

THE ECHO

NEUQUA VALLEY'S STUDENT NEWSPAPER

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Learning with Dignity Act raises questions in district 204

Allison Blaszak
Staff Writer

The state of Illinois has passed the Learn with Dignity Act created on Jan. 1, 2018, requiring both middle and high schools to provide free menstrual products in the bathrooms at high schools and middle schools. So far, there has been no change in district 204 schools. Students from Metea Valley, Waubonsie Valley and Neuqua Valley High School have noticed that the district had not yet made the changes required by the law and spoken to school officials about their concerns. In an interview with the Chicago Tribune, Louis Lee the assistant superintendent for high schools, stated that the current district policy regarding menstrual products is to place them "directly in the restrooms located in the nurse's office," and says they will add "signs in all restrooms to make sure students know where to go and [that] there is no cost." The district has not yet placed the products in the bathrooms. In an interview with NCTV17, Metea Valley student Avani Shah called this "mundane and ludicrous," explaining that when products

are not readily available in bathrooms, she has to walk from the restroom to class in order to get a pass and then travel to the nurse's office in order to receive what she needs.

The students from the high schools spoke to the school board, in light of the lack of the law's implementation at schools, and stated that menstrual products should be available not only in the nurse's office, but in the bathrooms themselves. Metea Valley student Abbey Malbon explained in an interview with the Chicago Tribune that this would allow easier access to necessities like pads and tampons and reduce the embarrassment of telling the teacher the reason for going to the nurse's office.

Kerry Cahill, Assistant Principal for Operations, says that the school does plan to make some changes. According to Cahill, they "currently plan to designate a bathroom on each floor of both [Neuqua] buildings" where products will be available. She says the current goal is to have this plan implemented by January. It is currently unclear if the other high schools and middle schools intend to follow suit.

Weed legalization: when the smoke clears

Emma Wightkin
Student Life Editor

Pot, weed, grass, dope, or, in more technical terms, marijuana, originated as a medicinal herb in Asia around 500 B.C. It has now become a part of pop culture, with recreational use featured in mainstream media. Although medical use has been accessible throughout many states in America since the 1990s, recreational use of the substance didn't become legal until 2012. Colorado was the first state to legalize marijuana, and by 2016 California, Nevada, Maine, and Massachusetts had followed suit. Recently, Michigan made recreational marijuana legal, and many are beginning to consider, and even fear, the results if Illinois is next. Although there is negative stigma surrounding the use of marijuana, it is hard to ignore the number of important benefits legalization will contribute to the fight against racial disparity and to states' law enforcement and economy. The criminal status of marijuana and the enforcement of the laws around it have been shaped by racial tensions in America.

See more of **WEED LEGALIZATION:** on page 5.

2018 was truly the year of the meme, in January teens were eating tide pods and watching Logan Paul. In February, our FBI agents were texting us and kids were playing Fortnite. In March we were laughing at spongebob memes. In April we couldn't get enough of the yodeling boy. In May we had debates over yanny and laurel. In June we got upset over IHOP's poor marketing decision and fell in love Incredibles two. In July everyone came down with ligma and was doing the zoom challenge. In August we watched jojo siwa destroy her hairline for 5 minutes straight and Johnny Johnny eating sugar. In September a moth fell in love with a lamp. In October we got the bread and cringed at every tik tok we saw. And in November we watched surgery on a grape. Now in December we must decide which meme reigns supreme as the 2018 meme of the year.

We had a great year in the meme community but in my opinion the top 5 memes for 2018 are tide pods, the yodeling boy, the international house of bad marketing decisions, ligma, and last but certainly not least, Jojo Siwa's receding hairline.

Although those are excellent memes only one in particular can take the spot for meme of the year, with 6 out of 5 harambes and that meme would definitely be tide pods. For those of you who are very lost let me explain. There are many commercials and labels telling parents to keep detergent pods away from their children because if eaten they can be fatal especially to small children. But the bright colors of the tide pod and the shiny packaging caused teens to start referring to the pods as a 'forbidden snack'. So of course teens starting making memes, eating them and getting hurt. In total there were 86 reports of teens intentionally ingesting laundry detergent. But what really did it for me with this meme at least was going to the grocery store had seeing that they locked up all of the detergent pods so teens couldn't get to them. All though side splitting hilarious please don't eat tide pods or any detergent for that matter. Until next year this has been @PaigeWillAlwaysLaugh with the meme of the year.

Shonda Rhimes dominates the television industry

Dana Balmas
Staff Writer

The television world is constantly changing as audiences pick-up and drop shows to find what they truly love and connect with. Many TV shows never even survive the first season, let alone the pilot episode. Fortunately for award-winning director, writer and producer Shonda Rhimes, her shows -- which she calls her "babies"-- are prevailing through the test of time. Some of her shows over the years include "Grey's Anatomy," "Scandal," "How to Get Away with Murder" and "Private Practice." Rhimes has also written three books throughout her career which each offer advice on how to live a happier life. She also serves as a heroine to many people of color and women who do not think they can make it in the male and white-dominated entertainment industry.

Her boldness in writing diverse characters



Grey's Anatomy, Rhimes' longest-running show, covers Meredith Grey, a doctor navigating the complicated life inside and outside the hospital.

Photo courtesy of IMDb.

is why each of her shows has sparked fires in the hearts of fans. Only someone who has completely fallen in love with the writing process can capture people and their complex lives in the way that she has. In a recent interview with the Guardian, Rhimes explained that she "love[s] working. It is creative and mechanical and exhausting and exhilarating

and hilarious and disturbing and clinical and maternal and cruel and judicious." Rhimes is also a strong feminist presence in society. Most of her shows, including "Grey's Anatomy," "Scandal," "How to Get Away With Murder," "Station 19" and "Private Practice," feature working women who are not afraid to put their own work above the men in their lives. It is a value that many shows before hers do not share, and she is a pioneer in the field of women's empowerment. Rhimes explained her impact on television, saying "a black woman built an empire of humanity-themed TV shows. Do your homework. Get woke. Black is not a theme. I am not a token. But I am a night of television." Never afraid to share her voice, Shonda Rhimes maintains her own integral part of television. Her iconic array of shows airs every Thursday night, advertised as the Thank God It's Thursday (TGIT) lineup, and can be watched on the ABC channel.

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ORION'S OPINIONS

-Orion Elrod-

Once again, we are being cheated

Many states are scrambling to try to rectify their dwindling population of teachers. According to the United States Census Bureau, there has been a decrease of over 12 percent in college students majoring in education. An additional problem facing the education community is the eight percent of teachers who leave the profession before retirement. To encourage people to pursue education majors, California reversed a law that banned education as a major in the state while Virginia enacted emergency regulations allowing public universities to offer the major. These are both appropriate actions. They seek to encourage people to gain the training necessary to lead a classroom.

The inappropriate response that many states have enacted is to lower teacher requirements in order to encourage people to enter the field. In Arizona, Governor Doug Ducey signed legislation that passed the responsibility of determining teacher certification onto school districts. According to *azcentral*, after this was signed, over 1,000 unqualified teachers were given emergency certifications, allowing any person with a bachelor's degree to forego almost all other state requirements and become a teacher. Although the shortage is a major issue, it is not right to lessen the efficacy of students education by placing undereducated teachers into their classrooms. Allowing districts to determine qualifications is essentially allowing them to cut corners in order to fulfill their needs. Rectifying the errors that were made in creating the current school system should never come at a student's expense.

There are various solutions that could encourage more people to fill the vacant teaching positions that do not involve handing out jobs to unqualified candidates. In fact, data from the Learning Policy Institute suggests that teachers who enter the profession inadequately prepared are two and a half times more likely to leave during their first year, making any progress made by hiring unqualified teachers incredibly temporary. The deficit is, in part, caused by teachers leaving due to salary issues. A chart created by *axios* shows that in 39 states, teachers were given lower salaries in 2016 than in 2010, once adjusted for inflation. Though people may want to teach, they also need a sustainable income. School budgeting is a complicated process that varies by state, but teachers, 94 percent of whom spend their own money on classroom supplies according to the US Department of Education, should not have to be concerned about their salaries. Stop giving large corporations tax breaks. Teachers should not be punished just because they decided to work in the public sector. Redistribute some of the money allocated to the military. There is money already available within the government budget if we prioritize education.

Educators are some of the most valuable people in our society; they should be treated as such. Pay them more. Education drastically changes the future of our nation and those within it. When the quality of teachers decreases because we are driving qualified educators away and consequently have to mass hire people who have no business being in the classroom, our nation's children suffer. We

November storm causes power outage

Abigail McArthur-Self

News Editor

During a storm on Sunday, Nov. 25, a number of houses in the Chicagoland area have lost power. Initially, 350,000 residents lost power, at least 40,000 of which were without utilities for multiple days.

According to Paul Vandersteen, a science teacher at Neuqua, storms usually cause power outages when they interfere with above-ground power lines. This means that older parts of the Chicagoland area were more likely to be impacted, as some newer areas have their power lines running underground.

Commonwealth Edison (ComEd) supplied the power to these homes and has been working to return it to them. The same weather conditions that created the outage, ice and snow, have hindered work-

ers. The conditions have made repairing the damage dangerous in some areas, and the sheer volume of power outages has led to ComEd hiring extra contractors to help them reach affected residents more quickly. All power was originally predicted to return Thursday, Nov. 29, but repairs continued into December.

In interviews with the Daily Herald, residents described their processes for staying warm without heat. Bundling up was a common recommendation. Many also reported spending time at stores, libraries, friend's houses and other places that hadn't lost their power to keep warm. Towels and blankets were used to block doors and insulate walls. Some families were able to run small generators or battery operated appliances.

Residents were warned away from running gas appliances like camping stoves,

however, as these could lead to carbon monoxide poisoning, and were cautioned to be careful when lighting fires for warmth because blankets and similar items are highly flammable. Residents using such methods were advised to always have one individual awake to ensure safety.

Some Chicagoland residents opted to leave their homes entirely and stay in local motels and hotels.

Some teachers and students at Neuqua Valley lost power. Although Vandersteen himself did not, he explained that those he knew who did relied on friends and relatives who still had power. Because temperatures dropped below freezing, he said, it became dangerous for them to stay in their homes.

As of Dec. 6, the majority of residents had power again.

Harvest Bible Chapel sues critics

Arti Rathore, Abagal McArthur-Self,
Orion Elrod

Echo Staff

The Harvest Bible Chapel was founded in 1988 in Rolling Meadows and has since expanded. There are now several locations including Aurora, Elgin and Chicago. The church was founded by James MacDonald, who is now suing Julie Roys, Ryan and Melinda Mahoney and Sarah and Scott Bryant, who have criticized his church, for defamation.

Ryan Mahoney and Scott Bryant have been publishing their opinions of the church on a website called *The Elephant's Debt*. The website has criticized "the church's finances and borrowing; changes to the governing structure of the church, including how much authority rests with MacDonald; and the excommunication of three elders, among other topics," says the Daily Herald. According to the complaint issued to Cook County by the Harvest Bible Chapel, Ryan Mahoney and Scott Bryant met at the church after Mahoney had spoken against the church for denying him a "teaching opportunity." It states that the pair left the church and originally "began publishing negative and defamatory information," about the Harvest Bible Chapel on a personal website called *Blood Stained Ink*, which has now been made private, before *The Elephant's Debt* was launched in 2012.

MacDonald is also suing Melinda Mahoney and Sarah Bryant, wives of Ryan Mahoney and Scott Bryant respectively, who are not contributors to the website. The Harvest Bible Chapel justifies this action on the grounds that the women help fund the site. According to *The Elephant's Debt*, however, the Harvest Bible Chapel has continually referred to suing three defendants, leaving their wives out of the discussion, which they believe could be an indicator that the church is "embarrassed by the fact that they are suing the wives of the authors who wrote *The Elephant's Debt*."

James MacDonald is suing through the Illinois Deceptive Trade Practices Act which "prohibits false and fraudulent advertisements," and allows "a private person" to "bring an action for damages caused by the deceptive trade practice(s) of another." According to the Daily Herald, MacDonald claims that *The Elephant's Debt* is harassing the church and painting the chapel in a "false light."

In response to the accusations, Ryan Mahoney and Scott Bryant wrote, "we are confident that the legal process will ultimately uphold the values of the first amendment right to freedom of religion, freedom of speech and freedom of the press, all of which are essential to safeguarding the values of the Protestant Reformation and our common life."

Julie Roys is an independent evangelical

journalist who runs a blog and free-lances for Christian magazines. In response to criticism stating that the lawsuit was enacted in order to suppress a story that Roys was intending to publish, a document on the Harvest Bible website claimed that the issue is "her lack of objectivity." It continued on to say that "her attempts to stir up gossip, sow discord, inflame old animosities, and confront sensitive matters with specific church families in order to discredit the church led [Harvest Bible] to include her in the lawsuit."

According to the Cook County record of the Harvest Bible Chapel's complaint, the church claimed that Roys "works extensively and in mutual partnership" with Ryan Mahoney and Scott Bryant. In the past, Roys allegedly attempted to get MacDonald's "Walk in the Word" radio program taken off the air. In response, the church canceled her planned appearance at a women's event in 2017.

Roys is requesting that the prosecution provide adequate documentation of their concerns, along with other items such as their tax returns, so she can defend herself in court.

The court denied a temporary restraining order requested by the church in October. They returned to court on Thursday, Dec. 1. The case has not moved forward and is projected to continue into January.

Alliance for the Children gift drive

Joseph Timothy Glos

Staff Writer

Alliance for the Children is a nonprofit organization that has partnered with Neuqua Valley for 18 years to fund a holiday drive. It centers around assisting children in the Appalachian Mountain region, one of the poorest sections of the United States. The organization has aided over 3,000 children by providing new clothes and toys, letting many children receive gifts when their families might have been otherwise unable to purchase them.

Interested participants can take a tag for a child in need. These tags list the name, age and gender of a child as well as items they desire. Items bought for Alliance of the Children are turned in from Nov. 29 to Dec. 21. Gifts must be unwrapped and brand new.

Alliance for the Children is also supported by corporate organizations such as Motorola and Walmart.

The organization has contributed to change in the communities they support. According to Tim Prater principal of Hurley Elementary School test scores increased from 35 to 95 percent and attendance by eight percent since the non-profit began their program.

Alternative high school relocation

Bhoomi Sharma

Staff Writer

The Indian Plains Alternative High School in Aurora is located in the oldest building in the district. The building has existed since 1929, with extensions and improvements added in 1946 and 1964. Currently, the building's infrastructure is outdated. One frequently noticed issue is the water system. While the water is safe, the smell and flavor is said to be "off-putting", according to the Chicago Tribune.

The school board has decided that the Indian Plains building will be demolished or sold, and the students will be moved to a building in Wheatland on the corner of Route 59 and 103rd Street.

The building requires alterations to make it suitable for use as a school. The district hopes to have the renovations complete for the 2019-2020 school year.

ONCE AGAIN, WE ARE BEING CHEATED

| CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

suffer. The adults who decided to teach and consequently have shaped our lives in and out of the classroom suffer. The process of fixing the teacher deficit will not be easy, but the current methodology is far from acceptable. We deserve better.

Ballot order set for Naperville's municipal election

Hannah Denaer

Staff Writer

On Dec. 4, an assemblage of candidates for the 2019 municipal election gathered in the City Council Chambers of the Naperville Municipal Center to watch the lottery that set the ballot order of the mayor and city council candidates. The drawing for city council was first, with the drawing for mayor following it. Each candidate received a number and the order in which those numbers were called out established the order of the candidate's names on the ballot. The lottery determined the ballot order of

Ballot order set for Naperville's municipal election|CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

candidates who simultaneously filed petitions to run in the election. Petitions were considered to be filed simultaneously if they were filed before 8 a.m. on Nov. 19 or between 4 p.m. and 5 p.m. on Nov. 26.

Petitions that were filed after 8 a.m. on Nov. 19 or before 4 p.m. on Nov. 26 were put on the ballot in the order they were obtained. In regard to City Council, the four candidates with the greatest amount of votes on

Election Day will serve a four-year term, but, currently, only the ballot order is concretely determined.

Modified Babies: A look into the changing world of genetics

Summer Moore

Staff Writer

In November of 2018, two twin babies named Lulu and Nana were born in China with genetically modified genes. Scientist He Jiankui, who was in charge of this project, was the first to successfully modify the genes of a zygote to create a resistance to human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). Jiankui performed the modification "surgery" with a tool called CRISPR-cas9. This tool assesses the genetic code to alter a humans genes. Although this procedure was illegal in China, Jiankui performed the operation.

Jiankui explained his procedure in an interview with NPR, stating, "When Lulu and Nana was just a single cell, this surgery removed the doorway through which HIV enters to affect people." HIV is a transferable virus, meaning, if a father is HIV positive he could transfer this virus to his

children. Jiankui explains he decided to perform the surgery because the father was HIV positive and Jiankui wanted to prevent further transmission of the disease.

This procedure resulted in one of the infants possessing two copies of the altered gene while the other only had one. This meant the baby with only one copy could still be susceptible to HIV. According to AP News, however, limited research does suggest that the one successful alteration could potentially slow the virus down.

James D'Anza, a genetics teacher at Neuqua Valley High School believes that, although there are many concerns about genetic modification of humans, including concerns of "playing God" and not knowing when to stop modification, Jiankui's procedure is a "great advancement for genetics." The co-inventor of CRISPR, Jennifer Doudna, defended her device in an

interview with The Week, stating, "Great things can be done with the power of technology — and there are things you would not want done. Most of the public does not appreciate what is coming."

Conversely, others such as David R. Liu, a professor of chemistry and chemical biology at Harvard University, stated in an interview published in Harvard's newspaper, The Crimson, that he finds "both the ethical and scientific side of [the procedure] to be pretty appalling." Another critic to human genetic modification, Nebraska congressman Jeff Fortenberry called it "a macabre form of eugenic human cloning," at a hearing in 2014.

Regardless of other's opinions, He Jiankui stands by his work and hopes to elaborate on his research and attempt this again, announcing on Nov. 29 that another woman is pregnant with a fetus that will potentially be modified.

IPCC releases new climate change report

Abigail McArthur-Self

News Editor

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), an international collection of scientists dedicated to researching and reporting the state of the planet's climate and the possible causes and solutions of issues present, released a new report in October of 2018.

The report largely focuses on the changes that the planet will see if the overall temperature rises by 2 degrees Celsius versus 1.5 degrees Celsius. An increase in temperature extremes, species extinction, sea level and severe weather events, such as hurricanes, is predicted at both temperatures.

However, according to the IPCC, mitigating the rise of global climate change by half a degree would limit the effects of climate change, would spare an estimated 10 mil-

lion people from sea level based flooding, limit the rate of extinction for at-risk animal populations and minimize extreme weather events.

They believe that, through limiting carbon emissions, countries can help curb temperature rise within the 21st century to 1.5 degrees Celsius. At this time, however, there is no projection for halting it entirely.

The IPCC's report is not focused on if there will be change -- of that the scientists seem confident -- but how much change the planet will see and how it can best be limited and adapted to.

According to Paul Vandersteen, an AP environmental science teacher at Neuqua, this report is in keeping with previous studies done on climate change.

He says the most important thing students can do is stay informed and vote.

He believes students should "pay attention to what oil companies don't want [them] to know," because the companies have a financial interest in which laws about carbon emissions do and do not get passed.

The report is available to the public on the IPCC's webpage along with press releases and a summary for policymakers, directed at the world's political leaders.

As of yet, the United States has planned no change in response to this new study, which has so far been disregarded by President Donald Trump.

Experts outside of the panel have reviewed the report and seem to be in agreement with it. Eleven scientists unaffiliated with the report have given testimony in its favor to the Science Media Centre, an independent British organization of scientists.

Indiana Man and his Range Rover win in U.S Supreme Court ruling

Maggie Mokrzycki

Staff Writer

In late November, the United States Supreme Court ruled on a case regarding excessive fining due to Indiana's repossession of a man's Range Rover following a minor drug charge.

Tyson Timbs, the plaintiff in the case, sold \$250 worth of heroin to an undercover police officer. He was then forced to forfeit his vehicle to the state. The car, valued at

\$42,000, was worth over 150 times as much as the heroin he sold. Timbs took the case to the Indiana supreme court where he was ruled against. The Eighth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution includes a clause on excessive fining, however there is nothing specifically cited as to how it applies to individual states. The Indiana court argued that the clause in the federal constitution does not specifically apply to states and because of this, the forfeiture was justifiable.

Eventually, the case landed in the U.S. supreme court, and the justices ruled in favor of the plaintiff. They deemed that the forfeiture was disproportionate to the crime committed. The court argued that the Eighth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution does apply to state statutes and that it was unconstitutional for the state of Indiana to force forfeiture of the vehicle on a minor charge.

Tear gas used at the United States-Mexico border

Joseph Timothy Glos

Staff Writer

In November, the United States Border Patrol had one of its first encounters with the migrant caravan from Honduras, when United State border officials launched multiple canisters of Tear Gas into the Mexican border regions. The gas was utilized in an effort to prevent the caravan from crossing the border. Tear gas is a chemical compound commonly used as a riot suppressant. Because the gas is banned in warfare, its use has led to many questions on the legality and morality of the United States' decision to use the compound on

the border.

Tear gas, also known as mace or lacrimator, is designed to cause irritation of the mucous membranes causing coughing, tearing of the eyes and burning in the eyes, nose and throat. It is a nonlethal agent mainly used to minimize harm to civilians and de-escalate violent situations. Tear gas can also cause death; however, this is rare and only results from long-term exposure in unventilated areas.

Tear gas has been banned in use in warfare since 1993 under the Chemical Weapons Convention. This ban is primarily in effect to prevent those exposed to tear gas from

mistaking it for deadlier form of chemical weapon such as sarin gas and responding in kind. Tear gas can be stored for the purpose of riot control and as a tool to train military personnel, but these stores must be declared to the international community. Although the United States' launching of tear gas into Mexico could be perceived as a threat to Mexico's sovereignty, it is unlikely that Mexico will pursue charges against the United States of America in an international court of law.

The use of tear gas also raises ethical questions. Critics such as Jamal Dakwar, the director of the American Civil Liberties



ECO ECHO

-Ella Estopare-

Shark Finning: a cruel new industry

a This holiday season, we consumers are scrambling for the best deals on holidays gifts. Black Friday, Small Business Saturday and Cyber Monday offer customers deals that are worth raiding the busiest stores and camping out in front of Walmart, but what consumers fail to think about is the part that comes after buying all their gifts: wrapping them.

In the United States alone, consumers are responsible for using four million tons of wood to make wrapping paper for holiday gifts. It's important to acknowledge the waste that comes during the winter holiday season. Much of the wrapping paper Americans use is non-recyclable. Decorative wrapping paper that's embellished with glitter and other sequins can clog up the machines at recycling plants. The problem of holiday wrapping waste production has become so prominent that China has refused to take our holiday waste over the past years. Often, the wrapping paper and ribbons that go to recycling plants aren't sorted and are troublesome to put through recycling machines. With China now limiting the waste it takes from the U.S., some citizens have tried to find other ways to dispose of wrapping paper: burning it. This "solution" is a harmful one, especially to those who burn wrapping paper made in China. In China, there are little to no regulations that control what products go into making wrapping paper. Burning this wrapping paper releases potential toxins that could be inhaled. Instead of finding a better way to dispose of wrapping materials, we should be using more environmentally conscious material in the first place.

There are alternative forms of wrapping papers that are less harmful to the environment. One ton of recycled paper can save 17 trees. Using wrapping paper made of cardboard, fabric or even recycled paper is a great way to reduce deforestation.

This holiday season, we need to be conscientious of the spirit of giving. Giving back to the environment is one way to make sure that you're not just giving to your loved ones, but also the rest of the world. If you're looking for places to find colorful and environmentally healthy wrapping paper, visit Wrappily.com.



-Madeline James-

DOWN TO THE WIRE

Changing the Conversation Inklusivity On and Off the Court

Early in December, Kent State University made headlines for signing Kalin Bennett as a recruit for their men's basketball team. 'Tis the season for college athletic commitments, but his in particular stood out -- and for good reason. By signing Bennett, Kent State became the first NCAA Division 1 school to sign an athlete with autism. Bennett currently attends a prep school in Little Rock, Arkansas and will be joining the team as a freshman next year.

When Bennett was interviewed by NBC about his decision, he, like all other star athletes, talked about his love for the game he plays, and how much it made an impact on him growing up. But basketball was more than just a sport for him. It allowed him to have important social connections and to have a normalized experience playing as a team member. Bennett has overcome many adversities to get to the point where he is now. As a toddler, he was nonverbal and was told that he might never have some of the abilities that many take for granted: speaking and communicating. Basketball served as a major opportunity for him to be able to see past his challenges and develop a new skill set, which served him on and off the court.

Bennett's case is a prime example of how America is making greater strides in inclusivity. More than ever before, it is becoming a spotlight issue and is affecting many Americans positively. Division one athletics, the highest level for a college athlete, are no longer reserved for one type of athlete. Bennett's signing, while highly publicized, was a normal experience for any college-bound athlete, and he will be on the court next year, with the same uniform, coaching staff and expectations as his teammates.

Sports is one of the most universal human experiences, and it bonds us together like few other things in this world can. Sharing the same passion, joy and emotions with others, even if for a brief moment, is so important. They also allow us to see past our differences and show that there is a lot more in common than different between us. Yes, Kalin Bennett is an autistic male. Yes, he may be faced with different challenges than some of his teammates. But he, above all else, is going to be playing at the highest level of his athletic career (so far) starting next year.

Isn't the conversation about inclusivity within athletics starting to make waves? The answer is starting to become more and more clear from cases like Bennett's -- yes.

Madeline James is The Echo sports editor, and is an avid "30 for 30" watcher. She hopes to one day be as opinionated as Stephen A. Smith. She is not related to the basketball player with the same last name.

Rolling into a new season of bowling

Summer Moore
Staff Writer

The Neuqua Valley High School girls' bowling team is hoping to strike out their opponents in this upcoming season. Katherine Lhotak, who has been the bowling coach for 10 years, explains that for the girls practices, they will normally just work on what they need to. So, if a player is struggling to perfect a certain technique during a meet, then that individual will work on that technique during practice -- anything Lhotak notices needs improvement. They practice at Parkside Lanes in Aurora IL.

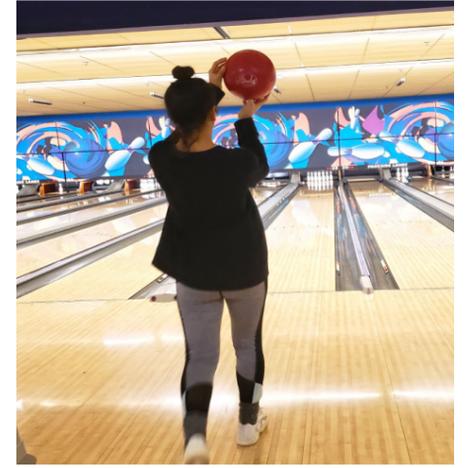
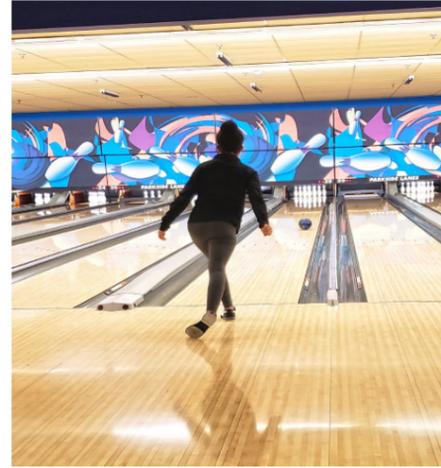
Lhotak shares how bowling meets work, explaining that "during dual meets against other teams, we roll our six [play-

ers] against their six and then drop the lowest score." This prevents the team member on the lowest end of the average from drastically lowering a score. She also says that the team chemistry is excellent. She explains that all of the girls are "inclusive" and if there is someone being quiet the team will try their best to get them out of their shell.

Chloe Long, a senior at Neuqua Valley High School, explained that the "super chill" and inclusive environment of the bowling team is what drew her in to be a Neuqua Valley bowler. She started bowling in sixth grade, and her sister convinced her to try it out in high school. Long stated, "The highest I have bowled was a 279, which is one strike away from

a perfect game." She hopes to continue bowling in college.

Lhotak explains, "[bowling is] one of those sports that you can start ... freshman year and get a scholarship to go bowl in college and not know how to bowl in the beginning." Unlike other sports, bowling does not require many years of prior knowledge and practice before players are able to get a scholarship. Bowling scholarships can range from a \$100 to \$6,000. Lhotak shared that some Neuqua Valley bowling team members have decided to continue their bowling careers at colleges such as University of Pikeville, University of Central Missouri, University of Wisconsin-Whitewater and Arkansas State.



The Neuqua Valley High School Girls Bowling Team practices at Parkside Lanes, in Aurora IL. They practice their techniques everyday after school. **Photo by Summer Moore**

Aerial silks: an underrated artform

Anika Haridas
Staff Writer

Aerial silk performers have been in the limelight in recent years because of the aesthetically pleasing, unique features that the art form has to offer. This type of art requires a performer to hang from a length of fabric while doing aerial acrobatics. Two students here at Neuqua Valley High School that participate in aerial silks are juniors Cristina Rios, who has been performing for about two years, and Cassidy McGill, who has been performing for almost one.

Together, they express themselves and their creativity at Tease Fitness, a company founded by Kristin McNabb that

is "the Midwest's premier pole and aerial fitness studio." Tease Fitness advertises their classes as a form of movement that will reshape self-image while fostering strong, powerful relationships with the community and environment.

Rios explains how aerial silks is not as simple as people perceive it to be, saying, "aerial silks takes a lot of flexibility and stamina," skills that can be improved by practicing and attending each lesson.

The students are taught by one of the 14 instructors at Tease Fitness and their practices consist of a lot of flips, spins and poses. The foundation of their practice consist of yoga conditioning for about 20 minutes on the floor because of the flexibility the art form calls for. Af-

ter this, they condition on the silks then move on to the fun part, which is working on and perfecting new tricks.

Because aerial silks have just started becoming prevalent as an art form, it is easy for it to be overlooked in a school environment that mainly focuses on more traditional sports and activities. Performances are showcased every other season, where students get to select a composition and create a routine. Rios describes how these performances makes all the hard work she and McGill endure worth while, saying, "being in the air for that long can get pretty difficult, but it's a lot of fun because everything pays off and you get to show friends and family something pretty unique".

Sprinting towards a brighter future

Dana Balmas
Staff Writer

Growing up as a strong gymnast, MiKenna Robinson did not see herself going to college for track until later in her teenage life. Recently Robinson, a senior at Neuqua Valley High School, committed to the University of Texas at Austin to compete in their Division 1 track program. Although track is a team sport, Robinson's amazing times are her very own to carry. She did gymnastics for seven years in addition to winning numerous titles for her track career. Robinson explains what an integral role her parents play in her success. She describes how "they are [her] immediate support system" and even calls both of them her "cheerleaders." They helped her take home third in the 800 in the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) Junior Olympic games, the outdoor DVC champ status, different sectional titles for the 200 and 800, and state recognitions in the 800 at third place and 9th in the 200.

There was a time in her life, though, where track became a struggle. In her

sophomore year, Robinson faced problems meeting the times she wanted and started to struggle with confidence as well. She told herself "to be patient" and, now, going into her senior year, she has the strategies to succeed in the future. Now, in preparation for big meets, Robinson makes sure to do a few key things. The night before a race, Robinson stays home, rolls out her muscles and eats a well-balanced meal. At night time, she also visualizes the race for the day ahead. She elaborates on the rest of her routine by stating, "in the morning, I eat a carb-heavy breakfast because I know I will be burning a lot of energy, and most importantly, I stay calm. On the start line, I tell myself I'm here for a reason and that I am qualified for this. It takes a lot of preparation and positivity. It is 20 percent physical and 80 percent mental." After doing all of these things, she tries her best for the results that she wants.

As a newly committed athlete to UT, she says she is blessed to see everything pay off. Getting accepted was like "a kind-of an exhale because it was a really stressful process and a big relief to know where to go before high school track sea-

son started." In the fall of next year, Robinson will take her place at the University of Texas in Austin. She leaves behind her message for younger athletes: "Be true to who you are and what you want to do. Work hard for it and surround yourself with people who care about you. Be true to your mind."



MiKenna Robinson posing for her UT promtional photos. She is flashing the traditional longhorn symbol, the university's mascot, with her left hand. **Photo courtesy of MiKenna**

Weed legalization: when the smoke and stigmas clear

[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Emma Wightkin

Student Life Editor

According to the American Civil Liberties Union, people of color are almost four times more likely to be arrested for marijuana possession than a white person. Decriminalization of weed, something many states have already put into place, has prevented arrests over possession of small amounts, but it is not enough. Although this problem is largely stimulated by racial biases and the legalization of marijuana will not change the ignorant ideals that certain police officers possess, it could contribute to eliminating the unfair arrest of people of color for a crime that a white citizen is more likely to get away with.

Additionally, states that legalize marijuana will save millions on law enforcement costs currently wasted on punishing crimes such as possession of marijuana. The American Civil Liberties Union estimates that it costs the U.S. around 3.6 billion dollars a year just to enforce marijuana laws. Recreational use of marijuana could also end up generating more money for a state through sales taxes on the substance. According to Forbes, many people in Illinois are in favor of legalizing marijuana because the tax on recreational marijuana could generate up 700 million dollars a year for the state.

Despite these positive impacts there are still some negative consequences of legalization that need to be considered, especially for teenagers. Although all states that have approved recreational marijuana have required citizens to be at least 21 to use and purchase marijuana, teens have still been able to gain access to the substance. According to Psychology Today, a study in Oregon, led by Julie C. Rusby of the Oregon Research Institute, revealed that underage high school students who chose to smoke marijuana sig-

nificantly increased their use after it was legalized. Regardless of its medicinal effects as a pain reliever, marijuana can have detrimental effects on human brains, especially developing ones. As stated by the American Psychology Association, smoking marijuana can temporarily impede a young adult's attention, memory, and learning and decision making abilities. The frequent use of marijuana stunts the cellular activity in the endocannabinoid system, which is not fully developed in adolescent brains. The system is very important for controlling emotions and responses to stress and can be hindered by consistent marijuana use.

On one hand there are many positive impacts that legalizing marijuana can have on America economically and socially, but on the other hand it is difficult to disregard the negative ramifications that the substance has on people's health. However, the well-being of individuals is largely their responsibility; therefore, if they decide they are not willing to potentially harm their mind and body, they can simply choose not to smoke marijuana. The cloudy details surrounding the effects of marijuana also cause fear in many that is often unsupported and unwarranted and should not deter the public from the irrefutable fact that marijuana can improve many factors in American society.

It should be a personal right to use any type of recreational substance a person chooses, as long as it is not proven to be deadly and does not cause harm to others, because our bodies and what we decide to put in them, within reason, shouldn't be commanded by a higher government power. American ideals are based on the principles of freedom and liberty, and in terms of drug use, we should step back and consider the extent to which the government should be allowed restrict it. If government powers are able to dictate what citizens are able to put into their bodies, how much more are we willing to let them control?



The question about marijuana being legalized has been held in the air for many years. The negative connotation surrounding the substance leads many to believe that legalization will have more detrimental than favorable repercussions. It is important to always consider both sides. **Graphic by Dana Balmas.**

To stay eco-friendly between Thanksgiving and New Year's Eve...

Tip: Plug any decorative lights into a timer to conserve energy.

Tip: Instead of using a store's plastic bags when shopping, use personal or reusable bags.

Tip: Donate any excess food to food banks.

Tip: Use reusable utensils for meals.

Tip: Send online invitations to holiday parties.

Tip: Consider giving non-materialistic gifts, such as concert tickets or "open when" letters.

Tip: Nearly 35 percent of Americans have untouched gifts piling up in their homes.

Tip: 45,000 football fields full of paper could be saved if every American family wrapped three of their gifts in reusable products.

Frey and Colletti pioneering new wave of obscure comedy

Maggie Mokrzycki

Staff Writer

In 2016 when Vine died out, everyone thought comedy itself would be lost forever. The thought of this saddened many. Those six second videos consumed our lives and molded our humor. After what felt like an eternity without something to feed our short attention spans and extremely specific taste for absurd comedy, talk of Vine2 started. We waited for it to pop up on the app store, but as of now we are left in anticipation.

Soon after the loss of the iconic comedy platform, a man named Casey Frey, who began on the original vine app, started to appear on every twitter feed. Frey's humor was outrageous and many found it hard to decipher if was being serious or not, especially in his popular videos performing extremely comical dance routines without even cracking a smile. However, he still has become the next biggest craze and, "Five bars five seconds", has been heard throughout the school courtesy of Frey's viral video of him manically reciting the phrase. The way he can mys-

letti and Frey's fame has helped make the two the next big thing in obscure internet comedy.

The old fad of stand-up comedy and scripted skits, such as those seen on "Saturday Night Live," are being phased out among the new generation and random humor like Casey Frey's is replacing it. It is hard to tell what exactly makes this new wave of comedy so appealing, but perhaps it is the same reason people are also so attracted to things like outrageous internet trends and idiotic SoundCloud rappers. As a society, we seem to have gotten bored of the run-of-the-mill ideals we have accepted in the past and we are now seeking out new interesting forms of amusement. In a world that is so negative and judgemental, we can all agree that people like Casey Frey and his ridiculous comedy aid in the distraction from all the negativity on the internet. All together, the rise in approval of nonsensical entertainment has created significant contributions to the normalization of unique individuality among everyone.

"Five bars five seconds"

teriously pop his shoulder muscles out of his back while delivering a bizarre monologue has somehow become the most entertaining comedy of the year.

Additionally, Frey and his friend Nick Colletti have formed a dynamic comedy duo, collaborating in short videos together and even creating a podcast, with mutual friend Evan Breen, called "Friendship is Kind." Colletti, who surpassed Frey in popularity on vine coining the viral phrase "oh suh dude," creates skits and videos on his Instagram with an average of 400,000 views per video. However, the tables have turned and Frey is the next big thing, catching the eye of celebrities such as Kodak Black. Usually, internet stars and rappers are on two completely different wavelengths, but someone as large as Kodak, with over 26 million Spotify listeners annually, recognizing him has proven Frey's significance in current popular culture. The increase in both Col-



One of Casey Frey's classic jokes is his odd stature and mismatching facial expression. His Instagram is his main source for his comedic posts. **Photo courtesy of Casey Frey's Instagram.**

Music

Camila Cabello- Camila
 Fall Out Boy- Mania
 Migos- Culture II
 Rich Brian- Amen
 Calum Scott- Only Human
 Logic- Bobby tarantino II
 Hayley Kiyoko- Expectations
 Cardi B- Invasion of Privacy
 Kali Uchis- Isolation
 J.Cole- KOD
 Arctic Monkeys- Tranquility Base
 Hotel & casino
 Charlie Puth: Voicenotes



BTS- Love Yourself: Tear
 Shawn Mendes- Shawn Mendes
 Kanye West- Ye
 Jorja Smith- Lost & Found
 5 Seconds of Summer- Youngblood
 The Carters- Everything is love
 Panic! At The Disco- Pray for the
 Wicked
 88rising- Head in the Clouds
 Mac Miller- Swimming
 Travis Scott- Astroworld
 Ariana Grande- Sweetener
 Troye Sivan-Bloom



Brockhampton- Iridescence
 Lady Gaga/Bradley Cooper- A Star is Born
 Joji- Ballads 1
 H.E.R- I Used to Know Her: Part 2
 The 1975- A Brief Inquiry into Online Relationships
 Alessia Cara- The Pains of Growing
 Kodak Black- Dying to Live
 Zayn- Icarus Falls

Deaths

Stephen Hawking
 Barbara Bush
 Avicii
 Kate Spade
 Anthony Bourdain
 Joe Jackson
 Aretha Franklin
 John McCain
 Mac Miller
 Stan Lee
 Stephen Hillenburg
 George HW Bush



Celebrating
 their

World



2018 gave us some of our greatest memorable moments, and looking back on everything from

News

na announced ambassador
 of Barbados
 Musk security fraud case
 India legalized gay sex
 up and Kim Jong Un met
 me's Up" announcement
 Canada legalized weed
 highest OD rate ever

Weddings

Nick Jonas & Priyanka Chopra
 Mandy Moore & Taylor Goldsmith
 Justin Bieber & Hailey Baldwin
 Karlie Kloss & Joshua Kushner
 Princess Eugenie & Jack
 Brooksbank
 Stephanie Beatriz & Brad Hoss
 Amy Schumer & Chris Fischer

John Stamos & Caitlin
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 Kat Von D & Leafar Seyer
 Kit Harington & Rose Leslie
 Isaiah Mustafa & Lisa
 Mitchell
 Matthew Lewis & Angela
 Jones
 Tori Kelly & André Murillo
 Prince Harry & Meghan
 Markle

Year in Review

Greatest hits, top movies, many
 moments to remember. Here's to
 the year from 2018.

Movies

Black Panther
 Won't You Be My Neighbor
 Hereditary
 Incredibles 2
 Crazy Rich Asians
 A Star is Born
 Green Book

Celebrity babies and famous parents

Chicago West: Kim Kardashian & Kanye West
 Stormi Jenner: Kylie Jenner & Travis Scott
 Ivey Joan: Jamie Lynn Spears & Jamie Watson
 True Thompson: Khloe Kardashian & Tristan Thompson
 Tiana Gia Dwayne: "The Rock" Johnson & Dana Isaiiah
 Dana Isaiiah Thomas Jr.: Jordin Sparks & Pete Wentz
 Marvel Jane Wentz: Meagan Camper & Cher Lloyd
 Delilah-Rae Monk: Craig Monk & Offset
 Kulture Kari Cephus: Cardi B & Offset
 Vida Amber Betty Bublée: Michael Buble & Luisana Lopilato
 Rani Rose Hudson: Kate Hudson & Danny Fujikawa
 Kulture Kari Cephus: Cardi B & Offset

Alya Khan

Ella Estopora

"Thank u, next": the right reaction to breakups

Maggie Mokrzycki
Staff Writer

This November, Ariana Grande announced a new single after her breakup with comedian, Pete Davidson. They had been engaged since announcing the relationship last year. The song became an instant girl power breakup song. Most breakup songs are about revenge like Carrie Underwood's "Before He Cheats" and Kelly Clarkson "Since You've Been Gone," which is a dated way of handling bad breaks and give a negative message to listeners. Instead, Grande mentions what she learned from these men and thanks them for helping guide her in the

right direction. The lyric "one taught me love, one taught me patience and one taught me pain" is her way of saying not every relationship can be easy, but if possible, it is good to reflect on what you have gained from the experience. When Grande later mentions that she taught herself "love," "pain" and "patience," she shows that although breakups can be painful, the independence that happens as a result can inspire someone to work on their own self-image and confidence. With the death of rapper Malcolm Miller who Grande dated for 2 years, she had to show resilience, but that does not mean you have to move on quickly. It's easy to get caught up in the heat of the moment



Ariana's single was first announced by her tweeting the words "Thank you, Next". Photo courtesy of Amazon Music

and destroy a relationship that was crafted over so many months.

Trying to grow instead of being stuck with hatred can help people get over tough breakups. Moving on and saying "thank you, next" is the mature thing to do. Hopefully, Grande's influence on will help people get over breakups in a healthy manner. Many reacted to this song positively, and it became an instant hit. Whether it was a your choice to end a relationship or the other person's, it's a smarter choice to appreciate what you gained from that person, rather than deciding your time was wasted. Not taking breakups personally is Grande's overall suggestion; if something is not working, it's better to leave than stay.

Wish away your winter woes with music

Arti Rathore
Staff Writer

Winter blues have started to creep in and despite the approaching break and holidays, the weather has caused several to wish for warmer days. Though it is cold outside, all you need to warm up the season is holiday spirit, fuzzy sweaters and music, my personal favorite. Here are some of my holiday music must-haves to warm up your days.

To start, Christmas trap. Trap music is a growing genre, new to the music scene. The music is known for having loud, hard-hitting instrumentals that you can

feel in your bones. According to Runthetrap.com, it was started by "southern rappers such as Waka Flocka Flame or Gucci Mane." Radio stations have picked up on this new genre and incorporated it into their holiday sets by playing trap remixes of classics such as "Baby It's Cold Outside" and "Carol of The Bells." Different DJs have taken it upon themselves to mix things up and add a backing track to the songs that makes them perfect for any party any time. You can find a remix to any of the classics and chances are, it's a bop!

Speaking of classics, they're just as good and vital for a warm soul. Now, I love the "Carol of The Bells" remix that radio

stations play just as much as the next person, I really do. But that doesn't mean that the classics can't warm my heart. Hearing Bubl  sing "Baby It's Cold Outside" or having Sinatra's various Christmas albums such as "A Jolly Christmas From Frank Sinatra" blasting through your home is truly something else. The warm voices of crooners are perfect to put a smile on anyone's face and heat up the winter weather.

The last suggestion on my list is summer throwbacks. Christmas is coming, but these are essential to chase away your winter blues. There is never a bad time to enjoy good songs, even if it's the wrong season. Songs like "In the Summer" from

the "Frozen" soundtrack weaves together the winter weather with the summer love that we all have. It gets us in the mood for winter while paying homage to our beloved summer weather. It doesn't hurt that it's a fun little Disney song, too.

These three genres are the perfect way to stay warm this season. With classics to ignite the holiday spirit, trap to combine those classics with a beat that makes you move and a shameless summer throwback to remind you of the sun despite the early sunsets, you'll be able to forget about the winter weather in no time. The holidays are here and with them comes the chilly weather, but so long as you have music, I'm sure you'll be able to stay warm.

How Stan Lee's legacy lives on today

Allison Blaszk
Staff Writer

Stan Lee assisted in the founding of Marvel Comics and the creation of multiple iconic characters. Lee helped form connections with the audience through his inclusion of soapboxes; a small section where Lee would share his opinions and everyday thoughts with his audience. His fans also were able to connect with his characters who were superhuman, but experienced real human things. Peter Parker, the infamous Spiderman, was a teenage boy who gained spider like abilities, but still worried about his relationship with a girl. Iron Man was someone who could fly around saving the world, but he also struggled with being an alcoholic. The characters could have been everyday people without the superhero abilities, and that is what made his work so easy for audiences to connect.

During this time, there was little representation of minorities, and not many people did things to change this. Lee was one of the few who defied this and provide character of different ethnicities and

hardships. One of his characters, Black Panther, represented people of African descent and was made in 1966. This was a big move on his part because there was a lot of racial tension around this time. People around the nation were thrilled with this movie having casting people of color to play the main cast, which wouldn't have happened without Stan Lee's creation.

Stan Lee greatly contributed to pop culture by providing fun movies and cartoons. He created well known characters that almost anyone would be able to identify. His creations have remained relevant many years after they debuted. Though this legends may not be with us anymore, his legacy will live through his characters and the diverse creations he brought to the world.

On Nov. 9, Stan Lee, creator of numerous Marvel Comics heroes, passed away at 95 from cardiac arrest with respiratory failure. Lee created characters that were just like normal people, and was a voice for those who were often left out of popular culture works. Although he is

no longer with us, his creations have left a legacy in the entertainment industry and an impact on their fans that outlives him.



Stan Lee molded the foundation for creative comic books. These later formed into the iconic characters that touch the hearts of many. Photo courtesy of Marvel.com

Streaming killed the radio-stars

Rianna Panergalin
Entertainment Editor

Before the age of streaming, our generation and those before had the local radio blasting as we watched the world go by. But technology advanced faster than you could change the radio channel. The world of free-streaming shook up the radio community. Hubbard Radio cut 11 radio hosts from stations 101.9 FM and 100.3 FM at the end of November to save money during late night broadcasts. It seems that everything digital is making everything old school decline. This is attributed to "Generation Z, which is projected to account for 40% of all consumers in the U.S. by 2020," according to Variety.com studies, when we look at how current generation. Although streaming has dominated all outlets of entertainment, what does this mean for TV/Radio, and are there students in our generation that can possibly save it?

Networks like Spotify and Apple Music, have an average of over 50 million users, all of them being able to stream over 40 million songs. Radio stations like SiriusXM and iHeartRadio have made the switch over to digital streaming and even made the effort to have apps for the audience to stream with as well. Although these stations don't allow you to pick and choose.

The songs you listen to, some people enjoy pre-picked songs. Streaming can't provide national and local news updates between songs not allowing consumers to reconnect with what's happening in our world even when we're busy with other activities.

When asked, the majority say they listen to the radio, Junior Madison Young explains that when the drives, "it's easier to turn on the radio than to dig for music." Sometimes it's personal issues, like no accessibility to an aux cord or not wanting to waste their data to stream music, making the radio more convenient. Studies may show that radio consumers are declining but there is some hope for radio.

Marvel-ous representation of people of color in comic books

Orion Elrod
News Editor

The release of movies like "Black Panther," "Spider-Man Into the Spider-Verse," "Wonder Woman" and "Ms. Marvel" signify a long-awaited shift in the movie industry. Superhero movies and franchises such as "The Avengers" are often criticized for their lack of diversity. While this criticism of the movie is not unwarranted, criticism of the characters and series outside of the movie is often misplaced.

"The Avengers" movie franchise features the characters Hawkeye, Scarlet Witch and QuickSilver. In the comic book series, Hawkeye is deaf and other characters are often pictured communicating with him through American Sign Language. Scarlet Witch and QuickSilver

are Romani people, an incredibly marginalized and persecuted group, raised in Eastern Europe. The discrimination they face due to being mutants is supposed to mirror the discrimination they face due to their ethnicity. The movies erase these important aspects of the characters' identities to make the stories more palatable to their target audience: able-bodied, heterosexual, cisgender, white men. In doing so, they are eradicating important representation for marginalized communities. These characters were successful and important because they raised the voices of minorities and mirrored their stories, showing them that just like their favorite superheroes, they too could be empowered.

The issue of diversity in mainstream superheroes is not one of proper character creation but instead of how we present

them. When the movie industry tried to show the stories of women superheroes, they ended up unnecessarily sexualizing them and forcing them into unnecessary romantic relationships, like when they forced Black Widow with the Hulk. When they tried to transfer a deaf superhero to the big screen, they completely erased that part of his identity which in the comic books provided a large amount of his characterization. They have routinely erased or diminished minority characters and consequently provided flat and unrepresentative stories.

With recent movie releases, we have shown that including minority characters will not diminish box office sales. If anything, it will increase them. We must continue the trend of showing characters as they have been written, as real people, not cardboard cutouts.

Chess club is a club you should check-mate

Rianna Panergalin
Entertainment Editor

They placed 10-15 at IHSA state championship straight over the last 10 years and sixth place twice over the last four years with 128 teams at the tournament. "Is this another athletic team?" you may ask. No, it is actually the Neuqua Valley chess club. Chess club accepts all interested members. Their intent is to have fun and let it be casual but provide a more intense environment for those who seek it. Interested members can join the competitive team that is built into this underrated club.

Sponsor Frank Gambino says the club is very

flexible when it comes to attendance, but they usually "extract [the] competitive team" from within the club. According to Gambino, there are usually about 35 to 40 members in the club -- in contrast to the 20 to 30 members typical clubs have. But chess club is a "fun" way to "meet new people and friends," and they offer a "low-stress environment." Although there is a "big competitive nature", Junior Younis Nooraldeen explains about the club, it's all in good intention because you can see that people want to do better and improve. Although last year, Nooraldeen states many were a little skeptical about losing some of their games because many

of their teammates graduated, even with small awards they treated it as a big deal, this showing the optimism of the club.

Students interested in strategic games should test out their skills with the members of chess club. The club accepts all who are willing to join. "You don't have to be good at all to join", Younis Nooraldeen encourages to students who wants to join. He states that a person shouldn't be intimidated to join because "a lot of the people are encouraging...especially those who try to help out the newer guys". No experience, no problem -- just try not to be a "stale"-mate.



Concentration flooded the faces of one of the chess club teams during a chess tournament at Agro High School in Summit, Illinois. Left to Right: Vikram Dara, Pranav Addepalli, Younis Nooraldeen, Rohit Pissipotti, Abinav Shankar, Neelu Nerella. Photo Courtesy of James Fox.

Game On! High School Contestants' viewpoint of the game

Anika Haridas
Staff Writer

The NCTV17 Naperville broadcasting company recently hosted the eighth episode of their show "Game On!". On the NCTV17 website, their mission statement is stated clearly -- to connect their viewers and to celebrate the community as a whole. This is also the goal of the Naperville game show, "Game On!". The television company started their debut in 1987, "delivering hyper-local television coverage of the people, places and perspectives that matter to Naperville residents."

Prior to the events of the game show, Dr. Robert McBride, principal of Neuqua Valley, tells the audience that it is important to engage in Naperville activities to feel

a sense of community in their daily lives, saying that when NCTV17 reached out to him, he took advantage of the opportunity to form a greater connection between the students of Neuqua and the citizens of Naperville.

A variety of students from both the junior and senior classes participated in the event, which bore the tagline of "clash of the classes" to attract the Neuqua and Naperville community. Of the students that participated in the event, Junior Asia Graham and Senior Jordan Matthews voiced their opinions on the experience.

Graham said that it was nerve-racking at first, especially since many people would see her on live TV. Despite this fact, she didn't let her nervousness stop her from having fun

on the stage. She is known for her friendly and outgoing personality and she is glad that events like this will help her remember her time in high school as one full of fun and unique experiences. She goes on to state that "going on stage and actually playing with everyone was really fun, and it's cool because I'm not going to be able to experience something like this ever again."

Senior Jordan Matthews says that the game show was a good bonding experience with the seniors he worked with, saying, "'Game On!' was a pretty fun experience. It was a little nerve-racking, being in front of a TV and in front of a live audience, but it was really cool working together with the other seniors."

The Neuqua episode of the game show

"Game On!", was a charitable event that benefited all those who participated by both giving its profits to the senior class gift

and offering an all-around uplifting experience. The students got to bond with people they may have never talked to otherwise,

bringing the Neuqua and Naperville communities closer overall.



The cast for the eighth episode of game on consisted of students from the 2019 and 2020 classes. Students in the 2019 class were Aidan Murphy, Matthew Arends, Megan Wu, Avery Higdon, Jordan Matthews, Jaylen Scott, Christine Philip and Brienne Pirkins. Students in the 2020 class were Keilah Moore, Joey Matusik, Grace Lee, Quinton Lewandowski, Ankit Chhajed, Asia Graham, Luke Selby and Taylor O'Malley. Photo by Anika Haridas.

From the Library to the Broadway stage: Lisa Carlson on livening up the library for the first time

Grace Huff
Profiles Editor



Lisa Carlson has had a strong passion for singing since she was very young and has performed in numerous school events including the Variety show and singing the national anthem for the Senior Awards. Carlson used to dream of being a voice for Disney, but now she has her eyes set on going into Broadway. Photo courtesy of Lisa Carlson.

The library has traditionally been a place of study, a place where many of us would get yelled at for talking above a whisper. Neuqua, on the other hand, has decided to shake things up a bit and have live performances by students in the morning every third Thursday of the month in an effort to get kids pumped up for their big day ahead.

Lisa Carlson, Neuqua Valley senior was the "pilot" to kick off this new early morning event. She was first introduced to the idea of singing in the library earlier this year when she was handed a mysterious slip of paper, offering to let her share her talents in the library, from the

people who run Variety Show. Carlson said that when she first got it, she "didn't know if it was even a real thing" due to the fact that it was so new and for many of us we have grown up on the mentality to always be quiet when you are in the library. Despite her suspicion, it was real, and she performed "Attention" by Charlie Puth and "Chandelier" by Sia on the third Friday of October. Carlson said that, since there was little to no promotion of it, many students were very confused as to why she was singing with a microphone in the corner of the library. But nonetheless she continued to show everyone her talents to the more than 60

kids that were all filed in to the library since it is her true passion.

Carlson said that she hopes to get a bachelor's degree in musical theater and has applied to schools such as The American Musical and Dramatic Academy in New York City, Texas State University, and University of Central Florida.

If you are interested in performing in the library, feel free to contact Eric Bodwell. It does not just have to be music-related, as Carlson says that it is truly more of an "openmic style" event, and even if you don't want to perform, students will be performing every third Friday morning in the library.

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Ramifications of Midwestern values: the conversation around hardwork and wholesomeness

Sofia Mayhew
Editor-In-Chief

That 70's show seems to be a classic example of the midwestern lifestyle. Quaint, ethical and a little boring, the show seems to capture what it truly is for a teenager growing up in the midwest. The midwestern upbringing can have aspects that are beneficial. Although it can be very boring, it's also wholesome; people are kind, and everyone is so neighborly. Growing up in this environment can shield a person from a lot of other superficial things, and can grounded a person in a core set of guiding ideals.

In the center of all that good faith and good manners, thought, midwesterners are raised with a huge emphasis on hard work. Teaching chil-

dren the importance of hard work is extremely important; it's an important virtue for success and satisfaction. It's the way it's taught that causes problem.

Many of us were told it was the be-all and end-all, the secret ingredient, the holy grail. Want a good honest life? Roll up your sleeves and work for it. These people were right in a sense -- if we want nice things we have to work for them-- but we shouldn't tell children that nice things can only come from hard work. With a growing number of students feeling extremely stressed from high school, a study performed in NYU's College of Nursing reports that 49 percent of students feel a great deal of stress on a daily basis. Some of the blame can be put on the conversations we have about hard work. There are other things in life that are equally im-

portant and satisfying, like relationships with others, light hobbies that don't require hours of mastery and charity work.

Maybe this is why students are feeling more and more burnt out; we are encouraging them to cultivate good grades above any other endeavor. We are romanticizing hard work's glorious play off, without acknowledging the happiness that can be found elsewhere. We need adults putting more emphasis on finding contentedness through things other than just hard work.

As Neuqua students and people potentially moving away from the midwest in the coming years, we'll be lucky to have a good set of morals to keep us steady, but we'll have to remember that hard work, although valuable, won't give us everything we need.

Letters to the editor:

Dealing with Gun Violence in Schools

Hannah Meger

Guest Writer

Students shouldn't go to school wondering whether their math teacher, the football coach or the science teacher is secretly carrying a gun.

Unfortunately, in this day and age, we need to think about this possibility. Our world has become something no one would have ever imagined.

The topic of gun violence in schools has become a main focal point in our country. According to The Washington Post, "More than 187,000 students have been exposed to gun violence at school since Columbine in 1999." The massacre at the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, has shaken the public more than some previous shootings. Now trying to solve the issue of protection some believe teachers and staff members should be armed with guns through-

out the school day. This is not the right way to protect schools around the world.

Many teachers are civilians with no formal training with a firearm. Having a loaded firearm in the hands of an untrained civilian is a dangerous scenario waiting to happen.

The presence of a firearm dramatically increases the risk of a gun injury. This also advertises easy access to a gun. Maybe a student with bad intentions will steal it; hurting other or even him or herself. What if a teacher shot a student on accident? Not so long ago a California teacher's gun accidentally went off in class and three students were injured. There are far too many scenarios that result in accidental death rather than self-defense with a firearm present in a school setting.

While most teachers are very dedicated to their students there are reports of abuse from some teachers. This is shown as racial slurs or bias as well as

physical abuse. Will arming our teachers truly fix this problem? Especially in the environments of understaffed classrooms, it's not a good idea to have anyone with a gun present in the setting.

Arming teachers is also a violation of the second amendment in the U.S. Constitution in The Bill of Rights. It reads "A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed." This amendment is being violated to the point that citizens will not be considered free. During the school day teachers are in charge; if teachers have guns students can be presumed as being held under a malitian state.

Although some may believe arming staff members is the solution to the issue of gun violence in schools it is not. There are far too many incidents that can occur if staff members are armed. A gun problem cannot be solved by more guns.

Trickle-down economics is garbage

Kevin Sciackitano

Guest Writer

When Americans remember Reagan, they are quick to think of his "successful" economic plan, which saved the United States from stagflation and economic failure; however, the chief accomplishment Reagan was able to achieve turns out to be what's hurting our country the most in the present day.

Reagan's chief domestic reform was a complete restructuring of Federal economic policy. Instead of the Keynesian, involved government policies that had started during the days of FDR, Reagan and his neoliberal coalition instituted a new economic plan dubbed Supply-side economics, also called trickle-down economics. The basic principle of this model is that taxes and business regulations should be reduced: these laissez-faire rules theoretically make businesses more prosperous, encourage wealthy people to invest in new companies, and collectively better economic outlooks nationally. However, this model is terrible for American society.

Fundamentally, the idea is broken. Businesses don't fail because they are burdened by taxes and regulations. Obviously they are annoying and too much of them is cumbersome, but for most businesses small and large providing a good or service that people want to pay for will keep them profitable. Any

cut in taxes or regulation just adds some profits on top, but doesn't significantly change anything. Another fundamental flaw is the idea that wealthy people will use their newfound non-taxed money to invest in new business ventures that will grow employment and industry, but this idea is nonsensical. If millionaires and billionaires receive a few more million a year, they're more likely to save it or put it into the stock market (which both have no effect for the average worker.) Just look at the 1950s, where the top tax bracket was over 90%, and the economy was booming way more than today, this economic plan is based on falsehoods.

Not only does the idea fail in principle, in practice it is a failure, too. Despite massive GDP growth and wealth creation, the median wage in the US has not risen more than inflation since the 1980s when supply-side economics was implemented under Reagan (see Bureau of Labor Statistics). That means the regular person has not gotten a real raise in 30 years. It's clear that all the new wealth is going directly to the 1% (you might not like Bernie Sanders, but he's not wrong on this issue.) Also, trickle down economics encourages reckless deregulation of all major industries, which has led to many disasters like the Saving and Loans crisis all the way up to the Great Recession of 2008. The imbalance of cutting taxes with no new revenue streams has led to the

massive federal debt crisis as well. Look it up, the only presidents who have raised the national debt comparative to GDP after WW2 have been Republicans, and Obama (who had to fix the 2008 Recession and fight Bush's deficit-funded wars).

After almost 40 years of failure, it's time America wakes up to the fact that this neoliberal pipe dream isn't working. Income inequality, poverty, food insecurity, living standards, everything is getting worse for the average person and family. It's time to look towards the proven economic policies of the post-war era, and implement rules that build the economy from the bottom up rather than the trickle down. Government investments in infrastructure, education, and more are what create skilled labor forces and good economic climates. It's time to wake up from the nightmare, and have a true Morning in America.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

The Echo is a student-run publication fueled by the dedication of the students that make up the staff to bring credible, cogent news tfo Neuqua Valley. Any student is welcome to join our staff of writers, reporters and photographers. A student editorial board is responsible for story assignments, story selection, and story publication along with the designing of the paper itself.

Letters to the Editor are accepted only if accompanied by a name and signature. Submit them along with any stories or tips to our email

Any material submitted to The Echo is subject to editing for content and space.

The Echo wants to hear from you!

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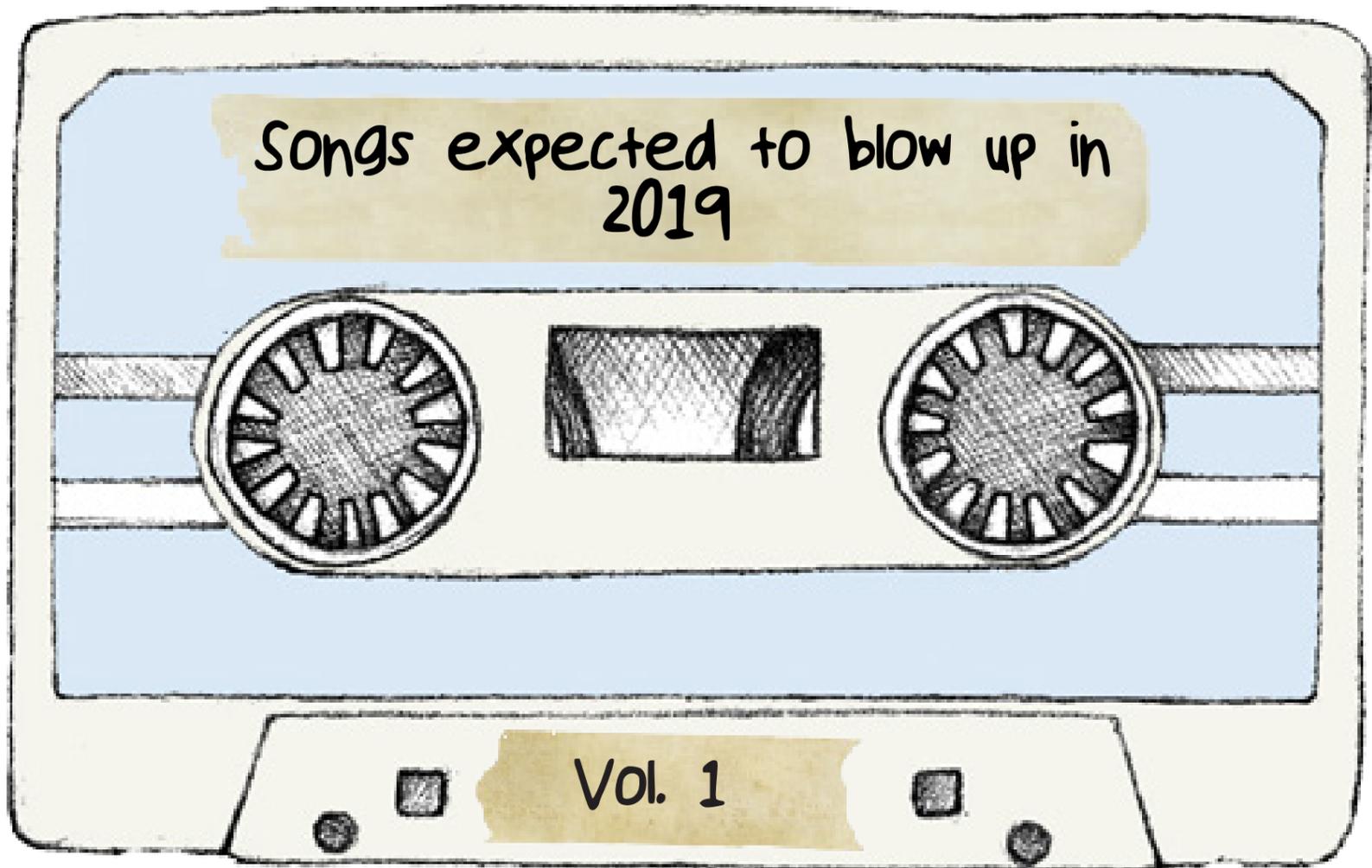
Corrections for the October 2018 Issue:

- Ponouns such as "Duncan Fox" and "Wesley" were not capitalized
- Whites spaces have been filled
- Graphics were too dark, so graphics are now lightened to print brighter
- More variety in layout types
- Line thickness is more consistent
- Spacing and line thickness are now uniform

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Type	1 Issue	4 Issues	8 Issues
Half Page	\$125	\$375	\$750
Quarter Page	\$75	\$225	\$450
Eighth Page	\$50	\$150	\$300
Student Rate (1/8)	\$25	\$75	\$225



Side A

1. CDot Honcho

"Honcho, Honcho, Honcho," the Chicago-based rapper, is about to blow up with his fast-paced trap beats and Jordan Smith-esque voice. "Another One" is going to be the "Mo Bamba" of 2019 -- but less cringey.

2. Lil baby

His Drake collaboration "Yes Indeed" put Lil Baby on the map in 2018, and his other collaborations with Gunna have kept him there. With the both high quality and popularity of his music, it's a safe bet to say Lil baby will keep rising through 2019.

3. lil Mosey

"Noticed", along with some other popular songs, made lil Mosey notable in 2018, and hopefully he will prove to all of us in 2019 that he was more than a one hit wonder.

4. Clairo

Clairo's ethereal alternative sound will most likely gain a lot of traction next year, considering Billie Eilish's rise to fame has paved the way for other pop artists like Clairo with an alternative edge.

5. Valee

Good beats, good flow. Nothing else needs to be said. This man will blow up, no doubt about it.

6. Jorja Smith

An English singer-songwriter who has made high profile collabs this year, and her RB styles will carry her up in 2019 "Roses" on repeat over winter break.

Side B

some high profile collabs this year, and her RB styles will carry her up in 2019.

7. Joji

Filthy Frank made the smooth transition from Youtube to music, and has been gaining popularity with a group of similar artists called ggRising. With Joji's Youtube following giving him a good base to jumpstart his popularity, his music will allow him to expand and reach a larger audience.

8. Greta Van Fleet

A cross between Led Zeppelin, Rush and The Black Crowes, if this band doesn't bring 70's style rock back into the 21st century sound scape, I'm not sure anyone will.

9. Declan McKenna

Declan's youthful pop alternative sound sounds like how it feels to drive really fast with your friends at night.

10. Flip Demaro

"Leave Me Alone" has us all goin nuts last year; hopefully we get more good music from him in 2019.

11. Benny Blanco

Although he might be a one hit wonder, but I swear everyone will have his Juice WRLD and Brendon Urie collab "Roses" on repeat over winter break.

Graphic By Sofia Mayhew