

**Volleyball
raises the bar
to 18-4**
SPORTS 5



**Homecoming
slips away
again**
ACTIVITIES 9



Scotus Central Catholic

columbus-catholic.org/rock-bottom-newspaper/

Columbus, Nebraska 68601

Rock Bottom

Volume 24 • Issue I • October 10, 2024

S-Club sparks student involvement

By Caleb Cameron

Years ago, Scotus S-Club gave students an opportunity to celebrate their extracurriculars. The S-Club was responsible for delivering letters to all those in sports and activities, distributing letter jackets, planning pep rallies, and coordinating other fun events at and around Scotus. As letter jackets fell out of style, Scotus's S-Club became outmoded.

This school year, Scotus S-Club is being reborn and revived by members of the faculty to bring back some positive aspects S-Club provided students in the past.

Head boys' track and field coach and business teacher Cody Mroczek is one of two S-Club sponsors.

"S-Club's goal is to get more students to attend home athletic events and overall to get the student body more invested in our teams and other activities going on around the school," Mroczek said.

One of the main fundraisers S-Club has taken over are green and gold cards. Scotus students have participated in selling these cards for years. The funds generated by green and gold card sales are used across multiple Scotus activities for things such as Remind, Hudl, and new equipment. In the past, only the students in a fall sport were required to sell green and gold cards. This year, all students were given green and gold cards with incentives for selling them. Students who sold 5 cards are allowed free entry to all home Scotus events. Students who sold 10 cards are given benefits, including merchandise, S-Club membership, and are qualified to be

on the advisory committee if they are a junior or senior. This year, Scotus students sold more green and gold cards than ever before with over 2000 cards being sold.

Junior Audrey Stoner was one of many who sold green and gold cards this year.

"The perks I'll receive seemed worth the awkwardness of asking my coworkers to buy the green and gold cards from me," Stoner said.

One of the best parts about S-Club is it is going to be mostly student led. Everyone who sold 10 green and gold cards will automatically be admitted to S-Club. Those in S-Club are expected to be leaders around the school and in the student section at home events. S-Club will have a student advisory committee made up of juniors and seniors. The advisory committee will plan to use the extra money from the green and gold card sales to benefit the students.

Head football coach and theology teacher Tyler Linder is also an S-Club Club sponsor.

"When it comes to the events and the planning of certain activities, we want that to all be student driven. High school is memorable and fun and is meant to build camaraderie, and that's better done with students' ideas rather than a teacher's," Linder said.

S-Club will coordinate numerous events throughout the school year. There are a variety of ideas for what S-Club could all do, but the activities will be decided by the students once an advisory committee is formed. Some potential ideas include a meal before home

contests, tailgates, another all-school dance, and student section t-shirts. Students will receive their S-Club merchandise by the end of the first quarter. The merchandise will be designed by the entrepreneurship class.

"We think we need something like S-Club so we can invest more money back into students and our activities to give the students a better high school experience," Mroczek concluded.



The Rowdy Dowdies cheer on the volleyball team during their jamboree match against St. Paul on August 22nd. The Rowdy Dowdies were named after the Dowd Activity Center.

Retreats renew relationships

By Abby Shumacher

As the school year begins with sports and extracurricular activities, so does the firing up of faith retreats. Everyone in grades 7-12 attends at least one retreat each year. These all occur at different times and places throughout the school year. Three retreats have already happened this year with another happening at the end of this month.

Retreat organizer and campus minister Molly Wallish hopes these retreats foster faith seeds in students.

"I think the retreats give an opportunity for each student to encounter Jesus, which is my goal as a campus minister. Each student is on their own personal journey with the Lord, and I pray the retreats offer an opportunity for an encounter," Wallish said.

On August 21st, the seniors started off the school year by going to Timberlake Camp, where they participated in outdoor Mass, faith activities, high ropes courses, kayaking, canoeing, the water blob, and class bonding.

Senior Emma Klug is the fourth Klug of her family to go on the senior retreat.

"I think it kicked off senior year pretty well, I think it gave us all an understanding of each other and helped us realize that this really is the last year of high school together," Klug said.

On September 4th, the freshmen class went to Camp Moses Merrill where they played many friendly competitions, explored nature, listened to talks, and spent time reflecting on their lives.

Freshman Emma White had a unique encounter during senior Becky Policky's talk about identity.

"I learned that everyone has insecurities and everyone has faults. You never truly know what is going on in someone else's life and what they are thinking. I think it is important to acknowledge this and try to become a more understanding and empathetic person because of it," White said.

Unlike the freshmen and seniors, the sophomores and juniors do not all go on the same retreat. They get to pick between going on the service retreat, women's retreat, men's retreat, Lenten retreat, Quest, TEC, and the March for Life.

See RETREATS, Page 2

School and students get new look

By Ava Rickert

Everyone knows the saying, "New year, new me." Whether it be a new hairstyle or bookbag, back-to-school is a time of reinvention for many.

Scotus is no exception to this, with the addition of both new uniforms for students and a video board installed in the Dowd Activity Center this summer.

For as long as many students can remember, school uniforms have been the same polos and crewnecks as when their parents attended the school years ago. New additions to the uniform include a black crewneck, a spirit t-shirt, and new colors of sweatshirts and polos embroidered with the updated Scotus logo.

Principal Brady Vancura was a contributor to the push for new uniforms for students.

"We, myself and Mr. Dahl, had looked into the branding of our school ever since I came back," Vancura said. "I thought, these are still the same uniforms I wore when I graduated 10 years ago. I wanted to get to a point where our school uniforms were our school colors, and I felt that making the kelly green stand out was very important."

Director of communications Taylor Dahl was also a major force in the introduction of new uniforms. He was part of the process from the beginning to the end.

"I met with Mrs. Lahm who runs student council, and then Mr. Vancura. We went over a few different options. Then we worked with Inked, who's a great partner with us with our school uniforms, and he got everything put together and showed us some examples," Dahl said. "He brought them all in and got everything all done really quickly. Now, being able to see the work we put into it every day with the students wearing it is pretty special."

The student body seems to agree with



Seniors Jacob Rother, Callen Jedlicka, and Austin Long cruise down the lake during their retreat at Timberlake Camp. The seniors were able to climb high ropes courses, participate in water activities, and do different faith activities.

See NEW LOOK, Page 2

ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Staff Reporters:
Aubree Beiermann
Caleb Cameron
Ella Hash
Kate Hendricks
Sofia Karges
Austin Long
Ava Rickert
Jillian Rusher
Madden Saenz
Abby Shumacher
Sydney Stuart

Advisor:
Angie Rusher

Editor:
Quinn VunCannon

**2024-2025
Rock Bottom Dates**

October 10
November 13
December 12
February 6
March 6
April 1
May 1

NEW LOOK



Sophomores Brody Lindhorst and Michael Brandt walk to class in their new school uniform sweatshirts. Items added to the uniform this year included new colors of polos, sweatshirts, and a spirit shirt, all with an updated logo.

the administration about the need for new uniform options.
“I think the new uniforms were a great change. I like how it’s the school logo, and it

doesn’t just say SCC,” eighth grader Addison Pensick said. “The black sweatshirts are also really nice.”

Another change to Scotus is the addition

of a large video board in the Dowd Activity Center. The board has seen use during volleyball games, Rock Talk assemblies, and other events held in the gym so far this year.

Activities director Merlin Lahm oversaw the process of getting the video board.

“We engaged a team of some businessmen in the area to see if there would be interest out there to support us financially, and we got some interest,” Lahm said. “Nevco came in with the best bid and it seemed that there could be some community support financially for sponsoring and advertising with the video board.”

Great Plains State Bank ended up being the sponsor of the video board.

Although Dahl is in total control of what goes on the board this year, he hopes to extend the opportunity to students in the future.

“This first year I wanted to take it on just because it’s new and it’s a lot of pressure and I didn’t want to put that on a student, but eventually within video production, we’d like to have our students be able to run it,” Dahl said. “Having some of our students’ content created to be put on the video board to showcase the students is the goal. Being able to say, ‘Hey, I did that work. I made that graphic or I made that video.’”

Looking forward, the video screen will see many different uses this year, including during basketball games and displaying the senior slideshow during Graduation in May.

RETREATS

Sophomore Brooke Krienke will be attending the service retreat this year, which will be on October 23rd. They will start their day off serving at Hope of the Poor and end their day by assisting at other places around Omaha.

“I always hear how faith is nothing without action. With these retreats, they give us the opportunity to worship God in what we do and to make a difference for people. Jesus said, ‘Whatever you do for the least of these, you do for me.’ This means that when

we serve others we are serving Him,” Krienke said.

Junior Seth Druempel plans on attending the Lenten Retreat on March 19, 2025, and hopes to have a positive experience from it.

“I think it will help me gain a deeper appreciation and understanding for Lent,” Druempel said.

The 7th graders had their retreat on September 13th where they learned more about their peers, wrote letters to their senior selves, asked upperclassmen questions, and went to

Reconciliation.

The 8th graders will have their retreat in the spring in preparation for receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Junior Max Beshaler is unsure which retreat he will be attending but knows they all have much to offer.

“Going on my retreat will help me grow closer to the Lord by allowing me to have time with Jesus and experience the joy one can only feel when being united with Christ,” Beshaler said.

Special Thanks to Our Issue 1 sponsor!



ACCESS
ELECTRICAL
SYSTEMS INC.

**Proudly serving Columbus,
Grand Island and
surrounding areas!**

Columbus:

2509 11th Street
(402) 564-8736

Grand Island:

701 W. 4th Street
(308) 381-3621

Providing electrical services for:

***Industrial *Commercial *Residential *Service *Design Build**

Students shouldn't "sweat" the heat at dances

By Rock Bottom Staff

Great music, stylish themes, pretty dresses, and a feeling of unification among the student body are all recurring aspects of Scotus dances. Another recurring feature of school dances is the enormous amounts of sweat produced by dancing students.

Homecoming this year was on Saturday, August 31st. As students piled into the cafeteria for the dance, the temperature rose to a boil. Soon enough, the floors became slippery, the walls dripped with moisture, and the temperature in the cafeteria felt like a sauna. Students persevered as their clothes became damp with sweat. Throughout the night, students gathered near the fans in an attempt to keep themselves cool.

With homecoming coming early this year, most students expected the dance to be warm, but it seems a hot setting has become a characteristic of all Scotus dances. It doesn't have to be that way. There are several simple changes that can be made to improve the heat problem at the dances.

Students complain the cafeteria feels muggy. The solution to fixing this problem is improving air flow in the cafeteria. A couple ways to augment air flow are increasing the amount of fans, opening all windows if the weather is cool, and keeping the AC blasting throughout the night. This would help slightly, but probably would not make a huge difference as some of this has already been tried before.

Another possible change could be moving the dances to Memorial Hall. Memorial Hall has housed dances in the past. The main complaint about having a dance in the gym is it feels spaced out. The problem of the gym being spaced out could be resolved by putting tables on a portion of the

gym floor, similar to how it is in the cafeteria. The DJ could be set up on the stage, overlooking the dance floor. The set up and tear down may also be a little more difficult, requiring a new layout, but would ultimately require less work than rearranging the layout of tables in the cafeteria. The East doors would be kept open and fans would be brought upstairs to circulate air flow. The AC in Memorial Hall would have to be improved so it could keep the gym cool throughout the night. The cafeteria or Dowd Activity Center would be used for pictures and the coronation ceremonies.

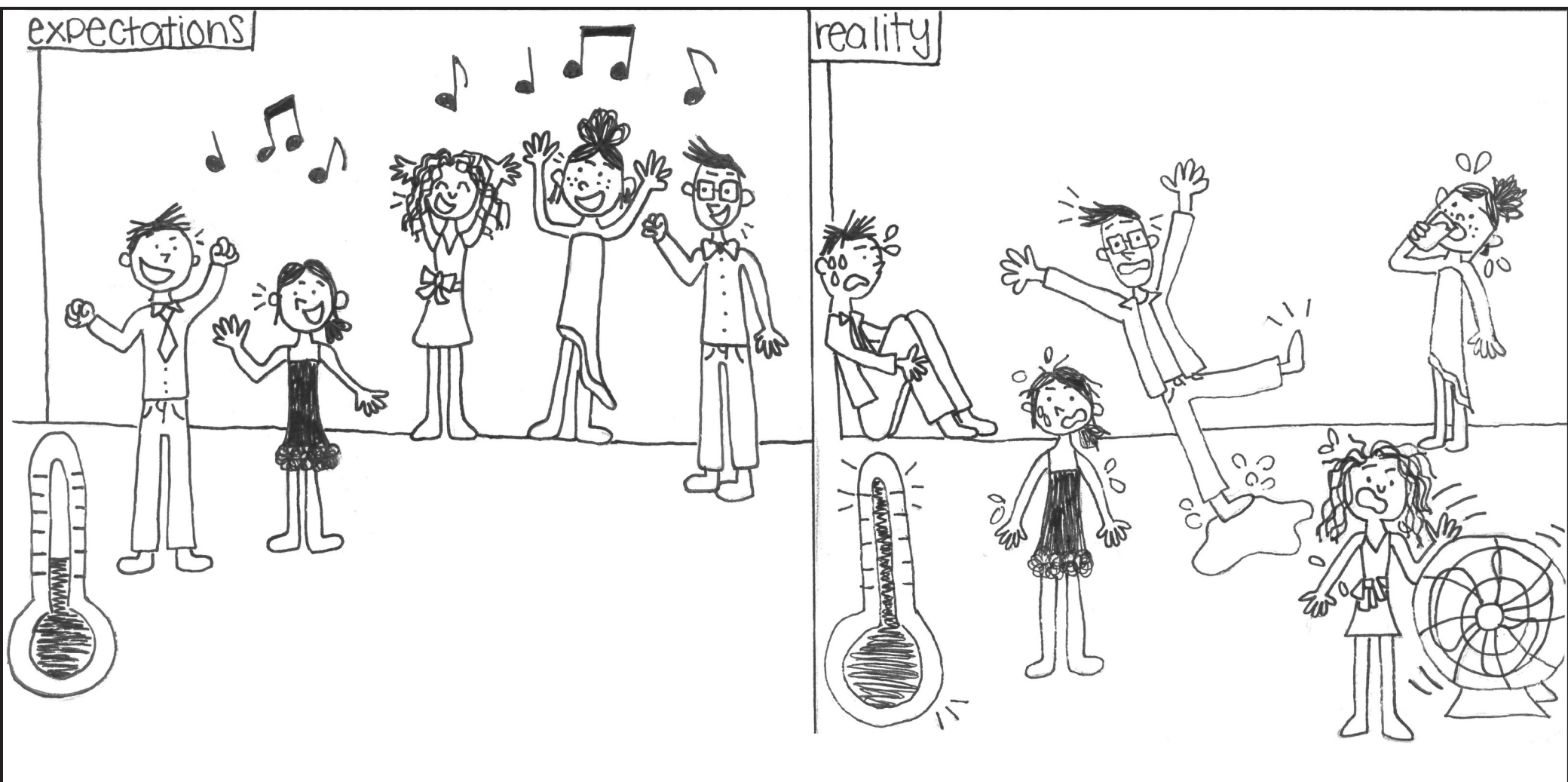
Another possible change could be having the dances at a whole different location. This would probably be the most difficult change

to make because the dances have been held at Scotus for many years. Finances would also be a factor of deciding possible locations. Scotus activities would have to sponsor the dance through fundraisers. A possible location for the change is the American Legion building. The building is large enough to hold the dance and would probably not be as hot and muggy as the cafeteria.

All of these changes would help the problem of heat at Scotus dances. The difficulty in making these changes is the dances haven't been changed for a long time. It is tough to plan something different, but these slight changes will be worth it for the students' enjoyment.

In the future, great music, stylish themes, pretty dresses, unification along with a cool environment will help students enjoy the school dances more than ever before. These changes may require a little extra effort by the students and the faculty, but the extra effort will be well worth it in the end.

“ In the future, great music, stylish themes, pretty dresses, and unification, along with a cool environment will help students enjoy the school dances more than ever before. ”



Jillian Rusher / Rock Bottom Staff

No hidden fees in true happiness

By Sydney Stuart



Every person knows the feeling when the Amazon box they have been looking forward to all week shows up on their front porch. With giddy excitement, they find the nearest sharp object to cut open the box. When they finally rip out the paper and bubble wrap, the prized possession they have stalked for the last week fails to meet any of their expectations. Sound familiar?

Humans are always on the lookout to find

happiness in this unfair life. Many people turn to money to buy them happiness.

The problem is money cannot buy happiness. No matter how much money someone makes, designer items they own, or cash they have saved up, money will never fulfill their happiness.

Obviously, newly bought items can lead to happy experiences. Everyone loves a brand-new car, the newest phone, or a thrilling vacation on a beach sipping their seven-dollar pink drink. I love traveling to new places and experiencing new cultures, but it would not be possible without money. The deal breaker is when money is no longer a useful tool and becomes an obsession. Similar to most material items, I soon lose interest in them and look for other means of happiness to buy. Somewhere in the back of every person's closet is an item they bought five years ago that brought them happiness for some time. Fast forward these five years, and I doubt they

thought about it once in the last two weeks. If buying the item was a source of happiness, then it is logical to believe they cannot be happy if they are not thinking about all their purchases.

Happiness comes from experiences or items we cannot buy. Examples include our faith, relationships, and small happy moments.

When we put our beliefs into our faith, we will never be let down because we are gaining eternal happiness. Simple things like a smile, a stop in the chapel, positive words, or small acts of kindness are far more valuable than any material possession we can buy. It can be difficult to see these non-materialistic possessions. I love making a gratitude list because most of the time I have many joyful moments, but they need to be identified. Another asset worth more than any object that is always in my gratitude list is true friendship. The relationships we make with people

can bring happiness, laughter, and service, but they can also bring jealousy, anger, and sadness. All of these emotions are crucial to learning lessons and finding true happiness. I also love taking walks and being in nature because the world has so many treasures that cost nothing. The sight of a colorful sunset, the singing of birds chirping, and the touch of the warm sun are irreplaceable experiences available to us every day. Whether we have a good day, a bad day, or any day in between, by putting our happiness in stronger values, including faith, nature, or friends there is always a reason to be happy.

So today, and all our days forward, let's find the free version of happiness that includes no fees, conditions, or shipping costs, by closing our Amazon account on a bad day. Let's give our bank accounts a break. Take a walk, read a book, laugh with friends, or visit the chapel and find a greater source of happiness.

Falling short of summer's joy

By Abby Schumacher



Just when you think summer is getting heated up, think again. When the middle of August comes around, people start to get excited and throw pumpkins in front of their houses, trade their lemonade for pumpkin spice lattes, and get into the festive fall season. Hold on, hold on, hold on. August?! It is still summer!

We as a society rush into every season and the end of it always gets unappreciated due to people being impatient.

The end of summer gets overlooked because people feel the need to rush into fall.

They completely ignore that there are still a few more weeks of summer to savor.

Some might think the school year is what determines when fall starts, but they are completely wrong.

The second school gets started, Walmart employees shove the school supplies off the shelves and make way for all the cute pumpkin decorations your mom is dying to get her hands on. For some college students who start school later, this can be a problem since they have to walk into the office supply section to get their items instead of in the front of the store. Those who are having an end-of-the-summer party would have a hard time finding summer items, since all the fall and even Christmas decorations are on the shelves by then.

“ We as a society need to learn to not rush into everything because if that happens, then there will be nothing left to enjoy. ”

Abby Schumacher ROCK BOTTOM

Starbucks' pumpkin spice latte came out earlier than ever this year. It made its grand reveal on August 22nd. This is two days earlier than when it debuted last year. Large

companies such as Starbucks rush into the fall season to capitalize on customers and increase sales. Most peoples' reactions were the same as mine: utter shock. At that point, I would be surprised if a single leaf was on the ground! What is to say that next year it will come out even earlier? Just because they are getting everyone all riled up about autumn, does not

mean we have to listen to them. Others might be fond of society rushing into autumn because it means they get summer sales when it is still summer. Bath and Body Works has a semi-annual sale in

which they sell tons of their summer products up to 75% percent off to make room for their fall collections. It is a big plus for those who want to expand their collection of this brand. Who does not love a good sale on items that are still able to be used? These might be good perks, but at the cost of losing a few sacred weeks of summer?

You might be wondering how this applies to you, now that fall has officially started. Christmas is around the corner, but this does not mean we overlook the other amazing holidays before then. Do not worry, your pumpkins could have waited for another 7 weeks. Still take advantage of the weather we have because when it gets to -5 degrees in December, you will wish you took advantage of it more. Wait, wait, wait to put your Christmas decor out until after Thanksgiving, so it does not get overlooked. We as a society need to learn to not rush into everything because if that happens, then there will be nothing left to enjoy. Live in the moment and cherish all the memories life gives you.

'Rocks tackle tough schedule

By Quinn VunCannon

The Shamrock football team has been put to the test, battling a schedule full of ranked opponents, along with dealing with injury and new personnel. Despite this, the Shamrocks now have a record of 5-1.

Scotus debuted their season facing off against their rival Aquinas. They defeated Monarchs 14-7, at home, as their homecoming game.

Senior running back Cohen Pelan had 16 carries totaling 70 yards and 1 rushing touchdown in the win against the Monarchs.

"We need to work on being more physical on blocks and get better at tackling in the open field," Pelan commented.

The following week the Shamrocks looked to build on the positive aspects of their previous game when they traveled to Elk-horn to play Mount Michael. The Shamrocks started off with an early lead, forcing multiple turnovers in the first half. They defeated the Knights 28-6.

Senior receiver Luke Wemhoff had 26 receiving yards, including a touchdown in the second quarter.

"We have a lot of experience considering [this year] is a lot of people's second or third year starting," Wemhoff said.

The biggest test of the season came in week three, as the Shamrocks faced the number two ranked Ashland-Greenwood.

Junior quarterback Carson Wessel is a new addition to the Scotus roster this year and has seamlessly fit into the lineup.

"After playing [Ashland-Greenwood], we saw how good we need to be to be a state championship type of team," Wessel said. "We saw what we had to work on to beat great teams."

Even though Scotus dropped the game 14-33, the Shamrocks kept their heads high going into week four.

The 'Rocks hosted Aurora for their next game and won in dominating fashion, 42-28. After being tied at halftime, 14-14, the Shamrocks exploded in the second half, outscoring the Huskies 21-0 in the third quarter.

Wessel had an impressive game at quarterback totaling three passing touchdowns, one rushing touchdown, 226 passing yards, and he lead the team with 10 tackles.

"Our strengths are trusting each other; we know that each and every teammate can get the job done," Wessel said.

Pelan also had an impressive game against Aurora having one rushing and one receiving touchdown, along with over 120 yards receiving and rushing combined.

"The Aurora game [was the most impactful this year] because it showed us that we can move the ball on offense and play a complete game," Pelan said.



Quinn VunCannon / Rock Bottom Staff

Senior wide receiver Luke Wemhoff pulls in a touchdown pass against Ashland-Greenwood on September 13th. Scotus was defeated by the Bluejays 14-33.

Scotus then traveled to Pierce to face a stout Bluejay team. They won in a close game, 14-7. The Shamrocks haven't beaten Pierce in 9 years.

Senior linebacker Caleb Cameron led the team in tackles with 14 against the Bluejays.

"We have played [Pierce] in years past and fell short, so finally beating them felt

amazing," Cameron said. "Beating them showed us what it takes to compete with the top level teams."

The next week, the Shamrocks headed to Schyuler and beat the Warriors 56-0.

Scotus will face cross town rival Lakeview at home, this Friday, October 11th.



Jillian Rusher / Rock Bottom Staff

Senior Max Wemhoff breaks a tackle against an Aquinas defender on August 30th. The Shamrocks defeated the Monarchs 14-7 at home during their first game of the season.



Quinn VunCannon / Rock Bottom Staff

Senior running back Cohen Pelan looks to get by an Ashland-Greenwood defender on September 13th. The Shamrocks were defeated by the Bluejays 14-33.

New girls golf team tees up tournament wins

By Austin Long

The Scotus girls golf team is almost unrecognizable compared to last year. Not only did the team lose a state placer and record holder, but they also have three new varsity players. However, they continue to win tournaments despite this change in personnel.

All nine golf invitationals the girls have

competed in have ended with the Shamrocks placing in the top three. Out of the nine, six resulted in victory. Notably, senior Quinn VunCannon has placed first individually in 3 of the invitationals.

"Our team has had to fill some big shoes and learn not to rely on one super low score,"

VunCannon said. "I think it's made everyone on the team more consistent because now we need four scores breaking 100."

The team's first win was at the Lakeview Invitational at Quail Run Golf Course against ten other teams. VunCannon earned 1st with a score of 91. Among four other Shamrock medalists was junior Kiya Taylor. She received 7th place with a score of 99. Together, the top four scored 384 to bring home a plaque.

"It's been harder to win the meets as a team, but we have been shooting lower scores all together," Taylor said.

After winning Lakeview's invite, the Shamrocks went on to win the Pierce Invitational, receive third at a hard-fought Blair Invite, and win a triangular against Boone Central and Lakeview.

Following the triangular, the Scotus girls golf team won the Boone Central Invitational at Albion Country Club. The top four Shamrocks all placed in the top ten individually with VunCannon placing 3rd, carding an 82. All together they scored 367, beating all other teams.

Along with returning head coach Tanya Niedbalski, new Scotus girls golf coach Matt Wallish has assisted with the team's winning abilities. While focusing on chipping and putting drills, Wallish has made a positive impact on the team.

"Our new golf coach, Mr. Wallish, has given us many beneficial drills that we do during practice," senior Abby Schumacher said. "He also works with us individually on what we are struggling with."

Prior to conference, the Shamrocks took first place at the Fullerton Invitational at Fullerton-Pawnee Hills Golf Course, and they took second at the Wayne Invitational at Wayne Country Club.

"Conference [impacted us the most] because we ended up first as a team, and we were really close to breaking the school record," sophomore Libby Langan said. "Almost all of us shot [our personal records] during the meet."

At the Centennial Conference Championship meet at Quail Run Golf Course, Scotus returned home as champions. All Shamrocks shot under 100, giving the team a total of 357. VunCannon secured first place individually with a score of 82.

"Winning conference so dominantly felt really good," VunCannon said. "Everyone came together and played how we needed to play to be successful on the team level."

After conference, the team competed in the Scotus Invitational at Quail Run Golf Course. The team won the meet with VunCannon placing 3rd with a score of 87.

The team competed Tuesday at districts for a bid to state.



Sydney Stuart / Rock Bottom Staff

Senior Quinn VunCannon tees off with an iron shot at the triangular against Lakeview and Boone Central at Quail Run Golf Course. VunCannon has finished 3 meets as the tournament champion so far this season.



Madden Saenz / Rock Bottom Staff

Freshman Michael Klaussen leads sophomores Chase Adamy and Aiden Zegar at the Scotus Invite on September 19th. The three runners are all on varsity for the first time.



Sydney Stuart / Rock Bottom Staff

Junior Brynn Homolka chips out of a bunker at the triangular against Lakeview and Boone Central at Quail Run Golf Course. The team has placed top 3 in all the meets they have competed in.

Volleyball raises the bar to 18-4

By Jillian Rusher

At the start of a new season, coaches, athletes, and fans all hold their breath for how the team will do in the upcoming year. This year the Scotus volleyball team and fans have had to hold their breath in many long close games. The Shamrocks have raised the bar and exceeded all expectations, beginning their season 7-0, and are currently 14-2.

The volleyball team began their winning season with two wins against Kearney Catholic and Concordia High School. Both games won in five set battles.

Senior Mallory Dreesen led the team in kills both victories, 17 against Kearney Catholic, and 21 against Concordia.

“We had a lot of mental toughness in both of those games. Something I found helpful was giving it all to God in the good and hard times,” Dreesen said.

The Shamrocks continued their winning streak into the Shamrock Invite, on September 7th. They won three close games against Pierce, Norfolk Catholic, and David City High School.

Senior serving-specialist Annie Weber has eleven serving aces on the year.

“We experienced many emotions. The close games made us nervous and anxious, but overall we were excited to win for the first time in six years,” Weber said.

Five days after their invite victories, the Shamrocks headed to Malcolm for the two day tournament. The team won both of their games on Thursday against Standing Bear and Centennial. The second day of the tournament, they lost their first games against Mal-

colm and Lincoln Lutheran. The Shamrocks bounced back at the end of the day, upsetting Malcolm for third place.

Senior outside hitter Ava Rickert had five blocks and twenty-five kills at the tournament.

“The Malcolm tournament went very well in my opinion. We were able to use the easier games on Thursday to prepare for what was coming on Saturday. Although we lost against Lincoln Lutheran, we still played point for point with a team that had two D1 recruits, which made me super proud of us,” Rickert said.

The Shamrocks did not let their losses slow them down and won their next game against Aquinas. Four days later, the team drove all the way to Fairbury and came home with the first place plaque. Along with three more wins against Wilber-Clatonia, Raymond Central, and St.Cecilia.

“Our motto this year is ‘Raise the Bar.’ It is a great reminder that we should constantly be building up our team to become the best we can possibly be,” Rickert said.

The Volleyball team increased their record 13-2 after beating Battle Creek in yet another five set match.

“There are many areas where I think our team has gotten better. Two I would say is our defense with the help of Kayla and also blocking, Ava has done a really good job blocking tough outsides,” Dreesen said.

The Shamrocks took a home court victory against Lincoln Christian on September 26th.

“We have learned to trust each other’s abilities as well as our own. I think this has



Sofia Karges / Rock Bottom Staff

Senior outside hitter Larkyn Mahoney reaches to make a play against Aquinas Catholic on September 17th. The Shamrocks swept the Monarchs, 25-15, 25-18, and 25-15.

boosted our team’s confidence a lot. Knowing your teammates have your back no matter what,” Rickert said.

Scotus beat the hometown rival, Lakeview, in a battle making their record 17-2.

Unfortunately, the following Saturday, Scotus went 1-3 at the Columbus Classic, but bounced back winning the Syracuse tournament on Monday, making them 18-4.

This year’s libero, junior Kayla Hoffman, has high hopes for the rest of the team’s season.

Hoffman concluded, “Our hopes for the team are to make it to the state tournament and compete competitively. In order to do that, we know every opportunity we get is a chance to get better and improve on the little things.”

Cross country pushes toward postseason

By Ella Hash

Most high school teams experience change from one year to the next. Seniors graduate, people decide not to go out, and new people join. Despite the change, teams prevail and the season goes on. For the Scotus cross country teams, changes are seen all around.

Freshman Michael Klaassen has run cross country since junior high. In his first year in high school, Klaasen is one of the boys varsity

runners this season.

“The team has changed the most in the varsity runners. Last year, most of [the team] was seniors. This year, with almost an all new varsity team, is different,” Klaassen said. “The team is especially different with some runners being only in their first or second year in cross country.”

The boys team only has one returning varsity runner in junior Evan Pavlik. As the

team is young, they have not placed in the top five at a meet this season; however, their times have improved with every meet.

Sophomore Chase Adamy is in his second high school cross country season and his first on varsity.

“At the beginning of the year, there was a really big [time] difference between all of us boys, but now we’ve come together and always improved every meet as a team and helped each other push to go further every meet and get better times,” Adamy said.

While the boys team has consistently been able to recruit runners, in recent years, the girls team has struggled to get runners out. After last year had the biggest team in a few years, this year is a different story.

Junior Hannah Heinrich is in her second year of cross country. Heinrich is one of the top three runners for the girls team.

“Our girls team only has seven girls this year, so it has been really fun to have the tight-knit dynamic,” Heinrich said. “We all get along so well and have a lot of fun.”

Despite the small team, the girls have performed to the standard they set last year. The team has consistently placed in the top two of each meet and has had at least two runners in the top ten every meet.

The first meet of the season was held at Boone Central. The girls team placed three in the top five and took second as a team. The second meet was the Platte River Rumble held at Mahoney State Park in Ashland. While the race started around noon, temperatures were already high. The team prevailed, however,

and finished second only to Glenwood (IA).

Senior Sofia Karges is in her second year of cross country and is the girls’ fifth runner.

“So far, I think the meet that has impacted the team the most is the Platte River Rumble,” Karges said. “The weather was in the upper eighties during this meet, so it was a big mental obstacle to overcome. However, we all ran really well despite the heat, and it was exciting to realize we can perform well in hard conditions.”

Following the Platte River Rumble, both teams competed on September 19th and 24th at the home meet and the Malcolm meet, respectively. The girls team finished first at both meets.

One of the larger meets the teams ran in was the UNK Invite on September 30th. The girls placed three in the top ten and won the Class C division while Adamy was the first finisher for the boys. The two teams then competed at the Aquinas meet on October 3rd, with the girls placing third and the boys placing seventh. The teams had their last race before districts on Tuesday at the Centennial Conference meet in Lincoln.

As the teams go into the postseason, both have goals of making it to state. The girls, however, want to finish what they couldn’t last season: winning a state championship.

“Coming off a competitive season last year, we are looking to continue the success we had,” Heinrich said. “We want to go all the way this year and end with a state championship!”



Ella Hash / Rock Bottom Staff

Freshman Avery Heinrich sprints to the finish line at the Scotus Invite on September 19th. Heinrich placed first at the home meet and is the girls top runner.

Shamrocks succeed with high spirits

By Madden Saenz

Like last year, the Columbus Discoverers tennis team continues to draw in Scotus athletes. This year, twelve Scotus students are on the roster: four seniors, two juniors, five sophomores, and one freshman. The large number of Scotus athletes helps give a strong sense of unity during a tumultuous and difficult season.

And tumultuous, the season has been. The team competed at various tournaments throughout the season, with some success and disappointment. One notable event was the Lincoln Public Schools meet, where the team finished sixth overall, but senior Joaquin Azurduy took first after a 1-6 comeback, and senior Brody Splittgerber finished second overall.

“It was an invite where I had the opportunity to face number 9 in the state,” Azurduy said. “I beat the guy and with it, I won the tournament. This tournament showed me that the next tournaments aren’t going to be so easy,” Azurduy said.

Another successful meet was the South Sioux Invite where the team placed fourth overall, where seniors Jacob Rother and Calden Jedlicka took silver in number 1 doubles, and sophomore Calben Pelan and Columbus High senior Carter Trebac took silver in number 2 doubles.

A good portion of this success is due to the many Scotus students on the team this year. With six of the seven players on varsity being from Scotus and another six on junior

varsity, the team also has amazing chemistry and a strong sense of security.

“The team being made up of mostly Scotus students makes it feel like we are actually a Scotus tennis team and CHS is co-opping with us,” Rother said. “It just feels like we are all on the same team.”

This unity is not shown on only the roster, but on the players themselves, through their mentality and high spirits.

“It helps build team chemistry; we are close with everybody and we all get along and have fun,” Splittgerber added.

There have been some lows this season. At the Papillion-La Vista meet, the Discoverers placed 13th, with few wins scattered across the team. Along with this, the team has struggled with consistency and, sometimes, effort. But, as with all sports, there is always room for improvement.

“There is always something we can do better,” Azurduy said.

However, with the help and support of the coaches, the team has a solid foundation to build on for a strong end to the season. Sophomore Alex Steffensmeier, a varsity doubles and singles player, has received immense amounts of support and encouragement from the coaching staff.

“The coaches are easy and fun to talk to. They’re great people who want us to strive not only in tennis but in life as well,” Steffensmeier added.



Aubree Beiermann / Rock Bottom Staff

Senior Jacob Rother runs to return a hard hit serve at the Discoverer Invitational. The team plays at their conference tournament tomorrow at Woods Tennis Center in Lincoln.

The Discoverers still have plenty of time to improve and succeed. Their next, and most

important, meet is the HAC Championship at Lincoln, Nebraska on October 11th.

Aquinas alumnus arrives at Scotus

By Madden Saenz



Education is a crucial topic in someone's life. Every minute of every day is an opportunity to learn something new from someone or something. Sometimes, though, the people who teach must leave and someone else will have to take their place.

Scotus has welcomed several new teachers and coaches this year, five to be exact. One of these is Michael Rerucha, the new 10th and 11th-grade history teacher. Hailing from David City, a high-school graduate from Aquinas Catholic, and a graduate from Wayne State College in Wayne, Nebraska, Mr. Rerucha has come to fill the gap left by the previous history teacher, Alexandra Rubeck. Mrs. Rubeck is still active in Scotus athletics, coaching volleyball and track. Rerucha is also an assistant football and basketball coach.

"This is my first full-time teaching job, but I did student teaching at David City [High] last year," Rerucha said.

Although Mr. Rerucha is fairly new to the teaching sphere, he has plenty of experience in coaching.

"I'm helping with football and basketball here," Rerucha said. "I have about four years of basketball coaching experience from various schools and summer programs. [I coached for] two years at Aquinas and two years at David City [High]. I was also a coach for AAU basketball in Gretna," Rerucha added.

Having attended a Catholic high school, this obviously affected Scotus' appeal to Mr. Rerucha.

"Scotus having such a tight-knit community and a lot of faith-organized stuff is what really drew me into it," Rerucha said.

With coaching, however, Rerucha's interest was piqued in a different, more adverse way.

"I gained interest in coaching my senior year. I tore my ACL, so I had to start looking at basketball from a different perspective," Rerucha recounted. "Instead of being a player, I had to look at it more from a sideline experience. That's what put me on this path."

Since arriving at Scotus, Mr. Rerucha has had a pleasant experience with coaching and teaching.

"It's met my expectations. I had high expectations coming in and feel they've been matched. Obviously, it's different," Rerucha explained, "but I think the main difference here is I see more involvement and care from the students compared to other places. I really love it; every moment is competitive and keeps you engaged. I'm not a big fan of going home right at 3:35, so I like having that extra two-and-a-half hours after school."

Overall, Rerucha has nothing negative to say about Scotus. The atmosphere, community, students, and environment is something Mr. Rerucha is happy to be in. Although there is still much ahead, Rerucha has one specific goal for this year.

"As a first-year teacher: survive, stay ahead, don't get behind. That's my main thing, and I look forward to the rest of the year" Rerucha concluded.

Wallish weighs opportunities closer to home

By Jillian Rusher

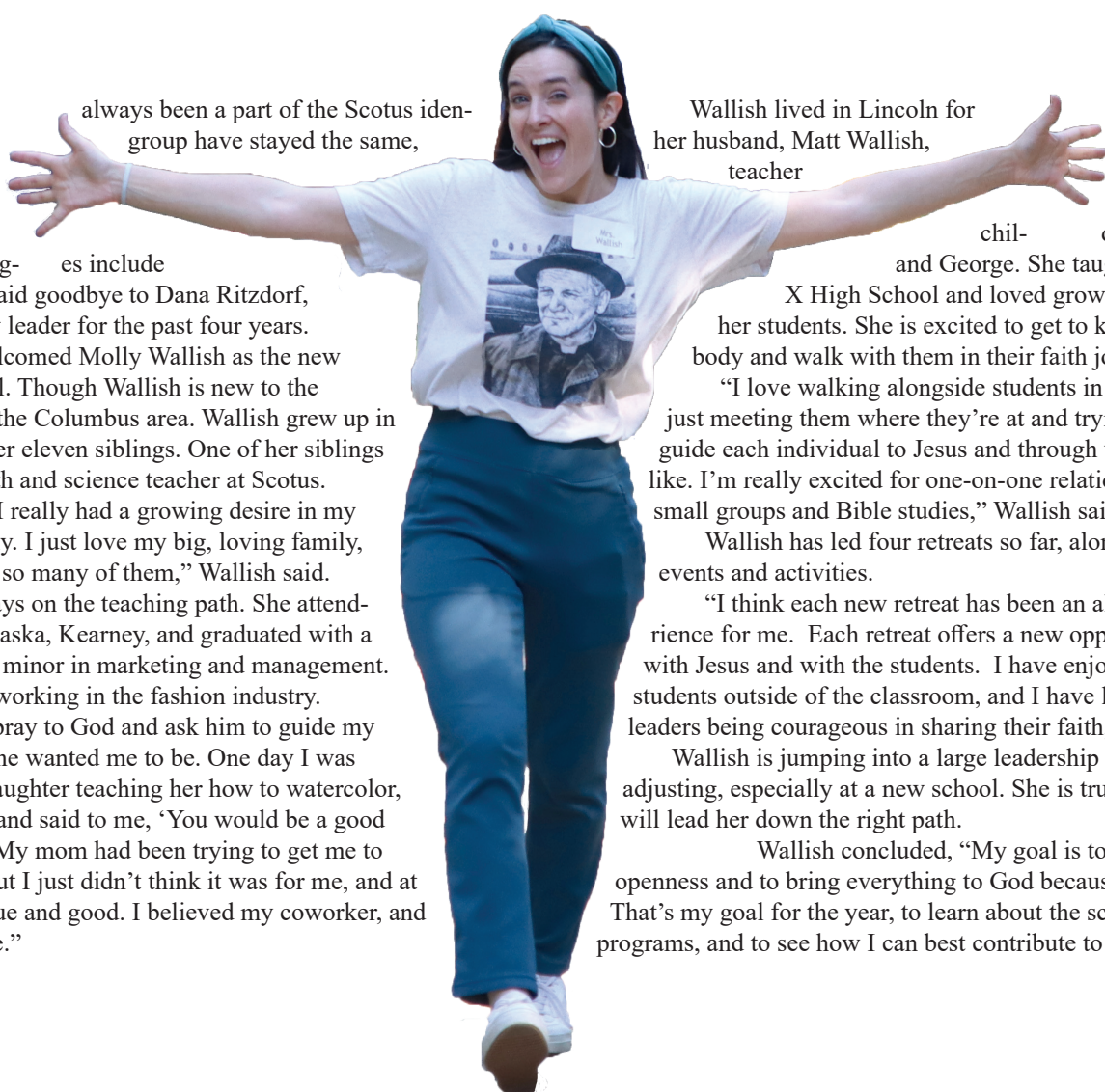
Campus ministry has always been a part of the Scotus identity. While parts of the group have stayed the same, in recent years there have been multiple changes in the Campus Minister role. These changes include last year when the team said goodbye to Dana Ritzdorf, who had been the activity leader for the past four years.

This year, Scotus welcomed Molly Wallish as the new campus minister at school. Though Wallish is new to the school, she is not new to the Columbus area. Wallish grew up in nearby Humphrey with her eleven siblings. One of her siblings is Zach McPhillips, a math and science teacher at Scotus.

"The last few years, I really had a growing desire in my heart to be closer to family. I just love my big, loving family, and Columbus is close to so many of them," Wallish said.

Wallish was not always on the teaching path. She attended the University of Nebraska, Kearney, and graduated with a degree in studio art and a minor in marketing and management. After college, she began working in the fashion industry.

"Every day I would pray to God and ask him to guide my steps and lead me where he wanted me to be. One day I was working with my boss' daughter teaching her how to watercolor, and my coworker turned and said to me, 'You would be a good teacher,'" Wallish said. "My mom had been trying to get me to take education courses, but I just didn't think it was for me, and at that moment it just felt true and good. I believed my coworker, and I hadn't believed it before."



Wallish lived in Lincoln for her husband, Matt Wallish, teacher

about nine years with who is a sixth-grade at St. Bonaventure this year, and three children Evelyn, Lucy,

and George. She taught art classes at Pius X High School and loved growing relationships with her students. She is excited to get to know the Scotus student body and walk with them in their faith journeys.

"I love walking alongside students in their journey to Christ, just meeting them where they're at and trying to help, counsel, and guide each individual to Jesus and through what that might look like. I'm really excited for one-on-one relationships, but also some small groups and Bible studies," Wallish said.

Wallish has led four retreats so far, along with campus ministry events and activities.

"I think each new retreat has been an all-new learning experience for me. Each retreat offers a new opportunity for encounter with Jesus and with the students. I have enjoyed getting to see the students outside of the classroom, and I have loved witnessing student leaders being courageous in sharing their faith," Wallish said.

Wallish is jumping into a large leadership role she knows will take adjusting, especially at a new school. She is trusting God, knowing He will lead her down the right path.

Wallish concluded, "My goal is to just approach it with openness and to bring everything to God because I'm just his minister. That's my goal for the year, to learn about the school, to learn about the programs, and to see how I can best contribute to them."

Scotus' Spanish classes welcome Wilch

By Aubree Beiermann

In the past couple of years, the Spanish classes have gone through many changes, and this year doesn't differ. This year, the Scotus Spanish classes have the pleasure of being taught by Alexis Wilch.

Wilch lived in Schuyler and went to high school there. She then went to college with the plan of becoming a doctor, but switched to teaching.

"I decided teaching because my family did it, so I was familiar with it. I went with being a science teacher because I was really good with science. Since I was bilingual, I was just going to go for that degree too," Wilch said.

Wilch graduated from Wayne State College in 2022 with a Bachelor's degree in Secondary Spanish and Science Education. After college, she returned to Schuyler and taught two years, one year of Spanish and one year of Biology before coming to teach at Scotus.

"I wanted to teach at Scotus because I heard good things about it from people outside of Columbus," Wilch said.

At Scotus, Wilch is teaching both Spanish 1 and 2 along with being the sponsor of the Spanish club. She is hoping to take the students to a language competition in Lincoln, as well. This competition is for a collection of languages where students can go to workshops, breakout sessions, try drinks and foods, and do dances.

"For the Spanish section, students make posters and then compete in different categories of singing, poetry, short films," Wilch said. "Then at the end we come together and they announce the winners. You can win as a whole school in an individual language or get first, second, or third as an individual in the separate categories that you compete in."

Next year, Wilch hopes to expand her teaching of

Spanish here at Scotus to more than just the language.

"Potentially I want to teach a Spanish culture class because I have curriculum for that since I taught that at Schuyler when I was there," Wilch said.

Wilch had many expectations coming into this school year, especially for the students. Those expectations were met highly.

"I like how people are willing to participate in class even though it can be a dumb activity. They find fun in it so it is good," Wilch said.

However, it all does not come easy. Moving schools comes with many challenges.

"The hardest part of teaching here so far is adopting curriculum from non-heritage speakers and then figuring out where their Spanish is from one teacher to the next," Wilch said. "What we think is necessary might not be the same. Right now, we are filling in the gaps."

With the school year just starting, Wilch is trying to make the students in her class perform to the best of their abilities and carry it on in the future.

"I hope the students will get some language retention and become experts in it. Make sure they walk out with more than just 'Hello' and 'Can I use the restroom?' in Spanish," Wilch said.



Urkoski finds new opportunities at Scotus

By Kate Hendricks

This year, Scotus Central Catholic has five new teachers in five different areas. One of those five is in the English department, with Danielle Urkoski taking over.

Urkoski grew up in Grand Island and graduated from Wayne State College and previously taught at Columbus Middle School, but her children attend St. Anthony's.

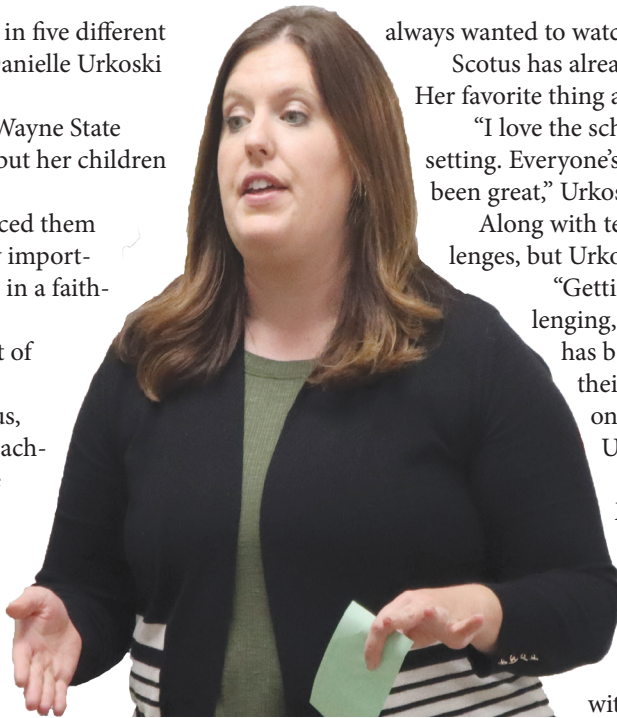
"When my kids started over at Saint Anthony's, we noticed them going there and having that faith-based education was really important to me. The opportunity came up for me to actually teach in a faith-based setting is why I ended up coming here," Urkoski said.

Urkoski knew some people on the Scotus staff, but most of them were new.

"The people that I've encountered, not only just at Scotus, but just in general in the Columbus Catholic Schools, and teachers that I have come across make me want to be a part of the Columbus Catholic Schools," Urkoski said.

Urkoski's new role consists of teaching English 8 and English 10. She has always wanted to be a teacher since elementary school.

"When I was in fourth grade, I remember sitting there and looking around the room and going, 'I could do this and this is something I feel like I would want to do.' I've



always wanted to watch kids grow together and learn together," Urkoski said.

Scotus has already made an impact on her in the short time she's been here. Her favorite thing about Scotus Central Catholic so far is the school spirit.

"I love the school spirit. Spirit week was different for me being in that setting. Everyone's really pumped up about everything and the pep rallies have been great," Urkoski said.

Along with teaching in a new school and environment comes some challenges, but Urkoski has already enjoyed her time here at Scotus.

"Getting used to the new curriculum for me was obviously challenging, but that's probably been the biggest thing. Everything else has been great. I think the fact every kid wants to participate in their faith is great. To see students pray before class and everyone wants to participate is super wonderful and surprising," Urkoski said.

Coming from a much larger school such as Columbus Middle School, to a small school similar to Scotus is a large change. She appreciated the change and is loving Scotus so far.

"So far the school year has been great. I am getting to know the students. I enjoy having the smaller class sizes. You get a little bit more of a relationship to be able to build with the kids," Urkoski said.

Athletics acquire new coaches

John Bailey - Boys Soccer

John Bailey will be the head coach for boys soccer this spring after being assistant to PJ Miller for the past six years.

Having been one at Scotus for several years, Bailey understands the influence coaches have on their athletes.

"I am most excited for the opportunity to make a positive impact on our players. I get self-satisfaction when my players have individual success and team success," Bailey said.

"I am excited to have an opportunity to teach them more than just soccer, which I try to relate a lot of what we do on the field to their lives after soccer and sports."

The boys soccer program at Scotus is known for its drive and willingness to succeed in all aspects of the game - something Bailey is looking to continue as he takes on his new role as head coach.

"I want every player that puts on the Scotus uniform to understand the history and the pride that is on their chest and what they are representing," Bailey said.



Cody Mroczek - Boys Track & Field

Cody Mroczek will hold the title of head boys track and field coach this spring.

Mroczek has taught business classes and coached cross country, boys basketball, and track for the last two years at Scotus.

Mroczek has been in the track and field scene for over a decade - from state champion in high school to competing in Division 1 track at University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

"I'm excited to see the team and the kids grow from the start of the year to the end of the year," Mroczek said.

"What's the most rewarding is seeing how the team does at the end of each meet."

Mroczek is no stranger to the high standards Scotus holds for its athletics, having been an athlete here years ago.

"I'm just glad to be part of Scotus tradition here," Mroczek said. "Scotus has a rich history across the board, and I'm hoping to continue that here."



Michael Rerucha - Asst. Football

Michael Rerucha will take on the role of assistant football coach and reserve boys basketball coach this year. He is in his first year at Scotus, teaching sophomore and junior history along with coaching.

Rerucha has had experience coaching in the past and is looking to pass on his knowledge of the game to young players.

"All through college I coached AAU basketball in the summer in Gretna, and so that's kind of how I knew I wanted to be a teacher," Rerucha said.

"I liked being involved with the athletics, and it's a good way to serve as a positive role model for kids."

Rerucha has seen firsthand how important athletics are to the Scotus community and how they unite the school.

"It's awesome to see how much parents care and that really helps with the kids buying in," Rerucha said. "Everyone's been super welcoming so far, so I've really enjoyed it."



Matt Wallish - Asst. Golf

Matt Wallish will be the assistant coach for both the girls and boys golf teams this year. This is Wallish's first year coaching at Scotus, having previously coached golf at Pius X in Lincoln, NE.

"I didn't know what to expect moving to a smaller class school, and I've been surprised by how many girls are on the golf team this year," Wallish said. "I'm looking forward to seeing how many boys try out in the spring."

Both the girls and boys golf teams have seen plentiful success in recent years, and Wallish is looking to improve even more this season.

"There are several goals I have this year, including having all my golfers lower their scoring average by making improvements throughout the year especially in their short game," Wallish said.

"I also want both teams to make it to the state golf tournament. It would be great to have multiple golfers medal at state!"



Alumna returns to home playing Field

By Sofia Karges

When students walk through the doors on the first day of the new school year, there are always noticeable changes to the building. This year, some of these changes occurred in the north end of the building with the addition of a new strength, conditioning, and physical education teacher, Heidi Field.

While this is a new teaching position for her, the building isn't anything new; Field was a Scotus graduate of the class of 2005. Field was a decorated athlete in high school and was elected into the Scotus Hall of Fame in 2015, so it makes sense that she is here working with kids, helping them to become better athletes.

"I didn't originally plan to go to college for teaching, but I really became involved in strength and conditioning because I loved coaching," Field said. "It was the way I could work with lots of different athletes instead of just one specific team."

After high school, Field went to Northwest Missouri State and graduated with a degree in K-12 Physical Education. After college, she taught strength and conditioning at Columbus High for fourteen years before coming to Scotus this year.

"Coming to Scotus was one of those things where it just kind of all fell into place," Field said. "They say things happen for a reason, and they really do; I wouldn't change how any of it happened at all."

Field started the new coaching position at the end of May with the summer lifting program. She was able to gain insight on the building and the people before school started, which is different from most new teachers, who start in the fall.

"Getting to know the kids and coaching staff early was helpful. People knowledge was something I'd definitely gained from being here in the summer," Field said.

Along with managing the lifting program in the weight-

room, Field was a big part of implementing the summer nutrition program, which was an added factor to lifting this year. After lifting, each athlete had the opportunity to take a Core Power drink, a banana, and some gummy bears in order to refuel their bodies after their workout. This change was added this year in hopes of teaching the students a little bit more about nutrition and how to take care of their bodies properly.

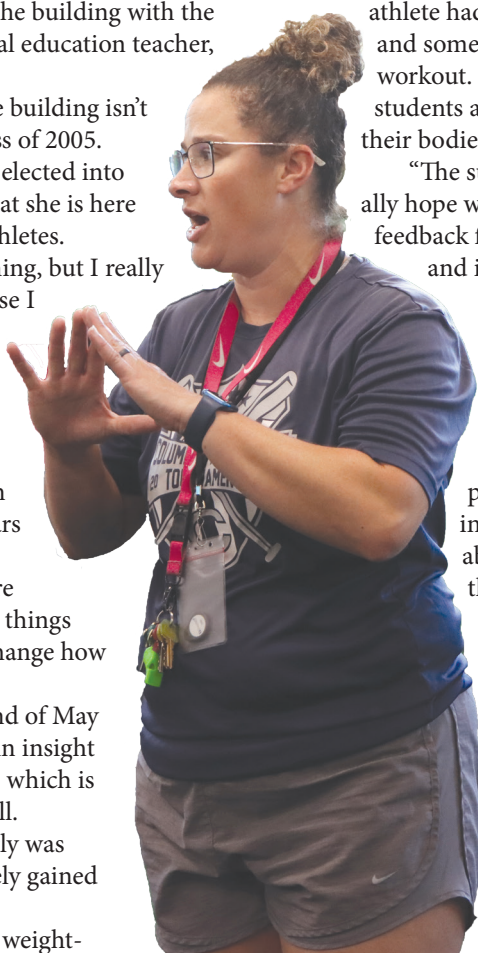
"The summer nutrition program was a huge success, and I really hope we can continue that next year," Field said. "We got some feedback from kids and coaches on how we can make it better, and it would be great to see some of those things happen."

Now that summer is over, Field is hoping to go further in helping athletes understand the importance of taking care of their bodies by teaching nutrition lessons in her classes.

"We've been talking about the importance of nutrition, sleep recovery, and mental toughness in my upper-level strength training classes," Field said. "I'm going into a bit more detail and expanding on what we talked about in the summer in hopes that it'll make a change for these athletes down the road."

Field has brought success to the Scotus program in the past, and now that she is back, there is no doubt she will continue to do the same for coaches and athletes.

Field concluded, "I want to bring back the pride students have for Scotus. When you're wearing the Scotus uniform, when you're playing or competing, I want kids to understand they have a lot riding on their shoulders, but they're strong enough to handle the pressure. I want them to have the pride of walking into this building every day and doing everything in their power to make it a better place."



Cheer takes flight with new coaches

By Sofia Karges

When entering the Dowd Activity Center or Memorial Stadium to watch the athletic match of the week, the excitement is felt by the whole crowd. The student section is growing by the minute, as everyone packs into the tiny bleachers to cheer on the Shamrocks. The tension is building and the atmosphere is ecstatic. What fuels the fire of this buzzing energy? The cheerleaders!

The cheerleaders have enhanced their role as leaders of the school this year while gaining two new cheer sponsors who have helped encourage this change.

New head cheer coach Sarah Langan and assistant coach Liz Gonka stepped into the new coaching position after the former cheer sponsor, Pat Engel, retired in May.

“The new coaches are both very committed to the team and help everything go very smoothly with all the time they have put in,” senior co-captain Raya Kluever said.

Both Langan and Gonka have had experience with cheer in the past and have been around dance for a long time because of their daughters Sophia and Sidney, who are both juniors on the cheer team as well.

“As a dance mom, it’s fun to be a part of what your girls do,” Gonka said. “I knew this year I wanted to be involved with cheer more than I was before, helping as a parent volunteer or wherever else they needed me, so taking this role has all really worked out great.”

The cheerleaders are trying out new activities to help their team grow. Some of these changes include using new cheers, learning new stunting skill techniques, and hosting new fundraisers in the community. These fundraisers, like Hyvee Bagging for Tips and



Ella Hash / Rock Bottom Staff

New assistant and head cheer coaches Liz Gonka and Sarah Langan admire the cheerleaders as they perform at the Columbus Days parade in August. Gonka and Langan stepped into these roles after the former cheer coach Pat Engel retired at the end of last school year.

Bid a Bag, help cover the costs of uniforms, cheer camp, and other competitions that would have otherwise been put at the families’ own expense.

“We have let the girls drive where we were going to go this year; we have just been guiding them in the right direction,” Langan said. “Implementing stunting has been something we’ve always learned at cheer camp but never taken further during the rest of the year. Everybody stepped up to help with that, whether it be going to extra clinics, getting into the weightroom or attending extra practices, all the girls put in the work to be

able to do it.”

Another notable change this year was bringing in a choreographer to make the state Non-Tumbling and Gameday routines. In the past, seniors were the ones who came up with the routines.

Senior co-captain Ava Rickert is a back-spot for one of the stunting groups in the state performance.

“Getting a choreographer takes the weight of coming up with routines off of the seniors’ shoulders, which has let us focus more on elevating the game day experience for our sports teams instead,” Rickert said.

The cheerleaders also had a quick turnaround after the summer before they had to perform their homecoming dance at halftime of the first football game. Not only that, but they also hosted Little Girls Cheer Camp for the elementary students at the September 20th football game.

“We worked our tails off to get it all to be successful right away,” Langan said. “We had a ton of compliments on our homecoming routine from people who normally never say a word. The girls all looked great, and the reason it happened was because they all put in the time at practice.”



Quinn VunCannon / Rock Bottom Staff

Senior Ava Rickert leads the cheerleaders through their routine at the Columbus Days parade in August. The cheerleaders march behind the band in multiple parades throughout the fall, including the Norfolk Lions Parade and the Grand Island Harvest of Harmony Parade.



Quinn VunCannon / Rock Bottom Staff

Sophomore Haley Van Diest and junior Eva Foreman hold onto junior Sidney Gonka as she goes into an extension at a football game. Learning and building new stunts is one of the many incorporations the cheerleaders are adding to their skills this year.

Scotus takes advantage of podcasting

By Kate Hendricks

Podcasting has become a popular form of entertainment for many over the last few years. Communications director Taylor Dahl and Executive Director of Columbus Catholic Schools Jeff Ohnoutka thought podcasting would be a good new direction for Scotus to take this year, so the Shamrock Green Room Podcast began. With the latest podcast, the listeners will hear all the stories of Columbus Catholic Schools.

The Shamrock Green Room podcast debuted on August 1st, with the first episode featuring Ohnoutka. The podcast can be found

on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, and YouTube. Episodes will be released once a month on the first, and are about an hour long.

This is Dahl’s sixth year at Scotus and first year hosting the podcast.

“Mr. Ohnoutka and I talked about having a podcast for about the last year. Last spring is when we bought the equipment and started recording it,” Dahl said.

The Shamrock Green Room podcast is welcome to all Scotus alumni, staff, former teachers, parents, and students.

“With the podcast, we want to be able to

grow the podcast in many ways. Having staff involved, students involved, and the students in video production to help produce and edit as well,” Dahl said.

The 22 students in the video production class are also leading podcasts this first semester. As the podcast grows this year they hope to be able to include all the students they can. There are already ideas for future episodes.

“Shamrock Student Sessions are what those episodes will be called, and they will be about 15 to 20 minutes long. The students

will talk about their experience in high school, what they experience in Scotus, and other things that they experience in high school,” Dahl said.

Junior Max Beshaler was featured in a recent episode. He is one of the students in the video production class this semester.

“I like being in charge of the podcast because it allows me to be creative and gives me an outlet to express my thoughts to a large audience. I listen to podcasts at least once a week, or even more. Often, I listen because I am bored and need something to occupy my brain on a long car ride,” Beshaler said.

Senior Olivia Nelsen is among the 22 students also in the class. In her recent episode, she talked about her elementary school experience and how it prepared her time at Scotus.

“I like that with podcasts, it gives listeners to hear others’ opinions on things and gives listeners a real, but different aspect on certain experiences in life,” Nelsen said.

The Shamrock Student Sessions allows parents and students to hear about other students’ experiences through school.

“Being able to hear yourself talk and be confident in your ability to talk to another person is huge. Whatever the student is going to go into in their future life, it will just help them down the road,” Dahl said.

Dahl hopes the Shamrock Green Room continues to be successful throughout the year.

“The podcast is fitting for our school because everybody has a story. No matter if you are a sixth grader at St. Isidore or a senior here at Scotus, you have your own story to tell and podcasting is a great way to hear that,” Dahl said.



Taylor Dahl / Communications Director

Seniors Ben Sueper, Lexi Reidmiller, Rebecca Kosch, and Eddy Herrera speak on the podcast in the Scotus Green Room. The first episode of the Shamrock Green Room podcast debuted with president Jeff Ohnoutka on August 1st.

Homecoming slips away again

By Aubree Beiermann

When school starts, high schoolers have plenty to look forward to, new classes, seeing friends all day, and the homecoming dance. Those students who were the most excited about homecoming were lucky this year because it came fast.

This year's homecoming had a theme of Tangled, and it was on August 31st, Labor Day weekend. The date came as a surprise to many.

"It was weird having it so early because you are just getting settled in for the school year, and it is already homecoming," freshman Avery Heinrich said.

The homecoming festivities started the week before the dance with the themed days. Students could dress up in different outfits based on the day. This year the themes were Pajama Day, USA Day, Mathletes vs. Athletes, Senior Citizen vs. Elementary Self, and Spirit Day.

"My favorite day was the Senior Citizen vs Elementary Self because I believe I could best portray my younger self and it was such a creative topic," junior Helene Chard said.

On the Thursday of that week, there was the homecoming pep rally, which was held in the morning. At the pep rally, the winner of the homecoming hallways was announced. This year the winner was the Juniors with the theme of 'Up'. Also during the pep rally, the candidates played a Scotus version of the Olympics.

"My favorite thing was watching the boys try to do cartwheels. They gave it a valiant effort, but most of their legs didn't even make it over their heads!" junior Audrey Stoner said.

This year's king and queen of the homecoming court were Joaquin Azurduy Castellanos and Abigail Schumacher.

"Being crowned homecoming queen was a dream of mine ever since I was in elementary school. I am so grateful for those who were campaigning and supporting me along the way. Sixth-grade Abby would be so proud!" Schumacher said.



Jillian Rusher / Rock Bottom Staff

Seniors Meah Sackett, Cohen Pelan, Sofia Karges, Luke Wemhoff, Joaquin Azurduy Castellanos, Abigail Schumacher, Max Wemhoff, Quinn VunCannon, Jacob Rother, Emma Brezenski, Ian Karges, and Mallory Dreesen all stand on the field after the homecoming football game. This year the homecoming king and queen were Abigail Schumacher and Joaquin Azurduy Castellanos.

The homecoming football game was the first game of the season. After the game, candidates walked onto the field so the king and queen could be announced and crowned.

"Standing in front of the entire school was a very good experience. The truth is that I was nervous and the wait to find out who won seemed eternal, especially being in front of everyone," Azurduy Castellanos said.

As usual, the dance had fun music and

exciting lights. This year had the addition, a surprise to all those who attended, of extreme heat and slippery floors. In the past, the cafeteria has had problems with the temperature of the dance, and this year had a new problem, the floor.

"The most memorable thing for me was that the floors were so slippery that I fell over like 5 times," sophomore Brooke Krienke said.

The heat and dangerous floor caused the dance to end at 10:30 instead of its usual 11:00. For the seniors, their last homecoming dance had a bittersweet feeling.

"I didn't really have time to process the fact it was done. It didn't hit me until we were at pictures. I kept thinking 'Well, next year, I'll do this' only to realize I have no next year. It's sad, but it was definitely one to remember!" senior Caroline Klitz said.



Ava Rickert / Rock Bottom Staff

Sophomore Aiden Zegar saunters down the hall in his USA Day outfit for homecoming week. The other homecoming day themes were Pajama Day, Mathletes vs. Athletes, Senior Citizen vs. Elementary Self, and Spirit Day.



Jillian Rusher / Rock Bottom Staff

Juniors Sidney Gonka and Camila Carrizales and senior Sofia Karges dance to "Waka Waka (This Time for Africa)" by Shakira at the homecoming dance on August 31st in the cafeteria. This year, homecoming was on the first home football game, only two and a half weeks into school.

Building projects benefit community

By Sydney Stuart

Every teenager has heard the question, "Where are you going to school?" In the last six years, Scotus STEAM classes have been broadening the horizon of students' knowledge of post-high school opportunities by showing options of schooling students might not have known were possible. Through STEAM classes, students can have hands-on

experience, similar to trade school classes, through the Welding and Building class at Scotus. More so, students are learning to give back to the community through the projects they create.

The STEAM classes have been at Scotus since the fall of 2018, and, currently, STEAM instructor Betsy Rall is leading the Welding

and Building class. When deciding what to build in her classes, Rall was thinking about more than her class. She was keeping the community in mind.

"We thought we could build a shed to sell at the gala, which we did. Then that was where the projects happened, and then people heard we did projects and people started to ask if we could do some things for them," Rall said.

This semester, there are two periods of Welding and Building; each class has a different project they are working on. Period eight made a shed for Habitat for Humanity. The ninth period is split into groups doing a variety of projects for the school and community.

Thomas Settje is a junior in the eighth-period class and helped to construct the Habitat for Humanity shed. He and his classmates learned how to use a variety of tools and different construction techniques, such as shingling, while working on their project.

"We all have the same role and we are building the walls in groups of four and putting them together," Settje said.

Rather than building this for the school, the shed will be given to a family. Junior Jackson Baumert is also in the eighth-period class and contributed to building the shed.

"I like having a goal because it gives me something to work towards, and the shed is going to someone who needs it," Baumert said.

The walls were built at Scotus in the shop. On Friday, October 4th, students from both eighth and ninth period Welding and Building classes went on-site to where the shed's final resting place would be. There, they put the walls together, assembled the roof, and attached siding on the outside of it.

Seniors Evan Jelinek and Jordan Kouma in the ninth-period class are fixing a magazine rack for the media center.

"I enjoy getting a project because it means we are helping someone who needs it," Kouma said.

Also in the ninth-period class, there is a group making a set of cornhole boards for the gala, a structure to hold Scotus' compost barrels, and a bench which will be in the courtyard in front of the statue Mary.

The Columbus Legacy group, which is composed of teenagers from all three high schools, reached out to Rall in hopes of collaborating to make a trailer to house a projector. The trailer and projector will serve as an outdoor movie theater in Pawnee Park.

Throughout the semester Rall is hoping to do more than teach the basics of construction and welding.

"Some people do not know what they want to do after the opportunity," Rall said. "Giving them the graduate to do something hands-on may lead them to look at a different career path than whatever they might be envisioning."



Taylor Dahl / Communications Director

Senior Spencer Shotkoski uses a circular saw while senior Adam Gonzalez-Gomez and juniors Mike Krienke, Chase Wangler, and Jackson Baumert hold down a sheet of plywood on Friday, October 4th at the home where the shed will permanently reside. All the welding and building classes have projects for the community.

Kids' backpacks takeover hallways

By Quinn VunCannon

For many, the last time students have been excited to go to school was when the hallways and classrooms were filled with bright colors and artwork. This was their cherished time in elementary school. However, this year, many students look to bring joy and fun back to the hallways of Scotus.

If you take a peek at the junior and senior hallways during passing periods, you'd start to notice the latest trend swirling around our school, children's backpacks.

A plethora of students can be seen wearing backpacks that range from Sonic, to *Paw Patrol*, to *Blue's Clues*. I think this trend is great and improves the overall atmosphere in the Scotus hallways. Many might see the small size and crazy designs as impractical, but others find the opposite to be true.

Senior Rebecca Kosch can be seen sporting a red and blue Spiderman backpack to class.

"The functionality of my backpack is amazing because it only allows me to pack necessities and not random items," Kosch explained.

This seems to be an unexpected upside to those who rock the children's sized backpacks. Another aspect I have seen around the school is people utilizing the lunch boxes that have come with the bags. I think the creativity and functionality of these backpacks give it a leg up as one of the cooler school trends.

In my opinion, I think wanting to bring fun back to the hallways is beneficial to all students.

Senior Lexi Riedmiller wears her pink sparkly unicorn backpack to school every day.

"I chose to purchase a kids backpack because it's senior year," Riedmiller said. "You have to go all out for senior year, and I like seeing everyone's different bookbags."

With the variety of students expressing their style in diverse ways, I think it only adds excitement to the school year.

Senior Max Wemhoff is very passionate about his backpack choice.

"My backpack is very pleasing to the eye, which is why I picked it. It has an angry Pikachu on the front surrounded by lightning bolts, and when you hit Pikachu, the bolts flash. It's pretty sick if you ask me," Wemhoff said.

I think another cool aspect of the trend is mixing up a mundane routine set by students many years ago.

Senior Ben Sueper can be seen wearing a *Blue's Clues* backpack strolling in the halls.

"I was just sick of my generic North Face backpack I have had since I was at least a 2nd grader," Sueper explained.

In my opinion, the fact that so many people joined this trend actually helps the class bond. It gives students something to talk about and have in common.

Along with many other students, I love that this trend counteracts the typical teenage attitude of being above having fun. Students are expressing themselves and having a laugh while doing it, which I think is an awesome direction Scotus is taking.

Some people think it's dumb and childish to bring a kid's backpack to use in a highschool setting, but the rest of us think it definitely adds swagger.



Quinn VunCannon / Rock Bottom Staff

Seniors Owen Kluever, Ben Sueper, and Alex Evans pose with kids' backpacks in the senior hallway. Countless students from all grade levels have participated in the trend this school year.

"I think the backpack trend is the new wave; it's great that we aren't 'too cool' for

the kids' backpacks," Wemhoff concluded.

'The Juice' makes comeback to big screen



New York Times

Michael Keaton's character, Beetlejuice, stares menacingly at the camera in *Beetlejuice Beetlejuice*. Keaton and two other cast members reprise their roles from the 1988 original *Beetlejuice*.

By Ella Hash

Ghost stories are staples for many families during the Halloween season. Parents and children share tales of scary stories to get into the Halloween spirit. Another major part

of Halloween are the countless Halloween and horror movies. Movies of witches, great pumpkins, and ghosts have been dominant points in childhoods across the country. One

story in particular has made an epic comeback to the big screen.

Beetlejuice Beetlejuice is the sequel to the 1988 film *Beetlejuice* and follows new and familiar characters from the original movie. The new movie brings more background to the dead and the living while following the characters in their twenty-first century lives. In the world of remakes and sequels to movies that did not need them, *Beetlejuice Beetlejuice* is an exception and lives up to the hype of its predecessor.

As someone who has watched the original film multiple times, the original cast blends well with their new counterparts. Michael Keaton's character, Beetlejuice, provides the same amount of weird and disgusting behavior he did in the 1988 original. Winona Ryder's character, Lydia, is the same goth girl and is now in the public eye with her T.V. show about her paranormal experiences with the dead. New cast member Jenna Ortega plays Ryder's daughter, Astrid. Ortega's performance mirrors her onscreen mother's character in the 1988 original.

Beetlejuice Beetlejuice also offers many references to the original. In *Beetlejuice*, the opening scenes show the Maitland couple fixing up their new house. Realtor Jane Butterfield and her daughter little Jane Butterfield then show up to the house, explaining how the couple could sell the house and get millions of dollars. In the sequel, little Jane Butterfield is now a realtor similar to her mother. Tragedy strikes the Deetz family in the sequel, and she

appears with an offer to help sell the family's home.

There is also a reference for the fans of the original dinner scene where the Deetzes and their guests were controlled by Beetlejuice himself. *Beetlejuice Beetlejuice* includes one musical scene where the Deetz family and their guests are under his control once again. The sequel also includes musical numbers of Beetlejuice singing to the dead and undead with familiar songs from the original.

Some have been skeptical to see this new sequel. One main argument is the whole original cast not returning. The Maitland couple, played by Alec Baldwin and Geena Davis, did not return in *Beetlejuice Beetlejuice*. Although the two actors are not in the sequel, *Beetlejuice Beetlejuice* mentions them and fills any plot holes from their story line. Another critique people have is if *Beetlejuice Beetlejuice* would even live up to its predecessor. While I think movie companies need to be creative and stop making remakes or sequels, *Beetlejuice Beetlejuice* far outshines the original.

This Halloween, I recommend a double feature watch party of the 1988 *Beetlejuice* and 2024 sequel *Beetlejuice Beetlejuice*. Whether a person is thirteen or sixty years old, *Beetlejuice Beetlejuice* is an instant watch. The sequel provides the same amount of fun and weirdness the original did in 1988. As Halloween fast approaches, get into the spooky spirit with the next Halloween staple, *Beetlejuice Beetlejuice*.

Pickleball provides perfect pasttime

By Austin Long

If you combine tennis with table tennis, what do you get? Pickleball, obviously.

Pickleball is a recreational sport that is played similar to tennis; however, there are some key differences. Pickleball has shorter nets and smaller courts. Additionally, pickleball is played with wooden or metal paddles and 'wiffle ball-esque' balls, rather than racquets and traditional tennis balls.

Recently, pickleball has become one of the most popular recreational sports in the U.S.

A large portion of my summer hours this year were sunk into the enjoyment that is pickleball. Whether it be day or dusk, pickleball was always a top option. I have bought in to the hype around pickleball, and anyone and everyone could and should too.

This oddly named game is loved by both those who enjoy a slower paced competition and those who crave breakneck speed gameplay. Pickleball allows this because it offers a 1v1 mode along with 2v2. One on one results in high intensity rallies with high-speed decision making, whereas duos provides a more leisurely match.

Not only can both males and females play pickleball, but they can also play together. Pickleball is not strength oriented. Rather, it is a game of critical thinking, mechanics, and hand-eye coordination. For this reason, pickleball gives no advantage to one particular sex.

Regardless of gender, nonetheless, one might argue pickleball is an expensive sport. A quick Google search will prove this to be

true, but this is only surface level information. Digging deeper will reveal pickleball to be inexpensive. Recently, my dad received an advertisement in the mail from Menards. Many promotions were presented, but only one caught my eye—two pickleball paddles and ball for only \$10. With a little bit of searching, I found a deal making pickleball affordable.

Along with being cheap, pickleball can easily be picked up by beginners. This is due to the nature of the game. Pickleball courts are smaller, resulting in the not so nimble players being able to rally the ball. Pickleball paddles are lightweight, making them easy to wield. Pickleball balls are wiffle-like, allowing for less fast speeds and more time to react during a rally.

From a new player's perspective, given these attributes, pickleball may seem to be scarce in depth. Nevertheless, pickleball is immensely competitive and offers a high skill ceiling. In fact, pickleball has its own professional leagues and national championships. In these stressful competitions, players display their expertise via complex mechanics such as topspin, backspin, and "dinking." These mechanics provide layers to pickleball's complexity. They must be mastered in order to be defended and utilized in a match.

For anyone looking for a cheap, easy to learn, go at your own pace recreational sport, pickleball is the game for you. There are numerous places to enjoy pickleball in Columbus, including the recently built courts at Gerrard Park. Furnished with indoor pickleball courts, the Columbus Fieldhouse gives



Austin Long / Rock Bottom Staff

Seniors Callen Jedlicka and Joaquin Azurduy Castellanos play one on one pickleball for sport at Gerard Park in Columbus. Gerard Park has given pickleball players the opportunity to play daily and nightly with its recently installed pickleball courts equipped with solar-powered lights.

players the opportunity to have year-round amusement. So, gather your posse, pick up

your paddles, and have oodles of fun playing pickleball.