

THE BLOTTER

Mean, lean, delegate machines

A look into Youth & Government

By Nicole Richert



Senior Mehari Milton speaks at the Kentucky Youth Alliance conference in mid-November. More than 1000 students attended the event.

NAHS's Youth and Government group attended the Kentucky Youth Alliance Conference in mid-November and presented, debated, and voted on bills produced by other high school students.

"I was prompted to start this group because my husband and I had the same club at our last school in Tennessee," co-sponsor and science teacher Amanda McCoy said. "I know that students have a voice and only need a place to use it."

Seniors Kendall Stidham and Abigail Hayes were previous members of the Model United Nations (MUN) group where they describe the group as talking about world problems, whereas Youth and Government is focused on local issues.

"Coming out of the pandemic, I got

really interested in politics, world and local issues," senior Kendall Stidham said.

**"I hope this group encourages young people to get involved with causes they care for, to be a voice for those who need one."
Mrs. Amanda McCoy**

Pre-Covid, NAHS had many clubs like MUN but the pandemic limited participation. However, now that clubs are being reinstated, Youth and

Government being one, the group is open and ready for new members.

"The more the merrier, we would love to see anyone at our meetings next semester," Choir Director and co-sponsor Dale McCoy said.

The group promotes teamwork, a sense of community, and networking opportunities, and gives a voice to members.

"It's a really widely known club across the country, with events that have thousands of people at once," senior Aqil Contractor said.

"Other than just being fun, you get to meet a lot of people that have the same interests as you, partner up with your friends, and get a huge stage to prove your capabilities," Contractor said. "You get a chance to make a lasting impact on the world and dive into the world of politics at a young age, increasing your confidence, speaking, planning, researching, debating, quick-wittedness, reputation, and social skills in general."

The group meets every Tuesday at the YMCA, in order to pick a topic that they're passionate about and want to present as a bill. Then, they look up potential questions they need to know how to answer.

"We discuss topics that our students are interested in and help them write their bills," Mrs. McCoy said. "[We discuss] weak questions and debate the pros and cons. We learn the rules of debate, and how to be recognized to speak. We research things we aren't sure about so that if that question is asked later, we will be ready."

Continues on page 2

New snow day policy for schools in Indiana

By Matthew McCoy

If winter weather arrives, "snow days" are going to look different for schools around the state.

The first three snow days of the 2022-2023 school year will be asynchronous learning days, according to the Indiana Department of Education (DOE).

Asynchronous learning is hands off-learning; teachers will each post an assignment by 9 a.m., and will be available for emails and questions until 2 p.m. that day. Students will be able to turn in "snow day" assignments three days after they are assigned for attendance.

The Indiana DOE is limiting schools to including a maximum of three asynchronous days toward their required 180 days of student instructional time each school year.

After the three days of asynchronous learning, students and teachers alike will participate in synchronous classes, face-to-face virtual learning with Google Meets.

"What's really important is what [teachers] assign," Principal Dr. Michelle Ginkins said. "If it's just a knowledge-based [assignment] and there's a right and wrong answer, kids can google it and get the answer to it. That's all there is to it. If you're saying, 'why don't you read this article, here are some discussion points.

Continues on page 2

Top of the class

Mrs. Monica Schotter named Indiana's Outstanding Art Educator

By Crimson Baker

For 17 years, Mrs. Monica Schotter has been influencing and inspiring young artists at NAHS.

On November 5 the Art Education Association of Indiana named Mrs. Schotter 2022 Outstanding Secondary Art Educator. The AEAI is an organization dedicated to the promotion and improvement of art classes in the state of Indiana.

The organization strives to recognize teacher performance, increase public awareness, assist the Indiana State Department of Education in implementation of art education resources and much more.

Mrs. Schotter has taught several art classes over the years. From ceramics and fiber arts to painting, she's done it all. She's been a teacher for 19 years.

"Teaching gives me an opportunity to go and learn new things," Schotter said.

Schotter started out as a clothing and textiles major in college. She started taking art classes; from there she explored the art community and found art education.

"During college during that transitional period just talking to different people in the art program and I talked

to the art professor and just fell in love with her and she sort of guided me to the field," Schotter said.

Schotter has helped with Youth Art Month exhibition, and since 2019 has been a district co-representative. She's been giving back to the art community in extensive ways, along with educating NAHS' students.

"I hope that the students learn that it's okay to fail at things, that everything doesn't have to be perfect and it's not going to be perfect the first time," Mrs. Schotter said. "It takes a lot of practice and a lot of

dedication to be able to do things well."

Mrs. Schotter also sponsors the National Art Honor Society.

"I like how much Mrs Schotter puts her trust in us. She trusts us to use her art tools correctly and helps us with anything we need,"

junior Jamie Domeck said.

Domeck has Mrs. Schotter for Intro to Art and is a member of the art club.

"My favorite memory from her class is meeting other art students with great art styles," Domeck said.

"I hope that students learn that it's okay to fail at things, that everything doesn't have to be perfect and it's not going to be perfect the first time."

Mrs. Monica Schotter



Mrs. Schotter helps senior Noelle Quillo in her fifth period Fiber Arts class. This is just one of Mrs. Schotter's many classes she

A lot has changed for Schotter and her teaching since she started the job, especially after Covid shut the world down. Art classes struggled to keep up with the virtual world. Art teachers struggled to keep lessons up.

"I tried to make it more like an art therapy for the kids and give them an outlet," Schotter said.

Schotter says she realized that project-based classes didn't work for everyone, and Covid changed how she viewed her classes and the material.

"Any time I can I try to make it lighthearted and fun and enjoyable so I hope that the students remember

that lighthearted side of me," Schotter said. "I love just the ability to take raw materials and make something tangible out of nothing."

Junior Hailey Hartman has taken four art classes with Mrs. Schotter.

"She's not too strict about it, she makes the class fun to be in," Hartman said.

Schotter has spent her teaching career trying to help kids discover art and find love for the subject.

"One time she was explaining something and randomly said 'Go Dogs' at the end of it and everyone just burst out laughing," Hartman said.

Youth & Government *from page 1*

From more than 1000 participants freshman Charlie Bott was chosen as Outstanding Delegate.

"I was really shocked when I got named Outstanding Delegate I wasn't expecting it at all, but I was very happy because I worked really hard," Bott said. "The event was nice and fun; I

had a great time, but they didn't let us get much sleep so I was really tired,"

The team has a conference coming up in March and is excited to present and hopefully pass their bills with the support of Mr. McCoy and Mrs. McCoy.

Snow days *from page 1*

'want your opinion and we're gonna come back and talk about it', that's more in depth and there's going to be no reason for cheating."

Dr. Ginkins says providing students with open-ended questions that value the students' opinions can

help prevent cheating and give students a bigger reason to complete assignments during snow days.

As of now, Floyd County has had no snow days so the first three snow days will be asynchronous.

A new type of epidemic

Teens consume copious amounts of caffeine on daily basis

By Haley Shock



Senior Sophia Slaughter makes a latte as a barista at Starbucks. She always enjoys being on espresso bar because she loves making drinks.

Over the last couple of years the world has experienced epidemic after epidemic, from Covid to Monkeypox, diseases run rampant. But now, we are facing a new kind of epidemic, that of caffeine.

Studies have found that 83 percent of teenagers consume caffeinated beverages on a daily basis and 96 percent consume them at least regularly according to Medical News Daily.

"I see a lot of people at school drinking coffee or energy drinks," senior Sophia Slaughter said.

Coffee is the preferred method of caffeine consumption based on a poll of 74 students. Slaughter is a Starbucks barista and says she sees her peers at her workplace.

"I see a lot of kids come into work all the time," Slaughter said. "Everyday when school gets out the store is

full of teenagers getting their daily caffeine."

The top drink at Starbucks is the Brown Sugar Oat Milk Shaken Espresso which was released in early 2021 as a new type of coffee drink which includes

four shots of blonde espresso in a 26 ounce drink. With each shot having 85 mg of caffeine that means one large beverage has 340 mg of caf-

**"I think I do have a dependency because I get migraines if I don't drink caffeine in the morning and I feel drowsy and exhausted."
Sophia Slaughter // 12**

feine. Some students drink these caffeinated beverages daily according to Tasting Table.

"I always get lattes from work

or energy drinks; specifically Monsters," Slaughter said.

Many students now depend on this caffeine every single day, 33 percent of students polled feel that they have a dependency on caffeine, 44 percent of those students feel that it affects them daily.

"I think I do have a dependency because I get migraines if I don't drink caffeine in the morning and I feel drowsy and exhausted," Slaughter said.

Senior Emilie Sartor says they also have a caffeine dependency that affects them on a daily basis.

"I consume about two cups of coffee a day, or four shots of that sweet, sweet go-go juice [espresso]," Sartor said. "I definitely have a dependency [on caffeine]. I need it to function because I don't sleep much because of school and I'm super busy."

While in small doses caffeine can enhance your mood, make you more alert, and help you focus according to Verywell Health; it can also have detrimental effects such as: insomnia, depression, anxiety, and stomach problems.

Slaughter says she feels like her dependency affects her on a daily basis.

"My dependency definitely affects me," Slaughter said. "It makes me need a caffeinated drink, which results in me drinking less water and it makes me really shaky sometimes."

Sartor also says they have a dependency, and their side effects are on

the more extreme side of the spectrum.

"I believe [my caffeine dependency] does affect me because if I don't have caffeine I have a huge headache and I'll throw up everything," Sartor said. "It makes me super tired easily though and I'll fall asleep in class."



Policy

It is the policy of the New Albany Floyd County School Board of Education that publications are established forums for student expression and as the voice in the free and honest discussion of issues and ideas. For the purpose of this policy, "publications" shall include newspapers, yearbooks, magazines, and/or electronic and/or online media. Each medium is an instructional device for the teaching of writing, communication, design, leadership, and other journalistic skills should provide full opportunity for students to inquire, question, and exchange ideas.

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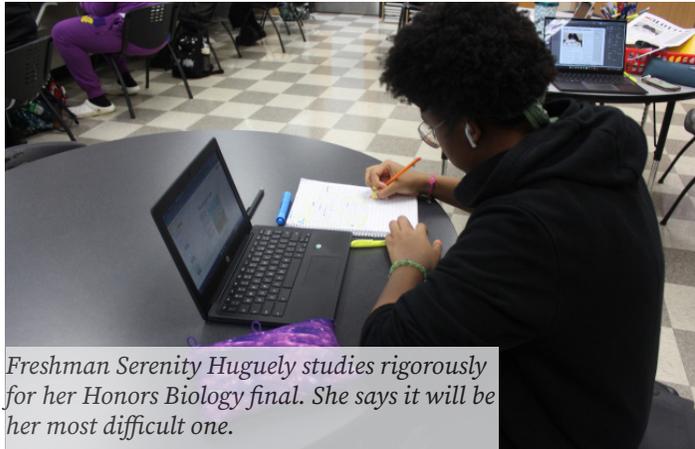
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It's the final count down

Students weigh the pros and cons of exams

By Jamie Sullivan



Freshman Serenity Huguely studies rigorously for her Honors Biology final. She says it will be her most difficult one.

As final exams overwhelm the students, frantic typing and hasty pencil markings are the most common sounds heard throughout the building.

"Finals Week," a term which dates back to the 19th century, has long been a source of stress for students in all kinds of classrooms around the globe. For NAHS, many students make the stress of finals evident.

"I honestly think finals shouldn't be required because that's too much stress on students," freshman Serenity Huguely said.

Huguely says that since students

already have to worry about other exams and standardized tests, she doesn't think it is necessary for students to have as many final exams as they do. Sophomore Ty O'Neal, however, says that finals should be required to

assess student knowledge.

"I think a final test should be required at the end of the semester to show what the student learned over the 18 weeks, but the final being twenty percent of your grade is a lot," O'Neal said. "It can hurt and damage your grade heavily if you were to fail it. The finals also prepare us for college as they have finals for their courses too."

Finals not only represent the course's students but also the teachers. Some instructors require final test results to demonstrate that their students are progressing and learning throughout the semester.

"I do think if a student has an A in the class then they have proved mastery of the course and a perk would be not to take the final," English teacher Debbie Smith said. "That may also motivate students throughout the semester."

While the upperclassmen have had years of doing finals, underclassmen have not had the same experience. O'Neal says that he is taking harder classes this year, so he expects the exams to be more challenging.

"I'm only a freshman, but I was here last year for Period Zero," Huguely said. "I know what a final is but I don't really know the different kinds."

Although underclassmen are less knowledgeable about some exams, upperclassmen at NAHS have spent years repeating finals week. However, the finals might look different this year compared to their freshman year.

"Finals have changed significantly since my freshman year," senior Suriyah Villa said. "Before Covid happened I saw a lot more of traditional type exams, now I'm starting to notice teachers doing different things for finals."

Villa says that during Covid, a lot of final exams weren't required or

done completely electronically, which changed students' perception of finals in school. Covid rapidly decreased student's work ethic and engagement during 2019 and 2020, according to Chalkbeat. Though, this doesn't stop the students at NAHS from putting in the work to succeed.

"I typically spend around an hour or two preparing for each of my finals," O'Neal said. "They are some of the most important tests, so I try to do my best by studying."

Villa says she spends a couple of hours cramming for finals, as well as a few hours of proper studying.

"If it's a subject I know I need help on I will definitely study, but if it's like English or something I'm not going to study," Huguely said.

Though some students spend hours studying for exams, teachers are also a massive benefit in helping students get prepared. Whether that be study guides or Kahoots, teachers want to ensure student success.

"I feel prepared for my finals," Huguely said. "I don't know about everyone else but I feel like the teachers have done a fine job preparing us."

Villa says that she is underprepared for her finals and that she doesn't real-

By Autumn Gullett

TEACHERS & THEIR REASONS



"I think this paper pushes for high academic achievement and teaches not just a subject but also some much needed paper writing skills college students need."

Mrs. Deborah Haerberlin
AP & Advanced Science

ly know what half of them even are.

"I feel like it depends on your teacher," O'Neal said. "Some teachers are better at preparing students for finals than others. This year, I feel like most of my teachers have well prepared me for my finals."

In addition to assisting students with finals, teachers also can determine how challenging their students' final exams will be. The way that individual teachers at NAHS give their final exams varies greatly, with some being more lenient than others.

"Some teachers are harsh about fi-

"I feel prepared for my finals. I don't know about everyone else but I feel like the teachers have done a fine job preparing us."

Serenity Huguely // 9

nals and some teachers are calm," Huguely said. "I mean it's a final exam, it's a huge percentage of your grade."

O'Neal says that by the end of the semester, he believes that most teachers are eager to finish up with finals because of the approaching holidays and winter break.

"I've noticed teachers are becom-

ing more relaxed with finals because in this day and age it is very tiring to keep up with, not only for students but for teachers as well." Villa said.

"To me, finals show growth and learning," Smith said. "I want to see that at midyear or end of the year you have grown in the content area."

Standardized testing has been a requirement in schools since 2002, following the No Child Left Behind Act. However, standardized tests have been used in schools since the mid 1800's. There has been much discussion over standardized testing among academics and educators around the world, and some believe it should be completely abolished.

"Many teachers have multiple variations for different students to prevent cheating," O'Neal said. "But some variations are harder than others. If you want to give everyone a fair chance, then you should have the same standard form for everyone."

O'Neal says that he understands the reasoning behind teachers' decision to provide students several exam options, and he would personally provide multiple options for exams if he had the choice.

"I think we have learned that a final does not need to be a multiple choice test," Smith said. "We can test students in other ways and so with that the type of finals given have changed."

Students' honesty on standardized testing and the difficulties they en-

tail has helped schools over the years determine what is best for their students' achievement in the classroom. Smith says she prefers to give her AP students a mirror test of the AP exam, and her English 11 students a project-based final.

"There should definitely be multiple types of finals, everyone processes information differently and it isn't fair if we cater to just one style," Villa said.

Villa says since every student learns differently, measures should be taken to guarantee that each student has an equal opportunity of success. Smith says she thinks the form of exam given should depend on the course and what is being evaluated in that course.

"I think there should be different types of finals for different types of kids," Huguely said. "I know a lot of people who like multiple choice, and I know a lot who don't like multiple choice."

Huguely says it would be easier for different students to have a variety of options based on how they learn best. Smith says she thinks a single exam shouldn't determine whether a student passes or fails a course in its entirety.

"I don't think finals should be required in order to pass a class," Villa said. "Students have many talents that can be overlooked by a bad test score."

10 TIPS FOR STUDYING FOR FINALS

1. Rewrite your notes the more you see them the better they will stick in your brain

2. Stay healthy; clean minded

3. Take breaks and give you brain time to take in the infraction you are studying

4. Pace yourself and try not to cram

5. Avoid procrastination

6. Teach someone else what you know to become an expert

7. Organize a social distraction; study groups

8. Creative a list of things you can remember that were important and fill in the blanks from there

9. Prioritize what could be on your final (definitely, possibly, maybe)

10. Create a playlist of non-lyrical music to listen to while you study



"I think all the unit exams in my class are beneficial for what my students will see in May [on the AP exam]."

**Mrs. Ashley Manger
AP Psychology**



"I chose to give no final to help alleviate some stress students get from finals."

**Mrs. Brittany Wright
Geometry**

For the first time in eight years the USMNT sets its eyes on the World Cup

By Jack Moutardier

For the United States men's national team this year was an important one. In the last World Cup in 2018, the USMNT fell short in the qualifying games and didn't make The Cup. This year was the first time since 2014 the USMNT made it to the group stage.

The groups consist of four teams, each team plays each one time and through the three games, the top two teams advance to the final 16. The USMNT tied Wales and England and beat Iran, giving them five points, which was enough to advance. However, in the first game of the final 16, the USMNT played the Netherlands and lost 3-1. Despite a disappointing result, there was a lot to be excited about in this World Cup for the USMNT.

The biggest issue for the USMNTS was finishing. In the game against the Netherlands we dominated possession with 59 percent, had a higher passing accuracy with 83 percent, one more corner with five, and six more shots with 17. But, despite all this we still lost by two goals. The reason was simple; when they had opportunities they finished, and we didn't. For us to be better next World Cup we need to find more up and coming American teens who can score and apply them to the team. Soccer is a fast-growing sport, and the amount of college players right now that weren't on the USMNT that will be in the next one is wild. We have so much young talent and bringing in great recruits to help find those players will be crucial.

Along with the attack, the opposite end defense

needs some help. I find that are midfield is strong and could be great for years to come. However, similar to the attack, the defense needs some work. In the game against Netherlands they scored basically an identical goal three times in a row. As a defense we can't allow this and finding up and coming talent to help on this end will be crucial.

Lastly, we need to fire coach Greg Berhalter and look to find a European coach who's seen top tier talent. While the players must be from the country they are representing, the coach doesn't. The USMNT problem has been having American coaches. Almost all American coaches haven't seen European league talent, and this leads to bad decisions and not knowing how to stop teams. Our team should look to bring in a coach in England's league, the premier league, or someone like that. These coaches see the best players in the world weekly and would improve our team so quickly.

While there are changes to be made, some things don't need to be. In the World Cup, the USMNT averaged the second youngest players with an average age of 25. Along with that, some of our star players were even

younger. In four years some of our stars will be better than ever and in their prime. While the USMNT may have just arrived, they are here to stay!

With the 2026 World Cup being in the USA and Canada, the USMNT will be guaranteed to be in the World Cup along with Canada.

This year Qatar headlined the World Cup. This was very controversial as it was the first time The Cup was held in the fall/winter. Along with that many workers died along with excessive child labor to build the stadiums.

All things considered, it'll be an exciting future for the entire country of the US. With so many players growing and only more to come, and getting to host the next cup, the USAs future in soccer is bright.

Three OF THE TOP WORLD CUP PERFORMANCES OF ALL TIME

Diego Maradona



Considered the unanimous best World Cup by many, Maradona's 1986 World Cup performance will go down in history. With the most famous goal ever called the "Hand of God" against England in which Maradona scored a goal barely hitting his hand against England in the Quarter Finals, to lead them to the finals where him and Argentina won the World Cup. Maradona's stats during the 1986 World Cup included five goals in seven matches and winning the World Cup, beating some of the hardest teams in the competition.

PELE



For all of these other players it was about the one world cup. They won. However, for Pele it's about the three that he one. When it comes to legendary world cup performances there is a lot of great ones but none are more superior than Pele. With 12 goals across his four cups, it's hard to doubt the greatness he accomplished. Along with that, through qualifying games to reach the cup and other international performances, he had 77 goals across 92 international games.

LUKA MODRIC



Before this year's World Cup, the most recent Cup was in 2018. In it, France played Croatia in the finale. Croatia, who were huge underdogs were led by Midfielder Luka Modric. Even though they fell short, Modric's performance didn't go unnoticed. Through the group stage and elimination rounds, he had two goals and one assist, as well as leading the tournament in minutes played, and miles ran. All of this together is a big reason that Modric got the tournament's best player award of the golden boot.

Students should take advantage of NAHS's mental health resources

By Kaytlin Cahill

Just like the rest of the world, NAHS students have experienced some negative emotions and feelings due to the pandemic nearly three years ago. Even though it is being 'handled', we still see students struggling with their mental health.

Having poor mental health can really affect how students see the world and how they are around other people and situations. According to the CDC, poor mental health can hurt an adolescents school and grades as well as their decision making and their physical health. Taking a mental health day can help teens by letting them relax and take their mind off of all the stressful things they may be experiencing.

Children take after their parents since they are around them more often. According to the CDC, it says that if a parent has poor mental health then the child may adopt those negative thoughts and or feelings because they tend to copy their guardian. In a poll taken by 146 NAHS students, 64.4 percent say that they have a parent or guardian at home who cares

about their mental health.

"Kids come in here with a whole load of baggage from home," LifeSpring Counselor Liz Chaddic said. "The school's job is to give you an education, it's going to be hard to give you an education if you have so much going on at home."

Many guys believe that they shouldn't have to show feelings and or emotions around certain people in a school environment. At NAHS, in addition to academic counselors, students have access to three full time therapists, two part time care workers who teach skills and one social services liaison.

"NAHS is doing a much more progressive job [to help with students mental health] because some schools don't have therapists at all," Chaddic said.

Here at NAHS, we want to provide a safe environment to learn and have experiences that will benefit them in the future. Anywhere from academics to get ahead in life to a therapist that helps you explore your own mental health and how

to make it blossom.

"There's been a big push for social and emotional learning," NAHS Social Worker Shelby Renner said.

We have therapists who are in the building, we have connections to resources, we want to make ourselves available for students because we know that things are hard."

We value students' mental health at NAHS and think of new ways to help our students deal with difficult times in and out of school. In our daily announcements, LifeSpring Mental Health Services offers Mental Health services here at school to help students who may be struggling with stress, anxiety, depression or anything of that nature. If you need help, reach out to your guidance counselor and they will help get the process started.

Reaching out isn't giving up, it's simply asking for help. Mental health is a serious topic and we offer help here and want what's best for our students.

TIPS FOR A BETTER MENTAL HEALTH

- 1. FIND AN ACTIVITY**

Find something to do to take your mind off of the stress. Maybe read a book or listen to music. Or take on an instrument.
- 2. DOES IT INTEREST YOU?**

Find something that you really enjoy and stick to it. Maybe branch off from that idea and find new things to enjoy. You don't want to do something that makes you unhappy.
- 4. TAKE ON A RESPONSIBILITY**

Maybe take care of a plant, or a pet. Sometime having a responsibility can make people feel better. Start with something small, like a plant.
- 3. TALK TO SOMEONE**

It will be difficult to get some feelings out, but there are always someone around to speak to about it. Reach out!
- 5. SET A GOAL**

Find something you've been wanting to work on and set a small goal, once you accomplish that, think bigger and broaden your goals.
- 6. TALK TO A FRIEND**

Talk to a trustworthy friend who understand where you're coming from, and someone who listens well and will help you through it.

It may be mini, but its impact is BIG

Mini Musical returns for the 68th year for its annual performances

By Nick Prince



The cast of the Mini Musical perform for seniors and juniors during WINN on December 2, 2022.

For the last 68 years, theatre students at NAHS go above and beyond to spread Christmas cheer.

Every year, the musical theatre class puts on a production of a short, holiday-themed musical called the Mini Musical, and this year, they performed at 12 NAFC elementary and middle schools in two days.

“My first memory of seeing the Mini Musical was in elementary school and I was so excited to get out of class to watch a performance; the joy and energy that ev-

eryone had was so fun to watch and made me really excited for Christmas,” senior Jadyn Summrell said.

Summrell played Mirabel in this year’s production. She, like many kids who grow up within the NAFC school corporation, remembers seeing the show year after year. It’s a tradi-

tion that dates back nearly seven decades, with faculty and staff who remember seeing it when they were children.

“You would not believe how many adults, when they see it at the schools or [New Albany High School] this weekend, that’s what they say: ‘I will always remember the musical starting with the same song,’” Theatre Director Amy Miller said.

This song that she’s referring to is “Christmas is Coming”, which starts and ends the Mini Musical each year. Every year, the musical blends a Christmas sto-

ryline with a story that is recently trending. This year, it was Disney’s *Encanto*.

“Well, I have to admit, I’m a big *Encanto* fan, I love the songs and it was fun because so many of the schools knew it too,” Miller said. “They were clapping along, singing all the words, so any time we can work something that’s pop-culture appropriate into it that the kids already know, they’re already that much more engaged.”

Unlike the fall and spring musicals which have after-school rehearsals, the Mini Musical is almost exclusively staged in class during the school day. Not only that, but many students don’t know what it’s like to perform for an audience of young kids.

“You have to make character choices that reach the younger kids, so you need to have really big facial expressions and put a lot of energy into everything you do,” Summrell said.

This musical is also different from mainstage shows because the rehearsal process is more relaxed and student participation is typically encouraged.

“It’s a little more fun to be playful and to let [the students] have a little ownership,” Miller said. “[They] often help me, as students, and I work a little more closely with [them].”

“My favorite Mini Musical memory from this year was when Slate Run had learned the choreography to our iconic

‘We Need A Little Christmas’ and we got to see them doing it with us. It was really amazing,” junior Gabby Hidgon said.

Every year, without fail, the Mini Musical makes its way around the district. This year, there were 19 performances total. The first was at Light Up New Albany, followed by 15 school performances, a stop at the Education Support Center for the leaders of our school corporation, a school performance for the juniors and seniors, and one final show at the annual Breakfast with Santa event.

“It definitely feels like I’m making a difference in some of these kids’ lives,” Hidgon said. “When I was in elementary or middle school, I saw [the Mini Musical] and it was part of the reason I continued in theatre through high school and aspired to be in the class, so I’m glad I can be a part of something that can do that for these kids.”

Not only does this musical provide little kids with some excitement for Christmas, but it’s an enriching experience for the students and adults involved as well.

“We truly take for granted that we are an anomaly,” Miller said. “All of our elementaries have theatre, our middle schools, our high schools. We get the opportunity to let every single student experience live theatre every year, and that’s very special. That is not something that is happening everywhere else. So, it’s a tradition we should try to keep alive as long as we can.”

MOST wanted

Holiday season has arrived; These are teens' top gifts

By Luke Blair

\$120

lululemon

lululemon is a brand mostly wanted by women. The most popular items are leggings and hoodies from lululemon. They are both around the same price.

Huggs are especially popular when it gets colder outside. They have a fuzzy warm inside to keep your feet feeling warm. That's why they are on every teens' Christmas list.



\$140

"Huggs are a great shoe for Christmas because they are warm and cozy when I love them, but I have never owned a pair in my life." -Mia Patel, 17

"A lot of people want the Playstation for Christmas because it is hard to get and expensive. It is one of the best gaming consoles out right now and so it is a perfect gift." -Mia Elm, 17



\$500

The PS5 came out in 2020 and is now one of the most popular gaming consoles in the world. It is also said to be the best gaming console out. Video games have become significantly more popular over time.

Most teens love cologne. A good expensive designer brand cologne is a perfect gift for Christmas. The picture shows Star Sauvage, which is one of the most popular colognes right now.



\$95

"I love nice cologne because they make me smell nice and feel good." -Mia Elm, 17

"I love the shape of the Jordan 4's. They are so different than any other shoe and it makes them stand out. They are a fire shoe." -Kaylee Semuth, 17



\$300

Jordan's have been popular since they were released in April of 1985. Although they are a great shoe they are very high in price. That's what makes this shoe a perfect Christmas gift and why it is one of the most wanted.

Senior wrestler eyes #1 state ranking

By Cooper Anderson

Senior wrestler Sierra Zamorano is ranked second in the state with an 18-3 record through her junior and senior season combined.

She competes against men and women in the 170 lbs weight class. The only female wrestler ranked ahead of Zamorano in Indiana is her teammate from the Indiana girls team. Although Zamorano said they've never gone head-to-head on the mat, she did say, "I gotta go get my one spot."

Zamorano said it was "a funny sto-



ry" of how she got into wrestling. One of her friends asked her to come wrestle and while sitting there contemplating on if she would or not, he shot her with a quick deal.

"If I lift this guy up and return him to the mat then you have to come to wrestling practice," Zamorano said. "So I lost the bet and ended up at wrestling practice and I've been wrestling ever since."

Zamorano's dad wrestled, along with her younger brother.

In addition to wrestling for the Bulldogs Zamorano also competes in national tournaments with the Indiana Girls Team. She also wrestles for a wrestling club, Zamorano said "not really as a team, more individual competitions".

The senior standout has advice for people who want to wrestle.

"Honestly, just get out there, you gotta be a certain temperment to go out there and beat the tar out of someone," Zamorano said.

The senior is also a National Merit Scholar, meaning that she scored in the top 4% of students on the PSAT.

"It's kind of wild," she said, going from getting good grades in the classroom to flushing all that out on the mat and just trying to win.

"Especially in higher weight classes, it's harder to see a girl win because the guys are just so much stronger," Zamorano said.

Zamorano proves it's not impossible to beat guys and girls while maintaining an impressive record.

"I have placed in state each year since I started," Zamorano said. "Freshman year I wasn't the best, sophomore year was covid and all that happened, but I really started to focus in. Then, one of my teammates, Paul King, took me under his wing and made me stronger and let me know what tournaments she should compete in and everything like that."

Zamorano said that along with being a great wrestler, King, who graduated last year, is an even better coach.

Zamorano says King has helped her not only in the weight room and on the mat, but also let her know who she needs to talk to, how to get noticed and which tournaments to say

yes to and which to say no to.

"I really took all of that to heart and it really made me a lot better," Zamorano said.

Right before her junior year Zamorano suffered from a torn quad and also separated her shoulder which took her away from the mats and weight room for four months, "a crucial part of the off season". But this year she says she's all back and healthy and looking better than ever.

As for wrestling in college, Zamorano is still deciding.

"Where I'm going to wrestle is still up in the air due to most of the schools being private and very expensive," Zamorano said.

She has also made it clear that academics come first for her and that is her top priority. Bellarmine has offered her a full ride. She says Campbellsville University is known for their wrestling program.

"They get a lot of talent that goes there," Zamorano said. "I don't know how good the coaching staff is."

Zamorano will be on the mat in Tell City December 21.

Swim team prepares for historic season

By Oliver Dickman & Jeremiah Renner

Swim season is nearly half finished and both teams are trying to repeat the success of last year's teams who had state qualifiers and school record breakers.

While the boys team has no seniors, a large group of juniors are stepping up as leaders. Junior Nate Samsel has been swimming for seven years; Samsel swims his favorite stroke, the 100 backstroke, with a PR of 1:06. His other events and PR's are the 100 freestyle in 55 seconds, and the 100 fly in 1:04.

"I expect all of the upperclassmen to respect the freshman, and that we can all understand our situation and understand the fact that we are doing

well for what we have," Samsel said.

"I love being bonded with the team and learning new ways of life through our Head Coach Dutch Vigar," Samsel said. His favorite memory was when a teammate's headphones exploded on the bus on the way to a meet.

"The culture here is special," Samsel says. "Everyone is well respected and we all care for each other."

The girls have a larger team this year, enough for a JV team.

Sophomore Lila Waters is in her eighth year of competitive swim. Her favorite memory was last year during sectionals when she got 12th place.

"If we work really hard we will be able to accomplish a lot," Waters said.

"It is going to be a tough season for all of us."

Waters says one of her favorite parts of being on a swim team is putting in a lot of work and effort to see what she can achieve.

"What I also like about being on this swim team specifically is the people on the team," Waters said. "They're all really fun and we have bonded a lot"

Five girls on the swim team made the *News and Tribune* "GIRLS' SWIMMING & DIVING: Twenty to watch": Abigail Holder, Stella Klaus, Peyton Lamb, Lauren Lopp, and Preslava Nedelcheva. Jack Green, Sam Jagers and Colin Kruer made the boys list.

Multi-million pool renovation continues

One of the biggest challenges that both the boys and girls swim team has to face this year is the school's pool being temporarily closed.

"There's no new square footage - we're not building anything new," NAFCS Director of Facilities Bill Wisehart said in a previous interview.

The pool liner systems, boilers, flooring, filters, tanks, bleachers, pumps, diving boards, are all being replaced as well as the painting and refurbishment of lockers and restrooms.

An estimated \$3.5 million is expected to be spent on this construction project, funded through general obligation bonds.

The original natatorium was built over 40 years ago. Wiseheart expects the facility to "be like new."