

The Tornado Connection

2019

Mr. Dunn Hired as New Assistant Principal

By Adraya Baxter and Evelyn Paserba

Mr. Dunn, the new assistant principal at the Butler Intermediate High School, was hired at the end of last school year and started his new position last summer. Even though he is a first year principal, he has already had a positive impact on behavior and the school atmosphere.

Before working as a principal, he worked as a guidance counselor at Connoquenessing and Butler Middle School. According to Mr. Dunn, "I enjoy working with my colleagues and making team decisions." He added that the administrators in the office meet at the beginning and end of each day to collaborate, which he feels is key to the school running as smoothly as possible. "Some days can be tough working as a principal, but the reward of seeing students happy at school is worth it," he said.

Mr. Dunn's impressions of his new school home have been positive because the environment of the school is based in kindness. "One of my favorite parts of my day is when I have unscheduled interactions with students," he commented. He enjoys talking to kids who are positive role models in particular. As for his least favorite part of his day: "I don't enjoy disciplining students or contacting parents for behavioral issues."

Our new assistant principal brings a background of the PBIS initiative to the school. He worked with PBIS in a Baltimore City school years before coming to Butler. Mr. Dunn hopes that with his PBIS background, he can help reinforce the good and recognize it. "The new SOAR program is really improving the school environment and reducing discipline. I am proud to be a part of it and to work with two great principals."

Mr. Dunn is no stranger to Butler and our schools. As a child, Mr. Dunn attended Connoquenessing Elementary School and continued on through the secondary buildings

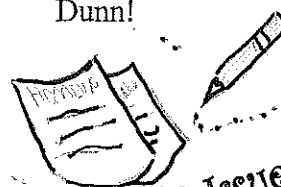
in Butler through graduation. While in high school, Mr. Dunn participated in many sports but found a passion for track and field. After graduating high school, Mr. Dunn continued his education at Penn State University, where he studied agriculture and threw the javelin. Mr. Dunn soon found out that he wanted to go into the field of rehabilitation to help others. He continued school and obtained a Master's degree in counseling and educational leadership.

Outside of school, Mr. Dunn is very involved with his family. He and his wife, Lynsey, have a 10-week-old son named Harold, but they lovingly refer to him as Murphy. They live on their family farm and own sheep. On the weekends, they love to be outdoors. "I especially enjoy running, camping, hunting, and watching college football with my son," he said. When Mr. Dunn is not at work, he is at home doing hands-on activities and maintenance.

His colleagues in the office speak very highly of him. "He is a great addition to the staff at BIHS," commented Mrs. Crissman. She met Mr. Dunn in high school, and they continued to work together for one year at the middle school. "I enjoy working with him and Mr. Dobransky because we all share the same goal of wanting to do what is best for the school, the students, and the staff," Mrs. Crissman said. "His counseling background is also a great asset, along with his sense of humor," she added with a smile.

Mr. Dobransky agrees with Mrs. Crissman that Mr. Dunn's counseling background and sense of humor make him a great addition to the school. Mr. Dobransky commented, "He has a great work ethic, and we are lucky to have him."

Welcome to Butler Intermediate, Mr. Dunn!



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Keeping the lines of communication open



BUTLER

Our 50-Year-Old School Owns a Rich History

By Connor Dolan

Not many people are familiar with the history of our nearly 50-year-old school, and its history is more interesting than one may think.

The Intermediate High School was built on a site that had originally been fairgrounds for the Butler Fair. Apart from the land being cheap, there wasn't a specific reason as to why this site was chosen. Coincidentally, it was right next to the Senior High School, which was built thirteen years earlier.

Plans to build the school started in 1970, and the school was finished in 1973. The first school year was in 1974. The budget for building the school, not including furniture, was \$10.5 million (\$69.5 million today). However, the building only cost \$7.8 million (\$51.5 million today). Although Butler was somewhat prospering via the train car manufacturing industry at the time, this was still a lot of money for Butler. The school was built to accommodate the higher student enrollment observed in the late 1960s. When it first opened, the school served ninth and tenth grade students.

Burt Hill and Associates designed and built the school with plans that were designed to be expanded if more space was needed. The space directly above the gyms on the second floor was made to allow classroom expansion if enrollment increased even more. Something that sticks out of the school are the two catwalks extending from the second floor. They were installed to meet an administrative requirement to keep bus lanes clear of pedestrians and students. This was the simplest way to get students to their parents in the parent pickup lane without having them go through the bus lane.

The school interior was fairly modern for the time, although it did not feature a true design concept. In the entrance hallways, there are some pictures of classes from the

first few school years. A major part of the school is the full air conditioning system, something that the senior high does not have. Because of the teaching methods of the day, classrooms had no interior walls. Some rooms had half-walls. Only a select few rooms had full walls, such as the staff and faculty rooms. Once teaching methods changed back to normal around 1978, every room in the school had full walls.

During the 1970s, schools all across America were applying something called an "Open Classroom Concept." Large, open rooms had three to four subjects being taught at once. It was thought by educational theorists, like David N. Campbell from the University of Pittsburgh, that this would make teaching better for the students and make schools more social. Many pre-existing schools adopted this model. Butler Intermediate was built around this concept, although it did not last long.

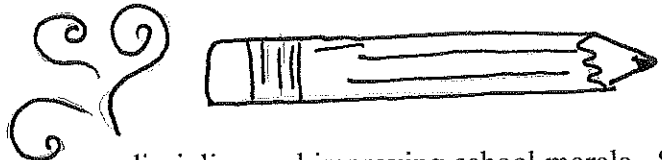
Five years after the first school year, interior walls were installed and normal teaching methods were implemented. Students complained that they were not able to pay attention and had a hard time listening to multiple different subjects at once. Teachers didn't enjoy teaching this way, as they felt they couldn't teach everything they wanted to teach. Parents didn't like the way their kids were being taught either. Although not very popular today, some schools across America still use an Open Classroom Concept. It even had a re-emergence in the early 2000s.

Although it has changed a lot, our school will continue to serve Butler students for years to come, and more history will be added to our school.



BIHS Students SOAR With PBIS Program

By Ali Smith


This year, the Butler Area School District has started a new program, the PBIS program, for dealing with the district's




discipline and improving school morale. So far, it seems to be working quite well.





Butler Intermediate began implementing the PBIS program, or the Positive Behavior Intervention and Support program, last spring, and the teacher committee rolled it out to the students for the 2019-2020 school year. The goal of the program is to eliminate discipline issues by supporting and rewarding positive behavior.




The acronym SOAR is posted throughout the school, similar to some of the elementary schools in the district but with slightly different definitions for each letter. At BIHS, SOAR stands for safety, ownership, attitude, and respect.




Teachers have been giving out blue and gold tickets. Blue tickets can earn students smaller prizes in their classrooms, like candy, gum, and homework passes. Gold tickets are given less but can provide students with larger prizes. The students are put into a bingo when they earn a gold ticket, known as the Principal's 200 Club. Each grade has its own board on the wall of the library. If a student wins the larger bingo by earning gold tickets, he/she can win a larger prize given at the end of each quarter. The first drawing for the large prize was held at the Veteran's Day assemblies on November 8.





Mrs. Crissman, a BIHS principal and the building administrator coordinating the PBIS program, credits the program and the faculty's extra efforts with the changes observed in the building. In September, discipline was down 40% from last year, and October boasted a 25% decrease over last October.



According to Mrs. Crissman, "PBIS is a positive way to reinforce the behavior the students should be showing in school." She claimed the teachers and administration at the school can spend less time with discipline and more time with their job and improving the school. Beyond the tickets, teachers review lessons on how to behave in different



areas of the school during advisory on Tuesdays and Thursdays.





She said that the students seem to enjoy the program, as well as the teachers. One of the members of the program, Mrs. Waseleski, says she has had a great experience with the program. She said, "The participation is super positive. My students LOVE earning tickets in class." Waseleski added that the program has been taking off quite well. The students, as she can tell, have benefited from the program highly.



So far, the program has done so much for the district. It's made Butler a better place for students and staff alike, and we can only expect more positive changes to come.

Committee Plans for Possible School Reorganization


By Rylee McCandless



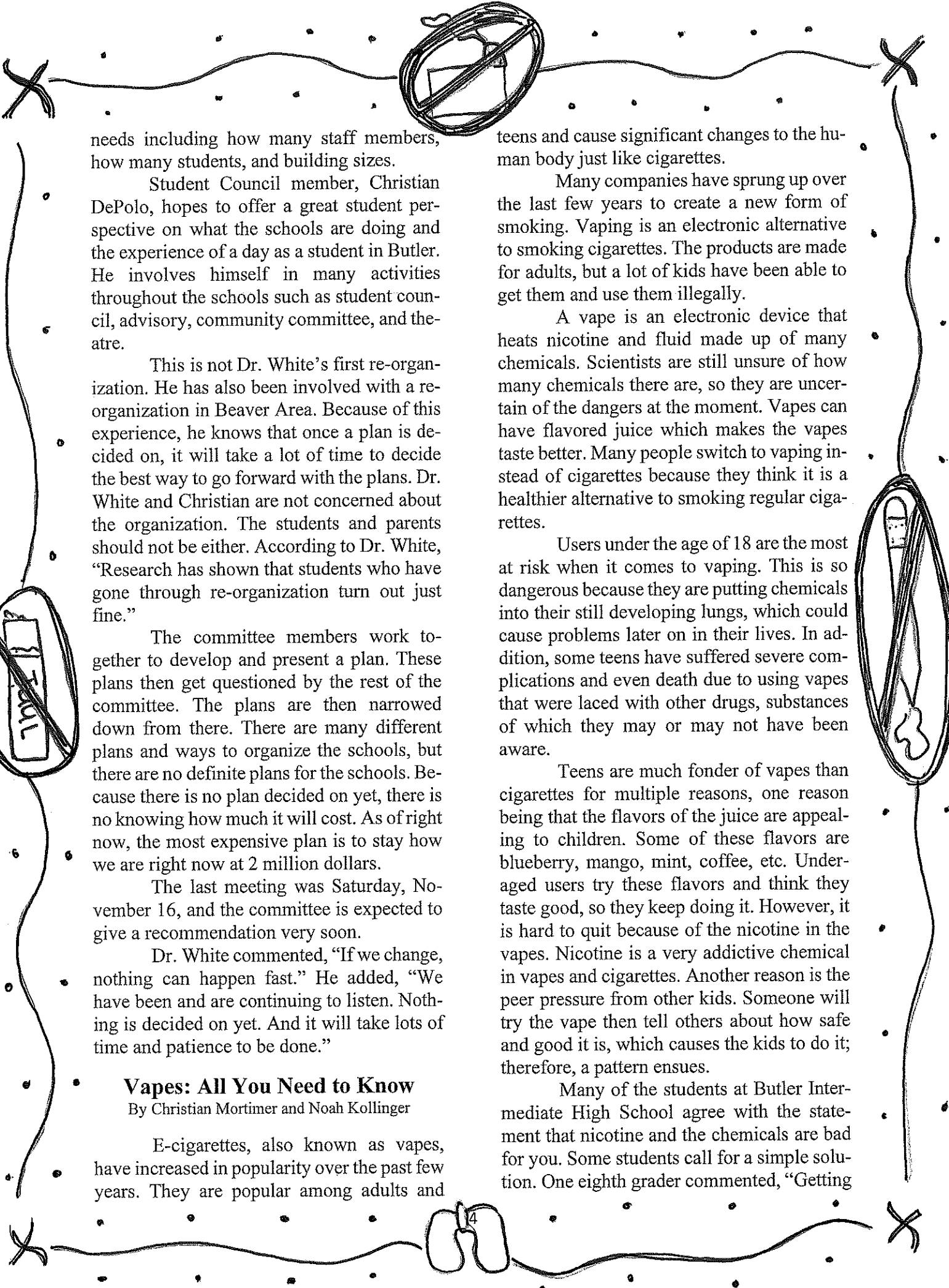
Due to declining enrollment and the projected expense involved with remodeling the current middle school, Dr. White, the superintendent, asked for student, parent, and staff volunteers to explore the possibility of school reorganization.



To fix the more than 100-year-old middle school building, the district would need to spend over 2 million dollars. Last year, the administration explored a variety of plans to address this problem. As the next step, a reorganization committee narrowed down the options to three: keep the school configuration the same, move the ninth grade to the high school and move sixth grade to the Intermediate (with fifth grade returning to the elementary buildings), or move the ninth grade to the high school and move fifth and sixth grade to the Intermediate.




The committee consists of school representatives for each school in the district, and it also has community people. At the initial committee meetings, five plans were developed. Each plan has been questioned, discussed, and then narrowed down. These plans were developed based on the student and staff



needs including how many staff members, how many students, and building sizes.

Student Council member, Christian DePolo, hopes to offer a great student perspective on what the schools are doing and the experience of a day as a student in Butler. He involves himself in many activities throughout the schools such as student council, advisory, community committee, and theatre.

This is not Dr. White's first re-organization. He has also been involved with a re-organization in Beaver Area. Because of this experience, he knows that once a plan is decided on, it will take a lot of time to decide the best way to go forward with the plans. Dr. White and Christian are not concerned about the organization. The students and parents should not be either. According to Dr. White, "Research has shown that students who have gone through re-organization turn out just fine."



The committee members work together to develop and present a plan. These plans then get questioned by the rest of the committee. The plans are then narrowed down from there. There are many different plans and ways to organize the schools, but there are no definite plans for the schools. Because there is no plan decided on yet, there is no knowing how much it will cost. As of right now, the most expensive plan is to stay how we are right now at 2 million dollars.

The last meeting was Saturday, November 16, and the committee is expected to give a recommendation very soon.

Dr. White commented, "If we change, nothing can happen fast." He added, "We have been and are continuing to listen. Nothing is decided on yet. And it will take lots of time and patience to be done."

Vapes: All You Need to Know

By Christian Mortimer and Noah Kollinger

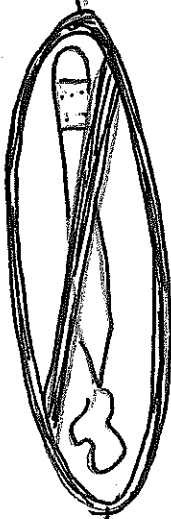
E-cigarettes, also known as vapes, have increased in popularity over the past few years. They are popular among adults and

teens and cause significant changes to the human body just like cigarettes.

Many companies have sprung up over the last few years to create a new form of smoking. Vaping is an electronic alternative to smoking cigarettes. The products are made for adults, but a lot of kids have been able to get them and use them illegally.

A vape is an electronic device that heats nicotine and fluid made up of many chemicals. Scientists are still unsure of how many chemicals there are, so they are uncertain of the dangers at the moment. Vapes can have flavored juice which makes the vapes taste better. Many people switch to vaping instead of cigarettes because they think it is a healthier alternative to smoking regular cigarettes.

Users under the age of 18 are the most at risk when it comes to vaping. This is so dangerous because they are putting chemicals into their still developing lungs, which could cause problems later on in their lives. In addition, some teens have suffered severe complications and even death due to using vapes that were laced with other drugs, substances of which they may or may not have been aware.



Teens are much fonder of vapes than cigarettes for multiple reasons, one reason being that the flavors of the juice are appealing to children. Some of these flavors are blueberry, mango, mint, coffee, etc. Under-aged users try these flavors and think they taste good, so they keep doing it. However, it is hard to quit because of the nicotine in the vapes. Nicotine is a very addictive chemical in vapes and cigarettes. Another reason is the peer pressure from other kids. Someone will try the vape then tell others about how safe and good it is, which causes the kids to do it; therefore, a pattern ensues.

Many of the students at Butler Intermediate High School agree with the statement that nicotine and the chemicals are bad for you. Some students call for a simple solution. One eighth grader commented, "Getting



rid of the flavors that appeal to kids would lower the number of teens that vape.”

The FDA actually created guidelines to ban the flavors of e-cigarettes on September 12, 2019. The only flavors are now mint and tobacco. They had to make this because so many kids were vaping, and there was no other way to stop them.

So how are students getting their hands on vapes if they aren’t old enough to buy them? According to Mrs. Bell, one of the school nurses, “Kids can get the vapes by stealing their parents’ vapes, illegally buying them off the streets, paying an older person to buy them, or ordering them online.”

Most people don’t actually know the effects that vaping has on the human body. Scientists don’t even know the long-term effects since they haven’t been around long enough, but that doesn’t mean there are no side effects to vaping. “Vaping can make your heart race at an unnatural pace, cause lung damage, and even death,” Mrs. Bell said. According to the CDC, a reported 42 people have died from vaping in the United States, and the number is constantly rising. Many of these deaths were young people.

Parents and educators can help prevent this harmful trend. “If we provide more education in the schools to show kids what it’s really doing to their bodies, then maybe they would think twice before doing it,” Mrs. Bell said.

For more information on the impact of vaping on our youth, please visit: www.fda.gov.

Custodial Staff Cleans Up

By Ariana Morrow and Brielle Pinto

Mr. John Tirk, the daylight custodian for the BIHS, works day in and day out to get his job done. Many people around the building had many wonderful things to say about him. Overall, the school believes Mr. Tirk is a great person, and he does his job well.

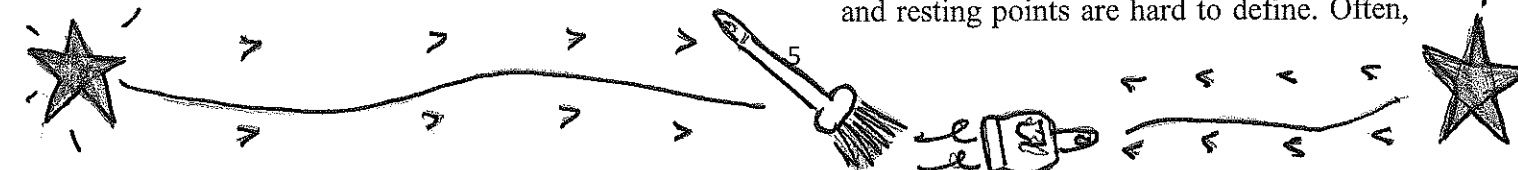
Mr. Tirk works hard at school but, just like everybody else, he likes to do things for fun, including golfing and working around his home. Mr. Tirk had always been a welder, and he enjoyed it very much. Then eventually he was working at DuBrook Concrete as a maintenance worker, but when he heard the opening in Butler, he immediately applied for and got the job. He started working in a school building in 2014 as a sub; then around 2017, he started to work full time. Then, Mr. Tirk started to work at the Intermediate.

Mr. Tirk enjoys his job, and he wouldn’t want to change much about it. His favorite part of his job is seeing the kids laughing and having fun, but he also has a least favorite part. As we all know, a custodial job can get very gross, but he says the grossest thing he has to do in a day would have to be cleaning the bathroom. In fact, he said that if he could change one thing about his job, he would choose to not clean bathrooms.

Mr. Tirk says that he really likes our building because of the kind teachers and students. “It is a great environment,” he said. Just because it can never be reinforced enough, if he were to give advice to all of the students, he would tell them, “Be kind to one another.”

Mr. Tirk is always busy and is always getting called to help out somewhere; as a result, his day goes really fast. His schedule consists of his sweeping the main hallways, cleaning the bathrooms, and any other assistance the office needs. A lot of Mr. Tirk’s time goes towards lockers. “Locker combinations can be really difficult,” he commented, which is why Mr. Tirk is always fixing them. On average, he fixes about seven lockers a day.

Since Mr. Tirk is always busy, breaks and resting points are hard to define. Often,





his only break is for lunch which is usually thirty minutes. But sometimes, he doesn't even get a lunch break because he's so busy!

Around the BIHS many people appreciate Mr. Tirk and what he does for our school. According to Mr. Dunn, the new assistant principal, "Mr. Tirk is very good at his job, and he is a hard worker. He is very kind and overall a nice guy who you would look forward to seeing and waving to in the hallways." Mr. Dunn is very appreciative of Mr. Tirk because he always does what he is asked to no matter how gross it is.

Security guards play a big role in the school day; therefore, they must run into the custodians a lot. The security guards see Mr. Tirk often because Mr. Tirk is always getting calls in the office, and the security guards say he never really seems to have a problem with the amount of work to be done. "Mr. Tirk does a wonderful job, and he is working hard constantly," commented one of the security guards.

The office is always busy and is always needing Mr. Tirk's help. Mrs. Casher was so enthusiastic when Mr. Tirk's name was brought up. She said, "I think he may get annoyed with us because we call him so much and ask for his help, but he is so kind that he never, ever complains about his amount of work." The whole office is so grateful for Mr. Tirk, and they say that there could be absolutely nobody better and kinder for the custodial job.

Overall, Mr. Tirk is a wonderful person that everybody loves in and out of the BIHS building; he is kind, hardworking, and a fun person to be around. Everybody here really appreciates him and what he does for our school. Nobody in the building would trade him for the world!

Clothing Trends

Keep Students Warm

By Alyssa Miller and Lily Vicari

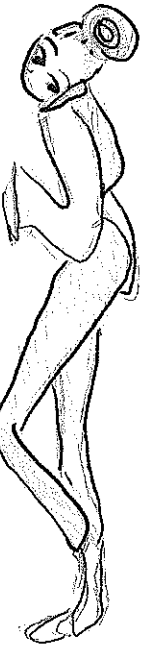
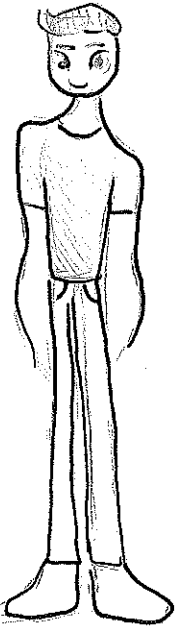
It's that time of year when it is cold, miserable, and dreary outside. But don't worry, BIHS student are keeping warm this year with new fashionable, cute, and comfy clothing trends. So, parents, as you are shopping this year for Christmas presents, keep these trends in mind.

First off, female and male trends are different yet still unique. Girls enjoy colors like yellow, white, black, red, dark/light blue, and maroon. Shirts that girls enjoy this wintery season include sweaters, long sleeves, T-shirts, and sweatshirts from Vineyard Vines, Simply Southern, American Eagle, Kohls, Ron Jon Surf Shop, Ivory Ella, and finally, Vans. To go along with these wintery shirts, girls wear ripped jeans, leggings, and sweatpants purchased from American Eagle, Nike, Adidas, Pink, and Under Armour.

Accessorizing is always important for female students, and they take it very seriously. Popular shoes this season are Vans, Ugg boots of any style, high top/low top Converse, Roxy's, athletic shoes, and Fila's. Other accessories girls wear include earrings, Pura Vida jewelry, scrunchies, and shell necklaces.

Boys' styles are simple yet fashionable to their gender. Seventh grader Brock Collins thinks that the styles are great this season. "They're poppin'," he said. Shirts that guys wear are t-shirts, long sleeve, and sweatshirts from Nike, Adidas, Thrasher, Abercrombie and Fitch, Champion, Hollister, Vineyard Vines, American Eagle, Under Armour, and Vans. With these trendy shirts, boys wear joggers, jeans, and sweatpants in popular colors like black, grey, white, yellow, navy, light blue, and red.

Some boys select shorts year-round, much to their parents' dismay. According to Emmet McClaine, a seventh grader, "Wearing shorts in the winter does not seem right."





Brock Collins thinks that it depends what you are doing. "It is ok if you are being active," he said. Finally, popular shoe brands for boys are checkerboard slip-on Vans, Jordan's, Adidas, Nike, and Under Armour tennis shoes.

Parents, we know that shopping for your pre-teen/teen can be a struggle. To make shopping a little easier, keep these fashionable, cute, and comfy clothing trends in mind.

Academic Games Enrich Learning

By Katie Smith and Caitlin Tayman

The academic games offer a great way for gifted students to expand their minds in math, English, logic, and history. According to Dr. DeThomas, one of the gifted coordinators at the Intermediate, "The academic games each address a different subject matter or way of thinking that extends beyond the ways students work in class."

Students play games, because it's challenging, while having a great time with friends. "They've introduced me to new people and made me think more," commented Lauren Beggs, a regular competitor.

There are five games, each with a different topic to address a unique way of thinking: Onsets, LinguisHTIKs, Presidents, Propaganda, and Equations.

The games each serve a specific function when educating students. Onsets is a logic-based game that teaches students to look at problems from a critical standpoint. Equations is a math game, where students create mathematical equations to solve a set goal. LinguisHTIKs is a game based in English that requires students to come up with a sentence based on certain regulations set by other competitors. In the Propaganda game, students identify different persuasion techniques taught and practiced before the competition. Finally, Presidents is a history-based game, where students compete in their knowledge of U.S presidents.

The students work very hard to prepare for the games during lunch and activity

periods, all with the goal that they will outwit the students from other schools at the competitions. If students place as an undefeated individual or on a first-place team, they have the opportunity to go to Tri-Bowl. From Tri-Bowl, they can proceed to nationals. Three Butler students have placed at nationals but never won.

"Academic games have really taught me a lot of diverse things because, in the games, I learn different math terms and English terms that I would not get the chance to learn in the normal classroom," observed Abbey Cornish, another Butler competitor.

Although the topics extend beyond normal classroom learning, they assist students with regular classes as well. "Since students are using a more complex thought process, it can help them become better students in the classes they're in," said Dr. DeThomas.

The games are funded by the gifted organizations, and although Dr. DeThomas would like more people to join the games, the financial issue is still apparent.

Good luck to all of the students participating in this year's academic games.

Butler's Junior Classical League Prepares for Convention

By Nicole Schroeder

Butler's Junior Classical League, also known as Latin Club, is a program run by the Latin teachers, allowing students to learn more about Roman culture and Latin language and to involve members in the language's connection with English vocabulary.

Every month, Latin Club hosts one club event, which includes raffles, food and drinks, the JCL song and motto, and celebrations of many Roman holidays. Having these regular events helps keep the students interested in Latin and their studies with the language. Many of the students in the program agreed the club is a safe space for them, as well as it improves their understanding of the English language and sharpens

communication skills after a year or so of being involved in multiple group activities.

The only qualification for joining the Classical League is that the student must take Latin as an elective. The new members can then fill out a form that asks about their interests and hobbies for convention, and pay a \$10 fee that goes to the club's funds for food so that members don't have to purchase all of the food themselves for club events.

Since there are only two Latin teachers in the district, they try to advertise outside their own classrooms, so that students taking other languages at least know about the club and can decide to switch to Latin for the opportunity of joining JCL if desired. "I would encourage students who are studying other languages who are interested to add Latin to their schedule for next year, in addition to their current language," said Mr. Kasperek, one of our well-loved Latin teachers.

The language of Latin is such an important part of the club because of its deep roots to the English language, so the members of the program have a better understanding of English vocabulary, skills, and grammar with different sentence types. Over 70% of the English language connects to Greek and Latin, so understanding these languages helps to grow our knowledge of our own world, and how it is based on the old ways of the ancient Romans and Greeks.

The biggest event the JCL is involved in is a statewide competition known as the PAJCL Convention, which is being held at Lock Haven University in May. After preparing for slightly under a year, students in the club will sign up to participate in countless events to earn points for Butler against other schools competing at the same campus. Some events listed are academic, athletic, creative arts, and many more specific events, so there is always something for everyone. There's no limit on how many events someone can do, so the more you do, the more points you can earn for Butler, which usually finishes in 2nd

or 3rd place in the end. The hope is that, this year, Butler will finish first.

The start of the Classical League can be traced back to 2001, when the club was created by the Senior High Magistra, Mrs. Russell. The IHS Magister, Mr. Kasperek, has been a sponsor of the club since 2004, and also says the IHS and the SHS integrate with each other when there is a club event.

According to Mr. Kasperek, "The JCL is a great group of talented Latin students who help each other expand their knowledge of Roman culture, language, and their deep connections with our modern English language, and our own modern culture."



Tyler Streamlines Communication and Data

By Alexa Geibel

Last year, Tyler, a new software used to replace Edline, was introduced into the Butler Area School District. Tyler was expected to make tasks, such as grading, parent communication, and scheduling, much easier to understand. After a period of adjustment, students, staff, and parents are pleased with the information Tyler provides.

Tyler provides staff with a well-organized platform to track grades, discipline, attendance, correspondence, and many other tasks. Butler had originally used Edline, but Tyler offers a much more user-friendly interface and additional information for everyone involved.

According to Mr. Dobransky, "Tyler provides an all-encompassing view of student and district data." The program is very useful, as it can track and report student achievement on an individual, classroom, school, and district level. Students, parents, and teachers can connect very easily through the online and mobile portal. The school staff can focus on a student on an individual level and spend less time focusing on multiple people at once. The system's core functionalities include attendance, discipline, fees and billing,



gradebook, reporting, scheduling, staff management, and assignments.

Disregarding all other uses, Tyler is mainly used to check grades and review assignments. As technological advancements are being made, students receive more privilege to access online websites and interact with other users. "My hope is that students check daily for assignments and grades," commented Mr. Dobransky. Tyler is also easy to install and portrays more about the schools, such as the district and overall activity. He added, "Everybody has access. Parents get the full view."

Many people believe that it was better to switch to Tyler than to stay with Edline. "Tyler is much more complex. It provides more information. The transition was difficult, but now it is more efficient," Mr. Dobransky explained. He also reasons that Edline did not have any technological support whatsoever. Many parents were irritated that the system did not work at first, but people eventually adapted.

According to Mr. Dobransky, the system is extremely precise when it comes to grading. "It's a tool that helps us do our job. The longer we use it, the easier it will be to navigate the system," he said. Tyler can be very handy for the beginning of a new school year, as parents can fill out forms online via the student and parent portal with Tyler's online registration. The program also includes student's lunch information, so they can keep track of their account balance.

Although Tyler is effective, there is still room for improvement. "We would like to become more stream-lined in parent and student log-ins and updating," Mr. Dobransky said. Most would describe it as when the system is up and running, it is a good resource. Tyler can prevent important information from getting lost or forgotten, since you are able to view Tyler for them.

Overall, Tyler is a very consistent and useful program that helps students, parents,

and teachers alike to have an informative school year.

Volunteers Improve School Environment

By Rylee Hurley and Brooke Martsolf

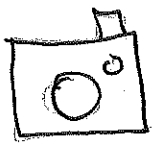
The Butler Intermediate High School students and staff are volunteering in creative ways to help the school and community.

Different clubs and organizations throughout the school work on projects all year long to improve morale and keep a positive atmosphere for students and staff. According to Mr. Dobransky, National Junior Honor Society, a ninth grade honorary, continually strives to stay involved and improve the school. The purposes of National Junior Honor Society are to create enthusiasm for scholarship, to stimulate a desire to render service, to promote leadership, and to develop character in the students of secondary schools.

The NJHS has certain qualifications to be a member. Members must have a GPA of 3.6+ and be enrolled in one or more honors classes, in addition to making contributions at school and in the community, demonstrating leadership, reflecting honesty, responsibility, courtesy, respect, and cooperation, and maintaining a clean discipline record. Mrs. Taoufik, the NJHS faculty sponsor, said, "NJHS members provide service for the school without pay." Mrs. Taoufik has been doing NJHS for five years. She loves working with students and watching them grow.

Students in all three grades can be involved in service by joining the Student Council. Student council members work on a variety of service projects in the school throughout the year; they recently made cards for veterans in nursing homes. In December, they will sell chocolate to benefit the Caring Angels program, providing medical care for children in the area who do not have insurance.

In addition, student council is working in cooperation with the photography



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classes and the Vo-Tech cosmetology department to offer a free family photo shoot to local families. According to Mrs. Sankey, the faculty advisor for student council, local families can sign up for a time to get their hair styled and have a family photo taken on Tuesday, December 3 from 3:30-7:30. A sign-up will be available online.

Mrs. Sankey has been the student council advisor for 28 years. Her favorite part is getting to know the kids and seeing them in a different setting. Mrs. Sankey thinks it's important for members to understand how to be a leader, to help people who are less privileged, and realize they are playing a role in the community.

Another service club at the IHS is Starfish. Although Starfish is known as an anti-bully program, many people don't realize that eighth and ninth grade leaders also participate in service projects. Leaders orchestrate food and clothing drives, visit classrooms to assist with advisory lessons, wrap Christmas gifts, and volunteer at local district-sponsored events, such as the Tuff Tornado Run.

Mrs. Reinhold coordinates the artistic and creative projects for Starfish. She commented, "The teachers talk to see if there is a need in the community or a way they can brighten up the school by using art or posters designed by the students." Her favorite project was when the students painted the windows above the pool. "We had fun painting and eating snacks together," she said.

Mr. Campbell is one of the art teachers in the building, and he assists with art and mural displays in the building. Mr. Campbell believes students enjoy working on the murals the most. He said, "The murals are something that will be up forever. It's something you can look back on years from now." The bigger projects can take up to a full year, where the smaller ones take about half a year.

Mrs. DeVanne is another art teacher in the building. She has only done one mural in the past but would like to make more in the

future. The one mural that she did is the new nature scene on the wall of the seventh-grade wing. She and seventh and ninth grade students got together two to three days every week after school until 6 o'clock. The paints were donated by Ace Hardware. She bought the brushes herself for \$30.

Christian DePollo was one of the ninth graders working on the nature mural last year. He said, "Working on any type of mural is extremely fun. You get to learn new things, and I will know my artwork will be there to inspire others and make someone's day brighter." He is now on the senior high student council and gets to use his creativity there. He will serve as the photographer for the student council's family portrait project.

He believes that having positive things throughout the halls and classrooms really gives students a productive perspective. He said, "School spirit is really important in such a big school. Having students participate in their school is such an awesome sight, and it really helps the school maintain a culture. It makes other students want to do the same thing, so having everyone interact really builds the school."

Fall Sports Teams Finish Stellar Season

By Jenna McClymonds and Jordyn Vandevort

This year was a very competitive season with all of the fall sports. Each team put all of their effort into each game, meet, or match.

Butler girls' volleyball had an outstanding fall season for both seventh and eighth grade. They all played well as a team and kept the energy up to win their games. Butler's seventh grade team had an outstanding season of 12-0, beating NA to finish undefeated. While Coach Williams still knows there are areas to improve, such as sometimes playing down to the other team's level, this did not show in their fantastic record.

Evie Paserba played very well as a setter and was a great asset to the team. Evie

Fun!!





commented, "Everyone kept a positive attitude and always helped each other out. Even when there were some conflicts, we made sure to not take it out on the court." According to Coach Williams, the home gym was a great environment to play games with fans cheering on the girls.

The eighth-grade girls' volleyball team also had an incredible season with a record of 11-1, only losing a close game to North Allegheny. Coach Holt believes that the girls won these games due to having a great attitude at practices and towards their teammates.

Ashley Figlioli said, "I loved playing this year, and I'll play on some club teams to prepare for next year." Both seventh and eighth grade coaches have been coaching for several years and played when they were younger. Both coaches want their players to learn to be good teammates and improve through the sport.

The Butler seventh and eighth grade boys' and girls' soccer teams also did very well this year. The seventh and eighth grade girls' team had an incredible record of 11-2-2, with their only losses coming from Fox Chapel and NA. Coach Gillan and Coach Mohney, also known as Gilly and Coach Mo, led the girls through a very tight season. One of their most challenging games was against Seneca Valley. They ended up tying them 0-0 in a competitive game.

The girls participated in camps in the summer and had pre-season practices two times a week. When school started, they had two or three games a week and practices after school on days they didn't have games. Leah Deal, a forward and one of the top goal scorers for the girls' team said, "I made a lot of new friends, and I love playing soccer so I will definitely play next year." Both Gilly and Coach Mo are sad to be losing the eighth graders to JV/Varsity, but are excited to see the seventh graders improve next season.

The boys' team had an incredible record of 12-0-4, ending with an undefeated

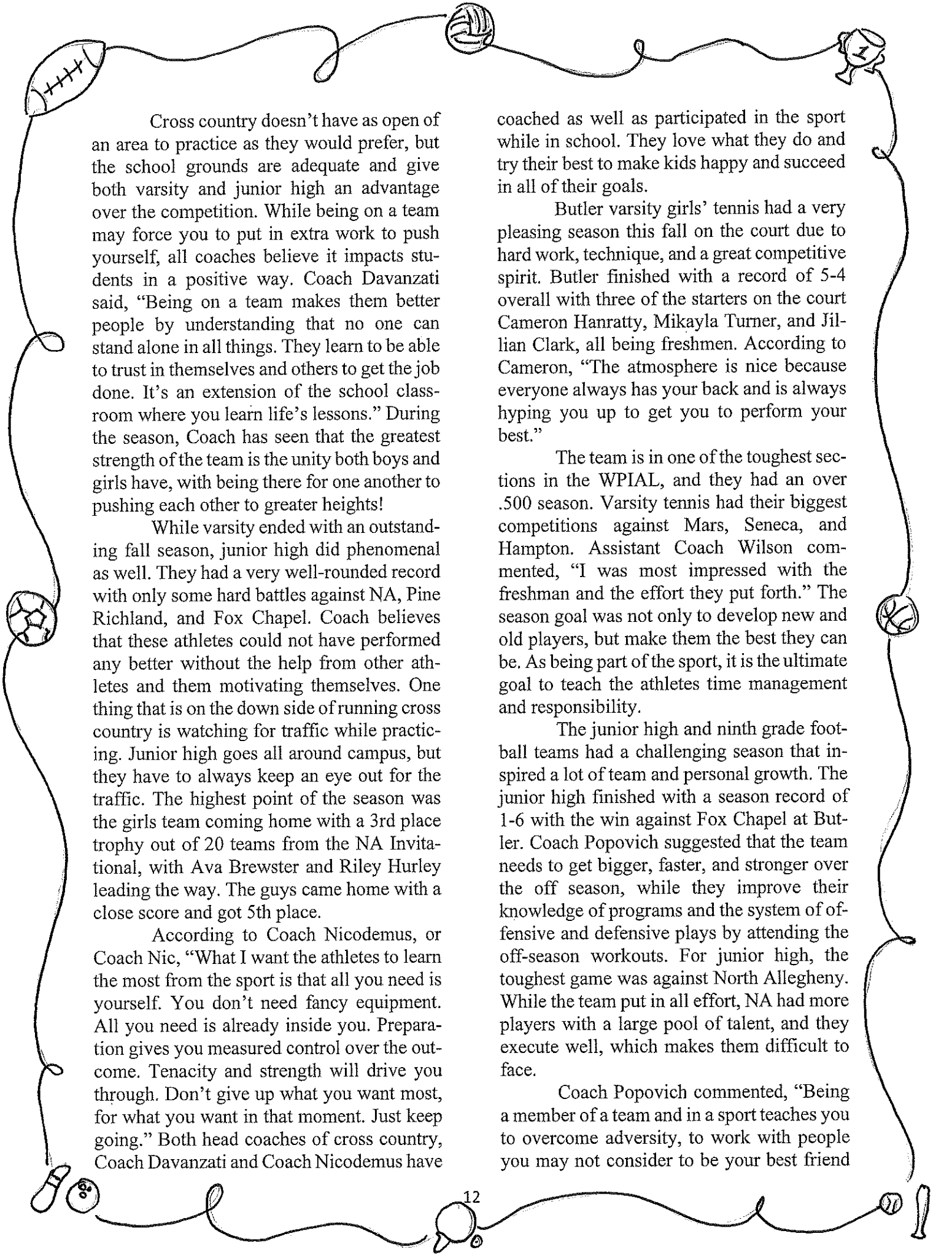
season. Coach Cory and Coach Zirpoli, also known as Coach Zirps, had very good coaching this season. The boys' pre-season consisted of two practices every week, focusing on fitness. Once school started, they normally had three games a week with practices in between. Since they had been training with each other so much before the season, they had gotten very close. Andrew Lucas, a center back on the Butler seventh and eighth grade team, commented, "We're all comfortable around each other, so it makes it easier to play with each other."

Another eighth grade defender, Nick Kilgore, suffered from an injury this season that kept him from playing the last few games. He said, "I went to as many games as I could to support my team." Coach Zirps wants his players to learn that hard work pays off.

Butler varsity and junior high cross country had a very outstanding record during the fall season at different meets as a result of hard practices, dedication to running, and great coaches! Coach Davanzati, known as Coach Dav, trained his team well with help from Assistant Coach Groomes, finishing off the season with 7-0 undefeated for guys and a 5-2 record season for girls with close scores. Varsity boys were team champions at the McDowell Invitational and Bill Lennox Invitational, also earning the title of WPIAL Section Champions, WPIAL District 7- Runners-up, and team qualifiers for the PIAA State Championships, while the girls' team only lost against NA and Seneca Valley. Both teams were defending state champions and runners-up, which makes them the hardest teams to race against.

Varsity girls were also tied for second place in the section and finished 5th out of 30 teams in the WPIAL championships, sending two girls for the PIAA State Championships. Coach Dav is very proud of all the goals that were exceeded during season with the help of each athlete believing in themselves and their fellow teammates.





Cross country doesn't have as open of an area to practice as they would prefer, but the school grounds are adequate and give both varsity and junior high an advantage over the competition. While being on a team may force you to put in extra work to push yourself, all coaches believe it impacts students in a positive way. Coach Davanzati said, "Being on a team makes them better people by understanding that no one can stand alone in all things. They learn to be able to trust in themselves and others to get the job done. It's an extension of the school classroom where you learn life's lessons." During the season, Coach has seen that the greatest strength of the team is the unity both boys and girls have, with being there for one another to pushing each other to greater heights!

While varsity ended with an outstanding fall season, junior high did phenomenal as well. They had a very well-rounded record with only some hard battles against NA, Pine Richland, and Fox Chapel. Coach believes that these athletes could not have performed any better without the help from other athletes and them motivating themselves. One thing that is on the down side of running cross country is watching for traffic while practicing. Junior high goes all around campus, but they have to always keep an eye out for the traffic. The highest point of the season was the girls team coming home with a 3rd place trophy out of 20 teams from the NA Invitational, with Ava Brewster and Riley Hurley leading the way. The guys came home with a close score and got 5th place.

According to Coach Nicodemus, or Coach Nic, "What I want the athletes to learn the most from the sport is that all you need is yourself. You don't need fancy equipment. All you need is already inside you. Preparation gives you measured control over the outcome. Tenacity and strength will drive you through. Don't give up what you want most, for what you want in that moment. Just keep going." Both head coaches of cross country, Coach Davanzati and Coach Nicodemus have


coached as well as participated in the sport while in school. They love what they do and try their best to make kids happy and succeed in all of their goals.

Butler varsity girls' tennis had a very pleasing season this fall on the court due to hard work, technique, and a great competitive spirit. Butler finished with a record of 5-4 overall with three of the starters on the court Cameron Hanratty, Mikayla Turner, and Jillian Clark, all being freshmen. According to Cameron, "The atmosphere is nice because everyone always has your back and is always hyping you up to get you to perform your best."


The team is in one of the toughest sections in the WPIAL, and they had an over .500 season. Varsity tennis had their biggest competitions against Mars, Seneca, and Hampton. Assistant Coach Wilson commented, "I was most impressed with the freshman and the effort they put forth." The season goal was not only to develop new and old players, but make them the best they can be. As being part of the sport, it is the ultimate goal to teach the athletes time management and responsibility.

The junior high and ninth grade football teams had a challenging season that inspired a lot of team and personal growth. The junior high finished with a season record of 1-6 with the win against Fox Chapel at Butler. Coach Popovich suggested that the team needs to get bigger, faster, and stronger over the off season, while they improve their knowledge of programs and the system of offensive and defensive plays by attending the off-season workouts. For junior high, the toughest game was against North Allegheny. While the team put in all effort, NA had more players with a large pool of talent, and they execute well, which makes them difficult to face.

Coach Popovich commented, "Being a member of a team and in a sport teaches you to overcome adversity, to work with people you may not consider to be your best friend



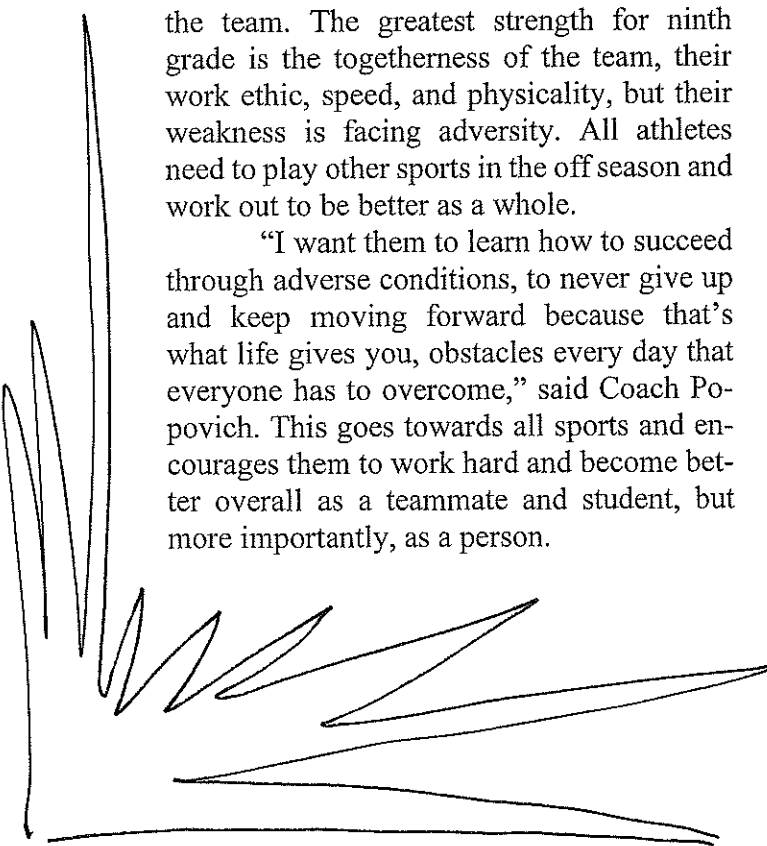
to achieve a common goal. It also teaches you how to make instruction and take instruction, how to force yourself to do things that need to be done even when you don't particularly want to do it." Overall, the junior high team fought hard to make it through the season with different conditions and they did their best.



Ninth grade football finished with a record of 2-5 with the team being extremely competitive in every game. During the season, they earned respect with opponents as a tough, skilled, physical football team. The lowest point for ninth grade was losing to Pine Richland at the tail end of the game, although the team has conquered NA and dominated them at home. According to Coach Smith, "Parents have the greatest impact on the team because they have to get their kids to practice in the summer. They also need to support the team regardless of how their child is doing. Everyone from players to coaches to parents have to put the needs of the team first."

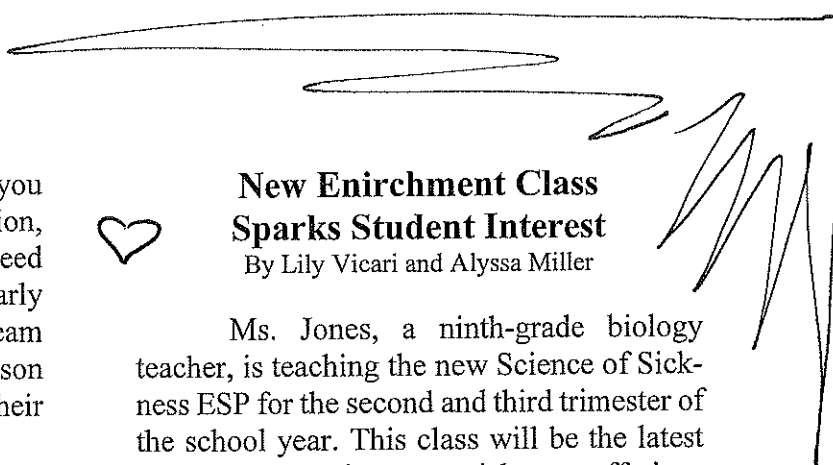
Being on a team impacts students by teaching them to be selfless and humble, to sacrifice for each other and for what's best for the team. The greatest strength for ninth grade is the togetherness of the team, their work ethic, speed, and physicality, but their weakness is facing adversity. All athletes need to play other sports in the off season and work out to be better as a whole.

"I want them to learn how to succeed through adverse conditions, to never give up and keep moving forward because that's what life gives you, obstacles every day that everyone has to overcome," said Coach Popovich. This goes towards all sports and encourages them to work hard and become better overall as a teammate and student, but more importantly, as a person.



New Enrichment Class Sparks Student Interest


By Lily Vicari and Alyssa Miller



Ms. Jones, a ninth-grade biology teacher, is teaching the new Science of Sickness ESP for the second and third trimester of the school year. This class will be the latest in a long line of great enrichment offerings for students in seventh and eighth grade.


ESP is an enrichment studies program that 230 out of 1188 students in the BIHS have earned the opportunity to take; that is 19% of the students in our school. ESP started in the late 1970s but has changed with the times to adapt to a changing world.

Students involved in ESP have a high GPA and proficient or advanced PSSA scores. Some of the original classes differ from the classes now. Back then, students selected classes such as Genetics, Pioneer Skills, Author and their Works, Biographies, French I, Reading Research, Animal Welfare, Botany, Math Counts, New Atlantis, Zoology, Geo Races, Mapping the World, and finally, Traditions. That was only a few of the many options that they offered. Some of the favorite ESP classes of the 2019/2020 school year include: TV/Video, Yearbook, Drama, and Calcubot.




ESP was an ungraded class until two years ago. The thought process behind not giving formal grades was that students were taking the courses for fun, and teachers did not want to add the stress of grades. Over time, however, the teachers found that students did not work as hard without the accountability of grades, and because ESP takes the place of a second English class for seventh graders and a full-year Geography class for eighth graders, they decided to give grades. According to Mr. Casher, on the coordinators of ESP, "ESP offers a good opportunity for enrichment."

The only new ESP offering this year is Ms. Jones's new class, the Science of Sickness. In this class, students will learn about

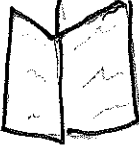


the flu, bacterial infections, cancer, how to treat different infections, viruses, and how they spread. She is very excited about teaching this class because it is something new and different from Biology. "I have always been interested in this field, and I think the students will be too," Ms. Jones commented.



Ms. Jones thinks that this class is one of the top three classes if students are interested in science. A typical day in this class will be: find your seat and learn about the topic. Along with this topic, students will do a lab dealing with what they have learned. The students will also do research along with the topic. As they explore this field of science, they will be swabbing places around the school for bacteria, along with swabbing their clothing and belongings. According to Ms. Jones, it is a challenge coming up with materials for a new grade level, but she is excited to get to know some seventh and eighth graders. "ESP breaks up my day so that I am not teaching the same class all day every day," she said.

ESP has been around for a long time, yet it is still changing constantly, meeting the enrichment needs of Butler's dedicated students.



Veterans Honored During November Assemblies

By Jordyn Vandevort and Jenna McClymonds

On Friday, November 8, seventh, eighth, and ninth graders attended Veteran's Day assemblies in honor of the national holiday, celebrated on November 11. Each assembly was unique and taught students about the experiences and duties of veterans.

The seventh graders learned all about proper flag folding, the POW/MIA flag, and the missing man table, by observing the ceremonies that go along with them. Students also watched two videos on the topic. Eight different veterans took time out of their day to come to share at the assembly. These veterans who served for our country were Chris Heinack, Floyd Case, Bill Wilson, Rick

Smith, Jim Bianchi, Ron Schenelle, Rich Geyer, and Denny Anderson.

The first video began with the coast guard sailing across the ocean to fight, and it showed the flight of the aircraft carrier. The second video was called "I Fought for You," and it shared a moving story about people who fought for our freedom. One of the powerful lines was: "In the name of God and country, I learned to define gravity, to honor my family. I lived in the belly of the beast, I fixed the hearts of iron monsters, I became a worm in the mud, for dignity, for honor, for righteousness, for God and our country... I fought for you."

The next portion of the assembly was the American flag folding. There are 13 different folds that represent the original 13 colonies that became the first states, and each fold, they explained, has a different significance. The next things talked about were the Prisoner of War, Missing-In-Action flag and the missing man table. The flag reads, "You are not forgotten," and it flies under the American Flag. The missing man table stands in every American Legion, and it remembers someone missing in action, with each item on the table having a separate significance.

The eighth-grade assembly focused on the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier is located in Arlington National Cemetery. During the assembly, Mr. McMahon, a retired guard of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier from 1987-1988, talked about his experience training for the military. He joined the army in 1984 and trained for nine tough months in Georgia. During his 20 years in the army, he was selected to be a guard for the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. He felt very honored to be chosen to guard it because he said, "People's families from World War I would go there, and they considered it their families."

The back of the tomb, which has been guarded since the 1940's, reads: "Here rests in honored glory an American soldier known but to God." The Tomb guards march 21

• Thank • You • Veterans • !



steps down the black mat behind the Tomb, turn, face east for 21 seconds, turn and face north for 21 seconds, then take 21 steps down the mat and repeat the process. The number 21 symbolizes the highest military honor that can be bestowed, the 21-gun salute. Out of respect for the dead, the guards carry a rifle on the outside shoulder - away from the Tomb.

Many of the students in attendance visited the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier that next weekend on their trip to DC. A few of the students even had the privilege of laying a wreath at the tomb, a ceremony that takes place over 2,000 times each year.

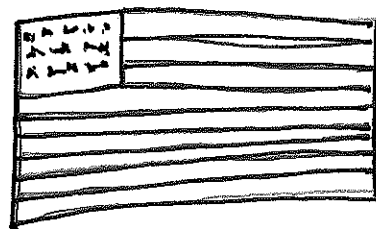
During the ninth-grade assembly, the students learned about our very own Sgt. Howard and his experience in the army. Sgt. Howard went to training as a senior in high school in 1984 because he wanted to get discipline from the recruiter, so he asked for the hardest job in the army. While at training, they would get one meal a day and at most two hours of sleep. Sgt. Howard went to airborne school for three weeks, for learning how to land, gain speed, and jump with a parachute. He also went to ranger school for 68 days, where you run, do road marching, survival tests, and more. Sgt. Howard then went to pathfinder school after that, which is jumping from a plane anywhere from 4,000 to 20,000 feet. When he was at these schools and trainings, he learned little bird assault, waterborne operations, jungle operations, and about special ops jeeps.



During this time, Sgt. Howard went to Somalia, Honduras, and desert training. When Sgt. Howard was in the army, he told a story of how he was shot and could not move from this casualty; he was paralyzed from the neck down and had to wait for a medic to patch him up and take him. "I remember shooting at the enemy, then the next thing I knew, I was on the ground," Sgt. Howard told the audience. While being treated to stay alive, Sgt. Howard had to get his lungs reinflated with a chest tube, and he got to watch the medic cut his chest open in between the ribs.

After injury, Sgt. Howard was done in the army and luckily survived. He got to be a ranger instructor in Florida, then a senior drill sergeant. After those duties, he became the ROTC instructor at Slippery Rock University, and he now teaches here at Butler. The ninth graders were all very interested in his experiences and amazed at the service he gave to our country.

These assemblies at the Intermediate remind the students each year of the importance of respecting our military and remember those who have lost their lives fighting for our freedom, not just every November 11th, but every day.



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