

# The Signal



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## Fenton Welcomes New Principal, Jovan Lazarevic

**By Karsen Idelman**

Having a passion is something that new Fenton principal, Mr. Jovan Lazarevic, is very passionate about. Lazarevic is excited, equipped and looking forward to this school year.

Lazarevic wasn't always interested in teaching and leading a school growing up.

Lazarevic said that growing up, "I wanted like every little boy to be a police officer and firefighter."

He went into a similar field, and became a military police officer for four years. After a couple of years he decided that he no longer wanted to work night shifts and changed his career path.

Looking back, he remembered all the teachers that impacted him not only as a student but as a person.

Lazarevic felt compelled to "give back like they gave to me, at which point it really became more of a vocation, or a calling."

Lazarevic became a science teacher and had always enjoyed it. Not only has Lazarevic taught biology, physical science, algebra, social studies, but he has also had many different administrative positions. He has been an instructional leader in many different subject fields, a dean of students and most recently Vice Principal at Prospect High School.

Lazarevic explains, "It was all on purpose. I wanted to get the entire scope of a building to see what that looks like so when you have to make decisions you know what the nitty gritty looks like, or at least have an understanding of it so I can ask educated questions, rather than be told what some of those things are."

Lazarevic is passionate about Fenton, its students and educational in general. He believes in the idea of "cradles to careers."

By that he means after students leave Fenton he wants them to continue doing good and be productive global citizens. He loves that he can impact the entire student body, as well as the community.

Already, Lazarevic says that he hears "What are you passionate about? What's your passion?" when he walks down the hallways, he feels that his hoped effect can already be seen.

Lazarevic wants the students at Fenton, his past schools included and his four children, to have the skills and qualities to be able to go out and be successful, in whatever field they chose. He hopes that students can have rewarding futures from the

lessons they learned at Fenton, both educationally and culturally.

Although he is a Yankees Fan, Fenton is happy to have him and excited to see what the future holds.

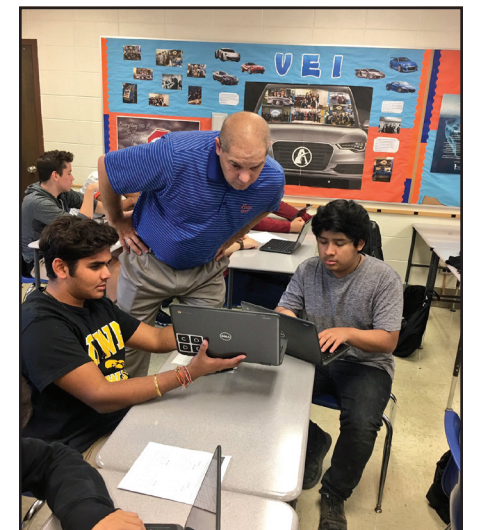


Photo courtesy of J. Lazarevic

## Lux Competes in Icebox Derby

**By Malien Tingpalpong**

For four days, starting on August 1st, 2017, 30 young women from all across Illinois participated in ComEd's annual Icebox Derby in Chicago. These 7th to 12th grade girls were selected based on their investment towards STEM innovations and careers. Among those thirty young girls was Fenton sophomore, Darin Lux.

The goal of the competition was to create a functioning and sustainable car out of a recycled refrigerator that was powered by solar energy. Participants were put into six groups of five that would help them build their Icebox car, with the additional help from mentors. Lux was put onto Team Yellow Spark.

Participants received a \$1,000 prize in the form of a check, while the grand prize of the Icebox Derby race was a laptop and \$1,500. The last day of the event took place on August 12 at the Daley Plaza in Chicago, where the race would officially begin.

Lux says that the Icebox Derby was an important learning experience.

She states, "I learned so many new things such as the mechanics within our solar panels and also learned electrical wiring and how the solar panels harnessed the sun and went on to power our cars."

The experience allowed competitors to learn about advancing our society into a sustainable and efficient place. The competition also provided many opportunities for the competitors. Lux was invited to WGN's Midday News to talk about the experience and demonstrate her team's car. Not only did the girls learn more about sustainable resources and STEM disciplines, but the experience also served as an empowering opportunity for young women to catch a glimpse of the STEM industry, which is dominated by men.

According to an article by Helen Shen in May of 2016, after a year of completing their PhD, women earned one-third less than a man in science, technology and math fields. Despite the fact that most women graduated with degrees in fields that paid less, the article found that married women with children were 11% behind married men with children within a year's salary.

## Are you BRAVE? Be an Ally! Show Support of LGBTQ Community

**By Julia Gainski**

Brave's Ally Week is approaching and will take place from the 25-29 of September. It is an annual and nationwide event organized by GLSEN, which stands for gay, lesbian, and straight education network.

The event was created in October 2005 and established by Youth Nationwide in efforts of combating name calling and bullying towards the LGBTQ community. Brave's Ally Week seeks to raise awareness of LGBTQ issues and promote an alliance between allies that support others who identify as a member of the LGBTQ community.

Counselor Mrs. Melissa To expresses her feelings towards the event, "I am excited for Ally Week to help spread awareness of the issues facing the LGBTQ community and to give opportunities for students to show their support. We want to continue to make Fenton a welcoming environment for all students."

This week is solely dedicated towards the allies who want to reach out. Students are encouraged to participate so that they can learn more about the LGBTQ community within Fenton, help support their peers, and promote awareness.

Senior, Lexie Kiamco states, "Ally Week is significant because it raises awareness for LGBTQ issues, helps people get involved with supporting the LGBTQ community, and strengthens the support of existing members."

Brave will sell ally pins during all the lunch periods. These little safety pins have rainbow beads on them and are worn to show active support. There will be one seminar during each lunch period in the community room to raise awareness and talk about what it means to be an ally.



# Metamorphoses, The Odyssey Set to Run End of September

By Belem Oseguera

Join us as we travel into the Greek world in this year's freshman and fall play. Students auditioned on August 28 and 29.

The auditions consisted of reading a monologue from the fall play *Metamorphoses*, and then by reading a dialogue; in both instances, students demonstrated their skills to perform and get into character.

On September 21, the Freshman class will be performing *The Odyssey* by Homer. English teacher and fall play director Mike Mitchell is very excited about this year's selected pieces. Working with the freshman he's seen how the play has really taken a life of its own. The cast has displayed various personalities that have added elements of comedy and "goofiness" to the normally dramatic piece.

Mitchell is perfectly fine with this outcome because as he says, "It's called a play for a reason. It's supposed to be fun."

Mitchell always encourages his cast to have fun but also to be true to the story. The environment on stage and off-stage is one full of talent.

Mitchell says that the cast is always brainstorming new ideas that he likes and takes into consideration.

"For years...we didn't have anything like this and it was hard for the freshman to get involved," he says. He recommends everyone to go support the freshman play

which will be "entertaining, visually interesting, short, and free!"

Most of all, he thinks it will be interesting for every freshman student to go watch because they will be reading *The Odyssey* in their English class. However, he does warn that this show "will not necessarily help you pass any quizzes."

Despite this, it will still be fun to watch! So if you don't have anything to do Thursday, September 21, make sure to go to support and encourage the freshman as they perform *The Odyssey*.

This year's fall play will be *Metamorphoses* written by Mary Zimmerman. The show is eleven different vignettes based on Ovid's stories. Although they are all separate short stories they all come together at the end.

Mitchell says there will be a couple stories that are popular and most people will recognize, such as the story of King Midas. Also, Mary Zimmerman gives a "modern" twist on Ovid's stories; so aside from all the dark parts that may be in the story there is a playfulness to it.

Mr. Mitchell likes to describe it as having "one foot in the old world and one foot in the new world."

Although these stories may be ancient Mary Zimmerman is able to show how the messages in these short stories are still very relevant today.

The Fall play will be performed October 26, 27, and 28.



Photo by Jessica Jalowiec

# Band Marches at NU Band Day

By Zoe Wilkens

Fenton High School's marching band has been incorporating many different levels of music into their program lately. This includes the high school students getting to experience a college level marching band and middle schoolers to getting familiar with high school level marching band.

Being the 13th year participating, Fenton's marching band was invited to Northwestern Band Day, once again. Fenton along with eighteen other high school marching bands, the University of Nevada marching band, and Northwestern University's marching band all came together on Saturday September 2nd, 2017 to perform the same songs during Northwestern's football game halftime. This year all of the schools performed "Chained to the Rhythm" by Katy Perry, "24K Magic" by Bruno Mars, and "Faith" from the movie, *Sing*.

On September 8, 2017, Fenton's marching band did another collaboration. This collaboration was with the Blackhawk Middle School marching band. For at least twenty years Fenton has invited the middle schools to come and participate performing halftime at one of Fenton's home football games during halftime. The two songs they learned this year were "Shut Up and Dance" by Walk the Moon and the disco classic, "Funkytown" by Lipps inc.

The annual participation of these performances is more than just any regular halftime show. It is an experience for the middle schools and high schools to be exposed to different school marching band levels and have them feel welcomed. Fenton's marching band director, Garrett George sees middle school band day and NU band day to be beneficial and honorable opportunity as it's, "important to see what's happening at the level above. High schools need to see what colleges are doing and middle schools need to see what lies beyond their experience. Any school needs to aim for the level above."

# 1 in 5 FHS Students Obese

By Gabrielle Molinaro

It is a new school year, and with the new year comes some changes that will benefit the student body! Healthy living is an important part of any human's life. Unfortunately there have been some health related concerns within the Fenton community that need to be addressed.

At Fenton, a percentage of 21.6% of ninth grade students in the 2015-2016 school year were reported to be obese, and this evidence can be found on the FORWARD- Obesity Report which you can find on the Fenton Wellness Committee's site.

In the report it also states that "30.9% of students overall had an elevated blood pressure reading."

With these alarming statistics, it is evident that there needs to be a change made.

I asked sophomore Sydney Minard, volleyball player, why she

believes staying healthy is important, and she told me, "I think staying healthy is important because it will not only benefit us now, but it will also benefit us when we are older. It is important for teens to stay healthy mentally and physically."

I also checked in with Freshman Izabella Niemczuk, swimmer, and I asked her to give some tips on staying healthy.

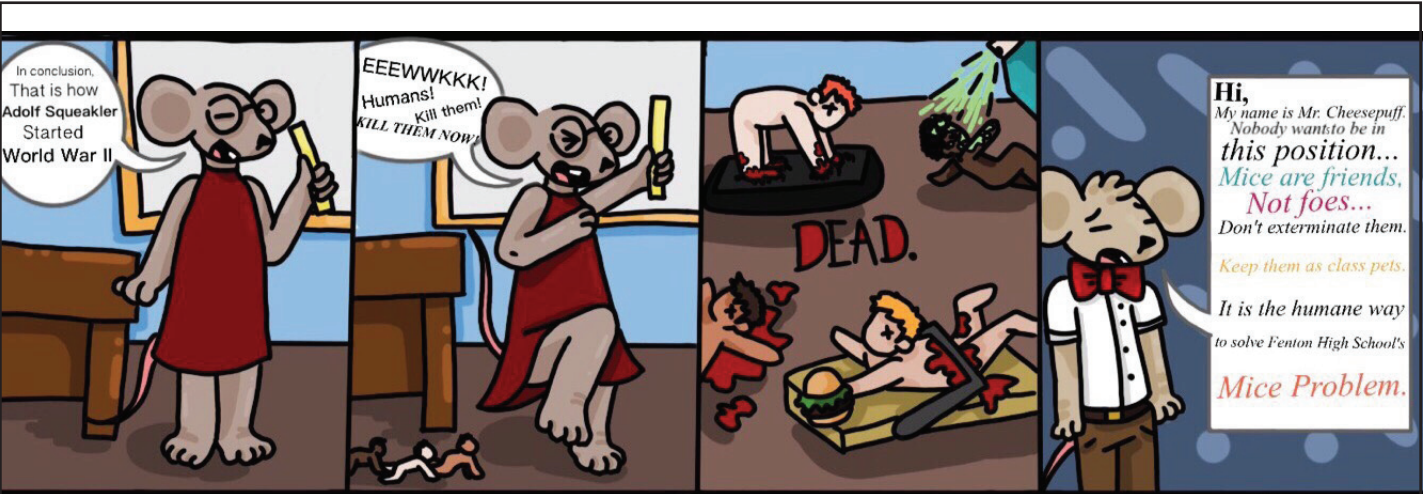
Niemczuk states, "I think eating healthy, like getting enough protein, fruits, and veggies, is very important. I also believe that drinking water is key to functioning as a normal human being."

Then I questioned Junior Matthew McElroy, swimmer and volleyball player, asking what motivates him to be active and participate in sports.

He said, "Being active and participating in sports is a good way to keep myself in check with homework because you have to have good grades to be able to partake in any sport or activity at our school, and I work hard to stay healthy in the off season as I get ready for the next sport to arrive."

While it is true that we have a lot of work to do to bring these numbers down, there are students that are already in the process of creating a healthier student body, whether it is playing tennis or participating in cross country.

As a community, we should all try to inspire one another to work hard and be the healthy Bison we should be!



By Jesus Amador



# Student Happiness in Mindset to Focus on Learning Not Grades

By Carolynn Boatfield

The price of happiness is an arm and a grade

A phenomenon known as "Pressure culture," one found alarmingly at Fenton High School, is a toxic mindset in which students' compare grades, activities, extra-curriculars, and class rank in an obsession to endless categorize themselves among peers.

From an early age in our education system, students are pushed to succeed, and with every accomplishment, the pedestal they stand on grows to heights that become dangerous if a student were to fall. Very early on, labels like "gifted" become expected and "average" is akin to an academic slur for those prematurely decided as an underachiever. Almost from childhood, these kids predetermined by teachers and parents for success flourished in classes because a label of "gifted" prompted sympathy when these students struggled. If a class or subject was too hard, it was the fault of the class design.

These children lived off of instant gratification of constant academic flattery due to never being challenged intellectually. Students like us, who believe that we cannot

change what we know, struggle. There is anger and frustration to be had when concepts confuse us. When we struggle with something, we give up because we believe it is beyond our static concept of our intelligence. Now that we are learning things that we can't be good at instantaneously, we don't have the patience or knowledge to improve them. Skills that don't come naturally are foreign, and the fear to fail isn't our main worry. The fear to fail in regards to our peers' success is the true high school nightmare. We know we are not better than anyone else, but that doesn't matter in the endless rat race of honor societies.

Students are opting to take AP classes for reasons not related to their love of a subject, but rather, because of a single label that they've been indoctrinated with for more than a decade: Advanced. In regards to the trending growth of this faulty student reasoning,

NHS advisor Dr. George Mussman commented on the mentality he has seen in his classrooms, stating "AP motivation is not about gaining better skills for a student, it's about what goes on the transcript."

This mental workup applies

to the gravity in which grades are portrayed in student life. With no reasoning behind taking classes and oversteering besides having a good transcript, the value of education diminishes, and letter scores take the place of valuable information students should have a connection with.

"Grades don't play the role they should; Ask kids at the beginning of the school year and semester, what do you want to get out of this class, other than a grade. This is hard for students to answer," says former AP teacher Mr. Mike Mitchell.

This speaks to the shallow presentation of learning in the American schools system. We are viewing advancement in academics as a selling point for our kids, and without a change, there exists no hope for a systematic restructure in the way pressure culture is killing high school children.

However problematic our fail-shaming culture may be, there are solutions that acknowledge how deep this problems runs. It is up to the student, ultimately, to realize when they've reached a point where competition becomes a race for suicide, a happening that is "prevalent, and more so than people want to acknowledge" says an

anonymous history teacher.

Guidance counselor Nancy Connor advises that "what brings you joy is just one YOU, you only compare yourself to you. Someone's instagram is always going to look better than yours."

What Fenton students take from the common message is for each individual to decide, but a choice for students as whole is to opt out of a suicide-promoting machine known as Pressure Culture. The mental health of our student body is sacrificed from this narrow mindset, and detrimental consequences have already been seen in obituaries across the nation. We believe there is only a narrow route to success, and, if we aren't traveling the same pace on the same path our peers traverse, we believe we are racing towards a downward spiral.

It is important to realize the value of ourselves as more than our student identities, and, like, Mrs. Rajendran comments, "For those who choose not to be in the race, follow your passion and find something you love to do, and you'll be happy," leading to the notion that with the student choice to choose themselves over the demand of pressure culture, the price of happiness may not have to cost an arm and a grade.

## Girls Swim Starts Season With 1st Place at Maine East Invite

By Malien Tingpalpong

On Friday, September 1, Fenton's girls' varsity swim team claimed their first victory at their first meet of the season, while the JV team took second at the tournament. The girls competed at Maine East High School against Maine East and Regina Dominican. For some of the girls, the victory took them by surprise.



Photo courtesy of Gabby Molinaro

At her very first high school swim meet, Junior Gabriela Diaz took third place in the 50 Free. She said, "When I finished I looked at my time, it read 47.3 seconds, and I felt super proud because I didn't think I could go that fast!"

The swim team season looks bright as a whole, but for the individual members it's a matter of getting better every week. Sophomore Gabrielle Molinaro competed in a relay event where they received first place.

When asked about her goals for the season, Molinaro said, "For this season, I am looking to better my technique and focus in on certain details within my stroke."

The team is not only extremely competitive. They are also a team of passionate and like-minded individuals. Freshman Kylie Peterson also competed on their relay team and received first place.

Peterson said, "The girls are super nice and the coaches are fantastic as they have a lot of good knowledge on the sport."

Even some of the most experienced members of the team take surprise to their victory. Senior Emily Jarecki, who competed in the 100 meter and 200 meter fly at Maine East, was extremely excited about their first tournament.

When asked about the first win, Jarecki said, "Ever since our team won first place at the Maine East Invite we lust for that invite to come rolling around again. Nothing felt better than working as a team to win it."

## Golf Looks Ahead to Advance Players Through Regionals

By Alexa Tellez

The leaves are falling, school bells are ringing, and that means none other than golf season for a number of students here at Fenton High School. Lead by coaches Rick Johnson, who has been coaching golf for the past 14 years, and Greg Lehmann, who has been coaching golf for the past 6 years, this year's players are in very good hands. With what few short, yet extremely intense weeks that the golf

season is, the team must work hard to end the season strong. Though their season has been a rollercoaster, with a record of 4-2, it is up to the golfers to try and be more consistent going into every match to end the season strong.

Senior Andrew Hill said, "The team is off to a good start, we are 4-2 so far so hopefully we can keep it up heading into conference and regionals."

While golf is in fact a very

short season, it may be hard to predict in which direction the season will head, but one of the main goals is to try and get as many players to advance through regionals as possible.

Senior Jamie Minard said, "If we keep up the work and focus we've had, we all believe we could with the conference this year. Ending my high school career with a win would be pretty cool and very rewarding."

The team faces some tough

meets as they play IC Catholic Prep and Wheaton Academy in these upcoming weeks, though with every tough team, comes the opportunity to learn from a great challenge.

One of the most important things these golfers should remember, comes from Coach Johnson himself, "The most important thing is to have fun and enjoy yourself on the course. If you aren't having fun then you aren't doing it right."



## New Coach Lynch: Football “Revolves Around Self-Discipline, Education”

By Zoe Wilkens

Each year the football team plays nine regular season games in the Metro-Suburban league conference. The number of home and away games switches every other year between five and four games. This year Fenton will play four games and five away games, as well as being brought new insights from special education teacher and new head coach, Mr. Matthew Lynch.

Lynch has been coaching for 21 years, coaching previously at Fenton once before his return, as well as coaching at Conant, Dundee Crown, and Marengo high schools. He has the football team diligently practicing and working out each weekday and occasionally has film review days.

Lynch’s philosophy on coaching and football is that it revolves mainly around self-discipline and education.

He believes, “you can’t pick and choose when you want to be disciplined and the players are here to get an education. Everything stems around it. They are here for a purpose and it starts with education.”

“You have to keep the hard work and stay positive. Challenges are about respect in the team”

This year Lynch is enthusiastic about coaching and is excited to share his knowledge with another group of kids.

Whether the players have been playing since they were younger, or since freshman year, football is much more to the team than just the game.

Junior Louis Rago says, “You don’t only learn about football. You learn about life as well.”

Going on along with this mindset Lynch explains the benefits to joining football and any other sport in high school. “Not just with football, but in any sport it’s about life and life experiences, and playing football is a brotherhood you can’t understand, but just have to feel it.”

According to Fenton football, every game, every play is beyond the number of touchdowns made or the number of games won, and it’s more based around the team bond and spirit within the players.

Rago reflects, “We will have the hardest practice, then at the end of the day we will all be best friends and have inside jokes that no one in the school will ever know. Being on a football team is like being in a platoon. It’s a brotherhood that every member that’s a part of it, protects each other every day.”



Photo by Jessica Jalowiec

## Boys’ Soccer Focuses on “3 D’s”

By Belem Oseguera

On Saturday, September 2, the varsity soccer team won first place against Maine West at the Joe Novy Tournament.

Throughout the game, the varsity boys kept a strong defense and offense and maintained good possession of the ball; which allowed the pace of the game to stay fast-paced and exciting.

The three winning goals were scored during the first half by captain and senior Angel Barriga and freshman Ivan Jaramillo. The varsity boys won first place in their poll bracket going with a winning streak of 3-0 which is what allowed them to advance to the Joe Novy tournament.

Coach Victor Ruiz was pleased with the team’s performance. Ruiz has been implementing a new system in which the players are expected to give a “fast-paced, exciting [game], with a lot of goals.”

As a coach, he tries to enforce the 3D’s in practices: Discipline, Dedication, and Determination. When asked to describe a perfect team, Ruiz responded, “There is no such thing as a perfect team. You always strive for perfection.”

He stays true to his word by having “rigorous game-related practices.” Such practices, he says, “gets them into the mentality of game speed...which then transpires onto the field.”

Barriga was also happy with how the team has been doing. “I think it’s a very good season so far. We still have a bunch of games left, but we are starting off stronger than last year,” he said.

Under the coaching of Ruiz and the hard-work put in by the boys, the varsity soccer team seems to be headed towards success. Games are played at Redmond Park and admission is free!



Photo by Jessica Jalowiec

## Volleyball Sets Sights on Conference

By Julia Gainski

Social studies teacher and varsity girls volleyball coach, Kelly Kleidorfer, says this year’s team’s best asset is that it is composed of a variety of different skill sets, and the hitting and serving is in top shape as well.

On that note, the team’s goal is to execute that quote and win a conference game. Coach Kleidorfer plans on improving the team’s consistency and starting strong from the very beginning of the games.

Junior, Mackenzie Miller, states her thoughts on the season, “As long as our team continues to work hard and trust each other, this will be a great season and I am excited for it.”

Senior, Katarzyna Zalewska, explains her hopes for the season, “It is only the beginning of the season but this group of girls is really amazing and I think that there should be high expectations for this team.”

This year marks Kleidorfer’s fifth consecutive season coaching girls’ varsity volleyball. Alongside this, she coached club for two years at a different high school.

Kleidorfer states her input on the team and says, “I think that it is one of the most talented teams we had in years, they are hard-working and really fun to watch and coach when the energy is high. I am very hopeful for the season.”

## Walk-a-Thon Promotes Health, Fitness

By Jessica McCauley

The Fenton Wellness Committee, in partnership with the Bensenville Park District, held their annual B-Well Walk-a-thon on Saturday, September 16th.

The Wellness Committee is a program that works to help their community live a healthy lifestyle and grow as leaders.

Jennifer Suwanski, the head of the committee, is always very excited about this day of play. “I think it’s a nice community event to help establish a healthy lifestyle. There is a health fair with a lot of booths full of local businesses which give healthy life plans. It’s a really cool way that the park district gets to show off all of their cool programs.”

The walk is a progressive style route, so the big start is at the park district and stations every half mile lead their way to the finish line at Redmond Park in Bensenville. The day included a variety of vendors, Zumba stations, rock climbing, dance aerobics, and hockey drills. The Bensenville Fire Department even grilled up veggie burgers and other healthy alternatives.

“The walk-a-thon is a treat for all ages and it shows how Bensenville can have fun and stay healthy,” Suwanski states.

Tara Kisacanin, a Fenton senior shares how her health is important to her, “Every day I make sure to have at least one vegetable and fruit in my diet and I try to eliminate junk food.”