

THE SLATE



ALL YOUR BULLDOG NEWS... **UNLEASHED!**



GOOD RIDDANCE. PAGE 6.



SO CLOSE

Northern Lehigh High School's football season came to an emotional end, Nov. 21, with a loss to Palisades. All of 2020, however, with its COVID restrictions and game changes, was not all wasted as the Bulldogs still achieved second-seed status in the 2A bracket in District XI action.

Photo by Jennifer Held
 Senior Mike Repsher, along with other teammates, could not hold back emotions after a loss to the Pirates, Nov. 21. More photos inside accompany Alexis Traugher's story on page 10.

Art Club selects featured artist for January

Keona Dyer showcases diversity with drawings

BY HAVEN MOORE
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Diversity among people's artistic abilities are essential to inspiring new forms of expression in art, and influencing the creative capability in all to become more present in their day-to-day life. Yes, it may seem cliché, but giving people motivation to initiate their true creative potential by sharing other's proud works of art is rewarding to both the viewers and the sharers.

The Artist of The Month is a newly-formed concept. It is a fun way to encourage and highlight the artistic talent of the students at this school. This month's first and official winner of this contest is Keona Dyer.

Keona is a 10th grader at Northern Lehigh whose specialty is drawing. Her drawings are special to people because they are always unique in one way or another. This includes her attention to detail, which distinguishes her pieces from other artist's drawings. Keona would like to think that people would appreciate her art because of the time and effort she puts into her creations to make them reach their full potential.

Keona was generous enough to provide us with three of her original pencil drawings, featured below.

As you can see, Keona drew an assortment of very detailed and realistic drawings. Hands in different positions, a boot, and the beloved Chadwick Boseman (may his soul rest in peace), are her featured pieces. Keona used pencils to draw these pictures and used a technique known as cross-hatching to get the base down. For all who do not know, cross-hatching is an artistic technique used to create tonal or shading effects by drawing closely spaced parallel lines that cross at different angles.

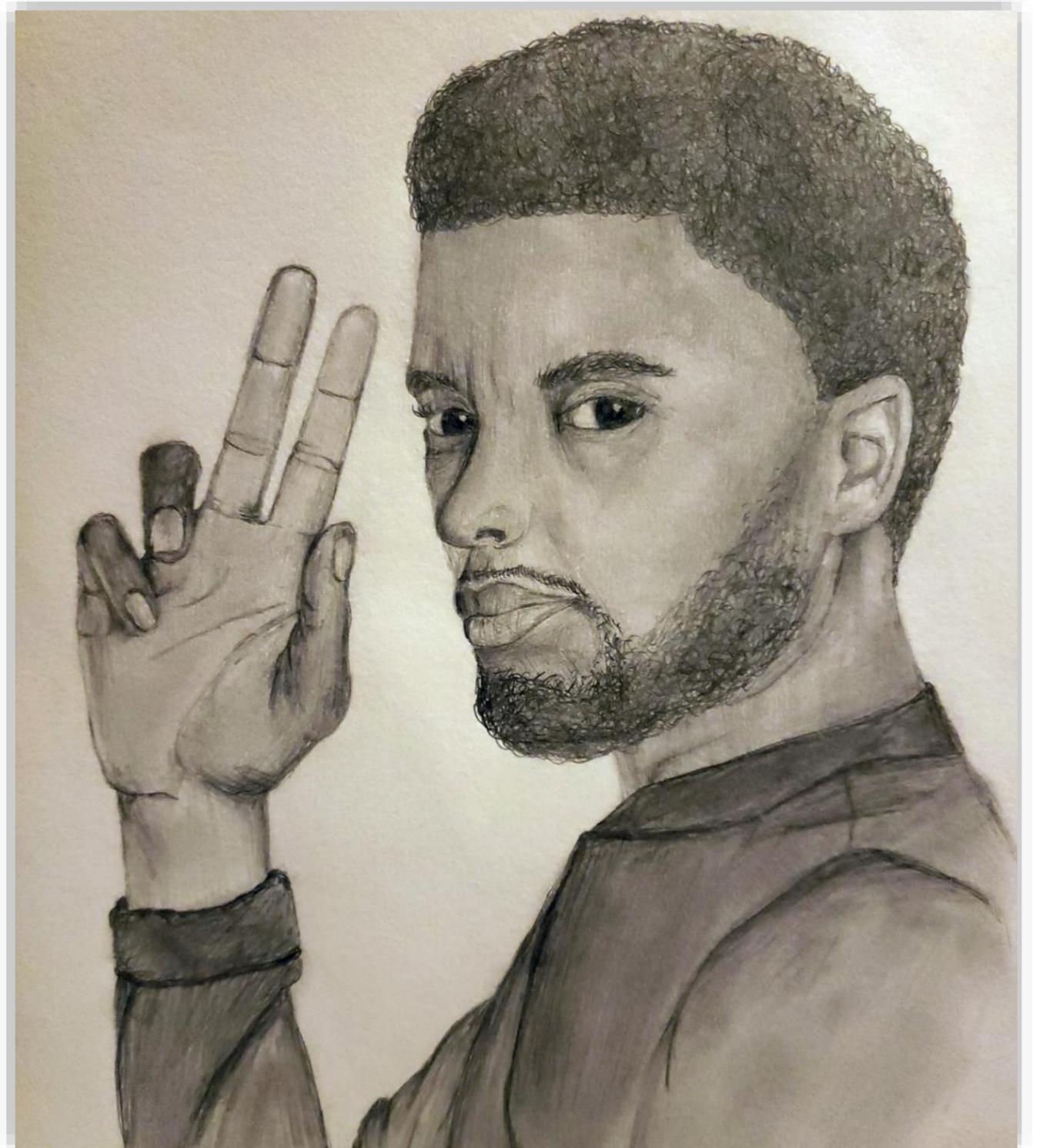
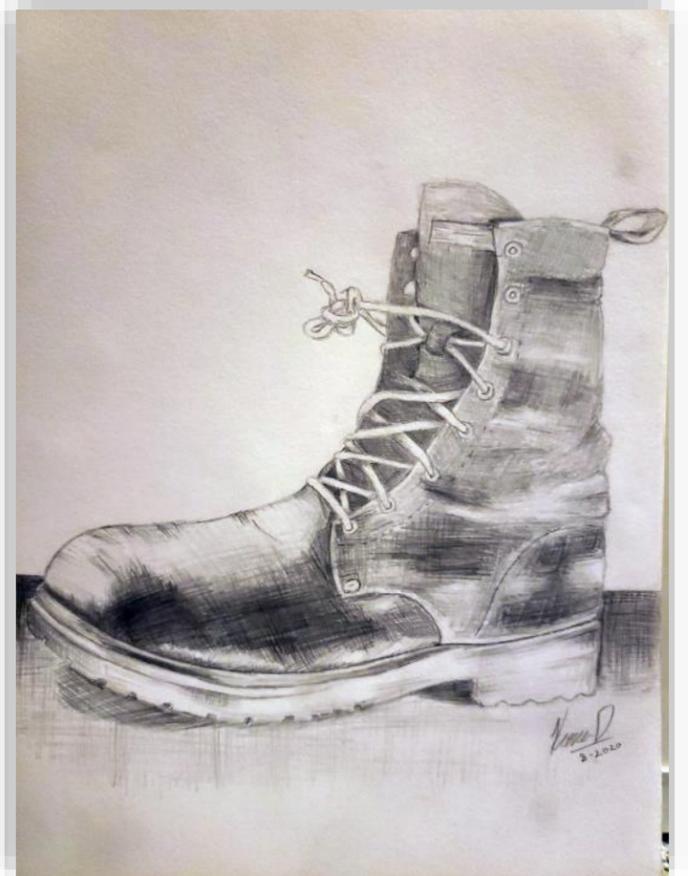
This process was used in both the 'hands' and 'boot' drawings. As for the Chadwick Boseman drawing, she simply blended the pencil to create various shades and values. This portrays the realistic approach Keona was taking on Mr. Boseman's portrait.

According to Keona, she felt the picture of Chad Boseman was a "challenge." The Art Club commends you Keona, for taking a constructive decision that has seemed to have opened horizons on your artistic ability.

The image that consists of three very well represented hands is a result of careful positioning and layered cross-hatching. Lastly, the drawing of the boot is an addition to her collection due to the greatest contrast of the shadows and values shown.

Believe it or not, although Keona is experienced with pencil drawings, she actually has never done cross-hatching in such detail before except for the two that you have just read about. Keona is a talented artist who isn't afraid to expand her horizons. Thank you for sharing your artistic talent with your fellow peers.

If anyone has any interest or questions about The Artist of The Month, please don't hesitate to contact Mr. Shuey via email, or visit him in the Art Room. 🍀



Selfless service abounds in honor society

BY BRITTNEY DIEHL
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

National Honor Society, NHS, is the foundation of many high schools, bringing people and communities together over a shared principle of altruism.

This club is not only present in many high schools around the nation but also present in our very own Northern Lehigh High School. It is an organization "in which specially-chosen students uphold high standards of service, leadership, scholarship, and character," said adviser Miss Janelle Scheckler.

Recently, the NHS at our high school has selected new members and announced those within the organization for the 2020-21 school year. These include Aicha Salih, Gabriel Diaz, Brittney Diehl, Danielle Dougherty, Emily Hunsicker, Caitlin Kirk, Brianna Briana Kuhns, Cameron Kuntz, Sophia Lear, Caelin Mack, and Ryan Lynch. This



year's officers include President Riley Griffith, Vice President Kendall Heiney, Secretary Aidan Williams, Treasurer Owen Levan-Uhler, and Historian Nia Nicholson.

When preparing for the induction ceremony, the inductees were asked what being accepted into and what NHS meant to them as a whole. "The NHS

brings wonderful opportunities that will help me grow. I am more than happy to be in such a group that allows me to give back to the community," said Sophia Lear, junior. Furthermore, President Riley Griffith also notes that "NHS enables [her] to achieve success and cherish the chances of becoming a leader and a role model for others." NHS can hold a myri-

ad of meanings to different people yet seems to boil down to two overarching ideas: growth and chance.

"Though, to be honest, my role in this organization is very small. These students are the go-getters of Northern Lehigh, and they thrive in situations that call for integrity and ambition," said Miss Scheckler. Not only this, but the NHS seems to be the foundation of many programs and events, yet not many seem to notice. It is the heart that is beating the body of NLHS and making us live rather than simply survive in high school.

Despite this, the NHS is student focused. It is meant to create an environment to let high school students flourish by helping others- both presently and futuristic- as asserted by the NHS advisor. "I know with full confidence that after they graduate, they will continue to lead lives of service, leadership, scholarship, and character." 🐾

Through My Lens By Brooke Bower



The past is something all of us have gotten hung up on one time or another. It's not a bad thing to think about because that's what shaped us into who we are, it's a part of us. We all become such strong people from it. But, sometimes it can affect us positively or negatively, it isn't something that we should dwell on.

We need to keep moving forward. Our futures hold so much for us. Like a canal, the water keeps flowing

down slowly or swiftly it's still moving like we are. Sometimes we take our time and that's OK, or others move quickly.

You should keep the lessons and memories the good old days gave you. Those are things that shouldn't be forgotten and you won't ever get those back. But don't drag the grudges and grief along for the ride. We can change what life has to come for us; we can't change our

past. Reflections of trees on the water for example are always oddly prettier than what's in front of you. If you look at your life from a different perspective like looking forward instead of focusing on what's behind you, life may have a different view.

Brooke Bower is a senior attending LCTI for commercial photography and electronic imaging. 🐾

Small minds can endure big changes

Two different generations react and reflect to this odd time

BY BREANNA HOPPES
EDITOR IN CHIEF

Throughout the journey of life, humans experience the beauty and pain that lies within development. As the mind blossoms, the naive way life had once been viewed entirely changes. During our lives, sudden losses, adversity and hardship serve as an obstacle.

Can you recall the beginning of this adventure? The devastation of hearing the whistle blow, signaling recess was dwindling to an end for the afternoon. Picture the last five minutes, the fastest kid in the grade is patiently waiting on third base, preparing for the bolt of a lifetime. As the next in line propels the kickball, which seems to be miles away, you make a beeline directly to home plate. The atmosphere is almost tangible. Life is simplistic.

Suddenly, it's no longer 2008. It's 2020 and the alarm is blaring at 6:30 in the morning. The crisp autumn leaves are beginning to take flight from the trees. The shocking reality begins to sink in, this is it. This is the last first day. Though this may have been exciting for those who experienced in years prior, it's 2020 and nothing is the way it once was.

The excitement that comes with be-



ginning a new journey has been ripped out from under the parents of kindergartners and the children themselves. Kaiden Evans, a kindergartner at Peters Elementary may have lost out on the normal first year of school experience, but the spark within him and his innocent heart of gold were still able to shine through in an adorable Q&A.

How do you feel about wearing a mask to school? *I don't like my mask, it hurts my ears & it's weird, I only know my friend's eyes. It makes me sad I can't see their whole face..*

What do you want to be when you're older? *When I am bigger I want to be a Chick-fil-A worker because I like giving people food and I love chicken.*

What scares you the most? *Abhh... A real dragon.*

What makes you the happiest? *When Daddy gives me a hug.*

What makes you sad? *When Grayson takes a toy from me and doesn't share and I feel so sad when Grayson's belly hurts.*

Who do you look up to the most? *Mommy and Daddy because I love them.*

Who is the strongest person you know? *Think of a superhero. Grayson is my superhero, he even has a cape. Grayson makes me happy. My other favorite superhero is Spider-Man though.*

Kaiden serves as a reminder of the goodness within the upcoming generations and the innocence in the thoughts of children. His heart is full of love and compassion for those around him, especially his little brother who suffers from a rare disease, PHACES.

Beginning this adventure without seeing the faces of new friends is terrifying and ending this journey without seeing the faces behind the mask is devastating. As our last days at Northern Lehigh wind down, there's still a sense of despair.

Senior Dylan Miller, who'd currently be preparing for an incredible, auditorium packed musical, is spending his senior

See Generations, page 7



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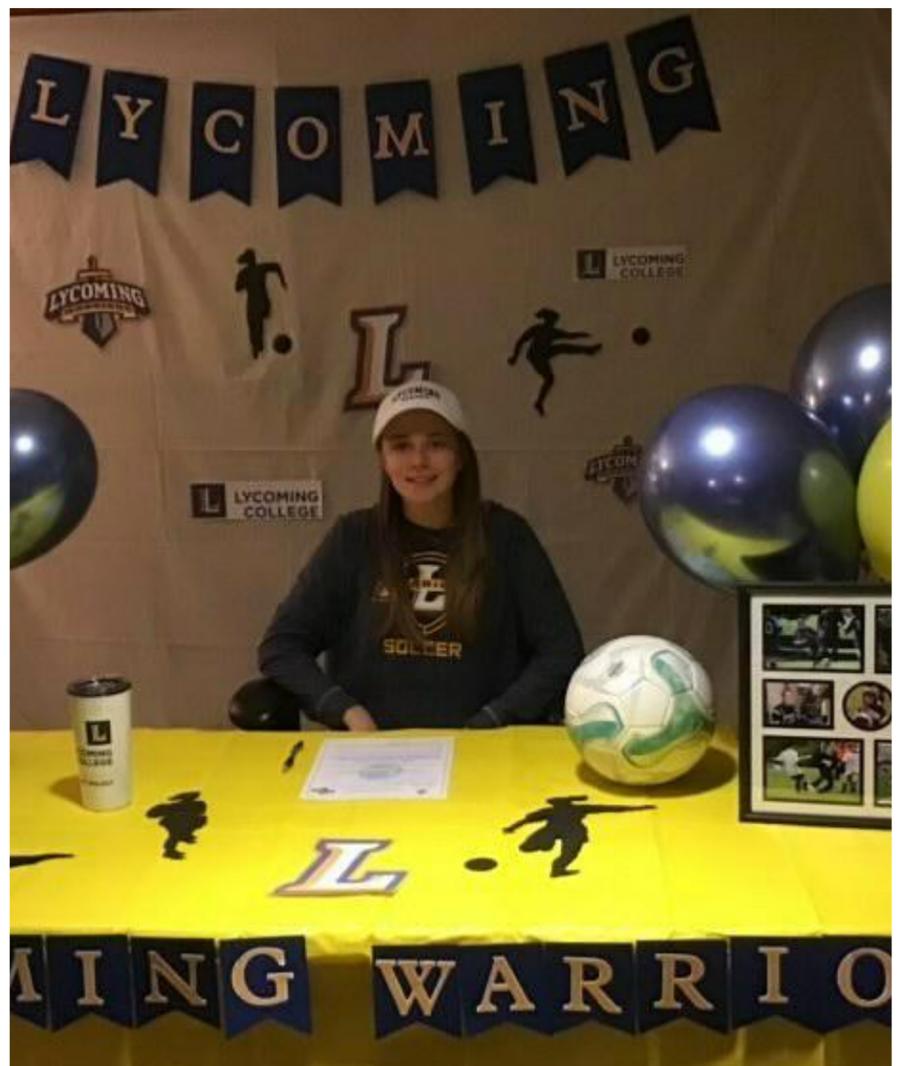
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Kickin' in Williamsport



Riley Griffith, senior, recently signed a letter of intent to attend Lycoming College and join its soccer organization. Best of luck, Riley!

Still 'suite' for almost 130 years



Tchaikovsky's 'Nutcracker Suite' dances with traditions special to a dancer's heart and pointe shoes

BY MADDY MACK
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

For most, the idea of Christmas is filled with cookies, decorating, ice skating, and drinking hot chocolate. Ballerinas, however, think of pointe shoes, dream roles, seemingly endless rehearsals, and who will receive the prettiest costume.

The Nutcracker, a Christmas tradition to many, is partially based on *The Nutcracker and the Mouse King*, a fantasy story by E.T.A. Hoffmann. A young girl, Marie, witnesses a battle between her dolls, with her nutcracker and mouse king as their leaders on Christmas Eve Night.

The ballet, however, is quite different from the original story. While there are many different versions of *The Nutcracker*, the most common is a two-act ballet composed by Russian composer Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky and choreographed by French ballet dancer and choreographer Marius Petipa.

The ballet starts as the Staulbaum's host their annual Christmas Eve party. The parents are welcoming guests as the children, Clara and Fritz, are dancing and playing. Their godfather, Drosselmeyer, gifts Clara a beautiful nutcracker. Fritz breaks the nutcracker, but luckily Drosselmeyer is a skilled toymak-

er and quickly fixes it. Clara, worried something might happen to her gift, sneaks downstairs and steals it from under the Christmas tree.

Clara falls asleep, and as the clock strikes midnight strange events start to occur. As she shrinks down, her gigantic Christmas tree grows to be even bigger. The toys around her come to life, and the room fills with the mouse army, led by the Mouse King. The Nutcracker himself awakes and leads his toy soldiers into battle against the mice and fights the Mouse King head-to-head. The Nutcracker and his army are captured, only to be saved by Clara, who throws her shoe at the Mouse King, killing him.

The Nutcracker turns into a prince and escorts Clara to the Land of the Snow, where they are met by dancing snowflakes. They then make their way to the Land of the Sweets, where they meet the Sugar Plum Fairy.

After the Prince tells her of their journey and the battle, she rewards them with a celebration of dances, which include the Spanish, Arabian, Russian, Chinese, Mirliton, and Waltz of the Flowers dances. Right before Clara wakes up holding the nutcracker underneath her Christmas tree, the Sugar Plum Fairy

See Nutcracker, page 9

Nursing homes can be ground-zero for virus

BY LILY GROOVER
STAFF WRITER

On Feb. 29, 2020, the first confirmed COVID-19 death occurred in Kirkland, Washington, in a long-term care facility. About a month later, more than half of the residents and employees tested positive. Twenty-six died within the first month.

In Pennsylvania, nursing home deaths account for 68 percent of the total fatalities to this day. The close living arrangements and daily activities make it easy for the virus to spread among the residents.

Additionally, it is hard to make those with cognitive disabilities, like dementia, follow procedures to stop the spread. One in five people who contracted the virus while residing in a nursing home will likely end up passing away. Only 58 percent of patients recover to full health; many are left with remaining effects.

Katy Groover, Director of Rehabilitation, DOR, at a nursing facility in the Lehigh Valley, experienced what life was like in a nursing home from March to the present. "March was when the entire nursing home became a scary environment. We had new measures put into place, we had to figure out how to social distance our staff, as well as our residents. We shut down all of what was normal within the facility," she said. "The paranoia set in, and I went to work on pins and needles." The risk of being symptomatic and having to be sent to the hospital almost triples because everyone in the nursing home is elderly. Additionally,



more than half struggle with preexisting conditions that make them more susceptible to further complications.

In the summer, nursing home buildings in Groover's region started spreading the virus. As the director of therapy, she needs to have her staff move from building to building so the residents can get the care they need and deserve. "The focus shifted from 'how do we do therapy?' to 'how do we do therapy with COVID?' We weren't the building to worry about

at the time. Unfortunately, the therapy department got moved to the back steam-er and our focus was to stop the spread."

There are a couple of theories as to how COVID entered Groover's facility, but no one knows precisely who caused it. In the middle of November, the first resident started showing symptoms. On Nov. 14, the first positive test result came back. Groover was very close to them, but they died five days later on the 19th.

After that result, the atmosphere shift-

ed. "We went from not being able to be tested, not knowing unless you showed symptoms to being tested once per month, to once per week, and now twice per week. There is daily symptom screening, temperature checks twice per shift, along with all of the residents. It takes up time, resources, and effort." Groover had to wear an N-95 mask, a gown, a hairnet, gloves, and much more protective gear while helping COVID positive patients.

One night, Groover came home absolutely distraught. A resident who she and her family were close to before the pandemic came into work with her and interacted with residents, who contracted the virus. She had passed away that night. For Groover, that was a turning point. She was a person. She was funny and loud, and an outgoing person. She would not have died that night if it wasn't for COVID.

Only eight residents in the entire building did not contract the virus. Twenty eight people passed away, with many sick and many in the hospital. They are real people too. Not just 'the old people weighing down the data.' Groover says, "It is not the flu. I get so angry when people refer to it as just the flu. There are a lot of changes in cognition. Their brains seem to have altered. A lot has changed in people's appetite. No one wants to eat or drink. Lots of muscle weakness, however it's more in their heads."

Symptoms in the elderly are harsh, but because of the nurses and essential employees following procedure and guidelines, many lives are saved. 🌻

A year of chaos, confusion, and questions unanswered



By Camryn Torres

What a year it has been — Kobe Bryant, Gigi Bryant, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Chadwick Boseman left us, COVID invaded; protesters persisted; murder hornets buzzed and left; Beirut exploded; Australia burned, and President-Elect Joe Biden triumphed, splitting the red and blue as noted above.

Our View

An open letter to a new year. *We implore you.*

Dear 2021:

Please. Have a seat. Let's discuss.

We need you to be better than that predecessor. A few things went awry with him.

It's tough to say how many lessons have been learned this year and how many people have grown from all that has occurred -- there sure has been a multitude of chaotic events that all seemed to stem from last February and March.

Our divided states seem to hate each other more than ever and if it's not an actual civil war occurring, it certainly feels like one. So, now that you have arrived, there are a lot of high expectations coming your way. It's a lot of pressure. Up for the task?

First, bring back concerts. This world revolves around tunes and beats of all volumes, cultures, and anthems that cross generations. The stages have been sadly silent for so long and we desperately need live music again. Arenas, clubs, little coffee shops. Please get the rock out.

Second, we need sports. Live, loud sports. Baseball, hockey, youth sports, high school sports — all without restrictions and drastic changes. The competition, the camaraderie, the crowds.

Third, is there any way you could bring back civility and decency? No? That's on us? Fair enough.

Fourth, maybe bring back... (gulp) hugs? Or at least, the type of physical contact that allowed people the bridge to connect with others — the fist bump, the old-fashioned high-five, a pat on the back (which can go a long way in the classroom).

Fifth, look, we agree that schools should be open. They are the foundation to our future. But they need to be safe always — and if that calls for a different method to how they operate, as we have been experiencing for a few months — so be it. At least for a while. We would rather have a virtual connection with each other than have to send a "Get Well card."

Look, 2021, we know you have just begun and there needs to be a grace period. We do not expect perfection but we also did not expect what 2020 did to us. Again, we are not demanding world peace. (That's on us too, right?)

But just give us a few months of hope, happiness, health, and concerts.

With love,
All of us.



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Black Lives Still Matter

The movement took the world by storm, and a storm in this forecast is what the U.S. desperately needed

BY BRITTNEY 'THE REAL' DIEHL
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Hundreds of people took to the streets in the name of a man whose blood on the hands of the guilty would not go forgotten. It was pure chaos for people who were simply attempting to utilize their First Amendment rights and were shot down mercilessly in the name of skin color.

The resurgence of the Black Lives Matter Movement, shortened to BLM, hit the United States straight in the chest, and the nation seems to still be unaware of what is needed for its people.

BLM is an organization aimed to stop racial injustices and inequalities set against people of color. Its main purpose support is to stop racism and find an equilibrium for equality. It is an extremely old movement whose ideals and standings have gradually changed over time to fit the changing wrongdoings of society when regarding race. Black Lives Matter has shaped our world, whether people would like to believe it or not.

Despite many people's beliefs, BLM is a movement focused on positivity- it is not negative in any way other than the fact that it is trying to abolish solve white supremacy and the treatment that results. People are fighting for their rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, not trying to get away with crimes. Those who are a part of the movement are not criminals, they are fighting against the crimes that have been done against them.

Strides have been made for the Black community. There have been many people who have joined the movement, final-



ly realizing the force that could conquer these many racial issues. Although there has been more realization and recognition of racism within society, there is still needs a lot to be done.

Overall, all things have somewhat bad traits and BLM is not one to be excluded. Rioting is not morally right in the eyes of some, yet I believe that buildings can be replaced if that is the only way to get people's attention. "However, should violent not be utilized when in the presence of ignorance?"

There have been many people knocking on the doors of the capitol and yet there is still no change. These people have not listened; therefore, new measures had

to be adapted so that they would open their eyes and ears to the sights and sounds of change. Merchandise and material things can be remade, a person's life cannot be manufactured. Materialism, it seems, is ruling society due to the capitalist president we follow and it is destroying our morals and making us greedy.

Despite the many wrongs done against the Black community and all people of color, what is done is done. We cannot change the past but rather fix past mistakes to ensure a better future. We should move toward change, big and small. There needs to be more of it, however. There are still people dying due to the color of their skin- something they

cannot control.

Even though there are some forthcoming within society, an individual cannot speak for change and not do anything to put effort into that change. We must get off our phones, stop posting about a cause, and make a change in the world. We are our only hope to fix our wrongs.

Humanity needs to learn to be non judgmental and all in need of simply wanting to happily survive our time on this planet. There needs to be the recognition that we are all on this rock floating through space to enjoy our time here. Humanity needs to learn to be human again. 🌱

From the elementary mind to a senior's reflection

Generations, from page 4

year differently than any of us could have imagined when we embarked on this adventure. Regardless of the challenges the pandemic has thrown since March of our junior year, Dylan has not lost sight of the true meaning of life and has remained as compassionate of a human as when he first began this journey.

What makes you happiest? *Honest communication with the goal of understanding and love.*

What is your greatest fear? *Identifying with toxic or harmful qualities.*

Who is the strongest person you know? *My mother because she taught me*

how to empathize with everyone and be understanding.

What's a moment of your life you wish you could relive now that you're older? *Meeting my first love, which made me realize who I am emotionally.*

What are your aspirations for your future? *Becoming an artist and spreading good vibes.*

Who have you admired the most growing up? *Frank Zappa because of his work ethic and intellect, and the Buddha for his compassion and peace.*

What has been the most devastating part about the pandemic for you as a senior? *Not being able to continue friendships or create new ones easily. mak-*

ing new connections is my lifeblood and this pandemic has put a complete halt to that. It's awful but also forced me to find other avenues of happiness and contentment.

What's your advice for those just beginning their school career? *If school gets you down don't sweat it, because it was created to shape people into debtors to industrial/capitalist society. Grades don't correlate with intellect and authority is an illusion. School is a great tool for knowledge but don't ever let it define who you are.*

To myself and many others, Dylan will be remembered as the young boy in middle school who had the awesome Afro and was a beast on the drums from a

young age. Though he has come face to face with events that seemed insurmountable, he has continued to blossom and develop into a fearless person who belts out on stage and is a shoulder to lean on and has a joke to be told at all times.

As we grow, we are forced to adapt. Humans experience loss, difficulties and things we believe are enough to entirely end the world. Hold onto innocence, dragons, and superheroes as long as possible and when you finally are forced to grow, may you grow to become compassionate, resilient and continue to find new 'avenues of happiness'.. 🌱

OPINIONS

The decriminalization of drugs: Should addiction merit jailtime?

BY BRITTNEY 'THE REAL' DIEHL
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

A war has been brewing for many years- a war on drugs. A powerful force has been controlling many people like a puppeteer pulling on strings. Addiction, a labeled disorder, does not warrant criminalization. This leads to the needed, desperate probing of the United States to decriminalize drug



-related offenses. No one should be penalized for something they can no longer control.

When regarding the connotation of drugs, there is often negativity that surrounds it. However, many states have made one drug's recreational and medical use available to the public: marijuana. Not only this, Washington D.C. citizens have "voted to decriminalize psilocybin, the organic compound active in psychedelic mushrooms," according to a *New York Times* article.

Furthermore, Oregon is said to have had "voters approved two drug-related initiatives." These initiatives include the decriminalization of "possession of small amounts of illegal drugs including heroin, cocaine, and methamphetamines." On top of this, there was another measure that "authorized the creation of a state program to license providers psilocybin."

These new actions prove to show that drug reform is making its way into society- something greatly needed. Drug reform provides the loosening of laws that were previously too strict, to begin with. No one should be in jail for the possession of weed.

Aside from this, the opioid crisis that has to seem to devour our nation proves to be one of the main supporting reasons to decriminalize drugs in general.

People can not control certain urges and it is society's job to help those people; for they could be in the same shoes at any time.

Some people believe these reformative actions and those who advocate for them are ruining lives, however; that providing the option of bail for drug charges ruins communities. Despite this, providing bail more sides with the fact that they have a chance at redemption and getting help for their internal conflicts.

A war on drugs has begun- that is no secret. There needs to be reform in the American system for no one should be punished for struggles. No one should be in jail for an addiction. 🐾

Toys for Tots still plays on



Northern Lehigh High School has been a drop-off location for the past several years. In that time, NL Student Council has worked with Toys for Tots Lehigh Valley and the Marines to provide new toys for families in need throughout the Lehigh Valley. For the last two years, the Middle School Student Council has also contributed to the toy drive. Before break, local Marines picked up the donations in time for Christmas.

Photos by Kathy Nowlin



To Our Dear Readers:

This pandemic won't close down our newsroom and our student journalists will not cease production. We thank you for picking up this paper, enjoying its contents, and passing it on to others.

The Slate staff
2020-2021



Plastic bag bans spreading through U.S.

Could the environment benefit from more states jumping on mandatory reusable bags?

BY OWEN LEVAN-UHLER
STAFF WRITER

Single-use plastic bags are an extremely common product used by millions of people every day. They can be found in most American retail locations, and chances are that you have a collection of them in your pantry or under your sink.

In Oct. 2020, New York became the eighth state to enforce a state-wide ban of single-use plastic bags. Many states are also considering instituting bans, since plastic bags are among the vast array of products that irreversibly damage the environment, not just on a small scale but a global one. With this in mind, would it be beneficial to the environment for Pennsylvania (and the rest of the country for that matter) to institute bans on plastic bags?

On average, Americans use over 100 billion plastic bags per year, or about 1,500 per household. Plastics bags are only used for around 12 minutes before they are thrown away. It takes over 12 million barrels of oil to produce such massive amounts of bags.

Only one percent of plastic bags end up being recycled, and the rest end up in landfills. It takes one plastic bag 500 years to photo-degrade in a landfill, which means that it does not completely break down, but instead becomes micro-plastics that absorb toxins and pollute the environment.

Additionally, many plastic bags find their ways to the oceans. There are about 46,000 pieces of macro and micro plastics in one square mile of ocean, and 8 million pieces of plastic enter the oceans every day, resulting in over 8.3 million tons of plastic entering the ocean every year, killing over 100,000 marine animals annually.

With such shocking information, hopefully it is abundantly clear why such plastic products like bags need to be

banned from further use. Unfortunately, many people and companies do not want plastic bags to be banned.

It costs New York City over \$12 million annually to dispose of the over 10 billion plastic bags that are used every year, not including recycling in most in-

many places, like NYC, it is easier to institute and regulate bans, but the political machine sees otherwise.

There is a reason there are only eight states that have issued plastic bag bans: politics. These states were only able to institute their bans after years of fighting

pected for U.S. plastic bags sales to reach \$1.4 billion in 2020. Having so many bags year after year presents a problem not only for the environment, but for the government and taxpayers as well.

With the current state of the planet environmentally, it would be beneficial



stances. The environmental or economic situation would not be so dire if it was easier and more convenient for people to recycle their bags. Unfortunately, the process for recycling these kinds of plastic products are different and not easily accessible in many regions, leading to excessive litter and environmental problems. In

lobbyists and anti-ban legislators, and lobbying for their own cause. What's more, there are about 14 states that have laws in place prohibiting plastic bag bans (Pennsylvania sadly being one of them).

Many manufacturers are against the ban because they make a lot of money from the sale of plastic bags. It was ex-

for the environment and its wildlife (as well as humans) to ban such plastic products. It is imperative that states like Pennsylvania begin to institute bans and other legislation to regulate these issues and to help provide a cleaner future to curbe the environmental problems facing the world in the years to come. 🌱

Nutcracker traditions dance on for a century-plus



Nutcracker, from page 5

and Nutcracker Prince perform their pas de deux as the finale.

NL sophomore Bianca Carrion has taken part in this cultural legacy. "Performing in The Nutcracker meant a lot to me because it was my first big performance with a professional ballet school," he said. "At 7 or 8 years old, I was able to dance with professional Russian ballerinas," Carrion said. "My favorite part was the party scene in the beginning because the younger dancers and the professionals all got to dance together."

COVID-19 has affected many things, and the annual ballet certainly was not spared. Local studios across the country have had to cancel their performances, but luckily some prestigious companies, like the New York City Ballet, San Francisco Ballet, Boston Ballet, Houston Ballet, and others are still able to carry on the tradition, even if it is over the computer.

Gabby Baran, Steppin' Out School of Dance student, has also been able to participate in past years. "Being able to perform in The Nutcracker with the Moscow Ballet at the State Theatre was amazing. I loved meeting so many new people from fellow dancers to teachers, to crew members, and making some friends along the way," Baran said. "I had a part in the Russian variation along with being a Snow Maiden. From backstage, I was able to watch beautiful ballerinas being lifted into the air and spun around during all the variations. Of course, this year I was unable to participate in this production due to COVID-19 and I miss it so much. I just adore the way the Nutcracker brings so much happiness to the holidays."

The Nutcracker has brought holiday cheer to many since 1892 and will continue to, even amid a pandemic. The hard work and dedication these ballerinas give are certainly not unnoticed. 🌱

One game changed it all

NL

A season starting with uncertainty pushed all the way to a possible championship



BY ALEXIS TRAUGHER
SPORTS STAFF WRITER

There seemed to be no hope, no confidence, nothing. Then one game changed it all.

Weeks of competitive play and strong endings filled with obstacles conquered will become memories and lessons for years down the road. Northern Lehigh's football season started off rough, but grew into something that will always be remembered.

The 2020 season started with uncertainty. Many questions were left unanswered and pushed aside. Then the games started. It was a rocky start, and the momentum was not present until one touchdown and a fumble led to confidence and well-played games. The start of questionable play for two games was left behind when it all fell into place.

"We hadn't been playing well for the first two and a half games. We finally scored a touchdown against Wilson and then recovered a fumble. From that moment on we played very well for weeks," Coach Joseph Tout said.

As the season progressed, motives changed and bonds grew. The team became a strong form of a family. Trevor Amorim was on many sides of friendship with Dylan Smoyer, junior quarterback, and the team. "The season started off a little rough but we pulled it together and turned things around. We started to play for each other and we wanted to see each other succeed. We started to throw the ball more which allowed the connection between Dylan and myself to grow," Amorim said.

Their hard work led them to the semifinals, which was the highlight of the season. They started off with strong dominance and empowerment with the score of 21-7 at half time. That battle was certainly not over. The scores continued to grow on both sides, but with an interception by Evan Zambo and then closing it up with a pass from Dylan Smoyer to Trevor Amorim, led to a final score of 42-27 bulldogs. That game will be remembered by the team and especially Zambo. "The best moment this season was when we played Palmerton in the semifinals. The highlight of that game was obviously my interception. I walked off the field with a huge grin on my face knowing that me and my teammates were capable of anything," Zambo said.

After their big win, the District Finals was the last game of the season. They played all the way until the end, but fell short with a score of 31-14. This was the first time in 10 years since the team has gotten that far. That game will go down as one of the biggest achievements this past season. "[The biggest achievement] Getting to the District Finals after beating Palmerton in the District Semi-Finals," Tout stated.

Even with the heartbreaking end to the season, it serves as a lesson and motivation to the upcoming players. This past season opened up spots and many playing



Photo by Jennifer Held

Senior JD Hunter could not hold back emotions after a tough loss to the Pirates in late November.

opportunities for newcomers. During last season, many sophomore players started to bring light upon themselves, giving hope to the school that next year should be a strong season as well. "We played a lot of sophomores

this season and I saw the entire group grow in confidence. Especially the sophomores that started- Lucas Farmer, Isaiah Warner, Austin Smyth, Ethan Karpowich, Jayden Krempasky, and AJ Wittong," Tout stated. 🐾

NL alumnus preps to lead Dawg ballers



Patrick Wanamaker takes over as NL varsity basketball coach this year. (Above) Wanamaker, an NL graduate, once battled on the Bulldog courts around 2006.

BY KENDALL HEINEY
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

As Jeff Miller resigns as varsity boys basketball coach, a former Bulldog champion returns. Northern Lehigh High School has announced an exciting addition to its varsity coaching staff, Patrick Wanamaker.

Coach Wanamaker will be replacing Miller as the new boys' basketball varsity coach. Wanamaker has been a basketball coach for 13 years total. He has coached at both Northwestern and Northern Lehigh, and he spent eight of those years as the Northwestern assistant and five as the Northern Lehigh assistant coach.

He has had many successful seasons with both teams as he helped take teams to PIAA State playoffs, Districts, and Leagues. While with Northern Lehigh, his teams have qualified for Districts every year, they won the Colonial League and Districts in 2008 and earned a league title in 2010. At Northwestern he assisted in getting the team their first District

playoff in a decade and got the team into playoffs the last three years he coached there. In 2019, the team qualified for PIAA state playoffs for the first time in twenty-five years.

Wanamaker, a 2007 graduate of NLHS, is happy with coaching at the high school level and the opportunities it gives him, he has had plenty of experiences with having strong seasons and knows how to take teams to the top. He plans to build a successful basketball team this year and he wants to work the boys hard to help level them up and always be prepared for every game. Wanamaker is ready to deal with bumps in the road and get them back on track.

"I believe that my coaching style will translate to success on the court," Wanamaker said. "I feel as though I could be considered a "players coach" in that I will strive to put the best team we can on the floor and build around the team we have. I wish for student-athletes to enjoy playing for me and enjoy being a part of a historically successful basketball

program at NL."

Patrick Wanamaker played basketball for around 14 years which included playing time at Northern Lehigh, LCCC, and outside recreational competitions. Outside of basketball, he played baseball as well as track and field. He played for the Northern Lehigh team from 2004-2007 and was a part of the winning of the 2007 Colonial League Championship. His team also won First Team all-league that year.

Wanamaker attended Northern Lehigh High School and graduated in 2007. He then went on to study at LCCC for two years and played basketball for a year under Coach Kevin Foley. While studying there, his team won their conference championship in the 2008-2009 season. After LCCC, Wanamaker went on to study at East Stroudsburg University and earned his bachelor's degree in Elementary and Special Education. Then, he went to Wilkes University to earn his master's degree in Classroom Technology.

He is ready for the hardships of the coming season with the COVID precautions and setbacks, but his love for coaching will help him see through and guide the team towards success no matter what.

"I began coaching as a volunteer at NL immediately following graduation from high school. I always knew that if the right opportunity presented itself, being a head coach was something I wanted to pursue. Looking back on the impact my coaches had on me, and the relationships built through sport, I hope to have those same positive impacts on my players that my coaches had on me," Wanamaker said.

Aside from basketball, Wanamaker spends his time with his family. He has been married for four years and has a two-year-old son. He really enjoys the outdoors, hunting, fishing, and he enjoys building things and household projects. Coach Wanamaker is in his ninth year of teaching at Northwestern Lehigh School District. 🐾

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Hold Your Paws High

Photos by Jennifer Held
Seniors Josh Schaffer and Joey Abidelli did not plan on ending the season as it did — but it was one to be celebrated, not lamented.



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You pledge allegiance, but only for so long

BY MOLLY WILLIAMS
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Everyone has to say the pledge of allegiance- you have probably said it so much growing up that you could say the whole thing without even thinking. There is little doubt that you could think back to when you were in preschool or kindergarten and still saying the pledge, followed up with a moment of silence.

It's common knowledge to know the words, but what is it saying? The pledge of allegiance was written by a socialist minister, Francis Bellamy. It was viewed as an American civic duty to show your allegiance and the original pledge was slightly different than the one we say today:

"I pledge allegiance to my Flag and the Republic for which it stands, one nation, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."



The words "United States of America" and the phrase "under God" were missing in the original. It was changed one more time before we ended up with the current pledge. We say the pledge as an oath of fidelity to the United States and to state our loyalty to the country and the people who fought for it. It is also a promise not to wage or initiate war.

"To me it represents our continued quest for unity, fairness and freedom under a system led by representatives chosen by the people, hence, our Democracy," Northern Lehigh Middle School history teacher, Mr. Todd Herzog said. While growing up, we have all had to say the pledge. Kids as young as three to six years old learn it and begin to say it everyday, but what would the point be if they don't

know what it means? The purpose is so kids could start to get a sense of patriotism for the country they live in at an early age. They can grow up knowing it by heart and that shows their respect for the people who struggle, yet continue to fight for us to live as peacefully as we can.

"I feel it is important as educators and students, that we recite the Pledge of Allegiance everyday to remind ourselves to be true to the United States of America and to acknowledge that our freedoms will not be taken for granted," Mr. Herzog said.

If people in school were never required to say the pledge, we wouldn't have gotten much of that loyalty for our country like we have now. Even if you don't think saying the pledge did anything, it taught you at a very young age that we do it to respect the people who lost their lives for us. 🐾

The rise of pet fostering and adoptions during the pandemic

Is this recent phenomenon a victory for pets or too good to be true?

BY HAVEN MOORE
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

For most people, this year has certainly been a rough one. With a recent anxiety causing pandemic on our hands, the world can surely seem like a very dark and isolating place. However, it's important to keep in mind that there are always positive impacts that surface during unprecedented times. As John Milton once said, "Every cloud has a silver lining."

Many people are very fond of their pets, or even just the thought of having one. With their unconditional love, non-judgmental nature, and overall great companionship, a pet can easily become your best friend. Over the course of this pandemic, adoptions for pets (particularly dogs) have risen to a new high.

Considering that we're living in a time of restricted contact with others, in a situation of worry, despair, and maybe even pure boredom, people are looking for companionship and love more than ever. So it actually makes perfect sense for adoptions to increase since this is what pets thrive on.

According to apnews.com, Foster Dogs Inc., a New York based nonprofit that helps dogs get out of shelters and into foster homes for their safety, reported that the demand for dogs from their organization is at an all time high.

The founder and executive director of this organization told AP News, "Last year at this time, this organization had applications from about 140 people per month. That has risen to about 3,000."

Additionally, according to NBCNews.com, Matt Bershader, president and CEO of the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA), said that the organization has seen a 70 percent increase in animals entering foster care in their New York City and Los Angeles programs compared to this time last year. To imagine how many animals craving love and affection, and a home to call their own are being given that, is truly heartwarming.

However, with this surge in pet adoptions,

See Pets, page 14



Many pets found homes during COVID lockdowns

Pets, from page 13

we can only hope that people who have become newfound pet owners will remain committed to their furry friends for many years to come. Eventually, this pandemic will pass and people will get back in the saddle with their busy lives and routine schedules.

The endless amount of time they once had to nurture and play around with their beloved pets could very well become a thing of the past.

Families will once again be on-the-go, with kids at school, parents at work, and all the other time consuming events that once filled our days. Those once praised poo-

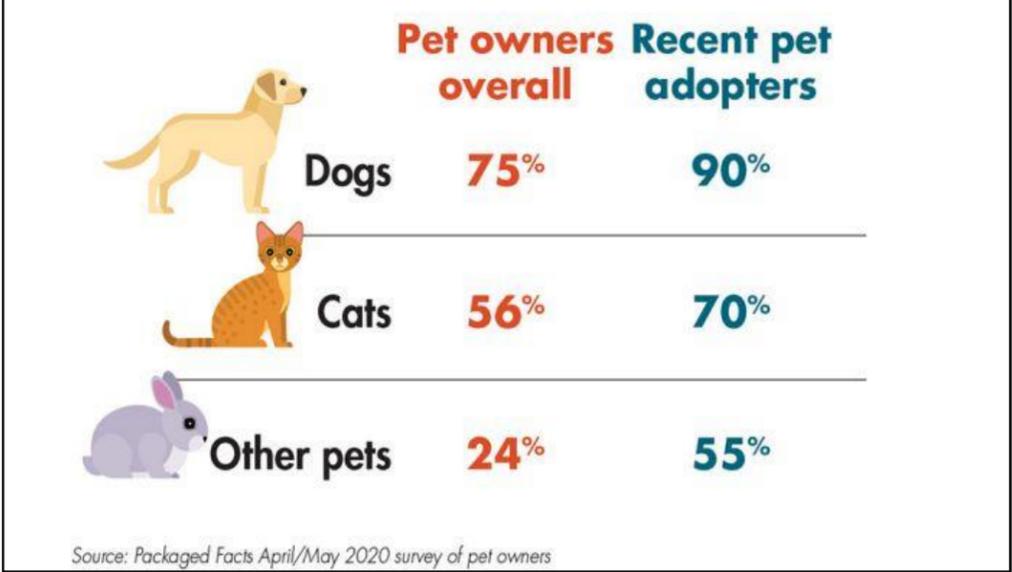
dles and parakeets could be left sitting in solitude at home. That is not what anybody would want for these creatures.

Given this thought, while there are still so many wonderful, home-wishing pets searching for long-lasting companionship, try not to be impulsive when it comes to adopting or fostering a pet. Remember that owning a pet is a life-long responsibility.

Take a moment to inquire oneself over this. Would you be able to serve its' every basic need even long after this crisis has passed? If the answer to that question is yes, then enjoy finding and making memories with your furry companion. 🐾



TYPES OF PETS IN HOUSEHOLD: PET OWNERS OVERALL VS. RECENT PET ADOPTERS, APRIL/MAY 2020



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Bulldogs will look to avenge their 2020 season next year



Photos by Jennifer Held

This offensive line built as a strong a wall as possible that could only hold the Pirates so long on Nov. 21. (Below) Connor Martinez does his best to console senior JD Hunter.

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The Queen of Brooklyn

BY CHASE JONES

*** Strange Times at NL High will return with more adventures next issue!*



Every so often when I am sick of living in my own fantasy world of characters that happen to look just like me and my best friend, I like to do a piece on something real. A real icon who did amazing things which inspired the people of their time and inspire me even now. Today's focus is Mary Tyler Moore, one of the most influential women throughout all of television history. There is no doubt that Mary Tyler Moore has left her mark on our culture and will forever have earned a place in our hearts. She will forever be one of my favorite actresses and comedic heroes. Thank you for all of the joy that you have brought to me and so many others.