

# Rock Bottom

Scotus Central Catholic Columbus, Nebraska 68601

<https://columbus-catholic.org/rock-bottom-newspaper/>

Volume 23 • Issue III • December 14, 2023



See Sports, Pages 4-5

## Interviews give students insight on skills

By Sofia Karges  
Staff Reporter

On the last day of school before Thanksgiving break, there was commotion throughout the north side of Scotus because people from the community arrived for mock inter-

views with Scotus juniors. On Tuesday, November 21<sup>st</sup>, these people interviewed juniors as if they were being offered a job at their own place of work. Mock interviews are an annual event all juniors at Scotus take part in because it helps them prepare for the job interviews they will have in the future.

Junior English teacher Angie Rusher helped the students prepare for the day.

“What a gift it is to our school that community members are willing to share their time with our students,” Rusher said. “It raises the level of concern for the students, so they prepare like they would a real

interview.”

Preparation for the mock interview included forming a resume and learning how to act professionally in a career setting.

“The resume building helped me to learn more about myself and my accomplishments which I was able to talk about in the actual interviews,” junior Raya Kluever said.

Past jobs, leadership positions, and awards given were all a part of the resume. Juniors had to take time to fill in each of these categories in order to make a successful resume.

“Building a resume helped a lot because I knew what a needed to say in my interview after making one,” junior Adam Gonzalez said.

These resumes will continue to be used next year for college and scholarship applications.

During the interview, the community members graded each student on various factors, such as the information on their resume, how professional their dress was, their body language, and the answers they gave to the questions.

“The most intimidating part about the interviews was thinking of sophisticated answers to the questions that were being asked,” junior Rebecca Kosch said.

The questions the interviewers asked ranged from an easy “Tell me about yourself” to more thought-provoking questions like “Would you rather have limitless time or limitless money?” The

juniors had to think about what they were going to say; in other words, it was not scripted.

“The most intimidating part about the interview was knowing a general idea of the questions that were going to be asked, but not knowing the exact questions,” junior Adrianna Kush said. “This made me wonder whether I was prepared enough.”

Each student had two interviews with time after to receive feedback.

“The interviews gave me an insight on what future employers are looking for in their job applicants,” junior Ella Hash said. “It also helped me learn what I can do to make myself stand out from the rest of the people at an interview.”

Many juniors have already gone through interviews because they already have jobs, so this was nothing new to them. Regardless, it is a good chance to be informed about what they can improve on.

“It was fun to put my skills to the test and get feedback about how to make it better,” junior Alex Casperson said.

Once the interview was over, the community members scored the students to tell them how they can improve for a future interview.

“The mock interview has helped me to know what to expect for real interviews I may have in the future,” Kluever said. “Overall, I think it was a great experience.”



ANGIE RUSHER / JOURNALISM ADVISOR

Junior Ben Sueper talks to a community member during his interview at Scotus on Tuesday, November 21<sup>st</sup>. All juniors prepared for the day by writing a resume, learning how to be professional, and developing answers to questions the interviewer might ask.

## Craft boutique brings Christmas to town

By Ella Hash  
Staff Reporter

December brings the all too familiar buzz of Christmas. Many are finding their gifts to wrap and put under the Christmas tree for their loved ones. The first weekend, however, highlights a special event and fundraiser Scotus puts on annually: the Scotus Craft Boutique.

On Sunday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>, Scotus opened its doors to the public for its annual craft boutique. The Scotus Craft Boutique has been a staple fundraiser at Scotus for over 40 years. With over 80 vendors coming in almost every year, there is something for everyone to shop for. Many people from in and around Columbus come to shop for their Christmas gifts at the event, making this fundraiser a big hit for everyone.

Mindy Hash has been on the craft boutique board for over three years. She oversees which vendors get a spot in the show, handles the logistics of the set-up, and organizes everything a person sees at the boutique.

“[The craft boutique] benefits Scotus tremendously,” Hash said. “Each year the boutique generates

See Boutique, Page 2

## Holiday season brings back Bake Off

By Kirsten Sucha  
Staff Reporter

The holiday season is back! With the festivities comes everyone’s favorite holiday treats. The Holiday Bake Off is the perfect way to celebrate this holiday by baking treats for the Christmas season.

Fortunately, the Holiday Bake Off returned on Monday, November 27. Every participant had to bake two dozen individually packaged treats, and the winner of the contest received a \$50 gift card and second place received a \$25 gift card.

Senior Isabel Zaruba was the winner of the Holiday Bake Off this year.

“This year for the bake off I made homemade cinnamon rolls. Over the past year, I have learned and perfected my cinnamon roll recipe, so it only made sense that I would make them this year,” Zaruba said.

In total, there were eight entries in the Bake Off this year. The newspaper staff is in charge of tasting and judging the treats brought in for the contest. They do not know whose baked goods are whose and they rank them in a Google Form. The staff only eats a small portion of the treats, so the rest are sold out of Mrs. Rusher’s room to raise money for the Holiday Co-op. The newspaper class also sponsors the prize given out to the winners. This is the third year the Holiday Bake Off has taken place.

Journalism and English teacher Angie Rusher started the Bake Off

in 2021.

“We started the Holiday Bake Off three years ago because November was slow for news, so we created some news! That year we had around 12 entries, and the second year we had 19. 19 was actually too many to taste in one class period. This year our sales were not as good because of so many bake sales happening in November already, and since we only had 8 entries, we will not be continuing it next year,” Rusher said.

Junior Adrianna Kush baked chocolate toffee cupcakes and placed second in the Bake Off.

“I have done the Bake Off all 3 years. The 1st year I didn’t really know what to expect, but last year I wanted to make something I knew others would not make,” Kush said. “Last year I felt more pressure because there were more entries, but this year I felt a little better going into it. I think I got 3rd last year so it was nice to place a little higher this year.”

Baking these goodies is no easy task. It takes preparation, baking time, and decorating time to get to the finished product. This could take hours, especially if it is an intricate dessert.

“My cinnamon rolls took around five hours solely to make, then a half-hour to construct and package my cinnamon roll boxes. Cinnamon rolls take a long time with all the kneading, rolling, rising, and baking involved,” Zaruba said.

See Bake Off, Page 2



JOANNA RUSHER / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

The Holiday Bake Off was hosted on November 27<sup>th</sup>. Pictured above are Isabel Zaruba’s first place cinnamon rolls, Adrianna Kush’s second place chocolate toffee cupcakes, and Jessica Jackson’s red velvet sandwiches.

# ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

## Staff Reporters:

Cecilia Arndt  
Patrick Arndt

Aubree Beiermann

Caleb Cameron

Mary Faltys

Ella Hash

Sofia Karges

Ava Rickert

Joanna Rusher

Madden Saenz

Kirsten Sucha

Quinn VunCannon

## Advisor:

Angie Rusher

## Editor:

Cecilia Arndt

## 7 Issues:

October 12

November 16

**December 14**

February 1

March 7

April 4

May 2

# BOUTIQUE

approximately \$17,000 of funds which then are distributed to all the students, whether it be through the new buses or through teacher wish lists.”

Volunteers help the craft boutique run efficiently and smoothly. This year, over 150 students and parents of the Scotus community volunteered over the weekend. The basketball teams helped to lay tarps down on the gym floors on Friday night, as well as a few volunteers who put out vendor chairs and tables. On Saturday, some volunteers decorated the Scotus hallways in a Christmas theme while others helped the vendors bring their items

in for the next day. Sunday had many volunteers scattered about Scotus as some took admission, helped in the kitchen, or helped with the tear down after the boutique ended.

Junior Rylie Tonniges was on the Junior Craft Boutique Committee last year and helped again this year by decorating and helping with vendor set-up.

“Helping with the craft boutique has helped me see how, even if I only had a little part in the set-up, my contributions helped overall,” Tonniges said.

Along with volunteers, the craft boutique could not run if it were not

for the countless vendors who sign up. Vendors come from all over the state to sell their goods at the craft boutique. Some vendors, however, have known the success of the boutique since they were little kids.

Macey Fuhr, a graduate from the Scotus class of 2009, is one of the owners of Country Lane Gardens, which offers beautiful flower displays. She has been one of the vendors at the boutique for the past 4 years.

“Looking back, I was a little girl who was able to come and shop with my mom, and now I am here as a vendor being able to support the school I graduated from,” Fuhr

said. “It is very rewarding [to be a vendor].”

The Scotus alumni support has helped the boutique in many ways. Many come back to shop for gifts, but also to support the school. With alumni vendors, such as Fuhr, the craft boutique is able to reap rewards for both parties.

“It is great that Scotus alumni care so much and want to return to not only help Scotus but also to benefit their own businesses,” Hash said.

The money generated from the Scotus Craft Boutique will go towards the Scotus Booster Club, who helps fund items needed at Scotus. Along with the boutique, the booster club also runs Split the Pot and the Scotus apparel store to further raise funds.



PHOTO COURTESY MINDY HASH

Cody Hellbusch ('07), Macey Fuhr ('09), and Lynette Klug (Scotus parent) talk to a customer at the Scotus Craft Boutique on December 3<sup>rd</sup>. Their business Country Lane Gardens with over 80 other vendors participated in the event that supports the Scotus Booster Club.

# BAKE OFF

There are many talented young bakers at Scotus. Some of the other goodies included reindeer cookies, red velvet cookie sandwiches, peppermint meltaways, and melting snowman cookies. It was not an easy job to choose between the winners.

“I’ve been baking ever since probably first grade. I would get some help from my mom, but otherwise I was adamant on being independent and doing everything by myself. I also watched food networks as a kid which invoked my love for baking,” Kush said.

Overall, the Holiday Bake Off was a success with many talented bakers and treats.

“Stay tuned for other fun events we might create to make some news! I liked the Holiday Bake Off because it gave every student a chance to be involved and donate to a good cause,” Rusher said.

Merry Christmas from the Journalism Staff!

**402-564-8268**

**We Deliver**  
Fuel • Oil • Propane

**Jeff Johnson**  
General Manager

East Hwy 30 • Columbus

**Schieffler**  
SIGNS INC.

**Columbus Public LIBRARY**  
connecting people and ideas

Live, work, or go to school in Columbus?  
Contact us today to learn how to get a library card!

402-564-7116 www.columbusne.us/library  
2500 14th Street, Columbus, NE

**402-564-8515**  
770 33rd Avenue  
Columbus, NE

**GO SHAMROCKS!**

**Valentino's**  
CLASSIC. ITALIAN. TRADITION.

Take-out & Delivery 3100 23rd St. 402-563-3542  
Online ordering available at [valsolumbus.com](http://valsolumbus.com)

Proud supporters of Scotus  
**GO, SHAMROCKS!**

**ERNST**  
AUTO GROUP

[www.ernstauto.com](http://www.ernstauto.com)

**Columbus Bank**  
AND TRUST COMPANY

[colbank.com](http://colbank.com)  
402-564-1234

**El Matador**  
Mexican Restaurant

2453 - 33rd Avenue  
Columbus, NE  
402-564-9337

**OTTE**  
ELECTRIC  
Inc.

**Industrial Contractor**

1260 3<sup>RD</sup> Avenue  
Columbus, Ne 68601  
402-564-9996

WHEN YOU MAKE IT \$5.50 FRIDAY!  
TREAT YOURSELF YOU DESERVE IT!

**JUICE**  
IT UP

2334 23rd St, Columbus, Ne  
Next to Walgreens  
[www.juicestopsmoothies.com](http://www.juicestopsmoothies.com)

**River Valley Tire Service, LLC**  
P.O. Box 2036 Columbus, NE 68602  
1351 21st Avenue

Bob Soulliere Jr | Owner/Operator  
[rivervalleytire@gmail.com](mailto:rivervalleytire@gmail.com) | 402-910-1997

Locally Owned & Operated Since 1925

**McKown Funeral Home**

Dave Purcell Gregg Ridgeway  
Brad Eickhoff Chase Cherry

2922 13th Street (402) 564-4232  
[www.mckownfuneralhome.com](http://www.mckownfuneralhome.com)

**Columbus MUSIC**

2514 13th Street  
Columbus, NE 68601  
402-564-9431  
[cmusic@megavision.com](mailto:cmusic@megavision.com)  
[columbusmusic.net](http://columbusmusic.net)

**PERFORMANCE PRINTING, INC.**

(402) 564-9323 2916 12th Street

**\$2 OFF**

**SHAMROCK SPCTEA OR SPORTY SHAMROCK PROTEIN SHAKE!**

HomeGrown Nutrition  
1925 23RD ST COLUMBUS, NE

MUST WEAR SCHOOL UNIFORM OR SHOW SCHOOL ID TO REDEEM DISCOUNT

FIND US IN THE BRICK STRIP MALL BY KFC

EXPIRES NOVEMBER 30

# Dress code needs a more uniform option

By Rock Bottom Staff

Scotus' current mandatory uniform has been around for many years. It is easy to point out the prominent khaki pants, or plaid shorts worn with polos or Scotus sweatshirts, which come in a variety of colors. The *Rock Bottom Staff* has collectively agreed that a single Scotus Shamrock spirit t-shirt should exist. This shirt could be worn any day of the week, not just on Team Scotus Days. Our thought process on this is because of the vary-

ing classroom temperatures, comfortability, lower costs, and uniformity.

Scotus has three floors with many different classrooms on each floor. Those rooms can range from being rather warm like Mrs. Dusel's on the first floor to freezing in rooms like Mr. Linder's on the third floor. Students struggle with these temperature changes; some even have to go from an oven of a classroom to a freezer for back-to-back periods. We think if students had the option of this single t-shirt, they would wear a sweatshirt and then

they would be able to take them off if they get too hot in class. Students can do that now if they wear polos to school, but those are rarely seen.

This is because they are not comfortable. Scotus' dress code only allows one type of shirt and that is polos. Polos are seen as formal shirts, which means the comfortability goes down. If Scotus was to get a t-shirt, students would be more comfortable wearing them under sweatshirts. This shirt could also be fifty percent cotton and fifty percent polyester,

rather than the stiff ones. Plus, the colors of polos are white, green, yellow, and for some reason, light blue.

With a single t-shirt available, the student body would look more uniform. The wide array of colors available for both sweatshirts and polos causes the strict dress code to not look as consistent throughout the school. This shirt, however, would be the only shirt students could wear under sweatshirts to be more orderly too. Regular t-shirts are not as formal as polos, but the single t-shirt could unify the students and

bring out Scotus' colors. If the shirt was green, black, grey, or white with some green and yellow text or design, it would do more than the blue shirts and sweatshirts.

This shirt could be available for order just as the polos, and students would be spending less. However, the addition of a new shirt would be another thing the parents would have to buy. At first, this idea might not appeal to people. However, regular t-shirts are cheaper than polos. In addition, students would wear them more. Par-

ents would have to buy multiple shirts so they can have shirts throughout the week. They could also wear them on a non-school day, unlike the polos which you can only wear to school or if you dress up as a Scotus student.

By taking a brief view of this idea for a new shirt, one could see the positive effects for the students themselves and the school at large. This shirt would be a comfortable addition for the students and provide a more uniform look to our school. Plus, it is time to get the blue away from Scotus.

# Spread the Christmas cheer early this year



By Ella Hash  
Staff Reporter

The last day of October tends to kick off the holiday craze in the United States. Parents, grandparents, and relatives will start asking for Christmas lists so they

can get all the good deals. Moms begin to bring out the decorations for the festive season. Soon all will hear Mariah Carey's "All I Want for Christmas is You" on the drive to school or work. While many tend to say all this Christmas buzz is unnecessary and should commence after Thanksgiving, I think it is the perfect time to begin the celebrations.

Some love to say people should not decorate for the Christmas season until after Thanksgiving. They claim a person is skipping over a holiday which should be celebrated. While I do agree Thanksgiving should be celebrated, not everyone wants to redecorate for another hol-

iday. I do not want to spend extra money on decorations for my house which will only be up for a short period of time. I would rather decorate for the winter and Christmas season, one of which will last for a few months.

Decorating my house for Christmas is one of my favorite pastimes with my family. Whether it be helping with the Christmas lights or setting up the tree, the Christmas magic is always in the air. Having the joy of Christmas is something I think everyone should get to enjoy without worrying if they are doing it too early.

Another area where people should decorate early is putting up Christmas lights.

At my old house, November 1<sup>st</sup> was when my neighbors always started decorating their house. Christmas was their dad's favorite holiday, and he went all out every year with his lights. Getting to watch and help set-up everything brought a sense of Christmas joy to everyone around. While this is many adults' least favorite parts of the year, I believe it is okay to start early on those decorations. No one wants to stand on their roof in below-freezing weather putting up the lights for their family. Do not worry about what others think, start stringing the lights early before you are dealing with frostbite.

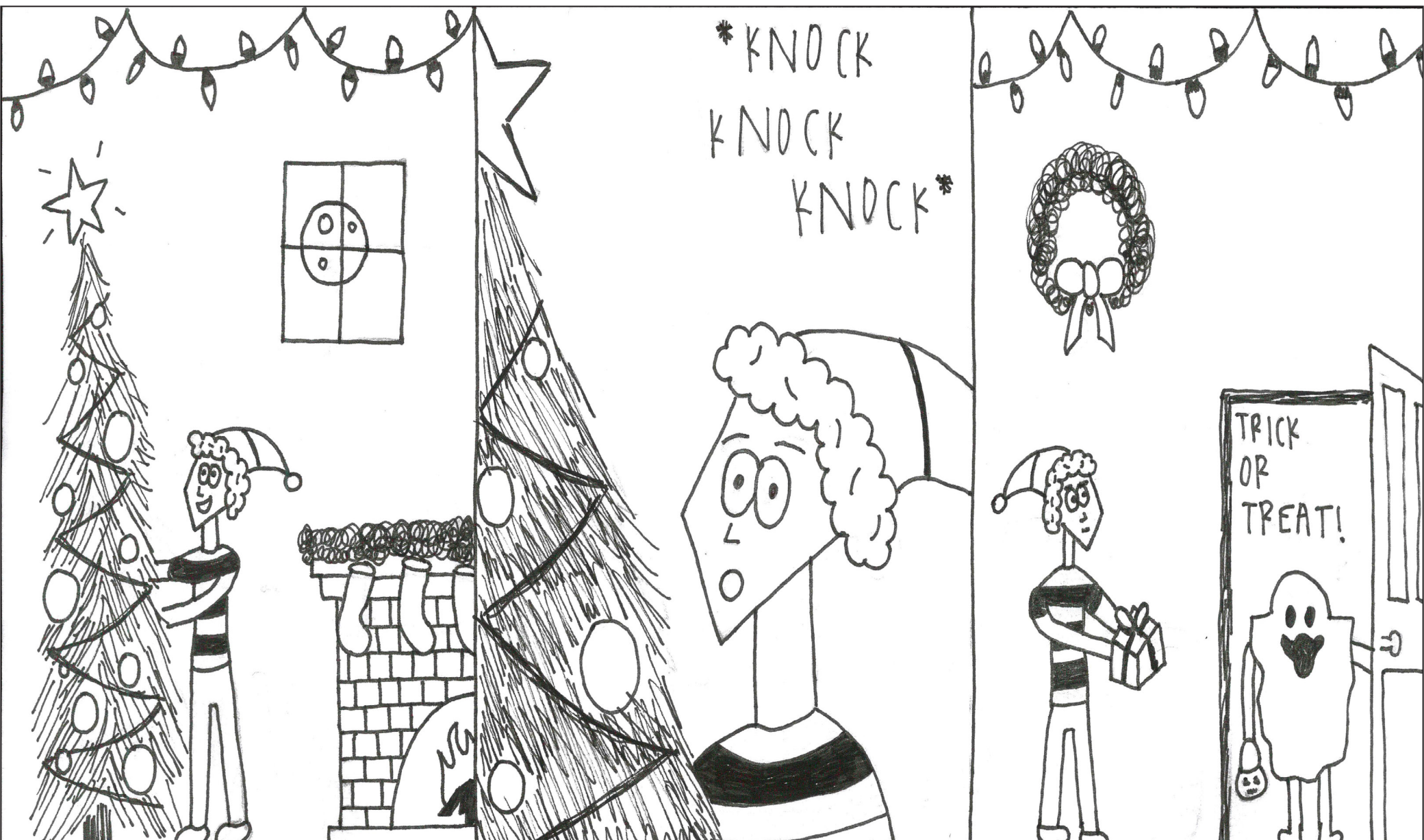
Christmas lights also

bring out the discussion of when you should turn them on. While my family waits until the day after Thanksgiving, do not be afraid to be the odd one out! Christmas lights are fun for the whole family to watch and stare at in awe. If you have a good display in your yard, turn them on! Most people want to see the lights before the holidays get too hectic, and by turning them on early, you are giving them time to look at them.

Radios seem to get the Christmas memo before most people. On November 1<sup>st</sup> most radios start to deconstruct their favorite Christmas songs, leading many to spike on music charts. Any person should be able to listen to

Christmas music right after Halloween. Yes, it seems early, but what else is going to get me in the holiday spirit like "Last Christmas" by Wham? I do not hear any Thanksgiving songs being played on the radio for a reason.

Christmas is a season that brings joy to many people. Many see this as a time to spend with friends and family and being able to catch up with loved ones. Bringing this joy into one's life can lift their spirits when the days start to get shorter. So do not be afraid to stray away from the norms of society and start your Christmas early!



KIRSTEN SUCHA, ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

# The timeless troubles of traveling



By Madden Saenz  
Staff Reporter

It's that time of the year. The turkeys are roasting,

the sales are abundant, and Walmart has Christmas trees ready to fall apart the second they get home. It's the holidays yet again. The holidays are a time to be around the ones you love and see family you haven't seen in years. The only problem with this is how to get to them. Some families are lucky enough to be the hosts, and instead of having to cram kids and luggage into the car, they get to stress about the number of turkeys and cranberries they need to buy.

However, nine times out of ten, my family is the one

doing the traveling.

Since my family moved to Columbus, there hasn't been a single holiday we have spent in our own home. Every year, no matter the holiday, we travel at least eight hours south to see family, which is exhausting. Don't get me wrong, I love my family, and I do miss them at times. But every three months? At least eight hours down there? No, thank you.

The issues I have with traveling stem from who I am traveling with and how we travel. Being trapped in the car with my manic younger

brothers, a gigantic fluffy dog, and a stressed-out mother does not make a good sixteen hours. To make things worse, we always take extra items like books, Nintendo's, and toys, making the car even less spacious.

Don't get me started on the sleeping situation. There is no room for us to stretch out and get a quality nap. We are all crammed shoulder to shoulder while having a gigantic dog spread across us, leaving my brothers and I eternally overheating, nauseated, and numb in the extremities. Whoever gets stuck in

the middle has it the worst. They get the dog's weight and my brothers' heads and drool on their shoulders when they sleep (Yes, I drool in my sleep; I'm not ashamed).

In the end, though, it's worth it. We get to see family we rarely get to see. The distance makes seeing my family an exhausting and timely process, so when we can cruise down and spend time with them, it makes everyone happier. My mom can visit her parents, my dad can see his mom and stepdad, and I can spend time with my grandparents and cousins.

Especially my cousins; they are some of the nicest and most fun-loving people you will ever meet.

However, all of this never eases the pain of hearing the words, "Pack your bags! We're visiting grandma and grandpa this Christmas!" My brothers and I know the most difficult era of the year is upon us. The trials and tribulations of numb feet and no legroom. The challenge of no bathroom breaks for at least an hour. The victorious freedom of getting out of the car at our destination. I love the holidays.

# Basketball girls build on new team

By Mary Faltys  
Staff Reporter

Although there are many new and less experienced faces on the team this year, the Shamrock girls basketball team has their eyes set on state. For the last three years, their season has ended in the district final game. This year, new and old players alike are uniting on the court in their effort to make it to the state tournament.

After losing some height on the team to graduation last year, the team is looking to strengthen other parts of their game to make up for it.

Junior Sofia Karges plays shooting guard and point guard on occasion.

"We want to run fast and play hard. We have a lot of guards and not a lot of height, so the game is going to be determined by how fast we play," Karges said.

The Shamrocks also lost several players on their varsity team from last year, but they are still looking for success. 5 of their 6 games before Christmas are against ranked teams.

Junior Emma Brezenski has been starting point guard

since freshman year.

"I'm looking forward to see how we can compete with the top teams in our class," Brezenski said.

The Shamrocks' first game was against Hastings St. Cecilia on November 30<sup>th</sup>. Although they lost 35-39, it showed them what they need to continue improving.

Freshman Emilyn Kavan subs in as a guard.

"We improved a lot from the jamboree game. The game was good, and we learned the things we need to work on and the things we did well," Kavan said.

Senior Joanna Rusher led the team against Hastings with 13 points.

"The team that stepped onto the court against Hastings was a completely different team compared to the jamboree game. This is extremely promising because we know how much we can improve in a short amount of time," Rusher said.

On December 5<sup>th</sup>, the Shamrocks played Guardian Angels Central Catholic at home. They lost 30-52.

Junior Quinn VunCannon is an early sub for the Shamrocks.

"The game had a lot of



JOSIE SLIVA / YEARBOOK STAFF

**Senior Joanna Rusher takes a shot against Guardian Angels Central Catholic on December 5th. The Shamrocks lost the game 30-52.**

ups and downs. We need to stay consistent with our game speed to be more successful in the future," VunCannon said.

The Shamrocks played Grand Island Central Catholic on December 8<sup>th</sup> at home.

They lost 35-49.

On December 9<sup>th</sup>, the Shamrocks got their first win of the season beating Humphrey St. Francis at home. The final score was 43-33.

"We went into the game knowing we needed a win.

Honestly, after we won, it was kind of anticlimactic because losing never even crossed our minds. We were all on the same page and we knew we were going to win," Rusher said.

They played on Decem-

ber 12<sup>th</sup> on the road against Omaha Concordia.

Their current record is 1-3.

The Shamrocks' next game is December 15<sup>th</sup> on the road against Pierce at 6:00.

# Wrestlers place with experienced returners

By Joanna Rusher  
Staff Reporter

After weights or early morning practice, students eat breakfast in the cafeteria. If they are eating before

7:30am, they will hear loud, thunderous noises from above them. When investigated, the students who travel up the stairs will not find a stampede of elephants or a giant stomping around. They will find the wrestlers

strategically tossing, pinning, and grabbing each other to prepare for the season.

Although young, the Scotus wrestling team is anything but inexperienced. After graduating only one senior last year, the team is

welcoming over a dozen boys back along with some skilled freshmen.

The team began practicing November 13<sup>th</sup>, and, due to little gym space, set up the mats in Memorial Hall every morning. The boys prepared for the first Invitational at Lakeview on December 1<sup>st</sup>. At the invitational, they doubled the points they scored in the previous year, and they had eight wrestlers in the medal rounds. Among the five medalists was sophomore Hunter Brunkhorst who placed 2<sup>nd</sup>, which was the highest on the team.

"Having a young team the last couple years helps us now," Brunkhorst said. "The more inexperienced guys from last year learned more in the off season."

Because of the young team, practices have been more intense, but exciting for the boys. Junior Henry Ramaekers is one of the many returning wrestlers and

placed 4<sup>th</sup> at Lakeview.

"[Practices have been] very positive. People want to get better this year and the coaches are excited," Ramaekers said.

Last week was unusually busy for the wrestlers with duals Friday and an invitational Saturday. The team prepared for both for a full week. Senior David De Leon placed second on Saturday in his weight class.

"The coaches have prepared us well with our short but intense practices," De Leon said.

Senior Rudy Brunkhorst placed 2<sup>nd</sup> on Saturday as well and is especially excited for other meets.

"[I am most looking forward to] the Aquinas/Central City home triangular," Brunkhorst said. "It will be fun to wrestle in front of our home crowd."

The team went 1-4 at the duals at Raymond Central and placed 4<sup>th</sup> at the Fort

Calhoun tournament on Saturday with 9 medalists. The medalists included first place finishes by Hunter Brunkhorst at 113 and Alex Evans at 285.

The home triangular takes place on December 22<sup>nd</sup>. Junior Spencer Shotkoski is in his third year with the wrestling team.

"There is way more maturity in the gym [this year] and everyone holds each other accountable," Shotkoski said. "Having a young team and watching them get better and beat kids who used to beat them is really cool."

Because of the experience in the gym this year the team lacked last year, the wrestlers are more hopeful and excited for the coming meets. Shotkoski shares insight he has learned in his years of wrestling at Scotus.

"Failure isn't the opposite of success," Shotkoski said. "It's part of success."



ASHLEE LEFFERS / YEARBOOK STAFF

**Sophomore Kobe Micek attempts to flip his opponent at the Lakeview Invitational on December 1<sup>st</sup>. The team doubled their points from the previous year and had eight wrestlers in the medal rounds.**

# Senior swimmers represent Scotus

By Madden Saenz  
Staff Reporter

When someone thinks of "winter" many different things come to mind: sledding, skiing, basketball, and wrestling. All these activities are done either with lots of warm protective gear or indoors. However, a select few Columbus High, Scotus, and a singular Lakeview student are eager to jump into the water and swim away. Indoors, of course.

This year, the co-op Columbus Discoverers team will compete in at least thirteen meets in the 2023 to 2024 season. Representing Scotus is returning swim veteran senior Mary Faltys. Faltys had a great season last year, being the fastest in the team's relay and competing in every possible event. Joining her this year is someone who had never done swim but according to Faltys, "is doing really well for a beginner," senior Kamren Kudron.

How did Kudron get

wrapped up in the swim world this year? "[I joined] partly because my brother was pretty good when he did it. Partly because it was a joke taken too far and I was scared to [back down]," Kudron said.

Faltys was able to corroborate this story.

"I told him he should join swim since I had joined cross country," Faltys said.

And so he did.

After two and a half weeks of learning the ropes, Kudron, Faltys, and the swim team competed at Columbus High's double dual meet against Lincoln Standing Bear and Fremont on the 30<sup>th</sup> of November. Faltys would compete in the girls' 100-yard freestyle, 100-yard breaststroke, and both relays. Faltys placed third in the 100 free, and first in the 100 breaststroke. As a team, Faltys and her other relay members would get second place in the 200-medley relay and third place in the 200-yard freestyle relay. Kudron competed in the boys' 50-yard freestyle

and both relays. Kudron placed seventh in the 50-yard free. As a team, Columbus placed second in the 200 medley and third place in the 200 free. This was Kudron's first-ever swim meet, and he had a great time.

"[Competing in the meet] was really fun because I'm a guy; I can do whatever events I want," Kudron said.

Columbus came out on top against the Lincoln team but fell short against the Fremont team. Two days later, they competed again at the Hastings Tiger Invitational on the second. Faltys competed in the same events as the dual, while Kudron swam in the 50-yard freestyle and both relays. As a team, Columbus placed eighth, with Faltys taking fifth in the 100-yard breaststroke, and tenth in the 100-yard free, while she and her teammates placed seventh in both relays. Kudron placed nineteenth in the 50-yard free and eighth in both relays.

Even though the meet did not give the results Columbus wanted, there was



CECILIA ARNDT / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

**Senior Kamren Kudron flies through the water during his 200 medley relay. Kudron and the Columbus team beat Lincoln Standing Bear but fell just short against the Fremont Team.**

still something to learn from the meet.

"The Hastings meet gave us good competition because there were more teams to compete against. It also showed us how our relays stack up against other teams,"

Faltys said.

On December 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>, Columbus competed at home in a triangular and a dual. On the 7<sup>th</sup>, the Discoverers were able to pull ahead and beat Lincoln Northwest.

"Beating Lincoln North-

west was a big accomplishment since we have such a small team."

Faltys and Kudron look forward to a fun and competitive senior swim season. Their next meet is the Varsity Dual on the 12<sup>th</sup>.

# Shamrocks face early adversity

By Quinn VunCannon  
Staff Reporter

As the long wintersports season begins, the Scotus boys basketball team is looking to reach new heights and hold the momentum from last season.

After finishing last season with a record of 17-9, the best team record since the 2016-17 season, the expectations continue to climb.

Junior forward Caleb Cameron is willing to embrace these lofty goals. Cameron is fresh off of a season ending injury from last year. He went down in the third game of the season against Grand Island Central Catholic, but is working as a key role on the team this year.

"I want to be united, as our team motto is 'family,'" Cameron explained. "I know our team can make a run into March and the state tourna-

ment."

Scotus' last appearance at the state tournament was 2017. However, they have had multiple appearances in district championship games since then, including last season. Junior captain Owen Lindhorst is one of four returning starters from last year's team.

"I will do my best along with the other captains to motivate, encourage, and push the team to be the best we can be during games and practice so we can reach our goals," Lindhorst said.

The Shamrocks opened their season in Hastings on November 30<sup>th</sup>, facing off against Saint Cecilia. They fell to the Bluehawks 51-58. Junior Max Wemhoff led the team with 14 points.

"The game didn't go as wanted or expected. I learned that we need to go into every game with high expectations of the other team," Wemhoff

explained.

Scotus hosted Guardian Angels Central Catholic for their home opener on December 5<sup>th</sup>. The Shamrocks snagged an overtime win, 49-46. Notably, junior point guard Cohen Pelan took 5 charges against the Bluejays, one of which was in the overtime period.

"We need to play more as a team," Pelan said. "We have been playing too much individual basketball, and that causes us to struggle on offense. We have to become more efficient by limiting turnovers, and looking for more assists."

The Shamrocks then played Grand Island Central Catholic that Friday. They lost 37-18, after an offensively stagnant second half. The Shamrocks went scoreless in the third quarter, and were outscored 26 to 4 in the second half.

On Tuesday they played



KENSEY MCKAY / YEARBOOK STAFF

Senior guard Jackson Heng dribbles in against St. Cecilia on the Shamrocks' opening night, November 30<sup>th</sup>. The Shamrocks fell to the Bluehawks 51-58.

at Omaha Concordia.

"Our desire to live up to what we can do is how we as a team have to operate to reach our goals," Cameron

concluded.

Scotus will travel to Pierce this Friday, December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023, to face the Bluejays. After losing to the

Bluejays in the district final last year, the Shamrocks are looking for their share of revenge.

# VunCannon returns to Scotus basketball

By Caleb Cameron  
Staff Reporter

The VunCannons have been a part of the Shamrock

basketball program for a long time. Mike VunCannon has been coaching the Shamrocks at various levels for over 20 years. Tate, Bryce, Drew and Seth have all graduated from

Scotus, with Tate, Bryce, and Seth all having gone through the basketball program. Quinn is currently a junior on the girls basketball team. In 2021, Mike VunCannon

was hired as the head boys basketball coach at Scotus.

"My passion of basketball has turned into a calling in the fact coaching the game is a way to help young men become the best Catholic versions of themselves. Scotus basketball has become my 2nd family," VunCannon said.

This past spring, the Scotus boys basketball coaching staff was thrown a curveball when varsity assistant and head junior varsity coach Zach McPhillips was no longer able to coach. Looking for a new assistant, head basketball coach Mike VunCannon had a perfect applicant for the open coaching position. Filling the open coaching spot is a Scotus alum, Tate VunCannon. Tate graduated from Scotus in 2017, playing in the state basketball tournament all four years of his high school career.

"I graduated pharmacy school in May and accepted a job at the hospital. As soon

as I knew we were moving back, I knew I wanted to help with the team in some capacity. It just kind of worked out that my dad asked me to be the freshman coach, and I knew what an incredible opportunity I had," VunCannon said.

VunCannon was a part of the 2015 runner up team. He remembers playing in games and the tough practices but realizes Scotus basketball is more than just a game.

"Scotus basketball taught me crucial life lessons about brotherhood, comradery, passion, and dedication towards common goals," VunCannon said.

VunCannon will be a varsity assistant as well as the head coach of the reserve team. He is not the only new coach Scotus has had over the past couple of years. Another 2017 Scotus alum Cody Mroczek was added to the staff in the summer of 2022. Also, coming back to help out when needed is Scotus social science teacher

Pat Brockhaus.

"Coach Mo, Coach Tate, and Coach Brockhaus bring their actual personal experience and knowledge of the Scotus basketball program to their positions on this staff. Their basketball IQ is very high, and they do a great job of helping our players understand the game on a much higher level," M. VunCannon said.

T. VunCannon is excited to start his coaching career at Scotus alongside his father. He hopes to have the impact his coaches had on him when he was in high school.

"It's humbling to get my foot in the door coaching for the program that forever shaped the way I view the game. My dad had such an influence on me through Scotus basketball and school, and taught me so much. It feels fitting to be able to give back to this program and school right alongside him," VunCannon said.



PATRICK ARNDT / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Reserve coach Tate VunCannon, head varsity coach Mike VunCannon, and assistant coach Cody Mroczek draw up a play in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter against Guardian Angels Central Catholic on December 5<sup>th</sup>. The Shamrocks defeated the Bluejays 49-46 in overtime.



PATRICK ARNDT / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Junior guard Luke Wemhoff finishes at the rim against Guardian Angels Central Catholic on December 5<sup>th</sup>. Scotus clinched the win against the Bluejays in overtime, 49-46.



JOSIE SLIVA / YEARBOOK STAFF

Freshman Emilyn Kavan slides through two defenders for a layup against Guardian Angels Central Catholic on December 5<sup>th</sup>. The Shamrocks dropped the game 52-30.



CECILIA ARNDT / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Senior Mary Faltys dives into the water at their meet on December 7<sup>th</sup> against Lincoln Northeast and Lincoln Northwest. The team placed 2<sup>nd</sup> at the meet.



ASHLEE LEFFERS / YEARBOOK STAFF

Junior Henry Ramaekers takes down his opponent at the Lakeview Invitational on December 1<sup>st</sup>. Scotus had 5 medalists at the meet, including Ramaekers, who finished 4<sup>th</sup> in his weight class.

# Celebrations throughout the seasons

By Patrick Arndt  
Staff Reporter

Everyone has a birthday, but what makes it special? There are many different aspects making each individual's birthday special; a major factor of a birthday is what season it is in. Throughout Scotus, 107 students and 10 teachers were born during the summer months, including sophomore Sydney Stuart.

"I think summer is the best because then you can spend the whole day doing whatever you want for your birthday and you are not stuck in school," Stuart said.

With all summer offers, other seasons give activities some seasons can not. Summer offers long days with warm weather, optimal for fun trips to the beach or relaxing outside; however, summer only makes up a fourth of the year.

Although it may not hold a majority, fall holds a place in the hearts of many at Scotus.

Fall begins in late August or September, characterized by distinct change in weather and the changing of leaves color. 91 students and 16 teachers have a birthday in the fall. Sophomore Ava Bettenhausen is among the students born in the fall.

"October, specifically around fall break because not only is it the perfect weather, it is also so beautiful with the bright leaves," Bettenhausen said.

Many people chose fall because the time of year is perfect for many outside activities, mainly due to low concentrations of bugs, low temperatures, followed by the beautiful colors of the leaves, fall remains a choice among many.

Following the short few months of fall comes winter, a freezing season of snow forts and sledding. Winter might not be the most popular season, but 91 students and 13 teachers were born during the winter months. 8th grader Celeste Sucha is among the few who were born in the winter.

"I like mine around the winter because then it has me all excited after since Christmas is creeping closer. It also has its flaws though like people being busy around that time and the cold weather. It depends on personal preference," Sucha said.

Throughout the winter months, outside activities may be few but offer fun for all ages. Winter offers a world wide celebrated holiday, Christmas, as well as beautiful sights, from Christmas decorations to lots of snow.

After the snow starts to melt and the ground begins to thaw, spring comes shortly after winter. Showing new life as flowers and trees begin to bloom and the weather turns from cold to warm, spring offers many activities put on hold by the winter months. Not only do flowers see new life but 87 students and 10 teachers did as well. 7th grader Katherine Sell chose spring as her favorite season.

"Spring is the best time for a birthday because you can get new things for summer. Plus, getting out [of school] is definitely a bonus!" Sell said.

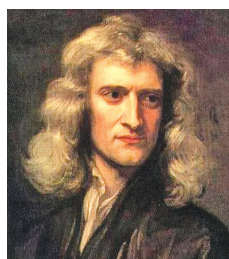
Spring months bring new growth to the barren winter landscape, bringing color back to life. As the school year ends and the stress of homework is lifted, spring offers great activities.

All in all, no season is equal. Birthdays and their seasons are unique as the seasons have emotional value to the individual. However, most of the people at Scotus prefer summer, whereas a smaller number prefer the latter of the seasons.

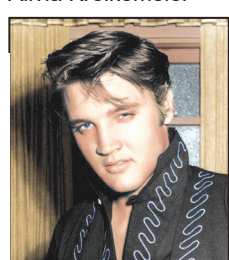
# Famous Birthdays

(and students and faculty who share a birthday with a famous person)


**January**



**4 : Isaac Newton**  
Brody Splittgerber  
Avery Heinrich  
Alivia Kreikemeier



**8 : Elvis Presley**  
Mrs. Dusel  
Emmalynne Splittgerber



**25 : St. Paul**  
Brenden Johannes  
Ethan Fiala

**February**



**3 : St. Elaise**  
Alex Medina-Perez  
Sophie Beckman

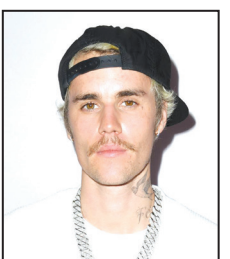


**9 : Michael E. Jordan**  
Rudy Brunkhorst  
Grant Zoucha

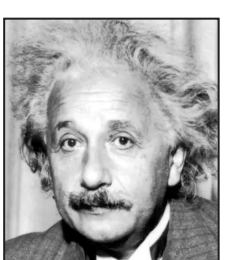


**17 : Michael Jordan**  
Olivia Olsufka


**March**



**1 : Justin Bieber**  
Matthew Gokie  
Mrs. VanCura




**14 : Albert Einstein**  
Haylee Faltys

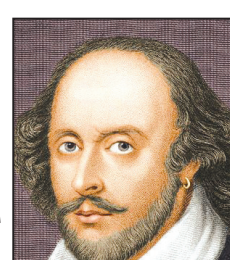


**17 : St. Patrick**  
Gavin Beiermann


**April**



**21 : Elizabeth II**  
Abigail Laska



**23 : William Shakespeare**  
Brayden Fleming  
Brooke Hendricks



**29 : St. Catherine of Sienna**  
Kennedy Bailey

**May**



**3 : Rachel Zeiler**  
Joaquin Azurduy  
Macey Johannes  
Alex Dush



**16 : Megan Fox**  
Ella Broberg  
Kalee Ternus  
Lillian Miller



**21 : St. Helen**  
Alaina O'Kane  
Shelby Wemhoff

**June**



**1 : Marilyn Monroe**  
Kate Hendricks



**9 : Johnny Depp**  
Melodee Nickolite  
Mr. Loseke




**13 : St. Anthony**  
Jillian Rusher

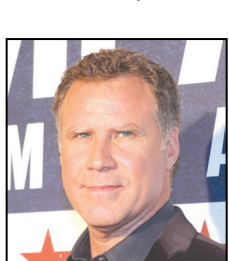
**July**



**4 : St. Elizabeth Ann Seton**  
Benjamin Schumacher  
Joshua Bixenmann



**6 : Kevin Hart**  
Cael Backman  
Julia McPhillips



**16 : Will Ferrell**  
Madden Saenz  
Liam Neville

**August**



**19 : Matthew Perry**  
David De Leon  
Pat Brockhaus



**23 : St. Rose of Lima**  
Kade Wulf  
Grace Faltys



**25 : Blake Lively**  
Noah Kamrath  
Kennedy Krueger

**September**



**5 : St. Teresa of Calcutta**  
Noah Sjuts



**8 : Mary the Mother of God**  
Aniston Weber  
Cohen Pelan



**16 : Chase Stokes**  
Gabe Gassen  
Emma Klug  
Emma Wangler

**October**



**7 : Lewis Capaldi**  
Brody Lindhorst  
Libbie Silva



**14 : Rowan Blanchard**  
Aidan Bettenhausen  
Larkyn Mahoney  
Alexander Chvala  
Oliver Coufal  
Mason Swanson



**28 : Bill Gates**  
Cali Harrington  
Draven Swiatek

**November**



**1 : Anthony Ramos**  
Aubree Beiermann  
Greyson Scott  
Mrs. Holoubek




**17 : St. Elizabeth of Hungary**  
Henry Ramaekers




**24 : Sarah Hyland**  
Caroline Rickert  
Avril Duran  
Tori Dush


**December**



**3 : Amanda Seyfried**  
Ian Karges  
Sofia Karges



**6 : St. Nicholas**  
Alex Evans  
Austin Long  
Kade Sliva  
Clint Saltzgaber



**18 : Brad Pitt**  
Mr. Ohnoutka  
Mr. Dahl

**"I have a true golden birthday. I was born on 7-7-07, and it was also the doctor's birthday."**  
Sydney Stuart, 10

**"My favorite part about being the oldest is I am a role model for my younger siblings."**  
Trevor Niedbalski, 9

**"The middle of summer would be the best time to have a birthday because you have the whole day to yourself, and you are able to do more with your friends and family."**  
Brody Splittgerber, 11

**"I would want my birthday to be on July 4th because I love fireworks, and the whole country is practically celebrating your birthday."**  
Jake Demuth, 10

**"Sadly, my birthday is the first day we come back to school from Christmas break."**  
Alivia Kreikemeier, 7

**"My birthday is on Halloween; it's fun but everyone always says I'm the devil's child so that's the downside."**  
Anna Lovell, 12

**"I think my birthday is very important because I share it with Mr. Vancura and Mr. Sheridan."**  
Neve Pavlik, 12

**"The best part about being the middle child in my family is I always have someone to talk to since I have eight siblings so there are four above me and four below me."**  
Ellie Ehlers, 9

**"The best part about being the youngest is I have 3 older brothers to protect me, and I am my mom's favorite."**  
Gissela Herrera, 8

# BIRTHDAY

## Statistics



**S T A T I S**

October 14 is the most common birthday with **7** people

Aidan Bettenhausen  
Larkyn Mahoney  
Alexander Chvala  
Oliver Coufal  
Mason Swanson  
Jill Brichacek  
Holly Thompson

**6** people have a birthday on September 13th

**14** people are born on the 13th of a month

**M O N T H S**

number of birthdays

January	30
February	30
March	32
April	38
May	27
June	45
July	36
August	36
September	38
October	33
November	36
December	44

## Birth order develops demeanor

By Cecilia Arndt  
Editor

Are older siblings more cautious? Are younger siblings more risk-taking? Interestingly, science shows birth order can play a role in the development of personality. Alfred Adler, a psychotherapist, “developed a theory that birth order impacts child development, personality, behaviors, and thoughts,” according to Christina Bradley in “Does Birth Order Influence Your Personality?”

The science is not exact, as life experiences and different circumstances may affect the development of children; however, most kids are likely to fall into the categories of birth order personality. According to Johnson & Wales University College of Professional Studies, the oldest child is “The Achiever,” the middle child is like “Switzerland,” the youngest is “The Baby,” and the only child is “The King of the Castle.”

The oldest child, “The Achiever,” is the test subject for parents. Without prior experience in parenting, the oldest child is usually held to the highest standard. Helicopter parents often circle the firstborn and the child may feel the rules and expectations of their parents weighing on them. According to “Does Birth Order Influence Your Personality?” the firstborn may feel jealous or resent their younger siblings for a while, but then takes a leadership role to help their siblings grow up. This leadership role often manifests itself as a third caregiver to small children and according to *Neuroscience News.com*, they tend to be hardworking and perfectionistic.

Middle children can be referred to as “Switzerland,” connecting the relaxed and neutral personality and the well-known impartial country. According to Johnson & Wales University College of Professional Studies, the middle child may often feel left behind or in need of their parents’ attention, and they often act out or find something unique to earn their attention. Due to this, they are often loyal, cooperative, flexible, and competitive.

The youngest child is often the one with the most freedom and leniency; they usually learn from their siblings and can be rebellious. Their typically attention-seeking behavior can take them far in life, using their creative, social, outgoing, and open personality. According to “Does Birth Order Influence Your Personality?” because they are the youngest, they are often not held to the same standards and may feel like they do not get enough praise. Instead, they often turn to manipulation to gain attention and adapt to distasteful situations. They are often pampered and petted, but are in a special place in the family.

On the other hand, according to Johnson & Wales University College of Professional Studies, only children “tend to be independent, confident, and intelligent.” As they are the first and only child of their parents, they tend to be similar to the oldest child. However, they can be self-important as they have never had to fight for attention. This one-on-one relationship with their parents allows them to have a deeper connection with them; however, they may have weaker social skills due to not having interactions with siblings.

Although these can be generalizations, birth order can have a major impact on personality. These do not apply to everyone, but can be a good starting point when delving into the aspects of personality and development. Apparently, each child has their own personality, preserving the family balance and giving everyone a role in the family.

KALEE TERNUS / JOURNALISM STAFF

## Scotus sees double with 22 twins

By Sofia Karges  
Staff Reporter

According to Google, about three percent of the world’s population are twins. At Scotus, however, six percent of students are twins, which is double the world’s percentage. In total, there are twenty-two twins at Scotus. Two are in tenth and twelfth grade, eight are in seventh grade, ten are in eleventh grade, and there is a set of triplets

in the sophomore class, too.

“Yes, I love my twin because I can talk to her whenever,” seventh grader Vivienne Karges said. “She is my sister and best friend at the same time.”

One advantage to having a twin is the obvious: never being lonely. Scotus twins had an overall mutual agreement of liking each other, even though some said their twin can get on their nerves.

“My favorite part about being a twin is we are so

close. We can also help each other in school since we’re in the same class,” junior Lexi Riedmiller said.

Because twins are in the same grade, it is often useful to ask each other questions about homework. This trick comes in handy when each twin was born with different skill sets on different subjects.

“I took the street smarts, and Cece took the book smarts,” senior Patrick Arndt said.

Having a twin has its downsides, too, like anything

else in life.

“I enjoy always having someone to talk to and hangout with, but I hate that we’re compared to each other a lot,” sophomore Kayla Hoffman said.

Almost everything is shared as a twin, especially as a little kid, which can make jealousy and competition a big factor in twins’ lives. While it is fun to never be lonely, it can be suffocating sometimes for twins to never get their own experiences. The older twin may also get special treatment because they were born first; however, most twins say being older does not influence their twin relationship.

“Owen is older, but I am more responsible, so it doesn’t really play a role in decision making,” junior Raya Kluever said.

At Scotus, there is almost every combination of twins. Out of the eleven sets, six are boy-girl twins, four are girl-girl twins, and one is a boy-boy set. With these same sex twins, two are identical and two are not, and with the Stoner triplets, Audrey and Jacqueline are identical and Elizabeth is not.

Although there is no research to prove how likely someone is to have a

set of twins, many people say twins are common in their families.

“Yes, twins run in our family,” Kayla Hoffman said. “My mom and aunt are twins, Kate and I are next, and Leo and Layne Sokol are our identical cousins.”

The Hoffmans are twins born from twins, and they are one of many with interesting twin facts at Scotus. The Karges’ have two sets of twins in their immediate family; Sofia and Ian are juniors, and Vivienne and Samantha are seventh graders. There are also two sets of twins who share the same birthday in seventh grade.

“I was born at 4:41 pm on September 10, 2010, and Calan was born two minutes later,” seventh grader Lily Windedahl said.

Vivienne and Samantha Karges were born earlier the same day.

Being a twin is a blessing and curse at the same time, but at the end of the day, most twins said they appreciate always having someone there with them.

“I like having a twin because we are different enough, but we understand each other. I think twins have a special connection to go through life that only they can understand,” senior Cecilia Arndt said.



ANGIE RUSHER / JOURNALISM ADVISOR

There are twenty-two twins and three triplets at Scotus. Pictured here are (front row) Vivienne and Samantha Karges, Jacqueline, Elizabeth, and Audrey Stoner, and Lucy and Natalie Faltys. (behind) Stacked top to bottom are Lawson and Kaylee Thiem, Kayla and Kate Hoffman, Cecilia and Patrick Arndt, Raya and Owen Kluever, Ben and Jack Sueper, Sofia and Ian Karges, Alyssa and Olivia Nelsen, Dylan and Lexi Riedmiller, and Lily and Calan Windedahl.

# Junior scientists put on a science fair

By **Aubree Beiermann**  
Staff Reporter

Rocket scientists have to start somewhere, and where they start is at the 8th grade science fair. This year, the science fair was held on November 17<sup>th</sup>. The 8th graders have put on their thinking caps and presented experiments for the last four years. Annie Sokol, the 7th and 8th-grade science teacher, is the one who started and is currently in charge of the fair.

For the science fair, students had to figure out an

experiment they wanted to try out. Dominic Chard did “Type of Boat vs # of Pennies” for his experiment.

“I tried to think outside the box for a project, but I could not figure out what to do. So I went back to Mrs. Sokol’s list and picked the project I liked the most,” Chard said.

This page had many ideas to help the students create an experiment that would work best for them and the time they would have to do it. It included anything from food-related experiments to how music affects plants to

the type of volleyball and the distance served. The students could also come up with their own and get it approved by Mrs. Sokol.

Jake Hespen picked out his own and did “Temperature of Paintball vs Accuracy.”

“I have a paintball gun, and I wanted to know if the temperature affects the accuracy,” Hespen said.

Once they finished their experiments and collected all the data they needed, the students had to make a poster board presentation. This board was supposed to show

what they did their experiment on, have data, and be decorated in a fun way. This was also taken as a grade for the science class.

This presentation was given to judges, some of whom were high school students, who decided on the top 3 best experiments.

Julietta Morales did “Type of Tape vs the Distance the Marble Will Roll.”

“My favorite part about the science fair was when I got the chance to present my project to the judges,” Morales said.

The 8th graders were

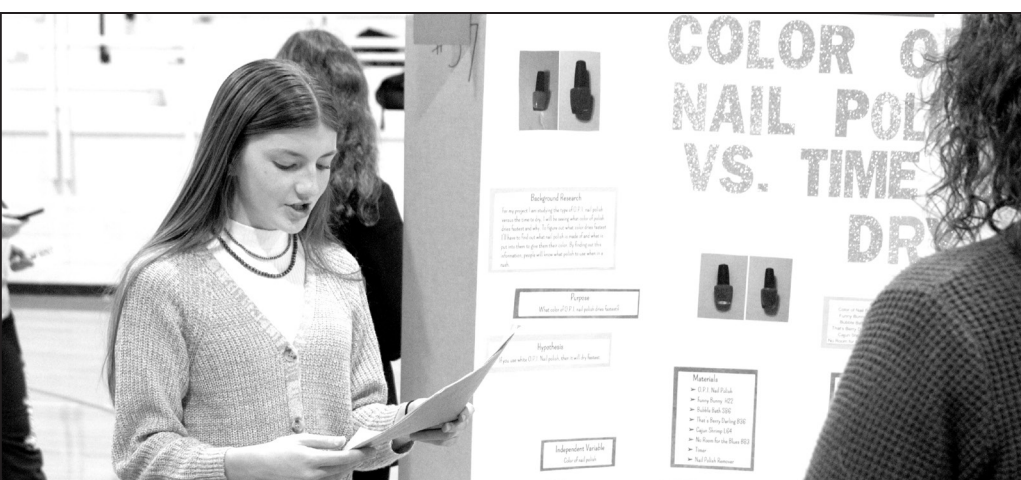
judged on their procedure, conclusion, experimentation, originality, and how well they explained their experiment. The students had to make sure they knew what they were talking about and had some sort of script. These presentations help students experience preparing for and speaking in front of an audience.

Zach Schumacher did “The Grip on a Baseball vs The Speed Thrown” and thought the whole process of the science fair was not too stressful.

“At times it was [stress-

ful], if I realized I didn’t get something done it was stressful to get it done fast, but otherwise it was pretty explained by Mrs. Sokol so it wasn’t too confusing,” Schumacher said.

The top 3 winners of the science fair were Avery Heinrich for first place with “Does Music Affect the Speed of a Dog Eating Food.” In second place, was Kali Speicher with “How Does Different Catnip Affect a Cat’s Heart rate.” Then in third was Melodee Nickolite who did “What Type of Soap Bubbles the Most.”



RYLIE JARECKI / YEARBOOK STAFF

**Eighth grader Madilyn Klug presents her experiment “Type of Nail Polish vs Time to Dry” at the annual eighth grade science fair, which was held in Memorial Hall. The students were judged based on their procedure, experimentation, conclusion, and more.**



RYLIE JARECKI / YEARBOOK STAFF

**Eighth grader Andrew Ehlers presents his experiment “Type of Metal vs Tensile Strength” at the annual eighth grade science fair, which was held on November 17<sup>th</sup>. The students had to pick out an experiment, test it out, and then present it to judges.**

# Carolers wish Columbus a Merry Christmas



CECILIA ARNDT / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

**Sophomores Audrey Stoner, Jacqueline Stoner, and Giselle Chilapa-Bello play the flute for residents at Brookstone Acres on December 1<sup>st</sup>. The Scotus band and choir caroled at four nursing homes and the Columbus Community Hospital.**

By **Cecilia Arndt**  
Editor

Hark how the bells, sweet silver bells, all seem to say, throw cares away...

without music, Christmas festivities would be dull and incomplete. Fortunately, the band and choir spread Christmas cheer throughout the season, from caroling to concerts.

On December 1<sup>st</sup>, the band and choir departed to carol for several nursing homes and the Columbus Community Hospital. They performed a few songs together, then played or sang

their own carols for residents and patients.

“I’d say my favorite place to carol was the hospital. Being able to bring Christmas or a little bit of it to the people who are suffering or in pain/bad places means a lot,” sophomore Isabella Chasteen said.

The Scotus band and choir were not the only ones spreading Christmas cheer; the Columbus High School choir was at the hospital as well. Before leaving, the Columbus choir joined the Scotus students for one carol. This joint performance was enjoyed by the patients and staff of the hospital, where they received numerous compliments.

In total, there were 45 band and choir students, and they were able to talk with the elderly afterward. They went to four nursing homes: Brookstone Acres, Cottonwood Senior Living, Edgewood Columbus Memory Care, and Meridian Gardens. The elderly were especially

appreciative of young people visiting and were excited to talk to them.

“The residents would light up whenever we played. I loved seeing the excitement on their faces. We had the chance to talk to some people, and everyone I talked to was happy we were there!” junior Rebecca Policky said.

Talking with the residents was wonderful, as some recounted how they would hold their hand and talk about everything from jukeboxes to Christmas. Every resident had a story, and they were excited to share with young people.

“They told us how the songs reminded them of their childhood and good old memories,” senior Amber Spawn said.

As they caroled, the band and choir were able to perform a few of their concert pieces. For the band, they played “Reindeer Galop,” which is a song depicting the way reindeer “galop” across the wintery countryside. The

choir sang “You’re a Mean One, Mr. Grinch,” a fun take on the classic Christmas story.

“The residents I talked to loved our performance and even asked a few of us to sing and play several other songs for them to hear our music again,” sophomore Audrey Stoner said.

This year, the band concert was on December 11<sup>th</sup>, ushering in more Christmas spirit. They played “Ukrainian Bell Carol,” “Reindeer Galop,” “Christmas Favorites” and “Mary Did You Know,” showing off by playing both classic and new Christmas songs.

The Shamrock Singers will be performing their concert on December 14<sup>th</sup> tonight at 7:00 P.M. They will be performing “The First Noel,” “Cold December Flies Away,” “O Nata Lux,” and “You’re a Mean One, Mr. Grinch.” In addition, they will be caroling around the school on December 18<sup>th</sup>.

# Mock trial teams compete at districts

By **Patrick Arndt**  
Staff Reporter

Order in the court! This year’s Mock trial teams competed with the best of the best, facing Lakeview and York at the district competition. This year’s trial was a civil case about a child taking a photo in a confidential lab setting and proving if they are either guilty or innocent. Scotus Mock trial is a group of three teams consisting of roughly 3 lawyers and 6 witnesses. Mock trial ended its season on November 10<sup>th</sup>, falling just short of making state.

With November 10<sup>th</sup> as the only competition day, the 18 members of mock trial practiced vigorously, studying materials and practicing lines. Of the members on Team 3, freshman Rachel Spawn played the role of a witness in the competition.

“We got a late start due to not having a lawyer to help

us immediately. Once we got a lawyer, he was a huge help. We put together questions and answers for our team. We had many practices the week of the competition,” Spawn said.

However, no matter how much practice a person has, nerves always find their way into the thoughts of a competitor on competition day.

The single day competition was held at the Columbus Courthouse and consisted of 3 teams each from Scotus, Lakeview, and York. Representing Scotus’s Team 1, senior Neve Pavlik portrayed a witness for Scotus.

“I was extremely nervous considering the teams we went up against for the days leading up to the competition. Once on the stand, everything flowed well, having full confidence in my team and their roles, and it was smooth sailing after that,” Pavlik said.

As the team started competing the team began

to improve, allowing each member to prove their unique skills and versatility. With the November 10<sup>th</sup> meet being their only meet, the teams ended very close to making state, falling only a few points behind.

Many competitors found that the season brought new and unique challenges; junior Rebecca Policky embraced these challenges and overcame every challenge presented.

“We had a tough civil case this year. It wasn’t easy for our team to understand what was happening at first, but with the help of our coaches, we could piece together what we needed to know,” Policky said.

Of the 3 Mock trial teams, only team 1 scored a victory against York’s Team 2, among the competitors on Team 1 was junior Caleb Cameron.

“I’m proud of the way we competed this year with all the difficulties we faced.



MACEY JOHANNES / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

**Sophomore Ryan Allen presents the opening statement at district mock trial; the competition was held on November 10<sup>th</sup> at Columbus Courthouse. Of the three teams, only the junior team won against York; none of the three teams made state.**

Even though the result wasn’t what we exactly hoped for,

we still had a fun ride this year.” Cameron said.



# Charlie's Chocolate Factory comes to close at districts



JOANNA RUSHER / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Junior Madden Saenz, playing Willy Wonka, smiles to the crowd during the final scene of this year's one act, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. This year was Saenz's first season in one act.

By Ava Rickert  
Staff Reporter

This year, the Scotus One Act cast and crew brought to life the cinematic classic of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. With a

mix of both veteran and new actors, the team had high hopes for the season.

The team participated in three competitions this season along with their home performance. Because they did not have the chance to perform their show as much

as previous years, they had to use every competition as a way to improve.

The team performed *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* publicly for the first time on November 11<sup>th</sup> at York. Junior Madden Saenz led the one act team this

season as he took on the lead role of Willy Wonka. The team placed third at York and awards were presented to both Madden Saenz for Best Actor and sophomore Ryan Allen for Best Supporting Actor.

"The audience fed our

one act and were really respectful at our first meet at York," junior actress Lily Humphrey said. "We needed this because some of us were doubtful of our one act's greatness and this is what we needed to start the season."

After a productive first meet, the one act team had their home performance a week later on November 17<sup>th</sup> in Memorial Hall. This was an opportunity for families, students, and teachers to support the team.

The one act cast and crew had their conference meet the next day on November 18<sup>th</sup> at Central Community College. They placed fourth out of ten teams and received no individual awards.

"It was kind of disappointing, but our energy was lacking that day," Saenz said, "so we didn't do as well as we should have."

The team was hoping for better results, but, nevertheless, they continued preparing for the biggest meet of the season, districts.

The team left for the district final on November 28<sup>th</sup> feeling prepared for the competition. Junior Caroline Klitz portrayed the role of Violet Beauregarde in this season's production.

"We felt, for lack of a

better term, hyped. We were nervously excited to give it our all," Klitz said.

With a trip to State on the line, the team gave it their all in the last performance. However, it was not enough to top off Lincoln Northwest, and the team placed second in District B-3.

Junior Jessica Jackson portrayed the role of Charlie Bucket in this season's one act.

"[Districts] was the best performance we ever had," Jackson said. "The energy was up and everyone who had seen us before believed that we had never performed so well."

Although a disappointing end to the season, their district results have put a fire in the one act cast and crew for the upcoming season.

"We may not have made it [to State] this year, but we'll be back next year stronger than ever," Klitz said.

Members of the one act claim their bond is more of a family than a team, with a total of forty-one members.

"There is no other thing that has made me feel as a part of a family as one act has," Humphrey said. "I will miss all of the seniors so much, and I hope that people can find their own home in one act in the future."



QUINN VUNCANNON / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Oompa-loompas dance around the stage while playing instruments at their home performance of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* on November 17<sup>th</sup>. They appeared on stage numerous times during the group's four performances this season.



JOANNA RUSHER / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Junior Jessica Jackson, senior Rosie Sucha, and juniors Caroline Klitz and Madden Saenz look at one of Willy Wonka's inventions in the one act, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. The team placed in the top three at two of their three competitions this fall.

PIZZA • CHICKEN • BUFFET • DELIVERY

**Pizza Ranch**

\$13 Everyday for Students!

DO YOU HAVE WHAT IT TAKES TO ESCAPE?

BOOK TODAY!

StarEscapeRooms.com

Columbus, Nebraska

Book your Adventure at StarEscapeRooms.com or call 402-658-5658

RICKERT CHIROPRACTIC AND ACUPUNCTURE, PC

Planting the Seed of Well-Being

**CSP**

Columbus Screen Printing Inc.

SUPPORT YOUR FAVORITE TEAM

Receive your Scotus Shamrocks Visa® Debit Card from Pinnacle Bank and we'll donate \$25 TO SCOTUS CENTRAL CATHOLIC!

Pinnacle Bank

COLUMBUS 210 E. 23<sup>rd</sup> St., 402.562.8936  
2661 33<sup>rd</sup> Ave., 402.562.8935 • pinnbank.com

Columbus Physical Therapy, PC

THE FEEL GOOD EXPERIENCE

402-564-5456

**ONEUNITED**

FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

Banking with you.

bankingwithyou.com

Member FDIC

**ACKMAN'S**

AUTO DENT REPAIR

Paintless Dent Repair

Mobile service, insurance approved, free estimates. Hail dents, minor dents and door dings repaired with no painting and no filling.

4903 35th Street  
Columbus, NE 68601  
(402) 563-2818  
mobile (402) 750-1593

Established 1950

**The Husker House**

STEAKS & SEAFOOD

402-564-4121 • Columbus, NE

www.huskersteakhouse.com

# Nostalgia brings back *Fortnite*

By **Kirsten Sucha**  
Staff Reporter

Over the weekend of November 11<sup>th</sup>, 44.7 million people logged back on to the game *Fortnite* after years of the game consistently losing popularity. Why? Because the company who created the video game, Epic Games, decided to bring back the “OG” Chapter 1 Season 5 *Fortnite* map for the month of November.

*Fortnite* is a survival game against one hundred other players who fight each other in combat to be the last person, duo, or squad standing. It is a fast paced game with intense competition, but there is a sense of victory every time a match is won. These factors excite many players into playing the game over and over again, causing the game to be played an addicting amount of times.

According to the website *Demandsage*, *Fortnite*’s peak popularity was in August 2020 where the game had around 292 million active players per month. Now, the average number is around

240 million active players per month. The numbers of active players are not bad by any means, but the game has still decreased in active players over the past couple of years.

Many argue the cause of *Fortnite*’s decrease in popularity is because of the constant new updates. Every few months or so, it is a new “season” because major updates are added to the game. New outfits, vehicles, weapons, and game play features are added every season. Because of technological advances, the game became almost unrecognizable after a point of time. This resulted in many players giving up or growing out of the game.

Because the game was losing popularity, the developers decided to bring back the most notable period of the game’s lifetime, Chapter 1 Season 5. The map was originally released in July 2018. This was arguably the best time of the game’s existence because of two factors: the map of the game was well thought out and the game was simple and fast to learn.

The only real reason 44.7 million teenagers logged

back onto *Fortnite* this past month was nostalgia. According to the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, the definition of nostalgia is, “a wistful or excessively sentimental yearning for return to or of some past period of irrecoverable condition.” So in simpler terms, teenagers are not playing these video games to be lazy, they are looking back at easier times of their lives. After so many updates, many players were left as if they lost something because the game was “not what it used to be.” Returning the old map makes old players feel a sense of comfort.

On December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023 a new chapter of *Fortnite* began, so, unfortunately, the Chapter 1 Season 5 map will not return. The map was active for four weeks before it was replaced with the “new and improved” version of the game. Chapter 5 has now begun, meaning out with the old and in with the new.

By bringing back the “OG” *Fortnite* map, Epic Games brought back nostalgia for all of its 500 million registered players. Maybe new is not always improved.



The original Chapter 1 Season 5 *Fortnite* map returned to the game in early November. The map was active for four weeks until Chapter 5 was released December 3<sup>rd</sup>.

# What water bottle for your wishlist



JOANNA RUSHER / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

The Hydroflask, Stanley, and Owala are the three trendiest waterbottles in recent years. They are popular items on wishlists this Christmas.

By **Joanna Rusher**  
Staff Reporter

With Christmas right around the corner, teenage

girls are increasing their screen time to online shop for items to place on their Christmas list. Many of these objects are thrown onto the wishlist to stay on trend in-

cluding the want for a Hydroflask, Stanley, or Owala water bottle. All three brands cost roughly the same per ounce, are insulated, and come in many different colors.

However, of these three, Hydroflasks are the most convenient, diverse, and practical.

Since the end of 2019, Hydroflasks have been thriving in their number one spot as they follow the visco girl trends. Hydroflasks dropped in the race for popularity as soon as Stanley’s and Owala’s began hitting social media. Hydroflasks were hated for their tendencies to dent when dropped and their inability to fit in cup holders. However, most of these problems were only created for an excuse to buy a new water bottle, and Hydroflasks have fewer drawbacks than other brands.

Hydroflasks are more sensible than other water bottles. This iconic flask has the option of two types of lids, one that is a screw on with a flexible handle, and one with a drinking straw and a handle. Many types come with rubber stoppers on the bottom to keep it from clanking when set down and announcing their presence

like Stanley’s and Owala’s.

Not only are they handy, Hydroflasks are also cute. Yes, Stanley’s and Owala’s come in tons of different colors just like Hydroflasks, but not in as many styles. Hydroflasks come in all shapes and sizes to accommodate for sports, cup holders, and kids. There are vibrant and fun colors for teens or neutral and professional looking colors for adults. To go along with the swing of the trend, Hydroflasks are also the perfect texture and shape for stickers. They can be peeled off and replaced without much hassle.

Owala’s have mostly been popular for their wide range of fun color combinations. They also fit in the side of a book bag but not in a cup holder. However, Owala’s cannot be personalized because stickers would clash with their wild colors. They also do not hold as much water as Hydroflasks, and they scratch easily. Finally because of the lid that is snapped shut, water splatters

when it is opened.

While Stanley’s hold just as much water as a Hydroflask, they are impractical. The straw sticking out of the Stanley allows for an easy spill. In addition, the shape of the Stanley that allows it to fit in a cup holder causes a imbalance where a slight bump could lead to disaster. The odd shape also doesn’t allow it to fit in the side of a bag and there is a risk of spilling on the inside, so Stanley’s must be carried at all times.

Hydroflasks, on the other hand, are perfectly even, so they are not so easily tipped over. Rubber stoppers on the bottom also add another layer of grip, and they can be placed inside a bag without fear.

With every water bottle having its own drawbacks, it’s hard to know what to buy. Nevertheless, it’s usually hard to beat the classics. As Christmas lists are considered, Hydroflasks should be placed before Stanley’s or Owala’s.

# BookTok: novel idea, terrible execution

By **Quinn VunCannon**  
Staff Reporter

For some, reading is the daunting task they have to complete in 7th through 9th grade for AR points. For others, books are a hobby that takes up a large chunk of time and money. Recently, young readers around the country are looking to TikTok for their share of book content.

Deemed ‘BookTok’, this side of TikTok has been largely responsible for a resurgence in reading among young people. Readers here will share and review popular books. It has even gotten so influential that big brand bookstores like Barnes and Noble are stocking sections labeled ‘#BookTok.’ On paper, this seems like the perfect space for people looking to get into reading.

However, BookTok is often a toxic place on the internet. It leaves readers disappointed with books that

don’t live up to the hype, and it encourages spending habits that have me cringing.

One drawback many people find when exploring BookTok is everyone has the same opinion. BookTok has a specific genre and audience it caters to. If one does not fall under this category, the experience will be underwhelming. Creators will all have the same bland opinions on the books they recommend.

This makes new readers feel stuck in a box. BookTok is a space where a person would get bullied for having a different opinion about a popular book. Books and reading usually have an air of creativity about them. It truly makes it more ironic that the most popular space around books stifles diversity in opinion. This lack of originality makes the experience for the average reader almost unbearable.

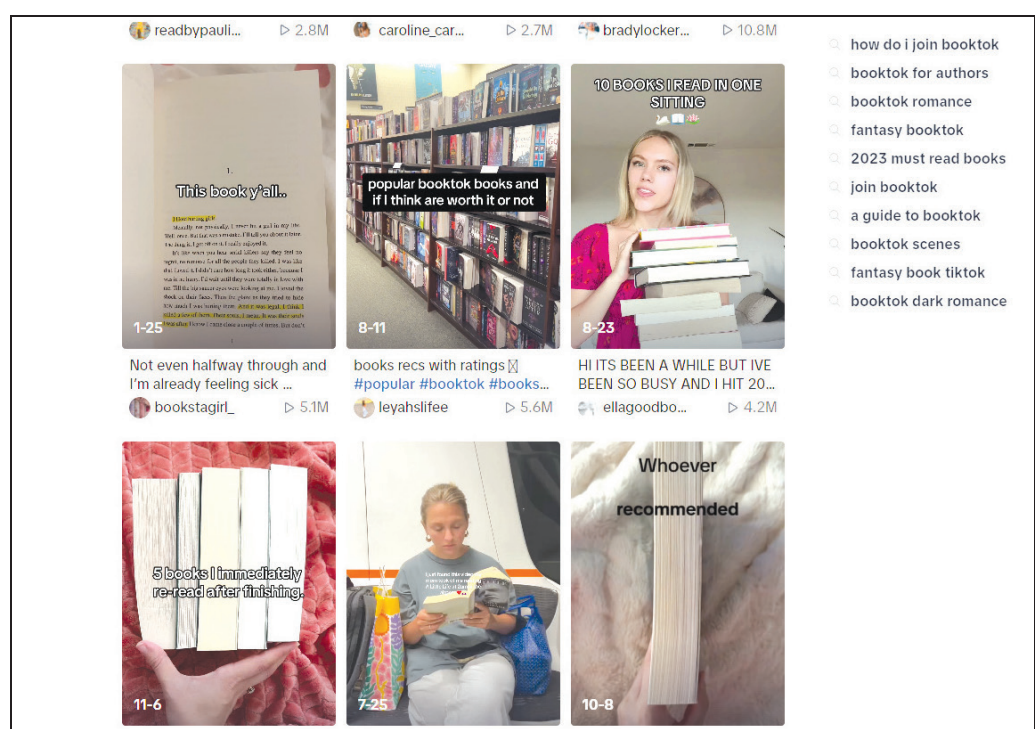
On the other side of the page, authors can thrive under the conditions BookTok presents. If one book an

author writes blows up on BookTok, it guarantees their book will reach thousands of readers. It also opens up a door for them to continue to write ‘BookTok’ hits.

That, however, leads me to my next critique. All the books that are popular on BookTok fall under one of two categories. One being a romcom with a swoon-worthy male lead, and two being a young adult dystopian fantasy with a female protagonist who dismantles whatever corrupt government rules over her society. Do not get me wrong, I love a good dystopian, but some diversity would be appreciated.

Another aspect of BookTok that goes unnoticed is truly how much money it encourages readers to spend. Books aren’t cheap, and with how fast the trend cycle flows, everyone’s wallets will hurt after spending some time on BookTok.

As much as I love to criticize BookTok for all its faults, it romanticizes reading



QUINN VUNCANNON / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Pictured above is a screenshot from a TikTok search for #booktok. When browsing on Booktok, the average reader sees a variety of different content such as reviews, recommendations, and skits.

in a way that makes everyone want to participate. There’s so many people out there who wouldn’t have thought twice about picking up a book until their TikTok convinced them

to, and for that I have to be appreciative.

I would encourage everyone to read in their spare time. It doesn’t have to be a 500 page, 10 book series,

as BookTok would advise you, but go out and try it! You don’t have to like what everyone else likes, and you don’t have burn holes in your pockets either.