

The Home Stretch 1  
for Super Dave • Pg. 10

# Adapted Instruction

Teachers continue to alter plans, schedules, and methods to ensure your children are receiving the best education under dire circumstances. Some are staying afloat while others are drowning in the COVID pool of unknown tomorrows. How are some Northern Lehigh educators dealing with sudden cyber-school while maintaining a shred of mental sanity?

BY BREANNA HOPPES  
EDITOR IN CHIEF

As the pandemic continues, emotions have taken a detrimental toll on many. Healthcare workers, nursing home workers and many more have been rightfully acknowledged for hard work and perseverance during this hard time. The COVID pandemic has taken a mental and physical beating on many, yet some individuals and their work have been overshadowed.

Educators and their determination during this difficult and complicated time have made every attempt to ensure their students are still receiving the best education regardless of the challenges being faced since last March.

While they stand in front of the computer instructing a Zoom, is there a smile under that mask? Has the pandemic dulled the shine they once felt from teaching? These questions are absent in the minds of many, although teachers are taking a drastic beating from the pandemic.

Miss Nicole Nightlinger, NL special education consultant, has consistently advocated for mental health awareness for years and when asked how her mental state was during this time, she was an open book.

"As the days, weeks, and months have passed, I find it harder

See Teachers in COVID, page 3



Photo by The Slate

NL math teacher Mike Lehtonen juggles teaching live streams to students who are at home while in-person learners work through the lessons in a hybrid model of instruction. Far from normal, educators across the district (and the country) are scrambling to maintain connections with the faces on screen and in the desks, but also with themselves.

## Fascist America: Worse than you thought?

BY OWEN LEVAN-UHLER  
SLATE STAFF WRITER

It is hard to deny that America is a country of extreme political, civil, and legal unrest, no matter one's political orientation. However, where this unrest originates from is subject to seemingly endless debate, which is harmful to the nation and its citizens.

The "endless debate" mentioned above is the argument around what aspects of the country, if any at all, are fascist. Some would say that the United States fits some of the characteristics of



fascist governance, while some would argue that a few far-right radicals are the result of notions of a fascist America. What is funny about these ideas, though, is that they are both false.

There are 14 points of fascism, and while it is lengthy to delve into each one, the United States fits under at least 11 of these points.

The first is nationalism. In America, extreme (and sometimes violent) patriotism is used to disguise and overshadow many other fascist occurrences, like censorship of people and media, scapegoat-

See Fascism, page 5

## New Feature



'Free Barking' is available! Check out your peers' answers to a new question each issue. Page 5.

# Getting More Graphic

Some classrooms think outside the book and tell the same tales with comic-like publications

BY DELANEY SZWAST  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Students are always looking for more pictures anyway, right?

In recent years, graphic novels have become increasingly popular. These stories, filled with both text and colorful illustrations, are enjoyed by people of all ages and reading levels.

However, there are many people who do not consider them “real books” or “real reading.” Some argue that they are “comics” because books should include only words, not pictures, while others complain that graphic novels do not contain challenging vocabulary and themes.

Are these stereotypes true? Many educators and literacy experts disagree. According to the article, *3 Ways Graphic Novels Benefit Reading Skills* by Scholastic Parents Staff, graphic novels improve reading skills like any traditional book. They contain exciting and complex plots, characters, and conflicts like other texts. The main difference between the two are the pictures.

These images help provide context for the stories that struggling readers may not understand. According to the article, *The Research Behind Graphic Novels and Young*

*Learners* by Leslie Morrison, readers can analyze the images to look for signs of character development or clues to help build plot. Graphic novels can also be more appealing to reluctant readers who are intimidated or unmotivated by words on a page.

When surveyed, Northern Lehigh high school and middle school English teachers agreed with the literacy experts.

“I do consider graphic novels as a form of reading because contrary to the popular belief, it’s not just pictures nor is it simplified,” said middle school English teacher Mrs. Blasia Dunham. “There is still dialogue, plot and character development, and so on. The graphic novel provides an artist’s interpretation of the visual components that normally are imagined for the individual reader, but otherwise, it tells a story just the same. It’s a different medium of reading, but as an English teacher, I still value its genre and think it’s worth exploring.”

Similarly, middle school English teacher Mrs. Shelby Bailey believes “graphic novels contain all the same elements of traditional novels, such as plot, character development, themes, etc., all of the qualities that make reading interesting and worthwhile. The

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## Race becomes confusing to teach in classroom texts

BY LILY GROOVER  
SLATE STAFF WRITER

Rarely does someone take initiative and question the material students learn in the classroom. We sit and learn from a textbook that was written before we were born. However, who decides what is in that textbook?

Is that group of people diverse enough to create material that is not biased toward one type of person? Is the material sufficient enough to make students across the country socially aware of problems within society?

Many textbooks and class plans, especially in English and history, brush over ideas and facts that have to do with racism, making the situation seem less severe than it was. Scholars and educators argue that some topics can be too graphic for children to learn in the classroom. They also state that it is not a teacher’s job to teach children about their own culture; that lies on the parents’ shoulders. However, many say that hiding the issues creates more of a problem.

The Harvard Gazette recently conducted an interview with Donald Yacovone, an associate at the Hutchins Center for African and African American Research. He explained how he found textbooks at the Houghton Library gloss-



ing over the institution of slavery. His findings included about 3,000 textbooks that dealt with white supremacy, racism, the ‘American ideal,’ or United States history books that have no mention of African Americans.

These books are available at public libraries that students use to educate themselves. His most shocking discovery was a book written by Noah Webster, the man responsible for our dictionary. In his book, “History of the United States,” there was almost nothing mentioned about African Americans, and when there was, it was extremely derogatory. Repeatedly, these books glossed over anything to do with slavery. Yacovone says,

“Anything that was less than an Anglo Saxon was not a true American.”

However, in literature, it is much easier to hide racist themes to students—simply not introduce those literary works to them. Mr. Douglas Hunt, an English teacher at Northern Lehigh High School, says that the novel *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* has many racial slurs that should not be introduced in the classroom. Other books include *Peter Pan* and *The Little House on the Prairie* for their racism against indigenous people. In the end, making students of color feel comfortable in the classroom is a success.

However, doing this hides the realities of racism from the students. Douglas

Edelstein, a social sciences teacher at a high school in Washington, in his essay about teaching race, says, “...teachers must honestly present the realities of race. Yet we must also protect our students from experiencing racial trauma caused by the ways we teach them.” The argument says that educators must find a balance between teaching racial works to students, but in a way that empowers them rather than becoming ashamed.

NLHS history teacher Mr. James Yadush says, “There is no issue that I shy away from in class, whether it be racism or any other controversial issue. I believe students must learn about the history of slavery, segregation, discrimination, and racism in our country. One of the main reasons we learn about history is to avoid repeating mistakes of the past, so this is why these issues must be taught in school.” Mr. Yadush goes on to say that the textbooks Northern Lehigh uses to teach history highlight African Americans and other marginalized groups’ contributions to our past.

The debate goes on whether or not these subjects should be taught to young minds. In the end, listening to people of color about how to teach ideas would benefit students around the country into feeling included. 🌱

# Classrooms surviving, not thriving, during COVID

'This was not in the teacher's manual' becomes mantra among educators in NL and beyond

## Teachers in COVID, from page 1

to answer this question. Those who know me know I try to find the positive in every situation, but I struggle more as time passes to find it. I am so mentally, emotionally, and physically drained anymore that there are times that I can't describe how I feel.

"I just go through the motions of the day only to do it all over again the next. I have dealt with depression and anxiety for years now and have learned to be aware of the signs of exhaustion and the need to take a day off. I just need to make sure I am keeping myself mentally and physically healthy. To do so I need to make sure I am eating right (though my chocolate

intake has increased exponentially), getting enough sleep, taking time to relax, which usually consists of binge-watching Netflix/ Disney+, or treating myself to a new sweater, book, etc. It is hard to find and maintain this balance, but it is possible. You just need to be honest with yourself and know when you need to take a break. So as I answer this question, I am tired mentally and physically, but tomorrow is a new day and I will be OK."

Miss Nightlinger openly expressed the toll the past year has had on her mental state. Regardless of the vibrant energy a teacher may radiate during the day, she describes the harsh reality herself and many other educators face when their door closes after a long day at

school.

Miss Janelle Scheckler, English teacher at NLHS, has been motivated throughout her years as an educator by the enthusiasm and spark that comes with each day of teaching. Unfortunately, the pandemic has slowly put a damper on the beauty of teaching.

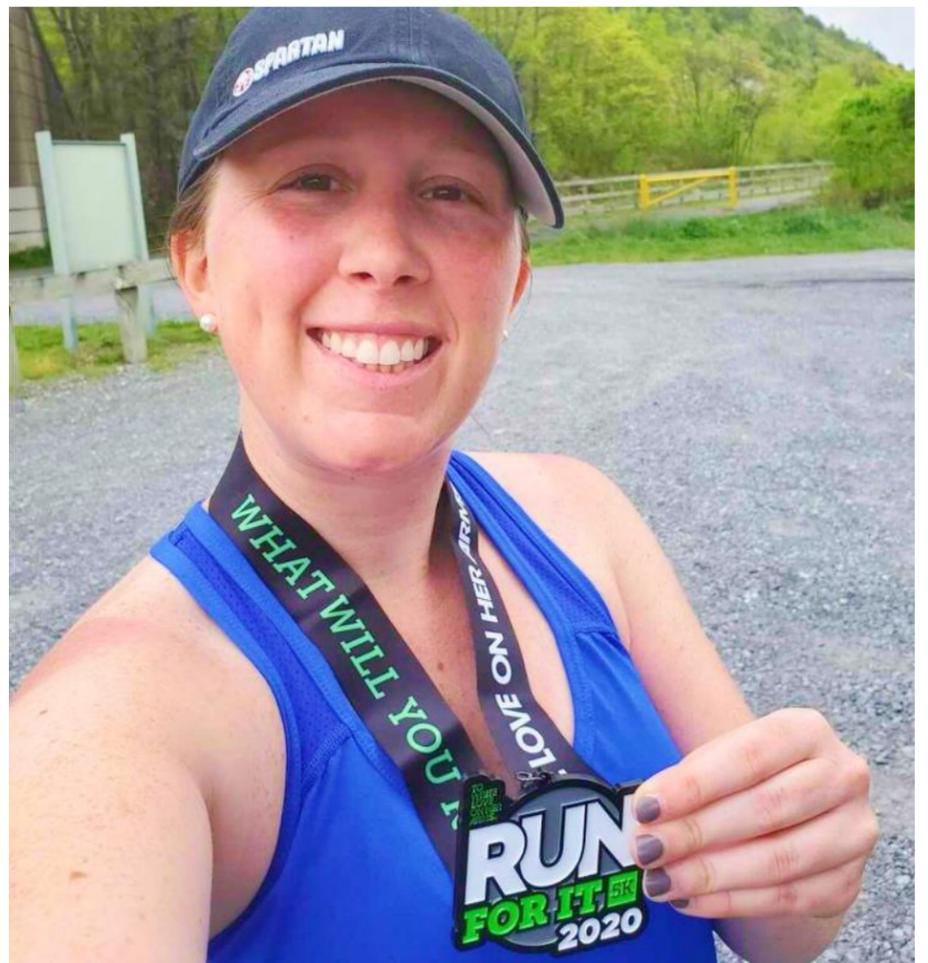
"I've never referred to what I do every day as a job because it's so much more than that. But right now, it's a job. I go into the school building (well, *sometimes*), I do my job, and I leave at 2:30 p.m. Everything feels a little too strained, a little too impersonal. I don't feel excited about teaching, and that lack of enthusiasm is a little scary. Teaching is extremely stressful, but that enthusiasm has been getting me through the stress for years. Without it, I'm struggling. This experience has made it abundantly clear that we as a society don't place enough importance on mental health. I'm very tempted to write a long rant about the disillusionment of the American dream and how it has caused us to place greater importance on material possessions, wealth, and a successful career... but I won't. I would argue that most of us don't know how to truly relax or how to — *at the very least* — be kind to ourselves. No one is thriving right now. In a way, that's sort of comforting to know. Like you said: It's OK to not be OK."

Each teacher had stressed the importance of mental health and the constant neglect it can receive. Miss Kim Bayer, math teacher at NLHS, has experi-

enced a long period of adaptation, unexpectedly, yet has powered through these challenging times regardless of the emotions felt during this journey. "Just answering these questions has been a journey. Sorry if I rambled too much in any of them, which I'm probably going to do again here," Miss Bayer said. "I feel like most of the time I try to just *keep calm and carry on* or make a joke to hide how I really feel, partially because too much of any emotion makes me cry like someone in the bathroom at a middle school dance. I try not to think about specifics and just make it through each week, no, just try to make it through each day.

"We may be in the middle of a pandemic, and there are loved ones I won't see for at least another six months, but there are also students who rely on me and all teachers every single day to learn and to bring some sense of normalcy to all of the craziness going on right now. So bring it on, virtual learning! I will deal with all of the technical difficulties and I will adapt material to make sense online as long as I need to, because this is what we need to do right now."

For these three educators, the COVID lifestyle has been nothing short of a nightmare but also as an important reminder regarding the simplicity life once was even when we believed it was madness fulfilled. We have all taken a beating due to the pandemic, but the brighter side is destined to be reached by each and every one of us... one day. 🐾



(Clockwise from top) Mrs. Katherine Farber remains connected with her students via Google Meet live streams (while others are productive in the classroom. (Above) Miss Nicole Nightlinger spent her quarantine time competing in (and finishing) a 5K. (Left) Mr. Nick Sander multitasks with his hybrid history students.

# February Artist of the Month: Aubrey Pollard

BY HAVEN MOORE  
SLATE STAFF WRITER

Artistic potential can be found anywhere in the world. Whether it be painting, drawing, sculpting, or even a form that cannot be portrayed physically, there is always an art piece waiting to be acknowledged everywhere you look. Many people have various styles they utilize to show their perspectives of the world through artwork.

When someone can share their work with others, inspire someone out there to take a chance, while making their statement, it is quite fulfilling. 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 second and official winner of this contest is Aubrey Pollard. Congratulations, Aubrey!

Aubrey is a freshman at Northern Lehigh, whose specialty is painting and drawing. She finds herself embarking on a new artistic creation when a random idea enters her mind, and she must express it on paper.

Aubrey always begins by sketching out her design with a pencil on a blank canvas and then goes in with various paint colors. She likes making her pictures look natural, as well as blending the colors very well to give an accurate representation of what she is painting/

drawing.

Aubrey not only has independent, creative artistic qualities, but she is also very kind in sharing her creations with others. She has made requested paintings, and even gifts them to people! Aubrey once made a painting of a pig for someone's birthday present and has given one as a gift to her basketball trainer. At the same time, she appreciates when the people around her give her an idea and let her make the final product. Aubrey is very unique when it comes to her work and does not like hers to look like anybody else's. That is what makes her work impressionable from others.

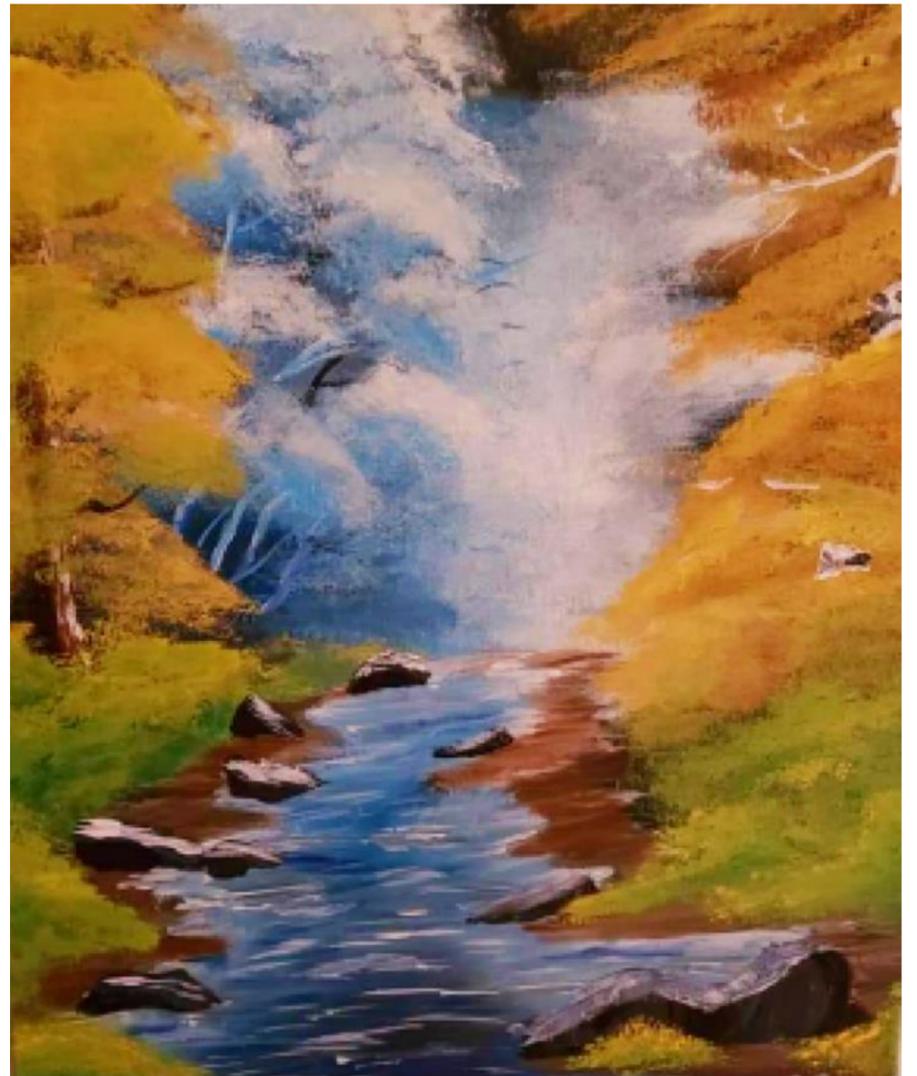
When Aubrey does sell them, it is only to compensate for the cost of materials. She never marks up her price based on how long it takes her to make the artwork. All she wants is for people to enjoy what she makes.

Aubrey was generous enough to provide us with three of her original paintings, featured below:

From what you can see, Aubrey has presented three detailed and colorful paintings just full of personality. Starting with the first painting (pictured farthest to the left), Aubrey painted a turtle gliding through water which shows hazy reflection on its surface.

The inspiration behind this painting

**See Artist, page 12**




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## Family Snowshoeing

In partnership with Get Outdoors Pa and the Wildlands Conservancy, don't miss out on your walks this winter...learn to snowshoe!

**Sunday, February 28th**  
**10:00-11:30am**  
**Covered Bridge Trailhead**  
**(7871 7th Street, Slatington, Pa)**

**Adult: \$10**  
**Children ages 6—12: Free**



This guided shoeing class on the Slate Heritage Trail will provide stunning views of Trout Creek. We go, snow or no snow! Dress appropriately as we will be outdoors the entire time. All equipment will be provided. Please wear a mask.

**Pre Registration Required with Wildlands Conservancy.**  
Visit <https://wildlandspa.secure.force.com/registration> or call **484-633-0093** for more information.

# Free Barking

With Molly Williams

## What awaits... After graduation?

With the end of the school year in the distance, the class of 2021 is about to join the real world. After being in school for as long as they can remember, what will it be like when they move on to a new stage in life? Now that COVID has hit, things will be a lot different after graduation compared to a few years ago. It comes with many more responsibilities, on top of everything else. To find out, I asked some seniors what's next for them after high school and how they feel about it.



"I plan to take the summer off and attend LCCC in the fall. I made this decision to be able to progress reasonably while navigating a post-COVID world."

DYLAN MILLER

"After high school, I am going to Lycoming College where I will be playing soccer and studying secondary education / mathematics. I am excited to start a new chapter of my life and to meet new people, but I will miss my friends who will now be hours away."

RILEY GRIFFITH



"I am a machinist in training and am currently working at Tyber Medical. I feel great that I will graduate high school with a full-time job lined up that I genuinely enjoy!"

ALENA SNYDER

"After high school, I am going to go to college and become an optometrist. I am very excited for the new experiences college will bring, but I am also nervous and sad to leave home and my friends."

JULIA WANAMAKER



"I am planning on majoring in psychology. I'm not sure how I feel about the coming future, because the pandemic threw a wrench in a lot of it, but I can only hope that the best is yet to come."

CALEB HANKEE

"After high school, I'm thinking of attending an out-of-state college, likely to go off and study marine biology. I think time after high school will be fun and challenging, with a lot of new experiences to both look forward to and to dread."

RICARDO BABILONIA



Want to park your prints in Free Barking?  
Give Molly Williams a shout: [mw4830@myntsd.org](mailto:mw4830@myntsd.org).

## Has disdain for human rights become the American way?

See Fascism, from page 1

ing, glamorization of the military (making way for the ignorance of its disproportionate government funding), and sexism and *queerphobia*, among others...

Another characteristic of fascist nations is the disdain for human rights. The United States, while a leader in the enforcement of human rights, is largely hypocritical. Systemic racism and xenophobia lead to many violations of human rights. The United States government is largely still an opponent of the advancement of queer rights. Separation of families at the U.S.-Mexico border and their subsequent deplorable detainment violates not only human rights but human decency. The prison-industrial complex is also one of the biggest examples of human rights violations in the nation.

One characteristic of fascism that the United States fills extremely well is how religion and government are intertwined to sway public opinion. While the United States preserves freedom of religion, and is supposed to separate Church from State, it does this far from effectively. Many politicians at the federal, state, and local level endorse and introduce many legislation solely on the basis of their religious affiliation, while many laws discriminate against people of certain religions. The effects of religion and government being so deeply intertwined are extremely polarizing and detrimental to a democratic system.

And so much for democracy when businesses and the corporate elite are the ones who influence the decisions of elected officials. This could theoretically happen in any democratic system, but is especially apparent in a fascist state. In America, while companies are not necessarily the ones who put people in power (the citizens surprisingly hold that ability to a certain extent), companies influence politicians' ideas and decisions, or pay politicians to vote in favor of their interests altogether through lobbying and bribery.

One of the largest characteristics of fascism that the United States pathetically falls under is obsession with crime and punishment. Under fascism, the police are given virtually limitless power to enforce "the law." For decades upon decades, American police have been getting away with a myriad of abuses and outright crimes. Especially



during times of unrest, civil law is often overlooked to wring citizens back into submission. This was especially apparent during the summer of 2020, as thousands of Black Lives Matter protesters were violently dispersed and detained by police around the country.

Finally, another huge characteristic of fascism is widespread cronyism and corruption throughout the government. Throughout American history and apparent within the last several decades, politicians endorse and appoint friends and other allies with little to no political qualifications, protecting each other from accountability for wrongdoing, making career politicians in the process. Under fascist governments, natural resources and people are exploited for the benefit of the politicians. With their country so neatly filling itself under various fascist characteristics, how are Americans supposed to respond? Citizens need to become as active in government as they can, familiarizing themselves with what is politically and socially transpiring in their communities and country, and researching what they can do to help change systems and programs on a local, state, and national level.

Citizens need to find and elect officials who are *actively* going to try to change the government for the better, and call politicians' bluffs on issues of importance. The American government, in recent years, has largely shown that it is not going to completely fulfill its duty to its citizens, so the citizens must step up and reform the government to work for *them*. 🌟

*Our View*

## Mutual respect shown among masked Bulldogs

No one *needs* to see each other's face anyway.

At first, the idea of making us (free citizens) wear face masks felt a little surreal. Need a quart of milk? Mask up. Walking the dog? Mask up. Starbucks run? Cover that excited grin before you show your Instagram clan a nonfat soy latte.

It's now part of our swagger. They fit the style, promote our favorite brands, and still show the respect to others that *your* health matters.

A school not too far from our NL community unfortunately takes a different approach. Masks are scarcely worn among teachers in the halls (when classes are not in session), colleagues regularly eat lunch together without distancing, and faculty meetings are held in person (masks optional).

One thing at Northern Lehigh that has been consistent during this



unprecedented time — the Dawgs have been looking out for each other.

Students, staff, and anyone in the building are masked at all times. When co-workers visit co-workers, on it goes. Heading down to the copier? Only the whites of our eyes are seen.

Students, including those who verbally state their disgust for such a mandate, respect the rule. For that, we are thankful.

Bulldogs all around the high school should be commended for not bucking the system. No one *likes* the mask, but it has proven to be part of the solution.

This is just life for the moment. The veil will be lifted one day. A time will return when our sometimes-grumpy faces scorn down upon you with academic concern and earth-stopping glares. Until then, you get half the face but all of our pride and appreciation. 🐾

## Red + Blue ≠ Black: Political tension is tearing us apart

BY AVERY DIAZ  
SLATE COLUMNIST

Red or blue. Elephant or donkey. Conservative or liberal. Or, dare I say it without raising your blood pressure to an alarming level, Republican or Democrat. Of course, there are several other minor parties, but those main two are like Batman to Joker, assigned roles up to individual interpretation. Almost everyone, to some extent, has preconceived notions about the opposing party.

Or from an Independent perspective, the specific views of them. Opinions are held, along with grievances and reasoning, as to why they side with the side that they do. But now more than ever, the negative perception of those with opposing views has created a toxic divide within the country.

Political parties are no longer seen as what they truly are: people who share the same ideas on how the country could best be run. Instead, they create an excuse to inflict hate and judgment upon others under the guise of free speech and entitlement to opinions. And when others don't agree, the problems start.

I'd even go as far as to say that political parties are seen as concrete representations of the morals and character of an individual, perpetuating stereotypes on a subtle, yet substantial, scale. But at a base level, this political tension is the thing of nightmares for all relationships.

The crazy uncle and outspoken aunt are no longer allowed in the same room



together at Thanksgiving.

*Strangers* feel the need to bash each other on Twitter and such with unsolicited (but not unreciprocated), strongly-worded messages.

Neighbors are engaging in unspoken wars in the form of yard signs. (Ever notice how they're almost always in clusters? One person puts up a sign. The next day, five flags and a cardboard cutout of the opposition's face is placed front-and-center in the lawn across the street. Case and point.)

Regardless of the extent, even if it's internalized, these walls of hatred put up for the other side are tearing the country apart. People deliberately try to fight and cause problems with those who don't agree, like toddlers, as opposed to strong adults respectfully supporting their beliefs.

Of course, everyone can share opinions and react accordingly to others, but at what point is it too far?

To put it (somewhat) dramatically, individuals live in fear of how others will react to their opposing political views. And within reason: family, friends, and coworkers may look down upon or treat them differently because of what they believe.

Meanwhile, others instill that fear. *Most* instill that fear, to some extent, through animosity and general feelings of superiority toward people with opposing views. Instead of being receptive to (or at

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 <p>ALL YOUR BULLDOG NEWS..</p> <p>Northern Lehigh High School 1 Bulldog Lane Slatington, PA 18080 theslatenews@nlsd.org</p>  	<p><b>Breanna Hoppes</b> EDITOR IN CHIEF</p> <p><b>Brittney Diehl</b> ASSOCIATE EDITOR</p> <p><b>Mr. Christopher Barnes</b> MANAGING ADVISER</p>	<p><b>CORE STAFF WRITERS</b></p> <p>Lily Groover Owen Levan-Uhler Madelynn Mack Haven Moore</p> <p><b>SPORTS DEPARTMENT</b></p> <p>Kendall Heiney Alexis Traugher</p>	<p><b>COMIC GUY</b> Chase Jones</p> <p><b>EDITORIAL ARTIST</b> Camryn Torres</p> <p><b>COLUMNIST</b> Avery Diaz</p> <p><b>BILLING MANAGER</b> Mrs. Kathy Nowlin</p>	<p><b>CONTRIBUTING STAFF</b></p> <p>Molly Williams, Ashley Moyer, Abigail Peartree, Giana Rosario, Delaney Szwast, Diego Fenstermaker, Callum Zimmerman</p>
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## Liberal steps up, writes in defense of Trump

*Editorial note: In order to solicit a more conservative view and/or a Republican perspective to support what former President Donald Trump had accomplished in his four years in office, The Slate sent an email to the student body in search of a willing writer. Twice. Announcements were also shared on the Dog Dish morning news program for two weeks. We received no response. So, in an honest attempt to discover some achievement in Trump's term, our associate editor (far from a MAGA supporter) fills the bill.*

BY BRITTNEY DIEHL  
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

I am a liberal lesbian feminist — and the farthest thing from someone who even acknowledges Donald Trump as our 45th president. Yet, here I am, writing a story no Trump supporter could bring him or herself to write.

Mr. Trump has done many, many things in office— many that are negative and others positive. There is some hope for this man to leave a legacy with a shred of good linked to it. When laying out his accomplishments, however, these words are, in no way, satire. I am a reporter and report is what I shall do.

For the most part, it all boils down to one aspect: the economy. Even in the midst of a pandemic— albeit with no COVID-19 plan— Donald Trump was able to keep the nation from plummeting as it had once done in the Great Depression.

Around 56% of Americans believed that under Trump's administration, they are better off than they were four years prior. This was done through the Cares Act, which was able to avoid a second



Great Depression for the country.

On top of this, Mr. Trump expanded GOP support among people of color and non-White voters. In 2020, Trump earned about 26% of the non-White vote and many of his critics were shocked to see his support for those people of color. Not only this, but Mr. Trump also made

history in March, becoming the first U.S. president to speak in person on the pro-life side of the controversial abortion topic. He embraces the pro-life movement and was the main reason behind many of the pro-life victories as well. He was the first president to face and take sides on such an issue— utilizing his First Amendment rights.

The Democrats' famous "blue wave" was also stopped by Trump. He helped Republicans prevent Democrats from taking the Senate, while his party gained a seat in the House of Representatives.

The United States' relationship with China has recently been on thin ice due to the global pandemic. In response, Trump shut down travel from China, held Beijing accountable for the virus, and was able to become stern on China's intellectual property theft. When on the topic of foreign affairs, he also took out Iran's terrorist Quds Force leader Qasem Soleimani— drawing a red line for such a group. He also transformed the Middle East by implementing the Abraham Accords and brokered four Arab-Israeli peace accords.

Many conservatives also rejoiced

when they found that Trump had put Amy Coney Barrett on the Supreme Court shortly after the death of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg— making him the first president to have put the most justices through to the Supreme Court.

Additionally, he launched Operation Warp Speed, the greatest health achievement in history to date. When looking at it individually, Trump was said to make many achievements in one year when others would take three.

When boiling it down, it was obvious that among what most see as a negative presidency, there was some good to it all. Many people rave about how amazing Donald Trump was to the country when president, so, why could no Trump supporter write about this? I chose to support a man I technically do not encourage in the name of journalism but *where were they?*

This just leaves the question of how truly people support a man or if they support what they *think* he is. Are they truly aware of his actions and ideas or do they blindly follow in the name of their supposed promises of democracy? 🐾

## Transgender roles hindered, not helped, by media

ABBY PEARTREE  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

All around the world, people in the LGBTQ+ community face hate and discrimination. One of the biggest contributors to this is something not many would expect. Some might even consider it an asset.

However, the media constantly creates a stream of homophobic and transphobic ideologies. It comes through in every form of the media. Movies and television display it constantly and social media platforms do, too. Things that are meant to try and help the community even manage to damage it through stereotypes.

Late night TV host James Corden played a gay man in the movie "The Prom." However, his portrayal involved harmful stereotypes such as an accent to his voice as well as a flamboyant persona. Although this is the way the character is meant to be played the miscasting of using a heterosexual man who is widely known makes it seem offensive and off-putting to many.



Years ago, a TV show called "Psych" had a terribly portrayed transgender woman. In the episode titled "Deez Nups," a transgender woman is flirting with the male detectives. They make disgusted remarks at her deeper voice and masculine frame. They misgender her multiple times and at the end of the episode they drop her off at a church to signify that they detested her being transgender. This hate appears in music.

In 1987, Aerosmith released the song

"Dude (Looks Like A Lady)" The entire song is making fun of presumably a transgender woman or a drag queen. Although not all drag queens are part of the LGBTQ+ community today, back then it was a vast majority. The song states to "never judge a book by its cover." By stating this, they are telling listeners that a person's gender is not defined by how they feel but instead their chromosomal sex. This is a harmful misconception that hurts transgender people often.

In 2007, Katy Perry released a song called "Ur So Gay." The song projected the stereotype that gay men wear makeup and that it is homosexual behavior to be male and wear makeup. The lyrics "I can't believe I fell in love with someone that wears more makeup than..." and "You're so gay and you don't even like boys." These lyrics show that there was clear intentions to be homophobic. However, after all of these different situations, the shows and movies still air and the songs haven't been taken down.

The artists and creators who made these songs and shows continue to make money. These examples aren't even the beginning of a long list of offensive media and new examples come out every day.

The only way to stop the normalization of homophobia and transphobia in the media is to boycott such material. However, with the number of people who discriminate against the LGBTQ+ community the probability of offensive media going away is slim to none. The choice is up to the people. Will a blind eye be turned or will acceptance make its way through? 🐾

# We don't need to see what's behind this mask

## Morality plays a big role in anti-maskers' selfish motives

BY BRITTNEY DIEHL  
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Imagine walking into a scene similar to that of *Bambi*. The babbling brooks, animals scattered, but at second glance, the animals are fake and you're surrounded by people doing daily shopping at Cabela's. Yet, one thing strikes you- pure horror as not a single person is wearing their mask correctly- if at all.

I did not see a single person who had the decency to pull their mask up for the sake of humanity as we currently know it. I felt rage, annoyance, terror- usual emotions of those in harm's way when there are effective and efficient means to help diminish such harm. However, I can describe these people in my own words- three to be exact. *They are selfish.*

However, this situation is not just found in Cabela's but also around the nation. Whether it is stubborn old women in church who want to worship God without the proper sanitary measures or



an entire grocery store full of people who refuse to put something over their face, the anti-mask movement has begun to spread, and the disease they are most likely carrying comes along for the ride.

Mask controversy has seemed to hit the nation and spread just as fast as this pandemic. Some believe it is a way for the government to control you, to take away your rights in the name of safety. Howev-

er, some are sane, saying how it is a way to keep themselves and everyone around them safe. But anti-maskers pose one question: can we all just get along?

There is one- and only one- answer to that question: no. There is no getting along in a day and age where there is no longer respect for others. They do not respect life as they wear a piece of fabric or disposable cloth below their nose. It is

not hard. Hospital workers wear quadruple that, if not more, while helping the people that anti-maskers are continuously infecting.

Despite this, every issue within society comes down to one mundane thing: morality. Is this right? Should people truly be doing this? Should freewill come into play? What about the promise of life, liberty, and happiness to those within the United States?

Some may argue that not wearing- as well as wearing- a mask is a right. They are American; therefore, they should be presented with the choice.

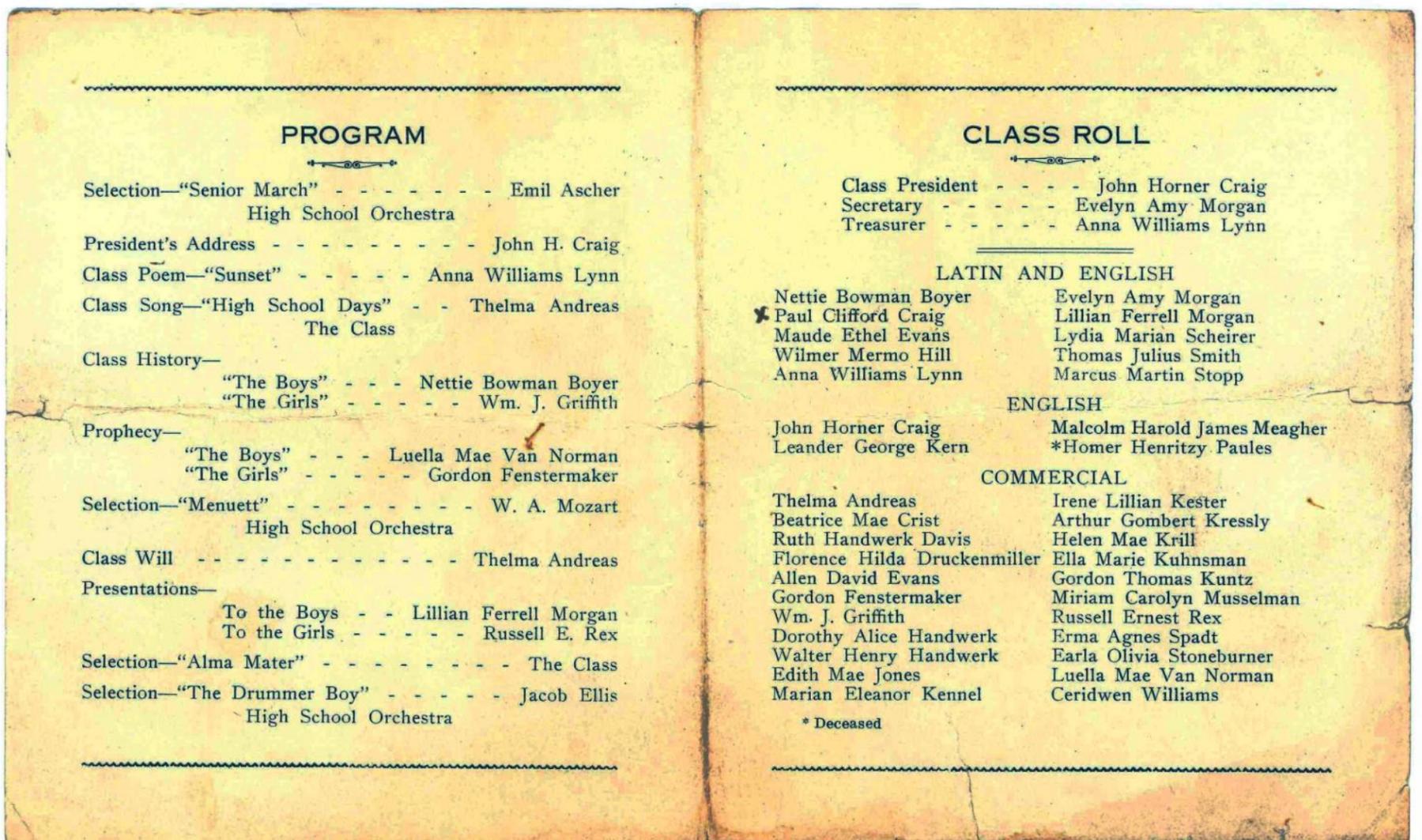
Not only do people choose to make masks mandatory in their businesses because it is what they are comfortable with, but also the fact that happiness should and will only come to those who do not infringe on other individuals' happiness.

However, one big-picture item is the future- not only the future in general but also the future when regarding this or other health crises.

Will we be able to survive this pandemic or others with the pure ignorance that has seemed to plague the nation? There is no idea of how much more we can take. Life is no longer normal. Wear your mask. 🐾

# Slatington High School Senior Night, 1921

Although he is an English teacher by background, NLHS assistant principal Mr. David Hauser enjoys his local history. He recently came across a program from Slatington High School Senior Night from 100 years ago. Recognize any names?



### PROGRAM

Selection—"Senior March" - - - - - Emil Ascher  
High School Orchestra

President's Address - - - - - John H. Craig

Class Poem—"Sunset" - - - - - Anna Williams Lynn

Class Song—"High School Days" - - - - - Thelma Andreas  
The Class

Class History—  
"The Boys" - - - - - Nettie Bowman Boyer  
"The Girls" - - - - - Wm. J. Griffith

Prophecy—  
"The Boys" - - - - - Luella Mae Van Norman  
"The Girls" - - - - - Gordon Fenstermaker

Selection—"Menuett" - - - - - W. A. Mozart  
High School Orchestra

Class Will - - - - - Thelma Andreas

Presentations—  
To the Boys - - - - - Lillian Ferrell Morgan  
To the Girls - - - - - Russell E. Rex

Selection—"Alma Mater" - - - - - The Class

Selection—"The Drummer Boy" - - - - - Jacob Ellis  
High School Orchestra

### CLASS ROLL

Class President - - - - - John Horner Craig  
Secretary - - - - - Evelyn Amy Morgan  
Treasurer - - - - - Anna Williams Lynn

### LATIN AND ENGLISH

Nettie Bowman Boyer  
\* Paul Clifford Craig  
Maude Ethel Evans  
Wilmer Mermo Hill  
Anna Williams Lynn

Evelyn Amy Morgan  
Lillian Ferrell Morgan  
Lydia Marian Scheirer  
Thomas Julius Smith  
Marcus Martin Stopp

### ENGLISH

John Horner Craig  
Leander George Kern

Malcolm Harold James Meagher  
\*Homer Henritz Paules

### COMMERCIAL

Thelma Andreas  
Beatrice Mae Crist  
Ruth Handwerk Davis  
Florence Hilda Druckenmiller  
Allen David Evans  
Gordon Fenstermaker  
Wm. J. Griffith  
Dorothy Alice Handwerk  
Walter Henry Handwerk  
Edith Mae Jones  
Marian Eleanor Kennel

Irene Lillian Kester  
Arthur Gombert Kressly  
Helen Mae Krill  
Ella Marie Kuhnsman  
Gordon Thomas Kuntz  
Miriam Carolyn Musselman  
Russell Ernest Rex  
Erma Agnes Spadt  
Earla Olivia Stoneburner  
Luella Mae Van Norman  
Ceridwen Williams

\* Deceased

# Graphic novels supply reading motivation that other books lack

Graphic, from page 2

only difference is they include a graphic representation of the plot's events, which allows you to easily visualize the author's vision for the events, characters, setting, etc."

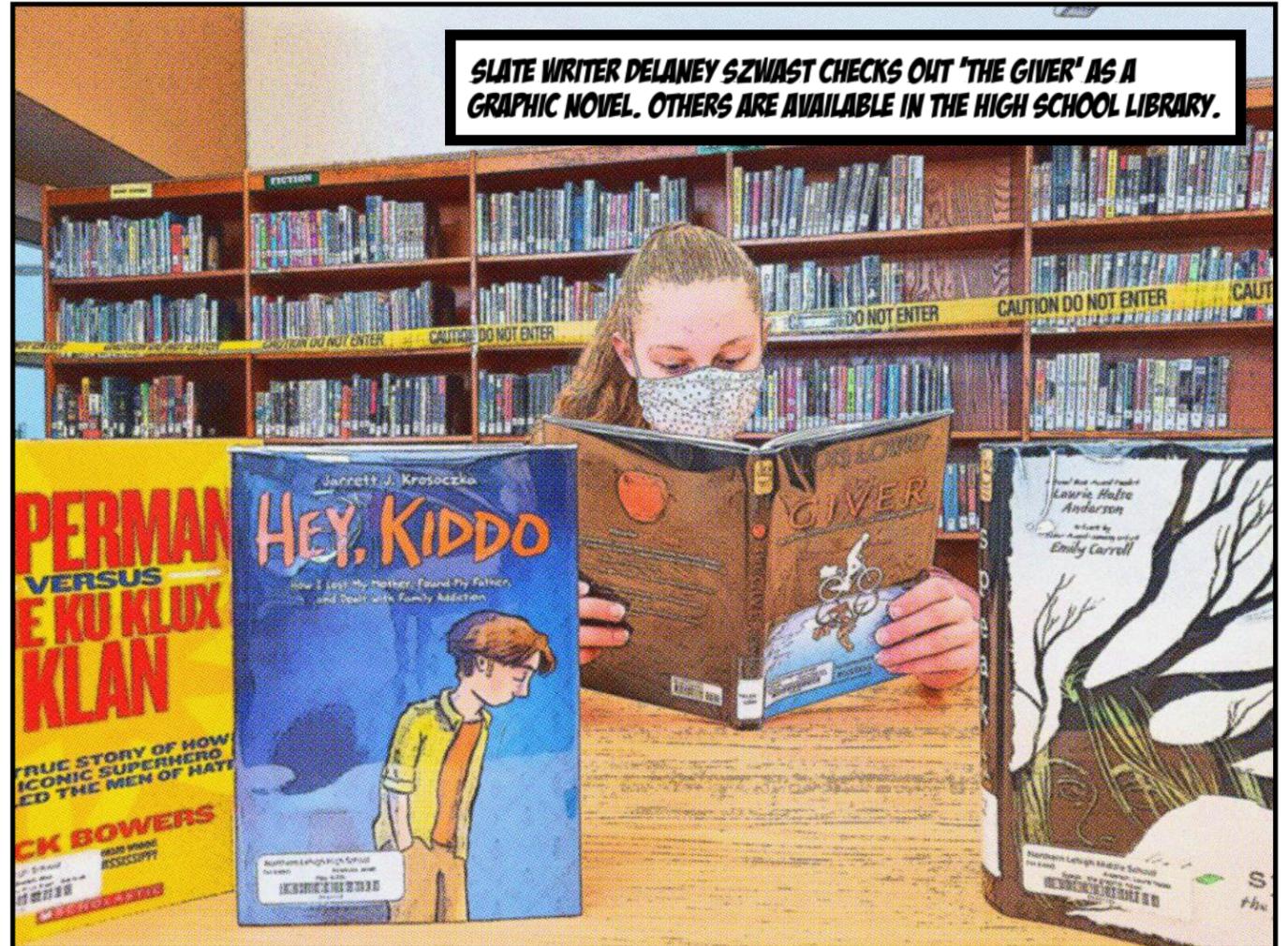
Similar views are believed at the high school. "The act of 'reading' is really just comprehending text. A 'text' is anything that contains words. That could be a graphic novel, a magazine article, a cookbook... 'Reading' isn't just something you do in school," explains high school English teacher Miss Janelle Scheckler.

As the benefits of reading graphic novels have become more accepted, they have started to appear more often in classrooms. Although the English teachers at Northern Lehigh all agreed that graphic novels are considered reading, their opinions varied when they were asked if they believe graphic novels should be used in the English curriculum.

"They should definitely have a place in the classroom," asserts high school English teacher Mr. Christopher Barnes. "I've used them as a supplement to *To Kill a Mockingbird*, which can have a lot of tedious reading for a student, and for *Speak*, which gives us visuals to the scenes we would otherwise have to just picture in our own minds."

Middle school English teacher Mrs. Kim Filipovits is willing to add graphic novels to the English curriculum, if the school is able to get them. "It is difficult for some kids to enjoy what they are reading. Regular books can seem boring to them. I am all for any book that will pique interest in a student. As long as they are reading, they are learning," she said.

Alternately, high school English teacher Mr. Jon Prive is not sure "if any graphic novels have reached a level of cultural significance at this point to war-



rant a central place in a unit of study in an ELA classroom. That being said, they can be embraced as a source of independent reading materials and might be included as excerpts to supplement other texts. Some worth exploring would be Neil Gaiman's *Sandman*, Vaughan and Henrichon's *Pride of Baghdad*, and Spiegelman's *Maus*. *Maus* is probably the best fit for our current ELA curriculum, to be studied alongside texts such as *Night*, *The Diary of a Young Girl* (Anne Frank), and *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas*."

He also noted that "the texts are often much more expensive than and not continuously published like the staples of classroom texts."

About 50 graphic novels are currently available in the high school library. School librarian Mrs. Krystle-Dawn Willing-Tiedeman is working on expanding the collection which currently ranges from graphic retellings of stories like the *Handmaid's Tale* and *Macbeth* to stories like *Hey, Kiddo*, which is a visual look into the topic of addiction in families.

She recommends students explore any of the graphic novels and encourages students and staff to suggest any graphic novels that could be added to the collection.

"For some people, the graphic novel versions may not be appealing, but for others, they could be the key to connecting with stories and literary experiences you've never had with traditional books," said Mrs. Tiedeman. "Plus, sometimes, they're just fun. We need to realize there's still room for fun." 🐾

# Screaming matches, ignored opinions hurt our country's progress

Avery, from page 6

least *humoring*) others' ideas, everyone is so quick to judge and bash others, genuinely believing that the other person is wrong in the way they think. It's an egotistical display of immaturity, blurring the lines between the right to opinions and political prejudice. And no, it's not just one-sided. Don't even start with that. Despite what our perceptions (heavily influenced and clouded by the "I'm right and you're wrong" train of thought) may suggest, *no one* can seem to get along or agree with *anything* anymore when politics are involved.

And, of course, everyone is so quick to make everything political. It's as if people look to pick fights, using their "views" as an excuse to detest others, eliciting verbal (and, at times, physical) fights if, heaven forbid, someone doesn't feel the same or disregards their opinion. Yikes.

In a world where, even more so in the



past year, we're gaining the strength to fight for what we believe, the accompanied screaming match when someone doesn't feel the same shouldn't be...well, accompanied.

Of course, the past year has further amplified this tension, with an election year and a raging pandemic causing stress and major lifestyle changes, but that's ever the reason to stand back and notice the wrongdoings on how others are being

treated.

Even if you think they have packing peanuts for brains.

During the times when everyone needs to stick together and be there for each other -- *not literally... back up* -- the nation's bond seems to have gone down the toilet. (And with it, an alarming amount of bulk toilet paper.) But the point is, *it doesn't have to be this way...* If everyone puts up these walls, automatical-

ly assuming that those of opposing views are the abhorrent scum of the nation, how is the country supposed to progress? Isn't that the point of all this, to make sure the "right thing" is being done?

At this rate, we're destroying the nation that we're allegedly fighting to "fix" with our "correct" ideologies. And making a fool of ourselves in the process.

Of course, people aren't going to get along. I realize this and I'm not necessarily trying to change that fact, especially since I'm speaking from a position of privilege.

With that being said, I'm not asking everyone to hug and kiss the very people they feel they're oppressed by. But at this rate, with the daily judgment and extreme nature of political hatred, a dark road is ahead. Even darker than the sad state we're in now. Everyone tears down each other just because *we* think that *they* think wrong.

That's just wrong. 🐾

# SPORTS




Basketball Senior Nights, pages 11, 13

## After 1,000-plus wins, the super one finally crosses the finish line

*NLHS veteran teacher Dave Oertner approaches 40 years of coaching; eyes the end before retirement*

BY KENDALL HEINEY  
SPORTS STAFF WRITER

Northern Lehigh's famed Dave Oertner has confirmed his retirement from coaching the cross country, track and field, and basketball teams. He has been an exceptional coach for the past four decades and had an exceedingly successful career. Oertner is also a Northern Lehigh alumnus who graduated from Slatington High School in 1978. He took part in cross country, track and field, and basketball in his high school years and his love for the sports kept him moving into becoming a coach of the teams.

Oertner originally wanted to become the basketball coach when he came back as a teacher. The spot was taken so the school suggested he should become the cross-country coach, and he has since stuck with it. Eventually, the basketball coach position was offered, and he stayed as the coach for 10 years in the late 1980s and early 1990s. He stepped away from boys basketball and became the girls basketball coach in the early 2000s. Mr. Oertner had the privilege to coach his daughters as they went through high school and enjoyed all of it.

"I was harder on them, but by the same token, it was an experience that I got to spend more time with my kids than almost any other father gets to spend with his. I taught them in class. I coached them. It was a great experience," he said.

Mr. Oertner accepted the offer of becoming the head cross country coach in 1982 when he first started teaching at Northern Lehigh. He has held a record of 1,012 wins and 751 losses over his 39 coaching seasons. Under his leadership, Northern Lehigh's cross country teams have experienced nine Centennial League Championships, eight Centennial League Meet Championships, four Colonial League Championships, three Colonial League Meet Championships, five District XI Team Championships, 13 Team PIAA State Qualifying Teams, and eight undefeated seasons. Oertner has also aided in getting six athletes to states. He coached Bob Chandler who was the PIAA Individual State Champion in 1992 after placing 3rd in 1990 and 1991. Just recently, Reagan Pender placed 5th in 2019 and 6th in 2018. Also, Lisa Dorshimer 6th (1992) and 10th (1991), Matt Oertner 9th (2000), John Breiningner 10th (1999) and Tim Pfluger 11th (1995).

Mr. Oertner is currently an assistant coach for track and field and is considering remaining there a few more years. As an assistant coach, less of his time will be taken and he can spend more time focusing on family and getting closer to full retirement. He has 97 seasons of coaching experience behind him and he is thinking about possibly reaching the 100 mark by staying with



(Top) Dave Oertner with asst. coaches LoriBeth Guelcher and Beth Case (who assistant-coached for more than 20 years) and NL record holder Reagan Pender, class of 2020. (Above) At 2019 States, with LoriBeth Guelcher, Ali Lora, Katie Guelcher, Reagan Pender, and Nate Keller.

See Oertner, page 11

# SPORTS




## Seniors take the court for final games



Photos courtesy of Mr. Bryan Geist

Still ballin' through a pandemic! Madison Seier (above) and Emily Hunsicker (right) recently celebrated Senior Night.

## 'Super Dave' calls it a career as head coach for almost four decades

**Oertner, from page 10**

track. "If I decide to stick around for a couple more years of track, that would be a nice number to reach. But I don't know yet. I was thinking about it, but I don't know if I will get there," Oertner said.

Oertner wants to retire from coaching, and soon teaching, to see his family more often. His oldest daughter, Lauren, is a speech pathologist in Rapid City, South Dakota; his middle daughter, Aimee, is a Captain for the United States Army and is stationed with her family in Texas.

She recently had a child, and Mr. Oertner would like to see his grandchild more often. His son, Andy, still resides in the Lehigh Valley and is an ER nurse. Retiring from being a fulltime coach would allow him to visit his family more

often and fly out without missing anything.

"It's tough to see them. I see my son often because he is still in the area," Mr. Oertner said. "But my daughters are in different states. So one reason I wanted to retire as a cross-country coach is so I'm able to do things like that, and have that time to be able to travel to see my children or have them home here in Pennsylvania."

He has been an influential coach and made his mark on the athletes that worked with him. NL grad (Class of 2001) Amy Zeiser said she has known Mr. Oertner almost her whole life and he has played a big role in school and beyond. "I have known Coach Oertner for almost my entire life. He started out as my coach, then as a colleague, and most importantly - a friend. He has always

been there for me and has always treated me like family. I have so many fond memories of my time in the NL cross country program that I will always cherish," Zeiser said. "He dedicated so much of his time, energy, and life to that program. He treated every runner with respect. He showed everyone how much he cared for them. There will never be another coach like Coach Oertner."

In more recent years, 2020 grad Reagan Pender believes she is the record-holding runner she is today because of her coach. "He was a patient and kind coach who was always willing to talk and encourage the team. I'm so incredibly thankful for the many memories I have from my four years of running under Coach Oertner. He was an amazing coach that really cared for his athletes and was always there for them. He created a

lasting legacy that will be remembered by all of the athletes he trained during his time of coaching at Northern Lehigh."

It was an extremely difficult decision for Mr. Oertner to make as he will be leaving something he has been involved with since he was in high school but believes he has chosen the right time to step away. Mr. Oertner thanks former athletic director Dick Smith who got him into coaching and thanks the athletes for the experience.

"I also want to thank all the people that I ran into along the way. My athletes, because without them, you have nothing. It was a great experience. It's one you just won't forget - ever. But as they say, it's time to move on to new challenges." 🐾



(Left) From a very successful 2019 year. (Above) One is a rare, invaluable collector's item; the other is a cardboard cutout.

# February Artist of the Month: Aubrey Pollard

## Artist, from page 4

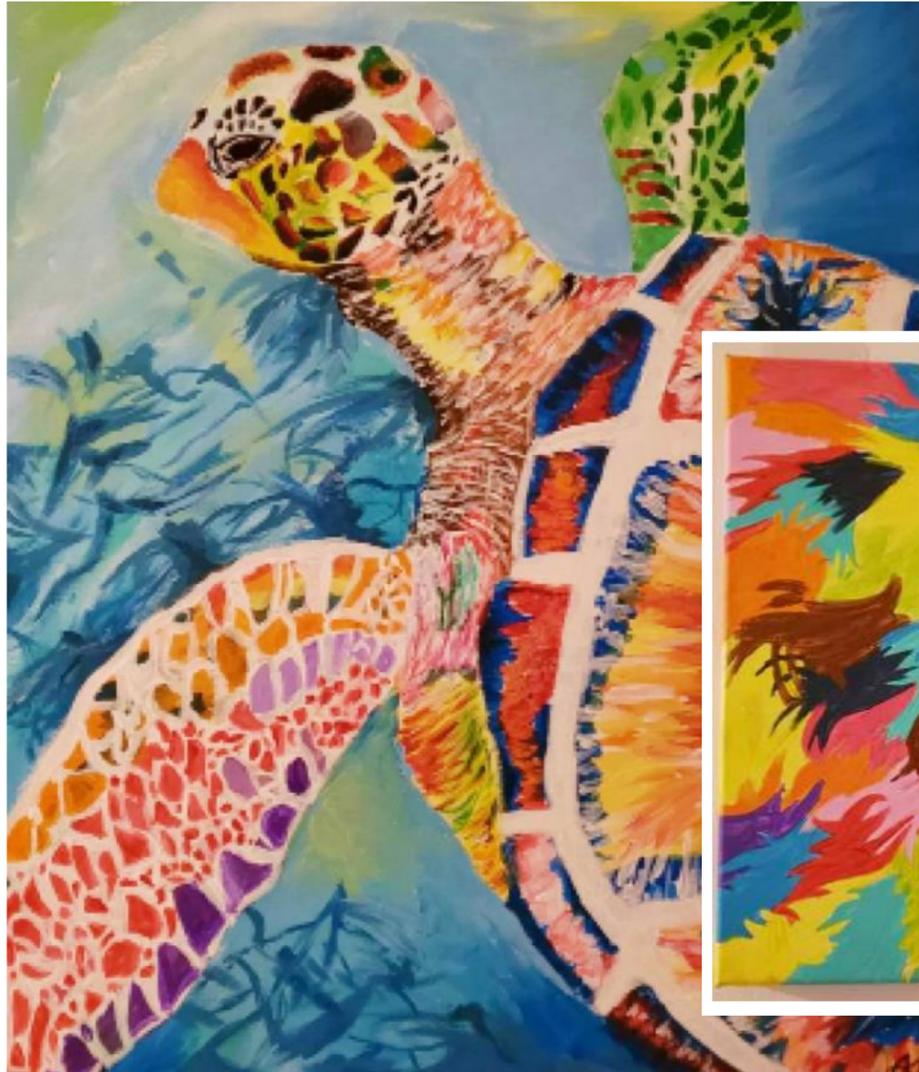
was when Aubrey and her family were supposed to visit Barbados before the pandemic hit. She particularly enjoyed adding all of the colors into the picture. Next, the second painting is of a vibrantly colored lion.

Aubrey's main drive for this painting was to be abstract, pop with color, and interest. Lastly, the third painting (on page 4) is of a waterfall flowing into a stream, which is surrounded by *woody* trees. She is always up for a new experience and thought this would be a great way to experiment with blending colors, which would make this painting display as realistic.

Regarding what Aubrey is working on presently, she is practicing drawing people and anime characters. She does this in hopes that she will perfect her technique of drawing the human body shape and proportions correctly.

Though she does her work like she's almost professional, she falls in love with art because it helps her relax. Aubrey is an artist who puts so much passion and effort into her work, and it most definitely shows. 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. 🐾






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# Boys basketball seniors celebrate their special night



Evan Zambo



Ryan Hammond



DeSean Smith



Jaden Marlatt



Teague Herzog



Ardit Mujovic



Chuck Wilk



Photos by Mr. Bryan Geist

Mike Repsher

# MONUMENTAL MOMENTS IN HISTORY

## History started with unanimously-elected Washington

BY CALLUM BRYCE ZIMMERMAN  
SLATE HISTORIAN

In this time when we have observed an election process full of distrust, contention, and outburst, perhaps it would help us all to reflect on the events that began the honored office of the President of the United States.

On Feb. 4, 1789, George Washington, the Commander of the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War, was unanimously elected the first president of the United States by all 69 presidential electors.

Those who participated in the election represented 10 of the 11 states that had ratified the U.S. Constitution, were chosen by popular vote, legislative appointment, or a combination of both a mere four weeks before. According to Article Two of the U.S. Constitution, the states appointed a number of presidential electors equal to the "number of Senators and Representatives to which the state may be entitled in Congress." Each elector voted for two people, at least one of whom did not live in their state.

Ironically, New York -- though it was supposed to be the seat of the new United States government -- failed to choose its eight presidential elections in time for the vote on Feb. 4, 1789. Two electors -- each from Virginia and Maryland -- were delayed by weather and unable to vote. Additionally, North Carolina and Rhode Island, which would have had seven and three electors respectively, had not ratified the Consti-

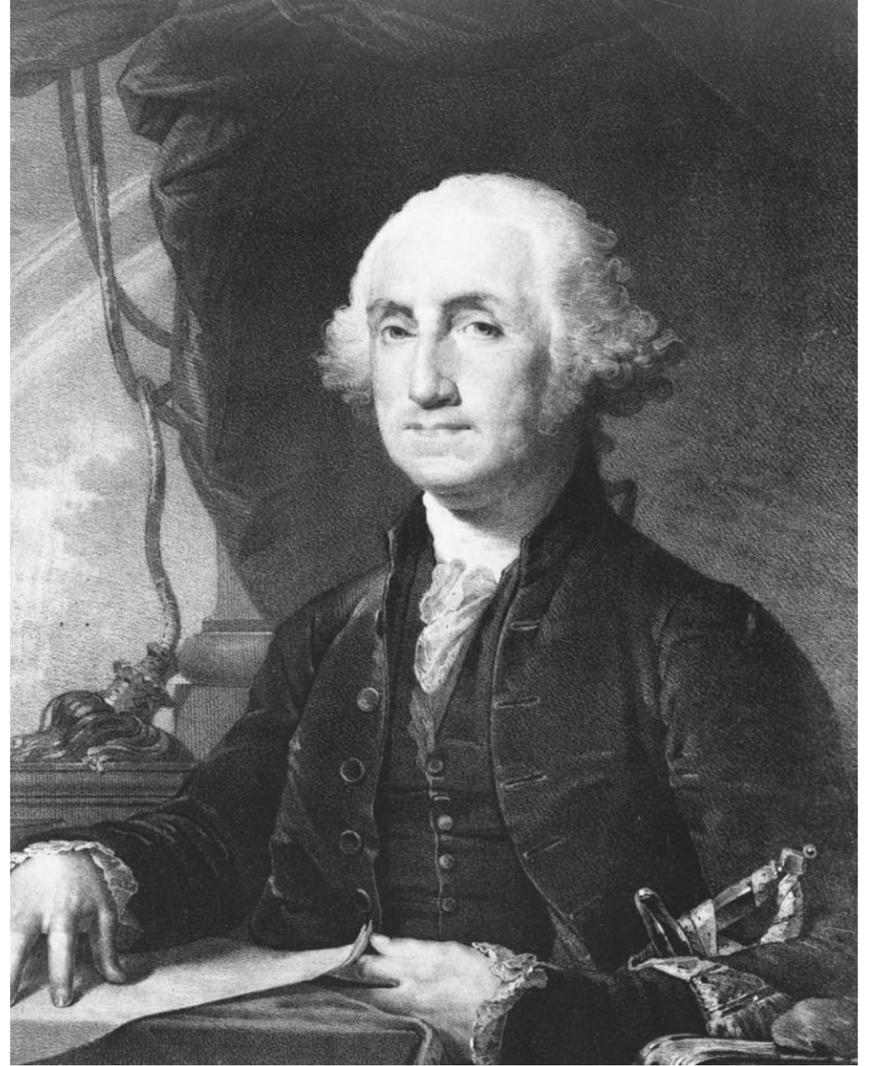
tuition and could not vote.

In April, Congress sent word to George Washington that he had unanimously won the presidency. He borrowed money to pay off his debts in Virginia and traveled to New York. On April 30, he came across the Hudson River in a specially built and decorated barge. The inaugural ceremony was performed on the balcony of the Federal Hall on Wall Street, and a large crowd cheered after he took the oath of office.

The President then retired indoors to read Congress his inaugural address. The evening celebration was opened and closed by 13 skyrockets and 13 cannons. As President, Washington sought to unite the nation and protect the interests of the new republic at home and abroad.

Of his presidency, he was reported to have said, "I walk on untrodden ground." He successfully implemented executive authority, making good use of brilliant politicians such as Alexander Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson in his Cabinet, and quieted fears of presidential tyranny.

In 1792, Washington was unanimously reelected, but four years later refused a third term. In 1797, he finally began his long-awaited retirement at Mount Vernon. He died on Dec. 14, 1799. His friend Henry Lee provided a fitting eulogy for the father of the United States: "First in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen." 🐾



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## Overworking, understaffing will lead to teaching/nursing shortages

BY MADDY MACK  
SLATE STAFF WRITER

The COVID-19 pandemic caused more job shortages than anyone could have predicted. Unfortunately, the jobs that are so desperately needed are the ones lacking the most. Already short-staffed hospitals and schools are seeing the worst of it.

Teaching, an already overstretched line of work, is even more understaffed than before. Mrs. Wanamaker, sixth grade ELA teacher, knows that education has changed forever. "It certainly is no secret that many industries have been severely damaged throughout 2020. However, one may not immediately think of the world of education when discussing this topic."

The ever-changing pandemic could make some college students veer away from the world of education.

"The reality is, though, that we were facing a teacher shortage before COVID-19 turned our world upside down, and we will continue to struggle with this shortage in the aftermath. The pandemic will certainly force us to look at the world of education a bit differently," she said. "The continual changes that our profession has seen over the last year may deter individuals who prefer the typical brick-and-mortar school day from pursuing a career as a teacher. However, it could also



draw more tech-savvy people in as we have learned better ways to incorporate technology into our daily lessons."

Only reinforcing the teacher shortage, many older teachers have retired. Teachers are retiring earlier than they originally planned to ensure the safety of themselves and their families. Additionally, new technology can be too difficult for some to learn, pushing them out of the profession altogether.

There continue to be more open positions in school districts across the country, and hopefully, there will be enough people entering the profession to fill them. Mr. Davis, an eighth-grade math teacher, believes all teachers need a break. "I think the pandemic has worn everyone out. Many older teachers will retire a little bit sooner than they originally planned due to the changes that have taken place in the educational world. Younger teachers who are searching for

jobs will have a much easier time finding jobs than ever before."

Health care professionals are needed in our world more than ever before. However, the pandemic has made many people think twice about entering the profession. Some workers have quit their jobs to keep themselves safe. "My job is really in need because many people resigned due to COVID, and we are in dire need of more people to work in health care. You will always find a job in the healthcare field, and I know I would not lose my job because I help people with COVID every day," Juliana Fenstermaker, technical partner at Lehigh Valley Hospital said.

Most people tend to forget that nurses are often understaffed and overworked. Northern Lehigh Graduate Emily Bevans can attest to this. "Long before the COVID-19 pandemic hit, the healthcare system as a whole has been taxed and spread thin. Nursing shortages have been and continue to be a norm for my profession. Nurses take on more patients than what we view as appropriate and safe. As a result, we have nurses who are emotionally and physically exhausted. Many nurses have left the bedside for different nursing positions, and some have left the nursing profession altogether."

Similar to teachers, nurses are also facing issues of burnout. "I am concerned for my fellow nurses who will be scarred forever by the impact COVID has left on them. Not only has their physical health been compromised, but more important-

ly, their mental health is in a fragile state. It would not surprise me to see a mass number of nurses leave the bedside, or nursing altogether, once the pandemic dies down and we return to normalcy. These nurses are burnt out and have little gas left in the tank," Bevans said.

Society tends to believe that all healthcare workers are superheroes. However, this pandemic continues to prove there will always be room for improvement. "The weakness lies in the hands of the higher-ups who make the budgets, look at productivity, and set expectations for staff to patient ratios. We do not have enough nurses, doctors, respiratory therapists, and other advanced practitioners (APs) such as nurse practitioners and physicians assistants," Bevans said. "Nurses have too many patients to take care of to provide the top-quality care the patients deserve. Besides patient care, it can be hard to complete the tasks expected when additional curveballs are always occurring. When all is said and done, and we have won the battle against COVID-19, I pray that the healthcare system receives the attention and improvements we not only deserve but that we need."

Overworked and short-staffed teachers and nurses will not be able to keep up their tedious lifestyle for much longer without serious consequences, both physically and mentally. Hopefully, there will soon be a change in both fields to benefit these essential workers. 🌱

## Get down with PPE

*Yeah, you know me... #oldschool*



Christine Quattrocchi, who works for Johnson Controls of Allentown, knew her employer was looking to make some donations to local schools. Christine is not only a parent but she is NLHS's assistant cheering coach and is always looking for ways to help our students and community. She took the time on Jan. 19 to load up her SUV with 11,400 nitrile gloves (114 boxes of 100) and 40 gallons of hand sanitizer with pumps. She is pictured here with the big dawg, Principal Mr. Robert Vlasaty.



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# FAREWELL TO A SUPREME LADY

BY CHASE JONES  
SLATE COMIC GUY

On Monday February 8th, 2021 the world lost a legend, her name was Mary Wilson. Mary Wilson was a part of the legendary Motown singing group, the Supremes, who are often referred to as Diana Ross and the Supremes.

Mary was a founding member of the group, alongside Diana Ross and Florence Ballard. The trio quickly rose to stardom during the 1960s and would leave a lasting impact on American music for decades to come.

Mary Wilson was born on March 6th, 1944 in Greenville, Mississippi to parents Sam and Jonnie Mae Wilson. Soon after her birth the family would move to Chicago during the era of the Great Migration. However, Mary would not reside in Chicago very long, for at the age of three she would be taken to Detroit, Michigan to live with her aunt and uncle.

Later on, once Mary's mother and siblings had joined her in Detroit after separating from her father, she would meet Florence Ballard.

The two girls quickly became friends through their love of singing and would go on to audition for a group called the Primettes.

The Primettes were the female counterparts to a group called the Primes, two of whom would go on to be founding members of the Temptations. After joining the Primettes, Mary and Florence would meet Diana Ross, the third Supreme and perhaps the most recognizable amongst them.

By 1963 the trio had already signed to Motown Records, officially changed their name to the Supremes, and had their first hit record. The Group would continue to rack up hits even after the departure of Florence Ballard in 1967, who would be replaced by Cindy Birdsong.

Then, nearly three years later in 1970, Diana Ross would go solo, leaving Mary Wilson as the only original member of the Supremes. Ross was almost instantly replaced by Jean Terrell, with whom the group would record seven more top forty hits. But, in 1977 Mary Wilson would leave and the group would be dissolved, never to be reunited.

Now, over four decades after the Supremes end, the most resilient and loyal of them has passed on. Mary was only 76 years old when she died ever so suddenly of "hypertensive atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease", according to the medical examiner who did the autopsy.

I personally, amongst many other fans, was deeply saddened by her death. Mary will always be my favorite Supreme and I will forever be grateful for her contribution to our culture.

Note: To hear Mary Wilson on lead alongside Eddie Kendricks of the Temptations, search for the Supremes rendition of the Four Seasons' *Can't Take My Eyes Off You*. 🌹

