



# Testing our Tolerance



## 2 years of COVID-19

pages 4-7

# T.O.C

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■ Junior Bridget Godsen receives the Kelly's Kindness scholarship at a vigil. Kelly's Kindness was created in honor of Kelly Hume, a Crown Point student that passed after a car accident in 2020.

PHOTO BY ABIGAIL GODSEN



1500 S. Main St. Crown Point, IN  
46307  
219-663-4885 ex. 11349  
fax 219-662-5663  
inklings@cps.k12.in.us  
online: www2.cps.k12.in.us/  
inklings

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#### co-editors-in-chief

Rosalie Degenhart

Abigail Godsen

#### assistant editors

Aubrey Banks

Livy Helmuth

Mary Marcinek

#### sports editor

Samuel Brewer

#### staff

Kaitlyn Chandler

Gillian Gatley

Joshua Hedges

Ariel Moore

Zoey Slavena

#### artist

Hayden Coles

#### adviser

Julie Elston

## THINK AHEAD

Upcoming dates and events

**Feb. 14 -  
Mar. 25**  
NHS Pop Tab  
Drive

NHS will be collecting pop tabs for the Ronald McDonald House starting Feb. 14 to Mar. 25. NHS members will earn one point per quart sized bag donated.

**Feb. 19**  
Choir State  
Solo and  
Ensemble

CPHS choir students competing at state ISSMA will travel to Indianapolis, IN to perform their solo or ensemble group.

**Feb. 21**  
Presidents'  
Day

There will be no school on Presidents' Day. President's Day is in honor of both past and the current presidents.

**Feb. 28**  
Graduation  
merchandise  
order deadline

This is the last day for students graduating in 2022 to order caps, gowns, graduation announcements, class rings and/or other senior swag.

**Mar. 8**  
Distance  
Learning day

All students in the corporation will learn from home, while teachers and administrators are in meetings and learning sessions.

**Mar. 11**  
End of 3rd  
nine weeks

After this day, there will be only one more grading period left in the 2021-2022 school year.

**Mar. 11**  
Opening night  
of *Anastasia*  
*The Musical*

Tickets go on sale Feb. 25. Ticket information and other performance times can be found at [www.cphstheatre.com](http://www.cphstheatre.com).

# COVID-19:

“How do we continue to make logical sense of something that is not really very logical or even sensible at times?”

- Superintendent Todd Terrill

## 2 years *tired* 2 years TOUGH

Students, administration reflect on almost two years with COVID-19, impacts on education, society

BY ROSALIE DEGENHART [co-editor-in-chief]  
MARY MARCINEK [assistant editor]

March 13, 2020: a day that is forever ingrained in the minds of many students and teachers. When Principal Russ Marcinek announced that spring break would be two extra weeks, students rejoiced for the extra time off. Little did anyone know, however, that those two weeks would turn into 158 days of not returning to in-person school, and nearly two years of dealing with a worldwide pandemic.

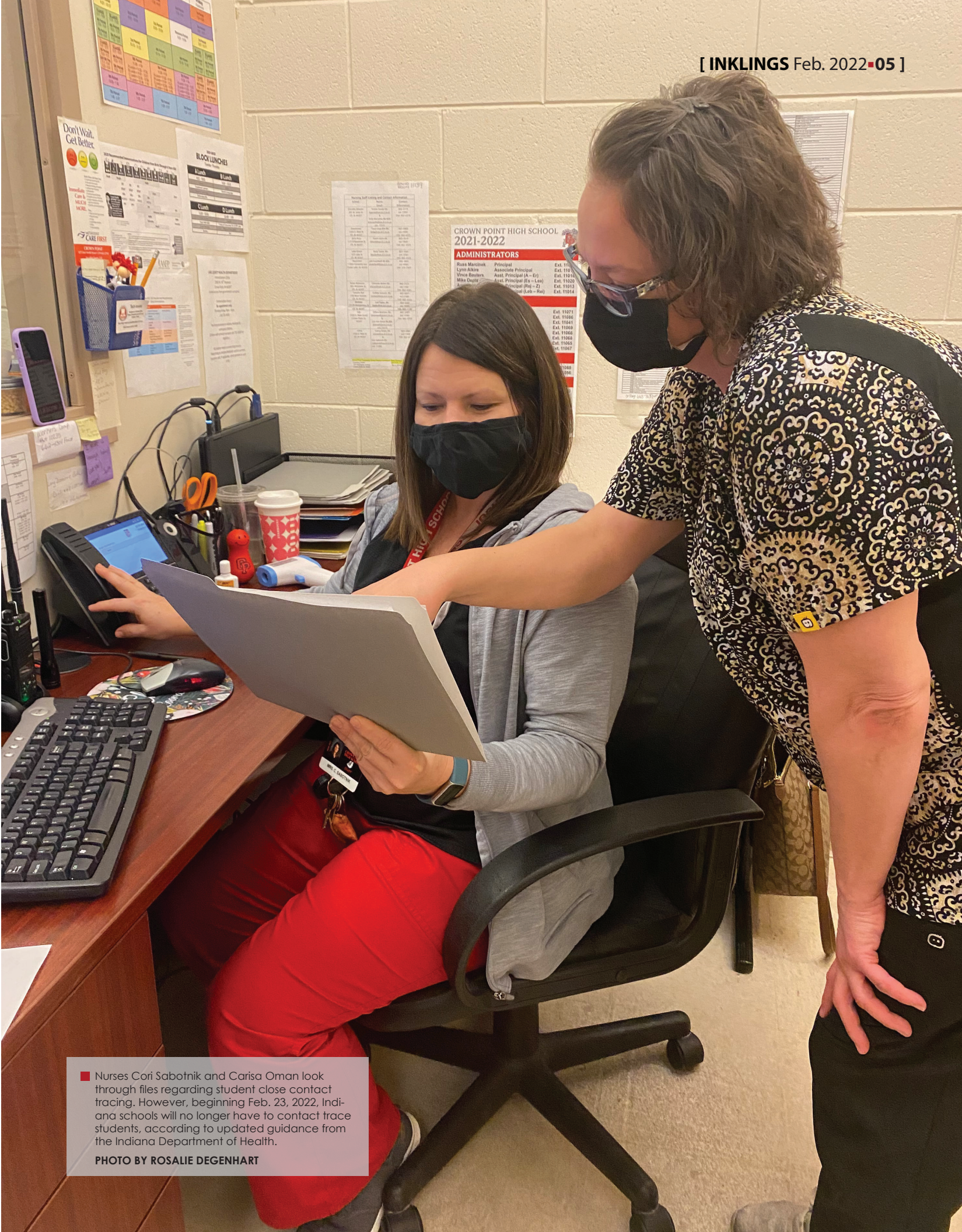
It was a first for everyone, including new Superintendent Todd Terrill. Before Terrill joined the Crown Point Community School Corporation for the 2020-2021 school year, he was the superintendent of Richmond Community Schools in Indiana. There, Terrill communicated with county health officials to determine how long students would be out of school in March 2020.

“We met with our health department, and we really had no idea what it meant. They thought ‘Well, if we can get a week, maybe 10 days off that will be good.’ Then, as a county, we decided on two weeks. I don’t think anybody really had a clue what COVID-19 meant for us,” Terrill said.

This unprecedented event is still impacting administrative duties. Marcinek was in his first year as principal when students were sent home in 2020.

“I would have never guessed two years ago that we would ever even have to stay home from school. I

continued on next page



■ Nurses Cori Sabotnik and Carisa Oman look through files regarding student close contact tracing. However, beginning Feb. 23, 2022, Indiana schools will no longer have to contact trace students, according to updated guidance from the Indiana Department of Health.

PHOTO BY ROSALIE DEGENHART

**"I do feel that the importance of relationships has been stressed, and I think it has become clear that relationships between students and teachers, students and students (are important)."**

- Principal Russ Marcinek

was shocked when that happened in March of 2020," Marcinek said. "I was really surprised that it came to that and that we're still involved in this COVID-19 situation at this point."

With the loss and tragedy that COVID-19 has caused, it can be difficult to think of any positives. However, facing different challenges has influenced CPCSC'S education for

the future.

"We really choose to focus on the positives and being more proactive than reactive. But, with COVID-19 that shifts quickly, we haven't always been able to be proactive, and there have been times that we've needed to react," Terrill said. "I think there are real positive things from this. I think, obviously, as we look at how we handle distance learning, it's about the different resources that we can make available to our students and our parents so that they can understand what's going on. I truly think (COVID-19) has impacted the way that we instruct students in a classroom setting on a daily basis."

Virtual learning made learning possible while in quarantine or when positive cases were high, yet the shift was difficult for many students. The connection between teachers and students was weakened, and

learning was a challenge.

"We've certainly had challenges over the past two years with some of the changes that we've had to deal with, whether it's going to different styles of learning, like e-learning or hybrid learning," Marcinek said. "But, I do feel that the importance of relationships has been stressed, and I think it's become clear that relationships between students and teachers, students and students (are important). Sometimes, that was taken for granted. (Quarantine) caused people to reflect on school. Some students really struggled without that connected piece of being in school."

From a student perspective, freshman Austin Shackleton struggled to stay focused and motivated during quarantine and virtual learning.

"During quarantine, it was like hauling a whole trailer to get me to do my work. I think, over quarantine, the work was simplified a little for the students. It wasn't totally obvious to everyone, but, being a straight A student, I definitely did notice it. There was a lack of motivation, due to the quarantine and not having the instruction that we constantly need," Shackleton said.

Shackleton can also recognize how quarantine positively impacted him academically and socially.

"It's made me so much more independent in my work, and it has pushed me more this year socially. Quarantine has pushed me to be more of an open person with more ideas," Shackleton said. "I joined speech and debate this year, and I love it. It has opened my eyes to a lot of new topics and a lot of new social experiences. It's given me a new perspective on a school-to-home ratio, like how we need to take time

for ourselves."

Both Marcinek and Terrill have recognized the toll that COVID-19's lingering effect has had on students' mental health.

"One of the things that I really challenged teachers on was making sure that they spent time addressing the mental health, the social-emotional, side of everything that students are going through because if that's not right the rest of it is not going to be right. I wanted them to know that I supported (mental health) and that our board supported (mental health) as we moved forward," Terrill said.

With the status of COVID-19 constantly changing, CPCSC has to stay up to date on the protocols. One category of protocols, and likely the most controversial, are masks in school.

"I would say that our biggest priority when we went into school was figuring out how to keep kids in school. Obviously, 'mask or no mask' comes into play. We really feel that it is not our position to say that masks are effective or masks aren't effective. What we know is that we want to leave that decision up to our parents as much as we can," Terrill said. "At the same time, at the beginning of the school year, we started off without masks and then it became very obvious by the number of students that we had to quarantine. We had to do something to keep kids in school so that is when we went back to having masks. So, the challenge has really been to do whatever we have to do to keep kids in school but give parents the right to choose."

Everyone's situation is different, which influences their approach of precaution against COVID-19. Senior Alexa Hyman knows how severe COVID-19

can affect those who are at high risk because of the extra precautions she had to take when her mom had cancer. However, she is experiencing burdens of COVID fatigue.

"It's definitely opened my eyes about how (COVID-19) affects people and to actually see the reality of everything. I should wear a mask, but, after everything that I've gone through, I'm already double vaccinated, and I have my booster," Hyman said. "I'm just so tired of it by now, and I've done my responsibility."

COVID-19 has created a divide when balancing public health and personal rights, as rules and regulations have shifted. Last week, the Indiana Department of Health updated guidance that as of Feb. 23 Indiana schools no longer have to contact trace or quarantine students, report cases or maintain a dashboard for COVID-19 school data. Therefore, CPCSC is following these guidelines. Masks will continue to remain optional. Previously, if positive cases in a building reached two percent of the population, masks would be required for two weeks until cases declined. Coming up with a benchmark percentage to implement mask wearing was heavily discussed according to Terrill.

"We had one board member who was adamantly against (the two percent benchmark), one who was kind of on the fence and not really sure, two that were

certain and others who were kind of in the middle," Terrill said. "It really took a lot of conversations with them for them to get to the point where they felt good about the direction we're headed in."

From federal recommendations and regulations to personal decisions, choosing the course of action has taken serious deliberation and discussion. However, two years of coping with COVID-19 has demonstrated perseverance, flexibility and resilience.

"I think (COVID-19) has really given us an opportunity to evaluate the different programs that we offer and how we offer those programs both for our high school students, middle school students and elementary students. We are finding ways to say 'yes' to different programs, different possibilities, and we are aligning our resources," Terrill said. "We are furthering the conversation both with parents and with our community members to make sure that we are preparing our students to be able to go out and become the future citizens and workforce of Crown Point and Lake County."

**"It's made me so much more independent in my work, and it has pushed me more this year socially. With quarantine, it has pushed me to be more of an open person with more ideas."**

- freshman Austin Shackleton

### Words rarely used before March 13, 2020

Social distancing

Masks

Virtual learning

Quarantine

Contact tracing

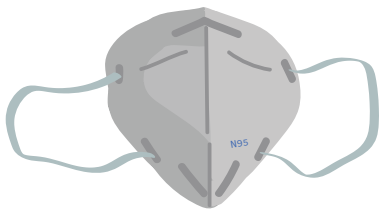
Booster

Variant

Zoom

Super spreader

**On Feb. 17, 2022,** the Indiana Department of Health released that Indiana schools will no longer have to contact trace students.



\*As of January 2022,  
**400 million** free  
**N-95** masks

have been made available by the federal government

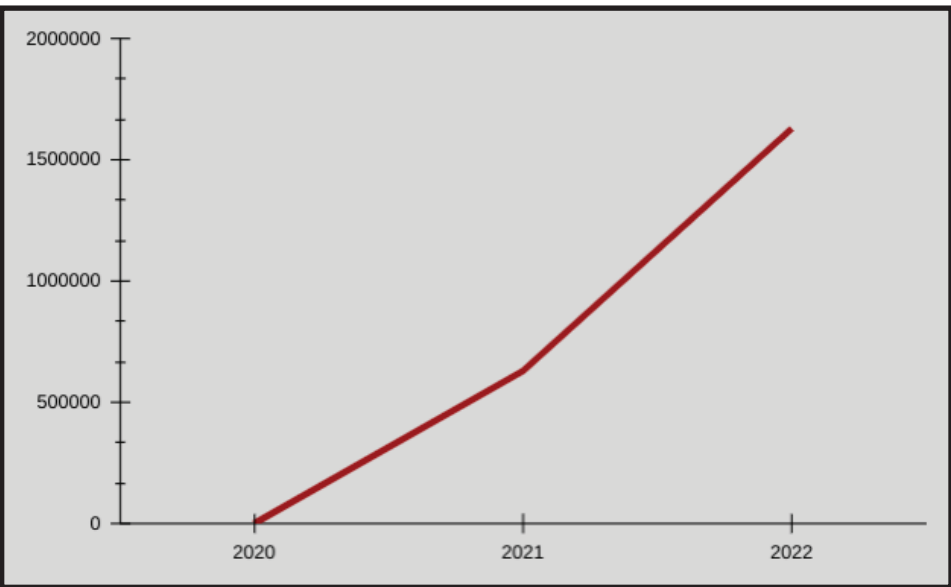
\*Information from the Biden administration



\*On Feb. 18, 2022,  
**18,777,274** COVID-19 tests had been administered in **Indiana**  
**348,834** COVID-19 tests had been administered in **Lake County, Indiana**

\*Data from Indiana COVID-19 Dashboard. Data is updated by 5 p.m. from Monday through Friday.

### \*Positive COVID-19 cases in Indiana Feb. 1, 2020 - Feb. 1, 2022



**Feb. 1, 2020**  
**0 cases**  
**Feb. 1, 2021**  
**628,988 cases**  
**Feb. 1, 2022**  
**1,629,098 cases**

\*Data from Centers for Disease Control

# SHORT STAFFED

## Help wanted as pandemic affects local businesses

BY LIVY HELMUTH [assistant editor]

Lights out. Doors locked. A sign by the entrance reads, “our store hours have temporarily changed.” Staffing related issues have been ongoing since the beginning of the pandemic, and they have the potential to be more than just temporary.

Internship Director Ginny Zega, who facilitates students who intern with community partners through the school’s internship program, was introduced to this crisis by a surge of business owners asking for student workers.

“More businesses are calling me than ever before,” Zega said. “Some businesses who have never even contacted me before are asking for help right now, but, since the internships only change at the beginning of each semester, there is little that I can do.”

Businesses across the world are short handed due to the spread of the pandemic. Junior Abby Kelley is employed with Ricochet Tacos and deals with under-staffing.

“We don’t have a lot of hosts, and the managers aren’t able to hire as many people,” Kelley said. “Not having as many people to work with makes it more stressful because you have to do more work by yourself.”

Junior Griffin Stuckey is employed with Smartbelly Smoothie Co., and he feels more pressure when his coworkers are unable to work because of the pandemic.

“We have had some issues with people getting COVID-19, and then they’re out for a couple weeks, so more people have to cover for them,” Stuckey said. “That puts stress on me because I get shifted a little bit more than usual.”

Because of these new circumstances, newer employees may not receive as much assistance.

“Less training is given to students working their first jobs,” Zega said. “Their bosses are much busier

holding everything together than normal, so they give their employees less training time. Then, they still get frustrated when kids don’t know something or they do something incorrectly because they didn’t get the proper training. I hear a lot of employees apologize because they are new and inexperienced, and when they look for somebody to help them there just isn’t anybody there.”

“I always feel guilty when other employees have to pick up more hours than they’re used to. I feel more guilt as a business owner when they have to pick up the slack of a short staff.”

**- Cafe Fresco owner  
Breanne Zolfo**

With these shortages, many students with internships are working more hours than they initially signed up for.

“Some businesses are giving employees too many hours right now,” Zega said. “Because they are struggling with hiring new employees, they are overloading the employees that they already have. Student employees may have to work immediately after school until extremely late at night.”

Businesses use several strategies to alleviate the impact of the pandemic. Top Fuel Crossfit owner Dustin Shurlow noticed how other business owners resorted to paying their employees more in order to motivate more people to work.

“I see more businesses not being able to keep staff

unless they can pay them higher wages,” Shurlow said. “However, that’s just not always an option for some small businesses, so they can definitely suffer from that. If they don’t make enough money to pay people more, then there is a chance people wouldn’t want to work there long term.”

To cope with the shortages of staff, some businesses shorten their hours or close entirely on certain days rather than increase pay.

“Not that long ago I went to Olive Garden, and I saw that there was a 30 minute wait, and an entire section of the restaurant was empty,” Zega said. “It was totally closed down because they didn’t have enough workers. I’ve also gone to the Red Robin in Valparaiso, and it now closes on Tuesdays and Wednesdays because they don’t have enough people to work.”

The additional support of a larger staff is beneficial for Shurlow and Top Fuel Crossfit.

“With having a larger staff comes more knowledge,” Shurlow said. “There are a lot of aspects to fitness. Some coaches are better at teaching proper form, some are better at motivating people and some are good with kids. So, it’s good to have a mix of different people’s strengths in order to ensure the best customer experience.”

Maintaining a full staff is also important to Cafe Fresco owner Breanne Zolfo because she feels less overwhelmed as a business owner.

“There is less stress,” Zolfo said. “Having a full staff gives me more peace of mind because I know that if anyone gets sick or if anyone needs to call off we have enough backups. Being able to stay open all day and not have shortened hours makes a business more profitable.”

Zolfo opened Cafe Fresco nine years ago, but her business practices have adapted to the new work environment of the pandemic world.

“We don’t know what times or what days will be busy anymore because of the pandemic. Sometimes, people are too nervous to come out, or they are just at home more often. It is an entirely different type of business since the pandemic happened,” Zolfo said.

Just as customers are now more hesitant to visit businesses, so are potential workers. With more at-home jobs opening up, workers are less likely to want to work in person.

“If more people are working from home, then fewer people are working at smaller businesses,” Zega said. “In person jobs are beginning to take the back seat. The pandemic is still scaring people from working, and it has become more convenient for people to work from home.”

Comfort levels of workers and customers, both with the virus and regulations, can cause tense reactions.

“Even during the height of the pandemic, people would argue and yell at us when we would ask them to put on a mask,” Kelley said. “That was the most stressful time that I’ve ever worked. I had to come to the realization: if customers aren’t that concerned about their own safety, why would they be concerned

about ours? Yes, with work there is a natural greater risk of getting sick, but you also need to advocate for and protect yourself.”

However, according to Kelley, customers have become more educated and informed about the status of the pandemic and the guidelines some businesses are required to follow.

“I would say that there has been a definite learning curve with people’s knowledge of guidelines in the pandemic,” Kelley said. “Sure, you could say that maybe the vaccine, the fact that people are accustomed to exposure to sickness or the fact that the pandemic has been around for much longer contributed to this. Regardless of the reason, people have gotten less divisive about the pandemic and now normally just abide by the rules.”

As time has gone on, with a few exceptions, people have become more accepting of rules and staff shortages, as well as recognizing that the workers who show up are keeping things running as efficiently as possible.

“Our customers are mostly regulars because Smartbelly is a little shop in the YMCA that they come to almost every day,” Stuckey said. “They notice if we don’t have certain people because of the pandemic and notice that we are working harder because we have less people. Usually, they are nice and lenient with us, but there are some who don’t take that into consideration.”

Community support for small businesses has nonetheless remained and even increased in some cases. Zolfo is appreciative of the kindness customers have shown her business during such circumstances.

“[Customers] are super understanding and sympathetic,” Zolfo said. “I’ve noticed more compassion since the pandemic has happened, especially for small businesses. People in general seem to be more understanding, sympathetic and passionate because they understand the struggles small businesses have had to face.”

Although there are many challenges that come with working in this time, the amount of jobs available gives people seeking employment more options to find a job that is the right fit.

“Trying to apply for a job now is the smartest decision because there are lots of vacancies and availability,” Zolfo said. “So, you’re more likely to find a job that you would be passionate about and interested in because almost every place is short staffed. Now is the time to apply for your dream position because there are so many vacancies.”

If it can be balanced with academics, work can be beneficial for students because it gives them somewhere where they can show off their talents and feel like they belong.

“Working gives students work ethic,” Zega said. “When they’re working, they finally feel like they’re in a place where they’re respected, and they get to shine. Work is a place that just makes them happy. For some students, work is where they feel most comfortable.”



■ Freshman Emma Capps (right) and senior Avery Pettit (left) make drinks at Cafe Fresco. Like many businesses, Cafe Fresco has been impacted by the pandemic.

PHOTO BY ABIGAIL GODSEN

\*Unemployment rose higher in

**3 Months**  
of the pandemic than in  
**2 Years**  
of the Great Recession

\*As of Jan. 2021,

**12.3%**  
of all American citizens without  
a college degree are  
unemployed.

\*Data from the Pew Research Center

## Speak UP

Student opinions on relevant topics

**What is one way you take care of yourself during the winter?**

"I try to talk to people about how I feel, and I make sure to drink more water and get more sleep. Sleep is definitely a major thing."

- junior  
Robert Velez

"I wear really comfy clothes and hang out with my friends doing winter activities."

- freshman  
Retal Awadallah

"I find that in the winter months I have a huge mental problem, so creating a list is something that I do a lot. I make sure I use moisturizer and take baths because I have really dry skin and terrible allergies."

- junior  
Brianna Stamper

"I stay home most of the time avoiding the danger on the roads because of a higher risk of injury."

- sophomore  
Ali Shaheen

"I try to hydrate more, and I sleep about half an hour longer than usual just because of the dry air and horrible cabin fever like atmosphere that kind of arrives here during the winter."

- junior  
Michael Wright



CARTOON BY KAITLYN CHANDLER

## Editorial

Taking care of all aspects of our health is crucial, especially during a global pandemic

After two years, learning how to stay safe from COVID-19 has become second nature: wash hands, wear masks, sanitize, repeat. However, it is important to remember that the other aspects of our health matter too like our mental, physical and immune health.

In the midst of a pandemic, mental, physical and immune health can be pushed to the side with all the commotion of contact tracing and social distancing. Yet, this doesn't mean one's mental, physical and immune health is any less important. In fact, in a time when society is more isolated than ever, it is even more important to focus on the little things to keep ourselves healthy in all regards.

The importance of taking care of one's emotional wellbeing has never been more relevant. Breaking the stigma surrounding mental health is the first step in allowing people to get help and speak freely about the causes of anxiety, depression and other mental health disorders. The uncertainty and constantly changing ways of COVID-19 can be overwhelming, but people should take the time to connect with others and recognize that others might be feeling the same.

Surrounding yourself with people who make you feel happy and comfortable can be crucial in pushing through a difficult day. Whether they are putting a smile on your face or lending an ear, human connection is vital during the winter months.

Staying active and fueling yourself with food to stay focused and energized during the winter is also important. Something as simple as walking on a treadmill while listening to music or doing short exercises during commercial breaks can go a long way in keeping one's body energized.

It is not only COVID-19 season but also cold and flu season, so taking care of one's immune system is important. Getting enough sleep and limiting stress are ways to help boost the immune system.

Staying in tune with our bodies will help us take care of ourselves. If needed, there are always people who can help us deal with the stress of living in a world where safety is not a guarantee. Taking advantage of the resources available to us gives us the opportunity to fuel the parts of ourselves that have been left without much fuel.

## Column

More community promotion, publicity would bring awareness to lesser known clubs, sports

BY GILLIAN GATLEY [reporter]



As a community, Crown Point does a great job at honoring our school sports and clubs. However, for those who play club sports or participate in clubs outside of the school setting, their existence is typically

overlooked even though they are just as much a part of the community.

For these teens who participate in these activities, the lack of publicity can be disappointing due to the work they put into their activities. As someone who participates in the Crown Point Lacrosse Club, it is often easy to feel overlooked due to the fact that what we do is unknown.

During COVID-19, many were isolated from the activities that allowed them to be a part of a community. With the world starting to heal from the impacts, many are trying, once again, to find their place among like-minded individuals. While students tend to find comfort in clubs and sports sponsored by the school, there is a broad range of activities outside of school that are not promoted.

Sports such as hockey and lacrosse, while still popular, tend to not get a lot of attention due to the lack of knowledge about the teams. As a community, the promotion of clubs and sports that are solely community based is little to none. In order to make these activities known, the City of Crown Point and other community minded organizations should consider hosting an activities fair a few times a year in order to introduce the community to new clubs and sports that exist outside of a school setting. In doing so, it might allow people to find their niche or allow them the opportunity to branch out to something new.

Along with this, there has been an influx of people moving to Crown Point. With this, they may not know what exactly our community has to offer. In order to give publicity to these clubs and sports, social media should include promoting these activities that the community has to offer.

By increasing the promotion of community sports and clubs, more people can be involved in the community, and they can discover activities that they enjoy.



CARTOON BY KAITLYN CHANDLER

Should getting fruits and vegetables be required in school lunches?

## Pro:

Requiring vegetables in lunches encourages healthier diet and lifestyle

BY SAMUEL BREWER [sports editor]

By making students take vegetables or fruits for their lunch, it encourages them to have a healthier diet not only during lunch, but for their whole day.

For students who get a lunch, it is possible that this is the only opportunity they have all day to get fruits and vegetables in their lunch. If they aren't made to have these nutrients in their diet, it could push the idea that the school doesn't care about their health, which isn't something the school would want.

Even though many people end up throwing these fruits and veggies away, giving students the chance to make a healthy decision in their life is crucial.

The school making it necessary to take produce during lunch is their attempt to promote a healthier lifestyle, and for every item of food that is thrown away, there are even more people who get a good and nutritious lunch.

## Con:

It only produces more waste since students still choose to not eat them

BY JOSHUA HEDGES [reporter]

Students have their preferences, and even if the school forces food into their trays, there is nothing stopping them from disposing of the unwanted items. The added trash collection with the extra cleanup after each lunch only produces more work for the staff.

The option for a healthy item is definitely not something the school should get rid of, but strictly calling it into the standard is not how we should promote healthy eating. Educating students on healthy eating in an engaging light is the route to actually connect the subject to students and their families. Food only lasts until the end of lunch, but knowledge lasts beyond the classroom.

Although with good intention, the school lunch fails to actually get students to eat healthy and only makes more work for the staff. Students know what they want and are not going to grab the salad over an extra lunch unless engaged properly on the subject.

## IN THEIR VIEW

"We all need a healthy meal, and, if the person doesn't want it, they can just discard it."

- freshman  
Alexandra Netherton

"I think that they should tell kids they should get fruits and vegetables but not make them take one if they don't want to."

- freshman  
Jack Garcia

## Column

New education bills are not supportive of a well rounded, safe environment for students

BY ABIGAIL GODSEN [co-editor-in-chief]



More and more state legislatures are proposing bills meant to address schools presumably teaching divisive topics, not providing parents with enough say in what their children learn and lack

of monitoring of what occurs in the classroom. These bills are overreaching in trying to solve what are largely non-issues for most K-12 schools, and they are not conducive to a safe, well-rounded learning environment. While I understand, and support, parents being involved in their children's education, those opportunities already exist. These bills are unnecessary and will not benefit students overall.

The idea of allowing parents monitoring classrooms online can pose a huge security issue for schools. We do not know who is watching, and these feeds could be hacked, posing a safety hazard for teachers and students. In an educational setting, students should feel free to make mistakes and speak their minds without worrying about what will happen if they make a misstep, or who is watching them from a computer screen.

Another big aspect of these bills is having material reviewed by parent committee. This does not make for a balanced, objective or well-rounded education when a select few parents, who may have no background in education, get to pick and choose what curriculum is offered to all children. We cannot expect students to be well-rounded individuals when their education is being curated by a small parent committee.

On a similar note, some want to take out curriculum that could be considered "controversial." Teaching about the good and the bad sides of our world helps us, as students, become better leaders for future generations. When this opportunity to think for ourselves is taken away from us, the potential for student growth is limited.

There are a multitude of things I could speak on in regards to education in the U.S., but my question is this: are these bills supporting students and their futures? To me, no, they are not. Fixing these non-issues will not change anything. We need to put our students first.

## Taking care of immune, mental, physical health becomes more important during winter, especially amid COVID-19

BY ABIGAIL GODSEN [co-editor-in-chief]  
JOSHUA HEDGES [reporter]

Winter often leaves people feeling just as dull and dreary as the weather. Especially during the early months of the year, the chill can really take a toll on one's body and mental health. Although it may feel limiting, there are still ways in which we can take care of our mental, physical and immune health during the winter months.

One major factor for keeping up one's mental health in the winter is staying connected to others. Due to the weather, it can be isolating and staying connected to others can be a natural mood booster according to social worker Jamie Monday.

"A lot of times we, in the winter months, like thinking about that hibernation kind of feeling. We may not be seeing each other or our friends and family as much. So, I would encourage you to try and continue to stay connected and involved with either activities, doing a job, just socializing with friends. That is a natural mood booster as well and then it's also good for us to kind of stay connected and keep in relationships, so that when the spring months come, you don't want to have lost or become disconnected with friendships because of the winter months," Monday said.

Like Monday, guidance counselor Clark Sterley also sees staying connected as a major factor that can help during the winter months.

"I think spending too much time in isolation makes things worse. People need to connect with each other somehow and sometimes people shut down in the winter because they don't want to leave the house just because they think it's too cold. Not having that human contact, consistently, kind of makes things worse for people," Sterley said.

One way people can create this type of connection with others is through things like clubs and sports teams which can lead to positive thinking and further motivation.

"People feel good when they are around other like-minded individuals, and they feel wanted; they feel a sense of belonging. Sometimes clubs, sports teams, have common goals, so it feels like they are part of something bigger than themselves. So, that can kind of lead to more positive thinking, which will eventually lead to better motivation," Sterley said.

Another factor which can help with keeping the body and mind healthy during the winter is staying active despite the cold. Although you may not feel the motivation at the time, the benefits can help get you through your day.

"Being active, so if you're not able to get outside

because it is way too cold, either doing it at your house or going to a gym somewhere," Monday said. "I always say it's like free medicine, like if you can do that, it's going to naturally increase your mood, but then it also increases our motivation and energy levels. So, I know if I get up and work out in the morning, I'm way more energized and motivated throughout the day; even though, it might be a little hard to get up and I don't feel that I really want to, the benefits that I'm going to see are gonna really outweigh the cons of not doing it."

Sterley also sees exercise as a factor that can help during the winter months. Going outside to get enough sunlight can really help the body physically and mentally.

"Taking the time to exercise helps because this time of year people just don't feel like they have the energy that they do at other times (of the year) just because I think that they are not getting the sunlight that they're used to, so they have to energize themselves in different ways," Sterley said.

"Our mind and body are connected, very much so. So, if our mental health is not doing very well, that means that our physical health is often times not doing well."

- social worker  
Jamie Monday

Despite seeming unrelated, the immune system can be really affected by stress. Nurse Cori Sabotnik comments on this effect.

"While stress is inevitable, it can cause a person to get run down and be susceptible to illness, especially long term stress," Sabotnik said.

Like Sabotnik, Monday also sees a connection between mental, physical and immune health. In this way, if one aspect isn't doing so well, it can take a toll on the other parts of the body.

"Our mind and body are connected, very much so. So, if our mental health is not doing very well, that means that our physical health is oftentimes not doing very well, and vice versa. So, if we could have a holistic approach, in terms of looking at the whole body, that is really helpful for us," Monday said.

Additionally, with it being so cold outside, it is peak cold and flu season even in the midst of

COVID-19, so it is still important to help protect one's immune health as a part of a daily routine according to Sabotnik.

"You can prevent illness in your daily routine by washing your hands often and using hand sanitizer. Also, not drinking or eating a friend's food or drink. Masks are helpful when used correctly. Staying hydrated, eating healthy meals and getting enough sleep also helps," Sabotnik said. "To keep your immune system healthy, I would probably just repeat most of what I had said above: eat a good diet, get enough rest and wash your hands. Masks are questionable to some, but, if I am around someone who is sick, I would like to have a mask on."

Like Sabotnik mentioned above, getting enough sleep is another major factor in taking care of oneself. Sleep is often a factor of our lives we know needs work, yet never gets efforts put towards it. Monday explains the effects an inconsistent sleep cycle can have on ourselves.

"If we could try to keep consistent either nighttime routine and/or wake up, that kind of allows our body and the circadian rhythm to kind of keep in sync, so that we're not sleeping too much even though you might want to," Monday said. "I'm not saying you shouldn't rest or get sleep, but we don't want to kind of feed that low energy, feed those low moods with more sleep cause then sometimes that could lead to feeling a little bit depressed or again increase the low motivation."

Regarding motivation, Sterley has a few tricks that he feels helps people stay motivated.

"With motivation, I think it always helps to make a priority list, to actually write things down that you need to take care of so that you can actually see it," Sterley said. "Prioritize them in order of importance and cross things off as you do them. I think that's helpful when people actually get to visually get to see themselves crossing things off of a list. I think that really helps with motivation. It makes you feel like you are actually accomplishing something."

Like anything else, motivation and taking care of the body starts with small steps and can help create long term habits.

"Instead of saying 'I'm going to do this for like the entire year' and end up getting discouraged because you've already fallen off track, maybe make a smaller goal for yourself. So, if you're wanting to get to the gym or you're wanting to exercise more, or maybe it's wanting to get a job by March, setting smaller goals like 'I'm just going to apply to two jobs a week.' Anytime we can break it up into smaller portions our brain can feel like that's more manageable," Monday said.

# Winter Wake Up Call

■ Senior Jack Darlington shovels snow to stay active during the winter months. It can be difficult to stay active when it is so cold out, but there are still ways to keep active.

PHOTO BY SAMUEL BREWER

# Languages of LOVE

Students, staff explore ways to express affection toward others

BY AUBREY BANKS [assistant editor]

February is known as the month of love, and many students and staff will be coming up with ways to celebrate the month with their loved ones. One way to celebrate is by utilizing the five different love languages.

Love languages describe the different ways in how someone may receive love, depending on what the person feels most comfortable with. For social studies teacher Brooke Yeager, her love language is quality time, and she explains how she expresses love to her friends and family.

“I tend to show my love through being present in my family and friends’ lives and allowing them to be themselves with no judgments. I like to help them out in any way that I can. It might be watching the kids or letting the dog out, going shopping together or maybe just having dinner together,” Yeager said.

Unlike Yeager, woodshop teacher Ed Topp’s love language is acts of service and explains how he shows it to his wife.

“I think that a better way of looking at it is that if I care about someone, and I see that they have a need that I can help them with, I do it,” Topp said. “If my wife has a problem with a machine not working correctly in her shop and comes to ask me about it, I will typically stop what I am doing and help her

with it. If she needs help moving heavy paper boxes, I will help her get it done. On the other hand, if I am struggling with computer issues or need help with a design or project, she will always help me get it done.”

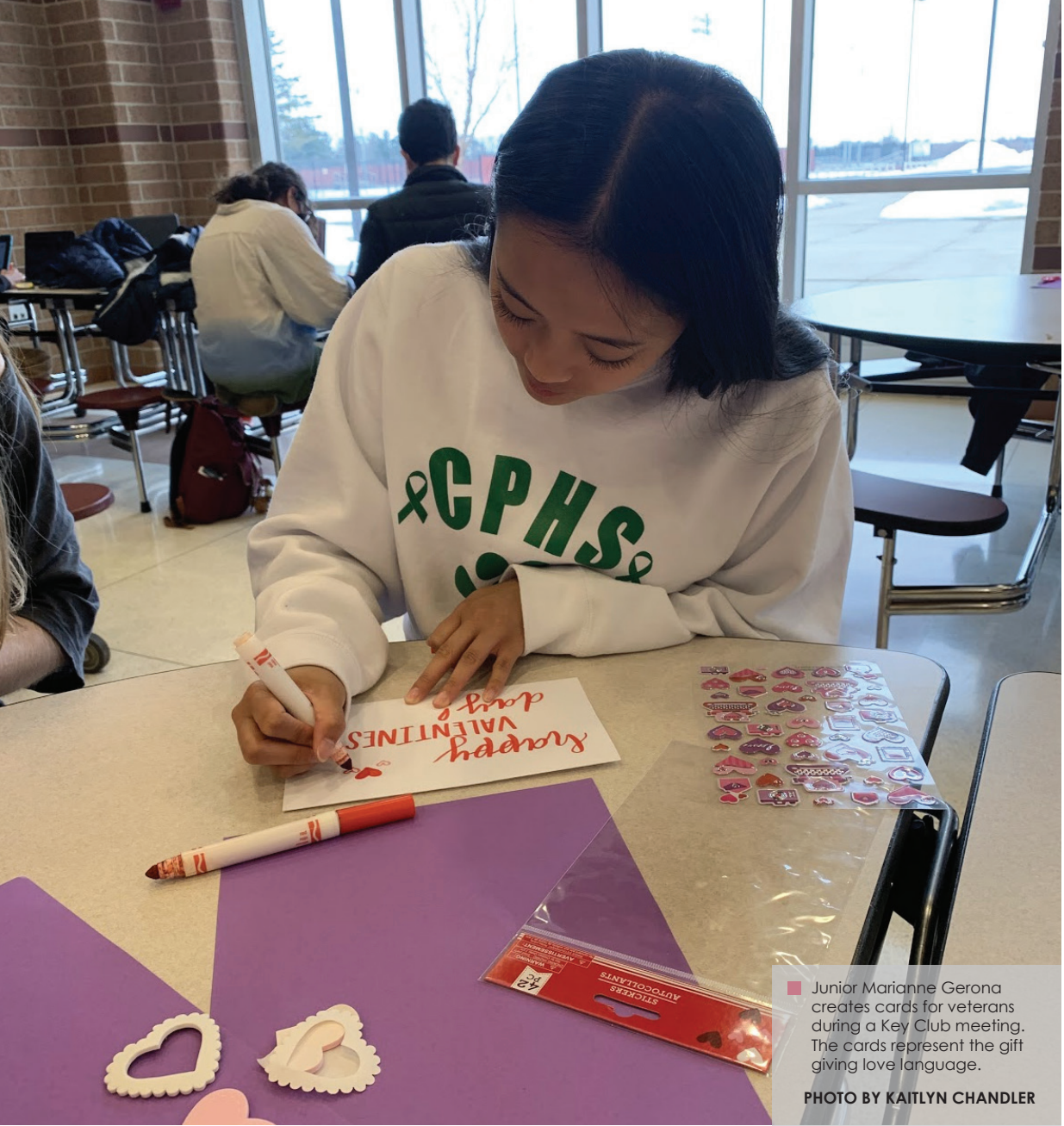
Topp also enjoys when others in his life display the love language of acts of service.

“We are all very busy people. When someone takes the time out of their day just to stop in my room and say hi or have a conversation with me or even to simply send me a text, that makes me feel like I am valued and appreciated by them. (An act of service) is my best way of expressing it. It is my love language,” Topp said.

Another love language is gift-giving. According to senior Genesis Sandoval, her love language and her partner’s differ, but they still find ways to show their appreciation for each other.

“I think mine is gift-giving. Every time I am out shopping, I will see something that will remind me of my boyfriend, and I have to buy it,” said Sandoval. “My boyfriend is not the same at all, as his love language is quality time. We just had a conversation about love languages because I wanted to know his, and I wanted to make him comfortable. I always had a need to just buy, make or create things for someone and just give them to them. I think my receiving is physical touch but my giving is gift-giving.”

Sandoval continues by saying how



Junior Marianne Gerona creates cards for veterans during a Key Club meeting. The cards represent the gift giving love language.

PHOTO BY KAITLYN CHANDLER

she wants to continue the tradition of giving out Valentine’s Day cards.

“My mom used to always give me cards for Valentine’s Day. That’s something I would love to continue doing. Another tradition I love is asking someone to be their valentine or being asked before it is actually Valentine’s Day,” Sandoval said.

According to Yeager, the most important thing to know about love lan-

guages is that they can heavily impact relationships.

“I think that love languages affect everyone’s relationships. In a new relationship, once you figure out your partner’s love language it makes it easier to communicate your feelings. It is also important for families to figure out what each kid’s love language is because making them feel special requires something different for each

child,” Yeager said.

Overall, love can be experienced in many different ways, as love doesn’t have to be shown at all for someone to know that they are loved.

“We have been married for 40 years, and if you don’t know that somebody loves you after 40 years without buying them a present or taking them out to dinner, then something is wrong there somewhere,” Topp said.

## Gift Giving

Gift giving is one way to show affection to others in your life. Gifts could either be sentimental or material in form, whether it is a hand made craft or bringing them their favorite snacks.

## Acts of Service

Sometimes the best way to show your appreciation for another is doing something nice for them, whether it is the dishes or providing support when they are struggling.

## Words of Affirmation

Compliments and positive words of encouragement are great ways to show someone you love or appreciate them. It could be as simple as “great job” or a heartfelt note.

## Physical Touch

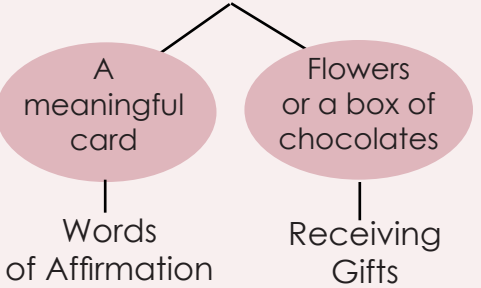
A hug from a friend or holding hands with someone are easy ways to show you care about them through physical touch. This is an easy, non-verbal way to show that you care for them.

## Quality Time

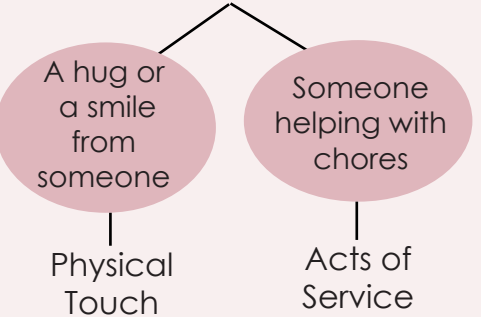
Spending time with the people you care about in your life can show how much you appreciate those in your life. This could be going to get coffee or calling someone up to catch up on life.

## LOVE QUIZ

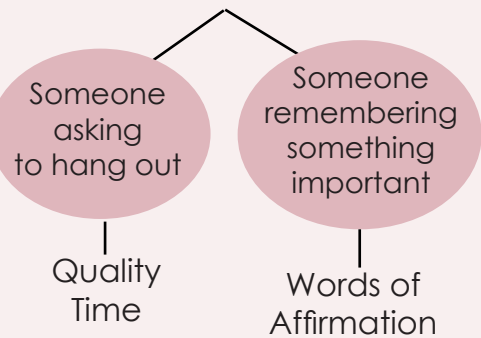
What would you rather receive?



What brings you more joy?



What would mean more to you?



# Raising the B A R



■ Senior Lilly Stoelb performs on bar in a meet against LaPorte on Jan. 11. The team won the meet with a score of 109.55.

PHOTO BY ABIGAIL GODSEN

## Gymnastics team ranked second in state, breaks school team record three times before conference meet

BY GILLIAN GATLEY [reporter]

Breaking records is an incredible accomplishment, but breaking a team record four times in only seven meets is a feat that sounds impossible. For the gymnastics team, this accomplishment became a reality early in the season.

The team first broke their record against Chesterton, scoring a 112.7 and taking first place. They went on to break the record again against Portage and for a third time at the Chesterton invitation with a score of 113.35. Head coach Ami Pysh highlighted the importance of the addition of club gymnasts to the high school program.

“Just because we’re 16 (players) deep and then, of course, we have Elly Kiran and Mikey Neal, they came from club gymnastics, so they’re very high level, in addition to all the other girls that I’ve had previously that are also former club gymnasts. They have been with us now for a few years,” Pysh said.

Not only has the team record been broken four times, but senior Makayla Neal has solidified her place in school history with a new beam record and a tie in both the vault and all around records. Neal attributes her success to focus and determination during those record breaking performances.

“I was just really focused that night, and I really wanted to beat that record,” Neal said. “I was really determined to do that.”

While Neal is dominating in breaking records, that is not all she wants to do this season. Her main goal this season is to make it to state with her team.

“Breaking records is fun and all, but I really just want to help my team out to get to state,” Neal said.

Along with Neal, sophomore Elly Kiran has also been a standout gymnast throughout the season so far. With a first place finish in floor, bars and beam against Portage and placing first in bars and floor against Chesterton, Kiran then went on to tie Neal’s previously set vault record of 9.75 against Lake Central.

“I was very excited and very proud of myself. I felt like all my hard work was paying off after being injured and everything the last two years and trying to get back into everything,” Kiran said.

With the pressure of breaking records, Kiran highlights her personal goals, as well as her team goals for the remainder of the season in order to keep their impressive winning streak alive.

“My major goals, I would say, are to stay consistent, injury free and just keeping a positive attitude about everything,” Kiran says. “Making sure the team stays lifted up, we don’t get too hard on ourselves and make sure everyone is working hard.”

As the season progresses, the team is looking forward to improving specific events and routines in order to increase their scores, but the work the gymnasts put in isn’t only limited to the high school season. To

### Record BREAKING

*The history of the last four gymnastics team records from Crown Point High School*

~~112.55~~

Set in 2016, broken Jan. 18, 2022 against Chesterton

~~112.70~~

Set on Jan. 18, this was the highest score the gymnastics team had ever scored, they broke it **SIX** days later.

~~112.85~~

Set on Jan. 24 against Portage, this record only lasted **FIVE DAYS**.

**113.35**

The current record for the CPHS gymnastics team, set at Chesterton invite on Jan. 29.

“They understand that gymnastics is a sport that needs to be addressed all year and worked hard at all year long, and they’re willing to do that in the offseason.”

- head coach  
Ami Pysh

Pysh, hard work during the offseason can be critical for improvement.

“They understand that gymnastics is a sport that needs to be addressed all year, worked hard at all year long, and they’re willing to do that in the offseason,” Pysh said.

Along with the work they put in during the offseason, the team focuses on their weakest events in order to make up points in any area they can.

“Just like any other team might say, beam is the nemesis,” Pysh said. “You’re either on or you’re off, so I would really like more kids to stick their beam routines.”

Pysh is not the only one that thinks the team needs to improve in specific areas in order to recover points. Neal believes everyone on the team has that same shared goal.

“I think we all just want to improve individually on specific events because we all have our weak points,” Neal said.

Though there have been specific standout gymnasts among the team, Pysh highlights the importance of the specialty gymnasts within the program that are helping to contribute to the deep depth and success as a team.

“I have all these specialty gymnasts that are kind of creeping in to create those top three scores,” Pysh said. “So, it’s kind of nice because it’s not the same four kids because of the specialty gymnasts, so there’s a variety of different ones that are going to get to compete in the postseason.”

The team is looking forward to their overall goal of winning the rest of their meets and their DAC. In order to do so, Kiran puts emphasis on the teams’ desire to stay consistent in their performances and their excitement to keep winning.

“I would say we’re just excited to work on staying consistent. We’re excited for more wins,” Kiran said. “Hopefully we break some more records.”

With the excitement spreading throughout the team, Pysh stresses the point of pride that each of the team members feels for each other and how that pride keeps them working toward both their individual and team goals.

“They are all working together for the same mission and are all equally as proud of each other for what they have contributed so far,” Pysh said.

Kiran agrees that the team contributions are not limited to a few specific gymnastics but rather attributed to the team as whole and their personal performances.

“I would say everyone contributes in their own way. We’re all very hard working and keep a positive attitude,” Kiran said.

With seven wins under their belt and multiple broken records, the gymnastics team is set to compete again on Feb. 19 at home for their DAC meet.



■ Senior Jesse Mendez attempts to grab a LaPorte wrestler in the first round of regionals. Mendez went on to win the bracket later that day.  
PHOTO BY SAMUEL BREWER



■ Senior Nick Tattini is given the victory over a Valparaiso wrestler during regionals on Feb. 5. The team placed first in the tournament.  
PHOTO BY SAMUEL BREWER

## Postseason Powerhouse

Wrestling team heads to state meet after earning sectional, regional, semi-state championships

BY SAMUEL BREWER [sports editor]

For the past few weeks, the wrestling team has rolled through opponents on their way to state. The team had a historic win at sectionals, winning every single match the team competed in, ending in a team 42-0 record in the tournament. According to head coach Brandon Lorek, the team supporting each other during the tournament was a major stepping stone.

“It was a very exciting moment to win all 14 weight classes. I loved watching the team come together as the opportunity to win 14 weight classes came together. By the end of the tournament, everyone was involved in every match, which is something we have worked on all season. I believe winning 14 titles says the team worked and fought for each other,” Lorek said.

The team also placed first in regionals, scoring 283.0 points, second place Lake Central scored 97.5.

**Sectionals**  
**42-0** team record  
**First** place overall

**Regionals**  
**Eight** champions  
**Six** finalists  
**First** place overall

**Semi-state**  
**Seven** champions  
**11** advance to state  
**First** place overall

“The team was focused on a common pursuit, and they believed they could put all 14 wrestlers in the finals. Plus, winning all 14 weight classes at the sectional put our team in a position to have a great performance at the regional,” Lorek said.

Eight of the wrestlers won their bracket at regionals, with the remaining six getting to the finals. Winner of the 182 pound class, senior Orlando Cruz feels the team’s regular season success helped push them to this point.

“We’ve had a tough schedule this year. We’ve taken the best teams from other states and our own state, even nationally ranked teams. Every challenge we’ve had this year we’ve proven that we’re good enough and that we earned it,” Cruz said.

One of those opponents was Illinois’s Mount Carmel, who were ranked 18th in the nation the time the two teams met. Crown Point won the overall bout. According to Lorek, the atmosphere was a memorable one.

“It was a complete team effort. It was a great environment, loud, energetic. I have never seen anything like that in high school sports or even college sports, so it was a great experience, and I think the wrestlers who competed there are gonna remember that forever,” Lorek said.

Sophomore wrestler Will Clark said it was a great environment to wrestle in.

“It was one of the most fun times I’ve ever had wrestling. Just the atmosphere, everything, number one in Indiana versus number one in Illinois. It was really fun,” Clark said.

Cruz believes that the adversity they faced helped them improve both during the meet and for the future.

“It was very different because they had a student section and a lot of people behind them, and it was also in a different state because we were away. It wasn’t really in our favor, but it’s the kind of stuff we have to block out and just work though. It was different, but it definitely made us better,” Cruz said.

The team also won the 4A team state championship in early January. This event invites the top teams from each division in the state to compete against each other and record the team score. According to Lorek, this accomplishment shows the grit of the team.

“It showed that we have the best 14 guys as a complete team in the state. It’s really the ultimate team event, so it was nice to win that together as a team,” Lorek said.

As for the rest of the postseason, after winning seven of the possible 14 brackets at semi-state, Lorek says the team is ready.

“The team is excited to compete for a state title and thankful for the opportunity,” Lorek said.

The team will send 11 wrestlers to compete at the state tournament Friday, Feb. 18 at the Gainbridge Fieldhouse in Indianapolis.



■ Senior Jessica Carrothers dribbles around a Portage defender during the first game of the Sectional Championship on Feb. 1. The team won the game 71-25.  
PHOTO BY GILLIAN GATLEY

## Girls basketball senior class continues legacy with fourth straight sectional win, advances to semi-state

BY KAITLIN CHANDLER [reporter]  
GILLIAN GATLEY [reporter]

As the girls basketball team enters their post season, the seniors, who were a part of a state championship team, take a look back at their achievements and the legacy they are leaving behind at Crown Point.

After their win against Chesterton on Jan. 21, the senior class of 2022 ended their regular season undefeated at home throughout all four years. Senior captain and member of the All Duneland Athletic Conference team Jessica Carrothers emphasizes how incredible the achievement is.

“I think it’s great,” Carrothers said. “I never would have thought that we wouldn’t lose a game on our home court or in our conference, so it’s kind of just crazy thinking about it.”

Along with being undefeated on their home court, the seniors are also reigning state champions, earning them a permanent mark of fame among the school. For senior Alyvia Santiago, the legacy her team is leaving is not limited to her time spent on the team but is reminiscent of her childhood as well.

“It means everything to me. I’ve been watching and coming here since I was six, and I would sit in the corner and give them high fives after their games. Being able to take it a step further and win the state championship means everything to me,” Santiago said.

With the senior class achieving both a state title and being undefeated at home, Santiago touches on the rarity of this accomplishment.

“It’s something that we are all individually proud of, and our coaches told us that it’s something that not

everyone can say they’ve done,” Santiago said.

With these seniors being such a big part of the community and vital assets to the team itself, head coach Chris Seibert emphasizes the role they play in leading the team and how the chemistry they have with the whole team attributes to their success.

“I think that we have five great senior leaders. We have a nice blend of underclassmen and upperclassmen. I think these five have been through the battles with our team over the last four years. They are tremendous leaders,” Seibert said.

Not only has the team been successful on the court, but their off court chemistry adds to that success, making the team closer.

“Most of the time we’re always going out after games, hanging out. We’re all really good friends in and outside of school and basketball,” Carrothers said.

As the team plays their sectional games, the success they have had on the court is very well known, making them the team to beat.

“I think it’s going to put a bigger target on our backs, especially for the postseason, and I think teams are going to want to beat us more,” Carrothers said. “So, we’re going to have to bring it every game.”

Going into their sectional games, the team held a record of 19-3 but has since pushed it up to 25-3 after winning their fourth sectional title in a row. On Feb. 12, they beat Penn and Lake Central to win the Regional Championship, advancing them to semi-state. This win marks the third regional win in four years.

Carrothers had a career high of 42 points, and senior Lilly Stoddard surpassed 1,000 total career points. The team will play in their semi-state match against Noblesville on Feb. 19.

SPORTS  
SHORTS

Boys Basketball ■ Boys Swim ■  
Girls Swim ■ Moments of the Month

Girls Swim places second at sectionals, three events qualify for state meet in Indianapolis

BY SAMUEL BREWER [sports editor]

On Feb. 6, the girls swim team placed second at sectionals. According to head coach Bryan Angerman, the team’s hard work the weeks leading up to the event was a massive driver of the team’s success.

“I think, especially in the last two weeks or so, that everybody has really been focused, practice has been going really good and everybody seemed like they really had their eyes on the prize at the end of the season, so they’ve really started to turn a corner and get things done the last two weeks,” Angerman said.

The team also placed third at the Duneland Athletic Conference meet. One of the highlights of the meet was freshman Bella Tufts’ victory in the 500 freestyle. Even though this was her first season on the team, she was able to overcome the pressure that came with

being on the big stage.

“I do feel a little bit of pressure, but I try not to get in my head about it. It’s more of a drive to meet expectations. It was more of like ‘Have fun with it, enjoy the experience and see how it goes,’” Tufts said.

With this being her first high school swim season, Tufts has already noticed some major differences between club and high school swim.

“There is definitely a big team aspect difference. Club (swim) is more like swimming for yourself, work on what you need. High school (swim) is ‘Do it for the team, get those team points to win the meet,’” Tufts said.

Tufts continued her dominance in the race at sectionals with a first place finish, earning her a ticket to state. Even though she excels at the 500, Angerman says that she was not always a distance swimmer.

“She’s a very hard worker; she’s



■ Freshman Bella Tufts swims the 500 at the sectional meet on Feb. 7. Tufts won the event and advanced to state.  
PHOTO BY GILLIAN GATLEY

got a lot of talent. She came into the program being a pretty diverse athlete. She was a flier, backstroke, IMer, then we started putting her in these distance events that she really started dominating in practice. Those two events for her are gonna be the best options for us to get down to the state meet individually, as well as her swimming some relay legs for us,” Angerman said.

Another high point for the sectional performance was the appearance of the dive team, which had been absent for the past few years. The dive team added 39 points for the team as a whole

“We’ve got four divers, and this is the first time in a couple years that we’ve filled four solid divers at the meet, so diving helps a lot,” Angerman said.

MOMENTS  
■ OF THE ■  
MONTH

■ **1-15** Baseball head coach Steve Strayer was inducted into the High School Baseball Coaches Hall of Fame. He will enter his 20th season coaching the dogs this year.

■ **2-11** Football stadium lights around the region were turned on at 7 p.m. to honor the passing of assistant football coach Bob Mattix. The Indiana Football Hall of Fame member was 72.

■ **1-31** The freshman boys basketball team beats Illiana Christian, pushing their final overall season record to an undefeated 20-0.

■ **2-8** The girls basketball team won sectionals after a 50-48 victory against Merrillville at home. This is the team’s fourth straight sectional title.



■ The gymnastics team poses after winning the Chesterton Invite. The team scored a 113.35, which broke the overall team record.  
PHOTO BY ABIGAIL GODSEN

■ **2-7** Senior defensive lineman Nikola Paic signed his National Letter of Intent to play Division One football for Valparaiso University.

Boys Basketball picks up four games in a row after loss to Chesterton

BY SAMUEL BREWER [sports editor]

Even with a record of 14-5, the boys basketball team is still looking for what they need to improve on.

The boys took their fourth loss of the season to currently first ranked Chesterton 29-55. According to head coach Clint Swan, it served as a wake up call for things the team needed to fix.

“I think when you have a game like that against a really good team, it’s a great truth teller. You can get away with certain things against some teams and other teams

you make those same mistakes, and they expose you. Chesterton is a great team for exposing what you do wrong. We came out of a game like that, and we were frustrated that we lost but

coming into practice and going through the film gives us a much better idea of what we need to work on,” Swan said.

After the loss, the team went on to win their next four games. Senior Drew Adzia said that the team picked up their spirits after the loss.

“After Chesterton, we really ramped it up. We won’t let teams run whatever they want against us. I feel like if we keep that intensity going we should be pretty good,” Adzia said.

Junior Keaton Buuck also saw a large change in the way the team played

after the game.

“I feel like there’s still things that we have to get fixed, but it really woke us up to the fact that there are things that we need to fix. Everybody started competing more,” Buuck said.

According to Adzia, this adversity has helped the team prepare for when they go up against strong teams in the future, such as 16-3 Valparaiso.

“Obviously, any game is a tough game, but, when you’re going up against a team like Valpo or Chesterton who you know is always highly ranked,

always good, you’re always gonna get their best shot no matter what. You always have to play the best you can,” Adzia said.

As for the way the season has gone so far, Swan is happy with the way the team has

played, but he is mindful of the work needed to have success in the postseason.

“We feel good about where we are right now. If you had told me (our record now at the beginning of the season), I think I would’ve signed up for that. By the same token, we look at where we are realistically and where we need to be, but we have good kids and they practice hard. So, we just need to stay the course,” Swan said.

The team plays next on Tuesday, Feb. 22 against Munster.

“After Chesterton, we really ramped it up. We won’t let teams run whatever they want against us. I feel like if we keep that intensity going we should be pretty good.”  
- senior  
Drew Adzia



■ Junior Louis Mureiko goes up for a shot against Chesterton at home on Jan. 21. Chesterton won the game 55-29.  
PHOTO BY GILLIAN GATLEY

Boys Swim places fourth at DAC, prepares for sectionals

BY SAMUEL BREWER [sports editor]

The boys swim team is well on their way to competing at this year’s sectionals. And, after seeing the team practice, head coach Blake Yeager is confident in the team’s ability to perform in the competition.

“We are excited about how sectionals could look. The boys are racers and have excelled when it was time for them to perform. They constantly have

been getting better as the season has gone on,” Yeager said.

The team finished fourth in the conference meet in January, a result Yeager was happy to see.

“DAC went extremely well for the boys team. Every swim we had either was a season best or a personal best. We had Matt Dumbsky win the 50 Free,” Yeager said.

Senior swimmer Colin Gingerich has also been happy with the way the

team has performed, especially after losing last year’s seniors.

“I think we’ve done pretty well. We lost a bunch of kids last year, but we’ve made due with what we have. I’ve seen a ton of improvement in a bunch of the freshmen and the underclassmen, and I am proud to have everyone actually take part in everything we do and give it their best,” Gingerich said.

One of the biggest standouts to Yeager this year is senior Bill McCall, who

will be competing in both swimming and diving events for the team at sectionals.

“Bill McCall has been an inspiration to everyone on the team by performing both swim and dive events. While doing this, he has drastically improved on both events. For someone to do this is rare and an extreme challenge,” Yeager said.

The team will compete at the sectional prelims Feb. 17 at Lake Central.

# Just Chilling

Explore fun things to do during chilly weather; activities for every person

BY ABIGAIL GODSEN [co-editor-in-chief]  
ARIEL MOORE [reporter]

Winter is a time when there is a chill in the air, and we often want to curl up inside to hibernate. But, after being cooped up for so many months, it can get boring. People become restless with the monotony of the weather and the lull between holiday seasons. To help with the winter boredom, below are some activity ideas to chill out to or energize your spirits.



## Learn a Skill

With winter and snow comes cold weather, so getting a chance to go outside and have fun may not be an option. However, there are other activities that can be done in the warmth of your home or inside of a toasty building. Getting certified in CPR is one such activity that only requires about two hours to learn the basics of CPR and the proper way to perform it on an adult, child and infant. Another way to enjoy winter indoors would be learning to crochet. One quick trip to your local crafts store and a YouTube video on the basics of crocheting a hat or other accessory can provide hours of entertainment for both the mind and the body. The self satisfaction of creating something with your own hands is also an added benefit of partaking in this beautiful craft.



## Binge-watch

A lot of the hobbies listed here are very physically or mentally active, but what about for those who want to relax? Binge-watching your favorite shows is the perfect way to relax either by yourself or with others. You could even do a movie night. Some series like the Marvel Cinematic Universe could take over a week to complete while others, like some of Netflix's original series, are pretty short and could easily be a one day activity. It is all about how deep in the rabbit hole of streaming content you want to go into. Taking a look at some of the new releases on Hulu, Netflix and Disney+ could give you a good idea of where to start. From there, it is all up to you how you want to spend that time.



## Ice Skating

One of the most iconic features of winter is the ice and the activity it creates: ice skating. Ice skating is featured all the time in movies as being the "big activity" for the winter season. Ice skating is one of the many fun and relaxing activities to do outdoors during the winter months. You can skate by yourself or with a group of friends. Even if you have never skated before, part of the fun is the learning process. There are ice skating rinks at places like Bulldog Park which costs \$5 per person and \$3 for skate rental. Open skate hours vary week to week so be sure to check the Crown Point, IN website for more information.



## Fitness Challenges

Fitness challenges are a unique way to stay active indoors during the winter months. Working out is not everyone's cup of tea, but there are a wide variety of activities you could do rather than traditional "work-out" exercises. Some of these could be learning to do the splits or even working out for a week to see what happens. This is a really flexible activity that you could mold to your own athletic proficiency level. You could start by checking out YouTube videos or googling "fitness challenges" to get some fun ideas. Remember, it is all about having fun, so these don't have to be week long challenges. Sometimes doing a Just Dance score competition with friends is just the pick me up you need to stay hyped up for the rest of the week.



## Baking

Baking piping hot treats is a fun way to spend your time at home during the winter months as it can warm your heart and your house. Waking up to the sweet smell of cookies or spice bread being baked can bring joy to your nose and stomach. Creating such treats can offer a bonding experience for all who are involved. Whether using cookie cutters to create fun shapes or building elaborate gingerbread houses, baking is an enjoyable way to pass the time and have fun, be it at your home, by yourself or with others.



## Snowball Fights

It's cold winter's eve, and children's joyful shrieks fill the air while white, shiny balls fly through the sky. Snowball fights are one of the seasonal activities that bring happiness and fun to the winter season. The simple act of molding a ball from fresh snow and throwing it at another person is humorous and can create fun-loving competition. Building snow bases, creating snowy ammo and waging war on friends and family alike on the cold white battlefield is an amazingly joy-filled experience that anyone with access to snow should try out. One of the best parts of snowball fights is attempting to build an indestructible fortress that enemies cannot possibly conquer; however, it typically ends up not being built as envisioned. Despite this, snowball fights are an activity that is worth taking part in during the snowy season.



## Game Night

Game nights are always a fun way to hang out with friends when it is dreary outside. In our opinion, *Clue* and *Sorry* are always crowd pleasers. Even if it sounds boring at first, people can get really passionate over the outcome of boardgames, and it can get quite chaotic when you really get into it. Especially with games like *Monopoly*, the competition can be intense, but that is what makes it so fun. It can be argued that you don't really know someone until you play a hardcore game of *Sorry* to see a person's true colors.



■ Senior Abby Deyarmin and junior Alexia Macchia bake cookies together. Baking is one way people can pass the time during the winter when it is feels too cold outside.

PHOTO BY KAITLYN CHANDLER

# Encanto enchants audiences with emotional and relatable storyline

BY ABIGAIL GODSEN [co-editor-in-chief]

Disney’s newest movie *Encanto* is a whole new take on the traditional Disney animated movie. With songs written by Lin Manuel-Miranda, the movie blends culture, lively characters and Disney magic into one heartwarming and heartbreaking cinematic event.

One of the most unique aspects of this movie compared to other animated films created by Disney is the scene setting. Usually, characters will go on massive adventures traveling to all sorts of places and times to achieve their overall goal. In *Encanto*, the whole movie takes place in the family home, Casita, and the surrounding village. The main character, Mirabel Madrigal, must find a way to save the magic in the house, which has granted everyone in her family with unique gifts—that is everyone except for her. On this journey of self discovery, Mirabel is faced with confronting her own insecurities, going against everything she has been taught, to harness her own inner strength to save her family.

By far, I think this is one of my all time favorite Disney movies. The char-



acters are vibrant, and, despite being given supernatural gifts, they are made all the more real by their own journeys of self discovery and realization.

Along this line, the emphasis on mental health and the relationship one has with themselves is heavily emphasized and not something seen in many other Disney movies. I was brought nearly to tears on multiple occasions when watching this movie because

of how raw and relatable the struggle with mental health and being “weird” is portrayed in these characters.

Not surprisingly, the soundtrack to this movie only emphasizes the strength, struggle and successes seen throughout the movie. Filled with a mix of pop, rap and layered vocals, the music is addictive and will have you humming it for the rest of the day.

Like *Coco*, *Vivo* and *In the Heights*, Lin Manuel-Miranda puts a spotlight on Latin culture and family. In *Encanto*, the movie is meant to take place in Columbia and has a large focus on family like these other movies. Aspects of Columbian fashion, dialect and mannerisms are used throughout the movie, which makes it more immersive and unique of an experience.

Overall, this movie is a unique experience in-and-of itself, and it shines just as brightly as any other Disney movie, if not more because of its new take on the traditional Disney animated film. I would highly recommend this movie for everyone. It is not only great for family movie nights, but to watch by yourself if you want to get in your feels.

# Don’t Look Up portrays toxic political climates through comedic storyline

BY KAITLYN CHANDLER [reporter]

Netflix original *Don’t Look Up* is the newest dram-com starring iconic actors such as Leonardo DiCaprio, Jennifer Lawrence, Ariana Grande and a multitude of others. With touches of humor throughout the movie, it also impressively portrays what the state of the world could come to in a toxic political state.

Astronomers Dr. Randall (Leonardo DiCaprio) and Kate Dibiasky (Jennifer Lawrence) discover a planet-destroying comet predicted to hit Earth in six months. With the fate of Earth on the line, they want to warn the government, but they quickly run into trouble while telling the president, played by Meryl Streep, who is power-hungry and selfishly craves citizen approval. It turns out that the president will

only do what satisfies her supporters, even when that decision could affect the well-being or even the lives of the population. Scenes of Ariana Grande playing the pop star Riley Bina, who performs music about the distraught state of the country, are also great satirical touches.

Main character Dr. Randall becomes deeply affected by the amount of fame he has gotten from being the new “hot astronomer” that everyone adores. Meanwhile, his partner Kate Dibiasky, also becomes affected by the media attention but not in a good way, for everyone in the country believes that she is crazy.

The director, Adam McKay, started his career as the lead writer for *Saturday Night Live* and continued his love for comedy by directing comedy classics such as *Step Brothers* and *An-*



*chorman*. With comedy classics up his sleeve, this film portrays his love for comedy with a twist of serious drama.

This serious yet comedic film poses the question: would America be able to come out of catastrophe with such a heavy political climate?

## Best of the B.E.S.T

BY JOSHUA HEDGES [reporter]

### Best App



TheoTown is a game that brings aspects of popular games like SimCity and adds a community of modders to provide near endless content. It plays more closely to city builders for computers.

### Best Follow



SuperMega Cast is a skit, podcast and gaming channel on YouTube starring hosts Mathew Watson and Ryan Magee. I often listen to their podcast called The Super-Mega Podcast where they confuse the audience with their odd bits and talk about whatever is on their minds.

### Best Website



Photopea is an in-browser photo editor that is arranged similarly to Adobe Photoshop and is completely free. It even provides templates and common social media size presets for a quick start to any project.

# Spider-Man: No Way Home webs loose ends that are nostalgic for all viewers

BY LIVY HELMUTH [assistant editor]

The devastating ending to Marvel’s *Spider-man: Far From Home* left Marvel fans shocked and questioning where the future of the franchise would lead. *Spider-man: No Way Home* masterfully webs together all loose ends from prior releases and caters to fans’ nostalgia.

Tom Holland’s portrayal of Peter Parker is exceptional, and fans get to see a new side of the character as he faces some of his toughest challenges yet. Zendaya and Jacob Batalon reprise their roles as Michelle Jones and Ned Leedes respectively, and both actors steal every scene they star in. Every character performance and portrayal in this movie is absolutely flawless, and there is never a dull moment throughout the entire film.

After Dr. Strange (Benedict Cumberbatch) botches a memory spell, Spider-Man must face some of the toughest villains from various universes, such as Doc Ock (Alfred Molina), Electro (Jamie Foxx), Sandman (Thomas Haden Church), Lizard (Rhys Ifans) and the Green Goblin (Willem Dafoe). Fortunately, Peter Parker receives help from some unexpected friends. Together, they face the consequential threat of merging timelines and balance the hardships of responsibility.

It is no mystery that Spider-Man wouldn’t be able to balance his double life without some heartache and tragedy. *Spider-Man: No Way Home* contains two of the most heart wrenching scenes in the entire franchise, and the film concludes on an unusually somber, yet fitting tone.

Although *Spider-Man: No Way Home* is Marvel’s fourth feature length film released since the global spread of the pandemic, it is the third highest grossing Marvel film, earning a whopping \$1.69 billion.



Rated **PG-13**

Rated **93%** on Rotten Tomatoes

Watch now at AMC CLASSIC Hobart 12 & AMC Sherrillville 12

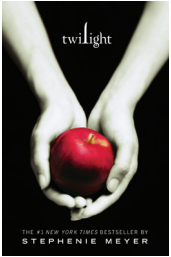
Above just being a spectacular movie, *Spider-Man: No Way Home*’s large financial success represents the rebirth of the film industry as a whole. It reminded audiences of the thrill and adventure of watching movies on the big screen again, and it provided a two and a half hour break from complications and controversies of the post pandemic world.

Overall, *Spider-Man: No Way Home* is a new fan favorite and one of the best superhero movies to have been released in the past decade. *Spider-Man: No Way Home* is enjoyable for new and old audiences alike.

## IN Review

Classic saga *Twilight* enthralls readers with rich, addicting plot

BY ZOEY SLAVENA [reporter]



The *Twilight Saga* series is a love story about a normal teen girl, Bella Swan, who meets Edward Cullen, a vampire with inhuman abilities.

A forbidden, dangerous relationship between Bella and

Edward starts to ripen into something more than just a friendship. This series, which comes in movies and books, has an amazing plot that teens and adults are addicted to.

*Love is Blind* comes back for second season of binge-worthy drama with thrilling anticipation

BY MARY MARCINEK [assistant editor]



Released right before the 2020 quarantine, season one of Netflix’s original series, *Love is Blind*, gained 1.5 million viewers in its first full week. Now, the

popular series finally returned for season two on Feb. 11.

The charismatic contestants, drama and unique premise makes *Love is Blind* a perfectly binge-able show. Viewers get to witness bachelors and bachelorettes participate in an experiment to determine whether “love is blind” by going on dates and eventually becoming engaged—all before ever physically seeing their fiancé.

### P.L.A.Y.I.N.G FAVORITES

#### Popcorn

This classic snack holds a special place in the hearts of busy people who need a poppable snack during the day. Not only is popcorn quick and easy to make, but the warm kernels are perfect for a chilly winter day.



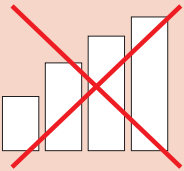
#### Wordle

Wordle is the perfect brain boost for a busy schedule. This word game is only available once a day, and everyone around the world gets the same word, making it an extremely fun, yet competitive game.

### WE'RE SO O.V.E.R

#### Unpredictable weather affecting school

When delays and cancellations disrupt the schedules of teachers and students, it makes learning all the more difficult. It is challenging for students to properly prioritize testing when the learning environment changes unexpectedly.



#### Technology Issues

Technology is great – when it works. In an environment dependent upon computers and phones, spotty WIFI and other technology issues create a disruption to classroom tasks and could be a safety issue.

# Creative Craftsmanship

Freshman Riley McCormick creates unique jewelry for peers, inspired by toys and trinkets

BY ARIEL MOORE [reporter]

During quarantine, hobbies were a way to help fill the copious amounts of free time. For freshman Riley McCormick, her hobby of choice was jewelry making.

McCormick was a fan of making crafts even before the pandemic hit, but quarantine gave her the time and opportunity to start learning how to create earrings. One of her inspirations came from a video she found on YouTube.

“In the video, this girl was putting weird things on earrings. At the time, I didn’t wear earrings, but it was during COVID-19, and I was bored, so I decided to (make earrings),” McCormick said. “It was a popular hobby during quarantine, so I thought I would get into it too.”

When she first began making earrings, she drew her inspiration from toy brands called Calico Critters and Mini Brands. Calico Critters are miniature animals toys, and Mini Brands are just as they sound: miniature everyday items, like Dove shampoo and Lipton green tea.

Apart from Calico Critters and Mini Brands, McCormick makes earrings from miniature baby figures, tiny ice cream figurines and erasers. To make these unique pieces of jewelry, the necessary utensils are items such as wire and hooks.

“I use wire and hooks. If I’m making a necklace, I use a chain,” McCormick said.

Cost for materials varies based on what type of materials are being turned into earrings. When buying miniature plastic baby figures for her earrings, McCormick realized that many items can be very expensive to obtain.

“I bought five (miniature toy) babies for \$20, which cost a lot,” McCormick said.

Gathering items is just the first and easiest step, but the process of creating the actual earring is a longer process.

“For starters, it depends on what I’m putting on the earrings. For example, if it’s a straw, very random, which is my style of course, you would just take some



■ McCormick places avocado earrings on a playing card. They are made of clay.

PHOTO BY ARIEL MOORE

wire and poke it through the hole and make the wire into a little hoop shape and attach a little earring bit to it. This is about the easiest way to make it,” McCormick said.

When McCormick makes her product, she tries to match the style of her earrings to the students in our school. To her, it’s important to make sure her potential customers have a selection of earrings that interest them.

“I create new merchandise by seeing how people dress, and I match their style. If someone likes a certain color, and they’re wearing a certain outfit, I’ll make something to compliment it,” McCormick said.

Creating these pieces of jewelry is something that’s enjoyable and entertaining, but there are times when McCormick doesn’t feel like working on her craft.

“I’m very proud of my business, although, sometimes, my procrastination gets the best of me, and I put it off for weeks,” McCormick said.

McCormick’s earrings have been promoted on



■ Freshman Riley McCormick uses pliers to repair a pair of earrings. These earrings come in all sorts of unique designs that can range from tiny household products to tiny food items.

PHOTO BY ARIEL MOORE

“I create new merchandise by seeing how people dress, and I match their style. If someone likes a certain color, and they’re wearing a certain outfit, I’ll make something to compliment it.”

- freshman  
Riley McCormick

social media by sophomore Cadence Fasel, and the promotion ended up bringing in a few new customers. Since then, she has sought out other ways to promote her product such as Etsy, but she has experienced difficulties with this source of promotion.

“My earrings have been posted on TikTok by some friends, but there is no Instagram (promotion). I tried to start an Etsy, but you have to be an adult to create an account,” McCormick said.

Aside from her friends’ support, she has family backing her up and helping to further nurture her talents in an enormous way.

“My grandma often commissions me to make her jewelry. My grandpa, on the other hand, doesn’t ask me to make much,” McCormick said. “However, he

does know a lady that has a jewelry shop. When I turn 16, I can do an apprenticeship there.”

To go along with the apprenticeship at Moriarty’s Gem Art, she will be taking the jewelry making class that the school has to offer. She hopes to learn a lot from the apprenticeship that she wouldn’t have otherwise learned.

“Learning something in a class and getting real world experience in something is completely different,” McCormick said. “If you learn something in class, then you’re just going by the books, but if you do it in a business setting, then you can learn something that a class can’t teach you.”

This young jeweler wishes to learn how professionals create jewelry and hopes to expand her knowl-

edge in a way she couldn’t on her own.

As of now, jewelry making is a side hobby that is done in her free time; however, McCormick is interested in furthering her jewelry making career and will do so in the future.

“I think now it’s a hobby, but, maybe in the future, I’d make it into a profession if I could,” McCormick said. “I would probably try to work for a preexisting brand in the future because that sounds easier.”

If a career in jewelry isn’t feasible, McCormick has alternative plans to continue her passion in jewelry making.

“In the long term, if it doesn’t work out as a career, then I’d turn it into a hobby to make extra money on the side,” McCormick said.

# STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

## Luke Sherman

senior

**Q.** Where do you see yourself in the future?

**A.** Most likely teaching Latin, teaching of some kind; college going for an education degree, possibly for physics too.

**Q.** What is something that makes you strive to be better?

**A.** Mainly a competitive spirit and just bettering myself. I love to be the best, and I want to do everything I can to benefit my future. Competition is just one of those ways that just pushes me harder.

**Q.** What goals do you have for this semester?

**A.** My goals for this semester are to improve my skills as a student and as a teacher as much as I can to get into college; mainly through tutoring and learning the best teaching style I can.

**Q.** What do you think you could have improved on more in the first semester?

**A.** Probably my focusing skills. I definitely focus on my tutoring more than I do my own work. I could probably focus on my own work more.

**Q.** Who or what inspired you to pursue a career in the Classics?

**A.** Probably a joint effort between Mrs. Wietbrock, our old Latin teacher, and the passion to teach kids. I love tutoring; I just discovered that last year of how much I love helping kids with any subject. Latin is just my favorite.

**Q.** Outside of Latin, what are your other hobbies?

**A.** I like to dissect movies and go through cinematography for certain movies that have a really high production quality, for TV shows also. Otherwise reading books, video games and stuff like that. My favorite movie is *Jurassic Park*.



## What Do You THINK?

If you could travel anywhere, where would you go? Why?

"Paris, it's been my dream to go there ever since I was little. I want to see the Eiffel tower."

sophomore Jerzy Mayer

"I would go to Greece because I really like the beaches there. The buildings are really cool because they are all white, blue and orange, so they're very vibrant colors."

junior Ellie Southworth

"Rome, Italy because I've always wanted to travel there because I'm Italian."

sophomore Aslyn Farinelli

"Michigan because it's a cool place with tons of stuff to do."

freshman Richard Bako

"I would go to Switzerland because I think it is a beautiful country, and I could also visit Lake Geneva."

senior John Krause

"Germany because our dogs speak German. That's the language we taught them commands in."

freshman Bayleigh Bixeman