

The



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Dance Force Aims High, Ready to Knock Out Competition

By Karsen Idelman

"The Greatest" Muhammad Ali, passed away earlier this year. His absence on Earth has not left an absence of legacy. He has been honored and remembered every way possible, even our own Varsity Dance Force is taking on the role of boxer for their competition hip-hop dance this season. Fenton's Varsity Dance Team is made up of sixteen talented freshman, sophomore, junior and senior girls lead by Coaches Annelis Chaidez, Heather Petersen and Head Coach Katherine Payton.

The team has been tirelessly preparing for their upcoming competitions since the season started on October 24th. This year not only is Varsity going to be performing a tribute to Ali, but also a new style for them to compete with, Jazz! This has its pros and cons. "We have a new challenge ahead of us this year. We will be competing with both a Jazz routine and Hip hop routine. This means our practice time is divided," explained Payton. But the entire team is still elated to show that they are strong all-around as a team.

Although the Jazz dance does not have a theme, like hip-hop, it is

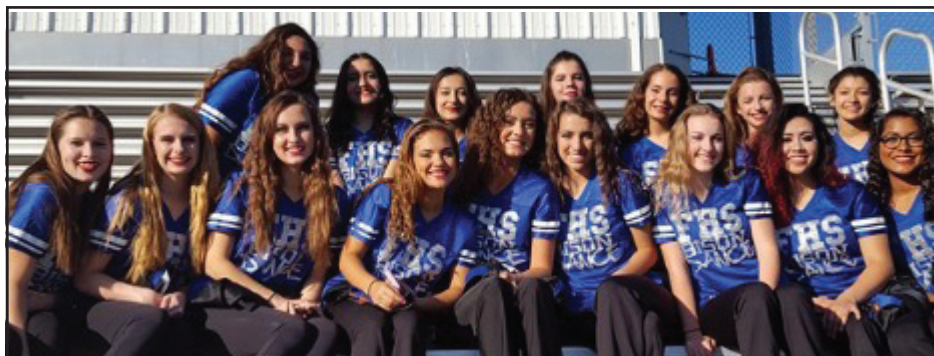


Photo courtesy of Heather Petersen

still just as captivating and intense to perform and watch, "With hip-hop as my strength, it has been hard transitioning to and from the different styles, but I love it! It's so much fun to do something different, but also very stressful at times." says junior Oliwia Bochnacka. As Bochnacka said, the team's strength is hip-hop, so Payton begins thinking about that very early, leaving herself just a two week break she said, "Themes are not necessary for dance, but usually make the routine more fun for the dancers. When choosing a theme I try to look at what is current in the world and I also pay close attention to where my dancers strengths are...This year our theme is a bit of a gamble. I chose a

Muhammad Ali boxing theme and with his recent passing there is a strong possibility that there will be other teams doing something similar. What I always say is that it's ok if we have the same theme, we just need to do it best!" Kirby O'Donnell, who reported that the Muhammad Ali dance is her favorite she has ever done, discussed the great part of competition season, "The appeal of competition season to my teammates and I is that we come together and work toward the same thing, pushing ourselves and being the best we can possibly be."

Both coaches and dancers alike are excited for the competition season and they are ready to defend

their reputation as one of the strongest dance teams in their division throughout the entire state. The team's atmosphere is what prepares them most for the stressful and at times crazy competition season. Like three year varsity member Trisha Butz said, "Dance force has taught me that the whole team has to care about dance in order to be successful. If everyone pulls their weight and feels passionate in what they're doing, the team will be unstoppable." Without the support of each other the team would never be able to maintain their high accolades. Overall the team is ready to go out swinging in order to KO all the other teams. As Bochnacka said, "there is a lot of love on the team and they wouldn't want it any other way. Although competition season is by far the most stressful time both physically and mentally, it brings the team so much closer. We work to be the greatest and we all do it as a whole. The team becomes a family and our bonds strengthen not only because we literally see each other every day but also because of how much we care and want the best for each other. Our goal as a team is to go out on the floor and be the best of the best."

New Hiking Club Provides Students Unique Experience



Photo courtesy of Stephanie Downen

By Julia Gainski

Recently at Fenton High School, Ms. Downen established a hiking club. The club's sole purpose encompasses around encouraging student's interactions with nature and becoming more active. So far, the first

major trip was to Starved Rock State Park. The trip took place on Columbus Day and was accompanied by staff members Clint Porter, Kelly Lamey, Dea Hanke, Rachel Georgakis, Jeff Baeder, and Paul Welsh. The club also took another trip to the Wood Dale

Grove where they walked for about two miles. Ms. Downen recounts that the hiking club is an excellent opportunity for students to meet new people and gives them a chance to be in a club that is very unique in comparison to other extracurricular activities offered at Fenton. Downen's favorite part is seeing the kids enjoy their time spent outside and says, "It is my goal for students to be more engaged in nature and active outside and give them a chance to do something they haven't done before."

On November 12, the club volunteered at their first service event, dedicated to ecological restoration that took place at Varble Woods in Bensenville. The Bensenville Park District was running the event from 9am-12pm. Ms. Downen's plans for expansion of the hiking club involve

continuing the program next year with more students and events alongside another trip this spring, for which the date has not yet been determined.

If one would like to join, more information can be found through Google Classroom, where the members are consistently updated. Melanie Garcia said, "I'm so happy that we started a club for people who enjoy the outdoors. At this club, people from all backgrounds can come out and enjoy the beautiful things that surround them. In our first year we've hiked locally as well as at Starved Rock. This weekend we will also be participating in a cleanup that will give us community hours! If you or anyone you know is interested please let Ms. Downen know."

How Do You Feel About the Cubs' World Series Win?

By Amber Azim



Sophomores Karsen Idelman, Mackenzie Miller, and Agata Kukiello: "We are very excited! We never thought this would happen in our lifetime!"



Teacher/White Sox fan Clint Porter: "I'm glad for the city of Chicago and all the long long long suffering for Cubs fans. I look forward to the next championship in 100 years."



Teacher Scott Murphy: "I would be lying if I said I wasn't excited! I am extremely excited. I am happy for the city."



Sophomore Marcus Astorga: "It was a phenomenal comeback and it was bound to happen. I am very glad it happened."

ARC Policy Changes Confuse Students

By Emily Patterson

In the student handbook, the policy of the Media Center and now the ARC, says that students who are members of NHS can go to the ARC without a pass during lunches and study halls, and students without NHS membership need a pass from a teacher to go. However, this policy changed a few months into the semester, with a new "open door" policy being instituted. With this new policy, any student could go to the ARC during their lunch or study hall so long as they had their ID to check in with.

"There was an interest in increasing the attendance in the ARC," said ARC librarian Steven Smidl. And the attendance definitely increased during this time. During the open door policy, ARC attendance increased between 200 and 300 percent.

"We created the open door policy so people felt more welcome," added division leader Lisa Luna. "We wanted to share this awesome space."

However, with the open door policy came what was viewed as an attitude of unaccountability. "This a great space to hang out in, but that interrupted other students learning," Luna said. "Students should be using the resources to do homework or be

reading the books that we have available."

In October, the ARC policy switched back to the original pass policy to promote student learning. However, there are still provisions to make the ARC more accessible. A pass to the ARC can be written by any current academic teacher, including students' study hall supervisors. As well, administrators, counselors, and psychologists can write students passes to the ARC. Students must also have their ID with them to check in.

Despite the reversion to the original policy, the ARC has not seen much of a decrease in attendance levels, though it has seen an increase in productivity.

"I treat this space as my classroom and I think that anyone that comes in here will realize that it's a pretty relaxing environment if you know how to use it," said Smidl.

Principal James Ongtengco praised Smidl and Luna for how they've handled the changes. "They have both made the ARC more efficient." Ongtengco also emphasized that staff wants the ARC to be utilized to its full potential. "The ARC space is for our students. We want it available as much as we can."

Speech Team Helps Students

By Zoe Wilkens

Speech team has been an activity at Fenton for as long as the competitive co-curricular activity has been around: 75 years. Each season begins in September and ends with the IHSA state series in February. There are 15 different events that students can compete in for speech at high school level. All of the events include some sort of acting or public speaking skills. These skills are developed throughout the year with 30 minute sessions of one-on-one training with a coach.

Fenton itself has qualified for the IHSA state competition 11 times out of the 12 times Nicole Hendricks, the main speech coach has been coaching. They've also qualified for the National Forensics League, an out of state competition in June. Although Fenton hasn't been able to attend the League due to a lack of resources, the team still competes at a collegiate level. The students in speech are often scouted at the state competitions and awarded college scholarships just as they would be for athletics.

Speech also helps students develop skills that help prepare them for life after high school. Many people face public speaking anxiety every day, and speech team is a great way to overcome that fear.

Hendricks says, "Speech team is an exceptional way to combat public speaking anxiety, which is a natural response."

Besides just overcoming fears, speech also includes communication skills that can be applied for a future jobs and job interviews.

"It is also a way to test your acting and public speaking skillset in front of audiences who are comprised of strangers instead of just family and friends. While a friendly audience is always fun to perform in front of, the true test of your skills is if you can convince an unknown audience to believe in your character or in your persuasive message," said Hendricks.

Although the co-curricular activity is mainly individual, as students compete with their own pieces, it is still and a team effort of support.

Nicole Rybak, a junior with three years of speech under her belt, mentions, "Even though it's pretty individual, you're closer to the team than you think. Going to the practices and peer coaching all the time after school brings the team together and we just feel more united. Over the years, speech kind of grows on you and starts becoming a major part of your life in the best way possible."

Pack the Place Promises Fun

By Milijana Vasilic

Pack The Place is an annual fundraiser for Fenton's special olympics basketball team. Allison Weegar, a teacher and part of Interact club, describes Pack The Place as, "A fun, exciting, and memorable event for both the athletes and those attending."

Pack The Place is intended to help raise money for the special olympics basketball team's funds for the state competition. It is organized by Interact club. Weegar described Interact as "A community service club that reaches out to neighborhoods and surrounding towns to work towards bettering the community." Interact is a year round club and anyone can join at any time. As for Pack the Place, if you buy a ticket you are automatically entered into a raffle with a variety of prizes! So come out Friday, December 9th at 7pm to Fenton in order to help support the special olympics basketball team. Weegar believes attending, "Really does make a difference in the athletes' lives."

Come out and cheer on your Bison, and help make a difference!



Photo courtesy of Nicole Hendricks

Lunch Period 'Mix It Up' Promotes Student Acceptance

By Mariel Eloppe

Have you ever wanted to make a new friend but you weren't sure what event to attend? Mix it Up is a national program that was started by Teaching Tolerance, a group whose goal is to teach more about diversity. The idea behind Mix it Up is simple: sit with people you don't normally sit with and have lunch together. The goal is to increase acceptance of diversity and to decrease bullying and ignorance. Plus it's a great way to meet and hang with other people.

This year, counselor Melissa To and a group of about 15 students planned the event out on October 5. Mix it Up is simple. The event lasted all three lunch periods where students who signed up came to the Community Room and were encouraged to talk and enjoy some free pizza.

"I think it went really well especially for our first time doing it. We had 40 students participate on that day," To added.

It's unknown when the next Mix it Up is and according to To, she's hoping that they'll be able to do this again once more this semester or at least in the next. If you're interested in planning or participating in the next Mix it Up, come contact To and keep your eye peeled for more information in the announcements.

Musical Auditions Welcome Students

By Mariel Eloppe

It's that time of year again and it's time to be able to audition for this year's musical: Emma! A Pop Musical. As you can tell by the title, this is a pop musical adaption and modernization of Jane Austen's novel, Emma. The story is about Emma Woodhouse, a girl who overestimates her own matchmaking skills and the problems she creates in other people's love lives.

Interested? The auditions are on December 5 and December 6. They start right after school and will be held in the auditorium. Feeling a little shy? Got stage fright? That's fine. The musical doesn't just consist of performers after all and it's fun to boot. Senior Emily Patterson adds, "Even if you don't think you're the best singer or the best actor the musical is still fun. Also if you want to join stage crew we're always looking for more people." If you need more information, there will also be an informational meeting on November 28 right after school in the choir room. Otherwise please contact Dr. Mussman if you have any other questions.

ARC Sees Drop in Checkouts

By Emily Patterson

It's 2008. The first film of the Twilight series is coming out and the fans of the books are lining up to get tickets. The first book in The Hunger Games series is published and is steadily gaining a large fanbase. The last book in the Harry Potter series has been out for a year and fans are waiting on the sixth movie to come out; its fanbase is growing by the day.

Eight years later, and books don't tend to have a following like this golden trio did. At this time, checkouts at Fenton were also high, with around 10,000 items being checked out from the Media Center in 2008 alone. That number has been steadily decreasing over the last eight years, with only around 6,200 items being checked out in 2014.

Last year, only around 2,700 items were checked out, but that is most likely due to the renovations during first semester and issues with the new ARC being present in second semester, which meant the resources that the media center had provided weren't available for much of the last school year.

So far this year, about 1,300 items have been checked out from the ARC, but Steven Smidl, the ARC's new head librarian, is hopeful that ARC checkouts will increase now that students have more open access to the ARC.

"I want the numbers to increase by at least 25%," said Smidl. "I'm hopeful that those numbers will increase even more in future years, but I figured we should start small."

Smidl expressed his concern about the drop in the amount of checkouts. "When the Media Center had to close so that the ARC could be built, students obviously didn't have access to the resources then. During that time, a lot of books were also taken out of the collection." The numbers that decreased so drastically during the time that there was neither an ARC nor a media center have not yet recovered to what they were before Fenton's remodeling. Smidl hopes that a wide variety of fiction and nonfiction books will be added to the ARC's collection to appeal to Fenton's wide demographic, and that new books will inspire students to read more.

Of course, Smidl also finds himself unsure as to why exactly the amount of books and other materials that students are checking out has dropped so significantly now that the ARC is up and running.

"What happened to readership?" Smidl asked. "Why are kids not reading at Fenton? I want to know what students perspectives are. Is it an absence of incentive for reading? Do we not have books that appeal to the current demographic?" Smidl mentioned some specifics, such as the popularity of graphic novels despite Fenton not having many, as well as the fact that Fenton has many titles, but usually has only one or two copies, even of really popular books.

Smidl hopes that, as the year progresses, more students will use the resources available in the ARC and will take an interest in reading.

Girls' Team Swims to Success at Conference Meet

By Gerardo Garcia

The Fenton girls swim team had their conference meet on October twenty ninth with two swimmers placing in the meet. Khanah Hori placed fifth in the one hundred free-style at fifty seven point seven seconds. Cassidy Feddersen also placed, taking first in dive with a final score of three hundred and twenty eight!

Feddersen said that the front double was the most difficult in her routine but also her favorite, "You have to know where you're at in the air...if you come out too late you're gonna land on your face and if you come out too early you're gonna land on your back.... I have really good air sense...it comes from a lot of gymnastics...after doing it so many times it's like muscle memory."

Feddersen also competes in other swimming events but said that her favorite event is diving, "Swimming is fun and I love it and I love the adrenaline in competition, but I like to flip and be messing around in the air."

Hori was pleased with her performance saying, "That second, when I looked at the time on the

board I was pretty happy because I was back at where my time usually is, but after that I wasn't too happy because it wasn't my fastest time and I always want to go for my fastest."

Hori's performance is especially impressive as she was out for much of the season due to injury. Also impressive was Maggie Bush's performance in a five hundred meter swim, finishing in 7 minutes. This was a personal record for Bush and an improvement of a whole nineteen seconds!

Bush said, "I could not stop smiling, my coaches told me I made sectionals and I could not stop, I was so happy."

Bush achieved this time by pacing herself after faster swimmers but also with help of her friend and motivator Amanda Tazbazian.

Bush said that Tazbazian, "is my favorite person on the team and she's helped me get as far as I've gotten in the five hundred."

Coach Geneva Rhinerson praised her girls, saying, "all the kids have improved their time this year, which is the goal. We're a small team, basically our goal as a team is personal best."

The girls definitely have a competitive spirit, Rhinerson says that mostly, "We see it in meets, that's where the true effort comes out."

As far as performance so far Feddersen said, "I feel like I'm doing really well, diving's been hard... everyone is trying really hard, we're down to the sectionals team, so it's the top two fastest in that event. I think we'll do really well ourselves, we go against hard schools. I think for ourselves our teams will do very well compared to our past times."

The sectional meet takes on November 11, and Rhinerson only hopes that the girls, "give their best effort, and that no matter what we are proud of what they have done this year."



Photos courtesy of Geneva Rhinerson



XC Concludes With State Meet, Seniors Recognized

By Gerardo Garcia

The cross country season came to an end after sending twelve runners to Peoria to compete in the state meet on November 5 and a touching awards ceremony the following Monday night. Though the season finished with a happy ending, the cross country team didn't have the smoothest season. Michael Lieggi said the season, "started out rough, because we didn't have a solid team yet." Later on in the season the team took an unexpected blow at the regional meet, Senior runner Anye Whyte said, "Regionals we had a very bad race placing 4th... but we came back and our goal was redemption... we redeemed ourselves at sectionals and ended up beating everyone we lost to at regionals and then some."

With a great sectional meet, the team then sent their twelve state

qualifiers to Peoria. Coach Kurtz described the state meet as, "an entirely different animal." For Lieggi it was his first state meet which he described as, "overwhelming, it was fun though, it was a lot of fun...I thought I was gonna be more nervous and that it was going to be really stressful throughout the race but it wasn't, I just focused on running and did what I came to do." It was also Alex Whyte's first time to state, who said just to qualify "was surprising, I wasn't expecting it. I'm proud that our team got this far...and it was stressful, it was a different environment than a regular meet. It was a challenge." Vasquez said that his last meet, "was kind of overwhelming I didn't expect it go by that quickly, four years." Anye Whyte also found his last meet to be overwhelming, but also said, "It felt good to go as a team one last time...I felt I had a lot to prove at our

last race, and I really wanted to leave it all out there on the course and I really gave it my all as I believe we all did."

Most cross country runners will continue to compete in the upcoming track season, but it may never add up to the joy they feel in the cross country season. Whyte will

remember this season fondly saying that, "I don't regret a single part of cross country, it was probably one of the greatest decisions I made during high school...I think it really shows who we are as people, that we're willing to push our bodies to the limit, farther than we even can believe we can do."



Photo courtesy of Micheal Leiggi

Varsity Soccer Team Wins Regionals, Ends Season at Sectional



By Paul Garcia

Before the regular season started in August, former Head Coach David Alvarez was terminated from his head varsity coaching position, which drove former assistant varsity coach, Tom Drazek, and former JV coach, Nick Falco, to both resign from their coaching positions.

All players and lasting coaches were distraught and had to make ends meet with the small amount of staff that was left.

New coaches were hired. Jim Johns, the new head varsity coach and Jake Chvatal, the new JV coach, are the latest editions to the program.

Although relationships were just beginning to form between the players and replacement coaches, the players knew that they had to cooperate in order to make the following season a successful one. Success is exactly what the program achieved.

Although frustration was apparent during the beginning of the season due to new coaching, players knew that cooperation between members was essential.

As a result, the varsity team was able to bring home the regional championship for the second year

in a row by defeating Marmion Academy 4 to 1 in a spine tingling penalty shootout after two overtime periods.

This level of success was not a result of luck. The team had to work harder than ever before to work with the scraps that they were given.

Varsity captain Abel Carrera shares his feelings on being regional champions.

"To us, winning regionals was very special because we brought it back from having a difficult season."

At the end of the day, the team managed to make it into the "Sweet Sixteen": the top sixteen teams in the state.

For some this was their last year playing for Fenton and bonding with their teammates.

Varsity Captain Gerardo Lopez has insight as to what he has gained throughout his years of participation.

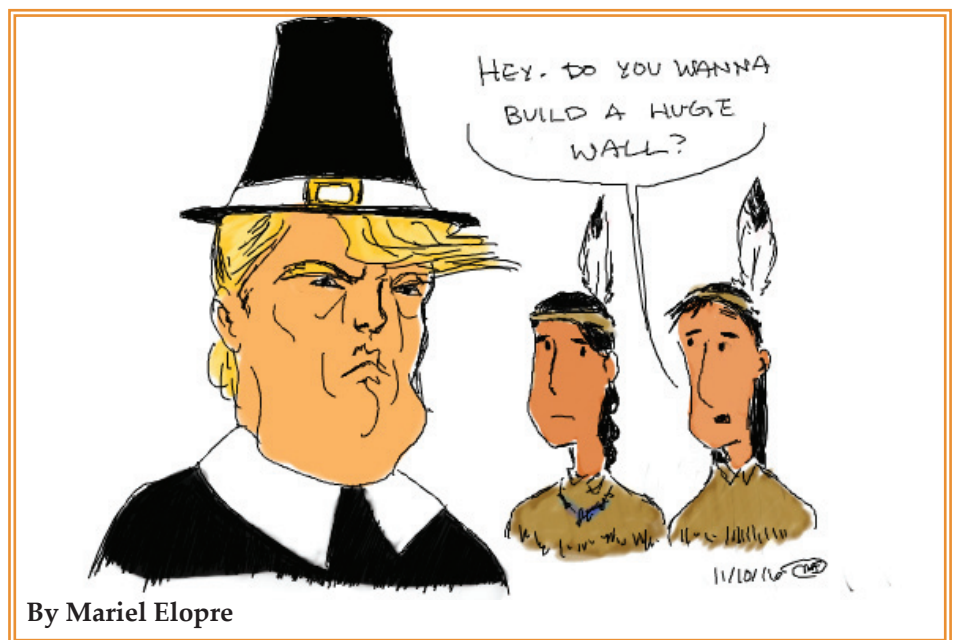
"I learned throughout the four years that I've been playing that you can't give up easily. You have to keep on working harder after every game, at practice after every year. Eventually you will get better and you just have to stay positive."

Carrera also mentioned that

one has to cherish the time spent with one another.

"High school goes by fast and what you have to learn is that even though what we all want to do is succeed and win trophies, you really don't need to win trophies to have fun."

As the season comes to an end and players touch the field for the last time, what matters to them is what they have been taught and the memories that they have made with one another.



By Mariel Eloppe

Students on Stage Coming

By Rina Focht

Students on Stage is a combination of small plays, mono-dramas, poems and other stories all put together to create one night of amazing acting. It is a production of shows that is completely written, directed, and performed by students at Fenton High School. Anyone is allowed to submit their work to the directors, and then certain pieces are selected to be made into a show. This year's performance will take place on December 2 in the Fenton Auditorium. All of the actors, directors, and writers would love to see you there. Director Zach Murphy says, "It is amazing that we are all able to express ourselves freely, and to get to do what we love at the same time."

All of the cast members get really excited about the shows, and really come together to make the show as best as they possibly can. We hope to see you at the show!