



Rock Bottom

Scotus Central Catholic

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

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Scotus retreats from old ways to impact students

By Joanna Rusher
Staff Reporter

Retreats have always been a staple at Scotus Central Catholic with each grade attending one each year. Putting on six retreats per school year is a lot to organize, so for years the youngest four or five grades would simply go to one of the local parishes for activities and participation in the sacraments. Over the past couple years, however, the retreats have been changing to different locations and activities for the students. They now have opportunities to volunteer, serve, learn, and grow in many different aspects of faith and life. Dana Ritzdorf is the campus minister at Scotus and organizes most of the retreats.

“I think they’re important because we’re a Catholic school, and they give students the opportunity to encounter Jesus in a deeper way. It is probably one of the most important things we can do,” Ritzdorf said. “They just get students out of their normal routine and to a different location, and gives them the opportunity to turn off everything that is stressing them out on a normal school day and just focus on their faith.”

To make these opportunities larger, the seventh grade retreat was changed into a half day, giving the young students a small taste of what a high school retreat would feel like. This mini retreat took place on

September 15, and, although short, impacted the students. One of the highlights of the retreat was a small group of upperclassmen leading small groups, giving talks, and answering questions. Hannah Dreesen is a seventh grader who attended the retreat.

“The upperclassmen helped me visualize that if you don’t have a great relationship with God, you can start the amazing journey now,” Dreesen said.

The senior retreat is one of the only retreats that did not change. Students look forward to it their entire high school careers. Located at Timberlake Camp, there is Mass, icebreakers, canoeing, a ropes course, and a giant blob to launch people into the lake. Senior Amber Spawn was among those whose expectations were exceeded at the retreat.

“The senior retreat set a high note for us as a class,” Spawn said. “It is always good to start off the year with something positive.”

The retreat takes place at the beginning of the school year to encourage students to bond throughout the year and not just at the end. Many students thought the retreat helped them grow closer as a class, including senior Alex Medina-Perez.

“[The retreat] definitely showed me we can all have fun and just enjoy whatever it may be that we have to do this year,” Medina-Perez said.

In contrast to the senior retreat,

the sophomores and juniors will now have options on what retreats or volunteer opportunities they wish to attend.

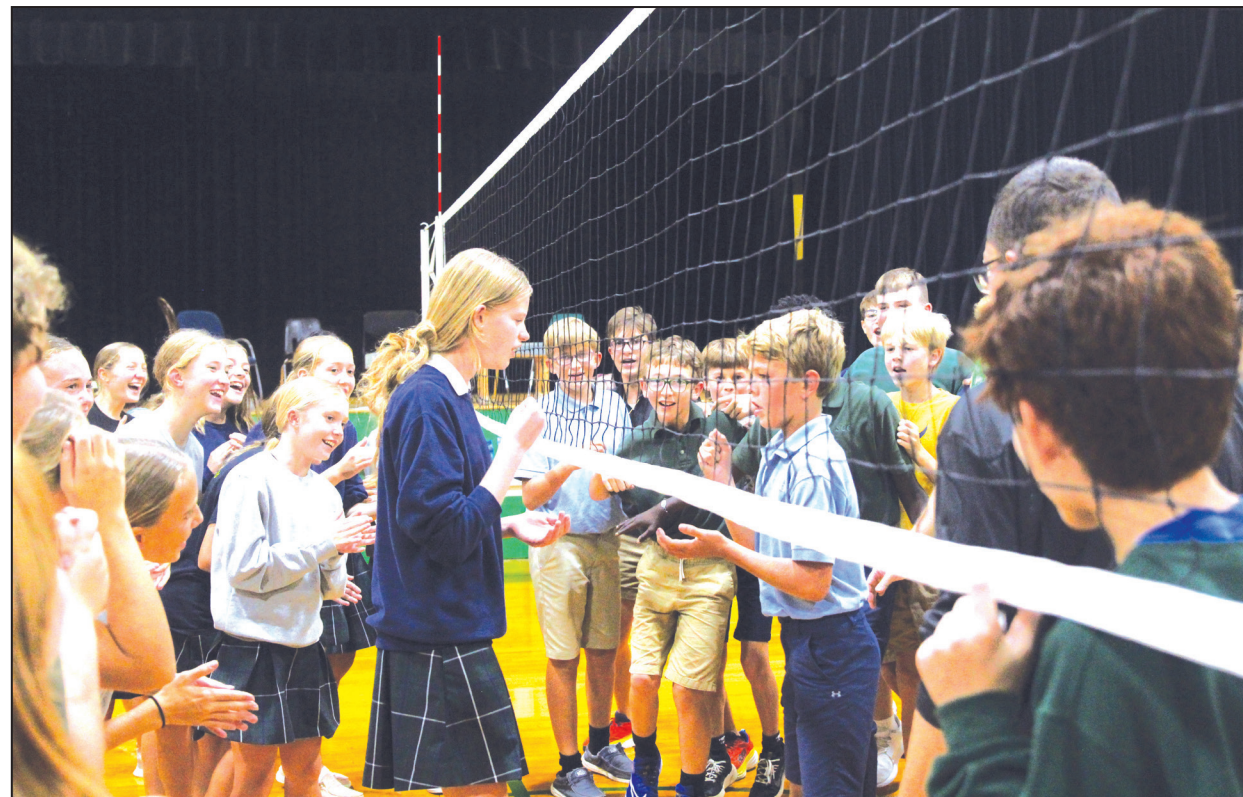
“We just tried to brainstorm what would make it more enjoyable for students. What would make it more impactful, what would make it more likely for people to actually encounter the Lord?” Ritzdorf said. “So we thought that giving more

choice might help with that. We’re hoping that it just makes it a little bit more personal and the kids might be a little more invested in it.”

Some of the options, out of eight total, are the FIERCE athlete retreat, the men’s retreat, and the March for Life. These will begin taking place on October 11th with the service retreat. Helene Chard is a sophomore who will be attending

the culture retreat.

“I think the decision about having students choose the retreats they want to attend is a good idea because it could help the students grow deeper in their faith at the pace that is suited for them,” Chard said. “Everyone is at a different point in their faith life and this could help them meet God where they are at.”



JOSIE SLIVA / YEARBOOK STAFF

Seventh graders Jordynn Bowns and Eddie Olmer face-off for the rock-paper-scissors championship at the 7th grade retreat on September 15th. It was a half day where they played games, talked in small groups, and attended adoration.

Holoubek expands Spanish experience

By Madden Saenz
Staff Reporter

Spanish at Scotus has been an interesting ride since Mrs. Moody’s retirement after the 2021 school year. First, Scotus had its students learn via Zoom classes, which were taught virtually by online Spanish professors and was hosted by

volunteer teacher Kristi Heng. This was a trying time for some students because they lacked the one-on-one teaching with a teacher who had hands-on Spanish experience, until last year.

In 2022, Scotus welcomed a new Spanish teacher, Autumn Holoubek (who at the time was Autumn Johnson). With this new

teacher, the Spanish students at Scotus Central Catholic were in a sort of educational utopia. With new access to Spanish I and II classes and a teacher who had a bachelor’s degree and a trip to Costa Rica under her belt, Spanish at Scotus became a noticeably improved experience. Unfortunately, Scotus still lacked the ability to further its

students’ Spanish education, that is, until Mrs. Holoubek stepped up to save the day again.

“I really wanted to [teach Spanish III]. Not that I don’t love teaching the lower levels, but getting into the upper levels and being able to do more with the language is just fun. I also wanted that opportunity for students because I think it’s important, so I want them to learn more,” Holoubek said.

Thanks to Mrs. Holoubek’s efforts, current and future upper class students can further improve their linguistic skills and advance their Spanish abilities. Even with these new forms of education, Mrs. Holoubek has continued her efforts in helping students learn Spanish.

“Spanish Club is just an opportunity for anyone and everyone to come and learn more about the many cultures of Hispanic and Latin America...and those [cultures and people] that come along with it. We’re doing that in a variety of ways. We’ve already tried some new food,” Holoubek said. “We’re hoping to be able to travel, possibly. We’re not sure about it yet, but learning dances, listening to music, trying new foods, hopefully going to a restaurant or two, just a bunch of different activities and ways that people can learn more about those cultures” Holoubek said.

Even better, Spanish Club is not just available to just Spanish students.

“We even have some junior

Scotus technology switches to Google

By Kirsten Sucha
Staff Reporter

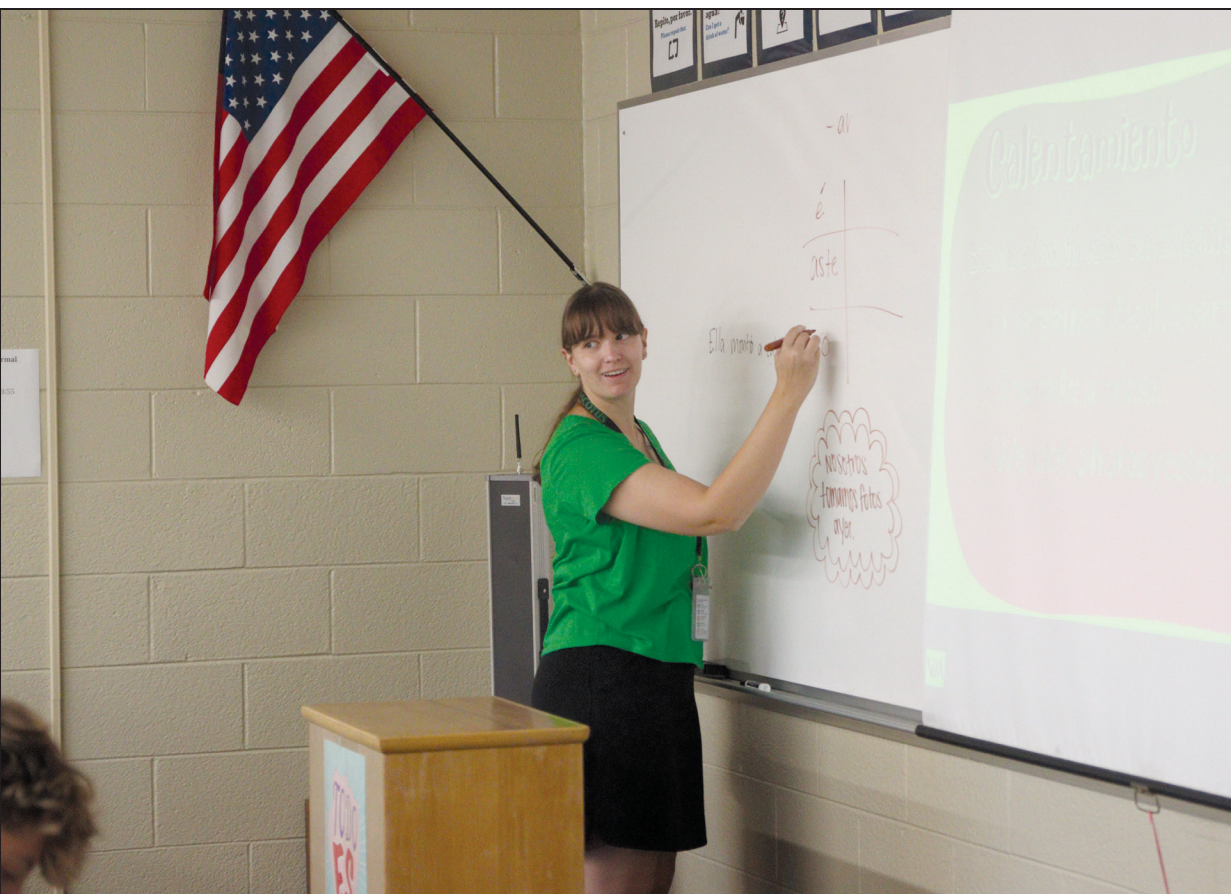
Throughout the school year, changes happen all the time. One new change students and teachers have had to deal with this fall was the new email and storage program on their computers.

Scotus recently decided to transition from Microsoft accounts to Google accounts. After being a Microsoft run school for almost a decade, Scotus recently decided to switch to Google for organizational purposes. This equated to the students and teachers using new emails and switching over to Google classroom for their assignments.

IT coordinator Jeremiah Salyard has been in charge of the change.

“So the whole reason we’re switching over is because we have decided to consolidate the four Catholic schools here in town into a single organization. That means getting everyone on the same page. To do that, one of the things we want to do is update everyone’s email and such,” Salyard said.

Even though the transition from Microsoft to Google went smoothly for the most part, there were still a few hangups.



MADDEN SAENZ / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Spanish instructor Autumn Holoubek smiles back at her Spanish II class. Holoubek offered to teach Spanish III, opening more doors for students at Scotus.

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7 Issues:

- October 12
- November 8
- December 13
- February 1
- March 7
- April 4
- May 2

GOOGLE



ELLA HASH / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Senior Amber Spawn works on her college assignment in the media center during 7th period. College classes still use Microsoft even though Scotus recently switched to Google.

“Things just are not transferring over correctly. Missing documents and emails, and that is going to happen regardless,” Salyard said.

Missing documents and files was a large concern when Scotus decided to switch over to Google. Many students were also concerned with the navigation side of Google

since they were taught how to use Microsoft. There has also been a struggle from jumping between Microsoft to Google because there is still access to the students’ Microsoft accounts; this has caused confusion when logging into certain websites.

Junior Jacqueline Stoner ex-

pressed her own opinion about the difficulties of the switch.

“I find it a lot harder to navigate and use Google products than Microsoft, so that can really slow me down when I am trying to get things done,” Stoner said.

Even though there have been several disadvantages, students

and teachers find positives in the situation. 73.9% of 93 students surveyed say they prefer Google over Microsoft.

Freshman Lillian Miller is one of the many students who prefers Google.

“Everything seems to run a little bit smoother, and the software feels more modern,” Miller said.

Not only do students find the new browser better, Salyard also agrees with this statement.

“I find it is a bit easier to kind of do some of the administration things on the backside. They have kind of geared it a little more towards education, where Microsoft’s more geared towards business,” Salyard said.

Overall, the switch to Google has been a success, but there are still changes that need to be made for a successful switch. Even though accounts for emails are set up, Salyard is not completely done with the change.

“Now that things are slowing down, I’m able to go back and start to address these other things that are in the background that are not currently an issue, but they will become an issue if I do not go looking for them,” Salyard said.

Senior Tori Dush summarized the switch to Google.

“It was a difficult switch at first because nobody knew what to do, but once we got into our classes and played around with it then we can see that it is slightly simpler than Microsoft in a sense,” Dush said.

SPANISH

high kids who are joining and there’s some other people who may be weren’t able to fit Spanish into their schedule this year, but they still want to be learning about that and so they’re just joining us for the club,” Holoubek said.

Mrs. Holoubek feels Spanish at Scotus has been improved greatly; however, she still wishes there

could be more for the students that want more.

“In a quote perfect world, not really a perfect world, but in my perfect world I would say I would love to be able to have Spanish I-IV, maybe even a V if there was an independent study, but that would not happen with just myself. We’d have to hire another Spanish teacher. If

we could find another teacher and include all those classes, that would be wonderful.”

Overall, Mrs. Holoubek is happy with the current Spanish program and wants everyone at Scotus to be happy as well.

“I just encourage everyone to take Spanish and take the time to learn things about their neighbors

because especially here in Columbus, but just in general in the United States, we have a lot of friends and neighbors who are Spanish speakers. I think it’s really important that we as Christians take the time to empathize and learn about other people’s cultures, and I think learning Spanish is a great way to do that.”

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Rowdy Dowdy changes get mixed reviews

By Rock Bottom Staff

After the summer off, the Rowdy Dowdies returned this fall, bigger and bolder. However, the familiar sight of them at every home volleyball, football, and basketball game is slightly different than previous years.

The Rowdy Dowdy student section has faced some new changes this year, which have been met with varying degrees of approval. This article reflects the opinion of the journalism staff who reviewed these changes together. We decided the Rowdy Dowdy updates are good overall, but there is still room for improvement.

The most notable dif-

ference is the new location of the designated Rowdy Dowdy student section. Previously, the Rowdy Dowdies were located next to the pep band. They are now located on the west end of the gym, across from the visiting team's student section. This change was brought about to accommodate the Scotus parents and fans. Some Scotus fans had complained about the lack of space and difficulties watching the game while sitting next to the student section.

Although it is important to be as accommodating and welcoming as possible for everyone, we find this new home problematic. Trying to fit the entire student section into the new space is nearly impossible. The first home

volleyball game had a tremendous turnout, but not all of the students who came to support were able to fit into the student section. Most of the junior high students had to sit on the bleachers across the aisle and at the top, next to the rest of the student body. Students have been reluctant to return because the tightly-packed, hot area was not pleasant to cheer from.

In addition, being on the visitor's end of the gym for volleyball makes it difficult to cheer and feel involved, both for the students and cheerleaders. We feel we are too far away from the rest of the Shamrocks. Being near the visiting team makes negative cheering against them tempting. It is also not ideal while watching volleyball; the up

ref and post block part of the court from our view. During basketball games, however, it will not matter as much because the teams switch sides throughout the game, and the basketball home bench is on the west end.

It is especially important for the cheerleaders to feel connected to the crowd because they are the ones leading the Shamrock support. The exciting changes they brought to the Rowdy Dowdies have been warmly welcomed. Their effort and organization makes it fun for the students; new and different cheers are being used to spice it up.

The cheerleaders also introduced their "Best Dressed" award. At each game, they pick one student

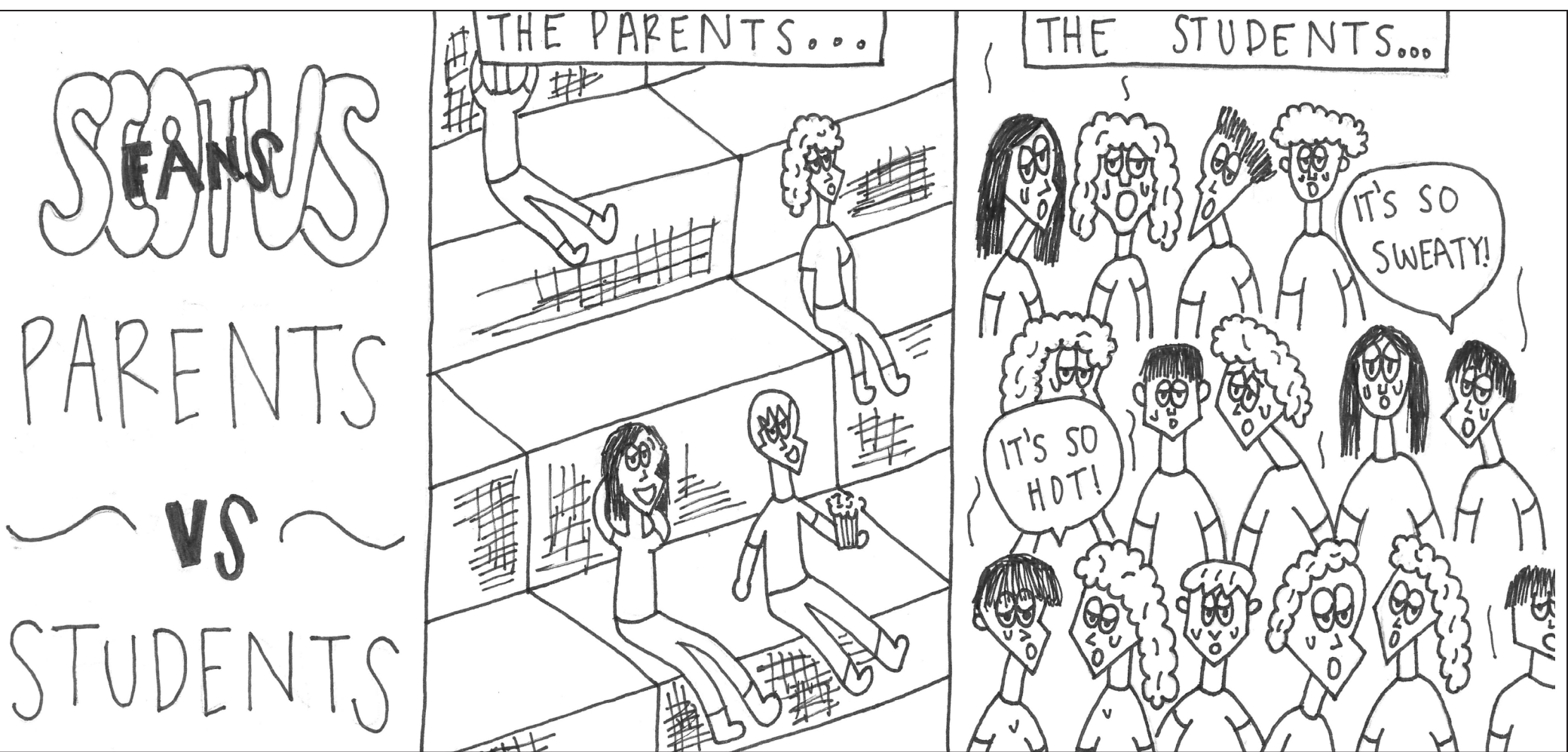
whom they think dressed to the theme the best and award them a \$5 concession stand gift certificate. Not only does this encourage the students to dress to the theme, they also put more effort into their attire.

New social media pages, created by the cheerleaders, are dedicated to promoting the Rowdy Dowdies. Recently, the cheerleaders have been making TikToks entailing student section information, such as dates, locations, and times of upcoming games. This makes it easy for supporting students to keep up to date on important Rowdy Dowdy information.

We know it is hard to accommodate the Rowdy Dowdies, Scotus fans, and visitors, but we believe a

better seating solution is possible. For example, we could consider switching Scotus and visitor fans' sides and moving the Rowdy Dowdies back to their original spot. Another option is utilizing the area the pep band occupies. Because the band does not stay the whole time, other people can use that spot after they leave.

Several changes have been made to the Rowdy Dowdies this year. Although they were all implemented with the intention of accommodating the majority of supporters and keeping school spirit alive at games, they are not 100% perfect yet. With a few tweaks, especially to the student seating, the Rowdy Dowdies could become the best they have ever been.



ROSIE SUCHA / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Women's sports warrant a watch



By Quinn VunCannon
Staff Reporter

92,003 fans packed Memorial Stadium on August 30th, 2023, but not for a typical football game. Almost one hundred thousand people

showed up for the Nebraska women's volleyball team. This sets a world record for attendance for a women's sporting event.

Women's sports are booming, and everyone should be a part of it. Women's sports are engaging to watch, just as competitive as their male counterparts, and are becoming some of the most watched sporting events around the world. A huge draw to women's sports is how the players interact with fans.

Watching women compete engages viewers in a way men's sports don't. Have you ever seen Caitlin Clark command a packed full basketball arena to get loud? If

not, everyone should. Caitlin Clark is just one example of a female athlete who creates hype around her sport. Clark plays point guard for the Iowa women's basketball team and led her team to a National Championship game in the NCAA women's March Madness tournament this year. When she's not draining logo three's or dropping 30 point triple doubles, she's hyping up the crowd and signing autographs for fans. Engagement is a big deal in the sports world, and she's the perfect example. Women's basketball as a whole benefits from Clark and hundreds of other athletes who engage with their fans. After these female

athletes grab your attention, they put on a cut throat show.

Women's sports are unbelievably competitive. Some people criticize female athletes because they claim they are 'boring to watch'. They could not be more wrong! I could select a thousand different games and rivalries to disprove this point. The 2023 Women's World Cup was one of the most competitive soccer tournaments to date. While many sportsmen and women have their sports' rivalries and dynasties, The US Women's National Team had a chokehold on the World Cup scene. The USWNT has been dominating the World Cup scene since the 90's. They had won 4 out of

the last 8 World Cups, and this year several countries stepped up to battle with the US. After an exciting game, Sweden knocked out the US in the round of 16 in a game that went to penalty kicks. Spain then beat Sweden to advance to the World Cup final. The team from Spain, F.C. Barcelona, held the previous record for the most attended women's sporting event.

Along with Nebraska volleyball's world record game in Memorial Stadium, women's sports are becoming more and more watched all around the world. This year during the US Open Tennis Championships, the women's final had more viewership

than the men's. Coco Gauff defeated Aryna Sabalenka and amassed over 3.4 million viewers on ESPN. The men's championship, which featured Novak Djokovic setting a world record for most grand-slam titles, only averaged 2.3 million viewers. Women's sports are getting the attention they deserve and now is the time to join the bandwagon!

This is your chance to join the fun in women's sports. Nebraska volleyball is ranked number two in the nation, and they face number one ranked Wisconsin on October 21st. This match will be huge, and a perfect way to jump right into the action!

City needs to light up student safety



By Ava Rickert
Staff Reporter

It is 7:50 AM. on a Monday morning. I am already

running late for school and still have to study for my Chemistry test happening first period. Right as I am pulling out of my neighborhood, a biker chugs past - in the driving lane. I cautiously drive behind him at approximately 5 miles per hour, pushing me even more behind schedule.

It is now 7:55 A.M. I finally reach my turn. Since the intersection does not have a stoplight, I am forced to wait an agonizing 5 minutes until I get the chance to turn onto the bypass.

It is 8 A.M., and studying for that Chemistry test is now the least of my worries.

What road am I driving

on that causes me all this hassle? The answer is 48th Avenue on the west side of Columbus.

For those who do not know, 48th Avenue is a road that runs north from the Loup Canal and past the hospital. The section of the road causing the most trouble is the stretch north of the bypass. 48th Avenue, a road traveled by many students at Scotus, has recently proved its incapability to move along any form of traffic during the morning hours. The downfall of 48th Avenue has just begun, and it will only continue to get worse.

The road has a variety of

issues such as deep ditches, narrow shoulders, and most importantly, no stop light where it intersects the bypass. While waiting five minutes to turn may be a minor inconvenience in the grand scheme of things, a crash credited to the lack of a stop light is a much more serious, and realistic, issue. I am no cook, but even I know 48th Avenue is a recipe for disaster.

People who do not regularly travel 48th Avenue always have a list of comebacks when listening to my complaints about the road, the most common one being, "Just go to school a different way." Trust me, I have tried -

and it did not go much better.

On July 5th, the city closed down 48th Avenue to repair its broken bridge, another one of its drawbacks. While this construction took place, I was forced to wind my way through the backroads of Lake North, which added at least 5 minutes to every trip I took into town. For supposedly being an easier route, it still caused just as much headache as waiting at a stop sign for ten minutes did.

Whoever invented roads would be vastly disappointed in 48th Avenue and its surplus of issues. Instead of providing safe and efficient

transportation for the citizens of Columbus, 48th Avenue puts their wellbeing in jeopardy.

To fix the safety concerns 48th Avenue poses, priorities need to be established. This cannot be a project that takes 10 years to address - because by then I will be in my twenties and not a teenage girl complaining about a road in my school newspaper. The change needs to be made now, both for the good of the community and also for their safety. If 48th Avenue's imperfections are not corrected soon, drivers and bikers alike could end up seriously hurt.

Shamrock football battles ups and downs

By Quinn VanCannon
Staff Reporter

The Shamrock football team has seen big success this season, but have also learned from tough losses. Entering the eighth week of the season, the Shamrocks have a record of 4-3.

To start the year, the Shamrocks faced rival David City Aquinas. In a monotonous game of runs and punts, the Shamrocks mustered up a win 3-0, from a field goal by senior kicker Frank Fehring. Leading the charge into their second game was junior running back Luke Wemhoff. "We played really well against [Pierce] and fixed a lot from week one," Wemhoff explained.

Even though they saw some offensive improvements, the Shamrocks lost to the Bluejays 28-20, after leading 14-8 at halftime. The Shamrocks had a tough time stopping Pierce's physical run game in the second half. The Shamrock offensive line is getting put to the test, getting

valuable varsity experience this season.

"We had a lot of linemen step up this year," Wemhoff said.

There are many new faces getting snaps this year. Juniors Conner Wurtz, Jordan Kouma, and Grant Zoucha are players starting on the line this year who did not see much field time last year. Although young, these names have contributed to a successful season thus far.

After a game winning field goal with no time left on the clock, the Shamrocks narrowly scraped ahead winning against St. Paul 22-20 in week 3. Scotus then coasted to an easy victory against the West Point-Beemer Cadets with a score of 41-27 in the next week. The Shamrocks have strived to make changes to help their team.

"We changed our offensive scheme, and it has helped us get our playmakers the ball more," Wemhoff said. Wemhoff had a season high of 3 rushing touchdowns against the Cadets. Wemhoff

leads the team in touchdowns with 7 so far this season. The team lost a few key seniors last year, but a change on the offensive side has benefitted the Shamrocks. Commanding the offense is junior quarterback Cohen Pelan.

"We need to clean up our penalties and work on our defensive and special teams units," Pelan explained. Scotus is looking to improve these things to finish out their regular season.

After a dazzling performance for the Shamrocks' homecoming game, they beat out Arlington 62-15. Scotus' victory was a total team effort with touchdowns by Cohen Pelan, Spencer Shotkoski, Evan Kiene, Frank Fehring, and Jack Sueper.

In week 6 the Shamrocks faced some adversity, losing to DC West 24-6.

The next week they played their toughest challenge yet, losing to Wahoo 32-0.

"We can compete with the best teams in C1 if we play clean and physical foot-



AVA RICKERT / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Junior running back Luke Wemhoff carries the ball against Aquinas on August 25th 2023. The Shamrocks defeated the Monarchs 3-0.

ball," Pelan said.

The team has lofty goals for the end of the season. With hopes of a playoff run, the Shamrocks will need to

continue this stretch of physical football.

Scotus will face Schuyler on October 13th. Then, to end regular season play, they

will face their cross town rivals, Lakeview, on October 20th.

Cross country new and old race to victory

By Ella Hash
Staff Reporter

Being mentally and physically tough is what any

sport wants and requires of its athletes. In cross country, the runners have to face challenges that require them to have both aspects of toughness. The girls and boys

cross country teams have had to push through these aspects this year.

Senior Jude Maguire is the top runner on the boys cross country team and

placed third overall at the Scotus home meet on September 14th.

"We lost one of our top runners so we have had some younger and inexperienced runners step up into placing spots," Maguire said.

Both teams have new runners on their rosters. The boys have two runners new to cross country and three new to high school running. The girls team has six new runners and four new to running in high school. On both of the cross country teams, these new runners have stepped up and filled in roles from last year.

"We are a lot more competitive this year," junior Emma Brezenski said. "Last year if you went out, you were on varsity because we only had six runners, but this year it is tough to even be in the top six."

Out of the top six runners for the girls, four are new runners and one is new to high school. On the boys side they are led by four seniors and a returning runner,

with one new runner taking the sixth spot. With new runners on both teams, the seniors have been people for everyone to look up to.

Sophomore Hannah Heinrich is in her first year of cross country and is the girls' top runner.

"The seniors have been great role models for all of us new runners," Heinrich said. "Their example and attitude helps set the tone for how everyone else performs."

The girls team has only two returning seniors, Josie Sliva and Serena Swiatek, while the boys team has six seniors. By leading the new runners, both teams have had a push to place at meets.

The first meet for both teams was held on Friday, September 1st in Albion. The girls team came in first, placing four girls in the top twenty. For the boys, Maguire and senior Caleb Schumacher placed in the top twenty, giving the boys a 4th place finish.

The most recent meets have also tended to go this

way. The girls have placed first in all their meets and have had at least three runners in the top twenty every meet. The boys placed seventh at the Platte River Rumble meet and were runner up at the home meet on September 14th. On both teams they are setting expectations and where the final destination is: the state meet on October 20th.

"We want to get to state but more importantly, our goal is to win state," junior Sofia Karges said. "Of course that is something people always say, but with the strengths we have this year I think it's something we can accomplish."

With state in less than a week, the teams have been gearing up to be prepared in both the mental and physical aspect. Yesterday, the teams competed in the district meet in Wayne, with the girls running at 3:00 p.m. and the boys after at 3:45 p.m.



ELLA HASH / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Senior Caleb Schumacher tries to pass a West Point-Beemer runner at the Scotus home meet on September 14th. Schumacher is in his fourth year of cross country and is the second runner on the team.

Boys tennis brings new faces

By Ava Rickert
Staff Reporter

The bigger, the better. This saying perfectly describes the boys tennis team, which has twice the amount of Scotus players as it did last year. Thirteen out of the 21 players on the Discoverers team are Shamrocks.

With a combination of new and veteran players, the team is looking to improve all aspects of the game. However, the lack of past experience in many players has been an obstacle the team is working to overcome.

Junior Brody Splitterger is one of the returning Scotus players and has been on the team for two years.

"We have a ton of new guys, so coaching experienced players and new players is really hard and impacts improvement," Splitterger said.

All players, both new and returning, are looking to especially improve their consistency and mental toughness.

Sophomore Jake Demuth

has been a member of the tennis team for two years. He has seen some of the differences between the two seasons.

"Last year we worked on repetition and getting better. This year is more about learning the game and working on specific skills," Demuth said.

The team has been to a handful of meets so far this season and has played against tough competition.

The team kicked off its season on August 25th with a 1-4 record at the Lincoln Northeast Invite, with sophomore Hudson Kloke and freshman Calben Pelan taking the sole win for the day.

The team hosted their home invite with multiple teams on September 1st. Junior Jacob Rother took this as an opportunity to compete to the best of his ability and accomplish his goals for the season.

"I would like to develop as a player and be able to compete with the better teams in the state," Rother said.

At the invite, Rother and his CHS teammate took silver in #1 Doubles. This was a

highlight of the season and gave the team the motivation to keep working harder. The Pelan/Kloke duo placed fifth in #2 Doubles at the invite.

Another season high was the team's away dual at South Sioux City. On September 5th, the Discoverers brought home wins in both #1 and #2 Doubles, along with wins for Rother, Pelan, and Kloke in singles.

Later that week on September 7th, the Discoverers hosted a dual against Grand Island. The #1 and #2 Discoverer Doubles teams secured the two wins of the day. Grand Island would go on to win all five singles matches.

At their recent invites, results have been split between successes and losses. In both doubles and singles, wins were recorded over York and Omaha Burke. Some losses from the invites included Gretna, Millard South, Westside, and Pius X.

The team competed at the HAC Conference Tournament at Lincoln Northeast on October 6th. The Discoverers brought home wins in both

#1 and #2 Doubles, winning matches 8-1 and 7-2, respectively. The team was not able to claim any Singles wins on the day.

"We are really looking to

do our best this year. We may not have some of the same experience that the other teams might have, but that's fine. We are just looking to give our all out there and

have fun, whatever may come of that," Rother said.

The Discoverers tennis team will compete at the state tournament today and tomorrow.



ROSIE SUCHA / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Junior Brody Splitterger serves the ball to his Grand Island Senior High opponent in his singles match on September 7th at Pawnee Park. Splitterger is in his second season on the Discoverers tennis team.

Shamrocks head to state tournament

By Patrick Arndt
Staff Reporter

Scotus girls golf started the season off strong placing 4th at the Grand Island Central Catholic Invite on August 31st and winning the Lakeview Invite on September 7th.

Seniors Cecilia Arndt and Kaitlyn Fleming, along with junior Quinn VunCannon have led the team to numerous victories through-

out the varsity season. During the Lakeview Invite Scotus took gold, with 4 of the 5 varsity players medaling top 10. Earning sixth place and falling just within the top ten, Fleming held her own, firing a 101.

"The Lakeview Invite stood out to me the most because we won as a team by 80 strokes, and I am excited for the rest of the varsity meets this year," Fleming said.

Fleming is a returning player having been on the team for 3 years, holding a successful tenure. With new energy brought on by the win at Lakeview, Scotus went on to win several other events including the Pierce, Boone Central, and Fullerton Invites. Arndt played a key role alongside her fellow teammates in winning invites throughout the season.

"So far the season has gone well for myself and our

younger players, especially the freshmen, who have great potential and are working hard. The team is still young, and I think that we will leave them in good hands after my class graduates," Arndt said.

Arndt holds a successful record at Scotus as a four year varsity player; she won state as a sophomore and has led the golf team to many victories including the team's 4th consecutive Conference Championship where the

team shot 372 and Arndt and VunCannon placed 2nd and 3rd; and the Scotus Invite where the team shot 372 and the entire varsity medaled. Arndt has high hopes nearing the end of the season, hoping to make her fourth state appearance and lead the team to its first state victory.

"I think all five of us need to play well in districts to make it to state as a team, but I'm hoping Cecilia and I make it individually," Vun-

Cannon said.

VunCannon is a two year varsity player. As a junior she will lead the team next year saying goodbye to Scotus's senior golfers, Arndt and Fleming.

Scotus was victorious in District C-2 competition, with 4 out of the 5 varsity players medaling.

Scotus competed at the Class C State Golf Tournament this past Monday and Tuesday in North Platte.



PATRICK ARNDT / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Junior Quinn VunCannon tees off at Evergreen Hill during the Pierce Invite on September 9th. VunCannon shot 102 and placed 12th; the team placed 1st.



PATRICK ARNDT / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Sophomore Kiya Taylor sinks a putt at Evergreen Hill during the Pierce Invite on September 9th. Taylor shot 105 and placed 14th; the team placed 1st.

Volleyball struggles for consistency

By Mary Faltys
Staff Reporter

The volleyball players had to step up to create success for the team this year. After graduating 5 seniors last year, some players had to learn new positions to fill the spots the graduated players vacated. Although they had a rocky start, their positive attitude and determination has started to pay off.

A quick two weeks after practices began, the volleyball team lined up on the court to play their first game against Kearney Catholic at home on August 24th. They lost in 3 sets.

Senior Joanna Rusher plays middle hitter.

"Kearney Catholic, the first game of the season, [was the most impactful]. The gym was absolutely packed, it was so loud, and the energy was incredible. We didn't win, but I think it showed us how much support we have from

our school. It really started the season off with a ton of energy," Rusher said.

On August 29th, they also fell to Omaha Concordia at home in 3 sets.

Senior Ashlee Leffers saw this loss as a way for the team to improve.

"Omaha Concordia was a team we could have beat tremendously, but our team did not work together to get it done as we should have. It showed us where we truly are as a team and what we need to work on to accomplish our success," Leffers said.

September 12th was a victorious home game against Aquinas; they dominated in 3 sets and improved their record to 3-7.

Junior middle hitter Adrianna Kush has periodically started on varsity.

"The game against Battle Creek has impacted us the most so far. It was our start to a new season of success. At the start of the season, we just couldn't seem to get

the job done. We had all the tools to do so, but we were not playing smart in the times we needed to the most," Kush said.

Continuing their winning streak, they defeated Battle Creek 3-1 at home on September 19th and swept Lincoln Christian on the road on September 21st.

The Shamrocks defeated the Lakeview Vikings in an intense battle to 5 sets on September 26th. The last time they beat the Vikings in a regular 5-set game was in 2018.

The win against Lakeview was a big moment for junior Mallory Dreesen.

"I still cannot believe we won. It was the most insane game I have ever played in, and it was so much fun. The environment was great and that definitely helped our team get excited and pumped up. Since we had a rough start to the season, it made us realize we are capable of winning against tough teams,"



JOSIE SLIVA / YEARBOOK STAFF

The Scotus volleyball team celebrates after defeating Lakeview in a 5 set match on September 26th. This victory against the Vikings was the first time the Shamrocks had beat Lakeview since 2018.

Dreesen said.

They played 4 conference games between October 5th and 7th. The Shamrocks'

conference record was 1-4.

On October 10th, the Shamrocks, with a 9-14 record, played Grand Island

Central Catholic on the road.

Tonight, they will take on Bishop Neumann also on the road.

Softball ends season placing third at districts

By Kirsten Sucha
Staff Reporter

Through many ups and downs, the Columbus softball girls have been able to stick

together through thick and thin.

Scotus and Columbus High have once again co-opped for their softball season. Because of this, the girls have to play in Class A

softball where the competition is more difficult compared to Scotus being Class C-1. There are seven total girls out for softball, including one senior, two juniors, and four freshmen.

Junior Hanna Chohon plays second base for Columbus and is currently out due to injury.

"We had the goals of achieving trust and a family-like relationship with each other. We have gotten so much better at communicating with each other and have good strong relationships," Chohon said.

Senior Kyra Bowen has been a member of the team for three years and plays center field.

"We joke and get along great. We have been able to stick together on and off the field," Bowen said.

The team had a pretty even win-loss record by the end of August; the team being 4-3. The ups and downs of August prepared the girls to improve throughout the month of September.

"I really improved a ton on defense. I can track down and catch balls I never used to before. My batting has improved, and I don't let the little things get to me anymore," Bowen said.

Senior night against Fremont on September 18th was an eye opening game for Bowen; the team ultimately fell short losing 10-13, but it was an impressive game for Bowen.

"During the game I saved 2 runs by making a 2-out diving catch. Later in the game, I saved another 2 runs by making a catch on a ball over my head where I had to jump and reach for it. Barring I went 3-4 with 5 run batters in. I hit 1 single, 1 double, 1 triple, almost a full circle. I loved this game, even if we did lose," Bowen said.

By the end of September, the team's record was 11-16, mostly consisting of a win to every loss. Even though it was a struggle to keep a consistent record, the team worked well together during their games against Lincoln Southeast on September 21st.

"They were ranked third in the state and completely wiped us during our first game against them to start off the night; the score being

0-10, we had to pick up our energy big time. Multiple girls were in new or different positions throughout our second game. We had to step up on our bats and communicate in the dugout and on the field. We strung our bats together and had very intense back to back innings and we ended up winning 12-7," Chohon said.

The Discoverers finished their season at districts defeating Lincoln Northeast, 11-3, but then losing to Lincoln North Star, 2-6.

Junior Katelyn Pensick played first base for the Discoverers.

"I feel like districts was a great end of the season. We worked all season for it and we showed up. We played great softball against great teams. North Star was very competitive and hotheaded. We played well, but we couldn't string our bats together like they could," Pensick said.

The team concluded their season at 13-22.



ASHLEE LEFFERS / YEARBOOK STAFF

Senior Kyra Bowen steps up to bat during Columbus' home game against Fremont on September 18th. The Discoverers had a double header and lost 2-4 and 10-13.

Ireland comes to Columbus

By Madden Saenz
Staff Reporter

4,015 miles (about 6461.52 km) to the northeast of the Atlantic Ocean lies the beautiful nation of Ireland. With its rustic communities, intricate history, and gorgeous landscape, it is hard to imagine why someone would want to leave it for America. With many differences between the two, moving from one to the other would be challenging. However, this did not stop the Dillons from coming to America.

Over the summer, Joseph Dillon and his family came to Nebraska from the sparkling city of Dublin, Ireland. Mr. Dillon worked for the pharmaceutical manufacturing company B.D. back in Ireland. As a result, Joseph would come to America and

begin a new chapter in his life.

“[My dad is] here on contract for three years. He got a job. He’s the plant manager of a company called BD. There was a problem with one of the plants here in Columbus, so he’s just over here to try to fix it,” Joseph said.

Many people would be devastated about having to move to a different city, let alone another county, but for Joseph, America is a new and welcoming experience.

“First, it was a lot to take in, but I feel like everyone has just been so kind and generous overall. It’s been easy to get used to. The culture is very different; the weather is much warmer. Everything is completely different, but it’s been nice settling in,” Dillon said.

Of course, America and Ireland are different countries, with dissimilar histories, cultures, people, and climates. Dylan especially appreciates the uniqueness between peoples.

“In Ireland we all have for the most part pale skin and green eyes; everyone here has. Like tan skin, a lot of blondes. There’s a lot of very nice people here, and I feel like you wouldn’t find the same amount. It’s just incredible over here,” Dillon said. “There are also other differences. The climate is very warm here, and it’s very cold back in Ireland. There are many sports here obviously, such as football, that would not be played in Ireland.”

Even in academics, though different, Joseph has been able to adapt and suc-

ceed here in Columbus.

“It’s very different. I think everyone here is very intelligent, very smart compared to back home where like I think the passing grade in Ireland is actually 55%. I think over here it’s 70,” Dillon said. “They have very high standards here which I do like. I think it’s great to push everyone to excel and the school has been very, very easy because of the people, the teachers, the students, principal, everyone’s just been really nice and generous and very helpful.”

Even with the new and exciting atmosphere of America, there are still many things Joseph misses from back home, especially the traditional foods of Ireland.

“There’s loads of foods that in Ireland you wouldn’t have here; a lot of them are

actually traditional Irish foods such as sausage rolls, chicken filet rolls, and there’s a lot of different kinds of breads that I miss. I definitely miss my friends and family. I do not miss the climate...[I] definitely [miss] my friends and family [the most].”

Although America is a new and different world compared to Ireland, Joseph still carries many hopes and goals he intends to carry out while here in America.

“I definitely want to see more of the country as it is. Very big compared to where Ireland is, which Ireland probably looks microscopic next to America. I definitely want to see different parts [of America]. I want to do well in school and make loads of friends. Kind of just, do what I love to do.”



Gonzales experiences American lifestyle at Scotus

By Cecilia Arndt
Editor

Would you live here? This is the question junior Adam Gonzalez-Gomez answered after his family trip to the United States last summer. Before he became a Scotus student, Gonzalez lived in Madrid, Spain. During the vacation, the idea of studying here was introduced to him.

Gonzalez said, “One day I just thought about what if I study here?”

After pitching the idea to his parents, it was decided that he was going to try the American Education System. The logistics were worked out, and they determined he was going to go to Scotus and live with his aunt and

uncle in Columbus. Although Spanish is his first language, he is fluent in English, and it was not too difficult of a change for him. What was more of a challenge, however, was the educational differences.

“It is difficult because of the way of teaching is different,” Gonzalez said. “During Spain, school is only focusing on learning; you don’t have homecoming; you don’t have prom.”

These changes can be good, however, and Gonzalez said he likes both systems. For him, it was not a problem to get used to.

“All the teachers like would care about me, were asking if I’m good. I appreciate that because the change of the schools and the lifestyle and everything is different,”

Gonzalez said.

Additionally, he shared how his classmates were helping him feel more at home.

“It makes it more easy because if I don’t understand something in class or wherever they can help me,” Gonzalez said.

Snapchat is also useful to Gonzalez when meeting people.

“You send a snap and the person sends one back; [now] I know your name and now I know your face,” Gonzalez said.

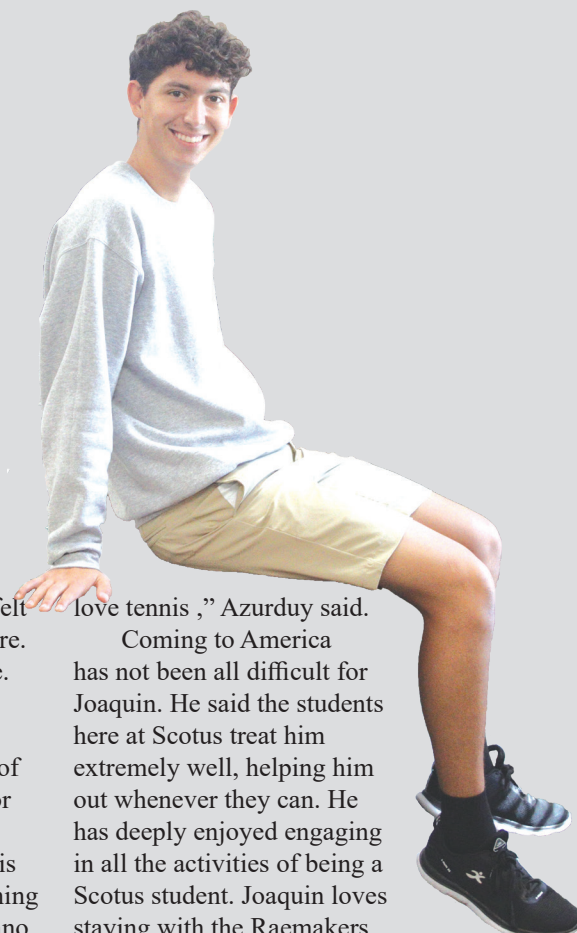
One of the best ways to meet people can be through sports, and Gonzalez plans on joining the basketball team. Last year, he played basketball for the first time. He also talked about how the differences in season changed

the way sports are played. In Spain, athletes played their sport year round, starting in October. This made it difficult to play multiple sports, Gonzalez said. Also, coaches are provided by the government.

“The government gives some coach to train that so if enough [of the] school want to train basketball and we have enough people, the government send us a coach,” he said.

In the short term, Gonzalez wants to play basketball, but long term he wants to continue to go to school at Scotus. His desire is to return for more than a year, including attending college in the United States.

“I always like this lifestyle, [the] American lifestyle, and now I’m living that,” Gonzalez said.



Azurduy follows brother’s footsteps

By Caleb Cameron
Staff Reporter

Scotus has had a long list of exchange students over the past couple of years, and they added two more to the list this fall. Joaquin Azurduy is one of the newest members of the junior class. Azurduy is originally from Bolivia, a country in South America.

Joaquin is currently living with Scotus junior Henry Raemakers and the Raemakers family. This is not the first time the Raemakers family have taken in an exchange student. A couple of years ago, they took in a Bolivian teenage boy named Mariano. Mariano had an amazing experience with the Raemakers family, ending with the Raemakers taking a trip to visit Mariano’s home country. Mariano happens to be Joaquin’s brother. While in Bolivia, the Raemakers met Joaquin. According to Joaquin, they promised him he could come to America and stay with the family whenever he pleased. Earlier this year Joaquin finally decided to accept the Raemaker’s offer. The Raemakers were

excited when they found out Joaquin was coming to live with them.

“I was excited. I liked Mariano a lot. He’s basically part of our family now, and he lived with us for a while, so I was expecting some fun times having his brother come,” Raemakers said.

Joaquin arrived in the United States earlier this summer and said there have been difficulties adjusting to his new American lifestyle. The first and biggest adjustment has been adjusting to a new language. Joaquin’s primary language is Spanish. He has picked up English quickly but still has some difficulty understanding everything. Google translate and Joaquin’s friends are helping him learn English. Another adjustment has been the harsh Nebraska weather. He thinks the weather is extremely warm but other times it gets too cold. He is not excited for winter as he has heard it gets much colder.

School in Bolivia is also much different.

“I think school here is very long. In Bolivia we start at 7:30 and we finish at

12:30. When I arrived, it felt very, very long. We eat here. In Bolivia, we ate at home. That’s very interesting to me,” Azurduy said.

Joaquin spends most of his free time with Henry or doing what he enjoys. He enjoys hanging out with his friends, playing and watching sports, and playing the piano. Joaquin’s favorite sport is tennis. In Bolivia, Joaquin spent hours every day on the tennis court. His hard work paid off as he is currently ranked nationally in Bolivia for singles tennis. He said the best rank he has ever achieved is tenth nationally. Unfortunately, Joaquin has not been able to play tennis competitively this fall. The NSAA requires exchange students to have an F-1 or J-1 visa and to come through a CSIET program. Azurduy has an F-1 visa but unfortunately did not come through a CSIET program therefore keeping him from competing. Because of this, Joaquin has taken a step back in the amount of time he practices.

“Even though I can’t play or don’t train as much doesn’t mean that I still don’t

love tennis,” Azurduy said.

Coming to America has not been all difficult for Joaquin. He said the students here at Scotus treat him extremely well, helping him out whenever they can. He has deeply enjoyed engaging in all the activities of being a Scotus student. Joaquin loves staying with the Raemakers and he credits a large part of his enjoyment here to them. He says his relationship with Henry has become exceptionally close.

“My favorite part, I think... I don’t know. Staying with Henry. He’s a great person. I consider him one of my brothers,” Azurduy said.

It is safe to say Joaquin has enjoyed his time at Scotus so far. Joaquin is excited for all the new experiences and people he will meet as well as all the memories he will make here at Scotus.

“I wasn’t expecting Scotus to be as different as it is. The people at Scotus are so nice and helpful to me. I am very excited to go to more sporting events, school dances, and participate in everything else Scotus has to offer,” Azurduy said.

Foreign Exchange Students 2008-2023

At Scotus in recent years, we have been blessed with many foreign exchange students who study at our school, some of whom stay to graduate and continue their education in the United States. Since 2008, there have been 49 students from other countries who spent time with us.



Johannes crushes ideas and ice

By Joanna Rusher
Staff Reporter

“I let my intrusive thoughts win” is a popular saying right now for teenagers. Part of being a teenager is having extravagant ideas, trying to execute them, and usually failing epically. Given this information, one would expect some sort of disaster to come from a teenager buying a snow cone shack, renovating it, and taking it to various events. This crazy idea turned into a successful reality for Macey Johannes, the proud owner of Macey’s Snow Cones.

Macey’s Snow Cones started out as a run down shack filled with plastic cups and a broken water heater. With the help from friends, family, and a creative imagination, Scotus senior Macey Johannes turned it into an aesthetic trailer that produces delicious treats. After purchasing the shack in May, Johannes spent two months renovating everything from the flooring and cabinets to the paint and exterior decor. She finally opened for business on July 4th and began her crazy journey.

“I had the idea last summer and was just wondering where the old snow cone shack had gone,” Johannes explained. “Then I found out a family friend actually owned it, and I asked if they ever wanted to sell it.”

Johannes tries to take the shack to as many events as possible. Macey’s Snow Cones has appeared at large events such as Columbus Days and football

games. Over the summer she was averaging at least one event a week. When she graduates, Johannes plans to be an entrepreneur or possibly go into interior design. The snow cone shack will be a positive experience going into either of these fields.

“I like to say it’s the first business I bought, and I’m hoping to do other businesses and stuff like that,” Johannes said. “I really like how creative I can be at coming up with the different flavors and even making the signs. I really enjoy doing that.”

Johannes has been extra creative with the flavors she sells. In addition to the typical snow cone treats like Tiger’s Blood and Blue Raspberry, Johannes creates specials that often display whip cream, sweet cream, and other delicious toppings. Some examples of these are Dreamsicle, Pink Lemonade, Birthday Cake, and Coconut Cream. Customers love the choice of flavors Macey’s Snow Cones offers, but the syrups don’t magically pop into existence. They create a lot of extra

work for Johannes.

“I buy the syrup as a concentrate, so it’s just the flavoring and the coloring. Then I mix sugar and water together, and I have to get it pretty warm so it dissolves and everything. Then I have to add preservatives to it,” Johannes explained. “For Columbus Days, I’d come home at eleven or midnight and make more syrup, gallons and gallons of it, because we go through so much.”

Despite all the work it has been, Macey’s Snow Cones has been extremely successful. Johannes has become a wonderful example for other teenagers wanting to follow through on crazy ideas.

“I don’t know if anybody is thinking about starting a business, but I recommend it. When I first thought of this idea back in June, I was obviously really excited, but I didn’t think I could actually do it, but it worked out pretty well. I’d say just do it,” Johannes said. “Also, come get a snow cone.”



PHOTO COURTESY NICOLE JOHANNES

Senior Macey Johannes takes a snow cone order at Columbus Days on August 12th. Macey’s Snow Cones has made appearances at the Mass Dash Burger Bash, football games, and many other events.

Sophomore sets service bar high

By Sofia Karges
Staff Reporter

As many are already aware, Columbus has been a place of change recently. With the construction around town and the addition of the casino and fieldhouse, many might not know about the loss of free recycling. What had been a growing factor in the community came to an abrupt stop over the summer, and it left a void in the area. Although it seems like an issue relevant to only a few, this problem affects everyone.

To help with this cause, sophomore Seth Druempel has taken over the responsibility of recycling at Scotus for his first semester Living the Faith project. Living in Schuyler, Druempel drives by the recycling company every day as he makes his way to school. On Monday mornings, Druempel, with the help of a few classmates, gathers the recycling at Scotus and brings it to Schuyler later that day.

“Last year one of my Living

the Faith service projects was volunteering at the recycling center, so when Mrs. Koranda mentioned Scotus wouldn’t have it anymore, it just felt right that I could help out,” Druempel said. “Like I said, I drive by it every day; I read the sign every day, so why not? It just really worked out.”

Druempel, along with the help of fellow sophomores Max Beshaler, Dante Smith, Kobe Micek, and Hunter Brunkhorst, collects the recycling from all the rooms at Scotus. After it has been gathered, Druempel drives by the recycling center in Schuyler on his way home from school where he sorts through it before dropping it off.

Before Druempel took matters into his own hands, Biology teacher Joan Lahm organized all the recycling at Scotus.

“Several years ago, Green Fiber from Norfolk set bins throughout the city, and they would take the recycling that was collected back to Norfolk where they make insulation. They ran into a lot of problems in Columbus because people were

putting garbage in them and overflowing them. Along with gasoline costs and transportation problems, they didn’t think it was worth it to keep the bins here, so they took all of them out of the entire city of Columbus,” Lahm said.

Lahm said Scotus generates cardboard easily, especially through the cafeteria. Before, it was easy to put this cardboard in the bins, but now, it goes into the garbage, which is a problem because it will eventually end up in the landfill. She acknowledged that the city thought the old recycling center was an economical issue because it lost money every year, but brings up the fact that if a city the size of Schuyler can support one, Columbus should be able to, too.

“I think it is a great initiative what Seth is doing, and I am very proud of him and what he’s undertaken. He has gotten classmates to help with the process, but he’s taking on a lot and I’m very impressed with what he has done,” Lahm said.

Even though this is only a one semester project, Seth believes he will help contribute to it all year because of the importance it has had in the community.

“I don’t even know how many thank you’s I’ve gotten, especially the first two weeks,” Druempel said. “I know even the guys I was working with said in every classroom they go in, they get thanked. Everybody is just trying to be as helpful as possible and making this as easy for us as possible, which is just great.”



SOFIA KARGES / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Sophomore Seth Druempel loads the Scotus recycling into his car on Monday mornings at 7:45. Druempel drops off the recycling and sorts through it at the recycling center in Schuyler on his way home from school.

Students explore the medical world

By **Aubree Beiermann**
Staff Reporter

In 2020, the need for healthcare workers was made known more than ever. Many people stood up to fill them, and now Scotus has as well. The 2023-2024 school year has brought new health science classes to the schedule. These new classes, Health Science, Advanced Health Science, and Intro to Medical Terminology, are available for juniors and seniors. Health Science, which is being taught this semester, gives students a brief look into healthcare careers. Both Advanced Health Science and Intro to Medical Terminology are second semester classes and allow students to dive deeper in their education.

Junior Cohen Pelan is currently in Health Science. "I like touring places like the hospital to see how it is run and to see all the different jobs," Pelan said. In Health Science,

students hear guest speakers, travel to healthcare workplaces, and learn about the industry.

Brady Vancura, the president at Scotus Central Catholic, collected data to see where most students were majoring in after high school. "We found out that 30% of our students were leaving Scotus wanting to major in some sort of healthcare related field," Vancura said.

HOSA, Health Occupations Students of America, which was already at Scotus, gives students an insight into the medical field. With many students being a part of this group, both Vancura and teachers alike thought the addition of classes would help boost the student's studies.

Senior Tori Dush is hoping to get a headstart for college.

"It will give me an idea of the parts of the medical field and let me know if this is the path I want to take," Dush said.

Scotus is not the only school adding to their curriculum.

"Health Sciences and the Advanced Health Sciences were being taught at both Columbus High and Lakeview, and so we felt that we could kind of work with the same curriculum in partnership with Columbus Community Hospital," Vancura said.

Vancura wanted to have the same education and classes available for students at Scotus. Intro to Medical Terminology is only being taught at Scotus and is important for students to learn.

"I am hoping to make a career in the healthcare and this class is helping me figure out exactly what I want to do," junior Raya Kluever said.

This career has many different paths, these classes hope to narrow them down for students, while still getting a deeper understanding of them, too.

Joan Lahm, the Health and Earth Science teacher, also thought it would be highly beneficial to add the classes.



AUBREE BEIERMANN / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Senior Anna Lovell, juniors Lexi Riedmiller, Larkyn Mahoney, and Emma Brezenski, and senior Isabel Zaruba listen to athletic trainer Andrew Sheridan talk about his career during Health Science class in Mrs. Lahm's room. In this class, students hear guest speakers, travel to healthcare workplaces, and learn about the industry.

"I suggested the new classes to the administration because I knew Health Sciences was very important in other schools. And when Columbus Hospital approached the Columbus schools, it was a great opportunity," Lahm

said. The partnership with the hospital hopes to get students to come back to Columbus after their schooling.

"We see a need in the community. There's a shortage of healthcare workers in

a lot of our different facilities here in town," Vancura said.

Advanced Health Science and Intro to Medical Terminology are being taught next semester by Lahm.

Students are still able to join them through drop and add.

Teens support the right to life

By **Caleb Cameron**
Staff Reporter

Across the United States on Sunday October 1st, people, big and small, young and old, male and female, took a stand. A stand for the life of the unborn. Scotus and

Columbus Catholic schools students, faculty, and families gathered on 33rd Avenue, east of Pizza Ranch. For one hour, they held signs and prayed silently for unborn children, their mothers, and anyone else who may be thinking about having an abortion.

Dana Ritzdorf, Scotus campus ministry advisor, organized the teens who participated in the Life Chain.

"Anytime you pray for something there is an impact whether or not we can see it. You never know who could be driving by. This event reminds those people of

the dignity of human life," Ritzdorf said.

Junior Raya Kluever has been attending the Life Chain for over five years.

"I've attended the Life Chain for many years to show my support for life. I think it is very important to give a voice to those who

can't speak or stand up for themselves," Kluever said.

Over 50 years ago, the United States Supreme Court passed Roe v. Wade, making abortion legal. Recently on June 24th, 2022, in the case Dobbs v Jackson, it was decided abortion laws would no longer be set by the federal government but by the individual states. In Nebraska, abortion is banned when a woman is 12 weeks into her pregnancy. Catholics believe life begins at conception, so the Catholic community is a large part of the Life Chain.

The Life Chain has not changed much since its existence. The Columbus Area Right to Life used to provide Scotus with signs to use at the Life Chain. A couple years ago, Teens for Life decided to switch up the signs held at the event. The old signs used to have sayings such as "Abortion Kills Children". Teens for Life decided to take a different approach to the issue. The new signs are more focused towards prayer and are much less blaming. Angie Rusher, Scotus teacher and former Teens for Life sponsor, explained the positive effect the new signs have on the Life Chain's purpose.

"A couple of years

ago, we noticed students did not want to come to the Life Chain because of the harshness of the signs we were holding. I do think it is important to have signs present that say "Abortion Kills Children" because not everyone recognizes how terrible it is, but we also want to be compassionate to those who are struggling and offer help and encouragement," Rusher said.

The Life Chain is not the only way Scotus students can show their support for life or support for their faith. The new retreat systems and the annual March for Life are ways Scotus students will be able to live out their faith. Knowing his impact, junior Ian Karges is excited to continue to fight for what's right and put an end to abortion sometime in the future.

"I am excited for the men's faith retreat because it will be a lot of fun to strengthen my faith while also being with people I know will also want to try and be better. I think it will be good to have a better relationship with those going as we strengthen my faith beliefs altogether," Karges said.



SOPIA KARGES / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Seventh grader Evan Cameron, sophomore Audrey Stoner, and junior Becky Policky hold pro-life signs along with other members of the Columbus community along the highway in Columbus on October 1st. The Life Chain is always the first Sunday in October and known as Respect Life Sunday.

Band thunderstruck by weather delays

By **Cecilia Arndt**
Editor

Many activities have the luxury of staying indoors to perform, but band is one that can be greatly impacted by weather. When marching, inclement weather may strike and the band has to be able to adapt. Unfortunately, parades can be rained out, which is what happened on September 23.

At the Norfolk Parade, the Scotus band was unable to perform due to foul weather. Although the Norfolk Parade was canceled, there have been instances in which the band have played in the rain. On August 13th, at Columbus Days, they played in the rain and were able to make the best of it.

"It was weird to play in the rain at first but turned out to be kind of fun," senior Nicole Peterson, who plays the snare drum, said.

Rain and other weather

conditions can play a large part in the quality of performances and can be difficult to play in. In addition, many instruments need to be dried off in order to maintain use.

"I play the flute. We have to be very careful with drying it off and airing it out after playing in the rain because otherwise it will mold and rust," sophomore Audrey Stoner said.

Unfortunately, this is the reality for many instruments, in which special care must be taken to keep the instruments in good condition.

However, opinions were split between enjoying the change of weather and having difficulty playing. In addition, many band members talked about the difficulties of drying their instruments in order to keep them from rust and warping.

Although the weather is impactful, the band performs fun songs. Some favorites are "Disturbia," "Sweet

Caroline," and "Livin' on a Prayer." These songs are commonly heard blaring from the band section during home football and volleyball games. There are also many people in the band who enjoy playing pep band and help to cheer Scotus on.

On September 30th, the Junior High Band performed at the Battle of the Bands, where they were the only Junior High band to march. In addition, the band performed on October 7th in the Harvest of Harmony Parade.

"The marching band was fun and exciting. I'm excited to do it again next year!" said Ariana Hissong about the Battle of the Bands.

Like a sports team, the band must work together to create a harmonious performance.

"It is like a family. You don't agree with everyone, but you know they got your back in rain and shine," junior Rebecca Policky said.



ANGIE RUSHER / JOURNALISM ADVISOR

Freshman Leslie Medina, sophomores Jacqueline Stoner and Giselle Chila-pa-Bello, and freshman Grant Jakub perform in the Columbus Days Parade on August 13th. During the Columbus Days Parade, the band marched in the rain; they were also scheduled to play in the Norfolk Parade, which was canceled due to weather.

Rocks don't let rain dampen Homecoming

By Sofia Karges
Staff Reporter

In the hallways of Scotus on Monday morning of Homecoming week, there is much excitement as students filter into school. With streamers and posters lining the walls and students dressed as rappers and swing dancers, there is no doubt about it: Homecoming is in the air.

Homecoming this year was on Saturday, September 23, with the home football game against Arlington the night before and the themed dress-up days the week leading up to it. The Shamrocks came out strong and pulled off another win at the football game, with the end score being 62-15.

Many people appreciated the simplicity of the Homecoming dress-up days this year. "My favorite dress-up day was Class Holiday because the juniors had Halloween, and it was fun to go to Walmart the night before with friends and buy a Scooby-Doo costume," junior Ian Karges said.

Music Genre Day, Beach vs. Winter Wonderland, and Spirit Day were among the other themes of the week. There was much variety in the outfits this year, and most people dressed up for them.

"I liked that the cheerleaders did Best Dressed for every day of the week because it encouraged students to dress to the theme and go all out," senior homecoming candidate Mary Faltys said.

After the themed days of the week, the

next Homecoming activity came the crowning of king and queen, which followed the football game on Friday.

Finding where to do the coronation was a challenge this year because it was forecasted to rain all night on Friday. Luckily the rain stopped in time for the crowning, but if there was lightning, it would have been in Memorial Hall before the dance on Saturday.

"Every day we would check the weather to see if the chance of rain went down. Luckily it ended up working out, but it was very nerve wracking," senior Josie Sliva said.

Sliva and fellow senior Frank Fehringer were crowned Homecoming king and queen Friday night after the football game by former royalty Jack Faust and Ashley Hoffman.

After Friday's festivities, there was much anticipation for an exciting dance as well. For many, these expectations were exceeded.

"I thought the dance was better than in years past. A good amount of people stayed for most of the dance, which I think also made a difference," junior Adrianna Kush said.

Not all students attend Homecoming for the dancing, however.

"The most memorable part of the dance was watching Mr. Ericson on the dance floor because he has some good moves," senior Alex Medina Perez said.

With a wide range of music tastes at Scotus, the DJ had a lot of pressure to make it enjoyable for everyone. While many said the DJ could have done better, the general consensus was that he played a little music



ANGIE RUSHER / JOURNALISM ADVISOR

Seniors Frank Fehringer and Josie Sliva smile for the camera after being crowned homecoming king and queen Friday night after the football game against Arlington. They were voted king and queen by the student body through a poll sent out the week before.

for everyone.

"Revival" by Zach Bryan was definitely the best song the DJ played. It was so fun to sing with everyone since we all knew all the words!" junior Emma Brezenski said.

Many agreed with Brezenski when she said the recommended songs were the ones that were most memorable. "Let it Go" from *Frozen* and "Golden Hour" by JVKE were among other songs people said were their favorites. Throughout the night, the DJ

played his own playlist and took requests. He played country, slow songs, line dancing, 80's music, and sing-along songs; there was something for everyone.

Homecoming is always one of the most anticipated nights of the whole school year.

"Homecoming is one of my favorite things to look forward to during the year," sophomore Kenzie Hille said. "Everybody puts effort in, and it makes it a ton of fun."



ELLA HASH / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Senior Neve Pavlik and junior Jessica Jackson show off their moves at the Homecoming dance on Saturday, September 23rd. The dance opened at 7:45 p.m. and concluded at 11:00 p.m.



ANGIE RUSHER / JOURNALISM ADVISOR

Homecoming royalty seniors Haden Brabec, Mary Faltys, Joanna Rusher, Evan Kiene, Kalee Ternus, Frank Fehringer, Josie Sliva, Jude Maguire, Isabel Zaruba, Jackson Heng, Ashlee Leffers, and Rudy Brunkhorst pose for a photo after coronation on Friday, September 22nd. The candidates walked down the field holding umbrellas because of the rain, but the rain stopped before the crowning began.

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Taylor Swift's Eras Tour enchants all

By **Aubree Beiermann**
Staff Reporter

3 hours, 46 songs, and 156 shows, Taylor Swift's Eras Tour guides fans on an adventure through Swift's 17-year discography.

The Eras Tour, which started on March 17th, 2023, has been talked about throughout the world. This sold-out tour goes through Swift's 10 albums, also known as "eras." Through each era, she sings some of her biggest hits as well as fan favorites. Coming up on October 13th, she is releasing a concert film over the Eras Tour in theaters. Right now, Taylor Swift is on a bit of a break after finishing her first U.S. leg and the Mexico leg. She will resume the tour on November 11th, 2023 in Argentina.

There is never a dull moment during this concert with all the surprises. Near the end of the concert there is a section known as "Surprise Song o'Clock." This is where Swift picks two random

songs from her whole career to play, and it is one of the most anticipated parts of the concert. The surprises are not only songs. During this time, she has also announced new albums, surprise guests, and new music videos.

The Eras Tour is one of the biggest tours to ever occur. Going to the concert is a once in a lifetime experience, starting from the moment fans step into the stadium. They are greeted with this feeling of high energy and excitement. Fans come together and exchange friendship bracelets, which was started by a lyric from Swift's song "You're On Your Own, Kid."

The Eras Tour is not only a concert, it is a performance with fireworks and Swift diving into the stage. She does not get enough credit for singing songs for 3 hours while running around and dancing on a huge stage. She never looks tired or run-down either. During the very last song, she has the same amount of energy as

the start. Along with all of this, there are multiple outfit changes and new sets to take fans through each of Swift's eras. Even people who are not big fans of Swift's music are shocked and amazed by this concert.

Fans are not the only ones who are grateful for this tour. The openers and the cities hosting the concert are seeing growth in many areas. Singers like Sabrina Carpenter, Phoebe Bridgers, and Gracie Abrams, who all opened for Swift, are seeing an increase in fans and are getting more attention. Cities are seeing an increase in commercial activity and a boost in the economy. When fans go to the concert, they make a whole weekend out of it. They stay at hotels, eat at local restaurants, and go to tourist attractions around the city. According to *Time Magazine*, The Eras Tour is projected to generate about 5 billion dollars for the economy just in the United States.

If there is a downside, getting to the tour is quite



AUBREE BEIERMANN / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Juniors Adrianna Kush and Aubree Beiermann pose at Taylor Swift's Eras Tour in Kansas City, at Arrowhead Stadium on July 8. The Eras Tour is going around the world selling out stadiums and is 3 hours long with 46 songs.

the challenge. Ticketmaster, the company that sells the tickets, is not liked by many people. The day of presale for tickets was a great war. Millions of people got on the website to get a ticket. Fans

waited hours in the queue, only to not get any tickets. Ticketmaster also brought prices up with the amount of fees they have. Even with all that trouble, the Eras Tour is worth

it. The concert is a 13/10 in every way. If you do not go, it feels like missing a big part of history. So, get a ticket for her show on November 1st or 2nd 2024 in Indianapolis!

Axe and you shall receive



PATRICK ARNDT / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Sophomore Brayden Fleming throws an axe at a projected target at Axe in the Box in Columbus. Axe in the Box opened late summer of 2023.

By **Patrick Arndt**
Staff Reporter

In recent years axe throwing reached a peak in entertainment with businesses opening across the country. In late summer of 2023, Columbus gained an axe throwing location of its own, Axe In The Box.

Throwing at Axe In The Box is my favorite because the games feature new "updated" versions of classic games such as target practice, but with the twist of the target's bull's eye changing locations on the target with every throw. Other games I love include Duck Hunter, Zombie Hunter, Tic Tac Toe, Line Up Four, and Bottle Axes. Duck Hunter and Zombie Hunter are essentially the same game, given there are several zombie or duck heads and one either non-zombie or rubber duck. If the rubber duck or non-zombie is struck, it deducts two points per hit, the equivalent of eliminating a zombie or duck. Bottle Axes is comparable to the

favorite game of millions, Candy Crush, which essentially strikes one colored box, connected to more, and wins points for each box broken.

What caught my attention the most was the staff. The staff is extremely friendly and helpful for first-timers while ensuring the safety of all. Before the timer starts, the staff educates everyone on the safety procedures and demonstrates how to throw axes for newcomers. A staff member also checks in with throwers periodically and asks how it was going and if they can do anything for the thrower. Axe In The Box offers a great hangout spot for nights of fun with games, drinks, and music. The youthful hip energy and atmosphere is something to not miss out on.

Isn't axe throwing dangerous? Contrary to what one might think is dangerous, Axe In The Box makes axe throwing a fun and safe environment, avoiding rubber axe handles and employing no bounce borders set around the target to stop axes from

bouncing back. The targets are also made of end grain wood to ensure the axe sticks, no matter the angle. Other rules have been set in place to avoid injuries, such as requiring closed-toed shoes and safety lines on the floor to avoid accidents while a person is throwing. The staff is also highly trained to treat any injuries that one could sustain while throwing an axe.

Axe In The Box made their axe throwing with everyone in mind, through safety demonstrations, the friendly staff, and atmosphere. Now with the opening of this family owned business, axe throwing is one of my favorite activities to do in Columbus, and I would rate Axe In The Box a 10/10. Axe In The Box is located at 311 23rd St, in Columbus next to Sapp Bros. Costing one person \$22, the price is comparable to other throwing locations and is affordable to all. Feel the rush. Throw an axe.

Rodrigo spills her GUTS on new album

By **Ella Hash**
Staff Reporter

Throughout the 90s and early 2000s, the music industry was taken over by the sounds of grunge and pop-punk music. As bands and singers tried to recreate the sounds few had produced, many female artists were taking their own shot at the genre. Singers such as Alanis Morissette, Avril Lavigne, and Gwen Stefani helped to make this genre one of their own.

Today, we see many artists who are trying to make the next big hit. These artists usually have a generic pop sound and do not add anything different to their songs. As someone who values the difference in what they are listening to, it is hard to keep listening to these types of artists. However, there is one artist in particular who I think is doing a great job of keeping her music differentiated from a generic pop song and adding a twist on her albums: Olivia Rodrigo.

Olivia Rodrigo has been in the limelight for a few years now. She started out as a child actor for Disney, and it helped to start her music career. Rodrigo is one of the best newcomers music has right now. After her success with her freshman album *Sour*, her new music has been highly anticipated by many, including myself. Rodrigo's sophomore album, *GUTS*, was released to the public on Friday, September 8th, garnering millions of streams on Spotify and Apple Music.

As a listener and fan of her work, I believe Rodrigo has a sound to her that many in her category do not possess. Rodrigo's album *GUTS* is a perfect example of this. Her album contains lyrics and songs which range from dealing with heartbreak to an angsty teen sound. I think she blends these songs together in a way that makes sense, not jumbling them all together into one incoherent album.

While her songs do range from one side of the emotion spectrum to the other, I

believe no matter your music taste, you can find something you enjoy listening to. If you are someone who loves listening to music similar to Avril Lavigne's songs, I recommend the song "ballad of a homeschooled girl." If you are dealing with heartbreak, "vampire" or "logical" are the songs for you. "Get him back!" is an upbeat song about getting back at your ex for not being a good partner, but the song is one anyone can listen to. Looking at *GUTS*, I think you can get something out of the album no matter your taste.

This album is great, but there are some who do not like Rodrigo's music. Many feel as if there is not a song for them or the album is too girly overall. I think it is fine for the album to be called girly. Many people who do not prefer listening to artists such as Rodrigo have said they enjoy the album. As stated before, I do believe there is something for everyone on this album. I do not think the people who are disapproving



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Pop singer Olivia Rodrigo poses for a picture at the D23 Expo in Anaheim, California in 2019. Rodrigo released her second studio album *Guts* on September 8th, 2023.

of the album have delved into all of her songs yet.

The *GUTS* album is not just a generic, girly, pop album many would expect

to listen to. The songs on the album bring back sounds we have not heard a popular artist use for a couple of years. While many have already

listened to Rodrigo's *GUTS*, hopefully you will listen to the songs with less bias in your mind.

Newspaper staff compiles lunch facts

FEATURE 6-7



Alumna opens new business in town

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One Act looks to punch golden ticket

By Quinn VunCannon
Staff Reporter

Most people say the newest edition of a product is the best one yet. The same can be said for renditions of Charlie and the Chocolate Factory. Although the original 1971 rendition might have people's hearts, Scotus One Act is sure to steal the show.

Scotus One Act is performing Charlie and the Chocolate Factory in competition this fall. The team has already performed at York on November 11th, where they placed 3rd.

This year, new and former cast members come together to perform a shortened version of this beloved movie. First year performer Madden Saenz is taking on the lead role as Willy Wonka. Taking on a lead role means learning about what it takes to perform in competition acting.

"There's a big change from speech to stage acting. The hardest thing to learn is definitely projecting my voice and being audible," Saenz explained.

One Act has seen a change in coaching the past few years. Previously, Mr. Ericson and Mrs. Holoubeck have coached and sponsored One Act. This year, the coaching staff consists of Mr. Ericson, Ms. Mimick, and Ms. Wallick. Starring



QUINN VUNCANNON / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Junior Madden Saenz, playing Willy Wonka, welcomes senior Logan Erickson as Grandpa Joe and junior Jessica Jackson as Charlie Bucket in Charlie and the Chocolate Factory. Scotus One Act has performed at York where they placed 3rd.

as Violet Beauregarde, junior Caroline Klitz sees the need for so many coaches.

"Ms. Mimick has really pushed us to delve into our characters no matter how small. We have learned so much more about how to perform

a scene, down to how to stand," Klitz explained.

When producing a play, attention to detail is crucial. Klitz and other cast members are excited to unveil the magical world of Willy Wonka. Charlie and the Chocolate

Factory is a whimsical play with vibrant design. The characters interact with each other and their set to recreate the magic of the original movie. Junior Jessica Jackson will star as Charlie Bucket.

"I'm excited for everyone to

see the set along with the actors! It is colorful and fun, and with all the characters acting, it really brings the show to life," Jackson said.

Often overlooked as a part in the One Act, the crew has an

See One Act, Page 2

Girls make FIERCE commitment to their faith

By Sofia Karges
Staff Reporter

Usually when the word 'retreat' is used at Scotus, people think of all-day field trips taken away from school to spend time with fellow classmates. This year there has been a change to retreats offered in order to allow students to have more control over what they want to do. One retreat to choose from was the FIERCE Retreat, which was held last week.

Samantha Kelley is the president and founder of FIERCE Athlete, a ministry aimed to promote true identity and femininity in female athletes based on the teachings of the Church. Kelley, who is based in Philadelphia, came to Nebraska on Thursday, November 9th to host an all-day retreat for high school girls at Scotus.

Junior Rebecca Kosch was one of many who enjoyed the activities throughout the day.

"I signed up to do the FIERCE Retreat because I wanted to know

how being in a sport and continuing my faith life could go hand in hand with each other," Kosch said.

Kelley has been an athlete her whole life; she was a nine-time state champion in high school alone and played soccer at the University of Connecticut during her college years. She suffered an ACL injury during her last year of high school, though, and struggled with her identity throughout her college years. With not being able to play the sport she loved, she partied hard with her teammates trying to fit in, but

never felt fulfilled. After attending a Christian conference her junior year of college, Kelley found out what God was calling her to do—evangelize through her athletics, which is why she started FIERCE.

During the retreat, there were four circuits Kelley led, which gave the girls an opportunity to work their lower body, upper body, core, and plyometrics.

"Doing all the workouts was my favorite part," freshmen Brooke Krienke said. "It's been cool to see how we can push each other and encourage each other to reach our full potential."

Before each workout, Kelley gave a theme to focus on in order to push the girls to work harder. Gratitude and encouragement were two of the these she gave. She also handed out pieces of tape to wrap around the girls' wrists where they could write motivational statements and intentions. Kelley also taught the girls about their true identity and femininity through two talks she gave, which expanded from the themes that were given during the workouts.

"She had us write down motivational statements on our wrists and intentions we can focus on during the workout. I really think it helped me compete because offering it up for someone else helps me work harder," junior Emma Klug said.

Kelley used this method before her own soccer games in college. Picking an intention to play for and writing her statement on her wrist refocused her when the game was getting particularly tough. Through this, she was able to work harder

Students rally up for faith and fun

By Ava Rickert
Staff Reporter

Screams, cheers, and applause filled the Dowd Activity Center on October 25th. The reason for the commotion was not a typical volleyball or basketball game, but students cheering on their classmates during the faith rally, which took place in the afternoon.

Instead of having the usual Rock Talk on October 25th, the campus ministry planned a short faith rally for the school. The hour-long event included a game between Rock Talk groups, a talk over the Eucharist, and Adoration, both led by Fr. Taylor Leffler.

The game was a highlight of the afternoon for many students. One Rock Talk team from each grade was brought down from the bleachers to participate. The team was given nine balloons and assigned the task of popping the balloons between two team members' bodies in a relay race. Some of the most common tactics were body slamming and jumping on each other. The first team to pop all of their balloons was the winner.

Senior Kyra Bowen's Rock Talk group was one of the teams to compete.

"I thought it was so much fun. It was a great way to work together as a team and accomplish the goal of popping the balloon," Bowen said. "I thought it was fun finding

See FAITH RALLY, Page 2



TAYLOR DAHL / MARKETING DIRECTOR

President and founder of FIERCE Athlete, Samantha Kelley, talks to high school girls about how God is incorporated in athletics during the FIERCE Retreat which was held last Thursday, November 9th at Scotus. Kelley led the girls through workouts and gave talks throughout the day.

See FIERCE, Page 2

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7 Issues:

October 12

November 16

December 13

February 1

March 7

April 4

May 2

FIERCE

because she was reminded she was playing for something greater than herself.

“I like how Sam is open about being a woman and tells us how we need to embrace our femininity through everything we do,” Kosch said. “It’s really cool to realize we are all here for each other physically and spiritually, even when we aren’t working out.”

The FIERCE Retreat was a place for young women to learn more about their identity while praising God through their athletics. It gave the girls an opportunity to become closer with each other and with themselves.

“It’s been really fun, and if they have one again, I will for sure do it,” Klug said.

ONE ACT

essential piece to each performance. This year, Scotus has 22 members in its crew, headed by seniors Ella Broberg, Luke Chard, and Olivia Ehlers.

“We have a very dynamic crew. They are dressing up as Oompa-Loompas and doing transitions. They are a big part of our show,” Saenz explained.

In order to meet the requirements of competition, the cast has to perform their show in under thirty minutes. A good play also has a variety of different lightings, sounds, and, of course, sets for different scenes. The crew takes care of all of these aspects of the One Act. They practice transitioning the set of one scene to another, and they have to be meticulous in order to meet time requirements.

“Our time is limited, but our goals are ambitious. With enough dedication and hard work, we can go far,” Klitz said.

Scotus One Act is looking to perform at state for the third year in a row. They will be performing their home show this Friday in Memorial Hall at 7:00 pm.

FAITH RALLY

different positions to pop the balloons as well.”

After the game, campus minister Dana Ritzdorf explained to the students a topic she believes is important in growing in a relationship with Jesus, the Eucharistic Revival. The Eucharistic Revival is a movement which pushes for greater understanding of the sacrament of Holy Communion.

Ritzdorf emphasized the importance of seeing the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist.

“He has given us everything, but sometimes we get so ‘used to’ it that we forget how precious the Eucharist truly is. I love that the church is pushing this revival because it’s in the Eucharist where we can have intimacy with Jesus and experience the depth of His love. I

want that for everyone, especially each of our students,” Ritzdorf said. “Faith and knowledge go hand in hand, so if we can help people grow in understanding, then God can do the rest and help them have the eyes to see in faith that He is really present there.”

After a talk from Father Taylor about the effect of the Eucharist on his life, the day ended with Adoration along with praise and worship. Many students enjoyed Adoration because they were at peace listening to the music being played.

“I enjoyed the adoration. Father Taylor has an amazing voice and I enjoyed the songs he played,” junior Ian Karges said.

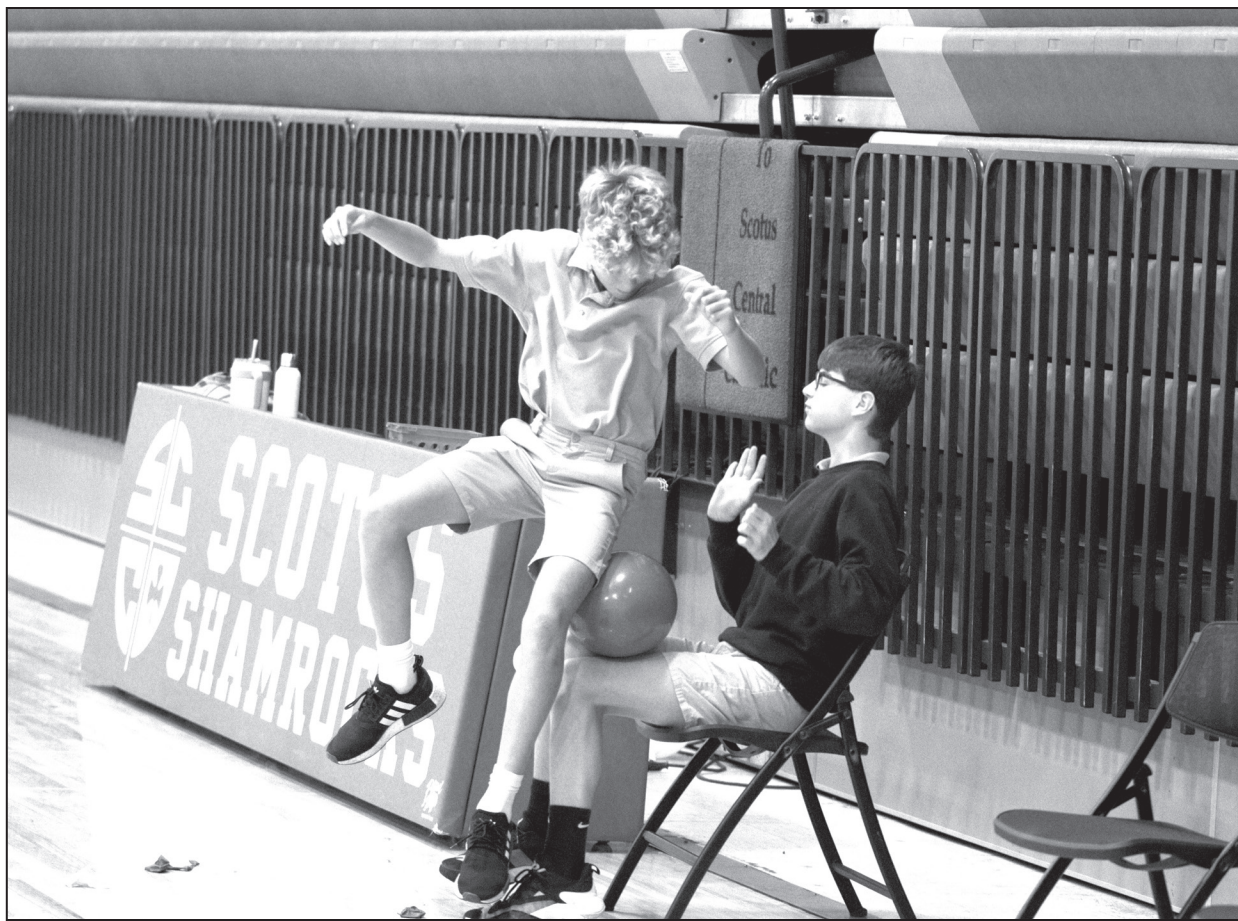
Before being dismissed from school, the Rock Talk groups were given time to catch up and pray

with each other. They shared their thoughts on the faith rally.

“It was only an hour long, but I felt like it was a good length. It wasn’t too long that everyone got bored, and it wasn’t short enough that it was a waste of time,” senior Mary Faltys said.

Whether it be through Rock Talk, faith rallies, or Adoration, there are an abundant number of ways students can grow in their faith at school.

“It’s a great way to come together in a fun atmosphere to celebrate our faith and spend time with Jesus,” Ritzdorf said. “Listening to speakers share about their own journeys with God can be an inspiration and help remind us all that God is real and He loves us.”



JACKSON HENG / YEARBOOK STAFF

Seventh graders Jace Jakubowski and Chase Zywiec work together to pop a balloon during the game at the faith rally on October 25th. One Rock Talk group from each grade participated in the game.

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Phone rules send a lasting message to students

By Rock Bottom Staff

For well over a decade, cell phones have been a distraction for students at Scotus. From tiny ipods to the newest iPhone 15, there have always been rules in place to regulate this temptation. Students often don't appreciate the thought that has gone into the phone rules, especially when it comes to the twenty dollar fine when one is caught using their phone. However, we as the Rock Bottom Staff believe the rules are important and beneficial to the environment

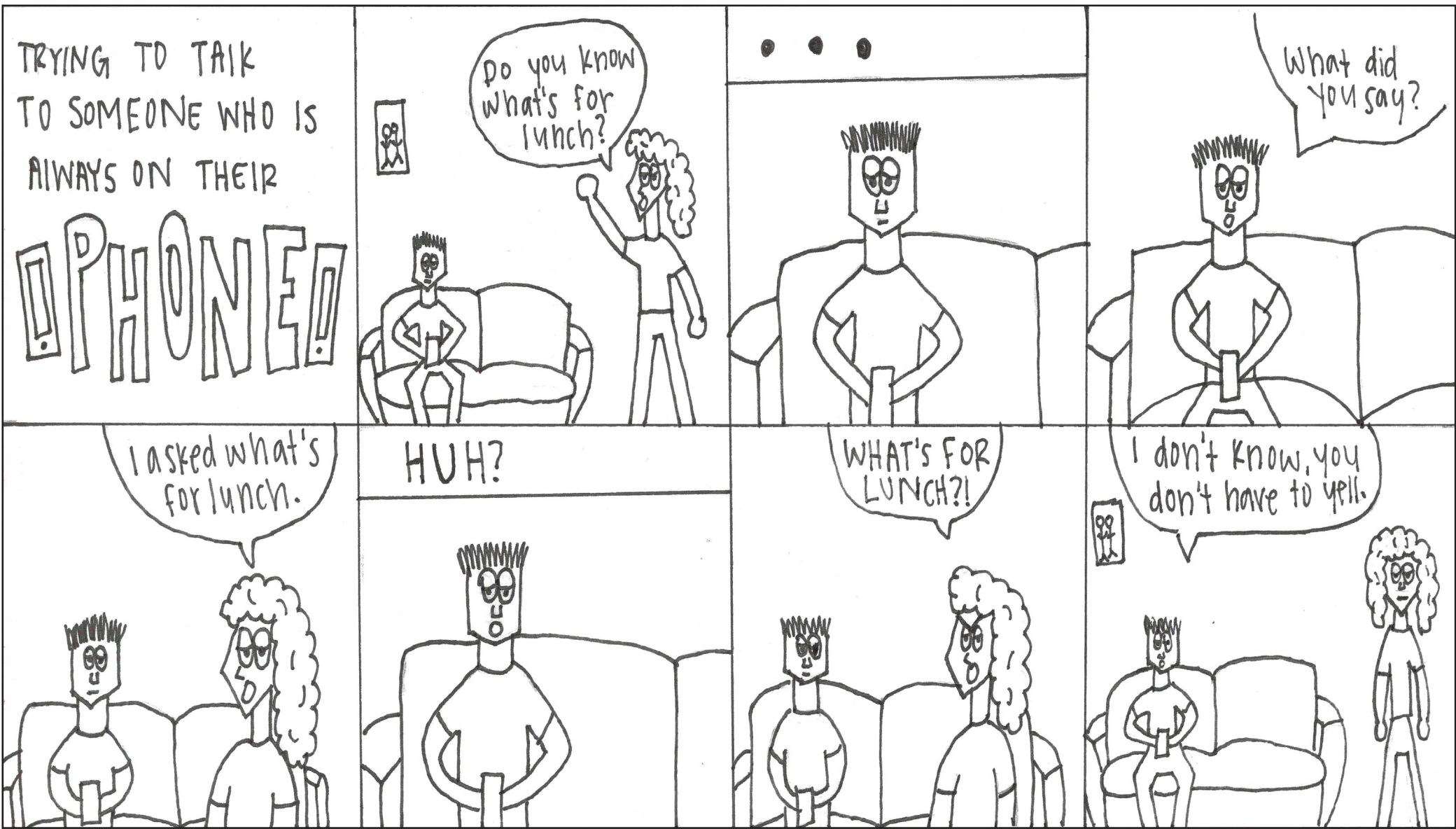
of the school. Many of the Scotus seniors remember the different rules that were in place when they were in seventh grade. All the teachers used to have pockets hanging from their doors where the students would place their phones during class. Although this seemed like a good idea, administration soon realized it encouraged phone usage between classes as they picked them up and carried them around. The newest set of rules where each student leaves their phone in their locker is, although simple, the best way

to discourage phones. This rule is easier to enforce for teachers and easier to carry out for students. By putting their phones in their lockers by 8:15 am, there is no need for students to think about them until 3:35 pm. Besides the obvious positives of the rules, there are also some underlying reasons the rules should be welcomed by students. Scotus students are growing relationships every day without texting or using social media. They talk to each other face-to-face between classes and welcome the time to socialize during a tech free lunch. We have

noticed students from other schools spending time on social media, sending snap backs, or taking BeReals during their lunch period. If someone was to take a look around our lunch room or even take a listen, they would immediately notice the absence of cellular devices and hear the rumble of countless voices in conversation. Without realizing it, Scotus students are developing skills they will use for the rest of their lives. To be able to go hours without checking their phones, working for entire class periods or study halls without distraction, and

asking teachers questions face-to-face is a skill that goes unappreciated. It's easy to feel as though the administration is bullying students into using an eighth of the screen time they did in the summer, but what they are really doing is suggesting habits students should implement in their personal lives outside of school. We encourage setting personal screen time limits or not having the phone in the room while doing homework or sleeping. According to *The Writing Cooperative*, it takes twenty hours to pick up a

new skill from scratch. That is equal to forty-five minutes a day for a month. According to *ABC News*, teens spend an average of seven hours and twenty-two minutes a day on their phones. This means that if one was to put all these hours toward a skill, they could pick that skill up in less than three days. Overall, the phone rules are positive for the students and the school. Students who implement these rules into their lives outside of school will learn to appreciate the rules more, as well as the relationships and skills they can build without their phones.



Turkey Day turns into another Thursday



By Sofia Karges
Staff Reporter

As summer comes to an end and fall rolls around, there are many traditions starting back up again. The

phrase "Happy HalloThank-Mas" is coined for this time of year because the next couple months are so jam-packed with holidays. While each holiday is significant in its own way, some definitely overshadow others. Thanksgiving is the most overlooked holiday when it comes to the end-of-the-year months. However, I believe the intent of it makes it one of the best holidays we have, tied for second with Christmas after Fourth of July. Thanksgiving is one of the most unique holidays in the world, not only because of its history. I know everyone loves Christmas,

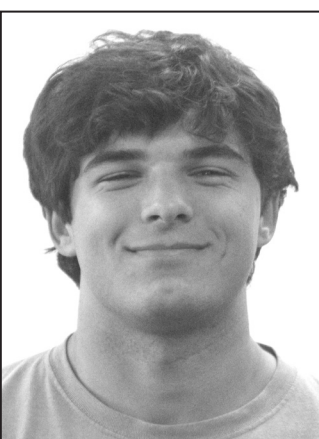
but Christmas is celebrated everywhere. No where else in the world can you find a day dedicated to cooking a turkey, eating good food, sitting around watching football, and being with family. Sure, there are other holidays where laziness is encouraged, but they don't hit as hard as Thanksgiving does. There is nothing quite as nice as taking a long nap after stuffing your face with your mom's cooking. With the weather and the food, it is the perfect atmosphere for the best holiday. Everyone makes such a fuss over Halloween because it is the kickoff to the holiday festivities. People spend so much time getting the perfect

costume and setting up for Halloween, yet decorating for Thanksgiving is almost unheard of. I get it, spooky season is fun, but it is not worth the hype. As soon as November 1st hits, people start worrying about the next big thing: Thanksgiving? No. Christmas. Radio stations start streaming cheery Christmas music, themed holiday menus are put up in fast food chains, Mariah Carey is back in business making millions off her Christmas songs, Hallmark movies start playing on repeat, and we all know Walmart started displaying their decorations two months ago. At this rate, outsiders

wouldn't even know Thanksgiving was a thing! Now, I get it. Thanksgiving might not be the most exciting holiday, but I believe it is a time to focus on the things that really matter. During Halloween, Christmas, and most other holidays, there are gifts to be given and received. Candy is the main focus for trick-or-treaters going from house to house on October 31st, and children sleep well on December 24th knowing they will receive gifts the next day. Oftentimes this puts us in a mindset that we should always be receiving something for us to enjoy a holiday although this should never

be the purpose of celebrating them. Thanksgiving is a time to be grateful for what we have and to enjoy the presence of family and friends. It has a power which is quiet; a time to slow down before the busyness of the Christmas season starts up again. While there aren't as many exciting traditions for Thanksgiving like there are for Halloween and Christmas, it might be the best holiday because of the intention of it. This year, take the time to slow down and enjoy Thanksgiving. Be present with your family and learn to love the holiday centered around gratefulness.

Oldest calls for the most responsibility



By Caleb Cameron
Staff Reporter

"Caleb, will you go to my soccer game this weekend?" I look up from my pre-calc book to see my little sister. My mom suddenly walks into the kitchen and gives me

that look. We all know the look I'm talking about. "Yes, Chloe I would love to go to your soccer game." I know it means the world to her, but I have a chemistry packet, 3 pre-calc assignments, and an English essay to finish. I understand the youngest have to go through this as well, but as the oldest in the family, I have the most responsibilities. I will find the invisible time. Being the oldest Cameron child has taught me how to be the most responsible in the family, how to set a good example for those around me, and sometimes how to accept being my siblings' chauffeur. These lessons are valuable but are also difficult to live up to. I can definitely see the ups and downs of being a middle

child or youngest child, but I believe being the oldest is the most difficult. One of the hardest parts about being the oldest child is the pressure of your younger siblings' reputation being placed on your shoulders. Especially at a smaller school like Scotus, last names matter. Because of this, the oldest child is most of the time the most remembered by teachers, faculty, and members of the community. The oldest's actions always have an impact on how the youngest is viewed and treated. There is already enough pressure to not ruin my own reputation, much less my siblings'. This brings up the aim to be perfect. There is a constant pressure to be the best student, athlete, son or daughter.

Oftentimes, the youngest is viewed as the most fun or relaxed. This is because they don't have the constant pressure to be perfect for their parents or family. One of the best parts of being the oldest is getting to do everything first. Also, one of the worst parts of being the oldest is getting to do everything first. It's great because who doesn't want to be first. However, it is the worst at the same time because it is the first time parents have to parent you through experiences. For example, driving is sometimes a hot topic between me and my parents. There are the issues of how often to be out with friends, gas usage, and curfew! The worst argument for me and my parents is I basically am

my sibling's chauffeur. I sometimes become a third parent. The younger siblings will never have to experience this. There are many instances where I watch my siblings and say, "I never was able to do that at his age" or "When I was his age the rule was much stricter". Why is that? It is because parents become more lenient as they gain parenting experience. This means parents are often the most strict with their oldest child. For example, I look at my little sister and say, "Holy cow! I can't even imagine what would happen if I acted like that or said that." The youngest is given much more wiggle room for rules and has a larger say on what they do or don't do.

Don't get me wrong, I love my parents, but I think all parents could afford to take it a little easier on the oldest. Now I can see the downside of being the youngest. I would not enjoy wearing hand me downs or being called my siblings name! But, I would take those things over the pressure given to the oldest. So, next time you are allowed to stay out after curfew, please remember your parents allow you because your older siblings made curfew. All the freedoms and lenient rules are because of us, so please tell your older siblings thank you the next time you see them.

Volleyball makes postseason run

By Caleb Cameron
Staff Reporter

After a difficult end to the regular season schedule, the Shamrock volleyball girls were determined to keep their season alive. After the last regular season game, the girls prepared to play Lakeview in the first round of subdistricts. The Shamrocks had played Lakeview three times before the subdistrict matchup, going 1-2.

Freshman libero Brooke Krienke had only started 2 games before subdistricts. "We knew [Lakeview] was going to overlook us because of our record and our prior meetings. We knew we

needed to use it to our advantage" Krienke said.

On Monday, October 23rd, the volleyball team traveled to Lakeview feeling confident in their preparation. From the start, the score was close. The teams battled back and forth, trading point for point. The Shamrocks fell just short, losing the first two sets 24-26 and 22-25.

Senior outside hitter Ashlee Leffers was a two-year starter.

"The coaches had told us to take one set at a time and do not give up because it has been done before. We had said one point at a time, and we all believed in one another. We trusted our coaches and our training,"

Leffers said.

The Shamrocks then went on to win the third and fourth sets 25-19 and 25-20. Going into the fifth set, the Shamrock energy was high. The girls used this energy to win the fifth set 15-12, ending the Vikings season. This was the first time the Shamrocks had beaten Lakeview in subdistricts since 2018.

Senior middle hitter Joanna Rusher led the team in kills for the year.

"Beating Lakeview my senior year was the cherry on top. They've ended our season my entire career until now," Rusher said.

The Shamrock's journey wasn't over as they returned the next night to play David

City for the subdistrict final. The Rocks dropped the first two sets. Once again, the Rocks managed to fight back by winning the next two sets, 25-16 and 25-23. The girls started the fifth set preparing to win. At first, it was back and forth but after a couple consecutive points, the Shamrocks pulled ahead. They ended up winning the fifth set 15-8.

Junior setter Meah Sackett led the team in assists this season.

"I think it was just a matter of everything coming together and playing to our peak at the perfect time," Sackett said.

The girls' next matchup was against Minden who was

ranked 2nd in class C1. Minden had 1 loss, losing only 3 sets the whole season.

Senior middle hitter Rylie Jarecki has been on the volleyball team since her freshman year.

"I think the biggest reason for the team's success at the end of the season was we played with a lot of heart and played for each other," Jarecki said.

On October 28th, the Shamrocks traveled to Minden. The girls kept it close but unfortunately lost in 3 sets.

Junior outside hitter Mallory Dreesen led the team in digs against Minden.

"We gave Minden a run for their money. We had a nothing to lose mentality and

that allowed us to compete with a very talented team," Dreesen said.

The volleyball team finished the season with a record of 11-18 but exceeded expectations in the postseason. Senior defensive specialist Kensity McKay led the team in digs this season.

"I think this year's team chemistry really lived up to our team's motto of 'Through It All' because even being 11-18 we proved we could compete with the best teams in the state. The team's chemistry this year was the best of any team I've played on because I knew I was going out there with my best friends, and no matter what we stuck together," McKay said.



JOSIE SLIVA / YEARBOOK STAFF

Freshman libero Brooke Krienke serves the ball during the subdistrict game against David City. The Shamrocks beat the Scouts in a reverse sweep.



JUDE MAGUIRE / YEARBOOK STAFF

The Shamrocks celebrate after scoring a point in their subdistrict match against Lakeview on October 23rd. The volleyball team won their subdistrict for the first time since 2018.

Scotus football concludes season after making playoffs

By Kirsten Sucha
Staff Reporter

At the end of the football season, almost every single team ends on a loss. The problem with ending on a low note is it never shows the amount of trials and progress a team must go through to get to where they are at the end

of the season.

The Scotus Shamrocks played the Schuyler Warriors on October 13th at Pawnee Park. The Shamrocks played a long, hard game in the cold. Junior Spencer Shotkoski was the leading scorer of the game with three touchdowns. Scotus scored a victory over the Warriors 46-8.

Tyler Linder is the head

coach of the Scotus football program.

"The Schuyler win was needed. We had dropped the previous two games to Wahoo and DC West so we needed to get back to our winning ways," Linder said.

Senior defensive back Frank Fehringer was a starter for the football team this season.

"Schuyler was a super fun game, I even had a scoop and scored a touchdown on a kickoff."

The Shamrocks continued on with their season playing Lakeview. The rivalry game was held at Lakeview on October 20th. Junior quarterback Cohen Pelan threw a 26-yard touchdown pass to junior Luke Wemhoff in the fourth quarter. The Shamrocks then recovered an onside kick and Pelan later ran in for the touchdown. Ultimately, the Shamrocks fell short to the Vikings losing 14-42.

"The most challenging aspect of playing Lakeview is focusing on the things that really matter in terms of winning a football game. Obviously, tackling, blocking, and scoring points are important to winning a game, but being in the right frame of mind might be more important," Linder explained. "Getting our boys into that mental space is always the most difficult aspect of rivalry week."

Senior Jackson Heng played cornerback and wide receiver for the Shamrocks this season.

"The physicality of the game [was the most challenging part of the game], and on offense we had a tough time moving the ball," Heng said.

Following the game against Lakeview, the Shamrocks were placed in the playoffs. Even though Scotus suffered a hard loss to Lakeview, the game continued to better prepare them for the playoff game against Wahoo Public High School.

"Our motto for Scotus football is 'Be The Best'. You cannot truly live that out unless you compete with the best. Iron sharpens iron. Anytime you play a team with great coaching and a tradition of excellence, it will make you a better football team," Linder said.

Pelan threw a total of 525 passing yards this season.

"[Playing Lakeview better prepared us by] helping us get the right personnel for Wahoo," Pelan said.

The Shamrocks had to travel to Wahoo on October 27th where they played the Warriors. There, Scotus played as the No. 16 seed and lost their final game of the season 0-46 to the No. 1 seed, Wahoo.

Senior captain Evan Kiene led the team in rushing yards this season.

"It was a fun year. We hoped for more, but that's the way it is sometimes, I will still cherish the good memories the team made," Kiene said.

The Scotus Shamrocks concluded their 2023 football season with five wins and five losses.

"I love the memories you make and the relationships you build along the way. Ralph Waldo Emerson famously said, 'It's not the destination, it's the journey.' I want to win games, and I want to compete for championships, but more than anything I want to foster an environment that builds men of character," Linder said.



ELLA HASH / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Junior Cohen Pelan runs toward the end zone during the game against Lakeview on October 20th. After the last regular season game, the Shamrocks traveled to Wahoo for playoffs.

Arndt places 6th, team places 3rd at state golf tournament

By Patrick Arndt
Staff Reporter

Scotus girls golf ended the fall season strong, placing 1st at districts and 3rd at state in North Platte.

Senior Kaitlyn Fleming was among the five sent to conquer the unforgiving Lake Maloney Golf Club on October 9th and 10th.

"Overall, we've played better before. A few people on our team didn't have great days and shot above their average. But it was a tough course, so that is understandable," Fleming said.

Sharing the same qualities of a normal tournament, State has unique differences setting it apart from any other tournament. Junior Quinn VunCannon commented on the stark differences between state and a regular tournament.

"State is a lot scarier.

Obviously there is pressure to perform, but it feels like more than that. At first they announce your name and everyone stares at you making you feel awkward, then you have to tee off in front of a lot of people, making teeing off even more awkward than it usually is," VunCannon said.

The state golf championship consists of a 36 hole team and individual event over 2 days, totalling 18 holes each day. Each day the top four scores are taken, to derive totals of day one and day two, the combined eight scores make up the team total of both days.

VunCannon put together two good scores shooting 98 on the first day and 103 on the second day. VunCannon was a member of the varsity team and also qualified indi-

vidually for state. Leading the team in scoring was senior Cecilia Arndt, firing an 82, 80 to place 6th individually among the 91 other players.

"I played a couple of difficult rounds, but it worked out in the end because I placed 6th. Overall, I think the team had a good performance, being the first state meet away from home, it really showed us how we can improve, and I see how much potential this team truly has," Arndt said.

Over 2 days the team scored a 743 placing third, shooting 372 on day 1 and 371 on day 2. Attending her first state tournament, junior Abby Shumacher posted two good rounds, scoring 109 on day 1 and a 116 on day 2 placing 73rd.

"I thought I played decently overall, granted it was my first time playing at state.



PATRICK ARNDT / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Senior Cecilia Arndt hits an approach shot at Lake Maloney Golf Course during the Girls Class C State Championship on October 9th and 10th. Arndt shot 82 and an 80, placing 6th, leading the team to 3rd place.

State seemed like a stressful environment as there were mobs of people everywhere I looked, and I tried not to let any external factors affect how I played," Schumacher

said. Overall, Scotus held their ground placing third among fifteen other teams and medaling only Arndt. Arndt has had a successful career at

Scotus, holding the 18 hole record of 69, tying the lowest 9 hole record of 34, and most medals at state with 4.

Runners face challenges at state meet

By Ella Hash
Staff Reporter

Warm weather, sunshine, and clear, blue skies is anyone's ideal day off. A person could relax, read a book, and enjoy the weather around them. While this weather may feel great to others, the sentiment may be lost on cross country runners. On October 20th, one of Scotus' days off from school, the girls' cross country team and boys' cross country senior member Jude Maguire made the trek to Kearney to participate in the State Cross Country meet, facing hotter conditions than they had all season long.

One of the top three runners on the girls' team was sophomore Hannah Heinrich, who had heat complications earlier in the season at different meets.

"It is very unusual for [the meet] to be above 80 degrees in October, so that added complications for many of the athletes and teams," Heinrich said.

The heat was a big factor throughout the day in Kearney, adding to the hills and turns the runners had to face on the course. Many runners in the races before the class C meet were dropping out due to heat exhaustion and not finishing where they were projected to place, including

Heinrich. Heinrich ran in the front of the pack until the last few hundred meters where she struggled across the finish line due to the heat and harsh circumstances of the course.

"I honestly don't remember the end of that race, but I'm happy I finished because I had made it so far throughout the season to quit at that point," Heinrich said. "We definitely grew stronger as a team because we experienced first-hand how important it is to truly be there for one another."

Although the weather was off, Heinrich and other runners still found a way to persevere through the troubles and find a way to keep going.

Freshman Leslie Medina was the girls' fifth runner this year. Medina has been in cross country since junior high.

"I was pretty nervous, but I was excited to be there and ready to get [the race] over with," Medina said.

For this state meet, the girls' team was composed of members who had not competed at state before. Although the course was not new to them, other teams had already picked the girls' team as the one to beat. After finishing first at every meet the whole season, beating out other highly rated teams, the



ISABEL ZARUBA / YEARBOOK STAFF

Senior Mary Faltys and freshman Emilyn Kavan keep the pace at the state cross country meet on October 20th. The top 15 runners place, including Faltys in 12th and Kavan in 15th.

girls were more than ready for the target placed on their backs.

Senior Mary Faltys was one of the girls' top three runners this season.

"We knew the other teams would do their best to beat us," Faltys said. "We had to come ready to compete."

The race started out as

any other. Nerves were running rampant throughout the air as a shot signaled the start of the race. The girls treated the race as any other they had run this season. Fans cheered them along the way, pushing them to move up in front of a runner or giving reminders they are doing great. As the race finished, the team

and individual scores were announced. Faltys placed 12th and freshman Emilyn Kavan placed 15th in class C.

"I am glad Emilyn and I both placed at state," Faltys said. "There weren't many other teams who had more than one runner finish in the top 15."

Even though Faltys and

Kavan were some of the top runners at the meet, the girls' team placed fifth, ending their season-long winning streak. The ending was bitter-sweet for the team who had been top-ranked all season.

Medina stated, "We will get to state again next season and hopefully win, for real this time."

Junior high fall sports wrap up

Volleyball

Many junior high girls are drawn to volleyball each fall. The team aspect of the sport is a major contributor to the big team. There were 17 girls on the 8th grade team and 27 on the 7th grade team.

8th grader Leni Kerkman played libero.

"I love volleyball and the environment around it. It's fun to be with my friends and try my hardest," Kerkman said. "I love it and can't believe it's already over."

The 8th grade A team finished with a 5-10 record, and the B team's final record was 5-5. As a 7th grader, Kate Sell played Scotus junior high volleyball for the first time. "I learned that my classmates are great teammates, and we work really well together. It made the season a lot more fun because we know how to lift each other up. That makes it special," Sell said.

Volleyball taught 7th grader Jaci Harrington the importance of persistence.

"I learned you can't focus on the mistakes or the score. You just have to pick yourself up and try again. We would get down on ourselves if we were losing, so we wouldn't do too great because of that," Harrington said.

"Have fun because it's not always about winning. It's about being there for your teammates, working hard, supporting each other, and lifting each other up," 7th grader Harper Spale concluded.

MARY FALTYS / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Football

Football is the most popular junior high sport at Scotus. This year, there were 40 boys on the team. Many boys play football because they enjoy being on a team.

For 7th grader Bode Roberts, that is just one reason he went out.

"Football is a great sport because I'm very physical and love to hit people and take them out. Also, I love to be part of the team and love every one of my brothers on that team," Roberts said.

Playing football brought the boys fun memories as well as taught them important life skills.

8th grader Grant Borg learned the importance of resilience.

"Expect to lose but get back up because you are going to be a better version of yourself," Borg said.

For 7th grader Jace Jakubowski, football reinforced the importance of teamwork.

"I learned that giving my best effort all the time will make me the best I can be and help the team to my best ability," Jakubowski said.

The 8th grade team finished with a 0-6 record, and the 7th graders finished 4-2.

"It's an amazing time, and I would definitely recommend it for future Shamrocks. It's a lot of hard work and effort in practice, but it all pays off when you get to lay out the quarterback on the opposing team," Roberts concluded.

MARY FALTYS / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Cross Country

This year's junior high cross country team had 17 runners, and only 3 of them were boys. They competed in 6 meets this year.

Many runners are attracted to cross country by the close bond among the team. This was true for 8th grader Aurora Ridder.

"I went out for cross country because all my friends were doing it, and it has a good environment," Ridder said.

Unlike the other junior high sports, junior high runners practice with the high school team. This often teaches the younger runners more about the sport.

8th grader Avery Heinrich was the top runner on the girls team and led the girls to a 49-3 record.

"I learned the value of hard work, and the upperclassmen are all really good role models," Heinrich said.

In addition to the strong team bond, cross country is also known for the challenging mentality.

Although the challenges are daunting for many, the support of the team helps everyone push through and enjoy it.

"I think it's a great sport. Even though it is tough and you might not like running, you can make a lot of friends and have a good time no matter what!" 8th grader Madilyn Klug said.

MARY FALTYS / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF



JUDE MAGUIRE / YEARBOOK STAFF

The Shamrock volleyball team celebrates with the Rowdy Dowdies thanking them for their support during their win against Lakeview on October 23rd. The Shamrocks finished the season 2-2 against the Vikings.



ISABEL ZARUBA / YEARBOOK STAFF

Senior Jude Maguire strides out in the first half of the State Cross Country Meet on October 20th. Maguire qualified as an individual for the meet for the third time.

Meet the Scotus Lunch Ladies

**Shelly Adams,
Lunch Program Coordinator**



Originally from: Sioux City, Iowa
At Scotus since: 2009
Family: Shelly is married with one son and one daughter.
Hobbies: Shelly likes to bead jewelry and watch hockey.
Fun fact: "I'm a car geek. I still own my 1981 Firebird!"

**Margie Swanson,
Cafeteria Manager**



Originally from: Bohol, Philippines
At Scotus since: 2022
Favorite meal to prepare: Goulash / Any home cooked meal
Family: Margie grew up with 10 brothers and sisters in the Philippines and moved to the US in 1998; now she is married and her son Mason is a seventh grader here at Scotus.
Fun fact: "I hate fishing in the states because I hate worms!"

Alison Ryan, Server



Originally from: Minnesota
At Scotus since: 2022
Favorite part about the cafeteria: "Getting to see my daughter and knowing that lunch is some people's favorite part of their day."
Hobbies: Alison likes reading and renovating her 95 year old house.
Fun fact: She is one of 8 kids, 7 girls and 1 boy.

Juana Campuzano, Server



Originally from: Mexico
At Scotus since: 2021
Favorite meal to make: Tamales
Hobbies: Juana likes dancing and traveling.
Fun fact: Juana has a lot of family get-togethers where they cook together.

Cindy Coulter, Server



Originally from: Silver Creek, Nebraska
At Scotus since: 2021
How did she end up at Scotus? "I retired from the Columbus Public School Cafeteria after 22 years. I missed being around people and kids, and I saw an opening at Scotus and the rest is history!"
Family: Cindy is married and has four sons. Mr. Coulter used to teach and coach at Scotus.
Fun fact: Cindy collects salt and pepper shakers and has over 500 sets of them.

Sandra Grant, Server



Originally from: Columbus, Nebraska
At Scotus since: 2022
Favorite meal to prepare: Grilled chicken and baked potatoes
Family: "I've been married for 38 years, and we have 4 kids and 10 grandchildren!"
Hobbies: Sandra likes bowling and spending time with her grandkids.

A Day in the Life of the Scotus Cafeteria

6:00 A.M.

Arrive at school

6:15

Check the temperature of the cooler, freezer, and milk coolers and gather all the breakfast and lunch items to prepare for the day

6:30

Turn on the exhaust fan, hood lights, oven, and steamer

6:40

Prepare the sanitizer bucket and utensils then pan out all the necessary items for the day's breakfast and lunch menus

7:15-8:10

Offer breakfast to Scotus students

9:00-10:00

Scotus lunch count

10:15

Load the vans with food for Immanuel Lutheran School

10:50-12

Serve St. Bons students lunch

11:15-12:45

Serve Immanuel Lutheran students lunch

12:10-1:20

Serve Scotus students lunch

1:30

Eat lunch

2:00

Clean the kitchen and cafeteria then go home

ELLA HASH / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

QUINN VUNCANNON / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

What's offered be 'sides' lunch?

Breakfast

Hot breakfast has been at Scotus for a long time. At the start, it was not state approved so they had more freedom on what they served. Then it stopped around 2016, and they started to sell grab and go snacks. When COVID hit, they stopped selling breakfast again. Now breakfast is a state reimbursable breakfast.

Breakfast:

- Biscuits and gravy
- Cinnamon rolls
- Sausage/egg biscuit
- Pancakes
- Breakfast burrito
- Waffle sticks
- French toast sticks and sausage links
- Long johns
- Yogurt parfaits
- Breakfast pizza



Extra Food and Drinks

The extra snacks offered at lunch started in the 2017-18 school year. The students requested that more food and drinks should be available. All the options for students have to be Smart Snack approved by the state of Nebraska.

Extra food and drinks:

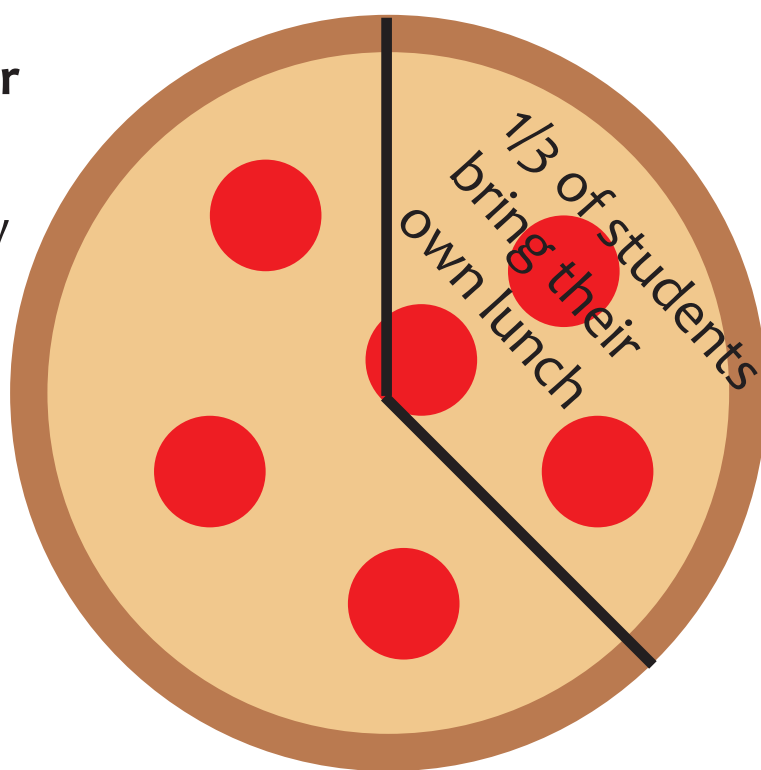
- Body Armor
- Lemonade
- Sparkling ICE
- Fruit juice
- Chex mix
- Fruit snacks
- Chips
- Cookies

AUBREE BEIERMANN / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Lowdown of the Lunchroom

Why do students bring their own lunch?

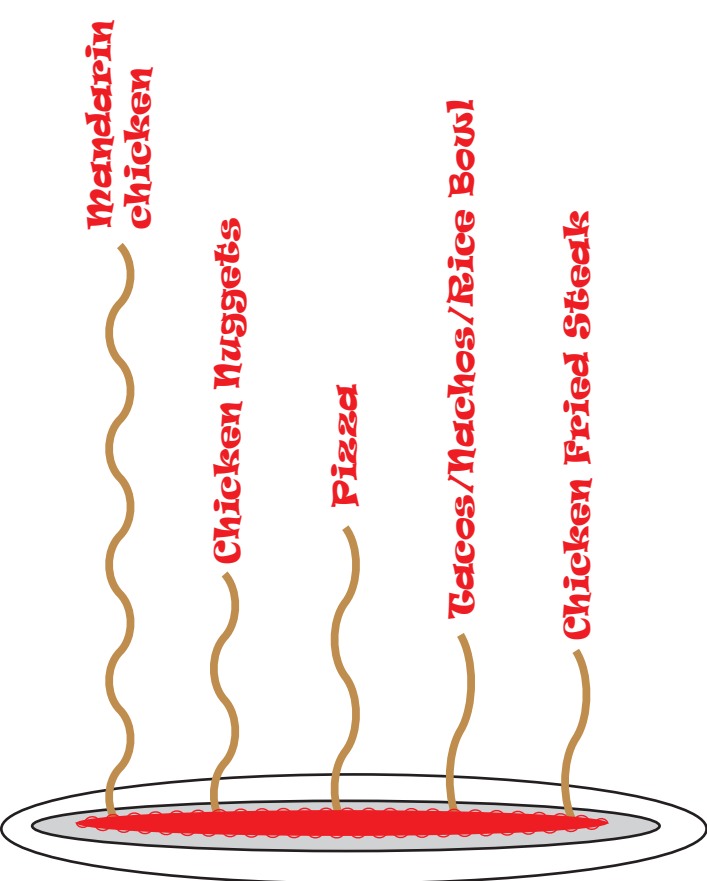
- Don't like the lunch that day
- Control over what they eat
- More food/larger portions
- Picky eaters
- To know what is in the food



What do students bring instead?

- Leftovers
- Sandwiches
- Fruit/veggies
- Pastas
- Salads
- Yogurt
- Chips
- Lunchables

Favorite Lunches

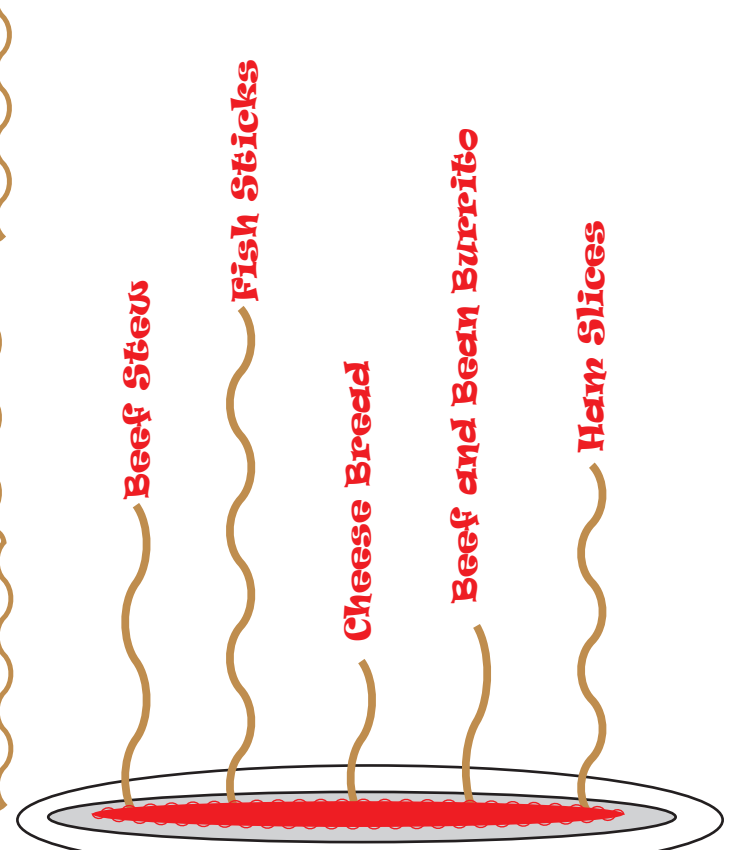


"Rice bowls are my favorite because I can mix up anything I want to put in my bowl."
-Annie Weber, 11

"[My least favorite lunch is the fish sticks] because they are soggy, and I have to cover them in ketchup to eat them."
-Evan Kiene, 12

"[My least favorite lunch is the grilled chicken because] it doesn't taste like chicken."
-Seth Druempel, 10

Least Favorite Lunches



Hot Takes

- "I think the mandarin chicken is overhyped."
- Abby Schumacher 11
- "Meatloaf is SCRUMPTIOUS."
-Audrianna Splittgerber 7
- "You should not call it beef and bean burritos if it's just filled with beans."
-Abigail Laska 12
- "They should serve the garlic parmesan sauce more often."
- Oliver Coufal 8
- "The watermelon is actually good."
-Bailey Faltys 8

School Lunches in America

Lunch, the time of the school day designated for eating and socialization, a pillar to all schools, has not always been in America's school systems. School lunches in America have been offered in schools since the 1890's, but were required by law in 1946, shortly after WWII ended, and in 1996-7 food regulations were introduced. Today across the nation over 31 million eat school lunches.

According to the FDA, in 1946, schools were required to provide lunches for kids, but at that time there were little to no regulations; 20 years later the 1966 Children's Nutrition Act was passed, bringing nutrition to schools. The Children's Nutrition Act brought forth new programs, including special milk options, breakfast choices, and nonprofit programs to aid lower income families. Years later, the meal requirements under the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program were updated, affecting the sodium and grain amounts consumed by students on a daily basis. Updates included a decrease in sodium consumption in grades 9-12 from 1,420mg to 1,280mg and increasing the whole grain consumption. Many, however, bring their own lunches from home rather than use the school lunch system.

According to the FDA and the US Census Bureau, many families across the country are defined as low income and are eligible for financial assistance for the payment of school lunches. Beginning in 1946 alongside the school lunch program, assistance methods were implemented in order to assist low income families and the war torn economy. The food stamps that were used during the war were tailored to be used in the new school lunch systems, making lunches more affordable. In 1958, a school lunch cost a student \$.25-.30 depending on if they wanted a dessert included, today a school lunch costs on average \$3.52. However, as Covid-19 shut down many factories and jobs, leaving millions without proper funding for lunches, the government enacted a free and reduced lunch program for the past few years, ending recently as the economy began to recover.

In Scotus, 70% of students eat school lunches daily, and only around 30 students eat the breakfast option. During the pandemic, Scotus took part in the federal government's free and reduced lunch program. All of the food served by Scotus is held to the highest of standards set by the FDA to ensure the health and safety of all students. The lunches contain all necessary food groups in accordance with the National School Lunch Program's regulations, including 1 cup each of vegetables and fruits, 2 cups of grains, 2 cups of meats, and 1 cup of liquid milk. As for those who choose to bring a sack lunch, milk can still be purchased through the lunch line and microwave ovens are provided for student usage.

PATRICK ARNDT / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

This information on this page is taken from a survey sent to every student 7-12 at Scotus Central Catholic with 250 responses.

NHS officers lead the leaders

By **Madden Saenz**
Staff Reporter

Academic excellence is something Scotus Central Catholic prides itself on. With a schoolwide average of a 24 on the ACT, 4 points higher than the national average and 98-100% of graduates attending college, Scotus is no stranger in this subject. Another way Scotus' excellence can be represented is the National Honor Society, or NHS.

This year, Scotus' NHS chapter welcomed its largest group yet. With thirty-one inductees, the total membership of NHS sits at eighty-four strong, an amazing number for Scotus' size. For comparison out of the almost 400 students currently at Scotus, about a fifth of them are enrolled in the NHS.

Scotus' NHS sponsor of twenty-five years, Jane Dusel Misfeldt, has seen this display of excellence many times before, and being able to witness this growth firsthand is something she is

extremely proud and pleased to see.

"I think it shows the high caliber of academic students we have here, we certainly have all different academic abilities here. But it shows that we have some students who are willing to really try even if they have to work really hard, versus somebody else who doesn't have to study as much; they're still trying to get to that level of excellence," Dusel-Misfeldt said.

After induction, students can shoot even higher in their excellence, which comes in the form of NHS officers, vice president, and president. These roles are not something a student just prints their name on and hopes they are lucky. The student must exemplify all NHS values and be chosen by their peers to lead.

One of these leaders is senior Joanna Rusher, who is the current president of NHS.

"NHS is [an amazing] opportunity for high schoolers to get involved in a national group. I also love how

it rewards students for good grades and leadership with a recognition they might not get otherwise," Rusher said.

She and her fellow leaders of NHS help guide new and current members, and overall aid in the success of the NHS program.

One of her fellow leaders, senior NHS officer Isabel Zaruba, gave her thoughts on what it takes to be an example of leadership.

"To be a good leader in NHS, you need to be outspoken, willing to participate, and responsible. Leaders in the NHS are notorious for making good decisions despite it sometimes being the 'boring' or 'lame' choice," Zaruba said. "Along with that, NHS leaders show up to the meetings, participate in the fundraisers and service projects, and set an example both inside and outside of the group. An NHS leader doesn't have to have an officer position in the group to be a leader. They just need to be willing to lead through their example." Responsibility does



MADDEN SAENZ / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Junior NHS vice president Quinn VunCannon gives one of several welcome speeches to this year's NHS inductees. Each of the officers seated behind VunCannon spoke at the induction ceremony.

not just involve keeping up with grades or responding to emails. Being of a higher rank within NHS means there is more responsibility. One of these is junior NHS vice president Quinn VunCannon.

"Our officers support each other by being honest and talkative in our meetings. We also hold each other

accountable by being on time and prepared for things."

Regardless of their position, NHS members must be role models for all other students, whether in school or not. They must lead by example and action and hold themselves and others accountable. Later this year, they can further prove their

skills as leaders in future NHS events. This December, look for NHS members as they will be selling candy canes to other students. In February, NHS members will also be coordinating Scotus' own blood drive, a perfect place to see NHS leaders in action.

Famous alum supports student success



PHOTO COURTESY PAT BROCKHAUS

The 22 seniors who attended the Chuck Hagel Symposium on October 17th proudly pose with the former Shamrock. The symposium in public service took place at the UNO campus and hosted many breakout sessions throughout the day.

By **Joanna Rusher**
Staff Reporter

Many students at Scotus Central Catholic see the mysterious framed picture of a man and his horse in the Media Center, but have no idea who he is. They walk by this image day after day without knowing the former Secretary

of Defense for the United States named his horse after their very own school.

Chuck Hagel is an alum of Scotus Central Catholic. When Hagel graduated in 1964, it was known as St. Bonaventure High School. Not only was Hagel the Secretary of Defense from 2013-2015, he was a United States Senator from 1997-

2009, serving alongside many presidents including Barack Obama, and picked up plenty of knowledge along the way.

On October 17th, senior government teacher Pat Brockhaus took 22 seniors to the Chuck Hagel Symposium in Public Service at the University of Omaha campus where Hagel graduated after returning from Vietnam.

"It's important to hear about public service and leadership from someone who was an average guy and to look at where he is now," Brockhaus said. "Someone in that room, out of all those students, might do something like that. Look at what [students] do in [their] schools, that's where it starts, that's public service."

The symposium began at 9am with short talks from two university professors, then Chuck Hagel was introduced. Hagel opened the floor for questions about anything from his opinion about the government now and his opinions on decisions government officials have made. At about 10:30, the students were dismissed for their breakout sessions. Out of ten sessions available, students ranked their interests in a survey sent out a couple weeks prior and were assigned to two. Senior Neve Pavlik attended a session titled "Lead. Collaborate. Change the World."

"We talked about a lot of issues going on in the world right now like homelessness or food insecurity and how the government plays a role in that as well as the different types of law enforcement," Pavlik said.

After the morning breakout sessions, lunch was provided before the students attended their second session. Some students who attended the symposium already had an interest in public service. Many of their ideas were affirmed as they were taught

about topics they are interested in by experts of the field. Senior Kensey McKay has thought about becoming a public attorney.

"I thought it was really interesting especially because Chuck Hagel is also from Nebraska, and we have a shortage of public attorneys," McKay said. "I thought it was really cool hearing about both the justice systems in Nebraska as well as the United States and internationally."

After the afternoon groups, every student went back to the main theater for some last words. Each school had the opportunity to take a picture with Hagel as they walked to their bus. Senior Aidan Bettenhausen was among those who was encouraged to see a Scotus and UNO alum have so much success.

"Usually it's a deterrence when you come up from somewhere where opportunity is not as easy to follow through with," Bettenhausen said. "I just found it really inspiring that Chuck Hagel came from a small town and got so far in life."

Campers go crazy for flag and cheer camps

By **Cecilia Arndt**
Editor

Many little girls aspire to become cheerleaders and dancers, and the Scotus cheer team and flag and dance team helped to bring these dreams to life with their elementary school camps. Each of the groups were able to perform their dances at football games, showing the expertise of the high schoolers and allowing the little girls to show off for their parents.

This year, the theme for the Cheer camp was *Teen Beach Movie*. They danced to various songs from the movie, including "Surf Crazy." The girls, from second through sixth grade, learned how to cheer at the camp held on Saturday, September 9th and performed on September 14th. Many of the little girls were over the moon to perform with the high school cheerleaders.

"Some of them get a little crazy and don't listen, but a lot of them are just excited to be with the cheerleaders so they listen to anything you tell them," junior Ava Rickert said.

Excitement can make up for many flaws; however, and the mini cheerleaders had plenty to go around.

"It is always a blast to perform with little girls who have pure excitement for cheering," senior Neve Pavlik said.

It can be a challenge to work with kids, but all of the cheerleaders were able to live up to their name and be leaders for the little girls.

Not only did the kids enjoy the cheer camp, the flag and dance camp was also a hit. The participants in the elementary school camp were also from second through sixth grade. The camp was held on October 13th. Each of the girls performed with a smaller version of the flag and dance team's flags, and were able to quickly learn

how to use them. The team enjoyed working with the little girls, and were happy to teach them.

"They all got excited when I taught them how to toss their flags," senior Amber Spawn said, "I love their attitude and personalities. Dance is a great way to get kids out of their comfort zone."

Not everything was easy, though, and there were a few challenges with working with the little kids. However, the girls made the best of it, especially when the performance rolled around.

"They were really high-strung and kept hanging on me, but they were super funny and adorable!" freshman Audrey Naughton said.

Performing anything can be nerve racking, but when the weather conditions are not ideal can create more challenges. They performed on the same day as the camp when it was cold and rainy, and all the little girls were



KENSEY MCKAY / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Senior cheerleader Makenna Barels leads the elementary school girls in their performance on September 14th. The flag and dance team held their elementary school camp and performed on October 13th.

bundled up. Although the cold made it difficult, no one let the plunging temperature get to them and their performance was spectacular in spite of the cold.

"Although it was a cold

night, they all had a blast!" senior Kaitlyn Fleming said.

Overall, both the teams and little girls were able to have a great time performing and were truly the "Coolest Cats in Town." Hopefully, the

little girls were able to meet some high school role models who were able to show them what they can accomplish, and make some future cheerleaders and dancers.

Junior high students help out the community



TAYLOR DAHL / MARKETING DIRECTOR

Seventh grader Wyatt Recek, eighth graders Zack Schumacher, and Layne Aschoff trim the bushes outside St. Anthony's during the junior high service retreat on October 16th, 2023. The 7th and 8th graders were sent out to various places in the community to lend a helping hand.

By Aubree Beiermann
Staff Reporter

It is rare to see students out in the middle of the day cleaning up yards, talking to the elderly, or helping out at a daycare, but on October 16th, 2023 junior high students took part in a "service day" and went all over town to offer help to those who needed

it. This new day was added in hopes of giving the junior high students more faith-based opportunities at Scotus. Dana Ritzdorf, the campus minister at Scotus, teaches 8th grade religion and helps prepare students for their Confirmation. "Service is one of our core values as a school, so we wanted to try this as another way to live out that value on

top of the service projects students do on their own," Ritzdorf said. The students volunteered at Arc of Platte County, Columbus Rescue Mission, Keep Columbus Beautiful, Prairie Village, Brookstone Acres, Hospital Daycare, United Way, the food pantry, Center for Survivors, and St. Anthony's Elementary School.

Arc of Platte County is an organization that helps children and adults with developmental disabilities. United Way, Center for Survivors, and the food pantry all work in unison in helping the homeless, those in need or seeking shelter. Brookstone Acres and Prairie Village are retirement homes. Keep Columbus Beautiful helps clean up the yards of people who

need a helping hand or are unable to do it themselves. Nate Tenopir also helps with the campus ministry group at Scotus. He and Ritzdorf were the leaders of this retreat. They put the kids in the groups, made a list of where the students could go to serve, and organized the day based on those variables. The day consisted of the students first going to Mass then being sent out for their service.

Audrianna Splittgerber, a 7th grader, went to Arc of Platte County.

"I ended up choosing to pack goody bags for their upcoming Halloween party. Then, when all of the tasks were finished but one, our group helped finish the last task, which was putting stickers on honey bottles they sell for a fundraiser. Afterwards, we got some cookies and were told about what they do at The Arc," Splittgerber said.

After their service was complete, they came back to school, ate lunch, and had station activities. The students ended the day by sharing what they did and the significance of it.

7th grader Hannah Dreesen went to Prairie Village. While she was there, she helped pull weeds and play BINGO with the residents.

"I think these retreats are important because no matter what you did, you had an impact on this community. Another reason is because you get to go outside your comfort zone and talk to new people and have fun with them," Dreesen said.

These retreats for junior high students allow them to help others who are less fortunate or need a little light in their lives.

"It's important to start building a foundation for when they are juniors and seniors. It's not just about what happens at Scotus. It feels like you have a responsibility to humanity outside of these walls," Tenopir said.

With the amount of students each place had, the time spent doing volunteer work went by quickly. This service not only helps those in need, but also rewards those who put in the work.

Fernando De Leon, an 8th grader, helped with Keep Columbus Beautiful.

"It feels good when you're done helping someone in need," De Leon said.

The junior high service retreat was one of the few retreats in November, held just prior to the high school girls' FIERCE retreat, and the overnight Quest retreat.



TAYLOR DAHL / MARKETING DIRECTOR

Eighth graders Tyson Cielocha and Clint Saltzgeber and the principal of Scotus, Brady Vancura, mop the floors at Saint Anthony's Elementary School for their service on the junior high retreat. At Saint Anthony's they also helped wash windows.



TAYLOR DAHL / MARKETING DIRECTOR

Eighth graders Abbi Pavlik and Avril Duran help out at the Hospital Daycare by reading a book to little kids during the junior high service day. While helping at the daycare they also helped with Halloween-themed projects and danced with the kids.

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To read or to watch: that is the question

By Cecilia Arndt
Editor

What do *Jurassic World*, *The Godfather*, *The Princess Bride*, and *Twilight* all have in common? Each is a movie adaptation of a popular book. Currently, there are nine of the top fifty lifetime grossing movies in the rankings as adaptations. Movie adaptations of books have been around since the early 1900s, allowing fans of the books to see it on the big screen. Although the idea of a book to movie adaptation is a sensible idea, with a plot, characters, and world mapped out, the actual execution of the work is often an underwhelming and disappointing film.

Harry Potter, one of the most successful book to movie franchises, is also one of the most hotly debated adaptations. Its adaptation to film brought a broader audience to love the series, but drew away previous fans. Although not feasible, many die-hard fans wanted the movies to directly imitate the books,

from Harry's green eyes to the origin of the Marauders. These differences were not received well, and the seemingly minuscule changes upset many of the previous audience. Overall, the detail and storytelling in the books were much better, although the movies were able to incorporate incredible sets, actors, and magical elements to bring them to life.

Popular book to movie adaptations include *The Hunger Games* series and the *Divergent* series. Both franchises were extremely popular, but both were received differently. *The Hunger Games* had a well-executed dystopian plot, and although there were a few changes from the original, overall it was a satisfactory transformation into film. However, the *Divergent* series was lacking in the adaptation. There were numerous differences, but the most heinous change was the cancellation of the fourth movie, which left too many holes in the plot. Overall, *The Hunger Games* was one of

the few excellent adaptations, while *Divergent* strayed too far from the original.

A controversial series, *Twilight*, divided fans even more when the movies were released. The poorly done movies made the already shaky plot even more so, and the poor acting made the films a laughingstock. This was arguably the worst adaptation, especially because the books were already not generally well-liked. There were mixed reviews, and some hailed it as a top work, while others the lowest of the low. In my opinion, the book did not have much of a plot to begin with, and the movies made it worse. The CGI of the movies was lacking, and the transformation scenes seemed like they were being jerked along. The premise, however, could have been used to make an interesting, creative story, but the plot ended strangely, especially with the changes to the movie's ending.

Overall, reading books is much better than watch-



JESSICA JACKSON / JOURNALISM STAFF

ing their movie counterparts because the attention to detail, elaborate plots, and complex characters of novels are more fleshed out. Movies generally take out parts of the books and change some of the ideas, thus changing the entire message of the books. Also, if the book is not a well thought out novel, the movie is doomed from the

beginning, as adaptations can never fully capture the "magic" of the original work. Each new iteration of the plot, ideas, characters, or details changes everything minutely, and these differences eventually add up to something that only shakily resembles the original. Although the books are better than the movies, the movies are sometimes

able to bring the world to life, like *The Hunger Games* did. If you happen to have read *The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes*, from *The Hunger Games* series, go watch the movie when it is released on November 17th. Maybe this movie will end up as the victor of the book to movie adaptations.

Nutrition grows from hometown alumna

By Mary Faltys
Staff Reporter

Columbus is home to many small, locally owned businesses. This summer, another one opened, this time

owned and operated by a Scotus alumna.

2019 graduate Hallie Parker opened HomeGrown Nutrition this summer, serving healthy food options geared toward supporting wellness goals. There are

protein shakes, teas, coffees, pudding parfaits, oat bowls and more. The growing business is looking to incorporate more items too as they expand. HomeGrown Nutrition is a fantastic place to get nutritious food options, and

everyone should give it a try.

My favorite item on the menu is the protein shakes. With over 75 flavors, I can always find one to satisfy my current cravings. The flavors range from sweet to fruity to peanut butter and everything in between. Each shake has the same nutrients as a complete meal in only 200 calories, making them a convenient and easy option for on-the-go breakfast or lunch.

The food items are protein driven, similar to the shakes. The pudding parfaits have the same nutritional value as the shakes, and protein oat bowls are a new addition to the menu. There are plans to add other food options to the menu, such as protein waffles.

Although there are almost too many flavors to try, new flavors are introduced to both the shakes and drinks as the seasons and events change. There were state fair

themed flavors in August. Pink drinks were released with the Barbie movie. Fall flavors were presented as the weather turned colder and the leaves began to change, including new pumpkin and holiday-themed flavors affecting items across the menu.

The biggest drawback is the price. Yes, it is a little expensive, but considering it is a small, local, and health-driven business, the price makes sense. I think the cost is worth it, but some people would rather stick to their go-tos at other places. Considering how much a standard order at Starbucks or Scooters costs, the price is not outrageous, and many people do not bat an eye as they pay for their coffee.

There are ways to make the price more comparable to other businesses. The coupon in the *Rock Bottom* newspaper is redeemable for a \$2 discount on a Shamrock

themed item. HomeGrown Nutrition has also recently implemented a reward system. By downloading the Stamp Me app, I can get a "stamp" each time I make a purchase. Once I get to 10 stamps, I can redeem them for a free item. Additionally, Wednesday purchases count for 2 stamps. Unfortunately, only purchases of mega teas or protein shakes count toward stamps. While this is somewhat limiting, the mega teas and protein shakes are common orders, so it is not a major restraint.

HomeGrown Nutrition is a great addition to the Columbus community. It has many healthy options to satisfy everyone's cravings. Although it is a little expensive, the price is well-worth it. Everyone should give HomeGrown Nutrition a visit, even if it is just to support a small, locally-owned, and homegrown business.



MARY FALTYS / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Sophomore Sophie Parker and junior Becca Kosch work to fill an order at HomeGrown Nutrition on October 28th. HomeGrown Nutrition was opened this summer by 2019 Scotus graduate Hallie Parker, their sister and cousin.

How hot can you handle?

By Madden Saenz
Staff Reporter

Capsaicin. A word many may have heard, but few know the meaning. Most people, however, do understand the feeling. The feeling of having a flaming piece of firewood in your mouth. The feeling of having the worst sweats and runny nose known to humanity.

Capsaicin is the key chemical in what many people call "spicy" food. It is an oil produced by various kinds of peppers that is meant to deter wildlife from eating the pepper seeds, like when an onion releases chemicals into the air when someone cuts it. Instead of irritating your eyes though, it puts the heat of the sun in your mouth. So how did humans come to enjoy this feeling of fire on the tongue, so much so, there are people who dedicate their lives to creating and eating the hottest foods known to man?

To answer this question, we need to travel all the way back to ancient Latin America and look at the ancient tribal cultures.

According to *Science-MeetsFood*, Spicy peppers naturally originated in Latin America and were adopted by the local tribes, and eventually were bred throughout the continent. In the late 1400's and the early 1500's after Christopher Columbus crossed the Atlantic Ocean, discovered the Americas, and travelled back, he brought a demand for the Latin American delicacies. This demand was mostly in the coastal communities of southeast and southwest Asia.

How did humanity go from wanting to eat spicy foods as a delicacy to wanting to use them to try to test their pain limit? In fact, how did we go so far to the point where someone bred a pepper specifically designed for having the highest amount of capsaicin of any food in history?

It all started with a man named Wilbur Scoville.

According to *Pepper Scale*, the Scoville scale was created when, in 1912, American chemist Wilbur Scoville wanted to test how spicy peppers could be. For a while, the scale was a bit flawed; since the tests for the scale

were volunteered tongues each person would react differently to the amount of heat in the pepper. The test was as such: "How many teaspoons of sugar water will it take before my mouth stops disintegrating?" Not painful at all!

Fortunately, fifty years later, the process of liquid chromatography allowed the tests to be conducted without human tongues to make the measurements of heat much more precise and safer; people were getting pretty sick and tired of drinking sugar water to dilute spicy food.

Inspired by this, American pepper breeder Ed Currie began his crusade on creating the world's hottest pepper. Originally, Ed Currie had bred a world record pepper, the "Carolina Reaper," which measured at a staggering 1.98 million Scoville units. However, this was not enough for this masochist. He would continue to hone his pepper breeding technique until, finally, he did it. Ed Currie had created his masterpiece: "Pepper X." The shriveled green pepper, which was no bigger than a palm, was measured at 2.99 million Scoville



LOGAN ERICKSON / JOURNALISM STAFF

units, almost double his previous record. Talk about a hot dish!

Most people are probably not too keen to jump into the spice culture. Usually, a person will just enjoy mild salsa and on the rare occasion a whole jalapeño. The only place someone would find anything Scoville-worthy is when they go out of their way to test their spice limit. The whole idea of spice culture is to eat the substance that is

the most likely to melt your face. Whether those people are thrill seekers or demented individuals will forever remain a mystery. If you are one of these sickos, obtaining face melting materials is not as difficult as one may think. There are many websites and stores from all over the world who specialize in spicy food. Just a quick Google search and the complete loss of your tastebuds will be yours.

As a sane and pain fear-

ing human being, the idea of spicy food is very black and white. A person either likes the food or does not. However, the dishes, culture, and ingenuity that have come from spicy foods is remarkable and is something everyone should try at least once. So go ahead. Eat a jalapeño or go straight to the "Reaper." Whatever the case, remember to have plenty of milk and ice cream nearby. Sugar water never does the trick.

Rock Bottom

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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 21st, 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 21st. 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 3rd, 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 27th. Pictured above are Isabel Zaruba’s first place cinnamon rolls, Adrianna Kush’s second place chocolate toffee cupcakes, and Jessica Jackson’s red velvet sandwich cookies.

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7 Issues:

October 12

November 16

December 14

February 1

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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.

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.



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 3rd. Their business Country Lane Gardens with over 80 other vendors participated in the event that supports the Scotus Booster Club.

Merry Christmas from the Journalism Staff!

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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 1st 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.

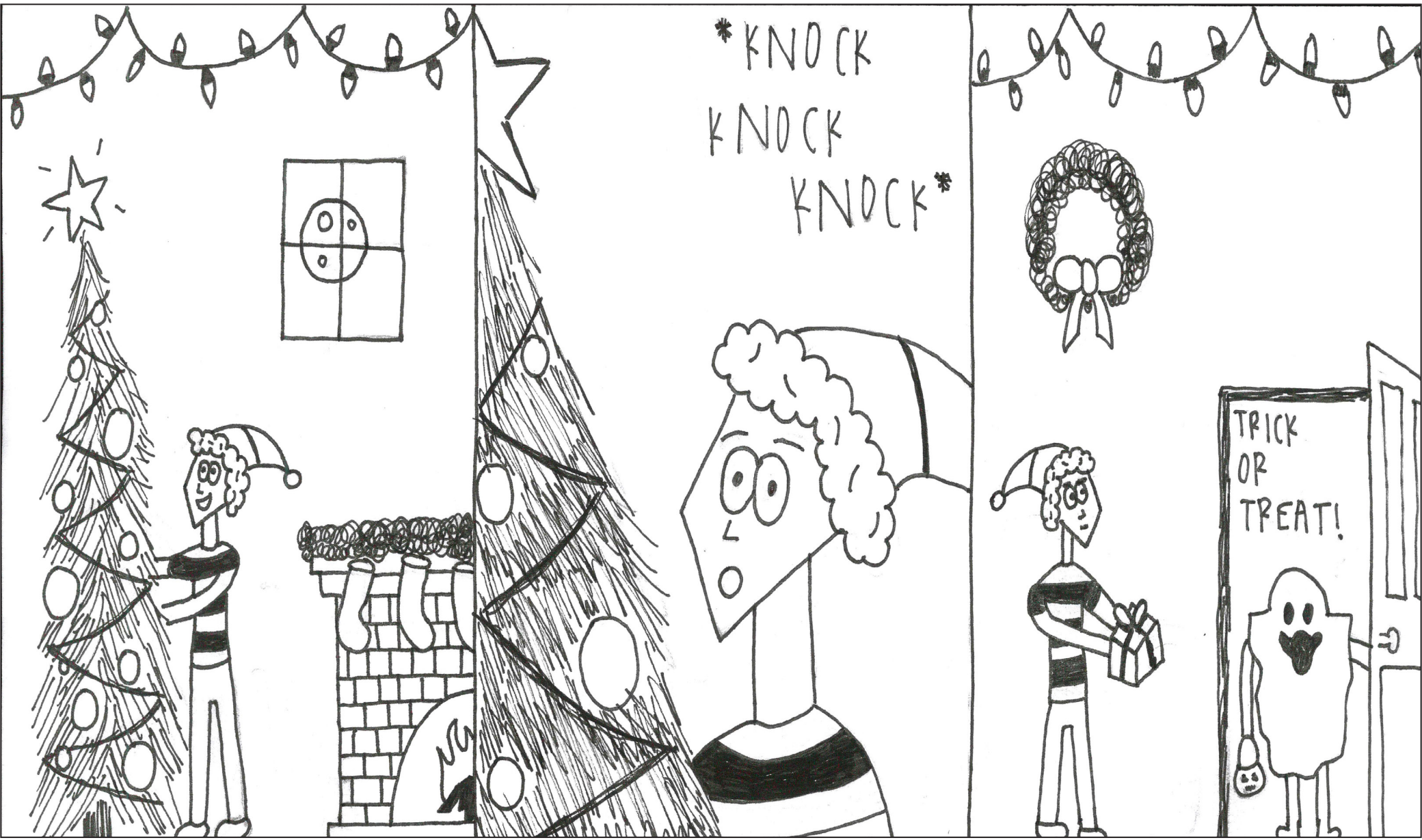
Christmas lights also

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 1st 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 30th. 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 5th, 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 8th at home.

They lost 35-49.

On December 9th, 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 12th on the road against Omaha Concordia.

Their current record is 1-3.

The Shamrocks' next game is December 15th 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 13th, 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 1st. 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 2nd, 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 4th 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 2nd 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 4th 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 22nd. 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 1st. 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 30th 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 7th and 9th, Columbus competed at home in a triangular and a dual. On the 7th, 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 12th.

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 30th, 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 5th. 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 30th. 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 15th, 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 4th quarter against Guardian Angels Central Catholic on December 5th. 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 5th. 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 5th. The Shamrocks dropped the game 52-30.



CECILIA ARNDT / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

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



ASHLEE LEFFERS / YEARBOOK STAFF

Junior Henry Ramaekers takes down his opponent at the Lakeview Invitational on December 1st. Scotus had 5 medalists at the meet, including Ramaekers, who finished 4th 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.

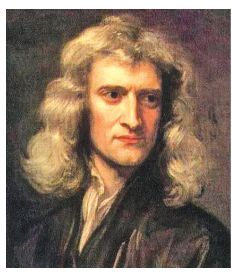
Spring months bring new growth to the barren winter landscape, bringing color back to life. As the school year ends and the stress of homework is lifted, spring offers great activities.

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.

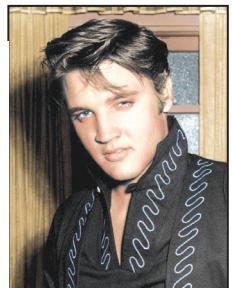
Famous Birthdays

(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

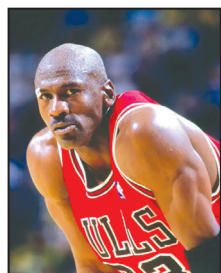
February



3 : St. Elaise
Alex Medina-Perez
Sophie Beckman

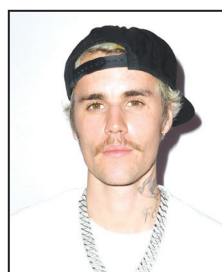


9 : Michael E. Jordan
Rudy Brunkhorst
Grant Zoucha

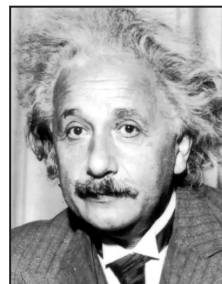


17 : Michael Jordan
Olivia Olsufka

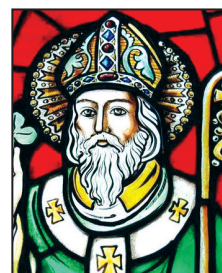
March



1 : Justin Bieber
Matthew Gokie
Mrs. VanCura



14 : Albert Einstein
Haylee Faltys

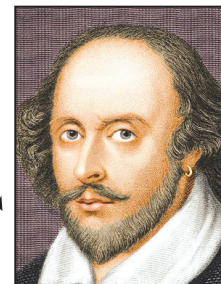


17 : St. Patrick
Gavin Beiermann

April



21 : Elizabeth II
Abigail Laska



23 : William Shakespeare
Brayden Fleming
Brooke Hendricks



29 : St. Catherine of Siena
Kennedy Bailey

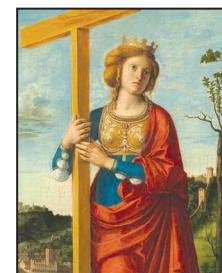
May



3 : Rachel Zeiler
Joaquin Azurduy
Macey Johannes
Alex Dush



16 : Megan Fox
Ella Broberg
Kalee Ternus
Lillian Miller

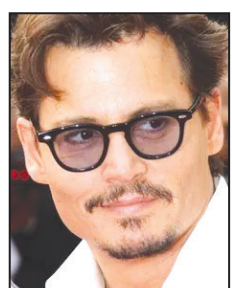


21 : St. Helen
Alaina O'Kane
Shelby Wemhoff

June



1 : Marilyn Monroe
Kate Hendricks



9 : Johnny Depp
Melodee Nickolite
Mr. Loseke



13 : St. Anthony
Jillian Rusher

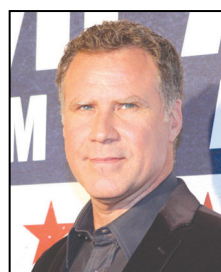
July



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

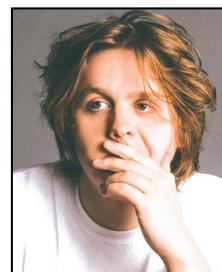


8 : Mary the Mother of God
Aniston Weber
Cohen Pelan



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

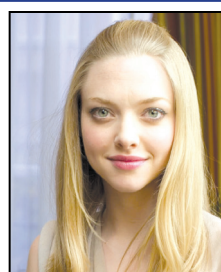


17 : St. Elizabeth of Hungary
Henry Ramaekers



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 Saltzgeber



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

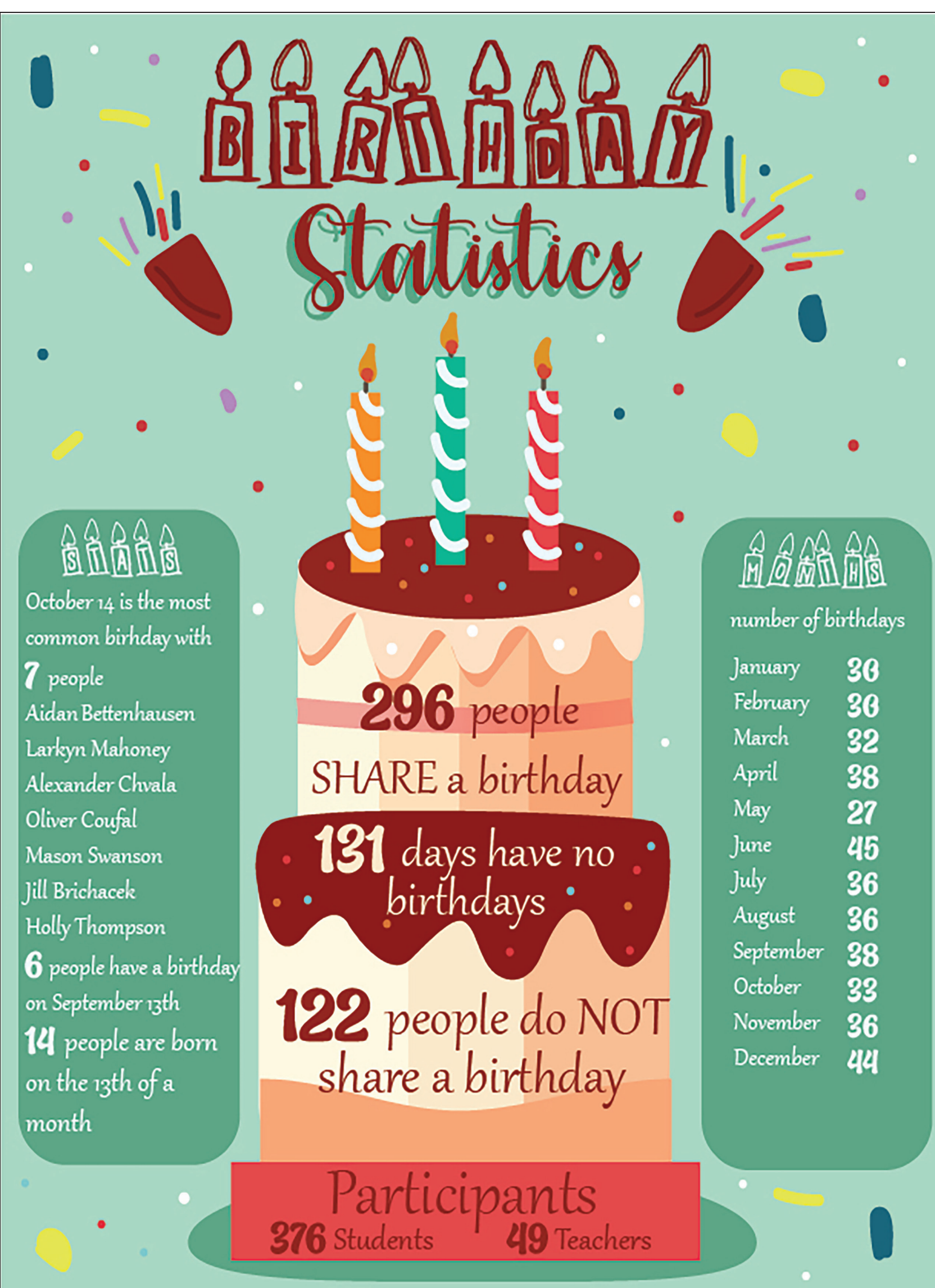
"Sadly, my birthday is the first day we come back to school from Christmas break."
Alivia Kreikemeier, 7

"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



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 17th. 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

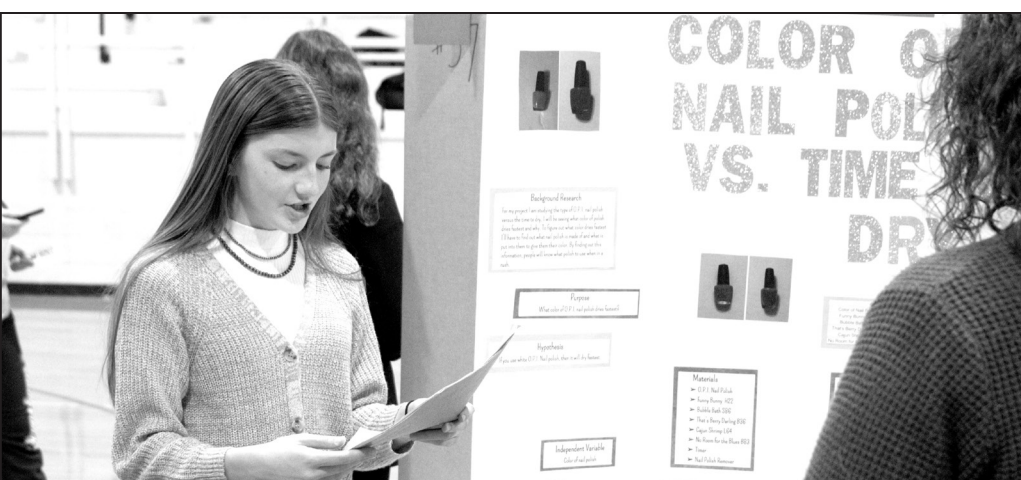
judged on their procedure, conclusion, experimentation, originality, and how well they explained their experiment. The students had to make sure they knew what they were talking about and had some sort of script. These presentations help students experience preparing for and speaking in front of an audience.

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 17th. 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 1st. 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 1st, 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 11th, 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 14th 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 18th.

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 10th, falling just short of making state.

With November 10th 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 10th 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 10th 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 11th 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 17th 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 18th 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 28th 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 17th. 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.

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Nostalgia brings back *Fortnite*

By **Kirsten Sucha**
Staff Reporter

Over the weekend of November 11th, 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 3rd, 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 3rd.

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.

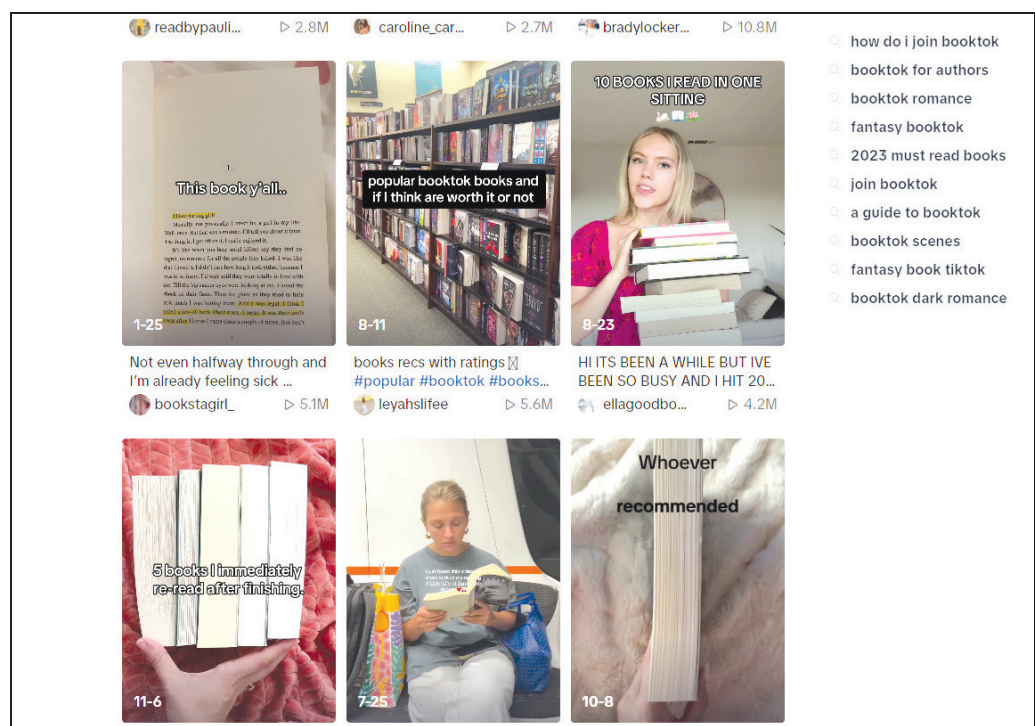
On the other side of the page, authors can thrive under the conditions BookTok presents. If one book an

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.

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Students “build up” the community

By Patrick Arndt
Staff Reporter

Columbus Catholic Schools has always emphasized the importance of service, requiring its students to participate in service projects. Whether it be picking up trash after a football game or organizing a blanket drive, Columbus Catholic Schools strive to help and give back to the community. Of the many projects students lead this school year, two really stand out.

Junior Ian Karges decided to give back after he was requested by Boy Scout leader Charlie Bahr to assist the United Way by leading an Eagle Scout project benefiting the communities it serves.

“I built 3 free little pantries for the United Way. Each one would go to a different town that the United Way serves: Schuyler, Columbus, and Albion. I installed the Columbus one by the United Way building, the others I put in a central location available to everyone,” Karges said.

Karges and a handful of younger scouts began the project during the summer in order to finish them before the cold season.

“During the summer we spent somewhere around 2-5 hours building the pantries every day for a couple of weeks. This project will help the communities around it, assisting the less fortunate by allowing them to take what they need and leave what they can,” Karges said.

Karges also found the work to develop and build the pantries a very time-consuming task, spanning through summer into the beginning of the school year.

“I didn’t expect it to take as long as it did, but after we finished the first one, the next two we

finished fairly fast without as many mistakes as the first one,” Karges said.

Completing the food pantry projects brought Karges closer to his end goal of becoming an Eagle Scout.

“To be an Eagle Scout it takes a lot of commitment. There are 13 badges that are required and another 8 that are up to the Boy Scout to choose. The soon to be Eagle Scout must have a total of at least 21 badges and an Eagle Scout Project that shows they are able to

be a leader and do good for their community,” Karges said.

Freshman Aiden Zegar developed his service project by finding inspiration from the internet and chose to give back to St. Bonaventure Preschool.

“I chose to build a little library for the Preschool because when I was little, I used to receive books in the mail from a non-profit company. I remember the joy I felt when I received those books and wanted to spread that feeling of joy to others,” Zegar said.

Zegar developed the idea with the help of his parents and St. Bonaventure Preschool. Zegar then worked diligently to design, build, and paint the library. As the library was being installed, it was an instant hit.

“I worked on this project during November and December. I would work on it for a couple hours a day, plus a few weekends. It took me another day to paint and install it,” Zegar said.

Zegar stocked the library with some of his family’s old books, with

the hope that more will be donated to the little library in the future.

“While we were putting it up, it surprised me at how quickly it took off. Even as we were installing it, people were already checking it out,” Zegar said.

Zegar plans on organizing a drive to the Simon House and wants to continue to serve his community through other similar projects throughout the rest of his time at Scotus.



SOFIA KARGES / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Junior Ian Karges poses next to his Eagle Scout project. He built 3 food pantries for the United Way, located in Schuyler, Columbus, and Albion.



PHOTO CREDIT SCOTT ZEGAR

Freshman Aiden Zegar poses next to his service project. He built a “little library” for St. Bonaventure Preschool.

Changes bring new look to game days

By Ava Rickert
Staff Reporter

Athletic events at Scotus are held in one of two places. The “old gym,” which has been around longer than students’ great grandparents, or the fifty year old “new gym.” Because it is not an option to build a new gym, faculty at Scotus have made it their job to make constant improvements to update the facilities.

Two people who have made a difference in the atmosphere of the gyms during athletic events are maintenance manager Joe Schoenfelder and strength coach Ryan Baker. Schoenfelder has installed new editions to the gym and Baker has changed how the starting lineups and timeouts look and sound during games.

Three of the most recent additions to the new gym have been a new crucifix, Bible verse banner, and speaker system. The cross was donated by Scotus Class of 1983 in honor of their 40th class reunion. The crucifix came from Italy and was installed over Christmas break. The banner was hung at the end of last school year.

The new banner and crucifix

have changed the atmosphere of the gym. Principal Brady Vancura has overseen these recent improvements.

“I think it gives a dedicated viewpoint of our Catholic faith in the gym. We wanted to make sure

the crucifix stood out,” Vancura said. “If you walked into our gym, we wanted to make sure you knew it was a Catholic school and that we present Catholic values in our gym.”

Campus minister Dana Ritzdorf helped brainstorm ways to increase

the Catholic aspect of the gym and coordinated the choosing of the Bible verse.

“It reminds us why we’re all here and, especially in sports, to

See GYM, Page 2



AVA RICKERT / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Strength coach Ryan Baker flips the switches for a light show during a girls basketball game. Baker began doing lightshows and music during games this school year after watching one at Gothenberg last year.

Snow days complicate Scotus life

By Caleb Cameron
Staff Reporter

After a snowy, white Christmas, the snow didn’t stop. Following a consistent start to the new year with temperatures being in the mid-20s to mid-30s, a heavy downpour of snow started on the night of January 7th. After this, Columbus Catholic Schools were not in school on January 8th and 9th, January 12th, and January 15th due to heavy snow and ice.

With worsening road conditions, Columbus Catholic Schools executive director Jeff Ohnoutka had no choice but to cancel school.

“When the roads become dangerous, it affects everyone who is driving. We have to take into account not just the students who come from in Columbus’s city limits but also those teachers and students who come from out of town,” Ohnoutka said.

Many students were snowed in and the roads were almost too slick to drive. The snow continued to

See SNOW, Page 2

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7 Issues:

October 12
November 16
December 13
February 1
March 7
April 4
May 2

SNOW

fall, reaching over one foot. Being trapped at home with free time on their hands, students had the opportunity to do whatever they wanted. Many students decided to spend the day playing in the snow.

Senior Mary Faltys spent time with her siblings during the snow days.

“During one of my snow days, my siblings and I built a snowman that was at least 8 feet tall!” Faltys said.

School wasn’t the only thing closed during days away from school. Many roads were closed due to thick ice. Temperatures dropped to 20 below zero. Many businesses closed or had limited hours. Having to come up with things to do instead of following a set schedule allowed many students to catch up on homework, sleep in, revive their hobbies, watch movies, play video games,

and spend time with their families.

Senior Makenna Barelts spent her time away from school partaking in her hobbies.

“The snow days allowed me to bring back some of my Covid hobbies. It was the first time in a while I was able to do things such as baking, painting, and coloring,” Barelts said.

Without school in session, many events were canceled or postponed. Girls and boys basketball lost two games against Norfolk Catholic and Battle Creek on January 9th and January 12th. The Norfolk Catholic games will be rescheduled with the girls playing on February 5th and the boys playing on February 6th. Reserve boys basketball lost 4 games and reserve girls basketball lost 3 games. These games will likely not be rescheduled. Junior high boys basketball

lost their first four games, and these games will not be rescheduled. The boys wrestling had a triangular at Boys Town scheduled on January 9th, but it was postponed to January 16th. Their meet scheduled at Schuyler on January 13th was cancelled. The Columbus swim team’s dual against Norfolk on January 9th was postponed. The Speech team’s first meet at Waverly on January 15th was postponed and will not be rescheduled. The Winter Ball, scheduled on January 13th, was postponed to February 24th.

Activities director Merlim Lahm is in charge of rescheduling all the canceled events.

“It’s unfortunate we didn’t get all our contests rescheduled, but that that’s not uncommon in a situation like this. We hope to reschedule as many events as we can, but we probably won’t be able to get them

all rescheduled,” Lahm said.

Many factors go into rescheduling events including current activities, finding an open date, limiting the amount of contests in a week, coordination with other schools, and students participating in other activities.

Snow days have their pros and cons. A big pro is people get an opportunity to relax from school and get to enjoy their hobbies. A con is snow days can be dangerous and people can get bored quickly.

Austin Long has mixed feelings about having snow days.

“Snow days are nice every now and then. It’s nice to relax and enjoy my hobbies, but it can get boring quickly. I also like being in a routine, and snow days on continuous days kind of wrecks my routine,” Long said.

GYM

stay focused on the most important thing,” Ritzdorf said.

A speaker system was also installed in the Dowd Activity Center during break. The system was hung in the middle of the ceiling instead of one end of the gym, as it had been for years. This change has greatly improved not only the quality of sound for games, but also broadcasts of sporting events on YouTube.

Improvements such as these are hard to coordinate because of the constant usage of the gym.

“We seem to be using the gym at least every day in school and then finding time to shut it down is hard,” Schoenfelder said. “Usually Christmas break or when there’s no school is a good time. But usually we still have practices then too.”

Another recent change in the gym during games has been a light show during starting lineups and music during timeouts. Baker was inspired to do this while at an away basketball game last year.

“It started last year when we

played Gothenburg in the district final, I believe, and we felt like their atmosphere and everything was really good,” Baker said. “They had a starting lineup light show. They did something super unique and fun with that and they were playing music the entire time. Right there, we said, ‘OK, how can we replicate this?’”

Since then, Baker has been doing his own form of a light show by flipping switches on and off during the lineup announcements.

“People really like walking past during it and watching me flip the light switches,” Baker said. “I’m always open to feedback and different recommendations. Obviously I’m seeing it from one angle and the person on the other end of the gym might hear it differently or something like that.”

After introducing these updates to the gym, the two staff members are looking to possibly improve the gyms in the future through repainting the gyms and programming a light show with music.



ISABEL ZARUBA / YEARBOOK STAFF

Senior Kensey McKay and sophomore Kayla Hoffman do a handshake during the starting lineup announcement at a basketball game. Music and light shows are two new things spectators are experiencing at games this year.

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Hobbies harness lifelong learning



By Cecilia Arndt
Editor

“How are you so patient?” I have heard the expression innumerable times, especially while I complete a

craft project, but my patience has not magically appeared. I believe having a creative hobby is important to foster imagination, originality, and other traits that are useful every day. Learning, in whatever capacity you can, is important and necessary to flourish in life. Hobbies fulfill this need, but the key part of a hobby is how interesting it is to you.

It does not matter what craft I do, the newness is what captures my attention. I think, everyone should have at least one artistic endeavor. Hobbies help to clear the mind, learn a new skill, and to gain technical understanding. Passion, real passion for

an interest, is in short supply when most teenagers’ free time is spent scrolling on a phone. Instead, learning can foster traits used in a plethora of other ways.

Patience is not the only characteristic cultivated by creativity. Tenacity, dexterity, critical thinking, and the mastery of skills can be increased by the simple act of learning how to make something. In addition, a hobby can be turned into a career and help to narrow down a profession. These, and plenty more, are a few reasons why everyone should have a pastime.

“But what if I don’t have any time?” This common argument against learning a

new skill can be turned on it’s head. According to *The American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry*, teens spend upwards of 9 hours staring at screens every day. Even with school, activities, and work, it only takes about 20 hours to learn a new skill. With the time spent on screens, the average teen can learn more than a skill per week using only screen time.

Another rebuttal is along the lines of “no one will teach me!” Fortunately, the screens that eat our time can give us more than doomscrolling. *YouTube* is an oft used resource to learn how to craft, and I can near-

ly guarantee every hobby has multiple websites, creators, or videos dedicated to it. In addition, there are innumerable creators willing to teach people how to properly use equipment, techniques, or “hacks,” to make the hobby easier.

As a living example of this, I have taught myself upwards of 20 hobbies and have sampled many more. From knitting and crocheting, to making rosaries, to quilting, learning new creative outlets has been my niche for years. I have always been known as the one who brings my creative exploits to events, and creating has been one of the best things I have

accomplished. The insight it has given me into the time and effort it takes to make something original brings me an appreciation for the arts I would have never known.

As I like to “hobby-hop,” I would not suggest sticking with something that has become boring, no longer interesting, or a chore. Fortunately, there are enough hobbies to go around! Anything fun, creative, or fascinating can become a hobby. In the end, everyone should be learning something, as becoming a student for life can be the most rewarding experiences a person can have.

Pursue personality opportunities



By Kirsten Sucha
Staff Reporter

Throughout high school, everyone goes through several changes. Whether it is gaining or losing friends, growing taller, or joining new

classes, we all metamorph together. But throughout the change, many teenagers tend to want to blend in with the crowd.

These problems are most adamant with junior high students. Each year they all say the same exact jokes, smell disgusting, and want to fit in. Do not get me wrong, high schoolers also struggle with their identities, so I suggest each person needs to be their own person because finding oneself is an essential part of high school.

My first suggestion is for everyone to find their own pair of shoes. Stop buying the same old raggedy Air Force 1s or Tasman UGGs and

start personalizing oneself by finding shoes reflecting your own personality. Shoes are the only item students get to personalize in their attire at Scotus, so why not have fun with it and have competitions on who can wear the most unique shoes. Anyone can find a brand new shoe at Famous Footwear, so go and get a pair quickly. One may also accessorize by wearing fun jewelry. This does not mean buying the same old Kendra Scott necklace; I mean finding a statement piece, something out of the ordinary. Wearing fun socks (black, white, or gray of course) or cool new glasses could also make any student

stand out.

Another big personality trait at Scotus is competing in certain activities. Whether it is basketball, one act, or cheerleading, everyone tends to base their whole personality around their activities. Why not mix it up once and a while? I believe a great way to find someone’s own personality is by trying activities they would have never expected they would be in. For example, I went out for one act three years ago and thought I would absolutely hate it, but it is my favorite activity I have ever participated in. I would love to see some big male basketball players acting in the

musical. Trying new things is the most important part of finding oneself, so try to be in as many activities offered at Scotus as possible.

There are also total joke stealers at Scotus, too. Does everyone remember when the “who asked” jokes were the most overused jokes at Scotus because I do, and it was not funny at all. Everyone needs to find their own humor and ways to laugh instead of just copying unoriginal jokes made around them. Now I can not help people get their own humor, but looking up some *YouTube* videos or watching funny movies can definitely help improve someone’s comedy. Observing oth-

ers can help, but making sure everyone’s humor is unique to themselves is essential. People who can find ways to laugh without making fun of others are the best type of people to be around, so be one of those people. A part of comedy is actually being funny and not just dragging others down.

These are only mere suggestions of how to find oneself in the midst of high school, but I highly recommend taking my advice because it will help not only with style and personality, but it will make you an individualized person too. Be you and stand out.

How to STAND OUT @ parochial school



KIRSTEN SUCHA, ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Samsung, the smartest of the smartphones



By Patrick Arndt
Staff Reporter

Apple, the Cupertino based company, has held American culture with an iron fist, being the choice

phone for many Americans but falling short of reaching the mainstream markets of Asian and other western European countries. Samsung is based in South Korea, dominating most rival companies like Apple. With each new smartphone, Samsung revolutionizes the cellphone game, developing phones like the Galaxy Z Flip 4, a monumental achievement in touchscreen phones. If I had to choose, I would pick Samsung all day, seeing as Samsung is more reliable than Apple.

First, Samsung battery life is far more superior to an Apple phone’s battery life.

Never have I ever had to ask a friend or family member for a phone charger because my phone died before lunch. For example, my phone at a full charge lasts 20+ hours without battery saver on. Thus, I could be on my phone for extremely unhealthy amounts of time without having to worry about my phone dying. Not to mention the charging cables, Samsung blessed its users with the readily available micro-USB and USB type C, unlike Apple, making different cords for each product.

Next is the superb camera quality; Samsung offers the highest quality phone cameras in all phones they

manufacture. Apple tried to top Samsung by adding a 15x zoom feature to the newest iPhone camera; spoiler, it doesn’t work like it should if it all turns out looking like a Paint 3D drawing. When my family and I traveled to South Korea over the summer, I felt great not having to carry an extra camera just to take scenery pictures; it was like I had a professional camera in my back pocket at all times. Samsung also offers portrait, photo, video, pro, panorama, food, and macro abilities. These abilities allow the user to far surpass Apple phones picture capabilities, making the Samsung a compact pro-

fessional camera of sorts.

Lastly, Samsung’s durability rivals that of my car, 2006 Toyota Highlander “The Brick”. In the amount of times I have dropped my phone out of a golf cart flying down the course, not once I have ever had my phone screen crack. Even with a larger than life screen size compared to Apple, the Samsung remains unbroken when faced with cement. With all the spiderwebbed screens of my friends, my old Samsung A13 has never broken, even after facing similar situations. The pure abuse that Samsung phones can endure is otherworldly compared to Apple

phones, with its newest model being recalled due to the back cracking easily.

However, with a majority of people in America owning an Apple product, some may argue Apple is a more convenient product offering Apple pay, airdrop, airtags, and Apple watches. Even with all the extra features, is it still worth the price?

In short, Samsung is a better phone in design and features. So, buy a Samsung and break free from Apple’s iron fist, own a Korean made Samsung today, or don’t, it doesn’t affect me either way, but you are missing out.

Girls basketball battles tough teams

By Mary Faltys
Staff Reporter

The Scotus girls basketball team started their season with a few losses, but it did not take long for them to turn it around. After their first four games, they had a 1-3 record. Heading into the conference tournament, their record was 10-5. Furthermore, all their losses came from highly ranked teams with one loss.

Junior Emma Brezenski plays point guard. "We've gained a lot of varsity experience [since the beginning of the year]. We're really getting used to playing with each other, so our chemistry has improved a lot," Brezenski said.

Before Christmas break, they defeated both Pierce and Humphrey/Lindsay Holy Family on the road 43-29 and 57-37, respectively. Then they lost to Lincoln Christian 33-41. This left their record 4-4.

For junior Sofia Karges, the Lincoln Christian game was an important game.

"Even though we lost, we all played together and for each other. It was one of the first games everything started clicking, and it made for a really competitive and entertaining game to watch, and a fun game to play in," Karges said.

Their annual Holiday Tournament over Christmas break was a success for the team, as they won the tournament. They defeated Schuyler 58-14 and Lakeview 58-28.

On January 2nd, the team traveled to St. Paul and won once again, 41-21.

The Shamrocks played Bishop Neumann, who was 8-1, on January 6th and lost 27-40.

Senior Kensey McKay plays guard.

"We really had to lean on each other, and although we did not win, we learned a lot about ourselves as a team that

helped us to go on to beat North Bend and Bergan the next week", McKay said.

The girls went on to win their next four games. They beat North Bend Central 37-26 on January 16th, defeated Boone Central 44-17 on January 18th, and triumphed over highly ranked C2 Archbishop Bergan 46-39 on January 19th.

Junior Mallory Dreesen plays as a post.

"Archbishop Bergan [was my favorite game] because it was very close, which made it very exciting, and they are known to always be a decent basketball team," Dreesen said.

The Shamrocks started their conference tournament strong, continuing their winning streak. They defeated Omaha Concordia at home on January 22nd 62-19.

On January 23rd, they lost a close defensive battle to Lincoln Christian, who was 13-1, with a final score of 26-36.



ISABEL ZARUBA / YEARBOOK STAFF

Junior Quinn VunCannon dribbles around her Lincoln Christian opponent on December 21st. The Shamrocks lost 33-41 to their then undefeated opponent.

Despite their loss, senior Joanna Rusher knows they are ready to keep competing with top teams.

"Because of our heights and the different skill sets on

our team, every game looks very different for us both defensively and offensively. We work really hard to prepare for each game, and I'm excited to see what the

next few games will bring," Rusher said.

Their current record is 11-6. The Shamrocks will play Aquinas Catholic tonight at home at 6:30.

Shamrocks reverse past dual records

By Kirsten Sucha
Staff Reporter

The toughest 6 minutes there is. To most, 6 minutes does not seem like a great amount of time, but what feels like a millisecond of a day to us is a huge amount of time for the wrestlers at Scotus Central Catholic. So far, 2023-24 season of Scotus

wrestling has found great success over the past few months with their 6 minutes each.

At the start of Christmas break, the Scotus wrestling team hosted a triangular where they wrestled Aquinas and Central City on December 22nd. The team fell to Aquinas 16-65 and Central City 12-58. Sophomore Kobe Micek (27-11), sophomore

Hunter Brunkhorst (29-6), and freshman Parker Newman (26-17) went 2-0 for the triangular. This triangular along with practices helped prepare the boys for meets ahead.

"We do lots of push ups and sit ups, which builds up our core, which helps us pin people and not get pinned," Brunkhorst said.

The boys then traveled

to West Point on December 29th for the Guardian Angels Central Catholic Dual Invite. The team placed 2nd in duals, with a victory of 37-24 in their opening dual against Bishop Newman, 78-0 over Bancroft-Rosaline, 60-18 over Tri-County Northeast, 48-36 over South Sioux City, and tied GACC 42-42 but won due to GACC having more forfeits.

Junior Spencer Shotkoski (19-7) wrestles at 157 this season.

"The GACC duals [was the most impactful meet because] we got second place as a team which we haven't done in about 10 years. Individually I went 5-0," Shotkoski said.

The wrestlers were back on the mat on January 4th to take on the Schuyler Warriors at the Schuyler home dual. The Shamrocks fell to the Warriors 20-51. Senior Rudy Brunkhorst (21-17), junior Henry Raemakers (13-10), Shotkoski, and H. Brunkhorst secured wins during the dual.

"The Schuyler dual I won in overtime 6-4. It's always awesome to win but especially in OT against a

good wrestler," Shotkoski said.

Following the loss, the team traveled to the Aquinas wrestling tournament where they finished 5th overall, competing against 10 other teams on January 6th. The Shamrocks had 6 total medalists, with the highest placers being Newman finishing 2nd and H. Brunkhorst finishing 3rd.

"Aquinas [was the most impactful meet] because we had way more people in the semi-finals than last year," H. Brunkhorst said.

The Scotus wrestling team was then shipped off to Archbishop Bergan to wrestle in a triangular against the Knights and Boys Town on January 16th. The boys swept the triangular defeating Archbishop Bergan 46-27 and improved their dual record to 8-7, the best record since the 2018-19 season. The Centennial Conference Tournament was held on January 20th at Boys Town. There, the team placed 5th overall for the 2nd year in a row. H. Brunkhorst earned gold and R. Brunkhorst won 4 of 5 matches at the tournament.

"Conference [was the

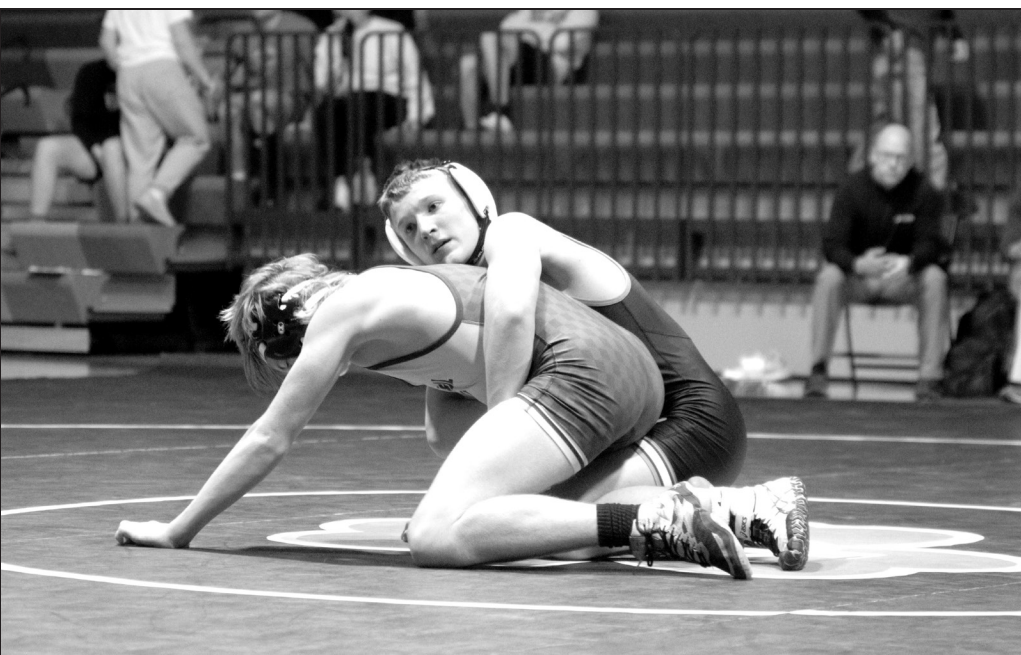
most impactful meet] because we had 8 placers and that should build some confidence going into the last 3 weeks leading up to district," R. Brunkhorst said.

The Shamrocks also attended the Boone Central Triangular on January 25th where they competed against Lakeview losing 17-59 and Boone Central with a 36-41 loss. With those losses, the Shamrocks are now sitting at a 8-9 dual record season. There was also a tournament hosted by Boone Central on January 27th where the team placed 12th. Medalists included H. Brunkhorst placing 3rd, Micek placing 4th, and Newman placing 5th.

The boys will be heading into districts on February 10th where they will be traveling to Thayer Central High School to compete for state qualifiers.

This is sophomore Jackson Baumert's (2-6) second year on the wrestling team.

"I think you should know that we have worked extra hard this season to be where we are," Baumert said.



ASHLEE LEFFERS / YEARBOOK STAFF

Freshman Parker Newman tries to flip his opponent at the home triangular on December 22nd. The team fell short to Aquinas 16-65 and Central City 12-58.

Senior anchors tread through season

By Madden Saenz
Staff Reporter

The Columbus High swim team has had quite the run so far. With only two swimmers from Scotus, seniors Mary Faltys and Kamren Kudron, one would think the season would be a struggle. However, Scotus' two swimmers have said and proven otherwise.

From a competitive start to the season at their home triangular and Lincoln meets, Kudron and Faltys have been pleased with the performance. With so many meets and events, though, the competitions blur together. However, there are still several meets of note this year for both athletes.

"The Elkhorn meet in December was one of my favorites this year," Faltys said.

Although the team expected and placed last with such a large competition pool, Faltys was pleased with her performance. She placed 15th in both of her events.

For Kudron, making improvements is a daily

occurrence.

"I have improved tremendously throughout this season, mainly by learning how to [properly] swim my events," Kudron said.

This year was Kudron's first year swimming, and to see constant improvement is impressive.

"Honestly, I don't know what meets [we've had]. There was one meet where the pool was freezing," Kudron said.

Kudron's dedication has shown tremendous improvement, physically and mentally, when competing in his events, and Kudron's progress does not go unnoticed.

Notably, the Anchors competed at home against South Sioux City, with the boys winning 96-35 and the girls winning 103-6. Multiple individual records were set at this meet, including Faltys' 100 freestyle and backstroke times of 1:02.62 and 1:16.18. Kudron raced in the 200 relay, which helped score several points for the team.

"I'm really impressed with Kamren's effort. He'll stay after practice to perfect

his technique or work on something with the coaches, and it's paying off at meets. He's getting faster each time," Faltys said.

Faltys is more critical of herself.

"My times are not where I want them to be, but I'm slowly dropping time and still have a couple of weeks left before conference. Last year, I missed going to state by .48 seconds, so my only goal for the season is to compete at state this year," Faltys said.

State is still a while away for the Anchors. The team has done multiple gags and activities to keep their spirits high to pass the time. These include a day of sledding and Kudron's "Lightning McQueen" themed swim cap.

"I have a Fremont FAST swim cap from my brother swimming in college. One of the coaches told me to swim faster, and I asked what I got out of it. He told me a Lightning McQueen cap. Now I am speed," Kudron said.

This year, the team has struggled throughout. Since the Anchors are a small team, placing high and winning



CECILIA ARNDT / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Senior Mary Faltys dives into a relay race at the Columbus triangular on December 7th. Both Faltys and Kudron broke individual records during the South Sioux City meet on December 30th.

meets has been difficult. Regardless, the future looks bright for the swimmers.

"We have a chance at getting one of our girls relay to state. We have the times to do it, but the challenge will be getting everyone to swim their best on the same day,"

Faltys said.

Kudron thinks the team has a chance but doubts individually. However, he still looks forward to a chance at state.

"If I make it to state, I'll have to take much time off, but I think it's possible,"

Kudron said.

Faltys and the rest of the team look forward to future meets, namely the Kearney-Pious triangular and the conference tournament in the following month.

"We'll have good competition," Faltys said.

Shamrocks face adversity in mid-season basketball



JOANNA RUSHER / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Junior guard Owen Lindhorst finishes a front-rimmed layup at the Lincoln Christian game on December 21st. The Shamrocks defeated the Crusaders 64-46, which progressed their record to 3-4.

By Sofia Karges
Staff Reporter

When most people think of winter during the school year, they think of winter sports seasons. Safe to say, the boys basketball games have been as unpredictable as

the weather lately; the recent snow days have provided an interruption to the flow of their play, and they are still learning how to come back from the snow break.

After a slow start to the season, the boys were able to make a few minor changes to finish the games strong, and

soon enough, they were on a 5-0 winning streak.

"The biggest difference-maker in our success was learning to play together," junior point guard Cohen Pelan said. "We started trusting each other more which has helped us play more confidently."

Boys basketball 'buzzes' with new team chemistry

By Quinn VunCannon
Staff Reporter

Anyone who has come to a boys basketball game or even walked the halls of Scotus would have to be blind not to notice the buzzed heads of many of the players and staff from the basketball program. Out of the 28 people part of the basketball team, 11 players and 2 coaches took to the locker room hair salon.

This trend first started when junior Owen Lindhorst showed up to an early morning practice sporting his new look.

"I [cut my hair] just because I was bored and annoyed after the GICC game with my hair in my face. It was all I knew how to do, and it would last the whole basketball season," Lindhorst explained.

After practice that day fellow teammates junior Cohen Pelan, junior Sam Olmer, and freshman Brody Lindhorst followed suit in chopping most of their hair off. They then showcased their new 'do's' at the girls basketball game that night.

What once started out as

a couple people doing it for functionality, slowly turned into a team bonding activity.

"It always gives us something to joke and laugh about, helping us to talk to each other," Lindhorst said.

After a freshman team win not long after Lindhorst started the trend, a new wave of teammates (and coaches) decided to rock the buzz cut. Head varsity coach Mike VunCannon decided he couldn't be left out of the fun.

"I wanted them to know that their coach was one hundred percent behind them, and that we're in this together," VunCannon explained.

Shaving your hair off might seem like just a boring fashion statement, but it led the boys basketball team to form a sense of camaraderie and team bonding.

"I think it was the first step with them to try to come together as a team," VunCannon said.

Being a leader and setting a hair trend is not all that different from being a leader on the basketball court. Nearly half of the players on the team were trend setters, including team captains Lindhorst and Pelan.

"Captains lead, it's not a

coincidence that other teammates wanted to follow suit. Getting underclassmen to buy into what you're putting out there is everything, that's the power of leadership," VunCannon said.

One of the last people to hop on the buzz cut train was reserve coach Tate VunCannon. Many players from all grade levels rallied around their coaches when they decided to partake in the morale boosting trend, including junior Adam Gonzales.

"I think our team chemistry has improved because the coaches did it too. It makes me more confident with my teammates," Gonzales said.

This trend has gotten so big it even spread outside the basketball team, as seen by countless boys at Scotus rocking the high and tight cut who are not on the basketball roster.

Although this trend started as a simple solution to the annoyance of playing sports with long floppy hair, it turned out to be a team building experience that might be the difference that pushes this year's boys basketball team over the hump of success.

To catch a glimpse of the

Humphrey/Lindsay Holy Family and Lincoln Christian were both easy wins for the boys; they won 51-42 in the Bulldog gymnasium and 64-46 in the Dowd Activity Center.

"Each player is starting to fit into their role better, and we are playing according to our strengths and weaknesses," senior guard Jude Maguire said.

Scotus also hosted the Holiday Tournament this year over Christmas break, which gave the boys more confidence as they defeated Schuyler 74-30 and Lakeview 49-34. These wins progressed their record to 4-4.

"Bringing more energy to practices and games and just giving it our all and never giving up is what has helped us improve the most over the season," junior guard Owen Lindhorst said.

St. Paul was another game where the Shamrocks came on top, this time winning 45-28. The Shamrocks would have a winning record for the first time this the season after this game.

"St. Paul was the best game since Christmas break," Pelan said. "It showed us that we play really good when we are all on

the same page and come out ready and with energy."

After St. Paul, the Shamrocks faced some tough battles against North Bend and Boone Central; going up against tall posts and good shooting guards and good shooting guards put the boys' defense to the test. Although they played hard, North Bend and Boone Central were able to take the lead, and the Shamrocks fell to these teams 33-52 and 30-59.

"These games were good for us because we started to realize we couldn't just cruise to victory," junior forward Caleb Cameron said.

Archbishop Bergan was another learning curve for the Shamrocks as they had to change their defense to account for the big six-foot posts. Even though it was a competitive game, the Shamrocks also lost 51-60.

"We can start to grow from these losses by bringing a good attitude and lots of energy to our practices; these will carry over to our games," Lindhorst said.

Because of the winter snowstorms, the Shamrocks had to postpone their games against Norfolk Catholic and Battlecreek; travel was

unsafe with the high winds and low temperatures.

The basketball team then traveled to Omaha to play Boys Town in the first round of the Centennial Conference Tournament. Unfortunately, the height got the best of them again, and they were defeated by the Cowboys 35-74.

Following the loss, the Shamrocks battled Lincoln Christian at home as a consolation game in the conference tournament.

The first time the Shamrocks faced the Crusaders on December 21st, they had an easy victory, winning 64-46. The second time they faced them was a different story than the first. Three contributing players on the Crusaders did not compete in the first game. After a highly competitive back and forth battle, the Shamrocks fell to the crusaders 56-62.

After Tuesday's home game against Malcolm, the boys are getting ready to travel to Wahoo to face off against Bishop Neumann this Friday.

They will then play Kearney Catholic at home on Saturday for a tough back to back game weekend.



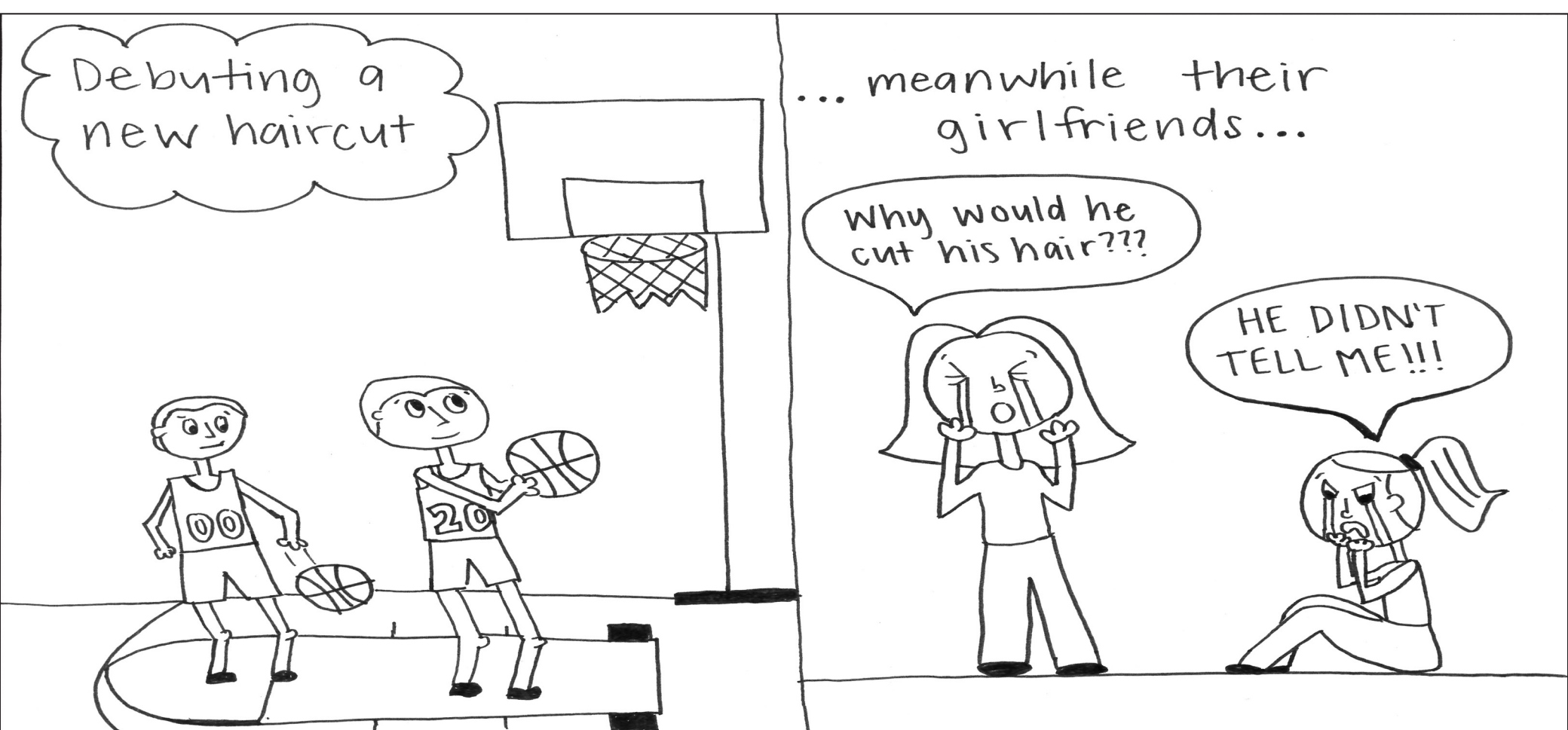
PHOTO COURTESY MIKE VUNCANNON

Junior captain Owen Lindhorst gives reserve coach Tate VunCannon a fresh buzz in the locker room after practice. Eleven players and two coaches on the basketball team have participated in the buzz cut trend this winter.

team chemistry created by the buzzed heads, come support the Shamrocks this Saturday

as they face Kearney Catholic in the Dowd Activity Center. "It lets us know we're a

family, but it's not done until Coach Mroczek gets one with us," Lindhorst concluded.



QUINN VUNCANNON / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Senior boys entertain with musical talents

By Joanna Rusher
Staff Reporter

Many students at Scotus Central Catholic use *Youtube* daily. Whether it is watching their favorite *Youtube* stars, learning a new skill, or listening to conspiracy theories, teenagers have been known to scroll the site. However, a new username has found its way to the search bars of the app as a familiar face uploads original and cover songs. Senior Frank Fehringer began his own *Youtube* channel not long ago and found fame among his peers.

claims to fame was playing the guitar while singing a well known song by Zach Bryan at his older brother's graduation party last spring. The video spread through the school like wildfire, as most students had no idea Fehringer had a hidden talent.

"[I learned to play the guitar] through *Youtube*," Fehringer said. "I pretty much taught myself. I like playing songs that are chill and easy."

At the beginning of his senior year this fall, Fehringer found himself with a guitar in his hands performing for his Advanced Biology class. Their teacher, Mr. McPhil-

lips, supplied a guitar for the occasion. Several classes who were also on the second floor heard his country voice through the hallway. throughout the next few days, the *Youtube* channel received many new subscribers.

"I put [my music] on *Youtube* to share with friends and family," Fehringer said.

Although Fehringer doesn't see himself performing as his career in the future, he doesn't intend to stop playing and singing.

"Of course I'm going to keep playing the guitar and singing," Fehringer said. "In a couple years I plan to be in college, and maybe playing

in a bar."

Not far from Fehringer's singing in class, a fellow musician can be found walking the halls. However, this student is less famous in the media, as he plays for tangible people. Senior David De Leon plays in a band that started this summer.

"I was really good buddies with this first guy; he would sing, and I would play the guitar," De Leon said. "Then he brought a guy who brought another guy, and we all got together in my garage one day and we thought dang, we sound pretty good."

Thanks to the connections of one of the members,

the band was up and going quickly with gigs at weddings and quinceañeras. The band members soon found themselves getting calls and playing multiple times a week.

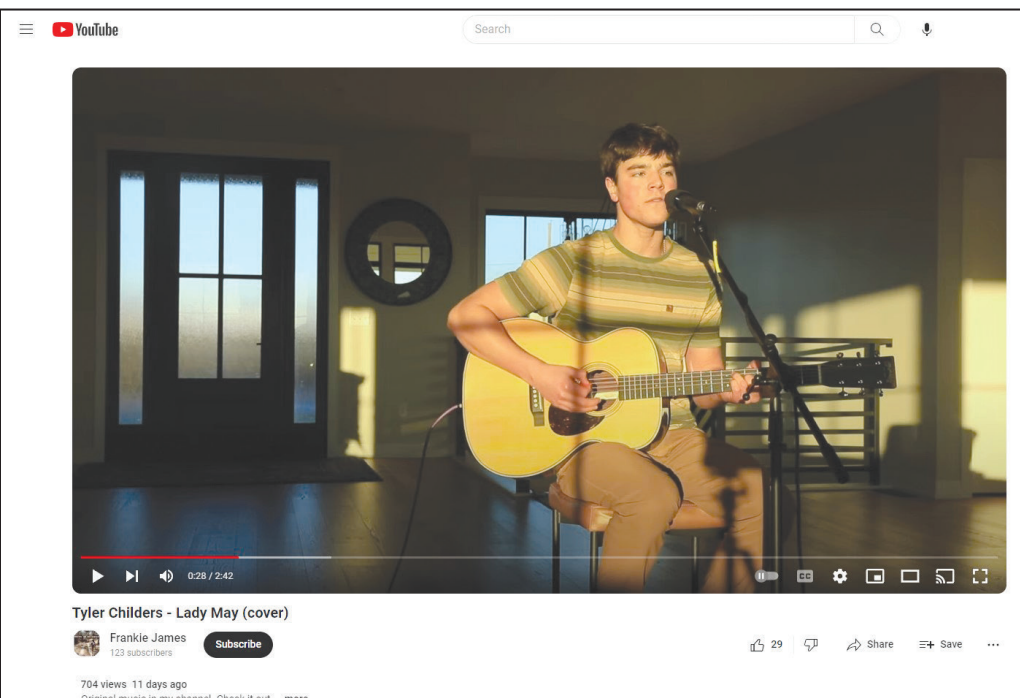
"It was just gig after gig and playing every day and it was really fun," De Leon said. "It helped me see what's out there; like I could start something."

De Leon plays the guitar for his band, but his musical talent started with the accordion. After being gifted his first when he was five, he learned the importance of practice and hard work. Since then he has picked up the saxophone, guitar, bass, and

piano.

"I don't know if it's going to be my job in the future, but it's a good side hustle," De Leon said. "In the future I just want to teach my kids how to play because it's a really good skill, you know, if you're stressed out, grab the guitar and take your stress out."

Although these two senior boys may not be found with their guitars as often in the future, there are still several months of senior year left. Fehringer's original music and covers can be found at @frankie-james-music, or find De Leon at school for more information.



JOANNA RUSHER / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Senior Frank Fehringer sings "Lady May" by Tyler Childers in a video he posted to *Youtube* on January 8th. Fehringer also writes his own songs, and about half the music he posts is original.

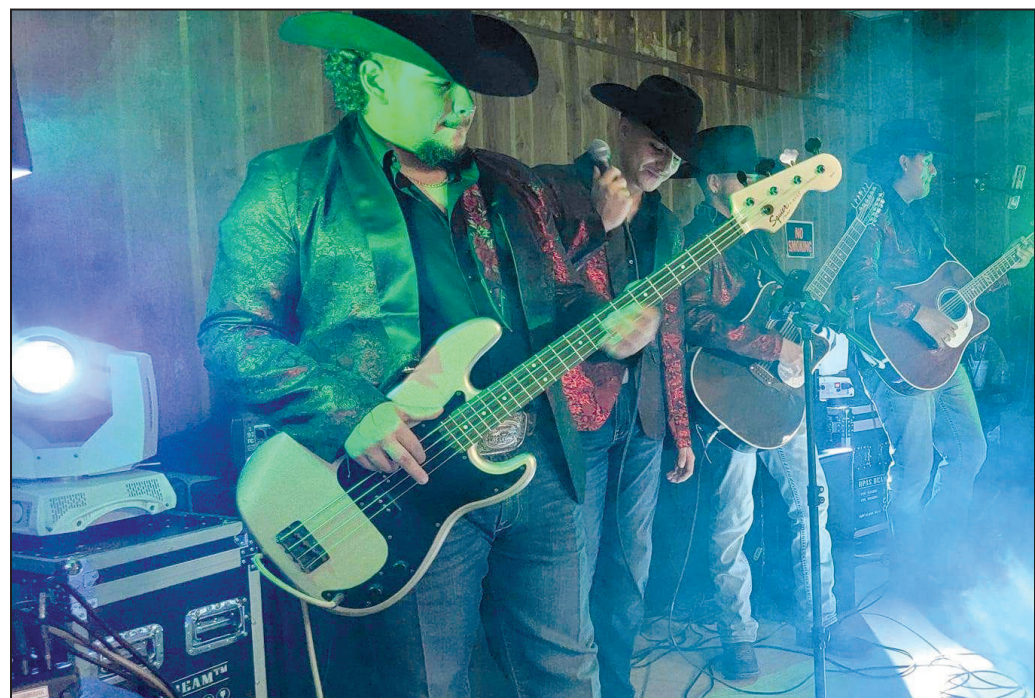


PHOTO COURTESY DAVID DE LEON

Senior David De Leon (far left) and his band perform at an event this summer. Some weeks over the summer, the band would play at gigs almost every night.

"Wrapping" your head around Spotify's tracking

By Madden Saenz
Staff Reporter

Throughout humanity's history, music has been a central aspect of life. Music is one of the most common yet personal forms of self-expression. From cavemen cracking rocks together beside a campfire to computers crafting the most intricate and technical sounds ever heard, music is always around us. Today, most people use music apps like Pandora or Apple Music to stream their favorite songs. However, no music app is as accurate and (creepily) attentive to our music tastes as the technicians at Spotify headquarters.

Since 2016, Spotify has reviewed and released playlists and animations curated by a person's listening habits from January to December. These rewinds are called "Wrapped". These animations show how long you listened, how many genres you enjoyed, your top five songs and artists, and more. Now, how does Spotify track and save all of the listening data from, according to Forbes, over 574 million users? Simple: algorithms, algorithms, and more algorithms.

First, Spotify tracks how many streams someone has. Spotify's algorithm detects how long users listened to or streamed songs. For streams, users must listen to a song for at least thirty seconds. Then, another algorithm counts how many streams a user had and estimates how long they listened to each song. Each song and its streams are combined to calculate a user's total listening time.

For the more niche aspects of a user's listening habits, Spotify uses a secret weapon to calculate each intricate detail for its users. Their industry secret, coup de gras, masterpiece used to calculate each minute detail?

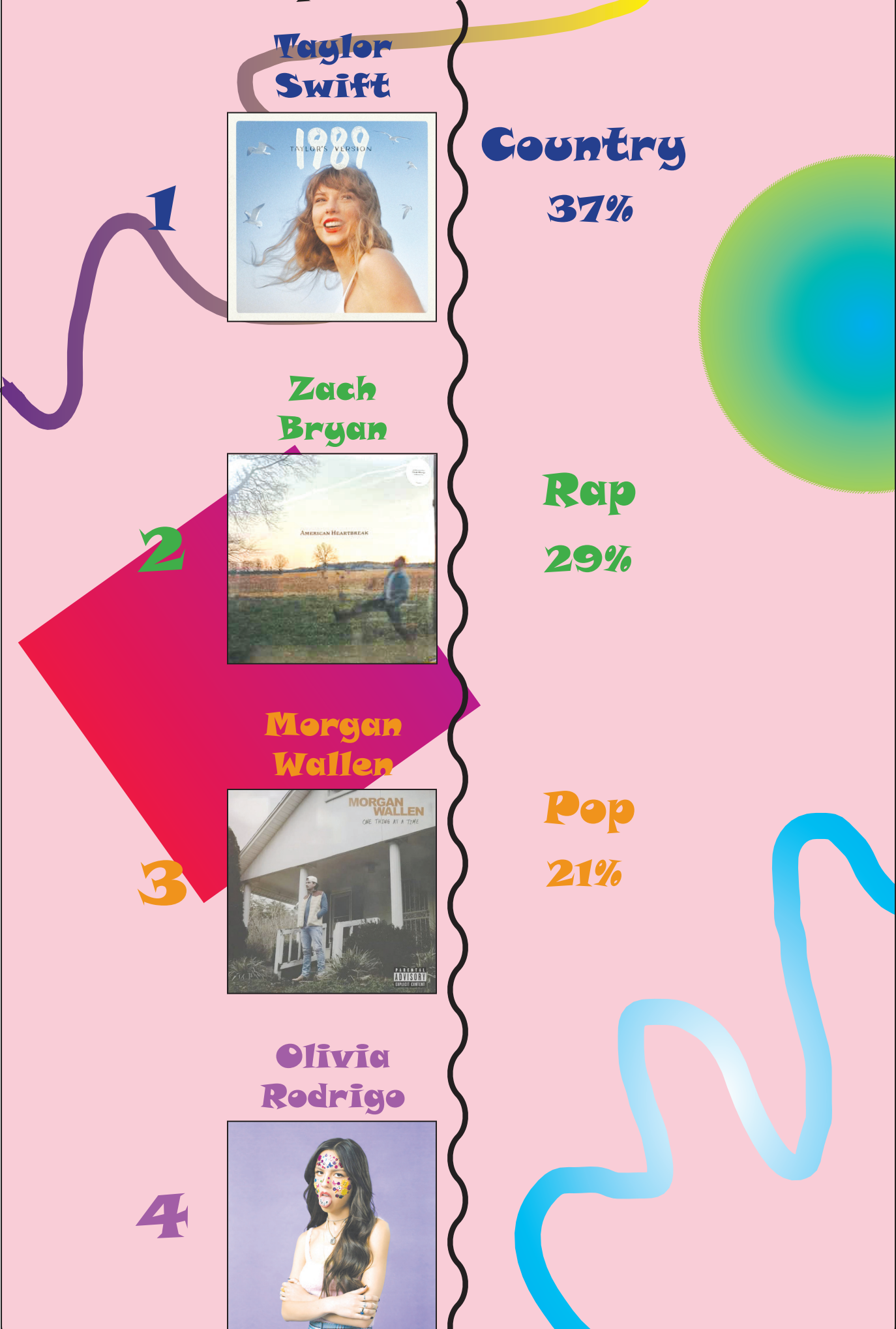
Algorithms, but they are complex!

To determine genres, listening types, and how to stylize the Wrapped, extremely complex algorithms are used. One algorithm will find your most listened-to artist and song and then calculate the average of other artists you listened to. These similar artists use similar keys, notes, instruments, chord progressions, and even the length of their songs. The artists and songs with the highest average streaming time determine the most played genre.

After, another algorithm will eerily track when users listened. Specifically, what time users listened to and what kind of music they listened to. For example, if a user tends to listen to new genres but listens late at night, they will get the "vampire" listening type. If someone listens to the same general genre and artists constantly, they will get the "time-traveler" listening type. Finally, an algorithm will, according to Forbes, "detect the colors and shapes of the artists and songs." What in the world does this mean? They will use their cover art or profile pictures to present a creative and concise presentation to show a user's most anticipated event of their life: Spotify Wrapped.

With algorithms and thousands of songs, users can discover their listening habits in a new, creative, and personal medium. Spotify Wrapped is one of the modern wonders of the music industry and invites others to share their tastes in music. With a complex and intricate system, Spotify has revolutionized how people can approach listening to music and brings a refreshing perspective to the current era of sound or a terrifying glimpse of the Big Brother-esque future ahead of us.

Scotus' Top Artists and Genres



Music streaming caters to countless preferences

By Quinn VunCannon
Staff Reporter

If a teen today was asked what a cassette tape or CD was, they would have no idea. They would, however, know how to log in to the streaming service on their phone and play their favorite song in an instant. Streaming music with services like Apple Music or Spotify have become the most widespread way to share and listen to music.

There are thousands of different streaming services available, so it is difficult to decipher what makes each platform unique and what platform to spend money on. The most popular streaming platforms used by teenagers today, Spotify and Apple Music, both have their strengths and their setbacks.

Price will be a factor many students look to first when choosing a music platform. Spotify offers a free version of its services that includes ads, while Apple Music is only available in the paid version. This might be the only factor that matters for some consumers, as not everyone puts a high priority on music consumption.

Both services are available at \$11 per month for an individual plan and \$17 per month for a family plan that includes six accounts. Both platforms also offer a discount for college students at \$6, but Spotify offers its student bundle with the inclusion of Hulu and Showtime. Spotify also offers what it calls a duo membership, where it costs \$15 for two premium accounts. For a college student or someone who has a friend to bundle with, Spotify would be the clear winner.

Both platforms have virtually infinite libraries of music. A big feature many listeners consider heavily is how each platform recommends new music and artists. Apple Music offers a variety of different playlists and radio stations that are based on an algorithm, called New Music Mixes. Spotify also offers algorithm based playlists called Daily Mixes that change everyday, but does not offer stations like Apple Music does. If discovering new music was the top priority for the consumer, Apple Music would be the best choice.

Another factor drawing consumers to different platforms is how they keep track of stats, such as average

	
<p>Individual Plan \$11 per month</p> <p>Family Plan \$17 per month</p> <p>College Plan \$6 per month</p> <p>End of the Year Review Apple Music Replay</p> <p>Offers playlists and radio stations, called New Music Mixes based on an algorithm</p>	<p>Individual Plan \$11 per month</p> <p>Family Plan \$17 per month</p> <p>College Plan \$6 per month bundle with Hulu and Showtime</p> <p>Duo Membership \$15</p> <p>End of the Year Review Spotify Wrapped</p> <p>Offers algorithm-based playlists called Daily Mixes</p>

listen time, most listened to genre, and top songs of the year. Apple Music and Spotify both have these features, which they call Apple Music Replay and Spotify Wrapped. Apple Music Replay offers a less stylized version of these stats while Spotify Wrapped usually includes a graphic eye-catching theme along with its statistics. Spotify Wrapped also includes

personalized messages from popular top artists. If statistics are a focal point for a listener, Spotify would be optimal.

Even though Apple Music and Spotify are the most popular, other music platforms also appeal to different audiences. Someone who prefers to play music from their Alexa or other smart home device might gravitate

towards Amazon Music since it is so compatible with those devices. If a listener wanted a wide variety of radio stations to play, Pandora might be their best option because it specializes in algorithm based music stations. Today's consumer has a plethora of platform choices to make their listening experience the best for them.

Apple Music and Spotify

are continuing to innovate how the average person listens to music. They both offer interesting features and programs that appeal to a wide variety of people for different reasons. Gone are the days of collecting CDs and big bulky listening devices. Music streaming is here to stay, and it will only keep growing.



Ben Sueper, 11
Top Artist: Kanye
“(The type of music) depends on my mood that day. Sad music when I want to feel bad and down and upbeat when I want to feel good.”



Harper Spale, 7
Top Artist: Taylor Swift
“(Music) calms me, relieves me of stress, and gets me into a better mood.”



Lydia Dostal, 9
Top Artist: Taylor Swift
“(Depending on the song, music can hype me up or calm me down.”



Milo Dowd, 7
Top Artist: Taylor Swift
“(I usually listen to music depending on my mood. If I'm tired, I'll listen to low-key music.”



Caroline Klitz, 11
Top Artist: The Great Comet of 1812
“(Music) makes me sad, happy, or relaxed. It lets me flush out my emotions in a healthy way.”



Fernando De Leon, 8
Top Artist: Drake
“(Music) makes me more social because it's a topic you can start a conversation with.”

Tuning into music: live or remotely

By Mary Faltys
Staff Reporter

The music industry has evolved with technology, allowing more and more access to music anytime, anywhere. Listening in-person changed to tuning the radio for songs, then advanced to music apps on phones. With Spotify, Apple Music, Pandora, and other listening platforms, music listeners have almost unlimited access to music in their pocket. However, many music-lovers choose to return to the old-fashioned way of listening: concerts.

About half of the surveyed Scotus students have attended a concert before. While some people think concerts are pointless and a waste of money, many die-hard music fans would disagree.

Country music concerts are some of the most popular concerts to attend. Junior Emma Klug is constantly listening to country music.

“(Small hometown and county fairs have been my favorite concerts to go to. I like being able to listen to the music in person [because] the atmosphere of a concert is really cool, and a lot of artists

and bands are a lot of fun to see live,” Klug said.

Concerts attract music fans with the appeal of seeing singer celebrities in person and having fun with other people who enjoy the same music.

Junior Madden Saenz enjoys meeting new people at concerts.

“(Concert friends are the best. You can meet the coolest and funnest people once in your life and never see them again, and they'll be the best friends you've ever made,” Saenz said.

Freshman Lillian Miller enjoys the companionship of

fans at concerts.

“(I love the united energy of everyone in the crowd. The feeling of ‘Wow, we're all here because we love music!’ is a truly incredible feeling,” Miller said.

Despite all the excitement and hype around concerts, there are people who think concerts are a waste of time and money. They are resistant to the large crowds, loud noises, and inconvenience when compared to phones.

Senior Patrick Arndt has never attended a concert because he has access to all the music he wants on his phone.

“(I would say if you are a very outgoing person, the energy at a concert might attract you more. As for me, I like listening on my phone. This way I not only save money, I can also save time from having to drive or fly to see a 3 hour performance for only 1 song I actually like,” Arndt said.

The hefty ticket price is the largest deterrent for many.

“(You waste almost one hundred dollars or more on something you can listen to for free,” junior Grant Zoucha said.

Many people do not recognize the impact music

has on their lives. It is easy to see in the interactive concert experience, but music apps are used just as much, if not more. Their convenience allows listeners to constantly play music throughout their day, either in the background or as the center of attention. Music is a major part of many people's lives, no matter how it is listened to.

“(Music helps with whatever you're feeling. There is music for every moment of my day, and I love that,” senior Addison Schoenfelder said.

Teachers start a side hustle with snacks

By **Aubree Beiermann**
Staff Reporter

Walking the hall of Scotus, there are posters everywhere. One type that has been popping up more in the past years is the signs stating a teacher is selling snacks. From Pop-Tarts to bags of chips, teachers on the 2nd and 3rd floors are profiting from this new business. Teachers such as Carmen Johnson, who teaches 7th and 8th grade religion and a variety of home-ec classes, Kris Wurtz, who teaches computer and finance classes, Besty Rall, who teaches STEAM classes, and Jarrod Ridder, who teaches junior high history, are all selling food for students to buy before school and during snack breaks. During snack break, there are lines of students who all wait to buy snacks from these teachers.

Most of the money teachers make goes back

to the school and students. Rall's goes to the STEAM lab, Wurtz helps out with FBLA service projects, and Ridder puts his toward the girls basketball team.

Mr. Ridder's room is on the 3rd floor. He started selling at the beginning of this year.

"I started selling snacks to offset some of the costs for the girls basketball program. With the money that we've raised so far, we took 127 kids to a Nebraska basketball game. We just look for some of those things to help make improvements and to make the experience for kids better," Ridder said.

Rall is also on the 3rd floor. She has snacks available in the STEAM room.

"I started selling snacks with the intention of bringing what I considered healthier snacks here," Rall said.

She has fig bars, granola bars, protein balls, and more for kids to buy. The money

Rall makes goes back to the STEAM lab.

Wurtz, on the second floor, started selling 3 years ago when she first came to Scotus.

"I sell snacks to continue the FBLA fundraising activities that the previous teacher had," Wurtz said.

Johnson also teaches on the second floor. Most of the students are in debt to her because she allows them to "charge" and pay her back later.

"There's good and bad about that. Students will learn to hopefully manage their money," Johnson said.

Students who go to Johnson and charge have to pay her back by the end of the semester. If they do not, it gets put on their school fines.

Ridder mostly sells to junior high students.

"It's kind of silly, but we all kind of have our own clientele if that makes sense. I kind of feel like depending



AUBREE BEIERMANN / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Computer and finance teacher Kris Wurtz sells snacks to sophomore Aiden Meers during snack break in her room 209. Other teachers such as home-ec and religion teacher Carmen Johnson, junior high history teacher Jarrod Ridder, and STEAM teacher Besty Rall all sell snacks in their rooms as well.

on where your locker is and where you hang out, is where you go to get your snacks," Ridder said.

Mrs. Johnson was inspired by her students to start selling snacks when snack

break was first introduced.

"Students opened my refrigerator door and cupboards looking for food and it just bugged me. Some students said, 'Mrs. Johnson, you should start selling

snacks.' Since I've been selling, I don't have problems with kids wanting to get into my refrigerator or cabinet," Johnson said.

Cheer jumps into showcases before state

By **Joanna Rusher**
Staff Reporter

They are the number one fans and the most dedicated members of the student section. They rally the whole crowd and bring energy to the team no matter the situation. They are there through rain and snow, and they show up when nobody else does. The Scotus Central Catholic cheer team accomplishes all these tasks while also designing posters, making *TikTok's* about upcoming events, and practicing routines for

state. However, this year the cheerleaders started their preparation early because they performed at multiple showcases before state.

"Getting rid of the jitters and anxiety of performing in front of a lot of people and judges for the first time at a showcase instead of state is huge," junior cheerleader Ava Rickert said. "I think we will all be a lot more comfortable and confident in our performances."

On January 7th, the cheer team traveled to Grand Island for their first showcase of the season. This was especially

helpful because it was the team's first time performing on actual cheer mats, which can affect multiple parts of the performance.

"The specifics of what we have been working on is spacing, changing certain roles on certain cheers, and working out little kinks we made mistakes on during the performance," senior cheerleader Neve Pavlik said.

Although the state performance will be affected by these extra showcases, the general student body is also seeing the work the cheerleaders are doing. The themes

for games are always well advertised and the cheers are loud and more well-known. The senior cheer members have been working hard to ensure all the tasks get done on time.

"I think cheer has taken a step-up from past years," junior cheerleader Sofia Karges said. "I think people are starting to appreciate the cheerleaders like they didn't before. The seniors have done a great job of this; it's changed the whole aspect of the team."

The team performed their non tumbling routine on

January 21st at Jam the Gym at Columbus High School. At this showcase, local cheer teams along with dance studios from the area performed their best dances. On January 30th, the cheerleaders brought in some guest stars for their guy/girl dance routine at halftime of the boys basketball game that day. With a *Barbie* themed mashup, the boys sported "I am Kenough" t-shirts while dancing with their partners. Finally, state takes place on February 16th in Grand Island.

"Last year, we placed 6th in non tumbling and 9th in

game day," senior cheerleader Kirsten Sucha said. "This year I am really hoping to place in the top five at state since this is my fourth year and I never have before."

After performing their state routine numerous times before the day arrives, the Scotus Central Catholic cheer squad hopes to have more success than they have in previous years. Once state is wrapped up, the season will end as the team holds tryouts in March to prepare for the upcoming season.



JOANNA RUSHER / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Senior Makenna Barels entertains the crowd with her animated dance moves on January 21st at Jam the Gym. This is Scotus' first year performing at this annual, local showcase.



JOANNA RUSHER / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Sophomore Eva Foreman, freshman Kennedy Krueger, and sophomore Camila Carrizales complete a move in unison at Jam the Gym on January 21st. This was the team's second showcase this season.

Revolution rallies students to show respect



ELLA HASH / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Seniors Joanna Rusher and Neve Pavlik talk with junior Jessica Jackson during the Revolution presentation on January 10th. Revolution is a teen group sponsored by the Center for Survivors that teaches students about teen dating violence.

By **Ella Hash**
Staff Reporter

Respect is a hot topic in and around all schools, including Scotus. Students learn to respect their teachers

and peers by having good manners, such as listening when someone else is talking. Learning respect early can help to carry over into other areas in life, such as personal relationships.

On Wednesday, January

10th, Revolution members shared their presentation on the topic of teen dating violence to Scotus Central Catholic students. Revolution, a teen group sponsored by the Center for Survivors and comprised of the three

area schools, teaches others about topics such as dating violence, sexual assault, and bystander intervention.

The presentation represents three different couples who all suffer with some sort of abuse in their respective relationships. Through the course of the presentation, audience members were able to see the abuse the characters suffered. Although this topic can be hard for anyone to watch, it is important for people to be taught the signs and know how to help.

Senior Joanna Rusher has been involved in Revolution for four years and this is her first year of being an actor in the presentation.

"No one deserves to go through anything we present about, and I know students learn from our presentations," Rusher said. "It gives me so much hope that fewer of these cases will occur."

In the summer the actors start to prepare by running through lines and hitting their

points for the presentation. They also have to prepare to play a character who is not a person they would normally act as. Junior Jessica Jackson plays Macey, a girl who is verbally abusive to her boyfriend, Tyler, in the presentation.

"As someone who acts frequently, I don't mind it," Jackson said. "The meaning of our presentation is to point out the flaws in relationships so if it means I play a bad character, then so be it."

Along with Scotus, Revolution has traveled to over seven schools to show their presentation. The presentations involve six actors, a narrator, and one tech person behind the scenes.

Junior Ian Karges has been a member of Revolution since 2022. This is his first year helping with the presentations as the tech guy.

"Because I am the tech guy, I go to every presentation. It is always fun to be able to go to a school and

see how different schools react," Karges said. "The best schools are the ones that interact with actors and are not constantly joking around. I also enjoy seeing the actors open up a bit to get their point across, and being from a different school always helps."

With the topics learned from the presentation, Revolution hopes some change takes place in the schools they present at. As February is National Teen Dating Violence Awareness month, the presentation came at a great time for Scotus, showing the people who are here to help. Revolution members are people anyone can talk to about their struggles.

"[Teen dating violence] is not an easy topic because people don't take it seriously," junior Caleb Cameron said. "I hope people take the information to try and prevent this in their schools and communities."

Speech starts the season with success

By Cecilia Arndt
Editor

Public speaking is an important skill to learn, especially when interviewing or entering the work force. The Scotus speech team uses this oratorical expertise to compete. After the first meet was canceled on January 15th, their first invite was at home on January 20th. Although the changes in schedule and the snow days made it difficult to be prepared, the speech team won their first meet. Jessica Jackson, a junior, won the varsity events of Program Oral Interpretation, Oral Interpretation of Poetry, and Serious Prose.

"I am excited to see how our team will do at other invites," Jackson said. "We were champions of the meet and many of our speakers have really improved this year."

Humorous Prose is an event where the speaker makes light of a topic using a script telling a story. Junior Madden Saenz placed second in Varsity Humorous Prose.

"It went very well," Saenz said. "We had multiple medalists and won the meet overall."

Informative Speaking, a speech in which the speaker uses both their speech

and boards to teach about a subject, had two of the Scotus team medal. Juniors Rebecca Policky and Caroline Klitz placed third and fifth, respectively. Both have been in speech since seventh grade and are looking forward to the rest of their season.

"I love our team," Policky said. "Our awesome coaches encourage us, and all the team members work hard. We all try to help each other reach our goals."

Entertainment Speaking, an event which also uses boards to enhance the presentation about an intriguing or funny topic, had the top two Novice speeches. Junior Abigail Schumacher and sophomore Sydney Stuart placed first and second, respectively.

"This was my first year in Entertainment, so I was really proud of myself," Schumacher said. "This was a great confidence booster for the team for our other meets coming up."

The Varsity Oral Interpretation of Drama, or OID, performed a script based on Mean Girls. Presenting the OID were seniors Neve Pavlik, Tori Dush, and Kirsten Sucha, and juniors Caroline Klitz and Lily Humphrey. In the OID, the drama between Cady Heron and the Plastics is shown in a different way,



MACEY JOHANNES / YEARBOOK STAFF

Junior Jessica Jackson, returning state champion, presents her oral interpretation of poetry speech. She won the most events on the Scotus team, taking gold in Oral Interpretation of Poetry, Program Oral Interpretation, and Serious Prose.

as the script was a Shakespearean reimagining of the original. The OID placed fifth.

"We are at a good starting place, but there's always room to improve," Klitz said.

Another group event is Duet, in which a pair of

speakers perform a script. Scotus had three Novice Duets, which took first, second, and third place. The second place duo was Ava Bettenhausen and Giselle Chilapa-Bello. Their duet is called "The Kitchen Witches" and is about a funny cooking

show with an unexpected pair of witches.

"I did feel a little unprepared and nervous, but it went surprisingly good!" Bettenhausen said.

In total, nine Novice events and 15 Varsity events placed in the home meet. The

team won by six points on January 20th and had another meet on January 27th. Their next meet will be on February 3rd at Aurora.

"It went very good for our first meet," Policky said, "I hope we can keep going from here."



CECILIA ARNDT / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Junior Henry Chard performs a convicted murderer in his Serious Prose speech. He placed 3rd in Varsity Serious Prose, a speech which highlights a solemn topic by acting.



JUDE MAGUIRE / YEARBOOK STAFF

Senior Neve Pavlik performs as Cady Heron while seniors Kirsten Sucha and Tori Dush and junior Lily Humphrey examine the "Burn Book". The Mean Girls OID placed 5th at the Shamrock Invite.

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Boys in the Boat brings book to theaters

By Ava Rickert
Staff Reporter

Any Scotus student who passed Ms. Mimick's freshman English class is all too familiar with the book *Boys in the Boat*. A novel about the journey of the University of Washington's rowing team to gold in the 1936 Olympics, *Boys in the Boat* was not only a series of quizzes and packets, but a way to teach the importance of hard work and determination in everyday life.

The book was brought to life in a film which had its theater debut on December 25th, 2023. According to *Movieweb*, the film has grossed over 45 million dollars in the short period it has been available to viewers.

When watching *Boys in the Boat* for the first time, I was filled with emotions I did not expect upon arriving at the theater. It changed the perspective my freshman self had on the book and made me understand the reason schools across the country are bring-

ing it into their curriculums.

I highly recommend this movie to anyone wanting to feel uplifted and inspired in a short two hours and three minutes.

Boys in the Boat presents its audience with phenomenal actors, a great book to movie adaptation, and spectacular visuals through its set and props.

The film brought in both experienced and newer actors to produce a film unlike any other.

Joe Rantz, the main character in *Boys in the Boat*, was brought to life through actor Callum Turner. Another cast member, Hadley Robinson, plays Turner's onscreen love interest.

Along with memorizing lines and perfecting team chemistry, the cast spent five months physically training in order to portray a real-life rowing crew.

Boys in the Boat is an excellent adaptation of the 2013 book it is based on. The movie covers all of the important events from the book, from

the team struggling to build camaraderie to them finding their swing and winning gold at the 1936 Olympics in Nazi Germany.

The film highlights the sacrifices and struggles Joe Rantz had to face in his journey from homelessness to an Olympic gold medalist.

In terms of finding a set and appropriate props for a film set in the Great Depression era, the directors of *Boys in the Boat* had to be particular in choosing visuals for the movie. Nevertheless, they rose to the occasion and did not disappoint.

The film clearly showed the struggles of the era and the difficulties of living in such a time. At the beginning of the film, Joe was often seen living out of his truck with minimal possessions. Along with his teammates, Joe was seen with battered boots and clothes.

Boys in the Boat showcased the fact money does not always buy happiness. Although low on funds, the crew always found a way to



MGM.COM

Callum Turner as Joe Rantz and his teammates in *Boys in the Boat* carry their shell to the water during the 1936 Olympics in Berlin, Germany. The movie had its theater debut Christmas Day 2023.

get through their struggles together, making them capable of winning gold on the biggest stage.

One of the considerable critiques on the film, however, is its timeline.

In the book and in real life, the story took place over a span of three years, ending at the 1936 Olympics. In the

film adaptation, the timeline is shortened to one year, focused on 1936.

This critique is outweighed by the realization if they were to include the other two years, there would be an annoying amount of time spent on unnecessary backstory which would cause even more complaints.

The movie *Boys in the Boat* delivers an experience with great actors, an accurate adaptation, and appropriate visuals for the time period it is set in. Go see *Boys in the Boat* once, twice, or even three times... which is what I am planning on doing.

Fieldhouse adds variety to community

By Caleb Cameron
Staff Reporter

Since last spring, the people of Columbus have anticipated the grand opening of a state-of-the-art facility for exercise, activities, and much more fun. The Columbus Fieldhouse was funded

by Columbus Community Hospital, the CCH foundation along with many donors from the community. This extension was added onto the existing Columbus Wellness Center on 38th Street and has been open since January 22nd, 2024.

Before visiting the fieldhouse, I asked myself why

Columbus needed something like this and how much better will it be than what Columbus already has? After visiting myself, I have been able to answer these questions without hesitation.

The main component of the fieldhouse that impressed me the most was the massive variety of activities available.

As you walk into the fieldhouse, you are bombarded with options. Some of the options on the first floor include trampolines, racquetball courts, tennis courts, two full-size basketball courts, a concession stand with many tables and couches, an esports area, a child watch room, and a huge turf field. On the second floor, there are three golf simulators, a nine-hole mini golf course, two batting cages, and a four-lane walking and running track. With all the new activities, I think the fieldhouse will be a great place for people looking for a new activity to try.

What I think will attract the most people is the massive turf field. Columbus has never had an indoor turf field the size of this one. The field is the area of two full-sized soccer fields and will be able to host many soccer tournaments in the indoor months along with tournaments through the YMCA. Above the field is a four-lane indoor walking and running track. This track gives people the opportunity to run without having to endure the harsh

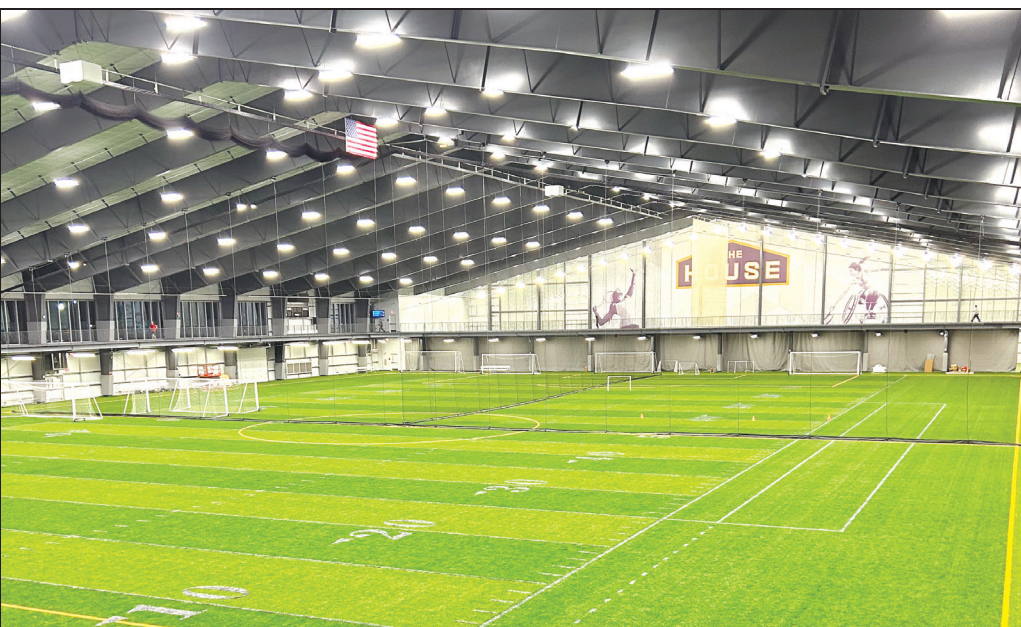
conditions of the winter months. There are also two full-sized tennis courts attached to the field.

I think the most interesting part of the new fieldhouse is all of the new sports technology. The fieldhouse has invested in three new golf simulators as well as two batting cages with in-game simulation settings. This new technology will help athletes perfect their swing on the course and on the field. The golf simulators show stats including clubhead speed and distance, and will have a variety of courses with different weather conditions. The batting cages also show a variety of statistics including hit speed, pitch speed, and distance hit. There is a multitude of pitch speeds ranging from 20 mph to 90 mph. Athletes will be able to pick from a variety of real-life ballparks in Nebraska up to MLB ballparks. These will both be open to all members of the YMCA.

With the new addition to the Columbus YMCA, the building is bound to be busy for the first couple months.

With all the new members, the fieldhouse might become overused. The new equipment may become overly crowded which may lead to some of the equipment being worn down quickly. Even though you should visit, it may be better to go at a less busy time of day or wait until the new crowds die down.

The new Columbus Fieldhouse was built for a diverse group of people with many different interests and will add a much-needed activity center to Columbus. The fieldhouse will be open at the same hours as the Columbus YMCA. To be able to use the fieldhouse, you will need a membership at the Columbus YMCA or buy a day pass at the front desk for \$15. Membership will include access to all activities in the fieldhouse and discounted rates for renting the fieldhouse. The Columbus YMCA will facilitate all fieldhouse activities. Next time you want to try out a new sport or want to get some exercise, I would recommend checking out the Columbus Fieldhouse.



CALEB CAMERON / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

The new turf field inside the Columbus Fieldhouse is big enough to hold two full-sized soccer fields. The fieldhouse is attached to the Columbus Wellness Center and opened on January 21st.

Wonka makes chocolate factory come to life

By Sofia Karges
Staff Reporter

After watching *Wonka*, the new spin-off movie of the *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* films from 1971 and 2005, it is safe to say 'sky-rocke-let' and 'pocke-let' are newfound words in my dictionary. The catchy tune has been stuck in my head since I saw Timothée Chalamet singing them in theaters. While the lyrics are not as sophisticated as they could be, they are brilliant; they will keep you thinking about the movie long after seeing it. They are a stretch from the actual pronunciation, though (but what else rhymes with 'chocolate' anyway?).

I saw the new *Wonka* movie when it first came out in December. Even though I wasn't quite sure what the premise of the movie was about when I bought the ticket, safe to say, I can see why it has been a hit in the movie industry.

Wonka tells the story

of how a famous chocolate man, Willy Wonka, and his background led him to where he was in the beloved *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* stories. I thought the films would be more comparable, but *Wonka* was not a remake of the original films. It was more of a prequel instead.

However, I do wonder if the movie only took off because the beloved Timothée Chalamet was the lead. For those who do not know, he is an American actor who has starred in many movies, such as *Dune* and *Enter Galactic*, but *Wonka* might be one of his biggest roles. Chalamet is becoming quite popular lately because of his looks, so it wouldn't surprise me if half of the *Wonka* ticket sales were because of him. These would include people who didn't know what the movie was about, but rather wanted to see Chalamet singing and dancing about chocolate. (This is me; I am that person)

However, even if the watchers' motives weren't solely based on the actual sto-

ryline, I thought the production was super high-quality. I particularly enjoyed seeing the colorful outfits and how the setting of London was portrayed in the mid-1900s. Willy Wonka's trinkets and accessories for making chocolate were also creative and interesting to see. For me, those were some of the most interesting parts of the film. These gadgets were also why the original movies were so fun to watch in the first place.

Another detail worth noting is the musical aspect. There is much more singing in the *Wonka* film than the *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* movies, so if that is not your forte, it may not be the right movie for you. The *Wonka* film is considered a musical because almost every character is involved in a singing number while there are only a couple songs in the originals, usually only involving Oompa Loompas. I don't mind the breaking out in song, but for some people, it can get to be a bit much. The only aspect I would



USA TODAY

Timothée Chalamet, dressed as Willy Wonka in the new movie *Wonka*, poses with his flying chocolate candy as he stands in the town square. *Wonka* came out in the middle of December and continues to be a hit in the movie industry.

change would be the storyline at times. Without spoiling it, *Wonka* didn't have as much recollection of the *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* movies as I had hoped it would. Prequels and sequels should have many details

tying to the original, and I don't think *Wonka* had much of that.

Overall, *Wonka* was a great movie. It was kind of cheesy and kiddish at points, but I think it will become a classic because of its ties to

the *Charlie and The Chocolate Factory* movies. I don't know if I would be able to watch it more than a couple times because the plot is not super deep, but overall, I think everyone should see it at least once.

Shamrocks jazz up state dance

ACTIVITIES 8



Little Women creates a family

ACTIVITIES 9



Rock Bottom

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

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Mr. Shamrock makes a comeback

By Sofia Karges
Staff Reporter

Because of the rich school history Scotus has, traditions are everywhere. When students get to be a part of something that has been going on for many years, it is especially memorable.

Mr. Shamrock, after being on and off the past couple of years, made a comeback on Sunday night. Mr. Shamrock is a pageant for the senior boys; they showcase a talent for the audience, answer interview questions, strut the runway, and perform a dance with each other. At the end of the night, the winner who has the best talent and overall pizzazz gets crowned with a green leprechaun hat and gets to take home the title of 'Mr. Shamrock.'

This year, Mr. Shamrock was held on Sunday, March 3rd.

"It has been 20 years since we started Mr. Shamrock, but this is the 17th year we have done it," Biology and Health Sciences teacher Joan Lahm said.

Mr. Shamrock was cancelled in 2020 due to COVID, and there was not enough interest for it in 2021 or 2023. Because of this, what once was an annual tradition was starting to die out.

"When you don't do it every year, people forget about it because they haven't seen it in a while, so they're not as excited about it," Lahm said.

Luckily, enough senior boys committed to signing up this year, so student council was able to bring it back.

"I signed up for Mr. Shamrock because I wanted the tradition to keep on going, and I feel like it's just a fun way to raise some money

for a good cause," senior Jackson Heng said.

Heng used his dancing skills to wow the crowd as he performed to an original mashup of songs with fellow senior Rudy Brunkhorst.

The admission to watch the talent show was \$2 or a donation of two can food items, which student council collected to donate to Simon House.

"I signed up for Mr. Shamrock because I have a real talent that I am pretty good at, and I wanted to show it off at school," senior David De

Leon said.

De Leon took the audience's breath away as he played the accordion while his brother played guitar along with him. He was crowned Mr. Shamrock at the end of the night by former Mr. Shamrock Nick Ehlers, who won it at the last contest in 2022.

The runner-up this year was Kamren Kudron, who performed a science experiment for his talent.

"If I had to give advice to the underclassmen, I'd say just do it," Kudron said. "I didn't want to do it

at first, but I still had fun regardless of being nervous."

Kudron said performing at Mr. Shamrock runs in his family as his two older brothers did it before him.

Senior Jude Maguire fought Mason Gonka in a boxing ring for his talent; they topped off the act with boxing gloves, robes, and a boxing belt for the winner.

"It was fun to do something like this with my friends, and it was cool to be able to perform in front of everyone," Maguire said.

There were eight senior boys

who showed off their talents this year, including Kamren Kudron, Jude Maguire, Rudy Brunkhorst, Jackson Heng, Mason Gonka, Evan Kiene, David De Leon, and Nick Fleming.

"Overall, I hope Mr. Shamrock becomes an annual tradition again because it is for a great cause during Lent, especially since we're in the season of almsgiving. It's also just a fun school activity and means a lot to Simon House," Lahm said.



KIRSTEN SUCHA / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Senior Mr. Shamrock contestants Kamren Kudron, Jude Maguire, Rudy Brunkhorst, Jackson Heng, Mason Gonka, Evan Kiene, David De Leon, and Nick Fleming line up for a kickline at the Mr. Shamrock contest, which was held on Sunday March 3rd at 7pm. After being judged over a variety of different categories, De Leon won the title of Mr. Shamrock and donned the green leprechaun hat.

Snow shifts Winter Ball to Sweetheart

By Caleb Cameron
Staff Reporter

With winter activities winding down and not much going on in the Scotus halls, students await something fun. The Winter Ball gave the students something to look forward to during the dull period between winter activities and spring activities. Last year's winter formal was on January 14th. This year's Winter Ball was originally scheduled for January 13th but was rescheduled to February 24th due to frigid temperatures. Many students appreciated the later date because of the dryness of February.

"I liked having it later because January and February are such long daunting months and having something to look forward to made the time go by a lot quicker," senior Kensey McKay said.

With the change of dates, the dance's theme was changed from Winter Ball to Sweetheart. The art classes made multiple back drops and roses decorated the tables.

"It was cool, but for being a sweetheart dance there was only one slow dance song. Many people wished to have more slow dances spread throughout the night," junior

Hanna Chohon said.

This year's winter formal started at 8 p.m. and ended at 10 p.m., only being two hours long. Most

dances in the past have been 3 hours long. There was a mixed reaction from the students on the shortening of the dance.

"Two hours felt way too short! It felt like it ended abruptly. I think it would've been smarter to have it

See BALL, Page 2



ANGIE RUSHER / JOURNALISM ADVISOR

The Winter Ball court candidates seniors Macey Johannes, Addison Schoenfelder, Rosie Sucha, Kamren Kudron, Kensey McKay, Aidan Bettenhausen, Gabe Gassen, and Mason Gonka pose for a photo in front of the back drop on February 24th. The theme of the dance was sweetheart since the dance was postponed from January.

Speech conquers conference championship

By Ella Hash
Staff Reporter

Last year the Scotus speech team came just short of winning the Centennial Conference Meet. Returners from last year's team came in with a chip on their shoulder looking to come away with the victory. With the help of new members, the speech team was able to claim a conference championship, the third in the past four years.

The speech team competed in the Aquinas speech meet on February 17th and placed first as a team. There were seven individual speakers earning twelve medals for the team, as well as Duet Acting and Oral Interpretation of Drama bringing home group medals. As the conference speech meet was just around the corner, competing and picking up team wins helped to boost confidence in the team.

Sophomore Jacqueline Stoner competed in Persuasive Speaking and was awarded second place at the Aquinas meet.

See SPEECH, Page 2

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October 12

November 16

December 13

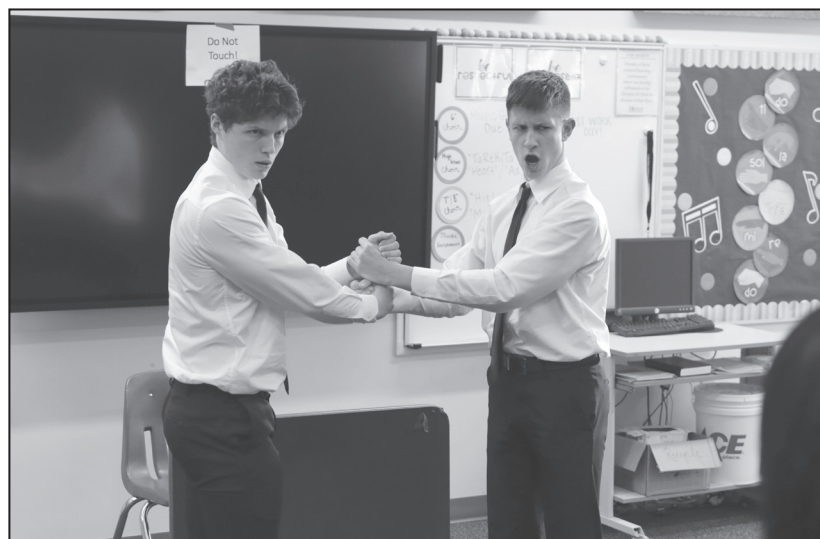
February 1

March 7

April 4

May 2

SPEECH



AUBREE BEIERMANN / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Juniors Austin Long and Jacob Rother act as subatomic particles in their Duet Acting speech at the Conference Speech Meet on February 24th in David City. Long and Rother are in their first year of speech and placed third at the speech meet.

“We’ve been winning a lot of meets lately, so there are a lot of high expectations going into the meet,” Stoner said. “However, as a team I believe we’re more than prepared for the challenge.”

With a week to prepare, the team had multiple practices to nail

their speeches.

Junior Madden Saenz competes in Humorous Prose, Duet Acting, and Serious Prose, and has been a member of the team since freshman year.

“Personally, I had done a lot of revisions to one of my scripts,”

Saenz said. “With Ms. Mimick’s help, I had a lot of improvement and success.”

The revisions and practices paid off, as the speech team placed first at the Centennial Conference Meet on February 24th. Multiple individuals medaled, and the groups of Duet Acting and Oral Interpretation of Drama also medaled.

Junior Jessica Jackson has been a member of the speech team since freshman year and competes in Program Oral Interpretation, Oral Interpretation of Poetry, and Serious Prose. At the conference meet, Jackson placed first in all three events.

“It’s crazy really. I worked really hard in all of those events and to see them place well makes me happy,” Jackson said. “I feel like my message is really getting out there, but I couldn’t have done it without my teammates and coaches.”

Along with experienced members competing, such as Jackson and Saenz, newer members are also making their mark on the team and help to take home the gold at meets.

Junior Austin Long is in his first year of speech and competes

in Duet Acting with fellow junior Jacob Rother. The two boys placed third at the conference meet.

“I felt accomplished to place third in varsity, considering it is only my first year,” Long said. “Both my partner, Jacob, and I were excited to be able to place in our event and contribute to the team.”

Speech may seem as though it is teammate against teammate, but it is much more.

“As individualized speech may seem, it is a team effort. Without our friendship and support of each other, we couldn’t be where we are,” Jackson said. “Speech is a unique event that gives students the platform to talk about their beliefs, and I think more people should partake in it.”

The speech team also competed in Riverside on February 28th, placing first. On March 2nd the team competed at Scotus in a mock district and received critiques to get ready for districts. They will compete again on March 16th at the district speech meet at Raymond Central High School.

BALL

be two and a half hours, instead of cutting off an entire hour from the length of homecoming,” freshman Lillian Miller said.

This year’s Winter Ball court was made up of seniors voted on by their classmates. After a vote, Kensey McKay and Kamren Kudron were crowned Queen and King by homecoming candidates Jude Maguire and Josie Sliva.

“I was super surprised when I was crowned. I was super joyful because I didn’t think I even had a chance. It’s also nice to know the school voted for me,” Kudron said.

The DJ for this dance was Scotus strength and conditioning coach Ryan Baker. Baker was also the DJ for last year’s winter formal. He listens to music all day in his strength training classes so this was not his first time being a DJ for the

students. There were pros and cons to having Baker as DJ. The sound system was made up of only one speaker so many students had a hard time hearing the music. The big upside of having a known DJ is students feel more confident to request the songs they enjoy. This resulted in many hits where everyone rushed to the dance floor.

“[My favorite moment] was when “Revival” started playing because we all got in a circle, and everyone was singing,” sophomore Brynn Homolka said.

The final dance, prom, will be held in April for juniors and seniors.

“This was a really fun formal to have as my last. Everyone was so fun, and being a senior at these dances is always a little bitter-sweet,” senior Isabel Zaruba said.



ANGIE RUSHER / JOURNALISM ADVISOR

Junior Katelyn Pensick, senior Isabel Zaruba, and sophomores Kate Hendricks and Claire Oakley dance at the Winter Ball. The Winter Ball was scheduled for January 13th but was rescheduled to February 24th.

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Academic insults are not adding up



By Joanna Rusher
Staff Reporter

The question I hear most often these days is “What are you going to major in in

college?” However, in grade school it was “What is your favorite subject in school?” Most kids say art, P.E., or lunch. By junior high and high school, most students have decided they don’t like school at all. As we all know, the desire to fit in in high school surpasses most other thoughts, so students often do whatever they can to not go against the grain. I can personally attest to the fact that math and science are not popular subjects to enjoy, and there is automatic backlash that comes with it. It is probably easier to lie about what my favorite subjects are rather than answer the aggressive

questions or judgmental looks, but that should not be necessary. The stereotypes that surround the enjoyment of math and science need to end.

I have wanted to go into engineering since at least my freshman year. Obviously that field requires endless math and science classes. When I am asked about my future major, my answer is almost always responded to with a large sigh, surprised look, or sympathy. Each time I become less confident in my answer. The funny thing is, this doesn’t happen for any other major. When someone says they want to be a nurse,

they are thought to be a wonderfully generous person; the same goes for education majors. I believe every major is significant to balance the work force, so why should potential math and science majors be discouraged from pursuing what they enjoy?

Of course, math is not easy, so I can see why it might be surprising for someone to enjoy it. Also, some people who enjoy these subjects are arrogant or rude about their grades. However, assuming every student who excels in these areas fits these stereotypes is naive. Some people like experiments and equations just as some

people love art or writing. It is wrong to automatically label these students as nerds or dorks when they are just doing what they enjoy.

Although it may seem harmless, giving back-handed compliments or sarcastic remarks are just as hurtful as direct insults. Comments like “You’re such a try-hard”, “Of course you got a good grade”, or “Did you even study?” make students insecure about good grades which is totally backwards. Being a student is hard regardless of what subject is being studied, so it is our responsibility to support one another.

It should never be

accepted to make fun of someone for what they enjoy studying or are good at. Everyone is different, and most parts of your day like turning on the lights, parking your car, or sitting in your desk at school would be impossible without someone who likes math or science. If you are going to ask someone what they are going to study, be prepared for anything. When they answer, no matter what it is, be a good person and support them.



JESSICA JACKSON / JOURNALISM STAFF

Trends total consumers money



By Ella Hash
Staff Reporter

Throughout time, many trends have come and gone. In the ‘80s and early ‘90s, girls could be seen sporting

large, puffy perms alongside various scrunchies. Boys were seen rocking mullets with either a flannel shirt or parachute pants. Although some of these trends have made a comeback in recent years, most have been fads of the past.

As trends have come and gone, I started to question how much money myself and others have spent in years past on items rarely used. As a society, we are all consumer driven people, but do people actually need every new product?

Stanley cups have been all the rage for the past six months. Teen girls to grown women cannot get enough of

the cute colors and different kinds of cups offered. The whole trend, however, reminds me of 2019 when Hydroflasks were the “it” water bottles and everyone spent their money on them. I think the new trend of the Stanley cup is excessive. Buying a “trendy” water bottle just to drink water is a waste of money which could be used on something else.

UGGS have made a comeback from when I was in elementary school. I remember begging my mom to get me the boots so I could be like every other girl in my grade. Today, many girls wear the Tasman Slippers or the Ultra Minis, not the high

cut boots girls used to wear. I do think these UGGS are cute; however, they seem to only be a good shoe to wear in certain weather conditions. People cannot wear them in the summer without burning up from the wool lining, so the only feasible time to wear them is in the winter. Even then, people are scared to get the shoes wet, which does not work in the winter with all the melted snow puddles.

In the past year, beauty products and their reviews have blown up on Tik Tok. Some of the brands that have seen an increase in consumers include Drunk Elephant, Rare Beauty, and Lancige, and products include the

Supergoop Glow Screen, the Benefit Benetint, and the Dior lip oil. While these brands have proven to have great formulas and last on the skin, they are costly. I get why girls would be interested in getting these products, but there are better options and dupes which work the same.

While it may seem as though I hate all the trends happening now, I do own and enjoy some items previously mentioned. Some of the popular products are great and I do think a person should purchase them, but use your money sparingly. Do not buy something if you already have the same item sitting in your house. Wasting money

on unneeded products limits what other items you could have bought. Also, buying items off-brand is the same as buying the name brand. Nobody is going to care whether you have something or not.

As society becomes more materialistic everyday, do not be afraid to take a step back from the trends and spend money on something more useful. Yes, trends come and go, but having something outdated is better than wasting unnecessary cash. I mean, if trends from the ‘80s can make a comeback, who is to say what else can.

Old cars open new doors



By Ava Rickert
Staff Reporter

After a long day at school, students walk out of the north doors to go home. They hear a loud, booming

engine noise and assume the Scotus buses are going somewhere. They turn the corner and see the screeching noises are in fact not a bus, but my 2003 Kia Sorento, “Vicky”, chugging out of the parking lot.

Owning an old car is not out of the ordinary for many teenagers. In fact, many Scotus students have their own “Vicky” they have had since getting their license.

Even though it is common, owning an old car is usually looked down upon in society. Instead of being looked at as reliable and cost effective, old cars are seen as eyesores and nuisances. In my eyes, however, old cars

are an essential part of the teenage experience.

Although it may be annoying at times, having an old car as my first has been beneficial for many reasons. Owning an older car builds character, has made me less judgemental, and is teaching me to be more appreciative.

When I say it builds character to own an old car, I mean it humbles me immensely. Whether it be the way my car sounds when it turns on or its brakes screeching every time I stop, having Vicky in my life has grounded me.

Spending my teenage years driving an old car has also made me less judge-

mental. It has taught me there are some factors people can not control in their lives, such as the amount of noise their car makes when it starts. Having a car with the same problems, I used to judge other people for has made me realize life is too short to tease people for their cars - or anything else. In the end, as long as it gets from Point A to Point B, all cars, no matter their condition, serve their purpose all the same.

Having an older car has instilled the importance of being grateful in my life. When I get ready to leave for school and see Vicky in the driveway, I am not grateful for her noises and quirks, but

I am immensely thankful I have the opportunity to go places without begging my mom to drive me. Owning an older car has also made me realize that in order to get new things, I have to earn it.

I can assume some are thinking, “She is only jealous she does not have a new car. She would not be going on this rant if she had one.” That being said, I would not turn down a brand new car if it was given to me at this moment, but I would still miss Vicky and her uniqueness. Owning a new car does not teach lessons and develop someone’s personality the way an old one does. If it were not for Vicky, I

would not have realized how a stupid car can have such a lasting impact on my life.

Next time you start to complain about your old car, remember owning one is not all bad. In fact, owning an old car as a teenager instills values in your life you will carry on into adulthood.

So the next time you think you hear a thunderstorm brewing but look outside and see Vicky instead of the rain, please refrain from judgment; she is teaching me - and you - how to be a better person everyday.

Scotus girls sign off at subdistricts

By Ava Rickert
Staff Reporter

The post season for any sport is the most exhilarating time of the year. The anticipation leading up to the end of the season fuels a fire in every team to do their best. The same can be said for the Shamrock girls basketball team as they headed into the subdistrict tournament on February 13th.

The Scotus girls basketball team faced David City in the second round of the C1-5 subdistricts. The Shamrocks came in as the 2nd seed with a record of 14-8 and the Scouts were the 3rd seed at 14-8. The game was slow with a score of 2-2 after the first quarter. The Scouts found themselves ahead 10-9 at the half after an 8-7 scoring run, but they did not maintain the lead for long. The Shamrocks closed out the game with a 28-17 win over David City High. Senior post Joanna

Rusher led the team with 14 points, 4 rebounds, and 2 assists against the Scouts.

"[After the game] I felt relieved but also shocked. I knew the game would be difficult, but they really kept us from scoring in the first half," Rusher said. "Our good defense won us that game."

With the game being back and forth for a majority of the time, it was hard for the team to build momentum. Senior guard Kensey McKay was a captain this season and had 3 rebounds in the game against David City.

"With the pace of the game being so slow, it was really hard to bring energy. We never really had a firm lead until the fourth quarter," McKay said. "David City High is a good team and being able to beat them even when we weren't playing our best is huge."

The team faced a quick turnaround and played North Bend Central two days later

in the C1-5 subdistrict final at North Bend.

The Scotus girls were down 6-12 at the quarter and were unable to pick up the lead for the remainder of the game. The Shamrocks played tough but eventually fell to the Tigers in a 24-43 loss. Rusher led the team with 9 points and three rebounds, and junior point guard Emma Brezenski added 8 points.

Being the last game with the team's seniors, many emotions were felt the night of February 15th.

"I was sad that it was my last game with the seniors but knew that we tried our best to win," Brezenski said.

The Shamrocks concluded their 2023-24 season with a 15-9 record and as C1-5 subdistrict runner up. Junior guard Quinn VunCannon contributed to the team as one of the first subs off the bench this year.

"Our team was really connected this season, and



ROSIE SUCHA / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Junior forward Mallory Dreesen wraps a pass around a North Bend defender during the C1-5 subdistrict final. The Shamrocks took on the Tigers on February 15th for a chance to go to the district final.

it makes it all worth it to go through it with people you care about," VunCannon said.

The team graduates three seniors: Joanna Rusher, Kensey McKay, and Addison Schoenfelder. All three have

been on the team since their freshman year.

"There were a lot of ups and downs, but I would say the highs outnumbered the lows. We all loved each other through the losses and

hard days, and I knew I had a team to support me when I wasn't at my best," Rusher said. "Overall, I feel like I am leaving the girls basketball program with valuable lessons and relationships."

Brunkhorst, Micek highlight wrestling season

By Patrick Arndt
Staff Reporter

On February 15th, Scotus wrestling was the first winter sport/activity to end at state. Overall, it was a relatively fast season, with the time between the Crusader Invitational and state competitions

speeding by.

On February 3rd, the Scotus wrestling team attended the Crusader Invitational in Grand Island. The team placed 4th out of the 18 teams attending. Of the varsity members, a few placed, including sophomores Hunter Brunkhorst placing 4th (31-

8), Kobe Micek 3rd (31-12), juniors Spencer Shotkoski 3rd (22-8), Henry Ramaekers 4th (15-14), and senior David DeLeon 3rd (15-15) each in their respective weight classes.

Shortly thereafter Scotus transitioned to the Class C District 1 tournament held

on the 10th at Thayer Central High School in Hebron. Of the Scotus attendees, only 2 of the 13 placed, Brunkhorst and Micek, both placing second, with Brunkhorst wrestling at 113 lbs and Micek at 120. Of the wrestlers who wrestled in the heartbreak rounds, all lost in a valiant effort to qualify.

Junior Spencer Shotkoski was among the few who made it to the heartbreak round ending his season at 24-10.

"I feel I wrestled well even though I didn't make it to state. I would say this is one of my better seasons ending 24-10. It felt good even though I lost, I knew I fought hard for my spot, because wrestling is about how many times you get back up," Shotkoski said.

Senior David DeLeon, a 4 year wrestler has held a successful tenure throughout his time at Scotus; with his record of 15-15, DeLeon was stopped just short of attending state.

"I was disappointed I

didn't qualify for state. It was a big goal for me this year to make it all the way. Heartbreaks had me feeling nervous and somewhat excited, and losing devastated me. I wish I had one more chance to make it to state because it has been a dream of mine for quite some time now," DeLeon said.

First year varsity freshman Parker Newman also made it to the heartbreak round.

"Overall, the whole way through the tournament even in the heartbreak match I was wrestling well, and was winning 6-0, after then I made a few mistakes and lost. I had felt confident going into the heartbreak round and losing made me feel kind of disappointed," Newman said.

Shortly after districts, Brunkhorst and Micek represented Scotus at state wrestling held in the CHI Health Center in Omaha on the 15th-17th. Both Brunkhorst and Micek did not place; however, both made it to the championship round, losing

to their opponents.

"It was an electric environment, and I knew it was going to be tough to place with such stiff competition. Even though I didn't wrestle the best, it was nice to attend state with Hunter and overall it was a great learning experience," Micek said.

Brunkhorst and Micek both dyed their hair blond in a celebration of making it to the state competition.

"Going into state I felt nervous, coincidentally, I wrestled sort of scared. I did make improvements this year because I went 2-2, better than last years 1-2. I did, however, like attending state with Kobe since we have been wrestling together for the Duncan Wrestling Club since we were 3," Brunkhorst said.

Brunkhorst and Micek both did not place, Brunkhorst finishing his season at 35-11 and Micek at 33-15. Both are looking forward to the next few years of wrestling with high hopes.



KENSEY MCKAY / YEARBOOK STAFF

Sophomore Kobe Micek completes a takedown against his opponent during the state tournament. State was held on February 15th-17th at the CHI Health Center in Omaha.

State challenges Scotus cheer

By Mary Faltys
Staff Reporter

Unlike many extracurricular activities, the cheer team works throughout the entire year. They are kept busy leading Shamrock fans at various sporting events and keeping school spirit high. All of their work is condensed into a short three minutes when they travel to state. Their quick time allotment is filled with showing the judges what they have learned and perfected from their year of experience.

Normally, state is the only event the cheer team performs and is judged at. However, they performed at a couple showcases in the weeks leading up to state this year. They hoped that performing at some smaller competitions would help them perform better at state.

Junior Raya Kluever has been on the cheer team since her freshman year.

"The showcases definitely eased all of our nerves and gave us experience with performing in front of others," Kluever said.

On February 16th, the

cheer team traveled to Grand Island to perform at state. They performed in two categories: non-tumbling and gameday. Their non-tumbling routine placed 11 out of 11 because it did not have one of the required elements, so one of the judges scored them very low. They placed 11 out of 24 in their game day performance, which is about what the team expected to get.

Senior Isabel Zaruba is a four-time All-American cheerleader.

"I think we performed well. We had two very clean

routines, and everyone worked really hard to perfect the moves. Although the scoring was disappointing, we still had good performances. We just missed the mark on a few required elements," Zaruba said.

Senior Kenna Barels was proud of their state performance.

"Even though we didn't place how we wanted, I think the team performed our absolute best at state. Everything went really well; from formations to our voice to stunts, it was all good. This was our first year in a few

years where our stunts went up perfectly," Barels said.

This year's state performance was the last one overseen by cheer coach Pat Engel. Engel has decided to step away after coaching for 16 years.

Senior Addison Schoenfelder has cheered under Engel for three years.

"[Coach Engel] is very approachable and fun to be around. She knows when to have fun but also pushed us to be our best because she knew how good we could be," Schoenfelder said.

The cheer season ended

with postseason basketball. Once there are no more basketball games to cheer at, the cheer team starts preparing for the next year with tryouts. Cheer tryout practices are March 4th-7th. With five seniors graduating this year, the cheer team is looking for new faces to fill their spots.

"I am so thankful to have been a part of the cheer team and take part in state the last four years. This really has been my favorite activity throughout high school. I can attribute much of my fun in high school to cheer," Zaruba said.



JOSIE SLIVA / YEARBOOK STAFF

The cheer squad takes a group photo with coaches Jordan Engel and Pat Engel after the state cheer competition. Head coach Pat Engel is retiring this year after 16 years as head coach.



JOSIE SLIVA / YEARBOOK STAFF

Senior Isabel Zaruba and sophomores Sidney Gonka and Eva Foreman cheer during their gameday performance. In addition to gameday, the cheer team also had a nontumbling performance.

'Post season pink' leads 'Rocks to district final

By **Quinn VunCannon**
Staff Reporter

After a rough stretch of January basketball, the Shamrock boys team had many doubters of their possible post season success. After 9 losses in a row, all hope seemed lost for the team, but they just would not let that define their season. Some would call it superstition, but the second game of their win streak they started wearing neon pink warm-ups in support of Scotus counselor Bridget McPhillips in their current cancer battle, and never looked back. The Shamrocks then went on to win 5 straight games and qualified for the district final for the second year in a row.

Senior guard Jude Maguire was on the varsity squad for both district final matchups. "We rallied behind each other and used our pink warm ups as extra motivation to come out and win for the McPhillips family," Maguire said.

For their last home game of the season, the whole Scotus gym, parents, students and athletes were adorned in pink. The Shamrocks had arguably their best game of the season up to that point against Aquinas, defeating the Monarchs 65-33. After the game, the team presented math and science teacher Zach McPhillips with a special pink basketball signed by the team and a donation to the McPhillips family. Junior guard Owen Lindhorst, along with three other Shamrocks, scored double figures in the victory against Aquinas.

"We had a great team breakfast that morning that put us all on the same page. [After the Aquinas game] we decided to keep wearing the warmups because we thought they were good luck," Lindhorst explained.

Throughout the rest of their season, the team stuck to their pink. The Shamrocks used the momentum from their last two regular season wins to propel them into subdistricts. They had

the most challenging path to winning their subdistrict, having a play-in game against Lakeview on February 19th. Junior guard Cohen Pelan had a season high 15 points against the Vikings in their 54-51 victory.

"I knew that the teams in our subdistrict were very beatable. We just prepared one game at a time," Pelan explained. "Our scout team also gave us great looks in practice that helped tremendously."

The Shamrocks then had one night to recover before playing number one ranked Fillmore Central on February 20th. The Shamrocks jumped to a fast paced start, sinking 4 three pointers in the first quarter. Junior Caleb Cameron along with Pelan lead their team to a 49-38 upset with 13 points each.

"Beating a top ten team was a big part of our journey. Nobody expected us to win. It helped a lot with our confidence for the following game," Cameron said.

Traveling back to Ge-



QUINN VUNCANNON / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Junior Caleb Cameron elevates to finish at the rim during a fast break against Aquinas on February 16th. The team watches on in their pink warmups as they beat the Monarchs 65-33.

neva, the 'Rocks would take on the Aurora Huskies for the sub district final. After rallying yet another pink out game, the Shamrocks came away with another victory 38-27, solidifying their spot in a chance to go to state.

Still sporting their 'Team McPhillips' pink warmups,

Scotus headed to Omaha to face off against yet another top ranked team, Omaha Concordia. Students, parents, cheerleaders, and band members all embraced another pink out to rally around the team.

"The atmosphere at Concordia was crazy. That was

the loudest basketball game that I have ever been a part of," Pelan said.

Even though the Shamrocks ended up dropping the game 45-25, the future is rosy for the returning 'Rocks.

Seniors make a final splash

By **Aubree Beiermann**
Staff Reporter

Winter seems to have come and gone, and with

that, so has the winter sports. This year, the Columbus Discoverers' swim team consisted of two Scotus students. Seniors Mary Faltys and Kamren Kudron have had a

long season with many ups and downs.

This year, conference swim was held on February 9th and 10th. At conference, Faltys qualified for finals in

all four of her events, two individuals and two relays.

"I had never made finals in my individual events before, so I was really excited. On Friday, I got 16th in the 200 Individual Medley and 12th in the 100 Breaststroke and finished higher than I was originally seeded. I dropped time in everything," Faltys said.

Faltys' time for the 200 IM was 2:29.32 and for the 100 Breaststroke was 1:15.02.

This was Kudron's first year going out for swim. He swam the 50 Free and placed 30th with a time of 0:26.71 and swam the 100 Backstroke in 1:17.79 and placed 28th at the Conference meet. Kudron made it to the finals for the 400m relay.

"I was scared at first because I only knew Mary and my cousin, Jaylyn. Once I got past that I started being thankful I went out," Kudron said.

State swim was on February 23rd and 24th. Kudron was the first alternate for the two relays that went to state.

"One part of me is happy [to go to state], but it hasn't set in yet. The other part of me feels bad for the people who deserve to go," Kudron said.

Faltys qualified for state in both of her individual events at the conference meet.

"I seriously couldn't believe it. I was focused on my 100 Breaststroke, so qualifying for my 200 IM was a complete shock. It was also surprising because I hadn't dropped time in my IM in 2 years. Both were lifetime PRs, which was super exciting," Faltys said.

Unfortunately, after all qualifying times were sent in, Faltys was bumped from top 32 state qualifiers with a tying 32nd place time.

With both of the swimmers being seniors, Scotus

will not have any experienced students on Discoverer's swim team next year.

"I think if you're looking for something to do or be a part of you should [go out]. The sport is hard at first, but you get used to it. The community is what makes getting through practice easy," Kudron said.

Some of the swimmers' favorite memories include going sledding before practice, playing games, and having volleyball games.

This year was Faltys' fourth and final year doing swim, and she has learned from it.

"During my swimming career, I've learned the importance of hard work, consistency, and discipline. My quote to end the season was 'what doesn't kill you makes you stronger.' It will be hard and won't always go your way, but you'll only grow from it," Faltys said.



PHOTO COURTESY MARY FALTYS

Seniors Kamren Kudron and Mary Faltys hold up their state swim caps while sitting at the Columbus High School pep rally. State swim was February 23rd and 24th; Kudron was an alternate for 2 relays.



JOSIE SLIVA / YEARBOOK STAFF

Junior guard Larkyn Mahoney drives past her Lakeview defender on the Shamrocks' last regular season game. Scotus played at the Vikings' home court on February 6th, winning 41-33.



KENSEY MCKAY / YEARBOOK STAFF

Junior Max Wemhoff extends for a lay up on January 25th against Lincoln Christian. It was a tight game, with the boys losing 56-62.



JOSIE SLIVA / YEARBOOK STAFF

Sophomore Sophia Langan dances to the song "Vogue" in the cheerleaders' non-tumbling routine. The girls learned their routine for homecoming and made changes in November to make their piece state ready.



PHOTO COURTESY SARA MILLER

(back row) Freshman Audrey Naughton, sophomore Lily Wemhoff, senior Nicole Peterson, freshman Lillian Miller, senior Caitee Hutchinson, (front row) seniors Kaitlyn Fleming, Amber Spawn, Kalee Ternus, and Karol Torres hit a synchronized arm motion during the girls' pom routine. They danced to the songs "Applause," "Born this Way," and "Bad Romance" by Lady Gaga.

PepperJax doesn't "meat" expectations

By Caleb Cameron
Staff Reporter

Nearly twenty years ago a small sandwich chain opened up its first location in Omaha, Nebraska. Twenty

years and over thirty locations later, PepperJax Grill is finally in Columbus. PepperJax Grill is located on 3111 23rd Street, replacing the old Amigos. It opened on Monday, February 5th. PepperJax Grill has

thirty-two different locations across Nebraska, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, South Dakota, and Minnesota. The first PepperJax location was opened in 2002 in Omaha. The chain serves a variety of items including Philly sand-

wiches, rice bowls, burritos, loaded nachos and fries, protein power bowls, and many different fries, drinks, and desserts.

I went to PepperJax on opening day. When I arrived, the building was packed. There were about 10 employees working, one of which welcomed me. There were only one or two tables available. The restaurant looked very clean and had some interesting signs on the walls.

After looking at the menu, I realized there weren't a large variety of different menu items, but each item has the ability to be customized however the customer wants. The choices of meats were abundant with options of steak, chicken, pork, sausage, shrimp, and bacon. There was also a variety of vegetables available including onions, mushrooms, green peppers, jalapenos, banana peppers tomatoes, black olives, and lettuce. The variety of dips and sauces was impressive with salsa, guacamole, ranch, sour cream, honey mustard,

barbecue sauce, mushroom gravy, sweet Asian sauce, and au jus all being available choices. The restaurant has variety of sides and desserts including fries, chips, salads, and cookies.

I ordered a Philly sandwich with steak, bacon, onions, green peppers, and jalapenos with barbecue and honey mustard sauce on the side. The sandwiches do not come with fries or a soft drink. My total came out to be \$13.14 which caught me off guard. I did not expect a sandwich alone to be as much as it was. Comparing it to other sandwich shops in town, it was definitely on the expensive side.

I received my order after about 10 minutes. After a glance into the box, I quickly realized the sandwich probably wasn't going to be worth my \$13.14. The bread did not look bad but didn't look or feel as good as some of the other sandwich places in town. The steak and the bacon had an interesting color, one that didn't look appetizing. There was a very small

amount of vegetables on the sandwich, most of which were lost in the meat.

Unfortunately, I was not surprised after having a bite of the sandwich. The vegetables were difficult to taste because of the meat and sauce. I picked out a couple onions, green peppers, and jalapenos, and they tasted decent. I didn't expect the meat to be the greatest quality, but it was worse than I expected. It wasn't seasoned at all and didn't taste fresh. I tried both the barbecue and honey mustard and liked the honey mustard better. I only ended up eating half the sandwich before throwing it away.

Overall, my first experience at PepperJax Grill was mediocre at best. In my opinion, the price for the quality of food wasn't worth it. However, I don't think it's right to completely judge a restaurant based off one bad experience. I hope I just caught PepperJax during a bad rush. I will probably have PepperJax again, but I will definitely not be going out of my way to eat it.



CALEB CAMERON / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

PepperJax Grill opened on February 5th at 3111 23rd Street. PepperJax serves a variety of options including sandwiches, bowls, burritos, and much more.

Wheely good food around Columbus

By Madden Saenz
Staff Reporter

Food trucks are a staple in American food culture. Starting in the 30s with the Weiniemobile, food trucks' ease of access and convenience have made them a staple within America. They bring people together and create wholesome, lasting communities based on people's tastes and preferences. For example, Texas has a massive culture centered around barbecue and grilling but also shares a large percentage of its population with Vietnamese and Mexican citizens. This dynamic environment has created a lasting and delicious community within Texas, with fusion cuisine and authentic foods served throughout the state, connecting people through food trucks.

Fortunately, Columbus has a surprisingly robust food truck culture. With several trucks around town, the range of foods is expansive. From barbecue to tacos to hibachi,

there is plenty of variety for people's palates. However, can these local little guys square up against the city strongmen? Well, that is what I am here for!

Our first stop is La Riviera. Painted a bright orange and located on the east side of town near the BD building, this food truck is quite famous around Columbus. With excellent customer service and cuisine, this automotive cookery shows what a food truck should be. The food offered is a variety of classic Mexican dishes. I recommend tortas, a Mexican hamburger, and the lengua (beef tongue; trust me, it is delicious) tacos. With affordable prices and delectable eats, La Riviera is here to stay.

On the opposite side of town, however, sits another food truck. Located near Super China Buffet, the flaming red paint job and reflective steel roof make this truck hard to miss. This food truck specializes in food from the other side of the world:

Japanese cuisine, specifically hibachi. Flame-grilled beef, pork, and chicken mixed with Asian spices and delicious fried rice give this food truck its fame.

However, things start to fall off with the quality. The sushi rolls are simple and satisfactory, neither wonderfully good nor atrociously inedible. The noodles are usually soggy and sticky, with too much or too little sauce, seasonings, and additions. Finally, the prices are slightly steeper compared to other food trucks. Regardless, the food from this truck is still quite good, and the noodles and sushi are not the ruin of the food truck. So, if you want a good meat dish with decent rice and a higher price, the hibachi truck is the place to go.

Finally, we come to another orange-hued kitchen-on-wheels. Located on Lincoln Highway in the Advanced Auto Parts parking lot, this food truck is another great place to satisfy your craving for Mexican food

with a mix of El Salvador. With soft shell tacos as their specialty, this food truck is affordable and delicious. I only ordered the tacos de asada, which were very flavorful and filling, with a delicious tomatillo salsa. However, the pupusas, basically a Salvadorian runza, were also tantalizingly delectable. The

dough was soft and crunchy, and the meat fillings were delicious. This food truck is cheap, exquisite, and worth a visit.

Columbus' diversity in freelance food operations is a gift to its residents. They have numerous delicious options that are worlds better than simple, mediocre fast-

food chains. More importantly, eating at these food trucks helps support local businesses and helps these entrepreneurs stay in Columbus. If you haven't been to one of the several food trucks in Columbus, get to one ASAP. Trust me, it will be worth your time.



MADDEN SAENZ / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

La Riviera serves customers coming in and out of Columbus. Food trucks have been around Columbus for years, bringing people more opportunities to try new foods.

Subway adds big things to menu

By Kirsten Sucha
Staff Reporter

in Columbus, their theme colors are green and yellow, and they serve arguably the best sandwiches. Can you guess what the restaurant is?

It is Subway, of course! Subway recently released new items to their menu, and they are not average sandwiches. They are called "Sidekicks"

and are all 12 inches in size. From footlong churros to pretzels to cookies, the company released these three new products and customers are raving about them.

The first out of the three new items Subway released was the footlong churro. They partnered with the cinnamon god itself, Cinnabon, to construct together a perfect melt-in-your-mouth churro. Subway sure knows footlongs, and Cinnabon knows how to make the most delicious cinnamon sugar, so this was a match made in heaven. There is an audible crunch when a consumer bites into this treat but is still soft in the middle of the snack. Although the churro is a footlong in size, if Subway was going for a shareable treat this is not it. It can be considered a snack or maybe even a post meal treat, but it is slightly hard to share with a friend. The listed price for the churro is \$2. This is definitely a quality churro, and it is easy to digest considering

its size.

The footlong pretzels are another treat Subway released for their new promotion. It is a buttery golden brown thick pretzel served with golden honey mustard. When a consumer would first look at this pretzel, they would see the perfectly powdered kosher salt sitting on top of it. There was nothing too special about this sidekick; it was sort of an average Joe-Schmo pretzel anyone could buy anywhere. Also, who wants a pretzel served with honey mustard? Seems to be an odd choice for a pretzel, but customers may switch out the sauce with any other sauce of their liking.

Most of all, customers are going crazy for the footlong cookie. Anyone can purchase these cookies at the low cost of \$5, and they weigh a surprising 10 ounces. This chocolate treat is served warm with a cookie-cake like texture. This is the only new sidekick served in its own individual pan, and it is more

of a firm brown color on the perimeter of the cookie and a light gooey texture in the middle. This cookie is a whopping 1440 calories and is definitely not something someone could tackle alone or eat on a regular occasion. The item is significantly larger in width than the other two sidekicks, so it is worth the price. The only complaint customers have had is it may even be too chocolatey. The taste is so savory it leaves a heavy texture in consumers' mouths. Nevertheless, it is by far the most popular new item with the infamous cookie selling out almost every day.

After these footlongs were released, it has customers left wondering, what will Subway come out with next? Could it be a footlong cake, french fries, or maybe even donuts? The world is yet to know. Whatever they decide to make as a product, after the release of these three successful new treats, consumers can be assured the footlongs will be the bomb.



KIRSTEN SUCHA / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Subway released their new footlong sidekicks on January 22nd. The new items include footlong churros, pretzels, and cookies.

Area coffee caffeinates Columbus

By **Aubree Beiermann**
Staff Reporter

Coffee cafes have been popping up in Columbus more now than ever. From big companies like Starbucks and Scooter's to small-town coffee shops like 38th Street Coffee and Broken Mug, Columbus has its fair share of coffee-infused people. From the classic black coffee to the blended caramel frappes, there is something for everyone. So where did they come from and what is the best?

According to Starbucks' website, Starbucks was founded in 1971 in Seattle, Oregon with coffee beans and a dream. Since 1971, Starbucks has opened 33,711 stores around the world. Starbucks workers wore brown aprons until 1987 when they switched to green. The name is inspired by the classic book *Moby Dick* and the warm aesthetic by Italian coffee shops.

According to Scooter's website, Scooter's Coffee was first started in Bellevue, Nebraska in 1998, and has grown to 750 locations worldwide as of 2023. At first, it was known as "Scooter's Java Express" because people could get in and out fast. Scooter's started with an idea for a coffee place that had the ease and quickness of a drive-thru, but still had the feel and taste of a nice coffee shop.

The Broken Mug and 38th Street Coffee are Columbus' hometown coffee shops. Both of the cafes are located and associated with churches. The Broken Mug was started in 2017 in the 1C Church. Now it has 2 more locations. The Mini Mug, also called the Coffee Trolley, is the drive-through option in the parking lot of The Broken Mug. They also recently opened the Downtown Mug in the Columbus Public Library. 38th Street Coffee is a part of the Highland Park Church and is across from the YMCA.

So, which is the best place to get coffee? The average ranking at Scotus were

The Broken Mug, Starbucks, Scooter's, and then 38th Street Coffee.

Freshman Lillian Miller chose The Broken Mug as her favorite coffee place in Columbus.

"I love the atmosphere of the Broken Mug. It is so cozy, all the food is fresh, and they have such a wide variety in their menu options," Miller said.

The Broken Mug also serves food. A person can get anything from breakfast scones to lunch sandwiches.

Junior Annie Weber picked Starbucks as her favorite.

"I have been a big fan of Starbucks for a while. They have many choices of drinks and they are customizable to your preferences," Weber said.

Starbucks is popular for being able to add and take out ingredients from their drinks.

Senior Tori Dush thinks Scooter's has the best coffee.

"You can actually taste the coffee instead of it being overpowered by sugar," Dush

said.

Scooter's also has Red-bull Infusions that a person can choose if they need an energy boost and do not like coffee.

Sophomore Audrey Stoner put 38th Street Coffee as her first option.

"There are so many more options to choose from and the staff is always friendly and welcoming," Stoner said.

38th Street Coffee is probably the most unknown to the people of Columbus. They have meals and treats as well.

This shows that there probably is not a true 'best coffee place' in Columbus. It depends on the person and what their taste buds like. From coffee to energy drinks, everybody needs caffeine.



Student body picks the perfect pizza place

By **Sofia Karges**
Staff Reporter

Pizza in Columbus has been around forever. Anytime the craving of cheesy, greasy goodness comes to mind, there is a place that satisfies

the hunger.

Scotus students were surveyed about which pizza place in Columbus is the best, and they ranked them in order of their favorite to least favorite. With many different pizza preferences, the results were varied across the board.

The overall rating of pizza in Columbus ranked by 157 Scotus students was as follows: Godfather's, Dominoes, Casey's, Little Caesar's, Pizza Ranch, Pizza Hut, and Valentino's.

While most of the results were ranked evenly, there

was one clear outlier. Godfather's beat out all the other places by about 30 votes; it was voted number one by 63 participants. Taking home the gold is not surprising to anyone, especially with its rich history and roots dating back to Columbus.

According to the *Columbus Telegram*, William Thiesen founded the first official Godfather's in Columbus back in 1974. Starting out as a bar owner in Omaha, a few businessmen offered him a deal he couldn't refuse, and Godfather's in Columbus was born.

Eighth grader Avery Heinrich was one of many who ranked Godfather's as her first choice.

"I like Godfather's because they have the best meat and the crust is really good," Heinrich said.

Since 1974, over 150 more franchise locations have been opened across the country. Needless to say, the one in Columbus has remained the one on top.

"I like Godfather's because they are the only place that serves taco pizza," sophomore Emilia Gassen said.

There are other great pizza flavors, of course, but nothing is quite as good as taco pizza from Godfather's.

Dominoes was also ranked a top three favorite of Scotus students. According to the Dominoes website, it was founded in 1960 in a small town in Michigan. Buying the building for just \$900, two brothers started the pizzeria and called it "DomiNick's." Four years later, the successful business was renamed "Dominoes," and it continues to be a popular choice as there are over 6,500 locations across the United States.

Freshmen Emma Splittgerber is one who ranked Dominoes as her top choice.

"They have the best pizza, their prices are good, and they have fast service," Splittgerber said.

Besides taste, having good service is what can make or break a business. You cannot go wrong with Dominoes' speedy delivery system. When you want a pizza fast, they are the ones to call.

Dominoes also proves to have great sides when something other than pizza is

being craved.

"They have really good chicken alfredo pizza and garlic bread bites," freshman Lydia Dostal said.

Casey's was the third ranking in the Scotus vote. It was founded in 1968 in a small town in Iowa. The founder, Kurvin C. Fish, named the store after his initials. Casey's is known primarily for its breakfast pizza, which was served for the first time in 1984 and officially put on the menu in 2001.

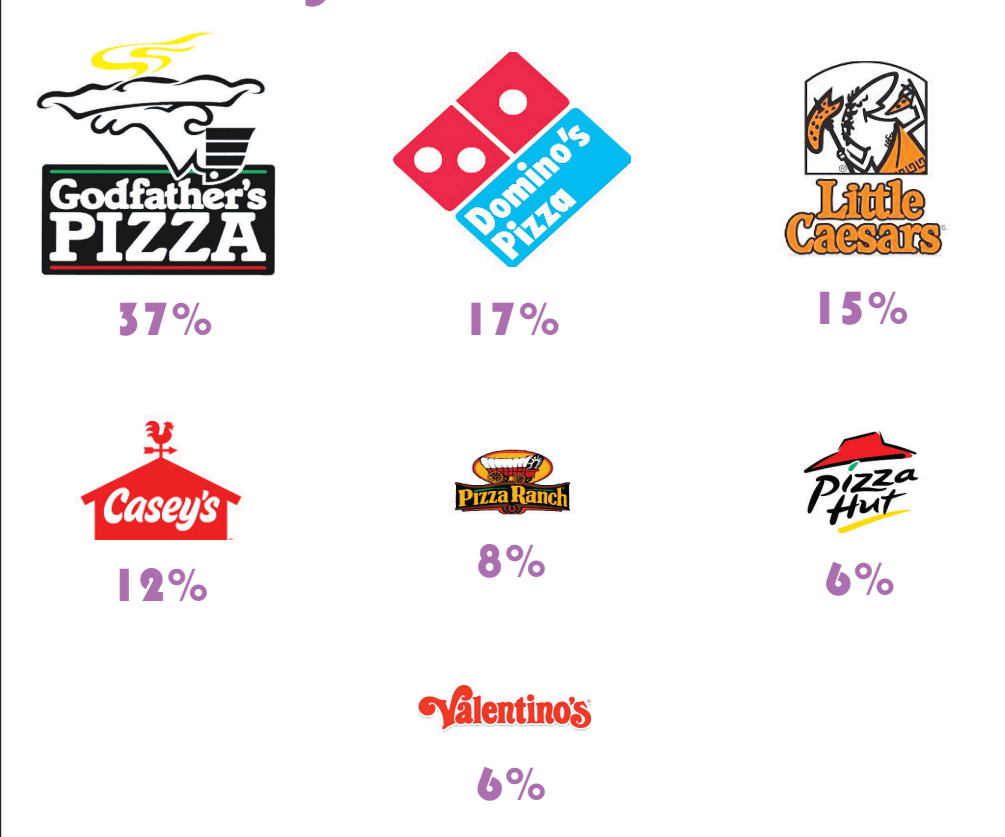
"You can never go wrong with Casey's breakfast pizza," eighth grader Tyson Cieloha said.

It is one of their best-selling items on the menu; they receive over 2.5 million orders a year for breakfast pizza alone. However, they also offer other flavors that are just as good.

"Casey's has the most flavor and the best crust in my opinion," junior Annie Weber said. "It is soft and cheesy."

Although everyone's pizza preferences are different, one thing is for sure: Columbus is the place for pizza.

Percentage of Number One Votes



Columbus food scene full of little unknowns

By **Patrick Arndt**
Staff Reporter

With a population of over 24,000, the small town of Columbus, Nebraska is home to a diverse food culture housing around 35 to 40 restaurants. Almost every street corner is occupied by a restaurant or food truck; however, hidden from the public's view lies some of Columbus' most historic and interesting restaurants. Each restaurant offers a unique hand in enriching Columbus's food culture, from Oriental, Cuban, to new takes on classic American cuisine.

Among the many minor restaurants, a few stand out among the rest. Of the different cultures of food, restaurants such as Copacabana, Glur's Tavern, and Highway 14 stand out showing the deep connections of food to people.

Copacabana is a small Cuban-style sandwich restaurant located north of Patriot Roofing LLC and barely south of Paws

& Claws Adoption Center across the train tracks. When first entering the restaurant, there is a strong cured meat smell, along with a faint smell of bread. Copacabana offers delicious authentic Cuban cuisine, spanning from Medianoche to Vaca Frita. Copacabana's Medianoche holds an authentic taste, from the egg bread to the roast ham topped with the perfect blend of cheese and pickles. Copacabana overall is an authentic restaurant offering a great look into Cuba's food culture.

Nearby is Glur's Tavern, a frequent of Buffalo Bill as I have been told. Glur's Tavern offers a rich history to the past of Columbus, being the oldest operating tavern on this side of the Mississippi River also being registered on the Nebraska Register of Historical Places. The Tavern itself is an interesting place, with sand volleyball pits and basketball hoops; the restaurant is family friendly offering fun for all ages. As the Tavern's history is rich,

so is its food. The burgers the Tavern serves are the true definition of "tavern burgers." Staying true to its American heritage, I ordered a burger, upon receiving it, I was bestowed with a double with American cheese, topped with ketchup, mustard, pickles, more cheese, bacon, and an onion ring with more on the side. Glur's Tavern is a family friendly restaurant offering a rich history to the diverse food culture of Columbus.

Finally, I trekked across town closer to home to try the tucked away Highway 14 Brewery, located a few blocks east of the Elks Country Club. As a recent addition to the restaurants in Columbus, Highway 14 Brewery remains relatively unnoticed, aside from the neighborhood around it. As Lent had begun, I decided to try their fish and chips basket, typically a meal without any notable taste. However, I was pleasantly surprised when I ate, due to the fish still being soft and moist, rather than so many

other restaurants offering dried out fish. This, however, was an excellent dish as it was a simple fried fish meal. Highway 14, out of all places, is more of a bar than it is

a restaurant but still offers high quality food and service, keeping its food simple.

Copacabana, Glur's Tavern, and Highway 14 all offer great food and service.

However, these three restaurants are not the only little unknowns from the Columbus food scene, but there are plenty more to find and try.



Copacabana Bakery and Cafe is a Dominican-Cuban style restaurant offering culturally rich foods. Located just off 23rd street, Copacabana remains relatively unknown, just like many others in Columbus.

Shamrocks jazz up state dance

By Kirsten Sucha
Staff Reporter

When most were sleeping soundly, the dance team was awoken by the sound of buzzing alarms on Saturday, February 17th. Rolling out of bed, they put on their costumes and loaded up the bus to head to the Heartland Activity Center. Where were they going? To the biggest competition of the year, class C1 state dance.

Before they went to state, the team had strenuous practices to work on their technique and cleanliness of their routine. They learned and practiced two routines this year: jazz and pom.

Senior Kalee Ternus has been a member of the flag team for four years.

"I felt over prepared. We practiced every morning from 6:30 to 7:15. By the end as a team, we were all burnt out

before state and were tired of the repetition," Ternus said.

As a team, they decided to drive down to Grand Island the night before to stay in hotel rooms. This was because they had to wake up bright and early to perform their jazz piece at 8:04 a.m. Upon arrival of the competition, the team was met with nerves and parents in the audience to cheer them on. To calm their anxiety, they took to prayer for good luck.

"We always pray 3 Hail Marys and jump up and down to make us feel prepared. At the end we pray to the saints to intercede for us," Ternus said.

They were then ready to perform their jazz routine, and being the second performance of the day, the pressure was heavy. Jazz consists of synchronized rhythms and profusion of forms to show group movement. They danced to the popular 1990s

song "Vogue."

Senior Nicole Peterson does competition dance outside of the flag and dance team.

"We were the second number to perform for the day, and they called us right as we headed backstage," Peterson said.

After their first performance, they had to wait two hours until their next dance at 10:32 a.m. This was their pom, which was danced to a mashup of songs by Lady Gaga including "Applause", "Born This Way", and "Bad Romance." Pom uses formations, jumps, and skills to emphasize synchronized arm movements. After the wait, they were ready to perform once again.

Senior Karol Torres joined the flag team her sophomore year.

"It wasn't that bad [performing in front of a large audience] considering I

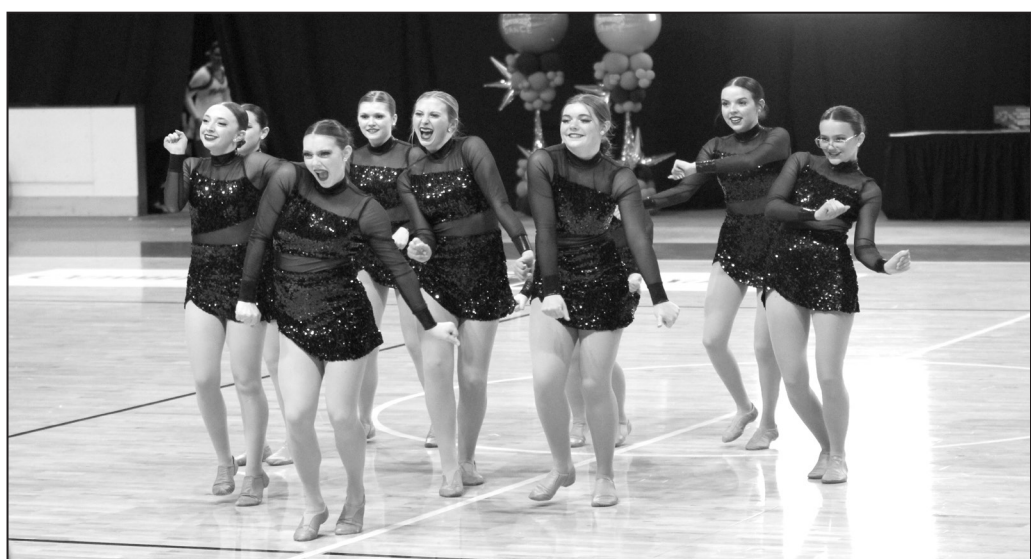


PHOTO COURTESY SARA MILLER

The dance team, seniors Karol Torres, Kalee Ternus, and Nicole Peterson, freshman Audrey Naughton, seniors Caittee Hutchinson and Kaitlyn Fleming, freshman Lillian Miller, sophomore Lily Wemhoff and senior Amber Spawn perform their jazz routine at Class C1 state dance. The team placed 11th in jazz and 18th in pom.

couldn't see anyone because I didn't have my glasses on and I don't have contacts," Torres said.

After their second performance, they had to wait

until about 12:30 p.m. for awards. Overall, the team placed 11th out of 13 in jazz and 18th out of 21 in pom.

"It doesn't matter the scoring because everyone had

fun, and it was an experience. The girls who won state deserve it because they live, laugh, love dance. We are a dance and flag team. Most of us prefer dance," Ternus said.

FBLA leads in the little things

By Joanna Rusher
Staff Reporter

A national event made its way to a little Catholic school in Columbus, Nebraska a few

weeks ago thanks to a school organization. National Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) Week is a week filled with volunteerism, gratitude, and relationships that occurs every year during the second week of February. Every FBLA group from around the country fulfills the themed days in their own way.

The week kicked off on Service Sunday where the students assisted sophomore Seth Druempel with his recycling service project. After snow days and other activities, the recycling throughout the school had really piled up. The next day was Mentor Monday when several FBLA members took a trip to Home Grown Nutrition, a local business owned by a Scotus alum. Sophomore Kenzie Hille was one of these members who talked to the business owner Halle Parker.

"I enjoy learning about how small businesses impact our daily lives," Hille said.

For Tuesday Talk, the FBLA students attended Mass to talk with the Lord, and afterwards, computer business teacher and FBLA sponsor Kris Wurtz provided donuts in her classroom to invite the members to talk to each other. The whole school became involved on Why Wednesday when the student body was encouraged to find the FBLA logos hidden throughout the school.

"Wednesday is when we started the logo scavenger hunt, just to get FBLA out in front of people," Wurtz said.

Finally, on Thankful Thursday and Friday, Sweet Harvest Popcorn, which is a local business also owned by a Scotus alum, was placed in the teachers' lounge to show appreciation for Scotus staff.

Junior Ella Hash has been in FBLA since her freshman year.

"It's rewarding to do something for the teachers," Hash said. "They barely get recognition for all the hard work they do for the students here at Scotus."

Besides FBLA Week, the organization does many other activities throughout the year. Some examples of this are the teacher secret santa, canned food drive, packages for troops, and the State Leadership Conference. Sophomore Sophie Parker will be attending the conference on April 11th.

"We do little things for our school and community that aren't huge sacrifices but make a big difference," Parker said.

The FBLA group at Scotus has grown in the past years with twenty-two mem-

bers this year. With a group this size, FBLA has been able to become more involved in the community and school

"FBLA is not just necessarily about the Future Business Leaders of America," Wurtz said. "It's more about being a service organization and just doing the right thing for other people."

Although FBLA is one of the smaller clubs at Scotus, there are many reasons to become a member. Whether a person wants to grow in leadership, business skills, or service, there is a place for them in this national organization.

"I am a part of FBLA to make an impact on my community," sophomore Jem Meyer said. "I'm always willing to give a helping hand to people who need it, so FBLA was the perfect fit for me."



PHOTO COURTESY KRIS WURTZ

Sophomores Lily Wemhoff, Kenzie Hille, and Sophie Parker pick up the recycling on Service Sunday to kick off FBLA week. FBLA week is a nationally recognized week with different themes for each day.

Dinner concert welcomes western theme

By Cecilia Arndt
Editor

The best events are consistent but change from year to year, and the band dinner concert does exactly that. Each year, the band students sell tickets for the concert, which is a fundraiser and attendees are served dinner. The theme, however, varies every year, with students to dressing up in more casual attire and festively decorating the gym. This year, the theme was country. With everyone decked out from head to toe in cowboy hats, flannels, jeans, and boots, the gym

was filled with the twang of country music. In addition to the westernwear, some students embraced the theme with dancing.

"The best part was line dancing and swing dancing to the songs," sophomore Audrey Stoner said. "It was so much fun, and I would love to do it again for another concert."

Sophomore Jacqueline Stoner is part of the group of Scotus students who dance to country music and meet almost every weekend. Eager to display their expertise, there were many people participating in the interactive concert.

"I love swing dancing so I enjoyed getting to show off my skills at the concert," J. Stoner said. "Engaging in the theme makes it so fun!"

In addition to the students dancing, the non-traditional approach to the band dinner concert was popular, as parents participated in the theme and dressed up like the students.

"Some parents even decided to go with the theme and wear cowboy hats," Abby Schumacher said.

As many people at Scotus are familiar with country, the music played was well received.

"Hot topic: the best part

about the country theme is the music," junior Henry Chard said.

The band performed the well-known songs "Rocky Top," "Fancy Like," "Take Me Home Country Roads," "Chicken Fried," "Like I Love Country Music," and "God Bless the USA." As these are popular songs, the crowd recognized them and some even sang along.

"It was so wholesome to look up from my music and see all the junior high and elementary kids singing along," A. Stoner said.

Although the band had a successful concert, they had to adapt to the two lead saxo-

phones, juniors Henry Chard and Ian Karges, being injured a week before the concert.

"We had a couple of curve balls thrown our way with Henry's surgery and Ian's concussion," band director Kristen Cox said. "Both guys play saxophone and are the only saxophones in the Jazz Band."

Fortunately, Chard was able to play for the concert, but they still needed to enlist the help of Ms. Salyard to perform with the Jazz Band.

"Preparation was a little stressful; we had to have Ms. Salyard step in and play her saxophone with the jazz band. Despite claiming not to

have played in five years, she killed it and everything ran smoothly at the concert," A. Stoner said.

In the end, the concert was a success and a smash hit with parents and students alike. With over 900 attendees and performers, the concert was well attended and appealed to the masses.

"When people get up to dance and dress over the top, it always makes the concerts more enjoyable," senior Neve Pavlik said. "The dinner concert is always super fun."



KYRA BOWEN / YEARBOOK STAFF

Band director Kristen Cox dances with her son, Lucas Cox, at the band dinner concert on February 5th. The theme for the band dinner concert was country and students and director alike embraced the theme by swing and line dancing.



KYRA BOWEN / YEARBOOK STAFF

Eighth graders Julia McPhillips and JR Oehlich and senior Luke Chard play the trumpet at the band dinner concert on February 5th. The concert had over 900 attendees and performers.

Little Women small cast creates a family

By Madden Saenz
Staff Reporter

Each year, Scotus has had the opportunity to perform a musical. Directed and choreographed by Ms. Laura Salyard, the actors and crew members give their all to perform their best musical each year. Last year's performance was Annie, a heartwarming, wholesome production. This year, the musical crew took a slightly more dramatic approach with their rendition of the classic novel, Little Women, by Louisa May Alcott.

However, musical usually involves less people than other events, meaning the cast and crew selection is slim. Regardless, the talent and skill are plentiful and diverse. At least three students from every grade have given their time and effort to bring such a production to life. This small cast brings everyone together, creating close bonds both on and offstage.

Freshman Lillian Miller shared her thoughts on the tight community the musical had formed.

"Having a smaller cast has resulted in a very close, family-like relationship. Everyone understands how everyone functions and how to work well with each other," Miller said.

If a cast member fell

ill or could not perform, immense difficulties would arise for the cast and crew. Unfortunately, this exact scenario happened.

Junior Henry Chard suffered a knee injury during the football season in October. At the first appointment, Chard was diagnosed with a meniscus tear. However, a follow-up appointment would reveal much worse: a torn ACL. On top of this, Chard would be playing Laurie, the male lead in the show. Without a Laurie, there would be no musical.

"In January, the doctor told me it would be at least four weeks until I was off crutches when I found out my lateral meniscus and ACL were both torn," Chard said. "I told [Ms. Salyard] I was sorry; I had to get this surgery ASAP. She understood, and I let her know I was willing to help out the new Laurie if there was anything I could do."

Fortunately, Ms. Salyard found a stand-in for Laurie. Junior Jordan Kouma filled the role. Kouma's characterization, body type, and appearance were a perfect fit for the character of Laurie. However, Kouma's vocal range was not what Ms. Salyard sought. Also, Chard still wanted to stay involved with the musical as much as



MAKENNA BARELS / YEARBOOK STAFF

Juniors Jessica Jackson, Lily Humphrey, Caroline Klitz, Jordan Koama, Alex Casperson, and Henry Chard pose for the post-show photo. Kouma had acted and danced on stage while Chard sang from backstage.

he could. With this in mind, Ms. Salyard devised a plan to save the musical: Kouma would act on stage and lip-sync to the songs during the performance. Meanwhile, Chard would be backstage singing into a microphone.

Finally, hours of preparation would culminate in three consecutive performances on February 9th, 10th, and 11th. The singing and lip-syncing between Kouma and Chard were seamless; few knew the singer's voice came from

backstage.

"We are very proud of the show we put on," junior Caroline Klitz said. "It is one of the best Scotus has put on in recent years."

Each performance had passion and power put into it, especially throughout the character of Jo March by junior Jessica Jackson.

"I was able to cry on command," Jackson said, "and Caroline, the actor for Marmee, sang beautifully."

Jackson was not the

only person crying from the heartfelt performances. Klitz gave a heartfelt performance and noticed the emotions she made the audience feel.

"The best part was about halfway through the second act; there is a string of heartbreaking songs. Especially during 'Some Things are Meant to Be' and 'Days of Plenty' my solo," Klitz said. "Audience members began crying, even some staff members."

"We are all very proud of

how we did during the preparation and performance of the musical. It was a crowd favorite, and Ms. Salyard herself was extremely happy with how it turned out," Miller said. "Aside from a few hiccups regarding a knee surgery during preparation it went smoothly, and we felt that we were prepared and confident going into performance."



MAKENNA BARELS / YEARBOOK STAFF

Junior Jessica Jackson and sophomore Evan Pavlik sing "Small Umbrella in the Rain." Little Women follows the love stories of the sisters while also focusing on the dynamics and importance of family.



CALEB CAMERON / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Seniors Neve Pavlik and Cecilia Arndt and junior Lily Humphrey tell junior Caroline Klitz about their day. Klitz portrayed the mother of the four sisters. While Pavlik, Arndt, Humphrey, and junior Jessica Jackson (not pictured) portrayed the sisters.

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Everyone should prep for Paris 2024

By Mary Faltys
Staff Reporter

Big televised sporting events are widely watched for the inspiring, entertaining, and sometimes controversial competitions between the greatest athletes, and what event has more talent than the Olympics? With so many different sports, qualifying times, events, and rules, it can be somewhat confusing to understand, but that should not deter spectators from tuning into the Olympics.

The 2024 Summer Olympic Games are coming to Paris this year from July 26th to August 11th. The last Summer Olympics were somewhat awkward because the athletes had to work around the COVID shutdown and protocols, so this year's Games are back in full swing. With 32 sports, including one new addition, any sports fan can find something exciting in the Games. Team USA brings home more Olympic medals than any other country, so the Olympics are especially exciting for Americans to watch.

The process for the

Olympics begins early each year. Each sport has their own trials with unique standards to determine who will be representing Team USA in the Games. The trials are exciting because not only do they determine who will be representing the USA, they are a preview of what the Olympics will be like. The competition can be just as fierce and exciting as the actual games. It is also a great chance to get familiar with the USA athletes.

With so many elite sports to watch, it can seem impossible to pick one. Gymnastics, taking place from July 27th to August 5th, is impressive for the strength, flexibility, coordination, and agility required of its athletes. Because there are several events, such as the floor routine, uneven bars, trampoline, vault, balance beam, and more, it is hard to get bored of watching the gymnasts, both men and women.

Swimming is also watched by many around the world. Many of the most well-known and decorated Olympians are swimmers. Team USA is especially

successful in this area of the Games; an American makes finals in nearly every event. Because distances and strokes vary with each event, watching swimming is not as mundane as some other sports. It is not uncommon for upsets either, keeping spectators optimistic. The swimming events will be held July 27th through August 4th in Paris.

Although the Olympic Games have been held for almost 3000 years, additional sports and events continue to be added. There is one completely brand-new event coming this summer: breaking, AKA breakdancing.

How will it work? Men and women will compete separately, as with most other sports, with 16 participants each. To compete, two "breakers" go head-to-head, with one breaker performing their dance first and the other responding, and they continue to go back and forth. Five judges will watch their breakdancing battle and score them according to their creativity, personality, technique, variety, and musicality. The competitor with the higher



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Breaking, more commonly known as breakdancing, is a new addition to the Olympic Games this summer. In the photo above, one competitor performs her dance while the other watches and prepares her responding routine.

score moves onto the next round.

With so many sports, events, teams, and athletes to watch, the Olympics are

a highly anticipated event each time they come around. Various sports have their own rules, athletes, and level of competition, making for a

confusing time for interested viewers, but that should not deter them from watching.

The Chosen release alienates audiences

By Cecilia Arndt
Editor

One of the most popular Christian TV shows is *The Chosen*. This series

details the life and ministry of Jesus Christ, including not only major events and miracles, but His daily life. There are currently three seasons released through Angel Studios' apps for free

and on streaming services, including Netflix, Youtube, and Amazon Prime. The newest season, season four, has begun releasing episodes throughout theaters.

So far, I have enjoyed

watching *The Chosen* and think it is an insightful take on the Gospels. Most content based on Jesus is about the Crucifixion, but there is an untapped market for the life story of Him. The introspection of Jesus' motivations and His daily life is shown in a poignant manner, showing audiences a lesser known side of Jesus. However, although I enjoy the show itself, I am less than pleased with the newest release of the series, the fourth season.

As the series has progressed, the creator, Dallas Jenkins, has experimented with movie theater releases with some success. Season three was partially released in theaters and online in late 2022 and early 2023. The first two episodes of the season were released in theaters on November 18th, 2022, and the rest of the season aired online with the first episode on December 11th, 2022, and the other episodes dispersed one week apart. This model worked well, with audiences

anticipating the release of the episodes in theaters and online, without having to miss out on some episodes. The newest season, however, has strayed from this method.

Season four, one of the most anticipated seasons for *The Chosen*, is currently being exclusively shown in theaters before being released in streaming services. However, the model they chose was not as palatable for audiences. Angel Studios has decided to release the season in three increments, showing them on the big screen before releasing them online. This would not be a problem, except for the fact that they are not keeping the previous episodes in theaters. This means, if a viewer was unable to watch the first three episodes, there is not a way for them to catch up before seeing episodes four through six. The streaming release is expected to be out after the last episodes are out of theaters, so even less of an audience will be available to

watch the last two episodes.

I believe this alienation of viewership may lead to fewer people watching the succeeding episodes in theaters, ending with less success at the box office. I think Angel Studios' method of release could be improved upon by releasing the previous online when they are taken out of theaters. If they used this method, they could allow audiences who missed the first episodes to catch up and to watch the newest episodes in theaters. Although I do not agree with the method of release chosen by Angel Studios, I still think the series shows a side of Jesus unseen by many.

Currently, the last installation of season four is in theaters with episodes seven and eight through March 10th. The streaming release has not been announced yet, but the earliest date will be after the last episodes are out of theaters, unfortunately.



MOVIEGUIDE.ORG

The Chosen season four has been in theaters since February 14th, with episodes 7-8 in theaters through March 10th, 2024. Pictured above is Jesus, played by Jonathan Roumie, and His apostles following Him.

Listeners 'Kahan't' get enough of Noah

By Quinn VunCannon
Staff Reporter

After the smashing success of the title track *Stick Season*, many doubters thought Noah Kahan was going to go down in history as the typical one hit wonder artist who was only popular because their song went viral on TikTok. The release of his full album *Stick Season*, however, proved otherwise.

The original album posted 14 songs and was released in October 2022. Kahan then released an elongated version of the album with 6 brand new songs and one extended track in June 2023, called *Stick Season (We'll All Be Here Forever)*. Since then, Kahan has periodically rereleased singles from the album with impressive features that elevate each and every song. Notable collaborations include Post Malone, Kacey Muskgraves, Gracie Abrams, and Hozier.

Recently, on February

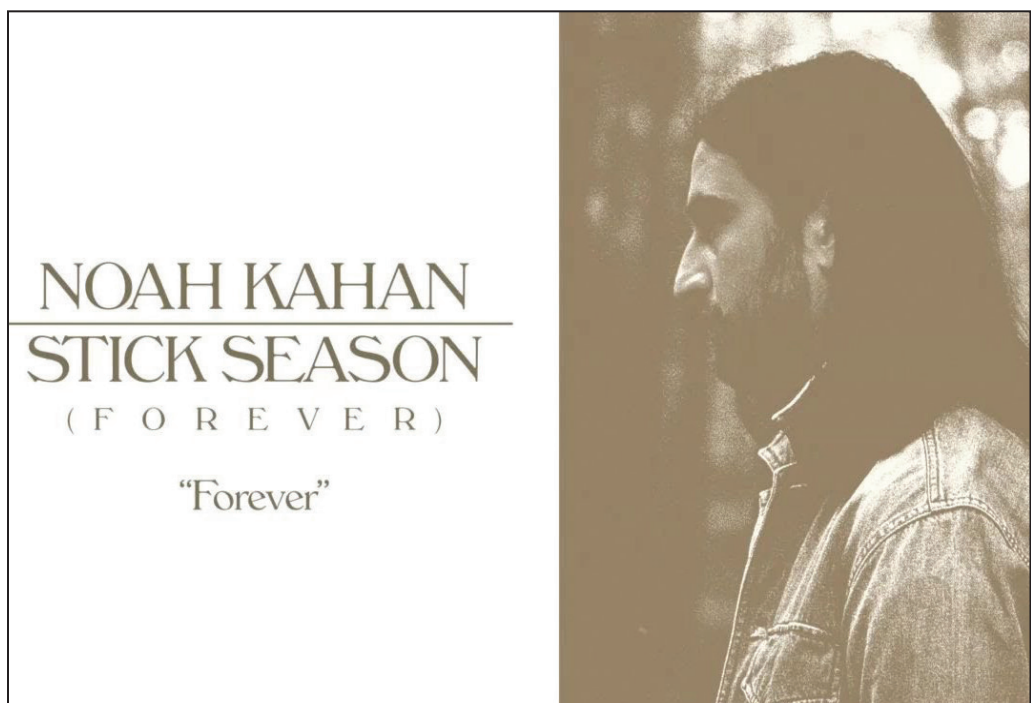
9th, Kahan released the final addition to the *Stick Season* collection titled *Stick Season (Forever)*. The final pieces added were an original song titled "Forever", and 2 rereleases with features, "You're Gonna Go Far" with Brandi Carlile and "Paul Revere" with Gregory Alan Isakov. All three of these new songs put a pristine bow on Kahan's *Stick Season* era and sum up the essence of Noah Kahan's take on indie folk music.

The original song, "Forever," starts off the new tracks swinging for the fences. The song's lyricism perfectly encapsulates the feelings of wanting to love someone through the highs and lows of life, and looking back on events in your life with different perspectives. The whole album has a theme of accepting change, and "Forever" is no different. The lyric "I won't be alone for the rest of my life / I'll build a boat for when the river gets high" highlights how Kahan utilizes the people around

him to get him through tough times. Using relatable lyrics set to a banjo or fiddle is Noah Kahan in a nutshell.

The next new song, "You're Gonna Go Far", was already a stand out single when it was added on to the original album in 2023. When Brandi Carlile adds her vocals to this track, it sounds nothing short of magical. Carlile's husky yet powerful voice adds harmonies throughout the whole song, and when she soloed the second verse it left me with goosebumps. "You're Gonna Go Far" is already an emotional song about growing up and Carlile's addition elevates that much further.

The final track of *Stick Season (Forever)* is "Paul Revere" with Gregory Alan Isakov. This song is about yearning to leave your hometown once you see the ugly truths about it. Isakov adds more traditional country sounding vocals that pair well with the song's western and American Revolution themes.



NOAH KAHAN YOUTUBE CHANNEL

Grammy-nominated Noah Kahan poses for the album cover of *Stick Season (Forever)*. Kahan's final *Stick Season* album included two new features and one original song, "Forever."

As expected, this song delivers on every level. The new bridge of this song is one of the best on the entire album and is a perfect bookend to Kahan's *Stick Season* era.

Some listeners might see the indie folk label of Kahan's music and be hesitant to listen, but the listening experience to Kahan's music is otherworldly. As a now

Grammy nominated artist, Kahan will certainly not go down as a 'TikTok artist' and has cemented himself as a staple in playlists around the world.



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Journalism finishes state runner-up

By **Quinn VunCannon**
Staff Reporter

Being successful at a state championship level is a hard feat in any sport or activity. The prestigious journalism program at Scotus is no stranger to competing on this elevated stage. The journalism students who qualified for state all traveled to Norfolk on Monday, April 22nd, to compete in the state competition and brought home a runner-up trophy.

The Shamrocks took 15 students who competed across 20 different categories. Some people had to write or draw on site to compete, while others, like those who qualified in the video production categories, did not have to turn in any new work at the event.

Journalism advisor and English teacher Angie Rusher has coached 5 state championship teams including a streak of three wins in a row, 2021, 2022, and 2023.

"I would prefer every category was a competition. I have faith in our students' abilities, and it shows what they can do on their own without the help of an advisor," Rusher commented.

Senior Rosie Sucha qualified for Newspaper Sports Feature



RYLIE JARECKI / YEARBOOK STAFF

Senior Rosie Sucha stands on the podium as a state champion in Newspaper Sports Feature Writing. Sucha was the sole Shamrock to come home with a first place medal.

Writing.

"Going into the morning I was really nervous because I had a live event, which meant I had to interview someone and write an article

in time. I ended up with a topic I was familiar with, so it allowed me to write a pretty solid article," Sucha said.

Sucha was the only Shamrock



RYLIE JARECKI / YEARBOOK STAFF

Juniors Rebecca Kosch and Alyssa Nelsen and seniors Josie Sliva and Isabel Zaruba pose with their medals in the Broadcast PSA category. Kosch and Nelsen placed 4th, and Sliva and Zaruba placed 2nd.

to come home as a state champion in their category.

Junior Jessica Jackson qualified in two events, Editorial Cartooning and Photo Illustration. Last year,

Jackson brought home a gold medal in Advertising.

"Competing with this team for the past few years has been a blast.

See **JOURNALISM**, Page 2

Opportunities open up for teachers

By **Aubree Beiermann**
Staff Reporter

This upcoming school year, Scotus will be losing some familiar faces and finding some new ones. At the start of the 2024-2025 school year, students will walk the halls and not see four familiar teachers. Alaina Wallick, Autumn Holoubeck, Alexandra Rubeck, and Ryan Baker will all move on from Scotus life to what else the world has to offer.

Wallick has been at Scotus for the last two years and teaches 8th and 10th grade English. She plans on continuing at this level of teaching in the future at Fort Calhoun. With her experience as an assistant coach for the speech team at Scotus, Wallick also wants to coach the speech team at Fort Calhoun.

"Being at Scotus has been a learning experience. I have learned that everyone always has room to grow, and we all need that mindset," Wallick said.

Wallick wants to go back to school and get a Master's in School Counseling.

"Being at Scotus has helped me learn how to help students outside of school environments which I can use to help students in the future," Wallick said

Holoubeck has been teaching Spanish 1 and 2 at Scotus for two years, and this year, she added Spanish 3 and started the Spanish Club. Holoubeck plans to move to

See **TEACHERS**, Page 2

Speech takes on state, medals 4

By **Quinn VunCannon**
Staff Reporter

The Shamrock speech team made history at districts this year. Scotus traveled to Raymond Central on Saturday, March 16th to compete in the B-4 District meet where every single person who competed qualified for state. The Shamrocks then took home 6 medals across 4 competitors at the state tournament on Wednesday, March 20th.

Junior Jessica Jackson became a back to back champion in Program of Oral Interpretation as well as taking gold in Poetry, and silver in Serious Prose.

"I felt a lot more confident than I did last year. I was warned I wouldn't make it, but I knew however I did, I performed my best," Jackson said.

After a regular season with nearly 25 gold medals, the bar was set sky high for Jackson, and she delivered.

"As individual as speech may seem, we all work as a team to support each other," Jackson added.

Jackson was joined on the podium by junior Becky Policky, who took first place in Informative Speaking after only taking home gold in two meets prior.

"To be honest, I wasn't expecting to win. It was such a shock, but I'm truly grateful for the award. All I can do is give all the glory to God," Policky commented.

Senior Logan Erickson placed 5th in Poetry in his first appearance at the state contest.

"I've been in speech for 6

years, and this is the only year I even made state. I definitely ended my speech career off the way I wanted to," Erickson said.

Junior Jordan Kouma was the final Shamrock to medal at state, taking second place for Extemporaneous Speaking.

"I had enough confidence to know I could place well, but my event changes every time I give it," Kouma commented. "But it is great to have the reassurance that I am good enough to place in a high level tournament."

Although only 4 people earned state medals, the speech team had a successful season, winning 5 out of

the 7 meets they competed in.

"Everyone found some sort of success somewhere. We owe our success to our teammates and especially to our amazing coaches," Jackson said.

The speech team is headed by Speech and English teacher Melanie Mimick, who has been coaching for 9 years, and English teacher Alaina Wallick who has coached the past 2 seasons.

"Getting that many kids to qualify was never on my 'coach's bucket list', so it came as a little bit of a shock, but at the same time, it shows the dedication of the kids," Mimick said.

The Shamrocks ended a successful regular season with Scotus history, and some will be continuing that success at the national level. Juniors Madden Saenz, Jessica Jackson, Jordan Kouma, and Becky Policky will be competing in the National Individual Events Tournament of Champions in May, and Saenz and Jackson will be competing in the National Speech and Debate Association National Tournament this June.

"It's an unreal achievement. I'm really looking forward to seeing us compete among the best of the best and seeing how we stack up," Saenz concluded.



PHOTO COURTESY MELANIE MIMICK

Senior Logan Erickson, juniors Becky Policky, Jessica Jackson, and Jordan Kouma pose with their state medals on Wednesday, March 20th. Erickson placed 5th in Poetry, Policky took 1st in Informative, Jackson took 1st in Poetry and Program of Oral Interpretation and 2nd in Serious Prose, and Kouma was runner up in Extemporaneous Speaking.

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7 Issues:
 October 12
 November 16
 December 13
 February 1
 March 7
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JOURNALISM

We all each have our own strengths that we bring to the table, and we all work together to make each of those talents shine," Jackson said.
 Jackson placed 4th in Photo Illustration and 6th in Editorial Cartooning.

Senior Joanna Rusher was also a returning state medalist, and this year qualified in Editorial Writing, Broadcast Feature Story, Broadcast News Story, and Broadcast Sports Story.
 "When I started writing, I

was totally in the zone. I forgot I was even at state journalism. Mrs. Rusher has trained us so well, so I just felt like I was back in her classroom, sitting at my computer, typing an article for *Rock Bottom*," Rusher said.

Rusher placed 3rd in Editorial Writing, and 6th place in all her broadcast events.
 Junior Evan Steffensmeier and senior Mason Gonka placed 3rd in Broadcast Sports Story.
 "This was one of our first videos, but it was definitely a fun experience. The most challenging part was finding clips with sound; however, we did find some gems and that allowed us to place well at state," Steffensmeier said.
 Senior Logan Erickson placed 3rd in the Advertising category.
 "Competing at state journalism is fun because it gives another perspective into competitive arts," Erickson said.
 Scotus put up a team score of 248 points, just shy of the champions Gretna East who carded 274 points.
 "We knew going in that it was going to be tough competition. 26 points away from a championship is really not very many. That is only a couple of places difference, so though I obviously would have preferred a state championship, I am really proud of how we finished and competed," A. Rusher concluded.



PHOTO COURTESY MINDY HASH

The journalism team poses with their state runner-up trophy on Monday, April 22nd. The team took 15 students to compete across 20 categories.

TEACHERS

Omaha and teach at Skutt Catholic High School.
 "I am for sure teaching Spanish 1 and 2. After that, I'm not exactly sure," Holoubeck said.
 While teaching at Scotus she has grown many relationships with both students and staff.
 "Scotus has been a really good place to start my career as a teacher and to learn a lot from my coworkers, students, and administration. It's been wonderful," Holoubeck said. "It's been hard to tell [the students] I am leaving and won't return next year."
 Rubeck has taught sophomore and junior history classes for the

past 4 years. She is also the head girls' track coach and JV and varsity assistant volleyball coach. She plans to move her focus from teaching to more coaching and instructing.
 "I will be interning at the Fieldhouse. I'm going to work under Lucas Novotny's strengthening program," Rubeck said. "Then I want to study and take the Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist exam."
 Rubeck is going to stay around and continue coaching volleyball and track.
 "You can tell Scotus has a family atmosphere, at least among the staff and the students. I'll miss

seeing kids and staff members every day because there are those relationships that you build with one another," Rubeck said.
 Ryan Baker has been teaching at Scotus for the past 3 years. He teaches Strength Training and boys JH PE. He also helps coach football. Baker plans to stay in the Columbus area and teach at 2 of the Catholic elementary schools.
 "I'll have PE classes split up between St. Bons and St. Isidore," Baker said. "I will be designing certain curricula and activities for kids, depending on their grade level and their ability."
 Even though Baker is leaving

he still hopes to be a familiar face to the students and staff of Scotus.
 "I've had some people mention like 'you're leaving!' I'm just taking a different position. I'm not moving. It's not goodbye, it's just see you later," Baker said.
 Wallick's position is going to be filled by Danielle Urkoski coming from Columbus Middle School and Rubeck's by Michael Rerucha from Wayne State College. The Spanish and Strength and Conditioning positions have not yet been filled.

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Prom brings back roaring 20's theme

By **Kirsten Sucha**
Staff Reporter

"Last night was a movie, "Nights like this," and "Say yes to the prom dress" were splattered all over Instagram posts after Scotus Central Catholic hosted their annual prom on April 6th. After countless days of waiting and hoping for prom night to arrive, it finally came.

The night started with pictures at 4:30 p.m. The juniors took photos at Columbus Motor Company while the seniors took theirs at the Columbus library. Students quickly departed to go to prom mass at 5:30 p.m. at St. Isidore's Church, and everyone headed to the dance shortly after. The junior class had the responsibility of decorating the dance and picking out the theme. This year, the theme of the 1920's was chosen.

Junior class officer Quinn VunCannon helped set up for the dance.

"Mrs. Holubek was really great about organizing everything for the officers. We ended up having everything ready but the backdrop, and Mrs. Rusher just so happened to pull a Great Gatsby tapestry out of her closet. It was

perfect!" VunCannon said.

Everyone was seated at 7:15 p.m. for the chicken or steak dinner served with green beans, a dinner roll, a baked potato, and cookie for dessert. This seems to be a Scotus tradition, but most schools around the country do not serve dinner before the dance.

Junior Adrianna Kush thought prom was the best school dance she had ever attended.

"I think it is a good addition because most people do not want to eat before pictures, but it would also be a lot for people to go out somewhere to eat before the dance," Kush said.

The meal lasted for about an hour, and then it was finally time to start boogying on the dance floor. One noticeable difference from last year to this year was the DJ. Instead of only playing music, he helped participate in the fun by throwing out poppers, glow sticks, LED foam sticks, and even inflatable guitars.

"Something that stuck out to me was that everyone had fun with each other and we all just had a good time together; my favorite memory had to be when Kameron

Kudron was declared a rockstar by the DJ," senior Karol Torres said.

The dance concluded at 11:30 p.m. After the dance, most went home to change and get ready for post prom. This year, post prom was hosted at 12:30 a.m. located at the field house. Here, juniors parents generously chaperoned the celebration to continue formal prom. Students were able to play games, eat various snacks, and even win prizes at the end of the night.

"I enjoyed having post prom at the fieldhouse because it allowed us to have a lot of different and exciting activities like putt-putt, pickleball, electronic bull, and the giant human hamster ball," junior Abby Schumacher said.

Prizes were handed out at 3:00 a.m., and most students went home directly after they were given out. Prizes included TVs, apple watches, airpods, various gift cards, and much more.

Junior Adam Gonzalez played soccer for the majority of post prom. "[You should attend prom] because you can have fun, dance, laugh, jump, and enjoy the music. It is a great time to have fun."



ANGIE RUSHER / JOURNALISM ADVISOR

Seniors Joanna Rusher, Max Lancaster, Isabel Zaruba, and Macey Johannes dance with the DJ at prom on April 6th. The DJ threw out glowsticks, party poppers, LED foam sticks, and blow-up guitars to help celebrate prom night.



RYLIE JARECKI / YEARBOOK STAFF

Juniors Katelyn Pensick, Hanna Chohon, Ben Sueper, and Henry Ramaekers play a competitive game of spikeball in the fieldhouse at post-prom. Spikeball was one of many activities offered at post-prom.



ANGIE RUSHER / JOURNALISM ADVISOR

(back) Seniors Ben Schumacher, Mason Puntney, David De Leon, (front) Joshua Bixenmann, Alex Medina-Perez, Matthew Gokie, and Kaden Backman smile for a photo before the meal served at prom.

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Track teams sprint towards Burke

By Caleb Cameron
Staff Reporter

With summer approaching, the spring sports seasons speed to a close. The athletes continue to work hard, fighting to secure their ticket to the state competition. This year, the girls track team had many new girls along with other girls stepping up and improving their performance from last season. The boys team had many returning athletes hoping to make it back to Burke this coming May.

Sprinters coach Cody Mroczek is in his second year coaching the track team.

"For the boys, we are returning all of our point scorers from last season so expectations are really high. The girls team has a lot of underclassmen and some girls coming over from soccer that are new to the varsity level. They've started to pick up things such as technique and the importance of running form that have boosted their performance from the start of the season to now," Mroczek

said.

The track season started on March 16th in Wayne at the Wayne State College HS invite. Both teams placed 2nd, with many athletes winning or placing in their events. Senior Jude Maguire won the 800-meter run.

"The season has started off strong. We've had a lot of early success. I've wanted to break the school record in the 800 and place at state. I also think we have a great chance to win the 4x4 this year at state," Maguire said.

The Shamrocks traveled back to Wayne for a second time competing in the Blue Devil Invite on April 2nd. The boys placed 2nd and the girls placed 5th. Senior Joanna Rusher finished third in the high jump.

"I was excited for track this year. I've started this season off way farther ahead compared to this time last year which is exciting. Even though we aren't placing higher than last year yet, I can see the team improving meet by meet," Rusher said.

Building on their success, the Shamrocks traveled to Boone Central on April 9th for the Boone Central Invite. The boys team placed 4th and the girls team placed 7th. Senior Mary Faltys placed 3rd in the 3200-meter run.

"The Boone Central Invite was my favorite meet so far. I ran better than I expected in the 3200 and competed well in the 1600," Faltys said.

After the Boone Central Invite, the Shamrocks ran at the Central City Invite on April 12th and the Fred Arnold Invite in Schuyler on April 18th. With every meet, the teams kept shaving time off their personal records. The boys 4x800 relay teams placed 1st at both meets. The boys' 4x400 relay team placed 3rd at both meets. The girls 4x800 relay team placed 2nd at the Central City Invite. Senior Jackson Heng is a part of both the 4x400 and 4x800 relay teams.

"I'd like to make it to state in the 4x800 and 4x400. By the way our relays have



ASHLEE LEFFERS / YEARBOOK STAFF

Junior Owen Lindhorst holds the lead in a tight finish of the boys 400 meter dash on April 23rd at the Lakeview Invite. Lindhorst claimed gold with a time of 51.29 seconds, and the boys placed 1st overall.

been performing as of late, I think we have a great opportunity to perform well at districts and make a big run at the state meet," Heng said.

On April 23rd, the Shamrocks traveled to Lakeview for the Lakeview Invite. The boys team won the meet with

the girls coming in 3rd. Junior Raya Kluever placed 2nd in the 100-meter dash.

"I've been working hard this season, and it's cool to see it finally paying off in the meets," Kluever said.

After the Lakeview Invite, the Shamrocks hosted

the conference meet on April 27th.

The girls team scored 70 points, placing 4th. The boys team scored 120 points, winning the conference title for the second consecutive year.

The Shamrocks compete at Battle Creek today.

Girls soccer wins with young leaders

By Ava Rickert
Staff Reporter

In Scotus sports, seniors carry a big weight on their shoulders throughout the season. Whether it be organizing team bonding or teaching underclassmen the ins and outs of the sport, seniors have big shoes to fill in order for

the team to be successful.

This year, there are no seniors on the girls soccer team. Instead, the team is being led by seven juniors, including two from David City Aquinas.

Junior midfielder Emma Brezenski has been a starter for girls soccer since her freshman year.

"I think having no se-

niors has made even the underclassmen step up and it's made our team even closer," Brezenski said.

The team started off on a loss against a tough Bennington team on March 15th, losing 0-2. Four days later on March 19th, the Scotus girls mercy ruled Holdrege and worked on fundamentals to use for upcoming games.

Junior midfielder Ella Hash has also started since her freshman year.

"One main thing the team has worked on this season is knowing where the forwards have to go and the runs they have to make," Hash said. "Now that we've worked on it, we've finally found the right runs."

After a tough 0-2 loss to

Elkhorn on March 22nd, the girls won three consecutive games, beating Concordia 8-0, Lincoln Lutheran 10-0, and Lutheran High Northeast/Norfolk Catholic 6-0. They hoped to use this momentum in one of their most anticipated games of the season against Norris on April 5th. They ended up coming short in a 1-2 loss.

Junior midfielder Sofia Karges is a team captain this season for the team.

"I would say Norris was a huge game for us. Even though we lost, it showed that we were able to compete with ranked teams," Karges said. "That was the game where everything clicked for us, and it was by far the best we played together so far."

They used the close loss as motivation to keep pushing through the thick of the season. The team then managed three consecutive shutouts starting with Grand Island Northwest on April 8th, beating them 3-0. Then on April 12th, the team beat Kearney Catholic in a 8-0 win.

The following Monday, April 15th, the team took on Millard North in an exciting

game where they went to two overtimes and eventually a shootout. The team ended up winning after going 5/5 in penalty kicks.

"Our game against Millard North [had a big impact] because it went into PKs and we learned to play together and play for each other to win," Brezenski said.

After the big win, the girls took on Schuyler on April 18th and beat them 10-0. In the last big matchup of the regular season, the girls took down Elkhorn North in a 1-0 win on April 20th. They finished off the regular season with a 10-0 win against Lakeview on April 25th.

The Shamrocks faced South Sioux City on Monday, beating the cardinals 10-0. They faced a quick turnaround, playing Lakeview on Tuesday.

Freshman Emilyn Kavan starts as a center back for the girls soccer team.

"We've been working really hard at practices and it's been paying off in big games like Elkhorn North and Norris," Kavan said. "We hope to be able to get to state again this year."



QUINN VUNCANNON / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Sophomore forward Sydney Stuart takes the ball from a defender during a game against Holdrege on March 19th. The Shamrocks beat the Dusters in a 10-0 win.

Boys soccer seeks postseason turnaround

By Ella Hash
Staff Reporter

The saying "pressure is privilege" was made common in the world of sports by tennis great Billie Jean King. Oftentimes, teams and players are under pressure to win and compete well. In the case of the Scotus boys soccer team, they faced their pressure in an unusual way.

The Shamrocks opened their season with a home tournament and played Gross Catholic and South Sioux City. After starting strong against both teams, the games ended in losses. The team would go on to play two more games after, their record going to 1-3.

After their rocky start, the Shamrocks found their rhythm in an unusual way. In their game against St. Albert Catholic, the two teams went to a shootout, ending in favor of the Shamrocks 4-3. The next three games tended to go the same way. In four straight

games the Shamrocks were forced to go to overtime and penalty kicks with their opponents, and each ended in wins for the Shamrocks. The four shootout wins in a row tied a state record previously set by Scotus in 2008.

Freshman Chase Adamy plays defense for the team.

"Even though shootouts aren't the best, winning four in a row has been the best part of the season, especially knowing we tied the state record," Adamy said.

Even though shootouts are stressful, the team had faith in their kickers and goalie. Senior Josh Bixenmann stopped over four shots throughout the four shootouts.

"I think that the most stressful thing [in shootouts] is you have to save one," Bixenmann said. "For me, I always pray before we start. I also take a deep breath and imagine it's just me and the player. The hardest part is finding where they go, but I watch their hips and where

they line up."

The team continued to work on their offense and the little things as the season continued.

Junior Jacob Rother is one of the starting center backs on defense.

"We don't have a lot of experience as a team, so we have been really working on our positioning and off-ball movement," Rother said. "Our soccer IQ is something we are trying to keep improving as the season continues."

After their four straight shootouts, the team played Kearney Catholic at home on April 12th. The game ended in a tie at the end of regulation, sending the Shamrocks to their fifth straight overtime. Towards the end of the second overtime period, sophomore Maclain Bailey launched a shot past the goalie to secure the 3-2 win.

The team would go on to a three game losing streak to Schuyler, Elkhorn North, and Blair. They then played their last regular season game



QUINN VUNCANNON / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Sophomore captain Maclain Bailey attacks the defense against Lincoln Lutheran on April 2nd in their second shootout win. The team tied the Class B state record of four consecutive shootout wins.

against Lakeview, resulting in a win. The team went into the postseason looking to put everything they practiced together.

Senior Alex Medina-Perez is a captain and starting midfielder.

"Going into postseason soccer, I feel somewhat comfortable, but at the

same time I have to know when to turn the switch on in my head," Medina-Perez said. "As a team we have to understand how to enjoy yet grind it out on the field as well as in practices. Overall, [the postseason] is going to be both interesting as well as challenging, which is how it should be."

Entering the postseason, the Shamrocks faced Seward on Monday, April 29th. The Shamrocks won 3-0, with goals coming from junior Ian Karges, and sophomores Andy Padilla and Gus Yindrick. The next day the team faced Schuyler for the second time in their season.

Golf goes for gold in postseason



QUINN VUNCANNON / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Senior Nick Fleming hits an iron shot at a triangular at Quail Run Golf Course. The next tournament for the team is conference, held at Quail Run on Saturday, May 4th.

By Cecilia Arndt
Editor

Throughout the spring season, the boys golf team has to face unique challenges due to a combination of inclement weather and

the variability of courses. The conditions of a golf course can vary from dry and hardpan ground, to rain making greens into puddles, or to wind blowing corncocks across the course. Fortunately, the team has been finding success through the 30mph

gusts.

“York definitely taught me a lesson because with both of my experiences of playing there it was super windy, so it showed me what to do in tough weather conditions,” senior Kaden Backman said.

One of the challenges of golf is the variability of the course and weather. On a team, each individual must learn how to deal with it and help each other to do so. Their best tournament so far has been the David City Invite, where Nick Fleming placed first with a 69 and the team was 1st with a score of 316. However, weather is not the only obstacle golfers face; the challenge of mental toughness can be difficult over a five-hour long invite.

“When we had the Norris Invite in Lincoln, I think we all learned that we need to keep playing to the best of our ability even if we are having a bad day on the course,” junior Carter Nickerson said.

These lessons will help the team to face adversity, when state conditions can vary from flurries to sweltering heat. Although the varsity is made up of returning players, their bid for state will hopefully encourage the

newer golfers in the future.

“We have so many returning varsity [players] and a super young team after them to fill their shoes,” freshman Ryan Pelensky said.

This year, there are 17 players, one of the largest teams to take to the course in the last few years. It can be difficult to manage that many players, but the coaches, Brady Vancura and Shane Fleming, have been using new strategies to utilize the team to the best of their abilities.

“I think having a simulator in the cafeteria has helped out the team a lot,” senior Nick Fleming said. “It has let us practice when the weather is crappy.”

This year, early spring practices were held in the school cafeteria where the boys hit golf balls into a net. The coaches split up the varsity, JV, and reserve teams to practice separately in order to spend individual time working on each player’s game.

Although there has been an influx of new players, all of the varsity team is composed of returning golfers. Nick Fleming, Patrick Arndt, Mason Gonka, Alex Sucha and Kaden Backman are all returning seniors.

“[The team dynamic] has stayed the same because of knowing the abilities of everyone on the team and knowing what we are capable of as a team,” Backman said.

This year, boys golf has been moved back to Class C, where two years ago the team won state. Last year, Fleming and Arndt were Class B state qualifiers, and they were also a part of the 2022 state championship team. Their next tournaments will be conference, the Norfolk Invite, districts, then hopefully state.

“I think the sky is the limit for this team, at Scotus we strive for excellence and our team has a high standard. I believe our team is looking to add another trophy to the trophy case,” Fleming said.

Discoverers swing through the season

By Madden Saenz
Staff Reporter

The Columbus Discoverers co-op team has had a struggle of a season. With a previous 4-13 record, the season has yet to meet expectations. Confidence and consistency have been lacking throughout the season, leading to several close games, losses, and errors.

Notably, the games the Discoverers played against Norfolk have been particularly frustrating. Two of the three games the Discoverers played against Norfolk were 1-run losses. They were games the Discoverers should have won, but they lost because of the previously mentioned faults. However, all of this is in the past, and the team has a new hopeful attitude for the end of the season.

“We have been struggling, but we have definitely had our ups and downs,” junior third baseman Grant

Zoucha said. “I think, going forward, we will start winning the games we should win and be a better team.”

Away from the games, the team has continued to persevere and work hard in practice, showing toughness and grit through their difficult season.

Junior pitcher and center field Spencer Shotkoski said, “Although we haven’t been performing the best, we still work hard and get along well with each other.”

Freshman centerfielder and pitcher Connor Cameron gave his thoughts on practices.

“They’ve been really good, we continue to attack our weaknesses. We work hardest on situational fielding and batting practice. We do tons of different batting drills.”

Zoucha also believes practices have met expectations and continue to improve the team.

“Practices have been great this year. We all listen

to our coaches and work on fixing our flaws and becoming a better team, individually and collectively.”

This effort and improvement has shown in their most recent games. Three of the team’s four wins have occurred within the last two weeks, a great foundation for a good end to the season. Their second win was against Omaha Westside on April 1st, a 3-1 victory. On the 4th, the team defeated Bellevue East 3-1, and on the 6th, they hammered Lincoln High with a 9-0 win.

Although they have continued to struggle, losing 2-1 and 3-0 to Norfolk and Fremont respectively, the team has continued to push through and take a rare win home, putting their record at 6-14. They won both games in the double-header against Pius X on the 20th of April and are set to play only five more regular season games.

The season has been hard on the players, but the Discoverers have kept



KYRA BOWEN / YEARBOOK STAFF

Junior third baseman Grant Zoucha loads up for a line drive against Lincoln Southeast on April 23rd. The Discoverers’ last regular season game is against Omaha North on April 30th.

their heads high and dug in through the trying season. Although state is an unlikely outcome to their season, the team strives to win as many games as possible with the short time remaining in their

season.

“The season is looking exciting,” Shotoski said. “Hopefully, we can win enough games and get closer and closer to that .500 record.”

The team now sits at a 7-16 record, winning 7-1 against Grand Island and losing to Lincoln Southeast and Lincoln Northeast. Their final game is against Omaha North on Tuesday, May 4th.

Seniors commit to collegiate activities



PHOTO COURTESY TAYLOR DAHL

Cheer coach Pat Engel, assistant Doane cheer coach Sonia Almodavar, Lynette's Dance Studio owner Lynette Hogelin, Senior Kenna Barel and her parents Bobbi and Neil Barel pose for a photo at her dance and cheer signing for Doane. Barel will be majoring in Psychology in the fall.

By Sofia Karges
Staff Reporter

After school comes to a close and summer break starts, college is the one thing on all seniors’ minds.

For most graduates, college has been anticipated for months. Students are ready to leave their high school sports careers and activities in the past as it all comes to a bittersweet end. However, for some seniors, their sports

and activities careers are just starting.

Although most seniors are attending state schools around the area, a couple have decided to pursue their dreams far from home.

Cecilia Arndt is com-

mitted to playing golf at Long Island University in New York, and Mary Faltys is running cross-country at the Coast Guard Academy in Connecticut.

“I chose to continue playing because I want to see how far I could go,” Arndt said. “It was an awesome opportunity to get offered to go to New York for college, and to be able to play made it even more special.”

Arndt has always known she wanted to play in college, but for others like Faltys, the idea never seemed plausible until this year.

“Josie Sliva got me to go out for cross-country this year. Without her, I never would have dreamed of running in college. I have also only had one cross-country season so far, so I am excited to see how much better I can get,” Faltys said.

Although sports are what most people think about, the performing arts are in college too, and Scotus has lots of seniors pursuing their passions this way.

Kenna Barel will cheer and dance at Doane University, Nicole Peterson will dance and sing in the choir at

Wayne State College, Karol Torres will dance and cheer at Northeast Community College, Neve Pavlik will cheer at Benedictine College, and Logan Erickson will also be attending Wayne to participate in speech.

“Dance and choir are both activities I am passionate about, and I have always known I wanted to dance after high school. Honestly, I don’t know how else I would fill my free time,” Peterson said.

The story is similar for Barel and Torres, who have both had experience with dance either at Scotus or at a studio. Coaches, teachers, teammates, and parents also have a huge influence on whether students want to continue in college.

“A major influence on my decision was my coaches Shane Fleming and Brady Vancura,” senior Patrick Arndt said. “They both helped me by teaching and instructing me on and off the course. I credit them with instilling a want to play college golf in me.”

Arndt will be playing golf at Waldorf University in

Iowa. Seniors Joshua Bixenmann, Kyra Bowen, and Nick Fleming are also playing sports in college; Bixenmann will play soccer at Nebraska Wesleyan University, Bowen will play softball and run track and field at Doane, and Fleming will play golf at Southeast Community College.

Bowen has followed in her parents’ footsteps as the Bowens both played two sports at Doane too; her mom played volleyball and ran track and field, and her dad was a football and baseball player.

“My parents and coaches helped me see a more positive, successful future at Doane. I wasn’t ready to give up on either sport quite yet, and Doane offered me the opportunity to continue both,” Bowen said.

Eleven out of fifty-five seniors are going on to pursue their passions in college, which is a high percentage for their small class.

“Take advantage of the activities you love to do and continue them in college if you can because you won’t be able to pursue them forever,” Peterson said.



CECILIA ARNDT

Long Island University
Biology, Golf

“Not all of us can do great things, but we can do small things with great love.”
~Saint Teresa of Calcutta



PATRICK ARNDT

Waldorf University
Undecided, Golf

“Pat, I didn’t drive six hours for you to layup. Hit the 7 wood.”
~Mr. Brady Vancura



KADEN BACKMAN

Central Community College
Nursing

“Fake it ‘til you make it.”
~Aristotle



KENNA BARELS

Doane University
Psychology, Cheer, Dance

I have a picture of me when I was little with Taylor Swift’s dad.



AIDAN BETTENHAUSEN

Southeast Community College
Business

“Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things you didn’t do than by the ones you did.”
~Mark Twain



JOSHUA BIXENMANN

Nebraska Wesleyan
Physical Education, Soccer

“It’s a long ways from your heart.”
~Galen Miller (my grandpa)



KYRA BOWEN

Doane University
Sociology and Criminology, Softball, Track and Field

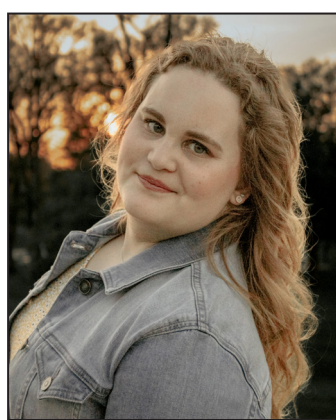
“You control your destiny – you don’t need magic to do it. And there are no magical shortcuts to solving your problems.”
~Merida (*Brave*)



HADEN BRABEC

University of Nebraska - Lincoln
Construction Engineering

“If you wait until the last minute, it only takes a minute.”
~Cyril Parkinson



ELLA BROBERG

Central Community College
Dental Assisting

“I’m tiny but mighty!”
~Mrs. Jane Dusel-Misfeldt



RUDY BRUNKHORST

Northeast Community College
Criminal Justice

My favorite memory is the locker room after beating St. Paul by a game winning field goal.



LUKE CHARD

Southeast Community College
Computer Information Technology

I can mimic or sound like Mickey Mouse.



ALEXANDRA CHAVEZ

Southeast Community College
Interior Design

My favorite memory is the piggy-back race in strength training when we lost because I fell off and went flying onto the gym floor and our punishment was to sing a song.



JUAN DE LEON

University of Nebraska - Lincoln
Mechanical Engineering

I can play a lot of instruments, and I’m in a band.



TORI DUSH

Northeast Community College
Nursing

I have 200+ cousins.



OLIVIA EHLERS

University of Nebraska - Lincoln
Pre-Veterinary Medicine

“Think, think, think.”
~Winnie the Pooh



LOGAN ERICKSON

Wayne State College
Mass Communication

“I told you so.”
~Jessica Jackson



MARY FALTYS

U.S. Coast Guard Academy
Marine Science, Cross Country, Track

“Everything happens for a reason.”
~Josie Sliva



FRANK FEHRINGER

Hillsdale College
Undecided

“Timshel”
~Hebrew for ‘thou mayest’



KAITLYN FLEMING

University of Nebraska - Omaha
Aviation

I will be the shortest pilot at 4’10”.



NICKLAUS FLEMING

Southeast Community College
Business, Golf

“Success is the doing, not the getting; in the trying not the triumph.”
~Zig Ziglar



GABE GASSEN

Northeast Community College
Utility Line

Getting a hug from Mr. Brockhaus.



MATTHEW GOKIE

University of Nebraska - Lincoln
Mechanical Engineering

“Only those who will risk going too far can possibly find out how far one can go.”
~T.S. Eliot



MASON GONKA

Creighton University
Business Administration

My favorite memory is the time Coach Linder made David think there was a hidden basement to the football shed during practice.



COOPER GREISEN

Central Community College
Welding

I have way too many fishing poles.



JACKSON HENG

University of Nebraska - Lincoln
Accounting

My favorite memories are the van rides in the summer to basketball camp with Coach Mo.



CAITTEE HUTCHINSON

Northeast Community College
Nursing

My favorite memory is performing at State Dance.



RYLIE JARECKI

Northeast Community College
Nursing

“Regardless of where you’re at and where you’re going, where you are right now is exactly where you should be.”
~Zach Bryan



MACEY JOHANNES

Central Community College
Business Administration

“You’re not crazy, you’re just first.”
~Jamie Kern Lima



EVAN KIENE

University of Nebraska - Kearney
Pre-Medicine

My favorite memory is watching David fall asleep and slide out of his chair onto the floor because of the hypnotist at prom.



ELI KREIKEMEIER

University of Nebraska - Lincoln
Ag Economics

“It is what it is.”
~Eli Kreikemeier



KAMREN KUDRON

Wayne State College
Nursing

“Life moves pretty fast. If you don’t stop and look around once in a while, you could miss it.”
~Ferris Bueller



MAX LANCASTER

University of South Dakota
Pre-Business

My favorite memory is Mr. Duhey’s 4th period study hall freshman year.



ABIGAIL LASKA

Concordia University
Criminal Justice

“You guys should start a food fight in the cafeteria. I want to see chicken tenders flying.”
~Mr. Brockhaus



ASHLEE LEFFERS

University of South Dakota
Social Work

“Do not let anyone make you feel like you don’t deserve what you want.”
~Heath Ledger



ANNA LOVELL

Northeast Community College
Radiology Tech

“Real g’s move in silence like lasagna.”
~Lil Wayne



JUDE MAGUIRE

University of Nebraska - Lincoln
Nutrition, Exercise, and Health Sciences

“Look at us now.”
~Evan Kiene



KENSEY MCKAY

University of Nebraska - Lincoln
Advertising and Public Relations

“A little nervous breakdown can work wonders for a girl.”
~Rory Gilmore



ALEX MEDINA-PEREZ

University of Nebraska - Lincoln
Architecture

My favorite memory is at the senior retreat exploring, running around, and kayaking until the very end.



SAVANNA MUCHMORE

Central Community College
Criminal Justice

“Mistakes happen, and it’s okay. If we were supposed to be perfect then the world would be a boring place.”
~Savanna Muchmore



NEVE PAVLIK

Benedictine College
Athletic Health Care, Cheer

“A single act of humility is worth more than the proud exhibition of any virtue.”
~Saint Frances Xavier Cabrini.



NICOLE PETERSON

Wayne State College
Occupational Therapy Dance, Choir

“Did everyone see that? Because I will not be doing it again.”
~Jack Sparrow



MASON PUNTNEY

Northeast Community College
Business Administration

“113,800 hours for a paper and handshake... and they said I had no commitment.”
~Mason Puntney



JOANNA RUSHER

Kansas State University
Chemical Engineering

My favorite memory is when my bookbag got stuck in my locker and I pulled so hard the whole door frame popped off and fell on my head.



ADDISON SCHOENFELDER

University of South Dakota
Kinesiology and Sport Management: Exercise Science

“Say whatever you feel, be wherever you are.”
~Noah Kahan



BEN SCHUMACHER

Creighton University
Business

“I am always right, except when I’m wrong, which is often.”
~Ben Schumacher



CALEB SCHUMACHER

University of Nebraska - Lincoln
Animal Sciences - Pre-Veterinary

“It is during our darkest moments that we must focus to see the light.”
~Aristotle



JOSIE SLIVA

University of Nebraska - Kearney
Exercise Science

“What in the world?!”
~Macey Johannes



AMBER SPAWN

Wayne State College
Elementary Education and Early Childhood Education

“If you let people’s perception of you dictate your behavior, you will never grow as a person.”
~George Feeny



ALEXANDER SUCHA

University of Nebraska - Lincoln
Business Administration

A fun fact about me is that I went global in Clash of Clans.



ROSIE SUCHA

University of Nebraska - Kearney
Clinical Laboratory Science

My favorite memory was exploring the place our senior retreat was at and being 30 minutes late to the next activity.



SERENA SWIATEK

Central Community College
Secondary Education Mathematics

My favorite memory is freshman year cross country when we qualified for state.



KALEE TERNUS

Wayne State College
Elementary Education and Early Childhood Education

“May your hats fly as high as your dreams.”
~Michael Scott



KAROL TORRES

Northeast Community College
Culinary Arts, Dance

A fun fact about me is during summer 2020, I stepped on a rusty nail, kicked a pitchfork, and got my forehead cut open by a Lysol can.



ISABEL ZARUBA

University of Nebraska - Kearney
or Creighton University

My favorite memory is the dodgeball game at my first ever pep rally. My brother’s entire senior friend group chanted my name. It was a scarring experience.



Kirsten Sucha

When attending my first JC camp freshman going into sophomore year, upon arrival the question asked to all of us was “Who am I?” While I sat there and thought about it for almost fifteen minutes, I realized I could not answer the question. Besides being in volleyball and track, I had no other adjectives to identify myself other than being a teammate.

From the time I was in the fourth grade, I had always been in every little league volleyball team imaginable. I was in love with the sport. Even though I was not the best, I thought being on a team was better than being alone. Because of my mediocrity, it equated to me not getting much playing time.

Instead of looking forward to going to practices, I would dread going to the gym everyday. I started complaining to my friends about how awful it was and overall was a negative person to be around. I was so frustrated and discouraged I ended up quitting my sophomore summer.

Track followed suit quickly after. My athletic ability for track peaked my freshman year, and then I was back to being my mediocre self. It was the same cycle of going to school, practice (hating every minute of it), and then home. After quitting both of these activities, I felt as if I did not even know who I was anymore. The only two words I used to describe myself were gone, but little did I know these were two of the best decisions of my life.

After quitting all my activities, my mom started egging me to try different programs at Scotus. Immediately she forced me to do one act. Because of my enormous ego, I came in with a horrible attitude at auditions, and of course my mediocre self did not land a role my sophomore year. I looked around and saw people I would never regularly talk to, and I vividly remember the tears streaming down my face after coming home from the first day of practice.

Then something changed; I realized nobody was judging anybody, there was no drama, and I could fully be myself. I started to love the activity I was in, which was something I had not felt since the sixth grade. The beautiful aspect was even though I did not get a main part, everyone had a role. No job was less important than the other, and it is what made it so special for me; I did not feel as if I was mediocre at all. It helped me come out of my shell and learn who I was. This passion for the activity even drove me to earn roles my junior and senior year and to step further outside of my comfort zone to join speech.

At the beginning of high school, I always had the mindset I had to be the best to be happy. Now I know even though I might have been mediocre, it led me to push myself to become happier, even if it meant losing the activities I loved at the time. I learned even though someone is average at something, it does not mean they do not have a role and are any less important. I have also learned if something or someone makes me super unhappy, it is okay to take a step back and try something new.

After a few tough years of high school, I have finally found who I am. My activities no longer define who I am and they never truly did. I am proud to say I am an accomplished, confident, and passionate daughter of Christ and plan to be forever more.

This is Kirsten Sucha, signing off.



Cecilia Arndt

Senior year. The time where it seems like every adult in your life is asking, “What are you doing next year?” The implication: what are you going to do with your life? Pretty big question for an eighteen year old, huh? Especially as an athlete, the dreaded questions about competing in college and where, and what major you’re in, and where are you going to live persisted. I, for one, did not know the answer to nearly all the questions even though I had been looking for the answers for years.

Then, out of the blue, I got an email. It was from the women’s golf coach at Long Island University, and she asked me to come out for a visit. I took the chance and my family and I drove the 1,335 miles to New York two weeks later. I was nervous, as LIU had been one of the first Division I universities to reach out, and I questioned whether I was cut out to not only play DI golf, but to move so far away. Turns out, it was the place for me.

A few weeks later, I signed to play for LIU and became a Shark. My answers to the big questions were finally concrete. The dreams I had when I was a little girl had come true. Although I worked hard and practiced for countless hours, it wasn’t just my efforts that brought me to New York. God gave me opportunities, and I took them.

The best things I did at Scotus were not the exceedingly planned out, perfectly executed ideas that were meticulously detailed. They were the chances I took, the leaps of faith where I somehow landed on my feet.

Freshman year, I took the leap to go to Scotus. Not only did everyone already know each other, but it was the first year after quarantine and I had moved. Through masks, I made friends and began to settle in. Golf season came and went, and I experienced my first state golf tournament; that year, I actually had to ask what state was!

The next year, I decided to try something new. I joined the speech team, and although I never placed, I always made friends. I learned from the engaging topics and speakers I listened to, and it helped me to become more outgoing. Overall, speech was a great experience in growth for me.

After musical season ended my junior year, I was looking for something to do before golf would pick up again. I was recommended by a friend to go on a retreat, and it ended up being the best retreat I have been on. The Teens Encounter Christ retreat showed me the Catholic community of rural Nebraska, and it was closer than I ever imagined. I made wonderful friends on the weekend, and it was truly one of the best experiences I have had.

Then, senior year began. About two weeks before school started, I decided to change my schedule. When I went to Ms. Brichacek I expected to be placed in random electives, but she told me there was room in Journalism. I took the opportunity to try it out, and I ended up as the newspaper editor. It was one of the most fun classes I have had the chance to be in, and it has helped me to grow as a writer.

One of the biggest lessons Scotus has taught me is to take the opportunities given to me. To go on that retreat, to take the class, to try a new activity. Athletics don’t have to end, pursue what you are passionate about. Everything is a new opportunity; take it.

This is Cecilia Arndt, signing off.



Mary Faltys

As a senior, I’m pretty sure every conversation I have includes the question, “What are your plans for college?” I struggle to answer that question because I’ve honestly given up making plans for my future.

Reflecting back, especially on the last year, it seems like nothing I’ve planned for myself actually happens. There are several things I said I would never do because they didn’t fit into the plan I had for myself, but here I am, doing those exact things. I don’t even need to use my entire life as proof; just senior year will do.

It all started with cross country. I said I would never run cross country because I don’t like people watching me run (and I still don’t). I enjoy running on my own in the early morning, not with a group in the afternoon heat. Besides, I didn’t know anything about the sport other than it’s a lot of running. This is the one I am most grateful I was wrong about. My cross country season changed the way I view competing and my teammates, and cross country climbed its way to my favorite sport. God knew what He was doing when He allowed me to be a part of the revival. I would never have thought I would be running at state cross country as a senior, but He had a greater plan for me. Although it ended like we had never imagined possible, I am eternally grateful I followed His call. Now I am planning on continuing my cross country career in college.

Similar to cross country, my swim season was full of unexpected turns. At conference, I didn’t think I would PR in all my events and make finals the next day. I also didn’t think I would miss state by 0.00 seconds. I tied with another girl for the last spot, so neither of us got to compete at state. Before the state submissions were released, I remember telling my coach I didn’t think it would come down to the two of us, but I was wrong yet again. After swimming for seven years and ending with heartbreak, I repeatedly asked God, “Why? What was the point of it all?” It took many tears and hard feelings, but I came out of it with a new determination. The quote, “What doesn’t kill you makes you stronger” has become my new motto as I try to use my adversity to become a better person. It was painful, but it’s all part of God’s greater plan for my life. If this loss is building me up for something greater, I can’t wait to see what God has in store for me.

I clearly remember saying, multiple times, that I would never, ever, ever run track, yet here I am. Yes, I still hate people watching me run, and yes, I know track is worse for that than cross country is; I’m literally running circles so people can watch. It took a lot of convincing for me to switch from soccer to track, but part of my decision came from my past experiences. I’ve learned to trust the unexpectedness of God’s plans. I don’t want to jinx anything, so I’m not saying how I want this season to end. I’m just trusting God will see me through.

It’s not just a lesson I’ve learned in these sports, but they are very clear examples of why I’m no longer concerned with making plans for myself. God has a greater plan for me than I could ever dream up for myself. Living through this has convinced me to never say never and always be open to God’s will for my life. I have no idea where He’ll take me. The only thing I can say never about is that I will never know what He has next for me.

This is Mary Faltys, signing off.



Patrick Arndt

Today I sit and type my last article for journalism ever. Having to open the dusty memories from the endless categories of my brain, my conscience is blank, tied up in the vast blankness of my inner thoughts. I realize now I have little to no outward opinions strong enough to write about, other than pineapple shouldn’t be on pizza.

Having no strong opinions has led me to have an agreeable attitude, and until this point it has served me in a good way. However, I am now at a point where I look back and find having an opinion may have been a good idea. I now see in daily conversations I have always tried to please everyone I meet, in some ways going out of my way to ensure their well

being.

For the longest time I had flown by this ill fated idea, brought on by clips from Ted Lasso, a TV show about a professional soccer team’s coach who constantly puts everyone in front of him. Living the “Ted” way, trying to put everyone in front of me, never earning me any good friends. I only have three friends I still talk to from my old school whom I would do anything for.

Of anything I have learned through the years of schooling, the most important has been taught by the teachers and students I had met on the first day of freshman year and has grown exponentially from then. When I first came to Scotus, I had to initiate conversations and introduce myself to others, an awkward task when everyone around me was wearing masks. Only then I realized I had to speak up for myself.

I realize now pleasing everyone for me only led to being taken advantage of; I now can see going out of my way to please everyone coincidentally led to myself not enjoying my own life. For the past year I have been, as Mr. Brockhaus loves to say, “advocating” for myself, finding it rather hard. I have gone from a “yes” man to standing up for my beliefs and opinions rather than standing up for others. Other times Mrs. Rusher has pushed my boundaries in journalism, pushing me out of my comfort zone in order to help me grow socially and academically.

To me, it’s teachers like these everyone needs in life. Ones to teach and push you out of your comfort zone in an attempt to prepare for the next step in life.

As I trade the tan halls of Scotus for the bleak gray halls of college, I leave the rest of Scotus with a small piece of information. When your teachers say advocate for yourself, listen to them. They have seen more lives impacted by self advocacy than you. Looking back, my time at Scotus has been fast and occasionally furious, so have fun and enjoy what you are given.

This is Patrick Arndt, signing off.



Joanna Rusher

“You know what’s awesome? God still loves yah and I do, too.” As I wiped the tears from my face, I looked up at my grandpa with annoyance because that didn’t help the situation or how I was feeling at the time. However, looking back, that was the best piece of advice I have ever received.

Throughout my high school experience, I have felt the pressure of high expectations, but no weight has been heavier than the expectations I have for myself. When the bar is set at unreachable heights, frustration is inevitable.

At the district track meet my junior year, I was warming up for high jump thinking: if I jump my PR today, I will easily make state. It was a rainy day, but I was excited because I finally had some confidence in my abilities. I decided to come in at opening height to make sure I was good and warm when the bar was raised. Soon, in a blur of rain, spikes, and matted hair, I found myself about to jump for a third time on opening height. I don’t really know what happened, and I was unable to focus on the situation in front of me because I was so humiliated and frustrated with myself. I don’t even remember missing again after that, I just remember hating myself, feeling embarrassed, and like I could punch a hole through a wall out of frustration. As my parents hugged me and tried to console the sobbing, shaking girl in their arms, they tried to persuade me to cheer on the other Scotus girl competing; I just shook my head and continued to cry for my miserable self.

Looking back, I feel a mix of emotions, but I don’t feel them because I didn’t make state; it was my first year in track for goodness sake. I feel guilty and sad because of the way I acted toward my teammates, family, coach, and myself. I was so frustrated with my coach, she couldn’t even help me. I yelled at my parents for trying to make me feel better, and I was so selfish, I didn’t cheer on the teammate who had helped me through the season.

This was definitely not the first time I had become overly frustrated with myself, and it wasn’t the last. However, I recognize now how miserable it made me. I have this bad habit of beating myself up for things that are either in the past or out of my control. Hating myself for a bad test score, a lost game, or a forgotten item have only caused me to make more mistakes. I’m working on focusing on the positive and moving on to the next thing God has planned for me because as my grandpa would say: “God still loves yah and I do, too”. I’ve found that focusing on the negative only creates a snow ball effect. I’m trying to lean on my family and friends because they genuinely want what’s best for me. I know God has a plan for me no matter my attitude about the situation, so I might as well be positive about it. “For I know the plans for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for woe. Plans to give you a future of hope” (Jeremiah 29:11).

This is Joanna Rusher, signing off.

Live stations kick off Easter Triduum

By Patrick Arndt
Staff Reporter

Stations of the cross, the story of Jesus's life and death, are typically held in a Church and narrated. However, seniors at Scotus changed the idea by acting out the stations live in the gym. The stations were acted out by members of the class of 2024. The reflections used were written by Scotus graduates Carly Burkhardt, Emily Kosch, Ian Ostdiek, and Dan Strecker.

Traditionally held in a Church or designated area, stations have been a rather time consuming memoir held with reverence. Live stations, however, portray every action of Jesus's suffering and death, adding a more vivid layer to the tradition.

Senior Jude Maguire played a key role throughout the live interpretation of stations, playing Jesus.

"The amount of people who wanted to participate and were excited to do it

surprised me. However, I was more focused on what was actually going on during each station and what Jesus actually went through during his Passion," Maguire said.

Jesus, however, was not the only major role throughout the live interpretation of stations of the cross. Many more members of the senior class took part in filling other roles such as Pilate or Roman guards.

Senior Kirsten Sucha played one of the many women of Jerusalem, helping to bring realism into the acting of live stations.

"It is a privilege being able to participate. I think everyone was mature, and it was fun to organize and act out something spiritual alongside the rest of the senior class, and I think we did a good job acting out stations," Sucha said.

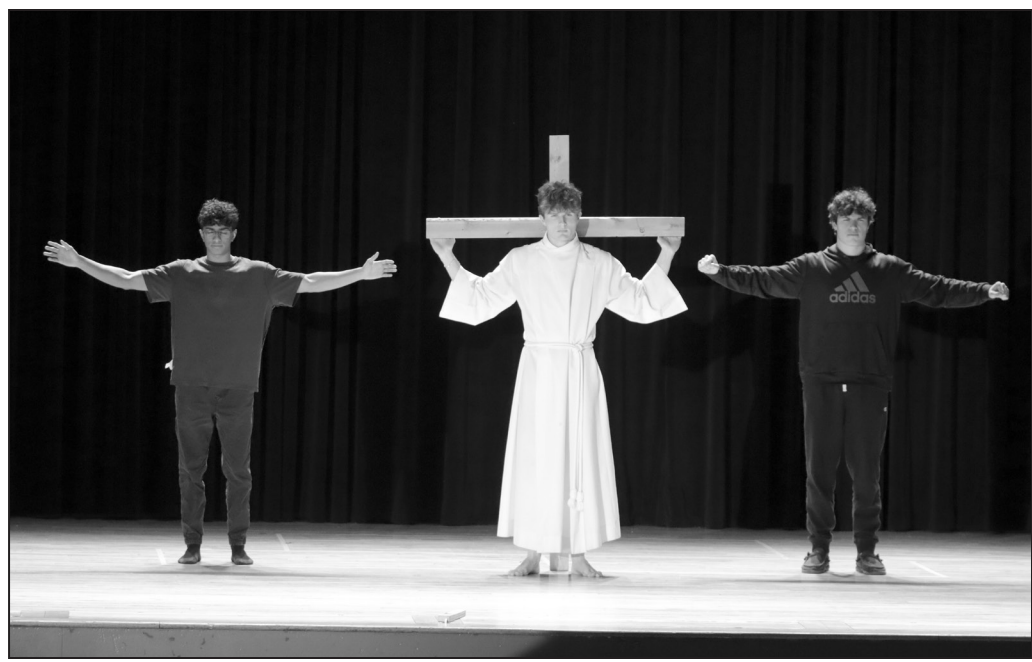
Live stations was a rather large task to tackle, taking time out of many mornings for practice and rehearsals;

this and other preparations were steps taken in order to ensure the best experience. Taking the challenge head on and playing another woman of Jerusalem was senior Kensey McKay.

"I think it is a good experience especially getting to see the whole process of stations come to life with my class while we rounded out our senior year because it is one of the last things we get to do as a class," McKay said.

A major component of live stations was Judas, played by senior Cooper Greisen.

"Being in the stations was different because I felt like I was the actual person and felt what Judas experienced. This gave me a chance to feel the emotions of the story of Judas betraying Jesus. I feel that it is a special privilege for seniors to do this. It is one of the special opportunities that we get to do before our time is over at Scotus, something we will



PATRICK ARNDT / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Seniors Ben Schumacher, Jude Maguire, and Gabe Gassen act out the crucifixion of Jesus Christ during live stations. Stations were held on March 27th to kick off the Easter Triduum.

never forget," Greisen said.

Adding to the authenticity was senior Kamren Kudron who played Simon.

"Throughout practicing I grew close to Simon's character; trying to embody

his character I decided to change into my school uniform. Since Simon was actually pulled out of the crowd, I thought changing into my school uniform would add a more relatable feel to Simon's character,"

Kudron said.

Live stations has been long recorded as a senior tradition and has always kicked off the Easter Triduum; it has become a staple of Scotus Easter celebration.

Shamrocks rock the judges at DMC

By Madden Saenz
Staff Reporter

The Nebraska District Music Competition (DMC) is the ultimate platform where the most talented young musicians across the state meet to showcase their musical skills. On April 19th, 2024, students from all over Nebraska pushed their limits to demonstrate their exceptional abilities.

DMC offers several events for students to perform in, including small ensembles like duets or trios, large ensembles like choirs or bands, and solos. Each event

involves either an instrumental or vocal performance, and the judges rate the students on a scale of one to three, with one being "Superior", two being "Excellent", and three being "Good."

All of Scotus' performers were determined to achieve the "Superior" score and dedicated themselves to hours of practice. They practiced and memorized and honed their skills through individual sessions with Mrs. Kristen Cox, the band director, or Ms. Laura Salyard, the vocal music director.

Sophomore singer and band member Giselle Chilapa-Bello prepared for

DMC by practicing her vocal solo "Everywhere I Look" by Molly Carrow.

"It's a happy, bubbly song about a girl who observes the beginning of spring. I practiced rigorously and was confident in my ability to perform. I listened to other people's recordings and my own to refine my craft."

Other performers work just as hard, but not to the point of frustration. On top of this, some performers have multiple events, group or individual. This may seem daunting, but Scotus students are used to juggling many activities at one time.

Senior Neve Pavlik was

entered in multiple events, leaving no shortage of music for her to perform and practice.

"I'm in an all-girls choir, mixed choir, band, baritone quartet, and a singing duet," Pavlik said. "I'm in a baritone quartet with Caroline, Helene, and Hailey. My duet is with Cecilia. My duet piece is called 'He's Gone Away' and my quartet piece is called 'Promenade.'"

This is just one example of a student pouring hours and hours into perfecting their performance. All their hard work would be evident at DMC on April 19th.

The Shamrocks rocked

the competition. The Shamrocks brought home a total of twenty-two "Superior" scores and eleven "Excellent" scores, while not having any "Good" scores. This was a phenomenal achievement, which proves how dedicated the performers have been to their events. The Shamrock band also managed to get a "Superior" in all of their band ensemble events, a difficult and worthwhile task.

Junior Henry Chard had a difficult experience leading up to DMC but had a very successful result after, both individually and in his ensemble events.

"Individually, my sax-

ophone would not work all week. My mouthpiece broke and my sax would squeak a lot when I played," Chard said. "Thankfully, it figured itself out and worked at districts. As a group, we figured out every little detail before our performance, making sure we were all warm and tuned. The performance felt like the best we'd ever played. Walking out I knew we had scored a 1."

All the events were shared at the spring concerts, and both groups finish their year performing at graduation.



JOANNA RUSHER / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Freshman Brooke Krienke and Junior Abby Schumacher



JOANNA RUSHER / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Sophomore Helene Chard and Senior Olivia Ehlers



JOANNA RUSHER / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Scotus Drumline



KENSEY MCKAY / YEARBOOK STAFF

Seniors Amber Spawn, Kalee Ternus, and Nicole Peterson



KENSEY MCKAY / YEARBOOK STAFF

Seniors Cecilia Arndt and Neve Pavlik



KENSEY MCKAY / YEARBOOK STAFF

Shamrock Singers Mixed Choir with Freshmen Calben Pelan

Junior High puts the “fun” in Fun Night

By Sofia Karges
Staff Reporter

There are countless activities offered for Scotus students every year. From prom to the musical to Campus Ministry to NHS, there are plenty of ways for students to be involved. Most of these activities, besides sports, are offered only to high school students, which is why the Junior High Fun Night is anticipated all year long.

Junior High Fun Night was held on Friday, April 19th this year; it is put on by upperclassmen each spring with the help of Mrs. Ohnoutka as a sponsor. There used to be a Lock-In each year where junior high students would be “locked in” Scotus from 7 pm to 7 am. However, it was changed two years ago to the Junior High Fun Night, which is held from 6 pm to 10 pm.

“The Lock-In was definitely fun for the students, but there were a lot of kids in the building for a long period of time, and after a while,

they may not want to be there anymore,” seventh grade English teacher Deb Ohnoutka said. “The Fun Night has been way easier to manage while still being fun for the kids.”

A volleyball and dodgeball tournament, pizza, dancing, and games are all a part of the agenda of the night, and only seventh and eighth graders are allowed to attend.

“It feels good to have a night dedicated to just us because we don’t have a say in most things at school,” said seventh grader Hank Sokol.

This year, senior Evan Kiene got together a group of friends to help run the night when he heard they needed help. It is tradition that upperclassmen run the Fun Night; they played music, organized the volleyball and dodgeball tournaments, and helped keep everything running smoothly.

“I thought it was more fun to have upperclassmen running it because they were our age just a few years ago,” said seventh grader Kiley Kosch said.

The Fun Night is a great

way for students to bond with their fellow classmates, and for this reason, no phones are allowed either.

“We didn’t get our phones, which I believe was a useful idea. It helped us to be more present in the moment and enjoy the night better,” said seventh grader Audrianna Splittgerber.

The volleyball tournament was held in the new gym and was the first organized event of the night. Free time was upstairs in the old gym for anyone who was not playing volleyball, and a dance was offered in the cafeteria.

“My favorite part of the night was the volleyball tournament because my team got to the championship game,” seventh grader Calan Windedahl said. “I also loved hanging out with my friends and cheering them on once we were eliminated from the dodgeball tournament.”

The volleyball tournament, dancing, and the dodgeball tournament were the main favorites of the night. Once it hit 10 o’clock,



JOSIE SLIVA / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Seventh graders Calan Windedahl, Noah Sjuts, and Mason Swanson react to the win of their dodgeball team during the dodgeball tournament at the Junior High Fun Night. The Fun Night is an annual event for seventh and eighth graders, and this year it was from 6 pm to 10 pm on April 19th.

people were not ready to leave.

“I think it is important to offer opportunities for junior high students to get together and do some fun things to build their class comradery,” Ohnoutka said. “I think

sometimes they feel left out with some of the high school events, so it’s cool that this is a special thing that is just for them.”

The Lock-In has been a tradition at Scotus for as long as anyone can remember.

With the positive response to the Junior High Fun Night, it will be a new tradition that will last for years to come.

“Overall, it was a really good night, and I am excited to attend again next year,” seventh grader Kate Sell said.

Retreats wrap up with students’ interests

By Ella Hash
Staff Reporter

Lent and Easter is a time for Catholics to grow stronger in their faith. During the Lenten season, many give up, or fast, from certain items. Others try to deepen their prayer life or give back to the Church or an organization that needs help. This Lent and Easter season, Scotus

offered two different retreats for students to grow in their prayer life and deepen their connections with their peers and classmates.

The first of the retreats was held on Thursday, March 21st. Around thirty students and chaperones were bussed to the Cloisters on the Platte where they were able to listen to reflections as they walked by the fourteen sculptures of Jesus’ trial and burial.

Junior Adrianna Kush experienced the stations in a new way at the retreat.

“The station that moved me was when Jesus met His mother because of the expression on his face,” Kush said. “He looked terrified which made me sad and led me to put myself in Jesus’ shoes with how I would feel meeting my mom for the last time. I do not know what I would do without my mom.”

After the walking tour of the stations, students were transported to the Holy Family Shrine where they had lunch and were allowed free time to explore the grounds. Then, one of the sisters on the retreat gave the students a talk about prayer for the Lenten season.

Sophomore Sydney Stuart attended as part of Campus Ministry.

“The sister’s talk about

prayer stood out to me because she stated how you cannot enter into prayer if you don’t give everything to God,” Stuart said. “If you hold on to the lies in your head and your unsureness then you won’t receive what you could fully.”

The second of the retreats was held on Wednesday, April 17th at Camp Rivercrest in Fremont. This retreat was the last for the year and was only for Scotus boys.

The group of around forty boys and chaperones were able to experience a team building challenge course, archery, a rock-climbing wall, prayer, talks, and reconciliation. All the activities related to a spiritual theme, such as surrounding themselves with the right people and friends, missing the mark in life when a person sins, and reminders of their call to God’s greatness.

“My favorite part was the opportunity to overcome challenges with my peers and have fun while doing it,” sophomore Seth Drueppel said. “The challenge course had us all think and work together toward a common goal. This meant that when we succeeded, we all could

celebrate together.”

The one difference about these two retreats compared to previous ones was the presence of the consecrated and religious persons. The Lenten retreat had Father Taylor Leffler and two sisters present, while the boys retreat also had Father Leffler and Father Scott Schillmoeller present.

“I think having people consecrated to Jesus and setting an example for us on retreats is important,” Stuart said. “They help us understand things about faith that can be complicated on our own.”

This wraps up Scotus’ senior high retreats for the year. Sophomores and juniors were given choices for their retreat this year, and campus minister Dana Ritzdorf said they will continue that again next year.

“I don’t always know what students think, but it seems like (the retreats) went way better than having class retreats,” Ritzdorf said. “Students really enjoyed being able to go on a retreat that fits more of what they’re interested in, or where they’re at in their faith journey. So overall I’d say it was very successful.”



PHOTO COURTESY: NATE TENOPIR

Scotus boys struggle to stay on top of a log during the group obstacle course at the April 17th Men’s Retreat at Camp Rivercrest near Fremont. The Men’s Retreat was the last senior high retreat for this school year.

Junior high adventures with a merry play

By Aubree Beiermann
Staff Reporter

Since 2021, the junior high has had the opportunity to try out another fine art with the junior high play. This year the junior high students are performing *The Very Unmerry Adventures of Robin Hood*. Twenty-five 7th and 8th-grade students have been practicing and building this play into a performance-ready act. Students have been working since the middle of March with art teacher and director Clyde Ericson.

“*The Very Unmerry Adventures of Robin Hood* was a play I intended for 2020 with the senior high kids, but that couldn’t happen because of COVID,” Ericson said. “It’s been a script I’ve been wanting to do for a number of years, but we just haven’t had the cast to do it. This year we

have our biggest cast ever.”

Seniors Logan Erickson and Neve Pavlik have been helping direct the play. Ericson has had seniors lead the play since 2021.

“They’ve been great leaders for the one-act program and are people I trusted could do a good job at directing our younger generation,” Ericson said.

Seventh grader Kate Sell played Poor Woman 2 and Maid 1 and recommends others to go out too.

“It is a good way to step out of your comfort zone, hang out with friends, and try something new,” Sell said.

Libbie Sliva is in seventh grade and was part of the crew. She helped make the props and take them on and off the stage during the show. Students in the crew also made up the audience in the play.

“It was hard trying not to get paint on my clothes while

getting things done fast,” Sliva said.

Seventh grader Audrianna Splittgerber played Helga the bartender/innkeeper. She enjoyed being backstage with friends.

“My favorite part was when some of us painted each other’s nails backstage and definitely DIDN’T get paint on the floor!” Splittgerber said.

In the play, seventh grader Ariana Hissong played Soldiers 2 and 4. She had an amazing time working on the play, even with its difficulties.

“The hardest part was memorizing all the lines, but it feels great when you know them all,” Hissong said.

Eighth-grader Melodee Nickolite played the Sheriff in the play and was excited to see the final production.

“My favorite part is getting to see the play come together instead of being different scenes,” Nickolite said.



MARY FALTYIS / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Seventh graders Harper Spale, Lawson Thiem, eighth grader JR Oelrich, seventh grader Kate Sell, and eighth graders Abbi Pavlik, Jo Westring, and Dominic Chard act out a scene of the Junior High Spring Play on April 26th. The students performed *The Very Unmerry Adventures of Robin Hood*.

The junior high students usually took 25 hours of practice to make this play happen. These hours are after school and after sports practices.

“Each week has its own goals, whether it’s casting, characterization, memorization, figuring out blocking,

making the sets, or making sure we have all the costumes. We put all that together and make sure we can run through it multiple times,” Ericson said. “We’re always right on time or slightly behind where we need to be. If we are lucky, slightly ahead.”

The junior high students performed the play on April 26th in Memorial Hall.

“It’s a challenge for kids to get up on the stage and act silly in front of their peers and their parents,” Ericson said. “They did a great job.”