior year is stressed filled trying to find their perfect fit for the next four years.

Lorinser explained her biggest struggle was trying to find the right

college and the right team. She did not quite know if she wanted to play at the next level, but NMU made it a no-brainer.

Lorinser has always pushed herself to be the best she can be so she can turn her dreams into reality.

Lorinser explained that in the off season, she works out twice a week with her team at Altius as well as working out on her own. She is on two different club teams and practices weekly.

Lorinser has been playing lacrosse ever since grade school. Growing up around lacrosse, Lorinser always enjoyed playing the game she liked with the people she loved. She has always had an immense amount of support, but her two biggest fans would be her parents.

“They came to every game rain or shine and have done everything possible to help me commit,” Lorinser said.

Recruiting is also a very stressful time for athletes as well. Many do not understand the stress behind putting themselves in front of college coaches and performing to the best of their ability. The recruiting timeline and process can be different for everyone. Not knowing if she wants to play lacrosse in college as a junior or even sophomore can drastically



PHOTO BY MAYCIE NEUBAUER

Senior Avery Lorinser stands in front of the wildcat statue. She will continue her lacrosse career at Northern Michigan University for the next four years.

change the outcome of the college she picks.

“A mistake I made is I waited until I was older and then there was a lot of colleges that were less willing to talk to me,” Lorinser said.

Lorinser added that it was not a last minute decision but instead a “full four year task”.

“It was fun to see her reaction to each campus and you could really tell she fell in love with NMU,”

senior Keira Jelinek said.

Jelinek and Lorinser traveled across the nation together over the summer touring colleges, going to camps, and playing in tournaments.

Lorinser is not only a role-model to her teammates and youth associations, but an athlete that makes the coaches job easy. Not many athletes are super coachable and able to take both negative and positive feedback, but Lorinser checks all of those boxes.

“She is the perfect example of how hard work outside of practice pays off. She now will be taking a large role on the high school team this year with the opportunity to play another four years in college. Her determination, commitment and love for the game will show the younger girls anything is possible,” coach Carly Fedorowski said.

Over the summer, Lorinser has put in an enormous amount of time and effort to accomplish her goal. With friends and family supporting her every step of the way it has made the choice to play lacrosse at Northern Michigan University a simple decision.

In 2020, a survey showed that there are roughly 99,750 student athletes at the high school level. For lacrosse, Lorinser is among the 2.6% who continue to play in college.

GRAPHIC BY STELLA MCHUGH

INFORMATION FROM
SCHOLARSHIPSTATS.COM

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Winter concerts amaze audiences

KENNEDY WILLIAMS
Podcast Reporter
Distribution Reporter

The winter choir, band and orchestra concerts took place at the high school over the month of November. These events showcased numerous students and their talents along with proof of their hard work and dedication. Parents, friends and staff were invited to enjoy the music at many locations in the surrounding areas.



Photos by Grace Cheney
Orchestra director Ryan Jensen conducts the orchestral winds at the Nov. 17 orchestra concert. Band, choir and orchestra all had concerts during this month.

The first performance to be held this November was the Concert Choir's on Nov. 3 at the St. Andrew's Church in Mahtomedi. The performance included every choir in the district from grades eight through high school seniors. This is to encourage young singers to continue their musical journey and to showcase the improvement and increased difficulty over the years.

One song in the show was an Estonian piece on nature and tranquility. Although the song was in another language, the meaning was loud and clear.

"You can totally understand the feeling of what that's trying to convey based on the visual emotions of the choir," senior Adam Long said.

The practice and time put in were seen at the concert through a smooth flow and sound that filled every corner of the room, leaving the audience in awe.

The second show to take place was the band concert. This performance included grades five, eight and seniors.



Each level band played a few songs to show their talent and went from least to most experienced to show the progression over many years of practice. When the seniors took the stage, they performed many songs. One included a lesson on how accurate and perfect each person needs to play, the song was called "A Plus". This piece features two parts, a perfect part where each player plays every note how it was intended to, and another part where each person made one mistake. The second part, although 99 percent accurate, filled the audience's ears with disgust, teaching everyone how practiced and talented a successful band needs to be.

Band director Dennis Lindsay wanted the audience to understand that "certain activities aren't gradable in the sense of just getting all the right notes, you have to have something a lot more there than that," when they left the concert.

The last show was the orchestra concert. This concert took place on Nov. 17 at the high school. The perfor-

mance showcased many prepared and skilled young adults. One piece they presented was called "In the Company of Angels". This piece featured a harp along with many very high-pitched parts. Wood instruments can pose some difficulty when attempting to hit those higher notes, so this stretch piece required lots of practice.

Junior Eme Rickheim said she hopes the audience could see the group's hard work and dedication after hearing how well-practiced and perfect the music sounded.

November was full of musical sounds for all to enjoy. A lot of hard work, time and effort were put into the choir, band and orchestra winter concerts. Many special talents and unique techniques were presented and Long thinks the group "has done a really good job of just taking it on" and "being willing to challenge their abilities".

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Art club helps students express themselves

MAGGIE O'BRIEN
Layout Editor

Art club has become a place where students can unplug and take a break from the stress of school and life. Art club is a calming place for students and it allows them to express themselves and their creativity. This environment has led to an increase in members.

The club is open and full of supplies. It is a space where students can do what they want. There is not a set activity and the members can use any of the supplies whenever they want.

"This is an open space for kids to create and if they want to learn how to do anything, Mrs. Nisi and I can help show them," club advisor Peter Koltun said.

Having an abundance of supplies is an attractive feature that draws students to join and many students favor that aspect of the club.

"I really like painting and I wanted more time to paint with open supplies so this helps," junior Ella Malecek said.

The art club has been around for a long time and has been a popular club, however over the past few years, there has been an increase in members. A trend among students is joining in big groups and telling their friends about the club so they can join as well.

"Last year there were a few people that wanted to be here, and they were like 'you should join and you should join' and their friends would join them," Koltun said.

Although the main trend is joining with their friends, it has not always been like that in the past. In fact, a good amount of people in the art club worked independently and did not socialize.

Koltun said there have been years where in the past there was a rise in members and "it has been just some random people that seem to come and at the same time" and do things independently.

A big aspect with the gain in members is the promotion being done, especially by the members and club advisors. The advisors of the club promote it by telling their students about the club and taking part in other school-wide activities.

Club advisor Carey Nisi said that she shares information about the club with her class and that there is a sign at the Activities Fair every year.

The promoting they have been doing has had a positive impact when it comes to the amount of people who joined the club even though most of the students learn about the club through friends. There are other ways students have heard of the club as well.

"I found it by looking on the school's website at clubs that were



Photo by Ava Biederman
Senior Ruby Albiston gives another art club member her opinion on a drawing. Many students joined art club this year to create art and express themselves.

available before the school year started last year," sophomore Hanna Lauer said.

Art club is a great place to let students creativity flow and take some time out of their day for themselves or spend time with their friends. It is an escape that is necessary for some students.

"Art club is relaxing, peaceful, fun and calming. It helps me relax and gives me time to work on my art," Lauer said.

Even though the club has a lot of pros, there is one downside that has a big impact on the amount of students who join the club.

"If students did not have to pay the activities fee, I think the club would be out of control," Nisi said.

Overall, art club is a great way for students to take a break from life and use their creativity. It is not only that, but also a great way to socialize and get to know other students in the school. It is a completely different experience for everyone as well as the fact that they can make whatever they want and do whatever they want.

"Art club is really what the student wants it to be. Whether it is hanging out and having fun or experimenting. It is student-led," Nisi said.



Junior Samuel Hall is planing on making a piece of art out of clay for art club. Students are able to use many different mediums for them to create any art they would like.



Photos by Ava Biederman
Art club has many members at many different levels. These students are in the clay room, working with clay to make many different pieces.

Speech team prepares for new season

MICHEAL FREDRICKS
Digital Graphics Editor
Online Editor

Last year, the speech team performed phenomenally and made it into the top 40 of the nation. The group started preparing for the upcoming season in the summer and the beginning of the school year. Captains reached out to students to help grow the team to its full potential which made the students and coaches very optimistic for tournaments this year.

“We’re returning a really strong group of students. We secured some new coaches, our staff is bigger than it has ever been before. So we’re kind of rounding into one of the powerhouses in the state in speech,” head coach Joe Kalka explained.

With a larger and more talented team, a more experienced and diverse staff was needed to give these students the success they wanted this season. With so many students more coaches were needed to reach each of them and also prepare them to become the best they can be. Teachers, past speech students and even a nationally recognized speaker were all added to the staff, which helped prepare the team to perform even better this year.

“So our new coaches this year are Wayne Perkins who comes from a debate background and is obviously a teacher here at the school. Sarah Lauer, a former speech competitor herself and also a teacher at the school. She is going to bring lots of success and hopefully diversify the team more,” Kalka explained.

Teachers at the school provided a way to find students interested in speech and point them in that direction. With so many students though, teachers could not be the only coaches for the team.

“Mackenzie Burski is a former very competitive speaker from Lakeville north and is now a student at UW Stout volunteering for our discussion

category, which this year is theme on environmentalism. Hannah Kelco, who’s an attorney, my wife and does some environmental adjacent law. And then Natalie Syntek is a longtime speech coach. I think collectively they’re just going to bring expertise,” Kalka added.

Many returning team members became captains this year to help novices with their expertise from last year. These captains were chosen due to their ability to perform well and able to help grow and make the team better. During the preseason, these captains reached out to old members to make sure they were informed of upcoming meetings. They also networked to find the people who would best help the team grow. They added student leadership to the speech team that is not seen in many other extra-curricular.

“Communication is the single most important skill in the modern world. You can’t get anywhere if you can’t communicate and there are a whole bunch of different ways to do that. Speech allows people to sort of explore different ways of communication.”

- Soren Peterson

Junior speech captain Soren Peterson explained how he was getting old members into the loop of what is going on with the team along with trying to build the personnel of the team so they can dominate in all of the categories speech has. He thought that the team was looking very promising with recruits and returning speakers.

Much of the preseason for speech was trying to recruit students from all backgrounds and areas. Getting these perspectives and new ideas was impor-

tant to the team because it gave them more variety in categories and more depth in certain subjects. Students from all walks of life met together to speak their minds and share what mattered to them. The team consisted of anyone and everyone willing to put in the work and wanted to share what they are passionate about. The speech team was open to everyone.

Senior speech captain Iris Fuglie explained how speech is “really empowering” and allows students to talk about “something you’re passionate about.”

It took a lot of hard work for competitors to memorize up to 10-minute-long speeches. Although the captains and coaches were there for support, much of the work done on the speeches was personal. Many students wrote their speeches and many had to memorize long blocks of text to look the most polished during tournaments. The preseason was a busy time full of writing, revising and memorizing but also adding their flare to it.

Fuglie explained that she enjoyed picking out her topic on women’s rights and how she was excited to add her spin to her speech.

Something unique to speech was that students learned valuable skills that they can use for themselves such as working hard, public speaking and respectful communication. Many of the speeches and topics are hard and controversial but students learned how to share their opinions without shutting down others. Speech offered a way for students to break out of their shells, gain confidence and learn real-life skills. In the world today, these skills are crucial to success.

“Communication is the single most important skill in the modern world. You can’t get anywhere if you can’t communicate and there are a whole bunch of different ways to do that. Speech allows people to sort of explore different ways of communication,” Peterson said.

The speech team was like a family full of comradery and respect. Veteran



PHOTO BY MAYA DISHER

Junior Soren Peterson speaks to the team and does a song lyric activity.

speech competitors were excited for novices to gain the amazing memories that they have. To inspire and give interest, stories of success, failures, and fun times were passed around with laughter and smiles. The team was very kind and welcoming and wanted everyone to become the best they can be. They were excited to make memories with their team this year.

Peterson said that his favorite speech memory was “The first final I ever made” and that it “lit that fire” that kept him competing. He was excited to give the newer competitors that same fire.

The speech team was excited to start the preseason off so strongly. They were excited to share their passions with those around them. The speech team is not a club or a sport, it is a united group that welcomed all and was ready to let all voices be heard.

“Students in this school are passionate they’re driven, they’re caring, and they have things to say. We’re giving them a platform to deliver messages that matter,” Kalka said.

Bowling teams roll into state tournament

GEORGE PALM
Broadcast Video Editor

The varsity and JV bowling teams have recently found great success both being in the top five highest rated teams in their respective leagues as they head into the state tournament, with the Varsity team going 16-2 in matches, and the JV team going 17-1 in matches. Further proof of their success can be seen in their

average points. The varsity squad has an average team point count of 198.3 points, and the JV squad has a team average of 176 points.

The bowling team’s success is not a matter of luck, but rather a matter of dedication and good spirit within the team. The head coach, Jesse Curtis, touched on this by explaining how both teams are a family and the warm environment presented through the team’s morale due to the “camarade-

rie within the players themselves.”

Although the players do in fact play a role in the warm environment both teams possess, it is the role of the coach and the team captain who are responsible for that as well.

Matthew Meyer, a sophomore for the JV team, explained how the coach does more than teach them how to bowl, but how to mentally succeed in bowling. He stated how Curtis is “very helpful in giving tips... and helps me prepare for it [games] and how to focus too.”

The team captain, Lexi Monty, states that the role of the team captain includes the responsibility of “holding the team accountable and having fun, but learning.”

This attitude of having fun and learning from mistakes certainly leaves an effect on the players, but players such as freshman Drake Wait, who plays for the varsity team, suggest there’s more to bowling than wanting to just “have fun.” Drake said his favorite part of taking part in bowling is “competing, where everybody tries their hardest.”

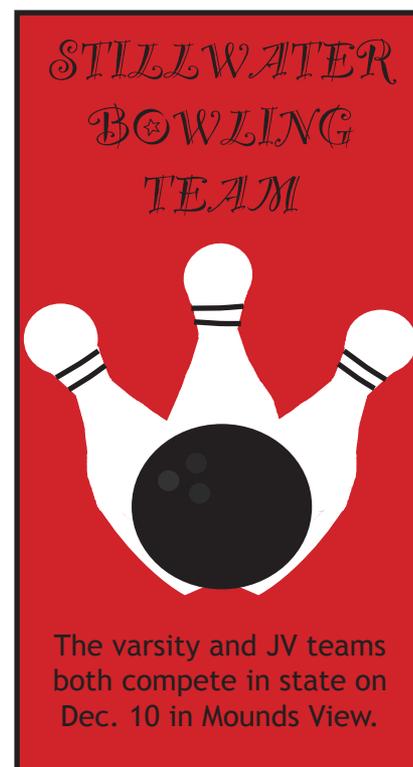
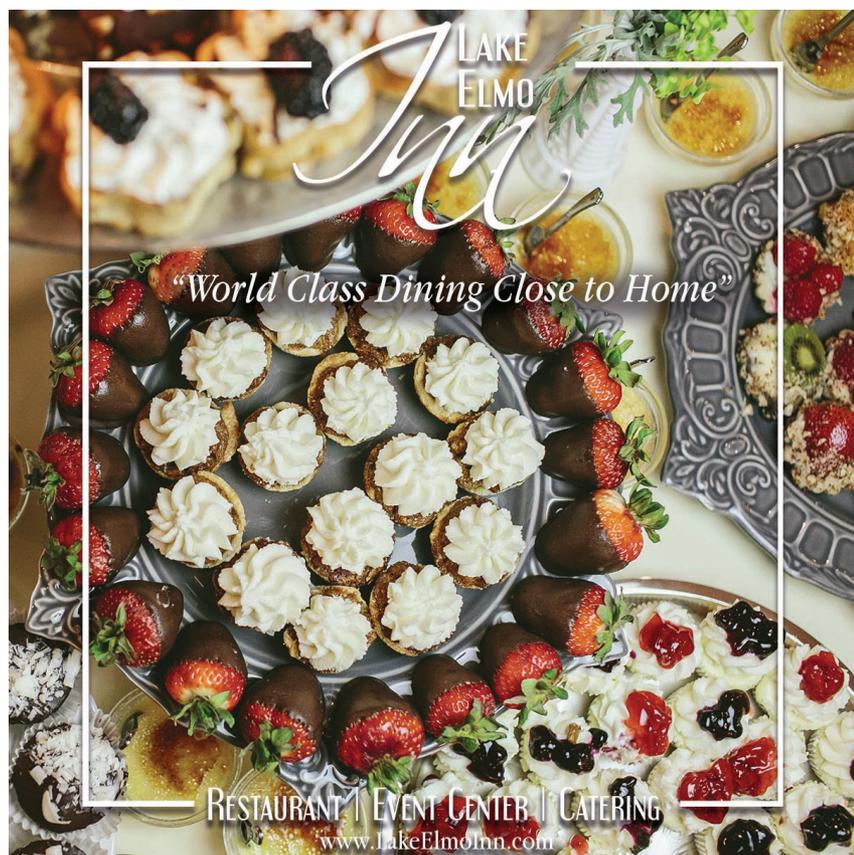
When asked about the environment of the team, whether it was more competitive or more friendly, Curtis said, “It’s a combination of both.”

With the warm but focused environment of the teams, the teams improved both mentally and physically throughout the entire season.

Curtis suggests that both teams improved in a handful of ways due to a “little better knowledge of the game.” He said that both teams have also tremendously improved in “where to shoot... and where to throw it.” Curtis later added that the improvements

made by both teams were due to “the ability of the kids to advance and improve.”

The bowling teams being successful in being top five in their leagues as they head into the state tournament is proof that having the desire to compete and wanting to win while cooperating and treating fellow colleagues with love and compassion, are a recipe for success and greater things to come along the way.



GRAPHIC BY ALISON KEELER



Unified PE offers an inclusive experience for all students

MAYA DISHER
Photography
Editor-in-Chief

High school is a time when students get to learn how to work and communicate with their peers. They create friendships and learn skills that will be carried into other aspects of their life. These four years are meant to unite the entire student body, but physical education teacher, Paula Harrison, saw a division between special education and general education students.

In 2019, Harrison introduced a new gym course to the school called Unified PE. Harrison attended a conference where a teacher talked about a class that brought special and general education students together to learn in an environment that caters to both education levels.

According to the speaker,

this was a unique learning experience that she believed benefitted both education levels greatly. Harrison could not help but agree and was inspired to bring this experience to her students.

"I've taught for a really long time and this, to me, is the way we should be working with our [special needs] friends. The whole school should be working together. This shouldn't be a 'you're in a separate lower class,' it should be how can we work together," Harrison said.

Unified PE has not only become an opportunity for general education students learn about the special needs community, but has also helped them learn other skills such as empathy, understanding and simply how to value other people.

Harrison said that we have been a "divisive society," for a

while and we need to understand that special education kids are not that different from everyone else, but people do not give them the chance to show it. This course has started to open the minds of young adults all around the nation, which therefore creates a broader future for the special education community.

The class is structured so that each student has a partner and everyday they are working together during fun activities.

Senior general education student McKenna Hink said that by getting to know these students personally everyday, she has a better understanding of how to properly communicate with special education students. Hoping to get a degree in elementary education, Hink plans to use these skills to help her with her future students of all abilities.

Since this program has

been created, many general education students have been inspired to become involved in TRUST (True Respect Unifies Students Together) Club, while many TRUST Club members have now enrolled in Unified PE.

Special education student and TRUST Club president, senior Kylynn Zanon was introduced to Unified PE by Harrison and she said she has gained even more knowledge on how to work and cater to someone else's special needs.

"You're making new connections, making new friends and your work is just a bunch of new experiences," Zanon said. "You're learning through all of these experiences about what they like and who they are."

Read more online

TRUST club leaders care on a deeper level

DANIEL ORTIZ
Broadcast Editor

The TRUST club gives opportunities to students with and without disabilities to "enjoy educational and physical activities to come together on equal terms with other students."

Physical Education and DAPE Specialist Paula Harrison said. The club has been active for about five years, but has been getting a lot of attention lately thanks to all the events and activities the TRUST leaders create.

Harrison said she found out about a program like this in a conference and she thought it was "exactly what we [high school] should be doing."

At the beginning of this school year, the club came up with the idea of T-shirts inspired by the superhero "Superman" to represent the club. The blue shirt has a diamond with a pony in the front and in the back it can read: "Inclusion is our Superpower." The shirts got so popular that a "second round" was needed, including the leader's effort to give out the T-shirts.

"We sold T-shirts at lunch, so they sat during their lunch period, the leadership group

will take turns...you go and sit there and tell people. This is what we're trying to do, trying to have more unity, more inclusion," Harrison said.

The TRUST club has a variety of events that have been really successful and fun for their members, they have events like the "Polar Plunge," which has raised almost \$8,700. They now have the T-shirts that have been popular around the high school, these events were created by the club leaders. "This is about the leadership group starting it," Harrison said.

"We meet every week to discuss upcoming events and tasks at hand. We discuss what the events will look like and how we will adapt to the needs of our members," senior Thomas Blair said.

"Being able to plan an event and come up with new ways to help our friends in the club is always a fun challenge," Blair added.

While the TRUST club is quite new, it has been growing in popularity through the years. One of the main goals of the club is for people to share with each other either with or without disabilities.

"I often see a lot of the spe-

cial needs members during the day, which always prompts me with the ability to greet them and have a brief conversation before going about my day," Blair said.

As inclusion as one of the TRUST club main goals, the club has to make sure that students involved feel included. The events, activities and things the club does to give people more knowledge about the goal of the club: reach out to students, and involve them in whatever they can be involved in, helps out so well to not only the leaders, nor the students, but the school as a whole.

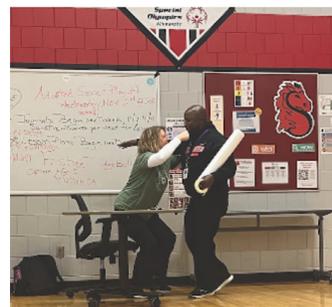
"Watching a member enjoy themselves because we found a way to include them in whatever activity we were all participating in has inspired me since day one," Blair said.

"I often see a substantial amount of people interacting with special needs kids in positive ways, even sitting with them at lunch. The purpose of the TRUST club is to attain total inclusion within our school, and seeing this come into effect is both motivating and incredible to witness," Blair added.



Photo submitted by Paula Harrison

The sale of these TRUST club shirts go towards the production of the club. The goal of the T-shirt is to provide people who see it with a new mindset: that inclusion is a super power.



Photos by Maya Disher



Unified PE teacher Paula Harrison leads the club, along with a couple other senior leaders devote their time to students in the club. The goal of the club is to reach out to students, and involve them in whatever they can be involved in, helps out so well to not only the leaders, nor the students, but the school as a whole.



The unified PE class won the adaptive basketball championship last year. They were accompanied by Mrs. Harrison and many student leaders that are involved in TRUST club. All of the adaptive teams were extremely successful last year, and are planned to be successful this year as well. There are senior leaders that have helped add to this success, and support the team.

Photo submitted by Will Hollaway



Photos include a typical day of Unified PE. They are in the gymnasium gym, participating in the trampoline track. Many people think that unified PE is completely different but really it is just a unique credit that is similar to any other PE.



Photos by Maya Disher

TRUST club raises money for equipment

AUBREE BIGGER
Copy Editor
Political Cartoon Editor

The TRUST club promotes unity, inclusivity and equality. This club works to unify the school and make students with disabilities feel at home. Often, disabled students can feel misplaced or like they do not fit in, and the members of the TRUST club work together to

"The main point of TRUST club is to kind of just unify the special education program with the rest of the school. It kind of like normalizes being friends with everyone,"

-Patrick de St. Aubin.

join hands and end the stigma. The TRUST club works together with its members to plan fund raising events. The club's most popular events are the Polar Plunge and when they sell their T-shirts for \$20 during lunch.

This year, the club's signature shirts have a superman

logo with the ponies mascot. On the back, it reads, "inclusion is our superpower" and "True-Respect-Unifies-Students-Together".

The club president is senior Rylynn Zanon and the leaders are seniors Patrick de St. Aubin and Tom Blair. The staff member advising the club is Paula Harrison. However, these are only a few of the many members of the club. They have members of all backgrounds and ages helping to create a safer, more unified school for everyone.

With the return of office hours, the club can do fun activities for students during that time, which they have not been able to do previously this year.

When asked about fund raising, Zanon said "It goes to our special Olympics," and "we use it to buy equipment." Although, they sometimes go on field trips or throw graduation parties for the club's seniors.

Harrison said they also use the money to buy T-shirts, specialized equipment and that they also donate some of their money to students whose shirts have gotten old and faded. "Donating helps us plan

a lot more events which of course is just great; we're also able to hold more campaigns and stuff. We're just able to spread the message a lot easier when we have, like per se, if we don't have money we can't buy the shirts we got, then we sell those back to make more money," St. Aubin said.

Fund raising is a big part of this club and is what helps them keep running. Not only is it beneficial to them in the future, but it is also an event that allows them to hang out and spend time together.

With donation money, the club can set up more fund raising events, sports events, charity events, and someday maybe even some art events. The club does a lot of fun activities and any sort of donation helps them out greatly.

The TRUST club does not use any of the money for profit. It all goes towards events, T-shirts and other things aforementioned.

Donation money is significant for the TRUST club. They need it to plan, enter, and run

Read more online

Pancheros opens a new location

ALISON KEELER
Layout Editor

Pancheros Mexican Grill opened in Stillwater on Nov. 15. It is a chain restaurant that began in Iowa and the publicity has grown rapidly since. Additionally, the process that Pancheros uses to prepare their food is unlike any other restaurant.

The Mexican grill includes both dine-in and takeout. Equally, the food is also available through Door Dash and the Pancheros mobile app. All of the meals are customizable to each customer's preference and the restaurant is allergen-friendly.

Pancheros was founded in 1992 by Rodney Anderson. He began the franchise in 2004 and there are now about 70 locations across the United States.

"We've had a big presence on the west side of the Cities for about 25 years," Manager of Pancheros Joe Kohler said. "[And within] probably the last 10 years, we have wanted to move east of the Cities."

Because of that, the franchise made its way to Stillwater earlier this year and it just had its grand opening mid-November. The restaurant is located on the corner of Highway 36 and Market Dr.

"This was a location that we've been looking at in Stillwater because we know it's a great community and it's growing rapidly," Kohler said.

For many years, there have already been multiple Mexican restaurants in the Stillwater area. It is said that Pancheros hopes to add some difference and uniqueness to the community. The ingredients that

Pancheros prepares are raved about by many customers.

Sophomore and Pancheros employee Lucy Marsden said, "It's similar to other Mexican restaurants but it's better. [We] make the tortillas fresh everyday, along with our other food."

The food at Pancheros is definitely what brings in new, and old, customers. There is a variety of options and the menu can be personalized to each person's liking.

Junior Zoe Vandenberg said she is "honestly really excited for anything that [Pancheros] might have. It's cool to have a new restaurant around with new food."

Pancheros Mexican Grill is said to be loved by many customers across the country who are always happy to come back for more. The food is prepared in such a specific way for the customers, the restaurant has redefined the standards of modern burritos.

"The biggest thing is that when people get burritos, we hand mix everything to make sure that every bite has [a piece of] everything that they wanted," Kohler explained.

The restaurant is still so new that many people did not know about it and they are just finding that it opened. However, it is very exciting because it is something new to add to the town.

"I actually hadn't heard of [Pancheros], which is part of the reason why I'm kind of excited. I always like new stuff opening and seeing what it's all about," Vandenberg said.

Pancheros has a warm and welcoming feel. The employees are kind



Photo by Maggie O'Brien

Pancheros is a modern restaurant with pleasant lighting. After ordering your food, you can eat in the nicely sized and comfortable sitting area.

and they are passionate about their jobs. They all work together as one big team.

"It's a good community and we all help each other." She added that "A lot of people from the high school work here which is cool. I would recommend it, the food is really good," Marsden explained.

Pancheros Mexican Grill is still actively looking for more employees. The restaurant has good flexible hours, as well as a strong community of people, and welcoming work environment.

"We are a new company [so] we are still looking for employees. If somebody wants a fun atmosphere, free food when they work, and a good job, [come] stop by!" Kohler said.

Pancheros is a great Mexican restaurant and it is a perfect new addition to Stillwater. The menu has a large variety of options for everyone and the interior of the restaurant has a really cool industrial look. It is different from other Mexican restaurants in the area and it is a great place to go for a nice Mexican meal.

'The School for Good and Evil' film leaves viewers uninterested, bored and dissatisfied

AVA BIEDERMAN
Photographer
Online Editor

"The School for Good and Evil" is just another fantasy film that consistently left fans in a bored and idle state. It was truly something fans were not expecting and not in a good way.

"The School for Good and Evil" is a fantasy and drama Netflix film based on two best friends. These two find themselves on opposite sides of the school, making them opponents in battle. This combat aids in balancing good and evil. While many viewers praised the actors, they were not impressed with the film.

The script was written by David Magee whose work was recently revealed in October. Paul Feig, the director, has already started teasing another film, but fans are unsure whether they will be watching.

All actors seemed to fit the role well, except for Sophie played by Sophia Anne Caruso. Being one of the two main characters, readers believed she was not quite what they envisioned. It simply was not a good match for the role. Compared to the meticulously drafted Sophie from the book, the movie laughably underper-



Graphic by Maggie O'Brien

formed. The way she was represented did not match up at all. With the material each actor was given, everyone else seemed to do an exceptionally better job.

"I think all the actors did a really good job for what they were given except for Sophie's actor, it didn't fit," junior Reese Nodes explained. All the other actors and actresses did a good job with the limited opportunities.

Viewers believed that the way Magee wrote the script made the film predictable and cliché. As fans were watching they could easily predict what was going to happen next. The clichés in the film many thought were unnecessary and over the top cringy. Along with that many fans were disappointed with how fast-paced certain

parts were. Viewers thought that they skipped over good parts that deserved more screen time.

Senior Samuel Sherr-Nelson thought the film was relatively fast-paced with a lot of random add-ins that were not needed. "Yes, it was very predictable," Nelson added.

"I would have also loved to see more of the certain aspects that happened in the book more explained in the movie," Nodes added.

So much that happened in the books was simply sped over or skipped all together.

Although the movie was over two hours, Netflix still managed to make the plot feel unfinished. Viewers think the film will seem better if there is a second one on the way. They brushed over many key parts of the

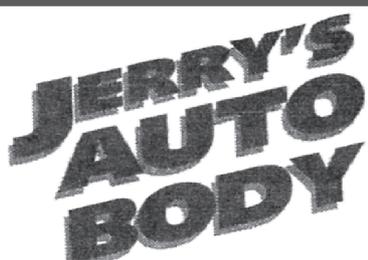
book plot. A significant portion of the buildup for the climax was somehow skipped, ultimately leaving fans annoyed.

When asked about thoughts on creating a follow up film, junior Chloe Stanton said, "If they come up with a second movie? Then yes. If they don't then no...I feel like it's not enough to cover the first book."

The love interest plot was not what viewers were expecting. Much that was in the book was just sped past without a thought. So much of what fans were hoping for was just not there. Viewers believe that Magee brushed over the most important parts of the love interest, everything that should have been included, was not.

Stanton said they really glossed over the love interest and how it unfolded. The love interest build up should have been more suspenseful.

The Netflix film, "The School for Good and Evil", is something viewers should not waste their time on. There was skipped over plots, too many cliché moments, unfit characters and over the top cringe, resulting in failed expectations. Spend those two hours doing or watching something actually entertaining.



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Tare Porbeni accepted into ivy league college Princeton University

ANGELA TAYLOR
Business Editor
Copy Editor

Tare Porbeni, senior offensive lineman and academic weapon, has been accepted into ivy league college, Princeton University. Located in Princeton, NJ. Princeton has an impressive acceptance rate of 5.6 percent. That being said, Porbeni did not allow that to scare him.

Porbeni maintained a GPA of 3.81, and explained, "academic excellence has been enforced in my house since youth."

Though glorified in classic teen movies such as "High School Musical", the life of a student athlete is not without its challenges.

When asked about the most difficult aspects of being a student athlete, Darrell Salmi, teacher and varsity football coach, said, "Athlete's need to train a lot while also continuing to do well with their classes, and their relationships with friends and family. Some will also maintain a part-time job and

keep up with chores at home. Those that are able to balance their personal life, school, and athletics display high levels of commitment and grit which I feel will benefit them greatly in their adult lives."

"He has proven to be a formidable and athletic football player, while also maintaining a rigorous academic career. On top of all this, he is truly a stand-up guy who is full of wisdom and kindness"

-Tom Blair

Porbeni is held in high esteem with both his peers, teachers and fellow teammates.

When senior Tom Blair was asked how Porbeni inspired him, he said, "Tare is an admirable football player because of various ways he conducts himself on and off the field. He has proven to be a formidable and ath-

letic football player, while also maintaining a rigorous academic career. On top of all this, he is truly a stand-up guy who is full of wisdom and kindness."

Porbeni received various other offers from schools such as: Columbia University, St. Thomas, Georgetown University, Brown University, Davidson College and more before officially deciding to commit to Princeton.

When asked about his reaction, he simply said, "I was excited to say the least, felt good being recognized and given an opportunity to play at the next level."

Though baring the college application process, Porbeni, explained by Salmi, was known to be calm and focused person despite the stress.

His display of respect served as "a great lesson and reminder to everyone at one point or another," according to Salmi.

Given his fierce work ethic. Porbeni's success will without a doubt begin to reveal its face in time.



PHOTO BY GRACE CHENEY

Senior Tare Porbeni runs back to the sidelines after possession gets switched back to defense. The game ended with a pony win in their first state game against Lakeville North on Nov. 4 scoring 42-7.

Volleyball team makes run for State

JACK HIGGINS
Photographer
Copy Editor

The girls volleyball team made one of their best runs in school history this year, winning the 4AAAA section championship and going to the state tournament for just the fourth time in school history. The senior-heavy team has gone to state in 2009, 2017 and 2018, so none of this year's players have made it this far. It is an exciting experience to make it to the state tournament, being played at the Xcel Energy Center every year.

The team will still have a lot of depth next year, even after losing a big group of senior players. The JV, sophomore and freshman teams all have a lot of depth and talent, with some juniors, sophomore and freshmen even playing on varsity.

"I haven't really focused on next year, but I think we will obviously lose a big chunk of talent, but I think we have a lot of younger girls that are going to be great for the future and be successful and have a lot of skill and talent," junior Mackenzie Peters said.

Math teacher Sara Baumgard said in female sports, team chemistry makes up a lot of the team's success. This has proven to be crucial this year, making the run to state possible. The team has bonded over many events, banquets, dinners and tournaments. This helps to make the team stronger in terms of knowing each other and working well together.

Another aspect of the team working so well together is their record this season, sitting at 23-6.

Baumgard said "We are going into State 23-6," which is a really good season.

"We've had some really big wins and some losses, but besides a few, most of the losses were extremely competitive," Baumgard said.

The season was very exciting for most players, as senior captain Tori Liljegren said, "It was really exciting. It was a good four years and went by very quickly."

Part of why the season was so fun was because of all the wins they had, and the tournaments they played in and won.

Overall, the girls had a productive season, and although they will lose a lot of talent in the seniors, they are hoping to build on this year's success for next year and be better than ever to make it back to the Xcel Energy Center and make another run for State.



PHOTO BY JACK HIGGINS
Junior Mackenzie Peters attempts a spike in the state volleyball tournament.

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Swift faces controversy for video

MILENA SANDSTROM
Podcast Reporter
Distribution Reporter

Taylor Swift released a music video for her song, Anti-Hero, which is on her newest album, *Midnights* and got backlash from the media. The song *Anti-Hero* has a powerful meaning of how we are our own worst enemies.

Swift showed a clip in the music video of herself on the scale and the second “villain” version of herself looking over her shoulder in disapproval. The clip in the music video that received the backlash from the public is a scene when she steps on the scale and it says the word “fat”.

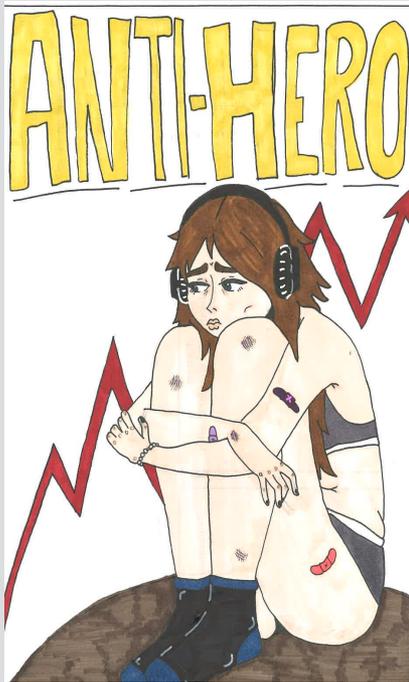
The media is claiming Swift is bringing negativity to the word fat and implying that fat is bad. People have misinterpreted the meaning of the scene, Swift was trying to speak out on society’s beauty standards that are placed on women and how they affect someone’s self worth. The meaning of the scene in Swift’s music video was wrongly misunderstood, the media is falsely accusing Swift of fatphobia.

Swift has spoken about her body image issues that she has faced in the past in her documentary *Miss Americana*.

Swift’s career started at a very young age and from then on her body and physical appearance has been a focal point for the public. In 2020, the singer started sharing her own experiences in an interview with *Variety* magazine.

“I remember how, when I was 18, that was the first time I was on the

cover of a magazine, and the headline was like ‘Pregnant at 18?’ And it was because I had worn something that made my lower stomach look not flat. So I just registered that as a punishment,” Swift said.



GRAPHIC BY AUBREE BIGGER

Swift shared with the magazine when she saw or heard comments about her body it triggered her eating disorder and made her feel like she was not good enough. Many people suffer from body image issues because of the beauty standards society

has placed on women. That is what Swift was trying to share.

“I know when she was first introduced in the music industry she was working with toxic groups and they gave her a bad self body image. Most of the *Anti-Hero* music video was her way of showing what it was like for her being so young and a woman in the music industry. And I think she did a great job portraying that but she could have done it in a more sensitive way,” junior Avery Adams explained.

Swift received backlash for the scene in the video, so much so that she deleted the clip. People on social media were calling Swift fatphobic, saying that she is bringing negativity to the word fat. However, the other side of the argument was claiming Swift was just trying to empower others who are facing similar struggles.

“Taylor had a good message and intention, she was trying to be empowering. I give her credit for trying to bring light and normalize the issue,” counselor Kristina King said.

The public claims Swift’s video was insensitive because the way she chose to represent the issue.

“Everybody has their own experiences and when you share them you should not get hated on,” junior Lyndsey Selman said.

Swift tried to speak out and though some people felt for her and related to the topic, others believed she was wrong to include the scene in her video or believe she could have done a better job at putting the message out.

Swift got backlash mostly on Twit-

ter and TikTok; people made points saying she could have used a different word, she is making young people think being fat is bad, and she could have left the scale blank.

“I think it’s a little bit insensitive yet she was just trying to depict her body issues,” Adams said.

Swift does not deserve the criticism she has received for the short scene in the video. Celebrities receive bad press quite often. It can be very unfair and diminishing when they are trying to bring light to a hard topic, especially when it is based off their own experience like in Swift’s case. She could have used a different word with the same meaning, but that could have gotten backlash as well, King said.

The singer deleted the scene from the video which shows she cares about what people have to say, but it is a sad circumstance that people took her message the wrong way.

“I think it was a hard decision to keep the clip or not, either way it was going to get hate for it,” Selman explained.

Swift should not have received backlash for the scene in the music video and it is unfair she was bullied into deleting it. It is completely unjust the media called her fatphobic for the incident. The logic people are using to hate on Swift is the same as saying everyone who uses the word fat is “fatphobic”. Swift was trying to share her personal struggles she has been facing for years and the media twisted her message, giving her bad press.

GRAPHIC BY BELLE LAPOS

ACT test scores affect college admissions

SYDNEY RODD
Layout Editor-in-Chief

High school students wonder if it is still worth their time and money to take college readiness exams, such as the ACT and SAT. This is because colleges across the nation are becoming test-optional, including many state schools. The ACT should not be needed to be accepted into post secondary schools.

Many colleges are temporarily waiving test requirements for future semesters or dropping the requirement entirely. Over 1,800 schools no longer require applicants to submit test scores, becoming either test-optional or test-blind. This shift is partially due to the COVID-19 pandemic, when many students were unable to take their standardized tests for multiple reasons.

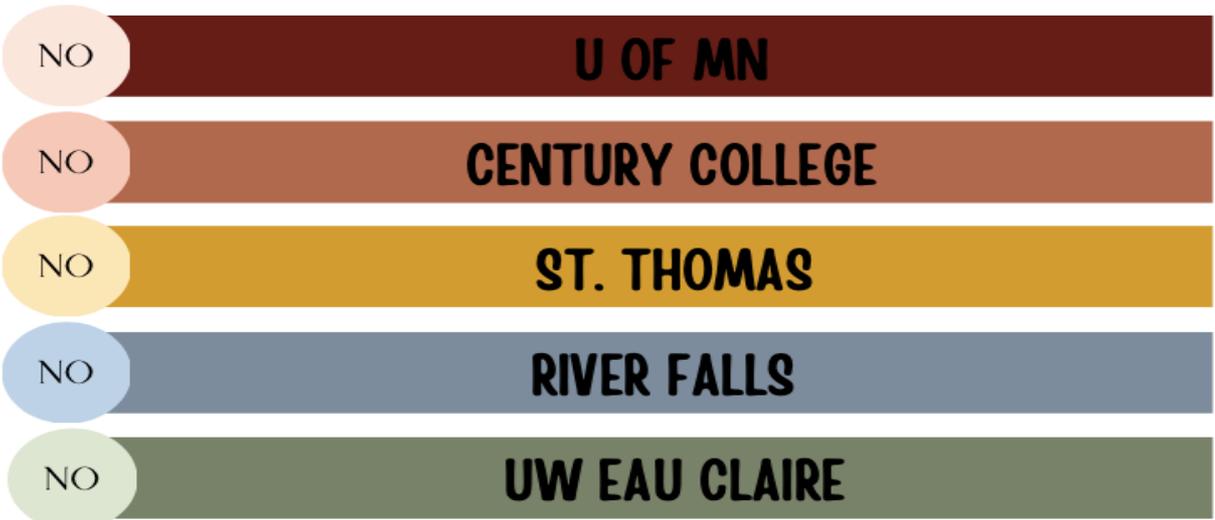
The ACT does not properly predict college readiness and success. A student’s GPA and transcript are stronger predictors of college grades than standardized tests. The ACT will only test a student on their knowledge of math, science and English, not their ability to problem solve or use critical thinking. Adding the ACT to a high school record will not give a large impact on admission predictions.

“Do you have the GPA, the skills to say that you’re college ready?” school counselor Sydney Piras said. “There’s more factors that are part of this conversation than just taking the ACT.”

The ACT and other standardized tests cater to middle-class white students. Many tests rely on background knowledge usually held by middle-class white students. The testing industry uses these biased questions in order to create a wider range of scores.

“There’s going to be a stronger

DO THESE COLLEGES STILL REQUIRE SCORES?



GRAPHIC BY BELLE LAPOS

correlation between performance on the ACT white male affluence,” Liam McClellan, senior debate captain, explained. “Specifically because privilege exists within that area.”

Standardized tests only show which students are good test takers. Scores are influenced by outside factors such as hunger, tiredness and stress. Scores may falter if a student is hungry and tired as they may be unable to properly focus. Students that can overcome these factors will do well on tests, while other students have scores that will suffer.

Junior Mallory Otsuka said the ACT “doesn’t measure how much you know, it just measures how good you are at working under pressure and answering questions quickly instead of correctly.”

The ACT does not cover all of a school’s curriculum, which makes it difficult for a score to measure the

knowledge of every student. Students will study things that will not end up on the test, and have lower scores. Others will learn to the test, ignoring information that is not part of the ACT.

When talking about the logistics of the ACT, McClellan said, “What the ACT tests on currently makes up only 60% of Minnesota state standards for our education system.”

Many students do not have the same opportunities as others. Some will be able to take time to study or pay for a tutor. Other students are busy with jobs or their home life, and may get lower scores as a result. Some students will have fewer opportunities than others, and their scores will differ due to this gap in opportunity.

Piras explained that certain students have access to expensive tutoring services, but other students do not have the same level of access to them. She asked if it was a fair tool to use to

judge students.

The ACT website lists multiple reasons for why students should take the test. The website also has different PDF files with reasons to take the test. One of their listed reasons is that the ACT is reliable and consistent. The ACT was created in 1959 and is used for college admissions. Millions of students take the ACT every year, and every university in the country accepts scores for admissions. Standardized tests give colleges a way to compare applicants and a basic idea of a student’s academic abilities.

Standardized tests such as the ACT do not properly predict college readiness or properly cover school curriculum. These scores should not affect if a student gets accepted to a specific school. The ACT is an unfair measure of knowledge, and students should not have to take this test to attend a higher level college.

EIC COLUMN



Pony Clapback

Sara Norton

Climate change is a big problem, but it is only getting worse. England has had significant protests and rioting through the climate change organizations ‘Just stop oil’ and ‘Enough is Enough.’ Defacing art and public property is never the answer, but if this is what has to happen to bring light to such a big issue, then so be it.

‘Just Stop Oil’ is a protest group defacing big corporations and prized possessions in museums. They do this to show society that valuable items are replaceable, but our world is not. Big corporations need to change their ways now before it is too late. But unfortunately, this has only caused these companies to ignore the message spreading to them.

“The issue is global warming with all the fossil fuels and gases emitted into the air. Big corporations aren’t doing anything about their businesses. They are ruining our world,” junior Imani Cofield said.

‘Enough is Enough’ is the other protest group that is having protests in the streets of London.

[read more at sahsponyexpress.com](http://readmoreatsahsponyexpress.com)

Staff Editorial: Homework quality needed for success

PONY EXPRESS STAFF

It is no secret that students feel swamped with their homework. While homework is not seen as inherently harmful, most take issue with the sheer amount of homework and its repetitive, unconstructive nature. Many compounding factors have added to this issue, and several solutions can alleviate the brunt of this problem.

When dissecting the issue of homework, one must look at two of its properties: quantity and quality.

Measuring the quantity of homework is easy and is generally measured by how many hours students spend on it per night. Students who have extracurricular commitments, especially student-athletes, do not appreciate having to cram several hours of homework late at night when they could be spending time with family and friends.

The quality of homework is much more challenging to measure since students and experts disagree on a clear definition of “quality homework.” It is further complicated since students have different learning styles. Some students learn better through visual or audio materials. Others learn better through experiments and projects. And some students learn best through repetition and writing. There is no universal method of teaching that is best suited for all students.

The U.S. has gone through periods of more homework and less homework. American teenage students today spend an average of two times as much time on homework as their 1990s counterparts. One major factor

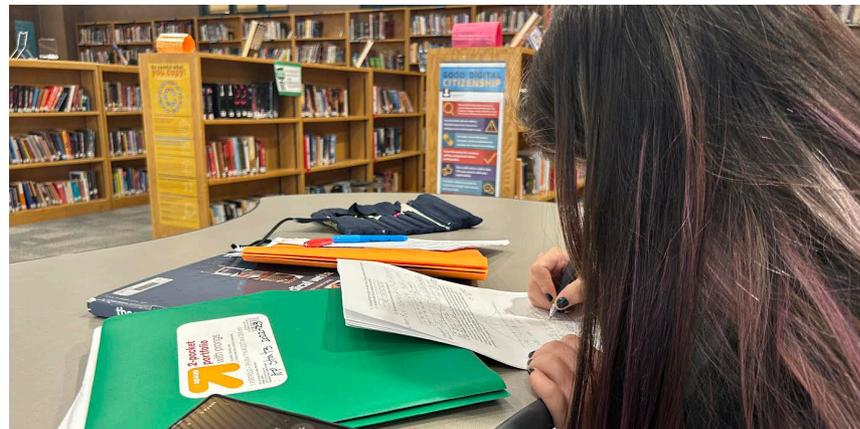


Photo by Sydney Rodd

Senior Jasmine Allison works on homework in the media center. Students are often overwhelmed by the amount of homework they are given in each class.

in this is an increasing amount of college-level courses offered at the high school level.

According to Assistant Superintendent Jennifer Cherry, high schools only offered one, maybe two, college-level courses. Today, schools often have many that span several departments.

College-level courses equate to college-level homework. When students choose to take multiple Advanced Placement or Postsecondary Enrollment classes, their homework load increases substantially. This workload can shock some students, but college courses in high school hold high students to the same standards as college students.

Even in standard-level high school classes, the homework load has increased due to a significant shift in the teaching profession. In previous decades, teachers had much more autonomy and flexibility over their

coursework. However, the quality of education varied greatly from teacher to teacher. So, the U.S. Department of Education decided to standardize teaching across the board having all districts and teachers adhere to set learning standards. More accountability in teaching led to less creative and more repetitive coursework inside and outside the classroom.

When coming up with solutions for this problem, most immediately jump to slashing the amount of homework. That is both unrealistic and not the most effective solution for student success.

Homework is not inherently harmful and can benefit learning inside and outside of the classroom. In practice, however, it has become frustrating and overwhelming for students. For students to succeed, homework should enhance the retention of material learned in the classroom.

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The *Pony Express* is a publication of Stillwater Area High School. This paper is an open forum for the community and students’ views. Letters to the Editor are encouraged. The Editorial Board reserves the right to publish and edit letters: correction will be made in order to correct content, spelling, grammar and length. Letters and comments may be submitted to rooms D220.

The staff editorial is written by the *Pony Express* staff and headed by Editors-in-Chief. The *Pony Express* is a member of the High School Press Syndicate, the Columbia High School Press Association, International Quill and Scroll, National Scholastic Press Association and the Minnesota High School Press Association.

The *Pony Express* print and online newspapers strive to provide a form of media that embodies the strongest professional standards while working to present current and relevant stories about the community, inside and outside our building’s wall. The goal is to adhere to all legal and ethical standards of best journalistic practices, while informing, enlightening, and entertaining our publication’s readers.



Netflix “Dahmer” stuns audiences, causes controversy

NICK MANKOWSKI
Layout Editor

The new Netflix docuseries, “Monster: The Jeffery Dahmer Story” better known as “Dahmer” shows reenactments of some of Dahmer’s killings and has left a lot of different ages with a glimpse into the mind of the serial killer Jeffrey Dahmer. Besides some of the imagery being a little graphic when showing how Dahmer went about his killings, this series really provided a different understanding of the serial killer.

The internet is outraged and calling Dahmer the most controversial series released in recent years. Some people wondered if the graphic scenes were necessary to learning about unknown details behind Dahmer’s killings or if they were just trying to get people talking.

Fan of the series and junior Jayden Van Dusen said, “I liked and disliked it because it kind of made it feel more like a fictional horror movie rather than a documentary about Jeffery Dahmer.”

“I liked and disliked it because it kind of made it feel more like a fictional horror movie rather than a documentary about Jeffery Dahmer.”

-Junior Jayden Van Dusen

“Dahmer” did a great job of recreating these impactful and emotional moments including the impact statement made by Rita Isabelle whose brother Errol Lindser was killed by Jeffery Dahmer. The only problem with the reenactment was the fact that Rita Isabelle did not know they were recreating it. She found out by seeing the show and was shocked by her portrayal on the show. Many other families of the victims have expressed their dismay on social media because

the series had sparked trauma up with in them that they thought they were passed. The worst part is the families were not even notified about the show and had to find out on their own.

Fan of the series and junior Brandon Barreiro commented on the families and said, “I am sure if they found out about it without knowing it definitely sparked some past trauma inside them.”

Most of the families that were affected by Dahmer’s killings were not given any royalties from the show, despite the show having the most watched week one for a new series ever and it being the second most popular Netflix show of all time behind season four of “Stranger Things”.

In fact the show earned 196.2 million hours viewed in its first five days of being on Netflix.

Barreiro had also stated just because they’re showing a different side of the story the families should still get benefits.

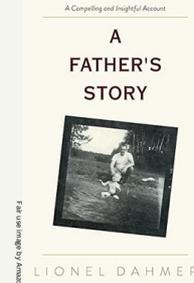
Many people call the show controversial and claim it is too graphic. Most of the viewers would not agree with Netflix not giving any money to the families, but the show was still highly viewed and liked by a lot of people. Along with “Dahmer” there has been many other movies and documentaries about serial killers including a movie called, “My Friend Dahmer”. These movies and documentaries have done just as well as “Dahmer”, but without the controversy.

Fan of the show and sophomore Matthew Meyer is drawn to serial killer shows just like everyone else, “because people find it interesting and people want to know why serial killers did the things they did.”

Despite the controversy I would recommend watching “Dahmer” but with caution. If you are a fan of true crime and mystery then this show is for you. If you have any trauma related to what Dahmer did or if you don’t like gory things then I would not watch it.

THE PUBLICITY OF JEFFREY DAHMER

AFTER DAHMER’S ARREST IN 1991. VARIOUS MEDIA HAVE COVERED THE SERIAL KILLER IN DIFFERENT FORUMS. HERE ARE THE TOP MOMENTS SINCE.



A FATHER'S STORY

JAN. 1, 1994
Dahmer's father, Lionel Dahmer, published a book two years after the conviction of his son. Lionel provides his lens on the ultimate question perplexing residents of Milwaukee: why did Jeffrey commit the murders he did? The book was released to critical acclaim in the *New York* and *Los Angeles Times*.

DATELINE NBC INTERVIEW

MARCH 8, 1994
The *Dateline* interview was the last Dahmer gave. It was conducted by Stone Philips at NBC at Dahmer's correctional institution; he was accompanied by his father, Lionel. The 90-minute documentary also included segments with his mother, Joyce Dahmer.



BBC'S "EVERYMAN"

NOV. 20, 1994
Britain's BBC commissioned a 50-minute documentary in 1994 to cover the intricacies and details of the initial 1992 trial. Incidentally, the expose premiered eight days before Dahmer's murder.

DAHMER
JUNE 21, 2002
In the first major Hollywood films following the trial, Jeremy Renner portrayed the lead role as Dahmer. The film was received positively, but was largely forgotten after its summer premiere.



DAHMER – MONSTER: THE JEFFREY DAHMER STORY

SEPT. 21, 2022
The most recent iteration the serial killer's media came after Netflix released a ten-part true crime series. The show received initial criticism after the streaming company tagged the series with "LGBTQ;" the producers were also criticized by victims' families for have no request by Netflix to be included as sources for the show.

Graphic by Pony Express staff

‘Black Adam’ movie disappoints

KAYLEE KELLOGG
Business Editor
Copy Editor

New Warner Bros DC movie “Black Adam” was released on Oct. 21 in most theaters around the United States, and is disappointing to viewers. “Black Adam” is confusing, lacks a storyline and overuses CGI.

Almost 5,000 years ago Teth Adam was imprisoned. The movie starts with Teth Adam, played by Dwayne Johnson, coming out of this sealed jail now as Black Adam. He is full of rage and is forced to challenge modern-day heroes. Black Adam gets rid of “bad guys” like most superheroes do, but he does so by killing them.

“He kills his enemies, typically by melting them with electric blasts or by drop-kicking them into the nearest ocean. He’s less an avatar of justice and order than one of rage and vengeance,” David Sims from *The Atlantic* wrote.

Black Adam was supposed to be a superhero, and he possesses powers like a superhero. Adams’ powers include super speed, great physical strength, wisdom and knowledge, incredible stamina and invulnerability.

His powers are used for “running around and destroying things in the name of good,” Eric Francisco from *Inverse* wrote.

Black Adam features well-known actors Dwayne Johnson, Noah Centineo and Pierce Brosnan as well as actress Sarah Sani. The director, Jaume Collet-serra is also known for other movies like *Orphan*, *House of Wax* and *Jungle Cruise* which also features Dwayne Johnson.

“Dwayne Johnson and director Jaume Collet-Serra attempt to offer a grand unified theory of DC, mixing family-film tropes with a protagonist who straight-up murders people,” Helen O’Hara from *Rotten Tomatoes* wrote.

The editing in this film is all over the place. The movie goes from good camera quality and real people to a video game-looking filter over everything. Fight scenes were made confusing by all of the editing, the flashing lights, slow-mos and closeups.

“One of the most visually confounding of the major-studio superhero sagas, between CG that’s assaultively unappealing and rapid-fire editing that sucks the exhilaration right out of every fight scene,” Alonso Duralde from *The Wrap* wrote.

There is no storyline to follow, which makes the movie disengaging, unmemorable and seem very long. “Black Adam” is two hours and five minutes long which is about the average length of movies out right now. Many people have shared the experience of

Careers of The Rock



DID YOU KNOW?

In 2018, The Rock called into SAHS's PA system to surprise Katie Kelzenburg about a prom date. He couldn't go with her, but instead rented out a movie theater for her and her friends.

LINEBACKER

Shortly after graduating from college, the Rock was part of the NFL draft what wasn't traded. He joined the Calgary Stampeders (in Canada) but was cut from the team the same season.

WRESTLER

After being cut, the Rock started his wrestling career. Within four years he had already won the WWF championships, in 2000. He won the subsequent four year titles.

ACTOR

Even in the wrestling field, The Rock was noted for his work ethic and quick made it into the acting world playing a minor, but recurring role, in *Star Trek*. He has played a variety of roles since, most recently the star role in *Black Adam*.

falling asleep or almost falling asleep while trying to watch this movie.

Charlie H. from *Common Sense Media* wrote, “I just found this movie to be enough that I fell asleep before a friend of mine woke me up.” He writes about how it feels like *Black Adam* struggles

under the weight of another superhero movie.

“Nothing exemplifies the randomness better than a ... pointless explosion of computer graphics to the rhythms of Kanye West’s *Power*,” Donald Clarke from *Rotten Tomatoes* wrote.