

# LIFE

MARCH EDITION

## Students participate in gun violence walkout

On February 26, approximately 600 students from Linn-Mar High School participated in a seventeen minute walkout to raise awareness about gun violence in America and to show support for the victims of previous school shootings. Seventeen minutes represented one minute for every victim of the recent school shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida. A small group of Linn-Mar students worked together to organize the event and then met with the administration to ensure that safety measures were followed.

According to Ethan Schmidt, senior, “The administration was really supportive. We went in with counter-arguments ready for all their anticipated reasons why they would not allow the walk-out but we were pleasantly surprised with how accommodating they were willing to be. Both parties just wanted the walkout to go as smoothly as possible. We would have still walked out if they were not supportive but it was nice to know that they knew where we were coming from. The administration’s cooperation made me realize how much bigger this issue was, that it affects not only students but teachers and administrators as well.”

Schmidt says he was shocked and pleased with how the walkout came together and says that he has made strong friendships through the process.

“It started with a tweet, which led to a group chat with people I didn’t even know and in some cases, hadn’t even met before. We came together and organized an

event on Facebook that had under 200 confirmed participants. When students poured out of the doors and just kept coming, I was astounded by the support. My sister goes to Excelsior and they had students who walked out in support as well. It just shows what a broad issue this is,” says Schmidt.

Why does Schmidt think it is important for the youth of America to speak out on gun violence?

“This is a really crucial time for us. Our voices are under-represented and not being listened to. The youth of America can have such a big role. When we stand together, there is so much we can accomplish. This (fighting for common sense gun control) is something we can do; we’ve gained the realization that we have a voice and we need to use it.”

Schmidt is quick to point out that he and others, by participating in this walk-out, are not advocating getting rid of all weapons or the Second Amendment.

“We are just advocating for common sense gun laws. Universal background checks done correctly could prevent guns from getting in the wrong hands. We also don’t need weapons that shoot multiple rounds in a matter of seconds; we don’t need bump stocks that turn regular weapons into automatic weapons,” Schmidt said.

In addition to the walkout, the group sponsored booths in the Pride Rock Commons signing up students to vote and providing information so they can call their legislators. Many organizers also planned to participate in the city-wide March for Life rally in late March.



*Senior Tia Lawrence, one of the organizers of Linn-Mar’s gun violence walkout, answered a questionnaire for the Linn-Mar Life student newspaper about her involvement in the event. See her story on Page 13.*



## Lincoln Currie not afraid to share his opinions with others

By Rachel Gulick

Lincoln Currie is a junior attending Linn-Mar High School. He has great respect for academics, especially English, but is clear about his opinions and isn't afraid to share them. Some may perceive him as crass, but his confidence allows him to express his ideas with eloquence.

**How long have you attended Linn-Mar?** Since kindergarten.

**What is your favorite subject in school?** "English. I love the written word. It's one of my favorite things. The English language is such a beautiful and hard to pick up language because of the sheer number of words and because there are so many adjectives to say specific things. There is an exact right way to say something in English and you might have to think a bit harder to find it, but it's there, and I think that's a cool thing."

**Who is the best teacher you've ever had?** "Dee Wesbrook. Because her class is just fun and she teaches you how to write with meaning. Writing concisely and with meaning is something important I took away from her class."

**What are your plans post-high school?** College at a university somewhere in the northeast.

**Major?** Journalism or English.

**What is your dream job?** To be a journalist for the New York Times.

**Why did you rip your academic achievement award?** "At the time I did it because I disagree with the idea of the ceremony and part of that is my upbringing. I was taught to be proud of my own accomplishments. You don't need a piece of paper to tell you did well. If you know you did well yourself that's a much more powerful thing."

**Would you do it again?** "No. I think it was a little bit over the top and even if that's my belief, it may have meant a lot to someone else in the audience. If they felt I cheapened that, I think it's wrong that I did it, even if I stand by my principles."

**How would most people describe you?** "Smart, strong-willed, gruff, crass, thoughtful. I think if you actually get to know me you'd get a different view of me."

**How would you describe yourself?** Capable, strong-willed, caring, intense, creative, witty, critical.

**What is something not many people know about you?** "I'm sensitive. I don't think a lot of people think about that because of my ex-

terior but I've got feelings as well."

**What are your hobbies?** Reading, writing, video games, crossword puzzles, poetry, baking, cooking, and watching sports. "I like talking with other people. I like conversing. That's probably my favorite thing in general."

**What is something you wish you were better at?** "Being outwardly kinder to people without them having to get to know me first."

**Do you prefer to be by yourself or with others?** "With other people, but I do enjoy being alone a lot of the time. I don't want to say I was born to be a writer but I really enjoy doing that. It's a lonely thing. You can't write with other people. People drawn to that profession have to be alone a decent amount of time."

**Do you motivate yourself or look to others for motivation?** "Myself. Doing better than others is fun, but Hemingway said there's nothing noble about being superior to your fellow man. True nobility lies in being superior to your former self."

**Are you someone people go to for help?** "Generally, no. I wish they would though. They probably see me as someone who wouldn't care but that's not the case."

**What are little things in life that make you happy?** "Compliments, which are sparse. When just the right song comes on that perfectly fits your mood."

**What do you wish you knew more about?** "People. How they work and think. What they think."

**What is the best piece of advice you've ever received?** You are your brother's keeper.

**What is your biggest regret?** "Starting to care and be kind to people too late. When I was younger I was kind of cruel to people and I think that was wrong," said Currie.

**What is your biggest accomplishment?** "Improving as a person from the beginning of the year until now, or since freshman year."

**What are you most afraid of?** "My dad dying."

**What is the biggest thing you've had to overcome?** "My own ego and just having to become better than I used to be. To not be so rude and in a bad mood. Life's too short to be so pissed off all the time."

**What is your greatest strength?** "My ability to use words. And maybe I don't use them the way I want all the time, but the ability to

use language in a variety of ways. When I write in certain patterns, or use wit in a joke."

**Favorite color?** "Purple because of the Vikings. They're like, a part of me. I think I'd trade five years off my life if they win the Super Bowl this year."

**Favorite type of movie?** "Woody Allen movies. They're witty, smart, the dialogue is smooth, they're just great. It's like watching a beautiful painting. They're excellent."

**Favorite person?** "Probably my dad. He's kind of a complex person, but I like that. He's very mature and there's times he can be funny and joke around, but he can also be serious. His number one belief is moderation. Don't try to get too high or too low. Don't do anything too much. It's a valuable lesson."

**Favorite type of music?** "I don't have a type. I like country music from the '40s and '50s, Johnny Cash. I like '80s and '90s rap like Ice Cube, Rakim, and Scarface. Eminem is great. Django Reinhart. Bruno Mars. Stevie Wonder is su-



previously talented. Shawn Mendes is great; his songs are awesome. Everyone should listen to his songs. Can't wait for his third album to come out."

**Pet peeves?** "People walking slowly in the hallway. People who don't care about anything and don't have any passion."

**Where is someplace you'd like to visit?** "Scotland. I'm one-quarter Scottish, and I love the countryside there."

## Pit orchestra gets little glory

By Rachel Gulick

The "pit" orchestra is a group of both orchestra and band members that performs the music accompaniment for the yearly spring musical. The pit is an area beneath the front part of the stage so musicians remain hidden from the audience. Although they are hidden, this makes them no less important than the actors on the stage. Being in pit is on a volunteer basis, so most are solo performers who are fitted with microphones. In recent years, the pit has performed shows such as *The Music Man*, *The Little Mermaid*, and *The Sound of Music*. The music for pit players is typically of an advanced skill level, and utilizes the skills of each player to perfect the score in only a few weeks' time.

Students audition for pit as a way to use the talents they have developed and to be involved in the musical while strengthening their skills on their instrument. Some may also be interested in the performing arts in the future, and pit gives them experience preparing difficult music in a short period of time. Pit forces students to become more confident in their abilities since most sections are made up of only one or two players. It also allows students to become closer to their directors and to each other because it creates a smaller group setting. Students and their director are seen as equals in the performance, because both depend on each other to have a successful performance. Preparation for pit is hours of hard work, but the end product is always memorable.

Pit orchestra a valuable part of putting on a musical. Without pit, the singers onstage would have nothing to sing to, and the audience wouldn't be able to feel the strong emotions of the story. A musical is entertaining to an audience because of the instrumental and choral aspects joining together. For being such an important role, pit players don't get the appreciation they deserve.

"It's a lot like show choir band. The audience's focus is on the people onstage, and most people probably ignore the players that actually make the show," said Rachel Hodgman.

Although pit is somewhat unappreciated, actually performing is always a great experience. It gives players and directors satisfaction in creating an amazing performance alongside the singers, but more importantly, through entertaining the audience.



## Linn-Mar students mesh to form band: Gold Revere

By Lincoln Currie

Hip hop with pop and R&B influences. That's how Linn-Mar High School Juniors Akash Gururaja and Ian Crumley describe their music. The two form the musical group "Gold Revere." Gold Revere has already released two albums since the summer of 2017, and has plans for more in the future.

It all started on a bus trip back from a show choir competition in early 2017. Crumley and Gururaja were complaining about how bad modern music has gotten.

"We would always think up melodies and song lyrics that would be good in a song. One day we just decided why not make it ourselves?" said Gururaja.

Ever since that bus trip, they began to write down songs and lyrics, with their first album "Volume One -- EP" coming out in the summer of 2017. The album features five tracks and is 19 minutes long. The song "Royalty" from the album is the most popular. Gururaja said that "Royalty" contains some of his favorite verses, and Crumley said that it is one of the group's best songs.

"The best song we've made is either 'This is It,' because of the unique chord progressions, storytelling, and lyrics, or our best could also be 'Royalty' because of the banger potential and the relative success, as it has almost 4,000 views and has been played in multiple countries."

The second album, released on January 1 of 2018, is titled 'Vol. Two: Reassurance - EP'. The album features six songs and is 20 minutes in length. The most popular track on the second album is 'Rumors (feat. Tommy G)' and has gotten over 1,400 plays on the music streaming service, SoundCloud. Crumley and Gururaja agree that their second album is their greatest accomplishment.

"I'm most proud of our latest album. I think it shows a lot of maturity and though it's not perfect, it's a step in the right direction," said Gururaja.

"We are both most proud of Vol. 2: Reassurance. The production quality was much improved from Volume One and for the most part, people like Vol. 2 more," said Crumley.

Gold Revere's members split up their work in the production process. Crumley makes all the music on his computer and creates all of the chord progressions. His focus

lies mainly in the production of the song, but he also helps out with lyrics and sings in certain songs. Gururaja is the main lyricist and singer, but is still involved in beat production.

While Crumley and Gururaja have general roles to play, making each song is a little bit different.

"It depends on the track. Tracks like 'No Respect for Time,' for example, the beat was produced beforehand and I wrote a song on top of it. Sometimes Ian will write the song, like in the case of the chorus for 'Rumors.' Sometimes I write the song. 'Never Let You Go' was something I thought of, then Ian made a beat around the melody," said Gururaja.

The group has not yet performed in public much, but plans to do so in the future.

"We have not performed in public (other than Get in the Spirit side acts), but we intend to do so in downtown Cedar Rapids and Iowa City this summer," said Crumley.

Their reasons for not perform-

ing in public yet have nothing to do with nerves, however. Both admitted to being nervous in the past, but after lots of practice, performing has become second nature to them. Crumley has performed enough to feel confident in his work. Gururaja has extensive experience playing in front of crowds, having performed in over 100 concerts, recitals, and competitions.

Crumley and Gururaja listed rapper Post Malone as their primary source of inspiration, but also listed pop artists Zayn and Bruno Mars as their inspirations.

Both members of Gold Revere

also said they would consider pursuing careers in music if the group became popular enough.

"If one of our songs goes viral, I would definitely consider a career in music," said Gururaja.

"I would love to produce and make music full time, it's very risky though. I hope that something comes along and grants a safe path to pursue our passion," said Crumley.

Gold Revere's music can be found on Apple Music, iTunes, Spotify, SoundCloud, Google Play, and many other streaming platforms.



## Gilke looks past surface when finding friends

By Lincoln Currie

Dozens of sports medals, an unmade bed, and a large poster of Michael Jordan's immortalizing game winner in game 6 of the 1998 NBA finals are the most prominent items in the room of Noah Gilkes. While the aforementioned items are what first catch the eye, sitting on his desk is an AP Chemistry textbook and a draft for a Composition II research paper.

"I'd say a common misconception about me would be that I don't care about school. They probably think that because I hang around certain people," said Gilkes.

Gilkes likes to buck those misconception, but realizes that a lot of people will refuse to look past the surface. Gilkes says he prefers to look past the surface when looking for friends.

"As I've looked for friends, I've seen that a lot of people aren't the way you thought they'd be. Some times in good ways, other times not. I'd say I look for trustworthy, respectful people who can be serious about things. I like people who have aspirations and have plans to reach those aspirations. I value good morals too, I think that matters more than good manners. I think morals run a lot deeper than holding the door open for someone. They have

to be honest as well, and obviously, if you aren't fun to be around, I'm not going to want to be around you."

What does Gilkes dislike about people? "When people say that they're your friend, then talk about you behind your back to people you also call friends. I also don't like manipulative people, and I don't think those types of people get called out for who they are enough."

So, how would Gilkes' friends describe him? "They'd probably say I'm funny and caring."

How would he describe himself? "I'd say I'm hardworking; I care about the relationships that I build," he said.

Gilkes says he has a healthy relationship with his family. He has one brother with whom he is close, but not too close. Gilkes said that in his relationship with his parents, trust works both ways. Gilkes especially admires his father.

"He's hardworking and I think that's important."

Gilkes is involved in cross country and has been since 7th grade. Gilkes was also on the varsity squad this year.

"I always loved to watch running since I was little, and it was my first

opportunity to try running. There really wasn't an opportunity for me before that."

What does Gilkes most like about Cross Country? "I love running and it's a good way to meet new people."

Linn-Mar Junior Jaren Nelson said of Gilkes: "I like Noah. He's a funny guy and he's really fun to be around. He made speech class a lot more entertaining."

Gilkes said that he plans to go to college, but is unsure about where. He wants to pursue graduate school and one day earn a PhD. His dream job is to be a gastroenterologist and he has an interest in medicine.





## Making a meal plan you can stick to doesn't have to be hard

By **Catie McMahon**

Planning and shopping for an entire week-worth of meals not only helps you stay healthy, but also eliminates all of the potential problems that come with stressing over what you are going to eat every day. Meal plans are an increasing health trend among society which strive to help organize seven breakfasts, lunches, dinners, and 14 snacks for an entire week. Meal planning helps with healthy eating and being more conscious about your choices and habits because you are actually committing your plan to paper. Here are some of the best tips to save money and time when figuring out your meal schedule.

The first question that many come across when planning a meal plan is whether they should start their meal plan on Sunday or Monday. Choosing Monday would allow you to spend the weekend planning, prepping, and shopping for your week. Annika Menges, a senior at Linn-Mar High School says, "I would probably want to start a meal plan on a Monday because it is your first day back at school, it's the start of a work week." Choosing Sunday would allow you to spend your Saturday planning for the meals, but you don't start your week on a high note. Going to work on a Monday with a fresh mind and a fresh meal is motivating for the week and excited to start over in the right way.

Healthy or not? This is the question that many individuals come across when trying to create a well-balanced meal schedule. It is very easy to make a meal plan healthy, but it is also easy to make it unhealthy. Unhealthy carbs and fats seem to be the biggest culprit in the meal planning venture, as finding recipes that are low in both can be tricky. The best way to find healthy but delicious recipes is through social media. Sites like Pinterest, Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter all offer great links to many delicious but nutritious recipes that are sure to keep you feeling your best. "I actually find healthy recipes on Facebook. I find little video clips that are fun to watch, I watch them before I go to bed," says Ethan Schmidt, a senior at Linn-Mar High School. BuzzFeed's 'Tasty' offers short video clips that are fun to watch, simple to make, and are very informational.

Shopping for all of the groceries that you will need for a meal plan can be stressful and expensive. The best way to make the grocery shopping easy is by incorporating a lot of the same ingredients into multiple recipes. For example, fresh food

can be expensive, and if you don't eat it all, you feel guilty. Incorporating the fruit into your snacks, breakfast, and as a side to dinner can really help save you money and time when preparing the meals. That way, you can buy in bulk from stores like Sam's and Walmart which saves you money and you don't waste as much food.

"My family likes to buy my food in bulk because of how much money and time it saves me in the long run. It is really hard to get sick of the same food that you are eating because of the endless options of ways you can prepare it in your recipes," says Payton Wensel, senior.

## Wensel makes name for herself in track world

By **Lauren Willett**

Track star Payton Wensel has been breaking records since she was only a freshman. As a result, she has received national attention from colleges all over the country. By sophomore year, her picture was placed along the outside of the gym, in Linn-Mar's athletic Hall of Fame. She recently decided to commit to the University of Iowa, to compete as a member of their track team.

I sat down with Payton in my car, per usual and was engulfed in Payton's calm, easy-going personality. As a result of my years of friendship with her, I knew how important track is to her, and how proud she was of her accomplishments as a part of Linn-Mar's track program.

"I am most proud of setting the Class 4A State record for the 400 meter dash, in 54.84 seconds," Wensel said. "But, I'm also pretty proud of my experience my freshman year at the State track meet."

Track and field isn't a seasonal sport for Payton.

"I'm not involved in any other activities. Training and lifting takes up the majority of my time, and I have to save time for school too."

Although, she wasn't always a single sport athlete.

"I played volleyball my freshman and sophomore year, but I quit because it was very political and I realized my true passion was track, and I was better at it, so I quit and dedicated all of my time to track."

"Both of my parents ran track, so I figured I should at least try it. I went out in 7th grade and started training my 8th grade year," said Payton.

Now, Payton has an athletic scholarship with the University of Iowa,

Although meal planning may seem like it takes a lot of hard work and preparation, the countless ways that you can save time and money make it a fun way to stay organized and healthy throughout the week. Yes, there is a lot of prep work in

the beginning when you must shop and make the meals, but it pays off in the end because it adds simplicity and health benefits to the rest of your week. When planning your next meal plan, keep these tips in mind to get the best results.



yet they weren't the only ones interested in having her on their team.

"I remember Oklahoma State, Wisconsin, Kent State, Iowa State, University of Northern Iowa, LSU, Wartburg, Minnesota, Missouri, Central Missouri, and plenty more I can't remember," said Wensel. "I committed to Iowa because my family would still be a part of my track career, I would know a lot of people on the track team, and I hate change, so I tried to limit the change as best as I could, and I connected well with my coach at Iowa."

"I met a lot of great people at Linn-Mar, and I made a lot of great memories, but I'm definitely ready for the next chapter of my life at Iowa," said Wensel.

Not only does track limit your time when it becomes filled with training and lifting, but it controls your diet too, especially during the actual season.

"I never go out to eat unless it's some place my dad considers healthy. I make sure I eat a full meal three times a day. I eat protein bars and drink protein shakes religiously. I also drink beet juice because of the scientific studies that say it helps your muscles use oxygen better."

Wensel uses every possible opportunity to improve her running and that also involves the clothing she wears. "Depending on the weather, it's so important to keep your body warm so your muscles don't tighten up. And also your running shoes need to be supportive and fit the specific needs of your foot."

To call Payton ambitious is an understatement, she already has her goals for next season planned out and she trains every day to accomplish them.

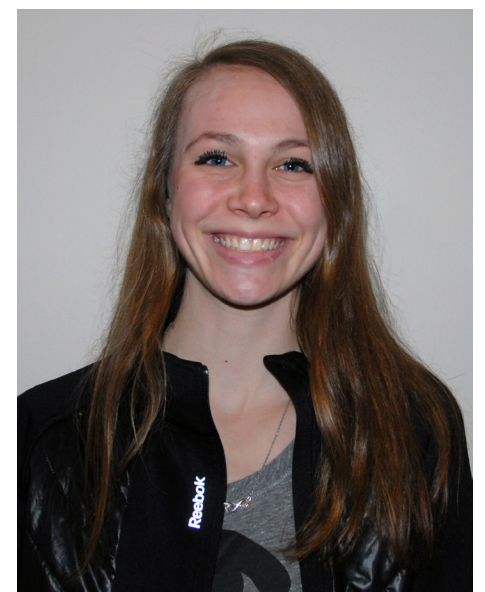
"Next season I want to go sub 54 in the 400, go sub 2:10 in the 800, go sub 60 in the 400h, and go sub 25 in the 200," said Wensel. "My favorite race to run is the 400 and I'm excited to try and beat the record I set at the state meet last year."

Outside of track, Payton is a pretty normal teenage girl. A typical Friday night after track practice for Payton is showering, eating dinner then leaving to hang out with her friends, which is one of her favorite things to do, as well as shopping.

She has a calm and collected personality, she's determined and goal-driven, which is the ideal attitude for an athlete such as herself.

"I have my dad to thank for keeping me grounded and as determined as I am. Outside of Linn-Mar's track program he trains me, and if I beat my previous record, he is happy for me, but he knows I can beat it again and keeps me working towards a new goal."

"I'm completely ready to finish out my last season at Linn-Mar. I want to accomplish more alongside my friends and teammates. I couldn't ask for a better team and I'm ready to work hard and beat some records."





## Girls' basketball coach dreams of making world a better place

By Nathan Wylie

Nate Sanderson, age 40, is the head varsity girls' basketball coach at Linn-Mar. He grew up in Iowa City, went to City High and then went to UNI to major in social studies education. His favorite color is blue and he enjoys Chicago deep dish pizza. He's a huge Cubs fan and was raised a Vikings fan but has recently latched onto the Patriots. He also enjoys watching a lot of basketball and studying how the coaches interact with their players to build a good environment for the team. He has an interesting approach to coaching in that he isn't just a basketball coach, he is also a life coach. Every Wednesday, the entire team takes about an hour to discuss healthy ways to handle yourself and inner dialogue both on and off the court. One exercise included writing on a piece of paper how you feel in the ten seconds following an embarrassing moment like an air ball or a really hard foul. Junior Kenzie Jensen, a post for the varsity team, had this to say about his way of coaching.

"It was very different at first, but it makes us feel appreciated for the work we put in during practices, it's

very gratifying."

Perhaps the most interesting thing about Nate is the wiffleball field he has in his yard. It all started back when Nate worked at Louisa Muscatine schools. His family bought a house that had a giant concrete slab where an old farmhouse used to be. It was overgrown and dirty, so one summer, he and the FCA club at Linn-Mar cleared everything off and painted bases, made a pitching mound, and just started playing wiffleball. When they moved closer to Springville, Nate wanted to really do something this time. With a lot of help from friends and family, they built a field with outfield walls, a gazebo, irrigation, sod, and a porch in right field. They started hosting tournaments for different charities about five years ago and to date have raised over \$35,000 for different local and international charities, including relief and mercy projects in Iowa, and other projects all the way to India, parts of Africa, and Eastern Russia.

Nate has a dream of making the world a better place in any way he can, and that is what led him to Linn-Mar. He wants to share his knowledge and his philosophy of

coaching with others in order to give a better athletic experience to as many students as possible.

"The number one thing I want my players to come away with is that they are loved, whoever they are, wherever they come from, they are accepted, and we care about them. At the end of the day we want to build that relationship so that we can be a supportive person in their life- if they need it. The second thing is that their value doesn't come from what they do with a ball, they can be an all-star athlete or not, but they bring something to the team that makes us better. It might be their work ethic in practice or how they treat others, or how they respond to their mistakes, so part of what we want to do is take them through different ways of exploring their strengths as a person... there is great danger in allowing yourself to be defined by how you play in a game because eventually the ball will stop bouncing. Some day you won't be playing anymore and if all you were was a jump shot, you'll be lost. We want the players to discover who they are in the context of basketball, without being defined through basketball. The final thing is that we want these girls to know

that they were uniquely created to make a difference in this world. We want them to believe that [they] can use their passions and their gifts to make a difference no matter where they go after basketball."

Then I asked what drew him to Linn-Mar.

"Linn-Mar was the opportunity to spread [my philosophy], like if we could build it here, at this scale, it would give us the credibility we need to open more doors and speak to other coaches. Like I said, we could have influence beyond just what we do here."

He goes on to say that there is tremendous potential at Linn-Mar to make a real difference through the hundreds of athletes here."

Nate Sanderson is a man with a dream, and through basketball and wiffleball, he is living that dream. He really is making the world a better place and proves that sports are more than just games. They teach students responsibility, accountability, teamwork, and with Nate's philosophy, love. Love for the game, love for each other, and love for yourself.

## Stranger Things gaining cult following on Netflix

By Amelia McRoberts

In July of 2016, Netflix came out with a show that became a massive hit that fans all around the world enjoyed. *Stranger Things*, said TheVerge.com is a hit show full of horror, humor, nostalgia and all sorts of mysteries. People of multiple generations are enjoying this show. Katie Wilson-Maher, a junior from Linn-Mar said, "I liked it because it was very creative and different than anything I'd seen before." Why are fans so excited for the premiere of season two and why does this show appeal to a variety of people?

*Stranger Things* is about a group of middle school nerds in Hawkins, Indiana. Everything is normal until one of the boys, Will, goes missing out. Mike, Dustin and Lucas are working hard to find Will, when they meet a strange girl with a shaved head in the woods. Then, as the show title indicates, strange things start to happen.

Since *Stranger Things*' main focus is on a group of middle school students, producers had to search really hard to find young actors who would be amazing at their jobs. When you watch the show, it's hard not to forget these actors are 12 and 13 years old. One of the show's

main stars is Millie Bobby Brown who only speaks 246 words in the whole first season. Still, critics and fans alike marvel at her ability to portray her emotions without even saying a word. Other members of the cast include Gaten Matarazzo, Finn Wolfhard, Caleb McLaughlin, and Noah Schnapp; their ages range from 13 to 16. It was very difficult to find the perfect kids to play the main roles in the show, but "these four kids were the only ones we felt could work and that could hold up this show on their own," said the Duffer Brothers, who wrote the show.

*Stranger Things* takes place in the 1980s, so this show is very popular with people that grew up then. The clothes and the hair fit the decade, as well as the music; all of the music featured in the show and the soundtrack is from the 80's. "Matt and Ross Duffer's new Netflix series *Stranger Things* is full of nostalgic nods to the decade and its pop-cultural products, but it's also uncommonly rigorous about getting the details just right — whether it's the many pitch-perfect music cues, the hat-tipping nods and homages to Eighties movies, or simply nailing the cringe-worthy fashion statements of the day" said *Rolling Stone*. The show looks like the

80s and it also ties in many popular movies like *The Goonies* and *Alien* in the script. Whether it's the characters, the setting, or the scene, the creators of the show, the Duffer brothers, put a lot of effort into connecting and tying classic movies into the creation of the show.

The show is full of horror, but there is also humor. "The events surrounding its mystery are awful, terrifying and sometimes really sad. But you still find yourself grinning and laughing and cheering on the heroes," says Forbes.com. There are unexpected twists and turns and since the first season is only eight episodes, all of the action is packed in. There was a huge cliffhanger at

the end of season one and now fans are eagerly waiting for season two to be released.

"*Stranger Things* key demographic is unclear, as teens, adults and older folks are infatuated with the show. According to Moviepilot.com, the show focuses on the kids, teens and adults so you can relate with any of the characters no matter your age.

*Stranger Things* has been a binge-worthy show for many ages, and now that the season two premiere is coming up, people are getting more and more excited for their favorite characters and suspenseful mysteries to come back.





## Should animals be kept in captivity just to entertain humans?

By Jesse Wade

It seems that a majority of people in the United States have been to some kind of zoo, aquarium or wildlife resort in their lifetime. As a kid, visiting such a place is a great time to see your favorite animals and maybe even see them performing in a show. However, there is another side to the story to these amazing creatures that we hold close in our memories, a side which questions whether we should be keeping animals in captivity at all.

This past summer, yet another orca named Kyara died due to infection while being held in captivity at a SeaWorld park. The same infection had also killed previous whales, among them Tilikum, perhaps SeaWorld's most notorious whale because he was involved in the death of more than one person at a SeaWorld park. What's even more dismaying is that Kyara was born into captivity and never got the chance to swim in open ocean waters.

Criticism against SeaWorld, most specifically against their Orca performances, has risen dramatically since the production of the documentary *Blackfish* in 2013. The award-winning documentary put a spotlight on the lives of orcas who had been held in captivity around the world. SeaWorld saw its attendance and stock drop tremendously and were maligned by media and special interest groups to the point where they were ultimately forced to say that they shall not retrieve anymore orcas from the wild and shall only keep the ones they already have in custody. SeaWorld currently holds approximately twenty orcas in captivity in its parks all over the world. In all, 48 orcas have died in SeaWorld facilities since they started recording the history of the park.

Regarding the death of the orca calf Kyara, Naomi Rose, a marine mammal scientist at the advocacy organization Animal Welfare Institute in Washington, D.C. said that pneumonia (the probable cause of infection in Kyara's case) is a "fairly common cause of death" for marine life living under captivity due to the added stress of not being in the wild. Although SeaWorld claims the cause of death isn't related to living in captivity, marine specialists have found a correlation among the many deaths in captive marine facilities. These specialists have found that sickness, euthanasia and other deaths at marine parks are either directly or indirectly related to living in captivity and/or the

mental state of the animals.

Along with respective interest groups around the world, public figures are starting to voice their opinion on the subject of captivity for wild animals. Former lead singer of One Direction, Harry Styles, asked crowd members at a July 2015 concert if they liked dolphins before saying, "Don't go to SeaWorld." Words from a renowned figure like Styles had a tremendous effect on SeaWorld's audience and future fan boycotts. SeaWorld had a reportedly 84% drop in profits the month following Styles' words. The airing of *Blackfish* and the many celebrities who have been championing the cause to end captivity for marine life, SeaWorld has lost astronomical amounts of revenue and popularity.

SeaWorld would be quick in their response Styles. "Dear Harry, we've seen a concert clip of you urging your fans not to visit SeaWorld. We want you to know we love dolphins, too. We care for the animals in our parks like we would our own family."

SeaWorld's mission statement on their website reads: "inspiring people to care for and protect wild animals and wild places is at the core of what we do at SeaWorld." It is true that SeaWorld promotes the development and caring for wildlife and injured animals and often rehabilitates them to better conditions. SeaWorld has recorded approximately 85,000 animals in captivity during a rehabilitative period and then released back into the wild. However, some of those animals are kept or sold for profit and some never make it back into the wild. Likewise, these animals in captivity face circumstances they wouldn't face in the wild, such as limited space to swim freely, being separated from family members and the creation of food dependency.

Locally, there seems to be an increase in knowledge on the subject of SeaWorld. Linn Mar Sophomore Carly Clements says, "The orcas and many other marine life are mistreated (by being held in captivity), as they can be treated and healed similar to people. However, once a person is treated they are free to leave, and the case is not the same for marine life at SeaWorld. We must not keep the 'patients' captive as long as they are rehabilitated to their natural state."

While SeaWorld can be a haven for wounded and sick animals as they rehabilitate, they fare far better in the wild. Orca lifespans are greater in the wild, the animals seldom suffer from fin collapse as they do in captivity and stress to

the body and brain are less. Orcas and other marine life have shown increased signs of aggression and frustration when they are penned in and often introduced to species they would never see in the wild. These are just a few of the problems that marine life in captivity face. Since

*Blackfish*, SeaWorld has said it will no longer take whales from the wild or breed whales in their facilities. Their current Orca shows will stop when the remaining animals in their possession eventually die. Will the loss of the orcas mean the loss of SeaWorld? Only time will tell.



## Making a mix-tape? Add these tunes to playlist

By Kirsten Lancaster

Everyone knows that the right song can fix even the worst day but what if you just can't find "the one?" Or maybe you're just tired of hearing the same old pop songs on the radio day in and day out. Here to help you find whatever it is you're looking for, fellow high school students who know a thing or two about good music give some advice.

**Sally Fauchier-**

*American Teen* by Khalid  
*Solo* by Frank Ocean  
*Cough Syrup* by Young the Giant  
*Lucky* by Jason Mraz  
*Electric* by Alina Baraz  
"I like them because they're songs that I can sing along to and put all my feelings into. They make me feel happy and calm."

**Emma Gostonczik-**

*Someday* by Passenger  
*Way Down We Go* by Kaleo  
*Rivers and Roads* by The Head and the Heart  
*Ain't No Rest For the Wicked* by Cage the Elephant  
*Torches* by X Ambassadors  
"A playlist for car rides, good days, and life in general"

**Alexa Gormley-**

*Chateau* by Blackbear  
*Beautiful* by Bazzi  
*Leavin'* by Jesse McCartney  
*FOOLS* by Troye Sivan

*Replay* by Iyaz

"These songs either make me want to dance or make me want to cry."

**Michael Kuchera-**

*Sun Daze* by FGL  
*Castle on the Hill* by Ed Sheehan  
*Feel it Still* by Portugal the Man  
"Sun Daze is great for driving around."

**Lauryn Klahn-**

*I Fall Apart* by Post Malone  
*No Option* by Post Malone  
*Unforgettable* by DJ Khaled  
*Wild Thoughts* by DJ Khaled  
*Sauce it Up* by Lil Uzi  
"The first two are good for driving around in your feels and the last three hype you up."

**Marissa Good-**

*Sober II* by Lorde  
*Higher* by Rihanna  
*Another Love* by Tom Odell  
*Turning Page* by Sleeping at Last  
*Sandcastles* by Beyonce  
"I really like songs with emotion, which tend to be sad songs."

**Jesse Wade-**

*Gucci Gang* by Lil Pump  
*Jocelyn Flores* by XXX Tentacion  
*Santeria* by Sublime  
*Sympathy for the Devil* by The Rolling Stones  
*Lithium* by Nirvana  
"Listen to these songs because even though they're from different eras they all hit you a certain way."



## Zhou prides herself on hard work, likes being involved

By Samyukta Karthik

"If I had to describe myself with one word it would intelligent and hardworking. Oops that's technically two words," Savannah Zhou said laughing softly as I walked into her quaint house and took a seat in her petite but beautiful living room. Her sister came downstairs greeting me enthusiastically and her mom kindly offered me something to eat.

Savannah is the daughter of Phillip and Rose as well as the sister of Daniel, a senior at the University of Iowa, and Kathy, a senior at Linn-Mar High School. Savannah is the youngest of the family. According to her sister, Kathy, Savannah is much more than just intelligent and hardworking. She is charismatic, funny, timid at times, sarcastic, obedient, and kind. She is a great listener and a supportive friend as well as extremely motivated.

Savannah, a sophomore, is a Student Council Sophomore Representative, a member of the Math Team, and an officer in Future Business Leaders of America.

"I love playing tennis, piano, and my viola. I also like swimming and playing basketball sometimes," said Savannah. She also works at Fareway. According Savannah, she hates not being active so she likes to keep herself busy in the classroom or in extra-curricular activities.

**What is one thing that you enjoy about having an older siblings?** They always listen to my complaints, concerns, and happy thoughts. They always give me good advice as well, and calm me down when I need it. But they are also there to celebrate my joys. They're there with me through the ups and downs.

**What does family mean to you?** The world. I think without my family, it would be very hard for me to be where I am.

**What would you want your superpower to be and why?** I would want to fly/teleport because I love traveling and I hate slow walkers.

**What's your spirit animal?** I think mine would be a lion because they are intelligent, analyze their surroundings and size up their prey or situation before taking action.

**What is a project/accomplishment that you consider to be the most significant in your life?** I think it would be when I attempted to start my own organization with a few friends as a project. It did not work out as well as we had hoped but the experience was definitely great! I learned about teamwork, leadership, commitment, and time management along with other great skills.

**Who is your role model, and why?** I don't think I have a role model, not because I think I'm the best, but because I try to notice what everyone is good at or excelling in and try to learn from everyone. Every person has at least one or two things that I can learn from.

**When have you been most satisfied in your life?** I was most satisfied when I was finally able to take a break from school work and working, because then I can just relax and eat and do whatever I want. It's those little moments that make me satisfied. Also, eating is always satisfying, too!

**Most embarrassing thing that's happened to you at school?** What if it's too embarrassing to tell? Just kidding (she said trying to control her laughter). I think the most embarrassing thing was when I was playing basketball at school, I used to have braces. One time, I was supposed to guard a pretty tall girl, and I opened my mouth to yell something. But, when the ball bounced off the hoop, we all went after the ball. In the midst of it all my braces had somehow gotten caught on the girl's jersey and when I fell, I took her down too. The ref was quite shocked.

**Is there anyone in particular you wish you could get to know better throughout high school?** I should make this answer sound very intellectual (Savannah said, laughing heartily). Honestly, I think myself, because there's always new things to learn and improvements to make. And all of my teachers and counselors as well as my friends.

**What is your biggest achievement?** My biggest achievement would be when I won 5th place at a math competition and gotten first at IMTA, a piano contest.

**What has been your biggest failure?** Not making All-State

**How long have you been learning viola?** Six years.

**Why did you choose the viola?** I couldn't play band instruments, didn't like the violin, so I was stuck between viola and cello. I listened to pieces by cellists and violists and ended up going with viola.

**What is your favorite part about playing an instrument?** Being able to express myself without words.

**Why are you trying out for All-State?** I really like and want the All-State experience. I want to push myself and see how far I can go.

**How do you deal with criticism? Jealousy? Hate?** I usually consider and ponder on the criticism to see if it is actually true, and if it is I will try to improve on that aspect. I try to ignore jealousy and hate because I don't need that in my life. Also

because I can't really do anything about it, I won't change myself and my personality just so someone won't hate me or because they are jealous. I may approach them and ask them though.

**What is a misconception that people often have about you?** I can handle everything, and won't break down at all.

**If you could change one thing about yourself what would you change?** My shyness and timid personality.

**What motivates you?** My future.

**What goals do you have before finishing high school?** Achieving good grades, good SAT and ACT scores, taking APs and college course, and finding new opportunities and new friends.

**What is your advice to incoming freshman?** Procrastination will ruin you.

**What is some advice you would give to your younger self?** Practice and prepare more for many different things, and listen to other people's advice, especially older people. Also sleep more.

**There's no doubt you're involved in a lot of activities, how do you manage your time?** I usually write everything on a calendar and check to see what I have coming up. When things are conflicting, I speak to each side and try to work something out. If nothing works out I usually go with the one that is more urgent. When I have too much school work and outside activities, I attend all my outside activities, and try to work out my school homework as much as I can, even staying up to 2 a.m. sometimes.

**Where do you see yourself in 10 years?** Probably under a bridge (She said with thick sarcasm in her voice and a huge smile). Just kidding. Hopefully, I will be working as a doctor in a large hospital and helping other people.

**What are your aspirations in life?** To have a successful and stable future that can support my family.

**Do have any college plans? Major? Which college?** All I know now is I want to do either pre-med or law.

**What do you enjoy most in life?** As of now, sleeping. I also enjoy



eating, spending time with my family, and obviously getting good grades and other achievements.

**In a single word, what is your passion and why?** Learning. Starting from learning, we can learn new things, improve ourselves, and change ourselves for the better.

**How has being Asian-American impacted your life?** It's kinda awesome to understand two languages and be able to learn as well as be a part of two different cultures. Although, sometimes it can clash. I always love that we can go back to Asia and tour around in order to familiarize ourselves with the culture. I also love the food because it's just sooooo good.

**What is your favorite part of being an Asian-American?** The food and being able to speak and be a part of two cultures and languages.

**What are some struggles you have faced being Asian-American?** A lot of people have higher expectations. Not that I can't live up to those, because I am and have exceeded those. But also because college admissions require higher scores and standards for Asian-Americans.

**Do you think the stereotypes about Asian are true?** Depends on which stereotypes.

**Who would you switch lives with for one day? Why?** For me, it'd be the president or government official so I can get an inside scoop at why they are choosing to make the decisions they are and why he/they are choosing to make these decisions.

### Fast Facts

**Favorite Color:** Blue

**Middle name:** Keyi

**Favorite food:** Fried ice cream

**Favorite TV shows:** The Office

**Favorite music artist:** 2PM all the way

**Favorite candy:** Kit Kats or Reese's Pieces

**Pastime:** Watch movies and TV

**Loves:** Me, myself, and I. (She said in an extremely sassy and sarcastic tone) And my family.

**Favorite places to shop:** Dick's Sporting Goods and Kohl's

**Favorite holiday:** Chinese New Year (because you get lot of money)



## Reilly's positive outlook on life is infectious

By Lauryn Klahn

"I admire how positive of an outlook Raigan has on life, how kind she is to everyone, and how she is super funny," says Brooke Mease about Linn-Mar Senior Raigan Reilly. Raigan has been through many ups and downs in her life but she never lets it interfere with the goals she has set for herself. This past year she had to deal with a knee injury, but she still didn't let that rough patch bring her down.

As Raigan and I sat and talked, like we have for many years because we've been friends since 1st grade, I learned many new things that I actually never had known about her.

**What is something popular right now that annoys you?** I don't get why people like Lil Pump. Like why? I don't like him because he is 16 years old, and he is annoying.

**Who is your oldest friend? Where did you meet them?** Morgan Michels. I met her at my house when we were babies. We are still friends because we grew up together and have just been friends forever.

**What 3 words describe you best describe you?** Driven, because I have some big goals I want to accomplish in life. Independent, because I am okay with doing stuff by myself, and some people aren't. Organized, because I don't like messes, but if you looked at my room it wouldn't seem like it.

**What is the strangest dream you have ever had?** I think there was one where I woke up in a different country and I didn't know where I was and they didn't speak English. I couldn't move so I just stood there.

**Who has had the biggest impact on the person you have become?** My mom because I just think that I've spent the most time with her and we're a lot alike. She's cool.

**Have you ever traveled to other countries? Which ones?** Yes, I've been to Mexico, France, and then England. I went to England and France for a leadership program in 6th grade. I went without my parents and in a group of 45 other kids. I went to Mexico for family vacations during spring break and winter break.

**What do you consider to be your greatest accomplishment?** Probably going on that England and France trip because I was not in tune with the world and I didn't yet have that out-of-country-experience. I learned a lot and being so young, I didn't think I could make it

two weeks without my parents, but I did. I think that's what made me a more independent person.

**Where do you want to go to college? What for?** I am going to the University of Iowa for chemistry on the pre-med track. I chose Iowa because they have the best medical program in the state.

**If you could change a past event in your life, would you?** Yes, I would probably change when I went to Florida for spring break. I wish I would have been here to say goodbye (to a loved one who had passed).

**What is the best life lesson you have learned?** Never take someone for granted, you'll never know when the last time you see them will be. It is the best life lesson to me because I learned it with my grandpa and how you truly do not know.

**What would you tell your younger self if you could?** Enjoy every day because life goes by fast.

**What is the most adventurous thing you have ever done?** Zip lining in the jungle in Mexico. It was scary and it broke my knee again, but it's fine. But it was a lot of fun.

**What is your favorite piece of clothing you own or have owned?** This pink sweatshirt I got 2 weeks ago from GAP. I like it because it's a big sweatshirt and it is nice and comfy.

**What is your dream car?** The newest year (when I'm able to get it) of a Mercedes-Benz G-wagon. I want a matte black one. It's my dream car because I like the boxy style of it, like a Jeep, but I don't want a Jeep like everyone else has.

**What is something most people don't know about you?** I was born with cleft foot and have had extra surgery to correct it.

**How do you want people to remember you after you graduate?** I want them to think of me in a good way and not just as someone who hated all 4 years of high school. Someone who was nice to others.

**If you could make one rule that everyone had to follow, what would it be?** Ummm...(laughs) To use their turn signals even though that already is a rule, like it would actually have to happen because it's annoying when people don't use them. It's there for a reason.

**Do you take anything for granted?** Yeah. Just like basic stuff, like food and water. That's just not something everyone has. I get three



meals a day, some don't have that.

**What do you like most about your family?** I like that I can just hang out with them and they support me.

**What are the best and worst things about getting older?** The worst is that you actually have to figure stuff out by yourself because for 18 years I've had my parents make appointments for me and now I have to start doing it myself. The best would be everything finally starting to fall into place with figuring out what I want to do with my life and achieving that.

**What do you regret not doing?** I regret not doing sports in high school because I feel like that's a big social part of high school when you are in sports, but I never did it.

**What would your perfect room look like?** My perfect room would be a big bed comfy bed that has a movie screen in it, like a movie theatre so you can watch movies all the time. Also, it needs to be dark enough to watch the movies.

**What songs have you completely memorized?** I'm pretty proud that I have most of Post Malone's songs memorized with the exception of like 2 because I don't like them.

**How many pets do you have or have you had?** Overall, I have had 4. Two dogs and 2 hamsters. I have a pup named Lyla right now, she is an Old English Bulldog and I've had her for 9 months.

**What are your biggest pet peeves?** When people are short with me and just kind of ignore me with no reason. Also, when people are rude to waiters and waitresses, or just like when customers are rude to any workers.

**What is something you think everyone should do at least once in their lives?** I feel like everyone

should experience snow because, obviously, some countries don't have that and it is pretty cool. Even though it's very cold.

**What are your favorite things to do in your free time?** I like to hang out with my dog because she is cute and fun to play with. I also like to watch Netflix because they have good shows on there, and watch the Hawks.

**What is your most embarrassing moment?** Okay um. When I was in anatomy class my junior year and we were trying to measure our vertical jumps and I dislocated my knee. It was embarrassing because I cried in front of like 50 people, most of whom I didn't even know, and I couldn't walk.

**If you could solve one world problem what would it be? Why?** World hunger because no one needs to go without out food every single day.

**What will you miss most about Linn-Mar?** Just like the people I guess. I've been around some of them since elementary school and might not see some of them ever again. Not being around them each day will be weird.

### Quick Favorites:

**Favorite Color?** Blue

**Favorite Food?** Pasta

**Favorite Song?** Pray by Sam Smith

**Favorite Movie?** *The Blind Side*

**Favorite TV Show?** *The Office*

**Favorite Place?** Lake of the Ozarks

**Favorite Holiday?** Christmas

**Favorite Store?** Target

**Favorite Restaurant?** La Camelia

**Favorite Animal?** Dog



## Pancheros versus Chipotle: which one is your favorite?

By Emily Pistulka

One of the most massive food debates is the showdown of Pancheros versus Chipotle. Knowledgeable burrito eaters know exactly where their idea of a perfect burrito comes from, and won't shy away from telling people why their choice is best.

Elizabeth Wild, Linn-Mar senior, says, "I prefer Pancheros over Chipotle because of the delicious tortilla shell. Pancheros is also the only place that has the \$1 burrito special, and specialty colored burrito shells for certain holidays."

Morgan Klostermann, Linn-Mar senior, says, "I prefer Pancheros over Chipotle because the queso is amazing. It melts in your mouth and is the best queso I have ever tried." Senior Jenna Bartelme says, "I prefer to eat at Chipotle. I think that they have fresher ingredients. The meat is great and I also love their guacamole."

Pancheros was founded by Rodney Anderson in 1992. He opened his first restaurant in Iowa City, Iowa. There are now 67 locations across the United States. Pancheros introduced the famous tortilla press, and "Bob the tool" which gets every ingredient in each bite. Pancheros is commonly known for their fresh-pressed tortillas and yummy queso.

Chipotle was founded by Steve Eells in 1993, in Denver, Colorado. There are now 1,700 Chipotle locations throughout the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, France, and Canada. Chipotle takes pride in their ingredients and believe in serving "food with integrity." Chipotle is commonly known for their tasty guacamole and human-sized burritos.

Lexi Atzen, a student from the University of Iowa, ran a survey on Twitter of the preference of Pancheros or Chipotle. With about 100 voters, 92% voted Pancheros while only 8% voted for Chipotle. Let's take a look into what makes so many people prefer Pancheros over Chipotle.

According to Atzen, "It seems as if many people like Pancheros because of their freshly made tortillas and their delicious queso. They mix the fillings and roll the burrito perfectly. That's an important aspect to burrito making for sure. On the contrary, Chipotle does not mix as well. Chipotle also charges based on the meat, unlike Pancheros, who has each meat priced the same. Pancheros charges extra for veggies unlike Chipotle, though. Chipotle has fresher meat

and vegetables than Pancheros does. The guacamole at Chipotle is delicious, but on the other hand, Pancheros has better queso. Many would argue that Chipotle is better for the burrito bowl because of the lack of great tortillas like Pancheros."

Emma Stewart, a reporter from Ames, Iowa says, "These two restaurants are just down the road from each other, making a stressful choice for us consumers. But, one of the two always manages to stand just a little taller over the other."

According to Stewart, "While Chipotle has the same concept as Pancheros, their burritos just don't compare. Pancheros is also the only burrito joint that has a \$1 burrito special. I took the time to visit both restaurants and order the exact same thing from each to compare the two."

First, Stewart conquered Chipotle. "I ordered a burrito with rice, chicken, shredded cheese, and guacamole (my go-to-burrito). The first bite was less than satisfying. The tortilla shell that encased my burrito was slightly dry and failed to hold in the innards of my meal. Upon further investigation, I found that the shredded cheese was unevenly distributed and difficult to taste. And then, to make matters worse, there was a giant pocket of guacamole in the bottom corner that completely overpowered the chicken and rice and spilled all over my basket. I was very depressed after that little occurrence."

Next, Stewart conquered Pancheros. "Shaking off my dissatisfying meal, I proceeded to move onto the town favorite, Pancheros, the very next day. I once again, ordered my go-to-burrito (if you were wondering, guacamole is extra). Sitting down at the booth, I finally took a bite of the heavenly masterpiece that is the Pancheros burrito. Pure satisfaction. The tortilla was warm and slightly doughy, creating the perfect cling to hold in all the ingredients of the burrito. The shredded cheese was prominent and beautifully distributed. All the flavors meshed together perfectly, which only added to my satisfaction. This burrito fairly earned the title of baeritto."

There is a common agreement that many people prefer the tortilla shell and queso from Pancheros, and the fresh ingredients from Chipotle. Pancheros versus Chipotle is an

often discussed argument that depends on the person's ideal burrito. Both restaurants have their pros and cons.



## How to break bad habits

By Emily Pistulka

Smoking gives you cancer and wrinkles, eating fast food makes you fat, and sleeping in makes you late, but what makes people still do habits even when they know they're still bad for them?

Perhaps Kanye West, musician, said it best. "Why everything that supposed to be bad, make me feel so good?"

It seems L-M students can relate.

Lorissa Hickson, a senior at Linn Mar High School says, "My worst habit is procrastinating, but I do it anyway because I am too lazy."

Emily Manley, senior, says, "My worst habit is eating foods that are bad for me but I cannot ever stop myself from eating them."

There are a number of bad habits that people all over the world have such as smoking, doing drugs, biting fingernails, sleeping in, swearing, drinking too much coffee or too much pop, eating bad foods, binge eating, going to tanning beds, drinking too much alcohol, overspending on credit cards, over-using social media, hoarding, playing video games, cracking knuckles, being late, and more.

People do all sorts of things that are hurting them in some way, even though they clearly know that the activity is a bad habit. There are a handful of explanations behind the driving forces of these bad habits. Let's take a look at what causes people to continue these things.

According to Dr. Nora Volkow, director of NIH's National Institute on Drug Abuse, "Habits can develop when good or enjoyable events trigger the brain's reward centers. This can set up potentially harmful routines such as overeating, smoking, drug or alcohol abuse, gambling, and even compulsive use of computers and social media."

Volkow says, "In a sense, then,

part of our brains are working against us when we try to overcome bad habits. These routines can become hardwired in our brains, and the brain's reward centers keep us craving the things we're trying so hard to resist."

Pleasure habits can be very hard to break. Dr. Russell Poldrack, a neuro-biologist at the University of Texas at Austin says, "Enjoyable pleasures can prompt your brain to release a chemical called dopamine. If you do something over and over, and dopamine is there when you're doing it, that strengthens the habit even more. When you're not doing those things dopamine creates the craving to do it again. This explains why some people crave drugs, even if the drug no longer makes them feel particularly good once they take it."

Volkow notes that, "there's no single effective way to break bad habits. But, one approach is to focus on becoming more aware of your unhealthy habits. Strategies can then developed to counteract them. For example, habits can be linked in our minds to certain places and activities. You could develop a plan, say, to avoid walking down the hall where there's a candy machine, or resolve to avoid going places where you've usually smoked. You could stay away from friends and situations linked to problem drinking or drug use."

Poldrack claims that another helpful technique is to "visualize yourself in a tempting situation. Mentally practice the good behavior over the bad. If you'll be at a party and want to eat vegetables over fattening foods, then mentally visualize yourself doing that. It's not guaranteed to work, but it can certainly help."

Bad habits can be hard to change, but it can certainly be done.





## Disney stories can define childhood memories...

By Samyukta Karthik

“Disney made up basically my entire childhood. I remember that my friends and I would always aspire to be a different Disney princess when we were younger and we would dress up and play “Disney Princess Ball,” said Savannah Zhou, sophomore.

Disney has played a substantial part in the childhoods of many of us. These stories have given us our beautiful “happily ever after” and given us a chance to imagine our own fantasies.

“I always wanted to be Mulan, because she depicted a powerful woman who was brave and who fought for her country. Mulan inspired courage in me,” said Vicky Wang, junior.

Since 1937, when the company released its first Disney princess movie, Disney has impacted the lives of many kids; they’ve provided very forward-thinking characters that encourage children to be different and they’ve modeled certain qualities that seem to be universally desired in young girls.

However, Disney stories are not necessarily as they seem. Many of the stories picked by Disney come from extremely dark origins and from authors notorious for writing extremely sinister works. So here are a few Disney stories’ deep, dark origin. Disclaimer: these may just ruin your childhood.

**Cinderella:**

Cinderella may have ended up with Prince Charming and found her happily ever after, but her step-sisters sure did not. In the Disney story, only her step-sisters and her step mother are cruel, however in the original version, Cinderella had a mean side to her, too. Cinderella was originally written as *Cenerentola (An Italian Tale)* by Charles Perrault. When the prince arrives at their house with the glass slipper and the step-sisters realize that they won’t be able to fit into it, one step-sister cuts off her toe and another cuts off her heel to fool the prince. Of course the prince does not fall for it and during the wedding for the prince and Cinderella, Cinderella sends her bird friends to

peck out and devour the stepsisters’ eyes as revenge for the deceit they showed. Cinderella also slams the lid of a chest on her stepmother’s neck, breaking it and killing her.

**Sleeping Beauty:**

In *Sleeping Beauty*, originally written by Giambattista Basile in 1634, Aurora was put into eternal sleep by a flax splinter and the prince was unable to wake her up with a kiss. However, rather than just leaving, the prince in the original tale decides to rape her before he leaves, even though he is already married, and Aurora becomes pregnant with twins while she is sleeping. While Aurora is still unconscious, the twins are born and one of the babies sucks the flax splinter out of her finger causing her to wake up. When Aurora finally finds out what happened and goes to the palace, the prince’s wife almost kills her and her children, but the king steps in and tells Aurora that she can marry the rapist.

**Rapunzel:**

The Grimm brothers are not called “grim” without reason, however, Rapunzel was one of the happiest stories that they wrote. Rapunzel was actually the daughter of farmers. When Rapunzel was twelve, a witch kidnapped her and locked her in a tower because she wanted to protect Rapunzel’s long and luscious golden hair. One day, a prince hears her singing and climbs the tower. Rapunzel falls in love with him and they decide to marry that night. However, when the prince climbs the tower again, the witch finds him and throws him from the tower into a bush with spines, which makes him blind. The prince spends months after months roaming around the forest, until, one day, he hears her voice again. He is the father of Rapunzel’s two children and she uses her magic tears, given by the witch, to bring back his sight.

**Beauty and the Beast:**

The original story was written by Gabrielle-Suzanne Barbot de Villeneuve. In the story, Belle convinces the beast to let her go home to see her sisters for a week. However, her sisters, who become

envious of her, convince her stay longer in hopes that the beast will get mad that she did not come back to the castle and will then eat her.

**Snow White:**

Snow White is another Brothers Grimm classic that has a dark origin. When the queen orders the hunter to kill Snow White and bring back her lungs and liver, the queen actually eats the lungs and liver thinking that it is Snow White’s, even though it is a lamb’s. Also, when Snow White is poisoned with the apple, she does not wake up from a kiss, but rather from the dwarfs bumping her coffin causing the poisonous apple to dislodge from her throat. At the prince and Snow White’s wedding, as a punishment, Snow White makes the evil queen wear burning hot iron shoes and demands her to dance until she drops dead on the floor.

**Little Mermaid:**

In the original story, written by Hans Christian Andersen, the penalty that Ariel had to endure to gain legs was that every single step she would take would feel like she is walking on sharp shards of glass. Also, Ariel’s motivation to become a human was not only because of the prince, but also because mermaids could not have eternal souls or go up to Heaven like humans could. At first, it seems like her plan was working, but then the prince ends up marrying another, a woman he thinks is the person who saved him. Ariel cannot tell him that he is wrong since she also gave up her voice. She is told that if she kills the prince, then she can simply turn back into a mermaid and doesn’t have to die. She just can’t do it, though; she throws herself into the sea, and turns into sea foam. However, rather than dying she becomes a ‘daughter of the air,’ entering a kind of purgatory where she has to do good deeds until she earns a soul, which will take about 300 years to happen.

**Mulan:**

In Hua Mulan’s poem, China ends up losing the war. The Khan from the enemy side lets Mulan live under the condition that she must live with him as his prostitute, so

Mulan escapes. When she arrives home, she discovers that her father is dead and her mother has remarried. Then she says, “I’m a woman, I survived the war, and I have done enough. Now I want to be with my father.” Then she ends up taking her own life.

**Hercules:**

To start off, Zeus tricks Hercules’ mother into having sex with him. Then, as a child, Hercules kills his music tutor with a lyre. Hercules takes Megara, who was the daughter of the king of Thebes, into marriage by force. They have two children and live happily, until Hera, Zeus’s wife, drives Hercules mad and he kills Megara and their children. Tormented by guilt, Hercules still completes the same 12 tasks as in the film, but with extreme violence and disregard for life.

**Hunchback of Notre Dame:**

In Victor Hugo’s novel, Quasimodo betrays Esmeralda because she says that she does not love him, and she watches as she’s hanged in the town square. Feeling guilty, Quasimodo goes to her grave where he stays until he starves to death. Years later, when her grave is opened, someone finds both their skeletons, but when they try to separate them, they turn to dust.

**Pinocchio:**

In the *Adventures of Pinocchio* by Carlo Collodi, Pinocchio is far more mischievous in the movie. Since birth, he behaves atrociously, he steals things, and even his father calls him a “wretched lad.” In the book, he runs away as soon as he learns to walk. He is found by the police, who imprison Geppetto because they think that Pinocchio was abused by him. When Pinocchio returns home one day, he kills a talking cricket (Jiminy). As a consequence for all his horrifying deeds, a cat and a fox hang him from a willow tree and watch him die while he swings in the wind.

**Jungle Book:**

In the original story written by Rudyard Kipling, after killing the murderous tiger Shere Khan, Mowgli finds out that his biological parents have been captured by a

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## Gormley turns school project into lifelong friend

By Kirsten Lancaster

School, music, and dogs. These are the three things that take up most of Alexa Gormley's life, but it wasn't always that way. It wasn't until she started at Iowa BIG that dogs, her new passion, came into her life.

"I think I wouldn't have gotten a dog if it hadn't been for Iowa BIG. They're the reason I have Stitch," Gormley says.

Alexa started at BIG last year unsure of what this new program would bring. She always had an affinity for advocating for those with mental illnesses but she never had a platform. That's where BIG, a project based program, came into play. Alexa joined a group that wanted to raise awareness for emotional support animals and therapy dogs. She had no idea what it all meant, but she wanted to help.

With the support of her team, she gained the knowledge she needed to educate others on the benefits of therapy dogs. It was then that she decided to write a book.

"I wrote this book last summer. It shows mental illness in a way that kids can understand. I know when I first learned things it was through stories so I felt like a book about an anxious dog could make mental health an easier topic to understand."

Now, under the guidance of her Iowa BIG teacher Liz Sheka, Alexa

plans on publishing her book by the end of the year.

Seeing someone so young accomplishing so much can be intimidating, but Alexa shares that she's far from perfect.

"If I could change one thing about myself, I would make myself less sensitive. I act before I think a lot and I wish I could fix that," says Gormley.

Growing up an only child made Alexa very independent. She says she struggles to be a good team member because she's so used to relying on herself instead of others.

"One thing I'm really working on is being a team player. I like being a leader so following someone else is hard for me."

But others see her in a very different way. Alexa's mom, Trudy Gormley, works at Linn-Mar High School, allowing her to see her daughter during the school day.

"Alexa is so caring and supportive of others. She is the first to reach out to help in any situation," says Gormley.

It seems like Alexa Gormley has it all figured out. She is pursuing her passion while helping others, all while getting school credit. As for the future, Alexa plans on attending Iowa State University to become a vet. She wants to spend the rest of her life caring for the animals that were her source of inspiration at Iowa BIG.

Some fun Facts About Alexa

**If you could live anywhere, where would it be?** In the country, I like Iowa.

**What's your favorite comfort food?**

Cheez Its

**Pancakes or waffles?**

Waffles

**Skydiving or cliff diving?**

Neither

**Movie date or picnic?**

Picnic

**What is your favorite season?**

Fall

**What is your biggest fear?**

Stitch dying and old people

**What's the most daring thing you've ever done?**

Gotten in fights with my ponies

**Are you an introvert or an extrovert?**

Extrovert

**Who knows you the best?**

Stitch



## Origins of Disney stories often much darker

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village of farmers. With the help of the animals in the jungle, Mowgli completely annihilates the village and kills all the villagers. Later, he is captured and has to find a way to escape because the inhabitants believe him to be an evil spirit. Finally, Mowgli finds peace in a village governed by the English.

**Aladdin:**

The original *Aladdin's* story is a relatively peaceful and happy story, but the story's second sequel is extremely dark. This sequel, called *Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves*, has the character Cassim (Aladdin's father) killed and dismembered and his body parts stacked around a treasure cave as a warning to travelers. Later, Cassim's body is stitched together by a tailor so his family will think he died of natural causes.

**Lion King:**

Lion King is supposedly a play based off Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, according to Disney. However, in this play practically every character ends up dying. Simba, who is based on *Hamlet's* character, is stabbed with a poison blade.

**The Fox and the Hound:**

In the original story, the fox is raised by the dog owner's/hunter's family, but he eventually returns to the wild. The fox occasionally returns to taunt the dogs and flash his cunning foxlike skills. One of the dogs breaks his chain, and chases him. That dog ends up getting hit by a train and dying. The hunter is devastated, and vows revenge on the fox. He becomes obsessed, but can never catch him. However, the hunter does end up killing the fox's first mate, second mate, and children. Eventually, the fox does die from exhaustion. Copper, the hound in the story, is shot by his alcoholic owner before the owner moves into a retirement home.

**Peter Pan:**

In the original story written by J.M. Barrie, Peter kills the Lost Boys when they get too old. "The boys on the island vary, of course, in numbers, according as they get killed and so on; and when they seem to be growing up, which is against the rules, Peter thins them out," says J.M. Barrie.

**Princess and the Frog:**

In the very first version of *The Frog Prince*, the princess has to hurl the frog against a wall to break the curse. In later versions of the story the frog's head was cut off, or his skin was burned.

**Frozen:**

Frozen is a spin-off of Hans Christian Andersen's *The Snow Queen* and probably one of the happier stories Andersen has written. Anna is the character Gerda in Andersen's story, however in the story Gerda is a penniless commoner, not a princess, and she is looking for her childhood friend, Kai. The story starts with trolls breaking a magic mirror, unleashing evil and cold everywhere. The mirror shows the bad side of everything it reflects and the trolls play with it too much. The mirror shatters and throws splinters into everyone's hearts, freezing them and turning the world cold. Kai didn't hide on the other side of a door and a demon mirror infected his eye and heart. The shards of the demon mirror cause him to interpret everything good and beautiful as ugly and bad, and vice versa. As a

result, the demonic Snow Queen looks beautiful to him. Then the Ice Queen ends up kidnapping him. To create Elsa, Disney merged Kai and the Snow Queen together. After taking Kai away and erasing his memory, the Ice Queen ends up making him do atrocious deeds of violence until Greta saves him with a kiss.

The included stories were taken from *Grimm's Complete Fairy Tales* compiled by Jacob Grimm, *The Complete Hans Christian Andersen Fairy Tales* translated by Marte Hvam Hult, and Disney Story Origins.





## Hagmeier settles in as freshman, likes freedom high school provides

By Sydney Bennett

Lauren Hagmeier, a freshman at Linn-Mar High School, says “On the first day of high school my friends and I were so scared, but now that I’ve been here for a while, it’s normal and I almost enjoy going to school because we have a lot more privileges here than we did in middle school. Plus, the food is better.”

Hagmeier has two parents, Brian and Brittany, who are divorced but both happily remarried. Lauren has three brothers. Logan, her half-brother, is a junior at UNI. Her two other step brothers, Nick and Chris, also go to Linn Mar high school along with Lauren. She lives in Marion with her dad and in Robins with her mom.

Lauren has a boyfriend named Johnny who goes to Prairie. She and Johnny have been dating for two months and she says, “Even though I don’t see him every single day like I would if he had gone to LM, we still make it through.” The days they do see each other they do homework, eat, chill, and watch Netflix.

Lauren dances at the Dance Company in Marion. She has been dancing for nine years, and is also on a competitive dance team. She dances on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays, and Sundays.

“You would think after being with the same four girls that many days a week that you would get sick of each other but in reality, we are all like sisters and we love each other.” She also says that she loves dance because it is a workout but is doing something she loves at the same time.

Other than dance, Lauren loves to hang out with her best friends, Arianna, Brooklyn, Myles, Kendall, and Tyler, who are also all freshman at Linn-Mar. She hangs out with them mostly every weekend doing some of her favorite activities like going to get food from some of her favorite places like Pancharo’s or Buffalo Wild Wings. Sometimes, they watch Grey’s Anatomy or comedy movies on Netflix, or they get Starbucks and drive around, on their school route of course.

Lauren says she absolutely loves the fall season because of Halloween, Halloween movies, fall drinks, fall clothes, haunted houses, and pumpkin patches. She says she loves everything fall. even the colors and smells. Her room, she says, always reflects the seasons but she goes all out for fall. She has blankets in dark reds and oranges.

She has fall candles that smell like pumpkin spice and apple cinnamon. She has jelly stickers on her window that say Happy Halloween and that feature skeletons, pumpkins, and spiders. Even though fall is number one on her list of favorites, summer is right up there. Lauren says she loves the weather of summer, the good and the bad.

“I love being able to tan with my friends one day and then the next day to be cuddled up with tons of blankets while it is pouring outside,” said Lauren. Lauren also loves summer because she says she feels free to eat all she wants, like ice cream, Fruitzen, and popsicles.

In the future, Lauren wants to hopefully get accepted into the University of Iowa to take on a career in pediatric nursing at the Children’s Hospital in Iowa City. Lauren babysits on a regular basis in the summer and that has gotten her attached to children, which is why she wants to be a pediatric nurse. Plus, she says she is a huge Iowa Hawkeye fan. She and her mom go to almost every home game.

“The hawks are good and entertaining to watch, it’s as simple as that.”



## Clement full of personality

By Jesse Wade

As you walk through the halls of Linn-Mar High School, you see a lot of faces and a lot of style. At first glimpse, you might notice Junior Carly Clement’s neon orange Nike backpack, but it is not the that part of her that lights up the room.

“I think my eyes are my most prominent feature, they’re giant and blue. People tell me they’re almost like fish eyes, but I like them; they make me, me.”

Seventeen-year-old Carly Clements isn’t the first person you’d hear in the halls or the first person you’d see flaunting her outfit for all to see. While not one for style, she makes up for with personality.

**“What would you say people think is the weirdest trait you have?”**

“Well, people always comment on how shy I am, but I just don’t know what to say in new situations.”

When the interview first started, Clements was very shy, and always trying to grab for something. She lies all over the place when in an interview situation. However, as the interview progressed, she became more fidgety, but had relaxed, too, and become more open about herself.

Clements, an employee at the local ChickFilA, says she finds herself in charge a lot more and loves where she works.

“I find myself being in charge more often than not. I don’t like when things are in chaos. My manager thinks I should be a team-leader and I’m starting to think I could handle that. Chick-Fil-A is like my second family.”

Clements loves order, and for things to be timely and in control. **Do you find yourself to usually early, or late?**

“Definitely early. I get really irritable when I find myself late. It brings this kind of anxiety to me. Being late makes me feel out of control.”

Being a full time employee at Chick-Fil-A and attending high school with a full schedule does take a lot out of Clements.

**If you didn’t have to sleep, what would you do with your time?**

“I’d still sleep. I need it. After school, and a forty hour work week, I’m pooped.”

Work and school takes a toll and there is little time for the small things in life for this high school student.

**If time and money were not an issue, what hobby would you pick up?**

“I’ve always wanted to learn how to sew, like blankets and pillows. They would be the decorations to my house.”

Clements likes the simple life. Her desire in the future is to have her house, a husband, and kids and to just be a mom who can enjoy life with her family.

“The thing I love most about my family, (my brother, sister, and parents) is when we’re all together. We always have a good time. That makes me feel good to know we love each other.”

However, Clements isn’t as innocent as she can seem.

**What is something you will NEVER do again?**

“I would never shoplift again. It was the worst, total peer pressure situation there. I was with some of my friends with nothing to do, and out of the blue they all wanted to go shoplift from Kohl’s. So we go there, and I’m freaking out the whole time. I didn’t want to get caught. It’s like the first wall broken into being a teen. That first scary experience of being rebellious. Everyone goes through something like that, I believe. The police ended up coming to my house at almost midnight to talk to me and my parents. Needless to say, that didn’t go over well.”

**What would you say is your worst memory?”**

“OH. The worst was when I was a little kid and a swing hit my toe. Yes, a swing. And it ripped off my toenail. It is the worst pain and a traumatic experience as a kid to see your toe nail-less.”

**If you could change your name to anything, what would it be?**

“Nothing. I’ve never had a problem with my name. I really like my name. I think my parents did a great job with it. It’s something I’d never feel bad about.”







## Lawrence gives views on support of Linn-Mar gun violence walkout

Senior Tia Lawrence, one of the organizers of the Linn-Mar walkout against gun violence which occurred in February, gives her views in a questionnaire about the walkout. Her answers follow below:

### **Why were you inspired to help organize the walkout rally at Linn-Mar?**

I was most inspired by the victims in Florida. Personally, I feel that most kids don't think there is anything they can do about government or politics, and here were these kids saying, "No, we have a say. There are things we can do." And the fact that it's coming from high school kids like me just makes it even more empowering."

### **Why did you feel it was necessary to go to the administration before the walkout?**

It was necessary to make them aware, because we obviously didn't want to surprise them with bunches of kids flooding the halls and leaving. It was just a common decency kind of thing.

### **What was your reaction to the turnout?**

Very surprised. We had about 400 people that had been formally invited on Facebook but only 150 people had said yes. I also think that we'd been receiving more negative reactions than positive, so we were assuming most wouldn't come.

### **Why do you think it is important for the youth of America to speak out on the topic of gun violence?**

I think this is a nice stepping stone to get the youth involved. This is an issue that hits home to a lot of us, because it affects us directly. Too many young people have been

raised on the mentality that politics are bad and that there is nothing we can do about it.

### **Future plans of Activism?**

Long term? Definitely. I'm very passionate about equality, transparency in government and the notion that the government serves the people. I'm going to major in political science and English, so we'll see. Short-term, I'm concerned with getting youth involved. 18-24 year olds are statistically the least politically active and we are very under-represented in public policy. That bothers me.

### **What do you personally think needs to happen to stop future acts of gun violence?**

While I'm personally very anti-gun in general, I acknowledge that isn't realistic in today's society. What I'd really like to see is laws put in place requiring licensing, creating a federal data base for weapons and preventing straw-gun sales. Honestly, just any legislation by Congress to make a change. I want action.

### **How do you feel about arming teachers? Security guard on campus?**

I think it is ridiculous. Teachers engage students in learning, not in combat. I want to see policy that addresses the cause of gun violence, not the symptom.

### **What would you say to politicians about this matter? The NRA?**

That now is the time to prove where your loyalty lies. A whole new generation of voters is watching and your next move determines whether we support and approve of you, or overthrow you. We want action!

## NCAA tourney time means one thing: March Madness!

By Jaren Nelson

Every single year the NCAA Basketball Tournament leaves fans in awe, whether that is being overwhelmed with pure joy, or more commonly, completely heartbroken. With only sixty-eight teams getting in, counting the first four, many fans around the country do not even get to cheer for their respective teams, simply because they do not make the tournament. That increases the popularity and importance of bracketology, or filling out selective brackets based on who you think will win each game of the tournament. What was once a light-hearted hobby has turned into a national phenomenon. There are countless websites and companies that do bracket challenges, with the overall winner being awarded a prize. Warren Buffett announces every year that a perfect bracket will earn a person one-billion-dollar reward from him. Yes, one billion dollars. So, if so many people participate in these challenges each year, why does a perfect bracket never occur? One word, sleepers. Sleeper teams bust brackets and break hearts every year during the NCAA Tournament. This year, however, you do not have to lose your mind over these sleepers, because this list will explain which sleeper teams you need to pick in your bracket this year.

The first sleeper team that is already showing signs of a great tournament run is Texas A&M. Led by star players DJ Hogg and Tyler Davis, this team is well sized and very balanced. Five of their six top minutes leaders are averaging double figures in scoring, and three of those six are over six foot nine inches tall. They already have collected impressive wins to start the season, beating both Oklahoma State and Penn State by double figures. Not to mention, their display of complete dominance against one of the best teams in the college basketball, West Virginia, beating them 88-65 in the season opener. Texas A&M has been a team on the rise ever since Davis stepped onto campus

three years ago, and this year just might be the right time for them to pop in the tournament.

The second team poised to win multiple games in the tournament in the Xavier Musketeers. This team is loaded with scoring, led by Trevon Bluiett and J.P. Maccura, who are both shooting over fifty percent from the field and averaging double figures. Bluiett is a superstar, averaging over twenty-one points per game. They are one of the best shooting teams in America, and have a very deep bench. "Xavier is a tough coached and tough-minded team. Toughness is needed to get through a season, but it is needed even more in the tournament," states Scott Nelson, assistant varsity coach for Linn-Mar High School and a big-time college basketball fan. Xavier exhibited their toughness in a clutch road win against Wisconsin earlier this season, when they ended the game with a fourteen to four scoring run that resulted in a ten-point victory. Xavier's ability to shoot, their toughness, and Trevon Bluiett are reasons to have them go deep into this year's tourney.

The final team that could stir up some brackets is TCU. Now, out of all three of these teams, TCU is considered the biggest sleeper. They are not as highly recognized on the national level as the other two, they will have the hardest time making a huge tournament run. The Horned Frogs are inexperienced, no doubt, but they have been fantastic since halfway through last year. Last season they finished strong, beating a top of the conference Kansas team in first round of the Big Twelve Tournament, and just missed the NCAA tournament. They were selected to play in the NIT, and put on an absolute show in the tournament, beating Iowa and winning the whole thing.

TCU is continuing to build off of a successful season last year, and make their mark in school history by punching their ticket to the tourney for the first time since 1998.



## Society needs to re-think how we raise boys

By Lincoln Currie

From birth, males are raised indoctrinated in a culture that tells them to toughen up and push away their feelings. Males are brought up being told that it is not okay to cry, that they need to be strong and hold in everything. This line of thinking is archaic and dangerous. A major culture shift must occur.

Why do men bottle up their feelings? Is it something men are born with, or is it the culture in which they are raised? Linn-Mar High School's School Psychologist Lisa Mooney believes it is the latter.

"It's a culture thing and how we raise people. If you're a boy, you don't cry. You suck it up. You have to be strong. That mindset is so deeply embedded in our culture. I think we do a disservice to males by telling them to buck up. I think showing vulnerability is a strength, it shows that someone who is able to manage their feelings is stronger than someone who just shoves them down."

Mooney then talked about her experiences when she used to work with younger children.

"When I used to work with smaller kids, I explained it to them like this. Have you ever been to a pool where people were playing with a beach ball? What happens when you take that beach ball and try to hold it under the water? It just ends of coming right back up. Just because you pushed it below the surface, that didn't make it go away.

Keeping all these feelings pushed below the surface can have dire consequences. According to the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, men commit suicide 3.57x more than women. More frighteningly, however, is the suicide rates among veterans, who are mostly men.

According to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, male veterans are 19 percent more likely to commit suicide than their non-veteran counterparts. According to USA Today, in 2012 and 2013, suicide tallied more casualties than combat itself.

Much of the reason as to why veterans are at a much higher risk of suicide is because of post-traumatic stress. Mooney weighed in on the matter.

"The most extreme cases of what can happen when men bottle

up their emotions, is what happens to a lot of veterans in this country. These warriors who have seen the worst and most unspeakable things, they get isolated. They are told, just like many other males, to just 'buck up' or 'be strong'. These soldiers are told they need to assimilate."

A culture of acceptance must be created so that stigmas about men talking about their feelings can disappear. If men learn to express their feelings instead of just letting them get trapped and collect over time, suicides will be less likely to occur. This can start small, with males talking about problems or issues with a close group of friends, and from that point, it can build. If this comfort with opening up continues to grow, eventually the stigma surrounding men talking about their emotions will vanish.

While males being able to express their feelings is important, there is a time and place for that. There are some times when everyone needs to move on or let some-

thing go. Sometimes men do need to be strong. However, the belief that being strong means pushing away all your

feelings, and that expressing those feelings makes someone "soft", is foolhardy. To be strong is not to pretend there is no problem. To be strong is to admit there is a problem, and deal with it in an effective way. Pushing aside your feelings

and bottling them up is not an effective way to deal with problems.

The stigma surrounding men talking about their emotions must come to naught. The antiquated notion that men must bury their feelings and never express them must be vanquished. If the stigma is removed, men can start getting healthier emotionally, lowering the risk of tragedies like suicide.

### Representation of Men

'Masculinity' is a concept that is made up of more rigid stereotypes than femininity. Representations of men across all media tend to focus on the following:

- Strength - physical and intellectual
- Power
- Sexual attractiveness (which may be based on the above)
- Physique
- Independence (of thought, action, finances)



## Traditional versus block scheduling: which is more beneficial for kids?

By Rachel Gulick

There are two main ways schools manage the school day for their students; block scheduling and traditional scheduling. Some schools have a combination of the two, but most rely solely on either block or period classes. There are benefits and disadvantages to each system, and the disadvantages often outweigh the good, which leaves a combined structure to be the best option. Combining the two could eliminate some of the disadvantages of each schedule and create a better system.

One way schools conduct class is through block scheduling. On a block schedule, students have four 90-minute classes each day which last for a quarter or a semester. According to the National Education Association, block classes mainly benefit teachers using a project-based curriculum. This is because students have more time for both cooperative learning and independent work time in a single class period. Teachers also have extended time to plan, and can get to know their students better. Students have fewer classes, which in theory, allows them to excel at just a few subjects at a time.

However, there are certain drawbacks to this system. According to the study "Research Spotlight on Block Scheduling", absences have more of an impact on students since block classes may only meet a few times per week. Similarly, it is more difficult to cover material in Advanced Placement courses in the short time allotted. According to SeattlePi, a student's attention span is only about 30 minutes, which means 90-minute classes are much too long to be effective. Along with this, teachers may not actually teach and interact with their students for the full block of class.

On the other hand, traditional scheduling is conducted through seven or eight 45-minute class periods. A benefit of this system is that the physical act of getting up and moving to a new setting for a different class every 45 minutes is more refreshing to students than only having four longer classes. This system accommodates for young students' attention spans and gives them variety in their learning each day. However, because there are eight classes each day, students may have more homework to keep up with, especially if teachers give assignments each day. With shorter class periods it becomes more

important that teachers have effective time management to maximize student learning during a shorter class time.

***"Block classes are too long and there's too much work time. But if you changed to all skinny classes, you have the potential for a test nightmare where you could have a few quizzes or assignments due on the same day, which leads to more stress for students," said Linn-Mar junior Lincoln Currie.***

Linn-Mar High School has a scheduling system that blends these two ideas together. Classes such as foreign language, math, and music are 45 minutes long, while other electives like social studies, English, and science are 90 minutes for a quarter or a semester. This is an optimal compromise to benefit both student attention spans and other classes requiring block length. This way, students are able to keep up with classes while being occupied and having variety in their day. Our school's schedule is the best design because it combines the benefits of both systems.



## Proficiency scales too subjective for academic purposes

By Nathan Wylie

The proficiency scale grading system, a tool that was added to Linn-Mar's grading system, consists of a four-point scale ranging from 0.5-4, 0.5 being not at all proficient and 4 showing mastery of all skills. While this version of grading may seem simpler, perhaps even better on the surface, the criteria in the proficiency scale system are arbitrary and too subjective for academic purposes.

Sherri Condon, a French teacher at Linn-Mar, said, "The proficiency scale is not refined enough nor sensitive enough to motivate high performing students or give them adequate feedback. Also, at the lower end, it rewards students who are incapable of performing at any decent level, rewards them and passes them. I spoke with the Marzano expert who told me to just use a scale within a scale for the top performing students, the 3.5-4 area, but that would just put us back at percent."

When she mentions rewarding kids and passing them despite inadequate performances, the proficiency scale rates a 0.5 as a 50%, and a 1 at 60%. A 1 out of 4 is 25% according to math. By showing almost no mastery of the skills in a class at all, a student can still receive a passing grade. On the other side of the scale, a four is generally described as 'exceeding expectations' or 'going above and beyond.' But how does one do that in a class like math? There is one correct answer with no opportunity to go above and beyond. Foreign language is the only course where the proficiency scale makes a little sense, however the above and beyond problem still applies. To earn a four in a foreign language class, you would have to use tenses and vocabulary from previous units, as well as from the current unit, various subjects and verbs, etc. This proves incredibly difficult for younger students.

The "beyond" requirement in above and beyond still doesn't make any sense. If a student does everything correctly, they deserve 100%. Simple. Another part of the grading system is the work ethic. It doesn't make sense that someone's professionalism (e.g. turning things in on time) would have any effect on their academic grade. If a student gets every answer right but forgets the assignment at home and brings it in the next day, they still scored 100% for that assignment. If an employability system is added to the grade system, make it a separate

entity that doesn't influence the letter grade.

The next step is to implement a solution. It's honestly quite simple. If the proficiency scale is implemented, it should remain separate from a student's actual

## Crockett calls out students over dress code

By Harper Crockett

Imagine you are walking down the hall in a high school. You round the corner to find a group of girls. One is wearing a crop top that is so small it simply looks like a sports bra. Another is wearing shorts so short that half her behind is sticking out. The third one is wearing a low cut shirt that shows the entire top half of her breasts. An administrator walks past the girls and smiles, but says nothing. As someone who experiences this on a daily basis, I can tell you how disgusting this is. Some schools do follow through with their dress code and students are reprimanded when they are not dressed appropriately. In some cases, dress codes are in the wrong. But most times, they have a valid reason. These girls should be required to change or cover up.

According to the Linn Mar High School 2017-18 handbook: *Students are expected to adhere to standards of cleanliness and dress that are compatible with the requirements of a good learning environment. The standards will be those generally acceptable to the community as appropriate in a school setting. Students are expected to wear clothing appropriate for a public high school which does not disrupt the school or educational environment. Clothing or other apparel promoting products illegal for use by minors and clothing displaying obscene material, profanity, or reference to prohibited conduct are disallowed.*

*While the primary responsibility for appearance lies with the students and their parents/legal guardians, appearance disruptive to the education program will not be allowed. When, in the judgment of the principal or designee, a student's appearance is inappropriate, disrupts the educational process or constitutes a threat to health/safety, the student may be required to make modifications. Clothing should not show an inappropriate amount of bare skin.*

I see this as meaning that a stu-

dent can pretty much wear anything and not get in trouble, like in the examples above. The claim is often made that dress codes are "sexist", and to be honest, they often are. But why is that? It is often because girls are the only ones who dress like that. I have never seen a guy walk down the hall in a crop top, so yeah, it is "sexist".

Recently, Oregon passed a law that changed the dress code requirements and made them more specific. According to this Oregon law, some of the restrictions include: "[that] genitalia, buttocks, and nipples must be covered by an opaque material. Anything with offensive messages or images is prohibited." This dress code seems more specific than Linn-Mar's dress code but neither will work if they are not enforced.

I agree that sometimes restrictions are a little too strict. According to a CNN report, one woman wrote about how her 9-year-old granddaughter wore a tank top on a 99-degree day and was told she was violating the school dress code. In this case, this enforcement is ridiculous. However, if it were a very low cut tank top and the girl was not 9 years old, this could be an entirely different story. According to Alexia Lujan, a Linn Mar High School senior, "there needs to be a line drawn from wearing a V-neck shirt, to having your whole chest hanging out".

I have no problem with shorts, tank tops, or leggings. My problem is when the shorts show more than they need to, or when a crop top shows everything, and when your low cut shirt looks like your breasts are about to fall out of it. No one

they can't slack off and pass by a technicality. Students who are more adept can be graded accurately on the content of their work, and be rewarded accordingly. It's just like the old saying goes, "If it isn't broke, don't fix it."

should be allowed to wear this in a public school.

In these cases, some people claim that the clothing choice is "a distraction to the guys," and in some cases, it is. But there is a reason why some girls dress like this, attention. They want the attention, but then complain about it when they get it. If there were rules that were more detailed regarding what one can and cannot wear, then this would not happen as much.

I am not saying that every school should have a full-on uniform instead of a dress code. I am not saying that people should not be allowed to dress the way they want when they are not in school. I am just saying that while in school, there needs to be dress code rules that are reasonable and enforced. In a public school, students should be required to dress decently and modestly. However they dress outside of school is their right, but in school is different.

According to Dylan Taylor, a Linn Mar High School junior, "girls should dress however they want, just not at school." Most women do not wear skimpy party dresses to work. So young girls should not wear skimpy clothing in school. So yes, it is a "sexist" rule. But that is only because girls are the only ones who dress like that. Therefore, there should be stricter rules on what girls are allowed to wear, and they should be required to change if certain areas of the body are not properly covered. But also, and this is probably the biggest issue, the rule needs to be enforced by the school, because words mean nothing unless there are actions to back them up.





# *The Linn-Mar Life*

## 17th annual Variety Show highlights student talent

