



doghouse fiction



“DON'T MAKE A SOUND”

By Casey Farkas
Team 8 Barker

My back presses against the cold, slick tile. My shirt is soaked through with sweat, clingy uncomfortably to my skin. I brace my arms on both walls bracketing me in. My hands wander, searching for something to grip onto. The smell of mold and chemicals permeates the air, burning my nose with every inhale.

My body feels heavy, almost unstable, as I lean against the corner of the colliding walls. My shoes are covered in a mysteriously sticky substance, making them adhere to the wooden floor beneath me. My breathing is controlled, although in suspense. I can't let him find me now. I've survived this long. I stand as stiff as my body allows, listening for any possible noise. In the dim lighting, I try to make out the confines of the room. I notice what appears to be a boiler, an old mattress, two doors, and a well. Litter covers the floor, along with a thick coating of what must be a horrible mix of dust and dirt.

Painstakingly, I slide across the wall, shuffling my feet as quietly as possible. As I'm halfway across the wall, my left foot knocks into something laying on the ground. It makes a light scuffling sound as it passes over the floor a few feet. I immediately flatten myself against the wall again, temporarily halting my mission. I hold my breath as sweat races down my face and drops off my nose.

After a few seconds, I decide to try again. I restart my sliding, my heart thrumming throughout my whole being. Almost to the next corner, I encounter the object formerly kicked. I glance down, not allowing myself to let my full vision set on one spot, and let my eyes adjust to make out the object.

I soon understand the item to be none other than a flashlight and start sliding down the wall to retrieve it. I go at an almost unnoticeable speed, hoping to make no noise...



doghouse fiction



“DON’T MAKE A SOUND”, CONTINUED

My eyes continue their frantic search around the room as my hand feels around softly for the flashlight. I grasp it as soon as my hands find it, and slowly make my way back up the wall. Who knows if it even works. I tuck it in my belt loop, the top of the flashlight stopping the whole thing from falling through.

As I finally make it to the corner, I just look around repeatedly. I have no idea where he could be. After a while - seconds, minutes, hours, I don't even know, I start making my way towards the middle of the room. Every step I take, I glance around and listen to my surroundings, until the toe of my shoe presses into the mattress. Looking down I notice there is a giant hole ripped through the center. Handfuls of foam have been removed, and a stain covers the vast majority of it. I step around the mattress and continue walking towards the center of the room and the well.

Once I've arrived, I let my hands roam on the cold and moist concrete bricks that make up the well. The well isn't very big at all, the body of it only going up to my hip, and the circumference probably about 15 inches at the most.

Damp wood holds up the roof, eroding shingles barely providing any coverage. I have no idea how far down the well goes, the only thing I'm able to notice at this moment the lightly swaying, dark water. I take in the room one more time before making the spontaneous decision to use this chance to see if the flashlight works. I pull the flashlight out of the buckle loop, feeling around for a button. Once I've located one, I push it, a dim light exiting the tool. The battery must be close to dying. I point the light down in the well, only to find just what I had seen before. All there is is dark, lapping water at the bottom.

I'm about to put the flashlight away and hopefully ensure myself a little more protection, when I hear the wooden floor creaking behind me. I freeze, feet glued to the floor, and my mind spinning. As slow as I can manage, flashlight still in hand, I start to turn around to see the offending man. But right as I've turned all the way around, it's too late. I have no time to make any more decisions or think any more thoughts, as I'm pushed into the well.

The End.

doghouse fiction



Lilac: The Missing Shadow

By Syllis Rivera

Honorary Team "6" Barker

Born half blind, Lilac Fresno had a childhood dream. She would later find a meaning to that. She wanted to be an aviator. Her parents didn't think she would be successful. She ignored her parents and moved on with life. About 26 years later, she successfully graduated from aviator school, being the top of her class, while also being as happy as she could ever be.

She first had to get money to buy an airplane. But in a turn of events, her parents sadly died of dementia and cancer. She thought she lost everything... But NO. She had to keep pushing through. After 26 painful years, she scraped enough money to get a beginner plane. She put on her helmet, and finally, reached the moment she has been waiting for so long.

When she tried to make a landing, sadly, her plane caught on fire, causing her to only have one option. And that option was to jump out of the plane. She barely made the landing, while running away from the plane that was about to blow up. When the plane blew up, she flew almost 5 feet away from the plane. It felt like being on a roller coaster for 2 seconds.

But when she tried to make a landing, sadly, her plane caught on fire, causing her to only have one option. And that option was to jump out of the plane. She barely made the landing, while running away from the plane that was about to blow up. When the plane blew up, she flew almost 5 feet away from the plane. It felt like being on a roller coaster for 2 seconds.

When she looked up, she saw a cave entrance. A cave entrance that looked old and smelled like dead pets. She was confused, but she went in anyway. When she went in, she saw the person she looked up to. Orville Wright, in a slight silhouette. She knew it was him because that was the person that she was inspired by when she was younger. But she doesn't remember anything about him, or how she knew his name.

She luckily reached into her pocket and realized she had her phone with her this entire time. So she looked up who Orville Wright's daughter was, and lo and behold, her name popped up. She was very confused, as her "father" should have died years ago, back in 1948. But then she slowly realized that she had fallen into a time warp when her plane blew up. She then figured out she fell through the duration of time and went back to 1949.

She then had to find a way out. She looked around and saw a door. She opened it to see her dead, next to the blown-up airplane that caught on fire. She ran into the door, slowly making her a silhouette of her biological father. **The End.**



CORALINE INSPIRATION

By Casey Farkas

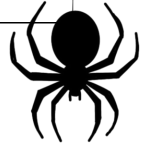
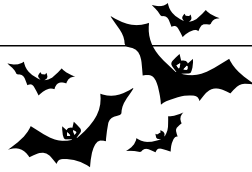
Team 8 Barker

Coraline has been a popular and original Halloween movie since its 2009 release. What a lot of people don't realize though, is the legend that the story is based off of. The author of the book, Neil Gaiman, drew his inspiration for the story from an ancient legend from around the time when he was a child.

This legend depicts a story about an old woman who lived with her son, daughter-in-law, and her newborn granddaughter. After a house fire that killed all of the members except for the old lady and her granddaughter, the old lady began caring for the child. The strange thing about this though, at least to the people of the town, was that they never saw the little girl ever leave the house. People from the town started to gossip and make theories about why she never was seen outside the house. Townspeople even gave the old lady the name "The Bad Mother."

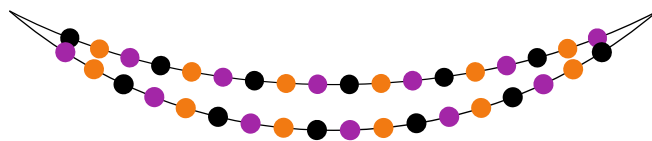
The house in which the old lady and her granddaughter lived served almost like a haunted house for the people of the town. A lot of kids would dare each other to enter the house at night, to see if they could handle it. But what most of the kids were finding was that there were no signs a little girl was living inside the house. These groups of kids would enter the house to find no toys or any feminine child clothing lying anywhere. After some investigation of the house, the group of kids found the burnt body of a newborn baby in a crib.

As it turns out, the granddaughter had never really survived in the first place, and the old lady was still emotionally attached to the dead corpse. More shocking than that, the body had buttons sewn where the eyes should have been, and the mouth was sewn shut. After the kids reported this news, the old lady spent the rest of her days in a psychiatric institution.



Another thing that was said to have inspired the storyline was a memory of Neil Gaiman's childhood. Apparently, there was a small door in his childhood home, much like the one shown in the movie. Young Neil opened the door, and ended up seeing the same thing Coraline did the first time she opened it—a brick wall. Gaiman also used the short story "The New Mother" as inspiration for the book/movie. All of these ways have evidently inspired both the book and the movie. But one more theory that shocks most people more than anything, is the theory that Coraline has schizophrenia.

A lot of people speculate that because of this main character visiting another world with a whole new set of same-but-different people, that Coraline must have some kind of mental diagnosis. While this theory has not been proven true by the author or anyone else, there are tons of people who believe this theory to be true. Remember to rewatch *Coraline* this Halloween and you can decide for yourself what theories you think are right!



BEETLEJUICE SEQUEL

By Adalyn Knecht

Team 8 Barker

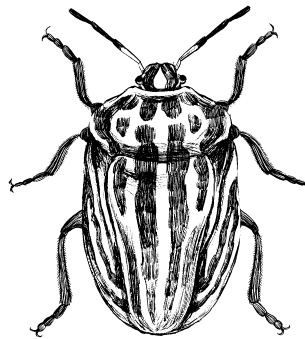
Beetlejuice Beetlejuice was directed by Tim Burton and was released to theaters on September 6th, 2024. This is the sequel to *Beetlejuice*, which was released on September 9, 1989. The original movie stars Michael Keaton, Winona Ryder, and Catherine O'Hara. These stars returned for the sequel, which also stars Jenna Ortega.

The sequel continues the quirky and supernatural adventures that fans loved in the original film. Set in the same whimsical and eerie universe, it incorporates Tim Burton's unique visual style and dark humor. Personally, I quite enjoyed *Beetlejuice Beetlejuice*. In the movie, Lydia, her mother, and her daughter return to their hometown after Lydia's father, Charles, tragically dies. Lydia summons Beetlejuice after finding out that her daughter is in danger.



The film explores themes of family, loss, and the supernatural, while keeping audiences entertained with its unexpected plot twists, quirky characters, and humorous moments. Michael Keaton's return as Beetlejuice brings back the iconic energy and mischievous charm that made the character a fan favorite. Jenna Ortega's addition to the cast adds a fresh dynamic, as her character plays a pivotal role in the unfolding drama.

I enjoyed this movie because it had many plot twists, very interesting characters, and funny moments. If you like these elements in movies too, then I would suggest you watch *Beetlejuice Beetlejuice*! The film not only pays homage to its predecessor but also expands on the story, offering something new for both longtime fans and newcomers alike.



Upcoming Movies:

By **Sylis Rivera**
Honorary Team 6
Barker

Rating by Released Trailers



There has been some controversy over some new movies coming out from companies such as Disney and others. All are my opinions and have some spoilers within.

Disney Movies

- *Moana 2*
- **Rating: 7/10**



Moana 2 and the other movies I am writing about are movies that did not deserve another one, and we didn't really ask for them, but we most certainly welcome them! The first movie, if you didn't know, is Moana finding the heart of Te Fiti. And to think that was a kickstart, wait till you hear about the next one! But the hype around Moana 2 is getting everyone involved, but also has been talked about online for a long time. It wasn't really expected until D23. In fact, it wasn't expected at all. But let's see what the plot is. Apparently, it is getting a call from her ancestors, which is pretty interesting though. It kinda deserved a sequel, as we got left on a cliffhanger in the last movie. We have got to see what comes next, as the plot is not what we expected. The trailer looks cool, but if you want to watch it, it's on Youtube. Yes, the ACTUAL trailer. But I guess we have to wait to see the movie in theaters next year. Moving on...



- *Zootopia 2*
- **Rating: 5/10**

Like I said before, this movie wasn't expected either. It's actually mind-blowing when you realize how long you've been watching this movie, then almost 7 years later, it's a sequel. But let's not get too off-topic, as we still have some great movies to talk about. What is the main story anyway? I guess they have to "crack a new case" again for Pete's sake. I don't think this movie needed a sequel, as it sounds very unbelievable. I really hope this movie will be filled with the features that we want. I don't think this movie will even do well. That's very unfortunate for how good the first movie was. The person who made Zootopia a movie is the person who approved of making another one. I mean, it should at least have good quality and new characters, because then it will probably be like the first movie, just without the introduction. Next movie!



- *Lilo & Stitch Live Action*
- **Rating: 6/10**

This movie is FINALLY going to be the better live-action movie, ever since My Little Mermaid had one. I could see my face for half the movie! It was really dark, and it only got 67% rotten tomatoes. But let's talk more about this movie. It's going to be a big movie for Lilo & Stitch fans out there, and there are a lot. Like seriously, what's the big deal with this movie? It came out almost 22 years ago, and people are obsessed with Stitch. No hate, but what is the reason? Anyways, I think the remake will just have a little bit of a change to the original story, not too much though. I don't know how the audience will react to this movie, but I would like for them to be happy with the movie as well. It's very clear that there will be many obligations on the cast, but I think it will do fine. It's cool that Lilo & Stitch have a lot of popularity now, so Disney gave them what they needed. I actually think I might go see this movie! I'm not a big fan of the series, but I like it. It's good enough for me to care about it. Let's hope this movie will be appreciated! On to the next movie!



Hollywood (California)

- *Minecraft The Movie*
- **Rating: 1/10**

This movie is not going to be a good movie. And I know, because can you tell me why they used real people in a BLOCKY world? That will not work, because Minecraft, the video game, is mostly blocky. Back in 2011, Notch knew what he was doing, why not Hollywood? And why did they use Jack Black to be Steve? He has a quote in the trailer, "I am Steve!". No you're not, you're Jack Black of all people. And what is Jason Momoa wearing? These random people are just dancing in front of a green screen for the entire movie. If I had the energy, I would just make the ENTIRE movie blocky. This is not cool, and I have a reason why. There are a bunch of content creators that made a living out of Minecraft, and this is how the movie is going to turn out. I really wanted the Minecraft movie to be just like the game, but no. It just had to be the exact opposite of what I expected. Hollywood ruined the entire movie for us. I would like to enjoy the movie, not dislike it. I don't like their choice of casting, either. But I would like to see the movie. I hope the plot turns out well. At least it's a movie. But the animal designs are different. They look disfigured. But we will see what the rest of the movie looks like!

Conclusion

All of these movies will be released next year, and there have been so many theories about all of them too. All of their trailers (Except for Lilo & Stitch Live Action, where there is only a teaser) are on Youtube. If you would like me to do more movies, I would love to do more! I had so much fun writing about these movies. These movies are good and all, but I would like to say that all of this work put me in a good mood. Thank you for reading my part of the newspaper! See you next writing!

Ms. Vangelo's Interview

By Storm Van Norman

Team 8 Barker

Please give a warm welcome to Ms. Vangelo, the newest member of Northern Lehigh Middle and High School's music department, replacing Mr. David Carroll who just recently retired last year. She currently teaches Middle School General Music and leads the Marching Band, bringing her passion for music and student connection to her role. Originally from Easton, Pennsylvania, Ms. Vangelo is excited to join the vibrant musical community at Northern Lehigh. Stay tuned to learn more about her inspiring journey and the exciting plans she has for her students.

What do you teach?

I teach Middle School General Music 7-8, Concert Band 7-8 & 9-12, as well as Marching Band.

What do you like about teaching?

I really love the connections that I get to make with students while watching them grow as young musicians.

What inspired you to be a teacher?

This question is always hard for me because when I was trying to decide what I wanted to do, I had a list of everything I didn't want to do. It wasn't until I sat down with my high school band director when she said to me "Is there any reason you aren't going to music school to be a teacher?" That changed my whole world because I never thought I could handle it, but here I am!

Where are you from?

I grew up in the Lehigh Valley in Easton, Pennsylvania. Where did you go to school? I went to Easton School District K-12, Indiana University of Pennsylvania for my BSED in Music Education, and the University of Delaware for my MM in Teaching/Performance.



What is your favorite type of music?

I enjoy too many types of music, but would probably choose Alternative, Indie, or Rock Music.

What do you like so far about teaching at Northern Lehigh?

I enjoy that Northern Lehigh feels like a family.

If you could teach any subject other than your current one, what would it be?

Maybe ELA.

What is one interesting fact about yourself?

I have been skydiving twice.

How many instruments do you play? Too many to name, although I am really bad at string instruments.

Do you have any hidden talents? I'm really good at puzzles.

For our next edition, we will have an interview for Ms. Armitage, our new Spanish and ESL Teacher!

When the Flood Gates Opened

Reagan Bellesfield

Team 7 Barker

Northern Lehigh High School experienced an unexpected event on Tuesday, September 24, that disrupted the usual routine. What began as a normal day quickly turned into chaos as water surged through the school, forcing a sudden evacuation and leaving students and staff bewildered. This article captures firsthand accounts of the incident from three freshmen, offering a glimpse into their experiences and challenges during the flood. To provide a deeper understanding of the event's impact, I set out to interview those who experienced it directly, focusing on their personal reactions and the situation with their belongings.

On Tuesday, September 24, the flood gates opened at Northern Lehigh High School. It was just an ordinary day, and all the students were at Lunch and Learn, wandering the halls, until water started flooding the school. The water was pouring through the halls! It started on the third floor but flowed down to the main floor, causing the students to be evacuated to the gym until they were sent home. I interviewed three freshmen to get their firsthand accounts of what happened that day, asking them the same two questions: "What was your experience with the flood?" and "What was the situation with the items left in your locker?"

Ryleigh Bellesfield was the first one I interviewed, and she said, "I was told to go downstairs because a toilet fell off a wall. Once everyone was gathered, we went to the gym for over an hour until we were eventually sent home early. We ended up being home the rest of the week!" Regarding her locker, Ryleigh said, "I already had all my stuff, but we weren't allowed to go back to our lockers until the next day."

Amara Fiorito recalled the event, saying, "I thought some kids were getting in a fight when I saw a bunch of kids standing around the hall. When I walked closer, I saw a massive amount of water. It was kind of shocking because I had no idea what was happening, and the teachers didn't know either. The water was moving very fast, and by the time we had all gotten downstairs, the water had completely filled all of Mr. Jordan's room." Amara continued by saying, "I had my math book and my notebook in my locker. They weren't too important, but when Dr. Bali emailed us saying we could get our stuff, one of my friend's parents drove us to the school, and we got our stuff. I know another one of my friends had some stuff in his locker, but he wasn't able to make it to the school because he didn't have a ride. His stuff was still in his locker, so he was doing the work he could with everything he had."

Then I asked Sophia Fiorito about her experience, and she said, "I was sitting, doing some school work during Lunch and Learn, when people started crowding the hallway. My friends and I went to check it out, and we saw water flooding the hall. We were all confused and wanted to know what happened. My friend and I were making our way downstairs when the water started flooding classrooms. Once we got downstairs, teachers started telling us to evacuate to the gym. After a while in the gym, they told us that they were sending us home." Sophia also said, "I was able to get the items I needed because my locker is on the bottom floor. The next day we were able to get our things from the school."

The flood at Northern Lehigh High School was an unexpected interruption that tested the resilience and adaptability of students and staff. Despite the initial chaos and confusion, the school community came together, and classes resumed after necessary repairs. The incident serves as a testament to the students' ability to face challenges and adapt to unforeseen circumstances, returning just in time for the spirit and excitement of Homecoming Spirit Week.

HURRICANE MILTON

**Lauren Gad and
Sylis Rivera**

Team 6 "Honorary" Barkers

About Milton

On October 9th, at around 8:30 - 8:35 PM, Milton ravaged mid-Florida, making it fairly battered the minute it hit. It was so powerful on the radar that people said it could be considered a "Category 6" hurricane, for it almost broke the record before it hit, going above Category Five. People around the world are still stunned by the power of this hurricane. Over 3 million people in the state of Florida had no power during the outbreak of this hurricane. Milton is the most powerful hurricane in 2024 (so far). It was suspected that Florida got broken into pieces from this hurricane, and miraculously disfigured it. The heavily devastating effect of the hurricane has injured many people in the process, but also is a point in history that will be remembered.

The Aftermath

The effect of this hurricane caused over 80 billion dollars (USD) in repairs for cars, houses, and many other things. But, if you were in that hurricane, you would learn about the needs you need such as water and food, and people now know for the future. But also, the most surprising thing is that Milton was so powerful, that when it hit, it reshaped the main coastline of Florida, causing people to think that Florida was going to be wiped away by this hurricane. Even though it wasn't, the damages for houses, belongings, and Florida itself are still severe. Speaking of, the Tampa Bay Rays, a major league baseball team, had plans for 2025, but then, Hurricane Milton took their field through the roof! No, seriously, it blew off the Tropicana Fields' top. So now they have to plan for a new field in 2028. What a bummer! According to Florida officials, about 125 (maybe more) homes were destroyed in the time period of Milton. This led to major controversy on social media, making it very popular across the globe.

It stopped around October 12th, going through Bermuda and dissipating into the ocean.

By the Numbers

30 fatalities. This number is fairly underwhelming, as we have had more fatalities in past hurricanes, such as Hurricane Katrina back in 2005. 1,392; to be exact.

180 mph. This number is record-breaking. On average, hurricane speeds range from 70-100 mph. The speed of Milton made the typical hurricane look like a baby!

1,000+ injuries. These injuries were caused by Milton. Some minor, some closely fatal.

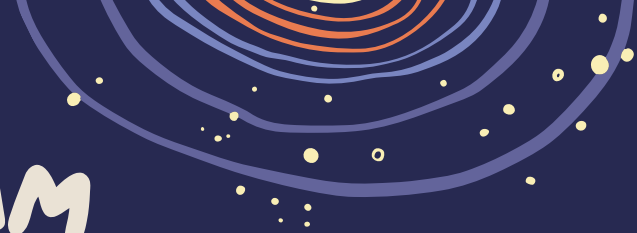
8,000 homes lost. Hurricane Milton sadly took almost 10,000 homes, as it washed over Florida.

85 billion dollars in repairs. Although this is not official, it's still a mind-blowing amount of money. Milton is 6th in the list of most costliest hurricanes recorded, with Hurricane Katrina at the top (\$125 billion) and Hurricane Bonnie (1998) (1.0 billion in 1998) at the bottom.

As we continue to gather information about Hurricane Milton, its impact remains a poignant reminder of nature's immense power. The resilience shown by the citizens of Florida in the face of such adversity is commendable. While the path to recovery will be long and challenging, the lessons learned from this event can guide future preparedness and response strategies. Communities affected by Milton are not alone; they have the support of people from around the world who are eager to help rebuild and recover. This hurricane has not only reshaped the landscape but also strengthened the bonds of community and solidarity. Thank you for reading and staying informed about such a significant event in history.

SOURCES FROM: WIKIPEDIA.COM, CBSNEWS.COM, NYTIMES.COM, USATODAY.COM, YOUTUBE.COM, GOOGLE.COM

BEHIND THE ASTRONOMY PROGRAM



REAGAN BELLESFIELD

Team 7 Barker

If you are not aware, there is a new program coming to Northern Lehigh Middle School named “Never Stop Looking Up.” It’s run by our beloved principal and science teachers, Mr. Hauser, Mr. Ohland, Ms. Merkle, and Mr. Gupta. I sat down with Mr. Hauser to learn more about it, and I’m excited to share the details about this new opportunity for students and their families.

Q: What inspired you to start the program?

A: I’ve always loved astronomy. Ever since I was young, I have been interested in learning about the universe. Before I was a principal or a teacher, I was a park ranger. I taught an astronomy program during the summer months and thought it would be nice to have a bigger and better program here.

Q: What equipment do we have available?

A: The astronomy program has four major pieces of equipment and one piece of software. We have a Celestron telescope used to take highly detailed images of space. We also have three SeeStar telescopes that connect to iPhones and iPads. Even though they are smaller, they are still high-powered and professional-quality telescopes.

Q: What is your vision for the program?

A: My main goal in the program is to make more students interested in the universe because studying the universe will connect to every subject you will study in your schooling.

My secondary vision for the program is to see our students earn recognition from the Astronomical League. That is an organization that recognizes people who are able to view and photograph objects in space, such as nebulas and star clusters. It is my understanding that no other middle school has ever tried that before.

Q: How will students be involved?

A: We will involve the students by teaching them how to use the equipment and how to take pictures of objects in space. I hope while they do that, they learn more about what is in the universe. Eventually, I would like students to take leadership in the program.

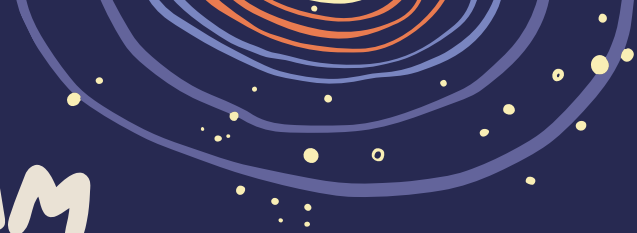
Q: Can you explain how the program will work?

A: The program will work by having gatherings throughout the school year when students and their families will be invited to attend. During these gatherings, they will record the objects that they view, take pictures of those objects, print the pictures, and maybe even use those pictures in other classes.

Q: When will the students meet?

A: The meeting times and dates may vary because we have to watch the weather. I would like to use the equipment for students in other schools, too, so I’m hoping for once or twice a month. I’d also like to use the equipment in classes for solar viewing. Every gathering would be different due to looking at different things because the sky is always changing.

BEHIND THE ASTRONOMY PROGRAM

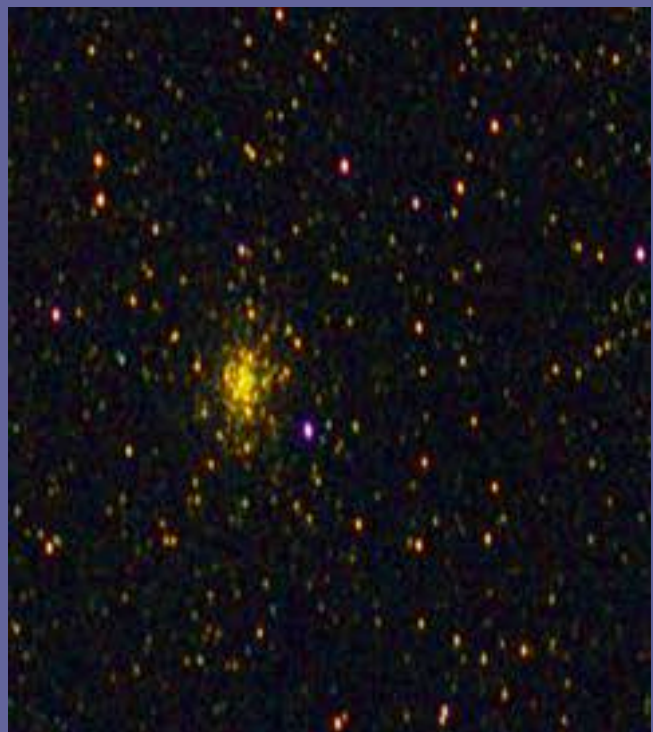


Mr. Hauser has provided photos featured in this article taken from our equipment, Thank you to Mr. Hauser and his team for organizing this cool program!



NGC 6960

6min



The Promotion of Overconsumption Through Social Media

Lauren Gad

Team 6 "Honorary" Barker

As time has passed overconsumption has gradually become more and more normalized through apps like TikTok, Instagram, Snapchat, and various others. Social media has rebranded overconsumption into something harmless, something it's most certainly not. This amount of consumption is very harmful to the planet in numerous ways. It heavily contributes to air pollution and climate change which can impact the mental health of the person indulging in it. The people who overconsume clothing are also harming others with their obsessive purchasing. Most clothing is purchased through fast fashion because of how cheap their prices are. The reason why they are priced this way is because in Asia, where most clothing is produced, there are no labor laws. The hundreds of people who work in these factories are treated awfully. They work incredibly early in the morning to exceedingly late at night. They are provided with no breaks and no off days. The conditions of the factories are not fit for humans to be working in.

The overconsumption of clothing, beauty products, shoes, purses/bags, and trending water bottles has detrimental effects on the wellness of consumers.



People who buy into microtrends promoted on social media are unlikely to keep them for over a year, as trends rapidly go out of style. Those who overconsume makeup and skincare products buy a mass amount of an item with the same purpose. This leads to the products expiring before the entire product is used. The long makeup and skincare routines many people have will most likely do more harm than good. Many makeup products are prone to cause acne or make it worse for those who already have it. Extensive skincare routines can damage the skin instead of repairing it. The abundance of harsh chemicals used can have many negative effects on the skin. Normalizing short and simple makeup and skincare routines will help both the environment and the people using them, but with how much makeup and skincare is promoted by large content creators, it is unlikely everyone will come to realize that less is more. Influencers are paid by large companies to promote their products. They are meant to make the viewers believe that the products are of better quality. This results in the buildup of unnecessary items. Big creators like this aren't just promoting beauty products. It is an endless mix of reusable water bottles, where the perk of it being reusable has become useless to consumers. Instead of reusing the water bottles as intended, people "collect" them in every color and briskly replace them with new, trendier cups. Shoes going in and out of style, useless home gadgets that propose tasks that can easily be done by humans, new clothing trends, and abundances of others.

Overconsumers are hoarders; we've put a name over it to glorify spending colossal amounts of money on redundant items.

owala oh why, why?

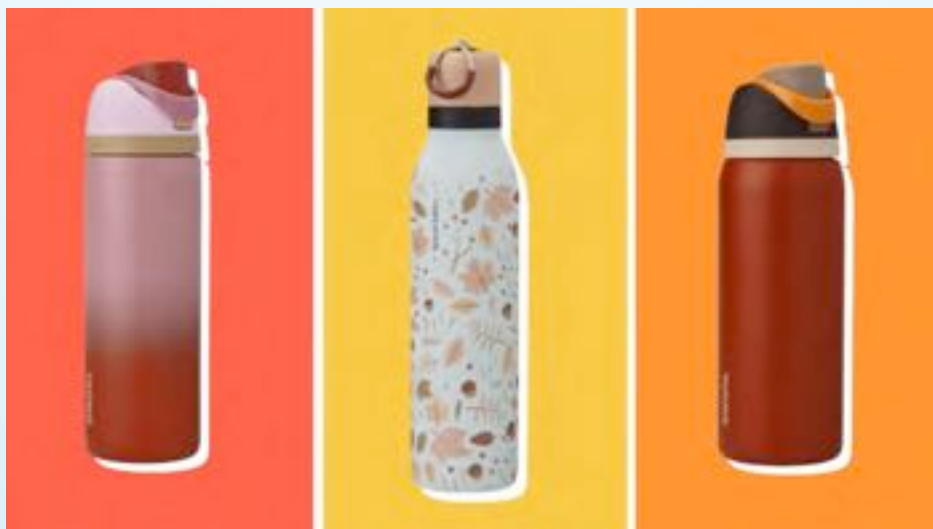
Zoey Fried
Team 8 Barker

Over the past couple of years, water bottle trends have become the new hype throughout our schools. For example, we went from Hydro Flasks being the most popular water bottles to Stanleys and Owalas. So, the big question is, are Owalas worth the hype? In most students' minds, it's probably a yes, but what makes them so special?

First of all, you have the multi-functional drinking top. This feature on the water bottle lets you choose between a sip and a chug without having to buy a separate lid. Second, these water bottles come in a variety of sizes, such as 24 oz, 32 oz, and 40 oz. The variety of sizes allows people to choose how much liquid they want to consume each day. Third, they are much more affordable than most premium-quality water bottles. If you compare prices, Owalas will definitely be cheaper for all you money savers. Fourth, they come in many unique color palettes. Unlike other water bottles, Owalas have color palettes that set them apart from some of the single-colored bottles. Lastly, the comfortable handle design allows for easier carrying and minimizes spills because it has two "lids" that protect your drink from spilling.

For me personally, I do own an Owala but not for the reasons you might think. Last Christmas, I received a new water bottle as a Christmas gift because my other water bottle broke. Even if you don't know the Owalas for their popularity, they are still great water bottles. They stand out from other leading water bottles and have excellent functionality with style. I bring my Owala everywhere because it is just so easily transportable and fashionable. Coming from me, I really recommend getting an Owala if you are in a sport or just for everyday use.

But whatever you decide, Owalas will be remembered in the water bottle trend along with the Hydro Flasks and Stanleys that came before.



crumbl cookies

Harlow Pesesko

Team 7 Barker

In 2020, a TikTok trend named '#TasteWeekly' fostered a significant spike in popularity for the brand Crumbl Cookies. The trend involved people buying and reviewing the week's flavors, rating them, and then sharing their thoughts with fellow consumers. However, as the business continues to grow, many people feel conflicted about the brand. Firstly, many customers argue that the cookies are outrageously overpriced. A standard serving of four cookies is around \$21. A single cookie is \$4.

However, you must also consider the size and quality of the cookies. Each cookie is very dense and about five inches in diameter. They are extremely filling, containing seven hundred twenty calories per cookie, which is about equivalent to a Double Quarter Pounder with cheese. These cookies are marketed as 'gourmet,' but are they really?

As previously mentioned, Crumbl releases new or recycled flavors each week in intervals. Crumbl markets their products in a 'limited time only' way to entice customers to try flavors before they are no longer available. The TikTok trend based on them also pressures customers into posting about the company and their opinions on this week's flavors. This gives Crumbl exposure and free advertising, not to mention how much influence people's favorite content creators have on them. Most consumers are more susceptible to being influenced by creators they admire than by the brand itself. If their influencer's opinion is positive, then the brand must be good. Additionally, overconsumption is another issue that arises from Crumbl.

Most customers get a full box of that week's flavors every other week. The nutritional value of the cookies and the reasons behind why they are being bought create a feeling of overconsumption culture tied to the brand.

However, before purchasing a product based on social media, consider the following:

- **Is the brand sponsoring the creator promoting it?**
- **Could this influencer be looking for a brand deal from this company or an invitation to an event this company could give them?**
- **Does this content creator have a reputation for truthfully reviewing products?**

A lot of influencers aren't being one hundred percent honest with you. Many of them value a paycheck over honesty with their viewers. Additionally, it's easy to see that eating cookies every week is unhealthy, especially if it's Crumbl. Considering their ingredients, nutrition, and calories, it may be safer to indulge in these cookies every couple of months.

However, Crumbl Cookies also bring positivity to America. The trend it has begun has instilled a sense of community across the nation. It allows all different types of people to join one another and enjoy something that they all love.



BLAKE LIVELY *BACKLASH*

Casey Farkas

Team 8 Barker

On August 9th, 2024, the book-made movie, *It Ends With Us* hit theaters. *It Ends With Us*, a romance fiction novel by Colleen Hoover, quickly became a bestseller. Fans immediately fell in love with the emotional, deep, comforting, and romantic themes. The book shows what it can be like to be in a domestically abusive relationship. The novel means not just a lot to the author, who has dealt with being exposed to domestic abuse, but to the fans as well. People who have gone through the same things as the characters were able to find some refuge and relatability in the book. In the movie, the main character, Lily Bloom, is portrayed by Blake Lively.

Blake Lively gained her fame through her previous acting roles such as *Gossip Girl*, *The Age of Adaline*, *The Town*, *A Simple Favor*, *Savages*, *Accepted*, and many more. This, combined with the fact that Blake almost exactly looks like Lily (red hair and blue eyes), made Lively almost destined to get the role of the beloved main character. Obviously, the highly-anticipated movie had many promotions and pre-release interviews. Some of these promotions started hatred for the previously all-loved celebrity. In a promotional campaign for the movie, Lively says, "Grab your friends, wear your florals, and head out to see it (the movie)." While this may seem like a fully lighthearted comment, it really doesn't fit when one of the main themes of the story is domestic violence. Fans did not react well, the comments on the video outraged. One comment said, "no one cares about florals. this movie is about DV. this marketing is so lost on the message of the book.!" Another comment states, "Wear your flowers?! 😞 does she know what the movie is about. She's here promoting this movie like is a Barbie movie 😞"



On top of this, people are mad at the way Blake has used promotional videos not to promote the movie, but herself. Fans have seen her promoting her beverage brands, Betty Buzz and Betty Booze, all the while she was supposed to be promoting the movie. Even in social media posts related to the movie, Blake has been promoting her beverage brands. Lively was also seen heavily promoting her haircare line, Blake Brown, as well.

Besides everything that has happened from a promotional standpoint, Lively has also gotten into some drama with her co-star, Justin Baldoni. In one scene of the movie, Justin's character (Ryle) lifts Blake's character (Lily) into the air. At this time, Baldoni had been struggling with back issues. To prevent any damage to himself or his co-star, Justin asked his trainer how much Lively weighed. This caused Lively to reportedly feel fat-shamed by the question. This, along with many rumors containing the two stars avoiding each other, their on-set kisses lingering too long, and many others, helped push backlash towards Blake. A lot of people don't accuse Blake at all, while a lot do. I guess it's up to you to decide who's in the wrong.

BULLDOG



Brooke Estrada, Grade 8



Anthony Jackovitz, Grade 8



Casey Farkas, Grade 8



Maya Bejarano, Grade 8

LETTER FROM THE ADVISOR

Dear Bulldog Bark Readers,

As we dive into another exciting year at Northern Lehigh, I am filled with pride for our dedicated team of writers and artists who continue to bring their best to each issue. Our paper is a testament to the hard work and creativity of every member of our *Bulldog Bark* family.

I'm also thrilled to share that we have transitioned to Canva for our layout design. This new platform will enhance our ability to collaborate, allowing each Bulldog Barker to have a hand in designing his or her own pages. We believe this shift will add a fresh and dynamic look to our publication and learning opportunity for our students.

Additionally, I am excited to welcome two talented 6th graders to our team. Their early promise in writing is truly inspiring, and I am confident they will bring fresh perspectives and ideas to our paper.

As we embrace the season of renewal and change, I am reminded of the words of F. Scott Fitzgerald: "Life starts all over again when it gets crisp in the fall." Let this be a time of new beginnings for all of us.

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 in Room 37 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 2024-2025 Bulldog Bark pack:

REAGAN BELLESFIELD, CASEY FARKAS, ZOEY FRIED, LAUREN GAD, ADALYN KNECHT, HARLOW PESESKO,
SYLIS RIVERA,
STORM VAN NORMAN

Happy Halloween! Let's have a strong finish to Marking Period 1 and a smooth start for Marking Period 2!

-Ms. Dunham