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## Under an Umbrella of Stigmas



Photo editing by Jalyn Leshner  
Courtney Gutai, Lacey Groover, and Bethany Barrett do not want a lot, but it's a constant struggle. Learn their story in the first of a two-part interview, page 4.

## They're still here

Why some NL teachers chose this profession and why they are sticking around (for now)

BY MADDY MACK  
STAFF WRITER

Over the past few years, the field of education has had many changes unfold – partially due to the pandemic, new technologies, ever-changing ideas of what education should be, and what can sometimes be seen as a revolving door of teachers. However, even with some of the negative impacts that have occurred, teachers are still able to enjoy their careers and look back on what made them join the field of education in the first place.

I am a teacher because I believe in the power of education. Education and knowledge are the one thing that cannot be taken away from a person. To anyone entering the profession, I would say strive for progress, not for perfection.



Ms. Elizabeth Hannon

To find out more about why some NLHS teachers continued their school careers, we asked seven different teachers their opinions on the profession and why they chose it.

Mr. Derek Long has been a math teacher for 14 years at Northern Lehigh High School. In the fall, he coaches football, and during the spring, he coaches the throwing events for track and field. After loving his own high school experience, he decided to make it his livelihood. "I enjoyed helping people while I was a student, and I thought I could also do that as a career," he said. "I looked up to many of my

See **TEACHERS**, page 2

## Paws to reflect and breathe together

'Valentino' visits NLHS students to offer the best kind of therapy

BY EMILY MACK  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Northern Lehigh High School has been wondering what it would be like to have animal therapy. This would mean having specified animals visiting the school to give students and staff a break.

People would get some time with dogs, cats, or even goat yoga. Having animals at school would be a way to ease the minds of many.

A survey was taken of Northern Lehigh's opinions' on animal therapy. The survey received 60 responses. 86.7% of survey participants said they would like having service animals in school. Only 13.3% of survey participants were opposed to the idea of service animals in

school.

The idea of therapy animals at school was created for the benefit of students and staff.

The benefits include reduced stress, improved physical and emotional well-being, low blood pressure, decreased anxiety, improved self-esteem, and normalization of the environment increasing the likelihood of successful academic achievement by students.

Engaging therapies with the animals would be petting or hugging the animal, speaking to the animal, giving simple commands for the animal to respond to, and reading to the animal. Animal Assisted Therapy is meant to improve physical, social, emotional, and/or cognitive

See **VALENTINO**, page 14



Photo by Caitlin Kirk  
Bailey Smith, junior, and therapy dog, Valentino, spent some peaceful and playful time together recently.

# Teachers stick around for a reason; offer advice for new educators



**Teachers, from page 1**

teachers in school and wanted to do that as my career." Despite the hardships that can happen in the field, Mr. Long still finds joy in the little moments of teaching. "I still teach because I enjoy teaching. I enjoy seeing students have that moment of understanding of mathematical concepts," he said. "I enjoy building relationships with students and watching them grow educationally."

Mr. Nick Sander has been teaching various history classes at NLHS for thirteen years. Although being a high school teacher was not his first job, he liked the teaching aspect of telling customers about products as a retail worker. "After several years of working retail, I realized that working with customers and educating them on our products and service was my favorite part of the job," he said. "I was teaching, and it inspired me to go back to college and get my certification." He also has been very involved in the school throughout his time teaching. "Since stepping down as Student Council advisor, I still help out where I can," he said. "I just recently completed work as winter game help at girls and boys basketball games, and will be the announcer at track and field home meets in the spring." The extremely challenging issues that have occurred in education have made staying in the field a difficult, but rewarding choice. "In all honesty, the decision to stay in this profession has not always been an easy one. At the end of the day, I still enjoy working with students, sharing subjects that I am passionate about, and interacting with coworkers that I respect and appreciate," he said. "You're coming into this profession at a difficult time. Should you decide to move forward with this profession, you will have to be a passionate advocate for yourself, your subject, and your students."

right." Mr. Barnes is also the advisor of The Slate school newspaper and the yearbook. He enjoys his career because he feels happy and fulfilled in life. "It sounds corny, but I deal with a lot of inner-mental troubles, and teaching provides the platform where I can shine and help others to do the same," he said. "It's therapeutic and I look forward to it every day." The challenges of the profession over the past few years have caused many to leave the field. "It isn't for everyone. Do not be afraid to accept that one day if that is the ultimate result," he said. "Do not stay in the profession if it's not fulfilling because ultimately your students will suffer. It is crucial to find the right district too."

Mr. Scott Gerould is a physical education teacher at NLHS. He also currently coaches both winter and spring track and field, advises the Patriot Club and the Class of 2023, and helps plan various events for the students throughout the year. Mr. Gerould previously served in the United States Army, where he was able to work with school-aged children and coach his comrades in various intramural sports. "I really enjoyed it, and that's how the itch started for me," he said. "I also had a tendency to lean toward noble professions that had a service to the greater good of civilization." He also feels that, just like everything else, change is inevitable in the field of education. "You have to be up for that challenge to keep your sanity," he said. "With that being said, when I forget about the unfavorable things and even the nonsense that happens and I focus on the root of why I'm here, to help students improve and find success, that is still very, very rewarding." Mr. Gerould also said that in order to be a teacher, you need to be a "glass half-full" kind of person. "You should probably have a resiliency to distress, be amicable to what is, at times, very rapid change that you do not control, understand that there will be an overwhelming amount of tasks that you will need to complete that goes beyond the actual teaching of students, understand that any given lesson has the potential to be a success or a disaster despite your well-planned intentions," he said. "So, if you aren't feeling the urge to run away yet, and you find great satisfaction in helping young people improve themselves, and you don't mind trying to be superhuman now and then, you might be just what education needs."

Ms. Elizabeth Hannon has been a history teacher at NLHS for six years, and has been a teacher for seven years overall. In the past, she has also assisted with the track and field program. After obtaining her bachelor's degree, she chose to become a teacher. "I became involved in working with historic sites developing educational plans for visiting schools. I realized that I wanted to inspire young people to want to learn more about history," she said. Ms. Hannon felt capable of teaching at the secondary level, in part due to the fact that she comes from a family of teachers. "Seeing other family members in the profession also inspired my decision to become a teacher." Despite the rapidly changing field of education, Ms. Hannon still believes in what the field has to offer. "I am a teacher because I believe in the power of education. Education and knowledge are the one thing that cannot be taken away from a person. Learning to problem-solve and innovate are basic skills that all people need to possess," she said. Adjustments in the field, although there can be setbacks, are to help both students and teachers. "To anyone entering the profession of education, I would say strive for progress, not perfection. While that may sound cliché, it was something that I had to learn to accept," she said. "Teaching demands that a person is flexible and well-rounded. While there are no 'perfect' school days, I still believe it is a rewarding profession to enter into."

Although the choice of being a teacher has not always been an easy one, it is a rewarding one. The opportunity to share stories, information, and ideas is important for all teachers. Despite no day being "perfect," the staff at Northern Lehigh High School truly care about their students and want to help in shaping their future. 🐾



Ms. Amy Shonk is a biology teacher at NLHS and has been in this profession for a total of ten years. Her career as a molecular biologist placed her in many teaching roles, and she always enjoyed playing "teacher" as a child, so much so that she made math worksheets for her family to complete in order to play along with her interest. "That evolved into eventually enrolling in a certification program and moving into teaching college, then high school," she said. "I really enjoyed helping others to achieve goals, whether it was for the company or personally." Ms. Shonk is also currently the Student Council Advisor. "It's more important now than ever to have teachers who can handle the changing situations, be rational in their views, and have a neutral position when with students," she said. To combat the challenging times in the field, Ms. Shonk says setting boundaries is extremely important. "Never stop learning and do it for the right reasons," she said. "Every day, do the best that you can for the students, and at the end of the day, be the best that you can for yourself and your family. Draw lines and don't become overwhelmed."

Mr. Rajeev Gupta has been a science teacher at Northern Lehigh for six years and is also a track and field coach. Mr. Gupta became a teacher for many different reasons. "In a sense, I have always been an 'unofficial' teacher," he said. "I have a big family with many younger siblings and cousins who were always asking me to teach them something: how to play a game, how to ski, how to climb. I always enjoyed seeing the joy on people's faces when they started to learn something new." He feels that, although teaching has become more challenging the past few years, it is still just as fun. "Remember that the learning process is supposed to be fun. Try to remember not to take yourself or life too seriously. Learn and have fun."

Mr. Christopher Barnes is a high school English/journalism teacher and has also worked in the middle school. After spending a few years as a newspaper editor for a first career, he was pushed to make a change. "I didn't [choose to become a teacher], my dad always thought I should be one. He saw the integrity and importance of the profession," Barnes said. "Now in my 16th year, it seems my dad was

# Aw, crap

Nature calls and you can't let it go to voicemail. Do we become too flushed to do what you gotta doo?

BY LACEY GROOVER  
STAFF WRITER

"Man, I really hope someone doesn't walk in." I'm sure we've all had this thought when going to the bathroom in public, whether it is a #1 or a #2. I've always wondered why people, including myself, are so afraid to use the bathroom *in the bathroom*?

According to a survey by *studyfinds.org*, 2,000 Americans were asked about where they prefer to use the bathroom and it was found that 69 percent hate going in public so much,

People, especially teenagers, think irrationally a lot of the time, and I think if everyone just didn't care about people pooping where they're supposed to poop, there wouldn't be as much drama going on in the bathrooms. It's difficult to walk into the bathroom, needing to go #1 or #2, and see a bunch of people hanging out in there. It makes you feel so self-conscious about using the bathroom for how the bathroom should be used. The bathroom is used more as a hangout area than an actual bathroom at this point, but that's a whole other issue.



to the extent of holding it in until they can use the bathroom at home; 74 percent of men said they hold it in comparison to 65 percent of women. It could possibly be a hygiene thing, where people feel uncomfortable defecating where others have as well. Taking a deeper look into things, only 15.6 percent of people suffer from feelings of anxiety. Due to this statistic being so low, why are people still anxious to use the bathroom for its intended purpose?

It could be an uncomfortable or lewd thing to some people. There's always a time and a place, and a bathroom is the time and the place to do that. People tend to shy away from talking or even mentioning bowel movements. Some see it as shameful and rude, others see it as plain gross. Everyone poops. People are very embarrassed in women's bathrooms when they have to change out a pad or tampon.

These bodily functions happen to *literally everyone*. As long as it's left for the appropriate moment and unbothered it shouldn't be frowned upon. It is using the bathroom for its *intended purpose*. No one should be poop-shy.

It could also be the subconscious thought of people hearing you poop. You don't even need to think deeply about it, it's easy to see why people don't like others hearing them. Peer pressure is difficult. Let's say you poop in the bathroom and someone gets a glimpse of your shoes from beneath the stall door. They then see you later in the hallway and they now know what your bowel movements sound like. It's a bit uncomfortable. Not to mention people seeing you go into the stall, most people's thoughts are to get in and out as quickly as possible so people don't think they are pooping. It's so difficult to get the same alone time in public bathrooms that people are used to at home. This leads to people being uncomfortable anywhere else but their house. It shouldn't be like this.

At the end of the day, do what's comfortable for you, but don't judge others on what they are comfortable with as well. I believe most people would rather you poop in the bathroom than somewhere else in the school. Flush the poop stigma! 🐾

## NL's Betances gets thread-start on homemade clothes designs

NL junior Miguel Betances owns and creates his clothing brands – *Homage Gallery* and *Mikebetances*, the latter having started just recently and mainly focuses on cut and sewn garments. "Homage Gallery is a streetwear-based clothing brand that has dropped two collections so far and started just last year," he said. "All the graphic design is done by me however future designs won't have designs strictly cut and sewn. Garments are focused on mainly denim/leather that will be made in LA. Soon *mikebetances* will be out in the public as currently working on the first collection."

*Homage Gallery* focuses on graphic design shirts, beanies, and eventually hoodies. All clothes made in Pakistan are cut and sewn.

I have been studying fashion for about three years and started sampling and sourcing fabric for about a year.

Check out more at Instagram: @Homage.gallery and over at @Mikebetances.



## Takin' the bacon



Nick Frame, Jacob Smay, Seth Adams. That is all you need to know.

## The Slate earns three State media awards

NLHS's student newspaper, *The Slate*, our proud publication in your hands right now, has won three awards in this year's **Pennsylvania Student Keystone Media Contest**. **Second place for Page 6 Editorials** by the editorial staff. **Second place for Cartoon/Graphic Illustration**, Chase Jones for 2022 and Lacey Groover for 2023. **First**

**place for Layout and Design**, Issue 6, June 2022, editor Owen Levan-Uhler and the production staff. Congratulations to all involved and thank you to all who support student journalism. The Student Keystone Media Awards contest recognizes high school and college journalism that provides relevance, integrity, and initiative in serving readers.

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# All They Want

BY LILY GROOVER  
EDITOR IN CHIEF

On 21st century Earth, being part of the LGBTQ+ community can be tough. It gets exceptionally harder in high school. Teens across the globe need their voices heard, need their struggles seen, and need their lives normalized. Many people are ignorant about the topic, and tend to make unnecessary and wrong assumptions about the people in this tight-knit group. Members of their world want us to listen, and recognize that they are, in fact, just people. Northern Lehigh High School students Courtney Gutai, Lacey Groover, and Bethany Barrett volunteered to introduce themselves to the public in hopes at least one person can relate to their experiences. The first of a two-part series...

**This is their story.**



**The Slate:** To start, please introduce yourself, how you identify, or how you feel comfortable presenting yourself to the readers.

**Bethany:** Hi, I'm Bethany, I'm 15. I am pansexual and asexual.

**Courtney:** I'm Courtney, some people also know me as Violet, I'm 16. I am a transwoman that uses she/her pronouns, and I am also polyamorous.

**Lacey:** Hi, I'm Lacey, I'm 14, and I identify as pansexual and/or just queer in general, and I don't care what pronouns people use for me.

**The Slate:** How did you come out to the people around you, your family, your friends?

**Bethany:** I came out to my family unwillingly actually. I had a friend who wrote me a note on how to come out to my family because I was nervous and I didn't know how, and my family ended up finding that note.

**The Slate:** And were they supportive?

**Bethany:** Yeah, they were supportive from day one.

**The Slate:** Did it surprise you that they were supportive or did you expect them to react differently?

**Bethany:** No, it didn't surprise me. My mom has always been very much like, *you be who you are and I'll be supportive of whatever or whoever you are*. I was just nervous, for some reason, even though I knew that's how she would react.

**Courtney:** So a while back, there was a trend on TikTok of an opening heart, it was really low budget, and a message would come out of it. I asked my friend to make one that just said "I'm a trans girl" and then I sent it to both my mom and my sister.

**The Slate:** Accidentally?

**Courtney:** No, on purpose. And my sister – she has her own house – texted me a couple of questions about it. But then, my mom came up to

my room and we had a solid discussion about it. She was like, *"Honestly, from birth, we thought you were a girl, and then when you weren't we were like, bub, that's funny."*

**Lacey:** So, originally when I was about 10, I thought I was bisexual. So, I kind of said, "Hey mom, I think I'm bisexual." And obviously, 10 is a little young to make that decision, but it was whatever. And then I remember on vacation, my dad and my sister were both walking or doing whatever, and my mom and I were just laying on the beach, and I knew I had been pan months before this. I thought that I should probably tell my mom this. So I said, "Hey mom, I think I'm pansexual." And she said, "What's the difference?" I told her that the difference between bisexuality and pansexuality is that bisexual people have a preference and I don't have a preference. If I like someone, I'm going to date them. So I came out to my mom that way, and I'm pretty sure the

**See All They Want, page 5**

# LGBTQ+ students open up about struggles

**All They Want, from page 4**

rest of my family just kind of knew. I started to be really flamboyant, and have lots of odd pride things. I like to speak about the things I believe in. Everybody was just like, "OK, Lacey's the queer one."

**The Slate:** And 'queer' – that's an acceptable term, right?

**Lacey:** If someone were to call me queer in a derogatory way, I'd kind of just brush it off and be like, yeah, I *am* queer. I don't know if other people of the LGBTQ+ community take offense to that, but I don't. If you call me queer, I'm OK with it.

**Courtney:** So queer, like a while back, was used as a slur. They'd use it as a noun, though. The biggest way that that slur was reclaimed was how it's an adjective and most people don't find it offensive.

**The Slate:** Doesn't the Q stand for queer in LGBTQ?

**Lacey:** Queer or questioning.

**The Slate:** It's good that you also defined pansexual because there's a lot of terms out there between asexual, pansexual, gender-fluid, etc., that people become ignorant to because they don't want to just take the few seconds to learn what they mean.

**Lacey:** I've had conversations with a lot of people about all of these labels. I like labels. They make me feel comfortable, but other people don't like labels. Sometimes they use gender-fluid or queer or anything like that. Queer is like an umbrella term or unlabeled. So it's just whatever label you fit with, and it doesn't matter. Some people don't care, some people care, and I'm one of those people where I like my label and I'm OK with it, but other people maybe not.

**The Slate:** Do you feel different or outcasted due to your identity?

**Bethany:** I personally don't. If somebody thinks of me that way, that doesn't affect me because I know that just because I'm pansexual, I'm going to like who I like. It doesn't mean I am weird or not as good as anybody else.

**Courtney:** I definitely have a bit of a different experience because I am also trans. As an observation, most girls at school are super chill with it. But I'll have kids talking crap about me behind their back a bunch. And, random people, who I don't know, would come up to me in the halls and say my dead name, on purpose.

**Lacey:** Among my friends, no, not at all. A lot of my friends are queer, and I love them because it's so good to have conversations and talk about different people that we find attractive, and it's nice to have people that feel the same way about the same people. But, among my classes, because I don't really see my friends at school as much, sometimes I feel outcasted. I wear a lot of pride things and I've had people call me slurs, like the f-slur and then they giggle at me like I'm supposed to laugh at it. Why would you even say that as a joke and think that it's funny? But still, I don't *feel* outcasted. If I'm an outcast, then there we go, I don't care, it doesn't upset me.

**The Slate:** Have you ever experienced hate for who you are, especially in school or online. Be as specific as you feel comfortable doing. Also, how does it affect you?

**Bethany:** I don't have any specific stories that I remember. I don't really know if people in school know that I am pan or asexual. I'm not very afraid to be open about it or anything, but I just have never really been the person to show it all the time so I haven't had any problems in school. If people know about it, if people don't know about it, I don't really care either way. And if I did have problems in school I think I would just not care because I don't care what other people think. If they think that I'm wrong for being who I am or want to make fun of me for it, so be it. That's your personal opinion, you can have it but it's not going to affect me.

**Courtney:** In school I've had various people say not amazing things when they fully understand the situation. It is very easy to tell if somebody's trying to be hateful or if they are just genuinely confused. I have had various things from people misgendering me to people dead-



**No Parking, No Smoking, No Hating** — NL students Lacey Groover, Courtney Gutai, and Bethany Barrett, who has moved to another district since this interview was conducted, just want to live their lives in peace.

naming me. This one person asked me what was in my pants, which was highly inappropriate.

**The Slate:** They just asked this out of the blue?

**Courtney:** Yeah, I was talking to them in class for a little bit and then they asked and I was just straight-up like, "that's not something you should ask," and I left it at that. I'll complain about that stuff to my mom, because it angers me. At the end of the day, I am more confident in myself than they will ever be. I know who I am and they're lashing out at me because they don't. That is how I like to look at it.

**Lacey:** So, like Courtney said, there's a difference between genuine confusion and just blunt rudeness. I've had people come up to me and ask invasive questions about me and my sexuality. Gayness aside, why would you ask anyone about that? This person was curious but that doesn't give you an excuse to be intrusive on somebody else's life.

**Courtney:** They look at us like we are zoo animals that they can just poke and prod at.

**Lacey:** Yes! Exactly, it's insane. My personal life has nothing to do with you unless I am close to you and want to talk to you about it. That is something for somebody else to initiate, not you to initiate. Don't butt into my life unless I am sharing it.

**The Slate:** Lacey, you had mentioned a story about some girls in your class asking if you were gay, and then immediately saying, "Well, just don't have a crush on me, OK? That's kind of gross."

**Lacey:** Yes, yes, I hate that. It makes me so angry.

**The Slate:** So, what do you have to say to people who think that just because you are an L, a B, a G, or others, doesn't



mean you have a crush on every single person of that gender?

**Lacey:** It's so stupid.

**Bethany:** I have had friends that I'm no longer friends with, where I have told them my sexuality and the first thing they say is, "Ew, don't have a crush on me." Going off of what [Lacey] said, that's not how it works. Just because I may like girls doesn't mean I'm attracted to you automatically, especially with pansexuality.

It's not any different from people being straight. If you like guys, that doesn't mean you like every single guy you see.

**Lacey:** If a gay person knows you are straight, they're going to want to refrain from catching any feelings because it's just not going to work, you know? It's pure narcissism. 🌈

*Part 2 will appear in our next issue.*

## EDITORIAL

# Let. Them. Live.

You can disagree in principle but stop being the reason their article had to be written

We all want to be happy. It is a simple goal but a harder mountain to climb for many.

Young, old, rich, poor, society's helpers, and earth's villains all just want to live in their own version of peace.

As a teacher of almost 16 years, I have always loved discussing the theme of identity in class. ELA assignments that involve characters who discover personal traits make for amazing starting points.

As a parent of two boys – ages 9 and 11 – the most-common denominator of all-things self-worth begins and ends with finding confidence to just be.

As a 44-year-old whatever-else-I-am, it amazes me (not in a positive way) how so many people thrive by making it utterly impossible for others to do the same.

For these reasons, after taking over as adviser of The Slate six years ago, one of the articles I really sought to assign was an in-depth conversation with any Northern Lehigh students from the LGBTQ+ community. I wanted so badly to learn more about what it is like to live in a world that wants to shut them out or, even worse, control their lives. My search just never materialized for reasons I absolutely understood.

This year, it happened. I cannot thank enough Bethany, Courtney, and Lacey for sitting down and sharing so many honest and open answers about who they are – not *what* they are. There was not a question they refused or a topic they avoided.



Slate editor Lily Groover shined in this monster moment of student journalism, handling the 90-minute conversation.

I want to also thank the families of these students, whom I called before setting up this interview to ensure they were OK with the sensitive publicity. They never hesitated to show support for their child. The

conversations made this teacher-parent-adviser very grateful. “Of course you can [publish it],” one mother said. “We have always been accepting of who she is, and as long as she’s happy, who am I to stand in the way?” So. It’s *that* simple.

Being a teacher helps me evolve as a parent, and being a parent helps me become a more empathetic teacher. So as a third-party listener to these students’ answers, it is sad to hear how much they need to defend themselves daily just to live in peace.

If you are someone who not only dislikes their kind, but also wishes harm upon them for totally unjusti-

fied reasons, I always offer this example: I am not a fan of bright colored shirts or sardines. However, if *you* want to wear red every day, and swallow little slimy salty fish, have a grand time. More for you, and I won’t interfere.

Your choices don’t affect me. You aren’t forcing *me* to wear red or stuff seafood down my throat, so, therefore, I don’t care.

Why then, *seriously*, why do so many people – including in this school – shove hate in Bethany’s, Courtney’s, and Lacey’s direction because they “wear red and eat sardines”?

Even if those imaginary examples are against your principles, let it go. Allow them to live. It is seriously so easy.

If you can legitimately provide a reason these three students, or any other proud and silent member of their community in this school and beyond, should not deserve to be at peace in their own lives, share it. I’m here.

But they are not dictating your diet or your wardrobe. Do what you choose. And let them do the same. 🌻

*Mr. Christopher Barnes*  
SLATE ADVISER, JOURNALISM  
TEACHER, REFLECTIVE PARENT

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## No Pictures!

By Keona Dyer



“Can we take your photo for the yearbook?” “OMG, no! We hate our picture taken.” (Ten seconds later, they take 13 selfies, 22 Snapchats, and 66 TikToks).

**THE SLATE**  
ALL YOUR BULLDOG NEWS..

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**NewsMedia**  
Foundation

The Slate, published six times a year, is the journalistic voice of Northern Lehigh High School. Support for a free press is provided by Northern Lehigh administration: Mr. Matthew Link (superintendent), Dr. Tania Stoker (assistant superintendent), Mr. John Rushefski (acting principal) and Mr. Michael Strohl (assistant principal).

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## AMERICAN PLUTOCRACY

### How the U.S. has killed democracy

By Patrick Conway  
SLATE COLUMNIST

Democracy is, and has been for a long time, one of the most prosperous and moral decision-making systems in the world. There is nothing better than getting to have a say in what happens in your society, and it has impacted nearly every club, school, government, and company currently existing.

Although it may not be implemented everywhere, the cries for its creation have become popular in most emerging countries, whether it be Iran, China, or the Russian Federation, and in already-prosperous companies, such as Amazon, Google, and Microsoft.

Just because it has become popular in some places, however, does not mean it has become popular, or even understood, in many places, such as yours truly-- the U.S. Think about the two words, "American democracy." What comes to mind? Well, there is, typically, within the context of the two words, an idea of the American flag, the bald eagle, the national anthem, and July 4th cookouts.

We can agree all of these things are very nice and patriotic. Do these things, in any capacity, have a direct relationship to democratic systems, though? No. Even if they relate to American democracy, that does not mean they connect to these systems directly. They are only symbolic — made by nationalist sentiments to prioritize the nation and its government. And, comically enough, this aforementioned national government has very few democratic values. In fact, I feel it is safe to say that we are simply **not** a democracy, and that, since the Cold War, we have driven ourselves further into the grasps of authoritarianism.

This is, for many of you, a very interesting and possibly faulty argument. After all, America has been considered a beacon of democratic values. These ideas of American democracy, however, hold no truth to them. America has not been a democracy since its initial founding— a democracy with many flaws and wrongdoings— something I will refer to as early modern democracy— one of the first modern trends of democracy.

In contrast, we have what I'll consider late modern democracies— nations either just gaining and establishing democratic systems, or ones that have embraced modern ideas of liberty and equity. There are only a few of these— places like Norway, Finland, Sweden and Swit-

zerland. These nations do as much as they can to represent national consensus — nations that America should take notes from.

To understand what institutions America should take from these late modern democracies, it is important to understand what democracy actually is. Democracy, at its core, is majority rule,

Even this definition, however, is incredibly faulty. As we have seen over the last few years, cooperation between branches have seemed to turn more into overreach— particularly within the judicial and executive branches. We see constant court rulings that overturn previous laws, presidential candidates becoming too closely tied with many congressmen, and a general misunderstanding of how our government is formed by our politicians. This is forgetting about the blatant

ly dictated by the upper-classes— elites, businessmen, and other privileged classes— as opposed to our lower classes. It is, therefore, what we define as a plutocracy— government rule by the wealthy, whether it be directly or indirectly.

Plutocracy is one of the worst things to happen to our freedoms since the inception of democracy, and it isn't easily changed. In fact, it may not be solved in our lifetimes— we aren't the priority, and haven't been for over a hundred



and the ability for there to be peaceful votes and transitions of power. If, for example, I were to ask the entire population whether I should cook hamburgers or hotdogs, and I additionally hosted peaceful debate and conversation about what should be done, this would be a democratic process— one called a direct democratic vote. If the majority decided to vote in favor of me cooking hotdogs (even if hamburgers are better), and I fulfilled the vote, this would be a democratic decision— one created by majority opinion.

So, can we be considered a direct democracy? The answer is no. We are, according to the government, a liberal republic— an indirect democracy— one where the system focuses on indirect representation through the election of officials by the public, and through the separation of powers and the protection of the people by the rule of law.

abuses of powers used to give businesses and politicians more economic and political power, whilst neglecting the masses. For most, there is little to no concern for individual politicians— there is only the interest of their party affiliation.

America's links to republicanism have decayed over time, as well. There aren't many politicians with true grassroots support. Most of this is only tied to party affiliation, and conflict between them. This fuels our republic— not policies and decisions, but party affiliation and social/economic position.

So, if America isn't a democracy, or a democratic republic, what is it? Well, it is simply defined— the rampant corruption found in our state and federal government is easily noticed— most politicians are paid off to make any decisions. These decisions, most times, are in favor of large businesses, not ones run by the people. Our government is almost entire-

years. Most of us, more likely than not, will be on the bottom for most of our young lives, and will never see any large developments that will help us to reclaim our country from our affluent overlords.

That doesn't mean we can't try to pave the way for change, however. To get there is one of the most important achievements for the masses, but it requires *you* to take action.

One of the few rights we have are ones to advocate for our democracy. No state or system can stop us all, but when isolated we are weak.

So, to make change, all of us *must* go out. You must do whatever you can-- but it all must be done in the name of democracy. It is one of the most righteous causes we will take part in for a very long time, but we need support. It is important that everybody do their part. Otherwise, we will never be able to create the democracy we were promised. 🐛

## Letters to the Editor

### Block Scheduling? Not so fast...

To the editor:

I prefer having shorter classes and having more classes for 180 days. The reason why is because in my old school we used to do it this way; we used to have eight classes (45 minutes per class until 2:20 pm) and just for two classes we would share it with other classes ( example- class A, B and C have gym together with four teachers for period 1, while class D, E and F have gym together with the same four teachers for period 2) and the other class would just be a free class or a teamwork class but with different people from the same grade.

After doing this system for over five years, I've gotten so used to it and it helped me so much to get better grades and not get bored in class with just having the fact that I only have 45 minutes per class.

When I moved here, I was so surprised that we only had four classes and each for about 1 hour and 30 minutes and it was nothing like my old school. Although I'm getting used to this system now, I still miss the old system (and my old school) and I would still prefer that old system.

Alondra Gonzalez Monsalve  
Sophomore

### Block Scheduling? Maybe a middle ground

To the editor:

Less time is less learning, whereas more time is more learning. That is the unfortunate complexity of scheduling seven classes into seven hours. Cramming creates a bubble of time where students cannot ask questions or fail to recall material.

Each length of time has their own downfalls and upsides, but the decision should ultimately be up to those who will be performing under the schedule. For example, while longer timeframes of inactivity can lead to boredom; Shorter timeframes may lead to a sense of timelessness. There is more to consider, however. "One of the things that comes up with traditional schooling is the stress on both students and staff because it's a much tighter time frame," said Mrs. Gale Husack, member of the Northern Lehigh School Board.

Every problem has a middle ground, including this one. The Northern Lehigh School Board should consider alternating classes on an A/B schedule throughout the week, or shrinking the number of periods. While still offering a range of possibilities, combining both suggestions would be the perfect middle ground.

Nathan Knauss  
Senior



**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](mailto:theslateneews@nlsd.org)



## A performer's perspective

### What theater and the stage mean to me

By Susan Gilsbach  
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Throughout high school, students usually have something that they do after school as an activity. For many, that is sports, the art club, the step team, or many of the other activities that NL offers. For me, that activity is the musical.

For my three years here at the high school, I have dedicated time and effort to making a great show with people who I become very close to during the two

with audience participation that did not have an audience present to participate. The next year, our performance of *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* was done with a small (incredibly talented) theater company that was rebuilding after Covid. The chaos that our theater had been through for two years, with differing pandemic protocols throughout it all, made me realize that even through all of the chaos that was going on, I still loved the theater and would brave a global pandemic to be able to participate in it.

started, it became clear to me that this musical was going to be different than the musicals I have been a part of in the past.

The rehearsal schedule was much more intense, and the show was much more physically, vocally, and technically demanding than other musicals that I have been in. There was more intense music to learn, choreography for many more numbers, and Greek mythology words to learn how to pronounce. It's a crazy schedule, but I've enjoyed every second of it.

a while. Singing and dancing and acting and memorizing lines may be time consuming, but the time I spend doing them is time that I believe is well spent. This year, theater has been an especially great experience.

Since I was eleven, I have loved *The Lightning Thief*, and I have related to the character of Annabeth. Getting to play the character I have related to and grown up with on the Northern Lehigh stage is an experience that I will always remember.

Getting to bring the magic of theater



Susan Gilsbach (far right) at a recent dress rehearsal along with Jackson Hunsicker and Ayden Scanlon.

month rehearsal process. It has become a source of great joy and comfort for me to be able to participate in musicals and plays here at Northern Lehigh.

For the past two years, the thing that I love has been through some interesting changes. My freshman year, theater was in a state of disarray with the pre-recorded virtual performance of *Nunsense*.

That show felt odd, because it was a very interesting process to learn a show

This year was the first year with no Covid restrictions going on. That meant that this was also my first year of "normal" high school theater. With the new director came new ideas about what musicals we could do and how to get more people involved in the theater.

With a cast of almost three times what we had last year, the theater company announced that their spring musical for 2023 would be *The Lightning Thief: The Percy Jackson Musical*. As rehearsals

Some people may wonder why I dedicate so much time and energy to rehearsals to sing and dance for an audience one weekend in March, but what they don't understand is that theater is so much more than that to me. It's where I've made many of my friends, and has helped me to get out of my shell and perform, which is something that I've truly come to love.

Through theater, I can put my worries away and pretend they don't exist for

to others, something that was shown to me by other actors on Broadway and in various other productions, is an exceptionally meaningful experience. I get to show people the fun in acting, and I am able to show things that can bring people joy and happiness just by dedicating a few hours a week to my art.

It's such a worthwhile experience to be able to explore characters and bring my take on each character that I play to an audience for a weekend in March. 🌟

## The anti-pet: Don't count out the rat

Most common pets today are cats, dogs, fish, or other domesticated animals, however, there is one pet many think of as disgusting, dirty, or creepy. Rats.

Most people believe that rats are dirty creatures and carry many diseases, causing little care for rats who get tested for makeup products and other cosmetics that could do worse than just burn or irritate their skin, but not many people try to stop this horrible thing, and by not doing anything, 111 million rats have been left to suffer through agony. Some common myths about rats are that they prefer dirty run-down areas, carry contagious and horrible diseases, and that many of them love cheese.

All three of these are false, as rats are a very clean animal and cheese normally has a horrible stench or odor, and since rats have a great sense of smell, the scent causes them to rather turn around and go elsewhere rather than actually eating it. A lot more of these lies make people hate and often kill rats, when in reality they're just as good of a pet as any other animal out there.

A few facts about rats are they have very good memories, are social animals, easily suspicious, breed non-stop, can have around 20 babies at a time, they're ticklish like humans, have great hearing and can communicate by producing and

Elementary,  
My Dear Readers



Kristiana Callaby

recognizing meaningful ultrasound frequencies that humans can't hear, and rats have been used to smell some diseases like tuberculosis.

Rats are also very easy to take care of, needing at least an hour or more of play every day or so, and they don't have specific diets or wants that are expensive, but they should still be given a large environment. Rats are also quite adorable if properly taken care of. Rats have been demonized throughout the years with



false accusations, like being rumored to carry the plague and other diseases.

However, do be careful when playing with rats, because a rat's jaws are almost as strong as an alligator's, so do be cautious of petting or touching wild and aggressive rats, because it will hurt if they bite you and depending on where they are. If you do plan on getting a rat, please do proper research and get the needed necessities to care for them, and don't let them near small or young children without supervision, as they're still animals

that will attack kids if provoked. But in reality, they're a living breathing thing like everyone else in the world, but people most of the time end up lying and assuming the worst about them because of past assumptions.

Now, what do you think of rats? Would you keep them as pets or not, and why? 🌟

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



# SPORTS



## Hoops, they did it again

BY CAITLIN KIRK  
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

She shoots, she scores. The crowd goes wild as the player basks in the glory of beating the buzzer and scoring the game-winner against their rivals.

When looking back on the Northern Lehigh girl's basketball season, many of the players are proud of this season's accomplishments. Following in their footsteps from last year, this year's girl's basketball team went to the Colonial League quarterfinals where they faced off against the Northwestern Lehigh Tigers.

While the outcome was not optimal, the girl's spirit still outweighed their loss. The team is excited to push forward and compete in the District 11 quarterfinals. As of now, 13-8, the girl's basketball team is proud of this season's accomplishments thus far and hopes to achieve more in districts.

Cadence Peters, a senior center, comments on how it felt to be part of this playoff-bound team, "Being a senior on this team is amazing. I am so glad I got to grow on this team within my four years and be the best role model I could be for the rest of the team. This season has been going well and I am so glad I was able to be a part of it. Making it into the playoffs has helped us prove our worth in our district and league."

During the season, the players on the



Cadence Peters (in her senior year) tries to block the opponent's offense.

NL girl's basketball team have recognized many star players. Emma Wensing, a junior, comments on who she believed were this year's team MVPs, "I think Aubrey Pollard and Katelynn Barthold are the MVPs on this year's team. I think everyone contributed, but those two stuck out the most.

Along with them, Dekota Barthold consistently hit three-point shots at crucial times throughout the season" said Wensing. "My favorite memory from this season was Dekota making the winning shot (33-35) at Moravian Academy."

Throughout the season, the girls have created unforgettable memories and bonds that will last a lifetime. They have fought through tough games and hard times to make it to the playoffs. Additionally, many of their hard-fought games stuck out to them. "My favorite moment of the season was beating Moravian in the final 6 seconds of the game; however, our best game this season was our win over Lehighton," said Dekota Barthold.

Furthermore, Peters said, "I think our best game this season was the Lehighton game.

It was a good game and showed us that we could make it far this season. We started to play as a team during this game. Our team worked so hard throughout the season, and the work finally paid off." 🐾



## Take down the gender stigmas

BY ALEXIS TRAUGHER  
SPORTS EDITOR

The power and adrenaline flood through your veins, tingling and allowing you to zone in on your one and only goal: winning. As you step onto the field, the odds begin to stack up against you as not only other female athletes, but male athletes line up on the opposing team. Does this make you back down, or does it make you work harder, not only to show yourself but to also achieve the total prize?

Many female athletes do not back away from that challenge, or many others. Professional, collegiate, and high school female athletes challenge the systems they are forced to comply with dai-

**[Area schools] are empowering their female athletes to participate in a sport that is strongly male-dominated and seen as one not fit for them.**



able to play professional sports, yet in those past 80 years they are still belittled by society. Equal Pay, sports deemed only for women, and so many other obstacles are continuously fought, but in this process each and every athlete forces society to question and begin to look to the future.

Today in the Lehigh Valley and the state of Pennsylvania, female high school athletes are fighting to have the opportunity to wrestle. When imagining wrestling, one might perceive it as only a one-on-one male fight for dominance. But behind all of that, there is power, strategy, and strength. Are those three things only in men, or are they also in women?

To the PIAA, these qualities are present in all genders. On February 14,

2023, they sanctioned their 100th school, Pennridge High School, approving girls wrestling. Along with Pennridge, schools like Parkland, Easton, Palisades, Pine Grove, Freedom, Liberty, Tamaqua, and many others in our area have been sanctioned and are allowing their female athletes this opportunity.

They are empowering their female athletes to participate in a sport that is strongly male-dominated and seen as one not fit for them.

Over the past year, this want for girls wrestling teams have begun to take the PIAA by storm. "The momentum of girls wrestling in the state hit its stride at the beginning of the 2022-2023 school year,

See Athletes, page 16

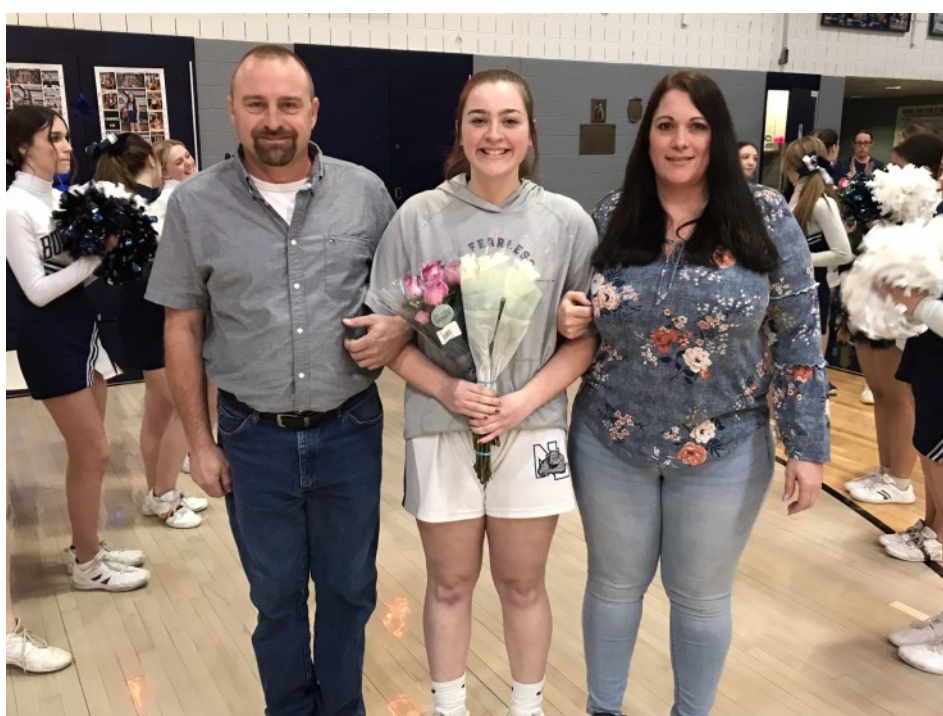
## Seniors end sports seasons in style



Faith Zelenty



Aiyana Bosch



Cadence Peters



Jeweliana Andrews



(Back) Jack Tosh, Bailey Smith, Chase Moffitt, Sam Frame, Landon Moll, (Middle) Noah Gosart, Ariel Kern (team manager), Cody Mazzocca, Austin Rex, Emil \*or\* Amir Mustafin... (no one's really sure) and in front Lawson Hoffman.

# The men who sacrificed all for our hometowns

BY GABBY LONBERGER  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

How many articles have you read about the men in Slatington, Walnutport, Slatedale, and Emerald Pennsylvania? The men who gave their lives protecting our country from harm? Let's take a moment and learn about these men who gave their lives. Owen John Williams was killed in action while serving with Company K, 114th infantry regiment, 5th infantry division, near Linydevant-Dun, France, a few kilometers east of Montfaucon. He was twenty-seven years old. His military service included participation in the St. Mihiel and Meuse-Argonne offensives. Williams was born in Williamstown, a small settlement between Emerald and Slatington, Pennsylvania. 19 September 1917, inducted at Allentown, Pennsylvania and left for Camp Meade, Maryland on April 24, 1918, the 114th infantry regiment sailed for France.

In May 1918, the regiment joined the 5th infantry division, which had been organized in December 1917. On 13 September 1918, he was wounded. On 11 October, the division entered the battle a little north of Montfaucon in extremely heavy fighting.

"In eleven days of the fiercest fighting the men of the Red Diamond had ever known, eight square kilometers of French soil had been wrested from the enemy. The resistance by the Germans had probably been as determined as any ever encountered by American troops in any war. The 5th Division had sustained 4,449 casualties of whom 779 were killed in action."

Herbert Paul Lent died when his destroyer, the USS Jacob Jones, was torpedoed and sank in the Irish Sea. He was twenty years old. Seaman Lentz, who grew up in Slatington, was the first in Lehigh County to die in military service in the World War I. He was living in Allentown when he entered the navy service in February 1916. At 420 local time on 6 December 1917, the destroyer, returning from France, was struck amid-

ships by a torpedo. The ship sank in minutes. Forty-three men were eventually saved; two were captured by the U-boat; sixty-eight men died. A survivor said that Lentz fell overboard while trying to save another man. His body was not recovered. He is listed on the family grave in Union Cemetery, in Slatington, Pennsylvania, and he is recorded among the missing at Suresnes American Cemetery, Paris, France.

Andrew John McCloskey died of wounds received in action while serving with Company C, 308th Machine Gun Battalion, 78th infantry division in France. Unfortunately for him, there is no record of his service in the army.

Thomas Christian Snyder was killed in action while serving with Company L, 316th infantry regiment, 79th infantry division, near Nantillois, France. There are no records of his service. Raymond Thomas Reichard died of pneumonia while serving with Company H, 39th infantry regiment, 4th infantry division in France. There are not a lot of details about his service. John David Aaron was killed in action while serving with Company H, 114th infantry regiment, 29th infantry division, near Haumont-près-Samogneux, France. He died during the Meuse-Argonne offensive in France. Victor Weiss died of pneumonia while in training at Camp Greenleaf, Georgia. He was twenty-two years old. Howard Frank Baer died of pneumonia while in training at Camp McClellan, Alabama. He was twenty-five years old. John William Burke died of pneumonia at Fort McHenry, Maryland, while serving with the 308th Guard and Fire Duty Corps. He was thirty years old.

John Lindsay died of pneumonia at Camp McClellan, Alabama. He was thirty-one years old. Lindsay grew up in Slatington on Walnut Street and once worked in the rolling mill there. He left with one of the first groups of draftees from the area in September 1917 for Camp Meade, Maryland. Before his death, he had just spent a ten-day furlough with his parents in Slatington, be-



fore returning to Camp McClellan at the start of October 1918.

Allen Otto Delk was killed in action while serving with Company I, 314th infantry regiment. The same unit as Laird Kern., 79th infantry division, near Consenvoye, France a few kilometers east of Montfaucon. He was thirty years old. His

military service was much the same as that of Laird Kern. Francis Henry Handwerk was killed in action while serving with Company I, 145th infantry regiment, 37th infantry division, near Eyne, Belgium. He was 23 years old. Thank you to these brave men, your legacies will live on in our minds, and hearts. 🇺🇸

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# CELEBRITY DRESS-UP DAY



Kiley Kennedy (David Bowie) and Victoria Halkias (Elton John).



Lizzy Youst (Fiona Apple).



Max Sutliff (Tanooki Mario)



Jalyn Leshar (David Bowie)



Ayden Scanlon (Saul Goodman)



Bailey Smith (no one is really sure what he is)

# More than just rocks. Or are they?

BY HAVEN MOORE  
STAFF WRITER

Rocks, stones, crystals, and so on are found practically everywhere outdoors. They're naturally occurring in nature, and most of the time, not much thought is given to them.

Many think *nothing special, just a plain old rock, muddied in the dirt.* However, there may be more than what is initial to its appearance. While their significance of them is always up to interpretation, many people spiritually find them more useful than what is visible. They believe that there is energy, healing power even, that can be used from certain types of rocks. Some people do choose to carry rocks or stones with them in their pockets, or decorate their own homes, all to employ the beneficial properties of these sediments.

While this spiritual practice is controversial among groups of people who deem the idea of rocks with "magical healing powers" to be false, many still find this practice faithful and have for generations that go far back in history.

The practice of crystals goes back for generations to at least 60,000 years ago, and was used in healing medicine rituals and formulas by Ancient Sumerians. Proof of crystal uses in spiritual practices and even in day-to-day life were shown and recorded in writings, as well as in traditions passed through cultures.

While the exact origin of crystal usage cannot be pinpointed specifically, they can be related to Ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia as well as Ancient Greece, Rome, and India. Depending on the area of origination, crystals were used for different purposes. For instance, it has been recorded that in Egypt, rocks like emerald and turquoise were worn as jewelry and on clothes.

They were believed to have brought good energy and useful properties such as protection. As time went on, the ancient Chinese culture brought some influence of rock healing and properties into their practices. Stones such as jade were notoriously used in healing rituals and were worn or decorated to embrace the properties believed to have been having such as peace, cleansing, and longevity. As



time has progressed since the origin of these uses, modern-day civilization has some of these traditional ideas and aspects of rock healing still used to this day by many people.

Many believe that these crystals and stones with particular properties can be used to benefit an individual and even heal them by cleansing their energy, just as ancient civilizations believed.

Just by placing crystals around a frequently inhabited space, keeping them near or on oneself, and occasionally cleansing them of negative energy, ones who are devoted to their spirituality and practicing these rituals find that crystal energy healing provides a positive experience. However, the intention is also a major factor.

Having the intention to use crystals for one's benefit is thought to help stimulate the energy they can provide and can therefore, emphasize their positive properties. People also charge and cleanse

crystals using a variety of methods such as placing them in direct moonlight, and sunlight, immersing them in nature, and even burning sage around them. Even something as small or seemingly insignificant as having positive intentions increases the natural vibrations of crystals, hence strengthening their natural energy to be used by the spiritually inclined.

There are a lot of controversial opinions that surround this subject. While many people find the "magical powers" of rocks to be partially/completely false or a hoax, it is a practice that has spanned across a very large portion of time, and still lives on to this day. So much skepticism exists concerning these practices for reasons such as a lack of significant scientific evidence showing any effect from crystal healing.

Additionally, attributing any success from crystal healing may not be entirely true, and could be a result of the power of one's mind. Not from the power of

the rock. Their intentions and will are what benefits them, not the physical rocks. Some skeptics also believe that these individuals are influenced by the placebo effect. This means that they think they find results from using the energy of crystals, but really, they are tricking themselves into believing they are. This form of success once again, cannot be attributed to the stones but to the person.

The true change comes from themselves and their doing. Whether any of these forms of spiritual practices are valid or not in their truth, the fact that the intention of the individual can positively influence their life is a great feat in itself. In the end, the idea that rocks can cause or directly influence these outcomes of success is subjective nowadays. Whether one chooses to believe and engage in the practice or tends to be weary of, it is always left up to the individual to take account of their values and make up their judgment. 🌿

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nlrecauthority@gmail.com /  
484-633-0093 today with  
questions and to get an  
application!



# A most welcomed visitor into our Dawg House



Photos by Caitlin Kirk

(Left) Jessica Ballas, from the Alliance of Therapy Dogs, brought a big, furry friend for students to enjoy. (Above) Jameelah Gonzalez, Amber Oruska, Chloe Benner, and Kyndra Dougherty made Valentino feel as special as he did for them.

### Valentino, from page 1

function for a person. The adorable support of animals can improve a person's emotional and mental well-being.

There are some guidelines that follow with having access to service animals. The owner of said service animal would need the animal and themselves to be certified.

The animals can be certified by the Alliance of Therapy Dogs, Love on a Leash, Pet Partners, and/or Therapy Dogs International. The animals would also have to be immunized. Animals would not be allowed on school premises if the

handler does not have control, if it is not house broken, if it is dangerous, or the animal is an interference with education. All animals would be properly groomed, bathed, and free of illness before working with any children.

Imagine having a terrible day and being offered an opportunity to cuddle with a cute, little animal. Just a small moment to take a break and find a center of calm. Animal and human connections have been proven to relieve stress. It may only be a small moment, but it can have a lasting effect.


I had the chance to meet the animal

therapy dog Valentino and his dog mom. He is a four year old 106-pound Bernese mountain dog. Valentino is a very big and fluffy dog. He is a therapy dog certified through the Alliance of Therapy Dogs.

First, Valentino had to complete basic puppy obedience classes. In order to become certified, Valentino also had to complete on the job training. He would visit daycares, retirement homes, and libraries. His behavior would be his proof of deserving certification. Valentino's job is to make students and staff happy and relaxed.

I also met with Mrs. Hoffert and Mrs. Chruscial. Mrs. Hoffert is hoping that students have a chance to learn about therapy dogs and what they do. Meeting with and petting a dog is a great example of healthy coping. She hopes that students become more relaxed after meeting with Valentino. Mrs. Chruscial hopes that animal therapy with Valentino brought students a positive start to their day. She expressed that he was here to bring happiness and brighten peoples moods. Not to worry, Valentino will be back again. 🐾

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# A history of St. Patrick's Day

BY CALLUM BRYCE ZIMMERMAN  
SLATE HISTORIAN

Every March 17, the people of the United States embrace all things Irish. We wear green clothes and bedazzled hats. Green drinks, bagels and grits appear everywhere. Chicago even dyes its river green. These familiar annual traditions weren't imported from Ireland, however. They are home-grown.

St. Patrick's Day celebrates the life of Saint Patrick, long recognized as the patron saint of Ireland. This influential



missionary has been credited with bringing Christianity to Ireland. St. Patrick's Day takes place on March 17 each year because St. Patrick's death is believed to have been on this day in the year 461.

March 17 has been more of a holy day than holiday in Ireland. For several centuries, March 17 was a solemn day in Ireland. Catholics attended church in the morning and had a modest meal in the afternoon, starting in 1631. There were no parades and certainly no emerald-tinted food products, particularly since blue, not green, was the traditional color connected to Ireland's patron saint prior to the Irish Rebellion of 1798.

Boston, Massachusetts has claimed that they were the location of the first St. Patrick's Day celebrations, back to colonial times. However, historian Michael Francis has unearthed evidence that St. Augustine, Florida, may have been the location of the first American St. Patrick's Day celebration. While

doing research, he found records suggesting that cannon blasts or gunfire were used to honor the saint in 1600. It was also suggested that the residents of the Spanish garrison town started having parades beginning the following year.

It was actually a band of Redcoats who began the tradition of America's largest and longest St. Patrick's Day parade. In 1762, Irish-born soldiers serving in the British Army marched through lower Manhattan to a St. Patrick's Day breakfast.

Corned beef and cabbage, the meal that has become a St. Patrick's Day tradition across the country, was also an American innovation. While ham and cabbage was the St. Patrick's Day meal in Ireland, corned beef proved a cheaper substitute for the very poor Irish immigrants. Mike McCormack, who is a national historian for the Ancient Order of Hibernians, states that corned beef became a staple of Irish-Americans living in the slums of lower Manhattan. They would purchase leftover provisions from ships returning from the tea trade in China.

"When ships came into the South Street Seaport, women would run down to the port to see if there was leftover salted beef they could get from the ship's cook for a penny a pound," McCormack says. "It was the cheapest meat they could find."

While St. Patrick's Day celebrations continued and expanded in the 20th century into a party day for Americans of all ethnicities, the celebrations in Ireland remained subdued. Once television came on the scene, the party atmosphere spread to Ireland once the Irish could see all of the fun happening across the pond. "Modern Ireland took a cue from America," McCormack says. The multi-day St. Patrick's Day Festival was launched in Dublin in 1996 and now attracts one million people each year. 🐾

# Extinction lists could keep climbing if measures aren't taken

BY SAVANNAH HALL  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

The planet we live on has way too many problems. They go from the smallest crime up to the whole Earth-heating-up-a-little-too-much-for scientists' liking.

One main problem is the number of animals going extinct.

The number of animals that have died and completely disappeared from the face of the world is far too high. This problem has been going on for too many years to count. A bright side to all of this is there has been a lot of awareness that has been brought to the problem. The more awareness means the more people that know about it and that means there are more people who care.

Some people change little things about their daily lives to try and help. These changes can include not using as much water when doing things, recycling plastics, and not littering. They even do large things like donating to charities and using a non-waste household concept. There are many animals that are on the brink of extinction.

We may not realize it but so many animals are dying. The closest animal to extinction is the Javan rhino from Indonesia. This species of rhinoceros only has about 60 individual rhinos left. Amur Leopards, from parts of Russia to China, are also extremely close to going extinct with only 90 individual leopards left.

Sea otters are also listed as an endangered species. The northern leopard species is the snow leopard. They have around 5,000 of its kind left. There is a type of dolphin species called the vaquita. The vaquita only has around 10 of its unique species left.

These animals are becoming extinct from many issues. Global warming is the main factor to all of this. Another being the landfills are using up their habits. There is also their resources being used up by factories.

Maybe some of your favorite animals might go extinct as soon as the year 2024. Many different zoos are trying to help bring the population numbers back to their original point. Zookeepers and wildlife rescues are saving animals from dangerous places and other zoos. Some other zoos around the world are abusing the animals that are staying within those zoos. The abuse can include the zookeeper's hitting, starving, and keeping the animals in small spaces. This abuse is bringing the numbers down as well.

Other zoos, and some of the same ones, are inbreeding the animals they have. Inbred animals can cause problems



Amur leopards could be no more in the near future if protective measures are not taken.

for the species. They also have problems with themselves. These problems are anywhere from deformed bodies and faces to extreme breathing problems.

These problems are extremely important to save the species and not to mention they are illegal. If you are planning on going to any of the zoos for any occasions, please do your research on any of them. If you go to a zoo that is bad to the animals means the more money you give them. If you give them money the abuse is not going to stop.

Also if you give them the money they are going to feel empowered and feel like what they are doing is the right thing. All in all these problems are not going to stop if no one is doing anything about them. 🐾

# Frame reps at banquet



Head football coach Joe Tout, Nick Frame (along with his brother and father) at the Mini Maxwell Scholar Athlete Banquet with other representatives from Delaware, NJ, and PA.

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# Somewhere Over Montana

By Lacey Groover



## It's time to let the ladies wrestle

### Athletes, from page 9

with 46 schools approving official programs since September 2022... High school girls wrestling participation in Pennsylvania grew by more than 80% during the 2022-23 season, and has more than 400% growth the past five years," The Morning Call stated in their published article.

In addition, we are expecting this "magic" number of 100 to allow full sponsorship for this sport as well as allowing schools all over the state be given this privilege. "The PIAA last year unani-

mously voted to approve girls wrestling as a PIAA Emerging Sport... This designation indicates that girls wrestling is a sport that the PIAA is tracking for potential full sponsorship," wrote The Morning Call.

Furthermore, this growth and growing interest in this sport demonstrates that this sport is needed in PA high schools, and should not just be limited to certain ones.

So the question is, will Northern Lehigh fight to have a wrestling team, and if so will we be having one in the near future?

This past season, interest was shown to have female participation, and with other schools in our district as well as in our area allowing this, we could only hope to become the 101st school.

If money is an obstacle, fundraising or sponsoring could help propel our school into the revolution of women doing anything they set their minds to.

NL needs to look to the future and see the importance of allowing male-dominated sports to be available to our female athletes. The female sports present at NL— specifically girls basketball, soccer, and softball— often do well and

are a prime example of the dedication these athletes put forth. Why limit them when we can allow them to flourish and put our name further on the map?

Furthermore, following graduation, many colleges— Cedar Crest College, Bucknell University, Muhlenberg College, Penn State University, and Elmira College, to name a few— that NL alum attend, have this opportunity available. If women can participate in this sport in college, they should be able to do it now. 🌟