FALL 2025

THE TORNADO CONNECTION

KEEPING THE LINES OF COMMUNICATION OPEN

Alice in Wonderland Jr. Takes the Stage at BIHS

BY KYLEE MOORE AND LEXI RUDISH, EDITOR



The musical Alice in Wonderland Jr. will be performed in the Butler Intermediate High School auditorium at 3:15 p.m. and 7 p.m. on November 25. Admission is free, but donations are always appreciated.

The cast and director have been working very hard to prepare for the show. Mrs. Tepper stated, “It took two months for this musical to come to life.” Both the students and Mrs. Tepper agree that memorizing lines and performing without fear are important parts of putting on a great show. Even though the cast and crew are a little nervous, they know all their hard work will be worth it in the end. They also feel that the short amount of rehearsal time has been challenging, but they are confident they can pull it off. “I love seeing students who haven’t been in a musical gain confidence in themselves and others, and how everyone is excited for the final result,” said Mrs. Tepper.

Sydnee Fuchs, who plays the role of Alice, is very excited for the performance. She is proud of how much she has improved and how she has gained confidence over the past three years. Her biggest accomplishment has been memorizing all her lines and being ready to perform. Sydnee said her favorite line is number 76 because “it’s 67 backwards.” She added, “I’m so excited to play Alice because she has always been one of my favorite characters and one of my biggest inspirations.” Sydnee also shared that she is proud of how much closer she and her friends have become throughout the rehearsal process.

Grace Pfender, who plays the Queen of Hearts, is also thrilled to perform. She loves theater, singing, and dancing, and has been participating in musicals since sixth grade. She said she is most excited to perform the songs *Shake Hands* and *How Do You Do* because they get the audience involved. Her favorite line is, “Adventure is a wonderful thing,” because it reminds her that taking risks and enjoying life are important. Grace said she is proud of how she has grown as an actor and performer over the years.

The stage crew and cast are equally proud of their hard work on the set. They are especially proud of the backdrops, which only three people can work on at a time. Because each side must be painted for different scenes, the process is time-consuming, but the crew says the end result will be worth it.

(CONT. PG. 2)

Come support the cast and crew of Alice in Wonderland Jr. at the Butler Intermediate High School auditorium on November 25 at 3:15 p.m. and 7 p.m. In addition, don't forget to stop by the bake sale in the lobby. Proceeds will support future Drama Club productions. We hope to see you there!



New Labs, New Opportunities at BIHS

BY ARIA YOST, EDITOR

Two newly improved learning spaces, the Ag Lab and TV Studio, are transforming the student experience at Butler Intermediate High School. These upgrades offer students safer, more organized, and more engaging environments that enhance both scientific exploration and creative expression.

The new Ag Lab was built last year and has helped many students become more interactive in the lab. It provides much-needed space and materials for various assignments and allows students to collaborate with others using the resources they need. Students are also safer when working in the Ag Lab. Mrs. Baxter, a seventh grade science teacher, says, "The lab creates a safe space for all kids to work on lab activities, and the materials and resources there allow us many more opportunities."

Mrs. Baxter says the Ag Lab *inspires* a "science lab state of mind" in students, encouraging them to participate in hands-on activities. The Ag Lab enhances students' learning experiences by providing more opportunities for interactive lessons. Her class usually visits the lab once a week, while longer experiments are conducted in her classroom. Although she still does some activities in her own room, Mrs. Baxter says the Ag Lab offers much more space and safety than in previous years. The lab allows students to spread out and focus on their assignments, and it is large enough for two classes to work together comfortably.

The TV studio moved to a new and improved space towards the end of last school year. Mr. Cochran, an eighth grade history teacher and TV studio advisor, says that his classes have been able to accomplish much more with the updated space in the TV studio. The studio is divided into two sides. One side is the production area, where students send out the news, and the other side is the talent area, where students present the morning announcements for the school. Mr. Cochran enjoys teaching students how to speak in front of a camera, operate various pieces of equipment, and produce movies and videos in his ESP class.

Mr. Cochran says that the new TV Studio is a great improvement from the previous one. The new layout provides a better divider between the production side and the equipment area. The improvements help get the studio running more efficiently and keep the space tidy and organized. Students always know where everything is, and the equipment stays in place, giving them easier access to what they need. The space also helps students feel more comfortable, and the equipment is less likely to be damaged.

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Besides the announcements, students in the TV Studio run the soundboard, create the weekly schedule, operate the computer that broadcasts the announcements, and direct what happens during the show. Mr. Cochran enjoys teaching in the TV Studio because students learn something new every day, and it provides a fun way to share news with the school.

Fresh Faces: Butler Welcomes New Teachers

BY KRUZ CHOPP AND REID CUNY



Mr. Jewell and Ms. Baptiste are two new teachers at Butler Intermediate High School this year. Both are also new to Butler in general and are very excited to work with students and gain new experiences at BIHS.

Mr. Jewell is a new seventh grade ELA teacher who has also become a varsity football coach this year. He has a loving family, including a wife, a child, one dog, and two cats. According to Mr. Jewell, "Applying to Butler was the best option," because the school has a good reputation and is known for strong teaching.

He also has experience teaching at other schools, including North Allegheny and Ambridge. He notes that these schools were different from Butler because, in his words, "The kids here are more well-behaved and easier to teach."

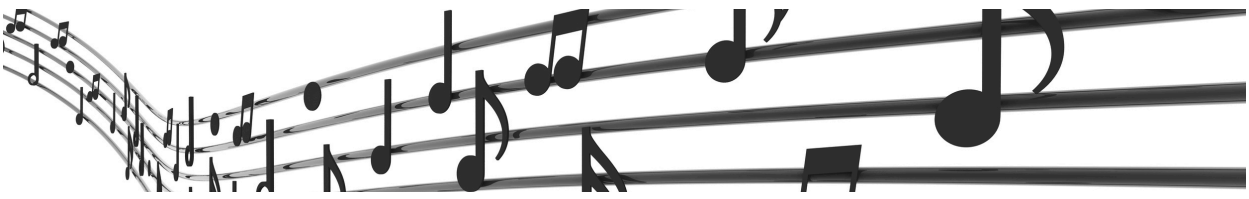
He added, "Getting to know the students has been the most rewarding thing because all of my students have opened up and become closer to me." Mr. Jewell explained that Butler was a good district to join because of the welcoming teachers, well-behaved students, and excellent teaching program.



Ms. Baptiste is the new seventh grade chorus teacher at BIHS. Last year, she taught at Fort Allegheny for one year and holds a teaching degree in music. So far this year, she has been enjoying teaching many new and wonderful students. She previously worked at a smaller school and now appreciates teaching a larger group of students at Butler. She loves working with children to help them succeed in the future.

Ms. Baptiste's teaching style is firm, but she also wants her students to have fun. She states, "I hope for all my students to never stop singing, to ignore other people's opinions, and to do what they want." In her free time, Ms. Baptiste enjoys going to the gym for workouts and spending time with her friends and family.

With their dedication, enthusiasm, and love for teaching, Mr. Jewell and Ms. Baptiste are already making a positive impact on the students at Butler Intermediate High School.



Starfish Leaders Impact School Culture

BY LIZZY KING

In August, approximately 100 eighth grade students trained to serve as leaders in IHS's Starfish program, a long-standing initiative designed to reduce bullying and promote kindness. This anti-bullying program has been running for a little over 25 years.

The Starfish program began in 2001 when Karns City teacher Denny Barger met with his friend, Butler Junior High principal Mr. James Allen, who had expressed concerns about the environment in his school building. Mr. Allen's children attended Karns City, and he saw firsthand how the program had positively impacted their school. Mr. Barger spent the next 20 years talking with Starfish leaders and assisting Starfish teachers in training students in the anti-bullying philosophy.

The Starfish program is inspired by the story of a boy who throws stranded starfish back into the sea, showing that even small actions can make a difference. Likewise, Starfish leaders aim to improve the school each day through small but meaningful efforts.

New leaders attended a training session on Tuesday, August 12, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., where they learned about the history of the program, practiced running team-building activities, and bonded as a group. On September 12, they kicked off the year by facilitating team-building activities at the sixth grade Starfish Day, an event aimed at introducing sixth graders to IHS's culture of acceptance and kindness. Each game encouraged the students to meet new classmates while using teamwork and problem-solving skills.



Melina Burgess said, "My favorite part was talking to the group I was assigned because I didn't know many sixth graders. Through Starfish, there are so many opportunities to meet new people."

Starfish has changed the way some students feel about coming to school and has positively impacted many. Rylee Bacheler shared, "Just one smile can change someone's day, and you want to be that person, not the reason someone doesn't want to come to school." Peyton Diamond added, "Starfish encourages us to be the best you can be in and out of school to help everyone around you because you never know what someone is going through each day."

Melina Burgess said Starfish has changed the way she approaches each school day. She believes bullying needs to be stopped and that more students should help set an example for younger students, not just teachers. She explained that even though teachers do a great job, students don't always listen to them, but when younger students see older ones setting a good example, they're more likely to change their behavior because they want to be good role models.

According to one of the Starfish advisors, Mrs. Neely Aldridge, "When I attended Butler as a student, we didn't have a program like Starfish, and we needed one. Fighting and bullying were real problems. I am so proud of the positive changes I have seen Starfish make in the culture of our school."

Mrs. Snyder added, “Starfish is so important to our school because it promotes an attitude of kindness and respect among students. It also gives our eighth graders an opportunity to take on leadership roles and participate in community service.”

Both teachers are looking forward to this year’s outstanding group of leaders assisting with the many service activities Starfish members participate in throughout the school year for the school and local community. Leaders have already helped with Open House, the Student of the Month program, peer mediation, sixth grade advisory visits, and the Hang Tough stocking drive for local cancer patients, with many more activities scheduled in the coming months.



Clubs Offer Unique Experiences

BY LUCAS BEERS

The Intermediate High School offers a wide variety of great clubs, including the Radio Control Club, Fly Tying Club, FITE Club, and Good News Club.

The Radio Control Club is operating for the first time this year. It is exclusive to sixth graders and has about twenty members. The club is run by Mr. McMillen and focuses on RC (Radio Control) devices, such as cars and planes. Members meet twice a month to discuss RC devices and how to care for them. Mr. McMillen’s favorite part of the club is watching students use each other’s RC devices. If he could describe the club in one word, it would be “fun.” His advice to sixth graders who may want to join is to “just try it.”



Every year, hundreds of students sign up for the Fly Tying Club. In this club, students learn how to make artificial “flies” used for fishing. Fly tying is a detailed process that requires patience and attention to detail. According to founder Mr. Popovich, his favorite part of the club is when his fly-tying skills help him catch a fish. During a typical meeting, students follow along with instructional videos as they practice tying flies. If you enjoy fishing and have the patience and focus for detailed work, Fly Tying Club might be perfect for you.

The FITE Club, which stands for Feminism, Inclusion, Tolerance, and Equality, is about standing up for yourself and others. Members meet monthly to discuss issues students face and how to support those who need representation. Students in FITE Club learn to use their voices and stand up for one another. The club is run by Ms. McKinsey, with the help of Mrs. Chwalik and Mrs. Neely Aldridge. Ms. McKinsey says there really isn’t anything not to like about the club and describes it as “inclusive.” For anyone considering joining, she encourages, “There is no harm in trying something new.”

Finally, the Good News Club focuses on Christianity, growing in faith, and learning important Bible stories. Around 200 students attend the monthly meetings, where they study the Bible and play interactive games such as Blooket or Kahoot for prizes. If you are religious, the Good News Club offers a welcoming environment filled with positive students and teacher role models like Ms. Tepper, who help members grow in their faith and become stronger Christians.

With so many awesome clubs to choose from, IHS makes it easy for students to try new things, meet new people, and get involved.

New Bus Company Hits the Road at Butler

BY ALYSSA SIMMONS

This school year, Butler Area School District switched bus companies from Valley Lines to A.J. Myers & Sons.

Most students said the change has not impacted them much, while others feel AJ Myers is better than Valley Lines. However, some students mentioned it is harder this year to find their buses in the afternoon because of the new numbering system. Most students said their favorite part of riding the bus is talking with friends, but they dislike when three people end up having to share a seat.

Each student has a bus ride that lasts between five and 45 minutes, and most said their routes have not changed much since last year. According to sixth grader Colt McGee, “The bus driver keeps us safe by looking back at us, and she has a bus monitor to keep everything under control.” Students also said their drivers remind them to stay seated for safety.

Mr. Kriss Simmons, a bus driver from AJ Myers shared his thoughts on how the switch has affected him. He said the change from Valley Lines to AJ Myers impacted him because he no longer gets paid weekly. Mr. Simmons also added, “I don’t prefer the Blue Bird buses because they aren’t as driver-friendly.” Still, he said both companies are good to work for and have their strengths. He has been a bus driver for two years and has worked for both Valley Lines and AJ Myers. His least favorite part of the job is disciplining students and trying to gain parental support for consequences. One of his favorite parts, however, is having time between runs to do farm work. He also appreciates that his job is close to home.



According to Mr. Simmons, staying with AJ Myers was the most convenient choice. Remaining with the Butler School District gave him a small pay increase, though with fewer paydays, and his bus is now nearly full due to a shortage of drivers compared to last year. He also noted that more stops have been added to his route, making the bus more crowded. This year, he was given a brand-new bus, which he considers an improvement. “I keep the windows and mirrors clean to maintain safety, but it’s challenging to make the kids listen,” he said.

When students misbehave, he tries to correct their behavior before writing them up or involving the principal, so disciplinary actions carry more meaning. “You need to have a little bit of tolerance and patience when kids act up,” he said. He added that students who behave are allowed to choose their seats, but those who misbehave must sit at the front for a period of time. To keep everyone safe, he adjusts his driving speed based on weather conditions and ensures the windshield and mirrors remain clean.

Overall, students and drivers are adjusting to the changes, and the new AJ Myers buses are helping keep everyone moving safely to and from school.

Musicians Prepare for Upcoming Concerts

BY CHELSEA-LYNNE LEACH

The music department is ready to ring in the holiday season with a series of concerts featuring chorus, orchestra, and band performances. Students from sixth through eighth grade have been working since early fall to prepare for their festive shows.

The BIHS band will hold its first concert on December 9, 2025, at the Intermediate High School at 7 p.m.



They will perform a variety of holiday songs, including Patapan, Jingle Bones, Holly Jolly Christmas, Holiday Top 20, Cartoon Christmas, and many more. Since late September, 65 sixth graders and 75 seventh and eighth grade students have been practicing for the performance.

Mr. Karenbauer believes music is an important part of a student’s education because it teaches multi-tasking and an appreciation for music. He decided to teach band because of the inspiration he received from his elementary school teacher. When students struggle, he invites them to his class during holding room to work together in small groups.

The orchestra will hold its winter concert on December 11 in the IHS auditorium. The performance will feature a variety of winter and holiday music and will conclude with the Butler Rock Orchestra performing hits by the Trans-Siberian Orchestra. The orchestra has been working hard on these pieces since the beginning of the school year, with the eighth grade orchestra showing particular dedication. Mrs. Black says all students pour great passion and effort into rehearsals, making them both fun and productive.



Mrs. Black has been playing the violin since first grade and was inspired by a visitor to her school who talked about different instruments. Now she inspires others and believes music is important because it teaches discipline, focus, and perseverance, while also encouraging creativity and self-expression.

The next seventh and eighth grade chorus concert is Wednesday, December 17 at 7 p.m. in the BIHS auditorium. At the concert, students will perform six holiday songs, including *We Wish You a Swingin' Holiday*, *Carol of the Sheep Bells*, *Christmasbel Canon*, *Nun Gimel Hei Shin*, *The Twelve Groovy Days of Christmas*, and *The Polar Express Medley*. Since the second week of September, the 120 performers and their teachers, Mrs. Tepper and Ms. Baptiste, have been working hard to prepare for the upcoming concert.

Mrs. Tepper, who has been teaching in Butler for 10 years and has 30 years of teaching experience overall, decided to teach chorus because she has been performing on stage since she was three, starting with dance and later focusing on singing. She believes music is an important part of a student's education because it teaches teamwork, reading skills, and engages both sides of the brain. Ms. Baptiste, a new chorus teacher at BIHS in her first year at Butler, was inspired by her own chorus teacher and her father's love of music. She also believes music is essential for students, allowing them to use both sides of their brain while having fun, and students say her teaching makes learning enjoyable and easy to understand.

The sixth grade chorus will perform holiday hits on December 18 at 7 p.m. in the IHS auditorium. Their selections include *Take a Winter Walk with Me*, *Old Man Winter*, *When I Close My Eyes*, *Listen to the Bells*, and *Believe* from *The Polar Express*. Mrs. Erevia says her students' greatest strength is stepping up and becoming leaders to help others. She believes music is highly beneficial for students. She said, "Music has so many benefits. Performing in an ensemble teaches teamwork, balance, time management, mathematical skills with rhythm, language skills with the text, strengthens new muscles in your body, and encourages working together to create something bigger than each individual. On top of all of that, you are constantly decoding a new language. You learn more about yourself and about others through music."

Mrs. Erevia has been teaching for 14 years and chose to lead chorus because she admired her music teachers growing up and wanted to inspire students the way she was inspired. She became interested in music because she grew up in a musical household, with both parents loving music, which led her to a career in singing.



With months of preparation behind them, BIHS students and teachers are ready to share the joy of music and the holiday spirit with their community.

The Crocus Project: Honoring Children Lost in the Holocaust

BY MACKENZIE KRILEY

The Crocus Project is a Holocaust memorial initiative in which students across the country plant crocus flowers in remembrance of the children who died during the Holocaust. This year, eighth grade students in Butler will be participating with the help of their history teachers.

Ms. McKinsey, who leads the project, said, "I am hoping that the students will learn about different events in history and how they affected real people. I hope that they can learn about real people who experienced history."

The Crocus Project operates with support from the Holocaust Center of Pittsburgh. Before planting, students learn about both the Holocaust and the biology of crocus flowers. They first plant the bulbs indoors and watch them grow. Once the flowers bloom, they are taken outside and planted near the school parking lot. Crocus plants typically bloom in late February.



The Butler Intermediate High School began supporting the Crocus Project in the fall of this year. Ms. McKinsey, Mr. Andrews, and other eighth grade history teachers help guide students through the project and teach them about the Holocaust.

Ms. McKinsey's students continue to reflect on the Holocaust even after planting the crocus flowers. Tyler Oesterling said that it is important for students to learn about the Crocus Project to "show that this is a really important event and what people went through." Carleigh Rubcic said that the most interesting part of the project is "getting to plant a flower and watching the flower grow." Grace Shuler added that the Crocus Project is "about the Holocaust and what happened to real people."

Through the Crocus Project, students not only learn about history but also connect with its lasting impact on real people.

Fall Sports Celebrate Successful Season

BY GRACE BEHRENS, CHIEF EDITOR

The fall sports teams had an outstanding season, forming bonds and friendships while working hard to represent Butler. From football and soccer to volleyball, cross country, and cheer, the school's athletes demonstrated dedication, skill, and school spirit throughout the season.

Coach Fraser thought their football season went very well. This was his first year coaching, and he credits the inspiration of the coaches he had growing up. He wanted to give back to kids not just in the classroom but also on the field. Coach Fraser's biggest accomplishment this season was helping players who had never played football before. He taught them the positions, how to use the weight room correctly, and helped them grow mentally as players.

According to Coach Fraser, "If you want to play on our team next year, you need to tell me so I can help you prepare before the season starts. I can also get you in the weight room to improve your strength and get ready for the season."

A player from the team, Coby Christy, said their toughest opponent was Seneca Valley because they lost to them badly, and Seneca usually wins against them. Coby described a typical practice: starting with a warm-up lap, followed by individual drills for their positions, then splitting into offense and defense groups for additional drills. Coby said, "Our biggest accomplishment as a team this season was our five-game winning streak."

Coby noted that the team could have focused more during practices to perform better in games. He added, "Football teaches how to work together, not as individuals, and how to stick together when things go bad." A key moment this year was everyone showing up during the off-season, which helped create a strong team bond.

The girls' soccer team also had a successful season. Coach Leyland said, "What makes me want to coach is the players, and I love promoting soccer in the school." He enjoys coaching alongside his assistant, Blake McChesney. Coach Leyland has been coaching Butler Jr. High for four seasons and has 31 years of overall coaching experience.

His coaching goals include recruiting and developing players, ensuring the team has fun, and winning games. This season, his biggest accomplishment was losing only two games while giving all 25 players ample opportunities to play. He is organized, communicates well, and fosters a positive atmosphere for the team.

Coach Leyland mentioned that the team could have practiced more, but many players had other commitments, and he didn't want to burn them out. His advice for future players is to play soccer as much as possible outside of the school season. He also wishes he had more time for individual player meetings to understand each player's goals.

The team's biggest rival was North Allegheny, a team they have struggled to beat in the past. A typical practice begins with warm-ups, followed by technical drills, tactical exercises, and ends with a scrimmage. One highlight of the season was winning the final game against Fox Chapel 2-1 after tying them earlier.

Player Teagan Early said she loves the school soccer season because it builds strong friendships and teaches life lessons. Her favorite part of the season was winning the Soccer Feast, where the entire Butler team celebrated together. She noted that the team improved through bonding activities and consistent support for one another.

The volleyball team also had a strong season. Coach McKinley said he wanted to coach because he loves volleyball and enjoys the challenge. He has been coaching for three years. His goals include instilling a love of the sport, improving player skills, fostering teamwork, and making practices fun.

Coach McKinley said his strengths include patience, building skills from scratch, identifying weak points, giving helpful tips, and staying organized. His biggest challenge is getting seventh graders to listen. He recommends that future players practice passing with family or friends.

The team's toughest opponent was Pine Richland, where close games challenged their execution. Practices usually include warm-ups, stretches, passing and setting drills, serve receive, and specific drills. Coach McKinley said the team's biggest accomplishment was getting most players to serve over the net. Player Sophia Slaugenhoup said she started playing because her brother played, and volleyball has helped her build friendships, teamwork, and communication skills.

The boys' soccer team had a successful season as well. Coach Reges said coaching allows him to work with players and coaches to develop strategies for competition. He has been coaching for five years and focuses on developing good people while teaching the game.

Their biggest accomplishment was seeing players grow both physically and mentally. Coach Reges said his strengths are patience and commitment to a plan, though he works to be flexible when necessary. He noted his weakness is being reactive rather than proactive.

Their toughest competition this season were Hampton and Plum, both of which presented challenges due to their size, speed, and discipline. A typical practice consists of warm-ups, small-sided play, discussion, and large-sided play. A season highlight was beating North Allegheny. Player Luke Szul said their biggest accomplishment was an eight-game winning streak, and his favorite part was becoming a team captain.

The cross country team had an amazing season. Coach Birckbichler said she coaches because she loves running and wants to inspire young athletes. She has coached track and cross country for three and a half years.

Her biggest goal is for athletes to see their potential and understand that dedication leads to growth. She finds the best part of coaching is observing each athlete's weekly improvement and watching them gain confidence. The team's biggest accomplishment was overall growth, both individually and as a team. She recommends that future runners join summer training to build a fitness base before the season.

Their toughest competition included North Allegheny and Pine-Richland. Practices include push-ups, core work, dynamic warmups, and a variety of workouts such as speed work, long runs, and hill training. Runner Kenley Graham said her favorite part was making new friends and participating in competitive meets, with Freeport being the most challenging.

The cheer team also had a strong season. Coach Atkinson said coaching allows her to make a lasting impact on young athletes, both in sports and in life. She has been coaching for six years. Her strengths include creating a positive, goal-driven environment and emphasizing teamwork, personal growth, and life lessons. She noted her weakness is striving for perfection, which can make her hard on herself and the team.

Future athletes should focus on building strong cheer skills, staying active, and being coachable. A typical practice begins with a team run, dynamic stretches, stunt and tumbling warm-ups, full-out routine practice, technique drills, and conditioning exercises.

Coach Atkinson said the season's highlight so far was seeing the team earn first place in their first competition out of five teams. Cheerleader Molly Wynn said her favorite part is watching the team improve and enjoying the positive environment.

Overall, the Butler Junior High sports teams showed tremendous growth, teamwork, and dedication this season, leaving coaches and players proud of their accomplishments on and off the field.

FALL 2025

THE TORNADO CONNECTION

STUDENT SECTION

Sibling Battle 25-26

BY MACKENZIE ERDOS AND MAKAYLA COMPTON, EDITOR

Carly and Roman Cygan

- "He could not live without his Nintendo Switch or food."
- "I got him in trouble because he was hiding gatorade and chip wrappers from our parents."
- "My best memory with him is when we were on the plane flying back from Aruba and we played footsies together."



- "She could not live without me."
- "I got her in trouble for a hole in the stairs wall even though I did it."
- "My best memory with her was going to Aruba for vacation."

Grace and Hudson Behrens

- "He annoys me when he plays basketball in his room because the whole wall shakes."
- "My favorite memory with him is when we went to Disney because we had so much fun."
- "I regret saying nothing. Whatever I say, I say it with passion."



- "It annoys me when she is in her room all the time."
- "My favorite memory with her is when we rode the roller coasters at Disney World."
- "I don't regret saying anything."

Hayden and Teagan Early

- “Teagan could definitely not live without her friends because she loves hanging out with them.”
- “My favorite thing to do with her is to play softball because I am better than her.”
- “We made the best memories together on our vacation to Sandbridge.”



- “Hayden could not live without our mom because she needs to tell her what to do.”
- “My favorite thing to do with her is playing softball in the backyard.”
- “My best memory with her is when we had such a great time at Disney World.”

Anaya and Silas Spohn

- “Silas annoys me because he does not rinse out the dishes which means I have to!”
- “My best memory with him is when we went to Key West because we had such a fun time.”
- “I regret saying that he is dumb because he is actually very intelligent.”



- “Anaya annoys me when she comes into my room without asking.”
- “My best memory with her is when we go to football games because we have a blast!”
- “I regret saying Anaya is nice because she actually can be very mean.”

Teacher of the Edition

BY ETHAN CHRISTLEY AND JAKOB THOMPSON

One student from each grade was randomly selected to share which teacher they thought should be honored as the Teacher of the Edition. Congratulations to Mrs. Hovancik, Mr. Jewart, and Mrs. Baxter!



Mrs. Hovancik, a sixth grade teacher, was chosen by Logan Fennell as his favorite teacher. Logan chose Mrs. Hovancik because she puts detail into her lessons, making her class fun to learn in. Logan stated, “Mrs. Hovancik makes me want to learn math.”

Mrs. Hovancik believes that she inspires the children in her classes but doesn’t understand why she was chosen. She loves teaching math, but in her heart, she is a science and social studies teacher. Previously, she taught at Northwest and Clearfield for a total of 15 years. Mrs. Hovancik attended college at Slippery Rock and Duquesne University and was also a student teacher in Ohio. Outside of school, she used to coach volleyball but currently coaches the Prospect Baseball team with her husband. She also enjoys spending time at her camp.



Another teacher chosen for Teacher of the Edition was Mr. Jewart, a seventh grade science teacher. Landon Donelson chose Mr. Jewart because they both enjoy doing CrossFit. Landon stated, “He has a very fun teaching style, and he’s very cool.”

Mr. Jewart believes that Landon is a good student because he always behaves but also knows how to have fun. Mr. Jewart attended Slippery Rock University, where he earned a 7–12 Biology certification. He has taught for two years in Butler and previously taught at Moniteau and Mars. Outside of school, Mr. Jewart enjoys working out, running, visiting coffee shops, and coaching. He came to BIHS because he loves the local area, community, and the students he works with.

Mrs. Baxter was also chosen as Teacher of the Edition by Charles J. Williams. Charles, an eighth grader who had Mrs. Baxter for seventh-grade science, loved how fun she made her class. He chose Mrs. Baxter because she allowed the class to play silent speedball every Friday and work with partners. C.J. said, “Working with partners made her class fun, and it was a lot easier.”



Mrs. Baxter is very excited that she was chosen. She decided to become a science teacher because, as she said, “I have always loved science and wanted to share that with the kids I teach.” Mrs. Baxter has only taught at BIHS and has been teaching for eight years. She attended Slippery Rock University and completed her student teaching at Pine Richland and Knoch.

The BIHS community is lucky to have such dedicated teachers who make learning fun and meaningful for their students.

Most Likely: Fall Edition

BY EVAN HEPFL



Most Likely to Be a Millionaire...

Caiden Morrow: "Reed Lasitis"
Kian Leyland: "Max Oddo"
Judd Prescott: "Coby Christy"
Amayah Green: "Lydia Wilbert"
Blake Diamond: "Tayshaun Harris"
Isla Mason: "Olivia Calvin"

Most Likely to Bleach Their Hair...

Luke Fazzino: "Gabriel Kent"
Avyn Anderson: "Maddox Rager"
Luke Daubenspeck: "Charlie Wellner"
Brielle Holt: "Aiden Dinger"



Most Likely to Drop Their Phone in the Toilet...

Dylan McDougal: "Lian Kovach"
Isabella Millward: "Jessie Cruse"
Lucie McDougal: "Dahlia Myers"
Isabella Millward: "Jessie Cruse"

Most Likely to Become a Tik-Tok Influencer...

Jayden Lipka: "Jamison Strawbridge"
Sophia Blystone: "Avery Anderson"
Willow Perry: "Cassidy Berresford"
Evan Gettinger: "Brielle Holt"
Mason Ansani: "Nash Zaccari"
Allen Reiner: "Hayden Early"



Most Likely to Be in the Olympics

Harper Gerlesky-Danahey: "Paige Emerick"
Kannyel Gonzalez: "Amara Thompson"
Owen Smith: "Ascher Cumblidge"
Variah Angerett: "Vayda Byers"
Grady Bohin: "Reed Cousins"
Ella Huey: "Juliet Miller"



Future Cross Country Runners Compete in Fall Race

BY GABBY PARFITT

On October 25, Butler students in first through sixth grades competed in a cross-country race at BIHS. Admission included a $5 race fee plus a $1.30 signup fee. Fifth and sixth graders ran a one-mile course, while first through fourth grade students completed a half-mile distance. Medals were awarded to the top 10 boys and top 10 girls in each division. Junior high and varsity cross-country runners volunteered alongside parents and coaches. The meet was a great success because many students participated, had fun, performed well, and brought incredible energy to the event.

The cross-country coaches organized the meet to encourage participation from students who don't usually play sports. "It is a fun opportunity for them," said Coach Uncapher. The cross-country meet will now be an annual event that students can enjoy, with the hope that it inspires them to join the middle school cross-country team. Coach Uncapher explained, "Students should run. It's a low-cost activity that anyone can do. All you need is a pair of running shoes. Running helps you set goals, improve yourself, and build skills that will help you in life."



Adam Mason and Lillian Ruxton both competed at the meet and enjoyed the experience. Lillian ran in the fifth and sixth grade girls' group, while Adam ran in the fifth and sixth grade boys' group. Before the race, they were excited to run and thought it would be a fun opportunity.

Both students felt the race went well overall. Lillian said, "I kept stopping, but I think I can do better next time." Adam also performed well, earning third place in the fifth and sixth-grade boys' division.

Adam and Lillian said they would like to participate again next year because it was a fun experience and a good chance to improve. Lillian hopes to join the middle school cross-country team next year because she thinks running is really fun. Unfortunately, Adam won't be able to join due to his involvement in several other sports. Both students encourage others to try running, saying it's a great way to challenge yourself and try something new.

Advice From Eighth Graders

BY KENDALL CRANMER AND HANNAH MOTONIS

Eighth graders had the opportunity to give advice to sixth grade IHS students. They shared many ideas to help the younger students make the most of their school year.

Advice about making friends:

Quinn Steyer: "At lunch, sit with them and ask them questions."
Dylan Richards: "Be yourself."





Advice when struggling to balance school work and sports:

Liam Hohn: "Just show up to practice, and try your best."
Mason Ansani: "Ask a teacher for help."



Advice when struggling with grades:

Marshall Bish: "Ask a parent or a teacher for help doing your homework."
Tommy George: "Go to math help."
Jude Bartholic: "Pay attention in class."



Advice when nervous for a big test:

Lydia Wilbert: "Relax, study, and stay calm."
Aiden Dinger: "Try your hardest, and don't give up."
Molly Wynn: "Put forward your best effort no matter how small the test is."

Advice when struggling to fit in:

Kaylee Watt: "Talk to teachers about it."
Elijah Snyder: "Be yourself."
Ryaun McGuirk: "Talk to guidance counselors."



Overall advice:

Enzo Debacco: "Do your work and behave."
Claire Baehr: "Don't be mean because they will be mean back."
Elijah Snyder: "Try harder than you think you can."
Sawyer Vavro: "Don't worry about getting lost."
Lucas Szul: "Study and do your homework."



Holiday Puzzles

BY OWEN HEICHEL

Winter Holidays

CANDLES
CAROLS
CHRISTMAS
DREIDEL
EVE
FAMILY
FRIENDS
GIFTS
HANUKKAH
JOY
KINARA
KWANZAA
LATKES
MENORAH
NEWYEAR
PEACE
REINDEER
SANTA
TRADITION
UNITY
WINTER

A N F H W F C H R I S T M A S
A E R A D E L A T K E S A S K
T A E N N S F R K D T Z Y L N
N N I U V Z K P I A N E W O R
A K N K F E S A R A I I H R J
S S D K C A Y A W A N M R A C
D R E A R L N K N T N O A C A
R R E H I I R F E E H Z A Z N
E P R M K P O R R I W D T K D
I E A N Y A N S K I A Y R C L
D F U N G I F T S A E V E Y E
E E N K U Y I F F K N N G A S
L L I A A I D R Y L A S D K R
D U T N T R A D I T I O N S R
S U Y E C H A R O N E M U T R

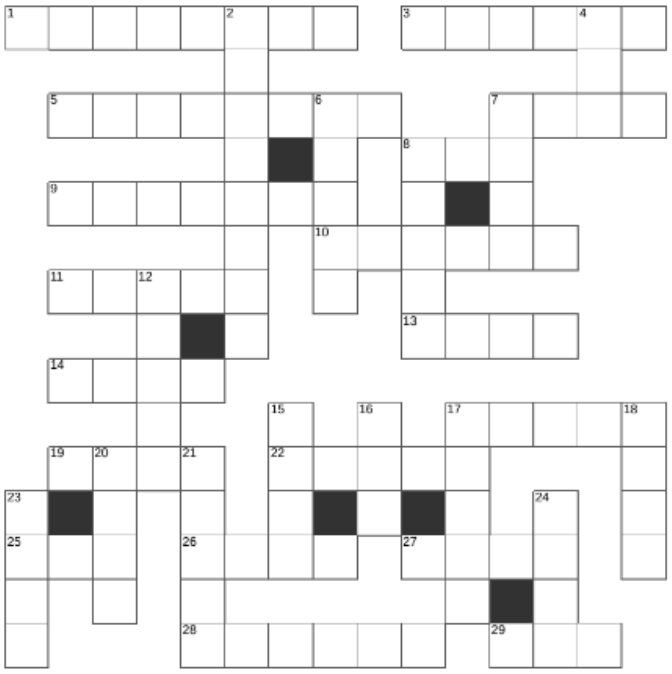
Winter Holidays

ACROSS

1 Times Square New Year's Eve event
3 Season of many holidays
5 New Year's Eve countdown time
7 Wrapped present for Christmas
8 Night before Christmas
9 Spinning top played during Hanukkah
10 Festival of ___ (Hanukkah)
11 Fried potato pancake for Hanukkah
13 Decorated evergreen for Christmas
14 Shines atop a Christmas tree
17 Sweet treat in a Christmas stocking
19 Festive New Year's Eve wear
22 Swahili for 'unity' in Kwanzaa
25 Miraculous substance in the Hanukkah story
26 Christmas carol, often sung with joy
27 Feeling during winter holidays
28 Season before Christmas
29 Month Kwanzaa is celebrated (abbr)

DOWN

2 Animal pulling Santa's sleigh
4 Helper in Santa's workshop
6 Prickly plant used for winter decor
7 Chocolate coins given for Hanukkah
8 Number of days Hanukkah is celebrated
12 New Year's Eve celebratory drink
15 Ancient winter festival, now part of Christmas
16 Feeling of the holiday season
17 Christmas song of celebration
18 New ___ (January 1st holiday)
20 ___ Lang Syne, New Year's song word
21 Jolly Christmas gift-giver
23 Symbol of children in Kwanzaa
24 Last word of a New Year's Eve song



The 2025 Tornado Connection Fall Staff



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