

Rock Bottom

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Gallino exchanges Italy for Scotus

By Claire Rickert
Staff Reporter

After over twenty-five hours of travel, Francesca Gallino finally arrived in Columbus, the place she would be spending the next five months of her life.

Gallino is Scotus' only foreign exchange student this year and is also the first Scotus has had since Covid.

Superintendent of Columbus Catholic Schools, Jeff Ohnoutka, is one of the people who knows the ins and outs of the process of having a foreign exchange student at Scotus.

"I think it is important for our students to be exposed to someone else from another culture. It is great for them to get to know somebody like Francesca, who is from Italy, and for her to tell you about what it is like to be a teenager in Italy, and for her to experience what it is like to be a teenager here in America," Ohnoutka said.

There are many behind the scenes tasks that must happen for a foreign exchange student to have a smooth transition from their homeland to Columbus.

"In the past, we had been working with a company where I would interview students over zoom because I think it is important to see how good of a grasp they have on the English language because if they do not, they come here and they

are going to struggle in our classrooms," Ohnoutka said.

Gallino is from Turin, Italy, where she lives with her parents and twin brother. She has had to adjust from everything she has ever known, to the extremely different life of living in the United States.

"I like it here, but it is definitely much different than Italy," Gallino said.

In Italy, it is common for students to do an exchange year, primarily during the fourth year of high school.

"My Italian school is called Liceo Scientifico Galileo, and I go there because there we get to choose what subject we want, and high schools have different programs," Gallino said.

Because Gallino chose science as her subject, she takes classes such as physics and anatomy and physiology, as well as other required classes, here.

"School here is also different because in Italy we do not have any school sports, not as many activities, or fun classes; it is just the school part," Gallino said.

Italian and American schools have many contrasting values and routines. From the way they are ran to how classes are taught, she explained how the experience at Scotus is different from Italian schools.

"My type of school in Italy is harder because we have twelve



PHOTO COURTESY FRANCESCA GALLINO

Senior foreign exchange student Francesca Gallino smiles with her host family's kids, Kate, Logan, and Lydia Sell at the Omaha airport when Gallino arrived in Nebraska. Gallino will attend Scotus the first semester of her senior year.

subjects and thirty hours of school every week without study hall. We also have random oral tests practically every day, and the questions are never multiple choice, but rather long, open questions. All the classes are theoretical, not fun classes, and in some of them you cannot get more than 80%," Gallino said.

Adjusting to life in a whole new country can be hard, and Gallino has had to adapt to many new aspects of life, especially the way

Americans talk and treat each other.

"Everything is new, and you have to be used to learning new habits and making new friends. The way everyone talks is also different; you guys give so many more compliments. We do in Italy too, but it is way different here," Gallino said.

Around Scotus, Gallino is mostly known as the foreign exchange student, but she wants everyone to know she is more than that.

"I love trying new things, which is one of the reasons I decided to be a foreign exchange student. It has been going great so far, and I am excited for the rest of the year," Gallino said.

Gallino would like to leave readers with some of her wise words.

"You guys use so much air-conditioning," Gallino said.

Scotus lights up homecoming dance

By Maysa Kuhl
Staff Reporter

Vivid, colorful lights, energetic students dancing joyously, and melodious music filled the Scotus cafeteria once again for the annual Homecoming Dance. The theme of the dance was "Neon Lights", which was also the featured theme of the senior hallway.

"Since it was my first Homecoming, I had high expectations, and it fulfilled all of them," freshman Kenzie Hille said.

This year's dance was more "typical" to past dances with the exception of the last two years. This year's homecoming dance was held at a more traditional date when compared to prior years. The 2021 dance was held on August 28th, 2021, which was quite early for a homecoming dance. Typically, the dance is held the week after Labor Day, but with schedules the date can fluctuate any time after.

"I liked it at this time," senior Paul Littlefield said. "We are all settled into school and activities, and it just seems to be more convenient."

The football team played DC West and beat them 14-6 before the homecoming court candidates were announced and the winners were declared. This year's Homecoming King and Queen were Jack Faust and Ashley Hoffman.

"It felt good to win king," Faust said. "Many people were cheering for me, which was really nice."

A tradition for Scotus' homecoming week is decorating the



JANAE RUSHER / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF '21

Seniors Shelby Brandenburg, Mark Buhman, Emma Lindhorst, Alex Ferguson, Lindsay Ohnoutka, Jack Faust, Ashley Hoffman, Neleigh Sliva, Carter Filipi, Jace Nelson, Ted Fehringer, and Trenton Cielocha pose on the football field for a photo of the homecoming candidates. The theme of this year's dance was "Neon Lights."

senior high hallways, and students dress up in a variety of themes for designated days. This year the dress up themes were 'Sleepover', 'Adam Sandler' and 'Anything but a Backpack Day', 'Zoom Day', and 'Spirit Day'.

"My favorite theme was the Adam Sandler day," senior Sierra Kravig said. "Every time I saw one of my classmates wearing the baggy shirt and shorts combo, I couldn't keep myself from laughing."

This year featured many new

additions and ideas to the homecoming dance brought about by the student council. One of these additions included light-up bracelets, which students could wear throughout the dance and a new DJ with a set playlist, rather than students requesting music.

"The DJ and theme were awesome, and they really made it a great experience," freshman Audrey Stoner said. "The bracelets, however, were a bust because they didn't stay on and got dropped and shat-

tered everywhere on the floor to be stepped on, and half of them didn't even light up in the first place."

The dance ended at 11 P.M. with a drawing for a variety of gift cards taking place at 10:45 P.M. for the students who stayed. These cards included Runza, Hy-Vee, Big Apple Bagel and more.

"I thought it was a great last homecoming, and I'm glad I spent it with my best friends," senior Haley Leise said. "It was one to remember."

Change comes to Scotus chapel

By Mary Faltys
Staff Reporter

The Scotus building was constructed in 1878, but it has not always had a chapel. 102 years later in 1980, a chapel was added. The Scotus chapel was extensively remodeled another 42 years later, this past summer.

Lola Doerneman, a freshman in campus ministry, has experienced the latest updates to the chapel since school has resumed.

"I think the upgrades with the chapel are very beautiful and much needed. They are definitely positive changes," Doerneman said.

Changes made to the chapel include new carpet, additional pews for extra seating, a portable altar, new lighting and color scheme, and a brand-new confessional (still under construction). The most notable change, however, is the tabernacle area where the Eucharist is displayed.

"The tabernacle is the most impactful because the colors and the marble around the monstrance make it the center of everything," Doerneman said.

It is easy for students and staff to take advantage of the remodeled chapel; there is something in there every day before school starts. Jeff Ohnoutka, the Scotus president, leads a rosary on Mondays and Thursdays. Each Tuesday and Friday, Fr. Heithoff celebrates Mass. On Wednesdays campus ministry has Worship Wednesdays once a

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CHAPEL



MARY FALTYS / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Freshman Peter Faltys and senior Tom Melliger pray in the newly renovated chapel during Worship Wednesday. Worship Wednesday is a time of prayer and Adoration before school for everyone in attendance.

month. Students can also spend time in Adoration during their study hall, or any other time, because there is perpetual Adoration.

Dana Ritzdorf, the head of campus ministry and 8th grade religion teacher, introduced a new idea to her campus ministry team this

summer as a result of the remodeled chapel. Each student in campus ministry was highly encouraged to visit the chapel during their study hall and sign in.

“One of the things we’re trying to do is have a team Adoration goal. We want to get to a combined 1,000 minutes this semester,” Ritzdorf said.

The students who have taken up the challenge have already experienced the benefits. Josie Sliva is a junior in campus ministry, and she enjoys the challenge Ritzdorf has given them.

“It really makes you think about why you are going, and it’s nice to have some encouragement,” Sliva said.

There is a brand-new addition to the chapel that is still coming: a confessional. Soon, two sacraments will be readily available at school.

“I love that we have a confes-

sional. It’s not finished yet, but I’m excited for that because we can start offering Confessions before school,” Ritzdorf said.

Scotus students and staff are not the only people to benefit from the renovated chapel. More people use the chapel now because there is perpetual Adoration. The remodeling was highly anticipated by many, and it exceeded some expectations put in place when the project began.

“I get a lot of compliments from people outside the Scotus building, whether it is adorers or parishioners in town, who talk about how it is such a great place to go,” Ohnoutka said. “There are a few things that turn out better than you ever anticipated they would turn out, and this is one of those rare instances where something far exceeded my expectations. I’m very proud that it is part of our school.”

HOMECOMING



JASMINE JACKSON / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Sophomore Henry Chard and seniors Mark Buhman, Daniel Cline, and Owen Rother sing at the Homecoming Dance on October 1, 2022. This year’s DJ had a set playlist rather than taking requests.

GALLINO



PHOTO COURTESY FRANCESCA GALLINO

Senior Francesca Gallino poses with her family, twin brother Lorenzo, mom, Patricia, and dad, Marco, at the airport before she leaves for the United States. Though the plan was for Gallino to stay only a semester, she is considering staying the whole year.

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Troubles tower over tall girls



By Joanna Rusher
Staff Reporter

“Wow, you’re really tall!” “You must play basketball.” “What shoe size do you wear?” “How tall are your parents?” Every day it

gets more difficult to politely answer all these questions. People don’t understand there’s more to tall girls than just being tall. Being a tall girl is really hard, so next time you want to say something, have some understanding.

First, I want to address the constant questions. Let’s get some things straight. Yes, I’m tall, yes, I ironically play basketball, but you don’t ask everyone you see on the street if they play basketball, so don’t ask me. That’s like me saying, “Wow, you’re short! Do you play mini golf?” You wouldn’t be too happy, would you? Also, you can quietly assume to yourself that my parents are

tall. You don’t need my help. Second, you need to know I’ve heard it all. Calling me a giraffe, saying my legs are long, big foot, and so much more. Sure, it might be funny to you, but I’ve heard it already, so please be nice.

Being tall has its struggles, but especially when you are a girl. Clothes for example. Shopping online is simply out of question. If I can’t try it on, I can’t buy it. Pants are too short, sleeves don’t reach my wrists, dresses show too much, and women’s shoes don’t sell enough sizes. No clothes can be borrowed either. Tall girls will get the most excited over clothes than anybody because when something fits, it is a

huge deal. P.S., if you work in retail, don’t comment on how tall the girl is. Say the outfit is cute and leave it at that.

There are everyday struggles tall girls have to deal with, too. For example, don’t ask one of us to move your car unless you are planning on not being able to reach the pedals when you get back in. On another note, don’t ask us to sit in the backseat. That’s just cramps and knee aches waiting to happen. I apologize, but we can’t help it.

In addition, I would like to apologize for tall girls everywhere for any accidents, spills, or injuries we may have caused. Tall girls

are generally clumsier than the average person. Long limbs are hard to control! Stairs are awful because our feet are big enough that they don’t completely fit on the step. Big feet also contribute to a lot of “tripping over nothing”. Also, if we have a bruise on our arm or leg, we probably don’t know where it came from because stuff gets in the way.

Now, there are benefits to being tall, too. For example, playing sports is easier in most cases. Also, we get from place to place fast. Long strides are hard to keep up with, so don’t walk next to us if you aren’t prepared to run. One time, we were walking through Target, and

this random guy (who was probably 5’5”) gave my 6’6” dad a high five just for being tall. Where’s my high five? I guess shopping has its benefits, too. We never have too many choices, so decisions are easy. Some stores have started carrying pants with the label “longs”, which is highly appreciated.

In conclusion, please, I’m asking you on behalf of all tall girls, next time you see one, don’t say the first thing that comes to mind. Treat them like you would any girl you see because, trust me, it means a lot.



MAYSA KUHIL / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Breaking through the biases



By Jasmine Jackson
Editor

I discovered myself in a commonly dreaded situation: without a bus partner. I scoured the aisle for an empty seat half-filled with a friend. Within seconds, I located the

desired spot, but it was not filled with a friend. I resisted the urge to frown as I slid into my seat. This would be a long bus ride...

Even prior to meeting my soon-to-be bus partner, I had formed, what I believed to be, a credible, reasonable bias. I failed to realize the foundation on which I built that bias. This foundation is a common acquaintance that lurks throughout the school hallways and classrooms: gossip.

Gossip is defined as casual or unconstrained conversation about other people, usually involving details not confirmed to be true. We are all victims and perpetrators of gossip, and the consequences are more than present in our

school environment through biases. We must seek truth and form our own opinions about a person from personal experience or face repercussions.

Outside of our school environment, biases have negative impacts. Workplace biases involving race, religion, or gender prohibit diversity and company growth and instead fuel discrimination and inequality while decreasing company productivity. These biases stem from the refusal or failure to seek the truth about a person or group of people.

In our school environment, biases take on a similar form. One passing glance down a hallway or into the cafeteria reveals bias. Every

day we sit near and talk to the same people, our friends. At face value, there is not a problem with this, but consider my dilemma on the bus, which ended with me having to be seated by someone I did not care about. What I presumed would be a wasteful, boring hour of my life, turned out to be quite insightful. I realized I held an unreasonable bias against this person. Most of the rumors about them were not true, and the gossip surrounding them had been stretched into a completely unrecognizable story. Still, I was in control of whether I believed those stories or not; unfortunately, at first, I did. When we refuse to confront our biases, seek the truth, and form our own

opinions, we miss out on potential relationships.

Gossip can be beneficial, though, right? If based on reason and experience, it can perhaps warn others of bad company. Sometimes, there may even be an aspect of truth to gossip. However, it is still gossip, and gossip stays gossip until it is proven fact. We must confront the source(s) to receive the facts.

There are over 400 people in this school. We don’t have to be friends with everybody, but as we enter another school year, consider if we have a valid reason not to associate with the rest of our peers. If so, what is that opinion, and what is it based on? If it is anything unrelated to your personal experience,

ponder whether that bias is reasonable and justifiable. Consider also if it is relevant; fortunately, there are plenty of differences between the person we are now, and the person we were years ago. A second chance may be due.

So, switch up the not-so-arranged seating charts at the lunch tables and classrooms. Walk to the other side of the hall and talk with another person. Sit with someone new on the bus. Change is simple but impactful; if we start here in Scotus, we can begin to change the outside world around us.

Ponder popularity’s purpose



By Claire Rickert
Staff Reporter

We have all been there before, even if it was only for a split second, desperately wishing we could be ‘cool’

like the popular kids. So many high schoolers’ lives are consumed by the overwhelming desire to obtain a ‘popular’ status.

Being popular in high school is not everything, and it might actually be bad for you in some cases.

I am not saying being popular is always bad because it can be good at times! You need to be conscious of your actions because even one little mistake could make you popular for something bad. Being popular for something bad is a negative thing. You do not want people knowing who you are because you have a bad reputation. You also need

to make sure you surround yourself with people who will lead you down the right path. Negative friends can lead to bad consequences.

Change for the better is awesome; in fact, I greatly encourage it, but never, ever, change yourself in order to become popular. Do not lose yourself because you think other people will find it ‘cool’. It is impossible to please everyone. Once the cool crowd ditches you, what are you going to do with your fake personality? It might sound incredibly cliché, but only you know who you truly are!

According to an article by *Insider*, new research is

showing that being popular in high school is sometimes connected to developing issues with mental health. This does not mean that because you are popular, you will now have bad mental health. The studies have shown kids who are ‘popular’ seem to have more stress to act, look, and overall be someone they are not, and, therefore, their mental health worsens. Popular kids also typically have a larger group of friends. Rachel Narr, a Ph.D. candidate in clinical psychology explained that in terms of friends, quality is better than quantity. She also said that since adolescence is a major time when people are

developing self-concepts, it helps when you have a close friend who makes you feel good about yourself.

Being popular also only matters to popular high school kids. I can guarantee that no adults, who are normal, care how popular their kids are in high school. Even if you think you care about being popular, just know you will not in a few years. After high school, you will not see that many people from your class anymore. They are not going to worry about how popular you were, but rather how you treated them and how you made them feel.

I know what some of you are thinking right now,

“Isn’t it great to have lots of connections and have everyone know who I am?” Yes, it is great to have those accomplishments, but it really matters how you got those connections. Were you nice to a kid some people do not usually approach, and now he remembers you? Or do people know who you are because you publicly made fun of them, and everyone laughed?

I would like to leave you with one of my favorite quotes, “Sure, popularity is the thing in high school. Let’s see how that’ll work for you in the real world where no one cares.”

Youngsters propel football to success

By Kavan Splitterber
& Ted Fehringer
Staff Reporters

For the second straight season, the Scotus football team has gotten off to a phenomenal start. Entering week eight, the Shamrocks have an impressive record of ___ wins and only one loss coming at the hands of top-ranked Pierce High School. (Subject to change)

Scotus opened the season with an impressive victory thanks to a goal line stand over archrival Aquinas Catholic 13-7 on August 26th. The following week, the Shamrocks fell to Pierce 7-45.

Coming into the season, the football team had question marks regarding multiple key positions that were held by influential seniors last year. The Shamrocks were forced to fill this void in the offseason.

“We have six different sophomores starting and some fresh juniors who’ve never played varsity,” senior captain Alex Ferguson said. “We had a different left tackle for the first three weeks of the season.”

Last year, the Shamrocks boasted an experienced squad led by a skillful group of seniors.

“We are younger so there’s not a lot of varsity experience, but I feel like all the classes are a lot closer and are better friends this year,” senior quarterback Trenton Cielocha said.

Despite a youthful squad, the Shamrocks have still managed to rack up ___ wins and a strong ranking of ___ in Class C-1. Even with this success, the team wants to minimize their mistakes down the stretch to reach their ultimate goal this season.

“We like to take one game at a time, but we are

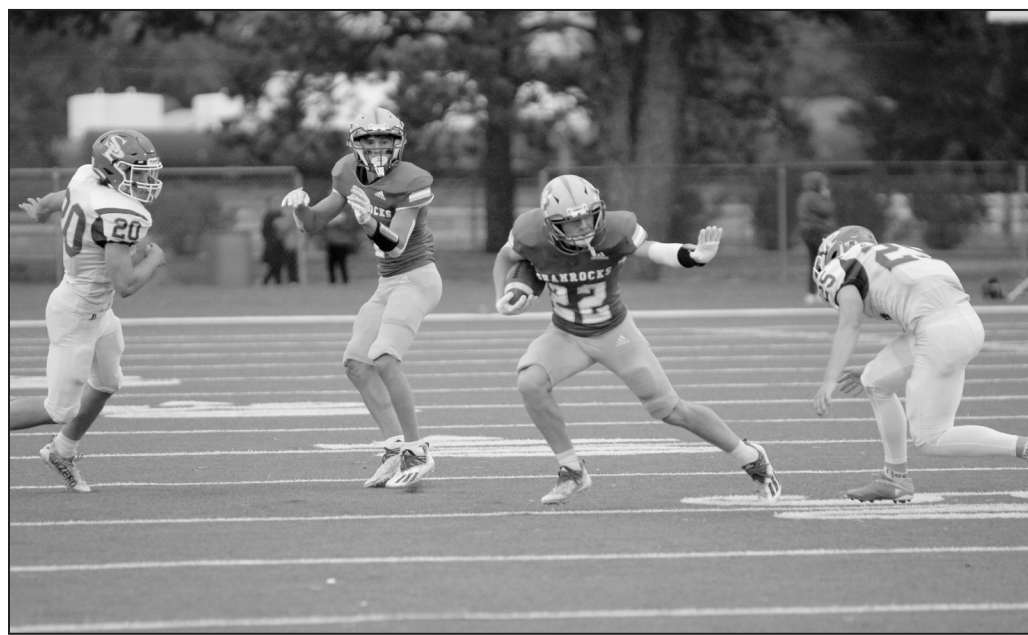
working to get back to the playoffs,” senior running back Jack Faust said.

The Shamrocks have found success in recent weeks against West-Point Beemer and Arlington behind strong performances on both sides of the ball. Scotus crushed West-Point Beemer 49-0 and Arlington 35-8.

“The West Point- Beemer game was the most memorable game so far. We played well as a team and did all the little things right on offense and defense, which led to a blowout win,” Faust said.

Even with lopsided victories, the Shamrocks have shown they can dig deep to win close games. On September 9th, Scotus defeated St. Paul 28-18 in an entertaining matchup at Pawnee Park.

“We were leading by only one touchdown against St. Paul. In the third quarter, we were determined to put a solid drive together by running the football and taking



LIBBIE BREZENSKI / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Sophomore Luke Wemhoff attempts to evade a St. Paul defender as junior Jackson Heng looks on at Memorial Stadium on September 9th. Scotus ended up defeating St. Paul with a final score of 28-18.

over the line of scrimmage. We made a lot of mistakes, but we ended up winning the game,” Ferguson said.

Another gritty performance for Scotus came on September 30 when they

defeated DC West 14-6, propelling them to seventh place Class C-1 wildcard points.

The last game played by the football team was against Wahoo at Memorial Stadium on October 7th.

Scotus’ schedule will wrap up with games against Schuyler on October 14th and crosstown rival Lakeview on October 21st.

Girls golf puttin’ on a show

By Joanna Rusher
& Brennen Jelinek
Staff Reporters

With fall sports under way, it is apparent that girls golf is an “end-of-summer”

sport with the whole season wrapped up in seven quick weeks. Despite the season seeming so short, the team was off to a quick start. In eleven total meets, eight of which are varsity, they have four team wins and countless

medalists. These wins include huge invites, broken tournament records, and the conference tournament. They have placed at almost every meet, and they are not planning to slow down.

Sophomore varsity

player Quinn VunCannon is optimistic for her team.

“I think we have a good shot at winning state; we just have to perform well the rest of the season,” VunCannon said.

The season started out with a couple of duals and triangulars. Then, on September 8, the team had a big meet against ten other teams at Quail Run Golf Course. The team ended up winning overall, kicking off their extremely successful season. Following this big win was an even bigger win two days later at the Pierce Invite.

“My favorite meet was the Pierce Invite,” VunCannon said. “I medaled individually, and there was a three-way tie for the team, and we ended up winning that, too.”

Along with the Pierce Invite, the team’s other big wins included the Lakeview Invite, Fullerton Invite, and the Conference Tournament. Although they have had a lot of success, there are always aspects of the game the

whole team can improve on. Senior varsity golfer Kaelyn Dierman pointed out their main issue.

“I think we can improve on short game; it’s the hardest, but if you’re good in short range, your scores will be a lot better,” Dierman said. “All we need to do is work on the little things and knock off a couple strokes.”

Junior Cecilia Arndt has been having a successful year. On top of winning five meets this year and tying for first in a sixth, Arndt has broken two school records. She broke the 9-hole school record by shooting a 34 at the Fullerton Invite on September 20. At that same meet, she rebroke her 18-hole record, beating her old record of 73 by 4 strokes.

“I am the most proud of my 18-hole record because I have been working extremely hard, and it is amazing to break 70 in a tournament,” Arndt said.

The team added to their sweet victories with a home

invite. The team won the Scotus invite overall with a team score of 363. Arndt won with a 76, Dierman placed third with an 83, and VunCannon and senior Ella Nahorny also placed. On top of the varsity win, the junior varsity team won too, with second and third place medals from juniors Kaitlyn Fleming and Kenna Barelis and places from three other players.

The team’s most recent win was the District tournament, played this past Tuesday in Oakland Craig. They won with a team score of 382, beating the second place team by 20 strokes. Individually, Arndt, Dierman, and VunCannon all medaled placing first, seventh, and tenth. Girl’s golf is state-bound!

Next Monday and Tuesday, the team will compete in the Girl’s Golf State Tournament at Elk’s Country Club here in town.



MARK BUHMAN / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Junior Cecilia Arndt swings at the conference tournament on September 24th. Arndt placed 1st at district golf and has broken both the 9-hole and 18-hole records this year.

Softball finishes district runner-up

By Claire Rickert
Staff Reporter

Through both ups and downs, the Columbus High School softball team continued to work hard and gain confidence, as well as skill throughout their season.

Scotus Central Catholic and Columbus High School have done co-op softball for countless years. This year, four Scotus girls are out for softball.

“The teams overall focus for this year was to play for each other and really work hard and push ourselves despite who we’re playing,” senior second baseman Lindsay Ohnoutka said.

Because Scotus co-ops with Columbus High School, the players from Scotus have had to get used to playing class-A schools, unlike the competition Scotus plays, who are mostly class-C1.

“The teams are definitely extremely competitive and there are more kids, so there usually are more experienced players,” sophomore third baseman Katelyn Pensick said.

Their season started out strong with two wins at a triangular hosted by Omaha

Westview. The games ended 13-1 against both Omaha Westview and Omaha Buena Vista.

“At the beginning of the season, we were really looking to work together as a team and celebrate our differences,” Pensick said.

After six consecutive losses, three of which were at the LPS softball invitational in Blair, Nebraska, the team won against Lincoln High 11-0.

“There are times where the other team just gets their bats going, and we allow that to affect our defense. That is when our errors start piling up, but we shake it off and bounce back the next inning or the next game,” Ohnoutka said.

The team attended the Norfolk Invitational and left with one more win than when they came. They came out on top against Kearney, winning 11-6.

“Softball is a game of success and failure. If you have confidence and push yourself, then you can beat whatever team you’re put up against,” Ohnoutka said.

After a few challenging games, the team played Omaha Central at home and won 11-0, making their total

number of wins five.

“We control what we can control, and there are games where we have just been defeated from the beginning, but we have gained so much confidence getting farther into the season. We have picked ourselves back up and are ready to get after it,” Ohnoutka said.

The team had two doubleheaders against Fremont and Lincoln Southeast and won both games against Lincoln Southwest. They won 11-7 and 6-3.

“Our game against Lincoln Southeast stood out to be the most because it was our last home game; we stayed at our level, did not give up at all throughout our game, and we took the win,” sophomore second baseman Hanna Chohon said.

After losing to Elkhorn and Lincoln Southwest, the team came away from the LSE Invitational with a win against Norfolk 8-7. The team considers this a huge win because they had previously lost to Norfolk at the beginning of the season.

“I remembered the Norfolk game because it showed us we can go up against teams just like us and compete better,” Pensick said.

They split a double header against Kearney, one game 8-9 and the other 7-5. The team also competed in the Heartland Athletic Conference and lost 4-9 to Norfolk, 0-8 to Lincoln Southwest, and won 4-3 against Fremont and 11-6 against Lincoln

High.

“I have loved getting the chance to grow closer to my friends and make new ones throughout the season,” junior right field Kyra Bowen said.

The team went 2-1 on the first day of districts, beat

Fremont 12-5 on the second day, but lost to Lincoln East in the championship, bringing home the district runner-up plaque.

“It has been such a great opportunity to play for Columbus softball,” Ohnoutka said.



ZACH SCHULTZ / YEARBOOK STAFF

Sophomore 2nd-baseman Hanna Chohon slides onto 3rd base at their home game against Lincoln Southwest on August 23rd, 2022. They had a double header and lost 1-11 and 5-13.

Cross country prepares for districts

By Mark Buhmen
& Lily Dohmen
Staff Reporters

As the sun beats down, fatigue sets in, the gun goes off, and the race begins. This is a typical scenario for the start of a cross country race.

The Scotus Central Catholic cross country team is used to this scene. Many weeks of training help prepare them for these moments. As the team approaches the latter parts of the season, however, the format for their daily workouts changes.

“As we head toward districts and state, we are starting to shorten [the workout] intervals and speed them up in hopes to create more speed. [We] also taper the amount of the workout,” co-head coach Betsy Rall said.

The team experienced a change in the coaching staff this year. Activities director Merlin Lahm retired from coaching this past year. Mrs. Rall and St. Anthony’s principal Amy Sokol took over the position with the help of

Scotus business teacher Cody Mroczek.

“We have to be understanding that the new coaches are trying to figure this out just as we are,” junior Kameron Kudron said.

The teams’ first meet was at Boone Central on September 2, 2022. The girls’ team placed fifth, and the boys’ team came in fourth, with top runner Jude Maguire placing thirteenth, earning a time of nineteen minutes and twenty seconds.

“We are adjusting really well [with the new coaches], and we are definitely running better than we did last season,” Maguire said.

Junior Logan Erickson is on varsity for the third year in a row.

“For a normal routine of practice, we have two hard days, a hill day, and then pre-meet for a week’s practice. Then we run on the weekends for extra practice,” Erickson said.

The Wahoo meet, held at Lake Wanahoo, moved its course to a new part of the lake this season. The boys

placed fourth in the meet but first out of all the Class C schools competing in the event.

“My favorite meet this year was the Wahoo meet because it was a brand new course. It was also a hard course, which makes it more fun,” Maguire said.

The Scotus Invite, held at the Lutjelusche course, took place on September 15, 2022. Both teams placed second overall. Sophomore Ian Karges placed seventeenth in the race.

“I enjoyed the home course this year because it was the first meet I got top twenty in a varsity meet,” Karges said.

The teams traveled back to Boone Central on September 23, 2022. The boys finished first while the girls took second. Junior Josie Sliva placed tenth overall.

“[My favorite meet was the] second Boone Central meet [because] it was perfect running conditions,” Sliva said.

On September 26, 2022, the varsity teams traveled to



LILY DOHMEN / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Junior Logan Erickson and sophomore Ian Karges run at the home meet held at Lutjelusche on September 15, 2022. Both teams placed second overall.

Kearney for the annual Class C meet. The boys’ team came in tenth, and the girls’ team finished twelfth.

“We have some work to do, but Kearney was a very good step forward toward meeting that goal of getting to state,” Rall said.

Both teams competed at

the conference meet on October 4, 2022, at Pioneers Park in Lincoln. The girls placed second overall and the boys place third overall.

“It isn’t [the] running that people enjoy most. It is the people that make the sport more enjoyable. They are competing with friend[s]

they love,” junior Alex Medina said.

Both varsity teams will be competing at districts on October 13, 2022, at Douglas County West in Valley, NE. The girls begin at 4:30 pm, and the boys follow up at 5:15 pm.

Volleyball adjusts to patchy season

By Daniel Cline
& Jasmine Jackson
Staff Reporter
& Editor

The girls volleyball team is approaching mid-season, and so far, the team has experienced varied results.

Currently, the team holds an 11-10 win-to-loss streak. Senior Maysa Kuhl is a varsity setter.

“We are working on getting more consistent wins, but our team has a lot of heart, and that helps us get through a lot of the ups and downs,” Kuhl said.

The team didn’t begin the volleyball season with outstanding results. Their first loss was against Kearney Catholic on August 25th, the start of the season. Senior Ashley Hoffman is a varsity defensive specialist.

“Going in we knew Kearney Catholic was second in

C-1, but we still managed to take a set off them,” Hoffman said.

This loss did not continue, as the team went on the following weekend to win their next games against Plainview, Boyd County, and Stuart, respectively, at the Planview Round Robin Tournament.

The girls volleyball team has battled many challenges, both individually and as a team. The girls faced and lost against tough competitors such as Pierce and Lincoln Lutheran, teams who have 12-2 and 19-0 win-loss streaks, respectively. Senior Faith Weber is libero on the varsity team.

“We have an entirely different roster this year, so we’ve been focusing the most on becoming mentally tough, fixing our mindsets, and limiting errors,” Weber said.

Following an alternating win-loss streak, the girls won against Aquinas (3-1) on September 15th but lost against Battle Creek (0-3) the following Tuesday. Junior

Joanna Rusher is a varsity middle hitter.

“Playing Battle Creek was a big deal because it really showed us everything was all in our heads, and that we needed to play more confidently. I’m hoping we can stay more consistent because we’ve seen how competitive we can be,” Rusher said.

On September 22nd, the girls beat Lincoln Christian (3-0). Senior Hailey Steffensmeier is the other varsity middle hitter.

“The team played well at the Lincoln Christian game. We blocked, hit, and dug efficiently, which allowed us to play in three sets. It was also one of our few home games, so it was great to have the Scotus community supporting us,” Steffensmeier said.

There are thirteen varsity players this year with only six of them returning from last year. Head coach Janet Tooley had some input on the team’s challenge of having so few returning players.

“We’re really looking at

a totally different group of girls with different skill sets and levels of development. There are times when we might have three sophomores out there, which is unusual in the years I’ve been around Scotus volleyball. It can be frustrating because you want to see growth and development faster, but it’s a matter of being patient,” Tooley said.

The girls lost their game against Lakeview (1-3) on September 27th. Despite this loss, the team’s priority is to qualify for state. Libbie Brezenski is a player on the varsity team.

“Everyone is in rebuilding mode, so the competition is all similar. We need to focus on consistency and limit our own errors,” Brezenski said.

The girls competed at Lincoln Lutheran on October 6th and at Aquinas on October 8th for their conference tournament. The girls volleyball team will compete on October 11th against GICC at home.



AVA CREMERS / YEARBOOK STAFF

The Scotus volleyball team celebrates after winning a point in their game against Lincoln Christian on September 22, 2022. The team won the game 3-0.

Tennis builds consistency with experience

By Libbie Brezenski
& Mary Faltys
Staff Reporter

Out of the thirteen boys on the Discoverer’s tennis team, nine are Shamrocks. Many of them are bringing their experience from last year back to the team as well. The team used their experience as a foundation to build their team consistency and made small adjustments to be able to compete at a higher level.

Senior Bohden Jedlicka is one of the returning Scotus players and has been on the team for four years.

“The biggest challenge we have faced is trying to compete at the level the big schools in Omaha and Lincoln compete at. We are more experienced and competitive this year, and I am excited to see how we do at the state and HAC conference tournaments,” Jedlicka said.

In the face of the increased competition, the team is trying to center themselves

around their consistency in each stroke.

Senior Alex Zoucha has played on the team for three years. He has seen the some of the improvements the team is trying to make.

“We are getting more consistent and finishing the shots we need to,” Zoucha said.

The Discoverer season started off with an overall team loss to Grand Island on August 25; however, Jedlicka’s doubles team won their match and Zoucha won his singles match.

Since the beginning of the season, the Discoverer Co-op team has had similar wins and losses in duals and had individual successes as well. The #1 doubles team consisting of Scotus seniors Blake Wemhoff and Zoucha has a 17-11 record. Jedlicka also plays on a doubles team with a teammate from CHS, and they have gone 20-9 in #2 doubles.

On September 2, the Discoverers hosted an invite with multiple teams. Because their

team is small, it is hard to get a team win, but some players had individual successes.

Senior Blake Wemhoff has played for three years and had an impressive win at the Columbus meet.

“[The most memorable meet was the] Columbus meet because it was the first meet I ever got first,” Wemhoff said.

Another highlight this season was their home dual against South Sioux City. On September 6, the Discoverers brought home wins in five out of the nine varsity matches. The wins that afternoon came from the Wemhoff/Zoucha’s doubles team, Jedlicka’s doubles team, Zoucha’s singles match, and sophomore Jacob Rother’s singles match.

A few weeks later on September 22, the Discoverer team lost their dual to Norfolk, but some of the players and doubles teams had individual wins.

On September 27, the tennis team played both North Platte and York at York. They triumphed over

North Platte, once again winning five out of the nine games. They had similar results when they played York later that day.

Senior Sam Meyer, sophomores Callen Jedlicka and Brody Splittgerber, and freshmen Hudson Kloke and Jake Demuth make up the rest of the Scotus players on the team. They all have varying years of experience.

Demuth is one of the few new players this year and looks up to the returning players for guidance and support.

“[My favorite player is] Blake Wemhoff because he never shows his anger when playing,” Demuth said.

Although the boys come from different levels of experience and have faced many challenges, they enjoy the companionship they have built with one another.

“The people on the team are close, and it’s like a family,” Jedlicka said.

The conference tournament concluded Friday, October 7, so the boys are



MARY FALTYS / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Sophomore Jacob Rother winds up to return the ball to his South Sioux City opponent in his singles match on September 6, 2022 at Pawnee Park. Rother won the match 8-2, and the Discoverers won 5 out of the 9 matches in the dual.

preparing to compete at state. The tennis team hopes to fin-

ish strong at state in Omaha on October 13th and 14th.

Mroczek brings business back to Scotus

By Lily Dohmen
Staff Reporter

Kids graduate from high school, go off to college, graduate from college, and move away, but sometimes they come back to their hometown to start their careers.

Former student and athlete Cody Mroczek decided to return to Columbus this year and teach new business classes at Scotus.

"I never thought I would be back in Columbus. I had two good job options, one at Scotus and one at Lincoln Pius," Mroczek said. "It came down to how grateful I was for what Scotus did for me. When I got to college, Scotus set me up for success, and I wanted to give that opportunity back to Scotus."

Mroczek attended the University of Nebraska Lincoln, where he majored in Business, Marketing, and Informational Technology

Education. He also minored in Coaching.

"I student taught at Lincoln Pius. Lincoln Pius was not an option at that time, so I emailed my supervisor to see if I could go here because I really wanted to be in the Catholic school system," Mroczek said.

Mroczek graduated from Scotus in 2017 and ran cross country, track, and played basketball.

"[I wanted to become a teacher because] I really liked the idea of being in a school setting and coaching," Mroczek said. "I was very hesitant at first because coming out of high school I never thought I would be a teacher. As soon as I did student teaching last year, I fell in love with it. It was fun being in a classroom with kids."

Mroczek has many goals for his future at Scotus.

"My goals are to not make any rookie mistakes like forgetting my laptop or other materials at home. I also want to make sure my

students are having fun in my classes because I know students talk, and I do not want a negative perspective on my classes," Mroczek said.

Mroczek teaches six courses altogether, Entrepreneurship, Intro to Business, Accounting, Marketing, Careers, and Video Production. Three of these classes are new for students to take this year.

"The lunches, administration, and classes have changed [since I went here]. I was not able to bring my own lunch. Mr. Ohnoutka used to be just in charge of Scotus and not all Columbus Catholic schools. The steam lab, steam courses, and business courses are new," Mroczek said. "Scotus is doing a lot more for students to be successful outside of high school than it did just five years ago."

Mroczek's biggest influences on teaching were coach John Petersen, chemistry teacher Jane Dusel, social sciences teacher Pat Brockhaus,



LILY DOHMEN / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Assistant cross country coach Cody Mroczek talks to head coach Betsy Rall at practice about the workout on Wednesday, September 21, 2022. Mroczek came back to Scotus to teach business courses this year.

activities director Merlin Lahm, and former English teacher Becki Zanardi.

"It is weird working with former teachers. I still call them all Mr. and Mrs. It is fun being on the other side of the perspective. Some of

them call me Mr. Mroczek, which is also weird to hear," Mroczek said.

Mroczek joins the business department helping Mrs. Kris Wurtz, who was new last year, with the new classes.

"It has been a fun year so

far, and I am looking forward to the rest of the year. I hope the students are having fun. I want to create a new culture yet still incorporate the old Scotus culture," Mroczek concluded.

Scotus says hola to Ms. Johnson

By Joanna Rusher
Staff Reporter

In 2022, the Spanish program at Scotus Central Catholic was without a Span-

ish teacher. Using a program called Rider, they were able to continue Spanish while having a teacher teach the class over Zoom. The teachers taught schools all over the country, so they could only

come for about thirty minutes of the class. They also couldn't come on days Scotus had an unusual schedule.

Many schools transitioned to this way of learning, but Scotus was fortunate

enough to only have this for one year. Among the five new teachers hired this year, was Ms. Autumn Johnson who was hired to teach Spanish I and II. She is a first-year teacher who, before coming to Scotus, was student teaching at Aquinas and Lutheran High Northeast in Norfolk. She grew up in Fremont, Nebraska, graduated from Fremont High School, and, most recently, graduated Concordia University. She graduated from with a major in Spanish Education. Many of the Spanish II students were excited to hear there would be in person learning again this year.

"In person learning is better because it is so much easier to ask for help if we need it," junior Spanish II student Tori Dush said.

Many students say they didn't learn as much last year as they should have because of the online aspect.

Sophomore Jacob Rother is also taking Spanish II this year.

"I feel like I am learning a lot more, but it is much harder," Rother said. "I think it's because we have an in-

class teacher now, and we have to catch up for what we missed last year."

The difference between Spanish II and Spanish I students, who didn't have to take an online class last year, is clear when it comes to excitement.

"The Spanish I students come in ready to learn, and they're excited, and that's fun," Johnson said.

Johnson has been working hard to catch up Spanish II students while teaching new material to both sections. She learned some of her best tips and tricks from important teachers in her life.

"I have always wanted to become a teacher," Johnson said. "My mom was a teacher, so she was kind of my first inspiration, and I had a lot of teachers growing up who were pretty influential to me."

Apart from rebuilding the Spanish department at Scotus, Johnson will be helping with the music aspect of One Act.

"I have been a musician my whole life. I am excited to contribute to that aspect of the show," Johnson said.

Johnson is being kept busy with the added extracurricular activity because she teaches Spanish I and Spanish II which is six sections of 131 students, total. Luckily, she really enjoys teaching.

"I like teaching because I get to share my passion with students, and I love watching students grow and be proud of the knowledge they gain," Johnson said. "I think teaching Spanish, specifically, is really rewarding because I get to help students not only learn a new language, but also learn about different people and cultures. I believe we become more empathetic when we try to understand other ways of life."

Like all teachers, Johnson has goals for her students and for the future of the Spanish program.

"I hope in the future we can offer a Spanish III and maybe even IV so students can continue in their study of the language," Johnson said. "I also want my Spanish students to leave my classroom with enough confidence to use the language outside of school."



JOANNA RUSHER / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Spanish I and II teacher Autumn Johnson teaches her class a new concept during Spanish I, period 7. Aside from teaching the Spanish classes, Ms. Johnson will also be helping with the music for one act this season.

Shotkoski, latest addition to math department

By Maysa Kuhl
Staff Reporter

Equations, numbers, and math in general are typically not crowd favorites, but studies indicate 46% of students actually enjoy classes with math. With a societal stigma over the subject and a lack of teachers going around, Scotus Central Catholic hit the jackpot when it comes to Algebra I and II teacher Wendy Shotkoski.

"I was ready for a change" Shotkoski said. "After 23 years of teaching, I wanted something different, a smaller school, just something different."

Shotkoski opted to work at Scotus at the start of the 2022-2023 school year after past teacher Alison Timoney left in 2020. During the year 2021-2022, the math department was teaching an overload of classes. The addition of Shotkoski to the department has reduced the number of classes for each teacher in it. Shotkoski had been a teacher at Columbus

High School for nearly 23 years where she taught math courses. There are not only differences in the classroom she teaches in but topics such as curriculum, class periods, and students, too.

"Scotus is a smaller school, with fewer number of students overall, but more in the classes I teach individually," Shotkoski said. "There are also different schedules, and getting used to the shorter class periods has been a real big change for me. I'm used to teaching in a 50-minute class period, where now it is 41 or 42 minutes, which is a little shorter."

Shotkoski grew up in Columbus and graduated from Columbus High School. From there she attended Central Community College and then transitioned to the University of Nebraska-Kearney where she majored in 7-12 Math & Physical Education. Shotkoski's son, Spencer, also attends Scotus, and he is involved in several sports and activities. Her daughter, Emma, is a senior at CHS

this year as well.

"I enjoy the nice, family atmosphere. I know everybody," Shotkoski said.

Shotkoski was inspired to teach by her own math teachers throughout her youth. She was even able to teach with one of these mentors at CHS for a few years. This led to a love of teaching and expressing her love of math with students and helping them grow to understand the material.

"I enjoy sharing my passion of math with my students," Shotkoski said in an interview with communications director Taylor Dahl over the summer. "I love working with young people... watching them mature over the school year or throughout high school."

Shotkoski has found a passion in helping students who struggle with math. It has made her job more fulfilling and is a driving force in her career.

"My favorite part about teaching math is seeing kids who struggle and then all of

a sudden, they figure it out," Shotkoski said. "It is like see-

ing the lightbulb on; it's what really inspires me to keep

going and to keep teaching math."



MAYSA KUHL / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Algebra I and II teacher Wendy Shotkoski teaches her class in her new classroom on second floor. This is Shotkoski's first year at Scotus, but she taught at Columbus High School for 23 years prior.

Heithoff helps bring others to God

By Mark Buhman
Staff Reporter

Most Scotus students know Fr. Heithoff as the priest who they see occasionally walking down the hallways. However, there is more to Fr. Heithoff than meets the eye. Martin Luther King Jr. once said, “The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy” (National Park Service: Quotes). Fr. Jim Heithoff is a man who has endured many challenging moments and engaged in controversial issues throughout his life.

Born and raised in Cedar Rapids, Nebraska, Fr. Heithoff was the oldest of four children. His parents and siblings were practicing Catholics; they attended Church almost every Sunday and prayed the rosary with each other many nights. However, they were not the ardent leaders at the front. They served whenever possible but did not often overstep their bounds. Heithoff spent first through eighth grade at a Catholic elementary school then attended a public high school. Throughout his time of primary and secondary

education, he grew in knowledge. However, few careers sparked an interest in him.

“Nothing really motivated me,” Heithoff said.

Throughout much of his adolescence, he figured he would become a teacher, but that did not satisfy him. He lived on a farm, but farm work was not a passion of his either. Amidst the uncertainty, Fr. Heithoff received some advice that would later play a key role in his life. A comment by a former acquaintance to pursue the priesthood always found its way back into the forefront of his mind.

“For some reason, being a priest came back to me,” Heithoff stated.

There was something noble about being a priest, and it motivated him. Unfortunately, after graduating high school in 1969, Heithoff had nowhere to go; the seminaries were full. As a result, he was forced to wait to enter his vocation. First, he attended Wayne State College. Next, he followed up with four years of college seminary at St. John Vianney Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota. He then received four years of theology school at St. Mary’s Seminary in Baltimore, Maryland. He was ordained in 1977, and with that, he was a priest. However, in the first few years after his ordination,

a resentful disposition came over him; an unhappiness filled him, centered around the promise of celibacy, which he had been required to take. This did not last long; however, as at his ten-year high school reunion, he saw many of his former classmates who were married and yet who also had many struggles. This realization enabled him to face a hard truth.

“You know, my life is probably as fruitful as theirs,”

Heithoff concluded.

After that experience, the oath of celibacy no longer felt to him like a requirement but as a reasonable promise to make. Heithoff realized if one genuinely intended to become a priest and fulfill the duties of the office, then it would make sense if he did abstain from marriage.

“Celibacy is meant to give witness to the Kingdom of God that is greater

than ourselves,” Heithoff said.

Not only does the promise of celibacy allow priests to focus primarily on their parishes and pointing people toward the Kingdom of God, but it also enables priests, like Fr. Heithoff, to offer their service to various schools in the role of a chaplain.

“It’s been a good experience for me to be here at Scotus,” Heithoff stated.

Fr. Heithoff may seem

like any normal priest to some, but he has much to say if one strikes a conversation with him. For forty-five years, Fr. Heithoff has devoted his life to the priesthood and plans to continue that for the rest of his life. To him, there is a purpose to being a priest, far greater than what meets the eye.

“It is about bringing God to others and others to God,” Heithoff concluded.



LAUREN HOUEK / YEARBOOK STAFF

Scotus staff member Nate Tenopir looks on while setting up for Mass with campus minister Dana Ritzdorf and school chaplain Fr. Heithoff. Tenopir graduated from Scotus in 2000, and Heithoff has been in the priesthood for over forty-five years.

Tenopir takes on new challenges

By Ted Fehringer
Staff Reporter

You may have seen a new face at Scotus, probably wearing a black messenger bag across his chest while roaming the halls during passing period, subbing for teachers, planning retreats, or proctoring study halls. A few years ago, the possibility of working at Scotus for Nate Tenopir was far-fetched.

“I was interviewing Mr. Ohnoutka for a profile on Community Champions for the Telegram, and he mentioned, ‘I think someday you’re going to teach and coach at Scotus.’ At the time, I was like, ‘No way.’ I have

been to college twice. I have two degrees. I don’t want to go through college again. Luckily, you don’t have to go through the whole college process again to teach and coach,” Tenopir said.

Although he is new to the building as an instructor, Tenopir graduated from Scotus in 2000.

Mr. Tenopir acknowledged how formational his faith has been in his life, but early on, he struggled with it.

“It’s not that I didn’t apply myself. It was just different. I could tell you the Ten Commandments, the Mysteries of the Rosary, and the seven deadly sins, but I didn’t understand the 2000 years of the faith and

where it comes from and how the Old Testament connects to the new, and just all the things that make the Catholic belief logical.”

With this experience of struggling with his faith at a young age, Tenopir wants to help Scotus students strengthen their faith in God by learning the Church’s history and logical evidence for his existence.

“There’s historical facts, personalities, and events that concretely show evidence for God and everything we believe in him. Being able to help students understand that is my top priority. Exposing students to this evidence will help, so when they go out in the world, they can say the logic and reason behind the faith and

be able to engage in those conversations.”

Mr. Tenopir believes reinforcing this foundational evidence will increase the chances of Scotus students staying loyal to the faith as they grow up.

“Question your faith and you’re going to wonder sometimes why things are the way they are. But if you’re equipped to understand, there’s a better chance that you’re going to stick to your faith.”

Tenopir has started the Men’s Group at Scotus to implement his plan of educating the youth. He wants to offer something that will “change the culture, especially among the boys

at Scotus.”

Working at Scotus has changed his normal routine. As a journalist, Tenopir worked long, late hours covering high school sports.

“In the past, I didn’t get up until 10 or 10:30 because I was at a game in the evening,” Tenopir said.

This change is something he has enjoyed.

“Now, between working out before school, working in school during the day, and coaching football, I have 16-hour days. This may sound horrible, but I enjoy it.”

Mr. Tenopir has experienced another major difference between his former profession and his new one.

“In my prior career, I

got to meet a lot of student athletes, but I don’t get to meet as many anymore.

Luckily, I get to be around the same group of student athletes every day. You get to develop a deeper relationship.”

If you are interested in joining the Men’s Group or need someone to talk to, you can find Mr. Tenopir in room 305 as he works to attain his substitute teaching license and eventually, his full-time teaching license.

“The transition to Scotus hasn’t been very difficult. Working here just feels like something I was meant to do,” Tenopir concluded.

Wallick edits the English classroom

By Jasmine Jackson
Editor

Comma rules, chapter books, and constant comprehension quizzes—this is often called a typical English class. However, former Scotus graduate Alaina Wallick would suggest otherwise. As the new 8th grade and 10th grade English teacher, Ms. Wallick is enthusiastic about her goal to reinvent English class and inspire students the same way Scotus inspired her years ago.

Wallick graduated from Scotus in 2018, having attended the school since the 7th grade.

“It’s a different experience to return as a faculty member. When Mr. Ohnoutka reached out, I was excited to see what had changed about Scotus and how I can help make it better by giving back to a school that gave so much to me,” Wallick said.

A University of Nebraska Omaha graduate, Wallick received a major in Secondary Education with an English Language Arts endorsement in the spring of this year. She completed her

student teaching with schools in Omaha and Council Bluffs but chose to return to Scotus, a place closer to her heart.

“When it comes to academic, athletic, and extracurricular excellence, there’s nothing better than Scotus.

Students know their expectations, and they know how to push themselves further. As a teacher, it’s rewarding to see students want to achieve greatness,” Wallick said.

Along with her return as a faculty member, Ms.

Wallick has also replaced former English teacher Becki Zanardi who retired at the end of last year.

“As a student, Mrs. Zanardi was one of the first teachers who instilled in me a love for English and

finding the meaning in things. I have enormous shoes to fill, and it can be a lot of pressure, but she left me with a lot of useful resources. I’m using what she left me and making it my own,” Wallick said.

In her new position, Wallick teaches 8th-grade and 10th-grade English, which includes over 110 students. She notices the difference in how students view English versus other core classes.

“It’s easy to put English on the back burner because students think we don’t need to know these comma rules or stories when I’m older, and that’s not wrong. However, English is a great opportunity to look at the deeper meaning of life, reflect on the people who came before us, and look at their journeys and experiences to apply them to our own lives,” Wallick said.

Wallick intends to alter this perspective of English by building a different culture in the classroom. She recently included a 9/11 unit after receiving student interest about the event.

“I definitely want a classroom community based on respect, engagement, and opportunities for hands-on learning. I also want to con-

sider student input. Hopefully, I can incorporate field trips during our Holocaust unit to help with more visual experiences,” Wallick said.

Ms. Wallick isn’t only focused on the classroom, though. Outside of class, she is the flag corps assistant coach, and as a student participated in a variety of extracurriculars from golf to theatre to mock trial. However, one of her passions is speech.

“I am excited to be on speech with Ms. Mimick. I’ve learned a lot from my experiences with high school speech, state, and being an NSAA judge in college. I’m eager to build up the program and have multiple students go to state each year,” Wallick said.

As the school year progresses, Wallick aspires to do more than the typical English classroom of chapter books, comprehension quizzes, and comma rules.

“I want to boost ACT and reading scores, and hopefully have more writing electives once I get my schedule worked out. I also hope to see more students outside of the classroom in activities,” Wallick concluded.



JASMINE JACKSON / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

English teacher Alaina Wallick ponders the answer to sophomore Rebecca Kusch’s question during 8th period sophomore English class. Wallick graduated in 2018 from Scotus and officially began teaching this year.

Campus ministry rallies faith at Scotus

By Brennen Jelinek
Staff Reporter

According to the National Center for Education Statistics, there are almost 35,000 Christian high schools in the United States. Scotus is one of these schools and has the privilege of having a campus ministry team to help lead its students in their faith. At Scotus, campus ministry is involved in the day-to-day life of the school. The campus ministry advisor, Dana Ritzdorf, had clear goals for the group this year.

“My biggest desire for this year is that the students would have more ownership over what’s going on with campus ministry, and that they would really step out and be leaders,” Ritzdorf said.

Campus ministry has made many changes to how they operate this year. One of the biggest changes made was breaking the full group

into five different groups. These groups consist of the retreat team, music committee, school environment team, prayer team, and the special events committee. Each of these groups has a leader who oversees making sure the tasks for each group are completed. Cecilia Arndt is the leader of the music committee and is extremely excited about supervising this group.

“I chose the music committee because I love singing and leading worship. We are in charge of Worship Wednesdays, singing at retreats, or anything that needs music to help with worship,” Arndt said.

The campus ministry team also went on a retreat this summer, which was brand new this year. They traveled out to Camp Moses Merrill in Lindwood to try to grow in their faith together as a team. They participated in team building activities and went on a long hike. They had Mass and a time for

prayer in the morning and adoration and confession in the evening. Samantha Johnston, who assists Ritzdorf, said the retreat was a wonderful experience.

“When I attended the retreat, I felt God’s presence the most during adoration or meeting new people. I grew my relationships with people that I had never talked to before,” Johnston said.

Campus ministry offers students a way to grow in relationship with God with the help of friends. This year, campus ministry has taken over the important roles of finding altar servers, lectors, and EMHCs for Mass, which each class took turns doing last year. Through this Ritzdorf hopes to keep the faith alive in the members of campus ministry.

“Ultimately, the whole point of all of it is that they would know God and want to grow in their relationship with him,” Ritzdorf said.

Campus ministry provides students of all ages an



MAYSA KUHL / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Senior Mark Buhman, junior Cecilia Arndt, and freshman Audrey Stoner sing at Mass during the 7th grade retreat on September 9th. Campus Ministry has taken on the roles of leading singing, lecturing, and serving at Mass.

easy way to come to know God and grow in faith. Many of the members of campus ministry have enjoyed their years spent as a part of this team. Caroline Klitz, the leader of the prayer team,

summed up her experience in campus ministry and invited other students to be a part of the fun.

Klitz concluded, “Campus ministry has provided and encouraged so many new

and reformed ways of experiencing our faith. I advise that every student, Catholic or not, to take advantage of the opportunities. God is waiting!”

New lunch staff brings program and meals

By Daniel Cline
Staff Reporter

Kids waiting in line, cooks scrambling to serve food, a buzz of kids talking to their friends, and the smell

of freshly made food. This is the Scotus cafeteria during lunchtime. The new school year brings with it many new ideas and features, a big one being the difference in the lunch program. The Scotus lunch program looks different this year with new staff,

new food, and new feelings towards the cafeteria food in general.

Perhaps the most notable change in the cafeteria this year is a change of staff.

The newly hired head of the cafeteria is Elaine Zoucha. Zoucha has been a registered

dietician since 2001 and has owned a long-term care consulting company which, up until this year, was her sole occupation. Due to her introduction to the cafeteria staff, she brought along much change in the cafeteria and the kitchen.

“Because we are trying a lot of new things and we have all brand-new staff except for a couple of people, we are making sure everyone is up to speed and knows their roles,” Zoucha said. “I am learning the school food nutrition program, which is completely different from what I have done over the past twenty years.”

It is true; nearly all cafeteria staff members are new this year, save for three. These staff members serve an average of 650 meals per day between the three schools of Scotus, St. Bonaventure, and Immanuel Lutheran School and Daycare.

The main facet of a cafeteria is its food, and many enjoy the new food options available.

“I like the fresh fruit

option. The watermelon has been a personal favorite of mine!” senior Hailey Stefensmeier said.

Every day, there are 5-8 different fruits and vegetables available to pick from at the salad bar, along with new protein options and a salad of the day.

The watermelon and cantaloupe, specifically, are purchased by the cafeteria from local growers, allowing them to have a fresh taste. Seconds are now available for every entrée every day for those who are not satisfied with the single portion. New entrées have also been introduced, with additional entrée options planned to be available every day in the future.

Not only has lunch been expanded, but the most important meal of the day is being served once again at Scotus.

“I get a better breakfast after morning practice instead of just a granola bar,” 8th grade volleyball player Brooke Krienke said.

Years ago, Scotus served breakfast before school, yet

it was stopped. Zoucha has brought it back due to the importance for students to start the day healthy and ready to learn. The meal has been a success in the cafeteria with between 40 and 90 students taking advantage of the nutritious start to the day. Four or five items are available every day. Three of these items must be chosen to eat, one being a half cup of fruit. Such items offered are French toast, scrambled eggs and cheese, and blueberry muffins.

Much of the student body welcomes the changes to lunch and the reintroduction of breakfast.

“I feel more energized for the last three periods. I used to feel sluggish and tired,” senior Evan Ostdiek said.

The cafeteria staff is certainly proud of what they have done and are hopeful for the future of the program.

“It is a great program,” Zoucha said, “and it has been exciting to do something different and help give back to the school.”



DANIEL CLINE / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Seniors Tom Melliger, Sam Meyer, Ted Fehringer, Bryce Follete, and Mark Buhman wait in line at the salad bar. This school year, more salad bar options are available than ever before.

SCC transportation gets an upgrade

By Kavan Splittgerber
Staff Reporter

Part of being a high school student is participating in all sorts of different events and activities. From sports to retreats, students will always have the need to get around the state for different reasons. That’s where school buses come in; they function as transportation vehicles for students that find use quite often throughout the year. Like any other vehicle, school buses start to wear down after so much driving, so Scotus decided it was time for an upgrade.

“There was a need... you know our newest bus was fourteen years old, and it was time to do something,” Scotus activities director Merlin Lahm said.

Something was done indeed. Two new buses were introduced to Scotus students and staff alike for use this year. These buses are an improvement over the old buses in more ways than one.

“The two old buses had a capacity of 54 and 33 with

two per seat. Both new buses have a capacity of 56 with two per seat; they have air conditioning, so the comfort level is greater. Otherwise, the underneath storage is larger,” Lahm said.

The weather control of the new buses has already become an improvement worth noticing for many Scotus students.

“I love how you can cool down with actual cold air instead of feeling no difference between inside and outside the bus,” sophomore Emma Brezenski said.

The new buses should be much more effective during the winter, so comfort on the buses should not be an issue.

“The climate control has been very nice for this time of the year, being able to go to places in 90-degree weather with air conditioning is pretty nice. The older buses also had issues with heating. In the winter the buses didn’t heat very fast, and if they weren’t started and warmed up soon enough, they would never catch up to the cold temperature,” Lahm said.

Although the new buses have been helpful, they may

not be exactly what Scotus is looking for. Scotus has buses for now, but that is still subject to change based on the school’s circumstances in the future.

“We have these buses over a five-year lease, so at the end of that five-year period, we will make a decision on what we want to do with these buses. We will have the option to buy them or make another five-year lease on other new buses or decide it’s time to go toward a different avenue,” Lahm said. “There are schools that hire someone to do all their transportation; some companies out there provide the driver, provide the bus, and sign you a contract for services.”

Scotus owns their own buses because the school is fortunate enough to have multiple bus drivers who can transport kids and staff around for their events.

“I want to credit the people who drive our buses, Vern Younger and Ed Brezenski. These guys are long time Scotus supporters in one way or another, and they help us out by driving the buses,” Lahm said. “Dean Hefty has

been the bus maintenance supervisor for years, and he drives for us as well. We also have a number of coaches who drive: Mr. Ridder, Krienke, Jakubowski. Without those people, it probably wouldn’t have been possible to do things the way we do.”

Scotus felt there was a need for new buses, but Scotus is still in possession of the old buses for now. Although anything could happen, as it stands the buses may be here to stay as they still find plenty of use.

“There is the question

on what will we do with the buses we have, the two older buses. Right now, the plan is to keep all four buses and see how it goes for the fall season because there are instances where our schedule fills up, and we need the extra buses,” Lahm said.



KAVAN SPLITTGERBER / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

One of the new Scotus buses waits to be used in the school parking lot. Both of the new buses arrived on June 21, 2022.



Seniors soar at the senior retreat

By Libbie Brezenski
Staff Reporter

The senior retreat is one of the many highlights during a senior's last year at Scotus, and one of the last times the whole class is together in one place. This retreat is a bittersweet way to start off the year and leaves the senior class with long-lasting memories together.

On August 31, the senior class along with chaperones Mrs. Ritzdorf, Mr. Tenopir, Mr. Brockhaus, Mr. Dall, Ms. Brichacek, and Fr. Heithoff took a bus and two vans forty-seven miles southwest to Timberlake Ranch Camp located south of Central City.

Mrs. Ritzdorf is in charge of organizing for the senior retreat and plans for it months in advance.

"I book the date with Timberlake in the spring and then plan the schedule for the day when it gets closer to the date. Each year is similar, so I can just pull up the agenda from previous years and make changes as needed," Ritzdorf said.

Students began the day with having Mass outside led by Fr. Heithoff.

"It was very peaceful being outside with God's nature. It reminds us that God can be seen and felt anywhere," senior Hailey Stefensmeier said.

After Mass, the seniors did a class bonding activity before having the opportunity to explore the 600 acres of wilderness the camp has to offer for a half an hour.

Seniors Brianna Belzer and Lily Dohmen

went on a meaningful walk during their downtime.

"On the walk [with Lily], we talked about our future plans and how it felt unreal to be a senior already," Belzer said.

The final two hours of the retreat consisted of the seniors having the options to go on a high ropes course, a blob, obstacle courses, canoeing, or simply hang out with each other.

Senior Isaac Dreher was ecstatic when he heard about the high ropes course.

"When I heard about it, I knew I needed to do it. I'm not scared of heights; I'm just scared for my safety at those heights. I loved it all the way through," Dreher said.

Senior foreign exchange student Francesca Gallino had a great time participating in the pole climbing obstacle.

"The pole climb was scary but standing above all the people was cool. I'd say it released a lot of adrenaline, and my classmates were being supportive," Gallino said.

Senior Nick Zoucha participated in the blob activity. The blob was a giant inflatable where students could sit on the end and be launched into the pond by their peers who jumped off a platform.

"I loved the blob. I have always wanted to do one of those; however, I do wish it was a deeper lake so we wouldn't have as many of those restrictions," Zoucha remarked.

Overall, the senior retreat was a success, and it was a well spent day of making memories and class bonding.

Senior Whitney Klug concluded, "Take in time with people and enjoy things while we have the opportunity to do so because it'll be over fast."



(top left) Seniors Bohden Jedlicka, Francesca Gallino, Shelby Brandenburg, Nick Zoucha, Zach Schultz, Isaac Dreher, Lily Dohmen, Blake Wemhoff, Whitney Klug, Jack Faust, Jasmine Jackson, Jace Nelson, Brennen Jelinek, Mason Roberts, and Brooke Lehr participate in different activities offered at the senior retreat. The seniors had a couple hours in the afternoon to do a variety of activities such as a high ropes course, a blob, ziplining, and pole climbing to name a few.
ALLY WEMHOFF & LAUREN HOUEK / YEARBOOK STAFF



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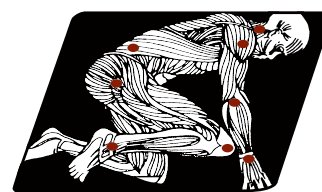


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Columbus fast food fry frenzy

By Libbie Brezenski
Staff Reporter

“Would you like some fries with that?” This is a commonly asked question that almost every fast-food venue will ask in hopes to get the consumer to buy more. Eating fast food is practical-

ly in America’s name, and according to *fastfoodmenu-prices.com*, fries are the most common purchase in that category. What goes perfectly with a side of fries? Dipping sauce, of course! Ranch is among the top-most popular generic dipping sauces according to *mashed.com*, and the flavor can range from

extremely tangy and sour to sweet and creamy.

The quality of fries and their dipping sauce partner has both made and broke my whole eating experience before, and I do not want anyone else to feel the disappointment of having a wonderful entree and being crushed with soggy fries and

sour ranch. So do not worry, friends! I have tasted and rated each of the fast-food fries around town by themselves and along with their coinciding ranches and have found the best, mediocre, and worst places to get a side of saltiness.

The gold medal winners were McDonald’s and Runza’s fries tied for first, and Runza’s ranch took the solo medal. Both fries are well-known hits in the Columbus area and are a classic choice for the top. Some may say these two are both overrated; however, the competition was just no match for them. Both fries were perfectly salted with enough to give it flavor, but not enough to make your mouth feel as if it was in the Dead Sea. If I had to choose only one, I would go with Runza’s because they were bigger in size, crispier, and had more potato. The Runza ranch was a perfect combination of flavor to go along with

its co-part and was sweet and creamy to taste.

In second place for fries is Freddy’s. Freddy’s fries were seasoned nicely and were addicting to eat. The only complaint I have is they are very thin. They do, however, give the customer a big plate of the fries to make up for the lack of fry in the fry. The second-place ranch was Dairy Queen. This ranch resembled McDonald’s ranch in taste but was costly. One dip of ranch costs around seventy cents and only holds up to two ounces.

The fries at Dairy Queen, Wendy’s, and Arby’s curly fries tasted good; however, none of them stuck out to me in order to be placed as one of my favorites. I do not have bad things to say about these fries, they just were not memorable and did not give me a wow factor.

The most vile, disgusting fry award had to go to Arby’s crinkle fries and Sonic ranch

separately. These two were an absolute let down and ruined my entire mood after eating them. Arby’s crinkle fries are NOT to be confused with their curly fries. These fries tasted as if they were left at the bottom of a freezer to burn since 2020. They were soggy, undercooked, and just absolutely disgusting. Sonic’s ranch was a complete let down even after their fries made my hopes go up. It was sour and tangy and left a weird funk in my mouth I would not even wish on my worst enemy.

After completing this full review of the fast-food fries in the area, I have concluded that Runza’s fries and ranch give the most flavorful and fulfilling combination with McDonald’s fries being the best on their own. If you are looking for a yummy, salty snack, I would recommend these two places time and time again.



LIBBIE BREZENSKI / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Pictured above is the classic Runza fries and ranch. Of all the fast food places Libbie Brezenski reviewed, this combination was the winner.

Bookstore modernizes historic downtown

By Lily Dohmen
Staff Reporter

As students, we are always looking for a quiet yet aesthetic place to study or read a book. We also want books that cannot be found in our school library. Many citizens have always wanted a Barnes and Noble in Columbus, and now we basically have one. On April 30, 2022, Dee Howerter opened Terrace Books in historic downtown Columbus. The bookstore is an independent, family-owned business. Terrace Books has a warm, happy, and inviting environment and friendly staff. It adds modern spice to the downtown area yet keeps the aesthetic.

Inside the store, they have a small reading nook and a free coffee and tea bar. Who does not love reading in a comfy chair with a steaming hot beverage? In the back of the store, there is a door that leads to a patio. This patio is another reading nook. It has a bunch of metal chairs and tables to study or read at. It even has a mini wooden patio. There is a fountain,

tons of flowers, and greenery for a modern aesthetic. Whether a person has their nose in a book or studying for classes, the patio brings a sense of calmness. Birds sing sweet melodies like honey, the wind slightly rustles through the branches of the trees, and people whisper about their books. It feels like being at home except in nature. It is easy to focus and there is no judgment because everyone is minding their own business. Even the workers are reading.

Terrace Books has a variety of genres for all ages and special orders are welcome. Terrace Books also specializes in finding rare and collectible titles for all ages and interests. The store sells new books, used books, and literary-themed gifts. Whether a customer wants a fictional little kid book or a romance novel, Terrace Books has it all.

The bookstore has many events for all ages. On April 30, 2022, Terrace Books celebrated Independent Bookstore Day. For every in-store purchase, customers had their names entered in



LILY DOHMEN / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

In the photo above is the new bookstore Terrace Books, which is located on 11th Street in downtown Columbus. Terrace Books opened on April 30, 2022.

three gift bag drawings. On August 6, 2022, they had a back-to-school party for preschool and elementary school children. At the party, Ms. Sinsi Miller from the Columbus Public Library read *Llama Llama Back to School*. The children also did a painting craft with the ladies from Artzy Haven.

Before the party concluded, each child was given a snack from Wildflower Pastries and a gift from the bookstore.

There is one downside to Terrace Books; their book prices are expensive. Any customer could probably find a book they want from Amazon for a cheaper price. It all depends on the type of book

a customer wants to read. Books can either be hardcover or paperback, fiction or nonfiction, and new or gently used. Terrace Books offers all these different types, which makes the price worthwhile and why we should support them.

I think everyone should pay a visit to Terrace Books

because it is not an ordinary bookstore. They offer all different genres and age-appropriate books, they have two reading and studying nooks, and they host many events for all ages. Terrace Books is a safe and happy place for booklovers of all kinds.

Bringing Halloween in a new jack-o-light

By Kavan Splittergerber
Staff Reporter

With fall now in full swing, the start of spooky season has finally arrived. The tenth month of the year brings many images to mind, such as golden fields, the

changing colors of trees, and giant leaf piles being scattered by children who could not help but jump in. Although all these are great, October would not be October without Halloween being the focus of the month.

Halloween has been a widely recognized holiday in the U.S. since the 1840s, but

it has always held itself as a niche festivity. The holiday has historically only held weight in children’s eyes up until they are 14 as then they are “too cool” to trick or treat. However, Halloween is so much more than a door-to-door activity, it is a unique holiday that holds many advantages above other holidays and should be celebrated more by people of any age.

One of Halloween’s greatest strengths is its accessibility. Holidays such as Christmas, The Fourth of July, and especially Easter are not celebrated by everyone due to either their religion or location. People outside of America will not be firing off fireworks on July fourth, but people around the globe

carve out pumpkins and make jack-o-lanterns for Halloween. Halloween does not have any Christian history such as Christmas and Easter which is not a dreadful thing but also limits the amount of people who partake in the holiday globally. Christmas is still celebrated much more than most holidays, but the weather brings down the mood. It is hard to visit family and friends in a blizzard where seeing past your own nose is a challenge. Luckily, Halloween does not have to deal with any weather issues as it is during fall with no snow or excessive storms. Getting around town on Halloween is much easier than trying to shop on Christmas with the roads covered in ice. Speaking of shopping, part of Halloween’s accessibility is the cheaper prices when it comes to shopping. Buying candy in bulk is much less expensive than fireworks or fancy gifts for friends and family alike. Of course, the opportunity is still there if you want to go all out and spend big, but it is far from

being required.

Halloween presents many forms of entertainment which are unique to its spooky season. Halloween is the only holiday with an intentional scary undertone giving it many more possibilities for providing entertainment. Haunted houses and scary movies take the frontstage during this holiday providing a fun yet unique way to celebrate the season. Dressing up has always been an important aspect of Halloween; this will not ever change. Halloween gives people a reason to try being someone else for whatever reason they want. People dress up as heroes and villains, both fictional and real with everything in between. The possibilities are endless as creativity can take any costume to crazy levels. Halloween parties are great events where many like-minded people can show up as whoever they want without being judged for it.

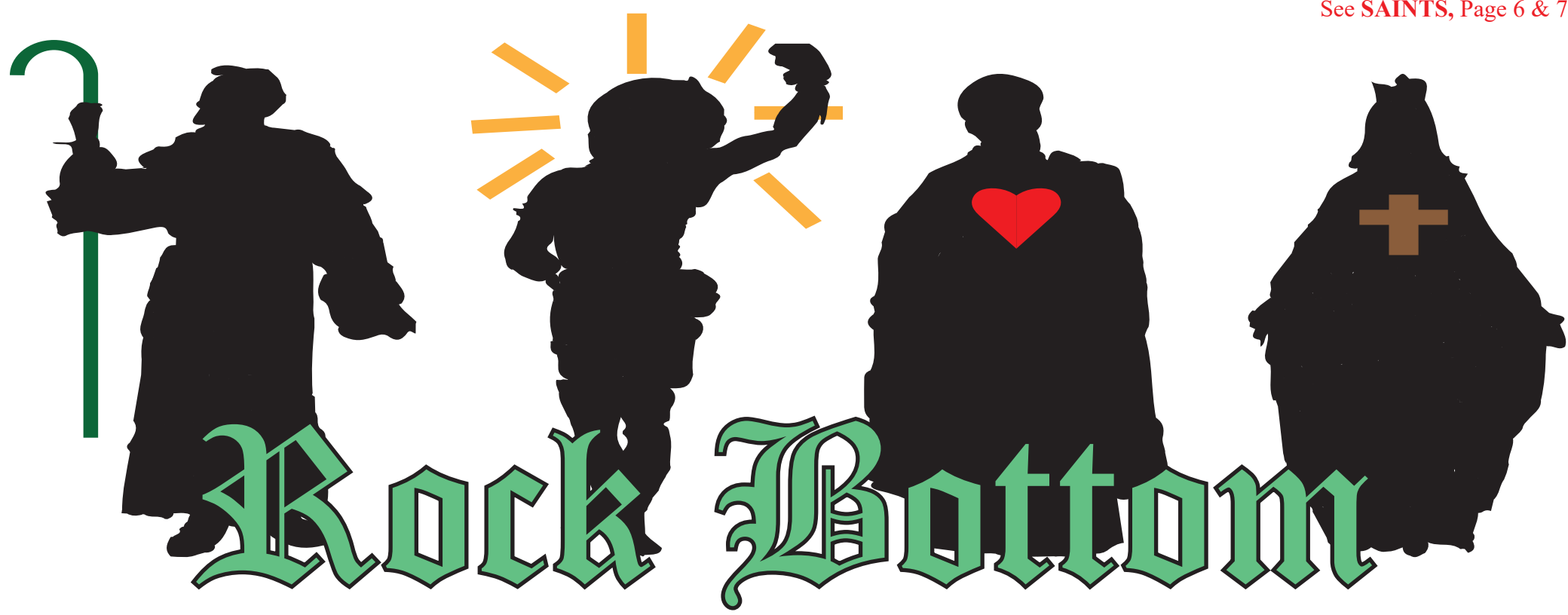
I can see why Halloween is not already the most popular holiday. Firstly, the rewards to be obtained are not

as appealing when compared to Christmas, especially for kids; school is not off either if the holiday is on a weekday so many people cannot celebrate Halloween. Luckily, these issues have easy fixes. If gifts display holiday spirit better, then people should send gifts on Halloween. This may seem strange; but there is no rule saying no gifts are allowed. Besides, I cannot think of a better time to send prank gifts to people than the holiday with the motto, “trick-or-treat.”

Halloween has been a holiday widely recognized for as long as I can remember, and I think now is the best time for Halloween to take center stage. With Halloween just right around the corner, enjoy this season to the max and go try to see what Halloween is all about. Go out and explore abandoned buildings, enjoy a haunted house, go trick or treating, decorate, and dress up with friends. If this season is the nightmare before Christmas, then I hope this dream stays for a while.



MAYSA KUEHL / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF



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Quiz bowl's quest for greatness

By Mark Buhman
Staff Reporter

Gameshows have been around for years. The first gameshow in the U.S., *Dr. IQ: The Mental Banker*, aired both on radio and television networks in its time; it lasted from 1939-1959. There was a live studio audience on the show, which consisted of local residents, since the show traveled across the country from city to city. Gameshow attendants breezed through the aisles of the local concert hall, theater, or other venue in search of eager contestants. Upon answering a question correctly, an individual would be rewarded in silver dollars. The prize amounts would vary (*Old Time Radio Downloads*).

It is from this first domestically born gameshow that all other gameshows in the U.S. have proceeded. Quiz bowl is one of those "gameshows", and it is one of the many activities Scotus has to offer. Although quiz bowl is not aired on television or the radio, it follows a format similar to that of many popular gameshows.

"Quiz bowl is an academic competition where students are asked questions from a wide variety of content: Science, Social Studies, English, [and] Math. They [must] be the first to buzz in [and answer] the

question [correctly]," head coach Annie Sokol stated.

The high school team has participated in three competitions so far, and the junior high team had one Saturday, November 5th, in Seward. The senior high team has performed well so far given a lack

of practice.

"For a team that hasn't had the same amount of practice and dedication as other teams, we have done pretty well. We have advanced a few rounds forward in single elimination, which has been exciting, but we haven't won anything, which is

expected [given] our level," senior Jasmine Jackson said.

Though practices have been difficult to organize around everyone's busy schedules, the team has been able to find time for some preparation, preparation critical to understanding the rules associated

with quiz bowl.

"Practices consist of learning the rules because there are a lot of little rules that you need to know. I get the buzzers out, and I [simply] read random questions. We [discuss] strategy to buzzing in, strategy to listening to questions, the rules as to who can answer when, when you can talk to each other, etc," Sokol said.

It has been said that "practice makes perfect", and this phrase applies to quiz bowl, as it does for any other activity. No single person knows all the trivia in the world; practice is needed to fashion one's understanding, so no matter where one is in knowledge, they are the perfect fit for quiz bowl, as freshman Jacqueline Stoner pointed out.

"No one seems to want to do quiz bowl because they're 'not smart enough' or 'it's too boring'. However, this is far from the truth, and I wish people would not stop themselves from joining for these reasons! Quiz bowl may be challenging, but it is also a ton of fun! And you don't have to be super smart, just willing to learn."

With one last competition for the junior high team last Saturday, both the high school and junior high teams have wrapped up their fall seasons, but more events are to come in the spring.



JASMINE JACKSON / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Freshman Elizabeth Stoner, sophomore Lily Humphrey, freshman Audrey Stoner, and sophomore Abby Schumacher discuss and debate the answer to a bonus question at the Central City quiz bowl on October 28th. The Scotus B team won their first round of single elimination but lost in their second round.

Leaders participate in UNO Symposium

By Claire Rickert
Staff Reporter

Within the walls of Scotus, administrators and students have found you do not necessarily have to hold a leadership position to be a leader. There are many ways to be an everyday leader.

Executive Director of Columbus Catholic Schools Jeff Ohnoutka started a Leadership Club in September to encourage this type of leadership. The group plans to have meetings every two weeks and host various speakers from throughout the Columbus Community who can give their insight on leadership.

"It is easy to have the expectation that students are going to know how to lead in the right way and make good decisions about things. That's why it is important we provide them with the chance to develop their skills and present opportunities for them to grow in that leadership," Ohnoutka said.

The students first came to know themselves by taking an online skills assessment through Gallup. So far, most meetings have consisted of Ohnoutka speaking on a subject relevant to leadership in students today.

"To be a good leader, you must know yourself first. It is important for our students to know what type of leader they are, what they value, and if they are willing to stand up for what they believe," Ohnoutka said.

At the next meeting, the students will hear Dawson Brunswick, head of the Columbus Chamber of Commerce, speak about his

experience in leadership. In addition to leadership club, there are various ways Scotus students can be involved in leadership activities.

On October 18th, 2022, a group of Scotus seniors and juniors attended the UNO Chuck Hagel Symposium. The students first attended a keynote presentation by former Nebraska Senator and Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel. Hagel also graduated from St. Bonaventure High School (now Scotus) in 1964.

"I thought the Symposium was a great experience. We got to listen to Chuck Hagel give his personal insight on a multitude of modern political issues, and we also learned more about unique individual subjects," senior Kavan Splittgerber said.

The students then had a morning breakout session that lasted around fifty minutes. Each student ranked ten different sessions to attend and most got their top picks.

"My morning breakout session was the 'Collaborate. Leadership. Change the World' session. It was interesting because public service is not just politics. It includes solving problems like homelessness, immigration, and mental health issues," senior Lily Dohmen said.

After the morning session, everyone ate lunch and then headed to their afternoon session. Students connected with people from Omaha schools and UNO professors, an opportunity many Scotus students do not get.

"My afternoon breakout session was about immigration and whether it was a domestic or international issue. It was interesting because the teacher was an immigrant, and



CLAIRE RICKERT / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Junior Eli Kreikemeier sorts trash at his morning breakout session during the UNO Chuck Hagel Symposium on October 18th. The students choose from ten different sessions, one of them being 'From Trash to Treasure: What sorting waste can teach us about sustainability.'

he talked about his experiences of immigration from an immigrant's point of view. I learned the different types of immigration, and how the impact it has on the world, especially the economy," senior Jasmine Jackson said.

Ohnoutka and social science teacher Pat Brockhaus also attended the event. During the afternoon session, Brockhaus met with the

other teachers and Hagel. It was a discussion-based session where the teachers had the opportunity to converse among themselves, as well as with Hagel. Brockhaus took a few key things away from the discussion.

"Leadership really does matter. Be a great leader, do the right thing, and respect people," Brockhaus said.

The day ended with a group picture taken with Chuck Hagel. Although some students were not sure if they wanted to pursue a career in public relations, all students reported they enjoyed the trip, and it enhanced their leadership skills.

"You can take your leadership as far as you want to take it," Ohnoutka concluded.

Junior High Fun Night finds success



LAUREN HOUEK / YEARBOOK STAFF

Seventh graders Madison Neville and Allie Brezenski participate in the "Chicken Dance" at the Junior High Fun Night on November 5th. The fun night also featured a movie, games, and a photo booth.

By Maysa Kuhl
Staff Reporter

With the addition of service projects comes new and exciting changes to the school brought about by students. These projects come in a large variety ranging from drives, to volunteering, and recently dances. One student, senior Libbie Brezenski, decided her fall service project would be to organize an event for the junior high students.

"I created this when I was playing cards with my family, and my dad asked if the junior high still did dances like they did when he and my mom were in school," Brezenski

said. "With some compromising between Mr. Ohnoutka and I, we came up with the fall fun night theme where junior high students could hang out with their classmates like the lock-in, but without having to stay late into the night."

The event was held on November 5th from 7 to 10 PM. There were several activities for the students to participate in various locations of the school. There were "door games" such as guessing the number of jellybeans in a jar, a gift card drawing, an informal dance in the cafeteria, games in the Dowd Activity Center, and a movie in Memorial Hall.

"There are too many fun

memories from this night," seventh grader Zoe Doerneman said. "I also just had so much fun at the photo booth and on the dance floor singing and chilling with friends."

To raise money for this project, senior Faith Weber and Brezenski organized and worked a bake sale. All the money not used for the decorations and prizes was donated to the Simon House. In addition to the bake sale, attendees had a five dollar or three cans of food entrance fee to help fund the event and donate to the Simon House. Brezenski raised \$176 dollars and 5 full boxes of canned food in total.

There were a variety of games held in the Activity Center including

dodgeball and basketball tournaments. Students had the option of participating in these games, cheering their friends on from the sidelines, or going to a new activity located somewhere else in the school.

"A friend and I were watching the giant girls v. boys dodgeball game," eighth grader Rachel Spawn said. "My friend picked up some balls that rolled to the corner and threw them at random kids. She accidentally hit someone in the face."

In the cafeteria, Brezenski created a playlist for the students to dance to with their peers. This was similar to the junior high lock-in which is held in the spring, where the music was played the whole night. The event also offered a movie which was played in Memorial Hall. *Ghostbusters* was the movie of choice after it found success at the box office this past year.

"My favorite event of the night was the dance party at the beginning," eighth grader Brooke Krienke said. "It is super fun to scream along to songs while jumping up and down."

As of right now, there are no plans to have another student pick up the responsibility of the event since Brezenski will be at college next year. While it was grueling work which started back in August, the JH Fall Fun Night was a success thanks to support from students and volunteers.

"I hope someone does keep this going for the years to come, but it is a lot of work to get set up," Brezenski said. "If someone is willing to do the work for it, I think having this be an annual thing would be a lot of fun, and it would give the junior high students something to look forward to in the first semester."

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HOMEMADE • FRESH

Feminism forces female heroes to fail



By Maysa Kuhl
Staff Reporter

A hero is defined in the dictionary as a person who is admired or idealized for courage, outstanding achievements, or noble qualities. Everyone has a hero wheth-

er they are portrayed in a fictional movie or served the Earth, they are idolized for their qualities. According to *comicbook.com*, films have had an increase in female heroes and lead characters, yet these films are experiencing a drop in ratings and audience support by nearly 50%.

While I may not be a movie critic, it is obvious to me the various flaws plaguing cinema, and it starts with the heroes being produced. Rather than a likeable and relatable hero, film writers found a trend in creating a female hero who faces no serious problems and never loses, and they are proclaimed as heroes. To many this is no hero, rather a narcissistic individual

lacking the characteristics of a protagonist. This is all in attempt to please feminists to gain a larger audience, but it is without regard of their current fans.

Off the bat, these fictional women are portrayed to believe they are better than everyone, rather than as an equal, and they think they deserve this treatment because "I'm a woman." As an audience member, this quality makes me immediately root for the opposite side of the so-called protagonist. For example, in *Captain Marvel*, Karol Danvers (Captain Marvel) sees herself as unstoppable and as the best hero to ever exist. As an audience, we are expected to respect her because it is what

the movie tells us to do, but Danvers has many unlikeable characteristics. On the other hand, in *The Hunger Games*, viewers root for Katniss because she not only sees herself as an underdog, but so do the other characters. She does not just assume she is better than everyone; she earns the respect of the audience through heroic actions and witty banter.

Along with an ego, these women never face problems to build the characters' personalities. They are unbeatable from the start because if they ever lose a fight, especially to a man, the writers are then assumed to be sexist. Early trials and troubles are a typical part of any good hero story. Greek legends followed

a plot of heroes being born, facing a trial at an early age, growing up and going on a heroic journey, and ending their tale in some chivalrous fashion. Early Greek writers realized these early tests made their heroes easy to root for, and it gave their characters motives. Today, female heroes win every fight and are automatically better than their male counterparts because it puts the writers in a good light.

Movies today also put male characters in a negative light as they are often portrayed as sexist and egotistical. The writers go out of their way to paint men as weak and frail, so the female counterpart is a clear hero. In the *Marvel* series

She-Hulk, the main character Jen Walters (She-Hulk) is immediately stronger and better than her own teacher Bruce Banner (the Hulk). Walters does not train harder or earn her strength, she is just superior because she is a woman.

As film writers and producers continue to create new content for fans, criticism will continue to spread if things do not change. Heroes can come from all walks of life, but they must possess the qualities of a hero and be relatable to the audience to create a successful film. Being a woman does not automatically make a hero of someone, but it is the achievements they acquire similar to how everyone else is judged.

Snapchat, a useless, overrated app



By Daniel Cline
Staff Reporter

If you ask any teenager if they use Snapchat, I guarantee almost all will say yes. The social media platform Snapchat is used

by teens worldwide to text their friends, send snaps, view others' stories, and see where their friends are. Many people also use it to send "streaks", which is sending a picture they take every day to someone and having them respond back with a picture they also took. Doing this consecutively results in a streak, which increases each day photos are exchanged. Most teens participate in sending streaks back and forth to their friends and maybe to people whom they do not even know.

I use Snapchat the same as any other kid my age, but I really think it is useless. Why use Snapchat to text when I could use the built-in

texting app on my phone? I mean, sure, there are features you can do on Snapchat you cannot do through normal texting, but is it all necessary? Do you need to be able to send streaks to people and see where all your friends are at this moment?

According to *thesocialshepherd.com*, sixty percent of people aged 13 to 24 use Snapchat. Streaks are what this age group finds addicting about Snapchat. Many people care way too much about streaks to the point where if they are going to be unable to have access to Snapchat for a while, they will have someone else log in to their account and do their streaks for them during

that time. Someone in favor of streaks might say they are a great conversation starter, but, in return, I would say it is better to start a conversation by saying what you mean rather than beating around the bush.

Snapchat stories are a scam. They lure you in by making you think everyone will see your post and be jealous or care about what you have to say, but they do not. It is nothing against you as a person. It is simply that there are too many people whose posts are uninteresting. An example of what I mean is if someone posts something political, there will be a whole load of people who skip over it.

According to *fastcompany.com*, a study done by the Wellesley Centers for Women surveyed 750 middle schoolers about their use of Snapchat. One third of their sample set said they began to use Snapchat at age 10 or younger. They found this age group who used social media showed "unsympathetic online behaviors". This age group should not even have cell phones, let alone Snapchat.

I think social media such as Snapchat is helping some people connect or stay connected when they otherwise may not have. This is the effect social media is meant to have, and for those whom it does, it is nothing but a

help. For most people who use Snapchat though, this is not the case. Snapchat causes people to care way more than they should about their friendships on a phone screen rather than in person.

Messaging feels somewhat superficial, and I do not think I am alone in believing this. I would much rather have someone call me or meet me in person to talk to me. While I do not think social media is all bad, it does cause people to talk less in person. Rather than sending your streaks for the day, go and have a conversation with your friends.



MAYSA KUHL / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Musk works to trump censorship



By Ted Fehringer
Staff Reporter

The father of our country, George Washington, once said, "If freedom of speech is taken away, then dumb and

silent we may be led, like sheep to the slaughter." It is a scary sentiment to ponder, but one that has held true since Washington's time. Every evil empire in human history has shared one play out of their totalitarianism playbook: shut down the political opposition by restricting the freedom of speech.

Unfortunately, the United States is becoming plagued with the same disease George Washington warned against two hundred thirty-nine years ago.

This disease, known as censorship, is rearing its ugly head in everyday life through the press and private companies.

The riots of January 6th serve as a good example. After the capital was stormed by right-wing protestors, politicians and celebrities expressed their views regarding the event through social media sites, especially Twitter.

The events that followed were just as damaging as the riots themselves.

On January 8th, 2021, two days after the January 6th riots, then-president Donald Trump, like many celebrities and political pundits, took to Twitter to express his opinion.

"The 75,000,000 great American Patriots who voted for me, AMERICA FIRST, and MAKE AMERICA

GREAT AGAIN, will have a GIANT VOICE long into the future. They will not be disrespected or treated unfairly in any way, shape or form!!! To all of those who have asked, I will not be going to the Inauguration on January 20th."

In response, Twitter released a statement stating Donald Trump's twitter account was "to be permanently banned due to the risk of further incitement of violence under the glorification of violence policy."

The censorship undertaken by Twitter was immoral, unjustified, and detrimental to the United States. Even worse, the social media juggernaut banned the leader

of the free world for using his freedoms given to him by the Constitution. These actions taken are grossly opposed to the idea of a democracy and the foundational promises granted to citizens by our founding founders.

Some believe the practice of censorship is necessary to maintain a safer environment to live and work by blocking "hateful" speech and misinformation. This view seems good on its face, but attempting to rule speech as "hateful" is largely subjective. A fact perceived as hurtful does not make it untrue.

Times seem to be changing, though. On October 26th,

Elon Musk, the wealthiest man in the world, strolled into Twitter headquarters in San Francisco carrying a sign, signaling his plan to drain the company of its current administration after acquiring the social media company for a whopping forty-four billion dollars.

Musk has thrown his support behind freedom of speech and rightfully so. Hopefully, with his leadership at one of the most influential social media companies in the world, all opinions will be voiced, heard, and respected, leading to a healthier democracy in the United States.

Golf achieves bittersweet success at state

By Jasmine Jackson
Editor

After the district win on Tuesday, October 4th, the Scotus girls golf team had more than enough fuel to propel them to the state tournament held on Monday, October 10th and Tuesday, October 11th at the Elks Country Club in town. With five qualifying varsity players, the team closed out their season with a 3rd place title.

Although the award was bittersweet, especially for returning state qualifier senior Kaelyn Dierman, she managed to look on the bright side.

“Returning to state was super exciting. This year we were not as successful during the season compared to last year, but it was cool to win another district [and return to state] with less experience,” Dierman said.

The girls ended the two days with 379 and 370 strokes, respectively, which accumulated in a total of 749 strokes. First time qualifier senior Ella Nahorny experienced heightened nerves

as she competed and ended her season with 106 and 101 strokes, respectively.

“We were pretty nervous beforehand. Competing with our team was fun as always, but it was stressful for sure,” Nahorny said.

The big competition of the two days were Broken Bow and Minden, both of whom ended the tournament with 688 and 726 strokes. This intense competition was a first for sophomore Quinn VunCannon.

“There was a lot of pressure. [Competing at state] was so much different than regular meets. We played with some girls we had never seen before, so that was a change. [However], competing was rewarding because it felt like a reassurance that we were good enough to be there,” VunCannon said.

Going into the tournament, the girls held high hopes for either a runner-up or state champion title, especially Dierman who ended her season with 95 and 92 strokes.

“My goal was to shoot in the 80s both days. This obviously didn’t happen,

which was okay. My numbers weren’t anything to hang my head about. I knew Broken Bow was going to come in guns blazing. I just wish we could have done well enough for runner up,” Dierman said.

The team did garner some individual success with returning state champion junior Cecilia Arndt. Arndt competed 83 and 79 strokes between both days, which resulted in her receiving a 4th place medal.

“It was exciting to have the opportunity to come back. There was great competition, and we wanted to be in the top two, but third is still a great place,” Arndt said.

For the players who plan to return next year, such as VunCannon, state golf was a great place to gain experience for next year’s season. VunCannon shot 97 and 98 strokes between the two days.

“I think we’ll be alright next year, but we have to put the work in during the summer to really improve from this year. We definitely didn’t play to the best of our abilities, and our scores reflected that,” VunCannon said.

Despite the bittersweet



TAYLOR DAHL / MARKETING DIRECTOR

Senior Ella Nahorny positions her swing as she prepares to strike the ball at state golf on October 10th at the Elks. Nahorny concluded her season with 106 and 101 strokes.

third place, the girls golf team had a successful season. Dierman reflected on the impact golf had on her through-

out her years.

“I am very thankful I joined the team last year and for all the friendships I made

throughout the way. Golf may not be my favorite sport, but I am still going to miss it,” Dierman concluded.

Cross country pr’s despite sad finish at districts

By Libbie Brezenski
Staff Reporter

The young and excited cross-country members hit the grass at Wahoo, Nebraska ready to obtain personal bests. They succeeded in doing so, but also were hit with

sadness and disappointment as well.

On October 13, 2022, the cross-country teams competed for a spot at state in Wahoo, Nebraska at their district meet.

This year the teams competed in a different district than normal. Instead

of heading north to compete, the Shamrocks went south to Wahoo where the competition was noticeably harder.

“Beforehand we knew it was going to be tough. We knew we’d have a hard time getting anybody in the top 15,” Scotus cross-country head coach Betsy Rall said.

Senior Whitney Klug was the closest runner to making it to the state meet placing sixteenth at the district meet. To be able to qualify for the state meet, runners must be among the top fifteen in the district.

“After the district meet, I was really disappointed about what had happened. I knew that I got sixteenth by a super small amount, but I didn’t realize how small it was until later on,” Klug said.

According to race times, Klug finished mere hundredths of a second shy of getting fifteenth place and making it to state.

Despite the disappointing end to the season, Rall is extremely proud of all the runners.

“Everybody had their best time at districts, and that’s perfect and not just by a little, but by a substantial amount,” Rall said.

Overall, the girls had a great season with much improvement in their individual times. This year, the girls did not have a deep team so

many had little hope for what was to come.

“There was basically no hope for our team this year at all because of how small we were, but we proved that to be wrong. We didn’t make it to state, but we definitely did a lot better than what most people including ourselves thought we would do,” Klug said.

The girls’ team graduates the lone senior who was a three-time state qualifier.

“The thing I am going to miss the most will be the people and the environment. Cross country is unlike any other sport in the aspect that everybody supports everybody, and it will definitely be the thing that I miss most about high school,” Klug concluded.

On the boys’ side, junior Jude Maguire was the lone medalist at the district meet placing seventh which qualified him to go to state.

“After the district meet, I was not as happy as I thought I would be even though I knew I made it to state. I

knew we had not made it as a team, so I was more disappointed than happy,” Maguire said.

The week leading up to the state meet Maguire focused on recovery and keeping his body in peak performance mode.

“In the week leading up to state, I drank tons of water and ate well to prepare myself. I also worked hard in practice and made sure to get plenty of rest so I would be able to compete to the best of my ability,” Maguire said.

Maguire finished 38th at the meet out of 115 runners in total.

The boys cross-country team had a successful season with a significant decrease in all their individual times. The boys team does not graduate any seniors so they will have many varsity returners next year looking to make it down to the state meet as well.

“As sad as I am to end this season, I am excited for the future. It looks very bright for cross country,” Rall said.



LILY DOHMEN / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Junior Jude Maguire follows fellow junior Kamren Kudron along the path at the Letjelusche meet. Maguire was the only member from both teams to qualify for state this year.

Volleyball finishes roller coaster season

By Mary Faltys
Staff Reporter

Going into the final stretch of the season, the Scotus volleyball team knew they were going to play many teams they had faced before as well as several ranked teams. Despite the high level of competition, each game yielded different results. They finished their season on October 24th playing two games at subdistricts. The girls ended with a 15-16 win-to-loss record.

Throughout the season, the volleyball team worked to overcome obstacles so they could play together as effectively as possible. Junior Joanna Rusher played middle hitter.

“We had a really young team, with only a couple starters returning from last year, so we struggled with that quite a bit. We kind of had to start over, but we learned so much throughout the season,” Rusher said.

Junior Kensey Micek

saw the team bond as they faced new challenges throughout the season.

“I think we all grew closer on and off the court because of all the adversity we faced this season,” Micek said.

The Shamrocks’ companionship helped them battle their way to subdistricts. The team experienced an alternating win-loss streak in the final few weeks of the season.

On October 11th, the girls played Grand Island Central Catholic, and they lost 0-3.

The Shamrocks had opposite results when they played Bishop Neumann on October 13th. They won the match 3-0. Hailey Steffensmeier, a senior who played middle hitter, was excited about their victory.

“My favorite game was against Neumann. It was great to finally beat them after losing to them twice before,” Steffensmeier said.

The following week the volleyball team travelled to Hastings. They concluded

their regular season playing Hastings St. Cecilia on October 18th. The Shamrocks put up a fight but lost the match 1-3.

The next game the Shamrocks played was part of the subdistrict tournament on October 24th. They beat Central City 3-0 in the opening match of the tournament.

A couple of hours after the Shamrocks swept Central City, they lined up on the court to play the Lakeview Vikings. After playing an intense match, they managed to take one set away from the Vikings but lost the game 1-3. Their subdistrict loss ended the Scotus volleyball season.

Although they did not come home with the victory they wanted, the team is proud of the way they finished the season strong. Senior Maysa Kuhl saw the effort the team put in.

“We definitely went out fighting! We left everything we had on the court; sometimes the cards just don’t land in your favor,” Kuhl said.



MARY FALTYS / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Senior libero Faith Weber saves the ball in the subdistrict match against Lakeview on October 24th. The Shamrocks lost to Lakeview 1-3.

The experienced seniors saw the effort of all their teammates throughout the season. Ashley Hoffman was a senior defensive specialist.

“One person didn’t really stand out to me; it was more like everyone. We all had

our good and bad days, but everyone tried to help out to make the team better,” Hoffman said.

Senior Libbie Brezenski gave some guidance to her returning teammates.

“My advice for my team-

mates is to rely on each other. Volleyball can be very mentally exhausting so having support from people who are going through the same thing is really helpful,” Brezenski concluded.

Tennis exceeds initial expectations

By Brennen Jelinek
Staff Reporter

Columbus High boys tennis had one of the best seasons in recent years. With

big expectations looming over the team after vastly improving the year before, it

is safe to say the team went above and beyond those expectations. Senior Blake Wemhoff was proud of what the team accomplished this season.

“We had high expectations as a team from last year. We achieved those expectations because we have had a losing record in the past; and we went positive this year,” Wemhoff said.

At the Heartland Athletic Conference Tournament on October 7th, Wemhoff and his senior partner Alex Zoucha placed 7th in #1 doubles. They beat the Lincoln North Star team before dropping the next two matches and then beating Norfolk High’s team in the 7th place game. Senior Bohden Jedlicka and his partner Carter Goc also placed 7th in #2 doubles. They beat Fremont before losing a close match to Lincoln North Star and then beat Lincoln High.

The state tournament for boys tennis was held on October 13th and 14th. Out of the six players who played at state for the Discoverers, three of them were from Scotus. Wemhoff and Zoucha made up the #1 doubles team that competed at the state tournament. They had an impressive record of 18-14 going into the state tournament. At state, they lost a heartbreaker in the first round to Millard West’s team in extra points. Even after the painful loss at state, Zoucha thought the season went well.

“We made huge improvements from last year to this year, and we saw a lot of success,” Zoucha said. Jedlicka and Goc were ranked #13 out of 16 for #2 doubles teams at state. The duo boasted a record of 22-11, setting a Columbus High record for the most wins in a single season. At the state

tournament, Jedlicka and Goc beat the Fremont team in the first round before falling to Creighton Prep in the second round. Jedlicka and Goc’s first round win was the only win for the Discoverers in the state tournament. Jedlicka felt good about how state went.

“It went well, and we were successful. It was a good way to go out,” Jedlicka said.

Along with these three seniors, there was one other senior, three sophomores, and two freshmen also from Scotus. This season wrapped up the seniors’ tennis careers, but it impacted their lives tremendously.

“It was a great four years of my life, and I enjoyed every second,” Jedlicka said. “Honestly, more people should give tennis a try. It’s a lifelong sport.”



MARY FALTYS / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Senior Bohden Jedlicka returns a serve in a dual against South Sioux City on September 9th at the Pawnee tennis courts. Jedlicka was one of three players from Scotus to make state.

‘Rocks close out successful season

By Ted Fehringer
Staff Reporter

The last half of the Scotus football season featured multiple highs and lows, but ultimately ended in success after the team reached the first round of the state playoffs.

On October 7th, the Shamrocks squared off against Wahoo High School in an important district matchup between two solid teams in class C-1.

Through the first three quarters, both teams fought hard, making it a memorable game for junior defensive tackle Spencer Wittwer. Unfortunately, Wahoo ended as the victor, scoring twenty-one unanswered points in the final period to win 10-31.

“The Wahoo game was my favorite game of the year. Even though we didn’t pull out the win, I worked hard and left it all out on the field,” Wittwer said.

The Wahoo game also

provided a notable memory for senior defensive tackle Tom Melliger.

“My favorite memory was probably my tackle from the Wahoo game where I picked the guy up and threw him backwards,” Melliger said

On October 14th, the Shamrocks traveled to Schuyler where they defeated the Warriors 56-0, amassing nearly 340 yards of total offense with 250 yards on the ground and 86 yards through the air.

After improving to 6-2, Scotus prepared for their matchup against in-town rival Lakeview for the district championship.

Scotus fell to the Vikings 7-28 on October 21st, but still earned a spot in the playoffs against the top-seeded Aurora Huskies. Despite the loss, Coach Linder was still proud of the way his team fought.

“I felt like our players prepared well and played very hard against Lakeview. Lakeview has a great team,

and we had our opportunities,” Linder said. “Unfortunately, we didn’t make the plays we needed to in the second half of the game to come away with a victory. After it was all said and done, however, I feel like our boys battled and left everything they had on that field.

Despite drawing the top seeded Huskies in the first round of the state playoffs, the team remained positive and embraced the underdog mentality.

“Preparing for Aurora, we figured we had nothing to lose. We planned on going out there and playing our hardest,” senior lineman Jamison Kush noted.

Despite playing hard, Scotus fell to Aurora 13-43 on October 28th, sending off a group of seniors who led the Shamrocks to two playoff berths in the last two years.

“I am very happy with our group of seniors. They are a very close group of guys who fought for each other all year long. They



MARK BUHMAN / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Sophomore Henry Raemakers runs over a Wahoo defender in their loss on October 7th. Raemakers rushed for eighty-five yards on seventeen carries against the Warriors.

were resilient and were willing to put the team first. I’m sad to see them move on from our program but the impact they have had on our team and in my life personally will not be forgotten,” Linder said.

With nine seniors hanging up their cleats, the current junior and sophomore classes will have to step up for the Shamrocks.

“There’s not many of us juniors, but I think we’ll be a great team. We will

pull through for Scotus next season,” Wittwer said.

After donning a Scotus football jersey the last four years, Kush summarized what it meant to him in three simple words: “Be the best.”



MARY FALTYS / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Senior Alex Ferguson celebrates after leading the student section in the roller coaster cheer at the subdistrict volleyball game against Lakeview on October 24th. The Rowdy Dowdy student section has been a big supporter of Scotus competitions this fall.



MARY FALTYS / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Seniors Blake Wemhoff and Alex Zoucha compete in a varsity doubles match against South Sioux City on September 9th at their home courts at Pawnee Park. Zoucha and Wemhoff lost a heartbreaker in extra points to Millard South in the first round at state.



LILY DOHMEN / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Junior Josie Sliva, sophomore Emma Brezenski, and senior Whitney Klug smile at the camera while running in a dual against CHS. All the girls had personal bests at the district C-2 meet in Wahoo.



TAYLOR DAHL / MARKETING DIRECTOR

Freshman Kiya Taylor positions her ball for a putt on October 10th at the state tournament. Taylor shot a 104 and 105 strokes on both days.

Blessed Scotus, “Subtle Doctor” of the Church

By **Mary Faltys**
Staff Reporter

The lives of saints are often assumed to be perfect, but the reality is far from the truth. Although Blessed John Duns Scotus is not a fully canonized saint, he is a good example of a saintly person coming from an irregular life.

Taking a brief glance at his early life does not reveal the uniqueness of his story. Blessed Scotus grew up as an angelic, healthy boy. He was born around 1265 in Scotland. His faith-filled parents baptized him immediately, naming him after St. John the Evangelist. Scotus was comfortable and confident in his faith throughout his childhood. He loved his faith and wanted to dive into it deeper, but there was one problem standing in his way.

He could not learn. Scotus’ brain simply could not manage to remember anything, so he could not read or write.

Scotus wanted to be able to learn so he could study his faith. In desperation, Scotus prayed to the Blessed Virgin Mary to heal his intellectual weakness. She granted his prayer, and the next day he was miraculously cured. Everyone was astounded by his sudden change of intelligence.

- Scotus entered the Franciscan order at 15 years old
- Ordained in 1291
- Studied and taught at Oxford and the University of Paris
- 1299 Christmas night, visited by the Blessed Virgin Mary who placed the child Jesus in his arms
 - Inspired Scotus to write about the reason for the Incarnation*
- 1303 French king argued with the Pope and tried to get the University of Paris on his side
 - Scotus refused- given 3 days to leave France
- 1304 courageously returned to France- earned the title “Subtle Doctor” from authoritative teachings
- Taught a revolutionary idea that the Blessed Virgin Mary never had sin
 - Opposed teachings of other important Church leaders such as Sts. Thomas Aquinas and Bonaventure**
 - Risked expulsion from the university if he failed to publicly defend his teachings
- Was successful- became the doctrine at the University of Paris***
 - Sent to Germany to teach for several more years
- 1308 Scotus died and was immediately called “blessed” by his companions

In 1854, Pope Pius IX formally declared Scotus’ teaching of the Immaculate Conception to be the doctrine of the Catholic Church. The “Subtle Doctor” of the Church was officially beatified in 1993 by Pope John Paul II.

*Scotus’ teachings on the Incarnation opposed those of St. Thomas Aquinas.

**Sts. Thomas Aquinas, Bonaventure, and other leaders of the Church taught the Blessed Virgin Mary was born with Original Sin. She received her redemption in the moment after she was born and was perpetually cleansed from sin.

***Before Scotus made his public appearance to defend his Marian teachings, he prayed before a statue to the Blessed Virgin Mary and asked her for strength. She acknowledged his prayer by having the statue nod its head.



<p><i>Senior</i> Trenton Cielocha</p> <p>Patron Saint of <u>Cooking</u></p> <p>Feast Day: October 5</p>	<p><i>Sophomore</i> Jack Sueper</p> <p>Patron Saint of <u>Clash of Clans</u></p> <p>Feast Day: August 9</p>	<p><i>Junior</i> Jackson Heng</p> <p>Patron Saint of <u>Hurt People</u></p> <p>Feast Day: September 11</p>	<p><i>Junior</i> Kensey Micek</p> <p>Patron Saint of <u>Horror Movies</u></p> <p>Feast Day: June 23</p>	<p><i>Junior</i> Tori Dush</p> <p>Patron Saint of <u>Sarcasm</u></p> <p>Feast Day: November 24</p>
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*** A Patron Saint is a saint to whose protection and intercession a person, a society, a church, or a place is dedicated. (Britannica.com) These Patron Saints were just for fun.

Step by step guide to sainthood

By **Brennen Jelinek**
Staff Reporter

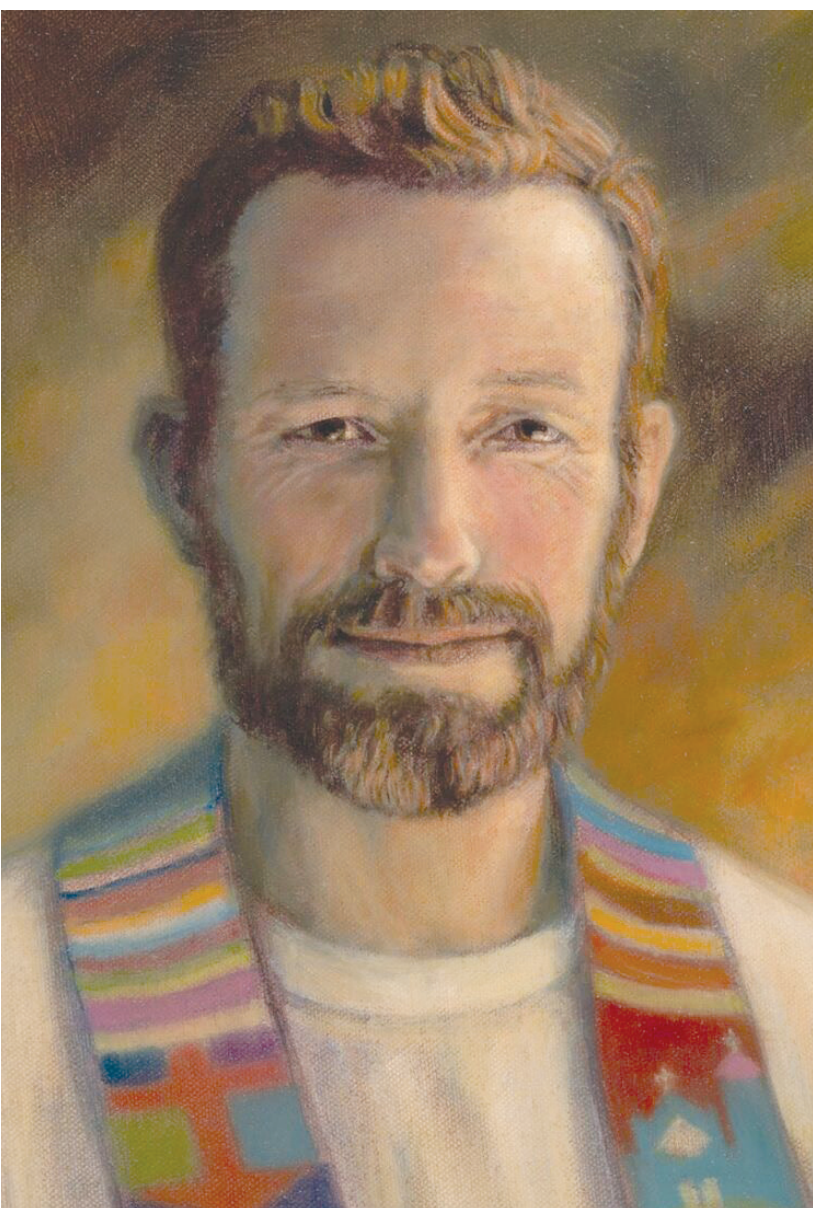
A saint is a person acknowledged as holy or virtuous and typically regarded as being in heaven after death. The Catholic Church honors over 10,000 saints and is canonizing new ones all the time. Saints are an important part of the day to day lives of Catholics. They pray through their intercession to help strengthen their prayers on a daily basis. For a person to be considered for sainthood, a formal request must be submitted to a special Vatican tribunal. This request would explain how the person lived a life of holiness, pureness, kindness, and devotion. If the candidate meets the requirements, the tribunal officially recognizes this person to be a Servant of God. There are four stages of recognition for holy people after their death.

1. *In the first stage the title of Servant of God is given. To be seen as a Servant of God, at least five years must elapse since the person’s death for them to be considered. This allows time for biases to fade out and ensure their reputation will live on.*
2. *Following Servant of God is Venerable, where a bishop forms a diocesan tribunal to review the life and virtues exhibited by said person or the details of their martyrdom if they are a martyr. The results of this investigation are sent to Congregation for the Causes of Saints in Rome, which helps advance the causes of these holy men and women. If they are a martyr, they skip the Venerable stage completely and are immediately recognized as Blessed.*

3. *The next stage of recognition is Blessed. To go from Venerable to Blessed, one miracle must be attributed to the person who is becoming a saint. This miracle undergoes scrupulous testing and investigation to ensure the miracle was impacted by the holy person in question. This title grants people to pray for their intercession, but it is usually only people from the diocese or where they lived. As mentioned before, no miracle is necessary if the person was a martyr.*
4. *One more miracle is required to move on from Blessed to be canonized and finally become a saint. This last miracle is required for both martyrs and non-martyrs. After this miracle is verified, the pope grants them canonization, which spreads the news of this saint’s life and efforts.*

The last person to be canonized was St. Oscar Romero on October 14, 2018. Oscar was born in El Salvador and spoke out against the cruel dictator Carlos Humberto Romero (no relation). Because of his speaking out, many attempts were sought out on his life. He was nominated by many US congress members and members of the British Parliament for a Nobel Peace Prize in 1979. The following year, he was assassinated while saying mass in his parish. He was canonized less than 40 years after his death next to Pope Paul VI and is El Salvador’s first saint. His feast day is March 24. Since Pope Francis began his service as pope, he has beatified 1,466 people and canonized 911 saints.

Blessed Rother realizes his reason



By Mark Buhman
Staff Reporter

Have you ever looked up at the saints of the past and pondered how ancient and remote they seem compared to today's society? Well, the next potential saint is not as far away from us as you may think.

Bl. Stanley Rother is especially close to his family. Senior Owen Rother, sophomore Jacob Rother, and freshmen Josie Rother are siblings and students here at Scotus, and they are relatives of Bl. Rother.

"Fr. Stanley's dad is my great-grandpa's uncle, so basically, I'm a distant cousin," senior Owen Rother stated.

Freshmen Josie Rother elaborated on her admiration of Bl. Rother's bravery and fortitude.

"I was in fourth grade when he was beatified, and we even had a whole lesson about him in school. I felt special to have such a holy and Christ-like role model in my life."

Born to Franz and Gertrude Rother in Okarche, Oklahoma on March 27th, 1935, Bl. Rother quickly grew accustomed to life on the farm. The Dust Bowl was in full force, and Bl. Rother learned from a young age how to persevere amid trials.

Following high school, he entered the seminary in San Antonio,

Texas. Studying, particularly Latin, was the most onerous part of the coursework. Rother took final exams in Latin XIII and failed. The bishop sent him home, saying he should continue to seek out his vocation.

When Rother came back and said he still felt called to the priesthood, the bishop promised him he would find him a seminary where he would thrive. That is how he found himself at Mount St. Mary's Seminary in Emmitsburg, Maryland, and Bl. Rother was ordained a priest from the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City in 1963.

The next five years of Rother's life consisted of him serving at various parishes within his diocese. Then, answering a universal call by Pope John XXIII, Rother, along with five priests, three nuns, and three lay people, traveled to Santiago Atitlán, Guatemala to serve the Tz'utujil people. Upon arrival, Rother soon realized the grave situation in Guatemala.

"The country here is in rebellion, and the government is taking it out on the Church," Rother stated in a letter.

A portion of the military was dispatched to Santiago Atitlán, and after that, Bl. Rother's people began disappearing one-by-one. Bl. Rother did everything in his power to counter the military's actions; he provided food to widows and

children of those who had been kidnapped, he allowed children to sleep inside the church at night to hide from the military, and he looked for the bodies of those who had gone missing.

"The Shepherd cannot run at the first sign of danger," Rother proclaimed.

Bl. Rother was aware of his responsibilities as priest of the Tz'utujil people, and that is why he came back to Guatemala for Holy Week in 1981. He had been in the U.S. prior to this, a decision he had made, and soon regretted, in response to his and his associate pastor's names being on the government's death list.

Yet, despite his attempts to avoid the threat, Fr. Rother was called home by God on July 27th, 1981. He was shot twice by three men who walked into the rectory of the church in the middle of the night. The people of Santiago Atitlán mourned Bl. Rother's death. They sang Easter songs; there was a renewal of the congregation's faith. Before Rother had come to Guatemala, there had been no vocations to the priesthood from St. James the Apostle Catholic Church. Since his death, there have been nine priests ordained from that parish and another seven are in the seminary.

Freshman
Evan Pavik

Sophomore
Annie Weber

Freshman
Camila Carrizales

Senior
Alyssa Hiemer

Sophomore
Emma Brezenksi



Patron Saint of Red Heads and the Mind

Feast Day: December 17



Patron Saint of Car Accidents

Feast Day: September 8



Patron Saint of Gummy Worms

Feast Day: January 20



Patron Saint of Flowers

Feast Day: September 15



Patron Saint of Peanut Butter M&M's

Feast Day: July 2

*** A Patron Saint is a saint to whose protection and intercession a person, a society, a church, or a place is dedicated. (Britannica.com) These Patron Saints were just for fun.

Take on a saintly mission

Match the saint with his/her patronage

Saints:

1. St. Michael the Archangel _____
2. St. Thomas Aquinas _____
3. St. Lucy _____
4. St. Mary Mother of God _____
5. St. Genesius _____
6. St. Sebastian _____
7. St. Peter _____
8. St. John _____
9. St. Maximillian Kolbe _____
10. St. Paul _____

Patronage:

- a. All Human Beings
- b. Political Prisoners, Families, Journalists, and Prisoners
- c. Writers and Publishers
- d. Military and Police Forces
- e. Athletes and Archers
- f. Catholic Schools and Students
- g. The Blind
- h. Fisherman and Shipbuilders
- i. Actors, Comedies, and Dancers
- j. Love, Loyalty, and Friendship



Three most common Confirmation saints at Scotus:

St. Francis of Assisi

St. Cecilia

St. Sebastian

How did you pick your Confirmation saint?

"[I picked St. Francis of Assisi] because he loves animals, and I love animals."
- Jack Sueper (10)

"[I picked St. Cecilia because] she is my namesake, and I love music!"
- Cecilia Arndt (11)

"[I picked St. Sebastian because] he is the patron saint of athletes, and I was inspired by his story."
- Jackson Romberg (9)

"I felt a connection with [Blessed Chiara Badano] because she is a very modern saint who died when she was a teenager."
- Hannah Heinrich (9)

"I chose my Confirmation saint to be St. Lucy because I admire her sacrifice and bravery to God."
- Brooke Krienke (8)

"I liked the story of how [St. Rocco] had given up a life of riches to serve the poor and the sick."
- Ian Karges (10)

"[St. Ava] is the patron saint of water and the ocean, and I've always loved spending time on the lake."
- Brynn Homolka (9)

Business classes invest in Scotus merch

By Daniel Cline
Staff Reporter

While walking past the student section at a Scotus sports game, a sea of green

would be visible. The student section is all wearing Rowdy Dowdy t-shirts. Also, while walking down the Scotus hallways, it is a difficult task not to see the ads and flyers for Scotus flags.

The Rowdy-Dowdy t-shirts were designed and sold by the Entrepreneurship class. The teacher for Entrepreneurship is Scotus alum Cody Mroczek.

“The idea came from me

recalling how during my high school days we had a Rowdy Dowdy student section shirt. I thought about how I could incorporate that in Entrepreneurship class in which I was trying to come up with a ‘business’ for my students to run. So, I decided that Entrepreneurship would be in charge of running their own t-shirt business,” Mroczek said.

In total, 245 t-shirts were sold to the Scotus students and staff. The money made from the shirts was used to purchase the large student section flag and will also be used to help fund future projects done by the Entrepreneurship students.

“The shirts got off to a slow start, but the class did a nice job of getting the word out leading up to the deadline of the order date,” Mroczek said.

The class was split in the jobs they did to sell and advertise the shirts.

“We ordered the shirts and distributed them. I personally got in contact with Jim Pillen for the sponsorship,” senior Nick Zoucha said.

Pillen Family Farms aided the Entrepreneurship class with the cost of manufacturing the Rowdy Dowdy shirts by giving \$2,000 to the Scotus business department.

Mroczek’s Marketing class had a similar idea to the Entrepreneurship class. The class designed and sold Scotus flags.

“The idea for the flags came from the Marketing class because they wanted to sell something like the Entrepreneurship class, so we brainstormed ideas and finally ended on the flags to sell,” Mroczek said.

Students in the Marketing class are split into two teams. Each team has a different role in advertising and selling the flags.

“I am part of the team in charge of the posts on Twitter and the flyers that are posted in numerous places around school,” senior Alyssa Hiemer said.

The Marketing class has sold 10 flags as of now, and their goal is to sell many more in the coming months.

“Our ‘target market’ for the flags is Scotus alumni and parents, so it is harder for

the class to get the word out, but I am optimistic they will reach their goal,” Mroczek said.

The advertising and sale of products proves to be educational for the business class students.

“Entrepreneurship has taught me a lot about supply chain and how running a business is harder than I thought,” Zoucha said.

These are not the only products that will be sold by these classes.

“The Entrepreneurship class will have one more product that they will sell to the student body before the semester is over while the Marketing class will continue to sell the flags and brainstorm more products for both classes to sell at the Scotus Craft Fair,” Mroczek said.

Both classes will run a booth at the Scotus Craft Fair in December.

Mroczek concluded, “Our hopes are that we will offer four to five different products to the Scotus community by the end of the school year.”



EMMA LINDHORST / YEARBOOK STAFF

The Rowdy Dowdy student section unveils the large student section flag on October 11th at a volleyball game. The flag was purchased by the Entrepreneurship class with the money made from selling the Rowdy Dowdy t-shirts.

Interests uncovered in new STEAM classes

By Joanna Rusher
Staff Reporter

At the end of the 2018 school year, there was a buzz around the school. This wasn’t the normal end of the year excitement for summer. Bouncing off the walls was a small rumor there would be STEAM classes offered at Scotus Central Catholic for the first time ever. The students were hearing about 3D printers, carving machines, and laser cutters coming to their own school. Scotus hired a new teacher Mrs. Betty Rall to come and teach the classes. She has taught them for the last four years.

“The classes were titled STEAM I, STEAM II, and Capstone STEAM, and they didn’t have a specific content; I kind of touched a lot of different topics in every class,” Rall said. “I just felt like I lost a lot of students from STEAM I or from freshman STEAM.”

Recently, Scotus curriculum team sought out a way to fix this problem. They

decided to reorganize into seven classes, all specializing in a different aspect of the STEAM curriculum. There is STEAM Art, STEAM Science, Electronics, Engineer STEAM, Horticulture, Welding/Building, and Robotics/Coding. Any high school student at Scotus has the opportunity to take one or more STEAM classes for a semester.

Freshman STEAM Art student Ava Bettenhausen was excited to take another STEAM class this year.

“This year’s class has way more importance and is more technical than STEAM 8,” Bettenhausen said. “I was really intrigued by the ‘Art’ part of the class.”

The STEAM students do countless projects regardless of what class they are in. Sophomore Horticulture and Floriculture student Abigail Schumacher is excited about the projects in her class. The students in this class have been making many improvements around Scotus and in the courtyard.

“We planted our own vegetables in the greenhouse,” Schumacher said. “I am growing sweet corn, and it’s doing really well so far.”

Mrs. Rall is teaching all these sections totaling up to be 103 students just this semester. Coming up with the curriculum for each of these new classes has been a challenge, but some have been easier than others.

“I know about electronics and electricity in my background, so we’ve done a lot of work with house wiring. We’ve actually done some simulated house wiring, and we’ve soldered some circuits. In that class, the content is good,” Rall said.

One of the classes that was the most anticipated was the Welding and Building class. The class is mostly composed of seniors because of how many of them have expressed interest in this field. Senior Brennen Jelinek is taking this class for multiple reasons.

“I like it because it teaches us real world skills



ZACH SCHULTZ / YEARBOOK STAFF

Seniors Brennen Jelinek and Izic Pillen work on a welding project on October 28th in the welding corner of the courtyard. There are 26 students in two periods of Welding and Building.

we can use later in life,” Jelinek said. “Whether it’s on the job or just repairing things around the house,

these skills are good to have in your back pocket.”

Each of these classes, along with Engineering

STEAM, will be offered again next semester with just as many students involved.

Students take advantage of opportunities

By Lily Dohmen
Staff Reporter

Everyone dreams of going to a great college and pursuing their dream careers. To figure out the best college

and career, students may go on college visits and job shadows to learn more information about the school and profession.

Career counselor Bridget McPhillips has been helping students at Scotus set up job

shadows and college visits.

“Job shadows are so beneficial because students have an idea of what they are interested in, but there is no way for them to understand what the job entails until they get there and see a profes-

sional at work,” McPhillips said. “Sometimes what they think a job will look like is nothing like they anticipated. You might learn it is not for you. It is never a wasted opportunity because you find out what you like or what you did not like.”

Last year, there were seventy job shadows recorded amongst the junior and senior classes.

“When I was gone, I worked with Ms. Brichacek, and we came up with a system where she would be in charge of the college visits and sign out sheets. Since I had all the job shadow resources from past years, I went ahead and did some work from home to help set up job shadows [during the first quarter],” McPhillips said.

This year, so far, there have been twenty-five job shadows recorded amongst the senior class.

“I job shadowed at Lost Creek with Mrs. Williams. I went there because I wanted to see what the public school

system was like,” senior Haley Leise said.

Senior Isaak Liebig shadowed Dan Quinn, an electrical line man, at Loup Power District.

“My favorite part was watching them put up a pole and see all the work they put into it,” Liebig said.

With the junior and senior classes combined, there were seventy college visits, not including visits on days off from school. Students can have up to four college visits at their time here at Scotus.

“Each year is different and usually there is a trend among the students in each graduating class [when visiting the same colleges.] Typically, our most attended college visits are UNL, UNO, and UNK,” McPhillips said.

This year we have had a few students go to different states for college visits. Senior Whitney Klug visited Oklahoma State University located in Stillwater, Oklahoma, which is six and a half hours away from Columbus.

“I visited Oklahoma

State University] because it has a super strong Animal Science program, which is what I plan on majoring in,” Klug said.

Senior Ella Nahorny visited Colorado State University in Fort Collins, Colorado. “I love it. I just do not know if I want to be that far away from my family,” Nahorny said.

Senior foreign exchange student, Francesca Gallino, visited Nebraska Wesleyan University. If Gallino receives a diploma from Scotus, she is eligible to go to college here in America whereas in Italy she would have one more year of high school.

“[My visit was a success] because it made me think more realistically about coming to college in the USA after getting my diploma,” Gallino said.

To set up a college visit or job shadow see Mrs. McPhillips from 8:15 AM to 11:20 AM in her office located by the study hall room.



TAYLOR DAHL / MARKETING DIRECTOR

Senior Bohden Jedlicka discusses dentistry with Dr. Rex Kumpf at his job shadow at Dental Works on November 3rd. Career counselor Bridget McPhillips schedules job shadowing for students.

Classes find faith, fun, and familiarity

By Kavan Splitterber
Staff Reporter

During a school year at Scotus, classes partake in all sorts of different events. Although school mass and pep rallies happen many times, each class only gets one class retreat a year. The seventh-grade class, the sophomores, and the freshman have all had their retreats this last semester.

The seventh-grade retreat took place on Friday, September 9th at Scotus and St. Bonaventure Church. Unlike the other class retreats, the seventh-grade retreat only lasts from 1:24-3:35 p.m.

“We talked about things like if we could have one superpower what it would be. We also played some games like I Got Mail,” seventh grader Kayden Renner said.

The seventh graders took part in a variety of activities in both small groups and as a whole class. The class took time having fun playing games and having snacks while still having time for their faith with adoration

and song at St. Bonaventure Church.

“Seniors and other kids would share their stories on their experience so far at Scotus, and they told us how to be faithful to God,” seventh grader Celeste Sucha said.

One of the most important parts of the seventh-grade retreat is when the class splits up and everyone takes some time to write a letter to themselves which they won’t read until again until their senior retreat in 5 years.

Freshmen had their retreat on Wednesday, September 14th. They went to the Moses Merrill Camp and Conference Center in Linwood, Nebraska.

“I thought the Moses Merrill Camp and Conference Center was a beautiful place where you could really see the work of God in the nature,” freshman Melody Bixenmann said.

At the Conference Center, the class was able to participate in a variety of activities such as mass, hiking, and games. The class also had some time to reflect with each other in large groups to

discuss the nitty gritty aspects of life.

“The retreat was like a spa day for my faith. Many times, our days get so busy that we forget to make time for our heart to feel God presence,” freshman Sydney Stuart said.

The sophomores went to Omaha for their retreat on Wednesday, October 5th. The class took time for adoration at the start of the day then broke off into 6 groups. Each group went out to different locations to help in any way they could.

“This retreat showed me that there are people out there who need our help. We are fortunate to be like this,” sophomore Evan Steffensmeier said.

The six groups went to Madonna School, St. Juan Diego, St. Martin de Porres Center, Hope of the poor, Mater Filius, and the Stephen Center. Each location had different jobs that needed to be done, which the students helped complete.

“I truly loved working with the members at the school of the disabled and en-



PHOTO COURTESY DANA RITZDORF

Sophomores Quinn VunCannon, Rebecca Policky, campus ministry assistant Kelly Koranda, Rebecca Kosch, Mallory Dreesen, and Abigail Schumacher finish up landscaping outside Mater Filius on Wednesday, October 9th. Out of the different groups of sophomores, the landscaping group was the smallest.

joyed learning about them,” sophomore Jessica Jackson said.

At the end of the day, the class reunited at the Cathedral in Omaha where they reflected over their work and had time for prayer.

“My class grew closer by coming up with conver-

sations we could have with people and listening and learning from other people together,” sophomore Alyssa Nelsen said.

The eighth-grade class will go on a confirmation retreat later this school year when they get confirmed. Unlike the class retreats, the

eight-grade retreat is organized by the churches and not the school. The juniors also have a class retreat they have yet to go on, but their retreat hasn’t been planned yet and doesn’t have a date for the occasion.



PHOTO COURTESY DANA RITZDORF

Sophomores Henry Chard, Henry Ramaekers, Hanna Chohon, and Ava Rickert prepare food at the Stephen Center in Omaha, Nebraska on Wednesday, October 5, 2022. Seven sophomores spent time helping at the emergency center by serving lunch.



MAYSA KUHL / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Seventh grader Melodee Nickolite talks with Ceily Marroquin in their group in Memorial Hall on Friday, September 9th at the seventh grade retreat. The seventh graders spoke with the seniors about their futures in their small groups at the retreat.

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Unlocking secrets behind escape rooms

By Joanna Rusher
Staff Reporter

Long, long ago, in a country far, far away, five ordinary people entered a room, unsure if they would ever come out alive. On that day in 2007 in Kyoto, Japan, those people were the first ever to enter and attempt to accomplish an escape room. Now there are over 50,000 escape rooms worldwide, but why so many? What makes them so fun?

An escape room is an imaginary scenario that traps the players inside of a room. They need to find clues, solve puzzles, and unlock the secrets of the room in a specific amount of time in order to “come out alive”. Every room has a different scenario and different puzzles, enabling the players to attempt hundreds of different rooms. According to *Room Escape Artist*, of the 50,000 escape rooms worldwide,

around 2,300 of them are in the United States. In 2018, there were only 12 escape room locations in Nebraska. Now there are over 30 just in the Omaha area, one of which is in our very own Columbus, Nebraska.

Located on 2705 13th Street, Suite 300, is S.T.A.R. Escape Rooms. They feature six unique rooms fitting different themes. The Hauntings of JART Castle, a haunted castle theme, is the most popular. Hyde and Seek (a Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde theme) and The Last Frontier (a scenario of being stranded in Alaska) are two of the easier rooms. Black Beard’s Treasure, a pirate ship theme, is the hardest room. Finally, Game Over, the newest room opening just a couple months ago, is a room based off board games. The owners of the escape rooms, Randy and Joanne Mueller, opened the rooms four years ago.

“It’s a lot of fun to see the excitement on people’s

faces when they come up and when they’ve done a room,” Joanne Mueller said. “It really has brought something to Columbus that no one else has brought.”

The escape rooms in Columbus are especially unique because of the creativity involved in their creation.

“Other places order their rooms from a supplier. They get a list of items like a flow chart, a storyline, and a list of props for a few thousand dollars,” Randy Mueller said. “We get to control the flow. Some rooms just don’t have a good flow, or the theme doesn’t carry well.”

Okay, so there are escape rooms in Columbus. Cool, but how do you even go about doing an escape room? It’s no fun to go pay for one just to not get out. Here are some tips to help you out. The first thing you should do is closely look at everything in the room. Anything could be a clue, and if you miss it the first time, you are



JOANNA RUSHER / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

The owners of the S.T.A.R. Escape Rooms, Joanne and Randy Mueller, sit in their doorway on October 27th at the Downtown Trunk or Treat. The escape rooms are located on 2705 13th Street, Suite 300.

unlikely to go back and check again. Then, after you find some clues, split up. This is the best strategy you can have when you are fighting against time. Have your group all work on different challenges

to be the most efficient. “Read the clues. The written word is like gold. A note in the room is worth two clues,” Randy Mueller would tell first time escapees. Using all these tips and

your new knowledge of escape rooms, you are one step closer to escaping your first room. As the Mueller’s always say, “Adventure awaits behind every door!”

Wordle spin-offs spell out success

By Jasmine Jackson
Editor

There are more than a million words in the English language, and I’m thinking of one word. Can you guess it? First, narrow the number

of letters in a word to five; however, you only have six chances to guess my word. Now can you do it?

Millions of online users take on this daunting task when they play the *New York Times* daily *Wordle*. The game offers feedback on your

letter choices as you progress. Green letters mean a letter is in the right place, yellow is in the wrong place, and grey means the letter doesn’t exist at all.

Invented in 2018 by software engineer Josh Wardle, the increased popularity for

Wordle has spawned an abundance of copycat games with various central themes. From a *Foodle* to a *Heardle* and even a *Taylorle*, are these spinoffs worth the same daily devotion as the original?

As a self-designated *Wordle* expert, the new

Wordle spinoffs are equally entertaining as the original because they offer numerous opportunities for users to challenge their expertise, think critically and creatively, and collaborate with friends.

The *Wordle* spin-offs are specific, which allows users to test their knowledge on a category. For example, *Foodle* covers food-themed words, *Heardle* covers song titles from short snippets, and *Taylorle* covers Taylor Swift themed words. It is safe to say there is a game for everyone and everything.

These categories and themes also improve creative and critical thinking skills. Users not only have to consider the five-letter, six chance aspect, but their guess must adhere to the game’s theme. For example, the *Moviedle* requires players to guess a movie in various one second clips of the entire film, and only movie titles are accepted as guesses. Here, it’s crucial to think inside the box...until you’re stumped.

There’s nothing more stressful than a row full of grey letters and one guess left after you tried nearly everything. This is the perfect time to call in some back-up. A row full of unorganized

or unused letters can appear unsolvable if you’ve been hunched over the computer for hours. Letting a fresh pair of eyes from a friend can increase the chances of solving the word.

There is somewhat of a spelling error each of these spinoffs share, and that’s originality. Yes, they are copycats of the infamous *Wordle*, but their themes often limit what words can be chosen for the day. After all, there are only so many birds the *Birdle* can suggest, and only so many the common population actually knows. After crane, pigeon, robin, etc., the game feels unsolvable. However, with over 400 options, the opportunity for five green letters in a row is achievable.

From *Globle* to *Murdle* to even an *Anti-Wordle*, the *Wordle* spinoff options are endless. The new spinoffs create the perfect experience for users to find their niche, think inside and outside the box, and build their teamwork skills. All it takes is a simple search and a series of well-educated guesses. (Hint: the best starting word is “adieu.”)



ILLUSTRATION COURTESY JESSICA JACKSON

To decorate or not to decorate

By Claire Rickert
Staff Reporter

You stroll into Hobby Lobby to get some fall decorations: pumpkins, decorative leaves, and fall-scented candles, and you turn the corner to see a Christmas tree and life-sized Rudolf staring right into your soul.

Every year, decorating for the next season seems to come earlier and earlier. A few weeks in, and everyone is ready for mother nature’s next stage.

There are two types of people. People who plan their Christmas Day meal in September, and those who despise people who plan their Christmas Day meal in September. Traditional views are you can ‘legally’ start decorating for Christmas the day after Thanksgiving. In recent decades, people have started to decorate and listen to Christmas music earlier and earlier. A couple weeks ago, I liked a TikTok about

Christmas. Keep in mind, it was October when I liked the post. Now, my “For You” page is filled with people who are baking Christmas cookies and decorating their house for Christmas, in October. Some people get angry when others decorate their house early for the next season. While they are sulking in their undecorated house, others are happily sipping eggnog in their beautifully decorated home.

Research is showing people who decorate for Christmas on a grander scale and earlier are more sociable and friendly with neighbors and friends. According to an article in the peer-reviewed *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, a research experiment was conducted in 1989 and the results were almost unanimous: Christmas decorating makes people happier. Their target was to conclude whether Christmas decorations attributed to people’s perceptions of their neighbors. Each subject was given pictures of their neighbor’s



CLAIRE RICKERT / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

home and front yard. Every time a house was decorated for Christmas, subjects always indicated the family who lived there was friendly and cohesive.

So, should you decorate early and risk the possibility of angering others? Yes. In the end, it is all up to you. Do what makes your heart happy. If people have a problem

with what music you listen to or how you decorate your house, simply ignore them. Christmas is one of the best times of the year, and if you worry about what people

might think of you, you will not get to enjoy the magical time of the Christmas season. Decorate your house early, or don’t, but most of all, do what makes you happy.



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Holiday bake-off tastes success

By Lily Dohmen
Staff Reporter

The holiday season is the season of giving back, so this year the journalism class decided to have their second Holiday Co-op Bake-off. The Holiday Co-op Bake-off was held on Monday, November 28th. The staff judged the holiday treats and ranked them from one being the best to nineteen being their least favorite.

Freshman Helene Chard placed second with her homemade Snickers and won a twenty-five-dollar gift card to the place of her choice.

"[I did the cookoff because] I have never done it before, and I thought it would be fun. I also could use an extra gift card," Chard said.

There were nineteen entries in the competition. Senior Claire Rickert made chocolate cupcakes with vanilla peppermint frosting topped with peppermint shavings and a piece of peppermint bark.

"I competed in the bake-off because I wanted gift cards. It is also a fun way to be involved!" Rickert said.

Junior Macey Johannes was the first-place winner with her Christmas cakesicles and won a



ANGIE RUSHER / JOURNALISM ADVISOR

Sophomores Aubree Beiermann, Haylee Faltys, and Olivia Nelsen buy treats at the holiday bake sale after school on Wednesday, November 30th. The bake off was held on Monday, November 28th.

fifty-dollar gift card to the place of her choice.

"[I have been baking] ever since I was little [because I] thought it was fun; just in the last year I started selling cakes and things," Johannes said.

Eighth grader Brooke Krienke made reindeer cupcakes.

"[I have been baking for a short

amount of time because] I am not a very good baker. The last time I tried to make brownies they started to bubble and pop. It was gross," Krienke said.

Freshmen Brynn Homolka made Snickerdoodle cookies for the bake-off.

"[I like baking because] my grandma always makes Christmas

cookies, and I would go to her house each year with all my cousins and bake and decorate cookies," Homolka said.

Junior Adrianna Kush baked coffee cake. She was the third place winner and won a twenty-five-dollar gift card to the place of her choice.

"I like cooking just for the fun of what I make, but I do not

like a good amount of stuff I make because food always tastes better when someone else makes it. My grandma and mom liked to bake, but I watched a good amount of Food Network growing up that also taught me," Kush said.

Junior Joanna Rusher baked Christmas cheer cheesecake cups.

"I did not realize so few people liked cheesecake! I feel like I would have done better, but half the judges already did not like it. My results were skewed from the beginning," Rusher said.

Senior Libbie Brezenski was the former winner from last year. This year she made chocolate strawberry cookies.

"[I learned to cook because] my grandma was a great baker but can no longer bake, so I have been trying to learn so I can do the baking for my grandpa," Brezenski said.

Teacher Christ Mustard made his cornflakes candy wreaths for the second time for the bake-off.

"I like to support as many activities as I can at Scotus. If you keep doing it, I will keep supporting it!" Mustard said.

Following the competition, the treats were sold at snack break. The staff raised \$239, which was donated to the Holiday Co-op.

Students support a familiar face



PHOTO COURTESY SHARIE JEDLICKA

Matt Jedlicka and Jim Pillen take a picture with their youth Scotus basketball team. The boys are now seniors at Scotus. On November 8th, Pillen was elected the 41st governor of Nebraska.

By Ted Fehringer
Staff Reporter

On November 8th, Jim Pillen, the Republican gubernatorial nominee and Columbus native, defeated Democrat opponent Carol Blood, garnering 59.9% of the popular vote and winning by 157,000 votes.

Although Pillen has risen to a well-known status across the state, a special connection still holds true between Scotus Central Catholic and Pillen. He has been a long-time resident of Columbus, growing up in Platte Center and attending Lakeview High School. After attending the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and Kansas State,

Pillen returned to Columbus, where he founded Pillen Family Farms in 1994.

Pillen has three children who all attended Scotus, including Izic, who is currently a senior.

Many students throughout the school know Governor Pillen from his involvement within the school and the surrounding community.

Alex Zoucha, a senior, commented on his unique relationship with Pillen.

"He was my club basketball coach and a family friend," Zoucha said. "During my club basketball days, Jim was a good man. He always expected the best out of people."

Eighteen months ago, Izic was

informed that his father would be running for office.

"I was kind of surprised. I didn't think he wanted to run for a political office," Izic said.

Since this announcement, Jim has been on the road, campaigning in all ninety-three counties across the state.

"His truck, which he got less than a year ago, already has 90,000 miles on it," Izic said.

Pillen's hard work on the campaign trail paid off. On November 8th, Pillen became the forty-first governor of Nebraska.

Some Scotus students had the privilege of attending Pillen's election party, including senior Nick Zoucha.

"I enjoyed watching Jim speak," Zoucha said. "The atmosphere in the building was cool. Jim has been in my life for a while. He coached us in basketball before high school." Zoucha said. "He has supported me so I thought I should support him."

Another Scotus student who attended the election party was senior Emma Lindhorst.

"I went to the party because for me it was a once in a lifetime opportunity to not only have the governor in the same town as me but to also personally know him," Lindhorst said.

Attending the election party also sparked an interest in politics for senior Lauren Houfek.

"I have always had an interest in politics, so going to this party was cool because the people all believed in Jim and his plans for Nebraska," Houfek said.

After winning the election, the next step for Pillen is leading this great state. Izic shared his father's plan moving forward.

"He is going to try to do as much work as possible from Columbus, but obviously, he will be in Lincoln a lot," Izic said.

For Izic, his life has remained the same since his father declared for the gubernatorial seat.

"Nothing really has changed besides my dad being gone a lot," Pillen said.

The connections between Scotus and Jim Pillen run deep. Pillen Family Farms has supported Scotus for some time, aiding the school in a variety of ways.

Pillen is the new governor of Nebraska, but to the Scotus community, he is a familiar face.

Juniors rock mock interviews

By Claire Rickert
Staff Reporter

Every year, the junior class nervously waits in the Memorial Hall bleachers as members from the Chamber of Commerce filter in, ready to interview the students.

To prepare students for job or scholarship interviews, the junior class has mock interviews, set up by Sarah Ehlers from the Chamber of Commerce.

"I love having members of the community come in to talk about the importance of resumes and to do the mock interviews. It is real life experience for the students that goes much further than anything I can just say in class," junior English teacher Angela Rusher said. "What a service it is to our school for the chamber members to take that time out of their day."

The first step in getting ready for these interviews was hearing from Amanda Henry, manager of human resources at Loup Power District, and Deb Hamling, retired human resources at NPPD. They came to Scotus on November 16th and spoke to the students about resumes and job interviews. The students then started preparing their resumes.

"They gave us ideas of what questions might be asked during an interview and what a good resume will look like," junior Kamren Kudron said.

The students were then interviewed on Thursday, December 1st by a variety of members of

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INTERVIEWS



LIBBIE BREZENSKI / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Junior Kenna Barel shakes hands with Columbus Chamber of Commerce Member Tracy Gasper after her mock interview held in Memorial Hall on December 1st, 2022. Each junior was interviewed by two Chamber members.

the Columbus Chamber of Commerce. Each student was interviewed by two different community members, and another group graded the student resumes.

"I truly enjoyed the interviews to be honest. I learned what the interview process is like and saw what I personally need to work on, without pressure on me to actually land a job," junior Kenna Barel said.

The mock interviews are a way for juniors to prepare themselves and gain experience for when they have interviews for jobs or scholarships. After the interview, they will receive their scoring

sheets, along with tips for the future.

"The interviews helped me prepare for any future interviews because there were unique questions and different people asking them. I now know my strengths and weaknesses during an interview," junior Nicole Peterson said.

When hard questions about college, interviews, or planning for the future come up, Career Coordinator Bridget McPhillips is there to answer them. She helped observe at the junior interviews.

"I think that all the students did a fantastic job of being professional and

answering their questions thoroughly. I talked to some of the Chamber members, and they said that they were blown away by our student's composure and responses. So that's always really encouraging," McPhillips said.

She then came and spoke to the juniors after the interviews on Friday, December 2nd.

"Our discussion was not necessarily interview related, but it kind of goes with the college and career prep that we do for our students. With the juniors I always host an interview with them to get an idea of what careers and colleges or programs they are



LIBBIE BREZENSKI / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Junior Abigail Laska listens as a Columbus Chamber of Commerce member gives her tips during the junior mock interviews held at Scotus on December 1st, 2022. Juniors also prepared resumes to be scored by other Chamber members.

looking at. We also talked about job shadowing and college visits," McPhillips said.

To start the process of preparing for senior year and the future, the students also took a personality assessment to see what kind of careers might appeal to them.

"We are so blessed to have a career coordinator at school to assist our students in exploring their futures. It is something I wish we had when I was in school," Rusher said.

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Listening to lyrics reveals missed meanings



By Mary Faltys
Staff Reporter

Music is a big part of our lives. With phones so readily available, it is extremely easy

to open Spotify, Pandora, or Apple Music. The hardest part of music listening is choosing which playlist to listen to. Different situations call for different songs; jeeping has a different vibe than homework.

Each song has a different feel to it. While some songs seem similar musically, their lyrics are vastly different. No matter what the words say, they are important. There are some songs I know I should not listen to because of their nasty words, but the music is just as good as my favorite clean songs. Although the bad songs often go against my faith and common beliefs,

I do not think I need to ban them from my life altogether.

Most of the time, I simply enjoy the notes but do not listen to the lyrics. When I tune into the words the artist is saying, the song takes on a whole new meaning, whether good or bad. Some of my favorite songs tell a story about the artist's real experience. "Death Row" by Thomas Rhett remembers his moving trip to visit the people on death row. Other favorites of mine include songs that reveal universal truths in a new light. "Truth About You" by Mitchell Tenpenny is one of these. Finding songs with perfectly aligned music and

lyrics is extremely gratifying.

Tuning into the lyrics of other songs has ruined some for me. When I first heard the song, I had no idea what message it was spreading. I have often regretted listening to the lyrics once I discovered its unappealing theme; I cannot listen to the song in the same way again. However, I reasoned I would rather know what I am exactly listening to. Although there are many songs with undesirable lyrics, I have discovered lyrics in new songs that keep me coming back.

Artists continue to release new albums, and they, along with their songwriters,

ultimately get the final say in the message they want to bring to their listeners. I love when they decide to share a hope-filled, heart-warming, or inspiring story. In addition to great music, the uplifting lyrics complete the song. The songs with equally great music but words with opposite lyrics give me a moral dilemma. I cannot quench my guilty pleasure of pressing play on some of these songs.

After some thought, I concluded that I cannot banish these songs from my life, especially if the song is trending. I determined if I do not let the bad songs negatively influence my life, faith,

and core beliefs; it is okay for me to continue listening to them in moderation.

Before a song is played too many times, the lyrics should be listened to. Although they are not the most ethical songs, their musical sounds bring listeners back over and over. Being aware of the words I am listening to can prevent me from lowering my standards to that of the song's lyrics, but I can guiltlessly enjoy cleaner songs without limits.

Honesty's not always the best policy



By Lily Dohmen
Staff Reporter

Most people have heard the phrase, "Honesty is the

best policy." This phrase is a joke because it is untruthful. No human being has ever been completely honest. Everyone has told a white lie here and there whether it was to a friend, family member, or even a stranger.

Honesty is honestly not always the best policy because sometimes a person does not want to hear the truth.

One reason why people do not like to tell the truth is it can hurt people's feelings. A person may be upset about hearing the truth because it makes them confront a situation they have been in

denial about. For example, when someone asks a person if they like their cooking. Even if a person hates it, they may tell the cook they love it. Sugarcoating truths can make the truth sound nicer, and a person may not come off as mean.

Another example of when telling the truth is wrong is when multiple lies have been told before it. For example, if a person continues to lie about a situation and one day decides to tell the truth, it could break open those several lies told before and expose the person even more.

Sometimes people want others to listen to them and not give advice. When a person gives advice or criticism, it can be a harsh truth. People want someone to listen to them so they can sort out their thoughts about the situation. People often know the truths or mistakes they are making but they are not looking to fix them. A person going through a rough time probably wants to vent or complain about the problem to feel better and then they will go on with their life. Feeling better about a situation does not mean a person needs to hear the truth; they

need someone to listen to them without judgment.

Being honest is bad when nothing can change the truth. Sometimes it is too late to turn things around and change them. This is something a person must accept on their own. For example, a company distributes a product, but it has an error. Since the product is already distributed a person cannot go back in time and fix it. There is no benefit to anyone knowing the truth about the error when it is too late to make the change. It will not make a difference.

When a person tells the

truth, it helps them feel less guilty. This can be true but at the same time after a while a person may start to feel guilty if they hurt another person's feelings. Telling a lie may prevent hurting a friend or significant other.

Sometimes it is better to keep the truth to yourself because it will not hurt anyone's feelings, people do not always want an opinion, and the truth cannot always change the outcome. Depending on the situation, the best policy is to sugarcoat truths. Sugarcoating truths can change a painful truth into a pleasant lie.



MAYSA KUHL / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

BeReal, but only when it's convenient



By Libbie Brezenski
Staff Reporter

The world of social media is fake. Everyone knows there is photoshop, filters, scripted moments, and set

ups to make it seem something is not how it truly is. This is why the app BeReal was invented.

If you have never heard of BeReal before, it is an app where everyone gets a notification at once and has two minutes to take a front and back picture of what they are currently doing. No one can see anyone else's picture unless they have posted one themselves.

If a BeReal is posted late, they will still have only two minutes, but it will notify the user's friends of a late post.

However, is it really a BeReal if people can "Be-

Fake" and post a late BeReal when it is convenient to them?

I personally know people who will purposefully wait until they are doing something cool to post to make it seem as if their life is exciting.

This showed when everyone saw senior Isaak Liebig wait and post his BeReal on the football field at the homecoming coronation.

While it was indeed an awesome picture, it was not authentic to what he was doing at the moment of the notification.

Another issue with the "Real"-ity of the app is the

option to retake the photo as many times as the user wishes.

If the point of the app is to be authentic with what the user is doing at that exact moment the notification goes off, why are they able to retake and retake their picture until the angle is perfectly right? That does not sound very "Real" to me.

Despite having the option to retake the BeReal, the app does snitch on how many times it is retaken. However, there is an easy way around this feature, and it is to close out of the app completely. When getting back into the app, it is as if the retakes

never happened.

How do I know this? I have "BeenFake" before like 99.9% of the users on the app too.

Oh, and if the BeReal you have already posted is not as cool as what you are doing in the current moment, you can always delete it with your once-a-day 'get out of jail free card' as if it were a physics homework assignment from Mr. Salyard.

In my opinion, the concept of the app is a wonderful idea where users can "BeReal" in the moment and post and see pictures without the toxic filters and photoshop other social media

apps allow; however, the way the app is set up is wrong. I believe if a user goes into the BeReal app at all, they should have to take a picture without it being able to be deleted or retaken.

While this will not completely solve the problem of a user waiting until they are doing something interesting to go into the app, it will limit the issue of retaking the picture to get a perfect angle or capture of a "perfect" moment.

Just as real life does not always go as intended, neither should a picture on a "real app" have to be as well.

Girls basketball builds on returning team

By Mary Faltys
Staff Reporter

Starting their season on November 14th, the girls basketball team knew they only had a couple weeks to prepare for their first game. Before they could start playing together efficiently, they had to figure out where they were starting.

The Shamrocks have six experienced varsity returners this year after losing only two seniors from last year. Senior Libbie Brezenski has recognized the team's differences from last season to this season.

"We have a lot of returning players because we were a young team last year, so that will help everyone feel more comfortable this go-around. I am excited to see how everyone works together and how far we can take it this year," Brezenski said.

Once they determined where they were starting as a team, the Shamrocks decided

what they wanted to achieve this season.

Sophomore Sophia Karges is on varsity for the first time.

"We hope to be able to develop new lifelong friendships. We also want to reach the state tournament this year," Karges said.

Several players started training for a successful basketball season before it officially began. Senior Hailey Steffensmeier was one of the girls who did off-season training to prepare.

"I shot on the shooting machine, lifted in the weight room, and ran a lot to stay in shape for the season so we don't have extra work to do once the season started," Steffensmeier said.

After two quick weeks of training, the Shamrocks lined up on the court to play their first game. Some players were gone the day of the game, so the lineup had to be adjusted somewhat. They played Hastings St. Cecilia at home on December 1st. After

an intense, thrilling 32-minute match, the score was tied 38-38. The Shamrocks lost 38-40 in overtime.

Senior Maysa Kuhl used their first game as a positive learning experience.

"I think everyone really gave it their all in our first game. It was not the outcome we wanted, but we learned a lot and can build from it. Not to mention, we had some girls gone so it will be interesting to see what we look like all together!" Kuhl said.

Junior Joanna Rusher broke the school record for most blocks in a game during their first game. She had seven blocks, breaking Amber Buhman's previous record of five.

On December 6th, the girls travelled to West Point to play Guardian Angels Central Catholic. They ended up losing 26-44.

"We did a lot of things right, but we also did a lot of things wrong. The other team outworked us and punished us for our mistakes while



NICK ZOUCHA / YEARBOOK STAFF

Senior Hailey Steffensmeier fights for a rebound against Hastings St. Cecilia on December 1st. The Shamrocks lost the game in overtime 38-40.

we didn't necessarily do the same for them," Rusher said.

Senior Kaelyn Dierman is a second-year starter.

"I am excited for what our team has to offer. We are only going to get better from now on, and I think working together and pushing each

other will help us be successful," Dierman said.

On December 9th, the girls traveled to Grand Island and played Grand Island Central Catholic. They pulled off a huge upset and won 57-47.

The next day, on December 10th, the Shamrocks won

50-42 against Humphrey St. Francis in Humphrey.

On December 13th, they played Omaha Concordia at home. The Shamrocks are scheduled to play Pierce at home on Friday, December 16th.

Swim's small team encourages teamwork

By Jasmine Jackson
Editor

As the weather cools, the outdoor pools begin to close, and the lakes freeze over. For swimmers on the Columbus

High-Scotus co-op team, the winter weather is easily combated by heading indoors to practice and compete. The swim team kicked off their season on November 14th with practice at the Columbus Aquatic Center.

Senior swimmer Alex Settje has competed since freshman year. The first detail he noticed about this year's team was its size.

"We have a lot less people this year, but I think this is allowing us to grow closer

as a team," Settje said.

The team's first meet was a December 1st dual at and against Fremont. The team lost, but senior Francesca Gallino has not taken the results to heart.

"Our coach is always trying to make us work harder. In general, the people on the team are very supportive with positive attitudes," Gallino said.

On December 3rd the team traveled to Hastings to compete at the Hastings Invite. The team only had two medalists, but the meet still proved to be successful for Settje.

"The Hastings Invite lasted long, but I managed to get first in my 100-yard freestyle heat. We are continuing to work on our breathing and making times," Settje said.

At every meet, swimmers can qualify for state if their designated event times fall at or below a cutoff time. Only the top 32 swimmers in the state compete in each event, and an automatic time sends someone to state automatically, while secondary

times only offer the chance of going to state. Last year, no one on the team qualified, but junior Mary Faltys hopes to change this.

"We always cheer each other on at meets, and I can tell it makes a difference. It encourages me to shave off a few milliseconds to get a state qualifying time, which I want to do in my 100-yard breaststroke," Faltys said.

"The challenges we face as a small team make our successes more rewarding."

Settje swims the 100-yard freestyle and 100-yard breaststroke but hopes to take the group events to state.

"I hope to qualify in the 200-yard medley or the 200 relay," Settje said.

The team comprised of only seventeen swimmers is not the only challenge the team is facing. Most of the team is inexperienced, save for a few returners such as Faltys.

"Because we have so many new swimmers this year, all the returning swimmers have stepped up to help the new people. I

see the returners helping the new people all the time with whatever they need, and I think that is really helping the team's relationships," Faltys said.

For newcomers such as Gallino, swim provides the opportunity to meet new people and try something new. She currently swims the 50-yard freestyle, 100-yard breaststroke, and the 400-yard freestyle relay.

"Swimming is a very relaxing sport, but it can also give you the opportunity to push yourself harder because you really compete against yourself," Gallino said. "The people on the team are the best part, even if other teams have double or triple our size. I would recommend people try it out. I have never swum on a team before, but I was able to do it."

The swim team competed on Saturday, December 10th at the Aquatic Center, and both the girls and boys teams placed 4th overall. The swim team will compete on Saturday, December 17th at Elkhorn.



JASMINE JACKSON / ROCK BOTTOM EDITOR

Senior Francesca Gallino swims the 100-yard breaststroke at the Columbus Aquatic Center on December 10th during a swim meet. The girls team placed fourth overall.

Wrestling team wrestles through inexperience

By Libbie Brezenski
Staff Reporter

Changes have happened within walls of Memorial Hall with the wrestling team.

Tyler Linder, who was head coach for two seasons, decided to step down from head coach to assistant coach this year allowing Boss to take over.

"When I was originally approached to be the head coach, I was very apprehensive. Being the head coach of any sport is very demanding and time consuming," Linder said. "I told our administration from day one that I would be the head coach to provide some stability to our program and to prepare and mentor my eventual successor. Two years was more than enough time for him to learn the ins and outs of head coaching."

When current assistant coach Linder was ready to step down, Boss knew he was ready to take the position.

"I knew it was a great opportunity. Having my own team is something I have always dreamed of," Boss said.

Along with the switch of coaching roles, the wrestling team also had a positive change in numbers.

Last year, the wrestling team struggled with being able to pull off team wins due to the fact they did not have a full squad. When there is not a player to wrestle in a weight class, it results in an automatic forfeit. That will no longer be the case this season. This year, the wrestling team has a full squad. This means every weight class is filled with a member of the team. The wrestling team consists of 1 senior, 4 juniors, 4 sophomores, and 12 freshmen.

"[Junior] Spencer Wittwer leads the team currently and has a good possibility of placing high at state. He is currently ranked third in Class B which is really exciting," first year head coach Rod Boss said.

Boss is most excited for the new possibilities and to see how the newer faces grow in this upcoming season.

"We have some young-guys like [sophomore] Spencer Shotkoski who have been turning the corner lately

and some new freshmen with Hunter Brunkhorst and Kobe Micek who I am excited to finally watch wrestle at the high school level," Boss said.

The most challenging obstacle the boys anticipate facing this year is the lack of experience. Despite having an inexperienced team, the Shamrocks still have faith they will do well.

"As a team, I think the experience will come to us, and we will have a turning point after Christmas Break," Wittwer said.

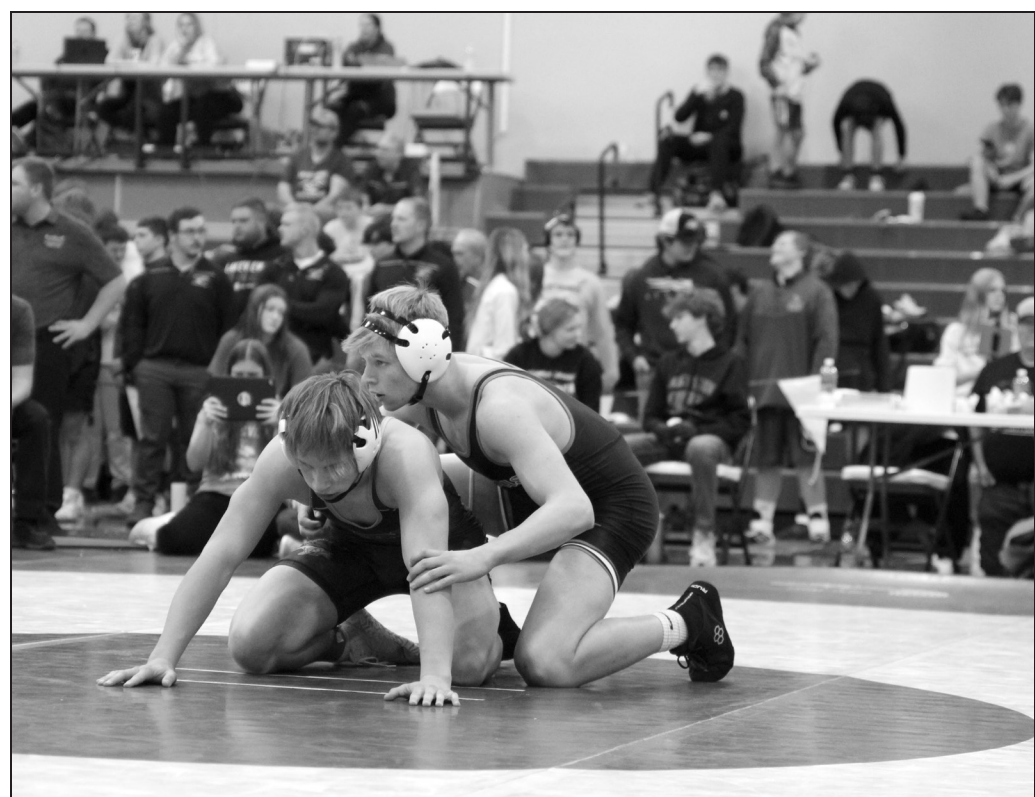
Over half of this year's team is made up of freshmen, but this will be beneficial to the Shamrocks for the next few seasons.

"I think [the lack of experience] will help in the years to come because all of us will [gain it as we compete more]," sophomore Alex Evans said.

At the Shamrocks' opening invite at Lakeview, they finished the meet with 43 points overall placing 10th.

Out of the 16 members of the team who competed, 11 had never seen the varsity mats before.

Wittwer finished 2nd in



SHELBY BRANDENBURG / YEARBOOK STAFF

Senior Paul Littlefield gets ready to face his opponent at the Lakeview Invite on December 2nd. Littlefield is the only senior on the roster this season for the Shamrocks and was also a winner on that night.

the 220-weight class, Hunter Brunkhorst finished 3rd in the 106-weight class, and other wins came from freshmen Brayden Fleming and Ryan Allen, Evans, junior David DeLeon, and senior Paul

Littlefield.

On December 9th, the Shamrocks traveled to Raymond Central and competed in a dual's tournament. The 'Rocks beat Weeping Water and Platteview but fell to

Conestoga, Bishop Neumann, and Raymond Central.

The wrestling team goes on to face Aquinas and Central City at a triangular in Central City today.

Boys have a momentous start to season

By Maysa Kuhl
Staff Reporter

After three weeks of grueling, intense practices, the boys basketball team officially had their first game of the season in the Dowd Activity Center. This year's team is considered "young" having only three returning players who have seen the varsity court.

"I think that we are going to surprise a lot of people," senior Mason Roberts said. "With us having a rough season last year, nobody expects anything from us, and I think that we are going to shock a lot of people."

Surprise them they did! Winning their first three games after only winning four games all of last year. The team started out their season with a win in a close game against St. Cecilia on Thursday, December 1st. With a 48-47 win, the team gained momentum, and this was the first time the boys had won their opening game in six

years. Sophomore Cohen Pelan propelled the Shamrocks ahead at the end of the game with a 3-point play.

"We wanted to go out and prove ourselves," junior Jackson Heng said. "Afterwards, we knew we can't get complacent with ourselves and need to build off the win."

Former Scotus player turned business teacher Cody Mroczek now coaches the freshmen team and helps with the varsity. Mroczek is able to help the boys using his own knowledge as a once-player for the Shamrocks. All four years of Mroczek's high school career, the boys teams made it to the state tournament.

"Coach Mroczek is helping make a big impact," Pelan said. "He is always pushing us to be better."

Following their opener, the boys hit the road and faced Guardian Angels Central Catholic on December 6th. The Shamrocks beat the Bluejays 48-42 after starting out behind in the first half.

Sophomore Caleb Cameron led the team in points with 14, with 11 of those scored in the third quarter.

"Not just one member of the team is making a big impact, but the sophomore class as a whole," said senior Blake Wemhoff said. "They are really stepping up."

In a quick turnaround, the boys traveled again to play against Grand Island Central Catholic on the 9th. The boys beat the Crusaders in a close game with a score of 44-43 thanks to a last second 3-pointer made by Heng.

With a current record of 3-0, the boys have high hopes for their success to follow them throughout the season.

"Overall, the goal of the season is to make it to Lincoln and compete as one of the greatest schools in the state," sophomore Owen Lindhorst said. "I am very happy and excited for the next few games."

The boys play Concordia on December 13th and will play Pierce on December 16th.



FAITH WEBER / YEARBOOK STAFF

Sophomore Cohen Pelan passes the ball to a teammate in the game on December 1st against Hastings St. Cecilia. Pelan's free throws put the boys ahead by one to win the game.

Offseason winter conditioning to pay dividends

By Mark Buhman
Staff Reporter

It is a proven fact that staying physically active is crucial to a person's overall health and well-being. This is especially true when a person is involved in many activities and expects to perform well in them. If an athlete wants to benefit from his or her activities, he or she should expect to adequately train and prepare for those activities. The offseason is the primary and optimal time for much of this training to take place.

The Scotus track and soccer teams believe in this mentality. This winter, those who are not competing in a winter sport have the opportunity to take part in conditioning, practices, and even competitions to prepare for the soccer and track seasons in the spring. Head girls track coach Alexandra Meyer explained the reasoning behind this new opportunity.

"It's for those kids who aren't out for a winter sport and want to do something in the offseason. It's an opportunity for them to see where they are at and get some good work in before the actual season," Meyer said.

There were a few students showing interest in the opportunity. One such student was junior Kamren Kudron.

"I just want to make sure I'm prepared for track since I'm not doing basketball.

Hopefully I can get a little better along the way. I began at the start of November with some distance work. I ran five miles at an 8-minute pace or so. I would usually run at the YMCA for that, and for speed work, I run at one of the tracks here in town," Kudron said.

As far as conditioning goes for those taking part in the winter track conditioning

program, athletes are not required to follow any one set of guidelines. Not only are workouts personalized, but the available meets are as well. Head boys track coach Joe Schoenfelder summarized the format for the winter events.

"There are a couple of colleges that will host meets where kids can go compete in their events. They are,

essentially, indoor meets for individuals. College of Saint Mary's will have three different weekends available for those interested. There are also different track camps. We can help the kids prepare, but we can't go to the meets to coach them," Schoenfelder explained.

Not only have some track athletes begun to prepare for the spring season,

so have some of the soccer players. Scotus senior Trenton Cielocha, explained a bit of what they are doing to prepare for the spring.

"We have indoor soccer games that we compete in against different teams from across the state," Cielocha stated. "We also lift weights and scrimmage against each other at the practice field."

Junior Frank Fehringer

also noted some of the work they are doing during the offseason. This will be his third year of high school soccer.

"You're pretty much on your own for conditioning. Everyone knows they should run, get a workout in, and stay in 'soccer' shape. I'm also in Strength Training, and Coach [Ryan] Baker put together some soccer workouts I can do in the offseason to help me get prepared for the upcoming soccer season," Fehringer said.

While Fehringer is in Strength Training, winter workout plans are not only limited to individuals taking an official conditioning class. Strength and conditioning coach Ryan Baker explained some of the training members of the track and soccer teams can do to prepare for their seasons.

"They'll both have an offseason program. We're still going to really focus on general strength leading up to the season, but once we have that basis, we'll really start to work on explosive movements, all really focusing on peaking at the right time. Everything is progressing towards that," Baker explained.

While everything is progressing towards the spring seasons, many of the athletes are having fun in the process.

"Not much of it's organized. We just get together when we can, shoot around, and have a good time," Fehringer concluded.



MARK BUHMAN / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Sophomore Katelyn Pensick conditions in the weight room after returning from Thanksgiving break. Pensick is one of the many athletes taking advantage of the workouts and events available this winter to prepare for the spring sports season.



FAITH WEBER / YEARBOOK STAFF

Sophomore Caleb Cameron hoists junior Jackson Heng in his arms after their victory against Hastings St. Cecilia on December 1st. This is the first time the boys had won their opening game in six years.



SHELBY BRANDENBURG / YEARBOOK STAFF

Freshman Hunter Brunkhorst raises his hand after winning one of his matches at the opening meet at Lakeview on December 2nd. He was one of the seven Shamrocks to put a tally in the win column at the meet.

Home Ec. hobbies cook up storms of creativity

By Jasmine Jackson
Editor

Yarn spread across the living room, cake batter on the kitchen walls, and weeds in the garden! While this may sound like chaos, it is the perfect environment for several Scotus faculty members and

students who have concluded that the best, most creative hobbies can be found from the comfort of their homes.

Sophomore Jessica Jackson often finds herself wrapped up in her needle-working hobbies, which she began a few months ago.

"I love to crochet

little animals, clothing, and jackets," Jackson said. "I'm creating a strawberry-themed cardigan at the moment although I've already created a patchwork cardigan, which took around two months to complete."

Needlework is the perfect hobby for those who love

hands-on activities or find themselves bored during the afternoon, such as sophomore Rebecca Policky who began cross-stitching around COVID-19.

"My grandma introduced me to cross-stitching, and ever since, I have made gifts for other people and completed projects just for fun," Policky said.

Even though crafts become easier over time, for junior high English teacher Deb Ohnoutka, who has sewed and quilted since she was eight years old, some creations hold more sentiment than others.

"My favorite project was my first quilt even though it was probably my worst. I was just excited to get started and do something. Nowadays, I can spend all day in my sewing room and not come out," Ohnoutka said.

Follow that delicious scent to discover freshman Sydney Stuart baking her favorite dessert: cookies.

"Everything tastes better homemade. I have been baking since I was old enough to understand not to stick my hands in the oven,"

Stuart said. "Every Christmas my family comes together and makes dozens of cookies, which we send to lots of people."

Seventh grader Allie Brezenski revealed her go-to recipe, an ice cream dessert involving layered ice cream sandwiches, fudge, whipped cream, and Oreos. However, her favorite part about baking is spending time with her family.

"During Christmas time, we had to wait a long time for the cookie dough to warm up, so we turned on Christmas music and wrapped presents. When the dough thawed, we got flour everywhere. After the cookies were done and frosted, we watched a Christmas movie and ate cookies together," Brezenski said.

Some have mastered more than one hobby around the house, such as band teacher Kristen Cox who cans and grows food from her garden. Cox's hobby is personal because it allows her to connect with her parents.

"My dad has always grown a big garden, and my mom did a lot of canning, so I was always roped into

helping them. Later, I found [these hobbies] were stress relievers," Cox said. "A big challenge is finding time. Sometimes I'm picking 50 pounds of tomatoes, and there's only a certain amount of time to get them processed."

Cox has experience with a variety of foods such as salsa, spaghetti sauce, rhubarb jelly, pies, and even pickled asparagus.

"One unique thing I've made is pickled asparagus, which I had never had until I was an adult. A parent of a band student shared her recipe, and I loved it. It's one of my favorite foods to can; the store-bought items are not the same anymore," Cox said.

All the mentioned hobbies are easy to begin, particularly needleworking, which is a favorite among the Scotus community. When venturing into that roll of yarn, heed Policky's advice.

"Sometimes you will stab yourself with a needle, but, remember, you did get a tetanus shot as a child," Policky concluded.



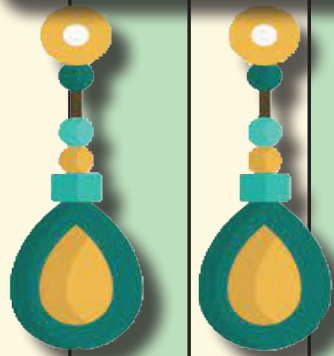
PHOTO ILLUSTRATION COURTESY CLAIRE RICKERT

Habits at Home



"I like to write short stories before I go to bed."
-11th grader Cecilia Arndt

"I twist my earrings whenever I get nervous."
-8th grader Lydia Dostal



"I pray a decade of the Rosary every day after school."
-9th grader Jake Demuth

"I spend money to try to make me more money."
-11th grader Eli Kreikemeier



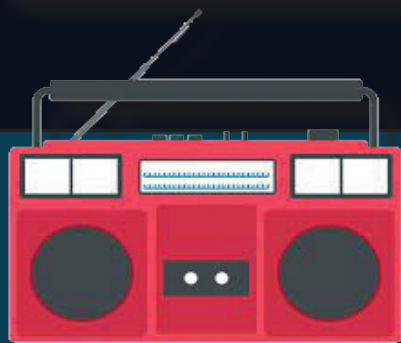
"I set five alarms for the morning."
-Melanie Mimick



"I watch *Leave it to Beaver* every night."
-Kristen Cox



"I play Gregorian Chant when I sleep."
-Nate Tenopir



"I have OCD for the cleanliness for vehicles, especially the inside."
-Pat Brockhaus



Koranda's creative side fills the classroom

By Maysa Kuhl
Staff Reporter

Tucked away on the third floor, sits the freshmen and sophomore religion teacher Kelly Koranda. Her room is filled with Bible verses, prayers, and some of her own artwork. One of the most notable pieces being a portrait of Mother Teresa, which Koranda made.

Koranda has been artistically inclined for a majority of her life after being inspired by her aunt, an art teacher at St. Roberts in Omaha. Her aunt shared her love of art with Koranda by giving her lessons when she was only 3 years old, and it strengthened her love for the activity. After passing away Koranda's freshman year of college, her aunt was still an important motivator for her art career.

"My aunt was always a big influence on my art, and I always loved sharing that interest with her," Koranda said. "I kind of always wanted to follow in her footsteps." It is no secret Koranda

has a degree in art, and she was actually influenced by a different family member to pursue this degree. The decision to teach religion was not difficult for her since there were no art positions open, and they both make her happy.

"I also had another aunt who loved art but stopped doing art, and she told me don't ever stop, just at least take one class each semester," Koranda said. "Then by the time, taking one class each semester, I was like well I might as well major in this!"

Over the years, Koranda has made tons of art, ranging from Catholic inspired to ones with happy memories attached. The most influential piece she has made was a series of the stations of the cross, which took her deeper into her prayer life at the time. Some of her art has been featured in art shows with other Catholic artists in Lincoln.

"My favorite piece was a painting I did of this guy which I made while I was

on a mission trip in Peru," Koranda said. "This guy was playing his violin, and I have more affection for that piece just because it reminds me of the trip and the guy we had met."

Koranda's creative side can also be found in the classes she teaches where she assigns fun and creative art projects for the students. One of the more recent projects for the freshmen class was to create internet profiles for biblical characters.

"I remember, since I have a creative tendency, loving those opportunities in class," Koranda stated. "I know it is not every student's thing, but I think it kind of taps in for the students with a creative side to give them opportunities to express themselves."

While pursuing her art career has been difficult these past years after having kids, Koranda still enjoys doing projects with them. She is able to pass on her love of art to her kids, similar to how her aunt did for her.



PHOTO COURTESY KELLY KORANDA

This is a painting from a series about the Stations of the Cross done by freshmen and sophomore religion teacher Kelly Koranda. This series played a large part of her prayer life in college.

Collections captivate students and faculty

By Claire Rickert
Staff Reporter

Rocks and crystals, antique sewing items, and Pokémon cards are all items teachers and students at Scotus collect.

Some of these collections are quite extensive and time-consuming while others are simply a hobby.

Religion and Family and Consumer Science teacher Carmen Johnson has an antique sewing machine collection.

"I have been collecting antique sewing items for about thirty-five years. I told my husband I always wanted a toy sewing machine when I was little and never had one. So, he gifted me one for birthday, and I have been collecting ever since," Johnson said.

Johnson displays her

sewing machines in curio cabinets so she can share her passion. She has a hard time choosing, but she has a favorite model of sewing machine.

"I have every Singer toy sewing machine, and those are probably my favorite of my collection. In the antique ones, you can tell the difference in the series by looking at the spokes on the hand wheel," Johnson said.

Johnson has also been a member of the Toy Stitcher's International Organization and has been since 1996. In 2019, she attended the national conference which was held in Kansas City.

Seventh grader Alexander Chvala has a Pokémon card collection.

"I have been collecting Pokémon cards since fifth grade. I like collecting them because it gives me something to do on my own time, outside of school," Chvala

said. Chvala also has a favorite in his collection.

"My favorite in my collection would have to be my Celebi VMAX Rainbow Rare card," Chvala said.

STEAM teacher Betsy Rall has a rock and crystal collection.

"I started collecting rocks probably around middle school because my grandparents collected them, and I thought it was very interesting. I liked digging around if we went to the river or if we went to a rock shop, I would pick up small samples," Rall said.

Rall has two full lapidary work sets from her grandparents and a variety of beautiful jewelry her grandfather made for her. Collecting rocks and being in nature is a love that runs in her family.

"My sister lives in South America, and when I go



"I'd like to share it because it's great for me to collect it and be able to look at it, but for people who are interested in this, it's kind of fun to bring it and show it to them."

there, we look for rocks in creeks and rivers, or other places like that," Rall said.

Rall's first degree is actually in metallurgy, which is the study of metals and their

properties. She has always been interested in this study but has trouble finding a way to integrate the topic into her STEAM classes.

"I'd like to share it

CLAIRE RICKERT / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

because it's great for me to collect it and be able to look at it, but for people who are interested in this, it's kind of fun to bring it and show it to them," Rall said.

Fishing creates lifelong memories

By Brennen Jelinek
Staff Reporter

Fishing is a hobby many enjoy, and a pastime shared by many people in Scotus. Some people have known how to fish their whole lives and others get introduced to it later in life. Fishing is a hobby many people pass on to their children at an early age. Most people, when asked who got them into fishing, answered their parents or grandparents. This creates many exciting memories people remember for the rest of their lives. Social Science

teacher Pat Brockhaus has great memories of fishing with his family.

"[I remember] taking my own sons down to Pawnee Park and watching them catch little fish," Brockhaus said.

There are countless different attractions that draw people to fishing. The thrill and excitement someone feels when they hook a fish attracts many people. People also go fishing to enjoy the peaceful feeling that comes with fishing. Others go to enjoy the nature that surrounds the lakes and ponds they fish in. These aspects are the rea-

son 7th grader Logan Sell got into fishing seven years ago.

"I like how peaceful and quiet it is and the adrenaline rush you get when something tugs on your line," Sell said.

Many factors affect fishing such as cloud coverage, time of year, type of fish, clarity of water, type of underwater vegetation, fishing tactic, and even the littlest things like type of lure and lure color. This makes fishing exceedingly difficult, but also that much more rewarding. Freshman Jameson Cieloha enjoys fishing because of how rewarding it is catching a fish.

"It's fun and you should try it. Some days you're lucky; others you don't get a single bite," Cieloha said.

Another attraction of fishing is the competitive aspect of it. Many people like to have competitions with their families and friends to see who can catch the most or the biggest fish. Because of all those factors that affect fishing, it is easy to compare who is the better fisher on that day. Sophomore Samuel Olmer enjoys fishing with his friends and family at Yankton Lakes.

"[My favorite part about fishing is] catching bigger

fish than my family and friends," Olmer said

Because of the interest shown by the students here at Scotus, the Scotus Fishing Club was started in 2019. Since then, students have competed in a variety of fishing tournaments around the state. Students learn the different methods and tactics that help make fishing a great hobby. This club also allowed students to make memories while fishing with their friends. One of sophomore Adrianna Kush's favorite fishing memories came from one of these tournaments.

"This past high school

fishing tournament my brother and I were partners, and we got 4th place. I also ended up catching the biggest bass out of all the guys competing," Kush said.

Adrianna Kush's brother Jamison summed up what he liked about fishing.

"As Hank said in king of the hill 'We don't fish for the fish. 90% of what I like about this sport, and it is a sport, is sittin' in the boat for 5 hours doin' nuthin'. And the icing on the cake is when God smiles on you, and you hook one. And when you're reeling it in, everything else falls away,'" Kush said.



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION COURTESY LILY DOHMEN



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION COURTESY SOPHIA MOWREY

Unique obsessions fill students' free time

By Joanna Rusher
Staff Reporter

The definition of an obsession, according to dictio-

nary.com, is the domination of one's thoughts or feelings by a persistent idea, image, desire, etc. Some obsessions are weird, while some are so normal people don't even

realize they are an obsession. In today's culture, music, a TV series, social media, or a certain celebrity, are often not recognized as odd obsessions. Until they become extreme.

Senior Sierra Kravig comes forward with an obsession that is often referred to as being a "Swiftie".

"I was questionably gone from school the day after Taylor Swift released a new album," Kravig said. "I collect her autographs, attend her concerts, and constantly listen to her music, pretty much all day."

While Kravig listens to the new *Midnights* album, junior Patrick Arndt is also listening to music, but his music obsession is less specific.

"I listen to anything and everything, but mostly old rock," Arndt said. "Last year, my Spotify told me I spent 59.1 total days listening to music. I started listening to this much music about four years ago, and I have to listen to music at least twelve hours out of the day."

Music is a somewhat common obsession, and so are movies. There are Disney

nerds and Star Wars geeks, but cry-worthy romance movie fanatics are more rare.

"I binge watch *The Notebook*," sophomore Emma Brezenski said. "I was bored one day, so I watched it, and now whenever I'm bored, I just watch it cause it's that good."

Sticking with the arts and media, sophomore Noah Kuhl is obsessed with a specific type of artwork.

"I draw dinosaurs or any animal. I spend a large portion of my free time on it," Kuhl said. "I loved dinosaurs as a kid and just seeing the fossils in museums made me wonder what they looked like, so I draw them in order to get an idea of how they might have looked."

The last few examples have all been pretty common obsessions, from music to TV to artwork, but sometimes people have obsessions over odder things. Senior Brianna

Belzer has what she sees as a strange obsession but could also just be a food preference.

"I have a milk obsession," Belzer said. "I drink three to four cartons of milk a day at school and about two to three glasses at home equivalent to seven and a half cartons of milk. I have a serious problem."

Some could say food obsessions are normal. Everyone has a favorite food, but an obsession for cleanliness is more unheard of.

"I love dusting things," sophomore Ava Rickert said. "I like to dust ledges like picture frames. Everything is dusty; it's satisfying to dust it off."

Everyone has obsessions whether it be a unique one or not.

"My friends think it's really weird," Rickert said. "But I think having an obsession is totally fine."



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION COURTESY BRIANNA BELZER

Mock trial sees success in additional teams

By Joanna Rusher
Staff Reporter

For the last couple years, due to the competitions being online, mock trial programs in schools were limited to two high school teams. The Scotus mock trial program had a junior team and a senior team. Freshmen and sophomores were still able to go to mock trial practices so they could learn the ropes, but they never had the opportunity to compete. This year, there was a rule change stating schools could have more than two teams. The Scotus program ended up splitting the students into three teams with nine students each.

Sophomore Rebecca Policky was on the second team this year. She was one of the many freshmen from the previous year who did not get to compete.

“I went out for mock trial because we didn’t get the full experience last year,” Policky said. “I was a witness for the defendant’s side. I

enjoyed sounding like I knew everything even though I didn’t know much.”

The case was a civil case covering a dispute over a caretaker stealing items from the elderly man he worked for. Each person had a different role, being either a lawyer or a witness. Sophomore Caleb Cameron was a witness on the second team.

“I played a witness role of Parker Brichacek,” Cameron said. “I really enjoyed being questioned by others and arguing with them.”

Both witnesses and lawyers faced their own challenges in the case. Senior Jasmine Jackson was a lawyer for the senior team.

“I was a lawyer for both the plaintiff and the defendant,” Jackson said. “It took a lot of practice knowing both sides. I had to build a lot of foundation for the other lawyers and witnesses.”

The opportunity they had to compete this year gave them experience that could lead to success in the future.

Junior Neve Pavlik was

a witness on the second team, and this was her first year doing mock trial.

“I felt as if our team did the best they could possibly do considering this was the first time anyone on our team had competed in any mock trial competition,” Pavlik said. “After our first round we were able to get comfortable in the court rooms, feel more comfortable playing our characters, and the first-time jitters were gone.”

Even with some inexperience the second team was able to go 2-1 and the third team went 1-2.

The senior team this year, however, had quite a bit of success. The team went undefeated until the district final where they lost a point-for-point trial to York.

Senior Kavanaugh Splittgerber was a lawyer on the senior team. It was also his first year in mock trial.

“It was really exciting making it to district finals! I was proud of the whole team for putting in all the hard work and seeing it payoff was



JOANNA RUSHER / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Sophomore lawyer Katelyn Pensick laughs as she talks to the rest of her mock trial team at the end of their trial on November 11th. The team won the trial and went 2-1 for the season.

worth it,” Splittgerber said. “After watching the trial unfold at district finals, I really thought the Scotus senior team had won.”

Mock trial is unique

compared to most activities offered at Scotus.

“Mock Trial isn’t like sports, you can’t see on a scoreboard whether you are winning or losing. It isn’t like

speech or one act because you (as a witness) don’t compete every time,” Policky said. “Mock trial is its own unique activity similar to law in the real world.”

Community judges science fair success

By Daniel Cline
Staff Reporter

When thinking of a science fair, someone may think of the classic erupting

volcano. Rather than over-used projects such as that, the Scotus science fair displayed many unique projects and experiments. The annual Scotus science fair was held last month on Friday, November

18th. The eighth-grade class participated in the science fair, which was organized by the eighth-grade science teacher Annie Sokol. Sokol has conducted the science fair every year she has worked at

Scotus as well as at her previous school for a combined sixteen years.

“The students were well prepared. There was not a lot of resistance from students that did not want to do it. All projects were done on time and in my classroom on the day they were supposed to present,” Sokol said.

The judges for the science fair included eleven Scotus juniors and seniors, instructors from Central Community College, the principals from St. Anthony, St. Bonaventure, and St. Isidore elementary schools, as well as other community members. Each student’s project was evaluated by three judges.

“The judges looked at how unique the student’s project was, how interested they were in the project, how they developed their hypothesis and procedures, how they presented their data and conclusion, and their display board,” Sokol said.

The judges then assigned a score to the projects they evaluated and indicated the top three projects they

judged. Each was ranked and assigned different points. An average of the scores plus any points from rankings determined a student’s overall score.

“I determined the winners based on how much information they had, neatness, presentation skills, and if they knew their information. I enjoyed seeing all the projects and how such a small topic could be used as an experiment,” judge and Scotus senior Ava Cremers said.

Students chose a variety of topics for their projects. Many used mundane objects and tested them in ways never thought of before.

“I did a project about nylon spandex, polyester, and cotton vs. their stain resistance. My stains were chocolate cake batter, spaghetti sauce, ink pen, lipstick, ketchup, and honey mustard,” 8th grader Rachel Spawn said.

Spawn washed each fabric and ranked them in order of which washed out the best. Spawn’s project was awarded first place in the science fair. The other winners were Ava

Sokol, Libby Langan, Kennedy Krueger, and Emmalynne Splittgerber, who were awarded second, third, fourth, and fifth place respectively.

“I did an experiment where I had 5 cold bottles and 5 warmer bottles of Diet Coke, then I exploded them with mentos and I recorded which temperature did the best,” Splittgerber said.

Overall, the projects proved to be educational for the students.

“I really enjoyed learning about the physics behind a ball’s bounce, such as the molecular arrangement and energy transfer,” 8th grader Lillian Miller said.

Sokol believes the science fair went very well and ended up being fun for the students.

“It is a fun event and a lot of work to get everything organized. But after it is done, the kids are not as nervous and they think it was not so bad. It is fun to see them present to someone besides somebody else in the school,” Sokol said.



TAYLOR DAHL / MARKETING DIRECTOR

Eighth-grader Ava Sokol presents her project to the judges at the Science Fair on Friday, November 18th. Sokol’s presentation about caffeine’s effect on water fleas was awarded 2nd place overall.

Band shares and hears music on class trips

By Kavan Splittgerber
Staff Reporter

Music is an age-old tradition which has been celebrated by everyone for as long as the world has been around. The Scotus band practices various pieces throughout the year to put on a couple shows for the entire school to enjoy. This year, Scotus wanted to bring their talent to others who don’t get to hear music played in person, so they went out to show their talent. Scotus also spent the time to hear music played by a true professional.

The band went to Columbus Middle School on November 3rd for the Friends of Music Outreach Performance. The band didn’t play anything this day but instead watched an expert perform on the piano.

“The pianist played numerous stellar pieces. My favorite was when he performed his own version of Happy Birthday to the birthday people such as Jase Christensen,” senior Hailey Steffensmeier said.

The pianist performing was David Osborne, “The Pianist of the Presidents.” Osborne is known for playing piano at the Whitehouse and has performed for 6 different U.S. presidents.

“Seeing David Osborne was great because even though I had no clue who he was, I knew where he had played so seeing him play was pretty cool,” senior Allison Wemhoff said.

The Friends of Music Outreach Performance was not only visited by Scotus band students, but also by all the CMS students. Scotus was the only high school to watch the performance.

One week later on November 10th, the Scotus band students went to Brookstone Acres Retirement Home for a small Veteran’s Day performance.

“The Veteran’s Program is something we continue to do every year, and I think that’s amazing because it really helps us young people keep in touch with those who came before us. We hope to make it a more occurring habit to play music for those

who usually don’t hear it often because music can be powerful and impactful,” senior Jasmine Jackson said.

The Scotus band played a multitude of songs for the elderly residents of the retirement home. All the songs are well known medley’s focusing on America and her veterans.

“At Brookstone Acres, we played the ‘Stars Spangled Banner’, ‘Marches of the Armed Forces’, ‘National Emblem’, and ‘Stars and Stripes Forever’ for all the residents,” Steffensmeier said.

This performance is different to the band’s usual concerts as they play the same Veteran’s Day songs each year. They also didn’t perform at Scotus Central Catholic where they normally do.

“The performance at Brookstone was more personal for both the students and their audience. The residents of Brookstone enjoyed hearing the live music and having the chance to visit with the high school students,” band director Kristen Cox said.

After their performance, the band students spent time talking with the residents and getting to know them.

“It was really interesting to talk with them, especially because they told us they

don’t get a lot of visitors, especially those who come with musical entertainment,” Jackson said.

The band ended their winter season on Monday, December 12th when they



ALLY WEMHOFF / YEARBOOK STAFF

Sophomore Caroline Klitz, freshman Helene Chard, and freshman Jacqueline Stoner talk with renowned pianist David Osborne at Columbus Middle School on November 3rd for the Friends of Music Outreach Performance. The Scotus band listened to Osborne play a variety of songs that he has played at the White House.

Addam's Family takes one act to state

By Brennen Jelinek
Staff Reporter

Scotus has always been seen as one big family. The family that took the stage on Thursday, December 7th was a different kind of family. The Scotus one act team performed "The Addams Family," a musical comedy about love and family, for their 2022 season.

This family celebrated a district win on Thursday, December 1st to go to state. This is the one act team's second time going to state in the last two years. Senior Mark Buhman could not be prouder of the team he is on.

"I am grateful for the opportunity to help showcase the hard work everyone has put in! It's not easy to make it to state, and us making it to state is accredited to the hard work everyone has put in," Buhman said.

The team began its season in Humphrey at Humphrey St. Francis High School. With it being the first competition of the year, performances were not ranked. Even though they were not ranked, awards were also

handed out to one male actor and one female actress on each team. Seniors Kavanaugh Splittgerber and Jasmine Jackson won these awards on the Scotus team. Senior Francesca Gallino helped with makeup and set construction for one act.

"We were still trying to figure out how to make our performance better. We started only like three weeks before, so we really didn't have much time to prepare," Gallino said.

One of the biggest competitions was in York on November 12th. The Shamrocks placed second out of eight teams in division one, losing to Malcolm. Junior Kirsten Sucha, who plays the female lead of Wednesday Addams, thought this competition set the tone for the rest of the year.

"[My favorite was] the York show, because it's when we learned we really had potential to do well this season. After that show, I think we all grew to be more confident in ourselves on the stage," Sucha said.

One act performed at home on November 18th in front of their parents and

friends. They took free will donations upon entry but otherwise the performance was free. Math and science teacher Zachary McPhillips, who participated in one act in high school, judged their performance. Senior Kavanaugh Splittgerber thought overall the home performance was a success.

"Our home performance was a very standard run of the mill as we didn't do exceptionally well, but we didn't do poorly either. I think our home performance was mostly fun for the cast to do though, as the audience had fun with the humor of the play," Splittgerber said.

The one act team competed at conference the following day in Central Community College's auditorium where they placed fourth. They also competed at Midland in Fremont on Monday, November 21st. They received a superior rating and most of the cast received acting awards. Senior Lily Dohmen is on the one act crew team and helps with makeup and costume.

"After we got our results at conference, we realized we needed to work on a few



LILY DOHMEN / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Senior Jasmine Jackson dips junior Logan Erickson at the Humphrey St. Francis competition on November 8th. Jackson and Erickson played Alice and Mal Beineke in *The Addams Family*.

things. One of the biggest things we worked on was our singing. We put a ton of time and effort into it following conference," Dohmen said.

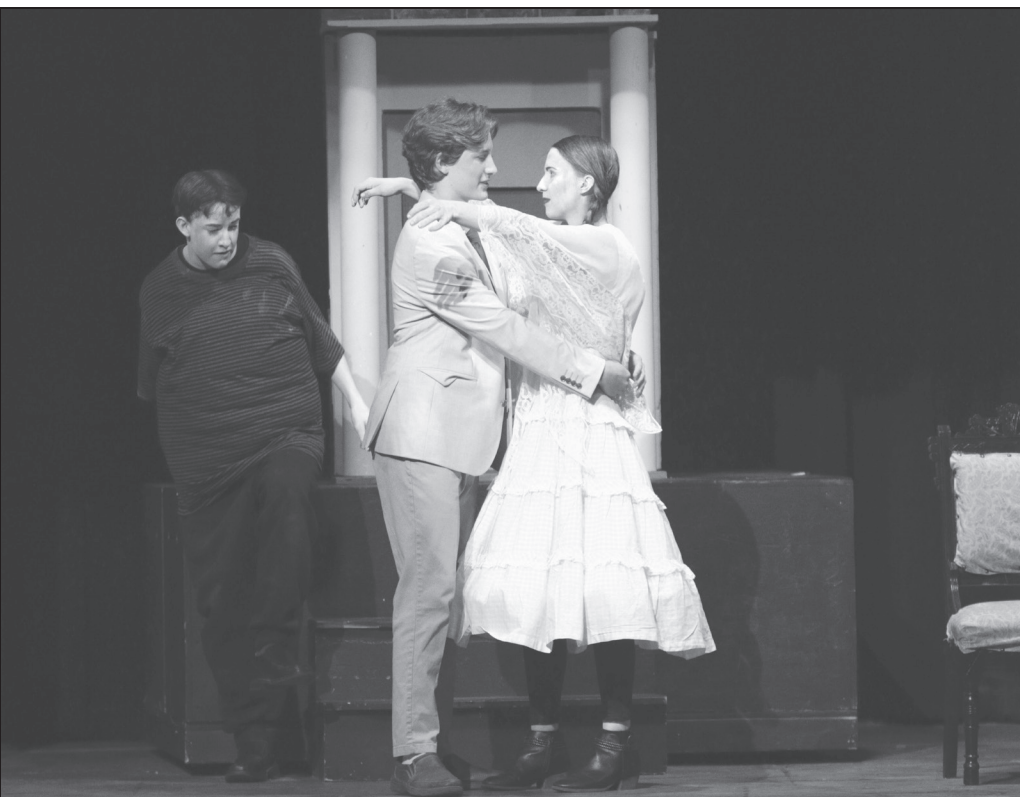
District one act was originally supposed to be held on Tuesday, November 29th at the Nielsen Community Center in West Point but was postponed until Thursday, December 1st due to the weather. There, the Shamrocks placed first, also taking home awards for best

crew, best actresses, best actors, and best performing ensemble. They placed first with unanimous votes from all three judges. Every member of the cast took home an outstanding performance award. Senior Jasmine Jackson portrays Alice Beineke in the play.

"My favorite performance was districts. We stayed undertime (28 minutes), and that was a time we had never achieved before,

nor did we think it was possible. Everything flowed perfectly, and we were able to bounce off each other to create a fun, entertaining, and successful show, as we did win our district," Jackson said.

The one act team performed at state one act on Friday, December 9th at Johnny Carson Theater in Norfolk. They placed 6th in class B, wrapping up their incredible season.



LILY DOHMEN / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Freshman Evan Pavlik sneaks up on freshman Ryan Allen and junior Kirsten Sucha in *The Addams Family* Production. All three actors won awards for their performances at districts.



LILY DOHMEN / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Senior Kavanaugh Splittgerber converses with junior costar Neve Pavlik during their performance at Humphrey St. Francis as seniors Mark Buhman and Jasmine Jackson watch. Splittgerber and Pavlik were the leads in the show.

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Black Panther pounces to the top

By Daniel Cline
Staff Reporter

In 2018, *Black Panther* debuted in movie theaters and became one of the highest-grossing films of all time. After almost five years, the sequel hit theaters last month on November 11th. *Black Panther: Wakanda Forever* brings movie goers back to the fictional African country of Wakanda, this time on a somber note. The Black Panther himself, actor Chadwick Boseman, unexpectedly passed in August of 2020, leaving a gaping hole in the cast of Marvel superheroes. With director Ryan Coogler tasked with making the sequel, he delivered with a sequel worthy of the late Chadwick Boseman.

Black Panther: Wakanda Forever presents the audience with an astounding story, interesting characters, and breathtaking visuals.

Fans theorized as to the many directions the sequel could take. Many wished for T'Challa to be recast and

played by a different actor; however, Marvel confirmed he would not be recast and the character's death would be part of the film. Mirroring the actor's death, the story of the movie occurs entirely as a result of T'Challa's in-universe death. What the filmmakers did with this was truly enticing. The movie's plot twists are both unexpected and yet can be inferred from details throughout the film. This causes the audience to think back on certain parts of the movie and realize there was a hint of something else in those moments.

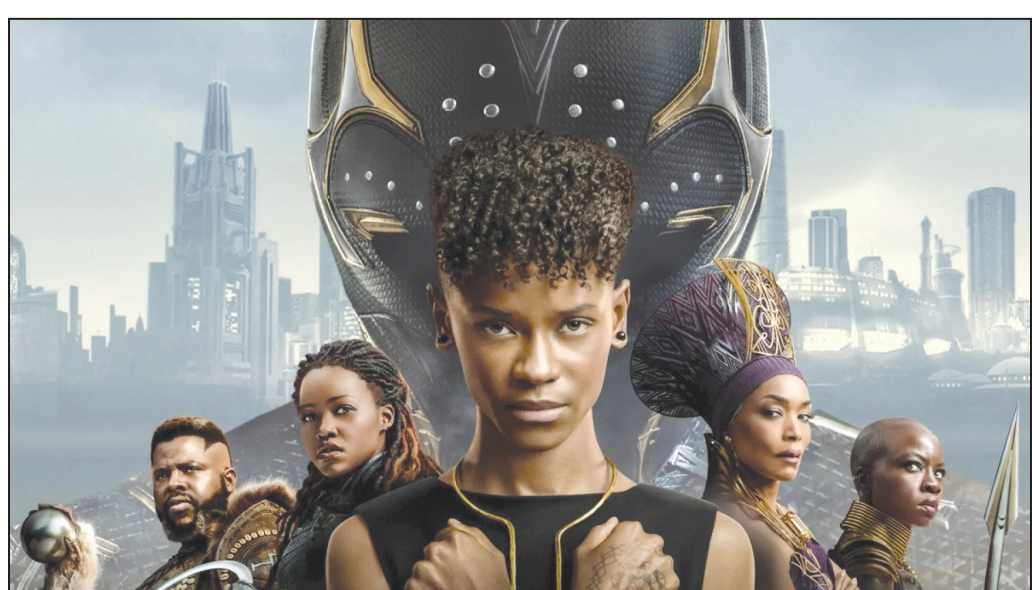
The characters in this film were riveting and enthralling. The film, of course, brought back many characters from the original *Black Panther*, and even introduced some new characters. A fan favorite character from the Marvel Comics was introduced into the Marvel Cinematic Universe for the first time – Namor. Namor is essentially a merman who is the leader of an underwater city. Namor is introduced in a

way that leaves the audience wanting more of his character, and the movie delivers by the end of the movie.

Another character newly introduced to the MCU is Riri Williams, a.k.a. Ironheart. Ironheart's introduction was brilliant. Some more characters to highlight are Queen Ramonda and Shuri. Angela Basset's performance as Queen Ramonda was as amazing as always, and Shuri's character arc throughout this film was effective.

The scenes of Namor's underwater village were visually astounding. The visual effects artists for this movie should be commended. Another great visual aspect of the movie was Ironheart's make-shift suit design. It was very reminiscent of Tony Stark's suit in the original Iron-Man. The choreography of the fight scenes was great as well.

Not every aspect of the movie was amazing, however. For example, this is one of the longer movies in the MCU. *Black Panther:*



THEMARYSUE.COM

Fan favorite characters M'Baku, Nakia, Shuri, Queen Ramonda, and Okoye all return for *Black Panther: Wakanda Forever*. The movie has been in theaters since November 11th.

Wakanda Forever's runtime was 2 hours and 41 minutes, 12 minutes longer than *Avengers: Infinity War*. The movie, though, does a good job of keeping your mind off how long you have been sitting in the same place.

The music used in the film simply does not compare to the music used in the first *Black Panther*, which con-

tained music by the likes of The Weeknd, Kendrick Lamar, and SZA. Namor's motivations for being a villain were similar to Killmonger's motivations in the original. Both characters want to take over the world due to the racism faced by them and their ancestors. There were also many scenes in the film that were too dark to be able to

see everything in the shot.

All critiques of the film, however, are outweighed by the greatness of everything else. The movie delivers an experience that is filled with stunning visuals, unique and interesting characters, and a story second only to the first *Black Panther*. Go see *Black Panther: Wakanda Forever* in theaters now.

Ted's guide to the World Cup

By Ted Fehringer
Staff Reporter

You probably have seen students watching the 2022 Qatar World Cup in study hall or discussing the United States' chances of making

it to the final. If you have no idea what is going on or who is playing, here is a quick guide to satisfy your needs and make watching the World Cup more enjoyable.

To completely understand this tournament, you first need to know the format.

The World Cup is played every four years, with a new location selected years in advance. The 2026 World Cup will take place in North America, with Canada, the United States, and Mexico hosting.

Thirty-two teams com-

pete in the World Cup. Each team must qualify, with every continent holding tournaments two years in advance. Each location has different rules pertaining to qualification, with most using a point-system. The host country or countries automatically qualify for the tournament.

After the thirty-two teams qualify, a random drawing is conducted to organize the teams into eight pools that consist of four teams each. The top eight squads, which are determined through the FIFA rankings, are placed into their own pool. The rest fill the remaining twenty-four slots.

Every squad in the four-team pool plays each other. A win is worth three points. A tie is one point. A loss is zero points. The top two teams in each pool advance to the round of sixteen. From there, it is single elimination.

The top teams, according to the FIFA rankings, in the tournament are Brazil, Belgium, France, Argentina, England, Spain, and Portugal. The United States is ranked sixteenth in the world.

Brazil is the favorite. Led by Neymar, the Brazil-

ians cruised past Siberia and Switzerland in Group G to win the pool with six points before defeating South Korea in the round of sixteen.

Belgium, on the other hand, was eliminated in pool play, despite being a top ranked team in the tournament. The favorites of Group F, the Belgians fell to Morocco by two goals, prompting one of the biggest upsets in World Cup history. Through three matches, the top-ranked squad only tallied one goal, despite some of the best offensive players in the world, including Kevin De Bruyne and Romelu Lukaku. In fact, the tournament went so badly that the Belgium soccer federation fired the national team coach.

France, England, Argentina, Spain, and Portugal round out the top eight teams of the tournament. All feature impressive rosters, with Argentina and Portugal sporting Messi and Ronaldo, arguably the best to ever play. France, England, and Spain showcase youthful talent who have made a splash in the tournament, such as Spain's Pablo Gavi, England's Phil Foden and France's Kylian Mbappe.

The three phenoms have combined for seven goals and four assists through pool play.

The United States, ranked sixteenth in the world, barely qualified for the round of sixteen with a nail-biting victory against Iran. The Americans took the second spot in Group B, earning a match with the Netherlands where they were defeated 1-3. The performance was rough, with the Americans being bested physically throughout the midfield by the Dutch. Despite this disappointment, the program is headed in the right direction, with America finding success with the youngest team in this year's World Cup.

My choice for the 2022 Qatar World Cup champion is Croatia. They have one of the best midfielders in the world, Luka Modric, and the team works extremely hard to break the opponent's will through stellar passing and physical defense.

The World Cup Final is on Sunday, December 18th. If need a break from studying for your semester tests, tune in. The game will be nothing short of entertaining.



NYTIMES.COM

Croatian midfielder Luka Modric advances up the field during the 2022 Champions League final. Modric is considered one of the top midfielders in the world and might propel Croatia to win their first World Cup championship.

The Chosen, Season 3 hits theaters

By Mark Buhman
Staff Reporter

Imagine sitting in a theater watching your favorite movie. You've got the popcorn, the pop, and the candy; all you need is one more thing: *The Chosen*. For those who don't know, *The Chosen* is a crowd-funded, multi-season series about the life of Jesus Christ. It has been around since 2017 when it kicked off its first of a proposed seven-season series. I began watching *The Chosen* earlier this year, and it has definitely been worth it!

Currently, *The Chosen* has approximately 418 million views. That's a large number, but not everyone's watching *The Chosen*, and to me, those who aren't are missing out! In an interview with *Fox News*, Jonathan Roumie, the man playing Jesus, told Trace Gallagher, "There's such a looming darkness in so many areas

of the media that I think we provide light to so many people... They watch the series, they watch these characters go through things that they can actually relate to, and they're encouraged themselves."

In our world, we could all use some uplifting and empowerment in the right direction, and where each of us finds that assistance makes a difference. I want you to be able to find encouragement, and there are three main reasons why I think *The Chosen* is a great place to find it.

First of all, *The Chosen* is unlike any other typical streaming platform. It is completely free to watch; you don't even need to give an email address. Thousands of people "pay it forward" for others to be able to watch this masterful show. While you are used to paying to watch your favorite shows, *The Chosen* is a free option.

Secondly, *The Chosen* accurately presents the story

of Jesus, both in keeping to the Bible as well as historical writings. The people in the show wear appropriate clothing and have skin tone typical of the region. On top of it, the man playing Peter, Shahr Isaac, is from Israel and is Jewish himself!

Thirdly, and most importantly of all, *The Chosen* is food for your soul. While the media feeds us fear and all the negative things of the world, *The Chosen* provides, as Jonathan Roumie accurately stated, "light to so many people".

Why then, do people still not want to watch such a quality piece? I personally think the one thing that deters people the most from watching a show like *The Chosen* is the challenges it presents. We all have a natural longing for God, but we also have concupiscence. Concupiscence, in simple terms, is "the inclination towards sin". We long to be eternally fulfilled, even while we live in

this temporal earth, and God is the fulfiller of all things. However, our sinful nature makes it much easier for us to lean towards sin and seek the

temporal sense of fulfillment sin brings.

In conclusion, the next time you feel like pulling up your favorite show or going

to the movie theater, why not make it be *The Chosen* that you are going to watch? You won't regret it!



CHRISTIANFILMBLOG.COM

Jesus, played by Jonathan Roumie, speaks to a crowd in Season 3: Episode 1 of *The Chosen*. Episodes 1 and 2 of Season 3 premiered in theaters on November 18th.



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Scotus resizes accomplishments of the past

By Kavan Splitterger
Staff Reporter

Scotus Central Catholic has won 50 state championship titles across 16 different activities through the years. When the school earns a state title, a couple things are done to celebrate the occasion. A banner is put up in the gym with the activity and year while a group photo of the team who won the title is hung up in the hallway. Scotus is suffering from success, however, as they have run out of room for new banners in the gym and new pictures in the hallway.

“It all started with the photos; we just ran out of room for the photos, and a couple weeks later, Mr. Lahm and I went into the gym and noticed, well, all the banners aren’t even hung up, and we realized we didn’t have any room. We really noticed that we won state journalism and then we won state golf, and it was like, we can’t do this we’re going to run out of room,” marketing director Taylor Dahl said.

To solve the problem of space in the gym, the school is opting to remove the banners all together and instead replace them with a single larger banner for each activity. Each banner will be 4 by 8 feet in size and have all of the years the team won a state championship.

“Each activity has its own banner. So, there will be a journalism banner that will say state champions journalism along the side and then it will have the years listed. This



ANGIE RUSHER / JOURNALISM ADVISOR

Senior members from the 2022 State Journalism Championship team pose with the new and old state championship banners in the Dowd Activity Center on January 27th. The singular championship banner (right) will be replaced with one banner (left) for all state awards.

way there will always be 16 banners and all we have to do is add years to them. This is just a way to condense it and make it a bit cleaner,” Dahl said.

Scotus still has all the old banners, but since they will no longer serve a purpose, the school plans to get rid of them. Each banner is now being sold for \$75 to any of the coaches or team members who

might want the banner to the championship they won.

“It’s a unique thing when you think about it if you were on one of those state championship teams, to have a banner like that. It would be a neat little talking piece, a one-of-a-kind item. We’re hoping that some of the alumni will purchase them and offset the cost for the new banners,” Dahl said.

The photos in the hallway also needed to be adjusted as space had run out. Scotus decided to take all the old photos and make them smaller to save room.

“That was a long discussion we had, but we just wanted to make sure every team was highlighted; we didn’t want to just not include some teams because we didn’t have enough space. Well, let’s condense

the photos down because the old photos are quite large and in the grand scheme of things, they didn’t need to be made that big, but who would have thought that we would have run out of space,” Dahl said.

The new photos are also being adjusted to stay consistent with each other, such as making them all have the same font and black frame. The photos are also being color corrected as the older photos looked dirtier and simply outdated.

“The 1981 golf photo is a really good example. If you looked at the old one compared to the new one, it’s almost a night and day difference just with how they fixed it with modern editing technology,” Dahl said.

History teacher and girls basketball coach, Jarrod Ridder, coached the girls team that won the state basketball title in 2018. Mr. Ridder bought the old photo of the team and is in the running to purchase the banner from the gym as well.

“It’s a belief. We’ve done it before, and we can do it again. Some of the teams didn’t always have the biggest and the best athletes, but they did it together. I’m a big believer in just doing better with what we have. The gym banners give these kids a sense of, they did it so we can do it, and they can use that to motivate them. When they walk by the photos every day, they think, that’s something I want to do, and it can motivate them to be the best they can be,” Ridder said.

Sokol tests the waters with Trout in the Classroom

By Daniel Cline
Staff Reporter

According to the Insurance Information Institute, 11.8% of pet owners own freshwater fish. Annie Sokol’s 7th grade science class could now be added to this percentage. In addition to the fish in the STEAM classroom, there are now fish in Mrs. Sokol’s classroom. Borrowed from a teacher at Lakeview High School, her fish tank is used for a project titled Trout in the Classroom that is sponsored by the Nebraska Game and Parks.

“There are over 110 educators the Nebraska Game and Parks send trout eggs to. We hatch them, and then release them,” Sokol said.

The project is nationwide with slight variations, such as Salmon in the Classroom and Steelhead in the Classroom. The project is open to any school in the state from 2nd-12th grade. It consists of the students and teacher raising trout in a fish tank and learning about such topics as ecosystems, ecology, and the environment.

“We are learning about the trout’s environment, which goes along with my ecology standards I have to teach in 7th grade. We are just starting to learn about what the trout is and the fact that it needs to be kept in cold water,” Sokol said.

Alongside discussion of the trout’s environment, students are learning about the trout itself. Aurora Ridder is a 7th grader in Mrs. Sokol’s class.

“We are learning about the life-cycle and parts of a trout,” Ridder said.

The students are tasked with taking care of the trout by performing a variety of duties. Avery Heinrich is a student in Mrs. Sokol’s 7th grade science class.

“We have to check water quality, record things, and make sure the trout are receiving all the necessary aspects to survive,” Heinrich said.

Sokol was more specific in what her students are required to measure.

“We do measurements each day, so there is a little chemistry involved. Every day, the students have to measure the water for nitrates, nitrites, ammonia, pH, and temperature so the trout can be kept alive. We then look at that in regards to the lakes and ponds around Nebraska,” Sokol said.

Due to the lack of rocky bottom lakes and streams in Northeast Nebraska, trout cannot survive on their own in this part of Nebraska. The trout in Mrs. Sokol’s classroom are still young and do not yet have fully developed eyesight. They are therefore kept in a tank with a black cloth covering it on all sides to prevent light from coming into the tank and impeding their vision. Future plans for the fish tank include the aid of students in STEAM class.

“There has been some talk about engineering and ways of how to make the fish tank more efficient, so my STEAM kids are going to make sure we understand how everything works,” Sokol said.



ASHLEY HOFFMAN / YEARBOOK STAFF

Science teacher Annie Sokol shows seventh grader Emma White and fellow students the trout in her fish tank. The fish tank is covered with a black cloth because the trout’s eyes are not fully developed.

Along with engineering plans for the fish tank, Mrs. Sokol is planning a field trip for her students to learn more about how they can be involved with the environment.

“We are going to Schramm Park and the kids will learn about outdoor activities here in the state of Nebraska and how to be involved in those activities,” Sokol said.

Mrs. Sokol’s class will care for the trout until they grow between five and seven inches long, after which the project will end and they will then be released into the wild.

Student apprentices appreciate teacher assisting



JOANNA RUSHER / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Senior Shay Smith assists seventh graders Lauren Fleming and Shelby Wemhoff with their Lenovos during sixth period junior high band class. Smith has been a teacher aide for Mrs. Cox all year, helping the junior high with marching and instrument techniques.

By Jasmine Jackson
Editor

Lesson plans, homework assignments, test preparation, and making sure students are having fun along the way, are some of the many tasks teachers face in managing their classrooms. Sometimes, it can be beneficial to take on an apprentice, or a student aide, to alleviate some of the

tasks. Beginning their junior year, students can opt out of a study hall and instead find themselves assisting a teacher.

While some students would be appalled at spending extra time in the classroom, senior Shay Smith teacher aides for band teacher Kristen Cox because she recognized the potential struggles of managing young

musicians.

“Mrs. Cox has always been very busy on her own, trying to get the concerts together and directing five bands. I make multiple copies of sheet music for all the bands, and I help the junior high kids with their music,” Smith said.

Teachers can make impressive impacts on their students, which is why senior

Samantha Johnston chose to teacher aide for campus ministry director Dana Ritzdorf.

“Mrs. Ritzdorf is an all-around great person, and I knew her class would be easy to teacher aide for. She gives me a key, and we usually grade papers together for her classes,” Johnston said. “Having the right teacher definitely makes a difference, but I love it.”

However, teacher aides can do more than assist a teacher as they can assist students. Physical education teacher Janet Tooley says she always has a teacher aide in her classes for extra supervision.

“Teacher aides alleviate most of the locker room issues that might keep a girl from getting to class on time, as well as just having the extra set of eyes to help supervise activities, run errands, and assist the subs,” Tooley said. “I can explain to the girls what I would like so the classes get accomplished.”

With endless tasks to be done, teacher aides can alleviate stress by taking on small tasks so teachers can focus on larger projects. This is the case for senior Maysa Kuhl who assists journalism instructor Angie Rusher.

“Maysa helps me with what I call file management. Journalism students check out cameras and take thousands of photos each week. Maysa loads all the photography, saves them into our journalism drive, watermarks, and loads the photos into Flickr,” Rusher said. “She saves me lots of time each week, keeps us organized, and makes it possible for us to sell photog-

raphy, a major fundraiser for our program.”

As a teacher aide, students can receive a new perspective on the classroom. Senior Alyssa Hiemer aids Tooley during girls physical education, which has taught her many lessons on managing students.

“Younger students can be difficult at moments,” Hiemer said. “We have to watch the kids and make sure they are going to the right gym and also make sure they are not messing around when the teacher steps out for a few minutes.”

Those interested in being a teacher aide can become one through nomination or selection. Cox always looks for specific qualities in her aides.

“I pray I always have a student aide because without them, I couldn’t have junior high band,” Cox said. “so, I look for someone who can figure out what needs to be done without me always telling them, with patience, and who shows their leadership.”

At the end of the day, teacher aiding is an opportunity for students to give back to their admirable teachers. Junior Neve Pavlik aids vocal music teacher Laura Salyard and is appreciative of her role.

“My favorite part is helping a teacher who has put effort into helping me. If you are worried about losing a study hall, don’t, because the teachers understand; however, in the end, I feel better about myself and am glad I was able to help,” Pavlik concluded.

ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

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The new year wants you to make a resolution



By Kavan Splitterber
Staff Reporter

2023 has started and one month of the new year has already gone by. Part of experiencing the new year is celebrating our world turning one year older, a grand and

global birthday party. There is one tradition which is practiced by a great number of people every New Year's Day to celebrate the occasion. New Year's resolutions are ways people choose to act or change for the entire year, or at least for however long they can keep it up. Resolutions differ from person to person but that is the fun of it, every person creates a resolution specifically to them. The New Year's resolution is a fun and healthy tradition which should stay around as it is a good way for people to connect and socialize, they serve as a good motivation for people to do something they've always wanted to do, and they can help others.

Since the idea of New

Year's resolutions is so widespread, it's a tradition many people partake in. Friends and families can socialize with each other over their resolutions. People who have similar resolutions connect with each other and can talk about it. Friend groups might decide to make the same resolution and can even have a friendly competition out of it or a team effort; regardless, it serves as a bonding activity and something fun to do.

Most resolutions are beneficial personal changes for the person who is making them. New Year's resolutions serve as a perfect reason or time to finally make this change the person could have been thinking about for a while. As an example,

a young adult can use their new year's resolution to quit vaping and get out of the bad habit. Many people have changes to their lifestyle they want to make, but they don't have the motivation or opportunity to commit. Resolutions act as that perfect gateway to the start of a new life.

Not only do New Year's resolutions help the individual, but they can help many people around them, too. A simple resolution such as not littering or giving offering at church helps many different people. If someone tends to act as a hoarder, their resolution can be to donate unneeded items to Goodwill at the end of every month. This helps both the person who made the resolution and the

people they are donating to. One of the greatest satisfactions in life is helping others in any way you can for the sake of helping. Someone's acts of kindness may be the spark needed to get others to do good deeds.

Some people think New Year's resolutions are pointless because many people give up after a few months anyway. On the contrary, someone making the effort to change is simply the start to completing it. Although someone may fail this year, they can try again the next year and go even further. The cycle continues until they eventually adjust to stick with their resolution the entire year. Besides, any good deeds that have happened during

the start of the year still happened. If your resolution was to volunteer at least once a week, the times you volunteered still happened even if you couldn't keep up the resolution.

The idea of the New Year's resolution has been around for over 200 years and there is a reason why the tradition has lasted so long. Resolutions can bring people together, can help motivate people to change, and help many different groups of people. We may be a month into 2023, but if you have not made a resolution yet, now is a great time to join in on the age-old tradition.

Starting off the New Year WRONG



By Brennen Jelinek
Staff Reporter

At the start of every year, people always ask me the exact same question: what's your New Year's resolution? I have always hated this question. I usually make up some stupid answer that

sounds good and forget about it as soon as the conversation is over. I think New Year's resolutions are pointless. The "new year, new me" attitude that comes with them dies out after a couple of weeks, and they are forgotten about until the next year. They have even gone as far as to become a joke. They fuel unnecessary competition and are often unrealistic and impossible to follow.

No one ever follows their New Year's resolutions. Every year people are hopeful in making them, but eventually give up after a few weeks and do not think about them until next year. People want to push themselves to become better through the new year. Because of this, many New Year's resolutions

are unrealistic, and people feel discouraged when they cannot fulfill these impossible goals. I have never heard of anyone who followed their New Year's resolution all year long. Come to think of it, I have never heard of anyone who was still following it in April. People either get bored of trying to follow them or completely forget about them.

One of the most common New Year's resolutions given up on is going to the gym and working out. It has become such a big joke of a resolution that gyms offer deals at the start of every year. These deals only last a few weeks or months because the people who run the gyms know the most popular time of the year to gain new memberships

is the start of the new year. They pocket crazy amounts of money while not caring if people truly want to better themselves. This sets people up for failure by only offering deals for a few weeks or months. This almost in a way encourages people to give up on their resolution.

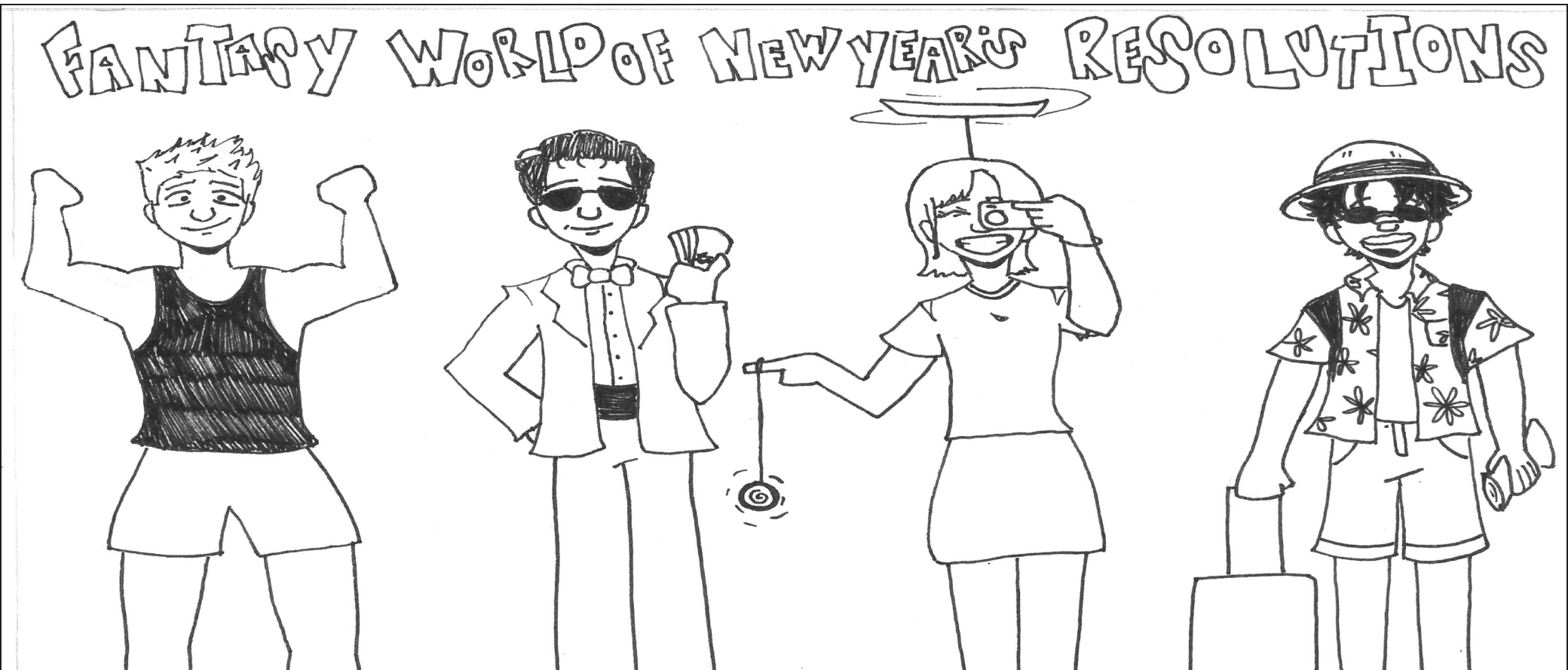
Many people see New Year's resolutions as a competition. This makes resolutions not about improving themselves, but rather as a way to measure up against other people. This defeats the whole purpose of why people should have a New Year's resolution. Resolutions should be made to help people improve themselves, and not because they want to sound better than their friends. Instead, people focus

on trying to one up the people they know to sound better than them. It creates needless comparisons and fosters unnecessary competition between friends and family.

Many people argue New Year's resolutions give people hope for the new year and a means to improve themselves. This may be true, but only if people follow them the entire year. People cannot change their lifestyle by following their resolutions for a few weeks. Therefore, resolutions only waste people's time and energy on something that will not leave a lasting impact on their lives. All the hope people may have had for the year is lost as soon as they give up on their resolution. All New Year's resolutions do is set

you up for failure.

New Year's resolutions should be forgotten. They are merely a pointless tradition that is always forgotten after a few weeks. They have become a huge running joke in the fitness industry. They fuel needless competition between loved ones. They are seen as a source of hope for the new year but set a person up for failure from the start. They serve no real purpose and the practice of making resolutions needs to stop. Everyone will have a much better year if they do not worry about having to follow pointless resolutions.



MAYSA KUHL / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

God is calling you



By Mark Buhman
Staff Reporter

One of my dad's biggest pet peeves is when people don't answer the phone. I'm usually notorious for this, but I'm getting better at it. Recently I've been trying to pick up the phone almost immediately when it rings, no matter who's calling. Now,

keep in mind this is with the exception of telemarketers; I try to avoid answering the phone when they call.

Say it was a telemarketer calling. Phew, I got out of that one! On the other hand, maybe it was a relative. Well, that could have been important! According to a survey conducted by the *Pew Research Center*, "only 19% of Americans pick up cellphone calls from unknown numbers; women, white adults, other adults, [and] high-income adults [are] less likely to do so" (McClain). Now, is that statistic surprising? Maybe not, but it can be a problem. You see, if one habitually neglects to answer the phone, you're going to miss out something important.

Unfortunately, this problem is prevalent on a spiritual level as well. In

this life, there are countless voices calling us. There's the world, the devil, and our sinful nature all vying for our attention. Then, there's another voice, and it's often the quietest voice, God's voice. There are many reasons why it's crucial you and I realize when God's calling us, but for the conciseness of this article, I'm only going to cover a couple of them. One of them is a direct reason, and the other is a reason because of the first one.

First of all, God has a plan for your life. You were created for a purpose. If you don't answer God's call, you're never going to figure out what your purpose is, and you'll probably find an alternative purpose, an alternative path less than what God had planned for you. The late Pope Benedict XVI

once said, "The world offers you comfort. But you were not made for comfort. You were made for greatness." I know it may not seem this way, but God's plan for you is perfectly suited for you. It is the plan and path by which you become the greatest version of yourself. Maybe if we gave God a chance, maybe if we answered the phone, we would discover He does have our best interests in mind.

Throughout your life, this call is always going to be there, but the question is, how long will your life be? Well, you don't know. No one does, unless God has revealed it to them. For the majority of us, our lives can end at any time. If you were watching the Monday Night NFL game on January 2nd, you would have seen one of the most unlikely events occur on the field.

Buffalo Bills safety Damar Hamlin made what was a routine tackle on Cincinnati Bengals wide receiver Tee Higgins. Immediately following the play, Hamlin stood up only to fall back onto the football field unconscious. Athletic trainers and medical personnel performed CPR on the field, and the twenty-four-year-old left the field in an ambulance, receiving oxygen. Thankfully, Hamlin has recovered from the situation, but this shows that you don't know when your day could come. For this reason, we should accept God's call while we are here. Besides, it's not about getting onto good terms with God before we die. It's about having a life-long relationship with Him.

While these reasons for answering God's call are im-

portant, why do people still ignore the call? A big reason is the unknown. Following God's will can be scary because it's not what we're comfortable with doing, but as Pope Benedict XVI said, "...you were not made for comfort. You were made for greatness." God calls you to the best path for you, and He doesn't call you to anything you won't ultimately be able to handle with His help in the end.

Most of the time when someone calls your phone, they need something from you. Telemarketers think they need money from you. Relatives may need to talk to you or one of the other members of your family. However, when God calls us, we are the ones in need. This year, make the resolution to answer the call.

Discoverers race toward state

By Brennen Jelinek
Staff Reporter

The Columbus High swim team has faced many obstacles throughout the course of the season. On top of Columbus High being the smallest Class A school in Nebraska, the swim team has struggled in some meets because of their limited roster. This is also some of the swim team members first year swimming competitively. Even with the odds seemingly stacked against them, they have gotten off to a better start than expected. With three swimmers already qualifying for the state tournament, the team hopes to add more to their numbers. Senior Alex Settje has enjoyed the season so far.

"I think we have come a long way since the beginning of the season. We have all been dropping time, and a few people have already made it to state," Settje said.

After a two-and-a-half-week break, the Columbus High swim team kicked off

the new year by competing at Lincoln High in a dual on January 5th. Later that week, the Discoverers travelled to South Sioux City for another dual on January 7th. Here the boys and girls teams combined to defeat South Sioux City 153-102. The following week on January 10th the team travelled to Norfolk High to take on the Panthers. The South Sioux City meet stuck out for junior swimmer Mary Faltys.

"The South Sioux City meet is always a lot of fun because it's one of the few meets where not having very many people doesn't hurt our score as much. It felt good winning almost all the events," Faltys said.

The girls team travelled to Millard North on Friday, January 13th. Because of the size of the meet, the boys teams competed the following day. This gigantic meet allowed for the swimmers to see how their times compare to other schools they would not usually compare to. This meet stuck out to senior first

year swimmer Francesca Gallino.

"[My favorite meet was] definitely the Millard meet because we had some good competition and people that had times really close to ours and helped to push ourselves since there were so many people," Gallino said.

Along with the good competition, the Millard meet was a big meet for Faltys. She posted a 1:14 time in the 100m breaststroke, qualifying her for the state tournament. There are two ways to qualify to go to state in swimming. The first is an automatic, which is a sub 1:10 time and automatically gets you into one of the 32 spots in the state tournament. The second is a secondary time, which is a sub 1:15 time and allows you to be chosen to fill any of the remaining 32 spots at state. Faltys was extremely proud of her hard work paying off.

"I couldn't believe I actually dropped enough time to go. I had been off by .25 seconds for a while, and I



JASMINE JACKSON / ROCK BOTTOM EDITOR

Junior Mary Faltys swims at the Columbus Invite held on December 10th at the Columbus Aquatic Center. She has qualified to go to state in the 100m breaststroke.

finally dropped a second off my time. It felt really good to qualify for the first time," Faltys said.

The team hosted a triangular on January 17th between them, Hastings, and Westview, where they placed second out of the three teams.

They then travelled to Burke on January 19th. To wrap up the season, the Discoverers had a triangular in Kearney on January 24th versus Kearney and Pius X. They then hold their last home dual with Grand Island on February 2nd. They wrap up the season

with the Heartland Athletic Conference Meet on February 10th and 11th. This final season has been a favorite for Settje.

"This season has gone great," Settje said. "Senior year of swim has been the best by far."

Basketball girls fight for win streak

By Mary Faltys
Staff Reporter

The Scotus girls basketball team had momentum heading into the new year. After losing their first two games of the season, they went on an impressive 9-game win streak. Their successes came from their ability

to play together efficiently and consistently as team.

Sophomore point guard Emma Brezenski noticed some differences between the team this year compared to last year that has helped them succeed in their games.

"I think the fact that everyone on the team can score this year, which is something that we didn't necessarily

have last year, [is making a difference]," Brezenski said.

Over Christmas break, the team's domination of the court resulted in many wins, building up their consecutive win streak. When the girls played Humphrey Lindsay Holy Family on December 20th, they won 73-37. The Shamrocks also beat Lakeview 39-21 on December 30th

in the Columbus Holiday Tournament.

Senior Kaelyn Dierman saw the team's positive performances result in their victories.

"My favorite game was the Humphrey game because they are a very talented ranked team, and we beat them by a lot. I also scored 18 points during that game," Dierman said.

On January 7th, the Shamrocks played Bishop Neumann and narrowly won. The final score was 41-40.

The Shamrocks beat Norfolk Catholic on January 10th with a final score of 33-20. This victory brought their consecutive wins to 9.

On January 12th, they played Lincoln Christian and lost 27-32. This loss broke their 9-game win streak.

Sophomore Sofia Karges did not let their loss dampen her positive attitude.

"We won nine games in a row, which really gave us momentum. We lost against Lincoln Christian on January 12th, which is unfortunate, but I have full confidence it'll just make us grow even

more," Karges said.

The rest of the team had a similar attitude. They used their streak-ending loss to motivate themselves to another victory. The next day they faced Battle Creek and triumphed 46-36.

On January 17th, the Shamrocks lost 28-40 to North Bend Central. North Bend is the returning class C1 state champion.

When the Shamrocks faced Archbishop Bergan, another talented team with a 12-2 record at the time, on January 20th, they dominated the court and won 40-17.

"We went into the game expecting to win. We had been in a bit of a slump from our last couple games and knew this one would be tough, but we were going to win," junior forward Joanna Rusher said.

They had a quick turn-around and played the following day. The girls won the next day against Boone Central with a final score of 46-35.

From January 23rd-28th, the girls played in the conference tournament. On January

24th, they won against Grand Island Central Catholic 41-29. They played Kearney Catholic on January 26th and won 44-29.

On January 28th, they lost to Lincoln Christian 25-34. This game left their record at 14-5.

Senior Maysa Kuhl recognized the importance of this win for the team.

"It was a really fun game. From the atmosphere to the competition itself, I think the whole team enjoyed it. It is always nice to beat a team you have previously beat by even more [the second time], and it will give us momentum going into the rest of the tournament," Kuhl said.

As they head into the remainder of their season, the team is trying to perfect their game.

"We are working to improve our offense to make it more of a threat against other teams. We have great confidence in our basketball skills, and we truly believe state could be a possibility this year," senior Hailey Steffensmeier said.



LINDSAY OHNOUTKA / YEARBOOK STAFF

Senior Libbie Brezenski takes a shot on December 16th against Pierce. The Shamrocks defeated Pierce 52-30.

Shamrock Shooters shoot for future

By Libbie Brezenski
Staff Reporter

Once a month on a Saturday, the halls by the Dowd Activity Center and Memorial Hall are filled with the sounds of little girls talking and basketballs bouncing.

The noise comes from a group of girls grades three through eight known as the Shamrock Shooters.

Shamrock Shooters is a skills camp that runs from November to February and allows young girls to go and improve their basketball skills with the help of the current girls basketball team.

"The original goal of Shamrock Shooters was the club program back with Coach Petersen. In those days they didn't have tournaments or leagues to attend, so all the Scotus kids would play each other on Sundays," head coach Jarrod Ridder explained.

Shamrock Shooters was not only created to improve basketball skills. It was also

created to form a deeper bond within the Scotus girls basketball community.

"Our current goal is to have our youth and high school kids together and build the family of togetherness in grades 3rd through 12th. We have awesome young ladies in our high school program, and we want them to provide a positive influence on our youth kids," Ridder said.

Almost all the members of the basketball team have also gone through Shamrock Shooters and know the meaning of their presence in the gym those Saturdays.

Senior Maysa Kuhl has participated in Shamrock Shooters ever since she was eligible to do so.

"Looking back at when I did Shamrock Shooters, I remember how cool it was seeing these big, tall athletes come coach me. It means a lot to little kids when their role models care about them," Kuhl said.

Sophomore Emma Brezenski also participated in

Shamrock Shooters. She had the opportunity to start a couple years early when she was only in 2nd grade because of her older sister senior Libbie Brezenski.

"It's special because I always loved when the older girls came and helped. I always felt special when they would come talk to us and know our names because they were the big kids who we wanted to be like," Emma Brezenski said.

Seventh grader Leni Kerkman is a current member of the Shamrock Shooters and thinks having the older girls there is beneficial.

"I like when the older girls come to help you because they can teach you stuff to help you. It is nice that they use their time to want to help us get better at shooting," Kerkman said.

Senior Hailey Steffensmeier believes it is important to help when she can.

"It unites the Scotus girls basketball program because in a way, we are all one team. Some of us are only fur-



JOANNA RUSHER / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Senior Sierra Kravig gives instructions and demonstrates a drill at Shamrock Shooters. The girls basketball team volunteers their Saturday mornings assisting at Shamrock Shooters.

ther along in the basketball journey than others, so it is important for us to give back to the younger team we can," Steffensmeier said.

At the end of the Shamrock Shooting season, the entire group gets together to celebrate the eighth graders as they transition from the

program to the high school team.

"At the eighth-grade ceremony, we get to celebrate the eighth-grade kids and their accomplishments throughout our youth program. We have our seniors talk to the youth about what being part of the basketball

family is all about and the impact it has made on them. It is a great deal when you get all the kids to hear these positive messages in a room together as a family," Ridder said.

The last Shamrock Shooters session is at the end of February.

Boys basketball makes the close ones count

By Joanna Rusher
Staff Reporter

With a record of 4-2 going into the holiday tournament, the Scotus boys basketball team's season had the potential to go either way. Winning 8 out of the next 12 games would prove to everyone that they wanted to win.

Coming into Christmas break, the boys basketball team had high expectations for themselves with the Holiday Tournament just around the corner. They started off the tournament with a bang, beating the Schuyler Warriors 57-32. They came back the next day ready to take on the Lakeview Vikings for the championship; however, they started off the game a little slow. They were down thirteen by half-time.

"Going into the second half, we all knew we could do it, we just needed to execute better," senior post Jack Faust said. "In close games, it comes down to who wants to win more. We wanted it more."

The nail-biting game ended with the Shamrocks on top 42-40. The boys walked away with the Holiday Tournament title. The next week, they had a hard loss to Malcolm High school, followed by another disappointing loss to Norfolk Catholic High School. However, they were able to shake off the couple losses and take on Lincoln Christian. Winning by 5, they had some confidence back. The next day, Battle Creek traveled to Columbus to be beaten by the Shamrocks by 9 points.

"Our schedule is tough after the holiday tournament," senior guard Mason Roberts said. "With losses to Malcolm and Norfolk Catholic, it was hard, but we strung a few wins together. Hopefully we can continue to do so."

The boys were able to keep their streak going by beating North Bend Central 53-46. On January 20th, it unfortunately wasn't looking good. The Shamrocks were down by 15 in their game at home against Archbishop

Bergan. After a few crazy calls and some great shots, the Shamrocks pulled out another close win by just 2 points, 50-48, against the Knights. This was their fourth straight game winning by single digits.

"We have been able to play good after a tough start," senior forward Bohden Jedlicka said. "We condition hard to be able to play harder in the fourth quarter."

Although they've been able to pull off some close wins, the boys know they still have lots to work on. Last week, they lost to Boone Central 44-60.

"[We need to work on] coming out hard right away at the beginning of games," junior guard Jackson Heng said. "We have struggled doing that."

The Shamrocks played in the conference tournament that took place January 23rd-28th. Scotus went 2-1, falling to Lincoln Lutheran 55-65.

Tomorrow, the boys will compete against Wahoo Neumann at home with varsity starting at 7:30pm.



JOANNA RUSHER / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Senior guard Blake Wemhoff shoots a jumpshot on January 17th at North Bend Central. The Shamrocks defeated the Tigers 53-46.

Scotus squad cradles hope for success

By Ted Fehringer
Staff Reporter

The wrestling team features young, new faces in its starting lineup, prompting multiple highs and lows throughout the season.

Overall, the team's record is 6-14 in duals this season, with quality wins over Fremont Bergan 58-24 and Weeping Water 54-30. Bergan sports a dual record of 4-4 while Weeping Water boasts a record of 11-7.

Despite the victories, great moments during the season were also felt during the losses.

"I think our best dual has been against Boys Town because we didn't give up even though we lost," freshman Michael Krienke said.

Scotus fell to Boys Town 24-57, but saw pins from freshmen Hunter Brunkhorst, Kobe Micek, and Michael Krienke.

The Bergan victory boasted a plethora of victories for the Shamrocks, with Spencer Shotkoski, Jackson Baumert, Henry Ramaekers, Kobe Micek, Carter Sucha, Ryan Allen, and Mike Krienke recording pins.

Spencer Shotkoski, a sophomore starter for the Shamrocks at 145 pounds,

acknowledged the improvement Scotus has shown during duals.

"For duals, we've really stayed off our backs, and that's helped us win most of our duals," Shotkoski said.

Carter Sucha, a freshman, also commented on the team's improvement during duals.

"We have really im-

proved on staying off our backs while also getting pins," Sucha said.

Individually, the Shamrocks boast young talent in the lighter weights who have a chance of qualifying for the state tournament in February.

Shotkoski owns a record of 14-16, hoping he will finish strong down the stretch.

"My chances of going to

the state tournament are fifty percent. There's no guarantee," Shotkoski said.

The 145 pounder acknowledged it will be tough task, but knows he is capable with a different demeanor headed into the final month.

"Personally, this last month, I need to go out there with a different mindset at districts. I need to show

them how bad I want to go to Omaha."

Micek and Brunkhorst have also had some success down the final stretch of the season. Micek is 25-10 on the year while Brunkhorst is 25-14.

On January 14th, Micek, who competes at 113 pounds, placed sixth at the Schuyler Invite, regarded as one of the

toughest in the state.

The freshman was the lone placer, going 3-2 on the day.

On January 21st, both Micek and Brunkhorst placed at the Centennial Conference tournament in Grand Island. Micek placed first and Brunkhorst placed second.

Micek pinned all three opponents in under one minute.

"I was aggressive and attacked off the whistle. I controlled the match both mentally and physically. My favorite move during the tournament was probably the cow catcher," Micek said.

Brunkhorst was also proud of the way he wrestled.

"I was aggressive and controlled the match well right off the whistle," Brunkhorst said.

The Shamrocks will compete in their district tournament on February 11th.

With the state tournament looming on horizon, Shotkoski hopes his fellow teammates as well as himself will show confidence and determination at districts, with the goal of punching a ticket to state.

"I would also say just going out there and having the confidence that you're going to win and not thinking about losing," Shotkoski said.



SHELBY BRANDENBURG / YEARBOOK STAFF

Sophomore Henry Raemakers finishes a takedown against his opponent at the Lakeview Invite on December 5th. This is Raemaker's first year competing in the sport.



JASMINE JACKSON / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Senior Francesca Gallino swims the breaststroke on December 10th at the Columbus Aquatic Center in the Columbus Invite. She is one of the three Columbus High swimmers from Scotus.



LAUREN HOUEK / YEARBOOK STAFF

Sophomore Owen Lindhorst finishes a layup on January 13th against Battle Creek. The boys defeated Battle Creek 52-43.

Celebrities promote passionate causes

By Jasmine Jackson
Editor

Lights! Camera! Action! The red carpet rolls out, the lights start flashing, and all eyes are on them with their unending fame, glory, and attention. Who? They're actors and actresses, singers and songwriters, and... activists?

Celebrities have power in their platforms. Many have recognized their influence (and affluence) can be used to promote personal and worldly issues to their audiences.

While philanthropy is a popular way of using their platform to advocate for a cause, some celebrities go beyond donations and form organizations of their own. *Titanic* actor Leonardo DiCaprio founded the non-profit the Leonardo DiCaprio Foundation, which raises money and awareness for climate change. According to the *Leonardo DiCaprio Foundation* website, the foundation has helped protect over 30 million acres of land and around 5,000 miles of coastal land. Actor and director George Clooney and his wife Amal together founded the Clooney Foundation for Justice, which, according to their website's home page, prioritizes the prevention of human rights abuse, especially for women and journalists, by providing them with free legal help to battle oppressors. *US Weekly News* says singer Beyonce founded the organization Survivor, named after her chart-topping hit, to help victims of natural disasters return to normalcy.

With often hundreds of thousands of followers across social media and the world, some celebrities have used their platforms to be vocal about issues they are passionate about. *Pop Culture* states *Harry Potter* actress Emma Watson was designated a United Nations Goodwill Ambassador and uses her platform to advocate for gender equality through the organization HeforShe. Actor Matthew McConaughey was born in Uvalde, Texas, and after the 2022 elementary school shooting, gave a speech at the White House regarding gun violence and reform. *Hunger Games* actress Amandla Stenberg uses her social media to promote causes she cares about, such as racial equality. Stenberg even went as far as to star in the movie *The Hate U Give*, which focuses on police brutality. According to a *New York Times* article, she accepts acting roles only if they align with her activist beliefs. Twice, Stenberg was named one of *TIME* magazine's "Most Influential Teen."

The glitz and the glamour can come at a cost to celebrities, even those who attempt to use it to speak up against injustice. *StyleCaster* reported that former *America's Got Talent* judges Julianne Hough and Gabrielle Union were fired from their positions after they complained about insensitive racial comments and jokes. Furthermore, they were subject to more criticism about their physical appearances than their male counterpart judges.

Even though celebrities using their platforms can result in more awareness and recognition for a cause, at times celebrities can pretend to be knowledgeable about a topic, when truthfully all of it is for show. Sometimes, celebrities may not be qualified to give their opinions on a subject. It is important to recognize the full picture of who a celebrity is past and present, alongside their qualifications before rewarding them.

Many celebrities choose to wield their powerful platforms for the benefit of others, despite adversities. They use their spotlight to amplify important causes. Even though many do not have the same level of fame as celebrities, making a difference is possible. Many can align with the aforementioned celebrities by promoting causes on a smaller scale, whether it be on social media or in-person.

Doppelgangers declare dangerous destinies



CalLEN JEDLICKA



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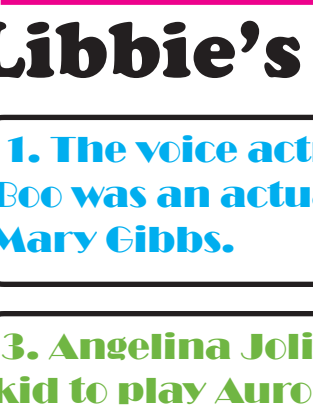
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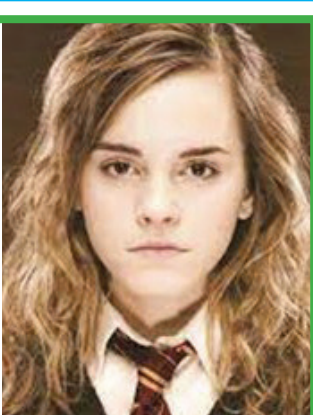


EMILYN KAVAN



AMANDA BYNES

HEATH LEDGER



EMMA WATSON



KELSEY ASBILLE

According to *Britannica*, every person has roughly six non-biologically related lookalikes living somewhere on the globe. A term, known as a "doppelganger", has been coined to describe this incredible phenomenon. The idea of a lookalike has been around for some time with the word originating from Germany in 1796 by author Jean Paul in his novel "Siebenkäs."

This idea sparked folklore that described an apparition of a person who acted as a ghost or double spirit. For a person to meet their doppelganger three times meant certain death. Doppelgangers have been a foundational character in nineteenth century horror, serving as a popular symbol for the genre.

In fact, although the term "doppelganger" was invented in Germany, many late civilizations around the globe held similar myths surrounding lookalikes and the bad omens that followed. In Egypt, the "ka" was an aspect of the soul and acted as an identical spirit to its person. In Africa, doppelgangers were thought to be supernatural children left in the place of human infants. In Norse, seeing one's doppelganger meant death was approaching.

Luckily, in the twenty-first century, doppelgangers have outlasted its bad connotation, becoming a lighthearted symbol among people of all ages. Without further ado, here are some doppelgangers to current Scotus students and staff:



ISAAK LIEBIG



DANIEL RADCLIFFE



MADDEN SAENZ



MRS. RAHL



KENSEY MICEK

KELSEY ASBILLE



ADAM DRIVER



JODIE FOSTER



Libbie's Top 10 Interesting Movie Facts

***FROM BUZZFEED.COM & BORED PANDA.COM

1. The voice actress of *Monster Inc.*'s Boo was an actual toddler named Mary Gibbs.

3. Angelina Jolie had to use her own kid to play Aurora in *Maleficent* because every other child was scared of her.

5. The scenes in *Titanic* set in 1912 last two hours and forty minutes, which is the exact time it took for *Titanic* to sink.

7. Sylvester Stallone wanted to make sure the boxing scenes looked real in *Rocky IV*, so he instructed Dolph Lundgren to actually hit him, and a punch to the chest left him in the intensive care unit for four days.

9. In *Now You See Me*, Isla Fisher almost drowned in the making of the underwater scene because the crew just thought she was doing amazing acting.

2. A *Harry Potter* stunt double was left paralyzed from the neck down after a flying broom scene went wrong.

4. To prepare for his role of "The Joker" in *The Dark Knight*, Heath Ledger hid away in a motel room for six weeks to better understand the psychology behind the character allowing the final outcome to seem more realistic.

6. Toto (the dog) was paid more than the Munchkins in *The Wizard of Oz*.

8. Flynn Rider's appearance for *Tangled* was designed during a "Hot Guy Meeting" where women from the studio picked out their favorite physical attributes from pictures of Hollywood's leading men.

10. In *Home Alone*, the picture of Buzz's girlfriend was actually a picture of the art director's son wearing a wig.

Instant famers find success and regret

By **Joanna Rusher**
Staff Reporter

When the American artist Andy Warhol said, “In the future, everyone will be world-famous for fifteen minutes,” he wasn’t kidding. In today’s society, one viral video, one awesome picture, or one lottery ticket could give people their fifteen minutes of fame. How realistic is fifteen minutes, though? Can people really drift in and out of fame that quickly? Of all the people in the world, it is highly unlikely for a per-

son to become a part of the 0.0086% of the population that is famous, but it’s not impossible.

The dictionary says fame is the state of being known or talked about by many people, especially on account of notable achievements, but many teens or young people define fame by looking at the amount of followers someone has. Teenagers constantly post TikTok videos and Instagram pictures in order to gain followers. According to *CBS News*, 86% of young Americans surveyed said they want to be influencers.

Another survey given to young Americans through *USA Today* reported a third of teens just aspire to be famous in general. It’s understandable. There’s countless reasons to want to be famous: wealth, followers, red carpets, parties, and more. It can take a long time for someone to develop enough followers to be considered famous, or it could take one day.

In other words, a person could have an overnight experience and wake up the next day an “instant famer”. Many celebrities are the result of instant fame. Justin

Bieber was posting covers on *YouTube* when he was discovered by producers one day. Kelly Clarkson was an unknown name until she won *American Idol*. These celebrities made it their goal to be famous and jumped on the slim chance they had. They became famous because they wanted all the positives that came with it; however, there are negative sides to fame, too.

It would be really cool if a Scotus student went viral on TikTok and got millions of likes. Every student could say they knew someone famous

and could personally talk to them. However, being the famous student would be super hard. One day, nobody pays attention to you, and the next, everyone does. It would be overwhelming; their life would become much more public. Many instant famers stop going to school all together. Having “fifteen minutes of fame” is unrealistic. Many celebrities have tried to escape the fame but fail. Megan Fox once told an interviewer that being famous is like being bullied in high school but on a global scale. Once a person is famous,

they are more than likely to stay famous because of the pressures of society.

The odds of a person becoming instantly famous are extremely low. Students are most likely not going to get tens of thousands of likes in a video, but it could still happen. In our society, fifteen minutes of fame may be more unlikely than fifteen seconds of fame through TikTok videos, but those fifteen seconds can change someone’s whole life.



Films and actors make bank at the box office

By **Daniel Cline**
Staff Reporter

The COVID-19 pandemic closed businesses across the world, including movie theaters. Since then, films such as *Spider-Man: No Way Home* and *Top Gun: Maverick* have brought the box office into full swing. With the general public attending movie theaters and watching world famous actors once again, it makes sense to reflect on those films and actors that rose to prominence and became the most famous of all-time.

The film *Avatar* was released in theaters in 2009 and became the highest grossing

film of all time. According to *CNBC*, throughout its 234-day run in theaters, the film grossed \$760 million in the United States and Canada as well as \$2 billion internationally. In total, the film made \$2.8 billion pre-2019. In 2019, however, the film was dethroned by *Avengers: Endgame* until *Avatar* reclaimed it two years later with a rerelease in Chinese theaters. The list of the top five highest grossing films of all-time in order is *Avatar*, *Avengers: Endgame*, *Titanic*, *Star Wars: Episode VII – The Force Awakens*, and *Avengers: Infinity War*.

The list of highest grossing films of all-time changes when inflation is taken into

account. The number one film becomes *Gone with the Wind*, which made \$304 million during its run in 1939. When adjusted for inflation, *Gone with the Wind*’s lifetime gross is \$3.9 billion, followed by *Avatar*, *Titanic*, *Star Wars: Episode IV – A New Hope*, and *Avengers: Endgame*.

Rather than basing the biggest films of all-time off box office gross, one may consider the overall impact a film had on the entertainment industry as a whole. For example, *Star Wars: Episode IV – A New Hope* introduced the world to Jedi, Sith, and everyone in between and paved the way for a host of sequels and spin-offs. *Star Wars* became a phenomenon

with all kinds of merchandise being sold. In 2012, Disney bought Lucasfilm, causing the conglomerate to own one of the biggest and most profitable franchises ever made.

The biggest movies of all-time could not have been made without actors. According to *bestlifeonline.com*, Marilyn Monroe is one of the most recognizable actresses of all-time. Outside of film, she is known as a cultural icon of the 1950s and 1960s. She was so well-known that she sang happy birthday to U.S. President John F. Kennedy in 1962 at his 45th birthday party. Other famous actors and actresses from the 20th century include Groucho Marx, Charlie Chaplin, Ron-

ald Reagan, James Dean, and Clint Eastwood.

Moving to the modern day, Dwayne “the Rock” Johnson is one of the most well-known actors. Originally a professional wrestler, Dwayne Johnson has acted in 56 films. Some of his most well-known roles are Maui from the Disney animated movie *Moana* and Luke Hobbs from the *Fast & Furious* franchise. According to *Forbes*, Dwayne Johnson was the highest paid actor of 2020, being paid \$87.5 million.

Also according to *Forbes*, the highest paid actress of 2020 was Sofia Vergara with \$43 million. She is known for being in

the TV show *Modern Family* and has acted in films such as *Four Brothers* and *The Smurfs*. Other renowned actors from today are Keanu Reeves, Johnny Depp, Leonardo DiCaprio, and Scarlett Johansson.

Since the late 1800s, people have watched movies to be entertained. Movies are an art form, and they could not exist without the actors in them. The future of movie theaters looks bright with movie franchises such as *Avatar* having multiple sequels planned, and of course the never ending plan of *Star Wars* spin-offs. Movies have and will continue to bring joy to all in the world.

If you were famous, what would you want to be famous for?



Speech prepares for competitive season

By Lily Dohmen
Staff Reporter

After having several entries qualify for state last year, but not finishing as well as they had hoped, the speech team is back and ready for a new competitive season.

The speech team started their season off at the Pierce competition on January 14th. The varsity team placed fifth, and the junior varsity placed first overall. Sophomore Jessica Jackson placed first in Entertainment for JV.

“[I am in] Entertainment because I love making people laugh at my jokes,” Jackson said.

Freshman Audrey Stoner placed fifth in Poetry for JV.

“[I am in] Poetry [because] I love reading and writing poetry so I thought I would be a natural fit,” Stoner said.

Sophomore Madden Saenz placed first in Humorous Prose and fourth in Serious Prose for JV.

“[I am in] Humorous Prose and Serious Prose [because] they are both really fun events and are a good

challenge,” Saenz said.

The Pierce meet did not go as planned for the varsity team, but senior Daniel Cline placed second in Humorous Prose, senior Jasmine Jackson placed second in Persuasive and Program Oral Interpretation, and senior Kavan Splittgerber placed fourth in Extemporaneous.

“The Pierce meet was a good first step for the varsity team. We did not have a lot of varsity entries but over half of our entries managed to break into finals. Better yet, the varsity speakers did well in finals and will hopefully continue to do well in future meets,” Splittgerber said.

The JV team had eleven entries break into finals and place at the Pierce competition. Freshman Sydney Stuart placed fourth in Entertainment.

“Pierce went well for me. It was my first time giving a speech in front of anyone ever. It was nerve-racking but exciting. It was exciting to see people on JV do well [for our first meet,]” Stuart said.

English and literature teacher Melanie Mimick is the head speech coach.

“This is a growing year for us because we are fairly young. At the end of the day, speech is all about sharing what makes each of us unique while growing skills in public speaking and performance.

When competitors can walk away learning something new that in turn develops the gifts they were given, that is what we consider success, not the amount of medals or trophies we have,” Mimick said.

The speech team hosted the Scotus Invite on January 21st. The speech team would have been team runner ups, but since the meet was small, Scotus was taken out of team scoring.

“[The home meet] went well. It is typically a crazy day for us coaches and we do not get to see the kids a lot, but they held their own with almost everyone making it into the final rounds,” Mimick said.

Cline placed in Humorous Prose and OID.

“At the home meet, I placed first in varsity Humorous Prose and my OID placed third. I essentially swept through Humorous, being ranked 1st with 49 out

of 50 points by all four of my judges,” Cline said.

On Saturday, January 28th the speech team traveled to Osceola. The varsity team placed first out of eight teams. “This year, we are

really working toward getting more people to qualify for state. I think hard work and determination are something that determines that. We have a lot of that on our team. It’s going to be a fun, surprising

season,” Jasmine Jackson said.

The speech team’s next meet will be held on Saturday, February 4th, at Aurora High School.



LILY DOHMEN / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Senior Jasmine Jackson performs her Persuasive speech at the Scotus Invite held on January 21st. Jackson placed second in Persuasive and Program Oral Interpretation.

Drumline ends January with a bang

By Mark Buhman
Staff Reporter

In every genre of music there is a beat. Many people listen to music, and that music can vary drastically based

solely on the beat. The Scotus drumline is used to keeping in step with beats. If you’ve ever walked to the Dowd Activity Center for a pep rally, you’ll hear the familiar thrum of the drumline. The

drumline performs multiple times throughout the year; they showcase their talent not only at pep rallies but also at sporting events and parades.

However, in addition to these performances, this year,

the drumline performed at halftime of the girls basketball game on January 20th. They showcased a piece they had been working on for the past several months. Head band and drumline instructor Kristen Cox shared her enthusiasm ahead of the performance.

“We’re excited about it! It says a lot about these kids because the winter season, with activities, makes it really hard to get practices scheduled, especially when students are in multiple events. We have people in swim, varsity basketball, ninth grade basketball, musical, and flags. All of those activities are practicing so to try to find time when we can get all of those students together has been a challenge, but they’ve made it work. We’re excited that they’re going to get to perform!” Cox said.

Drumline has had several performances this year, ranging from the Columbus Days Parade and Harvest of Harmony Parade to the St. Bon’s and St. Isidore’s Bazaars, and it is important to mention the drumline not only showcases pieces as a group to themselves but conducts much of their work with the rest of

the band, such as in marching band and pepband. Regardless, the drumline has put in a lot of work for their own performances.

“We’ve been preparing basically all year learning new songs. We practice at Scotus before school at 7:00 am,” senior Alex Settje explained.

It’s true, drumline has been practicing all year for their various performances. Not only do they practice all school year, but they also have put in work during the summer. Cox described the format of the drumline’s summer practices.

“Drumline practices approximately once a week during the summer at Scotus. During the summer, they do sectionals where half of the group comes, say, on a Tuesday, and the other half comes on a Thursday depending on what instrument they play. That really helps percussionists to build technique with a certain instrument; it also helps the new members learn the material that everyone else knows,” Cox stated.

Assistant drumline instructor Brian Long has been helping Cox with the drumline this year. Long is a

Columbus High graduate and was a member of the CHS drumline. This is Long’s first year assisting Cox with the drumline, and he is just as excited as she is about the progress the group has made this year.

“They’ve grown exponentially. They’ve got a lot more foundation in their technique now. They’ve got a lot more turns and new techniques under their belt as well. I think they’re going to come a long way in the next few years,” Long said.

Following the performance on the 20th, this feeling of success was reciprocated by the drummers. Senior Jase Christensen related his thoughts while packing up his instrument.

“I would say that I expected us to do pretty well. I feel like usually we get the hang of it from our practices. We work really hard. We come in every Friday; sometimes it’s every Monday, and I feel like the pressure of being out there really solidifies our performance. Being in the moment really helps with memorizing. I think we’ll continue to do well as long as we keep at it,” Christensen concluded.



MARK BUHMAN / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Seniors Alex Settje and Alex Ferguson, junior Nicole Peterson, and eighth grader Rachel Spawn play the tenor drums along with freshmen Aiden Meers and Dante Smith playing the bass drums in the background. The Scotus Drumline performed during halftime of the girls basketball game on January 20th.



CLAIRE RICKERT / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Winter Ball introduces new additions



By Maysa Kuhl
Staff Reporter

As students return to a sense of normalcy with the start of the second semester, Winter Formal brings a fun twist to a bland January. This year's dance was held on Saturday, January 14th, after the first full week back at school.

Last year the dance was held on November 13th, 2021, meaning the dance has pushed its date up by nearly 2 months. This change was well received since many students felt there was a quick turnaround from homecoming to the formal last year.

"I thought the dance was at a good time this year," senior Ashley Hoffman said. "It might have been better though if it was at the end of January because we just got back into school, and it was kind of fast."

This year also featured the Winter Ball court composed of seniors voted in by their classmates. After a vote done by all high school students, a king and queen were chosen. This year foreign exchange student Francesca Gallino and Blake Wemhoff

were crowned the winners.

"[Winning winter formal queen] was something unexpected," Gallino said. "I didn't really know what was going on since it was my first winter formal ever, but it was interesting."

A new addition to this dance was strength and conditioning coach, Ryan Baker, DJ-ing for the event. Baker has never DJ-ed before aside from the music he plays in the weight room, but several students asked if he would DJ at the dance. In the end, math teacher and advisor for the dance, Sam Rose, asked Baker to do the job.

"I felt like he was just like any other DJ, you couldn't even tell he wasn't an actual DJ," junior Isabel Zaruba said. "If anything, it was better having someone we know as the DJ because then all of us felt comfortable telling him what requests we have."

In addition to a new DJ, the dance also had a smoke machine to add more ambiance to the dance floor. In a shocking twist, the smoke machine did cause the fire alarms to go off midway



JASMINE JACKSON / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Seniors Francesca Gallino and Blake Wemhoff were crowned as this year's Winter Formal queen and king.

(far left) The Winter Formal candidates pose for photos as they are introduced. This year's candidates were Cameron Houfek, Libbie Brezenski, Brennen Jelinek, Kaelyn Dierman, Isaak Liebig, Lauren Houfek, Wemhoff, Gallino, Alex Zoucha, and Claire Rickert.

through the dance.

A common trend with this dance is fewer students seem to attend this dance compared to homecoming. Some students enjoy the extra space this offers, while others miss dancing on a packed dance floor of their peers.

"[I noticed at the dance] the energy was just not there," freshman Isabella Chasteen said. "It was less packed, and less people were

there, but it was still fun.

The final dance of the year will be held in April for the juniors and seniors.

"I know a lot of people do not show up to this dance compared to the others," senior Kavanaugh Splittgeber said. "It really can be a fun time if you are willing to make the best of the dance and enjoy it to the fullest with your friends or date."



JASMINE JACKSON / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Sophomore Quinn VunCannon dances at the Winter Formal on Saturday, January 14th. The dance was pushed back to January after it was held in November last year.



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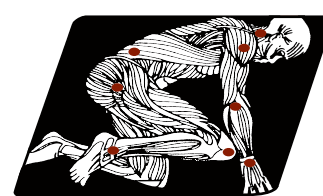


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Dominating decade of tunes

By Maysa Kuhl
Staff Reporter

It is no question music is subjective with thousands of styles being enjoyed by people around the world, but there is one question which has been nagging my mind: what decade has the best music? Depending on who you ask, you will receive a variety of answers, and this is why I have decided to find a solution. Using a criteria of music variety and the impact it had on society, I will declare the best decade of music spanning from the 1970s up to the 2010s.

The 70s was defined by disco with bands like ABBA, Earth Wind & Fire, and the Beegees releasing several hits in this decade. The 1970s did not lack variety though, it also had bands like Queen, Fleetwood Mac, and the Beatles who explored several genres. While this decade did see the end of Elvis, it also witnessed the dawn of music legend Elton John with his first album *Goodbye Yellow Brick Road*. Music played a

huge role in society introducing new and rising stars, and the music of this time named the 70s as the decade of disco. These factors place the 70s in high standings for the best decade.

Coming off the age of disco, the 1980s began to break off into more genres with growing fanbases. From popular rock bands like ACDC and Journey to legendary alternative artists like Michael Jackson and Prince, proved there was no lack of variety in this decade. Several artists of the 70s like Elton John and Stevie Nicks also released popular songs. In 1989, country music also experienced a shift in style leading to it becoming more popular. Music also played a heavy role in society since with new technologies, music could reach parts of the world never thought to be possible. The spread of music brought people all over the world together with a common interest placing it high in the race for best decade.

While many bands and artists popular in the 70s and 80s were still creating music

during the 1990s, there was also an emergence of new music styles in this decade. Grunge bands like Foo Fighters and Pearl Jam were popular along with pop artists like the Spice Girls and Madonna. Popular country artists like Garth Brooks and Shania Twain also had growing fanbases in this decade. It also gave rise to bands like Blink-182 and Green Day who are popular among younger generations today. Sadly, this decade is not as recognized for its music or its impact on society.

The 2000s was defined by pop music and the bold style following it. Artists such as Britney Spears and Beyonce had their claim to fame in this decade with hits like "Toxic" and "Crazy in Love" rising in popularity. This decade also saw its start of artists in other genres like Coldplay, Nelly, and The Killers, but these musicians are not the trademark of the 2000s. While the music fit in with the "style" of the decade, it would break into smaller trends and did not create a new fad which was

apparent in previous decades.

While many artists of the 2010s are considered more popular to the current generation; it does not automatically make them the best. While popular artists such as Taylor Swift, Adele, and Maroon 5 have made music which was enjoyable and popular, one's music taste was a touchy subject. The respect found in

previous decades for someone else's music taste was lost in the 2010s since everyone thought their music taste was superior. This places the 2010s low in the rankings for best decade of music.

While it is a tough decision, I have concluded the 80s is the best decade of music not just because the music was superior, but

because it brought people together. Whether you were a Def Leppard junkie or a Rick Springfield fanatic, there was a general respect and bond between people when it came to music. In the end, music is meant to bring people together and create joy no matter what their taste is, and this was done best in the 1980s.



MAYSA KUHL / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Underrated rom coms of the 2000s

By Claire Rickert
Staff Reporter

In today's world, countless movies of all different genres are available, and the technology creating these movies is so advanced you almost feel a part of the film. In the current era of obsess-

ing over the latest and greatest, we often overlook some of the classics. My favorite genre to read and watch has always been romantic comedy (rom coms), which is why I have chosen to rank the top three most overlooked rom coms of the 2000s (plus a few honorable mentions).

The rankings will be based on relatability, storyline, and the actors.

Number three on my list is *Life as We Know It* (2010). After a dumpster-fire first date, Holly and Eric want nothing to do with each other, but after they find themselves the legal guardians for their

goddaughter, Sophie, they have to find a way to make it work. While they have extremely different work and social lives, they find something they have in common, their love for Sophie, and eventually each other. This movie has always been a classic for me. Although the storyline is basic for a rom com, that's what makes it perfect- two people with nothing in common but a hatred for each other, destined to be together. The relatability of this movie is okay because I think some people could be able to relate to the enemies to lovers trope. The actors were also incredibly talented, especially the rom com queen, Katherine Heigl, who starred as Holly.

Getting close to the top, number two on my list is *27 Dresses* (2008). This movie is the epitome of "always the bridesmaid, never the bride." Although this movie was not overlooked when it debuted, it definitely is now. Jane is always the go-to gal when wedding plans are being made. She has been a bridesmaid in twenty-seven weddings (hence 27 dresses)

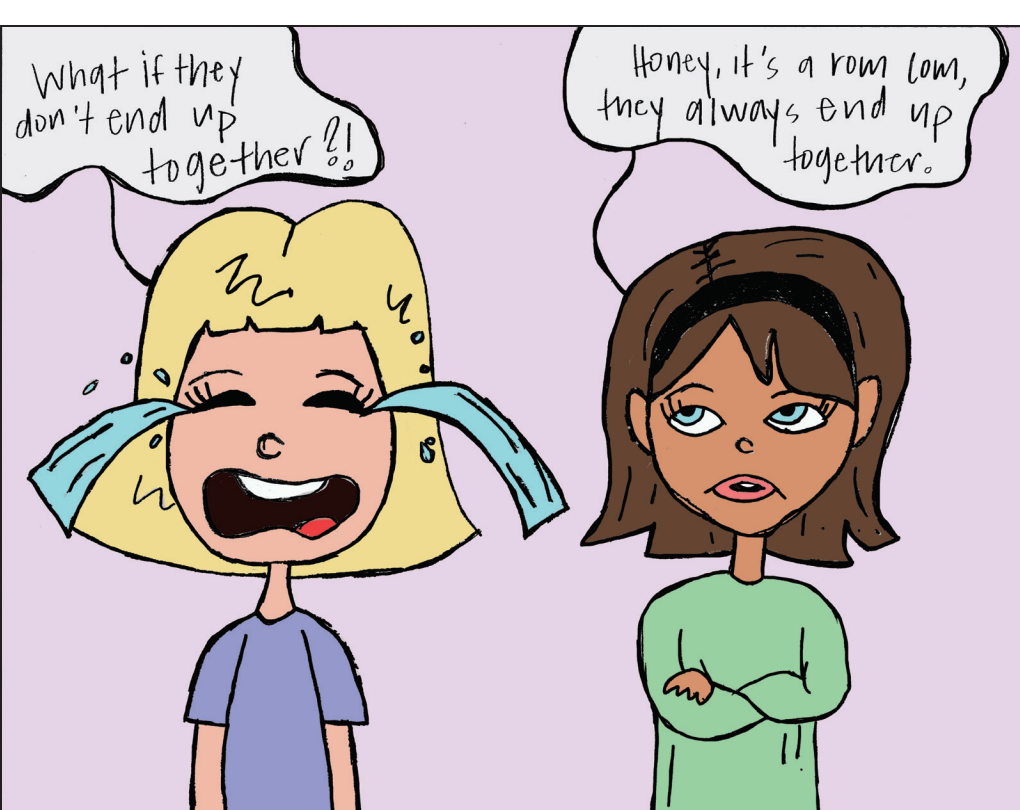
but has never had her own wedding. When her sister gets engaged to Jane's secret crush, she wonders if she truly does love being a wedding junkie. This is where charming reporter, Kevin, comes in, seeing Jane's story as his big break. This story is hugely relatable to many, filled with jealousy, back-stabbing, and regret. The storyline is magnificent and unlike any movie I have ever watched. The buildup is the perfect amount; it has you hanging on the edge of your seat but not falling off. Again, the rom com queen, Katherine Heigl, strikes with another cinematic masterpiece.

Finally, the top overlooked rom com of the 2000s, *The Lakehouse* (2006). What more can I say about this movie except that it is perfect? After moving into an old lake house, Alex finds a letter in his mailbox, but it's dated two years previous from the doctor, Kate, who used to reside in the lake house. Although separated by time, the two fall in love, but will they ever meet? This movie is filled with so many twists and turns; I literally

bawled my eyes out the first time I watched it. This movie is extremely relatable to many people, not because people are literally separated by years, but by other obstacles such as distance or status. The storyline is unique and thrilling. It keeps you interested the entirety of the film. I know I said before that Katherine Heigl is a rom com queen, but she's not the only one. The real queen bee of rom coms is Sandra Bullock, one of the amazing actors in this movie. Keanu Reeves, another great actor, stars as the other main character. This movie is great in all aspects.

Lastly, I have a couple honorable mentions I feel should have been a part of this ranking. They are *Just Like Heaven* and *Serendipity*. Both filled with drama, romance, and many twists and turns, they are incredible films, but did not quite meet the standards I set for this ranking.

Though many of these movies are overlooked, they will continue to stand as classics in the rom com world. If you have not seen these movies, check them out!



CLAIRE RICKERT / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Celebrated country artists comeback after COVID

By Mary Faltys
Staff Reporter

After nearly two years of shutdown activities from COVID, many country artists began performing all over the country. Those two quiet years gave them time to prepare and release new songs and plan their upcoming tours. While some devoted listeners travel to attend their favorite artists' performances, there are country artists coming to our area in 2023.

Looking ahead to tours in 2023, there are many concerts to get excited for. Although Taylor Swift is not solely a country singer, her upcoming tour is highly anticipated by many. Shortly after her tickets went on sale, Ticketmaster stopped the sales because there were too many consumers; their website shut down. The website, made for 1.5 million people, saw 14 million Swift fans vying for tickets. She will be touring across the United States from March

17th to August 9th. While Swift is not performing in Nebraska, she will make 4 appearances in neighboring cities, Kansas City, Missouri and Denver, Colorado, from July 7th-15th.

An exciting tour is coming for lovers of old-fashioned country music. George Strait, popular country singer of the late 1900's, will be returning to the stage in 2023 for another tour. The "King of Country" will have a quick 4-month, 6 appearance tour, but he will not make an appearance in Nebraska. The closest performance will be in Denver, Colorado on June 24th. Strait will be accompanied by Chris Stapleton and the Little Big Town band.

Kane Brown's international tour started in 2022 but is continuing into 2023. Following the release of his popular album in September 2022, Brown is performing his music in several countries. His 2023 performances are scheduled to start in Britain in January and continue to the Netherlands,

Germany, and Sweden. In February, he will return to the United States to continue his tour. One of his last performances is going to be at the CHI Health Center in Omaha, Nebraska on April 15th. Later that month, he will conclude his tour.

Morgan Wallen is preparing to kick off his tour on March 15th in New Zealand; he will start performing in the United States on April 14th in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Fellow country singers Hardy, Ernest, Bailey Zimmerman, and Parker McCollum are going to accompany Wallen on his traveling performances. Wallen's Nebraska stop is scheduled for April 29th. He will be performing in Lincoln at the Pinnacle Bank Arena. Wallen has added more stops to his tour due to rising demand and is currently scheduled to conclude his trip on October 7th.

Thomas Rhett is bringing Cole Swindell on his 2023 tour. Both country singers released popular albums in 2022. Over the course of 5

months, they will visit 40 cities in 27 different states. Their performances in the United States will last from May 4th to September 29th. Once again, Nebraska will be hosting at the CHI Health Center in Omaha. This time the show will be on May 18th.

Kenny Chesney is also coming to Nebraska. His

long-awaited 2022 tour was a big hit because it had been delayed twice since COVID. Last year, he performed in 18 different states in the span of 5 months. This year Chesney will be making a slightly shorter trip from March 25th to May 27th. His performance in Nebraska will be at the Pinnacle Bank Arena in Oma-

ha on May 13th.

With the rapid increase of musical tours throughout the world, country music listeners have many exciting dates to look forward to in 2023. There will be many short trips available to see their favorite celebrities.



TWINCITIES.COM

Famous country singer Kenny Chesney performs in Minneapolis, Minnesota on August 6th, 2022 to over 50,000 fans. Chesney's concerts during his 2022 tour took place in 18 different states and were largely attended every time.



LIBBIE BREZENSKI / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Boys basketball wins subdistricts at home

Shamrocks finish season in district finals

See SPORTS, Page 5



MAYSA KUHL / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Band travels back to the 80s

Band prepares for District Music

See ACTIVITIES, Page 8

Rock Bottom

Scotus Central Catholic

<https://scotuscc.org/rock-bottom-newspaper/>

Columbus, Nebraska 68601

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Scotus celebrates Catholic Schools Week

By Mark Buhman
Staff Reporter

This year marked the 49th anniversary of Catholic Schools Week, and thousands of schools from across the country have celebrated Catholic Schools Week (CSW) over the years. The tradition of celebrating Catholic education through this week-long celebration was fostered by the National Catholic Educational Association in 1974, and it has been held the last week of January ever since. This year Catholic Schools Week fell Monday, January 30th through Friday, February 3rd.

Scotus was one of the many schools that observed Catholic Schools Week this year, beginning the week with no class on Monday so the teachers could attend a retreat at the Benedictine Center in Schuyler, NE. As a result, Tuesday kicked off what would be a week filled with events. On Tuesday, students were encouraged to wear Catholic-themed t-shirts. This consisted of anything from Steubenville-inspired apparel to the new teal-colored campus ministry shirts.

On Wednesday, several high school campus ministry members went over to St. Bon's Elementary to play games and faith-based activities with them. Senior Alex Ferguson spent most of his time with the sixth graders, then with the kindergarteners.

"I really enjoyed spending time with the kids and asking fun trivia questions about some saints. These kids were really on fire for their



TAYLOR DAHL / MARKETING DIRECTOR

Juniors Mason Gonka, Josie Sliva, and Joanna Rusher follow along in a dance with a group of second graders at St. Bon's Elementary School. High school campus ministry members volunteered to play games and lead faith-based activities with the elementary kids during Catholic Schools Week.

faith and loved spending time with some of us older kids," Ferguson explained.

Later in the day on Wednesday, Heart of a Child Ministries showcased a pro-life presentation for the students and faculty. Campus ministry director Dana Ritzdorf explained why this was her favorite event of the week.

"I really loved hearing the pro-life speaker, Corey Osborn, who came to share his story and experience with the pro-life movement. He and his girlfriend chose to have an abortion in high school, and I loved seeing how Christ came into his life and redeemed him. I was

really inspired by his humility to share a story that's that hard to talk about! It takes a lot of courage!" Ritzdorf said.

Several students shared an appreciation for the assembly. Junior Kaitlyn Fleming conveyed her opinion regarding the pro-life presentation.

"I loved seeing the ultrasound. I also loved the stories. If an expecting mother wants to have an abortion and she sees her ultrasound, 80% of women change their minds. It's amazing!" Fleming stated.

A dress down day was also offered to the students on Wednesday, with the proceeds going towards Si-

mon House to assist young mothers and their babies. Additionally, Scotus held a baby drive. Students were encouraged throughout the week to leave basic toiletries for families with babies on the table outside the business office.

"The baby drive turned out really well! I liked doing it because it went well with the prolife and 'save the baby' assembly we had. It feels nice being able to give back to mothers and babies in need!" senior Lily Dohmen explained.

Thursday provided the students with some prayerful opportunities.

See CATHOLIC, Page 2

Lack of numbers brings cancellation to Mr. Shamrock

By Libbie Brezenski
Staff Reporter

The Scotus Central Catholic tradition of Mr. Shamrock has been active for 17 years and has provided the student body with a fun, lighthearted competition that brings entertainment and laughter to both those who participate and those who watch.

Many students like to watch the Mr. Shamrock competition with their families and look forward to seeing it all year long. However, the 2023 Mr. Shamrock competition has been cancelled due to lack of participants according to Joan Lahm, advisor for the student council.

"It's disappointing when you have to cancel. I sent a survey out and received 19 responses back with one yes and five maybes. Even if the maybes would have turned into yes-s, you cannot hold a competition with six guys; it simply would not be possible," Lahm said.

The Mr. Shamrock competition involves a group of senior boys who participate in different categories such as talents, costumes, a group dance, and interviews. It is made to resemble a beauty pageant or a Miss America competition.

There is an admission fee of two cans of food or \$2, and the food goes towards the Simon House while the money covers the expenses of the event. The night provides a fun way for the student body to get together with their peers and family and be entertained with a night of laughter and amusement of senior boys competing while also contributing back to the community.

Junior student council member Mary Faltys was one of the people looking forward to watching this year's competition and was saddened by the cancellation.

"I was disappointed when I heard Mr. Shamrock was cancelled. Last year, everybody had so much fun watching it, and I know lots of people were looking forward to it again this year," Faltys said.

Senior Kavanaugh Splittergerber was the only senior boy to sign up for the event.

"I was actually one of the few boys who really wanted to do Mr. Shamrock this year, so I was crestfallen when I heard the news that it was cancelled. I've been looking forward to participating in it all year, but now that's not going to happen," Splittergerber said.

Senior Nick Zoucha was an eligible participant for the competition, but decided against signing up due to his lack of entertaining talents.

See SHAMROCK, Page 2

Juniors join others on retreat

By Lily Dohmen
Staff Reporter

The junior retreat has always been flexible because it is held outside of Columbus. This year the juniors went to the three local Catholic elementary schools and the St. John Paul II Newman Center. Eighth grade religion teacher and campus ministry advisor, Dana Ritzdorf, planned the retreat.

"I think it was great seeing our teens interact with the little kids at the elementary schools. Being at the elementary schools was a good way to start the day because it was an opportunity for the juniors to step outside of themselves a little bit to serve our community," Ritzdorf said.

The juniors went into the classrooms and had bonding time with the elementary school kids in whatever grade they were assigned to. Junior Kensey Micek helped the preschoolers.

"I had preschool, and I think [the little kids] really enjoyed having us come in and read them stories as well as helping them out [with their] classwork," Micek said.

Junior Isabel Zaruba was with the fifth grade class at St. Isidore.

"I think most of the kids were really excited to have us older kids come and help in their classrooms. The fifth graders I was with had plenty of interesting questions to ask me including my favorite store,



TAYLOR DAHL / MARKETING DIRECTOR

Junior Matthew Gokie plays telephone with a student from St. Bon's on Wednesday, February 15th. The juniors also went to the John Paul II Newman Center in Omaha to celebrate mass.

if I was terrified of Mrs. Halligan, and if I had a boyfriend. I think I was just as entertaining to them as they were to me," Zaruba said.

In the afternoon, the juniors headed to the St. John Paul II Newman Center in Omaha where they were given a tour.

"[My favorite part of the retreat was] being able to get a tour of the Newman Center. I felt like we learned a lot about how to grow closer to God when we go off to college," junior Josie Sliva said.

After the tour the juniors listened to two UNO students talk about their faith life.

"We had two college students at the Newman Center share their

testimonies and talk about their faith life in college. One of them was our alumni Clarissa Kosch, which was a highlight having her share her experience with the juniors," Ritzdorf said.

The other speaker besides Clarissa Kosch was junior Evan Kiene's cousin Ben Lundstrom.

"My favorite part about the junior retreat was going to the Newman Center and taking a tour. It was interesting to learn about the [Catholic] college [life] and to see how different it was compared to other colleges," junior Anna Lovell said.

At the Newman Center the juniors participated in adoration, and

they also had the opportunity to go to confession.

"I liked the adoration [because] I [grew closer] to God. [Adoration] had given me time to talk to Him and get to know Him better," junior Joshua Bixenmann said.

The juniors returned to school right as everyone else was getting out, so they could attend practices.

"I think the retreat went well because there is value in letting the students see the Newman Center and helping them see what it would be like to surround themselves with a good community, strong friendships, and people who can help you grow in your faith," Ritzdorf concluded.

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CATHOLIC

Junior Joanna Rusher led the Divine Mercy Chaplet before school, an idea fostered by the Special Events Committee in campus ministry, and all-school Mass was held at the end of the day.

“My sister used to lead the Divine Mercy Chaplet every Thursday morning for a year, and I did it the year after that. I love the Divine Mercy Chaplet, and it only takes 20 minutes! We started at 7:20 am, and there were probably about 15 people there,” Rusher stated.

Friday capped off the week’s slate with a faith rally consisting of a *Family Feud* gameshow followed by two senior witness talks and adoration with Ablaze Worship.

“I had a lot of fun watching my friends compete [in the gameshow] and trying to answer the questions myself,”

sophomore Lily Humphrey said.

Regardless of all the events offered this year, there are ways to make future Catholic Schools Weeks even better. Assistant campus minister Nate Tenopir shared a suggestion he has for future years.

“I think it would be good to bring in former students who are now in the public universities or even simply in a secular career where things aren’t so open to how they can be Catholic. I feel it would be beneficial to give current students examples of just how unique the opportunities provided during Catholic Schools Week are compared to anywhere else in the world,” Tenopir concluded.



ASHLEY HOFFMAN / YEARBOOK STAFF

Deacon Jay Wingler from Ablaze Worship holds Jesus in the monstrance while seventh graders Emma White, Nathan Oehlrich, Amiah McGannon, and Abigail Pavlik look on. Scotus held a faith rally on Friday of Catholic Schools Week this year consisting of Family Feud, senior witness talks, and praise and worship with adoration.

SHAMROCK

“I don’t have the qualities or a talent I could show on a stage in front of [the whole school],” Zoucha said.

The Mr. Shamrock competition has been losing popularity through previous years with cancellations being made in 2021 and 2023 from lack of participation, and in 2020 due to Covid-19.

Despite this, underclassmen want the tradition of the competition to keep going.

Junior Kamren Kudron said, “We should force the boys to do it [if there are not enough volunteers.]”

Junior Karol Torres thinks there should be adjustments regarding the conditions to be involved in Mr. Shamrock to get more participants.

“We should let juniors

and [other underclassmen] participate,” Torres said.

Senior Jasmine Jackson also had a similar take on revising the conditions of the Mr. Shamrock competition.

“I wished more boys signed up because I think it would’ve been a nice conclusion to our many years at Scotus. For the future, though, why not have a Ms. Shamrock? I know there are a handful of girls who would’ve jumped and been delighted at the chance to do something this fun,” Jackson said.

If Torres’s or Jackson’s suggestions were to become a possibility, it would likely improve the numbers of participation and could prevent cancellations due to the lack of it in future years.

Sophomore Alex Evans likes the competition and thinks it should be brought back and open as well.

“If we bring [the competition] back, I will shave my head for it,” Evans said.

When the suggestions regarding the terms of Mr. Shamrock were brought up to Lahm, she was on board with the possibilities of opening it up to more ages.

“I think it is a great idea of opening it up to other classes. Also, maybe even having a talent show for anyone K-12 would be fun. Those are some topics we will definitely need to address and survey people about,” Lahm said.



ZACH SCHULTZ / YEARBOOK STAFF

Heart of a Child Ministries speaker Nikki Schaefer presents a twenty-two week old model baby at the pro-life rally held on Wednesday, February 1st. Corey Osborn also gave a personal testimony at the rally.

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ACT changes diminish student work ethic



By Joanna Rusher
Staff Reporter

It's 7am on a Saturday morning. You wouldn't normally get up at this time, but you have to drive to Central Community College, sit in a

random classroom with random people for four hours, and basically run a marathon with your brain. Why in the world would you do this to yourself?

Everyone takes the American College Test (ACT) to get into college. At least, everyone used to. The number of colleges that require ACT scores are decreasing significantly, and some are allowing super scores to increase chances of higher scores. All these changes being made are causing the importance of the ACT to be smaller and smaller when there was nothing wrong with the way it was done before. Colleges should leave their ACT policies the same.

The ACT is very time consuming. Aside from the four hours the test takes, many students also spend hours preparing for the test. Some take specific classes, tutoring sessions, or online courses. Moving on to after the test, most results don't come in for a month! Every student who studies that much knows it is worth their while. Students who don't put in as much time either don't care enough or don't think it matters.

According to *Forbes*, more than 80% of U.S. bachelor-degree granting institutions will not require students to submit either ACT or SAT standardized exam scores.

Colleges are telling students the ACT doesn't matter as much, robbing them of chances to go to school for a cheaper price. By not requiring the ACT score, colleges are telling students they will let anyone in as long as they can get money from them.

Although it might sound cliché, when colleges don't require ACT scores, it is unfair for hardworking students. Of course, students can receive scholarships with an ACT, but good ACT scores are somewhat worthless now that they aren't required. To add to the leniency of test taking in colleges, many colleges are now accepting ACT super scores. This means, no matter how many times the

ACT is taken, a student can submit their best scores from each category of the test.

While many students are glad they only have to improve on one score at a time, a super score is less of a test score and more of a summary that doesn't show the true skill set of a student. It doesn't completely show a student's skill to sit down and take a long test. It is an advantage for students who struggle taking long tests, but students can actually lose capacity to focus for long periods of time which can be a major disadvantage when going to some colleges or career fields.

Whether or not a college is allowing students to submit

super scores or requiring an ACT score altogether, it is becoming apparent that the ACT is continually becoming less important. This is silly when you take into account how much time and energy many students put into the ACT. Their good scores on one test are now worth less because a similar score can be given to a student who took the test several times and only did well in one category each time. In conclusion, colleges should not change the way they are doing the ACT. By keeping the ACT as a requirement and not accepting super scores, students can feel that their waking up at 7am on a Saturday isn't pointless.

Successful solutions to stressed students



By Jasmine Jackson
Editor

There's a little bit of everything for everyone in our school. Appalled at spending hours dribbling a ball? Try your hand at carrying a tune onstage. Horrified at writing endless essays? Focus your efforts on the sciences. The average Scotus student is involved in at least five

extracurricular activities, according to a survey of one hundred-forty students, with the highest being fourteen, and the lowest, zero. While the spectrum of extracurriculars allows students to expand their interests, it unfortunately leads to burnout, which 69% of the surveyed students reported experiencing. Burnout is defined as a state of emotional, mental, or physical exhaustion resulting from unmanaged stress, and it can lead to disastrous consequences for students' mental health and overall performance.

Within the survey, 73% of students reported feeling stressed, 74% reported exhaustion, and over half experienced a motivation loss. All these percentages were attributed to academic and extracurricular responsibilities. Fortunately, stressed

students can find successful solutions to burnout by creating a schedule, finding support systems, and even by making sacrifices to prioritize their wellbeing.

Students can navigate burnout and manage stress by organizing their tasks. Creating a list or using a planner are helpful ways to achieve this; however, students should prioritize what needs to be done first. If students have an essay due the following day, but a math assignment due in a couple of days, prioritize the essay. Pulling an all-nighter to leave time in the future only makes you more tired and stressed, setting you back a few days because your body needs time to recover. Also, cramming leads to mediocre results, leaving room for errors. In short, do what is due first.

Alongside maintaining a schedule, there must be support systems students can lean on when feeling overwhelmed. Confiding in a friend can be beneficial because as the survey suggests, there are many students in Scotus who feel the same. Teachers are also understanding when it comes to balancing activities and academics. However, support systems don't have to be people, they can be anything you may use to relax such as listening to music, journaling, reading, or even exercising. Finding something consistent to do is key.

Even though there are only 24 hours in a day, we still attempt to do it all. Part of this "do-it-all" attitude stems from the push for students to have multiple interests to be "well-rounded." However, why should

a student attempt to do five activities mediocrely, when he or she can do one exceptionally? Sometimes we must make sacrifices to ensure our wellbeing. This includes quitting a certain activity to make time for another, which is hard, but if it leaves more time for you to spend on that geometry proof, it should be done.

A common response toward burnout is to push the blame back onto the students. If they don't do as much, then they wouldn't feel as overwhelmed. While I have supported that statement, it is also equally important to look closer at where the stress originates---parents, teachers, and peers. 48% of students revealed they experienced immense pressure from parents and peers, while 47% of students stated they felt their teachers and coaches

set overly high expectations. To those parents, peers, and teachers, everyone is trying. Students are still learning balance and management, so it is crucial that we are empathetic toward their attempts. Students' minds are developing, and if we ignore that crucial detail, students will spiral.

Burnt out students can be found everywhere. However, never fear, because there are solutions. Students can find surefire solutions to combat burnout through organization, support systems, and even sacrifice. There's one detail the student survey didn't reveal, and that's the future outlook. 100% of students will report a 100% increase in their performance if they adhere to my advice. Care to test my theory?



JESSICA JACKSON / JOURNALISM STAFF

Million-dollar answer to happiness



By Mary Faltys
Staff Reporter

Everyone has heard the saying, "Money doesn't buy happiness." To explain it, people say money can buy us objects that bring us joy

but does not bring happiness in and of itself. But is that how it works? Most people simply accept the saying after hearing it so many times over the years. After much deliberation, I decided it holds true in everyone's lives. However, there are many factors playing into it.

At first glance, most of our enjoyable activities appear to be independent of money. We like to occupy ourselves with various hobbies and activities such as listening to music, doing crafts, reading, traveling, taking care of pets, cooking, athletics, and much more. If you really think about it, though, would all those activities be available to us if we did not

have the money to access them? To do crafts, you must buy supplies. You need to buy books to read. If you did not pay for your phone, and possibly your music platform, you could not listen to your music. This realization brings about another question: if you need money to access the activities you enjoy, are you paying for happiness?

Some activities clearly involve money such as shopping. If you find joy in buying products, is money buying you happiness? Or do you find joy in the product itself? Without money, you would not be able to enjoy that particular activity or product. While we unconsciously search for happiness

in purchasing anything we can, there are people who are discovering joy is letting go of all their "stuff."

Minimalism is becoming a global trend. People who have recognized how they had cluttered their life in their search for happiness have decided to try something new. Instead of collecting, they clear out space in their lives for joy by giving away their unnecessary possessions. I am not saying we should all empty our closets and become minimalists, but I think there is a valuable lesson we can take from their policy. Having more "stuff" does not guarantee any happiness. New purchases rarely provide happiness for a substantial

amount of time. While it is easy to think we need money to partake in our favorite activities, it is being proven we do not by the people finding joy in their newfound simplicity.

In the world we live in today, there are very few activities that are 100% independent of cost, but the ones that are we often take for granted. Hanging out with friends is a big one. Hopefully nobody pays for their friends! Looking around, we can find joy in plenty of ways without having to worry about or use money.

Back to the age-old question: if money is required, to some extent, for almost every pleasurable activity,

does money buy happiness? Complicated, convincing arguments from both sides can easily confuse the answer, but I determined the answer to be no by asking one question: does simply saving money bring you happiness? While some people may pride themselves in their savings, they rarely find happiness in solely having the money. Because money is not necessarily or directly required to partake in activities that make us happy, it does not bring us joy. It is simply a tool, or some might even say an obstacle, in enabling us to enjoy different activities we find pleasing.

Girls make third straight district final

By Brennen Jelinek
Staff Reporter

The Scotus girls basketball team has had another impressive year. After starting the year with two losses, the girls went on a nine-game win streak to put themselves in a good position for the rest of the season. They had a record of 16-5 going into the postseason. Senior Hailey Steffensmeier scored a total of 119 points throughout the season.

"I am proud of our regular season record. We played well these past few months," Steffensmeier said.

Entering the postseason, the Shamrocks were on a three-game win streak, beating Aquinas, Kearney Catholic, and Lakeview in their last three games, securing home court advantage and hosting the subdistrict tournament. The other teams in the tournament included David City Public, Lakeview,

Aurora, and Central City. Senior Kaelyn Dierman has started varsity for the past two years.

"I'm most proud of our younger kids stepping up, we have a lot of sophomores who play varsity with little to no expert experience, and they do really well," Dierman said.

The team opened subdistrict play against Aurora on Tuesday, February 14th. The Shamrocks defeated the Huskies 62-32, advancing to play David City High on Thursday February 16th for the subdistrict championship. The Shamrocks beat the Scouts 50-34, earning themselves a spot in the district finals for the third straight year. Senior Sierra Kravig joined the team her junior year.

"I am very proud of our hard work these last few months. Every practice and game we have played have led us to where we are now," Kravig said.

The Shamrocks played the Gothenburg Swedes on Friday, February 24th. Because Gothenburg was the higher seeded team, the game was played in Gothenburg, a nearly three-hour drive from Columbus. There, the Shamrocks played a close game with the Swedes. The girls were winning by two after the first and were tied 23-23 at halftime. The Shamrocks lost the game 44-36. Senior Maysa Kuhl ended the season with 58 assists.

"As a senior looking back at the season, I am glad I was able to make good memories with my teammates over the years. I am hopeful the team can be successful in the future," Kuhl said.

Even with the heartbreaking loss to end the season, the girls still had an impressive season. They earned the right to host subdistricts, and they made it to their third-straight district championship for the third



SHELBY BRANDENBURG / YEARBOOK STAFF

Sophomore Emma Brezenski dribbles around a defender in the subdistrict final game on February 16th vs. David City High School. The Shamrocks won the game 50-34.

year in a row before losing a tight battle in the second half. The girls basketball team ended the season 19-6, the best record the team has since

winning state in 2018. Junior Joanna Rusher led the team in scoring this past year.

"The underclassmen have taken a huge step over

the course of this year, and their experience will help to contribute to the success of the team next year," Rusher said.

Brunkhorst bursts on scene with state

By Ted Fehringer
Staff Reporter

The young Scotus wrestling squad saw a successful close to its 2022-2023 season with freshman Hunter Brunkhorst qualifying for the state tournament at 106 pounds.

Besides having a lone qualifier, senior Paul Lit-

tlefield felt he completed a successful senior season, improving areas of his wrestling game and learning valuable life lessons along the way.

"Throughout the season, my takedowns became more explosive," Littlefield said. "A life lesson I learned is that life is hard. You must push through adversity to be successful."

Littlefield, the lone senior on the team, set some lofty goals for his final season.

"I really wanted to qualify for the state tournament in Omaha," Littlefield said. "I worked hard at practice to try to accomplish this goal."

Unfortunately, Littlefield fell one match short of qualifying at the district

tournament on February 11th at Ralston High School.

Despite falling short of his goal, Littlefield had fond memories of the team's comradery.

"Hanging out with the team during meets was extremely fun," Littlefield said.

Throughout the season, Littlefield saw individuals improve their game immensely, causing him to see a bright future for the program.

"[Freshman] Thomas Settje improved a lot this season. He simply never quits. He never stops trying to complete a move," Littlefield said.

Similar to Littlefield, sophomore Spencer Shotkoski ended his season at the district tournament in Ralston. The underclassman was disappointed he did not attain his goal of reaching state but still found success down the stretch.

"My biggest accomplishment this year was working hard all season and becoming seeded at districts," Shotkoski said.

Shotkoski finished the season 17-21, falling one match short of state. He lost in the quarterfinals to Gering's Brasen Hakert 6-7.

"Not giving up was an

important life lesson," Shotkoski said. "I love to compete and it's nobody's fault but yours when you lose."

Shotkoski enjoyed supporting his teammates, especially freshmen Kobe Micek and Hunter Brunkhorst.

"Kobe Micek and Hunter Brunkhorst both beat a lot of experienced wrestlers during the season," Shotkoski said. "I enjoyed watching my teammates succeed."

Shotkoski is only a sophomore, granting him two more opportunities of fulfilling his goal of reaching the state tournament. This season, he saw improvements in his skillset that will prove to be foundational in next season's success.

"An area of wrestling that improved through the season was my defense. When someone shot, I would score," Shotkoski said.

Hunter Brunkhorst, only a freshman, qualified for his first state tournament, creating a great end to the season for the Shamrock wrestling program.

In the first round, Brunkhorst fell to Grey Klucas of Waverly 7-0. The sophomore had a record of 29-19 and placed second in District B-4.

"I was nervous going

into the match and then I shot a low single, and he sprawled and got around me. He kind of controlled the match the rest of the time," Brunkhorst said.

Brunkhorst bounced back, pinning Jordan Martinez of Schuyler in thirty seconds, recording the fourth fastest pin in Class B.

"I shot a single, and he tried a whizzer. I simply caught him on his back," Brunkhorst said. "It felt great because it's 30 seconds, so I was done right away and saved energy for the last match."

In the next round, Brunkhorst was pinned by Bennington freshman Evan Warner in four minutes.

"I shot in and took him down. I was leading the match coming out of the first period 2-1. The second period he took me down. Unfortunately, at the beginning of the third period, he got me in a cradle and pinned me. He [Warner] ended up getting third place," Brunkhorst said.

Brunkhorst capped off the season with a record of 36-21. It was the most wins by a freshman since Marcus Dodson's thirty-nine victories in the 2012-2013 season.



ALLY WEMHOFF / YEARBOOK STAFF

Freshman Hunter Brunkhorst gets ready to begin a new period in the top position. Brunkhorst was the lone Shamrock to qualify for the state tournament and ended the season with a record of 36-21.

Settje, Gallino say goodbye to swim

By Daniel Cline
Staff Reporter

With the start of spring coming closer, winter sports are coming to a close, including swim. The Columbus Discoverers' swim team's season has concluded, with their last tournament having been on February 10th and 11th. This was senior Alex Settje's last year of being on the Discoverers' swim team.

"The season went very well. We grew close as a team and all of us dropped a lot of time from the start of the season to the end," Settje said.

Settje's time in the 100-yard breaststroke was 1:18.66 at the Hastings Invite, the second meet of the season. At the Discoverers' conference meet at Fremont on February 10th and 11th, Settje earned a personal record of 1:14.05 in the 100-yard breaststroke. From the beginning of the season to the end, he dropped this time by 4.61 seconds.

"We were very success-

ful this year. The success was caused by how close we were to each other," Settje said.

At the Discoverers' dual with Grand Island at home on February 2nd, Settje earned a time of 0:27.44 in the 50-yard freestyle and 1:18.01 in the 100-yard breaststroke. Francesca Gallino is also a senior on the Discoverers' swim team.

"This year was pretty hard because we were a really small team, and, for half of us, this was our first year. We still got some wins and state secondary times due to our hard work and team support," Gallino said.

Gallino participated in the 50-yard freestyle and 100-yard breaststroke at the Discoverers' dual at Grand Island, earning times of 0:31.31 and 1:28.21 respectively. At the conference tournament, Gallino swam the 50-yard freestyle at 0:31.24 and the 100-yard breaststroke at 1:25.93.

"Even though it was my first and last year [of swim], I am sad to leave all the people

I met because of it. They had a big impact on me, and I am sure they are going to do great next year," Gallino said.

Mary Faltys is a junior on the Discoverers' swim team.

"My highlight of the season was qualifying for state. It was something I had worked for since last year, and it was really rewarding to see all my work pay off," Faltys said.

At the Columbus triangular held on January 17th, Faltys placed 1st with a time of 1:15.41. This earned her a secondary qualifying bid for state swim.

"Even though I qualified for state, I did not get to compete. The top 32 swimmers in each event compete, and I missed it by .48 seconds," Faltys said.

Faltys took 1st place in the 100-yard breaststroke at the Discoverers' dual with Grand Island with a time of 1:15.38. She also earned 3rd place in the 200-yard individual medley with a time of 2:32.72.

"The season did not end the way I wanted to. I did not do good at our last meet, which was really frustrating because it was my last chance to drop time before state," Faltys said.

Faltys ended the season

with a time of 1:16.97 in the 100-yard breaststroke at the conference tournament. Next year Faltys will be the only experienced swimmer from Scotus on the team. Alex Settje had some final thoughts on his experiences

on being on the Discoverers' swim team.

"Doing swim for all of high school changed me for the better. I made many good friends and made many amazing memories," Settje said.



ASHLEY HOFFMAN / YEARBOOK STAFF

Senior Francesca Gallino dives into the water at the Columbus Discoverers' dual with Grand Island at home on February 2nd. The swim team ended their season on February 11th with their conference tournament.

Cheer sums up season at state

By Claire Rickert
Staff Reporter

Unlike other state sport competitions, cheerleading teams are given only a couple minutes to show what they've mastered to the judges. The team prepares for months for a total of maybe five minutes of performing.

On February 18th, 2023, the Scotus cheer team traveled to Grand Island and competed in this year's state cheerleading competition at the Heartland Event Center.

"My favorite part of state cheer is the moment before we perform because we huddle up and hype each other up," junior Kenna Barels said.

Out of eight categories, the team competed in two, non-tumbling and gameday. In non-tumbling, they placed sixth out of fourteen.

"It was better than I had expected, but I think it had the potential to do a lot better if we had put more time into the little things," sophomore Ava Rickert said.

The category of non-tumbling includes stunts, jumps, and dancing, but does not permit tumbling like flips or handsprings. The routines are also scored on choreography and difficulty, so if a team has a more challenging routine, they will score more

points.

"Sixth is a great place for us and our routine. We scored well," junior Isabel Zaruba said.

The team placed ninth out of nineteen in the category gameday. Around the middle of the ranking, scores were close and a difference of less than a point could mean ranking two or three places lower or higher.

"It kind of stinks because I feel like we could have

done better to place higher. But we placed well with how much time we were given to learn the routine," junior Addison Schoenfelder said.

The gameday category consists of traditional cheering and includes a sideline chant, a time-out cheer, and a band or school song dance. Teams are also evaluated on their ability to lead the crowd and get fans excited.

"I was hoping for a higher ranking, especially

after seeing our performance on video, but ninth is still a respectable spot," junior Isabel Zaruba said.

This year, the team competed in Class C1 during the morning session. Head cheerleading coach Pat Engel has been coaching Scotus cheerleading for fifteen years. Her two children also attended Scotus and her daughter, Jordan, was on the cheerleading team and now helps her mom coach.

"We had a good day at state this year! We got to see the Columbus High Unified Team warm up their routine and see when they got announced as champions in their division. We do not get to see class A & B as they are a different session than us," Engel said.

With so many other sports taking up gym space during the morning, the cheer team has had trouble finding space to practice this year.

"This year has been challenging on finding practice time in a gym with so many other activities. We need to have mat usage as our competition mat is a certain size and we also do stunts. We have gotten creative," Engel said.

With that being said, the team is happy with their results at the state competition this year. The judges leave feedback so the teams can prepare for next year's cheer season.

"I am very happy with the way the team performed and placed at state. After reviewing the judges score sheets, I was even happier about how the girls did, as there were all positive comments, and they liked the creativity. Some years the judges do not have very positive remarks and that was not the case this year," Engel said.

Cheerleading is more than just cheering on sporting events, as they also have camps and competitions of their own.

"It was so great to see all the parents, grandparents, and friends come out to support the cheerleaders. We are per say the support staff for sports, and it is fun when so many come out to support us in our competition," Engel said.



CLAIRE RICKERT / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Sophomore cheerleader Ava Rickert holds up a sign during their gameday performance at state cheer on February 18th. The team placed ninth in the category gameday.

Boys return to district final

By Maysa Kuhl
Staff Reporter

Unlike other sports, basketball has one of the longest seasons, making it difficult to feel primed come the post season. The Scotus boys basketball team did not let this long season influence how they performed come the end of their season.

Following the conference tournament where the boys placed runner up, the team lost 35-62 in a tough match against Bishop Neumann on February 3rd. The boys did not let this loss dictate how they would end their regular season though.

"I am most proud of how our whole team has overcome adversity and has stuck together throughout the whole season," sophomore guard Owen Lindhorst said.

After the Neumann game, the boys travelled to Kearney Catholic on February 4th, where they beat the Crusaders 44-38 in a nail-biting game. Sophomore Cohen Pelan and senior Jack Faust lead the team in points earning 12 and 10 points, respectfully.

"I am proud of the team's improvement from

last year," Faust said. "We have had a good season so far, but we have a lot of big games ahead of us."

The boys then played Columbus Lakeview in a tight match on the 11th, which was largely influenced by the two free-throws scored by senior Mason Roberts in the fourth quarter. The Shamrocks beat the Vikings 53-49. Following the Lakeview game, the boys travelled to Aquinas on the 17th, where they won in another close game 39-37. This put the Shamrocks at a 15-7 win-loss record.

"As a team we've done better than the last couple years and have been having fun in the process," senior Blake Wemhoff said. "[I am most proud of] our conference performance and getting the number one seed in subdistricts."

The boys' record earned them the spot as the host site for the subdistrict tournament, which began on February 21st in an electric match against Lakeview. After only being ahead by one point at half, the boys strengthened their lead in the fourth quarter by making 5 out of 6 penalty free throws, and ultimately, won the game



KAELYN DIERMAN / YEARBOOK STAFF

Sophomore Max Wemhoff battles in the paint on February 21st, in the first match of subdistricts. This was the boys' third time beating Lakeview this season.

52-44.

The boys beat David City 58-50 in the subdistrict final on February 23rd. It was a close match with the teams being tied at half, but the boys pulled through and secured their spot in the district final game on February 29th

against Pierce. The boys team has not been to the district final since 2019.

"[Going into the district game], we wanted to leave nothing on the court and get out of the game with a win to go to state," junior Jackson Heng said.

While the boys team put up a good fight, it was not enough to beat the Bluejays. This was their second time playing Pierce, but the team struggled and lost 26-45. This marked the end of their season, but the team finished with a winning record of 17-

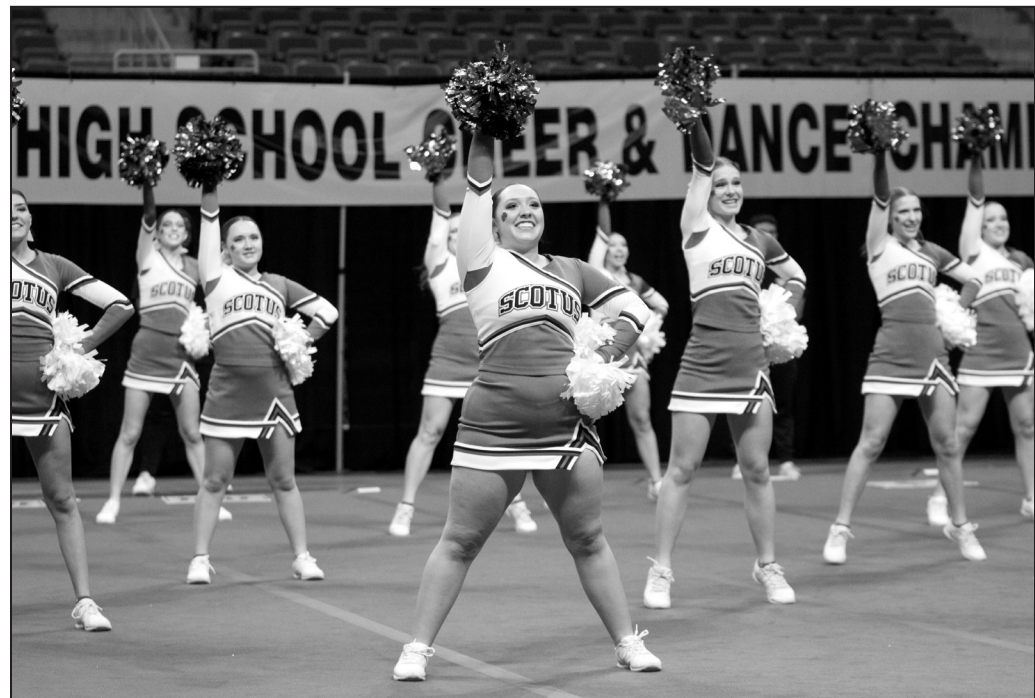
8, a vast difference from the 4-19 they had last year.

"I am proud of the turnaround we have had this year from previous years," senior Bohden Jedlicka concluded.



SHELBY BRANDENBURG / YEARBOOK STAFF

Senior Maysa Kuhl dribbles the ball up the court in the subdistrict final win vs. David City High School on February 16th. She is one of the five seniors on the team this year.



CLAIRE RICKERT / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Senior cheerleader Sam Johnston leads the team during their gameday performance at this year's state cheer competition. The team competed in class C-1 and participated in the morning session this year.

Café brings tropics to Columbus

By Lily Dohmen
Staff Reporter

The tropics have come to Columbus with a brand new and health-based business, Tropical Smoothie Café. On Friday, January 27, 2023, Cody, Lynsay, and Trevor Luchsinger opened Tropical Smoothie Café. Tropical Smoothie Café is located by Hobby Lobby and Slumberland Furniture. Senior Shelby Brandenburg works at the café.

“[I applied for Tropical Smoothie Café] because my friend said he could get the job for me [because] he knows the owner,” Brandenburg said.

Junior Max Lancaster is an assistant manager at Tropical Smoothie Café.

“[Working at Tropical Smoothie] feels great because there is opportunity in a new place,” Lancaster said.

Nine students from Scotus work at Tropical Smoothie Café.

“Working with other

people from Scotus has been good because I knew people I was working with from the start,” senior Whitney Klug said.

Not only does Tropical Smoothie Café sell smoothies, but they also have a variety of foods such as sandwiches, wraps, and quesadillas. The café offers catering services, which include smoothie bundles, boxed lunches, and food trays.

“[Tropical Smoothie Café] is a healthy alternative to fast food and is unique compared to most places in Columbus,” Klug said.

The café donates smoothies and food to community events. They also support charitable organizations and sponsor local sports programs. Tropical Smoothie has recently teamed up with the organization, No Kid Hungry, to help end childhood hunger. Recently, Tropical Smoothie Café and Wingstop CEOs went head-to-head in a wing-eating contest for the charities, Cristo Rey Fort Worth College Prep

and Camp Sunshine. Cristo Rey Fort Worth College Prep helps low-income students become contributors to society. Camp Sunshine is a retreat center for children with life-threatening illnesses.

“[Working at Tropical Smoothie helps me learn about] work ethic, and it has a great work environment,” Lancaster said.

Tropical Smoothie Café brings in promos. Every quarter or three months the café introduces one or two new food or smoothie items. After the three months are up, the café switches to a new promo and new menu.

“[Some benefits of working at Tropical Smoothie Café are] it is pretty easy to pick up on things and they are super flexible with your schedule,” sophomore Quinn VunCannon said.

Tropical Smoothie Café has an app where people can win free smoothies, a surprise birthday award, and exclusive offers and rewards. If a person downloads the app, they can get a free smoothie after

their first purchase. People who have the app can order off the app, which also helps them earn points toward free prizes. The café has a blog, which has three main post topics, new flavors, tropical holidays, and news.

“Working at Tropical

Smoothie is different from [my previous job of] nannying because I interact with more people my age and adults rather than little kids all day,” Brandenburg said.

The café is open from 7AM to 9PM Monday through Saturday and it is

open from 8AM to 9PM on Sundays.

“[People should go to Tropical Smoothie Café because] the food and smoothies are great!” senior Lindsay Ohnoutka said.



LILY DOHMEN / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Junior Evan Kiene and sophomore Aubree Beiermann make smoothies at Tropical Smoothie Café on Sunday February 12th. The café opened on January 27th.

HOW WILL YOUR CURRENT JOB HELP YOU IN YOUR FUTURE CAREER?



Senior Sierra Kravig:
Current- Waitress at HWY 14 Brewery
Future- Teacher
“[My current job] as a waitress helps me work on my social skills.”



Senior Alex Settje:
Current- Godfathers Pizza
Future- Something with computers
“[My current job will help me] gain responsibility and discipline [for my future occupation].”



Senior Lauren Houfek:
Current- Caregiver at St. Isidore Preschool and Daycare
Future- Elementary Teacher
“I want to be a teacher so being around kids and watching teachers is helpful.”



Senior Jasmine Jackson:
Current- News Clerk for the Columbus Telegram
Future- Investigative Journalist
“This will help with my future job because I want to be a journalist when I grow up, and through this job I get an insight into this career.”



Junior Karol Torres:
Current- Front desk worker at the Aquatic Center
Future- Surgeon
“[My current job will help me] to have better/improved customer service.”



Junior Logan Erickson:
Current- Pool Operator and Private in the Army National Guard
Future- Human Resources
“[My current job will help with developing] people and communication skills.”



Sophomore Rebecca Kosch:
Current- Valencia Boutique and Salon
Future- OBGYN
“My job now will help me with my future occupation by knowing how to talk to people and help the client’s needs.”



Sophomore Henry Chard
Current- Electrician’s apprentice during summer
Future- Electrician
“[My current job will help me because] I will have an automatic job when I get out of college.”



Freshman Jameson Cieloha:
Current- Dishwasher at Valentino’s
Future- Business Man
“[My current job will] show I can work hard.”



Freshman Emilia Gassen:
Current- Grace Jewlery
Future- Something in the medical field
“This job helps with my people skills as well as learning about different kinds of jewelery.”

Students care for the health of others

By Kavan Splittergerber
Staff Reporter

The city of Columbus provides many jobs to young aspiring students in high school. Although the jobs

may differ, plenty of occupations available fall into certain fields of work. One such field many students from Scotus Central Catholic are working in, is healthcare. Sophomore Kenzy Bei-

ermann works at Brookstone Acres as a certified nurse assistant. There, Beiermann cares for the elderly residents and helps them with their needs. Beiermann plans to continue down this path and become a registered nurse in her future.

“I decided to work in health because I have always been interested in the health care field, and I have always liked to help people who need assistance,” Beiermann said. “Work in the health field is important because many people need assistance, and if there weren’t health care workers,

they would not have help.”

A CNA is a common first step high schoolers take when working in health. To become a certified nursing assistant, plenty of school is required. The CNA class is a three-week Monday-Thursday 9-3:30 class where 76 total hours of in class time needs to be logged. In the class, individuals train on a variety of useful skills which are needed in the health field and practice them with an RN instructor.

Senior Libbie Brezenski already took CNA training and successfully passed the course. In the future, Brezenski hopes to either be an OB nurse or a CRNA.

“Unfortunately, there will always be sick and hurt people, and I want to be able to treat them,” Brezenski said.

To finally pass training and be registered as a state certified CNA, a final exam must be taken. This exam consists of five random skills

which were taught in the class. The student is tasked with going through each step of all five procedures in the correct manner. Along with the exam, a written test is handed out and must be passed to complete CNA training.

Junior Neve Pavlik has not yet taken CNA training, but she plans to do so in the future. Pavlik still works in the health field by working as a sterilizer at Dental Innovations of Columbus. For her job, Pavlik cleans cubicles, sterilizes equipment, and files paperwork.

“In the health field, there is something new to learn every day, and I find it enjoyable,” Pavlik said. “I decided to work in the health field after my mother wanted me to come into work one day. I have found the work and environment enjoyable ever since that day.”

Even students who don’t plan to take CNA training anytime soon still find health-

care work available to them know. Junior Kalee Ternus works as a rehab aide at Wiggles and Giggles.

“For my job I sanitize toys/equipment, help the therapist, watch the kids, answer phone calls, and fill out paperwork,” Ternus said.

Ternus is working in the health field right now because she plans to go into health care after she graduates.

“I plan to continue my experience in the health field by job shadowing around the hospital, and I love seeing the patients improve,” Ternus said.

For students who want to complete CNA training over this upcoming summer, they should contact Columbus Community College to get themselves enrolled in the class. Students who want to participate in the health field now but don’t want to be a CNA, can still find work by contacting the hospital and aiding anyone who needs it.



PHOTO COURTESY KALEE TERNUS

Sophomore Kalee Ternus sanitizes equipment at Wiggles and Giggles on Friday, February 24th. Ternus is one of the many current students at Scotus who plans on staying in the health field after high school.

Scotus students guard the good life

By **Ted Fehringer**
Staff Reporter

Outside the classroom, many Scotus students have taken their talents to the pool, trading their school uniforms and backpacks for swimsuits and whistles, working for the YMCA, Columbus Aquatic Center, and Pawnee Plunge.

Isabel Zaruba, a junior, saw valuable opportunities when exploring a job as a lifeguard.

"I became a lifeguard after working at the Plunge all last summer and realized I could do about the same job for \$3 more an hour if I became a lifeguard. Being a slide girl does not sound nearly as cool as being a lifeguard. I also wanted to have more available job opportunities as being a certified lifeguard opens plenty of job opportunities," Zaruba said.

Completing the training with fellow classmates, Zaruba became a registered lifeguard over Christmas break.

The training to become a

lifeguard is extensive with it sporting three phases.

Kenzy Beiermann, a sophomore, completed the training last year.

"First, I had to do the prerequisites which got you into the class. The prerequisites included six full laps up and down the pool. Next, you had to go down to a twelve-foot depth, grab a brick, and bring it back up. You also had to tread water for two minutes," Beiermann said.

The training prepared its fledgling students well.

"Josie Sliva was consistently tasked with saving the biggest guy possible any time we ran through a scenario. All throughout our class, she was paired with Evan and would have to drag him out of the water, and now at our job at the YMCA, Josie has had to save one of the biggest guys that works with us there during a scenario. She's pretty strong," Zaruba recalled.

Being on the job with fellow classmates has made the experience more enjoyable. Currently, Scotus has eleven students operating as

lifeguards.

"Working with Mary [Faltys], Evan [Kiene], and Josie while lifeguarding has made the experience so much more fun. They provide some humor throughout the monotonous task of searching the water," Zaruba said.

Sophomore Emma Brezenski started as a lifeguard in 2022, finding comradery between fellow Scotus students an enjoyable aspect as well.

"I loved working with my friends and people I knew rather than working with people that I didn't know before," Brezenski said.

Overall, the job has benefited its Scotus employees not just economically but also in building foundational life skills. Many difficulties of the job happened outside of the pool.

"Communication is a big part of being a lifeguard as well as responsibility and accountability. Lifeguards are often approached by everybody at the pool with any type of question, even if it has nothing to do with our

job. I have to make sure I can help them or direct them to someone who can answer their question," junior Mary Faltys said.

Although being a lifeguard may seem mundane on the surface, numerous life skills were offered through training involving situations outside the water, coupling as a useful technique for everyday life.

"During our class, we were all certified in CPR, AED, and First Aid. Having this knowledge is a super useful skill, and I am glad that I have it now. However, I hope I never have to use any of this knowledge," Zaruba said.

Overall, the Scotus students working as lifeguards have enjoyed their experience, with many continuing their lifeguarding into 2023 and well into the future.

"I plan to continue lifeguarding until I am out of high school. It is a good job with nice pay, and you get to wear a swimsuit the whole time you're on the clock. Dream job," Zaruba said.

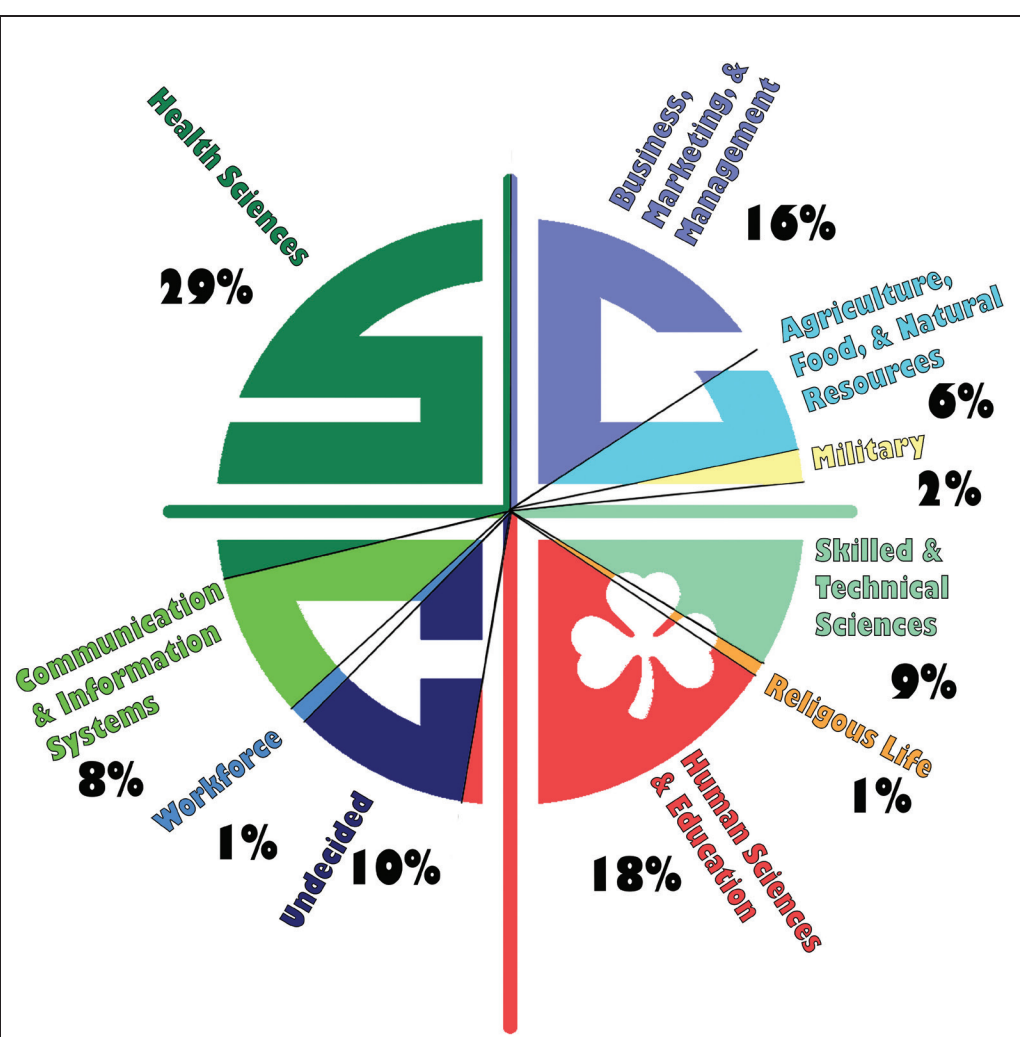


TED FEHRINGER / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Sophomore Kenzy Beiermann poses for a picture with her lifeguard gear while working on February 19th at the YMCA. Beiermann is one of the eleven Scotus students who work as lifeguards in the community.

Career data helps Scotus grow

By **Brennen Jelinek**
Staff Reporter



This career information was gathered by assistant principal Brady Vancura from the graduating classes of 2011-2022.

JOANNA RUSHER / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Job trends change drastically year to year, so tracking data like this is vital to figuring out which classes will offer students a jump start on their careers. Assistant principal Brady Vancura recorded valuable data on what careers students graduating from Scotus choose to pursue. The data is from the last twelve years, tracking how many students go into which field and the percentage of students who have graduated that go into each field. Vancura enjoys tracking these data changes from year to year.

"It's interesting to see the different trends. Over the course of the last 10 years, the interest in jobs from students that maybe require a two-year degree versus a four-year degree has seen an uptick," Vancura said.

By tracking this data, Vancura has noticed Scotus' highest career cluster chosen by graduates is the health sciences field, with it being

the highest chosen field every year. It has accounted for 28.7% of students who graduate from Scotus. Following the health sciences field, the second most students major in business with 16%. The career field with the third most interest at Scotus has been education and training with 8.1% of students graduating from Scotus going into that field. Because of these interests, Scotus has been picking more specialized classes to offer its students.

"We had about 16% of our kids leave Scotus wanting to major in business, and we felt that those would be really good classes to have in place for our kids to experience here at Scotus before paying a bunch of money at college and figuring out that they may not like it. If they do love it, maybe they look at taking a dual credit class over the summer or through CCC," Vancura said.

Along with the growing interest in the business field, Scotus has always had a good percentage of its students go into the education field. On

average, 8.1% of the students from Scotus go into this field every year. With the growing teacher shortage, these jobs are becoming increasingly vital for students to go into each year. Because of this, Scotus added Introduction to Education to help students who want to go into this field. The choice to add this class was not a difficult one to make according to Vancura.

"It's an opportunity for us to potentially grow our own and give them an understanding of Catholic education and possibly bring students back to one of our four Catholic schools here in town," Vancura said.

The data gained from these records helped Scotus as a whole to grow. By offering specialized classes for its students, Scotus allows their students to see what each field is like before going to college. This saves time and money by learning whether they like the career field they are interested in. This sets students down the path of success, translating into their lives after graduation.

Baristas brew benefits in businesses

By **Maysa Kuhl**
Staff Reporter

Cooking coffee beans is no easy task, especially when your job is to serve and please customers' picky orders. Being a barista takes skill and poise under pressure due to the fast-paced work atmosphere, but it is not an impossible job.

Columbus is packed with different restaurants and cafés that sell coffee, but of all these places, only three have employees from Scotus. These being Scooters Coffee, Java City in the hospital, and The Broken Mug with a total of five students working.

"I love the interaction with customers," senior Ashley Hoffman said. "Everyone is usually pretty cheery about coffee, and the friendships I have built with my coworkers are amazing."

Four of the five baristas from Scotus work at The Broken Mug, seniors Ashley Hoffman, Emma Lindhorst, Jace Nelson, and junior Ashlee Leffers. This

café will have been open for six years come April and is even expanding to another location in the new library downtown. These workers will either serve drinks in the main building or work the drive-through known as The Mini Mug.

"My favorite part about my job is seeing how happy the old people get when I give them their drink," Hoffman said. "Even if it is just a black coffee, they are always happy."

Senior Libbie Brezenski is the only other barista at Scotus, and she works at both Scooters Coffee and Java City. Scooters Coffee was founded in Nebraska and is quickly approaching 500 locations across the country. While Scooters mainly operates as a drive through, the Java City is located inside of the hospital offering an over-the-counter experience.

"I always thought it would be really fun to work in a coffee shop because it smells good, and it is a genuinely fun job," Brezenski

said.

Working at a coffee shop teaches the employees real-world skills to benefit them in future careers. These abilities are not just limited to their coffee and pastry making, being a barista trains communication skills, working with money, and working under pressure with efficiency. Former Broken Mug barista and senior Brooke Lehr learned these and many other skills as a barista.

"This job has helped me build on my communication, teamwork, and multitasking skills," Lehr said. "It also taught me to work at a fast pace."

While serving personalized beverages to customers may seem stressful, baristas have been trained and memorized their menus. While it may not always seem the case, not all customers are grumpy and rude. Many respect and even sympathize with their servers, some go as far as to hand out decent sized tips.

"I love the interaction

with customers," Brezenski said. "Everyone is usually pretty cheery about getting their coffee."

Being a barista has its ups and downs, but the Scotus baristas have learned

new skills and created new relationships through their job. These experiences will benefit their future lives.

"The Broken Mug has a great atmosphere to work in," Lindhorst said. "I genuinely

love going to work because making drinks for the regulars and having conversation with them is something I'll always remember even after high school."



MAYSA KUHL / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Senior Jace Nelson fills out an order as a barista at The Broken Mug. The Mug has been open for nearly six years and is even expanding to a location in the new library.

Speech's preparation leads to improvement

By Joanna Rusher
Staff Reporter

Walking through the second floor hallways after school, there might be a few odd things going on near Ms. Mimick's room. There are students yelling at each other, acting super exasperated, and some are even talking to walls. This may seem weird, but for these students, it's completely normal. Speech takes tons of preparation and practice in order to perform perfectly every single time.

The speech team doesn't have tournaments often, but they use the time they have off to improve on all sorts of things. It looks different for each person since they are all in different events.

In the last couple weeks, the speech team has competed in a David City tournament, Lakeview tournament, Aquinas tournament, and the conference tournament.

In David City, the team placed seventh out of twenty-three teams and the next week placed fifth out

of eight at Lakeview. The day after Lakeview, the team performed immensely better placing second out of eleven at Aquinas. Senior Jasmine Jackson led the way placing first in both her events of Persuasive Speaking and Program Oral Interpretation.

"My improvement has been attributed to the coaches and the judges' critiques because they know a lot about what we are doing, give me good advice, and offer another perspective," Jackson said.

The team this year has a young faces placing in the meets. The mix of grades is allowing for success this season. At the Aquinas meet, sophomore Caroline Klitz placed second in Informative Speaking, and she also placed third in the OID with senior Daniel Cline, junior Logan Erickson, and senior Shay Smith.

"Repetition and focusing on one detail at a time is how we improve," Klitz said. "By taking our speeches step by step, we can constantly improve."

To add to the success

of the Aquinas meet, three students placed fourth. Senior Kavan Splittgerber placed in Impromptu, sophomore Madden Saenz placed in Oral Interpretation of Humorous Prose, and sophomore and Rebecca Policky placed in Informative Speaking. Freshman Jacqueline Stoner and sophomore Jessica Jackson placed fifth, Stoner in Persuasive Speaking and Jackson in Program Oral Interpretation. Sophomore Jordan Kouma placed sixth in Extemporaneous Speaking.

"We have a strong and up-and-coming team," Klitz said. "We are all incredibly close, and we always want each other to improve. We are growing by encouraging others to grow."

Conference speech is different from other meets because the coaches can only submit three people in each category. The team will have a week to prepare and decide who will compete, and everyone has different things to improve on. Varsity coach Melanie Mimick works with each individual to improve in

every category.

"Ms. Mimick tells us which of the judges' comments we need to do, so I do everything she tells me," Cline said. "Judges' comments and other people who have aided in my improvements."

At conference, the team

sent 15 events to the finals. Four different competitors placed in the top three with ten others placing. Jasmine Jackson placed first in Persuasive speaking and third in Program Oral Interpretation, Jessica Jackson placed first in Program Oral Interpretation, Splittgerber placed third in Serious Prose and Saenz

placed third in Humorous Prose. Overall, the team placed second at the Centennial Conference Speech Meet.

This Saturday, the speech team will compete at district speech in Wayne, which will decide who gets to compete at state speech.



ALLY WEMHOFF / YEARBOOK STAFF

Senior Shay Smith, junior Logan Erickson, and sophomore Caroline Klitz perform their OID at the Scotus Speech Invite. The entire Scotus speech team placed second at the conference tournament.

Scotus band performs totally rad concert

By Kavan Splittgerber
Staff Reporter

Music filled the Dowd Activity Center on Monday, February 6th. The Band department put together a concert that night for everyone to come and enjoy. This concert was Scotus' 28th dinner con-

cert where a dinner set up by the band students is held right before the concert.

"Being a part of the dinner concert is always something to be proud of, and the fact that events like this could last that long is amazing," junior baritone Neve Pavlik said.

The dinner took place over an hour before the music started in the Scotus cafeteria. Every year, the Scotus dinner concert has a different theme, and this year's theme was the 80s. The cafeteria was full of bright, neon colors and streamers with many objects popular in the 80s decorating

tables such as boomboxes and Rubik cubes.

"The band dinner concert really supports a good cause, and I would encourage so many more people to come and watch it because of the fun music, and there's more than just cookies available--a full course meal!" senior saxophone Jasmine Jackson said.

After dinner, everyone moved into the Dowd Activity Center and waited for the concert to begin. Jazz Band kicked the night off with three iconic songs hailing from famous 80s artists. They played, "Crazy Little Thing Called Love" by Queen, "Billie Jean" by Michael Jackson, and "Take On Me" by A-Ha.

"My favorite song to play was "Crazy Little Thing Called Love." Jazz band loved to play that song, and we always had fun doing so," freshman tenor saxophone Jake Demuth said.

The songs were not the only throwbacks to the 80s; the gym was decorated for the occasion as well. 80s shine was on full display with neon colors and small disco balls all around. At the center of the gym was a large paint-

ing depicting a concert from the 80s painted by Scotus art teacher Clyde Ericson.

"I think it is a good theme because parents, grandparents, etc. can relate. We as students also get to experience playing a different generation of music," junior percussionist Nicole Peterson said.

Once the Jazz Band concluded their pieces, the fifth-grade band followed up their performance with a couple of songs from Queen. They played a medley of "We Will Rock You" and "Another One Bites The Dust" and "Rock This Band." The sixth-grade band took the stand next and played "Any Way You Want It" by Journey and "Ghostbusters" by Ray Parker, Jr.

Part of having the theme for the dinner concert means having the band students dress up to match it. To match the music they played, many band kids donned colorful 80s inspired outfits to bring the theme to life.

"First, I consulted the Internet, which told me to wear colorful, mismatched clothes, so I did exactly that, donning my brightest color, biggest hoops, leg warmers,

and a high ponytail," Jackson said.

The junior high band was up next with their assortment of three 80s tunes. Their performance consisted of "The Eye Of The Tiger" by Survivor, "Don't Stop Believin" by Journey, and "The Final Countdown" by Europe.

The night finally concluded with the senior high band. The group of 33 members played 9 songs including many famous 80s tracks such as "Never Gonna Give You Up" by Rick Astley and "Danger Zone" by Kenny Loggins.

"I really enjoyed playing "Sweet Child O' Mine" because I know all the words and sang along with Henry Chard during our rests," sophomore alto saxophone Ian Karges said.

The Scotus band will now be practicing for the district music competition in a couple months. Wednesday, April 26th will be the date of the last band concert for the school year of 2022-2023.

"I am sad that it is over, but I'm glad we went out with a bang with the 80s theme," senior trumpet Hailley Steffensmeier said.



MAYSA KUHLL / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Senior Jasmine Jackson, sophomores Ian Karges and Henry Chard, and freshman Jake Demuth play their saxophones in the Dowd Activity Center on February 6th for the dinner concert. Nineteen songs were played during the concert, all of which were from the 80s to hit the theme.

Determination drives dance at state

By Mary Faltys
Staff Reporter

As the busy, action-packed winter season came to a close, many activities participated in their final competitions and performances. The flag and dance team was one of these activities with an important competition before the spring season started.

On Friday February 17th, the girls on the team traveled to Grand Island to perform at the state dance competition. The team has 10 girls this year.

Senior Brianna Belzer had mixed feelings headed into state.

"I was excited and nervous. I was excited because we worked really hard on our dances. We started in July learning them, so I was excited to show more people. I was also nervous because I have messed up in the past and was afraid it would hap-

pen again," Belzer said.

Last year, the team placed 7th out of 11 teams. Wanting to do even better, they put in countless hours of practice to perfect their routines. They practiced 3-4 times a week since October in the early hours before school started.

Caitee Hutchinson is one of the six juniors on the team.

"I think practice is the hardest [part of state]. The closer you get towards state, the more you have to really work. It's also a struggle to wake up early and spend hours practicing when you know it's for a three-minute performance, but it's worth it," Hutchinson said.

At practice, the girls work to perfect the smallest details to make their performance as flawless as they can. Every subtle movement counts.

Lily Wemhoff is the only freshman on the team.

"One of the hardest things to do is to get the

dances clean and looking good. All of us being on time at the right time is hard too," Wemhoff said.

This year the girls performed a dance to two different songs. They had a routine for both a jazz and hip hop song. For hip hop, they placed 17th out of 18 teams.

Junior Nicole Peterson has been on the dance team since her freshman year.

"The competition was pretty difficult, but the scores were all pretty close! For hip hop we got 17/18, but it was our first year trying it out," Peterson said.

Their jazz routine placed 9th out of 16.

This was junior Karol Torres's first year on the dance team, so it was also her first time competing at state.

"I am most proud of our jazz routine. When we first started running through it, it was horrible. As we kept practicing and nit-picking it, it became way better than it

used to be," Torres said.

The state competition marks the end of the flag and dance team's season. As the girls begin preparing for next year, they often use the state competition as motivation for their upcoming season.

"I love watching others

perform. It gives me motivation to perform well and is fun to see what other teams have worked hard on for the year," Peterson said.

Senior Ally Wemhoff left some advice behind after her final state competition.

"I encourage anyone

who is thinking about joining to try out even if you are doubtful. Even if you do not make the team, you will learn and be able to progress in anything and everything, and you can carry that to the next year," Wemhoff said.



PHOTO COURTESY KRISTY SPAWN

The Scotus flag and dance team poses at the end of their state routine. They placed 9th out of 16 in jazz and 17th out of 18 for hip hop.

Annie the musical overcomes 'The Hard-Knock Life'

By Jasmine Jackson
Editor

A spunky, young red-headed girl needs a home, and her parents shouldn't be far. In fact, they left her with half a silver locket when they dropped her off at a New York City orphanage. Sound impossible? Fortunately, the Scotus musical department decided to take on this task, as this year's musical. *Annie* the musical found its way onstage and into audiences' hearts during its premiere performance weekend on February 10th, 11th, and 12th.

Before the curtains could open with the "Overture", the cast of *Annie* had to assemble. After discovering she would be donning that curly tomato-red wig, junior Neve Pavlik began preparing.

"I immediately started to memorize, and it was a long process. We started practices in the music room, and before I knew it, we were getting onto the stage, throwing things together, and then, it was showtime," Pavlik said.

However, assembling a two-hour musical can have setbacks, some of which senior Mark Buhman, who played the stern (at first) workaholic Oliver Warbucks,

admits didn't make the production path an "Easy Street" to travel.

"The biggest challenge we faced as a team this year was overcoming our own procrastination and getting over the final hump that we needed to hurdle to present the finished product viewers saw on stage. It took some determination and focus," Buhman said.

Additionally, the group's size would prove challenging. Sophomore Caroline Klitz played an orphan; however, she and many others doubled as more than "Little Girls".

"Last year, we had a larger cast so more roles could be played by different people. This year, with a smaller cast, we had so many quick changes," Klitz said. "I counted six costume changes for me in the first act alone."

Last-minute cast changes also tested adaptability, particularly freshman Giselle Chilapa-Bello's, who gained the role of Annie's fake mother, Lily, who attempts to assure Annie, "You Won't Be an Orphan for Long."

"I had to learn new songs, new script, choreography, and acting a few weeks before the show," Chilapa-Bello said. "It was hard at

first, but the upperclassmen and coaches were there to help me along the way."

To say musical is all about the cast, would be to say "Something Was Missing". Freshman Helene Chard may have been one of six crew members, but she doesn't regret her decision.

"As stage crew, I had to help take props on and off the stage and change the scenes," Chard said. "Musical really lets you get together and meet new people who may end up being your friends in the future."

On opening night, the group seemed ready to conquer any new challenges. After all, they had been tested throughout the season. Musical director Laura Salyard believes all the performances went well; however, there was "Maybe" one that stood out.

"Friday night we had some things happen that never happened before," Salyard said. "Treats were spilled, so Hazel, the dog, went crazy, a plate fell off the stage, but during performances, things like that can happen, but those funny and unexpected things always stand out."

While the premiere of *Annie* proved to have the



KAVAN SPLITTERBER / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Freshman Giselle Chilapa-Bello and sophomore Henry Chard assure junior Neve Pavlik that they are her real parents while senior Mark Buhman grimly accepts Annie's new fate. Chilapa-Bello and Chard played Lily and Rooster, respectively, both of whom pretended to be the parents of Annie, Pavlik, to receive a \$10,000 reward.

most surprises, it also proved to be a favorite, especially for sophomore Lily Humphrey, who played an orphan that was "Never Fully Dressed Without a Smile."

"My favorite performance was definitely the Friday one. It was better than we had ever done before.

Everyone had great energy, tried their best, and had the most fun," Humphrey said. "This made that performance

so special to everyone. Best of all, Ms. Salyard was proud of us!"

As the curtains closed on "N.Y.C.", they also did for senior Shay Smith, who played Grace, the private secretary to Oliver Warbucks, for the last time.

"This year, everyone was more of a family than ever. I cried a lot because it's all over, but everyone should do theater at least once during

high school," Smith said.

And with that last note, *Annie* found a home. It's true, the Scotus musical department can overcome the "Hard-Knock Life". Head crew member sophomore Becky Policky recognized the bittersweetness of musical's finale.

"I am sad that it is all over," Policky said, "but the sun will come out tomorrow."



BRENNEN JELINEK / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Sophomore Lily Humphrey, freshman Giselle Chilapa-Bello, sophomore Caroline Klitz, junior Tori Dush, sophomore Jessica Jackson, and freshman Elizabeth Stoner panic as they await the wrath of Miss Hannigan. The girls portrayed orphans to Miss Hannigan but were often treated as servants.



KAVAN SPLITTERBER / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Juniors Neve Pavlik and Cecilia Arndt and senior Shay Smith struggle to enjoy each other's company as they discuss the adoption of Annie, played by Pavlik. Arndt, who played Hannigan, was hesitant to allow Annie to leave the orphanage.

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How to lose a (wo)man in 10 seconds

By Libbie Brezenski
Staff Reporter

Trying to lose a guy in 10 days may not seem as if it would be hard, but to Andie Anderson, it was the hardest

task in the world. The movie *How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days* is about two publicists named Andie Anderson and Benjamin Barry who meet each other after both finding themselves in different bets with their

coworkers unknowingly. Andie's task was to make a guy lose all interest in her in 10 days, while Ben's was to make a girl fall in love with him in 10 days. Each are both highly determined to win against

their coworkers, but they do not know the other is also in a bet. Andie tries her hardest to drive Ben away by using the most successful tactic in the history of all "lose all feelings for me" tactics. She was determined to give him the "ick."

If you are unfamiliar with the ick, it is when someone does something so gross, weird, odd, or repulsive it causes someone else to lose all interest in them. Icks can be as generic as seeing someone pick their nose or as specific as seeing someone opening a bag of chips upside down and watching it spill all over their pants.

Andie used all the icks she could think of to drive Ben away. She constantly talked in a baby voice, said "I love you" two days into their talking stage, planned out their marriage, got him a fern plant to represent their relationship, made him miss seeing the final shot in a Knicks game by begging him to get her a soda, and simply was flat out annoying.

There is even a point in

the movie where she appears to get the ick for herself. Despite all of this, Ben was determined to win his own bet and stuck around in hopes she would catch feelings.

Though trying to give Ben the ick did not work for Andie, the ick is still a highly common cause of feelings being lost and disgust being gained. In fact, many people around Scotus also have their own personal icks they cannot stand to witness.

Some of the most common icks among the student body are nose picking, clinginess, mullets, bad hygiene, and baby voices.

While some icks are generic and can happen anytime, anywhere, other people have specific scenarios that automatically cause an instant loss of interest.

Someone anonymously said their ick is specifically "when someone doesn't tear the toilet paper on the dashed line," while one girl in particular had way more to say. Some of her icks include, "men wearing sandals, posting dhmu (don't

hit me up) on their snapchat story, mansplaining (when boys belittle a girl's intelligence and explain something commonly known), PDA (public displays of affection), aggressively blowing their nose, and mullet perms."

Though some would argue if someone were really in love with someone else they would not lose feelings over something minuscule, I think "icks" are a normal human reaction to disturbing scenarios.

If I saw my boyfriend picking his nose or chewing with his mouth open, I would be severely annoyed and disgusted enough to find him less attractive, and I would probably like him at least a little less.

However, if someone loses ALL of their feelings for someone over something small or a one-time thing, I believe they never were truly in love with them at all and should realize they probably do something to give someone else the ick, too.



MAYSA KUHLL / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Prog rock deserves fresh appreciation

By Daniel Cline
Staff Reporter

1969 was a turning point for culture, especially music. With the breakup of The Beatles in 1970, a gaping hole was left in the world of music. Rather than attempt to replicate The Beatles' formula, rock artists began to experiment with other types of instruments and sounds. This led to the invention of progressive rock, one of the most underrated genres of music. Many potential fans of prog rock may not know of its existence, although all fans of music should.

Progressive rock, or prog rock, is a subgenre of rock music with its origins in 1960s and 1970s rock. Elements of prog rock include unusual time signatures, nontraditional instruments and melodies, abrupt stops and starts, fantastical lyrics, and/or no lyrics at all.

One of the first and probably most famous prog rock albums is *In the Court of the Crimson King* by King Crimson. Throughout the

album, listeners can hear saxophones, long guitar solos, a variety of vocals, and fade ins and fade outs. The album was not only influential on prog rock, but on rock music as a whole. Listeners would be hard pressed to not find similarities between the song "21st Century Schizoid Man" and later heavy metal.

Some famous rock bands began as prog rock bands, such as Queen. Aspects of prog rock are evident in Queen's first album *Queen* as well as in their follow up *Queen II*. *Queen II* is a concept album, meaning all songs segue from one to the next. The album is almost stereotypical progressive rock with song titles such as "Ogre Battle" and "The March of the Black Queen".

A band who many say defined the genre of prog rock is the band Rush. Rush consisted of Canadians Neil Peart, Geddy Lee, and Alex Lifeson. Rush began as a Led Zepplinesque rock band, adopting elements of prog rock into their hard rock style. For example, their song "2112" is a twenty-min-

ute-long epic split into seven sections. The song tells the story of a person living in the year 2112 under the rule of a government that suppresses music. The main character finds a guitar in a cave and learns of the beauty of music.

Another of Rush's songs that serves as a great display of the nontraditional nature of progressive rock music is "Xanadu". "Xanadu" is an eleven-minute-long epic based on the poem "Kubla Khan" by Samuel Taylor Coleridge. The first five minutes of the song is entirely instrumental, composed of wind chimes, tubular bells, a glockenspiel, electric guitars, and drums. The song then breaks into a hard rock style with the introduction of lyrics, bringing Rush's evolution as a band full circle.

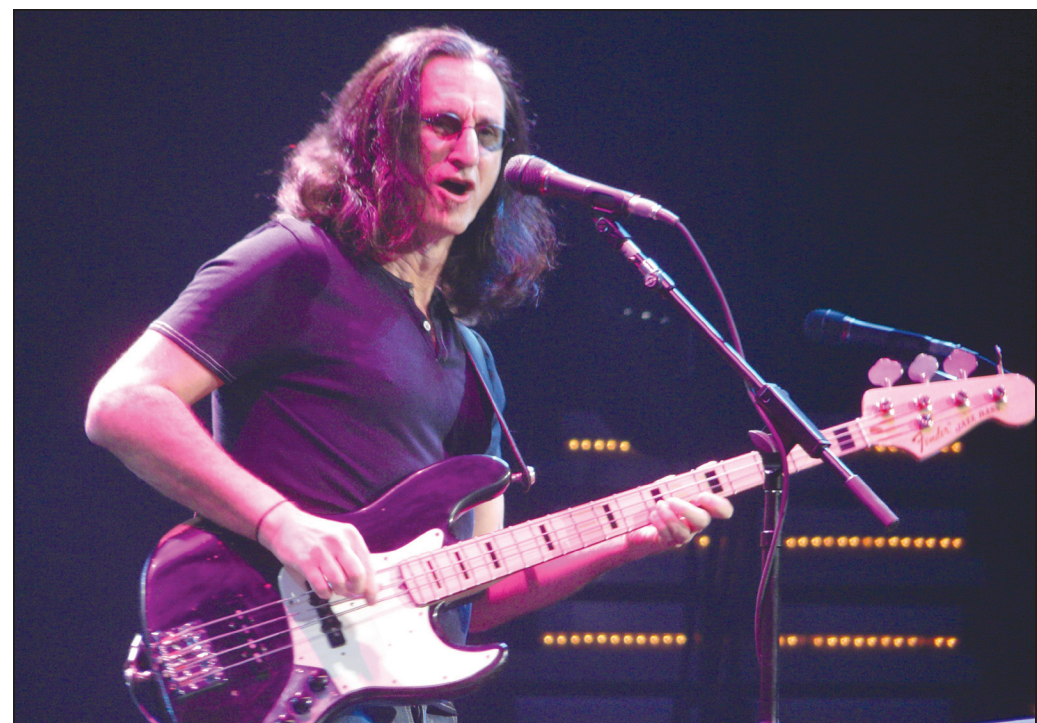
To start listening to prog rock, I recommend first listening to *The Dark Side of the Moon* by Pink Floyd. This is a quintessential prog rock concept album with my personal favorite song being "Money". Next, I recommend *Moving Pictures* by Rush. This album cannot

be described as anything less than perfect. The album includes Rush's two biggest hits "Tom Sawyer" and "Limelight". Other albums by Rush I recommend are *2112*, *A Farewell to Kings*, *Hemispheres*, and *Clockwork*

Angels. Finally, I recommend *Fragile* by Yes. This album includes the widely known song "Roundabout".

Of all subgenres of rock music, progressive rock is one of the most diverse and distinct. From its inception,

prog rock was about breaking away from the norms of popular music and creating something truly unique. Prog rock deserves to be more mainstream in the world of music.



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Lead singer and bass player of Rush, Geddy Lee, performs in St. Paul, MN on May 22, 2008. Rush is considered by many to have defined the progressive rock genre.

Keep the change! No, I mean it!

By Mark Buhman
Staff Reporter

How many times have you been in a restaurant, barber shop, or some other business and heard the phrase "keep the change"? Well, I've heard it many times, and it pains me each time I hear it used. The saying "keep the change" was first coined

many years ago, a phrase used by consumers when they wanted a waiter, cab driver, or some other business owner to keep the change from the amount handed over as a tip. Don't get me wrong! Giving back the change is not a bad habit, but it must be contained if you're a coin collector.

People have many different hobbies and interests.

Mine happens to be coin collecting. In the summer of 2019, I began my quest to amass a collection of old U.S. currency, both coins and bills. However, I primarily concentrated on collecting coins due to their historical, numismatic, and metallic value, and I feel others should do the same.

On November 13th, 1790, politician, diplomat,

and Founding Father John Jay wrote to then President George Washington.

"The Constitution provides, that 'no State shall coin money, nor make any thing but gold or silver coin a tender in payment of debts,'" Jay wrote.

Yes, we used to only use gold and silver coins as currency. Today such a practice would be absurd, but there was a time when gold and silver were not the blatantly precious metals they are today. Due to economic strife, in 1933, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt ordered citizens to turn in any gold coinage they possessed. In the 1930s, this included the Half Eagle (\$5 gold piece), Eagle (\$10 gold piece), and Double Eagle (\$20 gold piece), among other coins. The following year, the Gold Reserve Act of 1934 was passed, transferring "ownership of all monetary gold in the United States to the U.S. Treasury," according to an article published by *Federal Reserve History*. The end

of this numismatic era was difficult to swallow, but it wouldn't be the last time such an end would come. In 1964, the last 90% silver dimes, quarters, and half-dollars were produced!

Once commonplace in circulation, these coins are now barely able to be found, even in places where they are sold. Their numismatic value, originating from quality, quantity, and metallic content, has collectors, stackers, and many others scrounging for even the smallest specimens. I've witnessed this firsthand. Once, I visited a coin shop in Norfolk, and upon entering, I was greeted by the fact that the owner was completely out of silver. The reality is, demand is high, and availability is sparse.

As I said, a coin's value is derived from three primary factors, the largest being its metallic content. If you need some proof, consider this scenario. The rarest coin of the series is the 1909-S V.D.B. On a number of the pen-

nies that year, "V.D.B.," the designer of the coin's initials, was stamped onto the reverse at the center-bottom, between both wheat ears. The 1909-S V.D.B., with a mintage of 484,000 coins, can sell anywhere from \$1,200-\$1,550 in mint-state condition, according to Whitman's 2022 *Red Book*. Compare this to the 1932-D Washington Quarter with a mintage of 436,000, and it sells for a whopping \$7,500 in MS-65! The silver content of the Washington Quarter, among other factors, helped increase its value, whereas the copper alloy of the Wheat Penny did not give it the extra profit sought by collectors.

You see, coins are quite valuable! There's something about having a physical representation of wealth in the palm of your hand. The next time you think about tossing your change in the tip jar, take my tip, and keep your change! No, I mean it! Keep the change!



ANGIE RUSHER / JOURNALISM ADVISOR

Pictured above is a large portion of senior Mark Buhman's coin and bill collection. Buhman has been collecting old U.S. currency for about three-and-a-half years.



Good luck, 2023 Seniors!



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Journalism wins fifth state championship

By Maysa Kuhl
Staff Reporter

Coming off of a second back-to-back state championships for Class B state journalism, the Scotus Journalism team arrived to the state competition on April 24th for a chance to win their third. With 31 entries and 24 students attending the event, students from newspaper, yearbook, video production, and graphic design helped contribute to the school's 5th state journalism title.

The team scored a total of 438 points marking a record for the school. The team sat a good distance ahead of the state runner-up, Elkhorn North, for a majority of the competition. Sophomore Jessica Jackson placed first in Advertising and third in Editorial Cartooning scoring a hefty amount of points for the team.

"Being a part of State Journalism was an enjoyable experience," Jackson said. "It's always nice to be a part of something with people who try their hardest to do their best."

There were a total of 7 individual state champions coming from 5 events. Seniors Jack Faust and Nick Zoucha in Broadcast News Story, Ava Cremers and Neleigh Sliva in Broadcast Feature Story, Libbie

Brezenski in Newspaper News Writing, Jasmine Jackson in Headline Writing, and Jessica Jackson in Advertising.

"I wasn't sure what to expect! Especially since it was my first time participating in video production," Sliva said. "I'm proud of everybody and excited with what I placed with!"

There are four teachers who

oversee the journalism program as a whole, Angie Rusher, Taylor Dahl, Cody Mroczek, and Clyde Ericson. Mrs. Rusher teaches both Newspaper and Yearbook class, and this is her 14th year teaching and 5th state championship. This is also what the school calls a 3-peat, since this is the third state championship the team has won in a row.

"Every year is very different,

but the goal is always the same: get as many students to state as possible, especially to compete, and our talented students do the rest," Rusher said. "I am so proud of the work they put in, and that they get to share and celebrate their academic and creative abilities."

There are two types of events students can be a part of in state journalism, preliminary or competi-

tion. Those who are in preliminary events do not have to compete and only have to be present for the awards ceremony. On the other hand, those who are competing must perform in their event within a certain time frame. What they submit at the end of their time slot is what is judged. Students can only compete in two events; this factor allowed for Scotus to qualify four alternates.

"Actually competing was kind of nerve-wracking. Usually all the work I do for journalism is done over a course of a few days, but condensing it all into a 75 minute period was stress-inducing," Jasmine Jackson said. "I had to work double time."

Of last year's state championship team, there were seven returners which were a part of this year's win, seniors Kavanaugh Splittgerber, Jasmine Jackson, Lily Dohmen, Maysa Kuhl, Hailey Steffensmeier, Ted Fehring, and sophomore Jessica Jackson. This is the most returners to be on a team in Scotus journalism history. There will be three returners in next year's journalism classes.

"I am proud of the championship and hope the underclassmen can continue the success in the future," Steffensmeier said.



PHOTO COURTESY TRICIA FAUST

The 2023 State Journalism team poses for a team photo following their victory on Monday, April 24th. The team boasted five event champions.

Scotus' principal search ceases with Vancura

By Joanna Rusher
Staff Reporter

In the spring of 2021, the search began for a new principal for Scotus. With current principal and president Jeff Ohnoutka taking on more responsibilities and eventually becoming executive director of all Columbus Catholic Schools, there was a need for a new face. The

search ceased after two full school years when Scotus alum Brady Vancura announced he would take up the position in the fall of 2023.

"I think Mr. Vancura is the right guy for the position," Ohnoutka said. "He's really levelheaded, he has really good leadership skills, and I think he's going to do a fantastic job."

Vancura graduated from Scotus in 2012. After attending Bellevue

University for a few months and deciding he didn't want to major in sports management, he transferred to Midland University and earned his bachelor's in secondary education. After earning his masters' in curriculum/instruction and administration while teaching at Columbus High School, he returned to Scotus, was hired as the assistant principal in 2021, and has been working in administration for the past two years.

"I like the expectations that Scotus places on students because I think it allows them to be successful beyond our building," Vancura explained. "Graduating from here, I have the kind of background knowledge of the way that things have always been done, the 'Scotus Way', or the 'Scotus Tradition'."

When Vancura returned, there were many familiar faces. Being the assistant principal, he was the administrator of fourteen staff members who were here from when he was a senior.

"It was challenging at first. I was worried they were going to have certain expectations of me based on how I was as a student," Vancura stated. "I know these teachers are excellent teachers because I had a lot of them. I mean, I wouldn't have gone into education if it wasn't for me having excellent teachers going through here."

Although many of the same teachers are still here, Scotus has grown and changed since 2012. There are different classes offered including an Intro to Education

class taught by Sandy VanCura, Vancura's aunt. Even though Vancura did not have the opportunity to take this class in high school, the preparation he received at Scotus was valuable.

"[At Scotus,] we try to get people to be the best versions of themselves that they can be and to have high expectations for them," Ohnoutka said. "The people who work in this building are a really high character. They want what's best for Scotus and they challenge our students; Mr. Vancura was a byproduct of that."

At the beginning of the 2023 school year, Scotus will have a principal again, a position that has been empty for two years. Ohnoutka, the executive director of the four schools, will be able to take on more responsibilities as Vancura takes some of his. There will not be a replacement for his assistant principal position. Vancura will elevate to principal, Merlin Lahm will continue to be activities director and assistant principal as Ohnoutka becomes more mobile between all four schools.

"I just want to give kids the positive experience at Scotus that I had because this is a place that is known for alumni wanting to come back," Vancura concluded. "Many want to send their kids here because we have provided a positive experience for them. I just want people to know how much I love this place. I wouldn't come back to it if it wasn't special to me."

Speech seizes spectacular success at state

By Ted Fehring
Staff Reporter

On March 15th, the Scotus speech team saw its first state champion in twelve years and a plethora of medal winners at the state competition held in Kearney.

Jessica Jackson, only a sophomore, took home gold in Program of Oral Interpretation (POI) and placed fifth in Entertainment.

"I was completely shocked because I had seen every single POI speech who competed against me and everyone had done such an amazing job; I never expected to place first, and fifth at state for Entertainment was a surprise to me as well," Jackson said.

Jasmine Jackson, a senior, also put up strong performances at the competition, placing fifth in POI and runner-up in Persuasive.

"Placing was surreal because I never thought I would be Persuasive runner-up before. I started the event mid-season last year and to come this far so fast was an incredible accomplishment. It was also bittersweet because my speech season had come to an end after four years, but this was a great way to close it

See SPEECH, Page 2



TAYLOR DAHL / MARKETING DIRECTOR

Assistant principal Brady Vancura addresses the 7th grade class at 7th grade orientation this fall. Vancura will be taking the principal position for the 2023 - 2024 school year.

SPEECH



PHOTO COURTESY MELANIE MIMICK

Senior Daniel Cline, sophomore Jessica Jackson, and senior Jasmine Jackson pose with their medals after the State Speech Meet in March. Cline placed sixth in Humorous Prose while Jessica took home gold in Program of Oral Interpretation. Jasmine placed fifth in Program of Oral Interpretation and runner-up in Persuasive.



LILY DOHMEN / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Sophomore Jessica Jackson finishes a thought during her entertainment speech at districts on March 4th, 2023. Jackson was the Class B champion in Program of Oral Interpretation at state.

ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Staff Reporters:

- Libbie Brezenski
- Mark Buhman
- Daniel Cline
- Lily Dohmen
- Mary Faltys
- Ted Fehringer
- Jasmine Jackson
- Brennen Jelinek
- Maysa Kuhl
- Claire Rickert
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Jasmine Jackson

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out,” the elder Jackson said.

Another senior who defied low expectations headed into the 2022-2023 speech season was Daniel Cline. With his first year being on varsity, Cline made the most of his opportunities, placing sixth in Humorous Prose.

“I had wanted to place better than sixth, especially considering I had beaten the fifth, fourth, and third places at meets beforehand, but nonetheless I was happy and satisfied. Before this year, I believed I would go through all of high school without a state medal or any sort of award that mattered, so I am very happy with the fact that I placed at state,” Cline said.

Two other Shamrocks, Madden Saenz and Caroline Klitz, both sophomores, experienced the feel for competing at state, giving them valuable experience to bring into next season.

“I was super ecstatic for my teammates. The whole experience was amazing even if I didn’t medal,” Saenz said.

The excitement leading up to the state tournament was immense, with some of it spilling over into anxiety during the day of the competition.

“During the day I was nervous because Ms. Mimick and Ms. Wallick kept giving me feedback from my rounds and what I should do in order to improve and make finals. I took their advice and channeled it into doing my best. At no point in the day, especially during prelim rounds, could I slack off. I had to give it my all every single time,” Jasmine Jackson said.

Cline also experienced immense anxiety.

“I nearly passed out the

day of state. Not only was I extremely nervous the whole day, but because of that nervousness I couldn’t eat. Everywhere I went I was carrying a water bottle, making sure I was hydrated. Even though I was very nervous, I still was able to keep the nervousness under control during my finals round. In the finals round I gave my performance all the energy I had left,” Cline said.

The team’s hard work paid off, with Scotus placing fifth overall as a team.

Seniors Jasmine Jackson and Daniel Cline enjoyed their time as members of the Scotus speech team and were proud of their accomplishments this season.

“My favorite activity has always been speech, and I am grateful for my coaches and teammates who have helped and encouraged me to do my best. I hope everyone, although it seems daunting, tries out for speech because it lets you challenge yourself in different ways,” Jackson said.

Next fall, Jackson plans to attend the University of Missouri while Cline is headed to Creighton University.

“I am beyond grateful for the privilege to have been a part of the Scotus speech team. There are certain regrets I have about speech, specifically not having done it my freshmen year and not having participated in Humorous Prose before this year. Despite these regrets, I am happy with the time I was given and happy with how it all turned out. To anyone thinking about joining speech, do it. The only regret you’d have is that you didn’t do it before. You’ll have the time of your life,” Cline said.



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HOMEMADE • FRESH

Prom parties in Paris

By Lily Dohmen
Staff Reporter

Prom is the night when everyone stays up past their bedtime. The junior and senior classes took a trip to Paris, France on Saturday, April 1st, as they danced the night away at prom.

"[Prom] surpassed my expectations. It was fun to dance, and the food was good," senior Owen Rother said.

The junior class officers and sponsors plan prom. They pick the theme, food, DJ, and decorations.

"My favorite part about prom was probably the dance itself! I appreciate all the guys in my class inviting me to get in the conga line!" senior Mark Buhman said.

The theme for the dance this year was a Starry Night in Paris. The night before prom, the junior class set up all the decorations for the big day.

"[Prom exceeded my expectations] because overall

the music was very good, the decorations were stunning, and everyone just had an amazing time," senior Shay Smith said.

Prom is considered more formal than homecoming and winter ball because the girls wear long dresses and the boys wear tuxes.

"[My favorite part about prom was] seeing all the pretty dresses, especially [junior] Kaylee Ternus' because she looked like the pink version of Cinderella," junior Karol Torres said.

Photographer Jaqueline Smith and senior Emma Lindhorst took pictures at the dance.

"[My favorite part about prom was] getting a picture with Mrs. Johnson and Mr. Tenopir," junior Spencer Wittwer said.

This year's dinner included steak or chicken, a baked potato, green beans, a dinner roll, a salad, and a cupcake.

"My favorite part about prom was [the food, specifically] the cupcake; it was

delish," senior Claire Rickert said.

After the dance concluded, the students changed out of their fancy outfits and came back to Scotus for post prom. Post prom was held from 12:30 AM to 3:30 AM. The show this year was a hypnotist.

"My favorite part of post prom was watching everybody get hypnotized. I thought it was very funny when Spencer thought his name was E-I-E-I-O," senior Kaelyn Dierman said.

There were twenty students who were initially hypnotized in the show and one parent in the audience.

"My favorite part about post prom was the hypnotist show. I was a part of the audience because I know I'm way too much of a worrier to be hypnotized. I was super skeptical at first, but that show was real. It was so funny and entertaining," Rickert said.

Senior Libbie Brezenski was one of the twenty students hypnotized.

"[My favorite part of post prom was] being hypnotized, but I genuinely cannot remember most of it," Brezenski said.

Not only was there a show but various other activities. For example, there were three bounce houses, soccer,

laser tag, cup stacking, spike ball, a money machine, and chicken bingo.

"[My favorite part of post prom was] playing laser tag and killing the other team before they could enter," senior Paul Littlefield said.

Prom was the senior

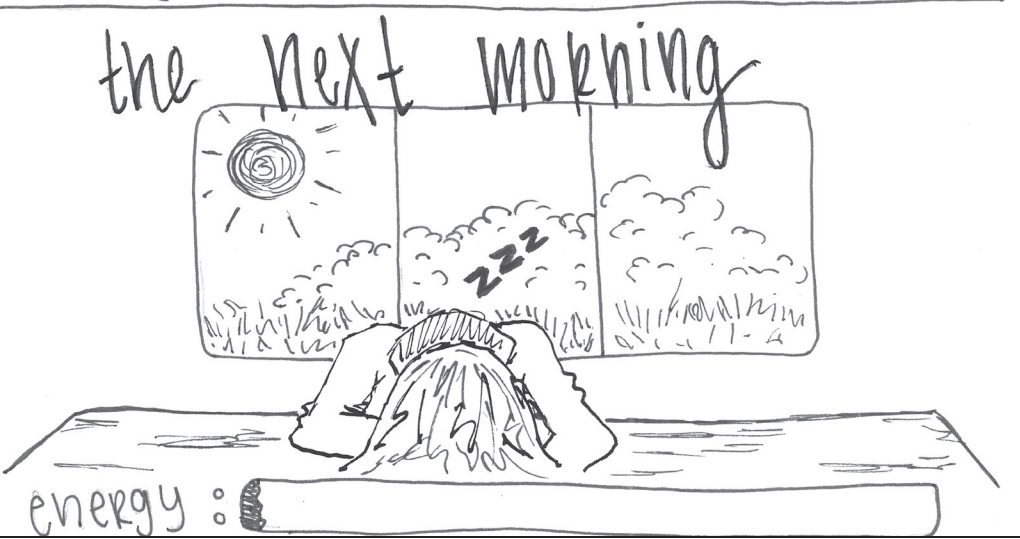
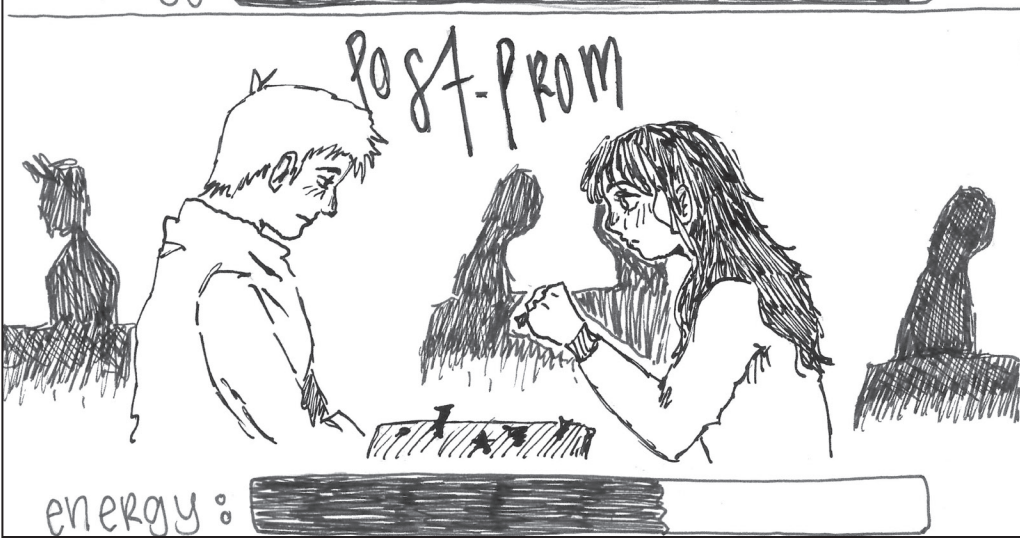
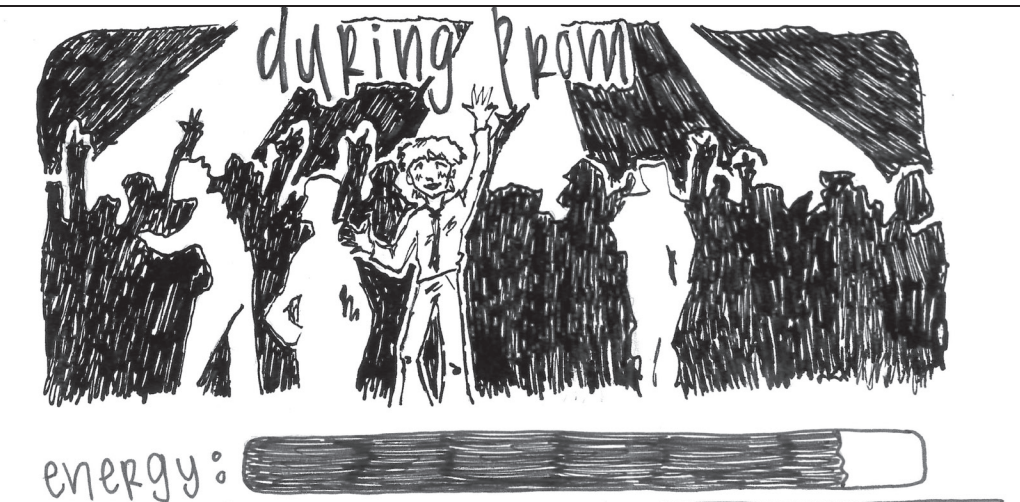
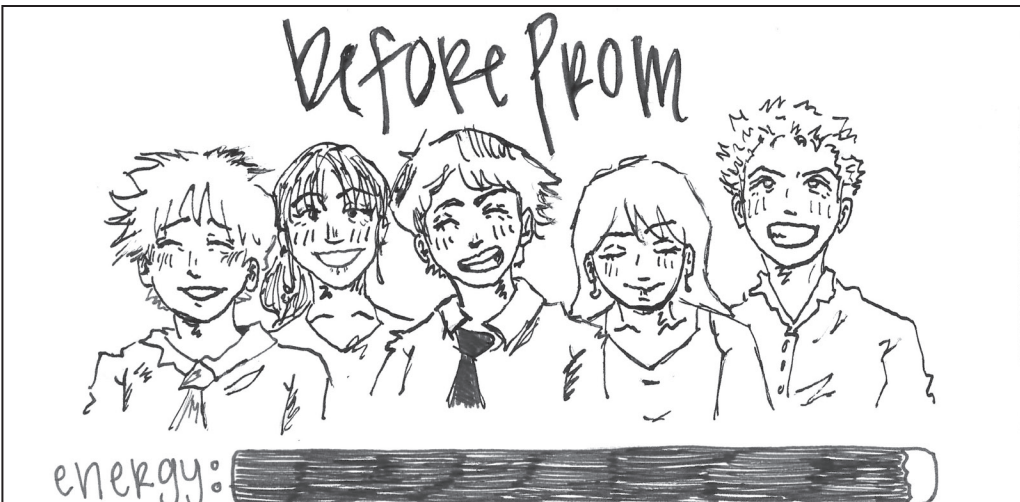
class's last dance.

"Many memories were made at prom that I will take with me for the rest of my life. I enjoyed my last dance with my classmates," senior Hailey Steffensmeier said.



EMMA LINDHORST / YEARBOOK STAFF

Juniors Abigail Laska and Amber Spawn dance in a circle of friends at prom on Saturday, April 1st. The theme for this year's dance was a Starry Night in Paris.



MAYSA KUHL / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

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Track sprints towards season bests

By Jasmine Jackson
Editor

Once the spring sun melts the winter snow and reveals an auburn track and green fields, one idea is certain—track season has begun. This year, Scotus has over 60 students participating in high school track.

Although head girls coach Alex Meyer is excited about the potential of this year's team, she acknowledged how the team's inexperience has proved to be a challenge.

"As a team, we are pretty young. We lost a couple of key players last year," Meyer said. "However, we have a few younger players who have the potential to be quite talented, and we have already seen new personal records set for many of girls, so I believe we are moving in the right direction."

Additionally, the lack of returners has led to some players, such as senior pole vaulter Sierra Kravig, to step up in different ways. Kravig is one of six vaulters and five seniors girls; she placed 6th at

the Boone Central Invite.

"We do not have as many seniors this year [compared to last year], so the seniors here are working even harder to fill leadership roles," Kravig said.

The track season first turned competitive on March 18th at the Wayne State College Invite, which was held indoors—a change from last year's outdoor meet. Senior Lily Dohmen is a distance runner who placed 4th in the 3200-meter-run.

"My goal this year is to place at conference and districts, improving my two-mile time, but the Wayne State College meet was my first indoor meet, which was a challenge because the track was way smaller than usual, and since I ran the two-mile, I had to run twenty laps instead of eight," Dohmen said.

The season would gain momentum, particularly for the boys team, which had 11 new personal records at the Boone Central meet on April 11th. The personal bests included that of junior Jackson Heng and his 4x400 relay team; the group won the event with a time of 3:30.72.

"It felt good to get a personal record especially with all the hard work in practice," Heng said. "We've been running a lot of repeat 300s, which were difficult, but it's been paying off. I hope we continue to keep placing top three throughout the season."

The Central City Invite on April 14th was characterized by more individual success; the track team boasted a whopping 22 new personal records.

"I expect to achieve a new personal record, and a goal of mine is to break the school record in long jump," Bowen said. "The new coaches are pushing us past what we thought was our best and are making us better than ever."

With conference and districts around the corner, the personal records, especially to senior discus and shot-put thrower Hailey Steffensmeier, are a confidence boost. Steffensmeier achieved a personal record in shot with a throw of 34'11" and placed 4th in discus—both at the Central City Invite.

"I hope to be able to return to state again in both

shot and disc, so I plan to keep working in the weight room and on my form so I can continue to launch the implements even farther this year," Steffensmeier said.

The track team didn't travel far for more competition on Thursday, April 20th; they competed at the Schuyler Invite where sophomore Owen Lindhorst won the

400-meter run.

"The 400-meter-dash has always stood out to me because it's challenging, which made me want to try it out. It's my favorite race to run, and my goal is to run it in the 40's," Lindhorst said.

The track team will host the conference meet this year at Pawnee Park on April 29th, and head boys track coach

Joe Schoenfelder is quite optimistic about end of the season success.

"We have had a great deal of success at every meet this year. Before the season began, I talked with the other coaches, and we thought we could be competitive and hopefully send a good number of athletes to Burke," Schoenfelder concluded.



LILY DOHMEN / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Junior Jude Maguire sprints the last leg of his 4x800 relay at the Central City Invite on April 14th. The relay achieved a season's best time of 8:49, placing 2nd.

Shamrocks starving for return to state

By Libbie Brezenski
Staff Reporter

Despite the loss of a heavy senior class and the top two scoring options from last year's season, the Shamrock

boys soccer team opened their season with Lakeview on Tuesday, March 21 winning 10-0. The boys team continued to have a firecracker start going 7-0 before dropping their first loss to

Kearney Catholic on April 11, 2023.

Though there was a question at the beginning of the season of whether the boys would have any scoring options, the Shamrocks

have been able to outscore opponents 32-3 in their first 9 games.

Taking over for the lead of the offensive production this season is junior Frank Fehringer, who previously missed out on most of his sophomore season due to injuries. Fehringer leads the team with 11 goals and is tied for 1st with five assists with senior Blake Wemhoff.

"Being hurt last year was horrible, so I enjoy every second I have on the field knowing at any time it could be my last. It is fun being the guy who scores and assists, and I am just glad I can help the team in such a way," Fehringer said.

Fehringer, along with Wemhoff and senior captain Carter Filipi, are leading the team to victory through their contribution of goal tallies.

Backing the offense up is the solid brick-wall defense of seniors Trenton Cielocha, Isaak Liebig, Cameron Houfek, Alex Ferguson, and sophomores Landon Neville and Jacob Rother.

Ferguson attributes a lot

of the defensive success to their determined mindset.

"[Our biggest strength is] our physicality is unmatched. We do not play scared," Ferguson said.

The team has continued to grow in confidence all around the field and has even managed to beat other top 10 ranked opponents such as GI Northwest in overtime.

Freshman Andy Padilla-Arieta believes the win gave the whole team a confidence boost to carry with them the rest of the season.

"The GI Northwest game definitely proved that we can compete with the top teams in the state and even beat them," Padilla-Arieta said.

Senior Ted Fehringer is one of the team's captains alongside Filipi and is highly respected and admired among the team. Senior Alex Zoucha is a starting wing midfielder for the Shamrocks.

"I look and rely on Ted because he is a go-getter and anchors the team down in the midfield," Zoucha said.

Looking ahead at the postseason, Ted Fehringer

believes the most important aspect for the team to focus on is individual growth.

"We need to get better every day which will end up helping our team growth. Our ultimate goal is to finish at Morrison!" Ted Fehringer said.

The Shamrocks finished out their regular season with a 5-2 loss in overtime at Schuyler on April 20, a 4-2 loss against South Sioux City, they played Hastings on April 25, and will play Elkhorn North on April 27.

They are looking to head into the post season with a hopeful record of 11-2 after their games against Hastings and Elkhorn North and will play their first round of subdistricts next week with a location to be determined.

The boys are hungry for a return to the state tournament after missing out on their chance last year and are determined to stick together "like a pack of wolves" 'til the end.

As Frank Fehringer likes to say, "The dogs are hungry."



LIBBIE BREZENSKI / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Senior Carter Filipi winds up to kick the ball up the field against Gross Catholic on March 25th. Filipi is one of the main offensive contributors to the teams goal rally this season.

Baseball pitches into a streak of wins

By Daniel Cline
Staff Reporter

The soft, spring wind is in the air and a crack as loud as a firecracker can be heard coming from the baseball field. The Columbus Discoverers baseball season is up and running once again. Their season began on March 20th with a 10-9 win against Lincoln Southwest. Nick Zoucha is a senior pitcher and first baseman on the Discoverers baseball team.

"[To prepare,] we did a lot of offseason fundamental stuff inside. We did a lot of hitting when we couldn't get outside," Zoucha said.

Over the following two weeks, the Discoverers went on to face five of the top ranked teams in the state. Those teams were Omaha Skutt Catholic, Bellevue West, Lincoln East, Norris, and Omaha Westside. The Discoverers lost against each of these teams. The two closest of these games were

a 4-5 loss against Lincoln East during a doubleheader on March 25th and a 1-2 loss against Norris on March 30th. Zoucha takes an optimistic approach when reminiscing on these games.

"We played well in our first few games. We still have some things we need to iron out, but we have drastically improved. We played very close with some of the best teams in the state already," Zoucha said.

The Discoverers made a comeback the next week, going on a five-game win streak. Their win streak began with a 5-4 win against Waverly on April 4th and continued with two wins on April 8th against Lincoln High and Lincoln North Star with scores of 13-3 and 11-9 respectively. Senior Brennen Jelinek, a pitcher on the Discoverers baseball team, attributed the team's streak of wins to their time spent practicing.

"We have put in a lot of time working on our

game throughout the season, whether it be pitching or hitting, everyone has put time in," Jelinek said.

On April 11th and 12th, the Discoverers participated in the Heartland Athletic Conference tournament. They won both their games on the 11th against Fremont 10-9 and Grand Island 7-4, making this the first year the Discoverers advanced to the second day of conference. They then lost to Lincoln Southeast 4-8 the next day.

"Overall, I feel like the tournament was a success. We figured out how to string some hits together and get runs on the board. Let's hope we stay like this for the rest of the season," Jelinek said.

The Discoverers next three games were on April 14th, 18th, and 20th against Hastings, Elkhorn, and Norfolk. They won each game 4-0, 13-5, and 5-1 respectively. Spencer Shotkoski is a sophomore pitcher and outfielder on the Discoverers baseball team.



ALLY WEMHOFF / YEARBOOK STAFF

Senior Jack Faust pitches at the Discoverers game against Bellevue West on March 24th. The Discoverers have a current win to loss record of 9-10.

"The first few games went really well. I got moved up to varsity after the first JV game. I am in baseball because I fell in love with it at a young age," Shotkoski said.

The team went on to lose a doubleheader against Lincoln Northeast 2-8 and 5-6 and against Fremont 1-7. The team has a current win-loss record of 9-10 with only four

games left in their regular season. They play next later today at Elkhorn South and tomorrow at Lincoln Pius X.

Seniors sign for collegiate activities

By Mary Faltys
Staff Reporter

After viewing seemingly hundreds of possible college options, most seniors are preparing to wrap up their high school career with their

decisions made. The Scotus 2023 graduating class has four students who have already signed for a collegiate activity, both sports and performing arts.

Committing to a college activity is a weighty decision, and there are many factors to

be considered. One of them is how appealing the college itself is.

Mark Buhman is the only senior who has signed for a collegiate activity that is not a sport. He will be a part of the choir at Benedictine University.

“Benedictine is a solid university, not only on the academic side, but more importantly on a spiritual side. Many institutions can claim to be Catholic; Benedictine actually lives out the Christian faith,” Buhman said.

When Buhman visited Benedictine in January, he had the opportunity to audition in front of the choir director for one of the few music scholarships and sit in on a class. Experiences like these are often a deciding factor in seniors’ decisions.

Libbie Brezenski has signed to play soccer at College of St. Mary and plans to major in nursing.

“I chose Saint Mary’s because I knew it had a great nursing program. When I went to visit, it was a wonderful campus. I have also known their soccer coach since I was 8 years old; I knew if I wanted to play anywhere, it would be for her,” Brezenski said.

Student athletes also have to decide whether they want to continue playing their sport at a competitive level. Many seniors are ready to be

done competing after a taxing four years of high school sports while others are ready for the continual challenge.

Lindsay Ohnoutka will also be attending College of St. Mary but has committed to softball.

“Getting to play the sport I love the most throughout my college career and playing against better competition has always been a goal I wanted to reach. I am most excited about the competition, playing against teams I have always looked up to as a young girl, and finally being the player out on the field,” Ohnoutka said.

Maysa Kuhl has signed with Hastings College to play soccer. She was a 3-sport athlete throughout her high school career.

“I am really excited to just focus on soccer. I don’t have to worry about other sports anymore, which will be nice,” Kuhl said.

The seniors’ commitments were largely influenced by their Scotus experiences.

“Scotus has definitely helped prepare me for the challenges I will face. Ms. Salyard is a strong, determined vocal director who has brought out the

best in me. She pushed me in both Shamrock Singers and musical, and despite the painful process of change, I am

grateful for her fortitude with me! I’m also grateful for the upperclassmen in Shamrock Singers when I was a freshman, sophomore, and junior,” Buhman said.

Coaches are always a major influence, especially after playing under them for four years.

“Both of our soccer coaches, Kristie and Jon, have had a huge impact on me. Not only have they helped me improve on my soccer skills, but they made me more coachable and confident in my skills,” Kuhl said.

The seniors will take their influences, experiences, and memories with them moving forward.

“I have been coached by my parents since I was 3 years old, so it will be a big change to never be coached by them again. I am excited but also sad at the same time for it,” Brezenski said.



TAYLOR DAHL / MARKETING DIRECTOR

Senior Maysa Kuhl smiles after signing to play soccer with Hastings College. Kuhl is one of the four seniors who have committed to a collegiate activity.

Soccer successful through highs and lows

By Claire Rickert
Staff Reporter

Name a sport where it’s cold, rainy, and snowing in the beginning of the season, but by the end it’s 105 degrees and the turf has the ability to burn feet; no matter the conditions the players are out on the field. What’s the guess? Soccer?? Correct!

As the Scotus girls’ soccer team makes its way into the thick of the season, they manage an impressive record of 9-2 after the Schuyler game.

The team started the season off strong with a 10-0 win against Columbus Lakeview. They took the momentum from that game and had a winning streak the next six games.

“Our team is fairly young, so we are working to improve our flow,” senior defender Maysa Kuhl said.

At the beginning of the season, the Shamrocks were ranked #3 in Class B. Although they were at the top of the list, their skill started to

show when they beat Elkhorn High School 3-0.

“One of our best wins was the Elkhorn High game because it proved we were a good team, and we deserved to be ranked at the top of the list,” senior goalie Faith Weber said.

After the Omaha Concordia game was cancelled, the team traveled to Council Bluffs, Iowa to compete in the Thomas Jefferson Tournament. There, they won two games, one against Tri-Center 4-0 and the other against Treynor 4-1.

“I think our wins against the Iowa teams proved to other teams that it doesn’t matter who we play, we can overcome the adversity and win together,” sophomore midfielder Katelyn Pensick said.

The team then managed three shutouts in a row, first facing Bennington and winning 2-0.

“Bennington was the best win because they were one of the better teams we had played that far in the sea-

son, and it was the first game everything started clicking together,” sophomore midfielder Sofia Karges said.

The next two shutouts were against Lincoln Lutheran/Raymond Central 3-0 and Lutheran High/Norfolk Catholic 4-0.

“Our team has been working on talking to each other whether we are doing good or bad. We have also been working on giving feedback to each other,” freshman defender Kate Hoffman said.

In a match against Grand Island Northwest, the team suffered their first loss of the season, losing 0-2.

“Grand Island Northwest was a tough game, and we knew going into it they wanted to beat us since we won two times against them last year. We didn’t come out ready to play, and they took advantage of that. It helped us learn we have to be ready each game no matter who it is,” senior defender Shelby Brandenburg said.

Bouncing back from the loss, the Shamrocks went up

against Kearney Catholic and won 6-3.

“Having our team feel like a second family is our biggest strength. On the field we have such great chemis-

try, and we know each other’s strengths and weaknesses,” Pensick said.

The team faced Millard North last Monday and lost 1-2. Then on Thursday, they

won against Schuyler 9-1.

On Tuesday, they played Hastings and today they will play Elkhorn North.



CLAIRE RICKERT / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Senior defender Brooklyn Brandt gets ready to clear the ball up field during their home game against Millard North on April 17th, 2023. The Shamrocks lost the 1-2, making their record 9-2.

Boys golf overcomes preseason hazards

By Brennen Jelinek
Staff Reporter

The boys golf team has many new challenges to overcome this year to defend their state title. On top of graduating two varsity members from the state team, the boys were also bumped up to Class B. This harder competition has led to a little bit of a rougher start to the season than last year. With only returning three state competitors from the previous year, the team needs some underclassmen to step up. Junior Mason Gonka is one of the three returning golfers who competed at state last year.

“We have gotten off to a rough start but have learned a lot. [Since] moving to Class B, the goal to win state has become a lot harder, and we must pick up the slack lost due to 2 varsity members graduating,” Gonka said.

After having their first meet at Aquinas cancelled due to weather, the Shamrocks kicked off their season at the Norris Invitational. There the boys placed third

as a team. Junior Patrick Arndt shot a 74, placing him third overall. Junior Nick Fleming shot a 75, tying for fourth place individually. The next meet was the Lakeview Triangular against Lakeview and David City High. There the boys placed first as a team shooting a combined 165, 6 below Lakeview who placed second. Gonka, along with Fleming and Arndt, shot 39 and held a three-way tie for second overall. Arndt has been off to a good start this season, placing top five in almost every meet he has competed at so far.

“[My favorite was at] Norris. We all played well for the start of the season, and I placed third with a score of 74,” Arndt said.

The following meet was a triangular in Stanton against Stanton and Battle Creek. In this meet, Fleming placed first overall, posting a 39. He was followed by Arndt, who shot 41 and placed second. As a team, the Shamrocks placed first, beating the next team by 14 strokes. In the York Invite, the boys took on many of Class B’s best

teams and placed sixth out of almost twenty teams. The meet gave them a look at the kind of competition they can expect competing in Class B this year. Fleming placed the highest out of all Scotus golfers at fifteenth. Fleming cannot wait for the rest of the year.

“[My favorite meet is] the Scotus Invite because we get to pick what team we play with and I can play with my friends from other schools,” Fleming said.

The Shamrocks have four remaining varsity meets left before the conference tournament. They then have one more meet in regular season play before competing at districts and state. The team is hopeful they will do well, but being moved up to Class B poses a big challenge. Head coach Brady VanCura is excited for these new challenges.

“Our goal is always to peak at districts and state, so the events leading up to those are opportunities to practice the things each golfer is working on individually. Each guy has a couple of

swing tweaks we are working on that we hope to have

worked out for the conference tournament,” VanCura

said.

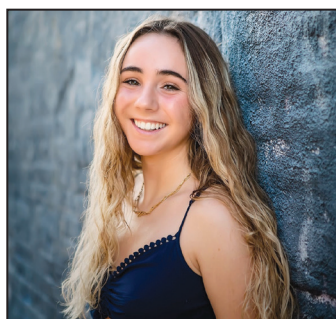


LINDSAY OHNOUTKA / YEARBOOK STAFF

Junior Mason Gonka lines up a putt at the Shamrock Invitational on April 20th. He is one of the returning state champion golfers.



BRIANNA BELZER
Wayne State College
MAJOR: Elementary Education
FAVORITE MEMORY: Telling chemistry jokes to Katie, but I was the only one who was laughing.



SHELBY BRANDENBURG
University of Kansas
MAJOR: Health Sciences
FAVORITE MEMORY: When Mrs. Rusher face planted in yearbook, and everyone was speechless for about five minutes.



BROOKLYN BRANDT
University of Nebraska - Omaha
MAJOR: Criminal Justice
FUN FACT ABOUT ME: I'm related to a murderer!



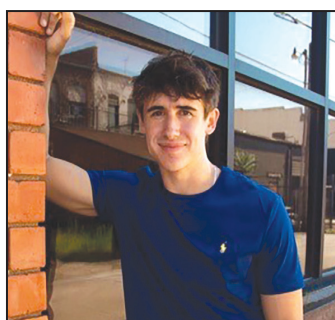
LIBBIE BREZENSKI
College of St. Mary
MAJOR: Nursing
FAVORITE MEMORY: When Alex Zoucha got close-lined when we were running our flush out run for soccer two-a-days freshman year.



MARK BUHMAN
Benedictine College
MAJOR: Journalism and Mass Communications
FAVORITE MEMORY: Making it to State One Act two years in a row!



JASE CHRISTENSEN
University of Nebraska - Lincoln
MAJOR: Business
FUN FACT ABOUT ME: I take trips to Florida every summer to visit my brother.



TRENTON CIELOCHA
University of Nebraska - Lincoln
MAJOR: Business
FUN FACT ABOUT ME: I can do a backflip.



PATRICK CIELOHA
Peru State College
MAJOR: Criminal Justice
FAVORITE MEMORY: "Train yourself to let go of everything you fear to lose."
~Yoda



DANIEL CLINE
Creighton University
MAJOR: Biochemistry
FAVORITE QUOTE: "Live for yourself, there's no one else more worth living for."
~Neil Peart



AVA CREMERS
Northeast Community College
MAJOR: Pre-Dentistry
FAVORITE MEMORY: Lauren's daily jokes in Yearbook.



KAELYN DIERMAN
University of Nebraska - Lincoln
MAJOR: Nutrition Exercise and Health Science
FAVORITE QUOTE: "That wasn't like *High School Musical* at all."



ERICK DIMAS
Central Community College
MAJOR: Psychology
FUN FACT ABOUT ME: I can speak more than one language.



LILY DOHMEN
University of Nebraska - Lincoln
MAJOR: Advertising and Public Relations
FAVORITE QUOTE: "It's the only life you got, so you gotta live it big time."
~Big Time Rush



ISAAC DREHER
Central Community College
MAJOR: Engineering
FAVORITE MEMORY: The zipline on the senior retreat.



JACK FAUST
University of Nebraska - Kearney
MAJOR: Exercise Science and Kinesiology
FUN FACT ABOUT ME: I have not missed a day of high school due to illness.



TED FEHRINGER
Hillsdale College
MAJOR: Undecided
FUN FACT ABOUT ME: I was the first boy in the class of 2023 to play in a varsity football game.



ALEX FERGUSON
Wayne State College
MAJOR: Secondary Education
FUN FACT ABOUT ME: I killed my sister's fish Tito when I was four.



CARTER FILIPI
University of Nebraska - Lincoln
MAJOR: Finance
FAVORITE MEMORY: Freshman year JV basketball with Trenton Cielocha, Calder Obal, and Jack Faust.



BRYCE FOLLETTE
United States Army
MAJOR: Explosive Ordinance Disposal Specialist
FAVORITE QUOTE: "Remember, Canada sells milk in bags."
~Bryce Follette



FRANCESCA GALLINO
Liceo Scientifico Galileo Ferraris
FAVORITE QUOTE: "In case I don't see ya, good afternoon, good evening and goodnight."
~Truman Burbank



JACKSON HANSON
Northeast Community College
MAJOR: Auto Body Repair
FAVORITE MEMORY: Senior retreat.



ALYSSA HIEMER
Wayne State College
MAJOR: Sports Media
FAVORITE MEMORY: Mrs. Moody chasing Cameron with a fly swatter in Spanish class.



ASHLEY HOFFMAN
Iowa Western
MAJOR: Prep Dental Hygiene
FAVORITE MEMORY: Junior high track when Mrs. Blaser was the coach.



CAMERON HOUFEK
Northeast Community College
MAJOR: Utility Line
FAVORITE MEMORY: Scout team hero sophomore year.



LAUREN HOUFEK
University of Nebraska - Omaha
MAJOR: Elementary Education
FUN FACT ABOUT ME: I've had every hair color.



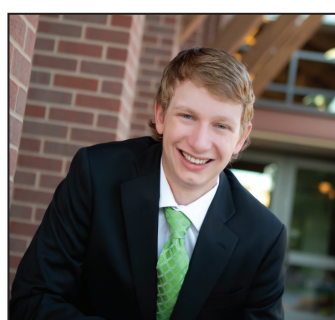
JASMINE JACKSON
University of Missouri
MAJOR: Journalism
FAVORITE MEMORY: I called and texted the radio after state speech without Ms. Wallick knowing, but the segment didn't air.



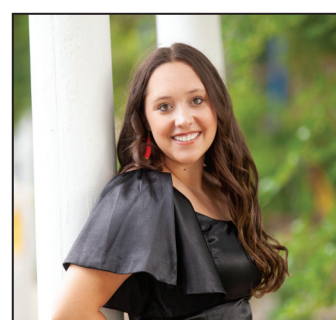
ELI JARECKE
University of Nebraska - Kearney
MAJOR: Construction Management
FAVORITE QUOTE: "Always expect the unexpected."
~Oscar Wilde



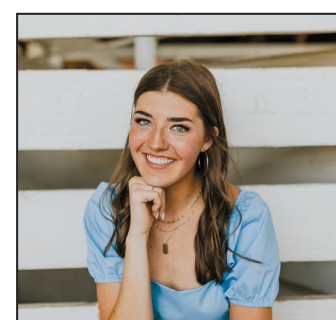
BOHDEN JEDLICKA
University of Nebraska - Kearney
MAJOR: Undecided
FAVORITE MEMORY: I accidentally broke a school window in seventh grade.



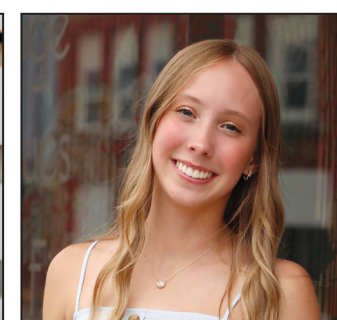
BRENNEN JELINEK
University of Nebraska - Omaha
MAJOR: Engineering
FAVORITE QUOTE: "Whatever you do, always give 100%. Unless you're donating blood."
~Bill Murray



SAMANTHA JOHNSTON
University of Nebraska - Lincoln
MAJOR: Engineering
FAVORITE MEMORY: Mr. Salyard's punny jokes that he always has to explain for people to understand.



WHITNEY KLUG
Kansas State University
MAJOR: Animal Science
FAVORITE QUOTE: "You learn the most from life's hardest knocks."
~Conway Twitty



SIERRA KRAVIG
Wayne State College
MAJOR: Secondary Education
FAVORITE QUOTE: "Long story short, I survived."
~Taylor Swift



MAYSA KUHL
Hastings College
MAJOR: Computer Science
FAVORITE MEMORY: When Brianna and I laughed so hard in anatomy because she said my fontanelle looked damaged.



JAMISON KUSH

University of Nebraska - Lincoln
MAJOR: Fisheries and Wildlife
FUN FACT ABOUT ME: In grade school, I hung out with a college football quarterback and NFL lineman.



BROOKE LEHR

Mid-Plains Community College
MAJOR: Ag Business
FUN FACT ABOUT ME: I have horses.



HALEY LEISE

Wayne State College
MAJOR: Elementary Education
FUN FACT ABOUT ME: I own at least 168 books.



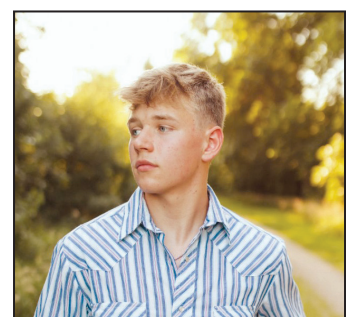
ISAAK LIEBIG

Northeast Community College
MAJOR: Electrician
FAVORITE QUOTE: "Some players land on high ground, others build up to it."



EMMA LINDHORST

Capitol Beauty School
MAJOR: Esthetics and Cosmetology
FAVORITE MEMORY: Watching Mr. Coulter nail Mr. McPhillips in the face with a dodgeball during a pep rally.



PAUL LITTLEFIELD

Wayne State College
MAJOR: Pre-Pharmacy
FAVORITE QUOTE: "There are the known knowns, known unknowns, and unknown unknowns."
 ~Donald Rumsfeld



ALEX LONG

Central Community College
MAJOR: Business
FUN FACT ABOUT ME: I used to weigh 220 lbs, and I now weigh 175 lbs.



TOM MELLIGER

University of Nebraska - Omaha
MAJOR: Electrical Engineering
FAVORITE QUOTE: "Such a small projectile and such a large target."
 ~Mr. Salyard



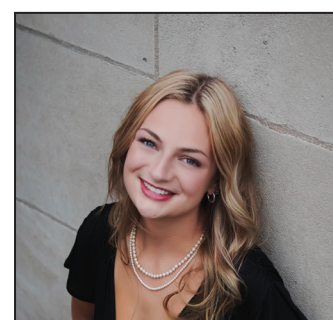
SAM MEYER

University of Nebraska - Omaha
MAJOR: Aviation
FUN FACT ABOUT ME: My full name is my initials, Samuel Anthony Meyer, SAM.



CESAR MONTENEGRO

Central Community College
MAJOR: Undecided
FAVORITE QUOTE: "I've been shot."
 ~Mr. Salyard



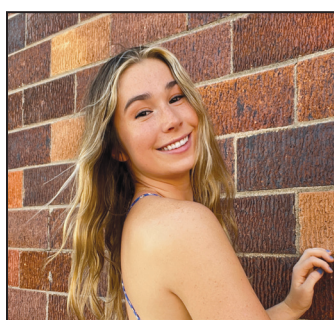
ELLA NAHORNY

University of South Dakota
MAJOR: Biology
FAVORITE MEMORY: Kaelyn trying to quit band in the middle of band class.



KATIE NELSEN

Northeast Community College
MAJOR: Social Work
FAVORITE MEMORY: When we were filling the one act trailer for the first time this year, not everything would fit, but Callen told us to step aside because he plays a lot of Tetris.



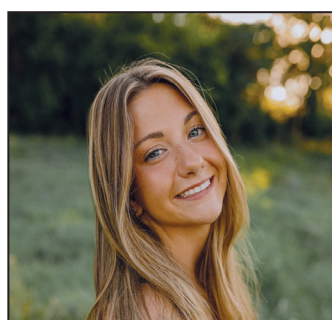
JACE NELSON

Central Community College
MAJOR: Biology
FAVORITE QUOTE: "You miss 100% of the shots you don't take" ~Wayne Gretzky."
 ~Michael Scott



TAYLOR NEVILLE

Northeast Community College
MAJOR: Elementary Education
FAVORITE QUOTE: "In the end, it's not the years in your life. It's the life in your years."
 ~Abe Lincoln



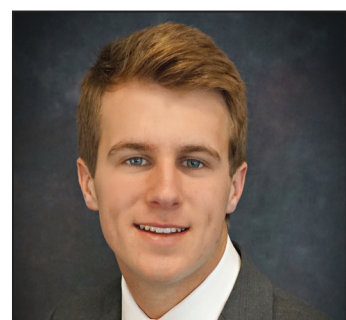
LINDSAY OHNOUTKA

College of Saint Mary
MAJOR: Exercise Science and Kinesiology
FAVORITE MEMORY: The pep rallies and spending time with friends.



EVAN OSTDIEK

University of Nebraska - Omaha
MAJOR: Psychology
FAVORITE QUOTE: "We are making the mother of all omelets. You can't fret over every egg."
 ~Kavanaugh Splittergerber



IZIC PILLEN

Northeast Community College
MAJOR: Diversified Agriculture
FAVORITE QUOTE: "Don't live someone else's dream, find your own."
 ~Steve Jobs



CLAIRE RICKERT

University of Nebraska - Omaha
MAJOR: Pre-Med / Biology
FAVORITE MEMORY: When Lindsay's face got bit by a skull in anatomy class.



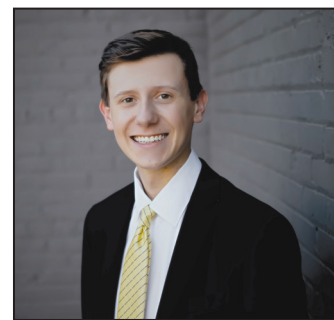
MASON ROBERTS

University of Nebraska - Kearney
MAJOR: Political Science
FAVORITE QUOTE: "You can marry more in a minute than you can make in a lifetime."
 ~Dad



OWEN ROTHER

University of Nebraska - Omaha
MAJOR: Business
FUN FACT ABOUT ME: I don't like honeybees.



ZACHARY SCHULTZ

University of Nebraska - Lincoln
MAJOR: Pre-Nursing
FAVORITE MEMORY: When we flew a drone around the gym during STEAM class.



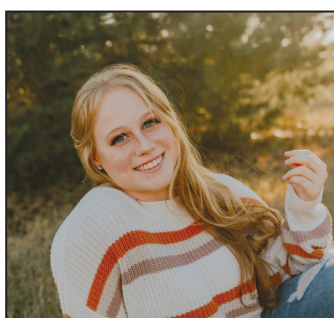
ALEX SETTJE

United States Navy
MAJOR: Submarine Electronic Computer Field
FAVORITE QUOTE: "It's not the size of the dog in the fight, it's the size of the fight in the dog."
 ~Mark Twain



NELEIGH SLIVA

Northeast Community College
MAJOR: Elementary Education
FUN FACT ABOUT ME: I know how to surf!



SHAY SMITH

University of Nebraska - Lincoln
MAJOR: Animal Science
FAVORITE QUOTE: "The best things in life, the very best things happen unexpectedly."
 ~Donna Sheridan



KAVAN SPLITTERGERBER

University of Nebraska - Lincoln
MAJOR: Broadcasting
QUOTE: "To see a world in a grain of sand and heaven in a wild flower; hold infinity in the palm of your hand and eternity in an hour."
 ~William Blake



HAILEY STEFFENSMEIER

University of Nebraska - Omaha
MAJOR: Nursing
FAVORITE MEMORY: Being the first person to become a state champion in a video production event at State Journalism.



FAITH WEBER

University of South Dakota
MAJOR: Nursing
FAVORITE MEMORY: Making it to the state semi-finals for soccer last year.



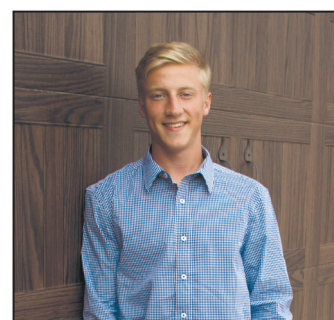
ALLY WEMHOFF

Central Community College
MAJOR: Business Administration
FAVORITE QUOTE: "Our mission this summer is to have a good time, all the time."
 ~John Booker Routledge



BLAKE WEMHOFF

University of Nebraska - Lincoln
MAJOR: Civil Engineering
FAVORITE QUOTE: "Okayyy."
 ~Geno



ALEX ZOUCHA

Northeast Community College
MAJOR: Utility Line
FUN FACT ABOUT ME: I was a helmet kid.



NICK ZOUCHA

University of Nebraska - Omaha
MAJOR: Undecided
FAVORITE QUOTE: "Do or do not, there is no try."
 ~Yoda



Claire Rickert

Every experience in life is full of good days and bad days; high school is no different. There are some aspects I will sort of miss about high school and some I cannot wait to escape from. When going through rough days, it is tough to make the most of it and even more difficult to remember the best is yet to come.

Some days, I truly do hate high school and cannot think of anything I like about it. It is in these moments it is most important to remember to make the most of any situation.

There have been days when I have had several tests on the same day. Those times made me hate high school. However, to make the most of it, I studied my hardest and tried my best to only complain some of the day and not nonstop from 8am-4pm. Everyone has to go to high school and suffer so you might as well try your best to make something good of the whole experience. Even with that being said, I always try to keep in mind better times and experiences are to come. Does four more years of undergrad and four more years of medical school sound better than four years total in high school? I don't know. What I do know is I will have so many new experiences and new friends that will shape me and set me up for success later in life.

The problem I have had with only focusing on my bright future is forgetting to live in the present. I have been wishing away high school for four years. Am I still doing the same by counting down the days until I graduate? Absolutely. But when you have bad experiences, you want to move on. Even through the rough times, I have had to remember I won't be here forever, and the hard times will pass.

I also have to remember high school has taught me some valuable lessons, and I should make the most of situations I can learn from. Whether it was forgetting about a homework assignment or totally messing up a lab in chemistry, I learned so many lessons through my mistakes. Even though I probably did not make the most of it in those situations, I am now equipped with the ability to see the positive in something absolutely negative.

Even though I've had some questionable experiences, I cannot forget the good times I've had in high school. I love talking and laughing with my friends, chatting with classmates when we've convinced the teacher to give us a free day, and celebrating school pride at pep rallies. Ugh, something about the fight song makes me forget all the bad school days I've ever had here.

So, was my high school experience the best? Absolutely not. Some days I feel I will miss high school and other days I know for certain I will not. High school has taught me to make the best of awful situations and to look for the positive, not the negative. Looking back on the last four years, I am able to feel proud of who I've become, despite the bad experiences I have had. Whenever I sense a bad day coming, I must remind myself the best is yet to come.

This is Claire Rickert, signing off.



Maysa Kuhl

It is pretty standard for seniors to tell the younger generations of the school to, "Try everything" or "Be yourself", but nobody ever talks about the vulnerability it takes to be yourself. While writing a project for English class, it dawned on me I spent my entire high school career avoiding any type of vulnerability and instead opted to blend in with the flow of the crowd. I did three sports because everyone did in junior high, and I was too afraid to ever quit. I ditched career ideas because it would require me to open up and share parts about my life I thought would bring forth judgement. It is not that these were all necessary facts I needed to share, but they could have furthered the understanding people had of me.

Come my sophomore year, I had dropped the idea that high school can be semi-enjoyable and replaced it with the idea that if I could just get out of here without making a fool of myself, I would be golden. Underclassman Maysa could not fathom the idea of opening up and sharing her passions with the same gremlins she called classmates. As Mrs. Rusher once said, I was guarded. It was not until the start of my senior year I realized the importance of being vulnerable with those around me.

I would like to say I started senior year off as a totally new person, but that would be a lie; instead, I was the same as ever. It was not until I began to experience typical senior lasts in which I expressed any form of sincere openness with my classmates. Like every senior says, there is a sentimentality to seeing things pass by, and I am not going to refute that statement; instead, I want to add to it. There is a sadness in saying goodbye to things, but with this sadness a bond is formed with those who were there alongside you. Weirdly enough, this bond has almost an unspoken type of vulnerability, one spawned from seeing someone at one of their lowest points. For instance, when my older sister played her last ever soccer game with me at the state tournament her senior year, we both cried. Is it embarrassing to write about in the paper, yes, but in that moment, we were both showing vulnerability by expressing the care we had for each other. It was not something we ever had spoken out loud because we were just dumb siblings, and it took us experiencing a low point together to be vulnerable. I believe if my sister and I had not experienced that moment together, our relationship would be different. It took vulnerability for us to truly understand the importance we had in each other's lives.

If there is anything you take out of reading this, aside from the fact my class was composed of gremlins my freshman year and I cried at state soccer, I hope it is that being vulnerable does not make you weak. It takes tremendous courage to be vulnerable. As I enter this new era of my life, I will be more open to sharing myself with others, and I hope the rest of you will, too.

This is Maysa Kuhl, signing off.



Libbie Brezenski

Despite there being countless romcoms and T.V. shows about the glories of high school, my high school experience was anything but a movie. Growing up, I had high expectations for my teenage years due to the different videographic masterpieces shown on my 2000s-box T.V. The image of high school in my head was full of freedom, parties, boyfriends, etc. All those things did happen to be around; however, high school was also filled with drama, heartbreaks, and other troubling bumps in the road I did not anticipate.

One of the biggest bumps in the road was losing my self-identity.

Throughout most of my time at high school, I have had to deal with a lot of "bullies," with ages ranging from prepubescent seventh graders to full-grown adults, who often had some pretty nasty things to say. From both adults and others my age, I have been told I'm a failure, a disappointment, bad person, ugly, fat, stupid, annoying, and even so far as to "off" myself. Being the naïve girl I was, I believed most of them, despite the fact most of what was said came from people I barely knew.

This took a major toll on me for years, and my family could attest to that. I put on a brave, smiling face when I walked through the north doors every morning and was a very good actress in the sense that many never knew what I truly was feeling inside. I was able to keep the charade up for the ten hours I was at school and activities, but the second I got home I completely shut down. Often after coming home, I would lock myself in my room, bawl my eyes out, barely eat, and snap at anyone who dared to ask why. I was a total wreck to say the least.

This was especially hard on my parents who were often told of how bubbly and happy I was at school and could not seem to figure out why I was the way I was at home. They tried so hard to cheer me up and asked constantly what they could do to help, but even I did not know what would make myself feel better.

I finally asked for help my junior year and went to a couple months worth of therapy after being diagnosed with depression, which basically means I had wired my brain chemistry into having different chemicals out of whack that caused me to feel the way I was feeling with no choice of my own.

As hard as it was to go through it, it made me realize something coming out of it; I cannot let other people's opinions define me, especially in high school.

High school should be a time of discovering who you are, what your dreams are, what you like, etc. Those tasks can be so overwhelming when you realize what you want may not be so popular. It is hard to go against what is socially accepted by peers or adults for fear of being seen as different.

However, once I learned not to believe other people's (who barely knew me) opinions of me and started believing my family's and my own (who do know the real me), I developed a sense of inner peace and tranquility that finally allowed me to truly be happy. Though high school was hard, I am thankful for being able to learn hard, life-long lessons early on that can help me as I take my next step into "adulthood."

This is Elizabeth (Libbie) Brezenski, signing off for the last time.



Mark Buhman

Unlike most people, I came to Scotus freshman year, following the footsteps of my two older sisters. Previously, I had attended Christ Lutheran School, a small K-8 country school eight miles north of Columbus. The change from Christ Lutheran to Scotus was drastic. I went from having one other person in my class to over sixty. Apart from attending my older sisters' sporting events and taking part in summer basketball camps, I had no connections to Scotus. However, I'm not going to sit here and claim as though I did not have opportunities to meet people. I remember, back when my sisters went to Scotus, countless scenarios at volleyball and basketball games where the guys in my future high school class took the time to come over and invited me to sit with them. Often, I turned the opportunities down, but looking back, I'm thankful for their kindness! The guys in my class were and have always been kind to me, and truthfully, I am grateful! Whether they liked me or not, they showed me love.

That is one of the many concepts we covered this year in senior religion. You don't have to like everyone, but you should love them. 1 John 4:8 tells us, "Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love." To a certain extent, I'm sure even Jesus, in his humanity, struggled to like the Pharisees and the Romans, who oversaw his death. However, He still loved them and implored the Father to show them mercy. "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing" (Luke 23:34). Love is more than simply a feeling; it is an action. It often requires a choice, a sacrifice on our part, and this fact applies to us today.

When we sin, we choose the opposite of love. We often do not know what we are choosing when we sin. Sin always results from a lack of insight or an irrational use of reason. For example, if a child steals a cookie from a jar, he does so ultimately because he thinks eating the cookie will make him happy. While it's true eating a cookie will bring him a temporary sense of happiness, he'll realize it's more rewarding to practice self-control and obey his mom by not eating the cookie.

Scotus has helped me realize the greater reward we all receive when we think rationally before we act and choose the morally good path as a result. I'm thankful Scotus helped me fashion my intellect and taught me to use reason for the greater good. Scotus has pushed my knowledge to levels I could never have reached on my own. The staff at Scotus is dedicated to the students. There are few places like Scotus. Few places stand by Christian values as well as Scotus does. That's what makes Scotus so special, and I wish other schools could see that! The staff at Scotus teaches the students to prioritize faith in everything they do. They guide them to couple knowledge with wisdom.

I don't know what the future holds, and I'm sure it will be filled with ups and downs. I'm far from perfect, but that doesn't mean I shouldn't strive to be like Christ. At the same time, when I fail, there's always grace for me to repent and grab God's outstretched hand once again.

Jeremiah 29:11 says, "'For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the Lord. 'Plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.'"

This is Mark Buhman, signing off.



Brennen Jelinek

Throughout all my life I have always been a laid-back, reserved guy. Because of this, I have a hard time getting out of my comfort zone and trying new activities. One of the things I regret not doing in high school is trying new things. It took me until my senior year to start joining clubs and activities. After trying new activities this year, I see how much fun it can be and regret not doing it throughout all of high school.

I went through the first three years of high school only playing football, basketball, and baseball as well as being a member of the National Honor Society. There were many activities I thought about doing, but decided not to because I did not know what to expect. After doing the same old activities every year, at the end of my junior year I decided I was going to try new things. During my senior year, I decided for my last year I was going to try to join as many clubs as I could. I branched out into joining Journalism, Leadership Club, the Shepherd's Program, and the Scotus branch of Habitat for Humanity.

Through joining these new activities, I made some friends I would not have otherwise made. I learned new skills I can use for the rest of my life. If I had joined more clubs sooner, it would have given me a few more years to enjoy some of the clubs I am now a part of. Overall, choosing to do more activities during my senior year was one of the best choices I have made in my life.

High school can be a hard time for many people. The fear of trying new things can be overwhelming. It is never easy to step outside of your comfort zone. The best way I have found to overcome this fear is to find a friend to join the club you want to join with you. Nick Zoucha was one of those people for me. He was the head of the Scotus branch of Habitat for Humanity and asked me if I wanted to join. Knowing someone already in that group alleviated so much of the stress and anxiety that came with joining the new club. It also gave me someone to talk about our projects with and go to events with. It gave me the confidence I needed to enjoy that activity.

If you can learn anything from my time here at Scotus, I would want you to know trying new things does not have to be scary. It is a great way to make new friends and learn new skills. So, grab a friend and go join as many groups as you want to be a part of. Scotus allows its students so many great opportunities to be involved in so many different activities and clubs. So, make the most out of your time here and join as many as you can.

This is Brennen Jelinek, signing off.



Ted Fehringer

In August of 2017, I walked through the north doors of Scotus Central Catholic, waving good-bye to my mother after taking a picture next to the school. I was nervous, with the prospect of navigating a new building, meeting new people, and junior high football practice after school. I am shocked while writing this in 2023, only weeks from graduating from Scotus. The time has flown by, and in some sense, I still feel like the nervous seventh grader who walked through the north doors on a humid August day. A new chapter is awaiting, but I must reflect on my last six years.

Countless times during my senior year, many people have told me to enjoy my final year at Scotus. "Enjoy it," they would say. "Many things will change."

I shrugged off their comments, not taking to heart their important advice. I was ready to move on, I told myself repeatedly. Then, the football season ended. I was faced with a hard truth as I was preparing my notes for the last game. It would be the last time I would ever announce a Scotus football game, an aspect of my high school career I was fortunate to have the opportunity to do. Saying my signing off speech on air was something I rarely thought about before October. It was weird for me to comprehend the words I was pronouncing because a chapter of my current life, one that I have lived in for six years, was coming to an end. It opened my eyes that my time as a Shamrock was fleeting, knowing I must cherish my time with my classmates and teachers before it was too late.

The opportunity to play organized sport will cease to exist after I graduate. Never in my life will any sporting activity replace the atmosphere of a high school sport, competing with people I have grown up with for years. I am currently involved in soccer, with the personal goal of enjoying every soccer practice and game in the final weeks because this time in my life will never exist after graduation.

"Tell me about your favorite memory at Scotus," someone asked me during the second semester of my senior year. I stopped, trying to think of one. Incredibly, finding one specific memory was impossible to locate. Days later, I found a simple explanation. Every day at Scotus has been a favorite because great memories occur daily. More importantly, although I might perceive a day as "bad," everyday was peaceful. Scotus offered a safe place to learn and grow.

Whatever grade you are in right now, enjoy your time at Scotus. Do not let your grades or athletic performance define who you are. Take one day at a time, and no matter how bad of a day you are having, just know there is always tomorrow. Your time at Scotus will flash by in the blink of an eye. Take advantage of every available minute to work hard and enjoy yourself in the process.

This is Ted Fehringer, signing-off.



Lily Dohmen

This is the end of an era.

As the end of my senior year approaches, many feelings and thoughts have been swarming my mind. People always say college is better than high school, but it does not mean I have to be embarrassed about missing it as I prepare for the next chapter of my life. All these experiences are becoming memories.

This is the end of my high school era.

On the first day of seventh grade, I was terrified. My shepherd, senior Emily Stutzman, wrote me a note of encouragement. It read, "You will do amazing things. Good luck this year!" I will do amazing things. As a seventh grader I had not put much thought into the phrase. As graduation is fast approaching, it makes me relive my past achievements and experiences, such as going to state in four activities and being the host of the game during the faith rally during Catholic Schools Week. I will miss having these opportunities, but they will always be memories I can look back upon in the future.

This is the end of an era.

I started running cross country my freshman year. The old junior high long distance track coach basically forced me to go out. She thought I would be a good addition to the team. I was a part of the state team during my sophomore and junior years. During my junior track season, I started having hip and back problems. I could barely run half a workout without being in pain. After the district track meet, I went to see my doctor and she suggested I take a break from running. I had to end my cross country career. It was my senior season, and I was going to miss out on the sport I fell in love with. I told myself since I was leaving the team, I was not going to be associated with it anymore until one day one of the coaches texted me and asked if I would come back as a manager. Knowing my coaches wanted me to come back to the team, even if I was not running, made me feel appreciated. As a manager, I went to some practices and every meet. I timed all the races, and I was basically moral support. Even though my time with Scotus cross country has ended, it will always have a special place in my heart. I am so glad I took that opportunity and did not just leave cross country behind.

This is the end of an era.

As senior year ends, memories flood back to my mind. One piece of advice I want to leave is not to let these silly high school memories go too easily. It is okay to miss high school even if it is full of ups and downs and lefts and rights. These memories will always be a part of your high school life. They will always be a part of your high school era.

This is the end of my high school era.

This is Lily Dohmen, signing off.



Kavanaugh Splittgerber

The most universal emotion anyone will have from birth to death, is fear. Fears can come from all sorts of different things, and what people are afraid of differs from person to person. When I started my education at Scotus Central Catholic back my freshman year, I wasn't a fearful person. There was still one fear, however, which never left my mind. I was afraid of being alone.

In my freshman class, I was a black sheep. I was a newcomer to the class who knew no one. I was a small nerdy theater kid who no one paid any attention to. I was only ever picked on by my class, and as soon as high school started, I wanted it to be over. It was easy for me to believe I was alone, but I soon wasn't. I joined one act, speech, and musical my freshman year. By no means was I excellent at any of these activities, but I found something much more valuable than success there, I found companionship. A group of people who were similar to me, a group of people who could relate to my struggles and insecurities.

Sticking close to this group was a priority of mine, but these people weren't in my class so I wouldn't see them often at school, and they would eventually leave me behind. Once again, the fear of being left alone crept into my mind. Luckily, the fear would be suppressed. Although it took some time, I discovered my class was full of some wonderful people. During my sophomore and junior year, I became friends with much of my class. I never had a particularly strong friend group, but I never felt truly alone either. There was always someone somewhere who would listen to me and be there for me. As often as I thought no one would understand me, I was wrong.

My senior year of high school was the roughest. Groups fell apart, friends departed, and the number of people who kept me company only kept dwindling. I was certain this year would be the year where my fear would become a reality. It almost did, but someone was there. Someone who has always been there. I turned to my faith, which had been strengthened from my time at Scotus. Only when I was so afraid no one would hear me was when I finally realized, God was always with me. God has been with me from the start, and He will never leave me. With the Lord, I will never be alone.

At every instance of my high school life where I thought I would be alone, I never was. At every instance my fear was found unneeded, and I was quite surprised about it. Maybe I went into high school with low expectations, but I was still happily proven wrong. It is easy to fall into a paradox within your own mind where you won't let anyone in even though you feel alone, but people do exist who understand you and will always listen to you. Even when I felt as though the people at my school weren't there for me, God always was. Learning about the faith I share with my class has brought me into a state of peace where I know now one thing for certain. I am never alone, I was never alone, and I will never be alone because of Him.

This is Kavanaugh Splittgerber, signing off.



Jasmine Jackson

Do you know what the "h" in high school stands for? Hardship. (Source: Trust me, because it's definitely not happiness). That isn't to say high school will be hard (however, if you take physics...), but it won't be easy, either. Our reactions to hardships determine our future mentalities, and throughout my high school career, I've discovered the one choice I have when it comes to facing hardships: was I going to be bitter or be better?

In 8th grade, I was the new kid, and when you're the new kid, everyone wants to be your friend. But once the new kid sparkle wore off, the outsider dust settled, and I found myself alone at home, waiting for a text that never came. I'm not a part of the same friend groups or have the same number of friends as I used to, but I do not choose to be bitter. I choose to be better by appreciating the caring and inclusive friends I have today and by recognizing sometimes fallouts are uncontrollable and even happen for the best. If you feel your sparkle has worn off, it hasn't. Sometimes, your shine is made for others, and your sparkle is meant to decorate the lives of those you never first intended.

I picked up persuasive speaking during my junior year speech season—a decision that led to a district championship and a state qualification. However, at state, I didn't make finals. I received my ballots and discovered one judge single-handedly ruined my chance at placing by ranking me 5th while the other judges ranked me 3rd and 1st, respectively; I was bitter. However, I realized I had the opportunity to do better with my senior season. Eventually, I earned my place, becoming state persuasive runner-up. I think back to that curly-haired girl who wrote a speech about hating bananas (ask me and I will deny) and the girl who sobbed in the bathroom at state, and I tell them all the setbacks were worth it. Only by choosing to let go of the bitterness was I able to see the better and reach my full potential.

This year, I secured a lead role in the musical. Then, I received an email stating I was a finalist for a full-ride scholarship, and the mandatory interview date was opening night. In a cruel twist of fate, I sacrificed one dream for another. I bitterly accepted my musical resignation but decided once more to be better. I gave a great interview but still received an email stating I didn't get the scholarship. It crushed me to learn my sacrifice was in vain. I remember the bitterness I felt as I cried to my mother who said, "I guess it wasn't for you," and she was right. Everything happens for a reason, and sometimes that reason doesn't include or favor you; sometimes, you are pulled out of the light to give others a chance to shine.

It is crucial that you choose to better regarding the bitter things because while bitterness takes you nowhere, betterness leads you everywhere. Fortunately, the "h" in high school also stands for hope, and I have hope for my future. Even though high school was bitter at times, I choose to see it in a better light because it made me who I am. I choose to better because I know the best is yet to come.

This is Jasmine Jackson, signing off.



Daniel Cline

As an introvert by nature, I have a hard time meeting new people. I often find it impossible to hold a conversation even with someone I may know quite well. Up until eighth grade, this did not matter too much as I had grown up with the people I went to school with and thus knew them well. I was comfortable to be myself around them and could talk to any of them. Midway through eighth grade, however, that all changed.

Four years ago, I moved from Norfolk to Columbus. Although I was only 45 minutes away from my old town, I still had to face the hardships of saying goodbye to friends and classmates. In January of 2019, I began attending Scotus. So much about Scotus was different from Norfolk Catholic. At NC, we were allowed our phones during lunch, the seniors could go anywhere they wanted for lunch, and the junior high kids only had study hall with the other junior high kids. The biggest difference, however, was the fact that I knew no one at Scotus. Every face was a new one, and I had a hard time keeping track at first.

I remember walking into Fr. Capadano's eighth grade religion class and seeing my new classmates for the first time. That day I tried talking to people, but I came off as awkward and standoffish. Slowly, I introduced myself to others, and they introduced themselves to me. Eventually, I thought I had found a group of new friends, but those friendships did not seem to last. Again I tried to become friends with others in my class, yet those friendships did not last. For two years this cycle continued, and I would say I had no friends from school at that time. Before my sophomore year, I did not feel like an outcast per se, but I felt uninvited. My class seemed full of people who enjoyed one another and knew each other so well; meanwhile, I was merely there.

My sophomore year, I felt I needed a change of pace from doing nothing other than going to school and sitting at home. Initially done to quiet my parents telling me I had to get off my butt and do something, I joined speech. Expecting it to be nothing more than boring people giving boring speeches, I was pleasantly surprised to find speech was enjoyable, and I was somewhat good at it. Through speech, I met other people from school and became a more active member of my class. I finally began to feel I belonged.

That same year, I found a group of friends who began to stick around and have become my closest friends. Although they were not the people I had initially expected to be friends with, they ended up being some of the best people I knew. Although I moved to a new school and had to "restart" my life, I would rather have met all the people I know now than never have met them at all. I took many risks throughout high school, including joining speech and meeting new people. Without taking those risks, I would not have reached my current status and level of happiness. Despite my introverted nature, I was able to overcome it and spread my wings.

This is Daniel Cline, signing-off.

Spring play presents a mysterious case

By Joanna Rusher
Staff Reporter

Everyone knows junior high students are dramatic, but hardly ever do they get to put it on display for the public. For the third year in a row, the junior high play has taken place in the spring. The first year it was performed, it replaced the high school spring play and was directed by one act director Clyde Ericson. For the past two years, two high school students have directed it with Mr. Ericson as the sponsor. Seniors Kavanaugh Splittgerber and Jasmine Jackson are the directors this year.

“Directing the play is a lot of fun,” Splittgerber said. “Some of the kids did it last year, but most of them it is their first time on stage. It’s exciting to see them open up and grow confident in their acting abilities that they didn’t even know they had.”

This year the play is *The Mysterious Case of the Mysterious Case* with a cast of

ten junior high students. The play is a light-hearted comedy filled with one-liners and pun-filled characters. Eighth grader Lillian Miller’s character goes right along with puns within the performance as she plays the character of Dinah Mite.

“It has been so much fun to learn how to stretch my acting to fit her emotional outbursts,” Miller said. “One moment I’m sobbing dramatically, and the next I’m yelling at my best frenemy Robin Banks [played by seventh grader Julia McPhillips].”

The junior high students learn a lot during practice from the upperclassmen whether it is their acting skills or advice the seniors give them. Eighth grader Rachel Spawn plays the character of Detective Dadd.

“I’ve learned more about acting in general. Kavan and Jasmine have made sure to keep us entertained and help us with our characters,” Spawn said. “Plus, Jasmine made us brownies, which is always a positive.”

Being in the junior high play can also help the students participating to be more prepared for high school activities. While junior high students are only introduced to junior high speech and the spring play, high schoolers can participate in one act, the musical, high school speech, or mock trial. Seventh grader Abigail Pavlik plays the character of Police Detective Ben Ding.

“I have become more confident in my public speaking,” Pavlik said. “I like playing my character because I can be sassy all I want.”

After auditioning in early April, the students have less than a month to prepare for their performance. With three to four practices a week and a dress rehearsal last Friday, the students will be ready to perform by this Friday, April 28th at 7pm in Memorial Hall. Free will donations will be accepted to support the drama department.

“I have learned that people who have to do this for a living have to put in a lot of

work,” seventh grader Amiah McGannon said. She plays

the character Syd Green. “It is very fun because you get

to know more people and you become a family.”



JASMINE JACKSON / ROCK BOTTOM EDITOR

Eighth grader Grace Faltys, seventh grader JR Oehlrich, eighth graders Lillian Miller and Rachel Spawn, and seventh graders Melodee Nickolite, Abby Pavlik, Emma White, and Julia McPhillips gather around the suitcase that is finally about to be opened. The play *The Mysterious Case of the Mysterious Case* will be performed Friday, April 28th at 7pm in Memorial Hall.

Students act out Stations before Easter

By Mary Faltys
Staff Reporter

On April 5th, the day before Easter break, Scotus

students and staff gathered in Memorial Hall to reflect on Jesus’s Passion. Once again, campus ministry had organized the live Stations of the Cross as students finish Lent

and prepare for Easter.

However, the Stations performed at Scotus are different than those at the normal services every Friday during Lent. First, they are

not the traditional Stations. They were written by Saint Pope John Paul II in 1991 and are based on the Gospels’ account of Jesus’s Passion and Death. Second, they are live Stations, acted out by volunteer students. This year, 25 students performed the Stations, and 9 others worked behind the scenes to make the Stations come to life for the rest of the student body.

Senior Alex Ferguson played the role of Peter.

“I participated in the Stations of the Cross this year because it makes you feel like you were there and involved in Jesus’s suffering,” Ferguson said.

At each Station, the actors would freeze in position under the bright spotlight while the corresponding Scripture passage was read, followed by a short point of view of one of the characters in the scene. Then a short reflection, designed for the students in the audience, was read. Finally, a short verse was sung.

Junior Neve Pavlik was one of the vocalists in this year’s Stations.

“My favorite part of Stations was the reflection on each station directed towards the students,” Pavlik said.

Participating in the Stations often helps the actors connect with Jesus’s Passion on a deeper, more personal level.

Senior Jack Faust played the role of Jesus.

“I acted out what Jesus went through, which added a new perspective to the Stations of the Cross,” Faust said.

Normally, only upperclassmen get to act out the Stations. Since the introduction of the live Stations three years ago, some students have been waiting for their chance to participate.

Senior Whitney Klug played the role of one of the women of Jerusalem.

“Since seeing the live Stations for the first time, I’ve wanted to be a part of them during my senior year.

I think they are cool and help show what Jesus went through in a way that is easier to understand from a teenager’s view,” Klug said.

Although seniors and juniors are typically the only students acting in the Stations, there was one exception this year. Seventh grader Alex Chvala played the role of John the Apostle.

“[The Stations are important] because they give us a firsthand look at how much Jesus suffered. [Acting in them] helped me notice how much Jesus suffered,” Chvala said.

Campus ministry implemented the live Stations at the end of Lent as an interactive way to help students prepare for Easter.

Senior Nick Zoucha, playing Pontius Pilate, got to experience the Stations in a new way by acting in them.

“It was a fun way to participate in my faith; we really see what Jesus went through,” Zoucha concluded.



ASHLEY HOFFMAN / YEARBOOK STAFF

Senior Nick Zoucha, playing the role of Pilate, freezes as he washes his hands of the condemnation of Jesus, played by Jack Faust. On April 5th, volunteer students performed the live Stations of the Cross for the rest of the school.

Music dept. caps successful year at districts

By Mark Buhman
Staff Reporter

On Friday, April 21st, the Scotus band and choir participated in the 2023 District Music Contest (DMC). DMC is an annual competition that has been conducted for years by the Nebraska School Activities Association (NSAA). As in previous years, this year there were countless DMC sites with each contest site varying geographically. Schools in close proximity to each other attended the contest site closest to them.

The Scotus band and choir attended one of District II’s sites, which has been held in Columbus for many years. There were around ten schools at the competition. The band received a II for its group performance, and the choir also showcased their ensemble pieces, earning a I. These ratings were assigned based on rankings I-V with I being the best. This year’s competition was held at Columbus High School (CHS), a move from last year’s host site of Central Community College (CCC).

“The NSAA made the decision to move it,” choir

director Laura Salyard stated. “CHS, I know, has also really wanted to host [our region’s competition].”

Despite the move, one factor that did not change was the high number of entries the Scotus band and choir saw at districts. Accumulatively, the groups had forty-eight total entries they could take to District Music, comprised of both elective and ensemble pieces. Elective entries were the pieces of music students decided to take themselves. Salyard received ten elective pieces from among the choir. Ensemble entries were the pieces students were required to take part in as members of the whole group. The large ensemble was the eleventh entry for the choir. Head band director Kristen Cox oversaw fourteen total entries on the band side.

“We tend to have a lot of instrumental entries, and this year is no different from any other year,” Cox stated. Fourteen events [are] a lot for a size band of thirty-three. We’re one of the only schools in our district either maxed out or close to maxing out for entries. Ms. Salyard and I are proud to say we consistently have kids involved and who

want to be involved!”

One student showing interest in DMC was freshman Alejandra Lopez-Martinez. Lopez-Martinez is a member of Shamrock Singers, and in addition to being a part of the ensemble pieces, she took “Noche Serena”, which translates as “Peaceful Night”, as a solo.

“I’m honestly excited, but terrified, since I’m a freshman, and I will probably go against people older than me. They are obviously gonna be amazing, but I’m sure I can do it. I’m trying to give myself time to gain the confidence!” Lopez-Martinez exclaimed.

Band and choir members alike worked to gain confidence in their chosen pieces of music, and confidence came with practice. Cox explained as the band progressed towards DMC, they kept advancing through the music section by section, increasing their fortitude and progress.

“Both pieces are ones they wanted to play and wanted to learn, which helps because they [felt] a great sense of accomplishment when they [got] a certain section under their belt and

want[ed] to move on,” Cox stated.

Senior band member Alex Ferguson especially felt confident about their improvement leading up to districts. Ferguson is not only a member of the general band but also of the drumline.

“Preparing has gone well so far. [Senior] Alex Settje and I have spent individual time with each other getting

our rhythm together in drumline so that we sound good together and play in unison. Otherwise, we play together as a group and sound like we could get a good rank this year,” Ferguson explained.

Those feelings of success became reality last Friday. Both Mrs. Cox and Ms. Salyard were proud of the groups’ efforts at districts and are happy with the results.

“I think it went really well! We were a little concerned with everybody going all on one day, but for the most part, we had a schedule worked out, and as students, everybody was pretty responsible in knowing what they were supposed to do and where they were supposed to be!” Salyard stated.



MAYSA KUHL / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

The Scotus choir performs during their District Music Contest preparation concert. The choir and band participated at District Music on Friday, April 21st.