Football Team Has Record-Setting Season

Eagles are city champs, conference champs, and made it two rounds into playoffs

Ian Firestone - Staff Writer

The Eagles football season sadly came to an end in the semi-finals of the playoffs against Holy Family. Despite the disappointing loss in their final game of the year, the Eagles made history numerous times throughout the season.

Senior Jackson Chleboun said, “My favorite part of the season was the playoffs. There is more on the line if you don’t perform well and there is just an unmatched competitiveness.” Chleboun also said, “Winning those first two playoff games was amazing, and being one of the last four teams in the state and last alive in Loveland is an incredible accomplishment.”

Being one of the final four teams is even more impressive to think that it was the first time since 2005 that the team had reached the semifinals. And on the way to the playoffs, more history was made.

The Eagles were the first team in 18 years to beat crosstown rivals Loveland, longer than most of the players have been alive.

Senior Marco Lapiere said, “I think that we definitely had all of the components to do what we did this year. It was just a matter of execution and knowing that we were all capable of doing what we did. With the new coach, there was uncertainty, but we all bought into our scheme and executed very well in the end.”

Marching Band Earns Superior Rating at Competition

Ben Records - Staff Writer

The 2023-24 school year has been an exciting and eventful one for Thompson Valley extracurriculars and athletics. The volleyball team took second place at state, the football team made it to the semi-finals in playoffs and won the conference championship, the tennis team won the Windsor Fall Invitational, and more. The Golden Eagle Marching Band has been overshadowed in past years, but this year, things changed.

On top of the rise in members, a more rigorous practice schedule and a higher focus on team building resulted in a more successful and exciting season.

Drum Major and senior Alexis Highland said, “I feel like our superior rating was well deserved and earned after the effort that everyone in the band put in. It felt extremely fulfilling.”

Every year the marching band heads to Northridge High School to attend the Greeley Invitational. Bands from across the state come to Greeley and perform in front of judges and receive a clinic from a band teacher or professor. After all of the performances, each band is given a rating of either excellent or superior.

This season, the ensemble consisted of more musicians than ever before. Summer band camp had great attendance, and during the school year those numbers doubled.

A superior grade is a prestigious award that few bands get every year, and this year, TV earned the award. Director and music teacher Mark Thompson said, “Receiving a superior rating at the Greeley Invitational felt awesome! This whole semester, my goal has been for the band to look and sound the absolute best that we could, and it was nice that a byproduct of that hard work was a superior rating.”

Both Thompson and Highland were proud of the team building that the band worked on over the season, with Highland stating, “This year felt like everyone in the band had a personal connection with at least one other person. We spent a lot of time on team building and it felt like one big happy family.”

Thompson seconded this, “This year’s band has been one of the tightest-knit groups I have worked with in my career. Though we have performed well in the past, this particular group has a type of ‘electricity’ that comes from their caring about each other and the art of music. This electricity, paired with their hard work, has really paid off in terms of how much they have improved in each rehearsal and grown throughout the season.”

Members of the ensemble clearly felt the same way. Jonathan Jack, a senior, said “[The superior rating] was unexpected but definitely welcome. I was very happy and I hope it happens again next year.”

Every year, the band has an eighth grade night where they bring in eighth graders from middle schools around Loveland to participate in the pep music during football games. This year, a majority of the members of the band were freshmen that participated in the eighth grade night last year. The eighth grade night this year was a similar success. The future of the Golden Eagle Marching Band is promising and bright.
Research Shows Correlation Between Screen Time and Anxiety in Teenagers

Avery Gibbs - Staff Writer

You are experiencing a mental health crisis and the question is who or what is to blame? In the U.S., around 17.1 million young people have a mental health disorder by the age of 18, and according to the CDC, in 2020 60 percent of US teen girls said they felt persistently sad and hopeless and only 12 percent of that group had seriously contemplated attempting suicide. This is a 60 percent increase from the decade before.

The pandemic had a huge negative impact on the world’s mental health, and some think the current crisis teens are facing is a result of the trauma and isolation. But according to Harold Kopelowicz, founding president and medical director of Child Mind Institute, the number of teen suicides jumped from 2007-2018. Although the pandemic has had a negative impact on mental health, there is a bigger cause that most teens choose to ignore: social media.

Teens are tired of being lectured for their phone usage because most times, the negative impact seems to be unavoidable and not immediate. Most importantly, most teens don’t really understand why it seems almost impossible to stop the endless scroll. In the moment, there is no realization of the long-term or the effect it has on their well-being. So as their mental health declines, teens are called lazy for their habit and not given the tools to effectively stop.

A recent report found that teenagers spend an average of 8 hours and 39 minutes per day on screens. Looking at social media in particular, the negative impacts lie within passive interaction, which means scrolling through a platform and interacting solely through likes compared to active interaction which is messaging others and creating a social circle.

The reason teenagers can’t stop scrolling is the same reason why drug and alcohol abusers can’t stop. It is the way human brains are wired. When someone who relies on social media every day chooses to stop scrolling or checking a phone they will begin to experience anxiety as not checking their phone releases the stress hormone cortisol. This anxiety is due to the way constant scrolling changes these three pathways in your brain: mesocortical which controls cognition, memory, emotional, behavior and learning. Nigrostriatal pathway which controls movement and sensory stimuli and lastly the Mesolimbic pathway that controls pleasure and reward seeking behavior, addiction, and reward perception. These pathways are activated when the brain experiences a reward, the notifications from social media apps all act as mini rewards. Physically changing the pathways.

In the absence of a phone, cortisol is released because infinite scrolling leads to constant firing of the brain due to the reward of continuous positive social interaction. These mini rewards cause a release of dopamine along these pathways and respond to a phone’s constant stimuli. Every notification and every 10 second video acts as a reward that is now attached to picking up a phone. So the lack of dopamine experienced when a person does not pick up their phone leads to anxiety. This is why choosing to just put the phone down is extremely difficult, especially for teenagers because adolescence is the second biggest period of growth in the brain so social skills are rapidly developing making them particularly susceptible.

In an article written by Sarah Miller for Jefferson Health Nancy DeAngelis, director of behavioral health states, “The overuse of social media can actually rewire a young child or teen’s brain to constantly seek out immediate gratification, leading to obsessive, compulsive and addictive behaviors. This is what can make mental health disorders such as anxiety, depression, ADHD and body dysmorphic worse.”

Emma Stempak, a Thompson Valley Senior, says that she finds herself spending more time than she would like on Instagram.

She recently deleted the app though, “My screen time dropped down a lot. I made the choice because I didn’t like that it was keeping me from missing moments and connections I could’ve had by not being on my phone. It also helped me focus in school.”

Smack has noticed the toll social media takes on teen’s relationships, “It’s stopped teenagers from connecting in person and knowing how to talk to others in more meaningful ways.”

Hove, even acknowledging the way social media is affecting teenagers’ brains is the first step in solving one part of the mental health crisis and knowing why the scroll doesn’t stop changes the way teens think about their capability and the value of their time.

Amazing Artists of Thompson Valley

Brinlynn Soderstrom - Staff Writer

Inspiration comes in many different shapes. With art, it’s no different. It is not easy to find inspiration for an art piece and it won’t always turn out the way you want it to. We have many talented artists at Thompson Valley. Three of them share the stories behind the fun of being an artist.

Chloe Hove is a junior artist who works on sculptures and drawings. She says that the most difficult part of being an artist is deciding to draw her ideas in the first place.

“The fact that when I do draw it out, it never shows up how I wanted it to in the first place makes it difficult as well.”

Hove goes on to say that her inspiration usually comes from social media, “I look at Pinterest and I’ll find a ton of amazing and crazy art pieces that people make. I also follow many artists on Instagram and their posts are insane, so I get inspiration from those and will create my version of that piece or a completely different art piece that was inspired by that piece.”

Hove even makes stories with some of her art. “There’s some lore behind some of my art pieces. I’ll make different characters or just different little cartoon characters. I’ll write stories and I’ll try to draw the characters that go along with them and I try to draw traditional pieces from other cultures.”

Of course, creating art can be a long process. Hove shares that one of her longest art pieces to create was a sculpture for her ceramics class! “I was doing a fountain for my Sculpture and Ceramics class last year and I was working on this face that half-human half-demon and I think the longest part about it was getting all the tiny details to look natural and expressive.”

Elijah Magoon is a junior artist who works on digital art. He believes that the most difficult part of creating art is the art block. He says, “There are times when I want to draw, but I physically cannot come up with the ideas or the talent to. That, and when I mess up so much that I just want to give up.”

Magoon also says that his inspiration comes from other people’s characters! “I draw a lot of other people’s characters a lot, whether it’s commissioned or gifting art.” Magoon also mentions another source of inspiration: social media! “Pinterest is good for poses and outfits!”

Art always has some kind of story or message behind it. There seems to be a lot of stories behind Magoon’s art. “There’s too much lore to explain. I have a lot of original characters and they have to have lore behind certain pieces. The pieces are there to connect the lore and there’s too many to explain all of it.”

It takes a long time for an art piece to be finished. For Magoon, 40 hours had been spent on a game called Art Fight. “There’s this game called Art Fight, where you have to draw other people’s characters for points and there were about 20 characters and their little pets in there, so that took me about 40 hours to draw them all and put them on the same canvas.”

Elizabeth Cramer is a sophomore artist. She mentions the difficulties of finding motivation.

“Having the motivation and finding the place you want to be to find the motivation to draw.”

Cramer also says that the longest time she took on an art piece was actually for an assignment in Spanish.

“I had to draw this skeleton for Spanish, and it took me a while. It was pretty hard.”

Cramer gets most of her inspiration from her emotions. “My inspiration comes from my feelings. Pinterest is good for emotions, but I mainly get pictures of eyes and lips from Pinterest.”

Out of all of these artists, they each have a different style and a different form of art. Everyone’s style is unique, but overall proves that art is different for everyone. From sculptures to writing to dancing, everyone can create something amazing.

ELO Changes

Bridget Giordano - Staff Writer

Extended learning opportunities (ELO) have been a fun addition to the typical school day here at Thompson Valley. But starting on Thursday October 23, our ELO’s are going to change a little bit.

Due to lower test scores and concerns about academic progress, the administration has added an academic element to the ELO structure. In one ELO each week students will be getting on an educational program called mastery. This helps us practice skills in different subjects. It will tell us what subjects we are really good at and what subjects we need a little bit more help on, all based on PSAT and SAT data. So that hopefully, we can bring our test scores up as a whole school.

But even though most of the staff embrace this idea, the students have a different opinion on it. Junior Hailey Flanagan states, “I think that it could be beneficial to the student body if kids are actually participating in it. But if kids just want to mess around then it’s really just a waste of time. You can’t make kids do something that they don’t want to do.”

Other students have similar opinions on it. Junior Kyla Smith says, “We went to log on and we all had lots of problems. All the students got confused and we just gave up, it was not helpful.”

Overall, most of the students have negative feelings about it. But the teachers and administration are very hopeful that this will help our school as a whole.
Counseling Department Reflects on their Learning Curve

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As we head into the second quarter at our school, there are many changes per usual, with finishing up quarter grades for teachers, and our new phone policy that staff are enforcing. Since we love our counseling department we wanted to do a check-in to see how the transition is going. Andria Hall, the senior counselor said, “It is going really well. It’s had its challenges, but I really enjoy being here, and I really enjoy to know the students.” Hall, along with all the other counselors, is new to her position this year and has had to do some on the job learning.

“How to schedule [has been the biggest learning curve] because they don’t teach you how to do that in counselor school.” Hall continued, saying that the biggest thing students can do to make the counselors’ jobs easier is “pay close attention to deadlines and add/drop days.”

Although scheduling is a big part of the counselors’ jobs, it’s certainly not the only thing that they do. As the senior counselor, Hall has spent time around on the floor didn’t put it out, so he ripped his pants off because rolling his pants down his pants and onto the floor. So his pants were on fire, the carpet was on fire.

Luckily he had those tear away pants, so he ripped his pants off because rolling around on the floor didn’t put it out, so he had to get them off or he would have been really injured,” Little said. “Finally a teacher came in with a fire extinguisher and put the fire out. It burnt the wall as well, so over spring break they had to come in to replace the carpet and paint the wall.”

Fire is hard to beat, but ask any teacher and they’ll have a story or two… or three. During the AP Human Geography Final exam one year, Jay Klaggio had an unpleasant surprise, “About 30 or 40 minutes into the exam, I had a student who turned and vomited all over another student. So we had to clean him up.” Klaggio continued, “We hosed him off outside and he finished taking the test outside at a picnic table.”

Bodily fluids may occasionally be a part of being in schools, but what about animals? Family and Consumer Science teacher Jacob Little, recalled the funniest experience he’s had since being at Thompson, “I was sitting down at lunch, I had my normal lunch crew sitting there eating as well. And I had two students I had had in the past walk in with a goldfish in a bag and they were like, ‘Hey, Little, do you want this goldfish?’” Little said he was very confused, and the explanation didn’t help. The students said they brought the goldfish for math teacher Austin Kohn, who didn’t want it. “I gave them a little bit of a lecture about how they shouldn’t be using a live pet as a surprise gift for somebody. Luckily one of my lunch crew kids actually had her own aquarium, she loves raising fish, and so she actually volunteered to take the goldfish,” Little said. “That was about two years ago and that goldfish is still kicking, and is as healthy as ever.”

Before stepping into the role of dean, Lorrr Quinn taught in classrooms for many years and in several different capacities. Sitting in the computer lab during class one day, Quinn noticed a student getting very frustrated, “I had a student go up to King Sooper and steal a bunch of Visa gift cards.” He continued, “Card after card, they had no money on them.”

The Strangest Stories from the Classroom

Odd (but true) stories that teachers have experienced in their careers

Bridget Giordano - Staff Writer

Everyone has different experiences when they’re in high school and no matter what your high school experience is like, you’re going to leave with some stories. Now imagine reliving high school year after year, sometimes for a decade or more, the stories start to become endless, and it’s impossible not to have some wild experiences when you’ve taught thousands of students.

One of our librarians, Liza Bauer, taught English here for twelve years before becoming a librarian (12 years ago)! Towards the beginning of her career, she had a fiery classroom experience, “So during my third year, there was a student who thought it would be clever to light some rubber cement on fire. Who was holding it dropped it, and the rubber cement spilled down his pants, which was holding it dropped it, and the rubber cement spilled down his pants and onto the floor. So his pants were on fire, the carpet was on fire.

Luckily he had those tear away pants, so he ripped his pants off because rolling around on the floor didn’t put it out, so he had to get them off or he would have been really injured,” Bauer recalled. “Finally a teacher came in with a fire extinguisher and put the fire out. It burnt the wall as well, so over spring break they had to come in to replace the carpet and paint the wall.”

Fire is hard to beat, but ask any teacher and they’ll have a story or two… or three. Before stepping into the role of dean, Lorrr Quinn taught in classrooms for many years and in several different capacities. Sitting in the computer lab during class one day, Quinn noticed a student getting very frustrated, “I had a student go up to King Sooper and steal a bunch of Visa gift cards.” He continued, “Card after card, they had no money on them.”

Safe Winter Driving

Ireland Neill - Staff Writer

Driving in snow is dangerous as is, but add inexperienced drivers and things get worse. However, there are things everyone can do to stay safe. Often in the snow cars slide, break down, and crash into people, cars, and other things such as ditches or poles. It leads to heavy costs, injuries and sometimes death so learning how to stay safe is important to preventing those events.

There are driving techniques you can use and supplies to carry that help with safety. When driving there is no need to rush to get places and you can leave earlier to make sure the need to rush disappears. Speeding is a big cause of accidents in snow, that’s why driving slowly is very helpful. Another big cause of accidents is sliding. This can be stopped if you break sooner than you normally would. Even if you break well in regular weather, the danger increases in snow so braking sooner helps you stay safe.

Another thing to be sure of is defensive driving. It keeps you and other drivers safe. Don’t tailgate, hug the edges of the lane, speed then brake hard or try to fight off others using the vehicle (aggressive driving).

Prepping your car with the proper supplies is also important. Having good tires for winter helps with not sliding and being able to get over large chunks of snow and ice. Carrying an ice scraper and snow brush helps to get snow and ice away from your field of vision so you’re not driving blinded. Ensuring you don’t have any snow on top of your car and on the hood prevents snow from blocking your vision by falling or sliding into the windshield while you drive.

Overall, being more aware and having extra supplies in the winter is what will keep you safe even in really rough conditions like snow, ice and slush on the roads. Taking the extra precaution helps to keep yourself and others safe on the road.
Some Seniors Decide to Graduate at Semester

Jade Silvas - Staff writer

Some high school seniors are embracing the idea of graduating early with a vision of their future goals, eager to jumpstart their careers, pursue higher education, or explore new opportunities. Graduating early is the gateway to all types of opportunities.

Senior Myla Mattson who is graduating at the end of the semester stated, “I want to be able to have more time where I am able to save money before I go into college to start my career.”

Mattson believes there are also disadvantages to leaving early. She added, “It kinda sucks thinking that I’m not going to be here with the rest of my friends to finish the rest of the year. And also making sure I have everything in order to graduate early.”

“It’s mostly just like you don’t have enough time to get all of your senior requirements, so you kind of have to squash it,” said Mattson when asked what extra steps she has to take.

Teachers play a big part in helping students meet their goals. Thompson’s credit recovery teacher Sarah Miller is one of those teachers. She pushes students to get their work done so they can earn all of their credits.

“As a teacher in general, I think just helping [students] understand what all the options are, and what the consequences, both negative and positive, of their choices are,” Miller said. “Also, just reassuring them that if [graduating early] is what they choose to do, as a teacher I’m still here to support you.” She values helping students with job and college or trade applications and double checking with students to ensure they have all of their credits and other requirements met.

Miller understands why some seniors decide to graduate early. She stated, “I think that a lot of them are looking for other endeavors, whether that be wanting to work full time and save up money or other things like moving out on their own or going to college in the fall. Some students are starting trade school programs, whether that’s like an electrician or phlebotomist. I think it’s really just because they are ready to take the next step in their lives and they need a little bit of that extra time.”

The counselors also play a very important role in helping students graduate early. Meeting with the senior counselor is the first step in creating a plan.

Senior counselor Andria Hall said, “For a counselor, a student choosing to graduate early isn’t too stressful. It’s really important to go through the graduation requirements with the student and make sure they are meeting all the necessary criteria by December.”

Hall stressed that there are details that the students need to keep in mind. “For students, I think the hardest part is getting their community service in if they haven’t already. All students are required to complete 20 hours of community service prior to graduation, and if a senior graduating in December hasn’t started working on their 20 hours that can be stressful. The paperwork for community service also needs to be turned in before December, so making sure they’ve done that can be a challenge as well.”

Students have tons of resources at Thompson to support them in any decision they make. Graduating early is a really easy thing to accomplish when you have all the right resources and create a solid plan with enough time to successfully follow that plan. So if graduating early is the start of the rest of your life, we will miss you!”

Learning in Alternative Locations

Students take field trips to various places to enhance their learning

Christian Colling - Staff Writer

Students, depending on what classes they take at Thompson Valley High School, have one, if not many, opportunities to go on field trips during school hours, and sometimes when school isn’t in session. Thompson Valley’s AVID class has several opportunities to travel to different colleges and learn about them.

Heidi Dunn, the AVID teacher at TVHS says, “I think these field trips benefit kids as they get inspired, and excited when they get to the school, and get more motivation to go to college as when they’re on campus walking around they get to see the things they can do.” Dunn also adds, “I have seen some kids really change their minds about college, going from not wanting to go to college, to looking forward to it.”

The first AVID field trip was at CSU in Fort Collins. This is just the first as the AVID class will be visiting CU and other schools of different populations and specializations.

Alyah Lindsay, a sophomore at TVHS and a student in an AVID class says, “The field trip helped benefit me because I got the experience of talking to different colleges, some even being ones I wanted to talk to for a while.”

In the past AVID students have had the ability to go to a Nuggets game during a day of school, and this event has been and continues to be a popular event for students, and also why students should try and find different classes that offer both educational and fun field trips for students.

There was also a Metal Fabrication Shop field trip on November 14.

Cameron Johnson, a senior at TVHS says, “It shows you what it’s like to work in the field if that’s your goal. It will give you a real life example of working. It can show you more opportunities if you’re not interested in continuing school after high school.”

Winter Break

Michael Cramer - Staff Writer

People do all sorts of things during the festive season from hanging out with family to skipping down a mountain, but what unique activities captivate Thompson Valley students during their winter break?

Winter break is an exciting time since it marks the halfway point of the school year. Students like to do as much as they can in this two week window. Senior John Shier said, “One of my favorite things to do over winter break is to go skiing. The feeling of cold wind rushing past your face is amazing.”

Skiing is an adventure that no one will forget in their life with thrill seeking slopes and awe-inspiring snow-covered mountains.

Something interesting that people do over winter breaks. Senior Danián Sáucedo says, “I am planning on going ice fishing with my friends. I’m also planning on going on hikes.”

People love to go hiking during this festive season for the amazing experience and the breathtaking views. Ice fishing is also a great adventure with your family or friends, with nothing but you and the frigid air around you.

Family vacations are another interesting activity to do over winter break. Senior Benjamin Records says “I am going on a cruise for my winter break. They are a fun way to get away.”

A cruise is a very adventurous experience where you get to venture across the ocean and see very majestic things.

There are a wide variety of things people do over winter break and this is just a little scoop of what people do. From skiing to ice fishing there are so many adventures that give amazing experiences.
Could Social Studies Teacher Dan Lutz Be a Wizard?

Evidence alludes to the eclectic teacher’s possible arcane activities

When it comes to the subject of elderly scholars invoking otherworldly manifestations with their eldritch power, one might be inclined to think of the fictitious works of Tolkien or J.K. Rowling, but according to claims from the social studies department and student body, the notion of magical beings secretly walking among us isn’t exclusive to fantasy novels.

The somewhat mystical presence of Thompson Valley’s world history and psychology teacher Dan Lutz isn’t unheard of to its staff and students. Known for his tall stature and long silvery hair, both Lutz’s appearance and thought-provoking analytical knowledge are certainly sorcerer-esque, leading some students and coworkers of the teacher to suspect seemingly illogical reasons behind Mr. Lutz’s ethereal wisdom.

“Of course I’m a wizard,” stated longtime colleague and neighboring classroom inhabitant Bethany Shupe, who also shed light upon Lutz’s plethora of hobbies and uniquely specific lifestyle.

Apparently, Lutz used to be the lead singer of a heavy metal band; he quote, “rocks a lot of fringe” (which according to Shupe is pretty witchy), wears leather pants once a year, but only ever that one single day in the entire year, and is reportedly a master in Kung Fu. “He could probably kill you with his thumbs,” Shupe assured us.

Shupe wasn’t the only one with suspicions, former student and AP class fanatic Jaden Fitzpatrick also had theories about the once college professor turned speech and debate coach. When asked about her experiences as a pupil of Lutz, Fitzpatrick couldn’t deny that “It’s been interesting, some may say mysterious,” before she paused, deep in thought. “The long hair” Fitzpatrick pondered aloud. “The long hair really provides some insight into his true self… There’s no way he’s human, that’s for certain,” Fitzpatrick eventually concluded.

With several stupendous rumors surrounding Lutz’s beginning to surface, from him being some species of shadow vampire, to him merely partaking in a moderate amount of occult rituals, we decided to take the allegations directly to the man, perhaps the myth, and quite possibly the legend, Dan Lutz, in an effort obtain some more concrete answers regarding his alleged activities.

This, however, proved to yield some unexpected results to say the least. When pressed about the accusations that he may take part in the casting of spells and other sorcery, Mr. Lutz provided a rather astoundingly irregular response, saying, “It was stated by a famous science fiction writer that any sufficiently advanced technology would be mistaken for magic, so, that leads to the question, am I simply in possession of incredibly advanced technology, or am I indeed casting any particular type of spell? It could be impossible to tell the difference between the two, so, at this point, it could be that I have arcane knowledge. Is that arcane knowledge into mystical forces, or is that arcane knowledge looking at technology that is not available to others at this time? I’ll leave it up to you to decide.”

His words somehow (not to mention paradoxically) raise more questions with his answer than answers to our questions. Given the near indecipherable nature of that remark, combined with the already scattered and incoherent mesh of rumors and theories, it seems the answer to the question “Who is Mr. Lutz?” much like the man himself, remains elusive. Is it that he’s simply an eccentric personality flaunting his stage-presence or is he some kind of magical entity masterfully evading detection, opting to remain shrouded in a cloak of mystery, or perhaps even something else entirely.

The truth, much like Mr. Lutz stated, seems to be up to personal interpretation.
The Horrors of Heredity

Sophomore Joseph Pearson knows how that feels. “A trait I wouldn’t like to inherit from my parents would be a popping jaw.” Both my mom and dad have their jaws pop occasionally. I’ve had it happen once before and it sucks and it hurts a lot and it’s very loud so the entire room knows it happens.”

Sophomore Colton Smith also has something to add to the conversation. “I’d have to say then being overly obsessed with cleaning, that’s definitely something I don’t want.” He said, “I like being clean but they’re really obsessive about it.”

Sophomore Logan Neff added, “I personally don’t want to inherit their stubbornness because I prefer to be more open minded about topics.”

Sophomore Hawk Olguin chose to focus on a different kind of trait, a physical trait. “I don’t want to inherit my dad’s eyebrows. They look like two caterpillars decided to take a rest on his head and stay there for the rest of their lives.”

So, in conclusion, there are a lot of annoying traits that you could, and very well might, inherit. But it could be worse, right?

Features for Fun

2023’s Top Five Wildest News Stories

DEWOOD/DUEWIG/LIBERTY/ELLIS/STUDIO

We all can agree 2023 has been a calmer year than ones in the past. 2020 was filled with chaos, whether it was the killer bees, insane fires, or the start of COVID-19. 2021 had the peak of COVID in January, and the riots at the capitol, in 2022 Russia invaded Ukraine, and there were some of the most powerful natural disasters in history.

The chaotic past years have made 2023 seem quiet, but it can be assured that there were definitely some strange news headlines.

Starting with number five, a man pulled over for reckless driving bit the tip of the police officer’s finger off.

The man could be in prison for up to twenty-five years for leading the police on a chase, crashing into several cars, and then biting an officer’s ring finger off up to the first knuckle.

Next, a man brought his six foot long, 55 pound alligator to a Phillies game at Citizens Bank Park.

The man, Joe Henney, claimed the alligator was his service animal, and when he tried to enter the park he was turned away. Joe then jumped out of a plane in 2022.

A Canadian amusement park was the location of a nightmare event, when their ride “The Lumberjack” stopped moving with all riders still aboard.

The ride consists of two hydraulic arms, shaped like axes, that swing back and forth. The ride stopped working at 10:40pm, but was back up by 11:05 p.m.

Two people were treated for chest pain, but other than that, no one was injured. Although, some may be scarred emotionally. As the ride was midair, the passengers were screaming and crying in fear, as shown in the video.

Finally, at least 189 bodies were recovered from a Colorado funeral home for being stored improperly.

Return to Nature Funeral Home near Colorado Springs was searched by police after a report of a foul smell coming from the building. They found that the 2500-square-foot building contained about 115 bodies originally, but after further investigation the number rose to 189 but could still be rising.

The funeral home offered a service called green and natural burial services, which allow bodies to decompose underground, without the use of metal caskets or chemicals. The owners claimed they were intending to bury the bodies but hadn’t gotten to it.
Thompson Valley offers many opportunities to get a jump-start on your career while still in high school. One of these opportunities is a class you can take through Front Range to become a Certified Nurse Aide.

The class is free and takes place at a Front Range Campus. Instructors teach you how to properly care for the elderly community, and the many skills a CNA needs to know to do their job. The campus is high-tech and offers a real-world setting to learn these skills.

At the end of the course you will take a written and skills exam to earn your certification.

“The biggest benefit of becoming a CNA is learning how to be a better communicator with people. Just to feel comfortable around people with different medical needs, and also other stuff, like the nurses and stuff. I think it was a great step in deciding if I wanted to pursue the medical field,” school nurse Jamie Quintana said.

When asked who would benefit from the CNA class the most, she answered “Somebody who is interested in pursuing a degree in the medical field, no matter what that would be. Even if it’s something other than a nurse.”

“Oh, really for anybody, just the experience is good. But, if you’re not interested in people or improving your communication skills, I don’t know if it would be the right choice,” Quintana continued.

Senior Nayelli Rodriguez took and passed the class to become a CNA. When asked what her experience was like, she said “My experience in the CNA class was really good. I felt like it was a very engaging and informative class. I really enjoyed how hands-on the class was. The instructor and students in the class were also very great to be with.”

“Overall, I just feel like this course is great because you’re able to take it while you’re in high school and you get credits from the class as well,” Rodriguez added.

Rodriguez was also asked what she did with her certification.

“With the certification that I got from the class, I was able to get a job, which was very great because I actually get real life experience and put my certification to use,” she answered.

CNAs play a vital role in the medical field. Hospitals and other medical facilities would not be able to function without them. They provide patients and their families with essential services that they aren’t able to do themselves.

Whether or not you want to work in the medical field, the class is a great opportunity to see what it is like to play such an important role, work with amazing people, and learn from talented instructors.

The Art of Teaching Art Classes

Chisholm started college working in graphic design. He said he had a bad work experience as a Graphic Designer. His professor asked him if he ever thought about teaching because of his experience working at youth camps, so after he graduated, he got his license to teach. He started teaching in Nashville, Tennessee at an elementary school, then in 2012 began teaching here at Thompson Valley.

Crawford started his art career trying to perfect his art style on his journey to becoming an artist, but he says he had no one to mentor him. He ended up realizing that making art was only a small part of actually being an artist. Later he met an art professor at UNC who told him “That making art for artists was not a choice but a necessity.” He learned that there were more ways to share his love for art and be more financially stable. Later he went back to school full time to become an art teacher at the high school level.

Robinson started her career with the memory of what her life was like when she was back in high school with her art teacher. She wanted to create a safe space where people could express themselves and their ideas. When she was younger, she felt depressed and anxious, art was a gateway for her to express herself in her own way, and she wanted to provide that same experience for her students.

Robinson has been teaching in schools for the last 21 years, first at Bill Reed Middle School, then Berthoud High and then finally here.

The art teachers here have all been through their own problems and challenges along the way, but all ended up at a similar conclusion, that they wanted to teach and share the knowledge and experiences with kids and teenagers.

Halloween, Thanksgiving, and Christmas are all major holidays swiftly coming through. Traditions bring these holidays alive, and many can’t wait to experience them. Kam Otteson, a junior, has an interesting tradition that her family and family friends all participate in during Halloween. They play a game called Green Ghost, in which everyone hides except one person, who is given the title ‘Green Ghost.’ Everyone else tries not to be seen and if they are, they get tagged. If the Green Ghost does tag/find someone, they have to yell Green Ghost as loud as they can. Once this battle cry has been made, everyone participating in the game has to run back to the designated home base, trying not to get tagged by the Green Ghost. This is a very fun game that could be a new addition to your holidays and might even become your family’s new tradition. “This is a very fun game. Everyone should try it out.” Kam Otteson stated.

Others don’t really celebrate certain holidays, such as Ireland Niell, a junior, whose family doesn’t celebrate Christmas in the usual context. “My sister and I don’t believe in Santa, so instead of presents our dad takes us on a trip in the summer.” Last summer, they went on a family trip to Maui, Hawaii. This year, who knows, they could go to Dubai.

Stephanie and her family make an unusual dish for almost every holiday: midwestern sushi. A pickle is smashed in cream cheese or sour cream, however, cream cheese is better as recommended by Stephanie. Wrapped around this is any delt meat of your choice. “Ham, turkey, or roast beef. Ham is usually the best to have around.” It, stated Stephanie. At every family gathering, they have midwestern sushi, an interesting combination that is worth the try. If you need a new tradition to spice up the holidays, any of these unusual traditions are worth presenting to your family.
Teacher By Day and Hockey Star in His Freetime

Choir Teacher Bryan Kettlewell loves his team even when they’re terrible

Choir director at Thompson Valley High School, Bryan Kettlewell, has many extracurriculars outside of his classroom. Hockey is one of them. The team: the Star Spangled Danglers.

Though the team has not won any games so far this season, the players are still having a great time. “Our team sucks, for real, we have lost every game this season,” Kettlewell said with laughs and humor. He still has many memories even when they aren’t winning.

The Star Spangled Danglers play against five other teams, old friends that played with Kettlewell in Winter Park play on these teams as well, making the league as “a good environment.” An environment and team that very obviously gives lots of memories and happiness to Kettlewell and the team.

Kettlewell will say, “If you’re not falling, you’re not trying hard enough,” when many players are bound to fall on their own accord. The last game The Star Spangled Danglers played on Tuesday the 14 of November they won, three to two.

Kettlewell explained that students can come watch, and would be happy for them to, but doesn’t recommend it because of how late the games are. These games can start from 9 to 10 at night and end at 11 or 12.

Kettlewell enjoys physical outlets outside of his classroom and hockey is one of those, a sport that has been with him for years. He describes his team and league as “a good environment.” An environment and team that very obviously gives lots of memories and happiness to Kettlewell and the team.

Features

Student Teacher Makes Positive Connections

English department student teacher Bethany Eveleth embraced her experience at the school

Bridget Giordano - Staff Writer

We got the amazing opportunity to have student teachers in some of our classrooms. It gives the student teacher lots of good practice and it gives students a new way of learning things because of their different teaching style. It also gives the normal teachers a break from teaching all the time (which I’m sure they love). But at some point, we do lose them so that they can go on and be great teachers on their own.

Unfortunately, one of our amazing student teachers, Bethany Eveleth has finished her experience and is done for the semester. Eveleth student-taught for Loris Osier’s Journalism 1 and 2 classes, and junior English classes. She was very sad to be leaving. Eveleth stated, “I’m going to miss the students so much. I’ve made so many connections with students here, especially because last year I got to work with freshmen and sophomores, and this semester, of course, mostly with juniors. And I just feel like the students here are so awesome and I’ve just made some really good connections. There are some like Cami Burgess that I will miss so much. I’m also going to miss the department. The English department is a really supportive environment, we eat lunch together every day, and so I also feel like I’ve made good connections with them.”

Not only is she going to miss the students and the teachers here, but we all will miss her as well. Freshman Lindsey Hobson, who was in her journalism 1 class states, “I’m going to miss her support and talking to her. And being best friends.”

Eveleth’s cooperating teacher, Loris Osier, stated, “I miss everything. We have become like the best of friends, and I am so used to having her right next to me the entire time. And just sharing ideas and sharing our laughter and just all of that collaboration. I miss her a lot.”

There were lots of connections made in the short time she was here. But we all have also learned a lot. Osier explains, “She has renewed my understanding of why people go into teaching. You get a little old and crusty when you’ve been doing this job as long as I have, and to have Mrs. Eveleth come in with fresh ideas and a different outlook and positive energy has just reminded why this job is so important and it’s important to keep doing the work to keep getting better.”

But not only did Eveleth teach all of us, we taught her some things as well. She stated, “I have learned to have a short memory. Like sometimes you’ll think that a student is mad at you or you’ll do something that irritates you. And then the next day they’ll come in totally fine and not even realize that they were mad at you or vice versa. It’s just so much better when you just walk in every single day with a new perspective for the day because the students are doing that too.”

Even though we only spend a short part of the year with our student teachers, they leave a big impact on our lives, and we leave a huge impact on theirs as well.
New Definition of Veteran Teachers

Handful of teachers served their country in the Armed Forces

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Rex Beach

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how long?
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joining?
:\“I came from a very poor family. I lived in the apartment with my brother, so I joined to get some money underneath me and to get my life on track.
:\“Do your research. Think of all the options you have open to you. Study for the ASVAB test that you will be taking, and find the option you will like doing, and make sure that the information that you are being given by the recruiter is on paper - not verbal. Make sure they write it down so you are able to have your information on hand with you.”

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Will Sherman

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how long?
:\United States Army for 11 years and 16 days.
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joining?
:\“The reason I joined in the first place was because I failed out of college and was out of college for six months, and I knew I wanted to go back to college after that break and I knew that the Army - that the military at the time - would be able to help me pay for college. At the end of the day, the branch that allowed me the jump out of airplanes was the Army, so that was where I wanted to go.”
:\“I would say if you were wanting to join the service that it is a commitment to not only yourself but to other people, and when I was in basic training and our drill sergeant pulled us into the day room and asked us, ‘Why did you join the Army?’ - now me being new to basic training and wanting to get out of their as quick as I can, I said, ‘to serve my country.’ And what Drill Sergeant Brewer told me was, ‘Well, Private, do you realize that serving your country means what you might have to take up arms and that you are going to have to defend this country from all foreign and domestic threats?’ and I never had considered the fact that would be a part of being in the service. You might be able to find the bad guys over there, but you must defend the Constitution, and it was so thought provoking that 37 years later I still remember it like yesterday.”

Two Thompson Valley Math Teachers Choose to Leave at Semester

Math teacher Hayes Horstmeyer will be leaving

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how long?
:\“The only good one, Army all the way. Three years active; 10 years total in service.
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joining?
:\“Money for college.”
:\“Look carefully at your options and think about what field might help you after the military.”

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how long?
:\“Army for 12 years.”
:\KD ZDV W K H UH D V R O LQ I R U
joining?
:\“Money for college.”
:\“Did you research. Think of all of the options you have open to you. Study for the ASVAB test that you will be taking, and find the option you will like doing, and make sure that the information that you are being given by the recruiter is on paper - not verbal. Make sure they write it down so you are able to have your information on hand with you.”

The other math teacher leaving is Hayes Horstmeyer. He said, “I loved the kids. They were really fun and making relationships with them.”

When asked for something he would like the kids to know before he leaves, he joked, “Do your homework.” This year was Horstmeyer’s first year teaching. He said, “I have always loved education like going to school and learning math and so I wanted to teach it.”
**Opinions**

**Voices in the Halls**

**What is your favorite animal?**

Freshman Katy Morehead says, “There’s this animal called an okapi. Nobody knows what it is but it’s like a half giraffe/half zebra, and I like it because it looks cool.”

Sophomore Reilly Kwaiser says, “Wolves, because I have a lot of huskies, and I just kind of like the pack working together.”

Junior Cameron Bonham states, “Their turtle because the turtle is slow and chill.”

Senior Tristan Niesen, says, “They are all interesting aspects of nature and each plays an interlocking role in the ecosystem at large, but I think my favorite and the stupidest animal would be the penguin.”

Staff member Kathryn Crowell says, A dog, for sure. All dogs because they are literally my happy place. Every time I see one, it makes me smile.”

**The Complicated Relationship Between Teenagers and Their Parents**

**ADPEULD%UXHVYVW**

**Writer**

The relationship between parents and their kids can be very complicated, especially during the teenage years, but it is always important to hold a strong connection between the two.

Our parents play a significant role in our lives, as they provide us with love, support, guidance, and wisdom. Sometimes we have big or small disagreements where we might be mad at our parents or they might be mad at us. It may seem like the end of the world, but something that I have learned is to not hold grudges or be mad about something as small as your parent not allowing you to do something or upset over a bad grade.

Another thing that is always extremely important in a relationship with your parents is communication. Both you and your parents have to always be willing to communicate in a calm and collected way because no one likes to be yelled at.

You both might not know everything that happens behind the scenes.

In my experience of losing my mom at 10 years old, I have learned so much and understood in depth how much you can not take your parents for granted.

It is absolutely necessary to value the people that you love and make sure that they understand how much you value them.

I think that losing a parent has taught me things that are much harder to understand when you have not gone through the grief and suffering of that loss. For instance, I would have never been able to wrap my mind around how precious time is and to constantly cherish every second you are able to spend together - the good and the bad ones.

Even through the hardships that you experience with your parents, you live through it and you learn lessons to hold onto for a lifetime and then you are able to teach your kids and raise them in all of the right ways.

Losing a parent has also taught me to be resilient and helped me realize that no matter what fires you are walking through, you will always make it out in the end with more new life lessons and gratitude towards others and every single experience which is an amazing way to grow.

Your parents are one of the most valuable things in your life that you should hold on to to the ends of the earth as you grow into the person that you are becoming.

It is okay to have your ups and downs, but you will never find another like them, and it is so important to remember to be kind in all circumstances to the ones that you love the most.

**Ireland Neill - Staff Writer**

School libraries have changed a lot over the years, as have the students and technology. Libraries are a source for all students to use in schools for help, access to free reading, and research use. But, instead of being just a place of education it is commonly used as a place to skip or socialize in an inappropriate way.

It may have been expected that the library is ignored because everything is done digitally, and reading doesn’t catch as much attention as it used to. Yet, while some people no longer regard the library there are many who use it regularly for some purpose. There are still quite a few students that check out books and use it for education but on top of that it’s used socially. Many students spend time there reading and studying or quietly socializing with friends.

A study was conducted by Dr Margaret Merga, a former Senior Lecturer in the School of Education at Edith Cowan University in Western Australia about libraries being a supportive place. The study found that “the library was a safe space that encouraged belonging, and many students visited it out of class times to read, relax, play quiet games, ‘chill out’ and feel safe.”

This is shown at the Thompson Valley High School library on off periods. Many students use that space for something when they have that time off. Yes, some people use it for skipping but with new rules enforced that’s no longer a really bad problem that disrupted the environment.

The librarian Liza Bauer says, “A pretty good number of students still come in to use it, especially on Mondays because they can’t go anywhere during the 45 minute periods. On block days there are less that come in but in general there’s still a good chunk of kids that come in and out to get books or help.”

This is also the factor of technological advancement that gets rid of the need for the library space. Audiobooks and Ebooks for reading, Google for help and websites for research are thought to take away from the need for a library but Bauer also stated, “We still have a lot of people that prefer physical books over Ebooks, I’m trying to get people to use audiobooks, but no one wants to.” She even talked about a student that came in earlier that day that said he preferred an actual book over electronics.

Libraries are important and will be for a long time because even with technology there’s a social aspect and love for books many will hold on to. The library is still a place of study and education while also being a safe place for a lot of students to do more than read, it has grown into something more that isn’t necessarily bad.

The Complicated Relationship Between Teenagers and Their Parents

**Tested Through Time - Libraries are Important**

**Written by Kathryn Crowell**

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Safety in the School Parking Lot

The school parking lot is not in the greatest shape and over the years of use for the school and activities, it is now an unsafe trash can for the students. The front of the parking lot closest to the school is part of TVHS, so the school can repaint and touch up that part of the parking lot. But, the back is not Thompson Valley’s, it is the district’s since Ray Patterson Stadium is a district facility. The school can’t make the call to fix the lot, it is the district who decides whether it can be fixed or not.

School officials like principal Jaymie Cruickshank talked about how it is the district and not the school’s ability to find the funds or are able to get permission to fix the school parking lot.

Many students hate the fact that the parking lot looks like and functions like a trash can, especially after games and other school activities. It is not uncommon to come back to school and see broken bottles and plastic litter all over the parking lot, but there isn’t much the school can do about that. Junior Claire Macaluso, who parks in the lot everyday stated, “The parking lot does need to be fixed such as the parking lot lines and the potholes. Many students don’t know how to park and are new to driving, so with better and brighter lines, then what we have now, like accidents, will decrease in our parking lot.”

Principal Cruickshank talked about how she “hopes they can get the bonds to fix the whole parking lot.”

Students Share Advice on Balancing the Expenses of Life and School with Work

Many students have jobs to pay for expenses and have fun with their friends. Some of these expenses come from multiple holidays, such as people’s birthdays, Christmas, Thanksgiving, Halloween, or even just giving spontaneous gifts to family and friends. However, the stress of balancing school, work, and outside activities can prove to be difficult, discouraging many from getting a job and earning money to pay for gifts.

Lily Evans, a junior who works at Cold Stone, balances AP classes, Student Council, and many different activities that Thompson Valley has to offer. “It can get hard to balance. It gets even more difficult when I have upcoming tests.”

Elle Shier, a sophomore, who doesn’t have the luxury of an off period. Shier divulged that “the amount of shifts you take adds lots of difficulty to school.” Knowing your limits is a factor that can play into managing your time. Instead of piling on work that you know you can’t handle, it can be better to set a few things aside and do what’s best for you, while finding pockets in your schedule to focus on classes.

Utilizing free time during school can also help one cope with the stress of school and work as described by Evans. Shier studies during lunch, ELO, and whenever she can during class; finding the schedule that works.

With holidays and birthdays coming up the rest of the school year it can get overwhelming saving up money. It’s important to save for things that will come up in the future, but spending money now can be very tempting, especially when holidays come around. Evans and Shier, seem to have figured out what works best for them. Evans only spends $15 to $20 on gifts trying to save as much money as she can.

Shier follows in those footsteps too. She plans to only spend, in total, $200 dollars this year.

Having a job is worth the trouble if you aren’t happy with your plan to make it through the lows and highs of life today.
The leaves are still falling from the trees, but it is almost time for underclassmen to begin their next big leap by registering for next year’s classes. It can be overwhelming to decide which classes to take.

Some seniors and juniors have advice to share for you to put your minds at ease.

Senior Kooper Burreson said, “Take your health classes. Don’t be a senior taking your health class.” Then he paused and continued, “Take some fun classes that aren’t hard but are fun/seem fun.”

There are many classes that are made up of students from mixed grade levels. Most students would agree that it becomes awkward when you are one of the only or the few upperclassmen surrounded by freshmen.

Senior Ariell Rodriguez stated, “I would take your social studies and math classes first so that you can get some of the early stress out of the way.” Then he paused and continued, “Take some fun classes that aren’t hard but are fun/seem fun.”

There are many classes that are made up of students from mixed grade levels. Most students would agree that it becomes awkward when you are one of the only or the few upperclassmen surrounded by freshmen.

Some electives that provide some entertainment or relief from academic stress include Health and Fitness classes with Kaila Stassi who teaches health classes as well as fitness classes like Team Sports and Women’s Weights. You could also consider taking a class with Bryan Kettlewell, such as choir. There are many options from Chamber singers to Show Jazz Choir and more. Major Chisholm teaches a number of art classes such as computer graphic art, photography, and video communication. The choices are endless for getting outside of the box and learning something new. Your counselor can tell you about the full suite of class options—every student is sure to find something that suits them.

Junior Patrick Tucker stated, “Take your core class like your social studies and science classes, so later on you can learn more in depth about those subjects later on.” He added, “Don’t stress about being better than everyone and don’t be too hard on yourself. You’re human. It’s okay to mess up, just learn from it.”

The counselors also have ideas about how class sequencing can be a big part of setting students up for success. Senior counselor Andria Hall said, “Well, obviously, required classes are really important. Whatever math level [and] English level you’re at, get those done early.” She continued, “But what I would also recommend, if you have time in your schedule, is trying something new and branching out. It is okay to ask for help, it’s okay to grow and expand your friend group. High school is all about exploring yourself, so do as much as you can do.”
Putting The Fall Debate to the Test

Pumpkin Spice in Your Life or Leave It Out in the Cold?

by Alexsandra Antolin – Guest Writer

There are many debates that cause friction among various groups of people. When should people be allowed to start playing Christmas music? How soon is too soon to put up the Christmas tree?

Many people have concerns that the wonders of the fall season are often forgotten among the excitement and joy created in anticipation of the holiday season. These people fantasize about pumpkin everything. From pumpkin scents to pumpkin carving, these pumpkin lovers beg that the Fall season be given its due time.

Today, however, we put one debate to rest. We decide if Pumpkin Spice is hot or nah, not so much.

Students were asked the question, “What is your opinion on Pumpkin Spice in general?”

Senior Leah Berning said, “Depends on what you put in it. I wouldn’t get a pumpkin spice latte, but I would get a pumpkin spice coffee in a cake.”

Teachers also had opinions on this topic.

Consumer Family Science Teacher Jacob Little said, “I’m an enjoyer of the pumpkin spice, not so much that the second the POS drops, I’m sprinting over to my nearest Dunkin’ or Ziggis or coffee shop in general - but I will have it from time to time.”

Math teacher Austin Kolm said, “I love it so much. I will get the the muffin of it, lattes, coffees, you name it. I will get it. I love when something is year-round and I get to have it.”

Junior Evelyln Stinner said, “I hate. Me no likey,” she continued, “Pice no good, pice no good with me.’ It seems as though people are either fully on board with the pumpkin spiced delectables or they are very much on the other side of the fence. There are few that don’t have a strong opinion one way or the other.

Trends That Should Be Left in 2023

“A flawless life may not be possible, but a flawless outfit is.” Except when it comes to 2023 fashion trends. This year has really brought back a blast from the past type of style, but not the good ones. Every Y2K, rat tail, thin eyebrows, fanny pack, sheer everything, and tassels and feather look has never looked good but the comeback is even worse.

Y2K isn’t always bad but specifically denim everything is horrific. Denim shoes, denim bra, denim jacket, it’s all terrible. It looks tacky and unprofessional, which many people in the public wear. Another terrible trend of the Y2K comeback is layering. How terrible is it to see someone with their pink flowy dress and then denim jeans underneath or the overly layered shirt tank top, then long sleeve, then short sleeve? A very unflattering trend, for sure.

The rat tail isn’t a very large trend, but it definitely has been seen more recently this year. It is absolutely not flattering and being shown in fashion shows is not classy. Rat tails are not appealing to anyone, nor do they serve any purpose or useless because most of the time people don’t actually use this for storage. It is a bag that just sits there, and you think it’s cute?

Moving on to sheer. Sheer is not terrible but the insane amount of sheer there is this year is over the top. Sheer dresses, sheer tops, sheer hats, sheer socks, and maybe a piece of sheer scarf or sheer shirt here and there is not that bad but an entire sheer outfit out in public is another story. It makes people like a tacky tablecloth. Nobody should ever wear that much sheer.

Lastly, but certainly not the last example of terrible fashion trends of 2023, all the tassels and feathers on everything “classy” that does not make it classy. The idea that making everything look like a flapper outfit is not classy. They don’t need to be on every skirt, prom, dress and mini jackets. They are useless and get everywhere, you’ll find millions of tassels and feathers everywhere for at least the next two weeks.

Now I understand someone may say, “It’s everyone’s style,” “Let people express themselves,” “It’s their own taste,” or “These aren’t even that bad.” Which, yes, I understand that it’s everyone’s style, but it’s getting out of hand and not everyone needs to go as far as denim “socks”.

Now I’m not judging anyone for what they wear or how they wear it, but I am judging the style/fashion.

Bad fashion trends are truly coming through this 2023 year with all the horrible comebacks. But there is a way to change this by stopping the comebacks of extreme fashion trends to the media.
Cheer Team Hosts First Cheer Competition

Eagles hosted the Peak League Championship Cheer Competition in November

Makinley McCutchen - Staff Writer
On Wednesday, November 1st the Thompson Valley High School cheerleading team hosted the Longs Peak League Championship Cheer Competition. This was the school’s first time hosting a competition, and nine different schools competed. The co-ed Eagle squad took first in their competition.

“It was fun to host the competition [and] to perform in front of our home crowd. I think the kids really responded well and it was our eighth straight league title,” varsity cheer coach Shari Robinson said.

There was a lot of planning and organizing behind the scenes of the event.

“It was well organized. It was well-put together. The event went on without a hitch. Boosters and cheer parents were great. Beth [Athletic Secretary] was ridiculously helpful. Orlando and the custodial crew were wonderful. The cheer coaches did a great job coordinating movement in the building so that everything ran on time,” Athletic Director Carey Duval stated.

There was additional assistance with the event. Roosevelt High School let the school borrow their flooring.

Before the event, the Eagle team faced some adversity and challenges. Robinson said, “We had two kinds of serious injuries on Sunday and Monday, so we had to redo a lot of the routine and teach other people different parts – so it was kinda stressful, although I think the kids really responded well and we went out there and just did a great routine.”

Varsity cheerleaders Peyton Doescher and Zienna Kaiser agreed that the event was fun and it felt like there was more energy with the event being at the school. They enjoyed having their families and friends able to attend.

Duval added, “It was a team effort. The absolute coolest thing was as the kids were waiting for the team scores, they were sitting in the middle of the gym floor, and singing badly, but it was nice to see the comradery between everyone.”

The event was all in all a very great bonding experience for everyone, hopefully there will be more events like this one in the future.

Christian Colling-Staff Writer
The varsity boys basketball team had a pretty neutral past season with an overall win/loss ratio of 14-10.
However, this year varsity coach Mike Burkett wants to see the boys at the Denver Coliseum at the big game to end this season.

Tom Manderville, a junior varsity player at TVHS, said they are focusing on, “Fully completing our offense and getting repetitions in and fully getting our offense to know what they have to do to compete.” and also says, “I want to make it to state and win as many games as possible, and I hope our team can be at its best this season.”

This season also hosts some returning players such as, senior guard Brady Kennison, junior guard Chase Manzani, senior Marco Lapietre, senior Gustavo Varelo-Bencorno, senior Will Coronado, and junior Tom Manderville.

The positive outlook for this year seems to be prevalent through the roster.
Dominic Shiedeler, a varsity sophomore athlete says, “Since the football team went so far, I hope we can follow in their footsteps of success and even go further.” Shiedeler adds, “A challenge I see this season is our team’s attitude, as it can be a blessing or a curse.”

On Friday, the 1st of December the boys played their first game against Horizon, resulting in a loss. However, they rebounded quickly in their second game against Fort Morgan on Tuesday, December 5. The Eagles beat them 79 - 37.

The first home game of the season will be on Tuesday, December 12 at 7 p.m. versus Northridge H.S.
Athletes Continue to Train in Off-Season

Ian Firestone, Staff Writer

Athletes are always working towards a goal or something for their next season, but how do they plan in their off-season, when they aren’t playing a sport?

The off-season is a way for athletes to work on specific things to make themselves better and think of their goals for their next season.

Cross Country just came off of a third place state title, and is looking for more next season. Junior Curtis Smela said, “Next year I want to win the state title for XC.”

Winning state looks promising when you see that every one of their varsity runners are returning next year.

Smela also runs distance for the Eagles track team and said, “I want to break the school record in the mile by running a mile in under 4:20.”

Football won conference for the first time since 1980 this year, and Sophomore Donovan Closz wants to help the team. He said, “Once the football season ends, I’m going to hit the gym really hard and work on agility drills to help the team.” Lifting wasn’t the only thing he wanted to do to help the team, he talked about his goals for next season, “I want to get 40-50 tackles next year, and I want the team to be able to go to playoffs again.”

The Eagles tennis team also won regionals this year and Sophomore Deacejuan Balke said, “I am playing tennis 3-4 times a week so that I don’t get rusty, but right now I am working on my pitching for the baseball season.”

Balke also talked about his goals for his next tennis season, “I want to get to state again individually, but also help the team get to the state tournament again.”

These athletes definitely have big hopes for their next seasons and what really matters during their seasons is how they prepare in the off-season.
Traditions run deep at Thompson Valley. Whether it be our chants during Friday night lights like the classic “Eagle, Eagle Eagle” chant or our infamous TP wars during homecoming week, the students never fail to stay true to the Eagles of the past.

From the sideline, traditions are apparent, but before the runout when the butterflies in the stomachs of the athletes begin to flutter and the noise of the awaiting student section gets closer and closer, a chant or a prayer that echoes in the locker rooms passed down from class to class can simultaneously stop the sweaty palms and wandering minds while lighting the fire of school pride within the athletes.

Teams such as the two-time state champion volleyball team have never forgotten their pregame traditions no matter the circumstance.

Junior Ashlyn Tafoya, member of the volleyball team, states, “So we always link arms and pray before the game, and we also do bananas.” She explains, “Bananas is a chant that gets us hype; we scream and bang lockers; it really gets us ready for the game.”

Although possibly unconventional, the success of a team can rely on their chemistry and the love the team shares for each other, and there isn’t really a better source of comradery than jumping around and banging on things.

The roots of bananas and the prayer trace back before Ashlyn’s time here; she does not know where the tradition came from. Ashlyn states, “The tradition came before the seniors who taught us, so it has been around for at least more than eight years.”

Finishing second in state this year the girls team can’t give all the credit to their pre-game chants but it has led them through some intense games and have gotten them pumped for three state championship games.

Whether superstitious or not for an athlete, team traditions cannot be broken as they often can become anxiety inducing when not performed so for a team to play their best it often can rely on silly chants such as bananas.

Ashlyn states, “The tradition helps the team, it gives us confidence and it never fails to get us hype for the game.”

Apart from the volleyball team the cross country team also has a chant that has been a part of their continuing success.

Junior runner Kaleb Spadafora says, “It really helps the team, we do it on our third stride so that one is fast.”

The chant along with the work they have put in and the talent they have shown has helped them become a consistently well performing team. They have shown to have consistency in the future looks good as they continue to get better and better. The boys team finished third this year in 4A.

Hopefully the traditions students have learned from each other and the ones they create will continue to inspire pride in future eagles and team comradery will continue to be highly valued here at Thompson Valley.

TVHS Pet Stories

Athen Janik- Staff Writer

Pets. They’re great right? They’re so cute and they make great companions. And sometimes it feels like they are more compassionate, more understanding, and just generally better than a lot of people. But you know what else is great? A good story. So what would happen if we combine the two? Pet stories, that’s what.

Sophomore Hawk Olguin is no stranger to good pet stories. “So I have this dog, he’s like a little corgi. He’s the smallest little thing ever. And there’s this poodle in my neighbor’s yard. He’s so annoying, he always barks and is never quiet, even at night,” Olguin recalls. “The dog was messing with my dog, and they started biting at each other. And the poodle starts jumping up, jumps over the fence into my yard and my dog backs him into the corner yelling at him, and the poodle gets so scared he jumps back over.”

But that’s not all folks, because Jeremy Bilodeau also has an entertaining animal anecdote to share. “I have an adorable little kitten, quite small, although she’s like two years old now, [she’s] still very small. And I have a mattress in my closet. And she doesn’t jump to the top of the mattress, she slowly climbs her way up like she’s climbing a mountain and she will just sit on the side of the mattress just holding on with zero effort whatsoever you can pet her and everything. She just vibes on there like it’s no work whatsoever, it’s adorable.”

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