



The Blarney Stone

“Bishop McNamara’s Source for News”



October 2023

Fall Edition

OCTOBER EDITION

Welcome to the October 2023 Issue of the Blarney Stone, the official newspaper of Bishop McNamara Catholic School! As continue the first semester of the year, there is much to read about, including Halloween, the House System, and conclusion of Fall Sports. Additionally, multiple students and faculty members are featured in this month’s edition!

BISHOP MCNAMARA AUCTION

The Bishop McNamara auction is an annual event that sees friends, family, alumni, donors, and faculty all attending for a

night of fun. From the dinner to the auction items, it’s a night that truly is amazing for everyone. This year’s auction theme was “Oh The Places We’ll Go”, and was the 40th annual gala. It was a very special night for lots of reasons, however, above all else was the prospect of the new improvements being made to our school. The football stadium, chemistry lab, chapel, and student success center are all being renovated and the auction featured the announcement of the Monday, November 6th start date for all the projects! Additionally, the auction featured Grant Naese as the cat in the hat as well as Eamon O’Brien and Johannes Pedinghaus as thing one and thing two, keeping with the

theme of the auction as its mascots! Overall, it was a fun night for all and was enjoyed by everyone who attended.

ILLINOIS STATE SCHOLARS

Every year the Illinois Student Assistance Commission recognizes the top students in our state. This year, Bishop McNamara had 11 students recognized. Students are selected based on both their GPA and ACT scores, with the top 10% in the state being chosen for the title of Illinois State Scholar. The following 11 students have worked extremely hard over the last 3 years of their high school careers to attain this title! Congratulations to them all.

◆ Sarah Berg



October 2023 Events & Athletics

- ◆ Mitchell Krizan
- ◆ Carter Levesque
- ◆ Mason McCue
- ◆ Grant Naese
- ◆ Clara Nugent
- ◆ Eamon O'Brien
- ◆ Christian Provost
- ◆ Maya Patel
- ◆ Johannes Peddinghaus
- ◆ Evan Rauwolf

ALL SCHOOL ROSARY

On October 17th, our school had an all school rosary service where kids from the High School, Junior High, and Grade Schools all came together to share in the service. Bishop McNamara's focus on faith is always something that is very special not only for staff and parents, but especially students!

HALLOWEEN

This year, Bishop McNamara featured a Halloween costume contest! There were three winners of the costume contest

itself as well as a duo winner. The three individual winners were Miklo Zavala, Aidan Jamros, and David Whitters. Additionally, Abner Garcia and Ana Garcia won the duo!



Written By: Grant Naese

JUNIOR HIGH STUDENT COUNCIL

Congratulations to the members of the 2023-2024 Junior High Student Council!

President & Vice President

- ◆ Elijah Muthami
- ◆ Claire Brouillet

Secretary – Evie McCue

8th Grade Representatives – Ana Garcia & Max Kirchner

7th Grade Representatives – Tyler Martin & Ramseigh Turro

6th Grade Representatives – Jamison Lewis & Aubrie Coughlan



Written By: Sarah Berg

ATHLETE SPOTLIGHT – CHRISTIAN PROVOST

Bishop McNamara is home to many intelligent students, but it's not often that you will come across a student who excels in academics, athletics, and community service. Christian Provost manages to maintain all these traits. Along with maintaining his standout grades, Christians also happens to be a part of the Illinois State Scholars program. Christian manages to have good grades, great athletic performance, and shows great amounts of participation towards community service all while being a great person. I tasked Christian with answering a questionnaire focusing on his



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high school career and what he plans to do after, and his answers are listed below.

"What does it mean to you to be an Illinois State Scholar?" I asked Christian. His response was the following, "To me, Illinois State Scholar is a recognition of all the love and support my parents have given me throughout the years leading up to this moment. Every material and instruction were provided for me; all I had to do was make it a reality."

Balancing academics and extracurricular commitments can be challenging, but for Christian, it's all about time management. "Balancing the load has definitely been the most difficult aspect of my high school career," he acknowledges. "But there's never been a moment I've felt it unbearable. With correct management and utilization of time I'm given during school, I can do homework rather limited outside of

it. When homework exists in these cases, limiting time on technology definitely helps me get done what I need to when I'm not at practice or a meet."

Christian's commitment extends beyond the classroom. He actively contributes to his community through his church involvement. "Outside of school, I am heavily involved in my church," Christian shares. "I attend Youth Liturgy Planning, participate in service events like Camp MOSH and Harvest Sunday, and fill parishioner roles most weekends — specifically Eucharistic minister and lector."

For those interested in starting cross country, Christian offers some valuable advice, "Cross country is definitely not a sport for the faint of heart. Many people join just because they don't have another sport to play — 95% of these people drop after the first week. If you enjoy running as an activity and

want to dedicate yourself to becoming the best you can be, then you're a perfect candidate for the sport. It might be hard to get into even if this is the case, but if your passion is there, everything else will sort itself out."

Reflecting on his high school journey, Christian informs us of one significant life lesson, "The number one thing I've learned in high school is how to stop caring — not about homework, quizzes, or extracurriculars, but about pleasing others. Obviously, it's a good thing to make your peers happy, but destroying your confidence, self-image, and your own happiness just for the sake of others simply isn't worth it."

When I asked Christian what he planned to do after high school, Christian responded, "Like many of my peers, I plan to continue my education in college. I aspire to pursue a major in computer science with



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a potential double major in business/economics.”

As we take a look back at an overview of Christian Provost, we find a student who displays dedication, compassion, and a strong work ethic. During his journey through high school, Christian wanted to set an inspiration for all students striving to balance academics, extracurriculars, and community involvement.

Written By: Miles Serpe

GRADE SCHOOL NIGHT RECAP

Grade School Night is an annual event that takes place during each football season to introduce our grade school kids to some of our high school leaders! This year it took place on Friday, October 7th. Before the high school football team played Chicago Christian, all children were invited to come and jump in the bounce house, play games, and even get their

faces painted. Additionally, cast members from our upcoming Beauty and the Beast Fall Production attended as The Beast and Belle! Despite the cold weather the turnout was great and everybody had lots of fun!



Written By: Delaney Kuntz

FOOTBALL

Football is a hard game that doesn't just require you to be physical but also mentally prepared for every play. Football has not only given me true happiness, but it has given me another family. To expand on how it has given me a family, I enjoy everyone on the team and they all help each other out. If I don't understand how to do something in practice, someone is always willing to help me. If I'm ever in a situation where I need help or I'm stuck, I know that they'll always

have my back and look out for me. Our coaches understand we're not perfect players, so they make sure to zone in on our abilities and help us improve. They notice who works hard.

My football team is a great example of a team that plays for each other and not just themselves. This is why I feel like I can trust them and call them family. Nothing comes easy in life, especially football. You just keep working to strive because working together through the tough times while experiencing a love for the game provides you with a strong family.

Written By: Rylan Barzantny

GIRLS VOLLEYBALL

Our varsity girls' volleyball team advanced to sectionals with a record of 18-6. On Tuesday, October 24th they played their first round of regionals and pulled off a win beating Peotone in two sets. On Thursday,



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October 26th they faced Beecher and won in two sets as well. For seniors Ana Darr, Mackenzie McCammon, and Lilee Nugent this was their third consecutive regional win. The girls play their first round of sectionals on Monday, October 31st. We look forward to seeing how they continue to make our school proud while working towards the state championship! Good Luck and Go Irish!



Written By: Nora Geisler & Hailey Gerberding

CROSS COUNTRY

The local cross-country team, led by captains Christian Provost and Emily Storer, embodied unity, and dedication throughout the season. Evita Martinez was able to claim her spot at the state finals meet.

The boys' and girls' cross-country teams had high expectations at the start of the season. The captains and other athletes from our community had early morning practices, exhausting workouts, and were seeking perfection. The friendship and bond within the teams was evident, creating an environment of belonging and teammates support.

Martinez's exceptional commitment and spirit were an inspiration throughout what was a difficult season. Her dedication and unwavering spirit was instrumental throughout a difficult season. Evita's stellar performance in the Sectional meet got her to the state competition level, where she proudly represents Bishop McNamara.

Although the rest of the team might not have qualified for the State Championships, their collective efforts and coaches' support should not be taken for granted. These lessons, the

friendships created, and the experience gained will be valuable building blocks for future success during the season.

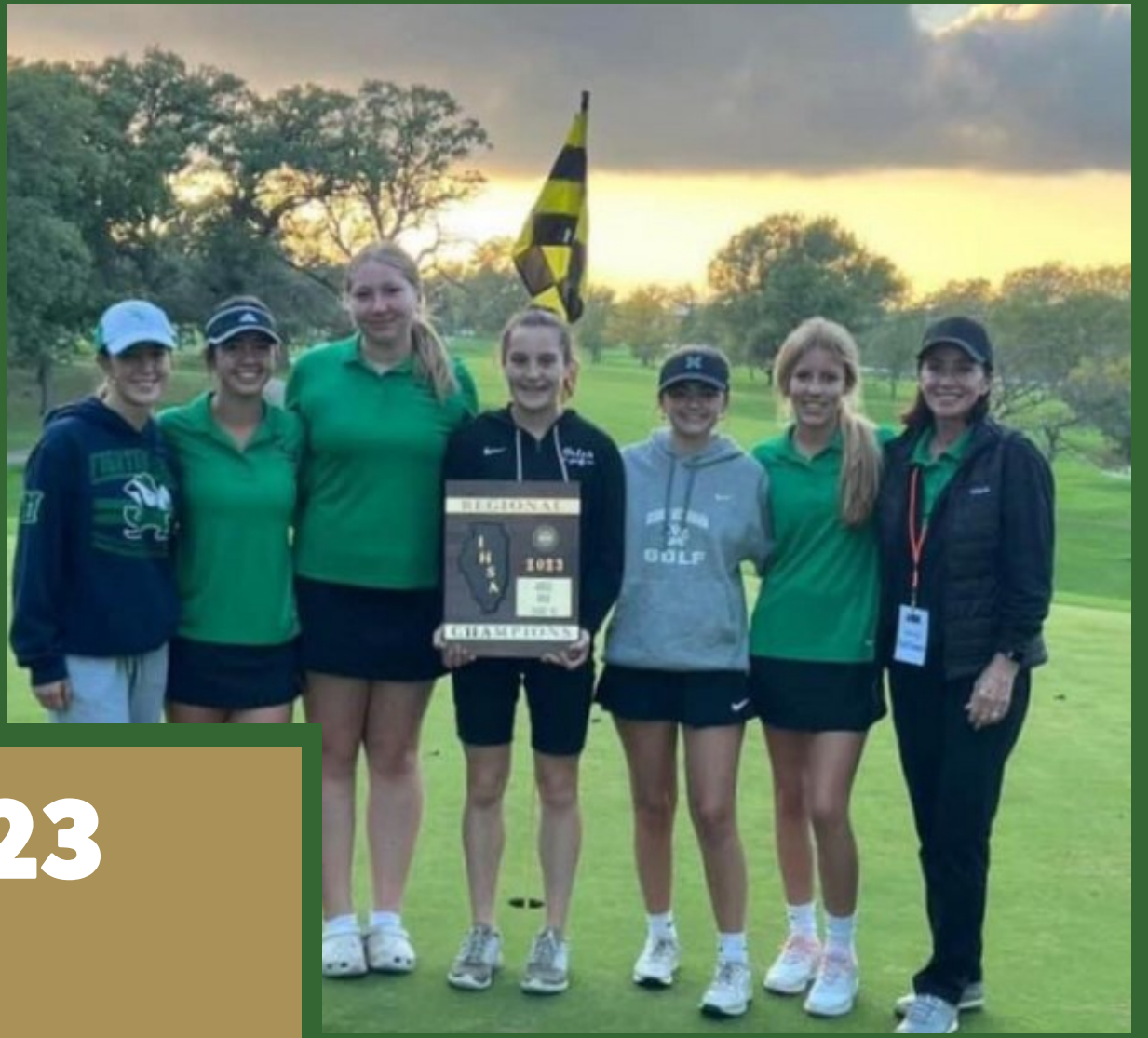


Written By: Isabelle Quigley

BOYS GOLF

Coach Bruce Shear joined the Irish men's golf program and brought enthusiasm, leadership, and focus. He emphasized the program's history and the importance of maintaining a high level of character and excellence on and off the golf course. Johannes Peddinghaus said "Coach Shear was part of the Bishop McNamara men's golf team as a student and brings a sense of tradition and excellence to this program. We really appreciate his leadership and direction."

Seniors Nik Acevedo, Johannes Peddinghaus, Kaden Harre, Ben



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Verrill, Boston Soucie, Grant Naese and Eamon O'Brien led the way this season. The team performed well at matches at their home course of the Kankakee Elks Country Club. They also finished third as a team at the Grant Park Invitational at Minnie Monesse Golf Course. Nik Acevado commented "The team really came together at the Grant Park Invite. Our months of practice and focus on our short game was evident. We were proud to bring back a trophy to Mr. Hamilton."

Johannes Peddinghaus and Eamon O'Brien advanced to Sectionals at the Kankakee Elks, where Eamon qualified for the State Finals by firing a 77. Eamon shot 82 during the first round of the State Finals at Prairie Vista in Bloomington, Illinois, making the cut for day 2, on which he shot 86 and finished tied for 51st among the 115 golfers competing in the 1A State Finals.

"We had the largest team in many years and are proud of our accomplishments. The future of Irish men's golf is bright" said Eamon O'Brien.



Written By: Eamon O'Brien

GIRLS GOLF

This years girls golf team was very special. We were the underdogs because we haven't had a full competing team in over 12 years, but we trained and fought hard to come on top at Regionals.

Winning regionals as a team and individually was one of my goals before I graduated, so it feels amazing that my team and I accomplished that goal. Nothing even comes close to topping that during all four seasons of golf for me.

I'm excited to see how much

this team grows in the future and the success they will have when I leave. The future is bright for McNamara girls golf.



Written By: Lia Coy

GIRLS BASKETBALL

With fall sports coming to an end, winter sports are about to be launched into full speed. One of the most anticipated teams of the year to watch has been the Bishop McNamara Girls Basketball team. Last year, the Lady Irish had an extremely successful season. Led by former state champion and Rutgers basketball player Kha-daizha Sanders, the team won their conference and ended a 3-year Regional Championship drought. I was able to speak with Savana Smith, one of the key players for their post-season run last year, as well as the only four-year player on the



DANCE & POM

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team, about their upcoming season.

After last year's successful season, the Irish had 5 key Seniors graduate. However, there are several new players coming out this season. The Irish are learning how to adjust, not only to the loss of those Seniors, but to the additions of these new players. "I would say this year we need to focus more on team chemistry," Smith said. "We lost 5 very core senior players last year, and we have a lot of new faces coming out this season. I think our top concern is developing that team chemistry." The team has already started to show signs of chemistry development in their defense. "Our strong suit would definitely be our defense. We have a lot of quick players and we've been able to use our defense to get a lot more transition points, whereas before I feel like we weren't able to take control of the pace of the game as we are now."

With the team beginning to develop chemistry with one another, they are setting their sights on several goals, including a deeper post-season run. "For this season, I would say that we're hoping to make it farther. We want to place at State Farm, we're hoping to win the Timberwolf Tip-off at Cissna Park because we got second in that last year, and then we're hoping to improve our post-season progression to at least the sectional title." In addition to these team goals, Savana has some personal goals for her senior season. "One of my personal goals this season is to be able to end my basketball career being able to say I was happy with the outcome and happy with the way I played."

The Lady Irish begin their season on November 14th at Cissna Park for the Timberwolf Tipoff, and their home opened is November 22nd against Chicago Christian. "Come support

our girls basketball team this year. We're going to have a lot of fun. We're having themes, as well as staff members of the game at home games." We wish the girls basketball team luck as they set out to have a landmark season!



Written By: Sarah Berg

POMS COMPETITION SEASON

While the football team hangs up their helmets for the season, the Bishop McNamara dance team laces up their hip-hop shoes in preparation for the season to come. Friday night lights have officially concluded, but the Poms girls are preparing for Saturday morning bus drives. It's that time of year; competition season has begun! When it comes to the season, these girls mean business, so the team will begin preparation



October 2023 Athletics & House Events

in the second week of November. The Poms team will be attending multiple competitions throughout the state, all organized by both IDTA and IHSA. This year, the team will be led by seniors Tara Arseneau, Maddie Russell, and Evita Martinez. All three girls will be bringing solos, along with two group numbers, to the various events. The girls will not only be performing for trophies, but they will also be present at home basketball games. Catch their performance on November 21st at the first home game! The Bishop McNamara Poms girls are thrilled to begin their season, and ready to continue the successful legacy of the dance program.



Written By: Reagan Kaner

FRESHMAN STUDY SEMINAR RECAP



Written By: Emily Storer

HOUSE SCARECROW DECORATING CONTEST

The Academic Prefects Jordan Mazjsak and I went into every freshman English class to present a PowerPoint. The PowerPoint consisted of some tips and tricks to help the Freshman out. We talked about the importance of good communication with your teachers, that way if you are sick or are missing from school for any reason, you can make up all of your work and stay on task. We also talked about procrastination and how it does not lead you to turn in your best work. Finally, we talked about the importance of getting involved in your school activities. At Bishop McNamara, there are many sports and extracurriculars to get involved in. We hope the freshman enjoyed the seminar, and if anyone would like to access the PowerPoint my email is storere25@bmcss.org.

The fall season has been a great time for some fun house events! We started off with a Scarecrow and pumpkin decorating contest. The theme was Medieval! Taking 1st place was Dublin with a Fairy Scarecrow! Donegal was 2nd with a King. 3rd was Limerick with a Princess. 4th was Waterford with a Night. 5th was Killarney with a Wizard. So much work was put into making sure the scarecrows were perfect and the pumpkins looked amazing! Great job everyone!

TRUNK OR TREAT

“Trunk or Treat” took place this year on Wednesday, October 25th! This was not necessarily a competition, but just something fun for the Bourbonnais and Bradley site kids to enjoy. Each House decorated the trunks of 2 cars and passed out candy to the kids. Additionally, many other sports and clubs came with decorated cars! Everyone who came and got candy



October 2023 Faith & Service

has such great costumes. This was such a fun night!



Written By: Claire Goselin

WEDNESDAY MORNING PRAYER GROUP

Every Wednesday at 7:00 our Morning Prayer and Mass is held in the Chapel. We pray specifically for our students, staff, and faculty. It allows for our community to get together and remind us that we are part of the Church. It creates this powerful presence coming from God. A presence that is brought closer to us by our community with strong Prayers and Thanksgiving. We come to God through Jesus Christ and being guided by the Holy Spirit is always the aim! Brining all things back to him and through him. After our morning prayer we offer Mass a shared celebration where our

faith is nourished by the Body and Blood of Christ. In addition to that, The Spiritual Point is our bible study held in the CMO every Thursday during lunch. We bring our lunch and share our meal discussing our thoughts about the Scripture of the week. This allows for student to share their faith and discuss what it is we have questions about. We came together as students and transformed into a family. The Morning prayer and The Spiritual are open to all!



Written By: Andrea Perucho

HARVEST SUNDAY

As November approaches, more service opportunities are starting to open up. One major service project we as a school and a community are preparing for is Harvest Sunday! Harvest Sunday is a two weekend pro-

ject in which students and other various parent volunteers gather food bags for the hungry and the poor. The first Sunday, November 4th, we will be passing out bags to the parishioners of the local churches. They will be taking them home to fill them up with non-perishable canned goods and keeping them for the next Sunday. On this second Sunday, November 11th, the volunteers will gather the bags and bring them back to the school so that we can distribute them to the various food pantries and other sites. With these bags of food, we will be able to feed many families, facilities, and empty stomachs. It is an honor to be able to gather food and other items for the people in need and we as a community can't wait to give back!



Written By: Madeline Russell



October 2023 Clubs & Fine Arts

SCHOLASTIC BOWL

The Irish Scholastic Bowl team had their first match against Timothy Christian High School on November 2nd. Although the match was a loss, it demonstrated causes for optimism for the remainder of the season. The team put up a good showing against the defending Metro-Suburban Conference Scholastic Bowl Champions. While the Metro-Suburban Conference has since dissolved, many of the same teams have transitioned to the newly formed Chicago Christian Conference, keeping Scholastic Bowl very competitive. Questions from this match included many math and science questions, as well as a few pop culture questions, specifically about the Barbie Movie. The team plays St. Edward's and Ridgewood this upcoming week. We wish the team good luck with the rest of their season.

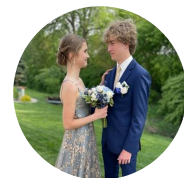


Written By: Sarah Berg

ESPORTS

eSports is a fairly new extracurricular here at Bishop McNamara. eSports is short for electronic sports which is where you play competitive online video games. This was an addition to our school in the spring semester of the 2020-2021 school year. The video games that were available were Rocket League, League of Legends, and Smash Brothers. Currently, Smash Brothers and Mario Kart are available at the Junior High and High School levels. This became an official IHSA activity in the spring of 2022 where students met to compete in various eSports. Since this addition, there have been two IHSA competitions that we have participated in. One former student participated in the State

Finals for Smash Brothers placing 16th in the State! Now in the current season, the Smash Brothers team has played scrimmages against Peotone High School and is preparing for the conference season. The Mario Kart team is participating in Play Vs competitions in the central region of the US. The team is currently ranked 12th out of 64 teams with a record of 4-1, with the only loss due to joining the season late and having to forfeit the first week.



Written By: Emily Storer

FALL MUSICAL CAST INTERVIEW

Bishop McNamara's fall musical: Beauty and the Beast will take place on the cafeteria stage on November 17th, 18th, and 19th. With the show quickly approaching, I sat down with Ms. Knepelkamp and Walter



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Fine Arts & Creative

Krause to ask a few questions about the show.

Ms. Kniefkamp has been teaching with Bishop McNamara for eleven years and has recently become head of the theater department. Her favorite part about being a director is "Seeing the students grow and really get into their characters. Also seeing new students develop a love for theater arts.". Her favorite songs from the musical are If I Can't Love Her and Be Our Guest. Even though Ms. Kniefkamp is the director/music director/choreographer, if she could play any role, she would want to play Lumiere.

I also interviewed Walter Krause who is a Junior and plays the role of Beast. When asked what the most challenging thing about playing Beast is, Krause says it's getting into the right headspace and having the right attitude. His favorite parts of the show are his

scenes in the first act and Beast's song "If I Can't Love Her".

Make sure to see the shows and support our theater department! In the words of Ms. Kniefkamp, "Our students have worked so hard and are going to put on an amazing performance. One not to be missed!".



Written By: Hailey Neill

FALL WREATH CRAFT



Materials

- ◆ Pizza Box
- ◆ Scissors
- ◆ Leaves
- ◆ Hot Glue Gun
- ◆ Acorns
- ◆ Pinecones
- ◆ Berries

Steps

- #1 - Collect leaves, pinecones, berries, and acorns from trees in your yard or neighborhood.
- #2 - Cut a circle out of a pizza box, as large or small as you would like.
- #3 - Cut another circle out of the middle of that circle.
- #4 - Arrange your nature items around the circle and hot glue them on.
- #5 - After it dries, set it up or even hang it up inside or outside.



Written By: Sarah Hoehn



October 2023 World Events & Credits

THANKSGIVING HISTORY

Thanksgiving is the holiday where we celebrate the coming of the colonists from England celebrating their first plentiful feast of their new life. Though, it took over two decades for the holiday to be nationally recognized as one. In November of 1863 president Abraham Lincoln made Thanksgiving a national holiday in hopes to keep the moral high in the middle of the civil war, but this did not come without controversy. Many people, Americans and Native Americans, believed that the true reason behind the holiday was to celebrate the oppression and blood shed of the relationship of the European colonists and the Natives.

BLACK FRIDAY

With black Friday just around the corner, you should probably know about some of the upcoming deals at some of the

stores in the area. Target is one of the best stores to shop at during black Friday, not only for the deals, but they host their black Friday deals weeks in advance. Every day there are new products with more savings. They also have up to 50% off on books, clothing, and other household items. Old Navy is very popular and they have deals on their clothing. The sale starts at 4pm on thanksgiving day and everything in the store is 50% off. Some items can be as low as \$5. Even Amazon has Black Friday sales, you can save up to 70% on tech items, 30% on kindles, and up to 50% on other items. And the final store you might want to stop into is Barnes and Noble, they have 50% off on most items in the store including books, magazines, accessories, and music related items.



Written By: Riley Piazza

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