

The Bulldog Bark



Advisor: Ms. Dunham
Principal: Mr. Hauser

Your Middle School News Unleashed!

Spring 2024

ARTS FEST 2024

By Harlow Pesesko
Honorary Team 7 Barker

On March 27th, 2024, Northern Lehigh Middle School hosted its

first arts festival, spanning the entire day and featuring a diverse array of artistic expressions. The festival showcased five pillars of art: visual, music, performing, literary, and media, each displaying meticulous craftsmanship and creativity.

Students, regardless of their initial interest in art, found themselves captivated by the talent on display.

The day kicked off with activities designed to help students explore potential career paths in the arts and identify their creative strengths. A highlight of the morning was a spirited competition between homerooms during

the kick-off assembly. Additionally, the school welcomed five special guests, who shared how the arts had shaped their lives. These presentations ranged from stories



of success in engineering to reflections on careers in photography and music. Notably, some presenters were former students, further showcasing the remarkable talent within the school community: Mike Trotta (drone), Addie George (photographer), Rebecca Blocker (engineer), Terri Trotter



Artsfest Logo designed by Lily McCarty



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BuzzFeed Quiz

Which Water Bottle Are You?

A Stanley? A Hydroflask? A Yeti? Something more humble? Take this personality quiz to find out by clicking [here!](#)



(entrepreneur) and our very own Officer Jones (musician). In addition, our cheerleaders also performed a routine and taught the student body a cheer.

During homeroom was the Career Artifacts exhibit, Therapy Dog Visits for relaxation, and the Paper Shoe Challenge, fostering essential skills and teamwork.

Throughout the day, students enjoyed a variety of activities during lunch breaks and designated visiting periods.

Various student activities were held in different locations across the school. From poetry experimentation to kinetic bridge building, students had the opportunity to engage in a wide range of creative activities. Notable events included the Paper Shoe Fashion Show, featuring innovative designs crafted by students, and performances by the MS Band and student musicians.

As the day drew to a close, the festival culminated in a series of final activities, ensuring that the celebration ended on a high note. Teachers led the following activities to which students had to choose three: Poetry, Camouflage Butterflies, Beat Challenge, Kinetic Bridge Build, Paper Roller Coasters, Origami/Paper Plane Engineering, String Art, Hula Hoop Geometry, Pixel Art, Kindness Rocks, Theatre Games, Mindful Movements, Chalk the Walk, and Jazz Improv.

Whether participating in workshops, admiring artwork, or enjoying performances, attendees left the festival inspired by the creativity and talent displayed throughout the day.





From TikTok Trend to Tainted:

The Rise and Downfall of Stanley Tumblers

By Lucas Fenstermaker and
Casey Farkas
Team 7 Barkers

In late 2023, a TikTok user named @Danimarielettering shook the internet with a video of her burnt car, revealing an unexpected treasure inside—a Stanley Cup nestled in the wreckage of her KIA “still with ice in it.” What started as a quirky discovery soon morphed into a full-blown phenomenon, capturing the attention of shoppers worldwide.

One reason people bought the Stanley’s is because they fit easily in cup holders unlike the Hydro Flasks that some still had. The appeal was clear: Stanley tumblers offered a convenient solution. People were obsessed with these cups, many people even purchasing multiple, even though they are REUSABLE, defeating the environmental benefit all together.

Early January of this year, Stanley released their Valentine’s Day cups that people went crazy over. Stanley fans fought for these cups and camped at Target, just to be first in line for the new release of Stanley products, the cups themselves almost \$90 each. At this point, they weren’t even cups anymore; they were whole backpacks as they are often accessorized. People buy carrier bags for their Stanley cups, carrying things like food, credit cards, lip balm, and many other things. Many are even starting to buy snack bowls off of Amazon that could attach to the cup. All of this occurred before Stanley’s lost their popularity



A Stanley cup appears to have survived a car fire in a TikTok video. [danimarielettering/TikTok](#)

- A woman posted a TikTok video showing how her Stanley cup survived a car fire with the ice inside unmelted.
- The bottle brand responded on TikTok by saying it will replace the woman’s vehicle.
- Stanley has become one of TikTok’s favorite portable drinkware brands in the past year.



due to their positive testing for lead.

Most customers moved on to the Owala water bottle even after the Stanley company claimed that the stainless steel prevents the lead from contaminating the water.

Are Stanley cups worth the hype? Well, that’s for you to decide.



Stanley Scandal:

What will “lead” to its decline?

By Harlow Pesesko

Honorary Team 7 Barker

That Stanley that just crashed on the classroom floor? It didn't just disrupt class; it might just disrupt the owner's brain growth.

Stanley cups are an incredibly popular brand tumbler cup, only recently becoming desirable after making its way into mainstream media. However, it's important to note that Stanleys are not new; in fact, they've been around for a hundred years, to be exact. It was 1913 when William Stanley invented the all-steel, double-wall vacuum bottle and stuck his name on it. Interestingly, Stanleys used to be marketed to men, having a thermos-like design and only being available in cooler-toned colors. (Image located below).



Sales revenue for Stanley were somewhat low, due to their look

being incredibly common, making them blend into every other irrelevant water bottle.



In 2022, the company changed their brand appearance, now catering to women. The tumbler quickly became an internet sensation. Every woman in the country seemed to have a Stanley in their home somewhere. However, most people predict that Stanley's will soon fall out of the spotlight for upcoming trends, as the price for their cups is incredibly high as it goes into higher demand. Many people have pointed out that for a much cheaper

price, you could have a water bottle that serves the same job.

Another complaint that rose from product consumers was the flawed design choice of having a

straw in a cup meant to be portable. However, this might be a genius marketing tactic. If fans of the cup have worries about their cup leaking when tipped over, they can buy covers made by Stanley, gaining the company even more money. Also, whether intended or not, many returning customers buy their cups in every color offered, as the cup is seen as an accessory for their outfits, some people having them in numbers of hundreds. Complaints about the cup seemed to be standard for any product, until something shocking was discovered. Some customers made

See Stanley, Page 6

claims of lead in their cups, which was then followed by a public announcement by the company that, yes, there is lead in the process of manufacturing their cups. Stanley revealed that it is extremely rare (not impossible) to be exposed to lead unless the bottom of the Stanley is damaged. This announcement is not very reassuring in the safety of the cup, as water bottles are very easily and often damaged. If you have one, think of a metal water bottle in your house. Does it have dents from being dropped? Now, think of the amount of times class has been interrupted by a water bottle falling off of a desk and loudly crashing to the ground. The reassurance of no exposure happening seems less comforting now, doesn't it? However, what even are the effects of lead exposure? Lead exposure can cause:

- High blood pressure
- Joint and muscle pain
- Memory and concentration troubles
- Headaches
- Mood disorders
- Lead exposure in children can cause
- Developmental delays and learning disabilities
- Irritability
- Weight loss/loss of appetite
- Fatigue
- Hearing loss
- Stomach pains
- Seizures
- Desire to eat inedible items (disorder known as Pica)

Many supporters of the cup state that the lead helps seal the cup, allowing it to hold the tempera-

ture of liquids more efficiently. As a response, another popular water bottle brand, "Hydro Flask" made a post on the situation, poking fun at their rival company.

Hydro Flask's social team posted a picture on their Instagram reading, "For over a decade, Hydro Flask has NOT had lead in our sealing process."



This statement indirectly makes fun of Stanley, boasting about their safer manufacturing process, which is shared by many other water bottle companies, many of which are much cheaper and more easily portable than Stanley's. Because of this, Stanley is currently going through a lawsuit, brought by a Seattle-based firm. Not much information has been released publicly about the lawsuit, but until the case has been resolved, there is much to wonder about. Unfortunately, many states protect cases from being public accessed, so not every question about the situation will be answered.

Besides speculation, here is an actual issued statement about lead in its product:

"At Stanley, one of the key features of our products is our vacuum insulation technology, which provides consumers with drinkware that keeps beverages at the

ideal temperature," the company wrote on its website, acknowledging that lead is used in the manufacturing process. The statement continues, "Once sealed, this area is covered with a durable stainless steel layer, making it inaccessible to consumers. Rest assured that no lead is present on the surface of any Stanley product that comes into contact with the consumer nor the contents of the product."

However, I predict that whatever information that is released will not affect the sales of Stanley's. Even with the confirmation of lead inside the cups, customers continue to completely buy out every cup on the shelves once restocked. The only way I see Stanley's falling out of the spotlight is as the novelty of having one fades and consumers revert back to cheaper water bottles that are immune to falling out of trends.

The revelation of lead in Stanley cups has sparked a crucial conversation about consumer safety and product transparency. As people weigh the convenience and style of these tumblers against the potential health risks, it reflects the importance of thorough research and scrutiny when selecting everyday items that could be overlooked, like a simple drinking cup. While the future of Stanley cups remains uncertain amidst ongoing legal battles and public scrutiny, one thing is clear: the lead controversy has left a lasting mark on the brand's legacy. Whether this impacts sales or its popularity is yet to be determined, but given its current status, there seems to be hardly a "dent."

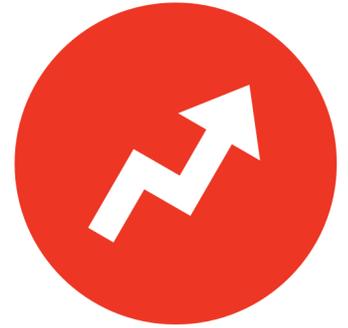
BuzzFeed NEWS

**Buzzfeed Created by
Alexandra Hege
Team 7 Barker**

Now that you're informed of the latest regarding our hydration crazes...

Which (Trendy) Water Bottle Are You?

A Stanley? A Hydroflask? A Yeti? Something more humble? Take this personality quiz to find out.



Behind the Clubs: WSCM

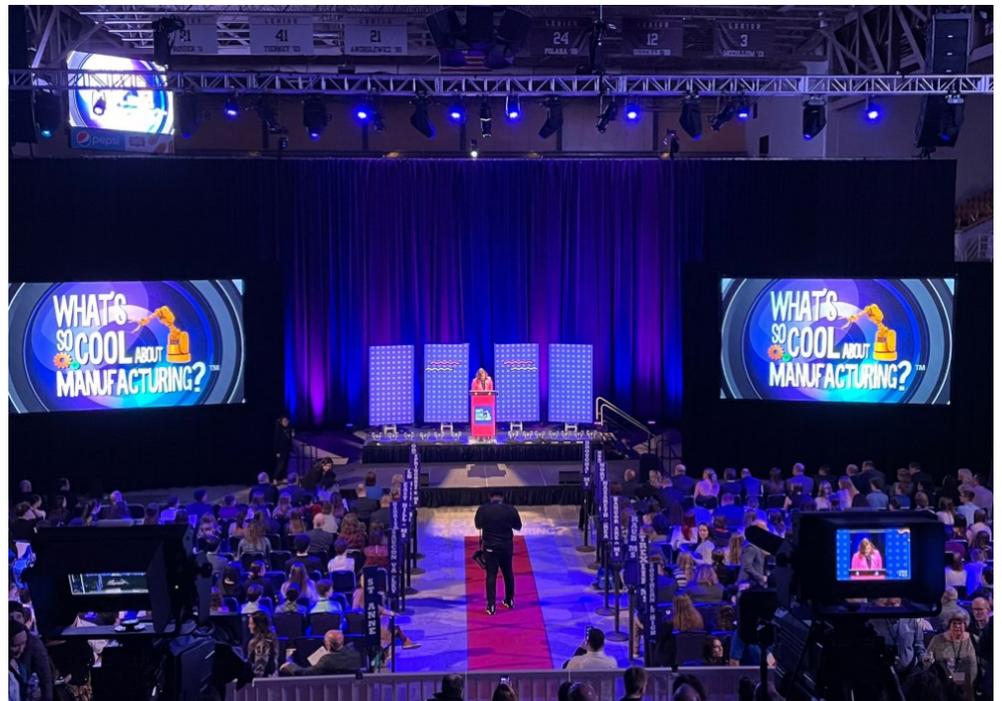
**By Ethan Binder
Team 8 Barker**

WSCM is a club available for 8th graders, standing for What's So Cool About Manufacturing. If you're in What's So Cool About Manufacturing, you get to work with video production, along with acting and storytelling. In this club, you work with local manufacturers to explore career opportunities and then create a video about the company you are working with. The video you create then participates in a competition with other schools in the area. There are eleven different categories for the competition: Outstanding Overall Program, Outstanding Editing, Outstanding Creativity, Outstanding Cool, Outstanding Team Spirit, Outstanding Educational Value, Outstanding Videography, Outstanding Outreach Plan, Out-

standing Career Pathway, Outstanding Brand Placement, and Viewers' Choice.

The What's So Cool About Manufacturing competition has run for 11 years, and even though it started in the Lehigh Valley, it has become a national

competition. This year, the student team was partnered with B. Braun, a manufacturer of medical equipment. When asked about their favorite part of What's So Cool About Manufacturing, Lauralie said, "My favorite part was seeing all the ma-

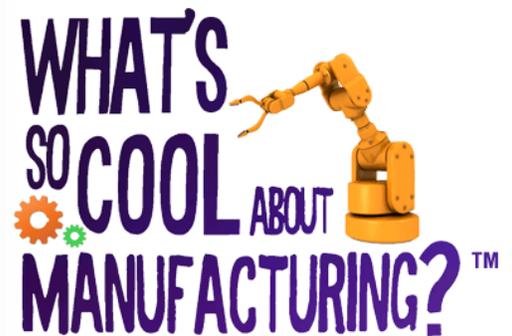


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chinery and how they worked. It was nice to see what medical equipment they make at B.Braun. Another cool part about B.Braun was they have little robots that make their job easier by moving carts out of the way and replacing them with new ones.” When asked about their favorite part of What’s So Cool About Manufacturing, Brooke said, “I enjoy being

in What’s So Cool About Manufacturing because I am able to learn new things like editing and learn about companies that are located near me. I also like being in What’s So Cool About Manufacturing because I like being in competitions; I’ve always been competitive so being in a competition with some of my peers and having the potential of winning

something excites me.” When asked about their favorite part of What’s So Cool About Manufacturing, Mrs. Frank said, “I like being able to tour the manufacturing facilities to learn how different products that many people use along with products that can save lives are put together.”



What’s So Cool About Manufacturing is a yearly video competition where student teams tour area business and create a short video based on what the company does. This year’s team toured, interviewed, and filmed B. Braun.

Behind the Clubs: Theater

By Ethan Binder

Team 8 Barker

Theater is a club that was originally for high school students only but has recently allowed middle school students to join.

In theater, you get to be an actor in a play and/or a musical. Another part of theater is the stage crew, where you can help make sets and move props and sets during the performance. To join theater as an actor, you need to be in an audition where you read a monologue and sing a song if you are joining the musical. To join theater as stage crew, one would need to sign up in the fall and attend meetings to decide what job an individual is interested in doing. For the Fall play

this school year, we did *Attack of the Killer Man from the Sun*. The play was a parody of old Sci-fi movies, but another factor in the play is the way they “break the fourth wall”. The play is about

tors, and even the playwright of the show came to see it. The next performance that Theater did this school year is the musical *Footloose*.

Footloose is about a kid named Ren who moves to a small town called Bomont. He soon discovers that there is a law against dancing, which is a problem because he can't stand still. The *Footloose* performance had more choreography than previous musicals and was a great final performance for all of the seniors

that were a part of this group. Theater has finished their performance and is moving forward to the Freddy's, which is really exciting!



Lou Ion, a scientist who tries to save the world from the Killer Man from the Sun along with others. The play's performance was a collaborative effort between the stage crew and the ac-



Behind the Clubs: Yearbook

By Ethan Binder
Team 8 Barker

Everyone knows what a yearbook is, but what some people don't know is who makes it or all that is involved in its creation. Yearbook is a club where the students make the yearbook for that school year. When making a yearbook, they first decide the theme for the yearbook. Then they decide the jobs that they are going to do.

There are three different jobs in the making of the yearbook: photographer, page designer, and editor. The photographer's job is to take pictures during different events throughout the school year. Then they send the photos to be uploaded to the website where the yearbooks are de-

signed. The page designer's job is to make the pages of the yearbook. After the photos are sent to the website, the page designers begin making each page of the yearbook. After the page designers finish a page in the yearbook, it is sent to the editors. The editors make sure everything is spelled correctly and that there are no mistakes. After the editors make sure there are no mistakes and fix

any errors, they send the page to be submitted. After all the pages are submitted, they are sent to Jostens, where they then print out the yearbooks to be sold. If you would like to purchase a yearbook, go to the Middle School Homepage, scroll down, and on the right side, there is a link to purchase! Act fast so that you don't miss the opportunity to remember the 23-24 school year.



Mental Health Awareness: SAD

By Storm Van Norman
Team 7 Barker

Mental health is very important in every stage of our lives but especially important in teenager's lives. A lot of people do not understand how important mental health is and how impactful it is. It can impact many areas of a teenager's life. Having poor mental health can impact school, grades, sports, friendships/relationships, and decision making.

Our mental health can affect how we think and think of ourselves, how we feel, and how we act. It is important that us teenagers take care of ourselves, our mental and physical health. During the winter time when the days are shorter, the sun is not out as long, our mental health tends to

get worse. As the seasons change, so do you. Springtime mental health can either improve or decline depending on your personality and what the new season holds.

Seasonal affective disorder (SAD) may have an impact on your mental health. SAD is periods of time when individuals go through mood changes as the seasons change. SAD can significantly impact your ability to function on a given day. Seasonal affective disorder affects everyone, not just people with mental health disorders. The weather impacts everyone and not just a few people.

SAD is due to the lack of sunlight and the days being shorter. The lack of sunlight may lead to lower serotonin levels, which is linked to feelings of depression. The hormone serotonin makes us happy. Teenagers are even more prone to mental health concerns because of hormonal changes, peer pressure, academic stress, and so on. Now that spring has sprung, take advantage of going outside and getting some fresh air. Just going outside for a little bit everyday can have a really big impact on your mental health.



Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD): More Than the Winter Blues

As the days get shorter and there is less daylight, you may start to feel sad. While many people experience the "winter blues," some people may have a type of depression called seasonal affective disorder (SAD).

The first step is to determine how much your symptoms interfere with your daily life.

Do you have mild symptoms that have lasted less than 2 weeks?



- Feeling down but still able to take care of yourself and others
- Having some trouble sleeping
- Having less energy than usual but still able to do your job, schoolwork, or housework

These activities can make you feel better:



- Doing something you enjoy
- Going outside in the sunlight
- Spending time with family and friends
- Eating healthy and avoiding foods with lots of sugar

If these activities do not help or your symptoms are getting worse, talk to a health care provider.

Do you have more severe symptoms that have lasted more than 2 weeks?



- Social withdrawal
- Oversleeping
- Gaining weight
- Craving foods with lots of sugar like cakes, candies, and cookies

Seek professional help:



- Light therapy
- Psychotherapy (talk therapy)
- Medications
- Vitamin D supplements

For help finding treatment, visit nimh.nih.gov/findhelp.

If you or someone you know is in immediate distress or is thinking about hurting themselves, call or text the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline at 988 or chat at 988lifeline.org.



nimh.nih.gov/sad

Nicki Minaj: *A One-Sided Rivalry*

By Harlow Pesesko

Honorary Team 7 Barker

Nicki Minaj is known as one of the best female rappers in history, surpassing sixty-five million listeners on a monthly basis. Nicki has won various awards for her musical talent, nominated by her loyal and adoring fans. However, Nicki's internet behavior has humbled her greatly, making even her fans embarrassed to call themselves so. A popular, but much smaller, rapper released a song named "Hiss," where there were a handful of lines that were most likely an allusion to Nicki. Four days after Megan's song "Hiss," released, Nicki responded with a diss track called "Bigfoot". Fans of Nicki remark that she could have spent much more time on the song to improve it and put her best foot forward instead of responding as quickly as possible. The name of the song itself is an insult to Megan, who stands at 5'10, with a size eight shoe size. In the song, Nicki even mentions Megan's dead mother. Even Nicki's most loyal fans had second thoughts about their support for her after this, many switching to

Megan's side. After Nicki dropped the song, streams for "Hiss" shot up by sixty percent. Megan earned an estimated \$121,000 in revenue from her song, 33,000 of which can be credited to Nicki's response. Nicki then took to X, (formerly known as Twitter) to drag Megan, calling her a serpent. After this, Megan still had not addressed Nicki, which only made her angrier. In an attempt to get a response, Nicki's insults transitioned from petty to vulgar,

accusing her of multiple things online. Megan continues to ignore Nicki, which could be a marketing tactic. The more attention Nicki brings to Megan's song, the more exposure Megan gets from Nicki's large platform, not to mention the extra money. While Nicki's fans struggle to defend her, Megan gains supporters.



TRUE CRIME STORIES

Lacey's Journey: A Tragic Tale of Neglect

By Casey Farkas

Team 7 Barker

In the small town of Slaughter, Louisiana, the heartbreaking story of Lacey Fletcher unfolded, revealing a life marred by neglect and tragedy. At just 36 years old, Lacey was discovered in a shocking state, her body fused to her family's couch, surrounded by filth and suffering from severe malnutrition. She was found at a height of 5'1 and weighed around 96 pounds at the time of her death. There were insect bites to her left ear, face and arms all of which happened before she died. Lacey's hair was matted so much that it had formed into a 24 x 18-inch knotted ball that could not be straightened. Lacey's parents claimed that Lacey suffered from a neurological disorder called locked-in syndrome, which is why she couldn't leave the couch. However, this allegation does not justify the neglect that Lacey endured.

Lacey, 36, had first been seated on this couch since she was 24 years old. Before being trapped on this couch for more than a decade of her life, Lacey was a very well-liked person. Before being homeschooled, Lacey had many friends and was respected by her peers. Lacey was even on her school's volleyball team. Though after 9th grade, Lacey's parents, Sheila and Clay Fletcher, decided to homeschool her. Lacey had been diagnosed with

Autism, and her parents took her out of school. Lacey had also been diagnosed with social anxiety and "severe" Asperger's, a life-long condition known to leave patients with maladjusted social skills. Lacey was discovered on January 3, 2022, making it her 12th year of being on the couch. Since Lacey was autistic and non-verbal, her parents claimed that



Clay and Sheila Fletcher.
EAST FELICIANA PARISH SHERIFF'S
OFFICE

she refused to leave the couch. After finding Lacey, the medical experts assigned to her case decided to do an autopsy on her to determine more information about the maggots on Lacey's body. One of the medical experts for her case wrote "There was no evidence of decomposition at the time of the autopsy: therefore, it was determined that the maggots

were present prior to death." Even experienced professionals were shocked by Lacey's discovery. Dr. Ewll Bickham described the scene as unlike anything he had encountered before. He claimed that the stench of decay and much more permeated the air, evident of the horrors inside those walls.

Lacey's parents went to court and spent 18 months denying the second-degree murder charges. Lawyers for the family insisted that Sheila Fletcher loved and cared for her daughter very much. Sheila and Clay's attorney even claimed that the couple loved their daughter deeply. After the 18 months of denying the second-degree murder, Clay and Sheila switched sides at the last minute and pleaded guilty to manslaughter. Lacey's parents decided to plead guilty to manslaughter due to the guilt over the horrific death of Lacey. When Clay and his wife pleaded no contest to manslaughter, prosecutors sought 40 years behind bars. Clay and Sheila were arrested officially in May of 2022. The prosecutors got their way, seeing as they now have to spend a maximum of 40 years in prison. In the face of such darkness, it is vital to shine a light on cases like Lacey's, reminding us all of the importance of vigilance and compassion in safeguarding the vulnerable among us.



TRUE CRIME STORIES



Kara's Story: Escape from Captivity

By **Alexandra Hege**
Team 7 Barker

On June 24, 2002, Kara Robinson, then 15 years old, was tending to plants in the front yard of a friend's house in West Columbia, S.C., when a car pulled into the driveway. A man in his late 30s emerged from the car, offering Kara some pamphlets. He then asked if her parents were home. She explained it wasn't her house and that she was visiting a friend. The man, later identified as 38-year-old Richard Evonitz, then coerced Kara into his car. During the journey, Kara discreetly observed details of her surroundings, hoping to aid her escape. At his apartment, she endured a frightening experience but remained resilient, finding ways to gather information about her captor. Eventually, Kara



Left: Kara Robinson. Right: Richard Evonitz in 2002.

seized an opportunity to flee, bravely escaping to safety with the help of strangers. Her ordeal

led to the identification of Richard Evonitz as a criminal, and he was subsequently pursued and apprehended by law enforcement. By the time the authorities arrived at his apartment, he had fled. While the authorities were searching his home they figured out that Richard was actually a serial killer. The police then tracked Richard to Sarasota, Fla., on June 27,

2002. This led to a high-speed chase that ended when he tripped over spike strips on the highway and was attacked by a police dog. Kara's remarkable story has been adapted into a movie titled "The Girl Who Escaped: The Kara Robinson Story." Kara's story highlights the vital importance of personal safety awareness and preparedness, emphasizing the need for vigilance and quick thinking. Kara today is a public speaker and advocate for victims of crime. Today, 19 years after her harrowing ordeal and remarkable survival, Kara Robinson Chamberlain is married with two sons -- and has amassed a following of 219,700 on TikTok. She utilizes this social media platform and other resources to "spread hope and encouragement to other survivors," as she notes on kararobinsonchamberlain.com, and "To remind them that they are not alone and that they are stronger than what happened to them."



"We are who we are because of what happened but we are not defined by it.

I currently use my traumatic experience as well as my years of work in law enforcement to speak to groups around the country. I tell my story, help to educate those who work with victims, and empower individuals to be the best version of themselves they can be, regardless of their past."

—Kara Robison Chamberlain

Easter Traditions

From Around the World

By Reese Mankos

Team 7 Barker

Many of our readers likely celebrate Easter. Perhaps you spent your younger years wondering when the Easter Bunny would bring your candy and eggs. It's no secret how the majority of the U.S. population celebrates Easter, but what about the rest of the world?

Poland

On Easter Monday, the Polish celebrate Śmigus Dyngus "Wet Monday" with a friendly water fight.

Bulgaria

In Bulgaria, there is a unique tradition where people take an egg and tap it against another one. The belief is that the person who has the last unbroken egg will have a year of good luck.

Australia

In an attempt to raise awareness about the dwindling bilby population, confectioners in Australia have taken to making chocolate likenesses of these small rabbit-sized marsupials. Aussies can scoff at will, knowing that every bite they take is helping to save an endangered species.

Greece

Avoid the streets of Corfu on

Easter Sunday around 11 am. On this day people gather at their windows to throw all sorts of pottery down the streets. The noisy custom apparently derives from Venetian tradition when, on New Year's Day, they threw their old posses-



sions from the window in the hope of receiving new ones.

Norway

In Norway, Easter time means crime time. Norwegian love crime novels and detective shows! All TV channels are broadcasting crime shows, bookstores are filled with freshly-printed detective nov-

and the milk cartons carry short detective stories on their side during the Easter period.

Sweden & Finland

Children in Sweden and Finland dress up as Easter Witches on Easter Sunday and go door-to-door with bunches of willow twigs. They will say a blessing which is said to drive away evil spirits and in return the children are given a chocolate egg. A rhyming blessing is recited to drive away evil spirits, and the children are often given a chocolate egg in return.

Bermuda

Kite flying is everyone's favorite pastime during the Easter holidays in Bermuda. Bermudians make their own kites with wooden sticks, bright paper and a special tissue called "hummers" that make a buzzing sound, also known as the sound of Bermudian Easter. Everyone gathers and lets their beautiful kites fly at the annual Kite Festival on Good Friday.

France

On Easter Monday, in a village called Bessières in France, thousands of people gather to cook a massive Easter omelet. This giant omelet is created using more than 15,000 eggs and over 40 volunteer cooks. The omelet takes around 30 to 40 minutes to cook and is then enjoyed by many people attending the festivities.

Hope you had a wonderful Easter if you celebrated!

A Teen Perspective: The TikTok Ban

By Storm Van Noman
Team 7 Barker



TikTok may potentially be banned in the United States, and was almost banned in Montana. TikTok is famous for its short videos and trends that go along with it. It allows users to create, watch, and send short videos to each other. The app tracks what you watch and enjoy and gives you more videos about that topic which is called an algorithm. TikTok was created by the company ByteDance and has been around since September 2016. ByteDance is a Chinese company that monitors activity on the app and is at risk of not securing your information. Americans could lose access to TikTok within six months if a bill that seeks to force its Beijing-based parent company ByteDance to sell its stake is signed into law. The bill, passed by a vote of 352-65 in the House and, now, goes to the Senate, where its prospects are unclear. Lawmakers have long tried to regulate the platform. The looming threat of TikTok being banned has stirred significant concern, particularly among teenagers, who make up a significant portion of its user base. TikTok, the widely popular app known for its short videos and viral trends, has become an integral part of many teenagers' lives. It serves as a platform where users can create, watch, and share content, all while participating in a lively online community.

However, the potential for a ban is driven by concerns over privacy and national security. TikTok, owned by the Chinese company ByteDance, has faced scrutiny over its data practices and alleged ties to the Chinese government. If a bill forcing ByteDance to divest its stake in TikTok becomes law, millions of American teenagers could find themselves without access to the app within six months.

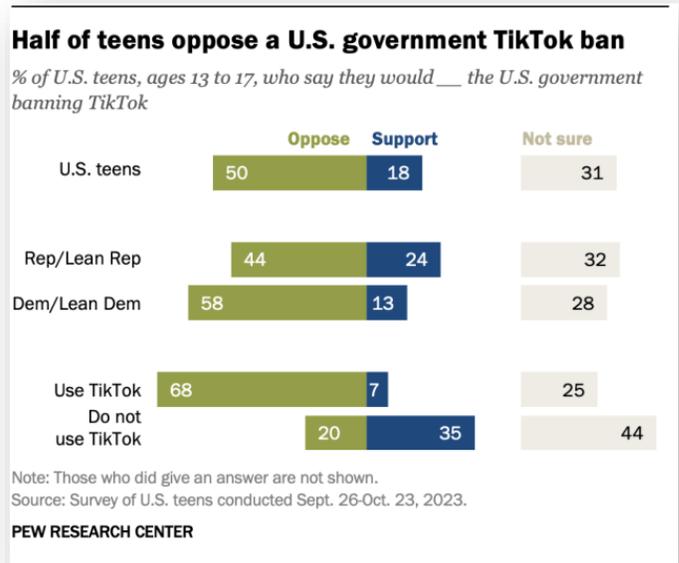
The impact of such a ban on teenagers cannot be overstated. For many, TikTok is more than just a source of entertainment—it's a means of self-expression, creativity, and even entrepreneurship. Numerous young creators have built careers and businesses on the platform, and a ban could have devastating consequences for their livelihoods.

There is widespread outrage over the potential ban, with many expressing concerns about its effects on creators and businesses. One group has highlighted the negative impact on millions of businesses and countless creators nationwide,

as well as the loss of an audience for artists.

Teenagers, in particular, have strong opinions on the matter. According to the Pew Research Center, a significant majority of teens oppose the idea of the U.S. government banning TikTok. Half of the surveyed teens stated that they would oppose such a ban, while only 18% expressed support for it. Another 31% are unsure, underscoring the uncertainty and anxiety surrounding the future of their favorite app.

The potential ban of TikTok is not just merely a matter of national security or corporate ownership—it's a deeply personal issue for millions of teenagers who rely on the platform for connection, creativity, and community.



What are your thoughts on the potential ban?

doghouse fiction



Adventures of Aria and Felix:

A Blooming Crush

By Patience Nitz

Team 7 Barker

Aria and her friend, Felix, were on a walk in the spring. The sun was felt warm on her skin, the snow has melted away, the flowers have started to bloom, and Felix

has stopped walki- wait why did he stop?

Aria turned around to see him staring into something in the near distance. She was about to say something, but stopped herself when she saw what her friend

was staring at, or better yet, *who he was staring at; a guy in a flower shop with long hair in a ponytail. Aria looked back at Felix, who was staring at the mystery guy with a vague blush on his face.*

Wait, why was Felix blushing?

Oh.

Oh.



Aria got a playful look and nudged her friend, asking, “So, whatcha lookin’ at?” Felix’s blush increased tenfold as he looked away from the guy in the flower shop and herself. “N-nobody important! Nope, not at all!” he exclaimed with some nervous laughter. Aria snickered and

said, “Yeah sure, and I’m blonde,” as she gestured to her ginger hair.

Felix put his head in his hands and groaned as Aria laughed at his embarrassment. She put her arm around his shoulders and said, “Hey, don’t worry,

it’s fine. I’ll just be your wingman.” “And how is that supposed to make me feel better?” Felix asked, taking his head out of his hands. “I’ll help you talk to him, that’s how!” Aria exclaimed, giving him a playful squeeze. Felix sighed, saying, “You’re as bad as Sheba.” Aria elbowed him. “Hey! Don’t drag my sister into this!” she complained despite her light-hearted smile and tone.

doghouse fiction



It was quiet for a moment before Felix asked, “So, how would I go up to him?”

[-]

Aria watched from outside the shop as Felix went in, going over to the person he was crushing on. He found him next to the roses, interestingly enough. Aria saw him tap the guy’s shoulder, which got his attention. Aria watched the two talk, glad that she was able to help.

Soon, Felix came out with three roses – a pink one, a red one, and a white one – which were all thornless and a slip of paper. He had a light blush on his face and a dreamy smile. “So, how did it go?” Aria

asked, a slightly teasing look on her face. Felix sighed and said, “In a way where I know that this spring will end well.”

Aria raised an eyebrow and looked over at the slip of paper.

Oswald’s number: (***) 934-7639

“Oswald, huh?” she said, looking back at Felix, who nodded. “Glad to be of help,” his friend said, offering a fistbump, which Felix gladly returned.



doghouse fiction



“Flower”

A poem about self confidence using flower-like terms

By Casey Farkas

Team 7 Barker

She blooms bright and beautiful
 But doesn't hear her voice
 She tend to pick out all her flaws
 Which isn't much by choice.

Stomped to the ground
 She falls with a thud

She never really realizes her beauty when she buds.

Her voice sweet as honey
 Her face quite flawless
 Never once did it occur to her that she was being
 truly modest.

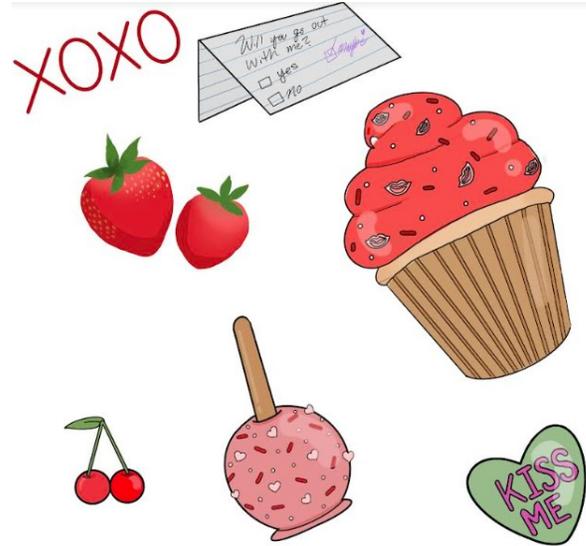
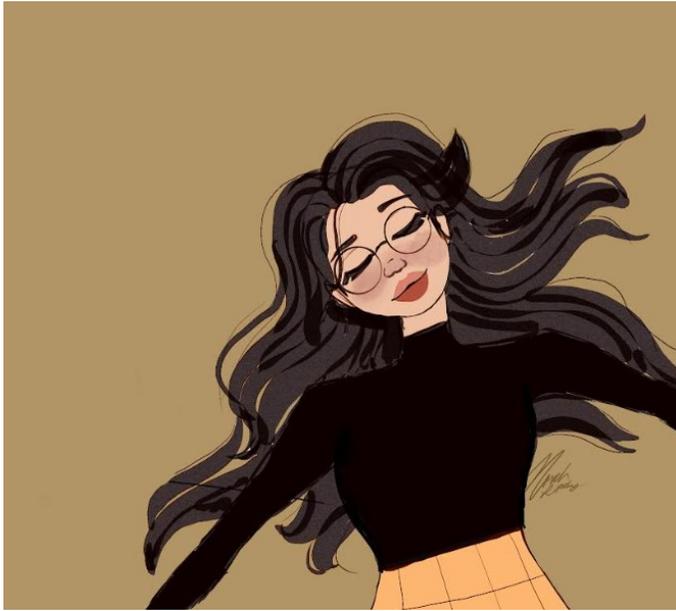
She prospers and is fair,
 But the tortures she receives she can hardly bear.

Stuck to the ground
 Unsure about herself
 She doesn't see her brilliant appearance, dainti-
 ness, and wealth.

One of nature's great gifts
 Although she does not believe such a thing
 She is more spectacular than any diamond ring.



NORAH'S CORNER!



This edition's art is all created by our very own Norah Lipsky, Team 8 Barker.

Letter from the Advisor

Happy Spring! I hope you enjoyed your spring break and got to relax with your loved ones, embracing the season's warmth and renewal. It is truly not only the time for rejoicing, but also a time for reflection. As Margaret Atwood once said, "In the spring, at the end of the day, you should smell like dirt." During this season of renewal and new beginnings, take the time to truly savor the precious moments with family, friends, and take the time for yourself to get caught up on what and who matters to you most—even if it is about which water bottle should trend next, or whether or not TikTok should remain. :)



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 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 2023-2024 *Bulldog Bark* pack for another great edition.

Ethan Binder, Casey Farkas, Lucas Fenstermaker, Alexandra Hege, Norah Lipsky, Reese Mankos, Patience Nitz, Harlow Pesesko, Storm Van Norman

Have a great start to Marking Period 4!

-Ms. Dunham