



Like They Never Left

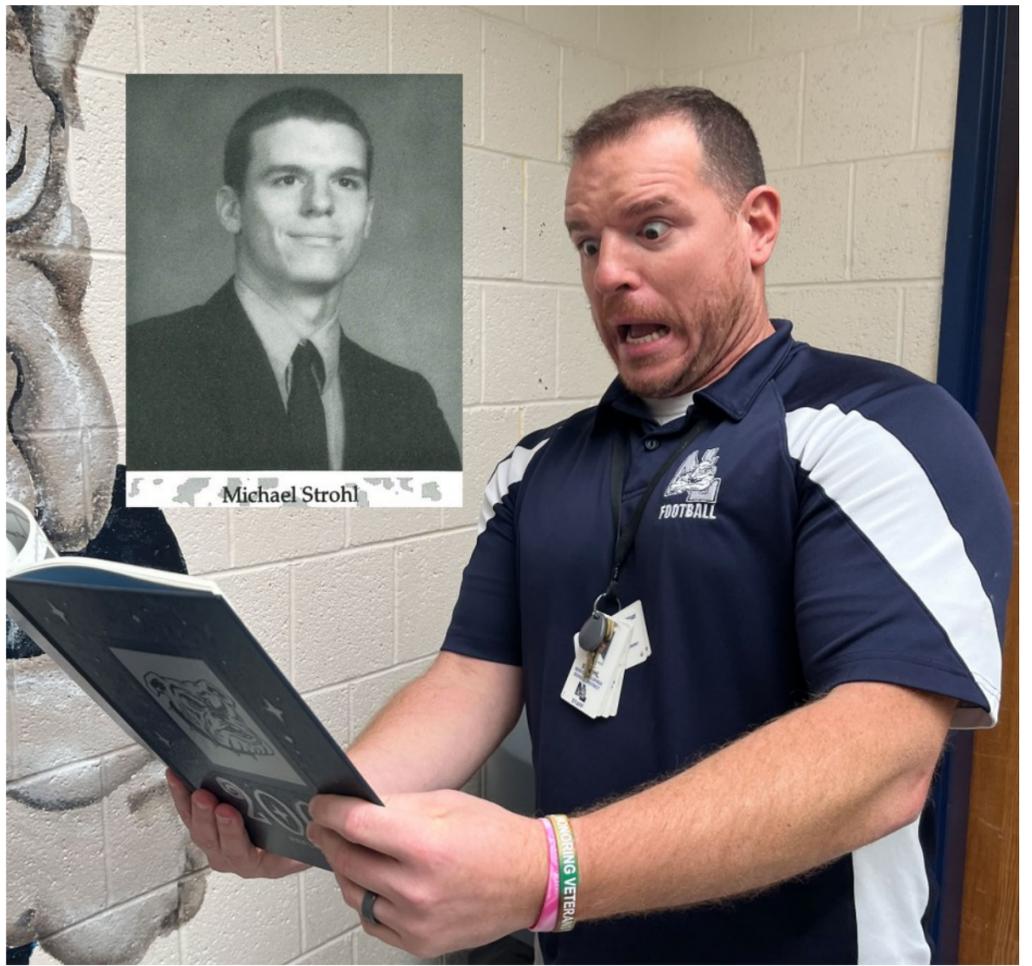
Some Bulldog graduates eventually joined the NL ranks of teachers, administrators, etc. We took them on a walk down Memory Lane. Join their journey to learn what it is like to work in the place they once studied, learned, and possibly caused some good, old-fashioned teenage hijinks.

BY MADDY MACK & CAITLIN KIRK
STAFF WRITERS

Graduating from high school is a monumental milestone in one's educational career; however, looking back, the choices, decisions, and actions you make during these times may be considered "cringy" to you today. Take a minute to reflect on all of your high school memories. Right now, you may be thinking to yourself, *why did I do that?* or *who let me out of the house like that?*

These age-old questions are the root of a fun adventure down memory lane. With a substantial number of former students turned faculty returning to NL buildings after college, their high school memories are brought back every day when they walk into work.

Mr. Derek Long, a math teacher at NLHS, graduated in 2004. When first seeing his senior year yearbook, he was embarrassed, but was glad to look back on memories. "Seeing my senior year yearbook made me feel old because it's been almost twenty years since I graduated. I thought of all the good times I had in high school, and I feel that I still act the same way I did twenty years ago," he said. "I will say, I do miss spiking my hair."



Michael Strohl

"Adults always like to complain about the misbehavior of 'these kids today.' I'm not so sure anything has gotten worse. We were the same way back then, we just didn't post it on the Internet. We did stupid stuff when our parents and teachers weren't looking. We called each other names, we broke each other's hearts, we slept in class, and we forgot to study for tests. Nothing's really changed, All things considered, this current generation is doing just fine."



...Read On To Find Out Who Said This

Mr. Long's most memorable moment from high school was his graduation. "My older brother, Dustin, with Down Syndrome, was able to graduate with my class. When his name was called, the biggest smile sprung across his face, and a standing ovation was given from the crowd. It really showed me how this community cares about each other," he said. This moment made him realize that the NL community truly wants you to succeed. After graduating from Penn State University, he was eager to return to NL to become a teacher. "I mean, I'm here every day, so I never really left."

Mr. Nick Sander, a class of 2003 graduate, returned to NLHS to teach various history classes. His trip down memory lane showed him how exciting looking back on the past can be. "Every time I look at my high school yearbook, I am flooded with memories from that special time in my life. 2023 marks my twentieth class reunion, so it is particularly poignant this year," he said. "Having looked through the yearbook, I am looking forward to the reunion even more. I am grateful that I have kept in touch with so many friends since then. It felt great going back and seeing how everyone has changed."

When reflecting back, Mr. Sander recalled being involved in the school, particularly in the theater program. His best memories came from participating in the plays and musicals each year. Since high school, he feels that he has changed a lot. "Experiences since high school, like college, the workforce,



Katherine DeBias

Photos by Caitlin Kirk and Maddy Mack

Asst. Principal Mr. Michael Strohl (Class of '01) and special education teacher Mrs. Katie (DeBias) Farber (Class of '05) were shocked and thrilled to back in time to their graduating years.

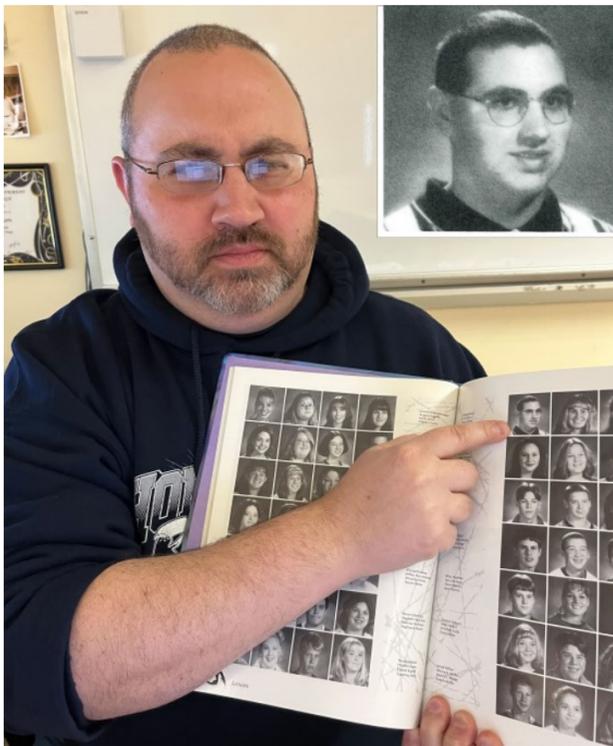
See Yearbooks, page 2

To the other side of the desk, Bulldogs cannot leave NL

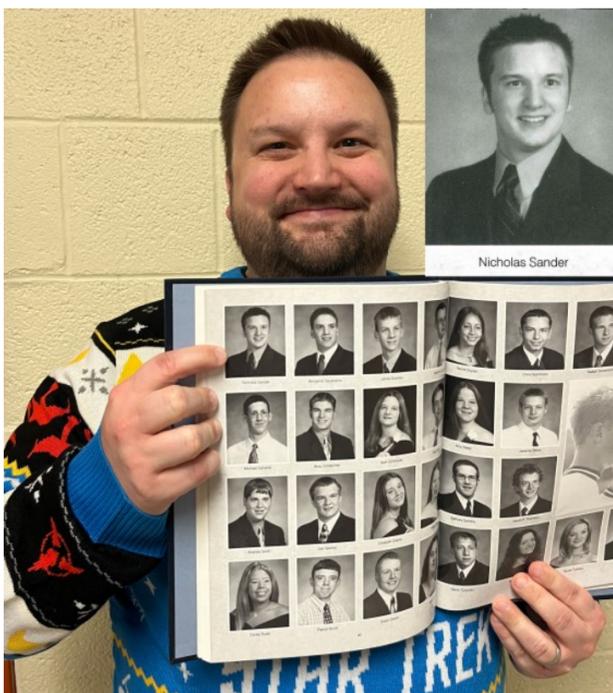
Yearbooks, from page 1



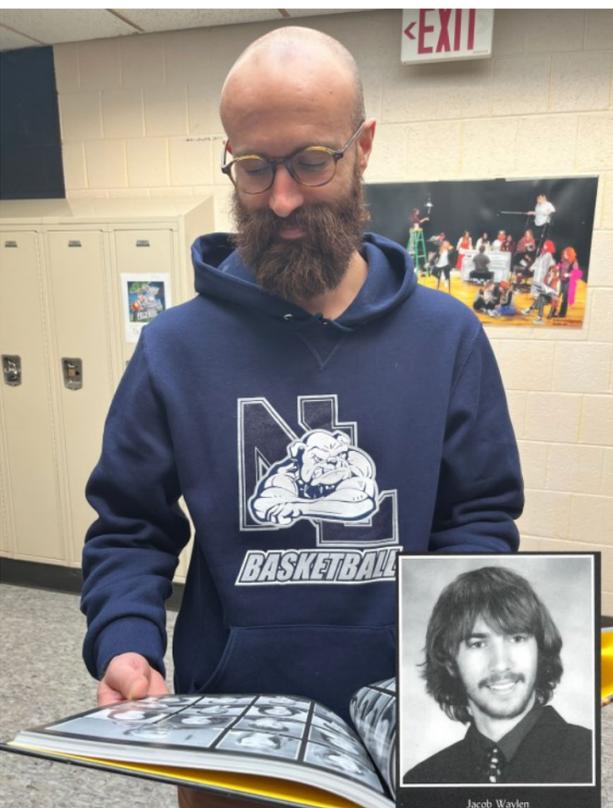
Mrs. Allison (Kuntz) Chruscial — Class of '98



Mr. Andy Kern — Class of '00



Mr. Nick Sander — Class of '03



Mr. Jake Waylen — Class of '08

and starting a family, have opened my eyes to certain things and hopefully made me a more dynamic, understanding person," he said. He feels lucky that some things have changed for the better. "That early 2000s emo punk look didn't last, thankfully." Mr. Sander is grateful for his time in high school and looks forward to continuing the trip down memory lane at his NL class reunion later this year.

Mrs. Heather Szoke is a Northern Lehigh alumna that returned to the district to teach the Carbon Lehigh Intermediate Unit class. Upon looking at her senior yearbook, Mrs. Szoke was excited about seeing everyone again. "I was surprised. Everyone looked so young and there were so many things I had forgotten about," she said. "I want to look through it more. I think a lot has changed about me. I am definitely more confident in who I am. A lot has stayed the same though. I still come to NLHS every day, married my high school sweetheart, and live in the house next door to the house I grew up in." When looking back, being a part of the NL Marching Band was the highlight of her educational career and something she still remembers today.

Mrs. Allison (Kuntz) Chruscial, a class of 1998 graduate, returned to the high school as a guidance counselor. "I have fond memories of high school, so I enjoy seeing my past yearbooks. I could've done without seeing my senior photo — that was cringy," she said. She found looking through the yearbook to be very nostalgic and enjoyed every minute of it. "I would like to tell all the NL students to really embrace high school, because for most, this is some of the best years of your life," she said. "Northern Lehigh is a special place, and one day you will see that. I am forever a Bulldog and very proud to be working and living here, and I am happy my own children will get to have experiences like I had."

Mrs. Katherine (DeBias) Farber, a 2005 graduate, was instantly elated at the sight of her senior year yearbook: "It made me smile instantly — a million memories came flooding back." Her time spent playing softball and field hockey taught her invaluable lessons she still relies on today. "I'd like to think that most of who I was in that yearbook is still who I am today within my core values," she said. "I have learned that being an ambitious and assertive female is not an easy road, but an empowering one for the generations to follow." Upon feeling an overwhelming sense of nostalgia, she wishes she had more time to reflect on the good times she had in high school. "I was honestly sad that the time I had to look through it was so short. I could've spent hours going back over those pages and all of those moments frozen in time."

Mr. Andrew Kern, a class of 2000 graduate, came back to teach various media, design, and technology courses in the high school. In high school,

he shined through his interests in graphic design, movies, animation, and more. College was a great opportunity for him to become more confident in his interests. "I've always been more interested in graphic design, movies, animation, etc. It took going away to college and blending those interests with a career path before I really felt comfortable being who I am," he said. "I wish I could go back and tell my high school self to fully embrace that identity much earlier." After college, he continued his legacy as "the kid in high school with the video camera." Mr. Kern made a senior video for his class highlighting all of their adventures together from that year. He then continued to make senior videos for classes that followed him. This tradition eventually turned into the high school's TV studio, Video Production classes, and *The Dog Dish* morning show. "Every so often, I stop and think about how something I did for fun as a teenager evolved into a whole program and curriculum here at NL (and with Mr. Bennett's help, of course). It's been a weird journey, but it's something I'm very proud of."

Mr. Kern has seen and heard it all throughout his time in the high school. "I'm approximately 7% more mature than I was back then," he said. "Adults always like to complain about the misbehavior of 'these kids today.' I'm not so sure anything has gotten worse. We were the same way back then, we just didn't post it on the Internet. We did stupid stuff when our parents and teachers weren't looking. We called each other names, we broke each other's hearts, we slept in class, and we forgot to study for tests. Nothing's really changed," he said. "All things considered, this current generation is doing just fine. Come back and visit me after graduation and I'll tell some stories about what we did in high school...you won't believe some of the stuff we got away with."

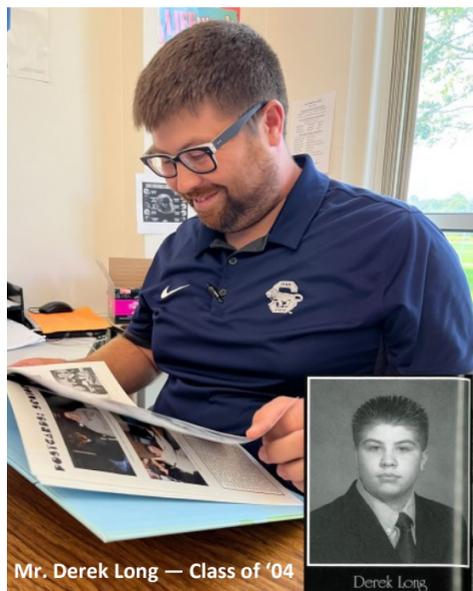
We acknowledge that there are likely many more faculty members from the district who have returned to work at their alma mater, and we would like to commend them for their commitment to the NL community as well.

Know that everything you have done for Northern Lehigh School District has and will continue to be appreciated and valued by generations to come.

Other alumni staff include: Mr. Waylen, Mr. Strohl, Mrs. (Martin) Waylen, Mrs. (Croll) Borger, Mrs. (Snyder) Bailey, Mrs. (DeFrain) Levandusky, Mrs. (Fedorcha) Dibilio, Ms. Kistler, Ms. Marino, Mr. Weaver, Mrs. McWilliams, Mr. Green, Mr. Hofmann, Mr. Hauser, Mr. Meixsell, Mr. Herzog, Mrs. Tulio, Mrs. Schuck, Ms. Frantz, Ms. Reichard, Mr. Jordan, Ms. Steirer, Mr. Kuntz, Ms. Schaller, and Ms. Martinez. Regardless of your status in life, we hope you take it upon yourself to take your own trip down memory lane and reflect on who you were, and who you have become, by looking through your past yearbooks. 🐾



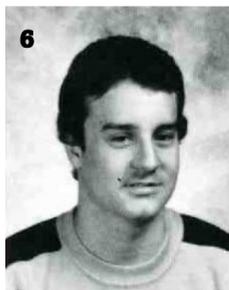
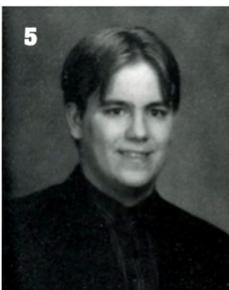
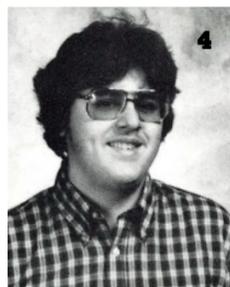
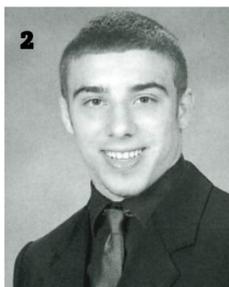
Mrs. Heather Szoke — Class of '02



Mr. Derek Long — Class of '04

GUESS WHO NL EDITION

Any of these current NLSD faculty faces ring a bell?



Answers on page 3 under the Yearbook ad. (Reserve yours now!)

Lightning strikes Northern Lehigh

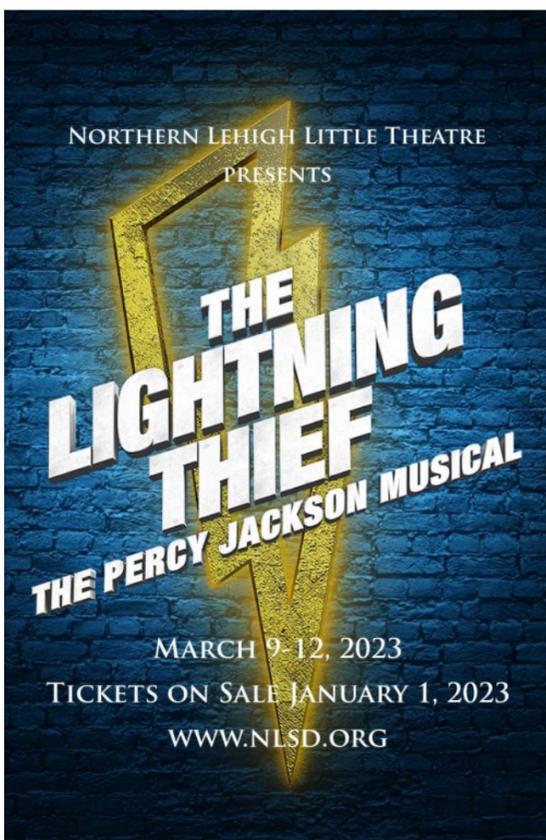
Spring musical rehearsals hit the stage singin' and dancin'

BY SUSAN GILSBACH
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Northern Lehigh's spring musical, *The Lightning Thief*, has officially started rehearsals. With an exceptionally talented cast, the musical has a little something for everyone.

From comedy to adventure, the musical tells the story of Percy Jackson as he navigates his new life as the child of a Greek god. When Zeus's lightning bolt is stolen, Percy is framed and sent on a quest with his friends Grover and Annabeth in the hopes that he can clear his name. A modern Greek myth, Percy Jackson narrates his own story and takes the audience through his adventure as a hero.

The cast of the rock musical includes Ayden Scanlon as the titular Percy Jackson, a young hero who is learning how to deal with his godly parentage. Jackson Hunsicker plays Grover Underwood, a happy-go-lucky satyr who is Percy's pro-



ceptor and best friend. Susan Gilsbach plays Annabeth Chase, the daughter of Athena who is desperate to be included on Percy's quest and to get the chance to use her skills in the real world. The show features a cast of young adults who are learning to accept themselves, despite the flaws that they may have.

Throughout the rehearsal process, the cast has been working on making sure that they are learning every single movement of the choreography, every note of singing, and every character choice as they deliver their lines. They are truly dedicated to giving this story the time and attention that it deserves. Ayden Scanlon reflected on what it's like playing the lead, and how the cast's roles have devel-

oped: "It's very exciting to see how everybody's characters developed, and I can definitely see how some of the actors and actresses are really getting into their parts. It's interesting for me because I am seeing myself change on stage, but I can also feel myself in my character and I'm just very happy to be able to have this opportunity to do what I like to do." He and the rest of the cast are incredibly excited for the show.

Breanne Mitchell, the stage manager for the production, was also asked about the rehearsal process. "I think rehearsals have been going great!" Mitchell stated, but she also looked forward to the future, "Even though we have a lot more to work on, I've seen a lot of people already improving. I think if we keep up the good work, the musical will be excellent."

The cast has been rehearsing almost every day, anxiously awaiting the performance dates. The musical has performances the weekend of March 9, 10, 11, and 12, with doors opening a half an hour before each show.

The Thursday, Friday, and Saturday shows begin at 7 p.m., and the Sunday matinee show begins at 2 p.m. See full ad on page 11. 🌟

Could regular schools offer more enrichment?

BY ABBY PEARTREE
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Imagine this: You wake up at around five or six in the morning, take a long drive to a building you will stay at until two in the afternoon, and do menial tasks that don't seem to benefit *you* in any way. This may seem to be the schedule of someone stuck in a dead-end job, but it is actually the schedule of the average public high school student. These institutions are intended to prepare a student for secondary education or a job; however, schools like this have very few things that genuinely

enrich a learner. What they successfully do is prepare a student to sit behind a desk and learn things that they may not need or want to know. A school should be teaching its students *how* to learn, not *what* to learn.

There are, however, some schools that allow students to pursue their own interests at their own pace. Montessori schools are institutions in which a student can choose what they want to learn each day, without being quietly bound to a desk. Montessori schools help to create independent and confident students that know *how* to learn. According to Rasmus-

sen University, benefits of Montessori education include both independence and a love for learning. These benefits stem from the relaxed nature of these schools. Instead of sitting behind a desk, learning a standardized curriculum that does not interest them, students are free to learn whatever interests them. This freedom is what truly makes these schools separate from the average public school. While the public school has requirements that dim the brilliance of students, the Montessori school's freedom fuels it.

Secondary education parallels the Montessori curriculum in several ways. For one, it can be specified into a specific area of education that the student wishes to pursue. College classes are often catered towards the major that the student wishes to pursue. Similarly, a student in the Montessori program may pursue their own interests academically.

Public high schools have a tendency

to treat students as if they are adults, but not in the same way that the Montessori schools do. A public high school's school day usually ends before the district's elementary school day. This, in many cases, ensures high school students are back home in time to watch their younger siblings. This is generally felt to be unfair by the students. At a Montessori school, the children are grouped together with all different ages, letting the high schoolers carry less of the burden.

The average public high school teaches students in a way that is preparing them for a dead-end job, but there are other ways to teach students how to learn.

Montessori schools, and other types of schools that do not share a generalized curriculum, are better equipped to send students to either secondary education or to a job. It is the duty of the schools to teach children *how* to learn effectively, not *what* to learn. 🌟

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EDITORIAL

Give us a break

Block schedule should not be toppled. Mid-year switch helps avoid 180-day monotony.

Variety is the spice of life – especially after 90 days of the same faces. While, at the very least, everybody seems to be working through the school day, a bunch of us are struggling to make it to the next hour or even five minutes.

Last year, there were rumblings about the high school schedule going back in time to a more traditional version. Something in the realm of seven classes, all under an hour, and for the entire 180 days. It would be a drastic change from block scheduling (which NLHS started during the 1998-1999 school year) that currently sees students for 86 minutes a day, across four classes (or two, then LCTI), and for half the year.

How the schedule will look in the next few years is up for grabs, but it seems block scheduling will stay for next year and we are thankful for that for one main reason – the mid-year transition to new classes. It is essential to helping students and faculty freshen up at intermission before a new Act Two begins.

When we all sit in front of the same faces every day, and they all struggle with the same voice, the 90-day switch is much appreciated. It's almost like having two separate school years. A clean slate can benefit anyone.

"The staff likes consistency, but they also want opportunities for co-planning, collaboration, for content areas to speak to one another," said Mr. John Rushefski, acting NLHS principal, at a recent NL Committees meeting. "The other thing we're looking at is the arts. We have a very difficult time fitting in things like music, instrumental lessons, other content like that – and there are some courses that have not been able to run [due to block scheduling]. A

seven- or eight-period day of traditional scheduling would provide more opportunities for things we haven't been able to do over the years."

Initially, the high school day was planned to look more traditional already, but changes in leadership pushed that back, according to su-

perintendent Mr. Matthew Link. The goal for some type of change is now 2024-25, "but I [Link] am not willing to lock in a definitive date because we have to go through the process" of researching options.

More time – however built in – would be wonderful for remediation, make-up work, and for clubs that now need to meet after school while having to find time to do so amongst a multitude of other after-hours activities.

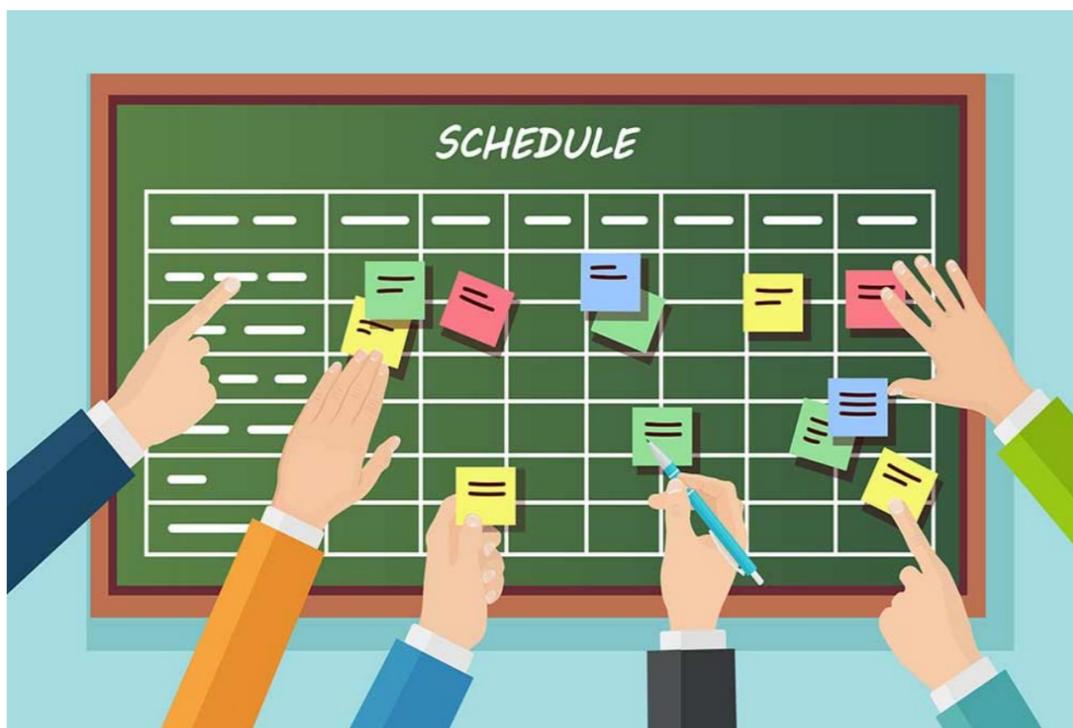
Meeting during the school day would help Yearbook, Honor Society, Student Council, The Slate, and other extracurriculars collaborate while students are in the building.

children in the district. "Those students are going home having much more work to do and the teachers do as well. Seeing the actual change in students moving backward to traditional teaching, I would ask that we reevaluate what our students feel."

With that in mind, The Slate surveyed NLHS students and faculty asking what schedule they would most like to see. Block schedule as-is with no changes (52.4%) and block schedule with enhancements to allow for supplemental instruction/meetings (33.3%) received the most hits of the 212 respondents. A move to traditional classes/times received 13 votes total.

Also consider the more relaxed vibe of a blocked day. Students and teachers can breathe, form better relationships with the time together, and allow for more variety in class compared to a hurried 50-some minute math, art, or English class. The Pythagorean Theorem needs time to confuse; understanding Guy Montag's frustration with government censorship cannot be discussed in the blink of an eye; what type of soufflé should be just thrown together?

Above all, we need variety to keep our ever-revolving focus fresh. Whatever is chosen, please do it with care. Possibly consider more student/faculty preferences over numerical data and scores. 🐾



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The humor of braindead Zoomers

By Ayden Scanlon
SLATE COLUMNIST

What is the first thing that comes to mind when you think of comedy? For many years, the average person would probably think of a comedian spouting standup, or maybe a person being hit in the face with a pie.

However, you may be surprised that to one fifth of the population, the top of the podium when it comes to humor might just be something as silly as a metal pipe falling to the floor.

Now, some of you are probably questioning how something so simple as the clanging of a metal pipe could possibly be funny. But on the contrary, many students reading this may wonder the exact opposite. Phenomena like this is commonplace in the 21st century, especially across gen Z. Naturally, this style of humor has been dubbed by many as 21st century humor or *zoomer humor*. The latter of the two terms deriving from the term *boomer humor*, which is a style of comedy similar to dad jokes and stereotypically associated with people who were born as a part of the baby boom following the second world war.

So what exactly is 21st century humor? The term is thrown around a lot across the internet, and there are even video compilations of the stuff that can go on for hours easily accessible on YouTube.

In essence, it is defined as a style of humor comprised of faced paced nonsensical images and sound effects. Many of the pictures and noises used in this style of comedy are largely associated with internet memes or trends, and likewise only have the average lifespan of roughly two months.

However, that is not to say that a trend cannot last more than a month; Rickrolling is a notable exception. Because of how often subject of the joke changes, this



also contributes to the rapid-fire nature of the media.

One of the most integral part of the most recent forms of 21st century humor is a subclass of sounds dubbed *goofy abb sounds*. These reason these noises are named as such is more or less self explanatory. They are whacky, generally cartoony and outlandish, sounds that often accompany odd or even disturbing imagery.

Interestingly, people outside of gen Z (and early members of gen A) often do not understand zoomer humor in the slightest. They are often left dazed and confused, wondering what on earth they have just witnessed. So possibly the biggest question on everyone's mind is: why? Why do so many people in the younger generations find such strange content so hilarious? In actuality, the answer is quite simple. This sort of humor is so funny because we are all told it is funny.

Now, that sounds absurd. But it actually has a very interesting psychological explanation. For starters, it is important to recognize that laughter is a sign of social acceptance. People laugh to signal that they are comfortable and accepting of the climate around them. This is why someone outside your friend group might not laugh at the same silly inside joke that you and all your friends find so funny.

In a way, 21st century humor is a kind of internet culture. It can even be seen as an art form of some kind. And it makes sense that gen z is so familiar with this kind of comedy and finds it so funny. Generation Z has largely grown up online. They are so comfortable with the internet and its social climate, that it has become the ultimate inside joke.

It is almost poetic in a sense that something so nonsensical can have such an interesting and deep seeded meaning for the younger generations. What is seen as something goofy and braindead is actually a carefully crafted form of internet culture. 🌟

An open letter to bipolar critics

Dear readers,

I want to start off by saying that the majority of people's responses to my article, *Being Bipolar*, was astounding, and I'd like to thank the people that went out of their way to tell me their positive outlook on it. I want to especially thank Mr. Reinhard for reading my article to the eighth grade health class to help them learn about mental illness; I am so incredibly honored to have the opportunity to spread awareness within our school and community.

There were, however, people who weren't so friendly about their feedback. I had multiple students come up to me the following days after my article was put in *The Slate* that also went out of their way to tell me their opinions on my article, but they weren't very civil. I had a few slurs and curses thrown my way, and as much as I would like to reciprocate with the same demeanor I received, I am more civil than that, so...

...To the people who commented on my article, was it worth it to impress the people you call friends, or did you feel obligated to say the things you did just because they were there? I get that high school is difficult, but that doesn't give you an excuse to lack empathy. Everyone is going through something, and we all process it in different ways, but let's say I wasn't processing it. What if your words damaged me so much I actually caused you or myself harm because of it? You can never know how unstable someone is.

Mocking someone for the sake of a quick laugh is truly pathetic, and I know, if any of the people this is directed toward read this, they probably won't care. It just shows how reluctant people are to change for the better of society. The media ruined saying things like "be yourself" because when people think of that they perceive it as corny or stupid, but really, you need to come out of your shell. If it's getting to the point where you are so scared to have a personality that you make fun of other people's personalities to make it seem like you have one, that's a problem. Get help as soon as you can.

I am making an effort to contribute to the improvement of humanity as much as I can, and you are disparaging it. I want to let you know that you didn't affect me personally, but your antics made me feel sympathy for other people having to deal with your fictitious personality.

"I'd rather be hated for who I am, than loved for who I am not." -Kurt Cobain

Lots of Love,
Lacey Groovers,
Slate artist/writer

The Beauty of the New Pinocchio

Pinocchio is an old fairytale of a wooden boy whose nose grows when he lies and wishes to be a real boy.

If you've seen this movie on Netflix, you should remember that it's a stop-motion animation, but, it sometimes makes you forget that it is due to how fluid the animation is, and just how everything is so meaningful in its own way.

At the beginning of the movie, Geppetto, Pinocchio's father, lost his son, Carlo, from bombs, due to the time taking place in Italy during a war as the year was said to be around the 1930s, the time of war between Italian Fascists and Italian Partisans.

Pinocchio does multiple things Carlo does or has learned, such as knowing the song Geppetto sang to Carlo every night despite not hearing it. I find that this is because when the 2nd Blue Fairy gave Pinocchio life, she must've transferred a bit of Carlo's personalities and memories into Pinocchio, otherwise, how would he know that song?

But, the morning after the Priest and Podesta visit the two, Pinocchio gets his feet burnt off but was made new ones in the morning, and as he says, "I love my new feet papa!" It reminds me of what Carlo said, "I love my new shoes papa!" which is very similar to what Pinocchio had said, considering both were about shoe-wear.

This is what I meant before by the personalities of Carlo and Pinocchio being very similar, considering how Pinocchio's voice is. Same thing with Pinocchio loving hot chocolate just like Carlo

Elementary,
My Dear Readers



Kristiana Callaby

did, which I found both interesting and sad. Minus all of the parallels, throughout the movie there's very saddening topics talked about, such as death, moving on, and accepting death itself, which makes this movie such a beautiful one with how these topics that are normally saddening be toned down to that of a lesson in a comforting type of way.

The fact that Pinocchio got rid of his immortality just to save Geppetto, is something I don't normally see in movies. Near the ending it also shows how some fathers, while they do say things they don't mean at times, can still just be horrible and rotten, no matter how much you love and forgive them.

The blue fairy sisters are also very



Photo courtesy of Animation Magazine

important, as the sister in charge of all who die helped Pinocchio save Geppetto from dying, and told him about the difference between mortality and immortality along with how horrible being immortal is. The other blue fairy sister is just as important, as she gave Pinocchio life and brought him back at the wish of the narrator.

But the blue fairy sisters are both very beautifully made, just the spiritual aura they give off is something they should have in a way. Beauty aside, when Geppetto said that Pinocchio didn't need or have to act like Carlo to be a good son

and a real boy, which I find something that many adults do today, comparing and wanting their children to act like this child or that way, yet not caring for the child's real self.

When Geppetto yelled at Pinocchio and called him a burden, it showed how calling a child something like that can affect them in many negative ways, which I also enjoyed. If you have seen it, what do you think of it? 🌟

Kristiana Callaby is a fifth-grader at Slatington Elementary School. She is a contributing writer for *The Slate*.



Hey! You don't have to agree with us!
Students, community members, anyone — let us know!
Letters should not exceed 200 words and may be sent to: theslateneews@nlsd.org



THE HALLS OF HORROR



Art by Keona Dyer

Zombies saunter through the halls and loiter next to lockers. Move it, people, or I'll lose it.

BY LILY GROOVER
EDITOR IN CHIEF

Most, if not all, high schoolers learn to drive a car once they reach 16 years of age. If they do not learn how to drive, then they at least pay attention to the road when other people drive *with* them. Therefore, most of these people should be familiar with basic traffic laws in society.

If this is true, then why is walking in the Northern Lehigh hallways an absolute gridlocked nightmare? Every single morning, my day is ruined because someone decides that their text message, or that hugging their 'bro' and stopping to talk, is more important than walking and getting to class on time. Students that use the NL hallway system need to learn

that there are other people around them trying to go about their day. People stop in place, form a huddle, walk like zombies, walk with four people across, throw objects over each other's heads, and worst of all, cannot seem to walk in a straight line. In reality, most students just want to get to their next class, without any disruptions.

During the COVID-19 era, hallway etiquette was suggested and followed. People remained 6 feet apart, left each other alone, and used certain pathways to get where they needed to be. Just because there is no official set of rules that help students use the hallway anymore does not mean they cannot learn simple hallway etiquette.

Picture driving along a road, and someone decides to swerve in front of

you in order to turn left. In this scenario, you would slam on the brakes, beep the horn, and stop the traffic behind you. This happens every single day, at every single bell in NL. No one looks where they are headed, and turn blindly into incoming traffic.

So, imagine the hallway is like a two-lane highway. The left is for people coming toward you, the right is for people going in the same direction as you. Easy. If suddenly, someone switches lanes, there is going to be an accident.

This concept should be self-explanatory, however it seems like many are not able to understand it. When driving, it is taught to yield to the people coming in the other lane when turning left. Therefore, this behavior should be exhibited in the hallway. Driving at a

nice, steady pace makes the journey more enjoyable for everyone, so walking at a nice, steady pace does the same.

Additionally, humans are bad at multitasking. They cannot text and drive, take a picture and drive, or turn around and talk to other passengers while driving.

The same can be said for the hallway. The text, the picture, and the conversation can wait until all passengers are safely seated in their classroom.

Now, it's understood that not everyone is an absolute menace while strolling the halls, there is only a select few that cause trouble. So hopefully, they take the time to realize their faults, and make school a more enjoyable experience for all. 🐾

Over the river, through the woods, down 873 we go



Student Council went over to Peters Elementary to act as teacher's aides. They made crafts, made gingerbread houses, and ate lunch with the kids. They also helped put up and take down classroom decorations. Student Council members were also able to visit some of their past teachers.

SPORTS



Beyond the Grief

BY ALEXIS TRAUGHER
SPORTS EDITOR

Grief is depicted in a five stage cycle: denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. It is commonly believed every individual will experience grief in a single order, and it will be a quick recovery process.

But people *continuously* fail to even come close to describing the pure horror of grief; the raw agonizing pain and heartbreaking reality of losing someone. They fail to describe how uncontrollable this process truly feels- the pain suddenly hitting in the worst possible time and you never knowing when.

From personal experience, my grief was delayed and hit *hard* four months later. It started with flashbacks, and turned into hearing someone gasp and my heart dropping into my stomach. Some deaths can be traumatic and haunt an individual for months, even years. Seven months later, I am still seeing flashbacks,- hearing her- being angry and having trouble stepping foot in hospitals, and just yearning for a hug from my other half.

The pain never goes away, it just becomes bearable.

My therapist always says that my pain is valid and no matter how long my own process of healing will take, I have to fight to heal. Individual bodies can withstand mass amounts of physical pain, the brain just has to believe in it. You have to realize your pain is emotional, and maybe even physical, but it is something you *can* overcome, and one day you truly will live with the space of where that person was and finally be able to breathe.

In addition to grief, many of us battle mental illness. I have severe anxiety and depression, which can be self destructive in its own right. Many of us can no longer feel emotions after suppressing them for so long. We fall into a numbness that has no light in sight. When you add grief into this already immobilizing equation, the truth is you will never truly be able to

predict what will arise.

Some will turn to anger, self harm, self-blame, or to something only they understand.

Many will blame themselves for what happened, wishing they could have done something. I blamed myself for not saving my grandmother, who had stage four

progress you begin to feel the want to heal. You have to begin your journey at a time right for you and my time is now.

I often describe my journey as me being a phoenix. I constantly build a nest and make progress, to only tear it down and burn a couple weeks later. I continuously take three steps forward to take five

myself again.

As the months have gone by, I have noticed my own healing and freedom came from the orange-blue flames of my destruction. It became my own choice and I started to take control of my life again. I chose to go to therapy. I chose to wake up the next day and not let the



metastatic breast cancer. I continuously thought if I could just give her my blood, a kidney, any ounce of my being and she would come around and stay with me. However, we fail to realize that we have no control over what their bodies can truly handle. Just that thought alone was something hard for me to grasp.

Furthermore, my process will look different to every person being compared. My therapy sessions, growth, and reactions will be different from even my own family members. The battle is an uphill one that has many hard pills to swallow, but once you make even a tiny bit of

steps back. I have to choose everyday to heal, not only for myself but for her. So I continue this never ending journey of self destruction and rebuilding.

I started with walls and boundaries, sheltering myself from the world, so I could never feel that level of pain again. However, the walls only made me feel more alone when I needed people the most. In the beginning I became a whole new person. I lost my passion for anything that made me who I was- wanting to be a doctor, reading, and even hockey became a second thought. Once I noticed, I chose to burn to ash and create

terrifying reality of no longer having Nan, or the truth that I no longer know what I want stop me from living. I was done just surviving. I finally wanted to live.

So today, I have cried and am not ashamed of it. I have grown and became stronger and discovered the people I need in my life. The honest truth is: grief no longer fits into those five stages. It starts with a hellish reality and slowly turns into a more bearable one. Life will never be easy or the same as it once was, but humans have always evolved, and I will too. 🐾

Cross Country runs through 2022 season



NL Cross Country 2022-23 — Coach Greg King, Dekota Barthold, Evelina Mayak, Kasia Dos Santos, Katelynn Barthold, Coach Mike Lehtonen, (bottom) Haylie Fenstermaker, Emma Smith, Emma Heil, Delaney Szwast, Adriana Danyluk.

‘Weird flex, but OK’



(Top) Lawson Hoffman, Chase Moffitt, Bailey Smith, Jack Tosh, Sam Frame, Landon Moll, (Bottom) Noah Gosart, Amir Mustafin, Austin Rex, Jonathan Zemlansky (no longer on the squad), Skylar Loos, Owen Mikulski (no longer on the squad).



Chase Moffitt



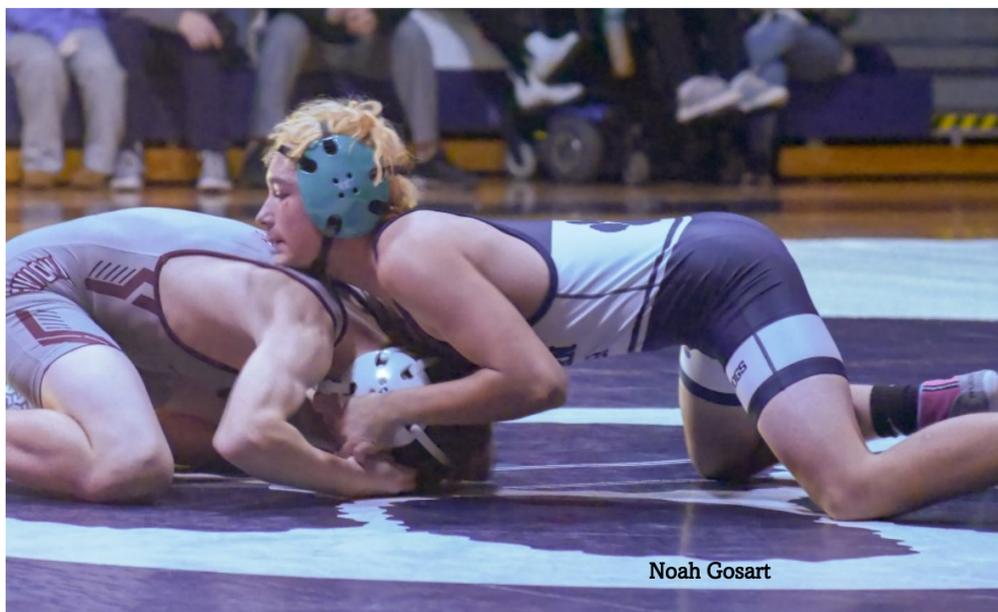
Jack Tosh



Chase Moffitt



Coaches Dylan Hofmann and Scott Snyder



Noah Gosart



Cody Mazzocca, Austin Rex, middle school coaches Ryan Kern, Tim Whalen, Jonathan Zemlansky (no longer on the squad).



Isaac Jackovitz, Nathaniel Kuhns, Grady Newhard, Adam Neff, and Mason Meinhart.

Sports world unites around 2023 start

BY BAILEY SMITH
SLATE SPORTS WRITER

To start, 2023 isn't promising for sports fans. On January 2, 2023, the Buffalo Bills were going against the Cincinnati Bengals on Monday Night Football. With five minutes left in the 1st quarter, a terrifying event happened. Bills safety Damar Hamlin was sent to the hospital after a big hit, and experiencing cardiac arrest after the hit.

Hamlin was running after a Bengals wide-receiver and tackled him. As he stood up, he collapsed to the ground and went into cardiac arrest. When the event happened paramedics rushed to help him and he was in critical condition to the point where they had to get an ambulance and send him into emergency care.

Hamlin was pronounced dead for 9 whole minutes until paramedics could hear a heartbeat. As he was leaving both teams realized that the sport isn't important anymore. Both teams came together holding each other's hands while praying around their fallen brother.

The game was then suspended because of the incident. There was an alarming charity event for Hamlin raising over \$4 million within hours after the event. Hamlin and his family got donations from all over the country.

Celebrities took their time and went to social media to send his family prayers. This was the first time this event has ever happened on national television; fans were shocked to the point where they couldn't even speak at the horror that happened that night. As of right now Hamlin's family has received over \$10 million in donations for Damar and his family.

His family was grateful for what everyone has done. He was at 100% oxygen and then brought down to 50%. Five days later Hamlin awoke and started his recovery as



Photo courtesy of AP Images Service

he asked his doctor a really special question. His first words were asking who had won the game that night. Hamlin also gave his team a face-time call to let his friends know that he was doing OK.

From a player's perspective I was shocked.

I would never think that kind of

injury could happen. It scared me and it probably scared many other players and their parents. I wondered what the NFL would do at first but now we have our answer. The NFL has canceled the game and it will not be postponed.

Now that has changed the entire playoff picture. I was also thinking how

hard that would be if that was one of my friends and what my first reaction would be. As Hamlin recovers, we ask ourselves the question. Will Hamlin make a return and play football once again with his friends? 🐾

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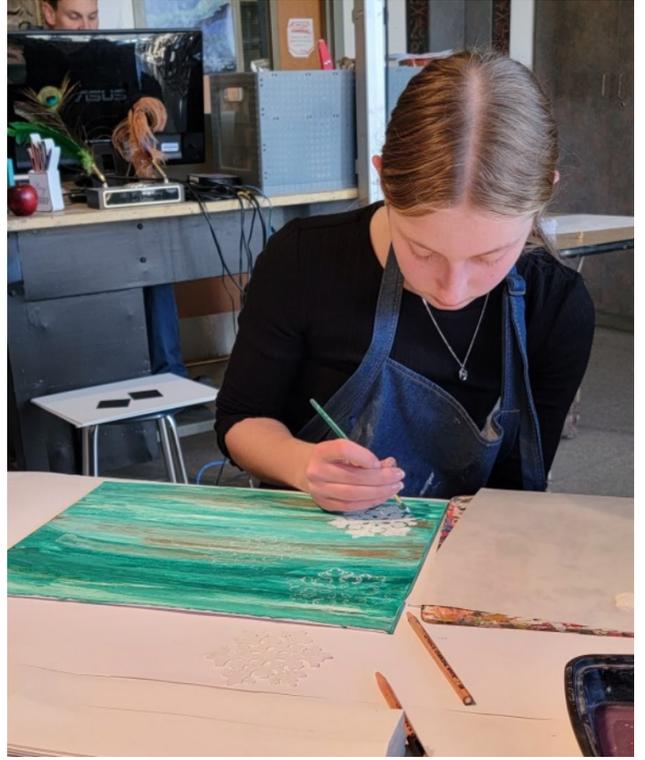
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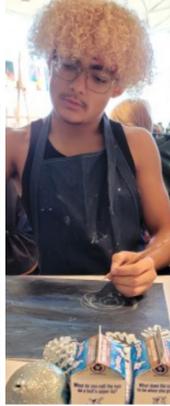


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Mental health awareness needs to be loud and heard; so neon green will do. Breaking stigmas and mental health awareness is so important that it deserves to be worn with pride. (Acrylic on denim, by Lacey Groover)