




# Rock Bottom

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# Rain does not dampen senior spirits

**By Audrey Naughton**

Each year, new photos of the Senior Bond Day get sent out, and all the other classes marvel at the activities available on this day. Students are ziplining through the air, climbing up a pole, and flying into the lake. Nothing else like this is offered on any school-related retreat throughout the year, which builds the anticipation for each class until it is finally their turn.

For the class of 2027, this was no exception. Going into the day, the weather was looking kind of bleak, but the plans went forward. Once there, the morning seemed to be promising, but at around noon, it began to rain — hard. This delayed each activity offered at the camp for a couple hours, which put a major dent in how the day was supposed to go. This would completely contradict what the students had hoped to experience today. Everyone was excited to do certain activities before they left, but the weather interrupted the flow of the day.

The one activity most of the class members are excited for every year is the Blob. It is a giant, inflatable tube in a lake that acts as a catapult, launching a seated person into the air when another person jumps onto the opposite end. Senior Lydia Dostal named this as her most anticipated activity.

"I was really excited to do the Blob. I watched videos of the past seniors doing it, and it looked so fun. I honestly didn't know what other activities were at the camp until we got there," Dostal said.

As excited as everyone was, they quickly had to change plans when the activities became unavailable. As a result, the students had to find different ways to keep busy with their peers. While this did not follow the initial plan, many found fun ways to keep busy.

Senior Brooke Krienke had a great time with friends while everyone was left to find their own ways to pass time.

"Thankfully, I brought my digital camera. We ended up having a photo shoot and taking tons of funny pictures!" Krienke said.

While waiting for the rain to pass, students participated in various forms of entertainment. Senior Emma Wangler recounts what she did with her friends during the rainy hours.

"Me and a couple of my friends spent time playing games while we waited for the rain to pass. It actually was probably one of my favorite things of the day," Wangler said.

Despite all of the unexpected circumstances, most of the students who attended did not feel as though this day was wasted. They appreciated the opportunity to grow closer to their classmates through more casual interactions.

Senior class member Leslie Medina talked about this in her account of the day.

"Overall, I think the day was still fun because we got to connect with some people we didn't usually talk to," Medina said.



Ainsley Kuhl / Rock Bottom Staff

**Seniors watch as the rain falls with Mr. Tenopir and Mr. Kathol at Camp Timberlake. The rain continued for most of the afternoon.**

Senior Bond Day is known for all of the adventurous activities and scenery offered, and while the rain got in the way of most of this, the day was not a loss. It instead gave the students a chance to connect with each other in genuine ways that were not structured or directed.

Future classes will look back on the 2027 Class Senior Summit and see that even when conditions were not ideal, the day was still full of fun and adventure.

# Football team sinks Viking ship

**By Lillian Miller**

"YOU CAN'T DO THAT," thunders the Scotus student section, a sea of red, white, and blue, vibrating with excitement and anticipation. Heat gathers beneath the Friday night lights, thickened by the movement and passion of so many people in such a small space. Then, the piercing whistle of the referee cuts through the buzz, and a hush falls over the crowd. It seems as if the whole stadium is holding its breath.

Without the proper context, the explosion of cheers, whistles, and thunderous applause that followed could seem like a bit of an overreaction. However, the September 11th football game against Lakeview was the first football victory over Lakeview High since 2019 with a 13-10 Shamrock win.

Activity Director Brady Vancura graduated from Scotus in 2011 and returned to work there in 2020, giving him a unique perspective of the Scotus rivalry against Lakeview.

"Previous to this game, Lakeview had beaten us in nine out of the ten games we've played over the last nine years," Vancura said. "This game has always been a super competitive game, and honestly, it was across all sports. It wasn't just a football thing."

As the years have gone by, however, club teams and community organizations such as Legacy and Revolution have brought students from both schools together, helping to set the rivalry aside and even fostering friendships. This has changed how the dynamic of the rivalry has looked over the past few years.

"It's not as mean-spirited as it used to be," Vancura said. "Most of what happens stays on the field or on the court, compared to the shenanigans and mean pranks that used to be associated with the rivalry back 20, 30 years ago."

While the rivalry may have changed over the years, the competitive spirit behind it has remained.

"It's one of those historic rivalries that you don't ever want to get rid of," Vancura said. "This year, with us being in different classes, there was nothing that said we had to play Lakeview. That was something we made the choice to do because that rivalry matters to us."

With all that said, the rivalry that fuels competition on the field has also become an opportunity to come together for something more impactful than the game itself. The annual Food Feud is one example.

"Prior to it being an NHS event for us, it was an FBLA event, so we've always kind of tried to participate in that," Vancura said. "The Food Feud is one of those things where we've come together to help the community and put the rivalry aside. But then again, it's always nice to beat Lakeview."

On September 29th, the schools came together during the Lakeview-Scotus volley-

See **LAKEVIEW**, Page 2




Photo Courtesy Lakeview

**At the September 29th volleyball game at Lakeview, the teams came together to support Sammy's Superheroes. Two pediatric cancer survivors from Platte Center Elm attended this Gold-Out game and fundraiser.**

# "Sweatpant scare" scares Scotus

**By Brooke Hendricks**

Imagine sitting in class for nine hours wearing jeans. That is not for the weak! Before the first week of school, a rumor surfaced that there would be no sweatpants allowed on dress down days. This became a major issue, and the news quickly spread. Students thought they were going to have to wear jeans on dress down days from now on. Many parents got involved by emailing the school asking about this policy. Later at school orientation, Mr. Kathol said it was a mistake and sweatpants are back!

This year at Scotus, there are some new dress code rules about our school uniforms. At the start of the school year, girls were able to go in and try on the new navy skirts. On page twenty in the handbook, it states, "Girls may wear a black skort ordered from Tommy Hilfiger and can continue to wear the green plaid dress skort through the 2027-2028 school year."

In addition, it also says, "Girls may wear a navy blue skort purchased through Lands' End that displays the SCC logo." Many of the girls at Scotus purchased the new skort, so they have more options. Their choices include the black Tommy Hilfiger skort, the navy Lands' End skort, and the plaid dress skort. Because the plaid skirts are going away in a couple of years, many girls purchased the new navy skort for more options.

"I like the new skirts, the elastic is more practical than the zippers on the plaid skirts," junior Melodee Nickolite said.

These changes did not stop with just the new skirts. Pants and shorts were also affected in ways. Another handbook change this year is students can no longer wear any denim black pants. Many girls last year

See **SWEATPANTS**, Page 2

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***2026-2027 Rock Bottom Dates***

*October 7*
November 11
December 14
February 1
March 3
March 31
April 28

## LAKEVIEW

ball game. They collaborated to fundraise for Sammy's Superheroes Foundation, a dedicated nonprofit cancer organization born in Columbus to give young patients a brighter future by driving awareness and supporting families.

As the announcer read before the game, "Tonight, we play for you. You are the true superheroes, and this entire community stands behind you every step of the way. Fans, let's show our unity and support. Please stand, make some noise, and give a huge, heartfelt round of applause for both teams as we Go Gold tonight!"

The fundraiser gathered a total of $885 in donations throughout the night. And while the rivalry may have become friendlier, that has not made the games matter any less to the people involved.

"There [will always] be [a desire] to be the better team in town," Vancura said. "You always want to be on the correct side of that game. And I know that deep down you feel like you have to win that game. Whether you're a Scotus coach, player, fan, or student, it just means more. And I guarantee it means more on their end as well."

## SWEATPANTS

wore the black denim jeans during the winter months.

"I definitely liked all the different uniform options we were provided in the past. I personally wish we didn't get rid of the black pants because they were very nice to have in the winter," senior Emma Wangler said.

According to the handbook the pants now must be a solid navy blue or khaki color.

At orientation, Mr. Kathol also explained belt loops, welt styled back pockets, and on-seam or slash side pockets are required for all school pants and shorts. The back pockets of the shorts or pants need to be inside the pants instead of on the outside. This, as well as the belt loops, makes the pants look more professional and put together.

"I think the new dress code is a bit annoying mainly because the shorts and pants have to have so many particular things on them for it to be considered school appropriate," sophomore Evalett Sandoval said.

From the sweatpant scare to the changes in the school dress code, Scotus' school uniform policies are continuing to change for the better.

"I like the new dress code idea. I think it will make the outfits look more professional for the school setting," freshman Everley Luchsinger said.

While some students may prefer the old options and look, the new rules give students here at Sctous more options and create a more formal look.




Broke Hendricks / Rock Bottom Staff

**Juniors Emma White and Kali Speicher pose in the new uniform skorts that were introduced this year. These skirts can be worn in addition to the plaid and black skorts.**


# Special Thanks to Our Issue 1 Sponsor!



# Quit raining on everyone's parade

**By Ainsley Kuhl**



"I hate country music." "I hate pink." "I hate Starbucks." "I hate cats." "You really like that? Well, I hate it." "I hate, I hate, I hate!"

We all know those people who have to make a point about everything they dislike. Someone mentions a popular song, trend, or celebrity, and almost immediately someone else proudly announces how much they hate it. It seems to be less specifically about what they disliked and more about making sure everyone knows they are different from the mainstream.

True individuality is not defined by what a person despises, it is about interests they have and being oneself, even if it does not meet other people's approval.

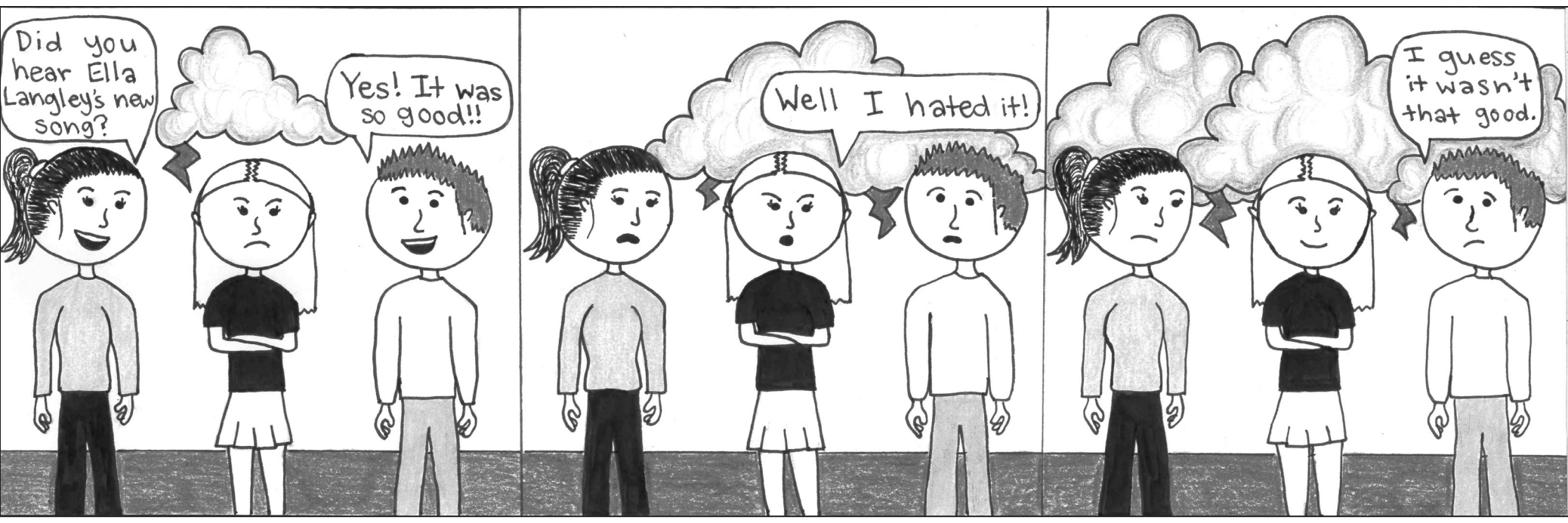
In a world that encourages everyone to stick out, it can be easy to hate what others enjoy in order to separate from the crowd. Simply saying, "I hate it," takes less effort compared to truly taking time to discover personal passions and perspectives. It can be easier for people to stand out by disagreeing rather than for what they love because that requires authenticity.

More often than not, the negative takes can be what stick out. When there is a conversation everyone is enjoying, someone who agrees may not attract much attention. If another person says they hate something, it can immediately shift the conversation, and suddenly all the attention shifts to them. Naturally, there are times where not everyone agrees, but the problem comes when a person always has something to say about what is popular.

There is a difference between having an opposing opinion and making other people feel bad for theirs. When people constantly criticize popular trends, they can also end up criticizing the people who enjoy them. Calling someone "basic" for liking something popular can make them feel as though their interests are less valuable because other people share them. This can not be any further from the truth. Being different is not about having the opposite interests of everyone else all the time, it is about being honest with oneself and others about what one genuinely enjoys, even if millions of people also do.

Everyone is allowed to dislike what is popular and have their own opinions. We are not all going to love the same music, movies, food, and trends, so someone trying to stand out by loudly announcing what they hate is simply performative. What actually makes a person unique is their personality, interests, experiences, and what they genuinely enjoy.

Maybe instead of focusing so much on what we hate, we should focus more on what we love. What excites us, inspires us, and brings us joy can say far more about who we are than what we criticize. As Taylor Swift once said, "I wanna be defined by the things that I love, not the things I hate." In the end, maybe it is as simple as being authentic with what we love.




Ainsley Kuhl / Rock Bottom Staff

# Injuries expose accessibility issues

**By Kennedy Krueger**



"You never know what you have until it is gone." People hear this quote and never think it will never apply to them. They never think that one day walking could no longer be a simple task. They never think that going up the stairs might become a workout rather than an easy climb. They never think about the fact that they might have to plan in extra minutes for every day tasks because they move so slow.

This became my reality over the summer. Being on crutches for six weeks, I never realized how inaccessible the world around me was. Every year, countless people temporarily lose their normal mobility due to injury. There are also many people permanently restricted from walking due to health conditions or amputations. I was only in this situation for a few weeks, and I cannot even begin to comprehend what accessibility issues they face on a daily basis.

The world we live in today is not as accessible as it could be. For people with limited mobility, it may be difficult to go out in public due to the challenges they face. Someone who has two working legs never considers the obstacles that someone with an injury or disability faces every day. Each step looks a little different for someone with limited mobility, whether they are going up, down, or straight ahead.

For people with mobility aids, stairs can be their worst enemy. Going up and down stairs with crutches is a struggle to figure out at first. Even when someone figures out the proper motions, it is still easy to lose one's balance. This poses a risk for reinjury or even the injury of another area. For someone in a wheelchair, stairs are entirely impossible. This is where elevators become a practical necessity, making level changes easy and safe.

Opening doors also poses a challenge for people with mobility aids such as crutches or wheelchairs. When someone is using a device that requires both hands, it is difficult to push or pull a door. Similarly for wheelchair users, it is nearly impossible for them to open their own door. Many public places and businesses have installed automatic doors, which grant wheelchair users the freedom to travel alone. Mechanisms similar to these make the lives of people who use assistive devices a little easier.

Today, we live in a technologically advanced world. We have the capability and should be using this modern technology to make spaces more accessible for everyone. Ramps and elevators make it safer and easier for people with mobility aids to travel to different floors. Moving walkways could help those who have trouble traveling long distances. For people using wheelchairs and crutches, automatic doors give them independence when entering an area. With more accommodations, public spaces can be less stressful for those with limited mobility.

With this being said, it is difficult and expensive to make major adjustments to buildings, especially the older or smaller ones. In some cases, it would actually be structurally, financially, or practically impossible. Many buildings do not have the time or money to make investments for a more accessible space. Although it would help people, it is unfortunately not realistic for many places.

No one ever thinks they will face mobility challenges until it becomes their daily reality. We should all be grateful for the blessings given to us each and every day because we never know when our lives could change.

# Success beyond the field

**By Lydia Dostal**



Beep! Beep! Beep! The alarm sounds at 6:30 a.m. Quickly, you get ready and rush to school to make it to the campus ministry meeting at 7:20. After that, you meet with your English teacher before your first period class. You drag through the day, anticipating the moment the final bell rings for you to go home; however, home is not your destination. Instead, you will make your way to your shift at your job. The day is busy, and you get off 30 minutes late at 10:30 p.m. Exhausted, you finally make it home, where you will spend the next two hours doing homework, go to bed at 1:00 a.m., and then repeat it all over again tomorrow.

This routine is the daily reality for many high school students. The members of the Scotus student body are heavily involved in a variety of activities. Whether that be volleyball, one-act, or campus ministry, our students stay busy. While all extracurriculars are important, Scotus prides itself on its athletic programs. Our teams uphold a consistent standard of excellence among all sports. Understandably, this standard can sometimes put an unnecessary amount of pressure on incoming students who think they must be involved in everything in order to be successful. Some people choose to forgo this stress and stay back, not taking part in any sports and instead focus on other endeavors. This choice is sometimes frowned upon by other students, but simply choosing not to participate in high school sports does not make a person lazy or unmotivated.

Many students opt out of doing sports in order to give academics their full attention. Along with excellent athletic standards, Scotus also upholds a high and rigorous standard of academic achievement. Maintaining this standard requires a great amount of effort and diligence from students. For some, meeting academic requirements while also splitting their time and attention between afterschool practices is simply not doable. I played softball my freshmen and sophomore years, and I remember how draining it was to attempt to maintain a 4.0 while also traveling two nights a week for games. Those who choose not to overload their schedules with optional activities are not lacking motivation, but rather prioritizing what is most important to them. These students are putting their effort elsewhere, not letting it go to waste.

Another reason some choose to not participate in high school sports is so they can join the workforce. A large number of students are employed at afterschool or weekend jobs. As someone who has two jobs, which I work at almost every day, being on a sports team would make it impossible for me to ever get scheduled. A recurring problem that I have encountered recently is the lack of availability from some of my coworkers who play sports and have practice or games every day, making them unable to work any shifts other than Sundays. This schedule may work best for some, but is highly inconvenient for others. Gaining work experience is just as valuable as playing a sport. Both require a person to work hard and develop teamwork skills. I would argue the lessons I have learned from my jobs have built me up more than my sport ever did, making it completely worth it to me in the long run.

All of this to say, the dedication exhibited by the multi-sport athletes at Scotus should not be ignored. It is extremely admirable that such a large number of students want to participate in so many activities, and they are able to balance these commitments so well. Being involved in an athletic activity year-round is something I could never do, and I applaud these students for their incredible dedication and effort. My only wish is that those students who do not participate in sports get some of the same recognition for the amazing things they are also accomplishing.

Scotus is an amazing school full of opportunities for growth and involvement. By recognizing every student's hard work and dedication to their respective activities, we can make Scotus a place where students feel completely seen and supported.

# Down goes "The Team Up North"

**By Connor Cameron**

The Shamrock football team has bounced out of the gate starting off with a 2-1 record this year. Coming off the news the boys were being sent down to play C-2 football from C-1 this past year, they were ready to make a showing. After a hyped up offseason, the football team started the year against Hartington Cedar Catholic, who was preseason ranked in the top ten.

After a physical game, Hartington took control, ultimately marching to a 34-10 victory over Scotus. It was a hard loss for the Shamrocks, especially after some vital starting positions went down with injuries, including starting quarterback Drew Mustard and starting wide receiver Evan Cameron.

As the boys were regrouping for the next week against Plainview, senior Brody Lindhorst expressed his trust in his coaches to put the players in the correct spot while also being moved to quarterback for the week.

"I knew what we were capable of doing. The coaches were confident in all of us, so we knew we had a chance," Lindhorst said.

After a long back and forth game, the Shamrocks ended up pulling out a 14-10 victory over the Pirates. Carrying this momentum into next week for homecoming week, the Shamrocks had a grudge against their opponent, the Lakeview Vikings.

The Vikings were ranked third in the class of C-1, while the Shamrocks were unranked heading into the game. The past eight appearances against the Vikings ended up going south for the Shamrocks, with many close losses against their rivals. Senior Joe Marksmeier believes this year's football team had a different idea in mind.

"In the locker room and in practice, the emotions were very noticeable because we knew we had what it took to get it done, and we also knew we would. The prediction for the game was that they were 27 point favorites, which annoyed us because people have been overlooking us all year," Marksmeier said.

The Shamrocks ended up pulling out a thriller in a 13-10 win over the Vikings, pushing their record to 2-1. The biggest factor was the defense being shut down, and the offense winning the running game consistently. The defense made some quick last minute adjustments to throw off their opponent.

"We completely altered our defense to stop their only two weapons, which were their quarterback and wide receiver. By doing this, they were not able to do anything on offense, giving us the advantage we needed to win the game," Marksmeier said.

The offense grouped behind their senior fullback Brody Lindhorst. On 22 carries, he went for 103 yards, running for an average of 4.7 yards per carry. However, Brody was not the only one making an impact for the offense.

Senior Charlie Olmer scored a touchdown to help push the Shamrocks over the hump to take the lead. He had one reception, which went for 43 yards to the end zone.

"There were a lot of emotions going through my head, but I knew I needed to stay calm and just keep going because the game was still tied," Olmer said.

After the intensity of pulling out a close win against a rival on Friday night, the Shamrocks were able to celebrate more at their Homecoming dance the next night. The senior leaders were ecstatic with their final Homecoming dance coming after a win against their rivals breaking a long streak.



Lauren Fleming / Yearbook Staff

**Senior Brody Lindhorst celebrates a touchdown against their rival Lakeview Vikings on September 11th. The Shamrocks went on to win the game 13-10.**

# Cross country sprints through the season

**By Kennedy Krueger**



Salette Adame / Rock Bottom Staff

**Junior Michael Klassen sprints up a hill at the UNK Invite at September 28th. Klassan ran a time of 20:47.2 at this meet.**

The Scotus cross country team's season is flying by, and they have had a strong season so far. With seventeen boys and fifteen girls, the Shamrocks are running towards success to end this year.

To begin their season, the team ran at the Vince Zavala Invite at Ryder Park on August 28th. The varsity girls took 2nd place in the Womens 4,000 Meters Girls Gold, and junior varsity took 4th place in the Womens 4,000 Meters Girls Silver. At this meet, the varsity boys placed 8th in the Mens 4,000 Meters Boys Gold. Senior Chase Adamy ran a time of 18:24.1 at this meet.

"The Vince Zavala Invite was definitely a struggle. It was our first meet of the season so we were not fully in shape, and the weather that day was miserable and hot," Adamy said.

The next race for the Shamrocks was the Boone Central Invite on September 4th. This was a hot and hilly meet, and these conditions can have an effect on the runners' times.

"The Boone Central Invite is always such a fun meet. My time personally got much faster. Even though I enjoy this meet every year, the heat still made it a huge challenge," Adamy said.

The cross country team competed at the Platte River Rumble at Mahoney State Park on September 11th. In the Mens 5,000 Meters S Division, the boys placed 13th, and the girls placed 3rd in the Womens 5,000 Meters S Division. Freshman Adelyn Beller ran a time of 22:45.4 at this meet.

"[The] Platte River Rumble [has been] my favorite meet so far! It's a pretty big meet, so it was fun to compete against teams from another state. The Platte River Rumble was the most impactful [meet] for me this season. I only ran the meet once in junior high, so it was fun to get back on the course," Beller said.

On September 22nd, the Shamrocks competed at the Bob Hoyer Invitational at Branched Oak. The Scouts varsity girls claimed 1st place at this meet in the 5,000 Meter race, and the varsity boys took 14th place in the 5,000 Meter race. Sophomore Samantha Karges ran a time of 23:03.2 at this meet, and this is her first year on the cross country team.

"The [Bob Hoyer Invitational was the most impactful meet for me this season because] I started out faster, which is what the coaches said to do. They were happy, so I was happy too. It was the first race, so the rest of the race I got to do nothing and cheer on the other runners," Karges said.

The cross country team ran at the UNK High School Invitational on September 28th and at the Aquinas Cross Country Invite on October 1st.

"I [was the] most excited for our UNK Meet! This was a huge meet with lots of competition," Beller said.

Recently, the Shamrocks ran at the Centennial Cross Country Meet. Next up for the team is the District Meet on October 14th. The cross country team will wrap up their season on October 23rd at the State Championship. Senior Leslie Medina-Perez has been on the cross country team since eighth grade.

"A goal that I have for this year is to finish off my senior season strong and give it all I have every meet no matter how I feel. I hope to end off the season with good memories of the season and with friendships that I'll remember for the rest of my life," Medina-Perez said.

# Volleyball strives for success

**By Brooke Hendricks**




Calben Pelan / Yearbook Staff

**Senior Lindsay Gokie wishes Concordia good luck before the game on September 1st. The team is lead by five seniors.**

New positions, roles, and faces on the court have played a key role in the Shamrocks early success this season. After graduating five seniors last year, several positions and their leadership roles they carried needed to be filled.

The season started out with a tough match. After the devastating loss against Kearney Catholic in four sets, the Shamrocks were determined to beat the number three ranked team Omaha Concordia. Weeks into the season, practices helped the girls prepare for the upcoming games. Senior Brooke Kreienke plays libero.

"Practices have gone great. Everyone brings the hype, which makes it more enjoyable and productive. This helps build us as a team and later translates to games," Krienke said.

On September 1st, the Rowdy Dowdy student section was filled and ready to cheer on the volleyball team as they faced Concordia! After falling in the first set, the Shamrocks continued to battle and pulled a win in five sets. This showed everyone how the volleyball team works together and what they are capable of doing this season. This was a big game for senior Lindsay Gokie.

"The Concordia game was the most impactful. We knew going in that it was going to be hard because they are ranked. The student section was definitely a key part to our success. That game proved to us what we are capable of," Gokie said.

The Shamrocks continued the season and played Omaha Westview the following Tuesday. They won in four sets, but many of the players felt they could have done much better. Alivia Kreikemeier is the starting middle.

"I didn't think we were mentally locked in for that game. We should not have lost the first set and we definitely could've cleaned everything up," Kreikemeier said.

Although the players thought they did not play to their full potential, Kreinke looked at it in a positive way as an opportunity to get better as a team.

"Even though we didn't play our best, it's always a good day when we get a home win." Krienke said.

September 15th saw a victorious game against Aquinas Catholic on their home court. The Shamrocks won in three sets improving their record to 4-3, not including tournaments. They fell to Elkhorn Valley in five sets on the 17th and also lost to Battle Creek in 3 sets. On the 24th, they also lost in three sets to a tough team. They played Lincoln Christian.

On September 29th, the Shamrocks faced their biggest rival the Lakeview Vikings. The students of both schools wore Sammy's Superhero shirts in honor of Sam Nahorny, who is battling cancer. The student council teams from both schools worked together to make this possible and to raise money for him. The Shamrocks battled and fought against the Lakeview Vikings, and they ended up losing in four sets with their new record of 7-11. Sophomore Evy Kluever plays outside hitter.

"This season has been very fun so far, and we all have a ton of talent that I can't wait to see as we keep continuing our season," Kluever said.

The Shamrocks season is continuing on as they prepare for the conference tournament in a couple days.

# Golf team aims high for low score

**By Ainsley Kuhl**

After coming off of a high last season placing second at state, the girls golf team is aiming to place even higher. Last year, seniors Ava Sokol and Libby Langan were key players in the team's victories and are back again.

This year the team's goal is to return to state and win.They have shown they are capable by placing top three at all of their meets this year. Langan has made it to state all four years and is hoping to place higher this year.

"I hope our team does well at state because we have a lot of young girls on the team who put in a lot of work over the summer to do well," Langan said.

Along with team ambitions, the girls also have their own individual goals and hopes they are working on this season. This is sophomore Milo Dowd's first year on varsity.

"I am looking forward to all the meets so I can improve my score," Dowd said. "I am most anxious for districts because I want to help my team get to state."

The Shamrocks started their season off with swinging success by winning their triangular against Lakeview and Fullerton on September 1st, scoring a 183.

On September 3rd, the girls competed at their first official meet at Grand Island Central Catholic, where they scored a 410, projecting them to 2nd place Langan individually took 3rd place. The course is long and quite challenging to many of the girls, but they were able to overcome it.

Facing Lakeview again, the Shamrocks played at the Lakeview Invite and ended placing 3rd on September 10th. Three girls placed at this meet with Langan shooting a winning score of 84, Sokol at 12th, and Dowd at 15th.

The Shamrocks then hit the road for the Pierce Invite on September 12, where the team took home the gold. Langan and Sokol both tied for first place shooting an 86, but Sokol ended up winning the playoff on the second extra hole played.

"Our coach said we couldn't just do rock, paper, scissors; we had to actually play, so we both went out together and started," Sokol said. "After the first hole, we tied and had to play another hole. It was hole 9, and I had done really well on it the last two times."

The next week, the team traveled to Albion twice for the Boone Central Triangular and Invite. The triangular was on September 17th against Boone Central and Lakeview. The team placed 2nd, with the JV team following in 3rd. In first place was Langan with Sokol and Dowd right behind tied for second place.

On September 19th, the girls played the Albion Invite, where they ended up finishing 2nd place. Sokol shot an 86, placing her runner-up with Langan finishing right behind her with an 87.

The Shamrocks again hosted the conference meet at Quail Run Golf Course on September 25th. Though the team has won it the past six years, this year they finished runner-up, closely behind Lincoln Christian. Langan placed 3rd with a 93 and Sokol 5th with a 95.

Districts were held on October 6th at Oakland Golf Course.



Aurora Ridder / Rock Bottom Staff

**Senior Libby Langan tees off at the Centennial Conference Tournament at Quail Run Golf Course on September 25th. Langan finished 3rd place, leading the team.**

# Seniors swing into final tennis season

**By Grace Holmstedt**

One serve, one rally, one point at a time. With the season on the line, how far can the team go? As this year's tennis season gets busier, the boys team is taking its competition to the court, one match at a time. After months of practice, the players are putting their skills, teamwork, and determination to the test as they battle through a competitive season. From heated singles matches to hard-fought doubles wins, every game brings new challenges.




Photo Credit Tina Pilan

**Senior Calben Pelan prepares to serve at the Fremont Invitational on September 11th. The Discoverers finish 5th over all at the meet.**

So far this season, the Discoverers have a winning record, collecting a second place victory at the South Sioux City meet, where the team finished with thirty-six points. They followed that match with fifth place at the competitive Fremont Invitational. Along with these big wins, the players are finding individual success as well.

Senior Alex Steffensmeier has played tennis all four years of high school. This season, Steffensmeier's singles record is 2-0, winning the Grand Island dual as a number 3 seed 8-2 and the South Sioux City Invitational seeded number 4 8-0. However, these wins did not come without some difficulties.

"When I play better competition, it challenges me to play up to the opponents skill level, which helps me improve my skills," Steffensmeier says.

Alex is also finding success in his doubles matches with his partner, senior Calben Pelan. The duo currently has a 10-9 record and is hoping to make an appearance at state.

"I am expecting to have a winning record going into state and being seeded with my doubles partner," Steffensmeier said. "I am also hoping to win our first round of state to build momentum going into the next round."

His partner Calben has the same outlook and expectations when it comes to competing at the state tournament.

"I expect to be seeded going into state because it will give me the best opportunity to win," Pelan said.

His season has come with new opportunities for growth and improvement in his skills.

"I played Lincoln East, who were the defending state champions, so it was a difficult match," Pelan said. "It exposed many of my weaknesses, which has helped me get better throughout the season."

This year, Pelan has a singles record of 1-1, and he and Steffensmeier compete as a number 1 seeded doubles pair at matches. Senior Dallas Wemhoff also has a winning record for the season. As a number 5 seed, he beat his Grand Island opponent 8-2 and bested South Sioux City 8-0 while being seeded number 6.

The seniors are not the only ones making an impact. This season, junior Christian Maguire is sporting a 2-0 singles record and a 12-7 doubles record with Wemhoff as his partner. Maguire even won some of his lower seeded matches.

"[The] Spartan Invitational was very tough because that's where all the best teams in the state were [playing]," Maguire said.

"My serve has gotten much better, and I have adapted to [playing] doubles well," Maguire said. "I'm hoping to win my first match at state."

With much of this year's wins still up for grabs, the team will be working harder than ever to secure their spots at the state tournament and hopefully bring home a win. Every challenge has helped them grow closer and more confident in their abilities. With more obstacles ahead, the players are ready to step back onto the court, fight for every point, and see how far they can get this season.

# Softball stives for season improvements

**By Lydia Dostal**

The Columbus Discoverers softball team is heading into the backend of their season with a drive for greatness. The team has a total roster of eighteen players, with seven of those players being Scotus students. Facing early setbacks this season, the Discoverers hope to finish the year with no regrets. Freshman Cora McGinnis is a varsity catcher for the Discoverers.

"We want to give 110% effort, ending the season on a high note while being proud of how we performed," McGinnis said.

This year, the Discoverers are playing an away season, with the majority of their games taking place in Lincoln. Extensive traveling can take a toll on the players after a while, but they are taking steps to avoid burnout. Varsity infielder Naomi Robertson is a Scotus senior.

"We have been working on staying consistent and keeping our energy up the entire game, even when it's hard," Robertson said.

The team started the season with a bang, winning their first game 12-8 against Lincoln Northeast on August 20th. This match gave the group a positive surge going into the rest of the year. Senior catcher Taylor Blaser is a four-year varsity starter for the Discoverers.

"It was a huge confidence boost to win the opener. Everything clicked for us. [The game] set the tone pretty high for the rest of the season," Blaser said.

Following the initial win, the team went on a difficult stretch, losing nine straight games. The Discoverers took these losses into practice in order to make the necessary adjustments to improve.

"We have been working on communicating through the plays. Communication is key, especially when participating in a team sport like softball," Blaser said.

In addition to team communication, the players have been taking steps to enhance their personal mentalities. Sophomore Jaci Harrington is a varsity pitcher for the team.

"We have been working to improve our mindsets by telling ourselves that we can, no matter what. Also, we have been working on the ability to come back right after a mistake," Harrington said.

The Discoverers recovered, snapping their losing streak with a 12-3 win against Lincoln High on September 3rd. The team brought this momentum into their next matchup against Lincoln Northwest, defeating them 15-6 on September 8th.

"The difference maker [in these games] was the energy in the dugout. Everyone was very hype and loud, so it helped encourage others and build up a positive mindset," Harrington said.

In the aftermath of these games, the Discoverers suffered two losses against Standing Bear and Lincoln East with scores of 7-9 and 2-10, respectively. These defeats were followed by two more victories for the team against Omaha Central and Grand Island. These wins were no small feat, with the Discoverers outscoring their opponents 29-13. Cali Harrington is a senior pitcher and outfielder.

"Our goals are, obviously, to win, but more specifically to win the little things. We want things to be energetic and fun, as we do not have a lot of season left," Harrington said.




Ainsley Kuhl / Rock Bottom Staff

**Senior Naomi Robertson throws the ball back to the pitcher after making a play during the game against Lincoln Northstar at Bradshaw Park on August 25th. Robertson is one of the eight seniors for the Discoverers.**

On September 22nd, the team celebrated their senior night, honoring eight seniors who have left their mark on the program. This game was against Fremont, and it resulted in an 11-1 victory for the Discoverers.

"Although our season hasn't gone the way we wanted it to, [the wins] show that when all the pieces fall together, we can be great," Harrington said.

# All Hallows' history

**By Audrey Naughton**

For a woman in the 18th century, Halloween did not mean cute costumes and pumpkin spice lattes, but the possibility of finding a husband. This time of year was typically seen as a way for young women to search for their future husbands in the hopes of finding true love. The history of Halloween is often obscured and different stories make it confusing to know exactly how it happened. In 2009, History.com published an article that would hopefully lay it all out and clear this up.

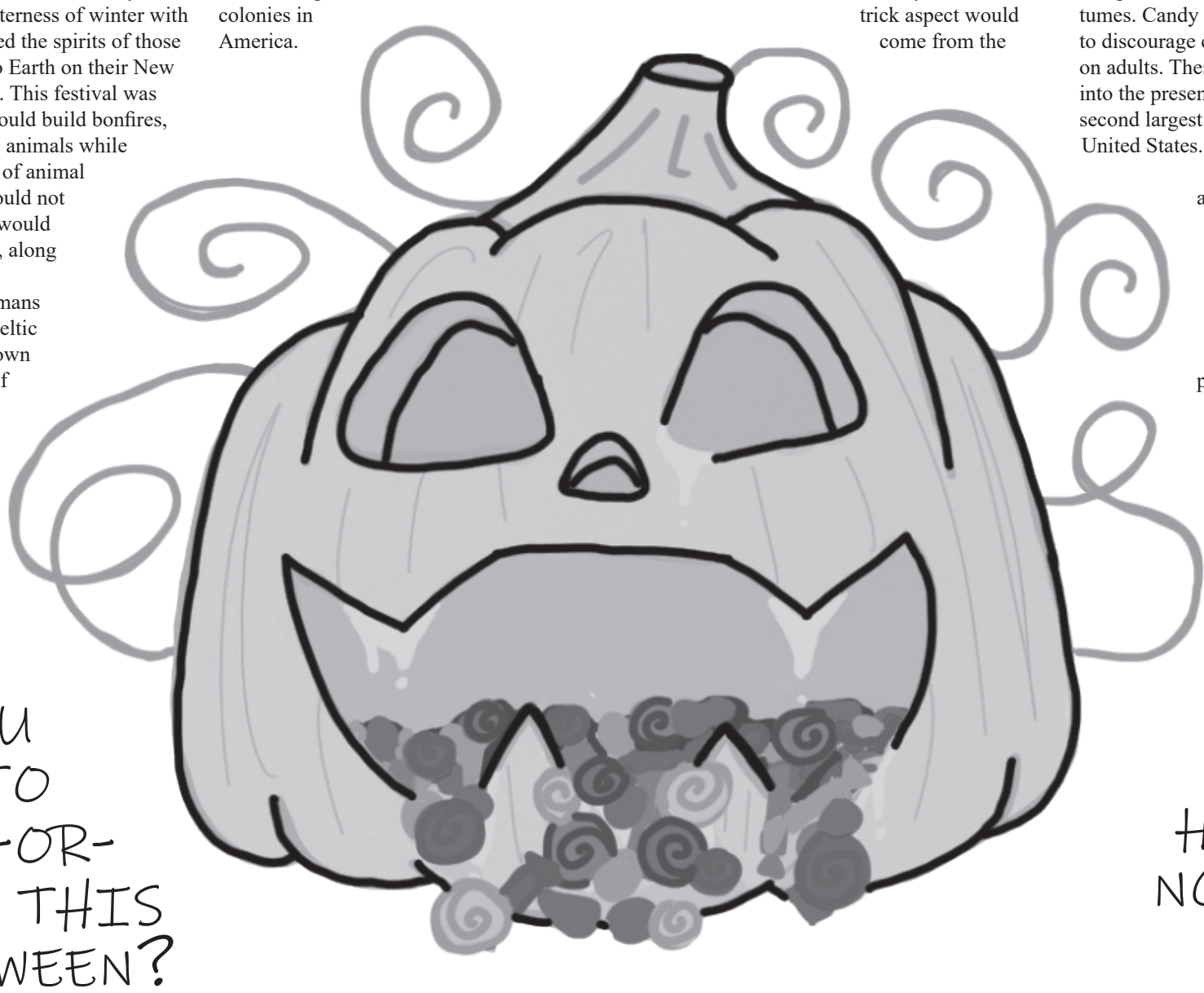
This holiday has its origins with the Celts. Their calendar was different, as their year began with the winter season. They associated the cold and bitterness of winter with human death and believed the spirits of those that died would return to Earth on their New Year's Eve, October 31st. This festival was called Samhain. They would build bonfires, burn crops, and sacrifice animals while wearing costumes made of animal skins. These customs would not last, as new conquerors would consume the Celtic land, along with their traditions.

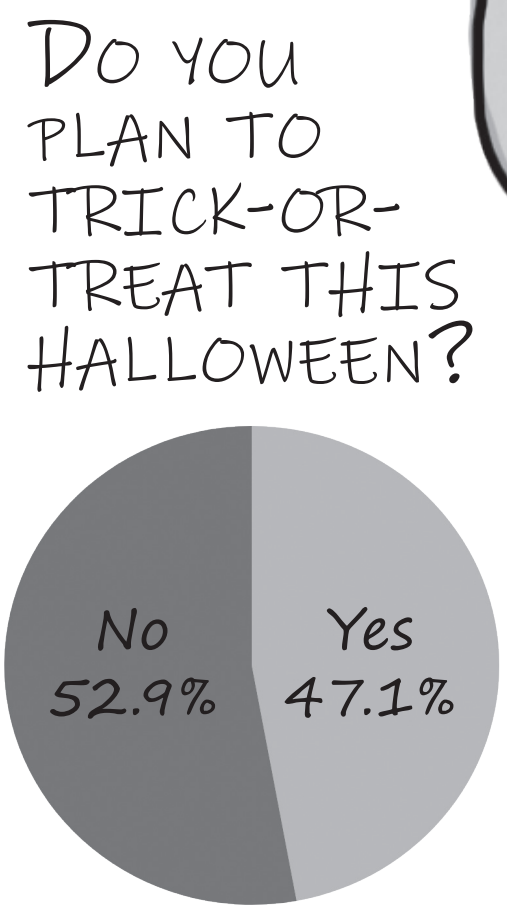
By A.D. 43, the Romans ruled over most of the Celtic territory, bringing their own rituals with them. Two of these would blend with Samhain: Feralia and the celebration of Pomona. Feralia was similar to Samhain because it honored the passing of the dead. Pomona was the Roman goddess of fertility whose commemoration would also become a custom. Another major influence was Chrisitanity. November 1st became a holy day in the Christian calendar to honor the souls of the saints, which was called All Hallows', leading to All Saints Day. The name "Halloween" or "All Hallows' Eve" replaced the former festival of Samhain and took place the night before All Saints Day. This was the nature of the holiday up until the settlement of New England colonies in America.

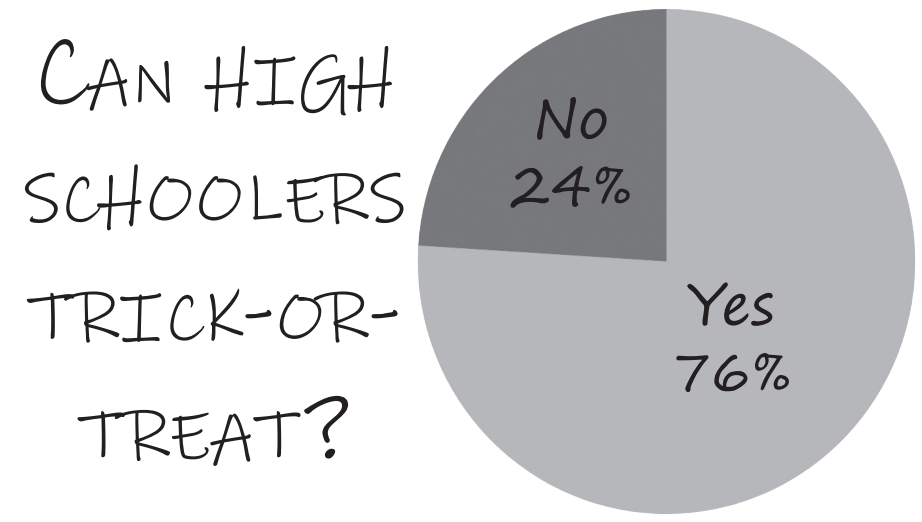
The observance of Halloween in the beginning of America was very limited given strong Protestant beliefs. The new traditions that would emerge would rely more on past customs from different European ethnic groups, including public events towns would hold in celebration. The festivals would not spread to the entire country, but boosts in immigration would lead to an increase in the popularity of the holiday. Trick-or-treating would quickly become one of the most beloved traditions. It came from a European custom of dressing in costumes and asking houses for money or food. The trick aspect would come from the belief that if a young woman performed tricks with yarn or mirrors, they could manifest the appearance of their future husband. However, around the turn of the 20th century, the superstitious and religious aspects of Halloween would become less prominent.

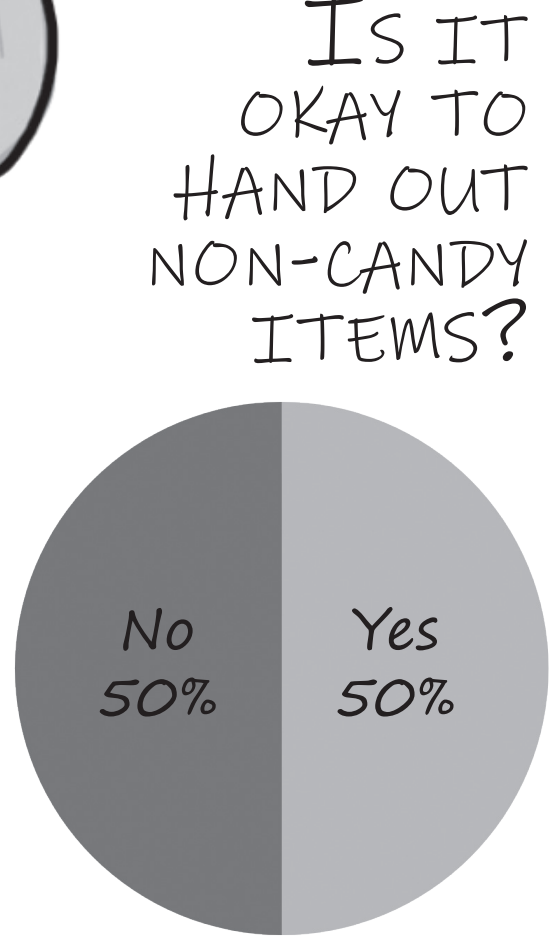
With the Great Depression came little celebration. People would no longer go trick-or-treating, and vandalism would skyrocket due to harsh financial circumstances. This would last for the next twenty years before it would be revived again in the 1950's. It was an inexpensive way to celebrate due to the fact parents would make their children's costumes. Candy would be handed out as a way to discourage children from playing tricks on adults. These traditions would continue into the present day, making this holiday the second largest commercial holiday for the United States.

Today, the holiday has lost a lot of its original charm and appeal, but the long-held traditions will always remain at the heart of Halloween. This Halloween, take a minute to appreciate the origins behind the cute costumes and big packs of candy that are seen everywhere in society today.






# Trick-or-treating takes taste over tradition

**By Lillian Miller**

The glow of the full moon lights the small living room, its warm light illuminating the crinkled wrappers and half-empty trick-or-treat bags littered across the carpet. The crisp October air joins the laughter and chatter that fills the room as children sort and barter their hauls of candy into small, colorful piles.

Halloween is widely known for its trick-or-treating traditions, where children dress up and venture door to door to receive candy from their neighbors. With this tradition comes a variety of questions: How old is too old to trick-or-treat? Is there a best candy to hand out? Do non-candy items have a place?

A survey was sent out to the Scotus student body to collect the candy opinions of the school.

Out of the 222 respondents, only 104 students, 47.1% of participants, plan to trick-or-treat this year.

"I'm going to go trick-or-treating for the candy, having a good time with friends, and community traditions," seventh-grader William Wenske said.

However, the candy, fun, and traditions are not enough to bring trick-or-treaters back year after year. Many of the respondents not planning to trick-or-treat claimed they were "too old."

"I feel like there's an age limit," sophomore Audrianna Splittgerber said. Senior Matthew Dinslage agrees. "I feel like it is for younger kids," Dinslage said. The last time Dinslage trick-or-treated was in seventh grade, along with many high school respondents.

However, when asked "Do you think high school students can trick-or-treat?" an overwhelming 168 students, 76% of participants, said yes. In fact, they believe highschoolers should be trick-or-treating because it keeps them safe and out of trouble. Walking around the neighborhood in costume keeps older kids engaged in a traditional, innocent activity instead of getting into mischief.

On the other hand, some people view teenage trick-or-treating as disrespectful and unthoughtful. Unsupervised or rowdy groups of older teens can sometimes make younger, easily frightened children uncomfortable.

In order to trick-or-treat responsibly, teenagers should wear a real costume, be polite, and keep groups small. Showing up without a costume looks like plain begging rather than participating in the holiday tradition. Teens should be thoughtful, say "trick-or-treat" and "thank you," and not crowd the door, letting little kids go first.

Alternative options for trick-or-treating can include handing out candy, assisting younger trick-or-treaters, hosting a movie night, or visiting a haunted house. This way, teens can still celebrate the spirit of Halloween without worrying about disrupting others.

But, whether trick-or-treating or not, students have a variety of opinions on candy.

Most students prefer chocolate over fruit-based or sour candy. Top contenders include Reese's Peanut Butter Cups with 24.7% of votes, and KitKats at 15.3%. Tied with KitKats for second place is the top fruity option, Sour Patch Kids.

No matter their favorite candy, though, students are united with their opinion on the size of a candy bar. Over 93% of participants voted for full-sized candy bars. The bigger size leaves a memorable thrill for the trick-or-treaters because they feel they have discovered a rare, high-value jackpot compared to standard bite-sized or fun-sized sweets.

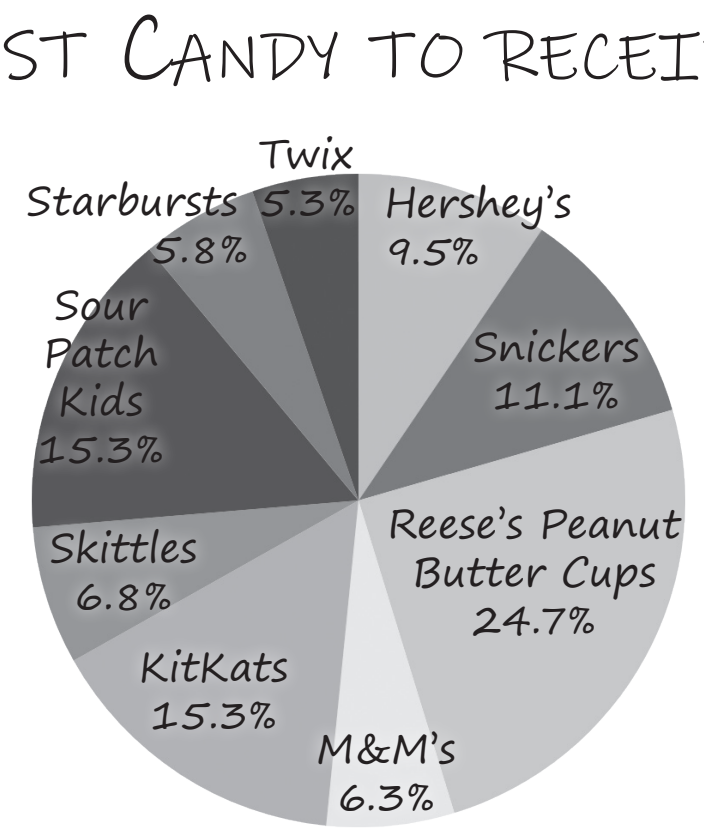
Alternatively, the fun-sized candy offers a budget-friendly, wide variety of options with built-in portion control. Only 14 respondents voted for this standard option.

In contrast to the unity expressed concerning candy sizes, respondents were sharply divided, with an exact 50-50 split concerning non-candy handouts. Traditional sweets reign supreme for many trick-or-treaters, while non-candy alternatives gain traction for allergy safety and novelty.

Opinions aside, Halloween is packed full of long-standing traditions.

"Halloween is supposed to be a fun day where kids get to trick-or-treat, eat lots of candy, stay up late, and have lots of fun," freshman Lydia Sell said.

So whether you plan to go out trick-or-treating or stay in this year, do not let anybody's opinion dictate how you celebrate your Halloween.



# Bring back the haunt

**By Connor Cameron**

The time has come, Gotham needs saving. You are suiting up and prepping for the biggest task ever. Who can get the biggest sized candy bar? Who can fill their pillow cases the fastest? Who can return to base before the moon reaches its peak? Waiting anxiously to get out around the neighborhood, the door finally swings open, and the brisk fall wind fills the room. Finally, freedom! Dashing from house to house, king-sized candy bars are flying everywhere, and soon enough, the pillow case is full completely. All of the sudden, your journey is interrupted by a strand of cars flying down the street. They pull into a parking lot under a sign that says trunk-or-treat and gather into a line. The whole night has been ruined, and a new tradition has come to take it over forever.

Trunk-or-treat events have exploded into the Halloween scene in the past five years. Local companies, churches, and families from the community gather together in parking lots to set up a substitute for the traditional door-to-door collecting of candy. In the Columbus area, we have one major trunk-or-treat event in Frankfort Square known as Scare on the Square. However, companies and businesses tend to host their own separate gatherings. These events have been around since the early 2000's subtly overtaking trick-or-treating in popularity. According to The Gillnetter, the reason for the continual rise in popularity is because it is easily accessible, safer, and more promotional for the companies to show them giving back to the community. However, this has caused a big hit to the traditional door-to-door trick-or-treating.

According to the aforementioned website, a poll recorded a 75 percent decrease over 20,000 participants of kids ringing their doorbell. This has caused many negative effects to communities with the biggest being connection. According to medium.com, the loss of family's trick-or-treating has affected neighbors' relationships to each other. They know less about them and lose the face-to-face connection. It also has affected kids' social interactions with their peers. When trick-or-treating, kids meet up with their friends to collect candy, resulting in unforgettable memories shared. Lastly, it states the loss of the holiday identity. Today, Halloween is known as driving to a parking lot and walking in a line to collect candy, whereas a decade ago, Halloween was full of hunting houses with the biggest candy bars, finding the best decorations, searching for haunted houses, and meeting other kids on the same mission.

It is not too late to make a change, though time is of the essence. Encourage families, friends, and neighbors to join in on adventures to other houses. By inviting these people to participate together, we can build connections that cannot be overshadowed by modern trends. Trick-or-treating brings everyone together as a community in a fun and adventurous way. Finding the best houses, remembering who had the best decorations, and racing through the haunted house the fastest will not be the same if Halloween is reduced to walking in a line around trucks and cars. So, gather up the best decorations, buy the biggest sized candy bars, light up the porches, put on the mask to save Gotham, and encourage Robin to take it to the streets together for the most thrilling, adventurous night of the year.



# Halloween haunts our screens

**By Salette Adame**

The room is dark with only the flicker of the TV screen. Dead tree branches move in the wind and claw at the windows while the smell of hot, buttery popcorn fills the room. A blanket is pulled up to your chin, and your body tenses up, breaking out in goosebumps. The scene changes to an open, empty door at the end of a dark hallway. Suddenly, it goes quiet and still. Then, a floorboard creaks. You jolt back, heart racing, yet you lean back in to keep watching.

Halloween movies possess a combination of fear, curiosity, and suspense, which make them so hard to turn off. However, with so many to choose from, what makes one Halloween movie stand out from the rest? Some people may want to spend the night hiding under a blanket, while others would much rather revisit a childhood comedy classic. To find out the perfect Halloween movie, students were asked about their favorite movies and genres they keep going back to year after year.

Horror came out on top, with 48.4% of students saying it was their favorite. Comedy trailed behind with only 26.2%, while 16.3% chose thriller movies. Family and animated movies then made up the remaining 3.6% of responses.

The popularity of the horror genre comes to the shock of very few movie watchers. Many students enjoy and seek out the anticipation and thrill that accompanies being scared. A few students described their favorite Halloween movies, such as *Scream* or *The Conjuring,* as classics because of how much they enjoy the jumpscare parts. Other students even stated they had no specific favorite genre; they just preferred something with slash or horror.

On the other hand, some students like Halloween movies that are less about being scared or filled with suspense, and more about having a good laugh and watching a comfy-cozy classic with their family.

Junior Abbi Pavlik finds the perfect balance between spooky and lighthearted in one of her favorite movies.

"Coraline is slightly scary, but it's still lighthearted and a movie you could watch with the family," Pavlik said.

This shows how a combination of the two can result in the perfect fit. Comedy and family movies fill the Halloween air with a whole different atmosphere. Instead of having to hide behind a blanket, terrified for what comes next, viewers are able to relax, laugh, and cherish the movie as it brings waves of nostalgia.

Movies such as *Hocus Pocus*, *Ghostbusters*, and *Casper the Friendly Ghost,* which many of us watched while growing up, were some of the most repeated answers for students' favorite Halloween movie.

Senior Lydia Dostal's favorite Halloween movie is more than something to watch.

"It has always been a family tradition for us to watch it," Dostal said.

Sophmore Audri Splittgerber also has a tradition, watching *The Nightmare Before Christmas* every year.

"It's a tradition at my house to watch it on Halloween," Splittgerber said. "And I think the timing for it is perfect because it gets me excited for Christmas but also gets me in a fall mood."

At the end of the season, there is no right or wrong answer when it comes to the perfect Halloween movie. Whether you prefer to watch something genuinely scary or a nostalgic classic that brings family closer together, it is all about what brings the spirit of the season. Whatever movie you choose, if it gives Halloween vibes to you, then it is the perfect choice.



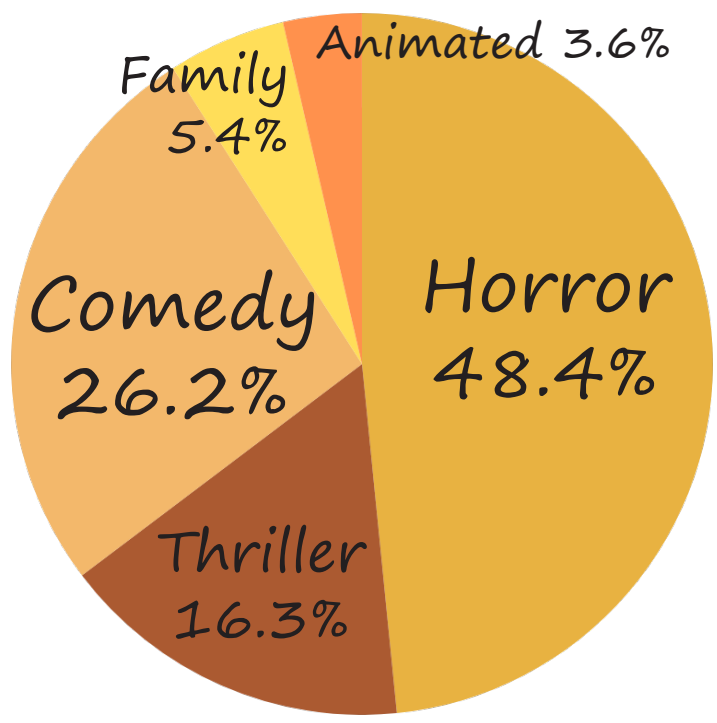






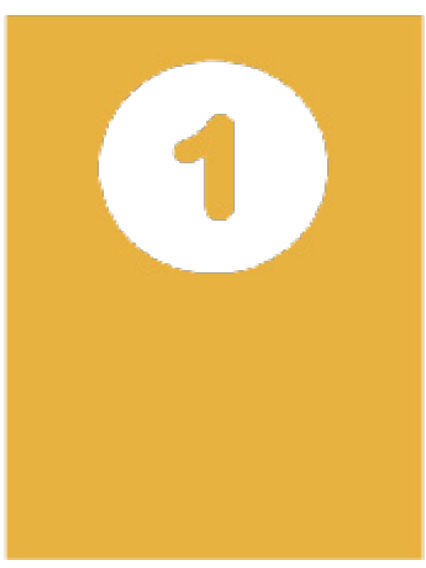

FAVORITE HALLOWEEN MOVIE?

FAVORITE GENRE?












# There's no place like Homecoming

**By Grace Holmstedt**

It was that time of the year again, where spirit filled the Scotus halls as students showed off their school pride throughout Homecoming week. From themed dress-up days and decorated hallways to a hometown rivalry football game, a dance 'Under the Sea' brought the week to a memorable close.

Themes are always a huge part of the homecoming week festivities. They give students a fun break from their uniforms and an opportunity to dress up with their classmates. They were musical genre, Zoom and anything but a bookbag, country v.s. country club, and a Scotus spirit day to end the week. This year, students voted the musical genre as their favorite theme.

"It was fun to see everyone dress up in their music genre," freshman Isla Plummer said. "Some people went all out!"

But students did not just dress the theme at school. The big Homecoming football game was against none other than the cross town rival the Lakeview Vikings. The student section showed up and showed out sporting red, white, and blue apparel. Students, staff, and fans alike came to support our Shamrocks. After a slow first half, the football team picked up the pace and ended up beating the Vikings 13-10.

Junior Makenna Schultz went to the football game with many of her friends.

"My favorite part of the football game was the ending when we were all screaming. Also seeing Brooke Krienke get so hype was fun," Schultz said.

Now, no Homecoming is complete without a king and queen. After the football game, students gathered on the field to see the procession of royalty candidates. The seniors nominated for court this year were Lillian Miller partnered with Joe Marksmeier, Brody Lindhorst accompanied by Leslie Medina, Parker Newman escorting Emma Splittgerber, Kennedy Krueger brought by Grant Jakub, Shayla Borchers paired with Michael Brandt, and Lydia Dostal escorted by Connor Cameron.

The 2025 winners Miles McGannon and Josie Rother came to the ceremony to crown the new king and queen. After tallying the votes, the winners of this year's Homecoming court were Emma Splittgerber and Parker Newman.

Finishing the week off, we had the Homecoming dance in Memorial Hall. Freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors all began piling in the gym at seven thirty. While everyone came into the dance with high expectations, many people left feeling like they were deprived of a fun experience.

Senior Chase Adamy shared his disappointment in his experience at the dance.

"I knew it would be bad, and it even went beyond my expectations by being horrible," Adamy said.

Many other students share this opinion, saying the music was underwhelming, and the DJ was not matching the vibe. But not everyone's experiences were negative. For freshman Everley Luchsinger, the dance was an enjoyable event.

"I didn't really have any expectations going into the dance," Luchsinger said. "I wasn't sure what to expect since it was my first year, but I did have a lot of fun!"

As Homecoming Week came to a close, the celebrations left behind fun memories of crazy outfits, surprising football game wins, and the dance "Under the Sea." While the week was over, the decorations came down, and the themed dress down days disappeared, our sense of Shamrock pride will continue throughout the rest of the school year.



Ainsley Kuhl / Rock Bottom Staff

**The 2026 Homecoming court poses for a picture after the September 11th Homecoming game against Lakeview. Seniors Parker Newman and Emma Splittgerber ware voted this year's king and queen.**



Julietta Morales / Yearbook Staff

**Art teacher and One Act coach Clyde Ericson busts a move in the dance circle. Ericson was a chaperone at the dance.**




Grace Holmstedt / Rock Bottom Staff

**Seniors Joe Marksmeier and Lillian Miller hype up the crowd at the Homecoming pep rally. For the competition this year, candidates did eachother's makeup and created dresses made out of toilet paper.**

# One Act Returns to Spotlight

**By Salette Adame-Hernandez**

Lights, camera, back into action. One Act has officially begun, and this year's production is bringing a familiar biblical story to life in a new way. Based on the Biblical book of Esther, it follows her as she is faced with a difficult decision that could affect her entire people.

This year the script was entirely written by the director Mr. Ericson. The cast and crew are not only performing but are working to bring his interpretation to the stage.

For set construction, creating the physical world of the play is an essential part. They establish where it takes place by building and arranging the set pieces for each scene.

Senior Aiden Zegar, who is part of set construction, has been able to see and experience the show behind the stage.

"I plan, design, and build the set so Mr. Ericson's sketches can come to life," Zegar said.

Although the audience may not see every detail, the crew still helps make the story feel real. They are responsible for making sure the set can be moved efficiently throughout the performance.

Along with the set, props also have an important role. The prop management crew is responsible for making sure the actors have their props when needed.

As a senior and part of prop management, Senior Leslie Medina helps keep track of details happening on stage.

"If one prop is missing, the show will feel off," Medina said. "They are essential to bringing the production to life."

While set and props create the visual side of the performance, lighting and sound create the atmosphere. Lighting and sound attract the audience's attention to specific scenes, making them unforgettable.

For senior Hailey Spike, being part of lights and sound requires watching the production in a whole new light.

"Since my freshman year, I greatly enjoyed preparing and turning on light and sound machines and working on the main stage," Spike said.

Onstage, the characters of Esther and the King carry the story forward. Being the lead requires memorization and understanding a character enough to portray them in front of an audience.

Senior Lillian Miller has been preparing to play one of the most important roles, Esther.

"My role this year is one of leadership," Miller said. "I am excited to grow as an actress and help my team as I go."

The core theme of courage can be seen throughout the production with Esther risking her life for others. This theme can also be seen through the many students who have given their time and talents to make the show possible.

Junior Logan Sell plays King Xerxes in the one act.

"We are going to have to put on a lights-out performance to make it to state," Sell said.

With the first performance coming up on November 7th, one-act is entering an important part of their season. For everyone, competitions are not only about stepping on stage, but showing the weeks of preparation and hard work.

Esther's story has been one told for centuries, but this version belongs to all the students and directors involved. From building the set, managing props, controlling lights and sound, and performing on stage, every member of One-act has a part in the final product. Everyone, in front and behind the curtain, works together to make this story come alive.



Abbi Pavlik / Yearbook Staff

**Senior Lillian Miller and Junior JR Oehlrich practice their scene's for the one-act. Miller was cast as the main character Esther, and Oehlrich was chosen to play her uncle Mordicai in this year's production of "The Story of Esther".**




Abbi Pavlik / Yearbook Staff

**Junior Logan Sell and sophomore Audrey Splittgerber do run-throughs of their lines for the one-act. Sell is set to play the violent King Xerxes and Splittgerber will act as his faithful advisor. The first competition this year will be on November 7th in Schuyler.**

# Retreats ramp up engagement

**By Grant Jakub**

Scotus Central Catholic Campus Ministry is stepping up their retreat game this year with hopes of giving students new opportunities to connect with their peers and the faith. Recently, they introduced more activities to support this growth.

The Campus Ministers, Cecelia Brichacek and Molly Wallish have been organizing new retreats and opportunities for staff and students around the school. This November, they will be hosting the first Fall Retreat. This retreat is an overnight retreat, offering students a good chance to grow in the faith, while also having the opportunity to play games and have a campfire that night. This will give students a chance to go to Mass, participate in Adoration, and have some fun with friends. This is the first overnight retreat offered through the school directly and will be a new, exciting experience for everyone embarking on it. The fall retreat will take place on November 14-15th at Camp Kateri Tekakwitha in McCool Junction.

The campus ministers are also organizing a new opportunity for the faculty of Scotus with the new Faculty Retreat, which will take place on the Monday of Catholic Schools Week, allowing the staff to connect more with their faith by giving them a chance to be with Jesus in the midst of the busy school year.

Recently, the Freshman Retreat took place at St. Isidore's Parish Center, where students had the opportunity to participate in Adoration, play games, and discuss in small groups. Then, the freshman received a fun surprise from St. Isidore's beloved priest Father Joe. This year, the freshman had the chance to bond with classmates they would not usually see when they were broken up in groups.

Freshman Adrea Anderson definitely experienced this bonding effect.

"After this retreat I feel much closer with my classmates. We were put in groups with people we might not normally sit by, so we got the opportunity to learn more about each other and God side by side," Anderson said.

The freshman also felt the powerful presence of God during Adoration on their retreat.

Freshman Everley Luschinger particularly felt this power herself.

"I would say the freshman retreat specifically helped me grow in my faith with God, when we did adoration in the church as well as the music to go along with that. I personally felt close to God at that point in the day," Luschinger said.

Overall, the retreat was a great success with the freshman becoming closer with their peers and gaining a new perspective to their future life.

Campus ministry is also providing opportunities for students to put their faith to work in the Service Retreat. This retreat's goal is helping the needy in downtown Omaha through the Hope of the Poor, students will learn about them and help them by serving them snacks and coffee. This retreat centers on the corporal works of mercy of feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, and gheltering the homeless.



Abbi Pavlik / Yearbook Staff

**Freshman girls gather together while broken into small groups at the Freshman Retreat. This retreat took place on September 16th at the St. Isidore's Parish Center.**

With these new retreats, students are granted numerous opportunities to grow in their faith, bond with friends, and make lasting memories. As the year continues, campus ministry will be providing students with many more retreats and events to come, including the faith rally this winter.

# Cheerleaders bring home banana

**By Aurora Ridder**

"One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight!" The cheerleaders had just finished their final routine and excitement echoed throughout the gymnasium. After working on the routine all week, they were able to bring home the prized banana. The energy throug out the crowd and the excitement from the team was a feeling they would never forget.

This past summer the cheerleaders went to UCA camp in Lincoln to help prepare them for the upcoming season. While there, they learned a few new routines, one of which they performed at halftime of the Homecoming football game. This routine introduced new and more advanced stunts to the fanbase. They also participated in various competitions and activities while there, where seniors Emma Wangler and Kennedy Krueger recieved the Pin It Forward award. Junior Kali Speicher is a base for the team.



Photo Credit Sarah Langan

**The Scotus cheer team wins the banana on the last day of UCA camp in Lincoln. The banana is awarded to the team with the most spirit throughout camp.**

"My favorite part of UCA camp this year was spirit night and making All-American. For spirit night, each grade was a different part of Scotus gameday. The seniors - rowdy dowdies, juniors - band, sophomores - football players, and freshman - cheerleaders. It was so fun to dress up and play games against the other teams," Speicher said.

Throughout the entire week, there had been an ongoing competition for the banana. The banana was given to the team who had the most energy, was the most peppy, cheered the loudest, was the first to start cheers, and had the best overall attitude. On the last day after finishing all the routines, it was announced that the Scotus cheerleaders had won!

Over the course of four days, there were multiple prizes and awards handed out spanning various categories. As a team, the cheerleaders won a squad credentialing certificate, an overall camp award, and a gold for their camp routine evaluation. Individually, seniors Emma Wangler and Haley VanDiest, junior Kali Speicher, and sophomores Mya Langan and Evy Kluever each won the All American Award.

The cheerleaders not only had to work hard individually, but they also had to grow as a team. Spending so much time together at camp gave them a chance to bond and get to know each other better. This is especially important because cheer requires the team to work as one mind and one body. Freshman Mylie Speicher is a flyer for the team.

"My biggest takeaway from the camp is learning how to trust and lean on your team. I think all around there was growth in our team bonding," Speicher said.

Activities such as making keychains, sharing with each other what they excelled at during a bonding night, and staying in the same hotel helped strengthen this bond. This allowed the cheerleaders to build better connections, create trust, bring the team closer together, and improve communication with each other outside of practice. Junior Karsyn Bridger is a base for the team.

"If we didn't bond over camp, there was no way we would've been able to bring the spirit and accomplish all the things. We will get to continue to grow very close over the season the more we spend time together," Bridger said.

# Dance team takes floor for year two

**By Emma Wangler**

After making their debut last year, the dance team returns to the floor for their second season, ready to take it to the next level. With a better idea of what to expect, the dancers continue to work hard while bringing school spirit to games and pep rallies.

Throughout the season, the team performs at football games, pep rallies, and other school events. Their performances give them a chance to showcase their routines while also getting students and fans involved in the excitement of it all.

Compared to their previous season, the team feels more organized and prepared. After the experience of their first year, the dancers have an improved understanding of the different responsibilities that come with being a member of the dance team. From learning choreography to performing for the crowd, they are more confident and ready to showcase their skills. Sophomore Lily Windedahl joined the team when it first started and is enjoying her second season with her teammates.

"I have had a lot of fun this season," Windedahl said. "In comparison to last year, it is a lot more structured, which I really enjoy. I think this is mostly because last year we were brand new and didn't know what to expect."

Over the summer, the dance team tried something new by attending a dance camp to improve their skills, learn new techniques, and practice choreography. From June 1st to June 4th, the team spent four days in Lincoln, Nebraska at the National Dance Alliance summer camp. The camp helped dancers improve their sideline routines, skills, and technique while introducing them to new choreography. At camp, sophomore Molly Eickmeier was able to learn routines with her teammates and was also one of the All-American nominees.

"While we were there, we all learned 3 routines, and we performed the team routine we learned at the first pep rally," Eickmeier explained. "On the third day, we had this competition called Top Gun to see who had the best turns, leaps, legs/flexibility, and even hip-hop skills. When I went out there, I just gave it my all, and I made it to the final round! At NDA, we bonded from complaining about how our feet hurt to even celebrating getting first place in both of our routines."

NDA camp gave the dancers an opportunity to prepare for the upcoming season while also building teamwork and confidence. The skills gained at camp can now be applied to crowd engagement as the dancers perform on the sidelines at football games and during pep rallies.

The dance team continues to work hard at practice, perfect routines and learn new choreography to perform for the crowd, competitions, and state. A Husker Scarlett dancer returned to choreograph for their team this season, creating the state jazz and pom routines. The hip-hop routine performed at Homecoming was choreographed by Sydney Kaspar. The dancers continue to practice in hopes of achieving better results at competitions and state.

As the season goes on, the dance team plans to keep growing and bringing energy to school events. Whether they are lighting up the floor at halftime or hyping up the crowd during pep rallies, the team is ready to make this season one to remember.



Lauren Fleming / Yearbook Staff

**Sophomore Molly Eickmeier performs the team's hip-hop dance at halftime of the homecoming game. Their hip-hop routine was choreographed by Sydney Kaspar.**



Lydia Dostal / Rock Bottom Staff

**Senior captian Tanner Shultz and Sophia Belina perform their routine at the 2026 fall pep rally. The team learned this routine at the NDA camp they attended this summer.**

# Legacy drives for a better community

**By Emma Wangler**

A student-led group from Columbus, Nebraska presented the community with a blast from the past with exciting news of a drive-in movie theater. The Legacy Youth Foundation is a nonprofit organization created by teens in 2022 which consists of students from the three high schools in the Columbus area: Scotus Central Catholic, Columbus High School, and Lakeview. Their work is focused on helping and improving the lives of people around Columbus.

Once a month, the members of Legacy meet together to discuss new and current projects. They hosted their second annual Groove n' Grub event on June 3rd, 2026, where teens and their families could join together at Frankfort Square to enjoy music, games, and food. They also hosted intramurals and a family Easter egg hunt at the beginning of the year. The group organizes many other events, but their biggest project this year is the drive-in movie theater, The Legacy, which opened to the public at the end of summer.

Teens in Columbus have often complained of nothing to do around town. The idea of adding a drive-in to Columbus arose when the first seven members of Legacy formed the group. The drive-in helped solve this problem as it brought the teens closer together and gave them another form of entertainment.

The now twenty-nine members of Legacy began by collecting donations from local businesses and working through construction, contracting, and licensing. After four years of working on this project, the drive-in was finally ready to present their first showing.

On July 31st, 2026, Legacy had their first movie showing, where they played the movie *Twister*.

This soft opening for family and friends helped members of Legacy see what they needed to change to make the experience more entertaining and comfortable for the audience.

The official opening to the public happened on August 8th, where the movie Jurassic Park was shown. Legacy also showed *Karate Kid* and *Pirates of the Caribbean* on August 14th and 15th.

Tickets for movies are first come first serve and can be purchased on their website for twenty-five dollars per car. Gates open at 8:00 p.m. with the only entrance being Pawnee Park Drive, the street in front of the plunge. At the gates, the staff checks the digital receipt for admission and escorts the car to their spot. They have cash-only concessions in Memorial Stadium, and in recent showings, they have invited food trucks, such as Judy's Food Truck, which sells funnel cakes. There is a fifteen minute intermission, which allows people to get up, stretch, and socialize.

In the upcoming years, Legacy hopes to host Back to School nights at the drive-in. It would be open to all high school students in the Columbus area. To get in, students would have to show their school IDs, and Legacy would provide popcorn.

Legacy is working on planning more events featuring the drive-in, including a Halloween event on October 24th, where they will show Halloween movies alongside trunk-o-treating in the parking lot.



thelegacydrivein.com

Family and friends gather to watch the first showing for the Legacy Drive-In theater at Pawnee Park on July 31st. The first movie played was *Twister*.

As Legacy closes the gates on their first season with the drive-in movie theater, this new community staple is working on improving this project to see more future success.

# From rags to rhinestones

**By Aurora Ridder**



thenewyorker magazine

Award winning singer and songwriter Dolly Parton's career came to a close August 25, 2026. She wrote over 3,000 songs and produced 49 solo albums.

Seventy-five years ago, a little girl from Tennessee picked up a guitar and wrote her first song. Little did she know, this seemingly small moment would change her life forever. That first song was the beginning of a music career that touched the hearts of all who listened around the world. She would go from a Tennessee country girl living in a small town to being a country music legend almost overnight. We know this country music legend as the one and only, Dolly Parton.

Dolly Rebecca Parton was born January 19, 1946 in Sevier County, Tennessee. From the beginning, she knew she wanted to be a star and would often listen to the Grand Ole Opry broadcast with her twelve siblings in their one-bedroom house. Growing up, Dolly and her siblings became very close. They would chase butterflies and create folk and country music together. When Dolly was just five, she wrote her first song "Little Tiny Tassletop" about a corn doll her mother had made her. Her uncle Bill Owens saw her talent and knew she could "make it." He would often bring her to Nashville on the weekends to sing, resulting in an opportunity for her to sing at the Grand Ole Opry at just thirteen years old.

Dolly Parton wrote about 3,000 songs during her entire lifetime, though not all ended up being recorded. Her professional career started the day after her high school graduation, when she made the bold decision to move to Nashville, Tennessee to pursue music. Shortly after, in 1965, Dolly signed a record deal with Monument Records. With this record deal, she was able to write and record several songs that hit the top billboard country list such as "Dumb Blonde" and "Something Fishy" from her "Hello, I'm Dolly" record. Over the next few decades, Dolly would go on to write many more number one hits which include her famous "9 to 5" and "Jolene," which lead her to open her own record label called Dolly Records.

Dolly Parton also had one of the biggest hearts in the music industry. In 1995, she got the idea to start an organization that would give kids under the age of five free access to books. This is how the Imagination Library was born. Parents of kids five and under can take them to their local library, where they can sign up to get a new free book once a month. She was inspired to make the nonprofit organization by her father, who had never had the chance to learn to read or write. Before passing away, Dolly's father Robert Lee Parton stated it was "probably the most important thing [she] had ever done."

Throughout her lifetime, Dolly Parton touched many people's hearts, not only through her music, but also through her charity and kindness. Whether it was writing a relatable song or giving a child a free book once a month, Dolly always found a way to make a difference. Even though she is no longer with us, her legacy will live on through her music and Imagination Library for generations to come. Dolly Parton will always be remembered by those who live and breathe country music as someone who brought joy into the world.

# World cup captivates crowds across globe

**By Grant Jakub**

"I don't even know what to watch anymore," say millions, if not billions, of people around the world. TV's around the world became silent. The World Cup was the center of attention for most of summer with games spanning from early June to late July. As an event that occurs only every four years, it is the staple of many people's lives. This year, it was different. Games were hosted right here in the United States with some as close as Kansas City, Dallas, and Houston. Canada and Mexico also hosted a few games.

Many new countries also qualified this year, including Cabo Verde, who had a historic breakthrough in Africa. Curaçao secured their appearance by placing high in the Concacaf region. Jordan qualified after placing high in the Asian Football Confederation. Finally, Uzbekistan who placed highly in Asian qualifying.

This year, the World Cup was filled with surprises, joy, and heartbreak. Prominent among them was the untimely exit of South Korea during the group stage. South Korea was a contender to advance to the knockout stage, and in consequence of their 0-1 loss versus South Africa, their fate was ultimately sealed as they placed third in the group and did not have enough points to advance.

In a surprise, two underdogs quickly emerged. Curaçao, the small territory of The Netherlands, qualified miraculously with a 0-0 tie against Caribbean powerhouse Jamaica. They were loved by many for their humble beginnings and the hard work it took to get to this point. The small African island nation Cabo Verde also shocked the world by qualifying for the knockout stage over two-time World Cup champion Uruguay. They tied all three of their group stage games, including the one against World Cup champion Spain. Many people had high hopes for them in the knockout stage where they unfortunately lost to runner-up Argentina (2-3) in extra time.

The knockout stage was equally as eventful, with Paraguay upsetting Germany, ranked tenth in the world, in a shootout. This was only the second game of the knockout stage, and it definitely set the tone for the rest of the tournament. Many teams expected to go far fell short. All three host teams, Canada, the United States, and Mexico, were cut short in this round along with five-time World Cup Champion Brazil. The knockout stage had many more losses and heartbreaks, but none could prepare the world for the highly anticipated final game: Spain versus the reigning champion Argentina.

The World Cup Final had people all around the world at the edge of their seats. Two powerhouses, Spain and Argentina, were battling for the championship. This game was what everyone was waiting for. With over 1.8 billion viewers worldwide, the game kicked off. Unfortunately, it was a pretty boring ninety minutes as no goals were scored. In stoppage time, Argentina received a red card, giving Spain a huge advantage. The game eventually went into extra time, and Spain's Ferran Torres scored the winning goal.



cnn.com

Lamine Yamal hoists the World Cup Trophy over Argentina (1-0) with Spain's Ferran Torres scoring the winning goal in extra time. This is Spain's first time hoisting the cup since 2010.

Over the span of the World Cup, many fond memories were gained from Cabo Verde's miracle run to Erling Haaland himself. The tournament was certainly one the world will remember for years. From the sprawling mountains of Central Asia to the Amazon rainforest in South America, I am sure most of us can barely wait for 2030!