

LOTS-A BUCKETS  
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**ARE WE RIGHT TO BEAR ARMS?**

# Two Sides of the Barrel

**By The Slate Editorial Staff**

The high temperature was to reach 71 degrees on April 20, 1999, in Littleton, Colorado, with no precipitation forecasted. The residents of that community and local high school, however, did not know the severity of the black clouds that loomed over the lunch hour.

Two students forever changed the landscape of school safety when they opened fire at Columbine High School killing 13 (including one teacher) and wounding 20. At the time, it was the worst school shooting in U.S. history, prompting a national

debate on gun control. That solemn title now belongs to Virginia Tech University, where on April 16, 2007, a gunman killed 32 people before killing himself.

Most recently, on a day to celebrate love, Feb. 14, 2019, instead marked the one-year anniversary of the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School massacre in Parkland, Florida. The gunman was a 19-year-old student who used an AR-15 semi-



automatic weapon to kill 17 students and staff members while injuring 17 others.

The FBI defines a “mass shooting” has occurred when *four or*

*more individuals are shot and/or killed in a single event at the same general time/location, not including the shooter.* Going by this definition, the Gun Violence Archive of Washington D.C. has recorded 60 mass shootings just this year alone.

So the debate continues.

With anniversaries of mass shootings — both from schools and various other places — constantly being recognized, yet little action firmly satisfying both sides of the Second Amendment’s Right to Bear Arms, *The Slate* sought out two strong opinions to respond to the same question.

Do you feel the U.S. needs to reform the current gun laws, regulations of ownership/purchase, and implement stricter background checks? Or are these non-factors in the uprising of mass shootings in recent years? Ian Rigby, a senior, and Jason Check, a junior, shed their light on two drastically different sides.

## Something Needs to Change



**Ian Rigby**

Whether in gun regulation or otherwise, the systematic and frequent slaughter of Americans is unacceptable. I am not here to argue politics, left vs right, blue vs red. And I’m not here to take away your gun, as long as you are a responsible owner. I’m here to argue about keeping legally-owned weapons out of ill-meaning hands.

In 1791, 10 amendments were added to our Constitution called the Bill of Rights. The second, well known to debaters and discussers, is our right to bear arms.

However, the brief language of this amendment leaves its true meaning up to debate. Some argue that the phrase “the right of the people to keep and bear arms” indicates that the individual has the right to own a firearm. Others cite the very first phrase in the amendment, “a well-regulated militia,” as proof that the amendment only covers a state’s right to protect itself.

The debate between these two will not be settled, unless we talk to the

founding fathers themselves. So we must not rely on the dead, as Thomas Jefferson suggested, and instead rely on the facts of the day.

As of March 19, there have been 60 mass shootings in the U.S. since the start of January this year. (The FBI-derived definition of “mass shooting”: Four or more shot and/or killed in a single event [incident], at the same general time and location, not including the shooter.)

In these short months, 85 people died in mass shootings. Regardless of laws, regardless of political parties and stance, it cannot be argued that the slaughter of 85 Americans is acceptable. *The only answer is gun legislation.*

That second amendment was written 228 years ago in 1791. Weapons back then were much different: mass murder by a single gunman just wasn’t possible. Jefferson advised that the Constitution be rewritten every 15-20 years, being fearful of ‘the dead’s influence over the living.’ So, we built in systems to change our Constitution and our Amendments. The Supreme Court changed the first amendment — the second is not gospel.

But *nothing* can be done, right?

**See Rigby, page 4**

## Nothing Needs to Change



**Jason Check**

People need to be responsible about gun ownership. When they think about guns, they immediately think about the Second Amendment. Before we can even discuss guns and current gun laws, we have to understand the background behind our founding fathers promising gun rights in America.

The Second Amendment was originally established to protect citizens of the United States from a tyrannical government. If citizens felt as though the government was beginning to take more control than warranted, they had the option to create their own militia. Since the Bill of Rights was created in 1791, America has been through more changes than even imaginable. In today’s world of technology and innovation, Americans tend not to monitor the government as much.

However, the issue of guns still involves the same question that Americans asked 229 years ago: *How much government intervention is too much intervention in a citizen’s life?*

Ever since the Columbine High School massacre on April 20, 1999, students in high schools around the country have been targets for domestic terrorists and the mentally-ill. Since Columbine, there have been 50 other

mass murders or attempted mass murders *at a school.* Furthermore, 141 innocent students have been killed as a result of mass murders at a school. In recent years, one of the most impactful school shootings involved Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, on Feb. 14, 2018.

Nikolas Cruz, a 19-year-old expelled student, opened fire killing 17 and injuring 17 innocent people. After the massacre, the solution some people wanted was tighter gun background checks and stronger gun control. However, stricter gun laws and more in-depth background checks would not have prevented Cruz from purchasing such a weapon.

Cruz, who had a clean record, was able to legally purchase an AR-15 style semi-automatic rifle in Feb. 2017. There is not any stricter background check that would have prevented him from purchasing it. The only possible things that would have prohibited Cruz

**See Check, page 4**

## Mr. Northern Lehigh takes center stage, April

By **Jamie Knerr**  
Editor in Chief

As another school year slowly makes its way to the end, student council activities throughout Northern Lehigh do not slow down.

As spring made its way to finally warm up our town and melt the lingering snow, student council held its annual Spring Dance on March 16 in our high school gym. The dance was semi-formal, and everyone that attended had a great time! Food and refreshments were served, along with a night full of dancing and fun. This year, student council ran a campaign that partnered the spring dance with our annual Food Drive.

The food drive we host benefits our local food bank, and all canned goods collected get returned to those in need in our community.

This year, a student had the option to bring in canned goods for the fundraiser and receive money off of the price of his or her dance ticket! Depending on the amount of canned goods donated, the student received

different discount options.

By combining these fundraisers, we were able to collect more cans than ever! Thank you to all who donated, and know that your generosity does make a difference for those in our community.

# STUDENT COUNCIL

Also occurring in March, student council ran our annual Loose Change Drive. Boxes were placed in each homeroom from March 18-29 and students had the option to contribute any type of monetary donation.

All money collected was donated to the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. This money benefits research to finding a cure for leukemia and lymphatic cancers.

Looking ahead to the last few months of the school year, student council will have many

events, so make sure you stay updated! On April 12, we will hold our annual Miller Keystone Spring Blood Drive.

Miller Keystone Blood Center comes to our gymnasium for the day to collect units of blood that save lives locally and around the country. This event is open to the public and any student 16 years or older. We would like to break our record of most units collected, so please consider donating! This opportunity is a simple way to give back and affect the lives of many.

Later in April we will also hold the Mr. Northern Lehigh competition, April 27, in our auditorium. Senior boys will compete in different pageant-like sections to win the title of 'Mr. Northern Lehigh'. They are judged in rounds of talent, swimsuit, and formal wear. Tickets will be sold at the door that night and we encourage everyone to join us for a night of fun as we allow our senior boys to take the main stage!

As the year comes to a close, stay up to date with all of the student council news regarding all events and fundraisers! 📷

## On Second Thought...



Sophomore Abberly Ressler got a little hot under the Stitch collar on a recent Pajama Day. The idea was well-intentioned but soon became a little regretful. The Slate applauds Abberly's effort.

## New courses added to NLHS curriculum next year

Next year, Northern Lehigh High School will enhance its curriculum with the addition of five new courses.

**Advanced Placement Language and Composition (Mr. Prive)** – “We wanted to provide another opportunity for students to take AP classes and potentially benefit from their experience and AP test scores when they attend college,” said course instructor, Mr. Prive.

Students will have to perform in several different modes of nonfiction writing and engage rigorously in many different kinds of reading. Hopefully taking AP Language and Composition will set students up for greater success if they also choose to take AP Literature and Composition in 12th grade. AP tests are set up differently and have much higher expectations than the standardized testing that we usually prepare for, and so require special preparation.

**Apocalyptic Fiction and Film (Miss Urban)** – This is a genre-based English elective that contains science, psychology, sociology, and research components and includes various forms of media and text that speculate about a scenario that will either destroy life or, more likely, will drastically alter life as we presently know it. This genre is quite popular and includes apocalypses ranging from atomic (*The Road*, *On the Beach*) to zombie (*The Walking Dead*, *I am Legend*).

“I wanted to create this course because this type of fiction was my favorite as a

student and still is my favorite genre. I would have loved having an English elective where I could have had time to explore themes, different types, and why these stories are so popular,” said course instructor Tayler Urban. “I like debating and this type of content allows for a lot of debate about if the scenarios could happen, what would you do, etc.

“The film part of the course just allows us to see how these scenarios have translated from page to the big screen. We get to notice trends in what types of apocalypse were popular during specific time periods and why. We get to see how perspectives change and how that hints at our changing values/concerns for our world. Aside from a lot of reading, debating, and film critiquing, students will also engage in research of a present-day apocalyptic topic-of-interest and will use that research as a basis for creating their own creative apocalyptic written piece.”

**Yearbook Publications (Mrs. Mattiola)** – The new, one-credit course is designed to work with students who have computer skills and an interest in learning and producing actual pages of the yearbook. Students will be encouraged to be in Team Yearbook Homeroom, but it is not mandatory. Students may also join the fun after school in Club Yearbook as we do outside work to organize and design a great yearbook.

**Software Development and Marketing (Mr. Jordan)** – “We needed an additional class to the business department. This class will cover both the design and marking of a game. Student will have the opportunity to not only create a game but be able to market the finished product. Mr. Jordan hopes the “students will have a fun learning experience.”

**Journalism & Media Studies (Mr. Barnes)** – Students will analyze the structure of all media with a focus on newspaper writing, but will also cover cable news channels, the Internet vs the printing press, and the role of social media in today's world of obtaining nonstop information.

The course will cover basic journalism – getting the story *right* before getting the story *first*, and the structure of news writing...how to say as much you can with as few words possible. We will also put into practice the “inverted pyramid” where the main facts go first and dwindle down to the “nitty gritty.” Sectional writing will be covered and practiced (sports, opinion, feature).

“I want to revitalize the old-school art of newspaper writing, just at the high school level,” Mr. Barnes said. “There is a certain art with telling a good story with accuracy, readability and interest. There will also be a constant focus on not only the news of the world, but how it is being covered.” 📷

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The Slate is proud to be the voice of Northern Lehigh High School. It is printed by The Times News of Lehigh. We thank you for reading and please pass it on!



# NL becomes a community of watchers with new initiative

## School District opens Safe to Say Something anonymous hotline to help those in need

By Brianna Schuck  
Staff Writer

With mental health being a growing conflict all over the world, Northern Lehigh is growing toward mental health awareness. Over the past few years, many kids, students, and young adults have been fighting themselves mentally to keep moving forward.

As a result, many of these aspiring people have taken their own lives, have been hospitalized, or are just in need of friends, support, and hope. With the growing issue, schools all over the country have taken steps to help not only those who struggle, but those who have friends who struggle, or really anyone in general.

According to USA Today, Pennsylvania is the very first state to mandate schools to have a hotline for threats. Being said, in late February, Northern Lehigh confidently and proudly welcomed the "Safe to Say Something" hotline to its district, being active in grades 6-12. This hotline allows students and adults to anonymously report threats, bullying, depression, abuse, and

any other alarming situation. Anyone in the community who may know that a student is struggling can report to this hotline at any hour (it is a 24-hour hotline).

"Each and every year, the district will



work to inform the upcoming sixth graders on how it works, what it is for, and how to use it," says Mr. Matthew Link, superintendent of Northern Lehigh School District. The goal is to receive tips that are not fraudulent in which the school can find and provide help to their best ability in response of the tip.

In accordance with mental health, many people also struggle to be strong, independent, and vocal. Therefore, the Safe to Say Something hotline is completely anonymous. If you do not want your friend to know that you were the snitch, but you want to get him or her help, then you should contact the hotline because not only will they not know who reported anything, but no one will be able to tell them because authorities do not even know who reported the issue.

Northern Lehigh is not moving in silence, though, as the district had speakers come in during a normal school day to explain to the students and staff what it is, how it works, and why it should be used. To promote it, District Officer Frank Gnas has hung up posters and stickers all over the hallways and even in the bathrooms and on the doors. In hope of increasing the use of the hotline, they have also promoted it on the morning announcements, posted it on the school webpage

to eliminate possible barriers, and positively explained to the parents of the district and community what Safe to Say Something is all about.

Recently, all the staff throughout Northern Lehigh attended an informational in-service day. Sadly, the topic of discussion was suicide, yet gratefully, the information covered helped get the point across to all the staff that suicide and mental health is no joke and it is a serious issue that must be addressed and attended to. In response, many teachers, coaches, and staff members are fully onboard with the hotline and are also there in support for anyone who needs it.

Mr. Link brought forth the idea that the school isn't just becoming safer online, rather the buildings have been made safer as well. To help make them secure, there was the addition of a new school police officer, Officer Kyle Kromer. They also added safety-film to all the windows and glass doors, and they are partnering with Nulton Diagnostic to provide therapists locally and on campus.

Nulton Diagnostic is new to the area,

See S2SS, page 5

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# Band members join 61st annual County Honors concert



Senior Charles Fleischmann solos the sax at the 61st annual County Honors Band concert.

By Shayla Smith  
Staff Writer

In early February, 11 of Northern Lehigh's most talented musicians traveled to Catasauqua High School to perform in the 61st annual Lehigh County Honors Band concert.

The annual County Band concert is held every winter and includes schools from all across Lehigh County. Joining our Northern Lehigh band members were approximately 120 other students from such schools, including Southern Lehigh, Whitehall, Northwestern Lehigh, Catasauqua, Salisbury, Allentown Central Catholic, Parkland, Di-ruff and William Allen High School.

"The purpose of this festival is to promote music education in our schools, showcase the great musical talent that exists in Lehigh County, and to give our band students a unique and enriching

instrumental experience which extends beyond the typical concert band settings that exist in most public schools," said Mr. David Carroll, band director.

"I have only been a part of County Band for two years, but it has been an amazing experience," said senior Charles Fleischmann. "To play with 120 of the greatest young musicians in the Lehigh Valley has been a true honor. Since our school is so small, County Band has been the only opportunity I have had to play with a full-piece band. My favorite part of County Band is the sheer volume and dynamics of the entire band. Furthermore, it is fascinating to hear how each student's part contributes to the entire piece of music."

Each band director from every attending school is given an opportunity to choose and conduct one piece of music that is to be performed in the concert. This year was extra special for Northern

Lehigh. Mr. Carroll's piece that he selected to conduct for the concert was music from the animated film "The Incredibles." Within it were various solo opportunities, in which selected soloists were given the chance to improvise their own sounds during the show. Fleischmann was one of the selected soloists.

"I had the honor of soloing on guitar and saxophone on a rendition of the "Incredibles" I spent a lot of time practicing in order to secure my position as a soloist among the other talented musicians there. I got to solo on guitar and then end the entire solo section on alto saxophone. Furthermore, I ended up soloing at the very end of the piece on the final chord, along with the other top soloist. It was very interesting listening to how the other eight students improvised over the solo section," he said.

See Band, page 5

## Stronger Gun Laws Needed

Rigby, from page 1

That's what they say. *These frequent massacres are just a fact of life.* Then, allow me to point you to Australia — a country that has had *one* mass shooting in the past 23 years. My friends, contrast that with our 60 mass shootings, just in these few months. The difference? Australia, in 1996, endured the Port Arthur massacre where 35 died and 23 were injured. The Australian government took action, putting regulatory legislation in place. Mind you, Australian citizens did not have their right to a gun stripped away. They can own a firearm, as long as the proper procedures are followed.

An Australian citizen must provide the government with his or her reason for purchasing the gun: including hunting, sport shooting, collecting, and all the things that some worry they won't be able to do. They must own a firearm's license. They must be of age and have a clear background. Should a profession require a gun, the person wishing to buy must only go through an additional six-month course on gun training. These few and simple laws have led to a country with only one massacre in 23 years, and guns are still available to collectors and hunters.

This is why other proposed solutions are a waste of time. Australia is proof that legislation works. Don't keep cutting off the leaves of the weed if you can simply pull it out.

Others point to self-defense as a justifiable reason to keep firearms. Self-defense is important, and in these same few months since January, as of March 11, 231 incidents were reported and validated of citizens using guns for self-defense. Great, right? But it's in-

consequential, in comparison to the 2,565 dead in gun-related incidents. For every person who defended themselves with a gun, 11 died. Is an 11:1 ratio worth it?

One final fear remains. Criminals will still get their weapons. I point you to DUI laws. In 2016, more than one million drivers were arrested with DUI charges. So, should we remove the DUI law? DUIs will still happen, won't they? Maybe, but by a number far few-



er than if legal. Criminals may get their weapons, but fewer than the present. And law-making bodies will be able to dually punish them. An improvement is an improvement. So follow examples set by Australia, and keep guns out of irresponsible hands. It has worked before, and will work again.

To argue otherwise is to hold the under-licensed, under-regulated ownership of firearms above the safety and lives of thousands of people across the country. And if this argument is not convincing, then there is no more that can be done. One cannot be taught compassion. 📧

## Leave America's Guns Alone

Check, from page 1

would be an age requirement or a law that would violate his Constitutional right. Not only are guns part of a Constitutional right, but they are part of American culture and history. No law should be able to violate someone's Constitutional right promised to them. The government should not be able to dictate everything that happens within its realm.

I understand that the purpose of

ing a firearm in the U.S. Background checks provided by the government give the perfect amount of information in order to determine whether someone should be able to purchase a weapon. Currently in the U.S., only nine states and the District of Columbia require gun buyers to go through a "waiting period" before they can take a firearm home.

The average law-abiding citizen understands that the safety of children and of innocent Americans comes before their gun ownership rights. However, most criminals do not follow any laws; there are plenty of ways a criminal can obtain a firearm without buying one from a licensed dealer. Stricter gun laws will not change this.

If someone really wants to get their hands on a gun, the opportunities are there. Guns do not kill people, but people kill each other.

Stricter background checks also bring the inquiry of interference into question. If the government blocks people from getting guns, does that not overturn the entire reason the Second Amendment was created to prevent? The point of the amendment is to allow people to revolt against the government, if necessary. How can something like that work if the government has complete control over the obtaining of a gun? Questions like these tend to challenge the idea of whether the Constitution is king or if restricting potentially dangerous people from purchasing firearms is more important.

The gun debate will continue to dominate political controversy, and people will never stop fighting for a solution. Nonetheless, Americans have a right to own guns, and that will never change as long as our Constitution is upheld. The solution is clear: conduct current background checks, uphold the Second Amendment, and leave America's guns alone. 📧

government is to protect the people; however, stricter gun laws will not protect any American from gun violence.

An example of this scenario is Chicago, where in 2018, there were 572 gun homicides, while only 289 deaths from guns in New York City. If stricter gun laws truly worked, then it does not make any sense for Chicago, which has some of the strictest gun laws in the country, to have such a large number of homicides. Chicago is a great example of how gun laws are ineffective; they do not have any positive effect on the amount of gun violence.

With this being said, I do support background checks for anyone purchas-

# High schoolers Read Across America, and NL campus

Theatre members, Slate staff visit Slatington Elementary with a love of reading, writing stories

Palge Craddock, Northern Lehigh theatre member, shared a love of reading with Slatington Elementary School students.



Shayla Smith, staff writer for The Slate, along with editors Katie Guelcher and Jamie Knerr, pumped up the fifth and sixth graders about the future of student journalism.

By Ava Rosario

Arts & Culture Editor

The Read Across America initiative is tackling the stigmas surrounding reading and writing. On March 1, members of Northern Lehigh Theatre Troupe and *The Slate* had the opportunity to participate.

NLTT students were offered the chance to read to a specific third or fourth grade class, while *The Slate* staff members held an assembly for the rest of the school to hear inspiring speeches about what *The Slate* entails.

I had only heard of Read Across America a few times before, and taking part in the experience taught just how important it is to teach children that reading *can* be fun. One thing I found truly fascinating during the visit was the effect my reading had on the students.

Before reading, I had asked who wants to be a writer for the newspaper or join theater when they grow up, and I was met with fewer raised hands than expected. After I finished the book, I decided to ask the question again, and this time it received almost unanimous enthusiasm. I had spent barely 15 minutes with the class and managed to influence them with the wonders of reading.

Seeing similar excitement and interest from the students during the

assembly made me realize our vital role to educate people about the importance of reading and writing. There's this stigma surrounding both that seems to scare people away as they age.

I remember being in that spot, putting away my beloved novels and turning to what I thought was more interesting entertainment - technology - because books just were not cool anymore, and for no reason. At least I *thought* it was no reason.

There is this silent pressure to put down books as we transition to young adulthood. The number of avid readers I know has noticeably dropped over the last few years.

A report from *The Washington Post* reads, "Leisure reading in the U.S. is at an all-time low," which is somehow unsurprising and still frightening. Liking to read is not considered normal today, and I truly think it is affecting us. Whenever I peer-review classmates' writing, there is an obvious difference when the author is a regular reader.

Also, the importance of being educated is growing in today's society, and reading aids in that. Sure, being forced to read those mandatory novels and textbooks can take away some of the joy of reading, but taking the time to find a personally interesting book and

See Read, page 7

## NL to host County Band in 2023



(Top, l-r, senior Michael Martineau, senior Charles Fleischmann, senior Scott Schaeffer, Mr. Carroll, senior Austin Deibert, junior Cat Shelley, freshman Olivia Walter. (Bottom, l-r) senior Brianna Strohl, sophomore Maggie Reitz, junior Madison Hoffman, sophomore Francine Ohlson, junior Dylan Kuntz.

Band, from page 4

"This experience was another fantastic opportunity for me to solo with an extremely talented group of individuals."

Students in Honors Band had only three rehearsals to prepare for the concert as a full ensemble, each rehearsal lasting the approximate length of a day of school. Such information goes on to prove the practice and level of compe-

tence of every participating member of the program as most students participating have been making music since middle school or younger.

Each year, Lehigh County Honors Band will continue to be held in scattered schools throughout Lehigh County. The tentative year for Northern Lehigh to host the festival is in 2023. Until the next show, the musicians and those to come will be practicing. 🎵

## Anonymous tip line is live 24/7

S2SS, from page 3

but not new to the business. Recently, they opened a campus on Main Street, Slatington. It is open to customers, both in town and in the schools, as there is a room for their therapists in each building. That way, the therapists can come directly to the school. Through this partnership, Northern Lehigh is enabled to be a much safer environment, so they can now very efficiently provide help, and if they don't have the answers, they can find those who do.

Principal Mr. Robert Vlasaty says he is "truly happy with the progress and responses our school has received throughout the use of this hotline." He also says that the hotline, being anonymous, "allows people to speak up even when they don't think they can or even don't know how to." The hotline provides help 24 hours a day to those who are in tough situations, seven days a week. Not only does Mr. Vlasaty support the hotline, but he also supports seeking help and seeing a counselor. He says, "counseling is not a weakness, rather it's a sign of intelligence." If your best friend won't support you, there is always someone who will. And those

close to you may not be able to give you answers, but they can help you get the answers.

If you know someone who is struggling, whatever they are struggling with, please do not be afraid to tell someone, and if you are, never forget that the



hotline is always there and it is completely anonymous. Many young students and young adults are dying due to drug abuse, suicide, and plenty of other diseases, addictions, and personal issues that they are not strong enough to face on their own. They need all of our support, and we can start by putting this hotline to a good use.

Note: Nulton Diagnostic Center will have its grand-opening ribbon cutting ceremony on April 24th at 5 p.m. at their center on Main Street. 🎉

# OPINIONS

## Editorial

### Slipshod attitude forces face of befuddlement

It was not quite art imitating life but more the ignorant illustrating meaning.

After a test of vernacular expansion (that's vocab, kids) ~ not to bewilder, but to broaden one's word inventory ~ the following frustrated utterance was unwittingly shared by a disgruntled student: "Yo, that test was mad hard."

The teacher inquired, "Did you prepare or study flashcards to supplement the practice done in class?" The response was a proud, "Nope." Insert here the teacher's common face of befuddlement. And thus, the inanimate word *slipshod* personified itself and blanketed the conversation with a depressing quilt of irony.

Work-ethic and integrity are topics discussed in many classrooms around the Northern Lehigh dog pound, but when did the careless, apathetic persona become the norm? Not only the norm but almost a sense of comical pride.

The conversation continued.

"So you knew there was a test today ~ you have known about it for a week ~ and never thought to once look at the words just to possibly do well, achieve something and be proud of yourself?"

"Nah." (laughs).

"So why are you here? I mean that. Why do you wake up and get out of bed, get dressed and put yourself into a school setting when you are not making anything out of it?"

The proverbial: "Cause I gotta be here."

The proverbial, expected response: "You do? No one is picking you up, carrying you in, and dropping you into a homeroom seat like one of those claw machines in a diner lobby."

It has been preached for years: Try. Put forth effort. Fail and try again. Learn from failure and celebrate the success.

If the whole world put slipshod effort into everything ~ pizza makers, car manufacturers, firefighters, veterinarians, soldiers, video game creators, government officials, parents, coaches, teachers ~ the world would spin with more chaos than it does now.

Nullify the negligent. Slipshod has no place in a society that desperately needs hard-working virtues.

One cannot blame the result if no training went into the practice. Talent does not just sprout up. It must be cultivated and nurtured. Do you think Jimi Hendrix picked up a guitar and automatically churned out "Red House"?

We can hear it now: "Who's Jimi Hendrix?"

Insert the face of befuddlement again.

### From struggle to smooth success: I will not be defined by a speech impediment

By Shayla Smith  
Staff Writer

I would like to personally blame, *ahem*, I mean *thank* Mr. Barnes for insisting I write about this topic. Stuttering is not something that I am ashamed of; however, it is something I would give almost anything to have fixed, as it is arguably my most distinguishable characteristic. It is discernible whenever I open my mouth. The only way to hide it is to be silent.

I have memories of it affecting me as early as second grade, when people would make assumptions because of it. Second grade was when my impediment developed (at its highest severity), and because of that, my teachers placed me in a reading group with life-skills students.

I was eventually moved to the highest level when they realized my outside ability did not match what I was capable of doing on the inside.

More recently, I remember an instance from work. I tried to speak to a customer, and my words had gotten jammed at the top of my throat. She had made a face, and questioned me about it. After I simply told her of my disorder, she chuckled and said, "You just don't look like a person that has something like that wrong with them."

I wouldn't say that these things offended me. They just confused me. They still do.

How can you make an assumption about a person's reading competence based on speech? I didn't give a reaction to the woman after she made that statement. I still struggle to understand what such a sentence even means. My most sincere apologies if I had forgotten to take my thickest chiseled-tip marker to write "STUTTERER" across my forehead that day.

When an impediment is observed, people assume there is something more about you that is wrong than simply being able to clearly articulate the easiest of words. It's not something that someone deserves to be babied or singled out for. It is something that just needs to be understood.



So, what's it like? Allow me to arm you with knowledge. As a student, you get used to seeing D's or C's on Power School for class participation grades. When going over classwork by order of going up and down rows of desks, you count how many students are left until it's your turn, and you rehearse (at

end of the line is cutting off.

Anything else is simply not an option, or you will get hung up on and will be way too embarrassed and ashamed to call back. This, I know, all from experience.

Upon the suggestion of this article, Mr. Barnes had emphasized that I include a paragraph or two

about my growth from my everlasting battle. To be more specific, the way I grew from a horrifying speech from his 7th grade English class up until my current days as a soon-to-be graduate. My 7th grade speech consisted of approximately three minutes talking about bullying through a voice that cracked much more than a pubescent teenage

boy's. It was embarrassing. I cried.

I could already guess that there would be whispers in the hallway once the bell rang. I figured it would be the topic of conversation for the next few days for people that didn't have anything in their lives that was better to talk about. My self-esteem was at its all-time

low during middle school. This event did not help with that.

Throughout high school though, I think things became better. When I spoke to people, I began to look at their faces more than I looked down at my shoes. Joining extracurriculars have been my best decisions and my favorite sources of strength.

I met and formed relationships with people that I had no idea could be so beautiful. I regained my previously lost ability to love people and to love life. Around such people, my disorder seems to go away. Rather than feeling cynical, I began to feel normal, like there's nothing wrong with me, and as if at no point there ever was. If nothing else, my impediment has humbled me.

I pity the suckers who choose to use their free-flowing voice for things as redundant and wasteful as insults and hate.

least five times) the answer you know you will be asked to read. In my specific case, you never raise your hand if the answer begins with "Th" or "B" because your throat will close and you will not be able to say the answer that you know.

The struggles go beyond the classroom, though. If you start to stutter during a phone call, you have the option of either telling the person on the other end that they need to learn to bear with you, or you play it off as if your

See Speech, page 7

# OPINIONS

## Finding the keys to the kingdom with confidence

By Anthony Bardelli  
Staff Writer

It is said that confidence is key to the kingdom, but knowing how to unlock the gates is the path. For humanity in a civil world where survival of the fittest is struck, only one characteristic seems to distinguish or classify the able and the unable - *confidence*. There are those whom are borne with an innate charisma, but for the majority of humanity it takes work to radiate an inner-strength founded on two principles: body and mind.

It matters not whether an individual is qualified, for if they cannot stand tall, feel

Everything from posture to tone conveys either unyielding valor or meekness. To feel good, one must look good in whatever way they know how. There is no reason for one to appreciate and care for their very being.

Taking time to find a personal routine is nothing more than the apex of physical confidence. By knowing what makes you a unique individual, feel special and look gorgeous with an emblazoned upkeep shows your ethics to others.

"It's OK to have a relationship with yourself...you want to have yourself looking together as much as you can," so that one can succeed comfortingly lovingly, says Jonathan Van Ness, grooming artisan.



Queer Eye, rebooted for the confidence of humanity.

the coursing might, then they shall fall. No more have these lessons been taught than by Antoni Porowski, Tan France, Jonathan Van Ness, Bobby Berk, and Karamo Brown, hosts of the Queer Eye reboot on Netflix, whose mission is to teach humanity that they are beautiful and have what it takes.

In body, how someone presents himself or herself not only expresses aesthetic, but is a manifestation of how you, as a stranger, treat yourself and the world. Often when examined from the basest of forms, confidence is tied directly with how people perceive themselves, act based upon that, and will then be recognized by it.

To the outside world, it shows that not only do you take time out of life to transform into the best you can be, but it coalesces the fact that you have taken the time to show you respect others by *appearing* the best you can be. Everyone has their own beauty, that is undeniable, but it is for the possessor to seek out for display - a quality of magnificence every human has.

Knowing what it is and showing it to the world through determined self-care instills the invincibility that breeds confidence. When one looks good, he or she feels natu-

See Confidence, page 9

## Opening chapters for future readers

Read, from page 5

read on your own time will ultimately be beneficial.

The Slate's assembly outlined what the newspaper includes, beginning with speeches from adviser Mr. Barnes, various editors like Jamie Knerr and Katie Guelcher, and staff writer Shayla Smith. Then they discussed the outline of the newspaper and the basics of its creation. A similar experience to mine happened during that assembly - I could see the students' interest growing as they learned. Whether from Mr. Barnes's inevitable witty remarks or maybe just being excused from class, I do not know, but they seemed inspired.

It is important for us to show others, especially younger ones, that what we have a passion for is significant, especially when there are strong stigmas surrounding it. They can be motivated to apply your wisdom to their life and mull

on whether or not *they* think it is important.

I finally decided to pick up my books again a few years ago, and I truly see a difference now that I read regularly. My writing is improving and I speak with better vocabulary. We seem to forget that



Once upon a time, Ava Rosario shared a story with Slatington Elementary students.

knowledge is power, and if everyone would dedicate just a few minutes daily to reading, they would start to believe it. 📖

## Finding empowerment beyond the stutter

Speech, from page 6

There's *nothing* that *anyone* can do to make people not gossip about you. The sooner that this fact is accepted, the better off you will be, I learned. With that said, I laugh. Most humans do not have the challenge that I have. I don't think they realize how lucky and fortunate they are to be able to use their voice without fear of it not working.

I envy that ability, and I envy those that take such a thing for granted. On the flipside, I pity the suckers who choose to use their free-flowing voice for things as redundant and wasteful as insults and hate. It's the biggest waste of a gift I can name. Sometimes I wonder if those that do so genuinely realize what a waste of their precious time and their even more precious breath that is.

Joining The Slate has been another thing I believe to be a source of empowerment. At the beginning of this past March, in celebration of Read Across Ameri-

ca, I gave a different kind of speech. Mr. Barnes, other Slate members, and I went to Slatington Elementary to speak with kids about what our newspaper is. A mental video clip of me breaking down in Mr. Barnes's classroom played on a continuous loop in my brain on the bus ride there. I knew that the audience would be much larger. More pressure, but also more encouragement to believe in myself. And so, I did.

When the mic was handed to me in the gymnasium filled with kids' eyes glaring at me, an amazing thing happened. Or rather, a thing *didn't* happen: *I did not stutter.*

I delivered what was perhaps my most fluent speech in front of what was also my biggest audience. I still remember the conclusion to it: an awkward, muttered "*That's all I got*" were my final words.

Taking a step back and listening to Mr. Barnes take over the assembly again, a different voice in my head proudly proclaimed: "*It's OK. That's all you needed.*" 📖

# Stand up and break out of the human camo

**By Madison Hoffman**  
Staff Writer

Avoiding the wrath of society's judgement, we seem to be in a constant state of hide and seek. We have begun using our appearance as a sort of camouflage to the metaphorical hunters waiting to catch the prey that stands out. We are falling victim to the temptation of blending in. Our appearance has become our greatest weapon. Camouflage can be good for (realistic) hunting, where animals don't want to be eaten; it hides them from others.

Camouflage - designed to blend in to your surroundings - looks different for all species. For animals in the forest, they look like trees. For animals in the ocean, they could either be sand or water colored. For humans, it's bland clothing, the same haircut, and the ability to all like the same things.

It's like humans have subconsciously created our own camouflage for everyday life so that we don't get hurt just like animals. We may not be hunted by others but we constantly want to be accepted, so the answer becomes acting and

looking like everyone else.

Most people do not want to stand out in a crowd. Even if you desire the spotlight at all times, it's usually for good reasons, not for being different in a bad way. There is a reason that in anime and other shows you can always tell who the main characters are. They are the ones not wearing the same thing as everyone or with bright green hair.

What we wear and how we present ourselves is a significant part of self-expression; it is how we want others to view us. Many of us are so afraid to be vulnerable to the judgement of others (even if you do like being the center of attention) because you don't want it to be for a bad thing. Some people aren't happy wearing the same type of thing that everyone else does everyday. They want to show who they are on the outside through clothes and hair. They may not care how many eyes are on them because they are comfortable in their expression.

Our eyes, in general, are attracted to items with the most color. Many people wear things



**See Camo, page 13**

# It's OK: Learn to embrace the tears

**By Cody Grabarits**  
Contributing Writer

Crying. There are different things people think of when they hear that word.

Some think of a sad event, some think of being weak, some think of being overjoyed. Numerous things could run through someone's mind when they hear



that word. Some people are extremely emotional and cry a lot. Other people, not very much at all. Others, still, are in between those two. Either way, everyone falls into a category and everyone has cried before.

But why do people cry? They're sad or scared. They're happy or proud of something or someone. They're mad or frustrated. Some cry when they've been injured or are in an intense amount of pain. People cry for a bunch of reasons and all the reasons people do it are

real and valid.

Ask almost anyone, and they'll tell you they think crying is for the weak. Many people think this, especially for all the men. Whenever guys show emotion, they're told to 'man up,' which is very toxic because you are basically telling them that their emotions are feminine and that only girls cry. That's ridiculous.

Crying does not make somebody weak. It's just a natural thing the body does in response to certain situations.

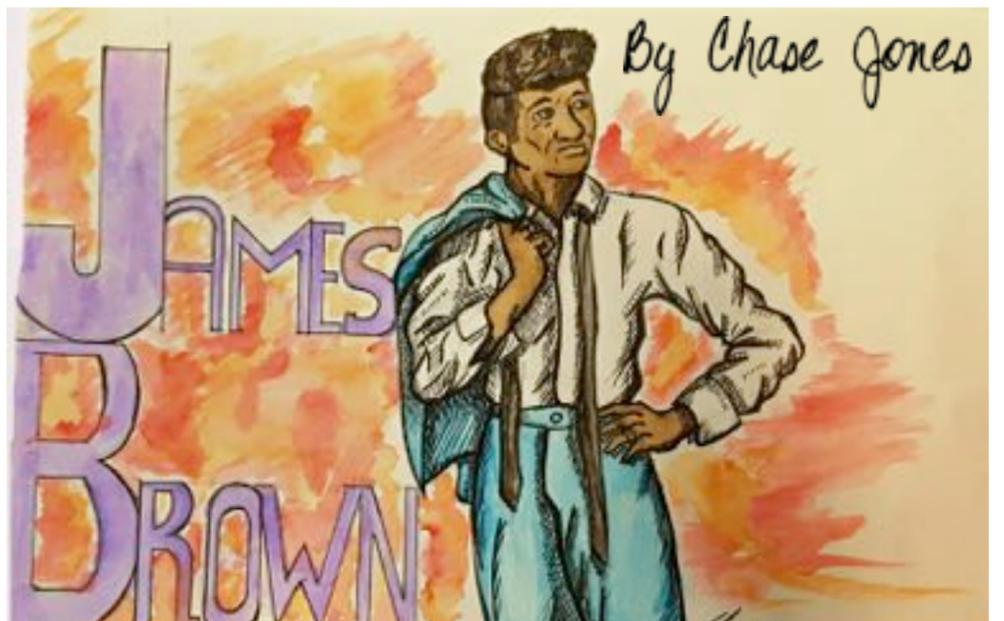
I am one who cries a lot. I cry when I'm sad, scared, anxious, and frustrated. I cry at sad movies, horror movies, when I see a dead animal on the road, when I have to talk about my emotions, and when I see an unloved stuffed animal. My one friend cries when he's extremely upset and if a movie really tugs on his heart strings. My other friend cries when she's sad and anxious and when something really warms her heart.

All three of those reasons are perfectly okay reasons to cry. People are all made differently. Crying is never a sign of weakness because it takes an immense amount of strength to show someone that you aren't OK. It's a huge step to open up to someone and to cry in front of them.

Crying is healthy. It releases pent-up emotion that has been

**See Crying, page 9**

# WATERCOLOR ART



# Into the Wild: NL teacher finds more luck than the Griswolds

Mr. Gerould wraps up our series on stories that humanize teachers

By **Jamie Knerr**  
Editor in Chief

Think about the classic National Lampoon's Vacation movie and you think of a family road trip gone completely wrong. Through this comical story, the legendary Griswold family loads up in an RV and takes a trip cross country, while things are bound to go wrong. For Northern Lehigh High School's health and fitness teacher, Mr. Scott Gerould, he decided to create his own version of the camping lifestyle, packing his family up to experience the wilderness from a different perspective.

For most of his life, Mr. Gerould has loved camping and being outdoors. "I've always gone hiking, and backpacking in the woods with nothing but a hammock to lay out and watch the stars at night. It's one of my favorite things to do," he said. When his daughter was born, his whole family began taking camping trips in tents during the summer. Last summer, after a big storm ripped through their campground and ruined the family's equipment and sleeping area, Mr. Gerould decided to make a change to the way his family experienced camping.

"After that experience, I had finally gotten my wife on board to go ahead and buy the camper." Once he bought the camper, Mr. Gerould and his 3-year-old daughter decided to take a short trip to camp along the Susquehanna River. "We were out there for four days and three nights just to break in the camper. My daughter was very excited." For her first experience in a camper, Mr. Gerould enjoyed doing all of the normal adventures you have while camping and being in the outdoors. "We had a lot of the normal camping fun. There was swimming, boat rides, fishing, and a lot of s'mores."

After this vacation came to an end, Mr. Gerould still wanted to experience more of the outdoors in this way, so his family took two more camping trips in the RV. "The second trip we took, we went out to Raystown Lake for four nights. Raystown Lake was



**Mr. Gerould took to the fresh air last summer to find some therapeutic bonding with nature and family.**

nice to experience in a different way, because we had always come to this camping ground in our tents. This was the first time in the camper." Here, his family was able to enjoy a beach, a playground for the children, fishing, and lots of other camping activities.

"On our third trip we went to Fair Haven Beach State Park, New York, which is near Syracuse and Lake Ontario." Staying for a few nights, Mr. Gerould was able to spend quality time with his

See **Camping**, page 16

## Local Rec Center searching for input

Northern Lehigh Recreation is a multi-municipal organization whose purpose is to create programs and events for our Northern Lehigh community. Within our first two years we have hosted a Food Truck Festival, Candy Cane Hunt, Movie in the Park, Trunk or Treat, Summer Rec Program, Night Hikes, Fitness Boot Camps and so much more. So, what's next? We want you to join us! As we continue to grow, we need the help, input and involvement of Northern Lehigh students to plan, coordinate and support community events! All students who are interested in helping our community and consequently building their resume or college application, please contact **Mr. Michael Kukitz, Executive Director**, by emailing [MikeK@NorthernLehighRec.org](mailto:MikeK@NorthernLehighRec.org) and checking out [www.NorthernLehighRec.org](http://www.NorthernLehighRec.org).

## Don't be fearin' the tearin'

Crying, from page 8

bottled up inside. It helps you feel better, too. Sure, you probably have a headache after you've cried and your eyes might sting, but overall, there is a weight lifted off your chest. You're able to take a deep breath again and gather yourself together to move on. It lessens or gets rid of the emotion to a point where you can talk about it or handle it better.

You feel freer and less-burdened. Moments after you have cried, you just exist there and everything seems OK for a few seconds. Crying is a healthy thing to do (and it helps to clear out your eyes, too.)

There's so much that has been said about crying that people hate doing it and are ashamed and embarrassed of it. I am included in that. I'm not saying that you should be constantly crying, but trying to hold back tears is pointless. The release helps you to feel better; when you hold back tears, you pretty much just fail anyway.

When was the last time you cried? Like, actually sat down, felt everything, and had a good cry? It's better than it sounds and it is more relieving than it initially feels. Crying is nothing to be ashamed of. Ever. 📷



@theslatenews

# Grand showmanship is a matter of maintenance

Confidence, from page 7

ral as the highest achievable, they do good, and do more. Knowing what makes you awe-striking can help aid your pride tenfold. By meticulously crafting yourself to your own perfection it shows you know how to make an effort.

The choice to put forth semblances of personal respect aids not only the present but the future as "making an effort means you're serious about the life you want," stylishly emphasizes fashion aficionado Tan France.

It is essential that you know what fits you as a person for you to pursue the legacy you desire. Look the part with swagger and the confidence you possess or own just by acquiring a visage unlike any other.

Not only must one be in concert with their body, but be so with their conscience. Another way to feel confident is to know what skill you possess that

brings joy. Any activity which assures victory of self enhances confidence. Once more, if you have it, flaunt it for all the world to see and be mesmerized by. Any strength no matter how small when examined is a key to confidence. When you know you can accomplish your quest, aplomb rises as you do above the clouds to where nothing can drag you down from a high of self-assurance. More importantly, do not conform to what is unwholly your quintessence.

Being in a situation where you know you feel you cannot ascend kills confidence.

In such times remember that there is always a chance for victory through toil and by knowing your strengths and looking/feeling your best, success is inevitable. It is natural to feel overwhelmed; a factor in defeat, but defeat is not but a boon under another guise. It teaches survival.

Even when all despair sets in, Bobby

Berk, master of the house, speaks from an old preacher's warmth "...sometimes when you're feeling buried, you're actually just planted," a statement buried for the downtrodden to rise regal as a lotus.

Once the body and mind have been joined in a mystical union unflinching in purpose, only one thought remains for confident actualization to spark: vulnerability.

Humanity is no different than beast and earth. Every cutting word behind the back or to the face is a deep wound. Though a scar may form, if the wound does not bleed, the pain of touching it is immeasurable. It is those who are truly confident beyond eldritch conceptions of the soul that bear their weakness. Showing emotion is neither hysterical nor does it make one the lesser. It is the suppression of sentiment which invokes weakness.

To understand what it means to be strong, you, not another, must know

what it means to feel your torment and jubilation.

"...Being vulnerable is not a weakness. It is a sign of strength. It shows you are in tune with yourself..." masterfully preaches Karamo Brown, the cultural scholar, to the masses who believe they are nothing by showing everything. In the end, is that not what confidence is? The ability to proudly step before the world and declare your chivalric nirvana?

One may see finding his or her own sigil of glory as a daunting summit, but it is the small details accumulating into grand showmanship that make it easy.

"It's just a matter of maintenance," expertly prepares Antoni Porowski of culinary championship. Gaze as you wish upon yourself with the highest regards, bear your strengths as a guiding light to illuminate your majesty, show your heart so that none may strike at its golden-steale. Own it and slay! 📷



## Senior Bulldog reaches '1,000th' milestone

Brandon Hess joins Jada Saeger in second major basketball achievement this year

By **Katie Guelcher**  
*Sports Editor*

On Thursday, Jan. 24, senior guard Brandon Hess became the second athlete this season to score 1,000 career points. That night the Northern Lehigh boys basketball team – opposing Notre Dame Green Pond – knew it would be a tough game (away), and they were facing a very talented team. Despite this, the Bulldogs knew it would be very memorable because one of their teammates would be scoring his 1,000<sup>th</sup> point.

“My main focus going into the game was the same as every other game – do everything I possibly can to help the team win,” said Hess.

Going into the game, Hess was only a few points away from reaching 1,000. Averaging about 16.1 points per game, he was excited to reach the milestone. During an offensive series, senior Nick Seier had the ball on the wing. He saw that Hess had a wide-open three-point shot. He quickly threw the ball in a long pass over to Hess just as he was setting-up for the 3-point shot that he needed in order to reach 1,000.

As Hess released the ball, he was confident that the shot would put him over the major milestone. At the end of the game, Hess had scored a total of 13 points, contributing to the final score of 75-58. Even though NL lost the game, it was still a major achievement for Hess. “It was a great feeling,” he said. “I am so lucky to have accomplished it with such great teammates, friends, and family supporting me the whole way.”

Hess has always been athletic, having played basketball since he was about 7 years old. Going into high school, his main goal was not always to score 1,000 points. “My main goals were just improving every year as a player and a team. Obviously making and going far into the playoffs was the main focus for me and our team ever year.”

Over the years, Hess’s hard work and dedication to the sport has been a key factor in the team’s gradual improvement of their record. His freshman year, the Northern Lehigh boys ended the season with an overall record of 1-21. Hess had a total of 89 points. He and the team worked to improve their record and the next year they finished 7-15 overall. He finished with a total of 197 points. Hess’s junior year, the team had a final record of 11-12. Hess majorly contributed by scoring with a total of 342 points. “I don’t normally get nervous before big games because I live for the big moments and love to play in front of big crowds.”

This season, the boys finished with an overall record of 15-7. Hess finished off the season with a total of 381 points. Last year, Hess helped lead the team into the District Playoffs – their first time qualifying since 2014. The same went for this year.

Hess’s ability to hit a three-pointer when the team most needs it or to finish a vital lay-up against two defenders was crucial in the boys’ successful season this year. Hess and the team had been able to work their way up to a winning record, and once again qualify for the District Playoffs.

There is no doubt that Hess contributes part of his success to his teammates, close friends, and family. “It was such a great



See Hess, page 11

Senior Brandon Hess surpassed 1,000 points in just four years of Northern Lehigh boys basketball.

# New coach, same traditions

Change in leadership for field hockey begins with Coach Seiler

By **Brianna Schuck**  
Sports Editor

Following the latest field hockey season, with great sadness, Northern Lehigh accepted the resignation of long-tenured head coach, Coach Frew. However, that does not mean the uprising program must also come to an end. Northern Lehigh Field Hockey welcomes the new head coach, Coach Kim Seiler.

Coach Seiler is an athlete herself, having played field hockey in high school, but ended her career shy of the collegiate level to focus primarily on her career and academics. After she established herself in teaching, she found herself back on the field.

This time, though, it was through a different picture, as she was now coaching at the junior high level, which she proceeded to coach for many years. Following this step, she coached at the varsity level for five years, totaling 15 years of coaching. She is returning to coach the varsity level for her sixth season, but this time as the head coach at NL.

In preparation, she has recently received her USA Field Hockey Instruction certification so she can stay updated with college field hockey coaches and all they do with their athletes.

Leaving her old team was tough, but she says, "I couldn't pass up the opportunity to work with a team that has such great potential." Building off of success, she plans to instill a new sense of meaning. "I want to instill a sense of community within

our team. I want our team to help develop each other, communicate and build each other up.

"No matter whether we are a young player, senior, coaches or parents, we are working together to be a positive role model for our student athletes. Respect is very important. Our program will work everyday to show and model respect to the game, players, opponents, referees, mainte-



nance workers, bus drivers....everyone."

Aside from that, Coach Seiler plans to keep improving. "My goals are to always improve our play day by day. I want our girls to be competitive with every team we play. Every team will know that the Dawgs came to play."

Previously, Coach Frew instilled a sense of tradition, and Coach Seiler is in sight of that tradition. "As I am a new coach, I am still learning Northern Lehigh traditions, but I

intend to follow through with whatever traditions are held here."

Coach also proceeds to glorify her passion for coaching, and for her new career: "I have always enjoyed coaching. Being on the field with the girls and working to improve their skills, team play and sportsmanship is very exciting. I can't wait to get back out there! I am excited to start a new chapter here at Northern Lehigh. Everyone has been so welcoming and nice."

Being the new coach in town can be tough, and it certainly can add a lot of unnecessary pressure. However, Coach Seiler isn't about to get beat by pressure. "In some ways, I am sure there are pressures, but I am focused on the girls and continuing to build the best program I can while instilling what I think are good attributes in young athletes. Hard work, perseverance and sportsmanship are the basis to any successful sports team. Although I have only worked with the girls a few times so far, I am very impressed with their willingness to try new things and have fun while they do it."

The main goal for every team is success and improvement, but Coach Seiler plans on teaching life lessons and everlasting skills as well. For the seniors, she says, "I want them to take away from their senior year that they had a successful season not only on the field but off the field as well. That they learned life lessons that will help them throughout their life.

The girls will know they can cre-

See **Fhockey**, page 15

## OPINIONS

# Winning isn't everything

Someone must lose; how do we handle coming in 'second place'?

By **Katie Guelcher**  
Sports Writer

One of the hardest parts about being an athlete is learning how to deal with a loss. Nobody likes to lose. Athletes who are passionate about their sport do not purposefully try to lose - it is not a good feeling.

After consistently pouring all your time and effort into the sport you love, losing can instantly crush every ounce of confidence that remains. It may make you question, "Why me?" or "Am I just not good enough?"

Asking yourself these questions game after game, or race after race, can, overtime, deteriorate your love for a sport. In our society, too many athletes have these thoughts and decide to simply quit because they do not want to deal with the emotional pain or stress. They do not realize that altering their mindset can easily give them a different outcome. It's not easy, but there are ways to better handle a loss.

It's cliché, but it is important to keep in mind that no athlete is perfect. Putting too much pressure on yourself is almost equivalent to setting yourself up to fail. If you do not live up to the expectations set, in your mind you have already lost. You have already let yourself down before you have even begun. It is important to know and remember that setting more reasonable and achievable goals for yourself will more likely lead to success.

Some professional athletes swear by saying that losing is the best thing that ever happened

See **Losing**, page 13

# Hess thanks his teammates for helping to reach milestone

Hess, from page 10

feeling to know everyone around me supported me through everything," he said. "My teammates always put me in the best positions to succeed and I can't thank them enough for four amazing seasons together. Also my friends and family always came out to support our games and when they knew I was getting close to my thousandth point, they all made sure they were there to be the first ones to congratulate me along with my team."

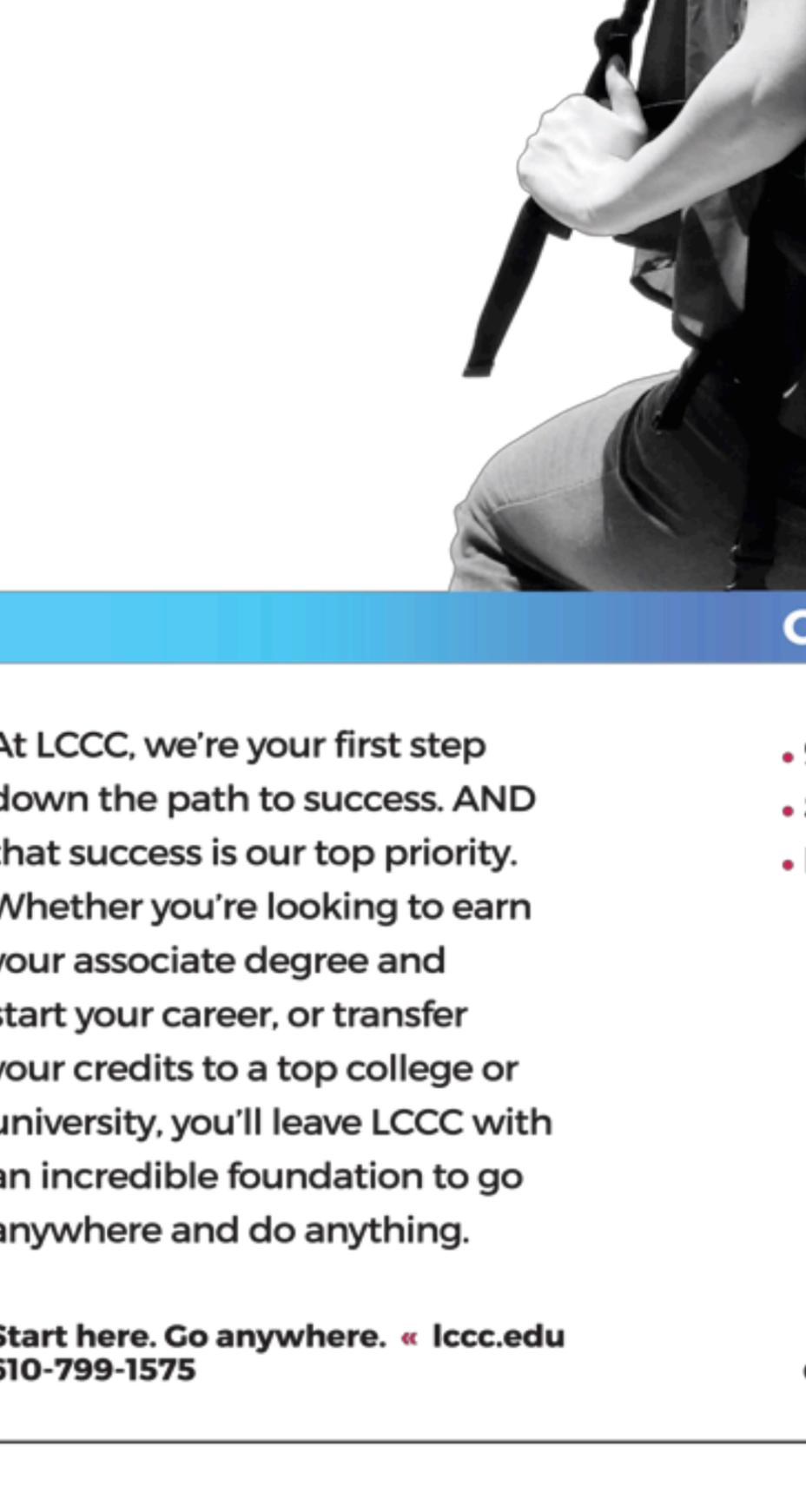
Reaching 1,000 points was not Hess's only accomplishment this year. This year, Northern Lehigh once again hosted the 37<sup>th</sup> Annual Slatington Rotary Tournament. Northern Lehigh beat out Jim Thorpe in the semifinal game to earn a spot in the final game against Lehigh. The Bulldogs were able to beat Lehigh with a final score of 52-48, Hess was able

to score 22 of those points - 13 of which were scored in the fourth quarter. At the end of the game, Hess was named MVP of the tournament. Along with this award, at the end of the season Hess was selected for the Colonial League Second Team.

Not only is Hess an outstanding basketball player, he also plays baseball in the spring. Along with all his earned accomplishments this season, he, along with seniors Preston Kemery and Jada Saeger, have been selected to play in this year's VIA Basketball Classic All Star Game. (March 30). These players went up against the top players from each team in the Colonial League.

After high school, Hess plans to attend Lehigh Carbon Community College to major in business management, and to no surprise, continue to play the game he has always loved. 🏀





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# Disconnecting the technology paradox

By Michael Martineau  
Staff Writer

Technology is everywhere. The vast majority of American adults carry phones in their pocket. Not only do many jobs require the use of cell phones and computers; the industry that develops such consumer devices is booming.

Many of the corporations vying to have the title of 'Highest Market Capital' are technology oriented. As computers and phones dominate American businesses, so do they proliferate within our social lives. Much of a teen's day now centers around updating and viewing each other's profiles on social media platforms.

What started as a platform for basic communication through "instant messaging" has now become a medium for our generation's whole subculture. Many of us get our music, news, humor, and friendships, through a single app.

Like a 19th century railroad monopoly, single social media platforms are controlling increasing amounts of our free time, and in new ways. All of this rapid change has caught the attention of psychologists, sociologists, parents, and (you guessed it), teenagers. We live in a unique time where two consecutive generations were raised in night-and-day environments: one with phones, the previous with-

out. Everyone is asking, what effect does technology have on us?

The answer, like most things in life, has two sides. Because technology is so prevalent in our culture now, it has pros and cons. On one hand, technology has had a positive effect on society. Our phones have connected the world in a way that nothing else has even come close to.

Within a minute of reading this, anyone with a smartphone can contact someone from across the world, and with translator applications, there would be no language barrier.

Just as quickly can these devices bring us music, news, weather updates, and emergency messages. Applications such as Facebook even leverage their influence to aid in disaster response by asking nearby users to give information and help to emergency services. Indeed, each day brings a new benefit technology gives us.

There are, of course, drawbacks. Physiologically, looking down at our phones constantly is taking a toll. It strains our eyes, hurts our neck, and hurts our hands. Psychologically, the damage may be more profound. Humans are now wasting their cognitive surplus on mindless activities that have the same addictive tendencies as narcotics. It affects our sleep too.

**See Technology, page 14**

## Handling a loss is its own victory

Losing, from page 11

to them. Ironically enough, you would think that winning would be the best thing to ever happen to them, but it is just the opposite. Having a major loss became the driving force that was needed to push themselves beyond their limits and achieve more than they ever knew was possible. Their loss had become their constant motivation to keep practicing and working hard to ensure they never had to feel the pain of that loss ever again.

Having the mindset that some of these professional athletes have is the best way an athlete can learn to handle a loss. Instead of feeling sorry for yourself, for losing a big game or race, use those feelings as motivation. Use it as a way to drive you to get better at what you do. Put more time into the sport you love. Do not let losing destroy your love for the game.

It is not an easy thing to do, especially after a big game, or a championship race. Losing something you feel you have worked so hard and have

come so far to achieve can be devastating. Despite this, it is how you come back from that loss is what is most important.

With that being said, it is OK to lose. Losing is, and will always be, a part of the game. Every game, race, or competition will have a loser, just like it will have a winner. Losing builds character within an athlete. It builds determination and shows that you can be stronger than you thought.

It is necessary to keep in mind that your effort will always equal your results. If after a loss you find yourself asking, "Could I have done more?", then chances are, the answer is yes. The amount of time and energy you put into practice majorly impacts how well you perform. If you don't put much effort into practice, you are once again already setting yourself up to fail. In the end, if learning from your mistakes forces you to push yourself to the limits as an athlete and a person, how can it be considered a loss? 🤔

# Gritty, among others, bewilder fans across sports spectrum

By Owen Levan-Uhler  
Staff Writer

'What... is it?' you were probably asking when the Philadelphia Flyers released their new mascot, Gritty. Heck, you are probably *still* asking that question. To answer this question, "Gritty is a 7-foot

"witch or sorcerer." This word was twisted into the slang term "mascotte" soon enough, which means "sorcerer's charm."

The term evolved over time with connections to gamblers and even an opera called "La Mascotte." It entered the sports world in the 1880s and in 1886, the New York Times wrote an article



furry orange creature with googly eyes," in the words of wise Wikipedia. So what is it with mascots like Gritty parading around our stadiums and arenas making utter fools out of themselves and/or terrifying children for life?

The idea of a mascot isn't exactly a new one. The term "mascot" comes from the French word "mascoto" meaning

about a boy (Charlie Gallagher) that was seen as a mascot. This article disposed of the second "t" in "mascott," resulting in the word becoming like it is today.

During this time, early into the 20th century, mascots were all real animals or children. They were also taken very seri-

**See Mascots, page 14**

## Breaking out of the human camo

Camo, from page 8

with a more natural, earthy tone to it. There is no reason to take a second look at people wearing those colors because those colors are all around us. It is the colors that we do not see that often – the bright red glasses, the yellow pants, and the orange-patterned crew socks – that catch a second glance. Patterned things, like polka-dots, stripes and tie-dye, can also grab our attention.

In my everyday attire, it became clear that I had no color and wore the same hoodie, jeans, graphic t-shirt, and converse combination. More variety was needed so I was more than just a hoodie and jeans.

My glasses were blue; now they are pink. My Converse and Vans were black; now I have rainbow tie-dye and 80's-esque shoes. My sweatshirt is now a jean jacket. I still wear the same base clothes but now I look more put-together and I have made it my own.

My favorite thing is bright, colorful and fun shoes. I feel like they are the last

thing people look at when they scan your outfit and I want to leave them with a unique note. If I do not include any color in my clothes, my shoes will make up for it.

And I do not always have to wear that kind of thing; I now will wear whatever I think I will look good in. I do not really think that it made me stand out any more than usual and you know what, I do not care if it did. It makes me happy to wear it and I am not here to make others feel comfortable.

If you are comfortable with the trends and wearing generally the same thing every day, then do that. But why not consider broadening your horizons a bit? No one is stopping you. Avoid being the camouflage that society has created for you. There is nothing wrong with standing out. Maybe you don't wear the same type of thing every day and people actually look forward to what you are wearing next. Even if others are judging you, who cares? Be your biggest critic. And if you're happy, then nothing can touch you. 🤔

## Chickens, Handsome Dan and Mr. Met confuse fans

Mascots, from page 13

ously, unlike the foolish green hairballs of today. One of the first football mascots was "Handsome Dan," a bulldog who belonged to the class of 1892 at Yale.

The first mascot that wasn't a child or an animal is thought to be the "Clown Prince of Baseball," or Max Patkin. Patkin was actually a real baseball player, who once found himself pitching for Joe DiMaggio. Patkin pitched a ball that DiMaggio hit a home run off of, but when DiMaggio started to run the bases, Patkin followed, mocking the way DiMaggio ran and making silly expressions. This sparked a mascotting career that spanned nearly 50 years.

But today, when we think of mascots, we think of a weird and goofy character with an obnoxious costume, portrayed by someone just trying to stay hydrated beneath all of the stuffing, fabric and fake hair. The first costumed mascots were likely Mr. Met in baseball, and Brutus Buckeye from college football, who debuted in 1964. It wasn't these two that made a costumed creature an icon of American sports, though. That job was left for the chickens...

In 1974, a San Diego radio station named KGB hired Brian Narelle, a cartoonist, to create a character for a series of commercials. So naturally, he made a chicken.

The radio station adored it so much, they had a vibrant chicken costume to go along with it, and they hired a young journalism student named Ted Giannoulas to portray the character. It became so popular that he was asked to provide entertainment for the crowds at Padre games. This chicken, and Ted Giannoulas, soon became the *San Diego Chicken* who entertained crowds for more than 40 years.

Soon enough, other sports teams inspired by the Chicken created their own mascots. The Phillie Phanatic debuted in 1977 and the Baltimore Oriole followed a year later. Today, nearly every sports team in the U.S. and many foreign sports teams have a mascot. One of the only teams that needed one was, you guessed it, *the Philadelphia Flyers*. So what do they come up with? An alarmingly fat, tangled mess of orange fur that would fit right in from our dear friends in the *Conjuring* series.



And even though he is sort of like the Phillie Phanatic or "Gapper" from the Cincinnati Reds in the way that he is big, fuzzy and goofy, Gritty was initially, and still kind of is, *creepy*. He's right up there with Mr. Met, who, by the way, looks like he came right out of an old Thomas the Tank Engine episode.

Though soon enough, Gritty charmed his way into our hearts



with his antics to his friendly (but weird) demeanor. But that's how mascots are supposed to be, or at least that's how we see them being. After all, the Iron Pigs have ham and bacon characters running and driving 4-wheelers around a baseball field during every home game.

So even though he was initially feared, Gritty is the newest staple of Pennsylvanian and American sports culture. In fact, on Oct. 24, the Philadelphia City Council declared that Gritty helped show the city's passion and spirit in a formal resolution honoring the orange creature. And on another note, he's "volunteered" to host the Oscars, and has received multiple write-in votes for multiple local governmental and board positions. Gritty is beloved by the Flyers, their community and followers, and by the internet. 🐼

# Global Warming and what we can do about it

By Owen Levan-Uhler  
Staff Writer

Polar bears are not the only thing affected climate change - though the poor creatures are suffering greatly. Global warming permeates the headlines and public debate with the entire future of the human race in the middle of the controversial storm.

Sure, natural disasters like the recent Hawaiian volcano eruptions add to the rising temperatures of the atmosphere, but humans

degrees Celsius, or 33.44 degrees Fahrenheit, with around two-thirds of this warming occurring since 1975.

This might not sound like *too* much - after all, the temperature here Slatington could rise or fall that much in a week or two. But local and global temperatures are different. Local temperatures fluctuate depending on the time of day, wind patterns and precipitation patterns, along with seasons.

Global temperatures change from how much energy the Earth receives from the Sun,



are the main problem. Do not think, however, I'm blaming *you* for the hole in the ozone layer, or the seemingly-everlasting smog that looms over Los Angeles. No, I'm saying that *you* could help eliminate this environmental threat, even by just turning off your phone at night, or flipping the switch on that one light that *always* seems to be on.

Global warming isn't a new concept, though its concern is rising like the Arctic Sea levels. According to earthobservatory.nasa.gov, since 1880, the Earth's global temperature has risen around a total of 0.8

and how much it emits back into space, and those intervals change very little. If this interval *does* change, it could be disastrous. In the past, just a 5 degree Celsius drop was all the world needed to be covered in massive glaciers 20,000 years ago.

Imagine what would happen if the world heated up by 5 degrees Celsius instead. Whole *countries* could be desert wastelands, the ceiling of the ocean could have rise to completely cover coast-lying cities and states

**See Global Warming, page 15**

## Be in control of your own devices

Technology, from page 13

Many reading this will remember a night, or nights, where they stayed up late swiping up on Instagram, and how awful they felt the next day. The instantaneousness of social media technology is double-edged by nature as well. Because articles and websites can be published free of any sort of regulation, misinformation spreads on the internet like a wildfire.

Abusing social media to spread misinformation is even rocking the foundation of our democracy: elections. There is strong evidence that many recent elections have been influenced by foreign and partisan false-flaggers. Just as it can bring us together, technology can be used as a medium to divide us.

So how do we combat the bad, and keep the good? As responsible citizens, each and

every one of us needs to understand a few things about the devices we allow into our lives. It sounds cliché now, but it goes without saying: not everything you read on the internet is true. Actively seeking out factual information from credible sources can come a long way. Finally, limit your time on these devices.

The Northern Lehigh School District has already taken great strides to keep unwanted distractions out of the school day.

While controversial among most students, I think this is phenomenal. Northern Lehigh students now have a guaranteed six or seven hours' worth of quality, screen-free human interaction. In order to protect ourselves and fully utilize our technology, we have to learn moderation. Control your device, don't let it control you. 🐼

## Behind the Hate, Part Two: Can't Lose with Compassion

Earlier in the year, *The Slate* looked into the origins of Hate; this second part studies what else can be done

By Brooke Delancey  
Contributing Writer

In life, we love and we hate, and the world goes 'round and 'round. Whether it is from how we are raised or from who we hang out with, we all have our own bias. Hate is mostly given from the people who are afraid to be different. People who are afraid to be bold, unique or to try something new, will often shame others for their creativity in fear that they will turn out to be much better than them.

In society, hate is based on if you like what they like, and if you do what they want to do. People hate people for hanging out and being friends with the "outcast," and giving them less attention when they want more. Maybe it's the nurturing, maybe it is who they hang out with. Sometimes people hate because they have nothing else better to do.

In order for the world to be a better place, we should stop hating silly things and learn to be more accepting. Once we learn how to accept, people can move forward and have a much more peaceful life. Hopefully.

In high school, people start wars. Whispering rumors in the hallway is the bomb to their hate. Some don't understand that they may have ruined a life due to the fact that they just wanted to make a

person feel bad. "It's just a joke" is said to cover the fact that they meant to hurt the other. That "joke" was just the doorway to the beginning of the suffering.

Something unique lives in all of us. Some of us are too scared to show everyone what we are made of. People are afraid to tell the truth in fear of their friends leaving them. From all the hate they have seen or done, they may be embarrassed to be who they are and try to make fear in the people who can be free to be themselves. But what if it is also the other way around?

What if the people who are tired of feeling worthless for being who they truly are retaliate on the people who made them suffer before and after they did not want to pretend to be somebody else? What if they can't take being emotionally punched in the gut everyday? What if you mentally and physically saying you hate them over and over again for who they are makes them physically attack back. That is what you want. You want a response. If they won't respond, karma will.

In many ways, we are the same. We all make mistakes. It is what makes us human. Emotions are what we all feel whether we like it or not. If we are all the same, shouldn't we all be treated equality?

People should be loved for being themselves. No one should feel useless. Everyone should simply accept everyone for who they are. Life should not have to be a popularity contest.

Where does it all originate? Hating starts when we are young. In kindergarten we all were meeting people for the first time on the first day. We did not think about what a person has done or felt since they came here. You probably only thought "Hey person! You me want to be my best friend?" If a person was "different" or "weird" You disliked them. You never wanted to play with them, or be their friend. That's where hate all begins.

As the years in school went on some people joined a group and other left. Me I had fun being around people, but I always preferred to go solo. I never really hated people. Sure sometimes I played with the other kids, but I never really was the type of person that wanted to be friends with everyone. You don't have to be everyone's friend. You don't need to be the most popular. You don't always have to be the first. In

order to climb you cant let others fall.

What I have learned is if you hate others, you probably hate yourself. We all live once. We do not have nine lives like cats do. All of us have one chance to be remembered. Do you want to be remembered as

the nice person who helps anyone that they can? Do you want to be the most feared, the person who does anything to fuel the hate, and person that makes others hate too?

We can battle this hate by loving. We all just being nicer to everyone. Holding the door, saying "thank you", and just saying "have good day" are simple ways to destroy the hate.

We all should just let go of the hate. Do you ever wonder what it would be like to be the other person completely. Everybody has something going on in their lives. Lets let it go. Just forget about it. Flip the switch.

Hate is defined as "intense or passionate dislike." Love is defined as "intense feeling of deep affection." Both alike are strong, and intense emotions. All hate is going to do is make you end up alone. If you love something you will never be alone. Answer one question. Do you want to put all your strength into ending up alone or ending up with love?

Now is your chance to figure out *you*. Will this be your second chance? Will love light up and free your soul of hate? Will you be able to have a good time with no regrets? You will regret hating. The only thing you will hate and regret the most is missing the opportunity of love. 📌



## Global Warming can be battled right here at home

Global Warming, from page 14

like Florida. Most of the existing land on Earth would be impossible to be cultivated upon, thus depleting all food for the population.

So, what *can we do*?

There are some simple methods to reduce global warming that start right in your home. One of the biggest methods to enable is not using so much water. Heating, pumping, and treating water is one of the biggest contributors to pollution, which causes global warming.

Taking shorter showers (and turning down the heat in the process), turning off the water while brushing your teeth, or even taking the two minutes it takes to fix the dripping from the sink can all reduce water usage. Also, not buying so many bottled beverages, especially water, can help cut down on pollution. It takes a massive amount of energy to access the water needed, purify it, mix it with other ingredients depending on what you purchase, and manufacture the plastic needed for bottling the fluids. Another one for teenagers in particular is not wasting so much food. "Approximately 10 percent of U.S. energy use goes into growing, processing, packaging, and shipping food—about 40 percent of which just winds up in the landfill." So instead of throwing out a bowl of food you don't want to eat, put it back in its container or cover it for later. At the store or restaurant or even at school, don't buy something you knowingly won't eat.

Many devices in homes are left

sitting unused and plugged into the wall when they are fully charged. Even though they are completely charged, the devices can still drain electricity. That adds up over time. "This 'idle load' across all U.S. households adds up to the output of 50 large power plants in the US," according to nrdc.org. So, when your phone or computer is done charging, unplug it as soon as you can. And devices that don't always need to be plugged in should be unplugged, too.

Many NLHS students don't drive yet, but for those who do, keeping your tires inflated can help cut-down your car's fuel emissions, which reduces pollution. It could also increase your miles-per-gallon ratio by 4 to 40 percent. Walking to and from school on some days helps reduce fuel emissions as well.

One of the biggest things you can do as well is speak up to your parents and relatives, informing them about climate change and pollution and what they can do to help. Your family members could invest in energy-efficient appliances, purchase gas-smart vehicles, and partner with companies that produce means of energy from renewable-sources like solar power.

There are so many more things that can be done about global warming that haven't been stated in this article. Speak up. Take initiative toward helping the world and fixing past generations' mistakes, even one light switch at a time. Our generation will be the one to help save our world or let it fall to extinction. 📌

## Good things happen to hard-workers

Fhockey, from page 11

ate their own destiny. If you work hard, good things can happen. I am hoping they have fun and truly feel they helped build a family-oriented team."

And for the rest of the girls, she believes it is important to always give it your all and set goals. Coach Seiler says, "As a social studies teacher, teaching young people, especially young female athletes, is always close to my heart. I want girls

to know that with working to improve themselves and instilling a good work ethic, nothing can stop them from reaching their goals.

Everyone is born with certain talents, it is the coach's responsibility to help athletes use those talents and combine that with their skills in order to be a successful athlete."

Although it is currently "off season" for the field hockey girls, Coach Seiler is still working and preparing for the upcoming season. 📌



## BYE BYE BIRDIE PLAYED TO A FIVE-SHOW SUCCESS



The Slate would like to congratulate the cast, crew and all those in charge of an amazing five-show run of "Bye Bye Birdie." So many months of hard work and preparation paid off on the stage for a phenomenal four days. Best of luck to all the seniors as they open their own first act in the real world!

Photo courtesy of Emily Moyer

## The Geroulds opt for wilderness; Wally World probably closed anyway

### Camping, from page 9

family and relatives away from the rest of the busy world. Camping is one of his favorite summer travels, and he was able to experience plenty of it this summer.

One of the main reasons Mr. Gerould loves camping is because it allows him to spend time with all of his family and they all get to experience these memories together. "My parents went with us, so my daughter was able to spend time with her grandmother. Family friends would also come along, who also have children her age, so she would always have others to play with too." On the third trip of the summer, Mr. Gerould was able to spend time with a majority of his family, as aunts, uncles, cousins, and friends all enjoyed the camping trip together at Fair Haven Beach.

Since Mr. Gerould had been tent camping or backpacking his whole life, buying this camper was a new experience for him. When asked if he preferred the camper over a tent, he said he had no preference. "It is more about convenience. You have restrooms and showers right there for you instead of having to go to a building that may be quite a distance from your campsite."

Mr. Gerould is ready for this summer, as he has already planned a visit to Raystown Lake, and is looking to book another for the month of July. In 2020, however, he plans to make his biggest RV trip yet and take his family cross country for a few weeks to visit places like Mount Rushmore, the Badlands in South Dakota, and Yellowstone National Park.

For anyone that enjoys camping and takes trips outdoors very often, Mr. Gerould recommends investing in this type of mobile home/transportation. "It makes the trip a little easier. There's more storage space, better sleeping arrangements, and more convenient restrooms."

Camping allows you to experience the outdoors in a way you would never be able to otherwise. This is one of Mr. Gerould's favorite things to do for the views of nature he is able to experience while out at night surrounded by the trees. As Henry David Thoreau, American poet, philosopher, and naturalist, once said, "In wilderness is the preservation of the world." Do not sit inside wasting time away, but go outside and explore the beauty of the wilderness our world offers us. 📷



Ava Gerould was all smiles with her dad as they hit the open road in what turned out to be a successful camping trip. "The Clipper" was thankfully not the "Family Truckster."