

The Bulldog Bark



Advisor: Ms. Dunham
Principal: Mr. Hauser

Your Middle School News Unleashed!

Spring 2023

Clubs and Activities:

The NLMS Underdogs

By Andi Szwast
Team 8 Barker

In today's times, it is becoming increasingly harder to find students who participate in clubs and activities. Most students would rather play a sport--which is not bad at all--but a reasonable portion of NLMS middle schoolers have no interest in joining clubs whatsoever. However, a much greater population of students do participate in clubs and activities. To see how many NLMS students truly participate in clubs, the Bulldog Bark sent out a poll and collected student data over the



weeks. Let's take a look at what NL middle schoolers have to say about clubs and activities!

WHAT

DO STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN?

From our survey, we found that nearly 80% of NLMS students participate in clubs and activities, while around 20% do not. This means that, for every 4 students that participate in clubs, 1 student does not. Nearly 60% of students said that they participate in sports, however, while around 40% said that they did not. As for how many clubs students participate in, most students said that they take

past couple of

BuzzFeed

QUIZ

"Which Season Are You?"

See Clubs & Activities, Pages 2-3



part in only one club, with some others participating in two or three and a very select few engaging in four, five, or more.

WHY DON'T STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN CLUBS?

According to our poll, the top three reasons students don't participate in clubs and activities are as follows. The third-most selected option was "I don't have time to be in clubs," which was chosen by around 10% of respondents. The second-most chosen option was "None of the clubs we offer are interesting," which was selected by about 40% of students. The most selected option was "I don't know what clubs we offer," which was chosen by nearly 50% of respondents. Despite all of their efforts to boost school spirit and increase club participation, the school district has yet to update the NLSD webpage that lists all of the high school and middle school clubs. For example, old clubs such as Intramurals are still on the website and new clubs such as Aavidum have not been added to the website. Intramurals stopped being an available club nearly two years ago, and Aavidum has been an established club since last school year. I know that this might not necessarily be in the hands of Mr. Hauser, but I still think it is important for people to know what clubs we offer. This has also now been proven to be a key reason behind why more stu-

dents don't participate in clubs and activities.

WOULD STUDENTS JOIN CLUBS?

In the poll, nearly 90% of students expressed some interest in joining an NL club. Around 50% of these responses were "maybe" and nearly 40% of them were "yes." The poll also asked students which club or clubs they would be most willing to join. By far, Aavidum interested the most students with around 60% of poll respondents expressing their interest in joining the club. Another popular vote was Yearbook with nearly 50% of all respondents selecting it. The third-most popular club was Student Council, being chosen by approximately 40% of respondents. The least-selected clubs were Debate and Library Club, both with only 10% of respondents deciding to choose them.

CONCLUSION

A good amount of NL middle schoolers participate in clubs and activities, but a fair selection of them don't. The most likely reason behind this is that many middle schoolers don't know what kinds of clubs and activities we offer. This may be due to the fact that the NLSD website currently displays inaccurate information on our school's clubs and activities, as well as the high school clubs that are open to middle schoolers. For those wondering, I have put

together a (hopefully) accurate list of clubs and activities in the middle and high schools, pictured below. An asterisk (*) indicates a club only available to eighth graders. Enjoy your middle school years, and maybe try out a new club every once and a while. After all, you only live once!

Middle School Clubs Open to Everyone

Aavidum

Band

Bulldog Bark (School Newspaper)

Foreign Language Club

Math Club

Yearbook

Middle School Clubs Open to Selective Groups

Academic Challenge Eighth (ACE)*

National Junior Honor Society*

Student Council

High Schools Clubs Open to Everyone

Chess Club

Debate

Library Club

GET INVOLVED!

ACE Team Experience 2023

By **Madilynn Husack**

Team 8 Barker

Being someone who participated in the ACE club, I can tell you a little bit about the experience and how it went.

If you're wondering what Ace club is, it is an Academic club that challenges students with questions in all topics. This year there were 7 schools competing for the top spot. This year the

competition was held at Panther Valley. The Ace Team this year consisted of Morgan Smith, Emily



Gad, Madilynn Husack, Aidan Rudolph, Andrew Rudolph, Kyle O'Connell, Porter Kern, and Colin Karetsky. To prepare for the com-

petition the Ace team would practice every Thursday during flex with Mr. Davis.

We got 4th or 5th place. We won our first round, lost our second by one question, and lost our third by a lot. The competition in general ran smoothly and breakfast and lunch was given out by the school. It was run in a bracket-style that consisted of a winners bracket and a losers bracket.

Overall, it was a fun experience and I recommend anyone who is slightly interested to try out.

Aavidum: What and Why?

By **Mackenzie Kuhns**

Team 7 Barker

What is Aavidum? The word itself, Aavidum, means "I've got your back", though, for many students across the nation it means much more. Aavidum, to students who participate in the club, is a safe space. It is not only for those with mental disorders, but anyone who needs help or just wants to raise awareness. It is a place where nothing is too weird, too serious, or too emotional. You can be whoever, talk about whatever you need to, or even have a shoulder to cry on, all of this and more is Aavidum.

What do you do in Aavidum? In Northern Lehigh Middle School, this year, Aavidum has done spirit



days for awareness, passed around positive messages, done activities with the IU students, and even went to a talk workshop. All of these things are amazing, but the most exciting of all was the work-

shop. For the Talk/Aavidum Workshop, Aavidum members visited a neighboring school to learn more about Aavidum and what it is capable of. You were greeted by vibrant colors, applause, and uplifting music. You did activities that may have put you out of your comfort zone like going on stage and creating a chant/cheer with your school's members. At one point everyone was put into random talk groups that were com-

See Aavidum, Page 4

fortable and allowed you to get to know others and share experiences. Lastly, the best part was when students were able to share on stage, with a microphone, in front of everyone. Personally, I found this amazing because usually students are never able to get their opinions out, but here, they were welcomed with open arms. Aavidum members shared how they came to join Aavidum and what Aavidum had done for them.

Why should I bother joining? Whether you or someone you know or knew is or was struggling with mental health or not, Aavidum welcomes everyone. Everyone always struggles with something and no matter what Aavidum will always have your back, but the best thing about this organization

is that it allows you to help others. Whether you help someone cope with something by remembering your own experience or just brighten someone's day by giving them a "You Matter Card". Aavidum surrounds a person with others who have the same mission, so

make someone smile today, if need be let that someone be yourself, just always remember that Aavidum has got your back.



Student POV of PSSAs and Keystones

By Andi Szwast
Team 8 Barker

As students progress through their elementary and middle school years, many become affected by a prominent source of stress in the form of an extremely long and challenging test known as the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment, or the PSSA. Most students have an opinion on PSSA's, but very few of them reflect on the series of tests positively. To further explore middle school students' judgements of the PSSA, the Bulldog Bark has selected three students to participate in an interview about the testing system: Ethan Binder and two students who prefer to stay anonymous. Let's see what NLMS students have to say about the PSSA's.

Do you view the PSSA's positively, neutrally, or negatively? Why do you have this perspective?

ETHAN: Neutrally. This is because a lot of people see the PSSA's negatively and I understand with the hour long tests but, in the past, I haven't had any negative experience with it other than the amount of time [it

takes].

STUDENT #1: Negatively. They suck.

STUDENT #2: Negatively. It's stuff I barely remember and it gets you all stressed for nothing.



Do you prefer to take PSSA's online or on paper? Why do you prefer to take them this way?

ETHAN: I prefer doing it online because it allows me to type out the answers and easily change them if I want to change my answers.

STUDENT #1: Paper.

STUDENT #2: I would rather it online.

Give us your final thoughts on the PSSA's/Keystones.

ETHAN: While they are a stressful time for most students, I view it more neutrally because for me in the past I haven't had any trou-

ble or problems with PSSA's/Keystones.

STUDENT #1: It sucks [and] I hate it so much. Why do we have to do this stuff if we don't know half of it? Why do we have to take them if the teacher didn't teach us well or didn't fully explain the problem? They give me bad anxiety.

STUDENT #2: I think the PSSA's are awful and useless.

All they do is stress people out. I understand we take them to test what the teachers have taught us, but kids don't take it seriously [and that reflects badly on a teacher that might be very good at teaching].

Based on our interviews, it seems like most students have a negative at worst and neutral at best perspective of the PSSA's/Keystones. Despite students' opinions of them, we will continue to take the PSSA's and Keystones until we graduate high school, a fact that most middle schoolers despise. Perhaps students in the future will be spared the burden of these ridiculously long and overcomplicated testing systems, but only time will tell.

Mental Health PSA

By Madilynn Husack
Team 8 Barker

Mental health is a topic that is all around us right now. People are always talking about how important mental health can be, and they are not wrong; it is very important.



Life is stressful: I get it. It is fine to take a step back to just breathe, but sometimes you need more than just that. It's okay to ask for help. Find a trusted somebody. That could be your friends, mom, dad, grandparents, teacher, guidance counselor as long as it is somebody you trust. If you don't have that, 988 is the number for the suicide prevention hotline. It is open 24/7, and if you are not comfortable talking with somebody they also have a way to text in.

For anybody who knows of people who struggle with mental health problems don't be afraid to tell someone because you telling someone could be saving someone's life. Tell someone trusted or we are lucky enough to have the safe to say program. If you are truly worried about someone's well being, telling somebody is the best thing you

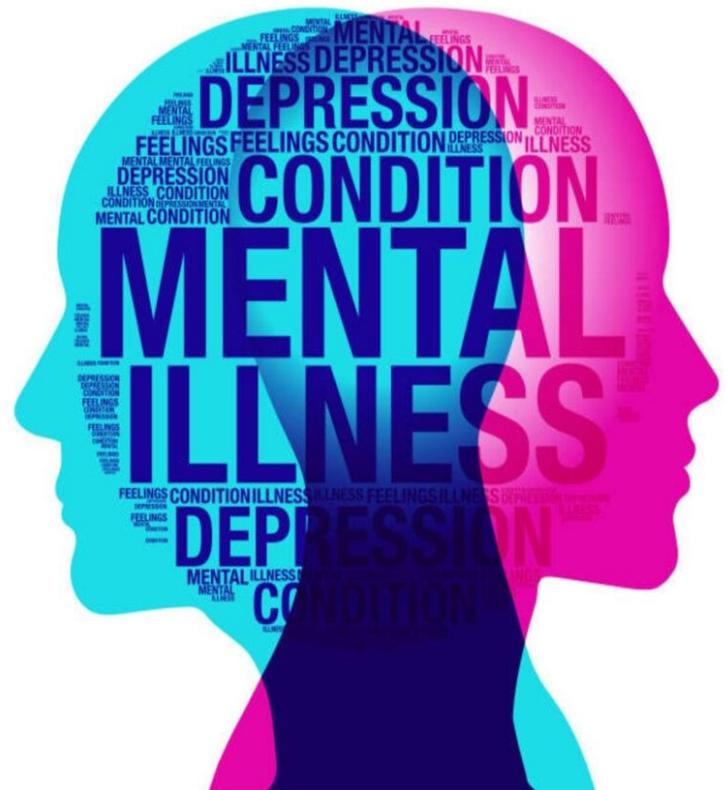
could do. For people who might not be at the stage of wanting to tell people some things that I can recommend are: find the problem of why you are feeling that way, if you don't know that's okay, find a healthy coping mechanism, the healthy part is the key word, sometimes social media is the

issue, try getting off of it for a day, and it will take time to heal. I can understand it is a hard thing to have to tell anybody that you want to harm yourself or just do bad stuff to yourself, but sometimes the best thing to do is not take on that journey alone because in reality you are not alone.

If you take nothing from this article at least take these couple of points:

If you're struggling with mental health, you are not alone.

- Stress is normal.
- There are people who want to help you through this.
- Find a HEALTHY coping mechanism.
- Everything takes time.



If you are really struggling, I hope this helps you in some way.



Donate Your Time: Volunteer Here!

By Madilynn Husack

Team 8 Barker

Maybe you feel like you should have helped out more last year. Volunteer at the local station or your local church. Well don't fear, I am here to help. Let me give you some small local and national charities to donate or volunteer.



-Forgotten Feline and Fidos-

A non-profit organization that strives to “reduce the number of homeless, unwanted cats by offering a low-cost spay/neuter program and by working with various communities to help control the feline population.” What couldn't you love about an organization that wants to take felines off the streets and find them a forever home, and it is a no-kill shelter, what couldn't you love? They take volunteers all the time and if you want to give back to your community don't be afraid to fill out their volunteer application form or if you want to donate look on their website, at forgottenfelines.org, or contact them with any questions at fffvolunteer@verizon.net or 610-737-6851.



-Feeding America-

Hunger is a problem all over the world, in America

alone 33 million people suffer. So how about donating to something that can help people in our own communities. Feeding America is a great option along with the local food banks. Donating 1 dollar gives 10 meals to starving Americans, so if you have that extra dollar why not donate it to a good cause. 98% of all proceeds go to starving Americans rather than the organization.



Sixth Street
SHELTER

-Sixth Street Shelter-

The last organization that I am going to recommend is Sixth Street Shelter. It helps all walks of life get back up on their feet until they get a job. Their mission is to, “end generational poverty and families experiencing homelessness by increasing independence through self-sufficiency.” Visiting their website, www.sixth street shelter.org, and going to ‘Get Involved’ can give you a list of events, ways to donate supplies and funds, or a way to volunteer. That was all straight from their page.

All of these organizations I highly recommend. Even donating that dollar you found on the ground can make a person's day. These aren't all the places you can donate or volunteer at, but these are some suggestions. I hope this helps in finding some great charities to donate and volunteer.

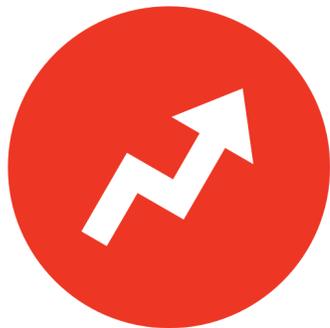
BuzzFeedNEWS

**Buzzfeed Created and
Written**
by Andi Szwest
Team 8 Barker

Which Season Are You?

Click here to find out!

Click on the hyperlink to
be take this edition's latest
Buzzfeed quiz!



Delusions of OPTICAL ILLUSION

By Madilynn Husack
Team 8 Barker

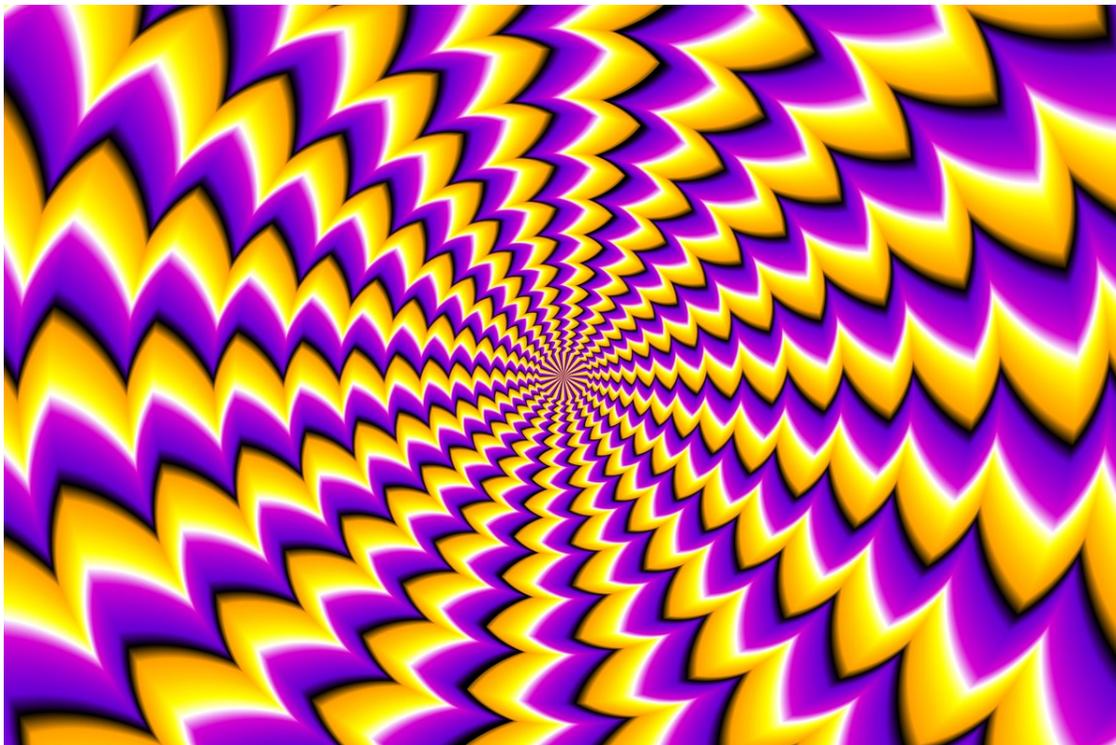
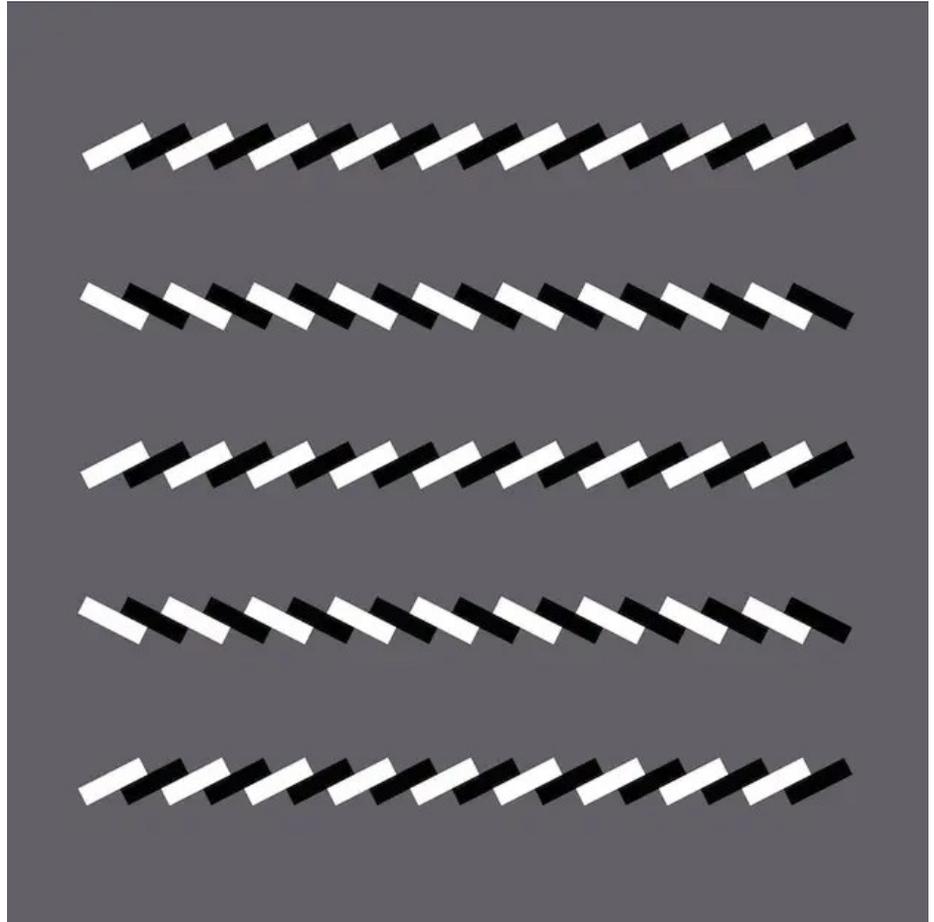
Optical illusions are everywhere. You can find them online, on products you buy, while watching tv... you get my point, so the Bulldog Bark team wanted to see if you could be fooled by these optical illusions. Starting with one that has divided the internet forever, along with “is the dress blue or gold” or the Laurel or Yanny” debate: The Cat and the Stairs. These types of illusions have always put a rift in the internet. So the real question is: what side are you on?



Is the cat going up the stairs, or is the cat going

down the stairs?

Do you think the lines are straight or on an angle? Personally, I believe they are on an angle, but I'm curious to see what you think?



You may be thinking that this is a video, but it is your mind playing a trick on you. This picture is spinning in a way that could be different though. I see it spinning counter clockwise.

Next, which is bigger-- the blue or black folder? Think carefully about this one because you may be tricked!



Lastly, I know you're just looking at a couple of cute, but kind of sad looking puppies, but the question is this: Is the puppy on the right slightly larger than the puppy on the left?

If you've made it this far without your brain exploding, congrats. If you were wondering what the answers were to the last two, it is the blue is bigger than the black

and the puppy on the right was bigger than the one on the left. If you are interested in looking at more optical illusions, I recommend going to Howstuffworks.com and going to their, "[Can You Get a Perfect Score on This Optical Illusions Quiz?](#)" I hope you enjoyed this little fun brain break while reading the *Bulldog Bark*.

Stuck Between Chaos and Controversy

By Norah Lipsky

Team 7 Barker

Within the past two years, there has been a lot of controversy among new movie releases, arguing over whether or not the content is appropriate, or if the concept is accepted by public eye. To begin, we will start with *The Little Mer-*



maid. In this live-action movie, Ariel is black. According to CNN, “the internet has been sodden with wave after wave of racist critics complaining that Ariel, the completely fictional underwater fish woman, shouldn’t be Black. Hashtags like #notmyariel are bouncing around social media, and YouTube hid the dislike counter on the official video after it was bombarded with racist comments and more than 1.5 million “dislikes.” One group of critics went as far as to share a digitally altered version of the teaser that featured a White woman in place of the movie’s star Halle Bailey, who

they called a “woke actress.” *The Little Mermaid 2023* trailer, as of this writing, has hiked to 2.4 million dislikes on Youtube. Some people see this as something that should never occur as the original Disney film featured a white character, while others are excited for how this movie can inspire

little kids everywhere! In my opinion, this movie should be seen as an exciting opportunity for little boys and girls around the world with the

same race.

The Little Mermaid isn’t the only movie that is controversial this year.

Next up, *Puss in Boots: The Last Wish*. Now, this movie has many different factors making it controversial. What’s most criticized is the movie’s animation style. It has a more paint-like style than the first movie. Next, the action in this movie people say isn’t appropriate for kids ages 7 and under. People argue that there is too much violence, foul language, and scary parts in this movie. Given these points, there are plenty of other movies that are controversial. Given the fact that we are the ones to stir it, we are also the ones who can end it.



BULLDOG HAPPENINGS!



doghouse fiction



An Easter Story

By **Norah Lipsky**
Team 7 Barker



Filene was a bunny filled with hope and joy. She always believed she could become the greatest Easter Bunny who ever lived. She tried so hard to hide eggs, fill Easter baskets, and spread happiness. Though Filene worked so hard, no one appreciated the hard work she put into her love for Easter. No one agreed that Easter was about hope and joy. They believed it was only for their love of candy, jelly beans, and gifts. On the other hand, Filene enjoyed giving and pursuing her love of making other bunnies happy. She believed if she put good out into the world, good

would come back to her. But no one ever seemed grateful.

Years went on, and over time happiness faded from Filene. She no longer hid eggs, or filled easter baskets, or spread happiness. All bunnies started to realize that they missed the Filene who used to be happy and excited to share the love of Easter. So, the bunnies devised a plan to bring their Filene back. When

Filene left her burrow, the bunnies hid eggs, filled her Easter basket, and decorated her entire home. When Filene returned she was astonished. She realized that Easter day, good truly does come back to you.

BULLDOG ART!

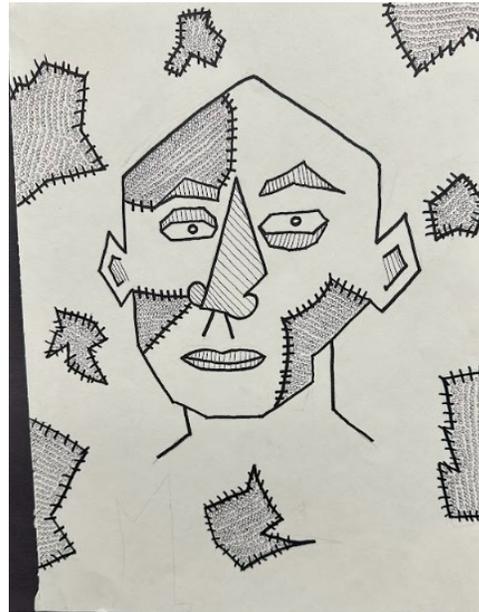


Graphically Designed and
Written by Norah Lipsky

Team 7 Barker



BULLDOG ART!



Letter from the Advisor

Spring break is upon us, and we all are certainly looking forward to that time to recharge and connect with our friends and family. It is my hope that we come back inspired and reenergized!



The Bulldog Bark serves to represent students' voices at Northern Lehigh, so speak up! *The Bulldog Bark* is always looking for more Barkers to add to the pack; even if you would like to contribute to just one issue. This paper serves to represent all of us. If you have any article ideas

or are interested in writing at any point, please see me at the TIS office (in the back of the library) or send me an e-mail: bdunham@nlsd.org. Also, if you are a talented artist, I would love for you to feature your artwork! We have plenty of room to show off your skills!

I would like to acknowledge the small, but mighty 2022-2023 *Bulldog Bark* pack for another great edition. P.S: We *really* need more people, some come join us!

Madilynn Husack, Norah Lipsky, Mackenzie Kuhns and Andi Szwast

Enjoy your well-deserved break.

-Ms. Dunham