

The Signal



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AP Exam Guidance

By Abby Hernandez

Advanced placement classes are classes designed to give students college-level coursework. Many students at Fenton enroll in at least one AP class; as the exams approach, many students contemplate whether or not they should take the exam; and wonder how to study for it. Though no one can honestly tell you whether to take the exam or not, many people can give you advice on what to do. Whether you ask a student, teacher, or online resources, there are many ways to make this decision and prepare.

Student Roza Grochal says, "I recommend taking AP classes, but only three. If you take more, be prepared to be stressed. They are hard classes, and it's hard to balance extracurricular activities and these classes, though they are hard. I do recommend the test because, if anything, you can always remove it from your transcript. The money for the test justifies itself if you go to a college that accepts AP scores."

One of the best ways to study for these tests is by taking good notes. By having helpful notes when reviewing, going back will take less time at the end of the year. Other good ways to study are study groups, hearing the terms used and having friends to help you check your information is very helpful. Toward the end of the year, I recommend getting a group from your class and reviewing all the units. There are also many online resources available to help. Though some you have to pay for, many great options are free. Such as Khan Academy or AP Classroom

Now whether you take the exam or not is up to you. The exams are expensive. However, it would be best if you justified it at your discretion. If you are willing to put in the effort, you should consider the exam, but if you know that when exam time comes around, you won't be ready, nor will you put in the time to study, then maybe don't take the exam. Nobody can tell you what to do in this case, but if you are unsure, I recommend reaching out to your teacher or past AP students and asking them if they think it would be beneficial. Be strategic in how you pick your exams. If you take many AP classes and cannot take them all, decide which ones benefit you the most or the ones you have confidence in taking.

AP Psychology teacher Ms. Ranjana Rajendran says, "As an AP teacher, in a perfect world, everyone would take the exam because studying for a test like the AP test is a great way to engage in productive struggle. However, these exams are not cheap, so I completely understand if students have to be strategic about the exams they must take."

Yes, AP teachers would love it if you took the exam. However, this is not a decision for them to make. No matter what, your teacher will be there to support you.

So whether or not to take the exam is up to you, but don't stress out about it because you will have support systems all around you. All you have to do is reach out for help!



Courtesy of Rick Kambic

Anti-Bullying Campaign

By Maelyn Birchfield

Throughout the month of October, Fenton has been actively engaging on the topic of bullying. Although bullying has been a worldwide issue for generations, October pushes it into the forefront. Since anti-bullying month was the center of attention during October, Fenton hosted an event during each lunch hour, where students could write motivating quotes for others to view on a chalkboard wallpaper

reason, considering that everyone has their own problems. Many speculate, when being bullied, one believes that girls are more verbal towards each other, while boys are more physical. Though, Madl thinks differently about this such stereotype. It definitely goes both ways, and isn't one way or another.

Other than bullying in general, cyber bullying is a real problem in today's society, with the increasing use of social media



throughout the decades. Cyber bullying is just as awful as bullying, as it can lead to depression and other issues. One cannot always identify whether someone is being cyberbullied.

On this subject,

as a means of encouraging others who may need it.

So what defines a bully? Well, according to Mr. Madl, one of the school's deans, it's someone who craves acceptance and gratification from others, as well as wanting attention and believing it makes them look cool.

Madl commented further on this, explaining that bullying can "take different forms, it can be physical or verbal, or it can be under the radar, social media, email, but they're all equally harmful."

With that, he also said that, while such people exist, he feels they would not be critical for no

one student voiced their opinion. Freshman Aurora Reyes commented, "Cyber bullying is a very serious issue that many people overlook, and it is not limited to the school day or school grounds."

I think that its stupid people just go on there just to prove someone wrong just to make themselves feel better, even if it's for a stupid thing," freshman Elizabeth Inmann said.

If you or someone you know is being bullied or cyberbullied, at school or anywhere. You should always go to a trusted adult or a friend if you are experiencing this problem.

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New Improv Club Fosters Creativity, Flexibility

By Jadyn Golz

Improv (short for “improvisation”) club meets after school every other Tuesday in the auditorium. As the name suggests, the club mainly focuses on improving an acting skill called “Improvisation theater,” where actors act out a sketch with no script. Instead, they make the scene up as the sketch continues.

Dr. Mike Mitchell sponsors the club. He states, “I think that improv is a skill that we use in a lot of different fields. It’s not just for acting. I think everybody improv[ises] every day. We’re going with the flow and having to make things up off the cuff. The cool thing about this club is that you’ll learn [quick-thinking] skills and get more tools for handling situations when they’re thrown at you.”

Mitchell comments, “Acting is [mostly] the same skills that improv touches upon. Improv is the first step. I think that before you can start to analyze a script and develop character, you have to [do] improv first.”

Senior Delilah Johnson states, “The improv club has helped me develop a character, which is heavily applicable to this year’s fall play, *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged)*. This play has a lot of improv-esc aspects to it. For example, there are moments in the play where we have to build off the audience’s reaction. Improv has helped me develop my character [so that I] know how my character would respond to different scenarios. It’s pretty exciting!”

Improv is a skill that one can use outside of the theater as well. Improv helps to build “critical thinking skills, creative thinking skills, and being able

to work as a team,” Mitchell states. He continues, “Listening is an important part of [improv] because you must listen to your partners to develop the storyline or character. You start not knowing what the relationship is, and then suddenly they say, ‘Mom!’ Then you think, ‘Yeah, I’m their mother.’ Then you have to fill in the rest.”

“I think many people think that anything goes [in improv], and you *do* have to go into it with that kind of mentality. But, there are certain parameters. For example, if somebody suggests something in improv, the *one rule* that everybody has to agree to is ‘yes and...’ You can’t say no because the minute you do that, it ends,” Mitchell comments.

Johnson states, “I decided to join improv because I enjoy playing improv games and creating characters!”

Mitchell is also involved with an improv club outside of Fenton. Because of this, Johnson notes that “I knew that it’d be a good experience to work with him!”

“I’m working on getting some people that do improv for a living to come in and do some workshops with the students,” Mitchell continues.

“We’re [also] looking to go to an improv club that will be student-appropriate [because] some of these clubs can get a little more mature. We’re going to do some things, work with some professionals, and learn some more tricks of the trade.”

If students are interested in joining Improv Club, they can reach out to Mitchell at mitchellm@fenton100.org.

Homecoming 2022 Week Review



By Edgar Martinez

Homecoming turned out to be quite the event this year! From the wacky outfits riddled throughout the halls for school spirit, to the homecoming bonfire where the court was announced. Easy to say that many people were on their feet for that entire week.

On September 29th, the homecoming bonfire was held at the Fenton stadium. Every JV sport team was announced and had their own shine in the spotlight.

“It was great getting the support of the school and their

recognition at the bonfire,” said Girls Cross Country member Mariflor Rosas.

Afterwards, the Class Olympics were started including egg toss, tug of war, water balloon toss, and the soccer kick. The 2022 school court was announced shortly after, and congrats to this the winners of the 2022 court! The rest of the night was spent dancing along the bonfire with music loud enough to rattle you and dancing.

“I have no clue what’s going on right now, I can’t feel my leg, yet I’m enjoying every moment of it”

said Valeria de la Cruz, before being swallowed by the mosh pit before my eyes.

In the end, general consensus is that the bonfire was a major success, and exciting on top of it.

The very next day on the 30th, the Fenton homecoming game was held at our stadium, going toe to toe with Bartlett. While Fenton did unfortunately lose, not only was it a close game, going down to the wire, but the team spirit shown was almost unrivaled. “

I saw that everyone was really involved and showed their bison spirit for our school at the game, some seniors even wore their pride on their (bare) chest,” said Chloe Lamb, a student council member and attendee of the game.

So while we may not have won in points, we beat everyone else in our character, and had fun whilst doing it.

On the first of October, the Fenton 2022 homecoming dance was

held in our field house from 7pm to 10pm. Put together by our awesome and dedicated Student Council who worked day in and day out to finalize it all.

“The council has put a tremendous amount of work into making this dance the best it possibly could be, and even then, working on it has not detracted from how much I enjoyed actually participating in the dance,” stated Jazmin Pizarro, a student council representative.

It appears to be unanimous that the night was one to remember for quite some time, Ian Joaquin stating “I stepped on lots of toes, bust multiple moves, and heard ‘Faneto,’ and that’s all I needed”

All in all, homecoming week and its events were some of the most memorable and noteworthy times we’ve had thus far in the year. Despite the expectations now, get ready for more great times and memories to be made for the rest of the year.



All photos courtesy of Rick Kambic

Interact Club: RYLA Weekend Trip

by Lucy Johnson

Interested in improving your community, spending time with friends, and getting community service hours? Well, then the Interact club might be for you! Interact is a global program that works in collaboration with local Rotary Clubs for students aged 12-18 made to encourage students to better their communities through leadership and selflessness. There are over 15,000 Interact clubs in 145 countries, and Fenton’s Interact club is sponsored by the Bensenville-Wood Dale Rotary Club. Interact members ran a fun run last month and are participated in a coat drive on October 15th.

Two students, Sarah Guerrero Gorostieta and Alexa Calderon, members of Interact, were chosen this year to attend the Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) a weekend at Holiday Home Camp on Lake Geneva in Wisconsin. The weekend consisted of games, team building activities, and opportunities to grow as leaders, all expenses paid by our local Rotary Club.

They started their trip on Friday, October 7, arriving at a scavenger hunt where they got to know the area and completed challenges. This is when they realized just how beautiful the area was with the fall trees just starting to change colors.

After they went to eat in the dining hall, Guerrero Gorostieta states, “We were both surprised with how good the food was, but it was delicious, with many options for any diet.”

All meals were provided with the trip.

Later, they were taught about what the Rotary does, locally, nationally, and globally. They were taught about a volunteer-based program put on by the Rotary titled, Shelter Box. Shelter Box is a disaster relief organization that puts together packages of things such as temporary shelters, solar lights, cooking sets, etc., for families who have been hit by natural disasters.

Calderon states that the presentation taught he that “rotary is a lot bigger and more important than people think. A lot of their work goes unrecognized but not unnoticed, and should be brought into the community more.”

Guerrero Gorostieta states, “It inspired me to learn more about Rotary and, because it really takes on a new sense of community. After the informational presentation, students partook in more leadership and team building exercises with others attending the experience.

Guerrero Gorostieta states, “Saturday and Sunday morning we grouped up with the Outdoor Wisconsin Leadership School (OWLS) to engage in physically and mentally demanding teamwork activities. There was an activity where we have to get a group of 14 people over a twelve foot wall, without ropes or climbing materials, but it was a safe and comfortable experience with building trust and learning about our own capabilities. It was a new perspective on leadership.”

With the program they got to meet people they wouldn’t have met

otherwise.

Calderon continues, “With rock climbing you either get put in a group with one or two other people I went with two other people, being forced to work with people I’ve never met before.”

They got the chance to meet people from all over the world with exchange students from Brazil, Sweden, and Germany. If you’re interested in an exchange program, you can do it through the Rotary!

The girls spoke about how not only did they learn leadership skills but also learned about teamwork and working in a community.

Guerrero Gorostieta explains, “We learned a lot about compassion and having 60 kids who are all leaders in their own communities was an experience that allowed all of us to grow together, so learning how to lead with other leaders was very beneficial.”

Calderon carries on, “We learned leadership is not a position but an action. There’s doesn’t have to be just one leader, and that’s what the activities were all about. It taught us that it’s okay to follow sometimes, and you learn a lot when you follow. Trusting yourself, and others something that can carry you through hundreds of new experiences.”

Throughout the trip, they were able to unplug, not because their phones were taken away but because they didn’t feel the need to be on their phones so often. The girls spoke about how they were so busy and focused about tasks at hand and heartfelt bonds being made that they didn’t feel the need to check their phones.

Calderon shares, “We were allowed to have phones with us but didn’t feel the need to use them for long periods of time, and only rarely used it to take pictures and it was surprisingly the best part of the trip, disconnecting and focusing on ourselves and the people around us.”

During the trip, they partook in a Kindness Campaign project where their groups worked together come up with something they can do to improve their community. Alexa and Sarah worked with students from the Chicago Heights area to plan a month of planting flowers in different communities with local Interact clubs, in order to help spread awareness for May which is Mental Health Awareness month. This program helped the girls create connections and they hope to “Interact” with the students they met through the program soon.

Ms Rebecca Norris, English teacher and InterACT sponsor, encourages anyone interested to join, saying that “There are members across all grade levels and all are welcome to join! Get community service, there are lots of activities to choose from. Students who want to join, come with ideas for community service and how we can improve the school!”

If you’re interested in joining Interact and having the chance to be nominated to go on next year’s RYLA trip, there’s monthly meetings in the mornings and after school on Mondays, so contact Ms. Norris located in Room 410, or at norris@fenton11.org with any questions!

Hands-on Learning in Criminal Justice

By Abby Hernandez

Criminal Justice has been working on the Police Project for the past six weeks. A project where students have the opportunity to engage in hands-on activities and further develop their critical thinking skills. During this process, students met with many field experts to do research.

Ms. Kelly Torres has been doing this project for a while now, but it keeps developing and getting more depth over time.

“This project allows students to get a once in a lifetime experience to sit down with police in a positive way” “it makes students more engaged because of it being a hand on project; while also focusing on college skills,” said Torres.

This once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to sit down with a police officer in a favorable situation. It also prepares students for college life, where they must research, present and communicate with others. It prepares

them for a life of public speaking and being a part of the community.

One priority for this class is to understand everyone is human, not sugarcoat things, but address fundamental issues in the world that need to be reformed and discussed. This project builds a relationship between students and police officers. Both sides are recognized, and changes are presented and heard.

“I feel like the research we did made it more eye opening to what the officers go through in a day. It reminded me they are people too,” said criminal justice student Angie Mendoza

Throughout this project, students met with officers and proposed projects on reforms they believed needed revision. Not only does this create a positive relationship between police and students, but it also gives students a more prominent voice in their future.

The students love seeing the change they can make but also learn

there is a balance at which things to change. Criminal Justice presented their presentations to whoever wanted to see them and then took the best solutions given to the issues in our community and sent them to the local Police Departments to try to implement them and change the community for the better.

This project demonstrates what project-based learning is all about while giving students a voice in what happens to their future.



Courtesy of Kelly Torres

Illinois State University

By: Jadyn Golz
100 N University St, Normal, IL 61761
Established in 1857
Average SAT: 1116
Average ACT: 23
In State Tuition: \$11,524
Out of State Tuition: \$23,048
Application Fee: \$50
86% of Students Receive Financial Aid
Notable Alumni:
Keith Habersberger
John Malkovich
Brendan Hunt
Gary Sinise
Laurie Metcalf
Sean Hayes
Craig Robinson
Jane Lynch
Adam Kinzinger
Some FHS Alumni:
Dr. Mike Mitchell
Mr. Dan Latka
Ms. Kristine Larson
Mr. Patrick Escobedo
Specialties:
Teaching and Education

State Rep. Candidate Speaks to Guerrero Gorostieta

by Sarah Guerrero Gorostieta

On Tuesday, November 8th, 2022, a new name will appear on this year's midterm elections ballot, under the Illinois District 77 Democratic nominee, for the first time since 2013. Candidate Norma Hernandez defeated ten-year incumbent Kathleen Willis in the Democratic primary for the Illinois House of Representatives 77th District nomination with one hundred ninety-nine votes. Hernandez now runs against Anthony Airdo, District 77's Republican nominee.

Illinois District 77 is comprised of townships Melrose Park, Franklin Park, Northlake, Stone Park, and Bensenville, along with parts of Addison, River Grove, Elmwood Park, Des Plaines, Elk Grove Village, Elmhurst, and Rosemont. According to the 2020 United States Census Bureau, 62.5% are of Hispanic ethnicity. Hernandez is the first Latina running for the Illinois 77th State House District.

From Stevenson Elementary to Proviso East High School, Hernandez explains that studying at schools that struggled with low graduation rates did not set her up for success, but today, it empowers her to investigate local systemic education issues.

"I remember graduating with a 15 on my ACT. I went to my counselor, and I expressed that I really wanted to go to college. Hearing them say 'are you sure?' discouraged me tremendously. They pushed me to attend Triton College, even though I asked for assistance in applying to other institutions. Then, it took me five years to get my associate's degree in arts from Triton. It was really hard to see my other friends graduating, but it wasn't until then that I understood the issue- it's really difficult to succeed when school systems continuously fail you," Hernandez states.

As a teenager, Hernandez worked cleaning homes for her aunt's neighbor's cleaning company. The value of hard work is something that remains deeply rooted in her family, as she comes from generations of agricultural workers from Jalisco, Mexico. She has helped her parents with their shop at their local flea market for the past 15 years, while also working full-time at the Walgreens in Melrose Park for 12 years.

When discussing the minimum wage in Illinois, she expressed that "We're not where we need to be, and we haven't been for over a decade. It should be and should have been fifteen dollars. A minimum wage, at the bare minimum, should cover basic life essentials. It is for that reason that I support taxing large companies and supporting small businesses. We should be caring for all of our people."

Los Buenos Diaz, a Mexican Grill located at 224 W Green St Unit B, in Bensenville, became one of her favorite locally owned businesses, which she discovered while canvassing in the Bensenville-Wood Dale area.

After obtaining a Bachelor's degree in social work from Aurora University, Hernandez attended the University of Illinois in Chicago (UIC), for her Master's degree in Urban Planning and Policy, which she describes to be her life's true pivoting point.

"It was at UIC that I had my first, and only, tenure Mexican Chicana professor, and she changed my life. Not only did she look like me, but she understood me, and empowered me to immerse myself in my community, and advocate for myself," Hernandez recalls, adding that "It was then that I started to thrive in school, and in my personal life, too. Looking back, I see that I exuded a new sense of confidence in all aspects of my life. That was really powerful."

Hernandez became the first Latina to ever be elected as a Trustee at Triton College, where minority enrollment is close to 70%, a majority of that percentage being Hispanic. Advocating for transparency and anti-corruption ethics, Hernandez

represented thousands of students on the school board, championing equity and change.

Besides her Trustee position, she worked at a non-profit in Englewood, a South Side Chicago neighborhood. There, she investigated how public policy affects the learning of others in the way it affected her education. Her current work as an Urban Planner, has allowed her to work with Chicago Public Schools, teaching students, and empowering students, to be more actively involved in our democracy, from their local government to our federal government through a process called Participatory Budgeting.

"A target on my back," is how Hernandez describes feeling throughout her ongoing campaign.

"I constantly feel monitored, especially as a woman, and a Latina. Everyone reminds me that I have to be careful when it comes to voicing my opinions. But I trust myself. At the beginning of this campaign, I had to remind myself that I worked full-time while running for the Triton Board. I was able to create real, effective change there. It has been a constant effort reminding myself that I am qualified, if not more than qualified, to represent this District."

The Norma For State Representative campaign is heavily community led, and Hernandez explains that "Our suburbs deserve the political representation to serve efficient change and the community involvement that drives my campaign has helped me get a sense that we are ready for change. I am so thankful for all of the support I've found. I feel as though I've found a new family, and that is something I hope to bring to a District level."

Learn more about Norma's plan at normaforstaterep.com, and visit vote.org for more on how you can exercise your right to vote this November 8th. Early voting is open.



Photo courtesy of www.normaforstaterep.com

Hernandez Reports on Non-Detainable Offenses

by Abby Hernandez

Illinois chose to pass a law and create non-detainable offenses. These non-detainable offenses include second-degree murder, kidnapping, robbery, burglary, arson, and threatening a public official, which may seem concerning, but only if you don't know what non-detainable means concerning this act. Social media has negatively presented non-detainable offenses; however, once you filter through what you have consumed, they become much less concerned and may even become comforting.

Let's start from the beginning. At the beginning of 2021, Illinois passed the SAFE-T act, which addresses changes to how arrests happen, policing, sentencing and corrections. The SAFE-T act is revisiting old traditions that require reforms.

"The SAFE-T is abolishing cash bounds, so people won't have to post bail if they are charged with committing a crime," said Fenton police liaison officer Patrick Fajardo.

It addresses the massive disproportion between those who can afford bail and who cannot. Initially, law enforcement put bail in place to ensure that someone who posed a threat to society could not be released back into the community. However, this targets specific groups of people who do not have money, whereas people who can afford a high bail will be released no matter the crime.

In simpler terms, if a rich person commits the same crime as a person who doesn't have as much money, the rich person will be able to pay bail and be released back into the community, though they may be a threat. Thus, this doesn't make the community any safer, as some people may think.

The SAFE-T Act is where non-detainable offenses stem. From now on, most minor offenses will be a citation and release situation; for more significant offenses, the criminal in question will set up a court day and is expected to show up. They

will be released from the station without being put in a holding cell unless the judge decides otherwise. This way, we aren't letting a monetary situation choose whether or not a person is released into society; we are allowing a judge to use discretion to make the decision.

During my interview, criminal justice teacher Ms. Kelly Torres points out that you are innocent until proven guilty in America. The SAFE-T act and the non-detainable offenses help ensure that it stays true. Non-detainable offenses simply abolish cash bonds and hold people until their court date unless the judge decides they are too dangerous to the community to release them.

How is this beneficial, though? And does it make a difference to us? The act is helping people because there have been many cases in which the person who couldn't pay bail was held in a cell until their court date for years; then, at their court date, they were found not guilty. Thus, not only were they holding an innocent person in a cell, but we were also paying taxes for that innocent person to be in jail. When someone is in jail, they still need to be fed, clothed, housed, and given necessities. That money comes from the community through taxes.

In perspective, this isn't a significant change because people who commit crimes won't get their corrections. Instead, it is a change so that police will be less responsible for things that happen when people are being held and that people won't have to pay taxes to support them in jail.

Overall, you will not see much change due to the non-detainable offenses because if someone is truly a danger to society, the judge will decide not to let them back into the community. The media is blurring the line between fact and fiction, but the outcome of this act will affect you far less than being presented.

The Doomsday Clock; Measuring Global Catastrophe

by Andrew Jakubowski

The Doomsday Clock was created in 1947 and we are currently 100 seconds away from midnight. When the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists created it, the time was 7 minutes to midnight. 1991 was the furthest it has ever been from midnight at 17 minutes. This was after the United States and the Soviet Union agreed to the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START).

The goal of START was to reduce the number of nuclear weapons that both the United States and the Soviet Union had. Shortly after both countries agreed to START, the Soviet Union collapsed. This was another event that led to the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists deciding to move the clock to 17 minutes to midnight. They knew the world was still a dangerous place. START didn't force the United States and Russia to retire their nuclear weapons. This means they were still allowed to have them, even if they were still functioning nuclear weapons. They also didn't agree to stop testing nuclear weapons. Even then, the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists agreed to move the clock back.

In the 1991 statement from the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, it says "the world is still a dangerous place. The START agreement, which mandates reductions in the number of strategic nuclear weapons, does not initiate a process for retiring the warheads and converting the highly enriched uranium and plutonium into a form not usable in weapons. Indeed it does not require the destruction of warheads, but it does permit modernization of nuclear forces.

Agreement by both sides to cease testing would restrict this."

Since 1991, the Doomsday Clock has slowly been moving closer to midnight. As of 2022, the Doomsday clock sits at 100 seconds to midnight, the same time it's been at since 2020. Why did they set it at 100 seconds to midnight? Well, the United States had a change in leadership, an extension of the New START arms control agreement. The United States also began strategic stability talks with Russia, looking to return to the Iran nuclear deal, and rejoining the Paris climate accord. While all of these are positive things, there are some negatives to go with it.

Some of these negatives are political corruption in the US, misinformation being spread on the internet, an inefficient response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the January 6, 2021 insurrection at the US Capitol, and climate change. These are some of the things that led to the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists deciding to keep the time at 100 seconds to midnight. In the 2022 Doomsday Clock Statement, the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists said "the Clock remains the closest it has ever been to civilization-ending apocalypse because the world remains stuck in an extremely dangerous moment."

One more thing keeping the clock set at midnight is the threat of nuclear war. The United States and Russia had decided to renew New START for five years which is a very positive thing, however, at the same time, Iran continues to build an enriched uranium stockpile, the Chinese have started to build new

ICBM silos, North Korea continues to test their nuclear weapons while also restarting plutonium production. With all of this, the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists created the "Turn Back The Clock" challenge where anyone could submit art, writing, videos, or songs about ideas for turning back the clock.

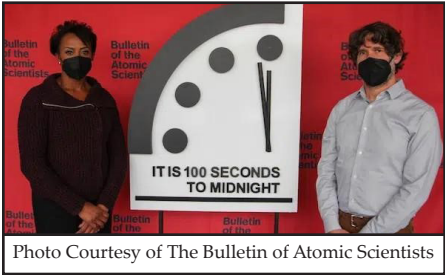


Photo Courtesy of The Bulletin of Atomic Scientists

Disney's Novel *Bravely*

by Jadyn Golz

I've read and reviewed a few books licensed under Disney (and Marvel, by extension). Except for *As Old As Time: A Twisted Tale* by Elizabeth J. Braswell, they fell short of my expectations. So, when I heard that *Bravely*--a companion novel to Disney Pixar's 2012 film *Brave*--was to be released, I was a little apprehensive.

However, my fears were somewhat settled when I heard that it would be written by Maggie Stiefvater, an author who I very much respect. Stiefvater was (as she puts it) "raised in the peculiar pan-Celtic mixing bowl that is the American Scottish-Irish diaspora." She commonly references Celtic aspects in her writings and novels. I think the most prominent example is in *The Raven Cycle*, a quartet of books focusing on a group of teens tracking down magic using Celtic sources. So to say, I was relieved when I heard that one of my favorite Pixar films (minus the bear part) would be in Stiefvater's hands.

Bravely is a sequel to *Brave* and includes many of the same characters and settings. The story starts in DunBroch as Merida returns from a long, three-year journey across the land. After the bear fiasco in *Brave*, Merida decided to live as the free spirit she'd always dreamed of being. She returns around Christmastime. Her family has remained the same, which Merida is both grateful and slightly disappointed about. After a year of adventures, returning to the same old DunBroch has her wishing for the winds of change. It appears that Merida has not learned her lesson to "be careful what you wish for" because a mysterious knock comes on Christmas Eve.

At first, Merida couldn't see who the figure was. But, the Princess of DunBroch was never one to back down from a chase. She raced after it in her bare feet through the Christmas snow. She cornered a young, blond man wearing excellently crafted gloves made of oxblood threads. He introduced himself as Feradach, the God of Ruin. The reason for his late-night knock? To destroy DunBroch.

Merida, ever cautious, pelted the God of Ruin with questions. Feradach couldn't stop her. The Cailleach, however, did. The Cailleach is revealed to be Feradach's antithesis, the God of Creation. "Old woman" is what Feradach calls her. The Cailleach explains that for her to create new things, Feradach must destroy them to make room for her creations. Feradach explains that DunBroch has fallen stagnant, never changing, and must be torn down to grow anew.

Merida opposes Feradach destroying her home and proposes a bargain: If she can prove that she can change her family without destroying them, Feradach will spare the land. And if not, Feradach would kill her and her entire family. The Cailleach agrees to this bargain, and the two gods whisk away into the night.

In four seasons, can Merida change her family's ways? Or will DunBroch face the ruin of Feradach?

Personally, this novel was much better than I'd anticipated. As the characters began to change, the story did as well. The theme is much more complex than "destruction is bad and creation is good." Stiefvater specifically notes how horrible Feradach's works could be but also how rejuvenating their effects are—even going as far as to compare Feradach's ruin to human ruin. Not only that, but the story touches on growing up, humanity, and responsibility.

In the Author's Note, Stiefvater states, "*Bravely* is 'historical.' Note the quotes, if you will. 'Historical,' not historical." I, being only a high school student, can't attest to the historical accuracy of *Bravely*. However, I trust Stiefvater and her major in medieval history. But that's not what I wanted to touch on with this quote. I think that Stiefvater's witty style of writing fits Merida perfectly. For example, here's an excerpt from when Merida decides to chase Feradach: "Around DunBroch, Merida was considered hot-tempered. She felt this was unfair and only because she was a girl, as she had three redheaded triplet brothers who were far more likely to pop off in anger than she was, and they never got called hot-tempered."

Overall, *Bravely* earns my stamp of approval. I was pleasantly surprised with this novel and have since resolved to give Disney another shot with their Young Adult section. *Long Live The Pumpkin Queen* (a continuation of *The Nightmare Before Christmas*) by Shea Ernshaw and *Prince of Song & Sea* (a companion novel to *The Little Mermaid*) by Linsey Miller have been added to my (very long) TBR list.

I recommend this book to any fan of *Brave* or witty female protagonists who don't let anyone tell them what to do. Happy reading!

FHZ Jazz Band Returns

by Abby Hernandez

The Fenton jazz band is getting back together starting this October! We are looking forward to the start of the jazz season. This year we are looking at songs from Duke Ellington and Alan Baylock; while featuring songs like *Sister Sadie* and *Happy Feet*, a mambo-inspired piece. Jazz members auditioned in early October on the song *Sister Sadie* and got the results back on October 7th. As of October 8th, we have one Jazz band, but if we can get a bass, piano, and drummer, we will also have the Jazz Lab Band. Let Mr. George know if you are interested.

On October 29th, the selected jazz will attend a jazz boot camp from 9-noon. Mr. George plans to bring a lineup of professional jazz musicians to help us get into the jazz groove. Mr. George's goal for this year's jazz band is for "students to learn how to transcribe solos."

"Last year I really enjoyed the gig at Los Buenos Diaz, this year my goal is to try to get more gigs within the community," says band director, Mr. Garrett George.

This year the jazz band will be going to Fitzgerald Jazz Club and opening for their headliner. They will also attend the Northern Illinois

University Jazz Fest during their season. Fenton staff and students will see the jazz band's musical talents in December when they perform during our assembly. The assembly will be happening differently than last year, and we look forward to showing you.

Congratulations to the current Jazz Ensemble. We are looking forward to hearing you play soon. Remember, the first rehearsal is October 25th, starting at 5 pm, and if we are lucky enough to have more people audition, Jazz Lab will begin at 3:30!

Jazz Ensemble 2022/2023:
Alto Saxophone: Benjamin Sanchez & Max Diaz
Tenor Saxophone: Abby Hernandez & Paula Serpa
Baritone Saxophone: Jessica Van Leeuwen
Trumpet: Angel Hermida, Sarah Guerrero Gorostieta, Julia Windham, Lita Aguilar, Eric Ziehm
Trombone: Tera Pabico, Ben Carr, Alex Calderon, David Severiano
Bass: Aiden Torres
Drums/Percussion: Paola Aguilera & Brandon Fontanez
Vocalist: Lita Aguilar
Guitar: Delilah Johnson
Piano: Roza Grochal & Sophia Pazola

Girl's Tennis Season Concludes

by Sarah Guerrero Gorostieta

The 2022 girls' tennis season has come to a close, and though participation numbers wavered through the months, Fenton's team finished strong, serving some of their best matches yet, as they wrapped the season up in October.

Maureen Porto, Fenton Staff member, and tennis Junior Varsity coach offers insight as to why this team, and other teams schoolwide and locally as well, have seen large interest but small rosters.

"One thing that really seemed to hold girls back this year was the inaccessibility of health physicals," Porto states.

Physicals must be turned in at the athletic office before athletes can appear on a team's roster. Physical prices remained too high for some girls, in addition to the fee to simply participate in a sport, plus the cost of the materials each girl needs to be successful in the sport, like tennis rackets, their price ranging from fifteen dollars to three hundred dollars.

So, what can Fenton do to aid aspiring athletes?

Porto suggests that Fenton offer free, or discounted, physicals to the student body, explaining that "having doctor's come into our school will not only increase sports involvement, but it will also prove to our students that we want them on our courts."

Porto thanks the team's novice members for their willingness to come out for the team. "Most of our kids come in with little to no experience with tennis, so learning requires allowing yourself grace and space for improvement."

Additionally, Porto expresses gratitude to the group overall, saying "each day, the effort our girls displayed reminds us, coaches, why we're here."

During the team's senior night, held on October 17th, Jeffrey Porto, the team's Varsity coach, contributed to this gratitude, applauding the team for their resilience and willingness to learn from one another.

A big subject of conversation within the team this year was the condition of their courts. Junior Roza Grochal, selected Varsity captain and the team's Most Valuable Player, has been actively vocal about the condition of the courts, saying that they are "dangerous, inadequate, and disappointing."

In a statement she describes as overt and apparent, Grochal reports that the team's "practice space is constantly in terrible shape. Last spring, after seasons of pleading, the cracks that covered a multitude of our courts were 'filled in'. Today, that filling is immediately more noticeable since it's not only painted over in a different paint shade, but the spots remain bumpy, overall. Throughout last year's fall season, half of our courts were considered 'danger zones, and instead of ordering maintenance to our space immediately, we just got our nets taken, and we were restricted from that practice area. Nothing was done until the end of our season, right before the arrival of winter. We were left without about four courts."

She continues, "The conditions of our courts remains an inconvenience to us. We've actively advocated for something to be done about our court's conditions. We will continue to voice our opinions about this topic because we will not stand for the mistreatment of the players and the blatant disrespect the school is showing. The team already feels unappreciated by the athletic department, especially since we weren't invited to the Varsity sports walk at the 2021 or the 2022 Homecoming Bonfire. How can we expect the student body to respect us if the administration or the athletics department can't set an example? It's just really frustrating."

When discussing the referendum's vision for the tennis courts, Grochal demands another solution, informing us that it "just isn't enough," but reminds us that the team isn't asking for much.

"The referendum, though it will do great things in its other aspects, won't fix our courts. Our courts are located upon a swamp, so the lack of draining will cause cracks to emerge no matter how many times maintenance 'fixes the cracks. It's just a bandaid- only temporary. At this point, we're asking for the bare minimum- please powerwash the courts and provide us with a tennis wall. That's really it. I don't get how it could possibly be a financial issue, either."

Since the courts are located a distance away from the school, the power washing hoses currently do not go far enough, but Grochal persists that "the school should have the budget to purchase. It does not take a referendum to care for your athletes, and we aren't asking for much. We're simply asking for respect," Grochal concludes.

Girls' Vball Winning Record

by Reagan Dakins

As usual, Fenton's girls' volleyball team is killing it on the court. Our team is 5th in the Upstate 8 Conference but "with a goal of going for 3rd," according to senior Sidney Westbrook.

The Lady Bison have a streak of three wins and plan to keep going, squashing the competition every chance they get.

When looking deeper into the team, these girls are focused on winning but also on being very team-oriented.

Captain Giana Krygier praised the team for their "support for each other and always being there for each other on and off the court."

Madison Westbrook looking back on the season with her teammates said, "It was very fun this year, even if volleyball wasn't going so well, we were always there to support each other. We all created a lot of fun memories from the season."

The morale of the team is amazing, and it shows on the court and how they communicate with each other. This is proven in their record, The season so far has been tremendous as they have a record of 24-10. Go Bison!



Photo Courtesy of Lailah Stevens

Boys' XC Team Push to State

by Reagan Dakins

This year's boys' cross country team has been leaving other schools in the dust. On October 15th, the Bison runners had a meet at Elgin High School for the Upstate 8 Conference Championship, our team landing 8th among the conference. Senior Victor Vasquez with a time of 16:17.2 came in 15th place out of 63 runners!

Coach Patrick Fritsch has great expectations for the rest of the season. "We have three juniors who have truly stepped it up and are where our number two runner was last year."

Our team continuously has had runners score low, for non-runners, this is a great thing for the team and Fenton. At the 33rd Annual Elmwood Park Tiger Invitational, three runners scored below 20th place, Vasquez in 3rd, Junior Eric Ziehm in 17th, and Junior David Severiano in 18th, putting Fenton 5th out of thirteen schools. One thing

for sure is that these boys give the competition a run for their money, and their points.

A goal Vasquez has for the last few meets of the season is to "try and get lower scores as a team" to advance further into the championship. This team is very supportive of each other and "works together, encouraging each other to push past the limits and reach personnel records," said Vasquez.

Fenton's team prides themselves on being fast runners and having good teamwork.



Photo Courtesy of David Severiano

Girls' Cross Country Season Ends With High Points, Success

by Reagan Dakins

The sound of the blank signals the beginning of the race, sending the runners off on a three-mile race through a rough course. In the mix of these runners are our lady-bison giving it their all. Looking closer at the Lady Bison, the team is full of hardworking individuals who have put in hours of practice.

The season has been great, "majority of our girls' cross-country team would PR by 1-2 minutes or by seconds" says Senior Leader Danna Melendez. For those who don't know, PR is a personal record.

At the Upstate 8 XC Conference Championships, we had four runners

for varsity run under 25 minutes. In the freshmen/sophomore race, Sophomore Anastasija Jankovich scored 4th out of 56 runners with a time of 21:45.3 minutes! Our freshmen/Sophomore team scored 4th as a team at this meet, which proves how fast our team is. It's safe to say the girls' cross-country team met the goal of giving it their "best efforts," a goal that was stressed by Melendez.

This season has not been easy with difficult weather plaguing the races but our bison persevered through the pain and made the best of the season! Good job lady Bison in a wonderful season!