

SHAMROCKS MAKE STATE



VOLLEYBALL



TENNIS



CROSS COUNTRY



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Scotus Central Catholic

Rock Bottom

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

Columbus, Nebraska 68601

Volume 24 • Issue 2 • November 14, 2024

Shamrock volleyball returns to state



JILLIAN RUSHER / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

Senior Mallory Dreesen celebrates with her teammates after winning a point at the state tournament. The Scotus volleyball team went into state with a record of 28-6 and played Wahoo High in the first round.

By Jillian Rusher

Throughout their season, the Shamrock volleyball team has won five, five set battles. This includes their exciting victory in the district final against Ogallala on Saturday, November 2nd, which punched their ticket

to the state tournament for the first time in six years. The volleyball team finished their season Wednesday, November 6th, in the first round of state.

The district final was a close match, with

Ogallala dominating the first two sets.

Senior right-side Ava Rickert had 31 aces throughout the season.

“We knew we did not want to end our amazing season in such a disappointing way. We all knew deep down that we could beat them; it was just a matter of everyone firing on all cylinders at the same time that would get the job done,” Rickert said. “We started playing smarter and mixed up the offense so we would have more options all around. That game was a test of our confidence in each other; we all had to dig deep and put trust in our teammates.”

The team had a reverse-sweep to finish the game in close sets scoring, 25-17, 25-20, 15-12.

Senior outside Mallory Dreesen had 16 kills in the match.

“I think one of the things that helped change our mindset is to expect to win every point. Coach Field told us that, and it has really stuck with us ever since,” Dreesen said.

The girls were sent off last Wednesday morning in Shamrock fashion with a hallway walk and police escort. They were set to open with Wahoo High.

Senior middle Adrianna Kush, along with the rest of the team, experienced for the first time what it felt like to play at Pinnacle Bank Arena.

“I couldn’t have asked for a better place to end my season than Pinnacle Bank Arena. The atmosphere is unlike any other, and it makes a person feel truly special,” Kush said.

Out of the four teams playing at the time, the Scotus student section was the largest of the schools and stood out because of the neon theme.

Junior libero Kayla Hoffman had 554

digs on the season.

“Playing at Pinnacle Bank in front of that many people was amazing. The crowd was loud and cheered us on the whole game! You can always count on the Scotus fans to travel no matter where the game is,” Hoffman said.

The Shamrocks won the first set against Wahoo, but would drop the next three sets finishing their season 28-7.

Junior defensive specialist Sophia Langan received 252 serves this season.

“Overall, I am so proud of us. We did it.

We made it to Lincoln. Our last game may not have been our best, but we can’t dwell on it. Throughout the year we showed grit, determination, trust, and our conditioning in those 5 sets,” Langan said. “We are all best friends, and we all played for each other. I will miss the seniors and the team chemistry we had. I am so thankful for the time and effort coaches, Mr. Sheridan, Mrs. Field, and our families put into this group. I cannot wait to build off of this year and see what we can accomplish next!”

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McPhillips battles back

By Sofia Karges

Walking down the halls of Scotus every day, new faces are seen all over the building, especially in the first few weeks of school. One face this year that is new to some, but familiar to most, is the return of school counselor Bridget McPhillips.

In the summer of 2023, McPhillips was diagnosed with a rare form of cancer, so she did not work in the building last school year. After battling through fourteen cycles of chemotherapy, two months of radiation, and one surgery over the last year, she is back in her third-floor office next to the study hall room. “It feels amazing to be back after not working for a year,” McPhillips said. “It was hard to be away from the students; I loved seeing everyone’s smiling faces, and I really missed the interactions I would have and the relationships I would build with them at school.”

McPhillips’ specific type of cancer is called angiosarcoma. It is a cancer that arises in the blood vessels of soft tissue, and it is hard to treat because it is so rare.

After McPhillips’ diagnosis, she went through a chemotherapy regimen starting in August and ending around Thanksgiving. From December to January, she was in Texas undergoing radiation, and at the end of February, she had surgery. Her post-surgery chemo was a precaution to make sure all the cancer cells were gone; it started in April and ended in September.

“Each chemo treatment can hit a person differently; some hit harder than others, some not so much,” McPhillips said. “The first round I did was really intense, and my immune system was basically nonexistent at that time. I wasn’t advised to go out and see people to make sure I wouldn’t contract any infections that would set me back. I had to spend a lot of time away from my family,

which was really hard to do. Not being able to see them was probably the biggest challenge I went through.”

McPhillips has worked at Scotus for eight years, so it was very different not having her around last year. Students and faculty continued to pray for her in her absence, along with contributing to her recovery in other ways.

Boys basketball organized a pink-out theme their last few games of the season, home-cooked meals were delivered to their family, rosaries were offered for her, thoughtful cards were written to her, etc.

“The support of friends and family is definitely what kept me going throughout the whole process. There were lots of people who



JILLIAN RUSHER / ROCK BOTTOM STAFF

School counselor Bridget McPhillips answers questions about resumes during the juniors’ history class in late October. McPhillips is back in the building after being gone last year due to her cancer treatment.

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Seniors cast their first ballots

By Ava Rickert

Millions of Americans counted down the days until one of the most impactful events of the year: Election Day. It is easy to say the presidential race between former president Donald Trump and Vice President Kamala Harris was one of the most anticipated elections of all time, ending in a surprising sweep of the popular vote, electoral college, house, and senate for Trump.

Even more exciting than the fact that no more political commercials will disturb the TV watching for the next four years is the fact that half of the senior class was able to participate in such a monumental event. In Government class, seniors have spent countless periods watching debates, talking about candidates, and registering to vote in preparation for the 2024 election.

Senior Rebecca Kosch voted at St. Peter’s Catholic Church in Bellwood. Kosch used many different resources in making her decision about the candidates.

“The information I gathered to make an educated vote in the election was through Mr. Brockhaus’ class, watching Brett Cooper’s YouTube videos, along with Charlie Kirk,” Kosch said.

Since this was the first election where some seniors were old enough to vote, it was a new experience for all who were involved. Some chose to vote early while others voted on the day of the election, November 5th.

Senior Max Wemhoff voted at a building north of the courthouse in Columbus.

“My voting experience was good; I voted early so I was in and out in like fifteen minutes,” Wemhoff said. “I went with my mom, and she basically told me where to go and

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ELECTION

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**2024-2025
 Rock Bottom Dates**
 October 10
November 14
 December 12
 February 6
 March 6
 April 1
 May 1



PHOTO COURTESY KIM KLUEVER

Senior Raya Kluever places her voting ballot into the ballot box at Immanuel Life Center in Columbus. There were 31 new voters from the senior class who were able to vote at the recent election.

who to talk to and all that, so all I had to do was vote for what I thought was best.”
 Senior Annie Weber voted at the Berean

Church in Columbus.

“My voting experience was great,” Weber said. “I had a fun time filling out the ballot

and was glad I was able to have a little bit of say in our country’s leadership.”

Senior Rebecca Policky voted at Columbus High School. Voting for the first time was not as easy as she expected.

“The worst part was trying to figure out what I was voting for. A bunch of the ballot initiatives were hard to understand and read,” Policky said. “I wasn’t sure of what some of them even meant, but I’m glad that before the election my parents went over what each was for and against. Their help definitely led me to a better understanding.”

Although being able to vote for the first time was an exhilarating experience for many seniors, others saw first hand the way a country can be divided after election results are released.

Senior Caroline Klitz also voted at St. Peter’s in Bellwood.

“Voting was fine; it was what came after. There is a lot of voter shame now,” Klitz said. “I went on social media the next day, and there were posts galore shaming people for the way they voted. It makes me uncomfortable.”

There were a total of 31 seniors who were old enough to vote for this election. The seniors who were not eighteen by election day will not vote for a president until they are twenty-one.

McPHILLIPS

would call and check in on me or send me notes while I was gone, which really made a difference,” McPhillips said. “I definitely want to say thank you to everyone. I’ve been lifted up in prayer by so many students and faculty; this is really what it means when we say we live in communion with one another.”

McPhillips went through fourteen total cycles of treatment. After every six weeks (two cycles), she flew down to Texas where her doctors would look at the scans and make sure the chemotherapy was working. If it wasn’t shrinking the cancer cells like it was supposed to, the doctors would move on to the next treatment. Luckily, every round of

chemo did its job, so McPhillips was able to continue the cycles she was scheduled to do.

“My body is going to take a lot of time to heal after everything that happened to it. I’m doing a lot better, but the progress is slow. I have a high rate of recurrence of the cancer, especially in the first two years, so I could still use prayers for my recovery,” McPhillips said.

Her doctors recently announced she is in remission, which means there are no signs of cancer cells in her body at this time, but they will continue to keep a close eye on her to make sure they don’t come back.


“Going through something like this, it really makes you appreciate what you have.

Each day is a gift. We can choose to live our lives knowing that fact, by being intentional and present and joyful in everything we do, or we can take it all for granted. I wouldn’t be able to get through this without my relationship with God and the love and support I received from other people. Because of how our Scotus community has impacted me, I hope our students know there will always be people who love and support them here, too, even after they graduate,” McPhillips said. “You don’t know what a difference reaching out to someone could have. Even the smallest act of love can have a huge impact.”


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Seniors stress over unneeded pressure

By Sofia Karges



“Oh, you’re a senior? What are you thinking about doing next year?”
 “Where do you want to go?”
 “What are you going to study?”
 “You don’t know what you want to do yet? You better get on that!”
 For some of you, this may be the first time you are hearing these phrases. My advice for those people would be to soak it in because once you hit senior year, all other conversation topics seem to be thrown out the window.
 As soon as junior year was over, all I have been asked about is what my life is go-

ing to look like after I graduate high school. I don’t even remember what I had for breakfast last week; how am I supposed to have a plan for my whole life already? This pressure, to need to know what I want to do for the rest of my life as a senior in high school, is unnecessary, and it makes life a lot harder than it needs to be.

Some students have known since they were three they wanted to be a nurse or a doctor. For others, maybe it was as simple as someone telling them they would be a good engineer, and they figured they like science and math, so why not? For most kids though, the reality is they don’t know what they want to do for the rest of their lives.

If they are anything like me, they could see themselves being happy in multiple different careers, and the thought of having to narrow it down to one scares them.

Here’s a reality check for everyone, no matter which of these categories you can

relate to: no one has it figured out completely (even if they think they do). I know adults my parents’ age who still don’t know what they’re doing with their lives. So why all the worry? Personally, I think we should all just relax, take a deep breath, and realize it’s okay not to know sometimes.

Other dreaded parts about senior year are all the other components that go along with going to college. Scholarships need to be applied for, ACT tests need to be taken, letters of recommendation need to be turned in, and college applications need to be filled out by a certain time. While these are all important factors to worry about, I think they should not be as hyped up as they are.

For example, the ACT test can be taken and used toward college applications all the way up until December of senior year. Scholarship results may not even come out until the

spring of next year, which is a big factor for most people when deciding what college they will attend. I know there are deadlines for these before, but my point is this: there is still plenty of time to have it all figured out. Seniors can change their college decision all the way up until August of their freshmen year if they wanted to—that gives a whole other year of decision-making most people don’t think they have.

I get it; it is good to start thinking early about these big decisions and to have a plan if you’re going to spend tons of money to live them out. Making college and scholarship decisions early has its perks; I just want seniors to know if they don’t have it all figured out, it’s okay, no one else does either.

Seniors should get the opportunity to enjoy their last year of high school instead of focusing so much on what they will do after they graduate. These decisions are important, but at the end of the day, it’s all going to work itself out. Don’t worry so much about the pressure; instead, focus on enjoying your last year at Scotus.

“Don’t worry so much about the pressure; instead, focus on enjoying your last year at Scotus.”

Sofia Karges ROCK BOTTOM

Positive vibes make positive lives

By Jillian Rusher



“The assignment we have in English is so pointless.” “Literally, why do we even do this?” “I have learned nothing all year.” “EVERYTHING IS SO STUPID.”

These statements seem dramatic, but this is what it is like somedays around school. Whether it’s sports, academics, teachers, classmates, or anything someone can turn into a complaint, it seems you cannot go anywhere without hearing a negative comment about someone or something.

People have two choices: they can either complain about everything going slightly wrong in their life or choose happiness. A hard truth in life is no matter how someone feels about a situation, they will have to do it either way, so why not be joyful about it. Here are some key areas to avoid complaining, and how to choose happiness instead.

Homework is something all students deal with, and it is going to follow students around all of high school. I have never heard someone say, “I am so excited to do my homework when I get home!” Those people are probably out there, but they are far fewer than the dozens of people I have heard say, “This homework is so pointless.” “Why do we do this, it’s so easy.” It’s easy to fall into the trap of complaining about the inevitable homework, but I promise, it is worth being joyful about the circumstances in life. Is the homework pointless because it is so easy? Hooray! Lucky you! Get some extra sleep when the easy assignment is quickly finished to the best of your ability.

A complaint that has become too common around our school is complaining about going to faith-based events. These negative comments are different versions of how someone does not want to go to Mass, or they wish we did not have all school Mass at all. I hate to be the one to tell everyone this, but we do go to a Catholic school. What makes Catholic schools different from public schools is the fact we can freely express our faith throughout our day and are able to participate in faith events. Not everyone complains, but those who do seem to be louder than those who don’t. Complaining stifles people’s ability to freely be excited about an event. Going into activities with a bad attitude will make the whole experience miserable for you and everyone around you. Going in positively, even if you are not enthusiastically jumping up and down about it, will make the entire event better. I promise, there is joy to be found in everything we do.

Complaining is a snowball effect. Once we start to complain about someone or something, it is hard to hop off the train of negativity. Once someone starts annoying us, we pick apart every little part about them to judge, criticize, and be negative about. We will not let our classmates change for the better because we have decided in our minds they are going to be annoying, and that is all they are. To end this cycle, we must do our best to not start the cycle in the first place.

This is all easier said than done, and once in a while we will need to vent to our friends, but not to everyone, everyday. If we look for the negative in our day, we will find it. The same goes if we choose instead to look on the bright side. We will find good all throughout our day if we choose to look for the good, instead of focusing on the negative.

My life, as well as everyone in my life, will be better if I try my hardest to focus on all the good in life. If we try to look for the positive in everything I promise we can find joy at home, in all our activities, at church, and yes, even in our homework assignments.



Jillian Rusher/ Rock Bottom Staff

A mediocre musical mess

By Madden Saenz



Growing up, music was all I would hear. From the loud and arrogant grunge bands to the psychedelic and magical sounds of ’70s rock to the synth-heavy symphonies of the ’80s to the hard-hitting, uncomfortable truths of classic 90’s hip-hop, I heard it all. Unfortunately, what I grew up hearing is leagues above the corporatized, lackluster sounds I’m hearing today. We’re almost midway through the decade, and various artists have released several projects. However, the top-charting sound uninspired and lackluster. Does this mean all modern music is bad? No. Numerous modern projects have made it into the mainstream and are absolute masterpieces, both critically and commercially.

However, these albums are overshadowed by the safe, shallow, and uninspired records that are topping the charts today and are, in their own right, partially redundant to what came before. Regardless, most artists don’t want to take risks and present something new and unique. New songs sound similar, even if they have a separate genre or audience they are appealing to. What do I mean by this? Let me explain this by quickly reviewing two different, yet deceptively similar tracks: “Bar Song” by Shaboozey and “Espresso” by Sabrina Carpenter, No. 1 and No. 4 on the Billboard Top 100.

First, let’s look at the production of both songs. They have a basic 4/4 beat, with simple, shallow instrumentals (simple snare and hi-hat, with the occasional sound effect for emphasis) and underwhelming vocals. Both songs are under three minutes long, which shows their songs are oriented toward the radio rather than their expression. Shorter

songs are easier to shuffle through and make easy money while also being just enough to fill up their runtime with a catchy hook and simple verses. Lyrically, the songs feature repetitive stereotypes, weak similes, uncomplicated analogies, and flat deliveries, with boring and repetitive linear and syllabic patterns. On top of this, these songs are played constantly on almost every radio station and network, which allows the tracks to reach millions and boost their ratings even higher (frustratingly so).

So what is a listener to do? With the music industry’s grubby fingers in everyone’s radio jar, it is hard to find one cookie that is something special. Where to find it? The simple answer: independent artists, or “indie” for short. The beauty of indie artists is they aren’t bound to a label and are signed to themselves or are signed to a small, independent record company. This allows them to express themselves fully,

without worrying about what the big business wants from them. A notable artist is Kevin Abstract, a former member of the renowned hip-hop group BROCKHAMPTON who disbanded around early 2022.

Since the breakup, Abstract has continued to shape his art around himself and what he wants. This vulnerable and erratic side of himself in his latest 2023 grunge-rap fusion album, Blanket. The title track is an ethereal, almost scary journal about heartbreak, with a whispered chorus, and painful, screaming instrumentals. While the lyrics and story are simple, the atmosphere and energy surrounding the track is something I have yet to find in another artist. My favorite track from the album, “Voyager”, is wrought with emotion, featuring a jarring guitar tone, heavy yet intricate piano chords, and a vocal performance that leaves you feeling crushed and hopeless.

Abstract and other artists’ freedom of expression is evident in their respective styles of music with the artists’ unique, awkward, and adventurous tracks that put their gifts on display to the world. So search “indie” on your music app, or dive straight into the rest of Abstract’s discography. Break free from the basics, and find something unique.

“So search “indie” on your music app, or dive straight into the rest of Abstract’s discovery. Break free from the basics, and find something unique.”

Madden Saenz ROCK BOTTOM

Cross country brings home new hardware

By Ella Hash

Between sickness and injuries, the Scotus girls cross country team faced adversity the whole season, but persevered en route to a second place team finish at the state cross country meet.

The girls cross country team opened up their bid for the state meet on Thursday, October 17th by running in the district C-2 race at Omaha Concordia. The team was the favorite to win their district, but faced some adversity coming in. They finished first out of twelve

teams, placing three in the top ten, all without their fourth runner, junior Mia Fehringer.

Senior Sofia Karges is the fifth runner and only senior on the team.

“It felt great to be district champs! Mia Fehringer, our fourth runner, didn’t run at districts, so to still win without having her was a huge testament to the dynamic of our team,” Karges said. “[Sophomore] Leslie Medina really stepped up to fill Mia’s role when she wasn’t feeling well.”

On October 25th, the team made the two hour drive to the Kearney Country Club for the second straight season. In certain coaches polls, the team went into the race ranked first in Class C girls. The Class C girls race was the last of the day.

The 3.1 mile long course is full of twists, turns, and hills the runners had to cross. This was the second time the team had run the course this season, the first being at the UNK Invitational on September 30th. They placed first out of thirty teams, beating out second place by three points. Contrary to the race on September 30th, the state meet was cooler by about fifteen degrees, causing many runners in the races before to run faster times than they had all season.

With the gunshot signaling the start of the race, the Scotus team started as they had any race this season. Leading the pack was freshman Avery Heinrich who was neck and neck with senior Hailey O’Daniel from Arlington. Sophomore Emilyn Kavan and junior Hannah Heinrich followed closely behind.

Once all the runners had crossed the finish line, the girls placed two in the top fifteen and finished second as a team. Kavan placed tenth and A. Heinrich placed second overall, one second short of first place. Her time put her in fifth all time for the Class C state meet race, and also broke Scotus’ UNK course record she set on September 30th by fifty-one seconds.

“It was very rewarding to get a medal alongside Emilyn [Kavan] because we both worked so hard for it all season,” A. Heinrich

said. “State was a great experience and very successful for our team.”

Rounding out the team points, H. Heinrich and Fehringer placed 22nd and 26th, respectively.

“Placing as a team has been a goal of ours for the past two years. From fifth last year to runner up this year, we continue to grow and get more comfortable on the state course,” H. Heinrich said. “We are so excited we got to come home with a trophy and are excited to build off our success next season.”

Although second is a bittersweet ending for most teams, the girls cross country team could not be more proud of themselves as individuals and as a team.

“Even if we wouldn’t have placed, I still would have been happy with this season overall,” Karges said. “I love these girls so much; we don’t need a trophy to show the jackpot we hit with this team.”



Avery Heinrich

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Sofia Karges



Hannah Heinrich



Mia Fehringer



Emilyn Kavan



Leslie Medina

Senior Shamrock shoots 6th at state, team 4th

By Abby Schumacher

The Shamrock girls golf team punched a ticket to state for the thirteenth time in a row after being named the district champions on October 8th in Oakland. At districts, they achieved a team score of 399, beating the second-place team by an encouraging 33 strokes. Senior Quinn VunCannon was the individual champion of the meet shooting an 88.

“Winning districts as an individual felt

so rewarding,” VunCannon said. “The course we played was tough, and to go out and be the only person to break 90 was a huge confidence boost for me going into state.”

The state tournament was held on October 14th and 15th at Lake Maloney Golf Course in North Platte. By the end of day one, they were in 5th place with a team score of 379. However, on day two, they lowered

their score to 372 after adjusting to the chilly weather and getting a feel for the course. This result led them to 4th place out of 15 participating teams with a score of 751.

VunCannon tied for 6th place out of 93 golfers. She carded an 84 on both days for a two-day total of 168.

“Golf is one of the most mentally challenging sports. It’s four-plus hours of you in your head, trying to perform to the best of your abilities,” VunCannon said.

It was three of the five players’ first time playing at the state tournament including sophomore Libby Langan. Langan was the second-best scorer for Scotus achieving a 99 and 93 tying for 34th place.

“I was both excited and nervous, excited that we made it there and anxious for the outcome,” Langan said.

Sophomore Ava Sokol was one of two alternates last year and went to the state tournament to cheer her team on and prepare for this season. This year, she placed in the top 40 percent of golfers.

“We have gotten a lot closer by all the meets we have gone to, especially in the van on the way there and back,” Sokol said.

Junior Kiya Taylor was not a new face seen golfing at state. This was her third year playing at the tournament and her second time at North Platte.

“Last year, I was more nervous because I had never seen the course and our team was not that comfortable around each other,” Taylor said. “This year, most of us had

seen the course and knew what to expect, and we had also grown a lot closer.”

Junior Brynn Homolka jumped into the varsity team this year and was able to be the 4th state scorer for the team.

“We have 4 returning varsity players and we’ve all made plans to practice together during the off-season,” Homolka said.

Four of the five players placed in the top fifty percent of golfers. As a team, they were victorious at 7 meets and 3 triangulars throughout the course of their fast-paced season.

“Our team has really bonded over the course of the season by supporting each other through tough times and celebrating our successes together,” Langan said.

“Golf is one of the most mentally challenging sports. It’s four-plus hours of you in your head, trying to perform to the best of your abilities.”

Quinn VunCannon Senior



Quinn VunCannon



Kiya Taylor



Brynn Homolka



Libby Langan



Ava Sokol

Shamrocks fall short in the playoffs

By Quinn VanCannon

The Scotus football team has had a history of excellence, and this year was no different even though they fell short in the playoffs.

The Shamrocks wrapped up the season finishing with a record of 6-4. Scotus faced many tough losses in close games throughout the latter half of the season, but managed to clinch a playoff spot in spite of that.

On October 11th, Scotus hosted its hometown rival Lakeview, looking to bust their

undefeated season. It was a hard fought battle with many lead changes. The Vikings took an early halftime lead, 13-7. The Shamrocks responded in the third quarter to take the lead 14-13. After a back and forth battle in the fourth quarter, the Vikings came out on top 26-22, stopping the game winning drive the Shamrocks were putting together late in the fourth.

Junior quarterback Carson Wessel had one rushing touchdown and one passing

touchdown against the Vikings.

“We had a great week of practice and I felt prepared for Lakeview,” Wessel said. “What I took away from the game was that I need to take care of the ball in order for us to win.”

The next Friday, Scotus hosted yet another home game against an undefeated team, this time, against the O’Neill Eagles. The Shamrocks were yet again looking to snap a win streak. However, Scotus was defeated by O’Neill, 13-32.

Senior wide receiver Max Wemhoff was a reliable target down field for Wessel all season.

“After the O’Neill loss, Cohen Pelan gave us a big speech about urgency at practice. His speech made us all realize that our season was far from over if we picked up our urgency and did the little things right. We then went up to Wayne and did just that,” Wemhoff said.

On October 25th, Scotus headed to Wayne for their last regular season game, looking for a bounce back win after back to back losses. The Shamrocks did acquire their win in dominating fashion, 42-7.

Senior wide receiver Luke Wemhoff led the ‘Rocks in receiving yards this fall.

“I realized that every game could be my last, so I went in with the intention of having fun and taking it all in while I was on the field,” Wemhoff said.

Going into the postseason, the Shamrocks landed the 13th seed and earned their opportunity for a rematch against yet unbeaten Lakeview.

Senior wide receiver Owen Lindhorst was a key piece of the offense in the first matchup of the teams.

“For us to beat Lakeview, we had to be the tougher team, physically and mentally,” Lindhorst said.

Scotus opened the game aggressively and took a lead in the first quarter 7-0. Lakeview responded with a touchdown in the second quarter and a punt returned all the way, to take the lead 14-7 going into halftime. A scoreless second half left the Shamrocks with a 7-14 loss to the Vikings to end their season.

Senior linebacker Caleb Cameron was one of the lead tacklers for Scotus this season.

“It felt like we battled towards the end of the season. It’s disappointing that the season ended as it did, but I’m proud of how hard we played for each other and how we handled the hard moments,” Cameron concluded.



Austin Long / Rock Bottom Staff

Senior running back Cohen Pelan carries a ball through Lakeview defenders on October 11th. The Shamrocks faced off against Lakeview twice this season, losing 22-26 and 7-14.

SCAN THE QR CODE TO VIEW A VIDEO ABOUT FOOTBALL PLAYOFFS



Softball ends their season 11-28 at districts

By Kate Hendricks

The Discoverers softball team was put to the test this year with its tough schedule and young squad. With the graduation of an impactful class, the Discoverers looked to reload their season with new faces. They finished out their season 11-28.

The varsity Discoverers team faced Lincoln North Star in a doubleheader to start the year. They lost the first game 1-11 and the second 9-13. Their season started at 0-5 until they took their first win against Lincoln Northeast on August 30th. Senior Katelyn Pensick played first and third base for the Discoverers this season.

“I feel like the season went well. We played a lot of games that were close but could just never capitalize in the end,” Pensick said.

With new faces on the field for the Discoverers, many challenges and opportunities arose. Defense is one of the skills they took pride in this season. Sophomore Sophia Belina was a shortstop and a first and second baseman for this year’s team.

“I thought we worked really hard starting with a team with a lot of underclassmen, and we were right there with everyone,” Belina said.

On September 24th, the JV team took on Omaha Westside. Sophomore Lydia Dostal is

a JV pitcher.

“The highlight of our season was definitely the West Side game. The game had already been started a couple weeks prior to us finishing it but had to be completed on a different day due to rain delay. We came in down 0-5 and scored 13 runs in 45 minutes, winning the game 13-9,” Dostal said.

The JV team had a successful season and a split record of 11-11. Their win percentage was .500, which is a big improvement from years past.

“We did a really good job playing together and pushing each other every day. All of us wanted to improve for each other,” Dostal said.

One of the most challenging games this season was Norfolk on September 9th.

“Our most challenging game was definitely beating Norfolk because we had a point to prove against a really good team offensively and defensively,” Pensick said.

The game that impacted the varsity’s season the most was the Lincoln East game on October 5th. This was the first time the Discoverers had beaten them in six years.

“The highlight of my season was getting a win on senior night. It just meant a lot to win on an important night,” Pensick said.

The Discoverers faced Elkhorn South for

their first game in districts. They ended up losing the first round and later played Omaha South for a spot to continue their season. They battled all the way to the end, defeating Omaha South and getting a rematch against Elkhorn South. Elkhorn South won 0-12, ultimately ending the season for the Discoverers.

Sophomore Taylor Blaser was the catcher for the Discoverers this season.

“Our last game against Elkhorn South impacted me the most because that was the last game I got to play with the seniors, who were our team’s biggest leaders,” Blaser said.



Rebecca Kosch / Yearbook Staff

Senior Katelyn Pensick waits to bat at the Lincoln North Star game on August 22nd. The Discoverers lost the game 9-13 and finished the season 11-28.



Rebecca Kosch / Yearbook Staff

Sophomore Taylor Blaser returns a pitch to the mound in the team’s game against Lincoln Southwest on August 26th. The Discoverers lost the double header in the second week of the season.



Kayla Hoffman / Yearbook Staff

Junior running back Thomas Settje makes a Lakeview defender miss during the Shamrock’s playoff game against the Vikings on November 1st. Scotus’ season ended with their second loss to Lakeview, 14-7.



Jillian Rusher / Rock Bottom Staff

Senior Adrianna Kush goes up for a kill at the state tournament game against Wahoo High. Kush had 170 kills this season.



Jillian Rusher / Rock Bottom Staff

The Scotus student section supports the volleyball team at the state tournament. This was the first time in 6 years the Shamrocks had the opportunity to cheer at the state volleyball tournament.

Old and new trends shift students' style

By Caleb Cameron

Most people have probably caught themselves sporting a trendy outfit, using the newest slang, or trying something they saw online. Whether it is a new hobby or gadget, trends have influenced almost everyone at some point to change how they act.

One of the largest trends in recent memory was fidget spinners. These toys became popular in 2017. The fidgets had three prongs and spun around a centerpiece. Fidget spinners were popular because they seemed to ease stress and helped people focus. Most students bought multiple spinners with a variety of colors and patterns.

Junior Seth Drueppel was one of the many people who bought into the fidget spinner trend.

"When fidget spinners were the big thing, my grandma got me one which I brought to school in third grade. The following week I went to a swap meet with my grandpa and found a stall selling them and bought over ten of them," Drueppel said.



Another trend many people took up was rainbow loom bracelet making. This trend was popular among elementary-aged kids in the 2010s. The rubber bands used to create these bracelets often came in kits filled with a variety of colors. People designed bracelets with many different colors and patterns. They became popular because they were customizable and fun to make.

Junior Audrey Stoner bought into the rainbow loom trend when it was popular.

"I have so many rubber band bracelets from when it was a thing in elementary school. I used to spend hours following tutorials to make rubber band animals and foods," Stoner said.

As of late, digital cameras have become popular. These cameras were used in the 1990s, a time when most students' parents were in school. As newer photographic technology has been developed, the cameras fell out of

style. But, over the past couple of years, digital cameras have been revived and turned into a trend. The cameras take time to develop the photos and do not allow for editing. The trend has resurfaced because it gives off a feeling of authenticity and reminds people of photos of their parents and grandparents. Many students also have personal digital camera accounts on Instagram.

Junior Ava Bettenhausen enjoys using her digital camera for many events and for personal use.

"I did get a disposable camera because my older brother had originally inspired me, then it was a huge craze. I still own one and I love the suspense of forgetting the pictures you took and eventually seeing them all when they are developed," Bettenhausen said.

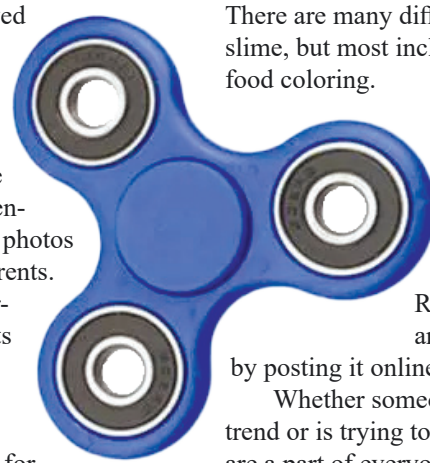
Another popular hobby during elementary school was slime-making. Making slime was popular due to its cool, damp, and stretchy feelings. People made slime in a variety of colors and there were tutorials on the internet. Slime-making

accounts on the internet also became popular. There are many different recipes to make slime, but most include glue, baking soda, and food coloring.

Sophomore Lydia Dostal made slime throughout her childhood.

"I had a slime account when I was younger with Caroline and Ava Rickert. We liked making it and wanted to get famous by posting it online," Dostal said.

Whether someone buys into every new trend or is trying to find a new hobby, trends are a part of everyone's childhood. One thing is for certain, there will always be a new, trendy object or hobby.



37%
of students
said their
favorite toy
was a stuffed
animal.

70%
of students
do not
like movie
remakes.

47%
of students
were not
allowed to
watch
Spongebob.

32% of
students went to
St. Bonaventure
for elementary
school.

18% of
students went to
St. Anthony
for elementary
school.

41% of
students went to
St. Isidore
for elementary
school.

Remake movies go big or go home

By Ella Hash

Hollywood and the film industry have made some unforgettable movies in the past century. What started out as silent black and white films has evolved into crazy uses of CGI and animation to create remarkable images. The film industry has tended to be lackluster to many audiences the past few years. New films seem to fall in two categories: a remake or sequel to some movie from the 1970s to the 1990s. While some people do enjoy these types of films, mainly for nostalgia purposes, most Scotus students do not enjoy this new trend.

One main argument for not enjoying remake movies is every movie seems to be remade. While it may seem as though this is the case, only a few percent of films each year are remakes. According to an article from *Stephen Follows: Decoding the World through Data*, out of the films released from 2015 to 2019,

only 4.5% of movies were remakes. Between 1990 and 2019, the data is even smaller at 4.2% of movies are remakes. The percentage does seem small, but audiences are far more likely to see a big budget remake film from an established production company than a new indie film from an unknown company.

One of the biggest culprits in the movie remake genre is Disney. Many animated classics have been turned into new live action films. While many of the new films hit the mark, others fall short. Some of the bigger remakes, such as *Maleficent* (2014) and *Cinderella* (2015), have grossed high numbers at the box office, while other live action remakes, such as *Peter Pan and Wendy* (2023), were left for their streaming service, Disney+.

The Disney live action remakes also raise the question if they should change the stories. *Mufasa: The Lion King* is scheduled to release in late December of this year. From

the previews audiences have seen, the new film is changing an integral part in Mufasa and Scar's story from the 1994 original. Many critics have voiced their opinions on the matter and have brought up that if a movie is a remake, the new film should follow the original storyline.

Another offender of the remake movie trend are superhero films. The DC Comics movies tend to retell stories multiple times. There have been multiple variations of all their characters since the 1950s. In total, there have been eight different Supermans, ten different Batmans, and five different Wonder Womans between T.V. and movies. While some were not as popular as the others, it is confusing to see Christian Bale, Ben Affleck, and Robert Pattinson all play the same character within fifteen years of each other.

As many people think all remakes are bad, many do not realize the films they love or

new popular films are remakes. The timeless classic *The Parent Trap*, starring Lindsay Lohan, is actually a remake of the 1961 film with the same name. Newer films such as *Planet of the Apes* and *Dune* are remakes from the 1960s and 1980s, respectively. Many prefer these newer movies because CGI and animation have made big leaps. People also tend to prefer the newer movies because of the acting and script writing.

The film industry will always try to make more money, and remake films seem to be the latest cash-grab. While these films may be repetitive, viewers can make their own opinions by watching or streaming these upcoming remake movies: *Mufasa: The Lion King* releasing in theaters on December 20th, *Snow White* releasing on March 21st, 2025, or *Superman* releasing July 11th, 2025.

"Do you like movie remakes?"

STUDENT OPINION

"No, because they always have to change something to fit modern day opinions, and most of the time they don't put as much effort into making it a good movie because they know people will watch it anyway; they are just cash grabs." Brody Splittgerber, 12

"I hate them. I wouldn't be surprised if Disney's goal with these remakes is to take everything that makes the original movie good and turn it as mediocre as possible."

Audrey Stoner, 11

"No, I think original movies are better and more interesting. It gets boring watching the same story in a different animation, it's just like reading the same book twice but in different fonts."

Audrianna Splittgerber, 8

"Yes, I do like movie remakes such as The Grinch or live action Aladdin. They are just given a modern touch without taking away from the original movie."

Annie Weber, 10

Students take trip back to playground

By Sydney Stuart

Elementary school is a time filled with many memories, including creative color-coated classrooms, the unforgettable scent of the one rubber ball at recess, and the embarrassing moments from the past.

Elementary school is like the sun to the earth; it is the foundation of a house. Elementary school not only teaches kids reading, writing, and math, but more importantly instills core friendships, memories, and lessons learned. Many students have drastically different elementary experiences, especially between the three Catholic elementary schools in Columbus.

Kiley Kosch, an eighth grader, went to St. Bonaventure.

“[My favorite memory is] the assemblies because it brought all the classes together, and it felt like a close community,” Kosch said.

Many students who attended St. Bonaventure still remember their school song and can sing it on command. Other students name memories including these, or maybe they can recall their elementary theme song, slogan, or the definition of a sacrament comes rolling off their tongue when reminded of elementary school.

Senior Ian Karges attended St. Bonaventure all seven years of elementary schooling and also cherishes the assemblies.

“I remember being on student council in 6th grade and deciding on what we were going to do for an upcoming assembly. We had a ‘Bucket-Filler Fairy’ who would reward kids when they were good. I dressed up with pink

wings and a crown for the assembly and made the whole school laugh,” Karges said.

During elementary school, kids remember the colorful parachute used during P.E, or their favorite game to play at recess, including tag, football, soccer, or even the track and field days.

Brynn Homolka is currently a junior and went to St. Anthony’s in elementary school.

“My favorite memory was definitely playing a 4 year long game of tag. We had a group of four, Addi Schumacher, Kobe Micek, Hunter Brunkhorst, and myself, and we played the same game of tag at every recess for four years straight. We occasionally had extra people join for a day or two, but it was mainly us four,” Homolka said.

St. Isidore’s is known for its small playground while having a large student population. Students would make the most of their space by playing games like kickball and football in their schools parking lot. The cul-de-sac north of St. Isidore’s is mainly used for kickball as they had a barricade for bases and a ditch to mark the out of bounds.

Not all students who currently attend Scotus began their schooling at one of the three Catholic schools in Columbus; those who did not go to St. Isidore’s, St. Anthony’s, or St. Isidore’s still have memorable experiences, but they differ from others.

Eighth grader Audrianna Splitterber attended Christ Lutheran Elementary School.

“My best and worst memory was when a kid in my class put a garlic bread stick in the microwave for a little too long, and the micro-



Sydney Stuart/Rock Bottom Staff

Junior Jake Demuth and sixth grader Hudson Jarecke help first-grader Remi Jenson play one of the various games at St. Isidore’s for All Saint’s Day on November 1st. All Saints Day is a core memory for many Scotus students because students dress up as saints and have many fun activities.

wave caught on fire. We ended up evacuating school, and we never used the microwave again,” Splitterber said.

Besides the highs and lows of elementary school, everyone learned valuable lessons which are taken with them throughout their

life. No matter where you went or where you are now these years of our adolescence have blossomed into more than a memory. They are an icebreaker at new events, conversation starters at the dinner table, or a good laugh when it is needed most.

“My favorite object growing up was my baby barbie dolls. I thought they were so cute and thought I had to take care of them because I was the baby’s ‘mom’.”

~Allie Brezenski, 9

“My favorite was probably any stick I would find outside.”

~Chase Adamy, 10

“I had a zebra Pillow Pet I always slept on. So now, this keepsake is really flat from using it so much as a kid.”

~Rachel Spawn, 10

“My favorite was a stuffed animal named Kitty Kitty Meow Meow because he was given to me by my cousin.”

~Max Beshaler, 11

“I loved Mini Brands; I was weirdly obsessed with tiny versions of things and currently still have a collection of 1000+ mini brands in my room right now.”

~Lily Humphrey, 12



“My favorite toys were Shopkins and Barbies because I always loved dressing them up, and Shopkins were so cute and made me feel like the main character girl at the time.”

~Alejandra Lopez-Martinez, 11



“My favorite toys growing up would be Baby Alive dolls. I honestly don’t know why I loved them so much, but I eventually had 16 of them.”

~Evalett Sandoval, 8



“I had a stuffed animal named Paws, and he was named after a dog my aunt had that was my favorite.”

~Liam Wulf, 7



“My favorite object was my net because I used it to catch a lot of turtles.”

~Charlie Olmer, 10



“I had a green T. rex toy with a missing arm. I always called it Sue, which was the biggest known T. rex at the time.”

~Noah Kuhl, 12



Kids’ cartoons craft memories

By Austin Long

Beginning with *Steamboat Willie* in 1928, cartoons have become popular amongst all generations. These animations have evolved over the decades for better or for worse. Some have become educational, while others only keep kids distracted. Nonetheless, there are nostalgia-inducing memorable cartoons from everyone’s past.

Fraggle Rock, created in 1983, was about fuzzy, colorful puppet creatures living in magical caves and tunnels under the home of Doc, an old man who lives with his dog and also a puppet, Sprocket. This TV show was from the mind of famous puppeteer Jim Henson, maker of *The Muppets*. Similar to *The Muppets* and *Sesame Street*, this show teaches important life lessons throughout its episodes and a sense of rhythm with its numerous songs.

“We used to have a VHS tape of every season and episode of *Fraggle Rock* in my old house, and I would put it in our old small box style TV and wake up at 4 am and sneak to the basement to watch it before school every day,” senior Lily Humphrey said.

Overall, *Fraggle Rock* gives all viewers something



to look back on with the warm, fuzzy feeling of nostalgia thanks to its warm, fuzzy characters.

From the creative genius of Nickelodeon executive Janess Burgess, *The Backyardigans* is an animated series about five brightly-colored, friendly, anthropomorphic animals that embark on imaginative adventures from their backyard. This show teaches life lessons such as how to work as a team and how to use the brain’s right side. However, *The Backyardigans* is remembered for its unique storytelling and tunes. The most popular of stories and tunes is the song “Castaways.” About being stuck on a deserted island, “Castaways,” which is also the name of the episode the song is from, has recently exploded in popularity. “*Backyardigans* was the best show. I watched that every day at daycare and would come home to find it on the TV. I also owned every



Backyardigan stuffed animal as a kid,” senior Ella Hash said.

With widespread use of the song on *TikTok*, *The Backyardigans* has brought a nostalgic fondness to fans.

The never-ending summer fun TV animation series that is *Phineas and Ferb* first aired in 2007 on Disney Channel and Disney

XD. Created by Dan Povenmire, voice of Dr. Heinz Doofenshmirtz, and Jeff Marsh, voice of Major Francis Monogram, *Phineas and Ferb* is about two step brothers who try to make the most of their seemingly endless “104 days of summer vacation.” With one of the most memorable theme songs, this show inspired creativity and offered numerous lovable and relatable characters.

“My favorite cartoon was *Phineas and Ferb*,” sophomore Rachel Spawn said. “The episodes were short enough for my attention span, and they were fun.”

Whether “fighting a mummy, climbing up the Eiffel tower, discovering something that doesn’t exist, or giving a monkey a shower,” *Phineas and Ferb* brings back memories.

SpongeBob SquarePants, one of the most loved, hated, and controversial shows to

exist, has been around since 1999.

“*SpongeBob* was an all time classic,” senior Ben Suerper said. “Jack and I would watch non stop *SpongeBob* all day 24/7 if we were given the option to. *SpongeBob* was just a funny silly show and that is probably why I was drug towards liking it.”

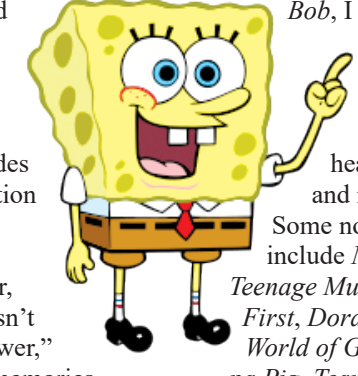
Originally made from the hands of famous animator Stephen Hillenburg, *SpongeBob SquarePants* was carefully crafted to be fit for children

and adults alike. Ironically, this is one of the reasons parents safeguard their children from the show. Additionally, parents despise the bucktoothed, carefree character *SpongeBob* for his high-pitched voice and nasal cackle laugh.

“I wasn’t allowed to watch *SpongeBob*, I think mostly because it was annoying for my parents to listen to,” sophomore Lillian Miller said.

Whether dearest to our hearts or detestable, these shows and more bring reminiscence.

Some nostalgic honorable mentions include *Mickey Mouse Funhouse*, *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*, *Sofia the First*, *Dora the Explorer*, *The Amazing World of Gumball*, *Bubble Guppies*, *Pep-pa Pig*, *Team Umizoomi*, *Tom and Jerry*, and *Scooby-Doo*.



FBLA sparks student involvement

By Madden Saenz

FBLA at Scotus has had a busy start to the year. With a rise in student involvement, several new events to attend or participate in, and a long-awaited victory in the Scotus and Lakeview Food Feud, things are certainly starting to roll.

To kick the year off, FBLA members had become more involved than ever, taking it upon themselves to enroll members in projects and try new events.

"I attribute it to the juniors and seniors that are involved in the activity," FBLA sponsor Kris Wurtz said. "They have a lot of enthusiasm and they're not afraid to say, 'OK, this is an event outside of Columbus we've never been to. Let's go to it and let's try it out!'"

FBLA also decided to try, instead of just doing the same fundraisers they have done for the past several years, on State Ribbon Projects this year.

"The projects that we're going to be focusing on are Connect with Business, Go Green, StepUp2Tech, and Spark the Legacy," Wurtz said. "We just finished the Feed Nebraska, and we're going to try to implement a March of Dimes project."

These projects are oriented toward different aspects of business: technology, communication, clean energy, and so forth. Members choose an aspect and then a corresponding project to be involved with and focus on a specific task which will help FBLA finish a project. However, this does not mean FBLA will abandon its previous fundraisers and events. A particular event FBLA had success in this October was the Food Feud, an FBLA-sponsored competition between Scotus and Lakeview to see which school could collect the most nonperishable food items. The collections would then be donated to the Simon House, a local charity program that helps shelter those in need. What helped the Scotus chapter get the winning edge over Lakeview? Donuts.

"It was very beneficial we had [donuts]," senior FBLA Food Feud president Ella Hash said. "It pushed people to go out and get these canned goods and support the school and the Simon House that way."

The idea for donuts came from something Hash had seen during her sophomore year, and she thought the incentive would aid greatly in the Food Feud.

"The volleyball team came up with the idea to have donuts for breakfast for the winning class," Hash recounted. "I saw a lot of turnout and I thought that it would be very beneficial. So, I had to go to Mr. Vancura and get it approved. Obviously, we did," Hash remarked.

Most people will do anything for free food. This includes students bringing hundreds of items to their first-period classes. The first-period band Class had the most donations, with 857 food items, almost half of the over 2,000 items brought by the entire student body at Scotus. At the Lakeview-Scotus football game on October 11th, several hundred other items were collected, with 3,000 food items to donate to the Simon House.

FBLA will continue to host donations throughout the year, including the Secret Santa and the Giving Tree donations this December.

"I think all of the FBLA members are very excited about our upcoming activities," Hash said. "Every year I see the joy it brings to the teachers and students, and I hope other people get involved in our activities."



Kris Wurtz / FBLA Sponsor

Juniors Kenzie Hille, Lily Wemhoff, and Josie Rother sort canned goods during the school day. The Food Feud was held on October 11th with about 3,000 canned food items being donated by Scotus students, staff, and families to the Simon House.

Students serve up joy through retreats

By Sydney Stuart

Scotus proudly owns the trait of serving others, especially the community surrounding the school. Scotus is known for its Faith,

Service, and Gratitude, and the school consistently strives to help its students learn to live these traits out daily.

The junior high service day and the service retreat are opportunities for students to give back to the community and learn the importance of serving others.

The junior high service day was on October 9th; the seventh and eighth-grade students completed various services in the Columbus area including landscaping, visiting nursing homes, and assisting various businesses.

Seventh grader Matthew Fernandez went to Columbus Community Hospital and helped with landscaping.

"I enjoyed helping the community because it's always the little things that go a long way. [The groundskeeper] was grateful that we helped him because usually it would take longer with just one person, and all it took to make him happy was to help him pull weeds," Fernandez said.

The campus ministry assistant Nate Tenopir helped to organize parts of the service day for junior high students. Tenopir and four other students moved sod for a gentleman in the Columbus area.

"Sometimes we compare ourselves so much to others we don't realize we have a lot, and we're meant to have a heart for service," Tenopir said.

High school students who chose to participate in the service retreat on October 23rd traveled to Omaha to provide services such as sorting clothes for the St. Vincent De Paul thrift store, serving those in need of food at Open Door Mission, assisting volunteers at the Juan Diego Center Group, and conversing with the homeless at Hope of the Poor.

Junior Sophie Parker attended the service retreat and went to the Saint Vincent De Paul thrift store to help sort clothing.

"It can be fun if you are with the right people and doing the work for the right reasons," Parker said.

At the service retreat, students began their day of service with Adoration at the Hope of the Poor church in downtown Omaha. Afterward, most students departed to their assigned location while others stayed at Hope of the Poor to converse over coffee and hot chocolate with the homeless.

Junior Kayla Hoffman talked to many homeless people at Hope of the Poor.

"The main aspect I took away was even though these people are not in a good place at this time, they still want to talk to you and feel wanted by not only us, but God," Hoffman said.

Campus minister Molly Wallish sponsored the service retreat and conversed with the homeless at Hope of the Poor. Wallish remembers feeling uneasy going into the event as she had never done service similar to Hope of the Poor's mission.

"I didn't know how the students would react or what they would do; if they would step up, or if they would linger in the background to try to put a barrier between them and who they are encountering," Wallish said. "I was impressed with the group I was with. The students were moving out and encountering talking with the poor and getting to know their names and having conversations."

Junior Favio Rivero-Rubio helped volunteers at the Juan Diego Center Group.

Rivero-Rubio said, "[Attending the service retreat] inspired me to try and attend more and volunteer in different places to help."



Taylor Dahl / Communications Director

Eighth graders Jordynn Bowns, Joseph Dillon, and Easton Lentfer wash the Scotus buses in the parking lot on October 9th for the junior high service day. At the end of the day, students held a dodgeball tournament in Memorial Hall gym.

The dead Haunted Forest comes alive

By Aubree Beiermann

For the first time in over 15 years, the Haunted Forest at Camp Pawnee was back for the Halloween season. The Haunted Forest was open for visiting from October 24th to the 26th and then on the 31st. This chilling experience was put on by Scotus students who acted as clowns, insane asylum patients, and many more horrifying characters.

The Haunted Forest was led by Nate Tenopir, religion teacher and assistant campus minister at Scotus. He had this idea for a fundraiser to earn money for the March For Life trip to Washington D.C.

"I think people initially were a little unsure about if it was right because it seems like it's sort of a juxtaposition of Teens for Life with them doing the haunted forest where there's going to be elements that incorporate some scary aspects, but the money is going toward the Teens for Life," Tenopir said.

Tenopir had students go through the costumes that were available for them to use left over from when it was last put on. One of the students who helped with setting up was junior Lola Doerneman. She helped on the weekends leading up to the Forest.

"I helped organize props and set up the trail. Going through all the props for the first time was very gross; we didn't know what was in all those totes," Doerneman said. "We also laid out a plan for the path."

Students who helped with the Forest had to go early and get their scary outfits and

make-up ready. One person who helped with the make-up was senior Lily Humphrey. She did most of the clown makeup and also acted as a camp counselor, who was a victim of a murder.

"Doing the clown make-up and doing a special look every time was my favorite part. People always got so excited when I finished their make-up, and it made me super proud and happy!" Humphrey said.

A guide would take guests through the forest where first, clowns would jump out, then the escaped hospital patients, followed by masked figures with chainsaws who would run around, and finally, the Camp Crystal Lake murders.

Many students went through the Haunted Forest knowing the people acting in it. This made it hard for the actors to stay in character. One of the clown actors was freshman Melodee Nickolite.

"When I walked through on Friday, I thought it was very good and the people working were very good at acting," Nickolite said.

Even with all the student help, it was hard for Tenopir to be fully prepared this first year. There were many problems that popped up during the first night of the Haunted Forest.

"There's a bridge that haunted an adult watching to make sure people could find the step on the way down," Tenopir said. "We also needed to put somebody by the road to



Sydney Stuart / Rock Bottom Staff

Scotus students volunteered to help work the Haunted Forest on October 24th-26th and 31st at Camp Pawnee. Students dressed up as clowns, camp counselors, and many more terrifying characters.

make a crossing area because they had to cross it."

Through the ups and downs, the Haunted Forest was a success. It raised, closed to \$10,000 for the March for Life. Students are excited to plan for next year. Junior Sydney Stuart was involved in the organization of this project.

"We are hoping to continue the forest year after year. This is a great fundraiser that is reliable and people enjoy," Stuart said. "My goal is for Scotus to continue the forest even after the current leaders graduate and this can be an event the students look forward to every year."

The Great Gatsby comes to life

By Austin Long

All good things must come to an end, but they also have to start somehow. Beginning practices in late September, Scotus one act plans for an ambitious season.

This year's script comes from *The Great Gatsby*, an American classic novel written by F. Scott Fitzgerald. Scotus juniors and seniors may recognize this book as it was included in their English curriculum.

Almost always, one act scripts are not made verbatim from their sources, and the Shamrock one act is no exception.

Senior Caroline Klitz plays Jordan Baker and was instrumental in creating the script.

"I watched the movie with my grandma," Klitz said. "The whole time I thought, 'This would be a great one act.'"

While staying true to the original story, Klitz was the one to adapt the play from the novel.

"I organized a table read to see how the script flowed," Klitz said. "I got positive feedback and continued to edit before finally approaching Mr. Ericson about it."

A pressing issue for Klitz, however, was

how she was going to create a script with the actor's personalities at the core of it all. Nonetheless, auditions for the play would prove Klitz's work to be satisfactory for the cast.

Art teacher Clyde Ericson has been the one act head coach for 7 years.

"We did auditions, and [the actors] all had their different interpretations, and some of them were pretty good," Ericson said. "Ultimately, we decided on who gave the best for each role."

Senior Madden Saenz plays the main character of Jay Gatsby.

"It's going in a very unique direction. It has been difficult to get everything the way we want it to be, but things are coming together very nicely," Saenz said.

Apart from the script, Scotus one act has had drastic changes in its leadership from last year. Losing coaches Alaina Wallick and Melanie Mimick, Ericson has stepped up again to tackle this season as the only coach even with the astonishing more than 60 members of one act to direct.

"I am lucky that, being the only head

director, I have a senior class that's very experienced," Ericson said. "I've had to put a lot of the creative responsibility on a lot of the seniors, and, largely, my role has been walking around, popping in on different programs, the crew, the props, the set building, the acting, the ensemble, the music, the dancing, and just making sure that everyone isn't going off track."

Although technically the only coach, Ericson and the cast have received acting assistance from other talented individuals. Assistant director Jenni Earhart, St. Bon's teacher, choreography director, Jenna Preister, and Scotus 2024 graduate, Logan Erickson have all offered constructive criticism to the Scotus one act membership at practices.

Scotus' first competitive performance was Saturday, November 9th at York. The Shamrocks ranked third out of six schools in Scotus' division. After York, Scotus performed at the Humphrey St. Francis competition on Tuesday, November 12th.

The Shamrock's next show will be the home performance on Friday, November 15th

in Scotus' Memorial Hall. This performance will be open to the public with a good will donation basket at the door.

"I'm excited to show off our talent," Klitz said. "We have proven that we can compete with the best and this show will put that on display."

SCAN THE QR CODE TO VIEW A VIDEO ABOUT ONE ACT



Adrianna Kush / Yearbook Staff

One act members seniors Henry Chard and Caroline Klitz, junior Ryan Allen, and seniors Jessica Jackson and Madden Saenz perform *The Great Gatsby* on November 9th at the York Tournament. There were 11 schools at the tournament and 6 of them in Scotus' division; they placed 3rd.



Adrianna Kush / Yearbook Staff

One act members freshman Melodee Nickolite, juniors Gigi Chilapa-Bello and Josie Rother, sophomore Lillian Miller, and freshman Sadie Knowlton dance the night away during the one act performance in York on November 9th. This is Nickolite, Rother, and Knowlton's first years in one act.

Shamrock band showcases skill around community

By Caleb Cameron

Whether or not someone plays an instrument or just listens to music leisurely, music is a part of most people's lives. Musicians and bands spend a lot of time perfecting their work. The Scotus band has been perfecting their craft since the summer. They have performed a variety of music in many different towns, events, and atmospheres.

This year's band is not as big as some of the other bands of the past. The band has 26 members, which is about half the size it was last year. On the surface, this may seem unfavorable for their performance, but the decreased numbers are a blessing in disguise. The smaller number allows the band to progress through learning the music quicker, maintain elite sound balance, and feel more connected as one unit.

Senior Jessica Jackson has played the flute in the Shamrock band since elementary school.

"In years past, I've felt like the band was separated into instrument sections, but with a smaller band, it feels like we uplift each other and communicate with everyone outside of our sections," Jackson said.

One of the ways the band has showcased their talent to people around the state is through parades. The band competed in three parades this year: the Columbus Days Parade on August 11th, the Lions Parade in Norfolk on September 21st, and the Harvest of Harmony Parade in Grand Island on October 5th. The band earned a superior rating at the Columbus

Days Parade, took home first place at the Lions Parade, and received a superior rating at the Harvest of Harmony Parade.

Senior Ian Karges plays the saxophone and is the band's drum major.

"I enjoy attending the parades because it is cool to hear our hard work pay off, and it makes us feel like one unit. It's always fun to hang out at a mall or restaurant and bond with other kids in the band after we are done performing," Karges said.

The band also plays at home volleyball, football, and basketball games. They add to the atmosphere of events, play the National Anthem, and excite the student section. The band covers many popular songs during pep-band including "Animal" by Maroon 5, "Counting Stars" by OneRepublic, "Best Day of My Life" by American Authors, "Disturbia" by Rihanna, and many more well-known songs.

Senior flutist Lily Humphrey has played in the Shamrock band since she was in junior high.

"I love playing pep-band songs during Scotus events because we all get super excited and hyped up playing our new, more modern music," Humphrey said.

The band has also played at other types of events around the community. They performed in front of members from all around the Columbus Catholic community at the Saint Bon's Parish Festival on August 25th and the Saint Isidore's Bazaar on September 8th.

They also played at the Columbus Catholic Outdoor Mass on September 29th. On November 11th, they performed their annual Veteran's Day program.

Band director Kristen Cox has been directing the Shamrock band for 30 years.

"It feels like an elite group because they all play very well and are well-balanced. Because they read music so quickly and well, we are able to work on a wide variety of mu-

sic for different events. I'm able to add new songs we'll practice for the future without disrupting the rehearsals we need for what we are currently working on," Cox said.

The band is starting to practice new music as the Christmas season approaches. Their annual Christmas concert is on December 9th. They will also play Christmas carols for residents in nursing homes around town.



Angie Rusher / Journalism Sponsor

Senior drum major Ian Karges leads the band at the Harvest of Harmony Parade in Grand Island on October 5th. This was the 3rd and final parade for the band this fall.



Angie Rusher / Journalism Sponsor

Senior Henry Chard plays his saxophone during the Harvest of Harmony Parade in Grand Island on October 5th. Chard has played the saxophone since joining band in elementary school.



Jillian Rusher / Newspaper Staff

Seventh grader Rhegan Bowns plays her trumpet during the Harvest of Harmony Parade in Grand Island on October 5th. The Shamrock band received a superior rating at the parade.

Swift has an era full of changes

By Aubree Beiermann

One hundred and thirty-eight shows later and Taylor Swift is still not done with her Eras Tour. There have been more than 10 million tickets sold and more have followed online. Swift has been all over the world and she is now back in the United States for three more stops. Then she's off to Canada to finish it all off. Throughout the tour she has made many changes. From outfits, to the setlist, to the guests she brings on the stage, fans never know what their show will bring.

The changes to the concert are what make the Eras Tour special. They are a positive move Swift decided to add to her tour. It keeps her fans who are unable to go engaged even if they are on the other side of the world and watching from a TikTok live stream.

Swift introduced new changes to her concert during her European stop. On her first date in Paris, she showed off new outfits for all of her eras of the show, except for the Reputation era. There were multiple outfits for each era introduced in Paris.

Right before the European leg of the tour, Swift released her album THE TORTURED POETS DEPARTMENT while on a break between tour dates. When she returned from her break, she added this album to the setlist.

With this addition came new outfits and choreography, but also the loss of many songs from other parts of the concert. This change made some fans who could not go to the Eras Tour before the cut upset because they wanted to hear them live.

This change makes the Eras Tour feel newer and thrilling. If she just kept the same



Taylor Swift and her background dancers perform her *Reputation* set during the Eras Tour in Miami, Florida at the Hard Rock Stadium. This gold outfit is the first new outfit she has worn for this set and is one of the many changes Swift has made to her tour.

setlist for all 152 shows, it would have gotten boring fast. THE TORTURED POETS DEPARTMENT set gave the concert a new electrifying look, which made it better in the long run. Fans should be excited for these changes instead of tearing them down.

During this era, Swift has welcomed guests onto her stage. Travis Kelce made his Eras Tour debut in London with a performance for the song "I Can Do It With A Broken Heart". Then to close the European leg, she had Florence from Florence + the Machine join her on stage for their song

"Florida!!!".

The last leg of the tour started in Florida, where Swift and Florence continued their duet. Swift also surprised her fans at her last show in New Orleans by bringing out Sabrina Carpenter to sing a mash-up of "Espresso", "Please Please Please", and "Is It Over Now".

Along with these duets, Swift starred in new outfits for a couple of eras. The Reputation outfit change was the most notable and shocking because it was the only era not to have a new outfit for the entire tour. She also wore three new outfits for her Surprise

Song section of the concert.

With all the surprise announcements, outfits, guests, and songs, this tour has been an once in a lifetime concert everyone should experience either in-person or online. When the Eras Tour ends in December, thousands of fans will miss spending their weekend nights on TikTok lives trying to find a clear-ish view of the concert to watch. This era of Taylor Swift will be missed dearly by her fans. Hopefully in the future there will be another concert to attend.

5 Below goes above expectations

By Ava Rickert

Whether it be fast food or fun activities, Columbus has added many new places to the list to visit in the last year. One of the newest being 5 Below, which had its grand opening on October 11th.

5 Below is a retail store that aims to sell a wide variety of games, snacks, jewelry, room decor, and more for five dollars or less.

Located on 110 E 24th Street in The Village Centre Mall in Columbus, 5 Below is looking to make its mark among the many retail stores already in business.

When I walked into the store for the first time, I was ready to critique the store for something my friends know I care too much about, lighting. However, I was pleasantly

surprised with the bright, clean light cast over the store. The store was filled with bright neon signs indicating which section of the store I was in.

Another issue for many shoppers is the temperature the store is set at. Being too hot or too cold can immediately push away many customers before they even pick up a single item. The temperature in 5 Below, however, was ideal for a satisfactory shopping experience.

Looking past the aesthetics, it was time to get to the qualities people actually care about when trying out a new store: cleanliness and organization, size and layout, staff helpfulness and customer service, and most importantly, prices.

As anticipated for a store not yet open for even a month, the store was notably clean and organized. The store was easy to navigate in terms of product placement and organization. There was a designated section for everything imaginable, such as snacks, beauty, tech, and much more, all of which were arranged in a convenient manner with the use of shelves, racks, and other displays.

5 Below was bigger than I had envisioned upon arriving at the store. I was expecting to walk into a tightly packed, claustrophobic space, but instead I found it to be the perfect size for a store of its type. The layout made sense for all of the products, and there was no wasted space I could see, which is an issue for

many stores.

Staff and customer service were the biggest letdown I experienced at 5 Below. The workers did not try to improve my experience at all. No employee greeted me when I walked into the store even though there was a group of them standing by the doors staring at me. While I was shopping, employees aimlessly wandered around the store as if working there was the last thing they wanted to do.

Something many people focus on while shopping is prices. As the name indicates, almost everything in the store was five dollars or less. However, more pricey items had their own section called Beyond 5. This was a helpful addition for shoppers because I did not get caught off guard by the prices of anything I was buying as I do at other discount retail stores such as Dollar Tree and Dollar General.

Other than the lack of helpfulness and hospitality from staff, shopping at 5 Below was a great experience. I was pleased with the organization, size, cleanliness, and overall environment 5 Below had to offer.

Obviously, this store will not be for everyone, such as my dad. 5 Below is marketed at young kids and teenagers who want to participate in trends and buy high quality products for a modest price. If you are a person looking for inexpensive cures for boredom and gadgets for fun, the products offered at 5 Below will be right up your alley.



Ava Rickert / Rock Bottom Staff

Retail store 5 Below opened in Columbus on October 11th at the The Village Centre Mall. Pictured above is the 5 Beyond section of the store where products over \$5 are found.

Olympians take the dance floor

By Kate Hendricks

With over 20 million viewers, 33 seasons, and 428 episodes, *Dancing with the Stars* is one of America's most popular TV shows.

Dancing with the Stars is an American dance competition television series. It can be streamed on Disney+ and ABC. The show pairs celebrities with professional dancers, every week each couple competes against the others for judges' points and audience votes. The couple receiving the lowest number of combined judges' points and audience votes is eliminated each week until the champion dance couple remains.

This year, Olympic Athletes have gone from the medal podium to the dance floor. American gymnast Stephen Nedoroscik and American rugby player Ilona Maher are the latest Olympians to join the cast. As someone who has watched other seasons of *Dancing with the Stars*, this season something is different. The celebrity dancers of this season are excited for each week's dance. They make every dance worth watching and are inspiring to all those watching. Every week there is a new dance style that makes watchers want to come back and watch the next week.

Stephen Nedoroscik is an American gymnast commonly known as the "pommel horse guy." At the 2024 Paris Olympics, he captured America's heart by helping the U.S. men's gymnastics team secure their first team medal in 16 years. He also won an individual bronze medal on the pommel horse. This season, he is paired up with professional

Rylee Arnold. This is Arnold's second season on *Dancing with the Stars*. Last year, she was paired up with Harry Jowsey and they were eliminated one week before the semi-finals, finishing in sixth place.

The couple collected their first perfect score of the season on the Halloween Nightmares-themed episode. They performed a contemporary dance to Hidden Citizens' version of A Flock of Seagulls' 1982 classic, "I Ran (So Far Away)."

Ilona Maher is a Team USA rugby bronze medalist and two-time Olympian. She represented the US in the 2024 Paris Olympic Games and 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games. She has become the first ever rugby player to dance on *Dancing with the Stars*. Maher has become a viral sensation across social media for sharing her authentic journey as a professional female athlete to grow the game of rugby. Her partner this season is Alan Bersten. This is Alan Bersten's ninth season on *Dancing with the Stars*. He was the season 28 champion with partner Hannah Brown.

Last week, the couple danced a tango to "Psycho Killer" by Miley Cyrus on Halloween Nightmares Night.

I think having Olympic athletes on the show provides guidance, positivity, and inspiration to those watching. Maher told her dance partner Bersten that she wanted to participate in *Dancing with the Stars* for her young viewers watching. "I'm this very big, muscular woman, but I also feel so beautiful



Professional Dancer Rylee Arnold and Olympian Stephen Nedoroscik dance to "A Star Is Born" from *Hercules*. The sixth week performances were Disney night.

and feminine. I grew up not very comfortable, so I want to now make it easier for young girls to love their body," Maher said in her introduction video.

As the final weeks approach, make sure to tune into *Dancing with the Stars* weekly on Tuesday nights. Whether someone has never

watched a dance competition before, or is tuning in weekly, *Dancing with the Stars* gets their viewers hooked. On November 26th, I recommend tuning into ABC or Disney+ to watch the *Dancing with the Stars* season 33 finale!