

the  
**PURPLE CLARION**

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Photos by Madison McClusky.

**(Left) Senior Sophie Winkleman directs the band in "The Greatest Show."**

**(Right) Saxophonists sophomore Amber Taylor and juniors Bentley Linch and April Gulley play "Entry of the Gladiator."**

## Band hosts yearly variety

*Madeleine DeNeal, staff editor*

Every year, the band marks their shift from marching to concert season with an annual variety show.

A few weeks after the last parade, the band began selling tickets to family and faculty members that covered a meal and performance. Each of the students are expected to participate and work as staff for the show.

"Band prepares by getting ads out and setting up the night before," junior Ian Meshew said. "Sections are also given music to prepare as acts for entertainment for the guests who come."

Pieces are organized by section. After dinner is served, the show opened with the band performing a song from "The Greatest Showman," which was this year's theme.

"The turnout of the show was amazing," freshman saxophone player Mollie Freed said. "I think that we either almost sold out or sold out completely."

Aside from "The Greatest Show," the band performed circus themed music. The clarinet and saxophone sections played "Entry of the Gladiators," a traditional circus theme.

"Seeing people happy when we were up there performing was amazing," Freed

said. "All of the people really seemed to enjoy it."

There were also a few non-traditional pieces performed, such as "Popcorn," played with boomwhackers by the extensive percussion section. The drama department also brought a song from their fall musical, "Grease."

"The Pink Ladies and Danny and the Hubcaps performed some songs," sophomore Kirsten Eversmann said. "It was included with a performance of "We Go Together" by the entire Grease cast."

Music was not the only thing the variety show had. On top of the food and festivities, there was also between-the-song trivia, a silent auction, where parents bid on section-donated baskets and parent-contributed items, raffle tickets, a home-baked sweet shop, and a game of heads-or-tails.

"I think they're a good opportunity to raise money and to give out some wonderful prizes as a consideration for all the money given into our program," Meshew said.

The variety show raises funds for new band room equipment. This year, the band was aiming for enough money to buy a new set of timpanis.

"The turnout of the show was great," sophomore Mitchell Quisenberry said. "We always live to see people come to our performances and having that many people in one place was great."

Though the night is busy and stressful for band students, the payoff, monetarily and emotionally, is worth it, according to Meshew.

"I think our performances were spectacular," Meshew said. "We worked hard towards making sure they were satisfactory."



Photo by Hilary Ford.

**Harrisburg students wore red Monday, Nov. 18 to show support for the students of Vandalia High School. VHS suffered a terrible loss on Sunday when two students, Jenna Protz and Holly Lidy, and Protz's grandparents were killed in an auto accident on their way home from a Class 3 playoff game against Williamsville. Numerous school have showed their support by wearing red, making donations to the Vandalia School Foundation. Funds will be used to provide future scholarships according to Steve Spearie of the State Journal-Register.**

# Speech successful in first outing

Mazie Tillery, staff writer

As the end of the year gets closer and most are expected to bundle up in sweaters, some students brave the cold with suit coats instead.

While the idea of public speaking can be daunting to most people, the speech team does it each weekend in winter as an extracurricular activity. Participants are expected to spend their Saturdays in business wear, performing in front of judges for a chance to move on to a final round. Those with the best scores break into either varsity, next-in, or junior-varsity finals depending on their skill level.

“Speech is a competition based on how well you can talk or act publicly,” junior Ian Meshew said.

Meshew does two events, the first being Special Occasion Speaking, and the second being Radio.

“Radio is prepared at the tournament,” Meshew said. “You have forty-five minutes to create a speech that is around five minutes long. Radio is different from other events because you don’t perform in front of any competitors. It’s just you and a judge.”

Speech competition is designed to focus on the individual’s ability in formal address, interpretation, or limited-preparation, according to the National

Speech and Debate Organization. Students memorize and perform pieces that are around five-to-eight minutes long. Some speeches come with a pre-written script, are done on-the-spot, or have been given as a TED talk. Others are originally written and can range from informational to comedic.

“Writing my SOS took about four months,” Meshew said. “I had to find eight sources and consult multiple coaches for the humor and informative aspects to create a perfect balance.”

There are many different sections of competition within speech. Events like Humorous Interpretation, Impromptu Speaking, and Original Oratory are just a few of the options available to participants.

Senior Addie Hanks is a four-year member of the speech team, as well as the solo team captain.

“When I was a freshman, I wanted to quit, [but] I fell in love with it,” Hanks said. “[Now], it feels the same as when I was just on the team, except I feel more weight to make sure everyone feels good and happy.”

While focusing on keeping up the morale of her speeches, Hanks also has her personal events to prep.

“I do Dramatic Duet Acting and Dramatic Interpretation this season,” Hanks said. “Having a partner [in an event] is nice because you are never alone.”

Hanks finds her duet event, which she performs with junior Ravyn Gauch, to be less stressful than DI.

“Personally, I feel a lot calmer when I’m with Ravyn than in my own DI round,” Hanks said.

The demanding requirements and idea of speaking in front of judges are at times too much for some members. Those who stay often find themselves breaking out of their comfort zones and even excelling in tournaments.

Hanks and Gauch, along with senior Javen Wendler, junior Avah Businaro, and sophomore Neva Wasson all took home first place awards in varsity during the Nov. 16 tournament at Mascoutah. The team placed first in the limited-entry division and fourth overall.

“I felt very proud of our team,” Meshew said. “Especially with such a limited number of members this year compared to last year.”

As the season goes on, Hanks will continue to inspire her team to do well and keep looking positively toward future tournaments.

“I never want my speech members sad, so I always try to keep a good attitude,” Hanks said. “You become successful with hard work and dedication, just like any

# Teachers talk tech in state capitol

Rheis Wasson, staff writer

Four teachers attended a technology conference in Springfield last week. The goal was to learn how to better implement technology and the internet in their classrooms.

The tech conference was held by the Illinois Digital Educators Alliance.

Many of the sessions offered included information about how to utilize the Google Suite of programs.

“They were talking about the edit history of a Google Doc, and while I’m sure most teachers do already know about it, but I think it’s still valuable for them to learn about it,” media specialist Heather Cox said.

Other sessions focused on new technologies and websites that teachers can use as resources.

“I attended one session on Pear Deck, a web application that will allow me to encourage greater participation in class discussions,” English teacher Cathy Wall said. “We got a three month free trial which I am going to sign up for in January. I also went to a couple of sessions on civic education. One focused on helping students navigate through fake and biased news and another on project based learning.”

The conference had a heavy focus on using technology as another tool in everyday learning. Wall learned some skills she hopes to use next semester.

“I have already created a website for my classes,” Wall said. “The website is full of links to other websites we use during the class period and information that I hope students will find helpful like a writing guide and tips for parents.”

Many of the sessions were conducted by teachers looking to help other teachers.

“The instructors there who gave presentations were open to other teachers’ ideas as well which I thought was neat,” Cox said.

Among the presenters was HHS’ own English teacher Krystal Wilson.

“I went to the conference not really as an attendee but as a speaker,” Wilson said. “I taught a session based on genealogy in the classroom and how it can be fit into any subject.”

Wilson was attended sessions when she was not presenting.

“I primarily picked sessions on Google Classroom and how to organize your data in Google, so I learned all sorts of tricks I never knew before,” Wilson said.

Something Wilson felt was very important for students to learn was what they say online never really leaves.

“I went to a few sessions on the things we put on the web and how imperative it is that we watch what we say. It’s not like how paper is; it sticks around forever,” Wilson said.

It was very informative according to Cox, who feels technological applications are important in all areas.

“The conference was very diverse in what it talked about. The subjects covered there can be applied in every class, whether it be math, science, or English,” Cox said. “Technology is one of those things that is unavoidable and I think we could benefit from getting used to using early.”

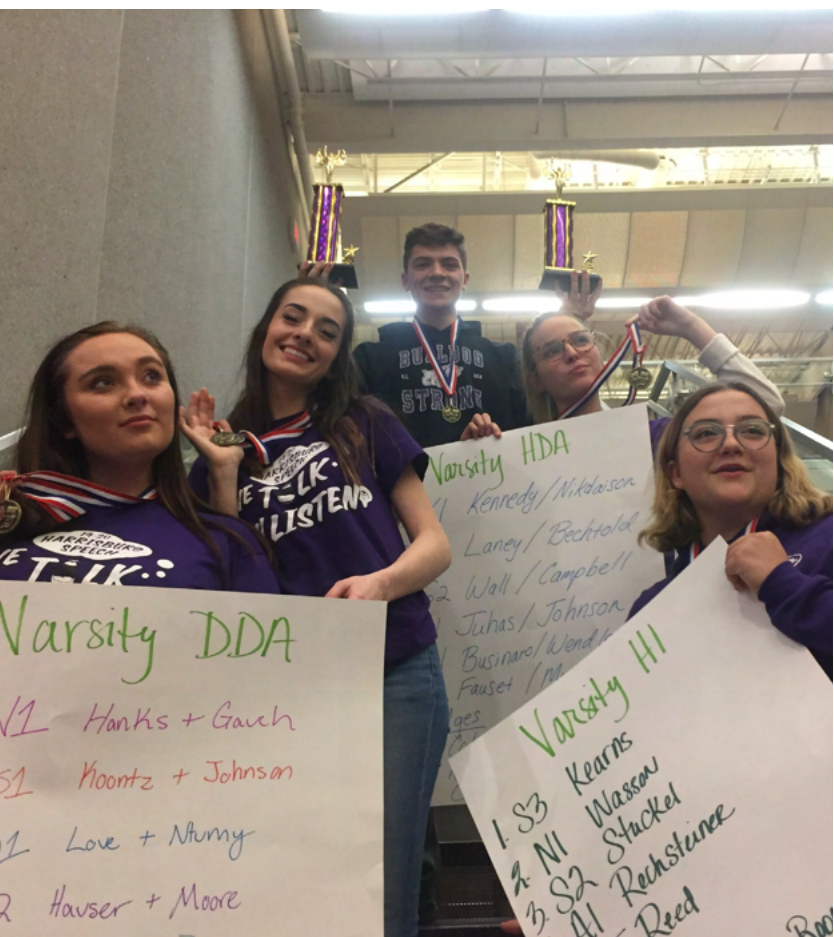


Photo by Madeleine DeNeal

(left to right) Speech team members junior Ravyn Gauch, senior Addie Hanks, senior Javen Wendler, junior Avah Businaro, and sophomore Neva Wasson pose with their first place medals after the tournament at Mascoutah high school. The team placed first in limited-entry and fourth overall. “I felt like it was a pretty successful win,” Wendler said. “It’s a great start to my senior season.”

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# Student council attends leadership conference

Hannah Reid, op-ed editor

The student council attended their first leadership conference for this year at Marion High School Nov. 7.

There were many ways in which the conference broadened the perspective of others according to senior Devin Gunter.

Adrienne Bulinski shared her personal story and directed the event. Bulinski is a previous Miss Kansas, author of "Blood, Sweat, and Tiaras," and the winner of numerous motivational speaker awards.

"The speaker was very inspirational, and the way she talked just drew me in because when she talked she used her arms and her face, and it was very interesting to see what she would do or say next," sophomore Kristen Eversmann said.

Approximately 551 students from 20 different schools attended this leadership conference.

During Bulinski's speech, she wore her dad's shorts and brought in her old bubble gum collection to teach her audiences how to be successful.

"The conference was a lot of fun, and my favorite part of the day was hearing her story," freshman Luke Winkleman said. "It was inspiring."

Eversmann also mentioned how motivational the session was.

"(My favorite part) would have to be when

the speaker told her story about how her foot was destroyed and how her path to recovery was hard, but she still made it in the end," Eversmann said. "I liked the lesson she teaches about how life will give you challenges, but you have to overcome them so you can reach your dreams."

Many students replied that they would love to have this experience again in the future. Not only did students listen to the guest speaker, but they also did group activities with unfamiliar students from different areas.

"We had to get into groups of random kids from other schools, and I was put into a group of about 15, and we had to learn everyone's names and favorite animals," Eversmann said. "It was cool because I got to make new friends from different areas. If I had the chance to go, I would definitely go again."

Once these students introduced themselves to their groups, they were required to remember every person's name in their group. Bulinski also taught everyone to dance and had a dance competition for those students who decided to join the dance.

"I didn't like the dance competition because it felt weird and kind of embarrassing to go in front of a lot of strangers and dance, but I give credit to the people who had the guts to do it," Eversmann said.



Photo by Selina Wang.

**Senior Devin Gunter, senior Molly Ryder and sophomores Kailyn Moss and Riley Harrison wait for the event to start in the Marion High School auditorium.**

## From Drab to Lab New equipment benefits science department

Madeleine DeNeal, staff writer

Last year, the science department received a donation of \$100,000 from industrial businessman Paul Jones, a Harrisburg alumnus from the class of 1966.

When the school began costly renovations in the spring of 2016, not much money was left for adequate classroom materials. Superintendent Mike Gauch, with the approval of the board, began a campaign to write letters to potential donors.

"Before the new equipment, students had to share in large groups. The equipment did not always perform well, so there was a large amount of error in the results," chemistry teacher Janet Hughes said. "Some labs simply couldn't be done, or had to be done in the form of a class demonstration."

A purchase of around \$60,000 was made for the science department, which consisted of brand-new appliances, replacement equipment, and new digital tools for classes to use. Previously, the science teachers were expected to execute labs with aged, unreadable, or broken materials.

"We could only use two hot plates at a time," chemistry teacher Jeanna Herring said. "Some of them did not work, and we would blow breakers if we used too many of them at the same time."

Any time before the addition of the new equipment, students were struggling to complete assignments thoroughly, according to Herring.

"We are now able to have all the students working in smaller groups due to more room in the lab and more equipment," Herring said. "Our groups would be larger to accommodate the lack of resources."

Due to the help of Jones and other donors, the science department has improved drastically in not only being able to instruct students on lab procedures but give them a deeper understanding of the subjects being taught according to senior Andy Ryner.

"Having new, better working equipment would make the lab[s] go more smoothly, instead of hunting for something that actually works," Ryner said.

According to Ryner, taking time out of the class period to look for usable materials was a hindrance. Having brand-new equipment reduces the likelihood of a laboratory disaster.

"My sophomore year, a few of the Bunsen burners wouldn't get to the blue flame, so the carbon built up on the flask," Ryner said. "The extra mass gave me a 370% error. It's important that that doesn't happen."

Aside from upperclassmen's struggles in previous years, the new equipment benefits freshmen and sophomores, who had limited access to lab work at the middle school, according to freshman Maren Russell.

"When I was in sixth grade, there was no access to lab projects," Russell said. "When seventh grade came around, I had one or two opportunities spaced out [across] the entire school year."

Russell also finds it easier to perform labs at the high school level. "When I did a lab activity in the high school's lab, I felt relaxed," Russell said. "I like how open it is. It makes doing experiments something to enjoy rather than stress over. I think the lab helps [a student] grasp an understanding of how to apply your



Photo by Rheis Wasson.

**Keith Dowdy (left) and Piper Weaver (right) testing their creations ability to maintain heat in science teacher Jeanna Herring's class. Freshman Trenton Sheldon was the winner of the event that required students to use their research to create an insulator that could maintain the temperature of water for 20 minutes.**

knowledge of science to real-world scenarios and issues."

Herring understands the importance of lab availability for all students.

"I think adding hands-on activities to any lesson adds to the students' comprehension, not just underclassmen, but all of them," Herring said. "They find the activities as a break in the usual instructional methods, fun, and they retain more of the information when they are able to relate it to something they did in the lab."

Though the new materials are wonderful assets for the classroom, most of Hughes' teaching methods have remained close to what they were before the new additions, with less difficulty surrounding the equipment.

"My teaching prior to the new building was similar to what it is now," Hughes said. "I spend less time dealing with safety issues and planning ways to adapt experiments for the materials we have."

The biggest change for Hughes, however, has been digital access.

"We have the ability to control how much digital work we want in each individual class," Hughes said. "Some courses, and students are better suited for different types of delivery and response methods. We now have the ability to meet those needs."

## Tech Talk

### *Call of Duty Modern Warfare is out*

Clay Brigham, staff writer



Infinity Ward is back with the newest part of the “Modern Warfare” series. I have recently bought it, and I think it’s great.

This newest part to the “Call of Duty” franchise is set before the events of “Call of Duty 4: Modern Warfare”. This game shows the beginning of Task Force 141 and their leader, Captain Price.

Some might ask “What’s so special about this game compared to the others?”

One thing I have observed in this prequel is that it is more realistic than the others. “Modern Warfare” successfully executed proper CQB (Close Quarters Battle) tactics and execution. They also showed the proper way the military searches and clears rooms. Infinity Ward has made this game in a way where the original run-and-gun playing style is dang near impossible.

The older games made by Infinity Ward lack well-rounded character models. Most seem to strictly focus on game-play.

The character development in this new release particularly caught my eye. In the game, it seemed like they cared about the players getting to know the characters. Infinity Ward made the characters seem more human than just a random npc (non-player character) that fights for you. Throughout the game, I saw the characters come to life and seem less like a bunch of ones and zeros, and more like an actual person with feelings.

The old games of the “Modern Warfare” series also seemed to lack some hard truths of war. Yes, they had missions that were sometimes hard to stomach, but it wasn’t the entirety of what is real.

This new game has put real world problems in front of the players. The game developers have put in the true horrors of a war against terrorism. “Modern Warfare” shows how hard it is to see the difference between friend and foe, and the hard decisions that are made to save lives.

Infinity Ward has really done well with this game. I personally feel like this is the best “Call of Duty” in the franchise.

I highly recommend that people try the game.

## Patriotism at heart

Brandon Butler, guest column



Are you a proud citizen of America? Do you love this country? If you said no then let me ask you another question. Is it because you dislike the others in this country? It seems obvious to me that most people do dislike others, and it’s often because of their politics. People dislike the others around and above them because they don’t agree. That alone is fine by itself, but the extent of that dislike as seen today is baffling, and more specifically, the division it’s causing. Our general lack of patriotism as Americans is hurting us.

Have you ever wondered why the United States of America doesn’t feel very “united” today? We’re dividing ourselves because of our political views. Today, we are letting that divide us completely. People in the modern world genuinely distrust their political opposites. Despite having different views, we are still Americans, and we need to start acting like it.

You might be asking, “How could acting like true Americans help our country out today?” Well, I’ll tell you how. It has the awesome potential to lessen or completely halt the dislike and sometimes downright hatred of each other. Today, when people of different views have a political discussion, it often leads to anger and hurt feelings. People need to be proud of who they are no matter if they get their way in politics. I firmly believe this lack of tolerance could be at the very least partially mended by a strong sense of patriotism among Americans today.

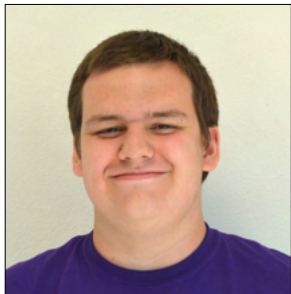
As President Abraham Lincoln told us years ago, “A house divided against itself cannot stand.”

This proved to be true when the United States refused to unify peacefully and the Civil War broke out. Yet, even with this devastating example, we still divide ourselves so clearly today. I ask you now to try and think back to this the next time you have thoughts of dislike towards your fellow Americans. When that anger, distrust, or disgust enters your mind, think about the greater good. Are your politics worth this divide? So, from now on, if you feel disappointed in our country or feel that you dislike it, then I urge you to think. Is this opinion really worth it?

## Bully for you

### *Skool Yard Kombat*

Rheis Wasson, news editor



In-school fighting. Brutal, quick, and sometimes mortifying, (just like Mortal Kombat). All these terms can be used to describe it, however no word truly describes this action better than trashy.

School fights are one of the dumbest things I have ever witnessed in my life. From why they’re fought to where they’re fought, it’s just plain wrong.

Now, I’m sure that those that fight at school see no issue with it, maybe seeing it as a way to get aggression out. Do you not get that there are other ways to do that? Maybe go for a run, go for a drive, or just hit a punching bag, I’m willing to bet whatever you’re fired up about will subside the next day anyway. And, not to mention, getting punched in the stomach straight after lunch isn’t too good of a time.

I for one really believe that if two people must fight someone, they should take it out of school and avoid attacking people who don’t even have a second to get a guard up. Have a bit of courtesy, am I right? Don’t just knock someone’s teeth out on your way to Spanish, it’s somehow even worse.

As for reasoning for fights, if you could write me an article similar to this one as to why you need to hit that guy (or girl) in the jaw with the fury of God backing it up, I’d love to read it. I’m sure I’d get a good chuckle out of it.

But, seriously, the reasons I’ve heard always boil down to the same old issues– people caring too much about what others say about them, someone that won’t matter in five years, and/or romance gone wrong always seem to be the most wonderful of schoolyard brawl clichés.

If I’m being honest, people who care too much about trash talk and fight people about it are not much better than those that talk trash. Seriously, sit down and think about that for a second. The article will still be here, I assure you.

If you as a person thinks that taking out those that twist your name around in bits or soil your mom or girlfriends name will help build your reputation as a person, you might want to reconsider a few things. Things like: Why do I even bother coming to school? Why do I feel the need to hurt that person? Will it really matter twenty years down the line? These are things that you should think about before knocking that person’s block off.

The subject of school fights is often ... touchy? Sometimes a bit of a ... sore subject? Maybe just a little bit ... brutal to talk about?

So maybe I wouldn’t have to talk about and make light of it if people just flat out didn’t do it, it’s annoying, trashy, and pretty much nothing is gained from it besides a reputation that won’t matter in barely even five years after high school. Not to mention, trouble, detention, or even suspension.

## Sara’s skin care cheat sheet

### *Walmart Introduces Natural Skin care*

Sara Wangler, feature editor



Picture this. I walk into Walmart, not suspecting a thing. I stroll up to the skin care aisle, and lo and behold the holy grail of all natural skin care. A new brand has arrived at Walmart, I’m here for it. This brand is called Earth to Skin, I’m so excited to try all of the products. The display is separated into four sections based on ingredients and benefits. I like this placement. Everything is very clear and easy for a person to find what they are looking for.

The line available at Walmart includes green tea and matcha for anti-aging and tightening, honey for sensitive skin and moisture, tea time for anti-aging and tightening, super fruits for a healthy glow, and super greens for detoxing and destress. Each line is perfectly formatted to fit the main needs of your skin. The brand also includes the basics. Cleanser, toner, serum, moisturizer for day and night, eye cream, two types of sheet masks as well as clay or gel masks.

I purchased a package of sheet masks in the sensitive skin collection. Each package includes four full size sheet masks and runs \$6.50 a package, which is a good deal considering most sheet masks are \$2.50 a piece. The packaging is very earthy, lots of warm tones and minimalistic designs cover each sheet mask. Inside the pouch is a durable and medium thickness mask. Right when the mask hits skin it’s instant cooling. The mask feels so good after a long day; sit back for 20 minutes. Serum on the mask is lightweight but coats your skin. I’d say these masks are number two on my mask ranking, coming only second behind Tony Moly sheet masks.

Each section has a box of testers, which price at \$9.98 and includes a cleanser, day cream, night cream, and eye cream. This is a huge bargain. Higher-end brands charge upwards of \$70 for a tester kit, and no one wants to pay for that. Although Earth to Skin is a drugstore brand and is far cheaper, that doesn’t mean it won’t do what any other skin care line would. I refuse to pay a fortune for skin care when there is a cheaper duplicate available.

From what I have seen online, this is an exclusive line to Walmart, which is shocking to me. Walmart has now invested in a bigger health and wellness section. Each aisle is filled to the brim with makeup, skin care, and hair care products. The retail tycoon also carries some of the most high quality items for so much cheaper than Ulta or Sephora. It’s the exact same thing for about \$5.00 less.

I will be reviewing Earth to Skins honey cleanser in the upcoming months and hopefully some of their other products as well. Remember, when choosing skin care, be sure to test out each product and always read reviews.

# The Clarion Call

## Vocational jobs offer many future jobs, a good salary

According to the latest research, there are many unfilled job opportunities in the workforce due to the number of people pursuing jobs that require a degree of some sort.

Chris Cortines, who co-authored a report for the Washington State Auditor, states that “good jobs in the skilled trades are begging because students are being almost universally steered to bachelor’s degrees.”

NPR, reporting on Cortines’ findings, noted that “seventy-percent of construction companies nationwide are having trouble finding qualified workers,” and that construction with health and personal care will account for one third of the jobs available over the next two years.

According to Eduardo Porter of the New York Times, “the truth is that there are better-paid jobs available to workers without the requisite college credential. The trick is finding them. They are not always in the most obvious places.” NPR reports that “some 30 million jobs in the United States that pay an average of \$55,000 per year don’t require bachelor’s degrees, according to the Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce.”

Although there are many jobs out there that do require a college degree, jobs that do not are frequently overlooked by high school graduates because these careers may not be brought to their attention.

These careers can be found in many fields.

There are additional job fields that require a degree but have workers who don’t possess a degree filling the positions due to their potential.

According to the New York Times, “Mr. Wardrip noted that as the job market had tightened over the last five years, employers had relaxed their educational requirements.”

Often times employees can obtain the skills they require for the job through vocational training, a certificate program or even an apprenticeship through the company.

“These skill-based jobs can be found in a variety of industries. They are particularly common in health-care, information technology (IT), and manufacturing. Hospitals, state governments, schools, manufacturers, IT companies, and other organizations have begun searching for employees with the right skills, rather than the right degree,” according to The Balance.

So what’s the take away for the student on the

brink of graduation? Quite simply, don’t assume that a fulfilling career necessarily requires a bachelor’s degree. Students need opportunities to explore their natural interests and skills and choose careers that fit them rather than simply subscribing to the idea that they must go to college to be financially successful.

And further, there are many things that schools can do to better reach these students and facilitate their future success. Expanding vocational programs, offering opportunities for students to intern with professionals and get some firsthand experience in a field that interests them, investing as much time and energy in students who don’t want to go to college as they do in students who are university bound, and increasing opportunities for these students to explore their interests in the classroom. Most of all, do not devalue the choice to skip college.

Working together, schools and students can reverse national trends and start graduating men and women who are ready to take off their graduation robes and put on their tool belts. In the end, we will all be better off.

**Mike Rowe handing out the dirty jobs scholarships. You get a scholarship, you get a scholarship, everybody gets a scholarship!**



Cartoon by Rachel Myers

**“I plan on becoming and working as a psychiatrist and work at the VA hospital to help veterans but also work with normal civilians as well.”**

**-junior Blake Eversmann**

**“My career plans are to attend Southern Illinois College and possibly transfer to Travecca University to be a speech pathologist. I want to help people who have speech impediments.”**

**-senior Haley Goosby**

**“I plan on graduating college. I’m going there to study criminal justice.”**

**-senior Hannah Bryan**

**“My career plan would include going to college playing soccer but also getting a nursing degree.”**

**-freshman Abbie Gramham**

**The Purple Clarion • Harrisburg High School • 333 W. College St. • Harrisburg, Illinois 62946**

The Purple Clarion is an unbiased, student-produced news, sports, feature and opinion publication dedicated to accurately reporting events that interest and impact HHS students. The Clarion is a proud member of the Southern Illinois Scholastic Press Association and a multi-year winner of the Blue Banner Award for excellence in scholastic journalism.

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Letters should be signed and submitted in person to faculty adviser Cathy Wall within the first two weeks of the month. All submissions are subject to editing for length at the discretion of the opinion editor and once submitted, become the property of the paper. All letters should be in good taste, omitting profane language and libelous content. Content in published letters do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Purple Clarion staff.

# Incredible stories of first generation Americans, their families

## Bui, Thai, Tran share family stories

Rheis Wasson, staff writer

America is a land of immigrants. Something very commonly is seen in the history of the nation is a great migration of people to America from one area due to social or political pressures. One of the more recent people groups to migrate here are from different areas of Vietnam.

One of Harrisburg's Vietnamese families is the Trans.

"My mom flew here and got citizenship from my grandpa who served in the Vietnam War. My dad went on a boat to Malaysia then Mexico and then he stayed there until he received his citizenship," junior Casey Tran said.

The Bui's is another Vietnamese family who decided to make their fresh start here.

"They both flew over, but not together since they hadn't met yet. I admittedly don't remember the specifics of their trips," senior Brandon Bui said.

The Thai's moved here after their marriage. "My dad was here before my mom, but moved back to Vietnam to get her citizenship in America," said senior Victoria Thai

Tran's father was not a native to Vietnam. "My mom is Vietnamese, and my dad was born in China but lived in Vietnam," Tran said.

Immigrants often face many hardships upon their first couple of years living here. But in the end, many are known for their bravery, Hardwork and high hopes for their future.

"My mom said her trip was fairly easy, but she was extremely poor. She usually didn't have food and would have to sometimes eat leaves. My dad, although he had a pretty fair income, wanted to immigrate to America because he felt that he would succeed in doing so. He left his large family behind and went on a boat that could only hold 150 people. The boat would sometimes sink and they would all have to swim. It took months before he could get to Malaysia. He then went on another boat to Mexico and waited three years for his citizenship," Tran said.

Some family's meet before moving to America. David Thai met Lyndi Thai while still in Vietnam. "They met in Ho Chi Minh City, but my dad was here in the '80s," said Thai.

Ho Chi Minh City is one of the biggest cities in Vietnam.

"They met and worked together in Boston, MA and then fell in love. They still continue to work together 20 years later," said Tran.

Each family faced their own hardships. "They faced so many that I can't name one specifically, but financial issues, resource scarcities, and language barriers were at the heart of their hardships, to say the least," Bui said.

Helen Bui and Mike Bui are the parents of senior Brandon Bui and sophomore Tyler Bui. Both students feel that language barriers also inhibit their ability to communicate with their parents. Bui and Tran are cousin.

"Neither of my parents can speak English well or understand it, although they can get by in daily life and have improved over time. I can comprehend most of the Vietnamese I hear, but I couldn't write or hold a long conversation if someone asked. We usually speak English at home," said Bui.

The transition from Vietnamese to English can be quite a challenge for them.

Being a first-generation American causes different emotions for the two students.

"I feel proud," Tran said. "My parents never went to college and never even completed high school, so while my parents still do struggle a lot, I want to take some of the burdens off of them and get my education and a good-paying job to support them."

Bui admits that he feels a great pressure to succeed.

"I wish I could say something noble, but I'll be honest- it's stressful. Not only am I the first natural-born citizen in my family, but I'm also the older sibling as well, and with my parents' mentalities, I always feel this pressure and tension that I have to do something big because of how much they sacrificed," Bui said.



■ Vietnam  
■ Mexico  
■ U.S.  
■ China

### The Vu and Nguyen Family



(Left) Aron Vu, (Middle) Mimi Vu, Alena Nguyen, Mother Ha Nguyen, (Right) Dad Ricky Nguyen.

### The Wang Family



(Left) Father Junda Wang, (Middle) Grace Wang, Selina Wang, Mother Cui Zheng, (Right) Wekey Wang. Photo taken in 2005.

### The Bui Family



(Left) Brandon Bui, (Middle) Tyler Bui, Helen Bui, (Right) Mike Bui.

### The Walle Family



(Left) Herlinda Leal Zavala Walle, (Middle) Luis Manuel Walle Garmargo, Marisol Walle, Stephanie Walle, Christopher Walle, (Right) Victoria Walle. Photo taken in 2006.

### The Aboyte Family



(Front) Jesus Aboyte, Mother Maria Aboyte, Father Jaime Aboyte. Photo taken in 2004.

### The Thai Family



(Front Left) Brandon Thai, (Middle) Mother Lyndi Thai, (Front Right) Victoria Thai, (Back Left) Father David Thai, (Right) Zach Thai. Photo taken in 2005.

## Walle's immigration from Mexico to US takes several years

Sara Wangler, feature editor

Senior Marisol Walle is a second generation American. Her parents Luis Manuel Walle Garmargo and Herlinda Leal Zavala Walle were born and raised in Gonzales, Mexico. In order to become American citizens it took them over a 20 year time span.

Walle's parents speak English better than they did when they first arrived in America, but Walle still has to translate most things, including this interview.

"I met my husband in 1992 at a plaza in our hometown of Gonzales, Mexico," resident Herlinda Leal Zavala Walle said. "We were each with a group of friends just browsing around on opposite sides of a circular shaped plaza. As we both moved around to the other sides we crossed paths. I saw him and he saw me. After that we started talking more for two months."

As their relationship progressed Walle Garmargo had to receive the blessing of his future in-laws.

"He walked to my house and asked my parents if we could go out on a date," Herlinda said. "After that we went on official dates and became boyfriend and girlfriend."

As they dated and time went on Mr. Walle decided he needed to make more money.

"My husband at the age of 19 and a few of his friends decided to go to America in search of a job," Herlinda said. "The car ride from our hometown to the border is five hours. But he and his friends walked. The trip from Gonzales to Nashville took a week, he climbed mountains and crossed rivers just to try and provide a better life for me."

After arriving to the border, Luis took a bus to Nashville, Tennessee. He then lived and worked there for three years.

"After years went by he had worked for and saved up enough money to come back to Mexico and come get me. At this point I was 21 and he was 23," Herlinda said. "He again took a bus to the border and then walked from the border back to Gonzales. Once he arrived, we both walked back to the border then took a bus back to Nashville."

The young pair lived and worked in Nashville for five months, then moved once more.

"After living in Nashville, we moved to Bowling Green, Kentucky," Herlinda said. "We lived there for three years. During that time I had my first two kids, Christopher and Stephanie."

Life moved very fast for Herlinda during her time away from home. She wanted to visit her family in Mexico and introduce them to her children, so she flew back by herself with her two very young children.

"Christopher was only a year and a half old while Stephanie was six months old when I flew back home. I had to hold them both because they were so young, I spoke almost no English," Herlinda said.

After arriving in Mexico, Herlinda stayed home with her two young kids for a year.

"He came back to Mexico after a year of not seeing us, then we stayed for another six months," Herlinda said.

While Herlinda was in Mexico, Luis had moved to Harrisburg, got a job at Tequilas and bought a house in which they currently live.

"He came to Mexico with news of a new job and a new house," Herlinda said. "When we first moved into the new house, it was so nice to have a place to call home, like finally settling down."

Following the move to the new house, the Walle's got married, then had another child.

"We got married after we had moved and settled in Harrisburg," Herlinda said "On Oct. 16, 2000 we were officially married. A year and one month later, we had Marisol."

Six years and one child later, the family of five took a trip to Mexico once again to introduce the new child to the rest of the family.

Fast forward two more years and the family of five turned into a family of six.

"I had my youngest daughter in 2009, we again wanted to introduce her (Monica) to the rest of our family," Herlinda said. "We waited one year and celebrated her first birthday in Mexico."

## How To Enter The U.S.

**Apply For A VISA**

Your reason for travel will determine the type of visa you need to enter the U.S. Some of the most commonly requested visas are:

- Business or professional visas
- Visitor visas for tourism or business
- Visas for students
- Immigrant visa for permanent residency tooltip

**STEP 01**

**Procedures for Entering the United States**

**STEP 02**

When you arrive in the United States, you must show valid travel documents as part of the entry process. The documents you need depend on the country you are arriving from and your citizenship or status in that country.

**Entry Denials**

Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officers conduct arrival inspections using the same criteria for all foreign nationals visiting the U.S. They decide your admission to the United States, even if all your travel documents, including your visa, are in order.

**STEP 03**

**DO NOT ENTER**

**STEP 04**

**Apply for an Immigrant Visa**

If you want to apply to become a permanent resident of the United States, where you are determines how you apply.

**STEP 05**

**Presidential Proclamation on Immigration**

On September 24, 2017, the president signed a presidential proclamation that makes changes to the immigration policy.

**Sources:**  
**How To Enter The U.S.**  
**USGOV**

Infographic By Selina Wang

# Girls' basketball aims to match record from prior seasons

Haley Sullivan, sports editor

As basketball season begins, the team is believed to have big shoes to fill as they strive to compete with last season's record of 28-6, according to senior Lydia Miller. A high school career record of 83-15 of the seniors contributes to confidence in the ability to live up to this record.

According to ninth-year head basketball coach Jake Stewart, the team is heading into the season with excitement for a prosperous year.

"I feel like we have a good chance to have a good season," Stewart said. "Staying healthy will be very important for us this year and the girls have been wanting to get started even earlier this year. I feel like if your whole team is excited about the season, there's a reason why."

Stewart goes on to say that the team will face a tough schedule, but they will likely compete to the best of their abilities, as long as they "execute on both ends of the floor."

"I think our team will perform very well together this year as we are all so used to playing with one another," junior Lauryn Gribble said. "We all know each other's strengths and weaknesses, and feel comfortable playing with each other. We also go over plays continuously and scrimmage a lot, so that is definitely helping to prepare us for the season ahead."

Because the senior class has played together for several years, the team dominates with a strong team dynamic, according to Miller.

"We seniors have been playing together since fourth grade," Miller said. "One of my favorite memories with these girls is when we won the Eldorado Fifth Grade tournament. It was also really fun when we won the first Sectional game this past year. The times on the bus are also great. We all get to be so goofy with each other."

Stewart's coaching style includes forming coach-to-player relationships with his athletes, which contributes to the team dynamic.

"My favorite part about coaching basketball is the relationships I have made with our play-



Photo by Clay Brigham.

**Sophomore Chelsea Davidson and senior Summer Sanders take a defensive position against the Gallatin County Hawks Nov. 19. The Lady Dogs won their season opener 50-32 with senior Lydia Miller and junior Lauryn Gribble both scoring in double digits.**

ers," Stewart said. "I am still in contact with pretty much every player I have coached in the last eight seasons. I have seen players getting married, met their kids, and graduated college. Hopefully, I can make a difference in their lives, not just on the basketball court. I appreciate each and every one of them for their hard work and dedication. I love seeing them succeed."

## Three up, three down Bat flips—cocky or confident?

Haley Sullivan, sports editor



Bat flips have been around for a while now, first becoming a popular form of celebrating big hits in the 1960s, according to a 2019 article by Aaron Cornett published to The Last Word on Baseball.

Despite the history behind a bat flip, a recent World Series matchup between the Houston Astros and the Washington Nationals brought a new twist to the classic bat flip when Astros third baseman Alex Bregman carried his bat down the first baseline and flipped it to the first base coach after a two-run round-tripper off Nationals pitcher Fernando Rodney in the top of the first during game six.

Nationals outfielder Juan Soto answered back to Bregman's flip by reciprocating the same response to his own 413-foot dinger in the fifth, according to CBS Sports staff writer R.J. Anderson.

According to New York Post sports writer George A. King III, both received backlash from managers A.J. Hinch of the Astros and Dave Martinez of the Nationals. Martinez reported being "annoyed" at Bregman and Soto because "that's not who [they] are."

Though Bregman publicly apologized after the game, saying that he had let his emotions get the best of him, according to King, Soto has yet to publicly acknowledge his actions.

Most agree that it is unsportsmanlike to flip a bat to recognize a homer. because of the cockiness displayed when a bat flip is used as a form of commemorating an exciting hit.

In a recently conducted poll, I established that 93 percent of sampled baseball and softball players see bat flips as a positive reaction to a home run.

"I think bat flips and a little celebration are okay because it's just letting your emotion and passion for the game show," senior baseball player Isaac Crabb said. "It's just like a pitcher getting excited after throwing a big strike out."

Meanwhile, 86 percent of sampled coaches believe that flipping a bat is an irrational reaction to have.

With a stiff rate of disapproval from coaches, flipping a bat can be problematic when an athlete is trying to earn time on the field. According to junior high softball coach Alicyn Dowdy, playing the game is about holding oneself to the highest level of sportsmanship possible.

"There are already ways to celebrate your home run, like when the team meets you at home plate," Dowdy said. "If one of my players were to [flip a bat], I would have a serious talk with her about sportsmanship and what it means to be humble."

The disapproval from junior high and high school coaches can lead to even more severe consequences from college coaches, resulting in losing any attention one could possibly receive from a college scout.

Because good sportsmanship is so important in catching the eye of a college coach in the recruiting process, bat flips are often quick to break the attention of a scout, according to John A. Logan College softball coach Taylor Siefert.

"If there was an athlete I was looking to recruit and she did a bat flip while I was out watching her, I would likely walk away from the game and go watch another," Siefert said. "In my personal opinion, I understand that emotions run high and it is exciting when you do something big for your team, but all athletes are capable of showing their excitement in other ways than showing off."

Siefert went on to say that if Major League Baseball athletes are discouraged to participate in such behaviors in their organizations, high school, and college athletes should be too.

In addition to the lack of attention that recruitment level athletes are bound to face, collegiate level athletes are likely to see a reduction in playing time.

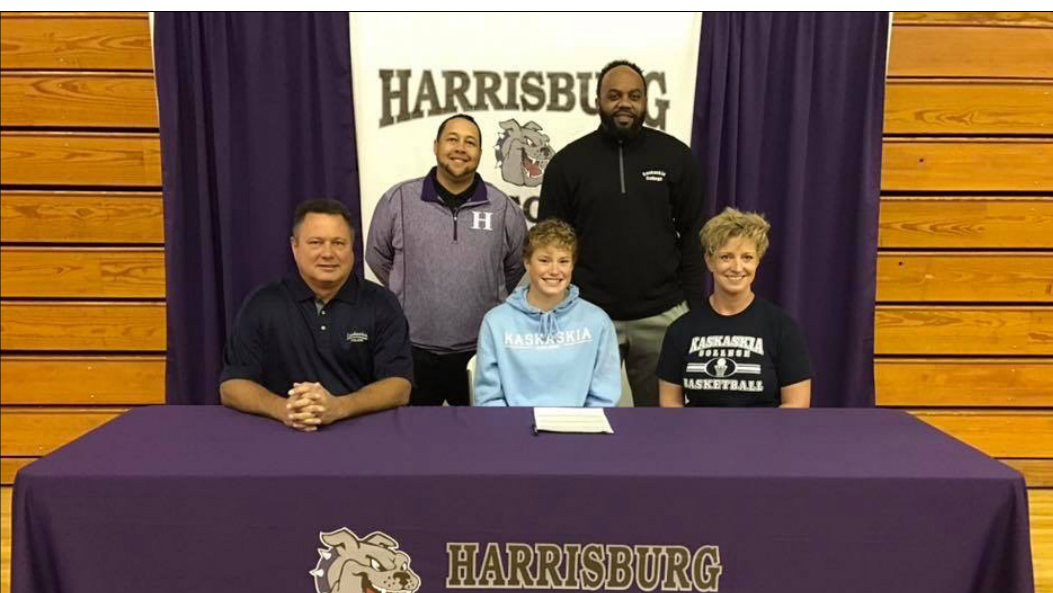
Back in April, Oklahoma State pitcher Samantha Show flipped her bat in celebration of a fifth-inning dinger, tying up the OSU Cowgirls and the University of Oregon Ducks. According to ESPN staff writer Alex Scarborough, this type of pretentious behavior is not uncommon for Show, even being described as "polarizing" by her own coach, Kenny Gajewski. Gajewski reportedly used this description of Show in two separate interviews within a three-day span, emphasizing her abrasive edge.

Because athletes that tend to engage in these behaviors also can be rumored to be "uncoachable," coaches may steer away from awarding playing time to these players.

"[Gajewski] made a trip to the mound," Scarborough said. "He had to take the ball from his ace, who didn't want to give it up."

Overreactions to exhilarating moments lead to bigger negatives than positives that can result in potential impedance upon one's athletic career.

Sportsmanship should be practiced in every aspect of the game, including the respect necessary for celebrating a home run. Although excitement and emotion is a big part of the game, respect and sportsmanship are equally important factors that should be applied on the field.



**Seniors Lauren McDaniel (above) and Maddi Ladd (below) sign their National Letters of Intent Ladd will attend Geneve College in Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania to play softball. McDaniel will attend Kaskaskia College in Centralia to play both basketball and soccer.**

# Wrestlers await first match

Madison McClusky, news editor

The wrestling team awaits its first match of the year with a team full of boys and two girls.

“Being one of the few girls on the team is really no different than being on a team with all girls,” freshman Alaina Stone said. “I think it’s a little harder wrestling with boys since most of them are more muscular than a lot of girls, but other than that I wouldn’t say it’s too much different than any other sport I’m in.”

According to Stone, it has been difficult in some aspects to adjust to the routines of wrestling being her first year.

“At the beginning, it was a little hard because I wasn’t in good shape for all the running and workouts, and I didn’t understand that much. As the season has progressed, it’s been getting easier to keep up with the upperclassmen and I’ve started to understand a lot more,” Stone said.

As preparation for the season, Stone has taken steps to prepare to win as many matches as possible.

“To prepare for this season I’ve been eating a lot healthier, and we’re doing a lot of conditioning in practice, so we’re able to last during the matches,” Stone said.

Stone had a brother who wrestled, and he has been a big part in helping her prepare for her first year.

“I’ve learned quite a bit from having siblings on the team in previous years,” Stone said. “I went to a lot of the practices and almost all the meets, and since I knew I was going to wrestle, my brother would come home and teach me some things. I would say the things he taught me helped a lot and prepared me a little more for the season.”

Junior Nolen Deaton is focusing on one thing as he prepares for the upcoming season.

“I went from a freshman that was just trying to get better at football to wrestling now being one of my favorite things to do,” Deaton said. “The main thing I’m preparing for this season is cutting weight. Cutting weight is something most wrestlers do to get to the weight class they want. Like me, I’m cutting to 170.”

Others are focusing on using what they have learned to find success.

“I think my biggest accomplishment in wrestling is that I’m a lot more patient, and I have a lot of stamina, so even if I’m not better than them, I’ll outlast them in the match which will help us as a team overall,” junior Zach Bethel said.

According to Bethel, there is one major component the team needs to focus on for a good season.

“We need to focus on getting the new wrestlers ready for wrestling,” Bethel said. “If the seniors step up and lead the team as they are doing I think we have a really good team and should do well.”



Photo by Selina Wang.

Senior Josh Smith bring his hand back to launch the fifteen pound bowling ball onto the lane. Smith is one of six senior boys on the team.

# Bowlers begin season

Madison McClusky, news editor

The boys’ bowling team kicked off their season at Herrin Bowl Nov. 9.

“The first match didn’t go as planned,” freshman Evan McDermott said. “We wanted to win, but we struggled, but we are going to try our hardest in every other tournament and match we play so we can have a good season. Our plan for the rest of the season is to focus more, be more serious and to work on little things.”

As for the girls’ team, so far they have only practiced to prepare for their first match Dec. 11 at Ross Cottom Lanes.

“I think the season is going well as far as practices go,” sophomore Macie McDowell said. “We’ve been practicing since October, but we also go out and bowl whenever we want. We have a solid team, and I think we will make it to State.”

According to senior Sebastian Barton, in addition to focusing on doing well himself, he plans on making sure the freshmen stay in line.

“It’s important that the other seniors and I keep the freshmen on track right now and keep them focused on improving their game,” Barton said. “The freshman we have now can help us a lot this year, especially Evan McDermott who has put years into bowling before his freshman year started. Not only can they help us this year, but they also have a chance to achieve big goals in the future.”

McDermott has bowled for as long as he can remember, making him a big advantage for the team.

“I have bowled my entire life, but for others on the team, that’s not the case,” McDermott said. “I’ve learned how to bowl because my dad used to bowl in a lot of big tournaments in Vegas and other areas, so my dad taught me just about everything I know.”

According to McDermott, he is pretty confident the season will have a good turn out for the boys.

“I feel like this year is going to be all right,” McDermott said. “Most of us are juniors and sophomores with a few seniors, so we’re a pretty young team. We have a couple freshman, but with lots of practice and faith, I’m confident it can turn around and turn out to be a good year.”

This year the team’s main goal is to push through and make it to State for the first time since the 2010-11 school year.

“From my freshman year to now we have gained new players who can help us a lot,” Barton said. “This year, as a team, we plan on working to get better so at the end of the season, when Regionals rolls around, we can get a win there and head to Sectionals and for the first time in my high school career, go to State.”



Photo by Clay Brigham.

Senior Tucker Bryant pins sophomore Bryant Lester in practice.



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# Senior Jack Martin founds Martin Magic

Clay Brigham, staff writer

Senior Jack Martin is a part-time baseball player and student but also a full time magician. Jack started practicing magic about two years ago. He has built a brand, including merchandise, and an original title for his act.

Starting a brand at such a young age can have its drawbacks, according to Martin. "A lot of people don't really know if they can trust me and my service because I'm only 17," Martin said.

His passion began around two years ago, in one of Martin's classes.

Joe Thompson is the reason I started magic," Martin said. "He claimed we were going to have a talent day in English class, and I didn't have a talent so I picked up magic. Martin never thought it would become what it is now.

"The story behind the company is that I really always wanted to have a business and magic gave me that opportunity," Martin said. "I just got some friends and family members and started it."

Martin's inspiration comes from multiple sources.

"At first it was just to find a talent, but then I later found out my dad and older cousins used to perform a lot of magic during high school just like me," Martin said. "This really inspired me to keep going with it and try to take it to a new level."

Practice is key when it comes to perfecting such a talent according to Martin.

"I always try to focus on school and family before magic, but I probably practice about 20-25 hours a week," Martin said.

Martin has created a fanbase both inside and outside of school.

"I would like to say thank you because I have gotten so much support, especially from students here at school, and Martin Magic wouldn't be here if it weren't for the fans," Martin said.

And Martin's fan base continues to grow.

"I've performed all around here in Harrisburg at local places but I've also performed at big gigs in St. Louis, Notre Dame, and I even have some upcoming stuff in Nashville hopefully," Martin said.

Martin would love to get the chance to enter a competition.

"A lot of people have told me I need to go to 'America's Got Talent,' but if I were to go anywhere, I definitely think I'd go on 'Penn and Teller, Fool Us,'" Martin said.

Martin hopes to make it as far as he can with magic.

"Magic has given me something that nothing else can, and if I do get famous, then the whole class of 2020 is getting free tickets to the show," Martin said.

Senior Nick Hunter is a long-time friend of Martin and a recent addition to the Martin crew.

"Before I moved here, I had known of his magic skills for about a year and a half," Hunter said. "He's very outgoing and energetic and likes to bring his own spice to his magic which I think will really help him down the road."

Hunter wasn't surprised to see Martin's love for magic grow.

"No, not at all," Hunter said. "Mainly because I've been pushing his magic career ever since the day I found out about. I love watching magic, and I thought it was awesome that one of my best friends was able to learn it. So it was really never a surprise, because I knew he was going to keep growing once people got their eyes on him."

Substitute teacher Steve Vinyard (Vinnie) is a long time lover of magic.

"My son did magic, I really enjoy magic shows and everything that involves magicians," Vinyard said. "As far as Jack goes, his sleight of hand magic is incredible. He invited me to be a part of his act for this year's talent show. I look forward to doing it."



Photo provided.

**"I don't really have a favorite trick but I definitely have a top five list," Martin said. "My favorite reactions from the audience are when they either start freaking out or just stare in disbelief. Depending on the crowd, all reactions are different," Martin said.**

# CEO program teaches students business, life skills

Madeleine DeNeal, staff writer

Senior Savanna Haney is a member of the business and leadership program, CEO.

The program is funded through local businesses who meet with students and show them the foundation of what makes a system work.

"We meet with business owners at least three times a week," Haney said. "You are also assigned a mentor to stay in touch with throughout the year."

CEO gives students many opportunities that they would not get during the typical school day. For Haney, on top of CEO, the school day consists of senior classes, clubs, and planning for the future.

"Outside of CEO, I am the student body secretary for student council, vice-president of History Club, an officer for White Hats, and a member of Key Club," Haney said. "At first, I was hesitant in joining [CEO] because I am interested in the medical field."

Luckily for Haney, the CEO program provided exactly what she was looking for.

"One day, we visited Ferrell Hospital," Haney said. "A

woman there was willing to answer any questions I had about entering the medical field."

Along with meeting people who have occupations that Haney is interested in, CEO provides resources for students through career-building exercises.

"Thanks to CEO, I have gotten to speak to many leaders who could invest in my future," Haney said. "[We] create a class business and create individual businesses. The experiences you have and the connections you make are very beneficial."

Haney believes that the program also helps students with anxieties revolving around social connections.

"In the few months we've been in the program, I've already gotten more comfortable with speaking to new people," Haney said.

She also takes part in classes that are given through CEO.

"We have done a meal etiquette class, a public speaking workshop, and gotten insight into the world of business from the owners themselves," Haney said.

Haney believes that this program is for everyone, and that it benefits all students involved,

"It gives [students] the opportunity to learn life lessons through firsthand experiences," Haney said. Haney is also a joy to have in class and possesses each skill that is necessary for the modern world, according to Mings.

"Savanna is already reaping the benefits of being part of the CEO program. She has had the opportunity to network with a number of local professionals, business owners, and legislators," Mings said. "She is also developing her public speaking skills and recently presented to a group of over fifty local community leaders. Savanna already has a business start-up idea, and her new business will be on display at our Annual CEO Trade Show next April."

Above all else, Mings believes that Haney will continue to work hard and achieve many great things in the future.

"For years to come, Savanna will be able to share about her unique CEO experience, which will help set her apart on any scholarship application or interview process," Mings said. "I am so proud of Savanna and look forward to her continued success."

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# College Degree Optional

## Military service offers lifetime benefits

Selina Wang, CPS editor

November is National Veterans and military families month. Many Americans begin their adult lives working for the U.S. government as members of the Armed Forces.

Tim Brigham currently works for Marion Veteran's Affairs Medical Center as a Project Support Assistant for the Surgical Department's OR.

Brigham served in the U.S. Navy for four years and the U.S. Army 21 years and now works to help other veterans get the care they have earned.

"I help assist them in processing the necessary veteran information through the Veteran's Administration System so that each veteran receives the best care that each and every veteran deserves," said Brigham.

A high school diploma or GED is required for Brigham's current job.

"My biggest failure is not finishing my education and getting my college degree," said Brigham.

But Brigham values "all the different countries visited and people [he] got to know." Alex Ross is another veteran. He served in the US Navy for five years. Ross enlisted in 1986.

Ross currently works as a real estate recording clerk for Jefferson County, Illinois clerk and recorder's office. He has worked at his current job for three years.

Ross' motivation for joining the service was his father.

"Originally I joined the Navy to be a diver like my father before me," Ross said, "but by the time I had the opportunity to try out for the physical portion of the entry requirements. However, I wasn't in good enough shape to pass the physical, so I chose to take the specialty course, the MK 26 C-school. I became a maintenance and repair technician on the missile launching system."

Even though his plans changed, Ross applied himself and was promoted quickly.

"Some of my proudest achievements would include finishing in the top three of the specialty class where we were taught about the operation and maintenance of the MK-26 GMLS. I ended up working aboard the USS Thomas S. Gates CG-51, and I made E-6 in 5 years which was a lot faster than most enlisted personnel," Ross said.

Ross sees both pros and cons in serving in the military.

"Some pros in serving would include the fact that so many different individuals can come together and bond like family gives me hope for humanity, ironically enough in a situation steeped in warfare," Ross said. "We also visited foreign countries where we were more appreciated and shown more respect than we experienced in our own home country."

Ross met many interesting people during his tour of duty.

"I do remember one instance where our ship had just visited Haifa, Israel, and we had made acquaintances with some of the residents," Ross said. "Maybe a week



Photo provided.

### E-6 Navy member Alex Ross (25 in the picture looks out to the sea while working aboard the USS Thomas S. Gates.

passed when we heard over the military radio, that there were Scud missile attacks on that very city where we had just been and hoped the folks we met were safe."

Ross also had the experience of visiting the port of Sevastopol in the Black Sea, where some of his ancestors originated.

Ross urges those who plan to join the service to look at it realistically.

"Understand there will often be times of great separation from all that your now familiar with," Ross said. "This should not necessarily be seen as a hardship, but rather as a unique opportunity to find out more about yourself and your potential for being independent and successful on your own as well as within a new group of folks who are experiencing a great many unusual experiences along with yourself. Decide your morals and ideals, hang onto them tenaciously but do not lose the ability to be open-minded toward what others value."

"We spend a great number of our lives at work due to the attachment towards materialism, so it's very important to be happy in our career, or at least not miserable as it directly affects those we are associated with and those who we are directly connected within a relationship," Ross said.

# Students get an early start on their college education

Selina Wang, CPS editor

College classes can be taken during the morning, afternoon or online.

Senior Langdon Jerrell drives out to SIC each afternoon. The IT class instructor is currently Scott Reed.

"The college course that I am currently taking are Intro to Game Design and Basic Computer Applications. I have them every day from 1:30-2:20 p.m. The class alternates by days," Jerrell said.

Senior Brandon Bui is currently taking IT 119 and IT 171 with Jerrell and senior Andy Ryner.

"The pros are that classes are a lot more lenient, which is also a con to an extent because it's easy to let yourself get behind," Jerrell said.

On club days, the afternoon college students are usually a couple of minutes late to their college classes due to the late fifth-hour dismissal.

According to Bui, other pros of the IT class include "getting to spend time with computers and having fun in IT 171 and getting to know the instructor who (he) will (have) in the future."

Intro to Game Design has covered the topics of shapes, movement, collision, and sprites so far.

"I have learned about Microsoft office better, and I learned some very basic coding for Python," Bui said.

Seniors Tucker Bryant, Sean Pruitt, Nolan Bebout, Daizha Locke, Ethan Hunt, and Christian Oliver also have classes at SIC. They take the Diesel Technology course in the morning before school from 8-9 a.m. daily.

"Having a morning class has pros such as "having the class out of the way for the rest of the day," Bryant said. "The cons would include being not fully awake and ready to learn."

These students have to get to the high school by 8:58 for their second-hour class.

"The college professors are very good at making sure that we focus on high school first and get what we need to do for them done later," Bryant said.

Senior Daizha Locke is currently the only high school girl in the class.

"The class this semester is learning about the combustion process of the diesel engine," Locke said.

"We take notes about the specific of the parts inside the head and block of the engine to understand how it works. We also get to do some hands-on things later in the week. Thursday and Friday we get out a 212cc engine, that we've slowly been taking apart and analyzing the way the parts work."


There are also a couple students who are taking online college classes such as juniors Alyssa Irvin, Jonah Mcguire and Ian Meshew.

These students have taken these classes to get a head start on their future degrees, but Bui cautions other students to take the classes very seriously.

"The most important thing to remember is that it is a college class and will affect your college GPA and be on your transcript," Bui said. "There also are many resources to use if you're ever struggling. Go ask or email the instructor, ask the classmates, and call the student center."

## Dual-credit classes taught by HHS teachers


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American Music (Hannah Drake)




Bio 2 (Tina Mondino)



Intermediate Algebra (Kara James)



A & P (Tina Mondino)



Journalism A & B (Cathy Wall)



Congratulations to the freshman-junior team for collecting the most items in Key Club's recent food drive.

# Local author, HMS teacher publishes her fourth novel in ongoing series

Sara Wangler, feature editor

Hillary DeVisser is a sixth-grade literature teacher at Harrisburg Middle School. On top of being a full-time teacher and mother, she is also a novelist with four published books. Her work is available online and in the school library.

"My love for writing started with diaries and journals back when I was young," DeVisser said. "I filled countless notebooks with angst, terrible poetry. Thankfully, they have since been located and destroyed to protect my integrity. Just kidding, I just didn't want my kids to find them one day and be horrified at how obnoxious I was back then."

In high school, DeVisser was given the confidence to consider writing as a career.

"My senior year English teacher, Dr. (Pam) Bramlet, was the first teacher that validated my writing," DeVisser said. "She gave me confidence that what I had to share was actually worth reading."

The writing was a big part of DeVissers' life throughout her life, up until college.

"I wrote steadily until I got into grad school, then working and going to school full time took up all of my energy and I abandoned writing for a decade or so," DeVisser said.

While taking a break from writing, DeVisser missed the stimulation of writing.

"Over the non-writing years, I missed it terribly," DeVisser said. "Writing is an incredible outlet for stress and creativity; it's my free therapy and ultimate happy place."

After years and years of dormant writing, inspiration struck.

"In my mid-thirties, I worked up the courage to try and write my first book," DeVisser said. "I made it about 60% of the way through the first story when a friend sent a picture of a painting they had just finished. Suddenly, a new story was whispering in my ear. The picture triggered a memory that sparked my first book."

That was the moment she knew something was brewing. "That's how writing works for me, it's always something tied to a feeling or memory," DeVisser said. "That book became the first in my four-book romance novel series based in Southern Illinois."

Writing is a very time-consuming process, and trying to balance life and being an author is hectic, according to DeVisser.

"The first book was written over the course of a year and self-published in 2015, and the rest have taken between nine months and a year each," DeVisser said.

Some authors can crank out book after book while others take more time to write, according to DeVisser.

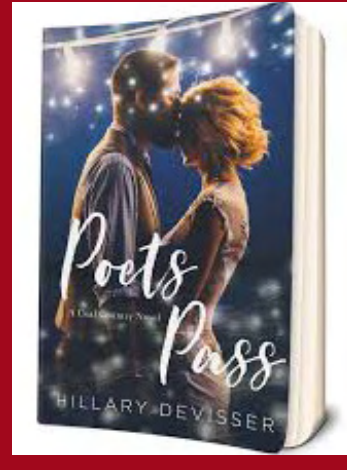
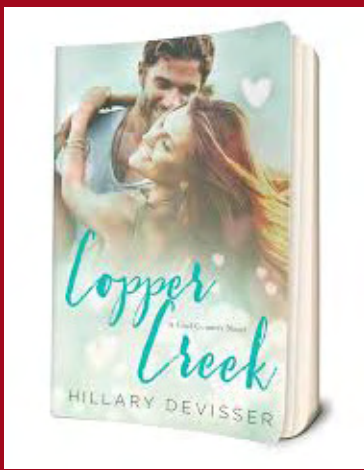
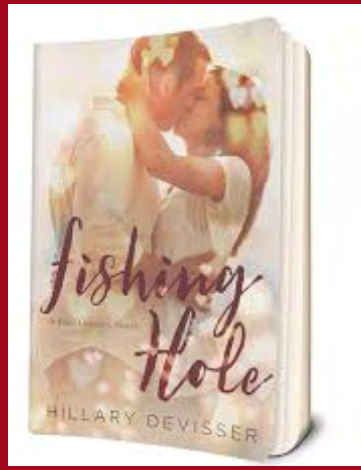
"I'm what would be considered a slow writer, and I'm so envious of authors that can crank out book after book," DeVisser said. "Working full time and raising a family definitely keeps me busy, and writing fills in the gaps of whatever free time I have."

As of now, DeVisser has new ideas in the works.

"My dream is to continue writing," DeVisser said. "While it was a little sad to close out my series, I'm excited to begin working on a new project."

DeVisser is now working on different genres of books.

"I have a stand-alone book all planned out as well as a few YA ideas swimming around in my brain," DeVisser said.



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