



BELLEVUE EAST

TOM TOM



BELLEVUE EAST HIGH SCHOOL

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Ten East students perform with the NMEA All-State Band, Choir, and Orchestra



Top left East High Singers was chosen to perform at a concert that took place between All-State rehearsals. “Singing at All-State was an amazing experience; I’m glad that Singers had the opportunity,” senior Samantha Seaman said. *Photo by Jennifer Wharton*

Bottom left junior Alex Plowman, junior Samantha Moore, sophomore Marcos Labrado, senior Cathey Belcher, senior Kelly Speltz, junior Celia Abolafia and senior Trevor Ratzburg enjoy one of their breaks. “One thing that the conductor told is was that you can always be practicing music. Even when your’re just walking, you can practice subdividing,” Abolafia said. *Photo by Patrick McCarty*



Above right Focusing intensely during a rehearsal, junior Alex Plowman sits side by side with students from all over Nebraska. “My favorite thing about All-State was meeting kids from all over. I was next to one kid from Wayne and another from Alliance. It was really cool to be sitting next to kids from both corners of the state,” Plowman said. *Photo by Kelly Speltz*

Selected students perform at NMEA conference

Samantha Collison
News Editor

The annual Nebraska Music Educators Association (NMEA) Conference and All-State performances were held Nov. 16-18 in Lincoln, Nebraska; 10 East students were selected based on their auditions to perform in the 2016 All-State choir, band and orchestra.

“I was quite pleased [with the number of students who made it]. This is one of the largest groups we’ve had in the All-State groups. We’re hoping to get more and more people to audition and more people to make it in to represent Bellevue East,” band director Patrick McCarty said.

Senior Trevor Ratzburg, senior Ryan Campbell, junior Holly

Schwarting and senior Joshua Schmitt were selected to perform with the All-State Choir; senior Kelly Speltz, senior Cathey Belcher, junior Samantha Moore and junior Alex Plowman were selected for the All-State Band; sophomore Marcos Labrado and junior Celia Abolafia were selected for the All-State Orchestra. Each group had different audition materials, but the audition process was essentially the same across the board.

“The music becomes available for students at the beginning of the [school] year and then they work on it with their lesson coach or us band directors, and then they come in and do a live audition which we send in to NMEA, and from there, the selection committee listens to every person’s video

and selects who is going to be in the All-State band, orchestra or choir. My involvement as a director is helping to coach the students with Mr. White, and I record the auditions,” McCarty said.

The live aspect of the audition was a new addition this year; the selection committee opted to use an online platform that allowed for one recording per person before automatically logging the student out of the system. Students auditioning for All-State Band performed three song excerpts and a group of scales for their audition. Students auditioning for All-State Choir were given all of the music that would be performed at the conference to prepare, but were not told until the day of the audition which three ex-

cerpts they would need to audition with. They also had a set of scales and arpeggios they had to perform as part of their audition. Schmitt and Moore, both first year All-State performers, had very similar motivations for auditioning.

“I decided to audition for All-State because I saw it as a really great opportunity for me to grow as a musician and I thought it was going to be something really awesome to go on my activities resumé,” Schmitt said.

Moore also saw it as an opportunity to grow as a musician, and she saw it as a way to grow as a leader: as a drum major in marching band and a section leader in East High Singers. During the three days of the conference, students spent the majority of their time in two-hour

rehearsals broken up by breaks. Speltz said the breaks were one of the highlights of the weekend.

“The funnest part is between rehearsals when you get to see other musical groups, and we also got to go to the final rehearsals for the other groups, and so I got to watch the orchestra and choir dress rehearsals and that’s a lot of fun because you get to see a lot of other talented musicians,” Speltz said.

Students described the rehearsals themselves as “fast-paced” because, while they all knew the music, they only had two days to put it all together and make it performance-ready. Ratzburg said that the rehearsals can be hectic at times, but it’s all worth it in the end.

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All-State: Students reflect on experience

Continued from page 1

“Rehearsals were really surprisingly less stressful than I thought they would be considering how difficult the music was. I really liked how Dr. Bjella worked with us because he works really fast. I thought it was a good thing because it forces you to focus a lot more,” Schmitt said.

Several students said that an important lesson they learned was that connecting with the music they were performing makes all the difference. Belcher described the All-State band director, Steve Davis, as “literally insane.” She mentioned his quirks such as refusing to use a baton or a podium, but what left the greatest impression on her was his passion for music.

“I learned that it’s really important to connect with the music. As much as technique and accuracy are important, it’s almost doubly as important to be able to emotionally connect to music because that is what actually makes it musical,” Schmitt said.

One of the notable parts of being a part of an All-State ensemble is the number of people in each. The choir was made up of 440 students and the orchestra was made up of 144 students.

“It was cool; we had 164 people in our band so it was somewhat comforting because if you mess up, no one is ever going to know. It was also cool because we got to have a big sound, and we were able to make a really big impact,” Speltz said.

All in all, the students said that being part of All-State was a positive experience. They encouraged students in band and choir to audition.

“I would say [to anyone in band or choir] to just do it, because if you really want to be a top-level performer in your choir or in your band then you need to be doing things like All-State because the things that you sing are a lot harder and it demands a lot more of you than you think it would, and it will make you a better performer and musician,” Ratzburg said.



Vocal Power The 440 person choir practice their final dress rehearsal. “With such a large group, the sound was just absolutely enormous which was awesome because it was almost as if you could feel it inside of your body,” senior Josh Schmitt said. *Photo by Kelly Speltz*

BPS teachers prepare for ACT

Skyla Peter
Opinion Editor

Teachers were sent to a special training to help prepare their students to get the highest scores they can when they take the ACT instead of the NESa in the spring of 2017.

“I think this will be effective because not a lot of people know what to expect from the ACT and not a lot of people know how to prepare for it, so I think it is good that we have our staff in the school that knows how to prepare us,” junior Kelani Kennedy said.

The English teachers were the first group sent to training. They had the opportunity to take the test themselves to familiarize themselves with it and get a better idea of how they want to start preparing their students.

“We actually had to do some practice ones and the couple questions that I missed were all just because I went too quick, and I missed the fact that there was a negative word or I skipped over something - just dumb mistakes. So if you just slow down and are accurate it’s way better than the speed thing. I think students need to realize what the test is like and that accuracy is key and just need to review some old things,” instructor David Bossman said.

Bossman also plans to help his students by giving them tips, talking about how the test actually is and giving them some hands on experience with it. One thing that he suggests students do is review over all the stuff they have already learned. Students can buy an ACT preparation book to prepare them-

selves individually as well as in class with the teachers.

“The biggest thing I learned is that most of the content is actually like seventh, eighth and ninth grade stuff, and the biggest problem that students have is they just forgot, so I think especially with English and math, students just need to refresh themselves and we will help students do that,” Bossman said.

The math teachers went to the special ACT training next and it was decided among all the algebra 2 teachers that every week there would be ACT warm ups and every month a practice test.

“At the training one thing that our presenter stressed was having students focus on accuracy over speed, a lot of students are worried that with 60 minutes they need to get to every question, but then they rush and make mistakes. It is more important that they take their time,” instructor Jeremy Jenz said.

Lenz will also be informing students about what specific types of questions will be on the ACT based on his knowledge of what the test is like, when it comes up in the curriculum. His focus is making sure that the questions he is teaching are very similar to the types of questions that will be on the test. Because everyone will be taking the ACT in the spring, the school average will most likely change.

“Our average will probably drop from where we are now because right now the students that choose to take the ACT are typically the ones that are more geared towards that path with being college ready and taking more advanced classes. Having

everyone take it that is obviously going to change our average because we have students that are not going down that path, we have students that want to do something else that they don’t need the ACT for,” Lenz said.

A lot of students have no idea what the ACT is and have no idea how to actually prepare for it. There are some programs that the school offers for specific students that helps prepare them for it. A program called College Possible helps students from low income families find a way to get into college by giving them the opportunity to take the ACT many times.

“I had not really started preparing for the ACT until I got into College Possible, and basically all we do is ACT prep. So we have work books and we meet every Tuesday and Thursday and work out of our work books to learn different ways to do better on the ACT,” Kennedy said.

The students that are in College Possible have already taken the ACT and will be taking it many times to help prepare them. The main thing that students need to know, according to teachers, is that the test is about accuracy over speed and they need to get used to the structure of the test.

“I think a lot of times students don’t realize that the math and the English are really similar in their structure and then there’s a break and then there is this reading and science and learning how the test is structured I think is the biggest thing and just practicing and looking at it. I think if you understand the test you can conquer the test,” Bossman said.

BPS foundation gives grants to teachers

Brooklyn Anderson
Reporter

Fifty teachers in Bellevue Public schools were recently given \$32,000 in grants for classroom innovation from the Bellevue Public Schools foundation. New school supplies and technology to help students learn. Grants can help teachers and students pay for equipment and supplies they need for that semester or that year.

Only two staff members received grants at Bellevue East, and they were journalism adviser Stephenie Conley and media center specialist Shannon Dunkel.

“I received the grant on Thursday, Oct. 27, and it was worth \$1,500. It [the money] was used to purchase four iPads that will be used in the green screen room. The green screen room has become very popular, but we are limited to only six iPads that go with it,” Dunkel said.

Conley is the yearbook and

newspaper adviser, and she also teaches Desktop Publishing, Video Journalism and Journalistic Writing.

In these classes Conley teaches students how to write, film and design journalistically and ethically and she teaches students how to use professional cameras, video editing software, and publishing software. Conley applied for the to help the programs she advises.

“I received the grant for \$1,500 and the money is to be used for technology innovations in the classroom. I will be purchasing high capacity memory cards, microphones, and an iPad for use as a teleprompter in order to support video journalism production as part of the Tom Tom news production cycle,” Conley said.

At Bellevue East, all teachers received the link to apply for the grant from Principal Jeff Wagner via email. Dunkel and Conley applied for it and they both received the same amount of money.



Recognition Teachers from presenting grants to their recipients, the group poses for a photo. “It was an honor to be recognized in front of colleagues and administration and to be able to tell them our exciting plans for the grant,” journalism adviser Stephenie Conley said. *Photo by Samantha Collison*

“I like that it is open to any teacher in Bellevue Public Schools. Come up with an idea, put it on paper, and see what happens,” Dunkel said.

Conley said she is looking forward to what the students will be able to do with the new equipment. Her students are excited as well. Tom Tom video editor Destiny Soto creates videos to accompany the print edition of the paper.

“Being able to buy newer equipment should make producing professional looking content much easier. We have higher capacity memory cards and now we have the opportunity to buy microphones that are compatible with our cameras, which can reduce background noise and can make videos go more smoothly. I hope these grants continue to help our abilities in journalism to grow,” Soto said.



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BPS utilizes app to communicate in crises

Cailin Tomsu
Editor in Chief

Fire drills are practiced, every quarter, every year, but once there is a real fire, the confusion hits. Students and teachers try to figure out what is going on while remaining calm. The fire at East in a men's restroom Oct. 20 and the confusion that followed helped prompt East to begin using an app called Crisis Go.

"The Crisis Go app allows the Bellevue Public Schools to communicate quickly and efficiently in case of a crisis situation either in or around our schools. The app provides staff with checklists, student rosters, and messages that are important in a crisis situation," Assistant Principal Susan Jensen said.

The app was integrated into the BPS district and available for use before the beginning of the 2015- 2016 school year, but was not fully implemented. After the fire in the restroom, East officially adopted the app and sent out installation instructions to the staff to help in future crises.

"I am so pleased that Bellevue is the first and only district in Nebraska to adopt this app. There are other districts studying its adoption, but which have not made a decision yet. [BPS] leadership saw the app for the first time in 2015 and quickly recognized how valuable it would be for the safety goals in Bellevue. They adopted it and began partial implementation 2015-2016 school year," Crisis Go representative Linda Bernard said.

The staff did not have total use of the app until the school experienced a little fire of its own. A trash can caught on fire in the science wing restroom. Students and teachers shared the confusion about what to do and what was going on in the school.

"I think that after [BPS] conducted its active shooter drill in May 2015, it became keenly aware of its safety and commu-

nication successes as well as its areas of need, of what would make their emergency response more effective. When Dr. Rippe and his IT and Safety experts saw the CrisisGo solution, they understood that it fit well into their district goals and needs. In particular, the ability of the app to alert all staff members with a need to know, very quickly in one group message was powerful. The groups are set up in advance on devices per crisis type so that a health emergency might alert the school nurse, but a gas leak may go to maintenance, and so on. Not everyone needs the same information. Also, the app contains a complete and accurate daily roster so that staff can account for all students in a crisis and can send attendance to district leadership very quickly, so that all students are accounted for in an emergency,” Bernard said.

CrisisGo will be used by the administration and staff members. As of now, students do not have access to the app. Teachers are able to enter their class rosters into the app and take attendance during or after an emergency to make sure every student is accounted for. The app contains emergency numbers that can be alerted easily, and panic notifications to get the word out to the entire staff.

“Teachers will use the app in day to day two-way communication with administration, and possibly (if district so chooses) in circles with students and parents for homework reminders, practice time changes, school closings and the like. Many similar apps offer only one-way communication, but CrisisGo permits two way communication. This is important because people can be in quick communication as circumstances unfold, be it a weather emergency, a lock down, a medical situation or a simple schedule change,” Bernard said.

The app is accessible on many devices and therefore the staff members will be able

to reach the app on their computers and cell phones. Everyone with the app has access to checklists and information on how to react in a crisis. The app will even show how to give CPR and any needed contact information.

"In crisis situations, it can take 10 minutes for emergency responders to arrive on the scene. This app allows every member of a school community to have immediate and accurate information so that they know how to respond even before police, fire or ambulance may arrive to assist," Bernard said.

If a true crisis is happening, the app will alert the user via an alarm that will override the mute setting on any device. It will only alarm those that need to know, to make sure it is not sent out to the whole administration and hysteria occurs. The app has been looked at by the district for some time now.

"I was part of a team that researched a new safety and security application for the district last Spring. One of the apps we reviewed as Crisis Go and we were all impressed with its features and capabilities over the other products. It was decided we would purchase Crisis Go for the district and began some training. Since that time, we have trained all administration in the district of how to use the app once it is downloaded on a phone, iPad or computer. I have now instructed all schools to have their staff download the app and I am working with schools doing drills using the Crisis Go app," Director of Student Activities Kevin Mills said.

Bellevue is the one of the first districts in Nebraska to use and integrate this app into the schools and classrooms. The app has been tested by many faculty members and seems to be the favorite and easiest to use by the administration.

"The app is very helpful to our district. The app has the ability to alert school staff through technology in seconds without

using an intercom or walkie talkies. The app can be used district wide to alert all staff in seconds. The app will be available for parents and students to receive alerts in the future. Currently, I am working with all schools to become familiar with app by using it in evacuation drills, lock down drills, lock out drills, etc. in reference to the SRP. The app has the ability to notify staff by a siren and will state what the crisis is or situation (fire inside, intruder outside, tornado) with a text box as well as the ability for staff to communicate with admin and other staff about students that are missing as we have all students listed in the app by class, by teacher for the entire district," Mills said.

Because it may take emergency responders five to ten minutes to arrive, in a true crisis,

the app will lay out instructions for teachers and administration to follow until the help has arrived. The app informs all staff and guides them along the way while the crisis is happening.

"In the very near future, we will be able to notify parents and students. Another benefit will be for students to report issues in schools as they see or hear of the events to admin and staff. The app will work even if cell phone lines are jammed. We can talk to one another if we are hiding from an intruder. We hope that we never need to use the app for a tragic event, but we are prepared to do so through this app and will continue to use it to keep students and staff safe. We want to communicate with all stakeholders in seconds and keep everyone up to date on crisis events," Mills said.

CRISIS GO

EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN

FEATURES

CRISISGO FEATURES

Alerts

When an emergency is determined, an audible signal and text message is sent to all staff that has the app.

Notice

For those times when you need to text only a group of people instead of everyone in the district,

CrisisGo's notification system is the answer. You can send images, video or voice to selected groups and keep people informed during a crisis. Teachers can notify first responders of critical information and remain informed.

Checklists

The organization's emergency plan is transformed into action checklists for each type of role. Staff can quickly access their checklists for each type of emergency and see the action steps required of them – all with a touch of a finger.

Contacts

Most administrators have the local emergency contacts stored into their cell phones. But what about those emergency contacts that are not normally used, such as the phone numbers for FEMA, nuclear disaster officials, utility companies, or the state transportation department? CrisisGo will store your most important emergency contacts.

Maps

The organization can load evacuation, defibrillators, utility shut-off and other maps so responders can have access to these when needed.

Rosters

Organizations can automatically update daily their students or staff in attendance so they can have a current, accurate list. People also have an emergency contact and phone number associated to their name.

Light

The flashlight becomes invaluable should power go out in the building.

Siren

Should a person become trapped and need to be located, the siren is the perfect tool.

OVER
20
PATENTS
PENDING

CRISISGO PREMIUM FEATURES

Broadcast

This feature allows you to stream live video to others in the district, allowing people to see what is going on at a location using their smartphone or iPad. All others with the app will be able to join the broadcast and see the current situation. Law enforcement and Fire also can have access to the organization's application.

Call

CrisisGo allows you to make a point-to-point video call or audio call to any other team member – just like Skype or FaceTime.

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Library to showcase East student artwork

Nia Booth

Video Editor in Chief

Walking through the library doors, sophomore Erica Perez got the first glance at her art work, a large canvas featuring a portrait of a girl and mandalas, on the white wall. Across from her painting, each of the counters were covered with painted canvases from students within the art program.

“My individual theme was portraits but messy style and so in the painting it shows her face all messed up and on the sides are two mandalas. [Having artwork displayed in the library] makes me feel a little bit weird, but at the same time it’s cool that everyone can see it,” Perez said.

This November, paintings from different East art students were used to decorate the library. For most students this was the first time that their artwork was on display.

“It seemed liked a really great and safe place to put up some art and the architecture here[the Bellevue East library] really leant itself to easy installment. So we’re getting up as much artwork as we possible can so that our artist get the exposure that they deserve because they’re really really good. So it’s nice for them to see their artwork up but it’s also really great to hear teacher and student feedback they deserve that. That’s mainly what we’re trying to do, get our work out here in the community, out here in the school, and then get our Bellevue East high school students the recognition that they deserve” Swoboda said.

Swoboda also said the library was naturally the place for displaying the art. Artwork and libraries have been paired together for a long time. The art at East is being diplayed in collaboration with media specialist Shannon Dunkel. “I really didn’t get the idea [on her own]. I mean galleries and media centers have always worked together to get the artwork in a safe place. It’s natural, it’s common. It’s like a coffee house situation. When you’re sitting and enjoying and reading and doing your work you’re supposed to do it’s nice to have good art around you just like it’s nice to have good books around you,” Swoboda said.

Each student had personal reasons for their art pieces. Students like junior Caleb Kaiser painted a picture of musician Jerry Garcia as a gift for someone.



(Above) Sophomore Erica Perez prepares her canvas for exhibition. Paintings and other art from East students will be displayed in the library. (Left) Junior Kira Free-Wakefield watches as Sophomore Drew Hudson works on his ceramic piece. Art instructor Trish Swoboda initiated the idea at East. *Photos by Nate Zyla*



Learn more about the displays in a video on thechief-tainspear.org

“I was deciding on a gift for my father and I thought he would like it so I just started painting. I hope he really likes it,” Kaiser said.

When choosing the art to display, each class had different guidelines for what they could and could not paint.

“The students that are creating them are from different classes and the guidelines that were given were particular to the lesson. In some instances there was a theme. For example in some instances they had to take an image of their pet at home and we would paint or draw from that. And in another case they had to take their own original composition, their own original photograph and it had to be of

someone important to them So it could be a self portrait, it could be a mom, it could be a dad, it could be a guardian but it had to be a real person,” Swoboda said.

Even with the guidelines the students still had a room for individuality. Swoboda feels strongly about giving students room to breathe when it comes to creativity and allowed them to show theirs with their work.

“I believe strongly in student choice. Students at this age really respond well to having control over what they create and a part of that was giving them carte blanche go ahead and paint whatever you want to. So a lot of students just chose a subject matter that was important to them. So for

example one student has an extreme interest in space so she painted a planet, another student has an extreme interest in music so he painted Jerry Garcia so it was really nice to see students take it to the next level. They really enjoyed having the choice,” Swoboda said.

This has opened the eyes of Swoboda for all the new possibilities for art in the library.

“I believe that we can do even more in here. I have some very good ideas on some very cost effective measures that we can to do make our own display rails and things like that so I hope to just see more and perhaps a sign that says art gallery,” Swoboda said.

Local food pantries help families in need

Brooklynn Anderson

Reporter

Volunteers from Tri-City Food Pantry prepared to serve bags of groceries and take in food donations from residents around the area Nov. 25. People put all of the food in boxes and in bags, along with frozen meat and bread in the back of the building to give out to clients. The volunteers gave out bags of groceries for the month when clients walk into the building. Customers walk in and pick up their food, and the volunteers smiled while handing them the bagged items.

“Tri-City Food Pantry serves to the Papillion, La Vista and Ralston area. We work very closely with many churches, school and businesses in our community giving us the ability to serve those in need,” the director of Tri-City Food Pantry Connie Shattuck said.

Tri-City Food Pantry was formed in 2007 and it is located in the Heartland Family Services building in Papillion. Tri-City is not affiliated with Heartland Family Services. Tri-City Food Pantry is a referral based pantry, which is a pantry that looks for resources for meeting client needs. Tri-City Food Pantry requires an outside referral every 60 days. Some places that do referrals for Tri-City is Heartland Family Services, St. Vincent DePaul Societies, and school social workers.

“We offer in-house vouchers to our clients that allows them to come back for another pantry in-between their referrals,” Shattuck said.

On average, Tri-City serves about 120 households each month. Many of the families have clients who work, but are having a hard time making ends meet. Tri-City also serves to some senior citizens and one third of their clients are 60

years and older. Tri-City gives their clients pre bagged sets of groceries along with frozen meat and bread.

“Most of our food is donated through food drives held by schools, churches, or businesses and we also have individuals who donate on a regular basis,” Shattuck said.

Tri-City relies heavily on monetary donations. Donations help the pantry purchase meat, milk, eggs and cheese program, and other food items Tri-City is short on. Sometimes, churches donate something special for the holidays.

“We do not do anything in particular for the holidays unless a church donates something to give as a bonus for our clients,” Shattuck said.

Bellevue East also sponsors a food pantry at Mission Middle School. It is called the Mobile Food Pantry; East and West switch months to give out food. The

mobile pantry allows staff and students to serve and give to others in the community.

“I’ve been doing the Mobile Food Pantry since last April and I became the point person to recruit help during that time and it started last March when Mr. Stueve was looking for volunteers to help with it here at East,” pantry liaison Rachel Schutte said.

The food is donated and given by different businesses, organizations, and grocery stores. People in the area are always welcome to donate food from their own homes. The donations go to Mission Middle School and the volunteers hand the food to the people in the community.

“In the past ROTC, NHS, Student Council, and other sport teams have helped out with the drive and we have had between 20-40 volunteers. Staff has helped out as well,” Schutte said.

AFJROTC reaps rewards with candy sales

Bobby Storck
Entertainment Editor

Many organizations in Bellevue East have learned that one of the ways to obtain money for their program is to fund raise. Recently, a wave of individuals selling specific items has appeared in the halls and classrooms. Their tactic: sell a product that people will find so addicting and so luring that few can escape its cost - \$1. This is of course the candy fund raiser by Bellevue East's Air Force Junior Officer Training Corps (AFJROTC)'s drill team.

"The candy sales are raising money for drill team in particular. We've already had our fund raiser for the rest of the corps. This money will help pay for our lunches at meets, help pay for our transportation to the meets. This fund raiser, however, is mostly for our trip to Dayton, Ohio for a regional drill meet this year," senior Justice Schmidt said.

The JROTC drill team's candy sales started this fall, and will continue into the winter and spring. Many individuals are selling as much candy as they can to pay for these expensive trips.

"For me, personally, sales



have been going great. I have already sold six boxes worth of candy in just a week, so I have raked in quite a lot of money for the drill team. Other people have been selling just as well, others not so much. It mostly depends on the person and what classes they are in," Schmidt said.

JROTC sellers are identifiable by the orange boxes they carry around. They will be selling, however, only during the first week of each month.

"We're going to be selling candy the first week of each month, so the first part of December,

you will see the drill team kids out there selling again, and again in January. We only make about 40 cents on each candy bar, so it takes a while to make a lot of money," JROTC instructor Master Sgt. William Ickes said.

Forty cents may seem like not that much, but after selling several boxes of 30 bars each, the money begins to add up as the candy seems to be sold just as fast as the JROTC can replace it.

"The reason we chose candy bars as a fund raiser is because when other groups were selling



Junior Nick Walker sells candy to sophomore Jadon Putney. Walker is an AFJROTC student who is trying to sell all of his candy to help reach the drill team's goal. Selling candy and Slim Jims, the group hopes to use the money raised to offset lunch and transportation costs for drill meets.

candy, it seemed to go well for them. The drill team wanted to do something different than the rest of the corps, which normally sells discount books and cookie dough," Ickes said.

The money will mostly go toward the drill team's overnight trip to Dayton, Ohio. This is because the costs for charter buses, meals, entrance fees, and hotel fees for an entire drill team can add up.

"The Ohio trip is going to be the most costly because we need to take a charter bus out there, and it also an overnigher.

We also will be visiting museums while we are there. All the rest of the trips we take are relatively close to here," senior Patrick Finan said.

Until their Ohio meet, the drill team will be selling as much candy as possible to pay for their trip. Students who are prepared by bringing \$1 gain a snack, and JROTC gains a trip that creates memories that last a lifetime.

"I believe the fund raising has been going successfully, even though it just started, but we still have a long way to go," Finan said.

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Culinary students create delicious concoctions

Beastro provides real life experience

Briana Benak
Photographer

The Beastro is when culinary students prepare and serve gourmet dishes to teachers and district guests for a small fee. The Dec. Beastro included items such as fried wontons, stuffed mushrooms, marinated cheeses and much more.

1. Senior Connor Sailors whisks together ingredients in preparation for the Beastro. *Photo by Briana Benak*

2. Instructor Jerry Lovell stacks his plate full of the delicious food provided by the culinary, and foods students. *Photo by Briana Benak*

3. Counselor Sara Powell waits her turn as teachers make their way down the Beastro line. *Photo by Briana Benak*

4. Senior Samuel Prange rolls dough in preparation for the Beastro. *Photo by Briana Benak*

5. Seniors Jackson Abe and Alonso Bernal Ramirez, prep their assigned food for the Beastro. *Photo by Briana Benak*

6. Instructor Patty Campbell compliments the work of the culinary students, as she fills her plate. *Photo by Briana Benak*

7. Seniors Kaitlyn Williams and Robert Stanback cut brownies in preparation for the Beastro. *Photo by Faith Wer*



A. Junior Sage Bekish strains broth for making stir fry.

B. Sophomore Juan Mena carefully measures soy sauce to add flavor to the stir fry.

C. Juniors Kayla Franzen and Krysten Jahla ensure they have the right amount of oil to cook the stir fry.

Photos by Donovan Cunningham

From courses to careers

Cailin Tomsu
Editor in Chief

A variety of four different culinary classes are offered at East, including basic foods and nutrition for juniors and sophomores, and culinary classes targeted at those trying to achieve a higher understanding of foods available for juniors and seniors.

"I took foods because I wanted to learn how to cook to help my family when they are on the run," junior Benjamin Skoff said.

The foods and nutrition classes are only one semester long and give each student that passes one credit. The more advanced culinary courses are one year long and give the students that pass two credits. In order to move up to more advanced classes the students have to have successfully completed the previous courses.

"I like foods; I like eating the food; but I don't like having to do worksheets or filling out a progress report after we are done with the class," junior Chloe Molnar said.

Culinary courses are considered a career pathway for students by the Nebraska Career Education Model. This means it is a class that allows the students to experience a possible career field and work environment. The students are taught the necessary skills to work in a

restaurant, or food career pathway.

"I learn the types of cuts and how to prepare various dishes," Skoff said.

Along with technique, students learn how about the food and nutrition. The beginning food courses will go in depth on what a good meal consists of, explain what the body needs and how to have a balanced meal. The student then learns how to make these. Even though not every student will go into a culinary pathway, they still get the experience.

"I will most likely not use these skills in my future because I do not plan to go in to the culinary arts in the future," Skoff said.

The students who take the higher culinary classes are more interest in continuing cooking in their future. Those that do, continue to use the skills they learned in the culinary classes.

"I do see a few of my students go on to culinary school and beyond right now I have a former student as a pastry chef at Disney World whom I am so proud of. I have some who take the class who think that they really want to go on to culinary school and realize how much works goes into it and decide that it is not for them. I am okay with that because I have saved them a lot of money," culinary instructor Cathy Hansen said.

Cooking with senior Connor Sailors



Senior Connor Sailors, Culinary Arts II student, prepares lemon mousse as one of his holiday recipes. "This is my favorite recipe because it is easy to make and it tastes good," Sailors said. *Photo by Maria Mwita*

Megan Miller
Sports Editor

Senior Connor Sailors is in Culinary II. He originally joined Foods and Nutrition I because he wanted to eat. However, during the class he developed a love for baking. Sailors plans on going to college for and pursuing a career in the culinary arts. In this issue of the Tom Tom, he shares his favorite holiday recipes.

Peanut butter brownies

Ingredients:

- 1 cup all purpose flour
- ½ tsp baking powder
- ½ tsp salt
- 1 ½ cup sugar
- ½ cup peanut butter
- ½ cup shortening/ butter
- 3 eggs
- 1 tsp vanilla

1 cup chocolate Chips
Cooking Instructions:

1. Cream sugar, peanut butter, shortening/butter, eggs and vanilla
2. Add dry ingredients, mix till smooth
3. Stir in chocolate chips
4. Bake at 350F for 25-30 minutes.

Lemon Mousse

Ingredients:

- 12 eggs
 - 13.5 oz. sugar
 - 6 lemons 4 gelatin sheet
 - 12 oz. heavy whipping cream
 - 2 tsp. Vanilla
- Lemon base:
- Betty crocker sugar cookie mix
 - 1 stick butter
 - 1 egg

Cooking Instructions:

1. Squeeze and zest lemons.

2. Curd eggs and sugar together until smooth.
3. Once smooth, add zest, lemon juice, and gelatin sheets until it forms together. Don't over cook or you will have scrambled eggs.
4. Refrigerate
5. Whisk vanilla and heavy whipping cream until stiff peaks.
6. Fold into the curd.
7. Refrigerate for at least 2 hours.



Watch Sailors create these recipes on thecheftainspear.org

Culinary conversation with Cathy Hansen

Samantha Collinson
News Editor



Cathy Hansen has been the advanced culinary arts instructor at East for 13 years.

Q: What do you feel your classes offer to students?

A: "They teach life skills; it's something that they have for the rest of their lives. It's not something they'll ever forget and I truly believe that this is something that will carry on."

Q: What is your favorite part of teaching culinary arts?

A: "My favorite part is when the lightbulb goes on for a student who hasn't been able to get a concept and then it turns out and they get so excited when it finally clicks and they finally get it. I get excited when they get excited."

Q: Which classes do you teach and how do they differ?

A: "Foods I and II and Culinary I and II. They progress, so Foods I is a basic foundation of all of the classes. They learn things like measuring, cooking terms and basic skills. In Foods II we get a little bit more in-depth with what we learn in Foods I, but then we also do some international foods, we learn weights

and measures and more advanced terms and cooking skills. We do a lot more scale measuring in Culinary I and quantity cooking, and in Culinary II we do a lot more quantity cooking and they have a lot more individuality in that they can personalize what they want to do.

Q: What competitions and events do your students attend?

A: "My culinary students can, if they want to, compete at the Metro Culinary Invitational, which is a fantastic competition that they're able to attend. It's in February at Metropolitan Community College and I usually take two teams. They're the only school with a culinary program in the metro area and they give a lot of prizes out. It's a competition where they compete against themselves, not

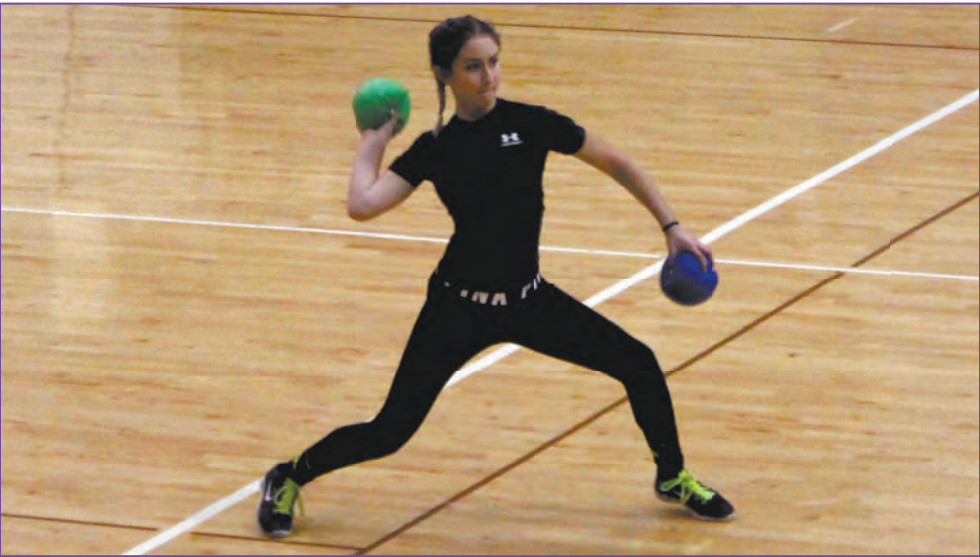
necessarily other teams because they compete against the industry standards so if they get a bronze, silver or gold medal, it's because they met those standards, not because they did better than other teams."

Q: Why do you think that your classes are so popular among students?

A: "One, I think students like to eat during the day. I think in a lot of students are passionate and they want to learn how to cook."

Q: Does the popularity of your classes help or hinder you as a teacher? Why?

A: "I think it helps, but I wish that we could offer it to all of the students who wanted to take it."



(Top) The FBLA Dodgeball tournament was an event to raise money for FBLA activities. Sophomore Jenda Simonsen participated in this event on the only all girls team and has been in FBLA with her friends. “We just kind of went for it; we were the only girls team and just tried our best,” Simonsen said. *Photo by Skyla Peter*

(Bottom) The winning team for the FBLA dodgeball tournament out of four other teams was call the team in white. People that were not a part of FBLA went to the tournament just to have fun. “My favorite part was having fun with people that I don’t really know,” sophomore Justin Kildow said. *Photo by Skyla Peter*

Dodgeball tournament raises funds for FBLA projects

Megan Miller
Sports Editor

❖FBLA held it’s tenth annual Dodgeball tournament to raise money for the group’s projects. A Bellevue East tradition, the teams included staff and students who came together and raised \$320.

Dodgeballs flew through the air. People were trying to avoid getting hit. They doged left and right, trying to stay in the game. There was no escaping the flying dodgeballs. They were everywhere. Finally, the opposing team was defeated.

“I just wanted to see if my team could win it and we did,” sophomore Justin Kildow said.

The dodgeball tournament, put on by FBLA, was played for the tenth year on November 30th to earn money for their activities.

“I expect this tradition to keep going until I’m six feet under. I don’t foresee this ending anytime soon. It has been well received. It is a great fundraiser and a good time had by all,” instructor Andrew Werner said.

The tournament was an effective way for FBLA to earn money. They use the money for their different projects and ac-tiviities that they participate in.

“It got started with an intense desire to throw objects at people’s faces. It started

approximately ten years ago. It was a great fund raiser for the different FBLA projects that we do and other causes, like helping the March of Dimes,” Werner said.

This year’s winning team, the Average Joes, had eight people on the team. The team included Anthony Dunn, Larry Walls, Coach Bald, Kerek Kildow, Jaxon Walls, Justin Kildow, and others. Their team went undefeated in the tournament.

“We went undefeated. I was probably one of the only people that got out,” Kildow said.

The tournament is a competition, but it’s not all about winning. The tournament is meant to be a fun event for everyone playing and watching.

“It’s a yearly thing we all do for fun and all the guys get together just to make the school year a little bit more fun,” junior Jaxon Walls said.

The team did receive a prize for winning. They got their entrance fee back along with the opportunity to play against west’s winning team.

“The winner received their entrance fee back and they are going to get their names on a trophy that will remain in our school. They also get the opportunity to play the dodgeball champs from Bellevue West, in which case they will be playing for prize money and a traveling trophy between the schools,” Werner said.

Wrestlers off to good start

Cailin Tomsu
Editor in Chief

The wrestlers are off to a fresh start, coming back from their season last year that resulted in 11 students making it to state, and the entire varsity team making it to the team state duals.

“So far we are doing excellent. At the varsity level at the omaha north invite we were first out of ten teams, we repeated our title from last year. At the JV level, we have been consistently winning about 70 percent of our matches,” varsity coach Collin Mink said.

East won the invite at Omaha North for the second time, and started the season ranked as number ten.

“This is a veteran team, last year we kind of surprised people with what we did. This year, we have high expectations because we return nine state qualifiers and twelve starters so we are one of the most veteran teams in the state,” varsity coach Todd Porter said.

There are currently 52 students out for wrestling this year, many of the students are returning from the previous wrestling season or have experience wrestling already.

“I have already made varsity and now my secondary goal is to go to state individual duals,” junior Jack Buglewicz said.

Buglewicz has been wrestling since he was in second grade and hopes to make the team can make it to state again.

“We are currently ranked tenth in the state, we have several ranked wrestlers in our middle weights,” Mink said.

The main goal for the wrestling team

is to stay firmly ranked as tenth place for the entire season and even try to get a higher ranking. The team wants to take as many wrestlers as possible to state, since they took double digits last year that is the hope again.

“My hopes for the season are getting to state and hopefully placing and getting a state medal because it’s my senior year,” senior Doug Cheek

Because many of the wrestlers are seniors, they all share the same goal to, to end senior year strong. Some even plan to attend college and will try to make the wrestling teams there. The team tries to stay healthy to keep their chances of making state as high as possible.

“We have had a couple of injuries, senior Justin Larson broke his hand and is out until some time in january and senior Ricky Bollinger suffered a high ankle sprain and will miss at least this weekend’s chieftain dual,” Porter said.

Because wrestling is a very physically grinding sport, the coaches all encourage the wrestlers to eat well, stretch and come ready to perform as well as possible.

“Were hoping to stay healthy and wrestling is just a grinding sport you are constantly getting beaten up a little bit. We want to keep everyone healthy,” Mink said.

All wrestlers hope for winning records, and look forward to a very successful season once again. The team will continue to push for more wins as the season progresses.

“Come out and watch us wrestler, if you like to see some good activity, like to see some East wins come out and watch us wrestle,” Porter said.



Bowling becomes NSAA sport at East

Skyla Peter
Opinion Editor

Bowling is officially being recognized by NSAA Unified Sports beginning this school year; the first season was from October to December.

Before bowling had become part of NSAA Unified Sports, there was just club bowling. Some of the students that were a part of the club bowling then joined the new official bowling team. For the overall season the Bellevue East team ended up finishing in third place at districts and before that they were previously undefeated.

“I really thought that we weren’t going to do as well as we did a lot of my teammates surprised me with how well they caught on and everything like that and they are doing so much better, like even in one day of practice they have improved so much,” junior Anna Walther said.

NSAA Unified Sports does allow students with disabilities and students without disabilities to compete on the same team together. This gives everyone an equal opportunity to be a part of a team, to learn from each other, and get better at the sport itself.

“It is really different with the special needs kids, it is really teaching me to be patient and really helping them and coach them not only as a teammate but as support and helping them through it. I know it can be frustrating trying a new thing and all the other sports don’t really help that like it is who ever is the best so we are really encouraging them and we help them in and things like that,” Walther said.

They bowl twice a week and that can consist of a meet and practice or practice and practice or a meet and a meet. The club bowlers have built up their skills over the years and most of them have been participating in bowling since they were young children.

“I have been bowling since I was little, over the years I have gotten better and I have been working on my mentality and everything and so bowling really helps. I encourage people outside

of school to go bowl,” Walther said.

One thing that they do is work with each person one on one so they can do their best at the competitions. The coach hopes that everyone will stay positive throughout the season, whether they do good or bad. He does not want the stress of districts to affect how everyone communicates with each other.

“I expect every body to be supportive of one another, I expect everybody to have passion for the game and that they try and do their best we’re not all pros but I want everyone to learn the game, not just to be better bowlers but to learn bowling etiquette,” Coach Kent Crossley said.

Crossley is not the only person that expected everyone to be respectful and positive as the season went on, everyone on the team seems to feel the same way about each other. Strong bonds were formed during the first season and everyone wants to show their support for one another.

“I expect that as the season goes on with districts and state that we really encourage each other, we stay positive, and that no matter what happens we are still teammates together, we still are going to talk to each other in the hall ways and say hi to each other because that is what we are, we’re family now,” Walther said.

This was the first year that bowling was considered an actual sport and the team has hope that more people will want to join their group and grow together. So far there are nine bowling members on the team and the team hopes that more people will come to join the new sports team at Bellevue East.

“Being that it is the first year, we didn’t really know what to expect. There have been a few bumps in the road but it’s been mostly good. Kids have been very positive about it, I love the kids that we have because they all are passionate about the sport and we all are helping each other to get better. It’s been a very good experience, I thought we might have a few more kids come out but for whatever reason we didn’t have that many kids come out but I think that has this goes along there will be more kids,” Crossley said.



In order to ensure that he had an accurate shot, sophomore Raleigh Purvis prepared himself by properly lining himself up. He followed proper bowling etiquette by waiting for the person in the lane next to him to finish up before he went. *Photo by Skyla Peter*



To prepare themselves for districts, Senior Anthony Smith and Sophomore Jeremiah Wiech work on their technique. They both showed bowling etiquette as they didn’t bowl next to another person who was already doing so. *Photo by Sylva Peter*



The first Bellevue East bowling team recognized by NSAA had some brand new bowlers and some more experienced bowlers. The team placed in 3rd at districts and everyone formed strong bonds with one another. “We do club bowling and I have bowled for seven years and then we do club bowling for the school and everything so we came into it basically kicking butt, and that makes it easier for us because not only can we carry the team but we can help them learn,” Kylie Jackson said. *Photo by Skyla Peter*

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New administration is ‘trailblazing’



(Above) The political cartoon was submitted by a student, who wishes to remain anonymous.

PBIS implementation in school seems ineffective

Staff Editorial

Manners have to be taught, that is nothing new. As an attempt to teach manners in high school the PBIS system was implemented. This system is composed of the ideas that students will be doing something respectful or extra nice and then the staff will hand them a little slip that can be exchanged for rewards. We as the Tom Tom staff think that this system is ineffective.

The biggest issue with this reward system is that students that are already being respectful and taking care of their school are not being noticed. These students already have the manners and use them everyday and as a result they are not being given these reward slips.

The students that this reward system targets do not care that much either. Therefore the parameters for obtaining the tickets should be made more clear so that students make more of an effort to obtain them.

The staff should be more involved in keeping an eye out for students that have met the requirements to obtain a slip for a reward. To properly motivate students to follow the guidelines of PBIS, the rewards should be enforced.

Another issue is that some students do not know what they need to do to gain a reward slip. If they pick up trash and a teacher sees, shouldn't they get a slip then? The staff should lay out what they expect and or want from the students, so they know how to change their behavior for the better and they will get a reward out of it.

The staff should also make it clear when the students can get their rewards and where. Some rewards are in the library while others are in the dean's office and some students do not know where to go. When students can drop them off is also unclear as well as how often they will be rewarded.

These are some questions the students have. If the staff could give a clear message of what they want the students to do to earn a slip, and what to do with that slip it would be a very beneficial system. If the teachers and staff would hand out the slips to encourage the students, the system would be functioning well.

We, as the Tom Tom staff, believe the PBIS system had good intentions, but because of ineffective implementation, miscommunication, the program is currently ineffective.

Road construction causes driving frustration



Maria Mwita
Reporter

As a resident in Bellevue Nebraska, I have noticed a few changes. There seems to be more traffic and I wanted to investigate why. It doesn't take a genius to know that there is construction all over

Bellevue and it has made it harder to get to places. I have mixed feelings about this construction. While it's seems that the roads will be improving and help Bellevue in the long run, it doesn't seem as helpful now.

I am speaking for myself, but I do believe there are other people in the city of Bellevue who are just as frustrated as I am with this construction, which has caused traffic jams, and want to pull their hair out. Like, are we being serious?

It shouldn't take me 45 minutes to get to school. I live near Lewis and Clark Middle School. Though Bellevue has done a good job at keeping lanes open moving cars, the process is still enraging.

I have never seen this much traffic

in Bellevue and I have lived here for 10 going on 11 years. Over the past few weeks some places have cleared up like Cornhusker, but other places like Highway 370 and Giles are still being worked on.

One thing that puzzles me about the road construction is why now (of all the times) and why all at once? The plan is for Bellevue to be finished with the construction within the next 2-3 years. I'll be a senior by then.

The construction isn't really what's frustrating me; it's the effects of the construction. The traffic is bad and has been causing students and people who go to work to be late sometimes. The best times to leave in my opinion are like 6:30 a.m. and 7:00. By 7:15 traffic starts.

Some really bad spots are Fairview and 36th street. Fairview Road is right by Fairview Elementary and is a road that can lead you to the highway, which also has construction. One of the roads are closed so there is a road with two lanes with cars going in opposite directions. That's fun to drive in.

There is a slight positive side to this. I have been able to find alternative routes to different places, like school or the mall. These routes have turned out to be a faster way for me, so that's a plus. There always seems to be more that pops up in Bellevue. Construction in some areas have cleared up which is good, but other places have just gotten started. It's going to be a long ride Bellevue. So fasten your seat belts and try to enjoy the ride

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EDITORIAL POLICY

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.

Metro lights up holiday spirit with places to go

Nia Booth
Video Editor in Chief

As the weather starts to drop and the night grow longer, everyone in Bellevue begins to look for things to do in the winter, whether it's inside or not. There are a couple of activities that you could do to enjoy the festive time with your friends, family, or significant other.

One place you can go to have a good time is the Bass Pro Shop In Council Bluffs. The store is now having its annual Santa's wonderland. Walking into the store you'll be greeted with the sounds of mini trains running by, children finally getting a glimpse of their reason for being good all year, and adults sipping on warm beverages. Of course the main attraction would be going with your family to see Santa and getting personalized photos to remember the moment. You could also share your memento with others. In addition to that, the store offers free crafts, games, and activities. The only catch is that you'll need to reserve a time to visit Santa because he's in such high demand, but that's nothing more than going to their

website and selecting the time that's best for you.

Looking for a special way to end the year? The New Year's Eve Fireworks Spectacular would be the perfect plans to have with those you care about, especially if you enjoy Christmas music. Attendees are encouraged to tune into STAR 104.5 to hear the music to which the fireworks are choreographed. The event will be held on Dec. 31 at 7 p.m. at the Gene Leahy Mall. It's the perfect place to finish off 2016.

If you're looking for the per-

fect winter activity to do with your friends, which could possibly end with them falling on their butt, nothing's better than ice skating. It's a great way to make memories with those you care about. There are a couple of locations in downtown Omaha such as the Motto McLean Ice Arena where you can go and skate.

Of course, there are other activities that you could do without leaving your neighborhood. You could go caroling, sledding, or build a snowman once it starts to snow.



Crunching ice, chilling air, all signs of the holidays. With the wonderful season of giving upon us, we seek out the greatest Christmas lights of the year. The Old Market, in downtown Omaha, is a great family friendly environment to check out some Christmas lights. From 5 p.m. to 1 a.m. these Christmas lights shine bright! Photo By: Briana Benak



Taking a walk down town is the perfect way to start your holiday season! With over 48 hours spent decorating, The Old Market offers a variety of holiday lights to enjoy. Head down any time until Jan. 4, to check out these lights. Photo by: Briana Benak

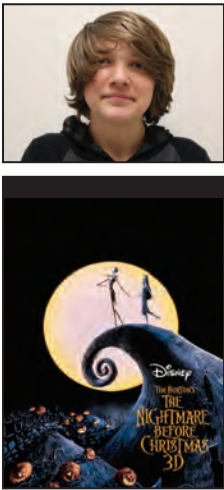


With a warm cup of coffee, and your favorite shopping shoes, Shadow Lake Towne Center is a great place to hunt for that perfect gift, along with enjoying the holiday decor. Be sure not to miss the giant Christmas tree that stands tall right in the middle of the mall. Photo by: Briana Benak

Festive film favorites



Freshman Michala Butterfield
"My favorite Christmas movie is the 'Elf' because it's funny, but you get to experience what children go through every day with the 'people believing in Santa Claus' and stuff."



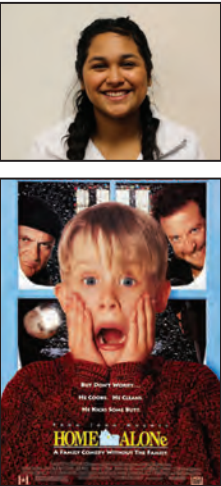
Sophomore Kory Belgin
"[My favorite Christmas movie] is 'The Nightmare Before Christmas' because you can watch it on Christmas and Halloween."



Junior Conner Brown
"My favorite Christmas movie is Christmas Vacation because it makes me laugh and I like funny movies."



Senior Paige Haskins
"My favorite Christmas movie is 'The Polar Express' because I like the art style and it is a calm and relaxing film."



Freshman Sarah Ibarra
"My favorite movie is 'Home Alone' because I think it's really funny"



Senior Michael Mitchell
"My favorite Christmas movie is 'Rudolph' because well, Rudolph is a classic for the ages."



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SO GOOD IT'S RUDULOUS

‘Moana’ sails as one of Disney’s greatest hits

Bobby Storck
Entertainment Editor

There are times in life when everything that can go wrong, goes wrong. You ask the world “Why me?” and it never seems to respond. This was the problem faced by the title character in Disney Animation’s newest musical, “Moana.”

“Moana” is the story of a Polynesian teenager (voiced by Auli’i Cravalho) who is next in line for chief of her people. Since her birth, she feels attracted to the ocean, yet is never allowed to go beyond the reef that surrounds their Pacific island. She wants to be free and follow her heart across the waves, but she also feels she has a commitment to her people.

Things begin to turn south, however, when their fishing nets turn up empty and their crops are inedible from disease. Moana discovers these problems are the result of the demigod Maui (voiced by Dwayne “The Rock” Johnson) having stolen the heart of Te Fiti: a magical stone with the ability to create life.

With food running low, Moana learns from her grandmother (voiced by Rachel House) that she is destined to be the one who sails beyond the reef, find Maui, and return the heart to its rightful place. Only then will the fish return and

crops become healthy.

A good movie will leave you thinking about it the whole drive home. This one had me thinking the rest of the day. Disney, time and time again, has released magnificent and memorable animated musicals and “Moana” is nothing short of spectacular.

The characters were human with the writing containing a neat balance of humor and emotion. Every scene seemed animated with extreme care, and one could watch the movie only paying attention to the detail in the picture and still be utterly amazed.

The plot was rich in detail, but not, however, in originality. Unfortunately for Moana, her adventure tale followed the stereotypical adventure plot, with most of the film being almost predictable. Even with its predictability, the movie had enough surprises and unanticipated moments that it kept things interesting.

The songs were well placed and fit in with the general flow of the plot. Although the songs were fantastic in tune and lyric, they, compared to Disney Animation’s “Frozen” (2013), did not seem as catchy. I would happily have “Moana’s” soundtrack on album and place it on my movie soundtrack playlist, but I doubt anyone will hear people singing the songs in the hallways and in the



classroom like people did when “Frozen” came out.

This movie well deserves a 9 out of 10. Despite being a tad predictable, the film is one for the ages. The scenery was absolutely mesmerizing, the songs well placed and insightful, and the voice acting well deserved of an award. The film does a great job demonstrating someone who makes the most of their destiny, and someone who finds the answer to “Why me?”

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