



Read about the in-depth of the flood recovery on pages 6 and 7



BELLEVUE EAST

TOM TOM



BELLEVUE EAST HIGH SCHOOL1401 HIGH SCHOOL DRIVE(402) 293-4150BELLEVUE, NE MAY 2019ISSUE 6VOLUME 68

Giving extra space to BPS



Springfield Platteview Community Schools proposed a boundary change that would give Bellevue Public schools a bit more land as part of their school district. The district change would give all of the land East of Highway 75 to the Bellevue Public Schools. In order for this to be approved both Springfield Platteview and Bellevue Public School boards must approve. If both boards approve, the state Reorganization Committee then would finalize the process of the boundary change by giving their approval. *Photo by McKenzie Gandy*

Diego Vasquez Glover
Reporter

Springfield Platteview Community Schools proposed a boundary change that would expand the Bellevue Public schools boundaries for attendance purposes.

The district change would give all of the land east of Highway 75 to the Bellevue Public Schools attendance boundaries. In order for this to be approved, both Springfield Platteview and Bellevue Public School districts must be on board.

If they are, the State Reorganization Committee would then finalize the process of the boundary change by giving their approval.

Principal Jeffrey Wagner detailed what he believes some of the benefits are that the Bellevue school district could get from obtaining newer land.

“For one, it can increase the property tax base for us,” Wagner said. “School districts are funded with local property taxes, so if that land and then whatever gets built on

there in the future is part of Bellevue, the district would reap that profit or the taxation of that land and property. So there’s some financial gains potentially down the road.”

East also can benefit form the increased population which, can improve the school’s image. It can show that a school is doing well as it shows many people want to attend at East.

“Then also the hope is that you’ll get housing and family dwellings and some of that property so then your enrollment and your population would stay at a sustainable rate or increase a little bit to ensure schools are full and thriving,” Wagner said.

According to a document released by Springfield Platteview Community Schools, the main reason for this boundary change is due to the students that are residing East of Highway 75 attending other school districts, focusing mainly on Bellevue Public Schools, despite being part of the Springfield Platteview School District.

Other benefits could come with this boundary change as well outside of the

school district for Bellevue.

“It just provides us more opportunity, and more land availability, not only as a school district,” Wagner said.

The change in boundaries can help with the commute for families because Bellevue is closer to the area than Platteview schools. Bellevue is 2 miles away and Platteview is 15 miles away.

“It is not really about the school district, but it is about the city of Bellevue. Also, being able to have that property and hopefully tax base, development, and many other things,” Wagner said.

Adding his take on what he thinks the benefits could be, Bellevue resident Brandon Smith gave his input on what the land could be for if given over to school district and becomes a part of Bellevue.

“It could be beneficial to business or any people around the area, it can also help Bellevue grow, we are a small town but we are starting to grow rapidly, so more space could be necessary for the future,” Smith said.

Smith said he believes the land could be put to good use and that the expansion is cost effective.

“If they’re looking to build new school grounds that could be a new use, but as for uses, it’s just more residential,” Smith said.

Senior Conner Shares said the land could potentially be used by the city as a whole. He said he thinks the expansion could be a great thing and that the proposal is meant to benefit the people.

“I feel like it could be developed, there is always room for growth, and the city could use the money from the taxes,” Schares said.

The voting process for the boundary change will be finalized in May. Students in the qualifying areas would become a part of Bellevue Public Schools.

For the land Springfield Platteview Schools could pass on to Bellevue Public Schools, some are hoping for the future development of the area.

“I feel the Springfield district is giving up the land for the betterment of the people,” Schares said.

Teachers leaving East

Staff moving on next year share parting words



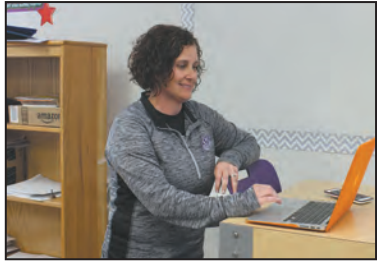
“My favorite moment at East was coaching the reserve basketball team to a win over West in 2014,” math instructor Kyle Martin said. *Photo by McKenzie Gandy*



“Work hard, have fun, and don’t forget that you know more than you give yourself credit for,” science instructor Phillip Alcocer said. *Photo by McKenzie Gandy*



“I’ve had a lot of great moments at East. From great Pickleball, to watching students evolve,” P.E. instructor Thomas Horton said. *Photo by McKenzie Gandy*



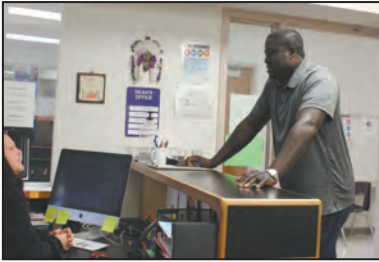
“Everything starts in high school; it’s your foundation of what life can do so take advantage of it now,” Kendra Holmes said. *Photo by McKenzie Gandy*

(Left) “Relationships that I have built - definitely has become a family within the art room,” art instructor Lindsey Werner said. *Photo by McKenzie Gandy*

(Right) “Thank you for sharing this amazing journey with me and remember that my door will always open to you,” business instructor Andrew Werner said. *Photo by McKenzie Gandy*



“One thing I’d like to say is always care for the environment, and always stick up for those who need it most,” science instructor Karin Donner said. *Photo by McKenzie Gandy*



“My favorite part is just working with kids and the relationships that I have built with students and teachers - that is the reason why we are here,” Dean Tola Dada said. *Photo by McKenzie Gandy*



Bellevue hosts Go Green on Earth Day

Abbie Deng
Reporter

Go Green Bellevue and Go Green Gretna held Sarpy County Earth Day at the Lied Activity Center to promote environmentalism with volunteers and exhibitors from all over the community.

“Earth Day was first started 50 years ago to raise awareness that we as a people were degrading our planet, to the extent it could no longer sustain us. Green Bellevue continues that message today, to educate our community to better care the planet in every action we take. Our community is taking steps to a cleaner future. That is our main theme and objective,” City Councilman Donald Priester said.

Sunday morning before Earth Day, parents, students and community members enjoyed their time as they engaged in the fun activities of Sarpy County Earth Day, provided by various members of the Sarpy County community.

“The Sarpy County Earth Day is hosted by Sarpy County, the City of Bellevue, Bellevue Public Schools. Both Green Bellevue and the newly formed Green Gretna are coordinating this year’s event,” according to Bellevue.net

Several activities commenced through the afternoon including a

trashion show, which is a fashion show with clothes made out of trash, held by the Zoo Academy, face painting for kids and several others.

“Education through hands-on activities was really the main goal of Zoo Academy students this year. At Sarpy County Earth Day, students presented information on the dangers of overfishing and by catch to populations of ocean creatures and the impacts of single-use plastics on ocean pollution and sea life as exhibitors. In addition, the students organized events featuring reusable, recyclable materials,” Zoo Academy instructor Tess Sykes said.

Other educational opportunities were presented at Earth day, including lessons on green energy, conservation and ways to stay green, and seeing and driving a Tesla, an electrically powered car.

“[Other activities] the Trashion Fashion Show, a people’s choice award for the art show, youth activities, a walk for water, making milkweed seed balls to save the monarchs, planting native cultivars, learning about electric vehicles and recycling athletic shoes,” Sykes said.

Read the rest of the story online at thecheiftainspear.org



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Hope squads brings happiness to East

Jacob Kriewald
Sports Editor

A student is impatiently waiting for the bell to ring. Once it does, he walks out the front of the school to find that Hope Squad has written kind and encouraging messages in chalk all around the school on the sidewalks.

“Hope week is a week where our Hope Squad gets to spread hope, motivation, and inspiration through the halls of East,” Hope Squad member sophomore Kenneth Duke said.

Hope Squad is a group of individuals who come together as one to put a smile on the staff and students face. For hope week they

did a chalk walk which is where they drew motivating and inspirational messages on the sidewalks at the front of the school. This was to help further their goal of spreading positivity at East.

“I think that Hope Week has affected the school in such a positive way. I got a lot of feedback from the Hope Squad video, which was awesome to hear. Generally, I think people really loved the idea of Hope Week,”sophomore Hanaa Tatby said.

Besides the chalk walk they did a variety of other activities around the school. The participants of Hope Squad placed inspirational notes throughout the building. They placed them on lockers and gave students the notes in person.

“I participated by handing out motivational slips to the students, and we did an event after school where we wrote motivational and inspirational sayings outside for all of Bellevue east on the sidewalk to see,” Duke said.

Hope Week will continue to make it return with a large amount of positive comments. With the impact it is making on the school’s population, it is something they will consider doing again.

“It reminds kids of the support here at school and that there are lots of people behind them who want them to succeed,” counselor Casie Onken said.

After all of the activitiesd during Hope Week for the school, the squad accomplished

their main goal, to give hope to East.

“I know it had helped bring awareness of the need for emotional support here at school and I hope it is helping students realize that they are not alone,” Onken said.

“It reminds kids of the support here at school and that there are a lot of people behind them who want them to succeed.”

- counselor Casie Onken

Band puts on pops concert for first year

Cam Smith
Reporter

Medleys of music filled the air and created an atmosphere of unity across all bands on the night of the first band Pops Concert. Band students came together to have a night of music to close out the school year.

“It was a really fun experience and everything went smoothly. For it being the first year being in band and having a concert with music that was fun to learn, I did the best I could and had a great time with it,”

freshman Savannah Rinders.

In the Bellevue East auditorium on April 30, Wind Ensemble, Concert Band, Jazz Band, and Symphonic Band put on a concert featuring well-known, mainstream songs.

“I think Mr. Wright thought it would be more fun to have all the bands do more upbeat and common songs,” percussionist sophomore Chris Moore said.

Pops Concerts are more of an non-traditional, separate events for both band and choir. In choir, students audition to sing solos or

duets for the departments. This year in band, all of the separate bands at East participated in playing more modern songs from various artists and movies.

“We’re doing special songs, like songs people actually know and listen to rather than a classical type of concert,” Rinders said.

When the idea of a Pops Concert was announced the students had a very upbeat reaction.

“I pushed the March one [concert] to later in March, because of the snow days, which was kind of like our core meat of the bone

concert literature and we just decided on doing something a little more low key, let’s do some fun things so that’s where the Pops Concert came from,” band director Charles Wright said.

The bands had a month to prepare for this concert. In that time all bands practiced both in class and in their own time.

“It’s not a lot of time for band to prepare, we haven’t had as many rehearsals and it usually takes a lot longer than a month. But slowly I can hear things piecing together,” Rinders said.

The concert featured Ray Charles, and “Africa” by Toto. Symphonic Band played “How far I’ll Go” from Disney’s “Moana.” Music like medleys of several other Disney movies like “Cars” were also played.

“I asked the kids for some ideas of what they wanted to play and we went out and searched and went through a website jwpepper.com. We’re doing some tunes that I like some of my favorite artists. But it was more of a combination of student ideas and my ideas,” Wright said.



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Bellaire receives Rigamajigs

Emily Nelson
News Editor

Bellaire Elementary, KaBOOM!, and CarMax teamed up in the Month of the Military Child to honor military children through providing the school with Rigamajigs, a toy that combines science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) skills.

Earlier this year, Bellaire's Parent Teacher Association (PTA) president, Bethany Rowlee, set out on the hunt for a new playground for the school. However, she stumbled upon the Rigamajig. The Rigamajig consists of wooden planks, wheels, pulleys, nuts, bolts, and rope.

"[While I was] submitting other grants to get our Bellaire kids a new playground, KaBOOM! contacted me in January to let me know that they felt Bellaire would be a good match for a Creative Play grant they were offering," Rowlee said. "What stuck out to them in the first part of our application is that we serve a large percentage (greater than 20%) of children of active duty military and veteran parents, as well as the fact that we serve a high percentage of low-income families."

Principal Nikki Schubauer said once they saw the price tag of the Rigamajigs, \$15,000, she knew they'd have to be recipients of a grant, otherwise they would be out of reach. KaBOOM!, in partnership with CarMax, presents six grants

a year to schools that meet the requirements of their application process. Schubauer said she knew they wanted to focus on military communities and felt confident. They received the call that said they were awarded a grant, the first given.

"We were very excited and honored to have received such a competitive grant," Rowlee said. "We were completely blown away."

The next step was a reveal to the students. Rowlee said KaBOOM! has a process for their reveal so Bellaire invited the local CarMax team, Superintendent Jeff Rippe, Lt. Col. Sean Park, and mostly children of active duty military and veteran parents.

"We invited the kids to the library for the surprise event, told them what was happening, thanked our amazing CarMax sponsors and VIP guests and then let the kids play with their new Rigamajig," Rowlee said. "They dove right in with plenty of ideas and imagination."

Schubauer said when the kids saw the Rigamajig they didn't even hesitate. She said they built helicopters, cranes, pizza cutters, and even a big fidget spinner. Associate Director of Account Management at KaBOOM!, Erica Liberman, said every time she interacts with the kids with the Rigamajig she is so impressed with the fact that the kids immediately get it in a way that adults do not. Rowlee, Schubauer, and Liberman said they see ways that this kind of

play benefits the students.

"Play is a great equalizer. It is how kids act out stressors that are in their lives," Liberman said. "They get a chance to process everything that is going on, it is their outlet. We know that kids from military families do experience very unique stressors like having a parent deployed, moving around, and perhaps having a parent come back with an injury whether visible or not."

Military child Makai Stearns said he can attest to the struggles. The fifth grade Bellaire student

moved around from England, Missouri, Portugal, Georgia, and now Nebraska.

"Being a military kid has had its moments where it has been hard, especially the moving part. I have had to move so this is my third school and I might be going to my fourth school soon," he said.

Stearns said although it is nice to meet new people, he understands the struggles of a military child. He said his advice to fellow military children is to just try not to worry about where you are moving and to just roll with it, try to make a

bunch of friends and try to make the best of it. Stearns said he hopes the Rigamajigs will give kids an example of something fun to do instead of worrying about if they are going to move. Liberman said the Rigamajigs were designed just for that.

"Free creative play can be such an amazing opportunity for bringing communities together and helping kids when they move to a new place. It's for the social engagement, but also the social and emotional experience," Schubauer said.



Bellaire Elementary School pupils work together and use their imaginations to build different gadgets. "I hope the Rigamajigs will give kids an example of something fun to do instead of worrying about if they're going to move," 5th grader Makai Stearns said. *Photo by McKenzie Gandy*

Kiwanis presents Bellevue art show

Sharon Guchu
Reporter

The Kiwanis Show is an art show that displays works from schools around the metro to compete with one another. This year the show took place at East High School in the South gym April 28.

"The Kiwanis Club is a community thing in Bellevue; they meet at the weekend and they sponsor the art show at Bellevue East and we always host it and we

have been doing it since 2003," senior Anabel Gallagher said.

Many different students participated and some of them won cash prizes. The show is put in different categories depending on what grade the person is in. Each category is judged by grade, giving people more of an opportunity to win. Each winner was money. Senior Miracle Ndichafah, Gallagher and senior Megan Hunter were some of the students who participated in the art show.

"I saw a lot of different drawings paintings and also 3-D crafts from people there were judges in there and then there was some pretty cool artwork. Some people drew people and painted them different colors to show some kind of feeling," Ndichafah said.

There were many students who submitted many different works such as drawings, paintings, 3-D and also 2-D. Each art class was required to submit at least one art piece. However there was a

maximum of two total. Inspiration was involved to make the many different artworks to make the art show possible.

"My inspiration for the drawings was actually because I am creating my AP portfolio and it's on soccer as a sport and so two of my drawings were about soccer. One was like goal keeping and the second one was just shooting," Ndichafah said.

Different people had different experiences in the show. Gallagher

has been attending the show since her tenth grade year, but this was Ndichafah's and Hunter's first time there. This is the 13th year of the Kiwanis Art show coming to Bellevue.

"It was interesting because strangers were there walking around and looking at all the art pieces that were submitted and admiring them all. So I think it was nice," Hunter said.

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Bellevue Flood Recovery

Family suffers from flood destruction

Madie Ybay
Co-Editor in Chief

The flood may be over, but it's effects are everlasting. Many families have been misplaced because their houses have been deemed uninhabitable. Junior Madison Ruch's grandfather, John

Ruch Sr., lost his family home in the flood.

"I was terrified when I heard that my grandfather had to be evacuated. I was scared for him and the house, but I am so glad that he got out and that he's safe," Madison Ruch said.

He was evacuated from his house in Green Acres on Mar 15.

John Ruch Sr. was able to go home on Mar 30. He is now living with Madison Ruch and her father.

"Losing the house was such a tough thing to do. However, I can still carry those memories in my heart and I still have my family close to me so I can continue to create memories with them," John

Ruch Sr. said.

Green Acres was one of the first neighborhoods to be evacuated and one of the last to be accessible. Many of the houses in Paradise Lakes and Green Acres were too destroyed by the flood for them to be habitable. Home owners had 10 days to gather their surviving belongings from

their house before the house was demolished.

"Going back to pick up what we could was extremely hard. Scavenging through old memories and not being able to take them back with us was the worst part," John Ruch Jr. said.

The house had held many

memories inside as John Ruch Sr. lived in that house since 1989. He raised his children John Ruch Jr. and Andrea Ruch in that house. Madison Ruch also grew up in that house making it especially devastating to lose.

"That house was a part of me. I lived there from when I was a baby until now," Madison Ruch said. "The best and the worst memories were made there. It has been so hard to let it go."

Going back to the house was something that the family had been anticipating during the weeks of evacuation. Nothing could have prepared the Ruch family for the destruction inside of the house. Almost all of their belongs had been ruined.

"When I was evacuated I could only get so close; I was running off of adrenaline. I just wanted to come home. Now that I saw what had really happened, I am devastated. All that adrenaline was just drained from me," John Ruch Sr. said.

Now John Ruch Sr, John Ruch Jr. and Madison Ruch are living together after the loss of their family home. Through the support of the community they were able to get through the wreckage of a place that has held memories for them of over 30 years.

"Just the support of my friends and the rest of the community has really helped me; I appreciate the continuous support that has helped me and my family more than anyone knows," Madison Ruch said.



Many people affected by the flood still hae a lot of work to clean up the destruction. The city is helping to assist with some of the clean up efforts. "We're also helping figure out [the flood victim's] mitigation and getting rid of their property and hauling it away to the dump so we're providing dumpsters and items like that," Mayor Rusty Hike said. *Photos by Cora Bennett*

\$1.4 billion

The estimated total loss and damages in Nebraska as of March 21. *

\$449 million

The cost of estimated damage to roads, levies, and other infastructure in Nebraska as of March 21.*

2,840

The number of assistance applications approved by the Federal Emergency Management Agency for Nebraska.

341

The total number of businesses damaged from flooding in Nebraska as of March 21.*

\$85 million

The total cost of all the houses and businesses that were destroyed or damged by the flood, according to Governor Pete Ricketts in an article on npr.org.

\$800 million

The total amount of money lost in crop and cattle losses from the flooding in Nebraska as of March 21.*

\$21 million

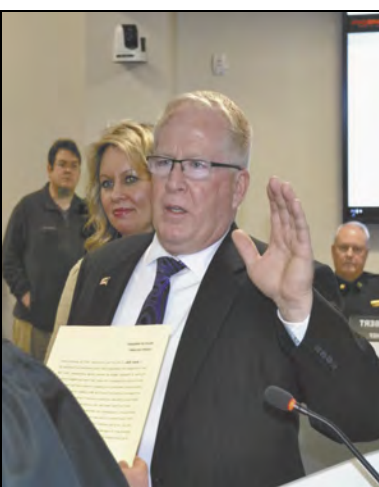
The total amount of money approved by FEMA to help aid the affected citizens in Nebraska.

2,067

The total number of houses damaged from flooding in Nebraska as of March 21. *

*According to Governor Pete Ricketts in an article on peoplesworld.org.

Hike discusses the flood, how to help out community, organizations that are helping out



Emily Nelson
News Editor

Q. What is the city of Bellevue doing to help flood victims recover?

A. We're helping with the organizing of NEMA (Nebraska Emergency Management Agency),

FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency), and all the organizations like the Salvation Army and all the volunteers that have come in to help with disaster relief. We're trying to organize all those people and making them accessible to all the flood victims and we're also working on putting a housing task force together, so they [those affected] can start landing on their feet and getting into their new homes and stuff and help them locate housing.

Q. What sort of relief efforts are being put in place?

A. The Salvation Army, they've been a huge help. FEMA has been a really big help as well in providing start up funds. They're not here to make people whole; they're not going to help pay us back 100%, but they're here to just get them started and make their next month's payments and that type of thing. That definitely helps at this time.

Q. How will these efforts continue to help those affected?

A. Reasonably, FEMA will be here for years; it could be two or three years so it's a long process before all the damaged areas are

cleaned out, the mobile home park, the manufactured home park, and there's some farm houses and everything out there. There's debris in the field, there's contaminated areas where the city's got a lot of damage to their lift station, the sewer system, so [FEMA] is here to help us through that process and provide whatever federal funding there is. Generally, the city has to pay for those fees and expenses, but we put in for reimbursement and the federal government reimburses us for what we spend.

Q. How can the community support those affected?

A. The community is supporting now by giving money. I know the Bellevue Community Foundation has a pretty good size fund they put together to help. A lot of private donors, a lot of business that are donating, Midlands Community Foundation, there's a lot of different businesses that have come up with raising money and funds. I know we've provided new washers and dryers through those funds to people that have lost their homes. We've bought beds for people and all brand new stuff so the funds are coming in. I hope they keep coming in because

people are going to need a lot of assistance when they start getting back into their houses.

Q. Is there any word of advice you could give to anybody or any family struggling with the flood?

A. Don't be afraid to ask for help because there's a lot of help here. Being in the Midwest, people don't like asking for help; that's one of the things we've found. The disaster recovery teams would come and would say that they don't have enough work here, and that's because all the neighbors are coming to help. People have trouble asking for help.



The Salvation Army worked with Bellevue Christian Center to open up another Disaster Relief Center in Bellevue in order to help those affected by the flood. Go to <http://www.bellevuechristian.com/floodrelief/> in order to get help or to help volunteer. *Photo courtesy of Creative Commons*



The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is working to provide funds and assistance to those in the community that need help. To request aid from FEMA, visit the website at www.fema.gov. *Photo courtesy of Creative Commons.*

"Playing in a major league stadium felt pretty good. It was always one of my dreams, and it was impactful being a freshman," Schuyler said.

Athletes manage injuries

Tennis ends strong

Diego Vasques Glover
Reporter

Playing throughout the school year many student athletes may experience an injury while practicing or playing during a game. If an injury does occur that athlete may have to spend a certain amount of time recuperating in order to get back into their season.

With sports injuries ranging from non-severe to severe, Bellevue East School Nurse Kala Brown explains what student athletes should be wary of when exercising or playing games.

“A big thing for sports is just to use your common sense on body mechanics, so don’t put your body in a position for an injury, and also like stretching beforehand because it warms your muscles, your ligaments, you’re less likely to get an injury if you’re stretching beforehand and just using smart body mechanics,” Brown said.

An online document by the American Academy of Pediatrics advises while injury is more likely to occur with physical contact in a sport, most injuries originate from overuse, with the most common sports injuries being sprains, strains, and stress fractures. Some exercises are recommended as well to prevent further injury such as

stretching to increase flexibility and avoid potential muscle injury, the academy stresses to take periodic breaks to reduce the chance of heat illness.

Brown recommends how much time an athlete should stay in the recovery process for the kind of injury they may be dealing with.

“If it’s a concussion it can take weeks or months, if it’s a strain or sprain it’s just days or weeks, so pretty short,” Brown said.

Cross country and wrestling coach Collin Mink mentions what he does when assessing a student athlete for a possible injury while supervising over multiple athletes during conditioning or events.

“Well usually my knowledge is limited, i’m not a medical professional, but I run into it at least once a season where a kid will get hurt and depending on the severity I always make sure not to move them, you don’t want to move them if a kid is on the ground grasping their leg, you know I want to assess it and make sure there’s nothing protruding out, it’s not a broken bone,” Mink said.

Mink describes the current process student athletes may have to go through in order to participate again in their sport, and what has changed when dealing more severe injuries.

“Depending on the severity they can be out for a considerable amount of time, one of the bigger injuries that didn’t use to require as much time out because less was known about it is concussions, concussions today kids have to go through a protocol to return to play and usually it takes up to if not more than a week for them return back to playing,” Mink said.

Bellevue East student athlete Brett Robalik gives advice in what student athletes should do when participating in their specific sport, and what tactics they could use when playing sports that involve projectiles.

“Wear the right equipment, if you’re batting, wear a helmet, if you’re catching, wear a catcher’s face mask, it kinda helps to turn balls away from your face,” Robalik said.

Recalling his past injuries Robalik mentions his experience and consequence of dealing with one of his most memorable sports injuries, and describes what happened during the incident.

“Well Sophomore year, I got smacked in the nose with a baseball and it kinda hurt, broke my nose, shattered everywhere, blood everywhere, I can’t breathe out of my left nostril anymore,” Robalik said.

Sharon Guchu
Reporter

Tennis started a while ago and they have been going this to prepare for different matches, invites and tournaments. Sophomore Kaylee Azafui is one of the players in girls tennis this year. She plays number one doubles and number one singles.

One of the coaches is Krista Tew. She has been playing tennis for 14 years and decided to start coaching. Since then she has been coaching for seven years.

“I started coaching because I love tennis, but my brother told me that there was an opening because my old head coach was leaving and my JV coach was taking over and they were looking for somebody and I just thought it would be a fun job because I love tennis,” Tew said.

In tennis, there is a lot of running so the players need a lot of endurance because there can be very long matches. To prepare for the long matches, conditioning is needed. In conditioning, they do a lot of footwork and running. To play, warm-ups are the first thing that tennis players do and that is hitting the ball across the court to see the opponents style of serving or returning the ball. Then, when

the match starts, you take some serves and try to put the ball in and try not to hit it outside the box. Then you continue till someone messes up.

“It’s definitely my favorite sport; me and my husband, we both played it in high school, so it’s one of those things that we obviously connect on,” Tew said.

This year there are many new players on the team. They got more players than they have gotten in a long time. Some of them from last year are getting into the game and understanding more of what is going on.

“This year I am more focused in tennis, more competitive than I was last year,” sophomore Kaylee Adzafui said.

Score count in tennis just like all the other sports. Something that is different about scoring in tennis is that they do it for individual players. They are scored by how many games they played either singles or doubles.

“I think there is a lot of development going on and preparing for next year with losing all the seniors that we are so it’s really about preparing the girls for next year. It’s going to be a tough year, but I think what we have gained this year will definitely be helpful for next year,” Tew said.





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The role of the Tom Tom is not only to promote the accomplishments and highlights of the school, but also to inform the Bellevue East community of events and issues that will affect the students, faculty, staff, administration, and community. Its primary focus is to serve Bellevue East High School and cover issues that affect teenagers today. The Tom Tom does not necessarily represent views of the Bellevue Public Schools and strives to support itself through advertising. In order to achieve the optimum learning situation, as well as serve its audience to the best of its ability, the staff believes that the decisions should rest primarily with the adviser and editors, according to standards of journalism. Material judged to cause significant psychological harm, or that violates the privacy of a person, or that is libelous will not be printed. Obscenity or profanity will not be printed in the Tom Tom. Stories in the Tom Tom will be based on substantial facts with quotes clearly attributed to named sources whenever possible. The Tom Tom will not run gossip or stories or columns founded on rumor without facts. Any student appearing at a public event such as a sports event or music concert may be photographed, and that photo may be published without violating the privacy of that individual. The policy of the Bellevue Public Schools is to provide an equal opportunity for all students; to prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, physical or mental handicap, marital status and political affiliation; and through affirmative action to promote the full realization of equal opportunity. Registration practices will demonstrate full adherence to the letter and intent of federal and state government policy guaranteeing equal opportunity for all students.

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Following procedures to stay safe at school

Editorial

Tom Tom Staff

Recently the 20 year anniversary of Columbine happened. School shootings have been more and more common over the years. This leaves students, families and staff as worried as ever.

Many procedures have been implemented into the curriculum to help prepare students in a case of an emergency.

However at East, when it comes time to do a lockdown drill, students and staff do not adhere by the rules. Of course it is only a drill and there is no actual danger, however, it is in place for a reason.

The drills prepare students and faculty for the threat of a school shooting. It's imperative for school to be prepared and ready for an emergency to happen, especially when it's as threatening as a school

shooting.

School safety procedures include lockouts and lockdowns. Lockouts are performed when there is a threat in the near area, but outside of the building.

Students and staff would go along their day as normal, however the doors will all be locked and will not let in any visitors. Parents will be notified about any threats to the school.

If the threat becomes more dangerous and has entered the building, that is when lockdowns are to happen. Lockdowns mean locks, lights, out of sight.

Instructors are meant to lock doors, turn off the lights and joining the huddle of students who are hiding out of the line of sight from the door.

In an evacuation scenario the announcement will be "to announced location" and in a

scenario when students must take shelter, instructors will tell students how and where.

According to the Center of Homeland Security and Defense, there were seven gun incidents in Nebraska in all of history. Last year alone 165 victims were killed or injured in the U.S. during school shootings.

It is possible for incidents like these, where students and staff get injured and killed, to happen at East. Students should be prepared for emergencies like this especially when it can cost them not only their lives, but the lives of many others.

Being prepared can do more than save lives; it can help reduce anxiety and panic when the actual event might happen, according to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

When the anxiety of a school shooting is reduced, it can reduce

the stress as well, which can make it easier and faster to recover. By one person being confident and prepared it can give others a sense of security and safety as well. When students are ready in an emergency, it can make it less scary and less dangerous.

There are certain guidelines to adhere by stated by FEMA and the American Red Cross. These drills are put in place to brace students so they are aware how to stay safe.

The drills are put in place for a reason and should be taken seriously. Students can never be over prepared; it does not hurt anyone to do the drill properly.

That means going where instructed, staying silent, and not doing anything else. It is important that students and staff are well equipped to deal with an emergency so dangerous as a school shooting.

Learning to balance work, school



Brooklyn Anderson
 Reporter

As students in high school grow older, they start taking more responsibility as in getting a job, getting their license, buying a car, and start paying for bills.

Around the junior and senior year, students are old enough to get a part time job and start earning minimum wage for the time taken away for that job. Working and going to high school applies pressure on students to get good grades and keeping a positive attitude for the entire day.

Having a job and going to school puts stress on a student that is not needed. Students get pressured to get a job at 16, to start paying for a car, a phone bill, and gas, to really get an idea what it's like to be an adult.

As the students get older, they begin to get ready to graduate and possibly go full time in work.

Senior year is the time where everything sums up into one moment and says that they are officially in adulthood. It can be an emotional time for seniors knowing that they are no longer going to school the next year like they have been for the past 12 years.

In my personal opinion, getting a job and going to school full time is exhausting for students, especially



Illustration by Zayda Birkel

if there are late night shifts. That kind of responsibility should not be pushed on teenagers at a young age because of the dedication they have to put into school to have good colleges ask for their time and to have a good college career.

According to the American Psychological Association, teenagers experience stress levels that are twice as high than the stress levels experienced by adults. The reason for the excessive stress is school.

Waking up early in the morning,

going to class for eight hours a day, doing extra curricular activities, participating in sports, and having a paying job can put a lot of stress on a teen.

In Nebraska, teenagers can not have a job until the age of 16 which will be a part time job getting paid minimum wage. As they get older, they can work more hours and get paid more than minimum wage.

As a senior, work and school can be stressful because of the hours and time taken away from being a young adult. There's not

much time to do a lot, which needs to be used wisely, especially for school and needing to get stuff done for classes to graduate with the rest of the class.

In order to keep that workload certain, students have to learn how to time manage so they are able to have breathing space to take care of themselves as well as being able to get their work load done. They need to make sure to ask for certain shifts, get rid of classes that are not needed as a senior, or have late start or early out.

Finals are not necessary in school



Jacob Kriewald
Sports Editor

The end of the semester is coming and everyone knows what that means, finals. Finals are the end of semester exams that are supposed to go over everything you have learned that semester, even though they may not hit every point from January to May

I have personally heard and experienced stories of teachers teaching one thing all semester, and then for the finals giving a simple multiple choice quiz. This is unnecessary, and finals should be removed from the school system completely. Our school dedicates two days to finals alone which means its either two really unnecessary days, or two really important

ones. With how much teachers stress finals and tests, they should either weigh on your grade heavily, or not at all. In certain classes, the grade could pass or fail you, but in others, you could fail the test

On one side of the argument, your grade does and will affect your grade in certain classes, and it should. On the other side, the impact could be unfair to some students.

A student could have put in a bunch of work compared to a student who could have skipped all semester and then somehow ace the final and ends with the same grade as the student who worked their tail off.

Finals are the tests that are supposed to make or break your grade. I have only been at this school for not even one year yet, and I can already see the flaws. For instance, the test either completely messes with your grade, or do not do enough.

Some of the counter sides to this argument could be the fact that it may not prepare you for college exams. In college, it is common for students to take tests often, so that is why high school gives these tests. The college tests are important to your grade just like every other thing else. This is also related to high school tests.

To make it into a good college, your ACT score has to be good or at least what the college will accept. These finals are little milestones to help us get the scores we need to succeed in college. The ACT is another test that is a little confusing. The test is

testing how well you can answer questions in a timed surrounding. Some and most students do not do well under a timed environment, it puts stress and anxiety. Most students take tests better when they have time to focus and pay attention.

There are all these issues, but I have the solution. I do not believe that they should be fully taken out of the school system, just controlled. It is a simple fix, by controlling the test in a more practical way, the school system can move everything around to make more sense.

If you are not passing your class, you should be obligated to take a final in that class. If you are passing the class then you should be able to be exempt from the finals. It is unfair to the students who do work all semester to have their last two days be spent on tests and stress.

Students that are passing their classes at a high enough standard should not be forced to subject themselves to two more days of intense stress. Finals can cause grades to drop dramatically, and that can drastically effect the outcome for students that already have high grades.

Students that are not passing their classes in the first place should be able to use finals as sort of a redemption. If students are able to pass their finals, which should theoretically be a culmination of all the things they have learned a semester, then they should be able to pass their class.

There are so many factors that weigh into a student's end of semester grade, and finals should only be a factor for those that need it. Having students with a good grade take the finals seems almost like a punishment for all their hardwork this semester.

Of course the easiest solution would be to implement this solution school wide, but it is understandable as to why that would not work right away. It can be a slow process, but nevertheless it needs to be a process.

It is the students final two days of school, let them relax and have fun. The students deserve a break from the stress and chaos of the school year. When the school year comes to a close, most students have checked out mentally from school. Most students are thinking about how their summers are going to go.

Making this small change could not only help students' grades, but also help the teachers as they will not have as much work to grade. It is simply unfair for students to let their whole semester grade ride on one test, as they have put in way more effort all semester.

The students work for around 10 months out of the school year to finish it out with tests and stress. This whole system is not broken, just a little out of control. With these simple little changes the final testing system can be great, more impactful, and an overall better way of doing things.

Schools should not only focus on going to college



McKayla Vermeer
Co-Editor in Chief

As the year comes to a close, many seniors are preparing for their life beyond high school. Many are excited for what may lie ahead, especially with the new experience of college on their horizon. However, there are still many students that may not be going into college at this point in their lives, or even never at all.

Choosing only to focus on college preparation in high school completely isolates the students that do not feel as if college is the right choice for them. Focusing solely on how to best prepare for college is beneficial to students that wish to attend college, but holds no value to the students that do not.

With the increased push to take advanced placement classes comes the push for students to go onto college after their high school career. While college is a great option for many, it simply is not the only option for students after high school.

Showing students that college is the only option after high school not only limits their opportunities, but it also can lead students to enter college when it is not right for them.

College is not for everyone, and it is about time that we stop pretending it is.

Many students are simply not prepared for the college experience, but choose to go anyway because they view it as their only chance at success. In reality, there are many other options for students to be successful in life.

One option for students is to go to a trade school. Trades can involve becoming an electrician, plumber, welder and more. According to The Simple Dollar, an average trade school degree costs \$33,000 as opposed to \$127,000 for a bachelor's degree.

By going to trade school instead of a 4-year university, you could be potentially saving a lot of money in the long run. For those that do not necessarily think the college experience is for them, going into a trade could be the option for them.

Additionally, some students can instead decide to immediately go into the workforce. Working full time is a valid option, especially for students that either are not interested in going into a trade or are not interested in going into college.

Students may also choose to go into the workforce after high school simply because they are unsure about what path they want to take. Taking a gap year before going on to college later is an option that could be more beneficial to the student, especially if they do not feel prepared enough to go to college.

Deciding not to go to college should not be stigmatized as a bad or lesser option. Everyone deserves the chance to go into whatever career field they feel like working towards.

A simple solution would be to educate students on the other options after high school like going into a trade school or going straight into the workforce. By setting up students into thinking that college is the only option, we do not allow them to explore their other options and talents.

Disputes over discipline



Emily Nelson
News Editor

Teaching is one of the key professions in this world. Instructors shape our minds from kindergarten to senior year, and even onto college. Once students get to high school, they have experienced 10 or more different discipline techniques ranging from laid back to strict.

The variety of strictness negatively impacts students. As they pass from instructor to instructor, they have to readjust the way they act. Once students reach high school, it is worse as they switch from a different instructor seven periods a day.

There are the obvious rules of a classroom, but instances with instructors who have very specific rules is a playground for chaos. Our job, as students, is to sit and listen for eight hours a day but with certain instructors, that is all we are entitled to do.

Understandably, students should know how to code-switch, which is knowing how to act differently between different instructors. If students are not able to code-switch and treat each instructor as an respected adult, then instructors should be able to give consequences to the student so they do not act out again.

Instructors have their own set of rules at the same time. Over the years, the rules have drastically changed. Gone are the days where

kids would get smacked on the hind end with a ruler for mouthing off to an instructor. Instead instructors just give punishments that do not stick with the student and will not prevent students from acting out again.

A common problem is also that teachers will often discipline students unfairly in their own classes. One student that often gets in trouble or causes problems may not receive as harsh of a punishment as those that are first time offenders.

However, there should be a clear common ground between being too harsh or being too laid back. Instructors are authority figures, but that also means that they should not abuse their power and make their classroom anxiety producing. If a teacher makes the environment of the classroom too authoritarian, then it can drive students away from the class and possibly learning a subject that they may enjoy learning about.

However if they are too lenient, then it is just an "easy class" that students take to get a credit and leave without learning about anything. Instructors should be treated with respect and should not be treated as a friend or a buddy. Teachers' jobs are to teach a subject, not to be a friend and hold their students' hands through high school.

Five ways to be an effective instructor, as listed on Teach 4 the Heart, are to be both kind and firm, have high expectations, focus on being respected instead of being liked, view yourself as your students' mentor, not their friend, and to be friendly, not familiar. Not every instructor needs to follow these guidelines and they provide room for the instructors to put their own twist on them.

The five regulations set a path for a healthy environment where students and instructors can work together toward getting the students out of school and into the world.

Without the stress of worrying how to run their classrooms and roadblocks of disciplining the wrong children, instructors can give their students the education they so desperately crave. Instructors can also focus on helping students in their classes that they are struggling in and need help with.

Ybay reviews: ‘Avengers: Endgame’

Madie Ybay
Co-Editor in Chief

Well, I am an emotional wreck. “Avengers: Endgame” is emotionally abusive in the best way. It is so hard to put into words how this movie makes me feel. Stan Lee and the Russo brothers have done it again. The movie was stunning; everything I could have wanted out of it. I have nothing bad to say about “Avengers: Endgame.” This movie has been anticipated for so many years, since the first “Avengers” came out in 2012. A lot of our generation had grown up with these heroes and “Avengers: Endgame” is the movie to end their stories. In the Marvel Comic Universe, this film is the end.

This is the end of an era. To be completely honest, I was not ready for the end. I still do not think that my brain has processed that I have seen the end. So much in fact that

it still does not feel real. I sat in the theaters for three hours and by the end of it, half of the movie didn’t feel real.

There is not much I can say about the plot as in the beginning has plot twists that help set up for the end. If you do not know the whole plot, and this is definitely spoilers for “Avengers: Infinity War,” is basically the surviving heroes are trying to recollect the infinity stones to undo Thanos’ snap that killed half of the living creatures in the universe.

I love just about every hero in this movie; they are beautifully portrayed by amazing and attractive actors. Sadly, this movie seems to be the last run for many of the actors since they are giving up their roles to different actors seeing as they are reaching an older age. I have grown up with these actors and it breaks my heart to see them leave.

However, they left with a bang, there was nothing I could complain about; the action scenes were beautiful and I was freaking out in my seat over the intensity of them. There was Marvel-ous (ha, I’ll leave now) scenes one right after another, which was absolutely insane.

I was losing my mind in the theater. I’ll tell you though, they built me up to break me down. This movie tore my heart open. My heart wretched and ached in adoration and love. At the same time it broke and shattered in heartbreak and sadness.

I absolutely love this movie, but I also hate it so much for hurting my heart. I am just not ready for this to be the end; however, it was the perfect way to end it. I would wholeheartedly give “Avengers Endgame” 5/5 stars. Absolutely stunning, and I would experience this emotional abuse again any day.



‘This is Where it Ends’ voices important topics

Brooklyn Anderson
Reporter

“This is Where it Ends” is a book wrote by Marieke Nijkamp that came out on Jan. 5, 2016 and has been a number one New York Times Bestseller book. This book has opened a lot of eyes to school shootings and what kids go through when this kind of experience happens. The book is written in four different perspectives during the shooting of the school. These four perspectives are Claire Morgan, Tomás Morales, Autumn Brown, and Sylvia Morales. Each of these students relate to one another as well as the shooter Tyler Brown.

The book starts off with the first day of the semester for Opportunity High School and Principal Trenton makes a “Start-of-Semester” speech in the auditorium of the school. Claire is at a special track practice out on the track with the coach and two other students. Autumn and Sylvia are in the auditorium waiting to be released to start class while Tomás skips the speech and tries to go through the principal’s office looking for a file with his friend, Fareed. When Principal Trenton ends her speech, the doors

become locked and no one is able to escape the auditorium and that’s when the bullets start to fly.

The shooter, Tyler Brown, is Autumn Brown’s older brother and he dropped out of school. Autumn tries to go to New York for dance school and wants to take Sylvia with her because they are a couple in this book. Not only is there a school shooting but a couple with two girls. This book talks about a lot more than school shootings.

“This is Where it Ends” has real life situations. When I first read this book, I could not put it down. It left me on the edge of my seat. The real life scenario shows how school shootings affect students and teachers. This book made me cry at the end because of how it ended and what happened throughout the whole entire thing.

This was the first book I read by Nijkamp and I recommend her stories to people because of how she writes and what the topics can be about. “This is Where it Ends” gave me thoughts on students and how they dealt with a tragedy like this one. I give this book a 10 out of 10 because of the message it gives as well as the emotion behind each word.

Memes being used online

Silas Chisam
Entertainment Editor

I am fairly sure by now that at one point in everybody’s life, they have at least seen, heard, or talked about a meme.

According to Econsultancy, the average person spends about two hours on social media a day. On social media many memes float around, so it is easy for everyone to at least come in contact with any meme.

The literal definition of a meme is exactly what you might think it would be. A meme is a humorous image, video, or piece of text that is copied (often with variations) and spread rapidly amongst internet users.

Memes can take many forms. A meme could be a typed out joke or tweet, a picture that you see scrolling through your instagram feed, or a video that your friends will show you about 20 times.

Some memes can even be a physical object that is then thrust into the digital world. Eating Tide Pods from 2018 is a great example of a physical object that was turned into a meme fairly quickly.

Teenagers spend a great deal of time watching or looking at memes or other internet content. Some advertisers take note of how long people are browsing on the internet and looking at memes and want to get in the action.

Advertisers have started to use memes to their advantage. Using this new medium of communication to share their product with the masses.

Although some may argue that these companies can stretch their efforts a little to much sometimes.

That memes are native to the language of social media. And when we spend hours consuming absurdist humor and ridiculous YouTube videos. There are even people who make videos reviewing memes on YouTube and recieving adsense money from those said videos.

“When advertisers start producing memes promoting their product, it can be seen as cringy and turn away a lot of viewers That’s why brands are getting smarter about the content they publish on social media,” Forbes Commercial Council said.

News media is not safe from the meme creators either. Plenty of news bloopers, outtakes and mistakes have been forever plastered on YouTube in compilations.

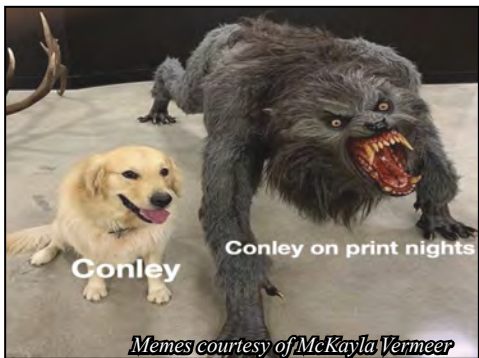
no one:

no one at all:

literally no one:

Newspaper staff:

“CaPtIoN mArVeL”



Whether those can be considered memes or not can be up for debate. By definition if they are humorous and are rapidly spread on the internet, it is a meme. However thats still up to the people to decide if it is funny enough to be considered a meme.

The video of Wendy Williams as she faints on live television in a Statue of Liberty costume on Halloween. People took this as an oppurtunity to make jokes and memes based off of her incident.

Which can be seen as insensitive since it was a serious situation since she passed out of heat in her costume. This made the meme controversial but some teenagers found it humorous anyway and the video was spread all around the internet.

Nothing is off the table when it comes to memes. Memes can be made out of offensive and vulgar things. People still find them humorus, keeping memes are still as popular as ever.

Many memes are also used in politics, whether canidates want them to be produced or not. However, some politicians use them to their advantage to gain popularity.

Memes can also be used against a candidate or really anyone, as it can point out the flaws and mistakes people make and make fun of them.

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