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CITY RESPONDS TO TRANSPHOBIC LEGISLATION

By Isaac **Bullwinkle**

Earlier this year on March 22, Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds signed a pair of bills into law restricting both restroom and locker room access for transgender students whose gender identity differs from their biological gender as well as criminalizing gender-affirming care such as the prescription of puberty blockers or cross-sex hormones for transgender adolescents.

The United States has been recently experiencing an unprecedented wave of anti-transgender legislation. Recent bills passed in the Iowa House like HF 2309, which essentially states that publicly-funded schools cannot allow transgender girls to participate in female sports, have become increasingly popular in US politics over the last year. These laws are also increasing in severity; a bill like HF 2309 might only affect a tiny percentage of athletes, much less students; in comparison, the recent bills passed by Reynolds are already restricting thousands of Iowan transgender and gender nonconforming students' bodily and medical autonomy.

Noah Seebeck '23 was one of several trans students at City who spoke out immediately against the passing of these bills, whose subjects are particularly trending across other states' legislatures; numerous similar or identical laws restricting transgender healthcare and/or bodily autonomy have recently been passed in states primarily with republican-controlled congresses.

Story continued on **A3**



ART BY ROSANGEL FLORES RUBIO

STAFF EDITORIAL:

Why Book Banning is Bad for Education

By Tai **Caputo**

Two bomb threats at Northwest Junior High School on March 23rd and 24th accompanied the demand for the removal of a book called This Book is Gay from the school's library. This heinous menace of violence and death to students and educators has brought debates about book banning to the forefront of the Iowa City Communi-

ty School District (ICCS).

Several Iowa bills have been passed in recent months banning books with explicit sexual content, racial themes, and LGBTQ+ characters...

Story continued on **A8**



New Astronomy Club to Design Solar System Scale Model

By Tai **Caputo**

As a five-year-old, Kaden Huntley '25 was so fascinated by space that he gave a report on black holes for the Willowwind School Talent Show. Now, the sophomore is the founder of the new Astronomy Club, which has embarked upon a project to make a scale model of the solar system on the City High

lawn.

Members of the Astronomy Club hope the scale model will give students an idea of the vastness of the universe.

"We want to educate the community," Huntley said. "Space is so much bigger than..."

Story continued on **A4**



Hello reader,

It's your executives, Lauren & Rose one final time.
We'd like to thank all of you for reading The Little Hawk this year.

I'm (Lauren) so proud of my future baby execs and all of the hard work they put in this year. I'm also so grateful for my amazing team of reporters (shoutout Isaac Bullwinkle) for all the laughs and journalism field trips we had together. I'm very confident that I'm leaving The Little Hawk in excellent hands.

I'll (Rose) be staying with you as an Exec for next year, but Lauren is LEAVING me. :(

I am so excited for next years group and our future works, at this time I'd like to introduce you guys to the two other executives that'll be joining me for next school year.

With love,



Hey reader!
(For the first time..)

Long time, no see! We are so sad to report that our beloved couch in room 2109 is no longer with us. On another note, we are so happy to be here writing our very first letter from the editors as Execs. We would love to introduce ourselves to y'all:

Hey! I'm Esther. I will be your new Website Executive for this coming year. I will also be in my second year as your A&E Editor. I am super excited to be an Exec as it's been a dream of mine for awhile now. A bit about me: I love Amy Winehouse, reading, and playing my instruments.

This is a public service announcement Hey pookies! I'm Wisdom and I'm thrilled to be writing this very first letter from the editors as an Exec. (This will be my 2nd year as your Culture Editor as well!) Being an executive is something I saw to happen for my future and it happened! YAY! A little bit about me is that I love Ice Spice, the color pink, and everything cute!

See you next year,



City Responds to Transphobic Legislation

By Isaac Bullwinkle

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“Kim Reynolds is pushing this legislative genocide and it’s accomplishing nothing. There are so many other things that are actually affecting kids and she’s hiding behind the facade of ‘oh, I’m doing it for the kids,’ but she’s just pushing her religiously affiliated, conservative political bias onto 3000 students in Iowa, and that’s ridiculous,” said Seebeck.

In response to the restroom-restriction bill, City High Principal John Bacon released a statement via email in support of trans and non-binary students affected, while also immediately making four all-gender individual use restrooms accessible to students in order to facilitate a safe and comfortable restroom environment for those restricted by the law.

Laine Forbes ‘24, a non-binary student at City, supports this direct action taken by administrators but raised concerns about potential misuse of these restrooms, a sentiment also shared by Seebeck.

“Unlocking the bathrooms was a great idea and although they’ll get abused, I think that’s a solvable problem. I think that if they end up locking the bathrooms, it’s just not helpful; they locked the other gender neutral bathrooms already before because of students misusing them, but that’s not our fault -- that’s not trans and non-binary kids’

faults -- so I think that if they can figure out a way to have the bathrooms be unabused, they’ll have done a great job” said Forbes.

While the former bill relating to restroom access has taken effect immediately, doctors and their patients affected by the latter bill, which would effectively force transgender people under the age of 18 to ‘detransition,’ have been given a six-month period in which gender-affirming care is still legal under Iowa law before it is criminalized later this year. Following this sixth-month period, medical transgender childcare will essentially be illegal; Seebeck believes this may force those restricted by the bill to resort to greatly suboptimal measures.

“A friend told me that he wants to seek out of state care in Illinois, hopefully along the border, so it’s only like an hour and a half away. And potentially then looking at options of getting his testosterone mailed in,” he said.

As an additional response to the passing of this legislation, students have since organized two walkouts protesting rampant transphobia in Iowa and US politics.

“ULTIMATELY KNOWLEDGE IS POWER AND POWER IS WHAT CHANGES THE WORLD”

Laine Forbes ‘24

“We as students have a voice and a power to skip school and show the government that our grades are affected because of them. And when we do that as an entire school, it’s so important because that’s when things get done,” Forbes said.

Forbes did, however, express the importance of continued and prolonged activism -- the walkouts are important, but their sentiments must be continually sustained if a reversal of policy is the goal.

“With the new legislation, there’s two walkouts already, but I think that you can’t just have it be twice and then the activism be over because that doesn’t do anything. A few years ago with the climate strikes they had them every week, and we don’t do that

with the LGBTQ walkouts, which just may not be productive.”

In addition to positive policy efforts from administrators and direct political activism, Seebeck and Forbes believe all students at City can play a pivotal role in making school a safe and comfortable environment for trans and non-binary students.

“I think students can help by educating each other and by trying to cut back on any transphobic sentiments or anything that

happens with each other because peer review is important and works -- just education on what being transgender actually is and the struggles that go along with it as well as how to support people with things like name and pronouns,” Seebeck said.

Forbes believes education especially regarding the experiences of transgender and non-binary people are of tantamount importance.

“Listening to trans and non-binary people is so important. If we want to talk to you and you want to learn, let us teach you because ultimately knowledge is power and power is what changes the world,” they said.



TOP LEFT: South East Students join the walkout at City High.

TOP RIGHT: Pastor David Berger Germann speaks out at College Green Park.

BOTTOM LEFT: Mayor Bruce Teague speaks to students.

BOTTOM RIGHT: A large group of students shows up to College Green Park for the walkout.

PHOTOS BY LILY MOESSNER



Yielding To Questions: City High Model United Nations Attends Annual State Conference

The Model United Nations team conference held at the University of Northern Iowa.



Model UN group representing Algeria and Belarus pose in front of their country's respective flags. PHOTO BY STEVE DODGE

By Kate Meis and Claire Hartwig

As a storm brews in the sky above the University of Northern Iowa's campus, delegates from high schools all over Iowa as well as Platteville, Wisconsin are gathered in Maucker Union to make amendments and resolutions.

"Model UN is a group open to anyone, and each school participating in the spring convention has a country or two, and picks a topic to work on and solve according to your country's policies and actions. After research, you go to a

convention at the end of the year and discuss with different schools who have different countries about your shared topics. You discuss the country's policies and relationships through standard United Nations practice, which is what Model UN is based or modeled on," Hazel Boerner '26 said.

This was Boerner's first year in the club, working on the Political and Security council representing Albania. Boerner and her partner Lily Rantanen were focused on what previous actions Albania had taken regarding the two topics ad-

dressed in their individual position papers.

"Model UN is a club with the goal of making kids aware of what the United Nations does through practice," Marty Powers '25 also joined Model UN this year, focusing on Belarus' stance in the Legal Committee. He was representing the country on the topic of codifying crimes against humanity and regulations on multinational companies.

"The legal committee's purpose is to figure out legal discrepancies and things that most countries

don't agree on, and figure out a way to come to a consensus on those issues," Powers said.

Both Boerner and Powers were intrigued by the people involved, learning about the United Nations. Additionally Boerner had shown previous interest in the club years prior, and was mainly interested in problem solving and finding diplomatic solutions.

"I'm a UN enthusiast. I like all that stuff. It's really interesting to me, geopolitics. It's fun because you get to talk with actual other people about it, and you get to

find out about ideas and you get to find other perspectives that you wouldn't necessarily agree with, but you get to understand them better," Powers said.

"It's a really confusing process, but overall a low commitment. It's super fun and horizon-broadening, and I totally recommend looking at the UN's work and mission. Also trying out Model UN, it's an amazing opportunity and very chaotic in a fun, you don't really know what's going on initially, but in the first hour of meetings, you start to get it,"

New Tennis Court Opening Delayed Due To Construction Error

The opening of City's long-awaited Tennis Courts have been delayed.

By Kate Meis

"Love-all" is heard on the courts just down the hill from City High's new addition as players from the boys junior varsity team begin practicing on courts with smudged paint and hard to see lines.

The new City High tennis courts were finished in the winter season of 2022 and the courts were to be released to the public when the paint applied to the courts were ruined due to rainy weather. Hoover Elementary was demolished and then transformed into additional parking and the tennis courts.

"The courts were supposed to start being used in spring for the full season. But we discovered in



New tennis courts before being repaired for delayed opening. PHOTO BY KATE MEIS

late February that the paint had not stuck. So, we had to postpone it," Chip Hardesty said.

For the courts, a special kind of paint is used and has to be applied and dried for 48 hours with temperatures no less than 50 degrees. Varsity practices at

the University of Iowa courts, the Hawkeye Tennis and Recreation center.

"Once it gets warm enough, they'll have to grind off the excess paint and then repaint it. I hope by early summer the courts would be available for the public and us."

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Astronomy Club Embarks on Scale Model Mission

The club begins designing solar system scale model for the City High lawn

By Tai Caputo

As a five-year-old, Kaden Huntley '25 was so fascinated by space that he gave a report on black holes for the Willowwind School Talent Show. Now, the sophomore is the founder of the new Astronomy Club, which has embarked upon a project to make a scale model of the solar system on the City High lawn.

Members of the Astronomy Club hope the scale model will give students an idea of the vastness of the universe.

"We want to educate the community," Huntley said. "Space is so much bigger than all of us. It's like the biggest thing. When you look up there, you realize how small you are. No matter what happens to humans, or what happens to you, nothing is really going to change up there."

Huntley was inspired by the scale model of the solar system in Mount Vernon. An astronomer located the Sun at Cornell College. Different planets are marked at local buildings and signs, with the

dwarf planet, Pluto, positioned approximately five miles away.

Principal John Bacon provided the Astronomy Club with a \$500 budget for materials. The Club received a lumber donation from Gilcrest Jewett, and it is also collaborating with woodshop and art classes. The Club plans to finish the proof of concept this May and begin the real scale model next year.

Huntley organized the club this year, inspired by his long-standing interest in outer space.

"I've always liked outer space," Huntley said. "Humans have not completely conquered Earth, but we're pretty close to getting there. So, space is the new thing. It's similar to how old explorers would use boats and go around the world, but now we're using spaceships and going to other planets and discovering all these cool things about our solar system and universe."

"At first, I thought [the Club] was going to be a very easy thing to do," Huntley said. "Not easy, exactly, but I thought in terms of



Astronomy Club begins 3D modeling the design for their model solar system. PHOTO BY TAI CAPUTO

the teaching side of things, I'd just come up with a slideshow and present that. But I've learned it was much more complex than that. I think it's better to be a lot more interactive."

Amelia Wolfe '25, said that in Astronomy Club, there are more group activities than in the average club. She described the Astronomy Club as "Surprisingly fun. Most of the other clubs that I've been in aren't doing big projects like this. So it's a cool club. The people that come to this club are also really nice."

Wolfe emphasized the importance of group members' feedback and input into the club. "[Our project] takes a lot more work than one might expect," Wolfe said. "So it's necessary to contribute ideas and feedback and stuff. And just putting in your opinions and contributing to the club itself."

Huntley said since starting the club this year, he has learned a lot about the processes behind long-term projects, and about how hard it is to be a teacher.

The Ambassador Program Opens Applications

Ms. Lewers becomes the program's new advisor

By Kate Meis

Outfitted in the program's classic red jackets the City High Ambassadors are ready to assist in many of the events happening on campus. As applications for the 2023-24 school year open to sophomores and juniors, the program's new advisor also takes the lead.

"The ambassador program is a way for students to be involved in representing the school at different functions and events. [Like] this summer there's going to be seven scheduled alumni tours, so it's nice when a couple of students who know the building can show them around and point out all the changes that have happened over the years. So ambassadors greet people and help with seating at school plays, band concerts, choir concerts, and with back to school nights or new student registration," Lewers said.

As Mrs. Lewers steps into a position as the program's advisor; she plans to change both how students get into the program, and how events will be organized among the students involved. This year students no longer interview to become ambassadors, instead filling out a form and getting three teacher endorsements. Additionally, Lewers wants to utilize more technology with email and an ambassador Canvas page.

"I used to help with the football concessions. I always chaperoned homecoming, and for a long time, I organized proms and worked with the Student Senate and a team of juniors to plan and put on prom. I



Courtesy Ambassadors

gave that up a few years ago, but now that both of my kids graduated from City High and they're out of the house now I figured this would be a good thing for me to stay involved and meet more students at the school," Lewers added.

Lewers is hoping to take student suggestions this upcoming year, and see what they want for the program. She hopes to go with what students are interested in as she continuously encourages their involvement.

"When students come from like a different school or a different state or even a different country, and they go to the guidance office to register then right away they're connected with a peer who knows the school, who's an ambassador, who shows them around the school, but more importantly, just kind of makes them feel like they have a familiar face," Lewers said.

International Club and Latino Hawks Plan Culture Day

The event will display fashion, food, and art from around the world

By Sadie Bodzin

For months, the International Club and Latino Hawks have planned a day to showcase City High students' culture through fashion, food, and sharing information about their culture. After almost a year of brainstorming, Culture Day will finally be held at City High on Friday, May 12.

Jeanica Mbuyi '25, Wisdom Konu '24, Helena Echa '24, Roseangel Flores-Rubio '24, and Miamen Elawad '25 are the student leaders behind the event, and are planning on holding a fashion show, a board decoration showcase, and having students show up to school dressed in their personal cultural traditional clothing. The fashion show will be held in Opstad Auditorium during advisory and the board decorations will be just outside in the Opstad lobby.

"I'm incredibly excited about culture day," Mr. Bacon said. "I think it's important because we have so many different awesome cultures."

Through culture day, students and staff alike are hoping to inform others about the different cultures and backgrounds of City High students.

"It's an opportunity to learn a lot and kind of broaden our worldview and bring us together," Mr. Bacon said.

Many students expressed interest in the event, Yomi Hemley '25, has experienced a Culture Day before and is excited City



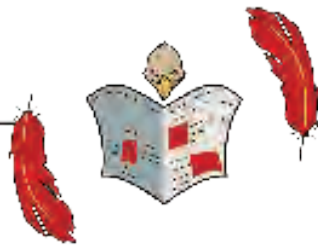
Courtesy Creative Commons

High is having one of their own.

"I used to live in Singapore, and everyone was incredibly diverse. My school had culture day and everyone participated and it made everyone feel included," Hemley said.

Students who are interested in participating in the Culture Day can get involved in the fashion show or board presentation as well as showing up to school in their personal cultural clothing.

"Students need to understand that there is never a right or wrong way--it is okay to be different," Mrs. McTaggart, the advisor of both clubs, said. "We can learn and grow together."



Renowned Choral Director Timothy Brown Makes Second Visit to City Choirs

By Esther Puderbaugh

“Would you please sing this for everyone?” asks famed choral director Timothy Brown to a person in the back of the choir class.

This year, Brown has made his second visit to the choir program at City. Coming off of 31 years as the Director of Music at Clare College, University of Cambridge, Brown, lauded as one of the best living choral conductors, has been traveling and working with various choral ensembles around the world, among other projects.

“I thought this community in particular would appreciate [working with Mr. Brown]; and so I emailed him and just said ‘would you be available during this timeframe?’” said City High Choral Director Tyler Hagy of Mr. Brown’s first visit that happened last school year.

Hagy met Brown during his Masters Degree program at the University of Cambridge.

“I just happened kind of randomly to turn up in the chapel at Robinson College one day to audition for the choir,” Hagy said. “[I] auditioned and was accepted to sing in the choir that year. And so through that time as part of the course I had to have some conducting opportunities with the choir, [and] Mr. Brown, in many ways, became one of the biggest mentor figures I had in Cambridge.”

Brown’s first visit resonated deeply with the choir students at City.

“After he left last year, there were actually several students that still would talk about him, and still did throughout this entire year. We were very eager to see him again,” Hagy said. “Out of all the conductors I’ve ever worked with, he’s one of maybe two that can get the choir to sing in the way that he wants the quickest. But also the personality that he brings, particularly to the work and

to the community of singers, I think is really special. Mr. Brown is a very curious person, and so he really enjoys knowing people and meeting people and learning about them.”

Brown enjoys visiting different choirs around the world partly because of the unique experience of meeting people different to him who have similar interests.

“I’ve always loved coming to America, simply because I’m learning [about] a different sort of country,” Brown said. “You behave in a different way. Not better or worse, but just differently. Your attitude towards music and your attitude towards each other is different. It’s a lovely atmosphere to work in, and particularly this year all the choirs have been very responsive. It’s always good to have other conductors in because the students can say ‘Gosh I don’t like the way he does that. Mr. Hagy does that much better’ or ‘That’s interesting. That’s an idea worth remembering’. Education is a cumulative experience of taking on board different attitudes and different things.”

Brown believes students who partake in musical ensembles in American schools to be incredibly lucky.

“In England, we don’t have school classes in choir or orchestra. And so any choir or orchestra [there] is in spare time. If there’s nobody in the school interested in running a choir, it doesn’t happen. And increasingly that’s the case in England,” Brown said. “I don’t think Americans realize how privileged you are to have school music in the way that you do, and I don’t think English people realize how unlucky they are.”

Between this year and last, Brown has noticed a shift in the mood of the choirs.

“It has been particularly interesting coming back this year because last year so many people were masked,” Brown said. “[Now], everyone’s much more open, and the singing is more open which is really interesting. People are now beginning to, as it were, count



Brown conducts Concert Choir at the Cathedral Concert. PHOTO BY ESTHER PUDEURBAUGH

the cost of COVID, and realizing what damage it did to people socially.”

In rehearsals, Brown is known to pick out individual singers to work with.

“I’ll be listening to a rehearsal, and I’ll pluck somebody out and say ‘Come and sing for me,’” Brown said. “In fact, in Cambridge, the choir asked me to do a workshop. And they were singing a piece of Tallis and it was just slightly hesitant, not kind of moving. I identified [someone in the choir], and I sensed that he probably had more voice than he was using. And I’m a bit naughty because I tend to pick on people and some people say ‘You shouldn’t do that’. But I got him to stand up and sing on his own, and I realized that he wasn’t making very much sound so I said ‘Come on, sing out’. And that one voice singing made the others sing out. So he was in a sense single handedly responsible for lifting them to a place where they could really work, and then they sang it to me and it was beautiful. That’s part of it: trying to identify individuals and help them help themselves.”

Choir student Joe Fullenkamp ‘24 has enjoyed his time working with Brown this year.

“When I was in the UK, I met Mr. Brown and he’s been one of my favorite choir people,” Fullenkamp said. “He gives some of the best advice, and he’s always alive with energy. You’re always engaged in what he’s teaching and what he’s trying to help you with. And by the end of every day that we have with him, our choir sounds really beautiful.”

With all of his experience working with many ensembles around the globe, including some of the most renowned groups, Brown believes music to be a truly unifying experience.

“It goes beyond music as well because I’ve made so many friends through music, through singing,” Brown said. “For many of the students here, they’re meeting somebody from a different culture, and they’ve never been to Europe but now they know somebody there. And so I’m sure I shall meet some of the students in Europe in the years to come.”

Mamma Mia in Photos



Mary Cate Pugh ‘23, Mara Maas ‘23, and Avery Provorse ‘24 perform as Donna and the Dynamites in the spring musical, Mamma Mia. PHOTOS BY ESTHER PUDEURBAUGH





City High Orchestra Performs 42nd Annual Dessert Concert

By Tai Caputo

Wednesday, March 29's Dessert Concert was not a typical City High Orchestra event. Members of the three orchestras garnished their usual black outfits with glittering red accents. They performed not their standard classical pieces but soundtrack highlights from Broadway musicals.

Ticket buyers for this annual fundraiser were treated with candy and unpopped popcorn to enjoy at home.

Megan Stucky-Swanson, Orchestra Director at City High, said that the Dessert Concert is "probably one of the main concerts that the students and parents and community look forward to. Not everybody is a fan of classical music or understands it, but most people can relate to the music, some of the music at least, that's performed in the Dessert Concert, because it's more recognizable, therefore I think more people enjoy it."

This year's theme, *Bravo to Broadway*, was chosen by Stucky-Swanson and approved by students. "I often ask students for their input. This year I chose the theme of *Bravo to Broadway*, and then asked students, 'What music would you like to see or play in this concert?' and I chose the repertoire this year based on their sug-

gestions. And so each year looks a little different."

The fundraiser brings in revenue each year from ticket sales and contributions, and helps fund orchestra costs.

"We do get some money from the Music Auxiliary, and the District, but it's never enough," Stucky-Swanson said. "So this helps offset some of the things we need to buy, and we're able to do that."

The event is called the Dessert Concert because afterwards there is usually a dessert reception. However, after the COVID-19 pandemic, the reception has changed.

"Typically, the dessert concert is followed by a large reception in the cafeteria," Stucky-Swanson said. "We typically have cupcakes, coffee, punch, and a jazz combo from City plays. Everyone mingles and listens to live jazz and enjoys a post-concert celebration with treats. And since COVID, we haven't been able to do that, so we've changed it a little bit to make little take-home boxes with goodies. I think we're anxious to get back to the reception part of it again!"

Stucky-Swanson discussed the ways in which pop music requires different skill sets than classical music does.

"Typically, pop music or show tunes or rock music is actually



Students in Symphony Orchestra smile after their performance of the final piece of the night: a medley of tunes from the musical *Phantom of the Opera*. PHOTO BY ESTELLE HARTZ

trickier than what students think it'll be, because the rhythms are often very tricky," Stucky-Swanson said. "And it isn't necessarily easy to sightread or play accurately, in the beginning. So it takes a little bit different focus to be able to execute pop music well, because it's so rhythmically tricky."

Sam Glass '25, a cellist in the Philharmonic Orchestra, said that he enjoyed having the opportunity to play non-classical music in a classical setting.

"We're able to have a lot more fun with it," Glass said. "I feel like I don't have to sit as stiffly. We can put movement into some of our

playing; I was bouncing in my seat for *Master of the House* from *Les Mis*. It's a bit more exciting music to play—not that it's not exciting, but it's so different, that we're able to have a lot more fun with it."

Glass discussed the different types of challenges.

"Creating cohesion as an ensemble and making sure everyone was working in unison and playing together making sure the different parts meshed [were some challenges in preparing for the Dessert Concert]," Glass said. "We had some more challenging rhythms than we generally do in classical works, and different sections other

than the first violins were featured a lot more, so we (the cello section) had to learn to adapt to getting the melody for half the piece, or quieting down a lot so you could hear the violas."

Glass emphasized his love of the orchestra community.

"Our community—this is especially what I love about being in [the] Philharmonic [Orchestra]," Glass said. "The cello section, we talk to each other, we hang out. I have a lot of friends in orchestra, so we all feel very comfortable with each other, and I think that improves our ability to play, so we're all friends."

Jazz Ensemble Wraps Up Competition Season at State

By Matisse Arnone

The turn of the seasons from winter to spring signals lots of changes in the air. In addition to new sports and warmer weather, it is also a sign that the jazz competition season is coming to an end. After four competitive performances spanning two months, the City High Jazz Ensemble had their final competition at the State Jazz Championships after placing second in the SEIBA district competition. Janie Owens '25 is in Jazz Ensemble for the first time this year, and she has

Marcus Miller '23 solos during a Jazz Ensemble performance at the Liberty Jazz Festival.
PHOTO COURTESY OF EDWARD KENYON



seen everyone in the group step up to the increased level of difficulty that the music presents.

"I think it takes more focus to get through some of the songs, and you just have to think about what you're doing and be exactly precise with what you're doing," Owens said.

Director Aaron Ottmar has also noticed his members stepping up to the challenge and performing well against tough competition this year.

"It's very competitive for sure, but I would say our groups are doing a nice job and we're in a very good spot," Ottmar said. "I keep preaching to folks that we don't want to be complacent and to keep finding things to refine and polish."

One of the biggest challenges that Ottmar has seen jazz bands of the past face is accepting the level at which they perform. Because the bands play the same music the entire year, he says that it is easy to fall into a rut and stop trying to improve anymore. He has seen this year's group take ownership of the feedback they get from judges after performances and work to get better.

"It's hard when you play the same music over and over to try and find new things, but that's why we like listening to judges, and seeing what feedback they have," Ottmar said. "I think next-level musicians are always able to find something that they can keep working on, and get that much more nit-picky. You get the big picture, and then from that point, you keep zoning in on what's most important and keep tweaking things so it's polished."

Finding a new mindset about the music performance has helped Maya Bennett '23 play through the entire season. She views every time she plays the music as a new chance to interpret the performance of it differently.

"I think that every time you perform, it's a little bit of a different experience, whether that be the space that we're performing in, the audience, or the energy we have. Ottmar is

also really good at choosing exciting charts that we can make our own throughout the season," Bennett said.

To prepare for competitions, Ottmar likes to make recordings with his groups so that they can be self-reflective as opposed to just responding to what other people tell them to do. In addition to the opportunity to perform in a new environment, he sees going to competitions as extremely beneficial to students' growth as musicians.

"Some people would say that competitions are not good, and I think there are certain aspects that may not be always helpful, but what I do like, especially with the festivals that we go to, is that you get a lot of great feedback from high-quality musicians and educators," Ottmar says. "I don't worry as much about the place or the trophy, it's all about how you grow as a musician so that's why I like taking students to a lot of different places."

Bennett agrees with the benefits of competition and also thinks that it can be incredibly motivating to see other groups from across the state get to show off the jazz programs at their schools, too.

"We get to hear other schools in the same division or higher division, and that exposes us to musical diversity in instruments and skill," Bennett said. "I think that's been beneficial for us and the jazz program."

The benefits of competition came to fruition after City High placed 6th out of 15 bands in class 4A, including beating West High whom they had previously lost to. More than anything, though, Ottmar hopes that his students learn to care less about the trophies and the places and more about the experience of getting to play with other passionate high school musicians.

"I think probably most importantly, my opinion is that competitions create wonderful memories for lots of students that they'll have with them for a long time," Ottmar said.



The Little Hawk

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Mission Statement

The Little Hawk, student journalism newspaper and website of City High School, aims to inform, educate, and entertain readers. LH journalists follow the code of the journalist by seeking truth, doing no harm, being independent, and working toward balance in all news stories. All student voices are encouraged to be part of an LH journalism class. To join the class talk to your guidance counselor today.

Letters to the editor may be submitted to: LittleHawkPage@gmail.com

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ART BY ROSANGEL FLORES RUBIO

Why Book Banning Is Bad for Education

LITTLE HAWK STAFF EDITORIAL

Lead Writer:
Tai Caputo

YES
10

NO
0

Two bomb threats at Northwest Junior High School on March 23rd and 24th accompanied the demand for the removal of a book called *This Book is Gay* from the school’s library. This heinous menace of violence and death to students and educators has brought debates about book banning to the forefront of the Iowa City Community School District (ICCSO).

Several Iowa bills have been passed in recent months banning books with explicit sexual content, racial themes, and LGBTQ+ characters. These bills come among at a turning point in education and politics in the state: last year the Iowa legislature banned critical race theory (which contextualizes modern-day racial inequality, and holds that non-white people are at a disadvantage in western society due to their race) and more recently, Governor Reynolds passed a bill that requires transgender students to use the bathrooms that accord with the gender that was assigned to them at birth. These bills, which are backed almost exclusively by conservative politicians, serve as a potent example of the increasing political polarization in

the State of Iowa.

Book banning has a long history in the United States and around the world. It is typically associated with tyrannical dictatorships, ranging from Victorian Era sexual prudishness to Nazi Germany’s flagrant book burnings. But the 1st Amendment of the U.S. Constitution also protects free speech and expression. This is why the recent book bans in the state of Iowa are particularly disturbing. The fact that the current Iowa Legislature allows and encourages the censorship of literature in schools is frankly shocking.

A new bill likely to pass in the coming month will make it possible for anyone in any part of Iowa to challenge a book that will then be removed everywhere in the state. Any teacher or librarian who recommends a banned book to a student will be fined \$25,000 per instance. Some teachers feel that the bill severely limits the pool of available literature. Books that have already been banned in Iowa include: *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*, by Sherman Alexie, *Me and Earl and the Dying Girl* by Jesse Andrews, and *Gender Queer: A Memoir* by Maia Kobabe.

The recent book bans will have many harmful effects on the community. Students who belong to minority groups will have a more difficult time finding books with characters and themes that mirror their personal experiences. Books should portray the reality of a school, not a whitewashed version of it. 48% of City High’s student population belongs to a racial minority group, and the same is true of the rest of the ICCSD. Perhaps more importantly, students benefit immensely from reading books about people who do not look or think like them. This helps create empathy and tolerance, and fosters a strong community of mutual acceptance. Books challenge readers by taking them out of their day-to-day lives to consider what it would be like to be someone else.

Censorship in any form is severely damaging to the community in which it takes place. Complete regulation of information is nearly impossible in the era of widely accessible internet and social media. But books, unlike the internet—whose algorithms direct consumers to topics and opinions with which they are already familiar—are not

echo chambers. Books—especially books that discuss complex and real-world material—prevent their readers from becoming ignorant and complacent in a world in which ignorance and complacency have been proven to be very dangerous. The reason students learn history is so that they can try to avoid mistakes that people made in the past. Books provide knowledge that is similar to history but through a multitude of different lenses. There is a common saying in education that “Knowledge is Power.” Knowledge is more than power; it changes the way we see the world, informs every decision we make, and increases the significance of our existence.

While some advocates of the bill claim that it will help to protect children and teenagers from supposedly harmful information, opponents say that it will prevent them from learning about other ways of thinking. If students are not exposed to other ways of thinking within the safety of the school environment, what will they do when they inevitably encounter those ideas in college and in the complex world outside of school?



Sexual Education: Questions Unanswered



ART BY NATALIE KUHLMANN

By Natalie Kuhlmann

According to the US department of health, 1 out of every 100 teenage women (15-19 years old) gets pregnant every year in the United States. 50% of those women drop out of school and never receive a high school diploma. Because of this, teenage mothers are more likely to fall into the grips of poverty and rely on welfare; and two-thirds of families living in poverty were started by young, unmarried mothers. Why? Because a majority of those pregnancies were conceived by women that never got proper education on pregnancy prevention methods, contraception resources, or even education about their own bodies.



Just about everyone has been through a health class whether it was in elementary school, middle school, and/or high school. For most people in the United States, the health curriculum taught them to never have sex unless they did, and in that case to use a condom. As I've gotten older, however, I've learned through parents, friends, and even

the internet about all of the valuable information that falls short in our current education system - especially for anyone with a uterus.

As a woman with one of my own (an organ that I knew little to nothing about thanks to my public sexual education), I was forced to turn to alternative methods of learning about my own body. Naturally, the first person I turned to was my mom, which, for many teenagers, is a shared experience.

"[My parents] taught me a lot more than health class," said Erin Anderson '23, a senior who has taken the required health class at City. "They taught me about ovulation and when you can get pregnant, and they talked about the negative side effects of birth control that were not discussed in class. They talked about other kinds of sexual health besides abstinence."

But what exactly is the content of the current sexual education curriculum? According to senior Sophie Stumbo '23, when it came to contraception, "We just learned about abstinence and condoms."

It is taught that condoms prevent pregnancy and STDs, but if you don't want to risk these terrible things, then never ever have sex in the first place. What isn't taught is that while condoms are an excellent way

to avoid STDs, they're only 86% effective in preventing pregnancy; however, pairing them with a hormonal birth control like the pill can increase its effectiveness to almost 100%. Knowledge like this is crucial, especially for adolescents who are most likely to use condoms as their primary form of contraception.

According to ICCSD's website, the current curriculum associated with sexual health for the high school health class includes "prevention and control of disease, including sexually transmitted diseases" and "human growth and development." What it doesn't include is information on the numerous other types of birth control, or in-depth information about anatomy and hormonal cycles. While teaching about abstinence, condoms, and the prevention of STDs is a good start, we need to do more.

This curriculum is not unique to just our school, or even our city or state. Across the country, less than effective sexual education is teaching students that they have two options when it comes to sex; when in fact, there are more and better choices like Long-Acting Reversible Contraception (LARC for short).

LARCs include the IUD and the implant. These are both low-maintenance forms of birth control with a 99% success rate when

it comes to preventing pregnancy. Depending on the type, these forms of LARCs can last up to 5 years. They both have the same effects as other forms of hormonal birth control like the pill with abilities to regulate periods, reduce acne, and other things that aren't related to sex.

Such types of birth control, among others, are excluded from our education and after asking my peers, I noticed that this is leading to a lack of understanding surrounding them. What little they did know about LARCs, they had mostly learned from friends or family. Information like this needs to be taught nationwide so that students understand their choices if interested.

Encouraging conversation about these options is massively beneficial for adolescents, especially since we are experiencing puberty which brings on an increased sex drive and the need to experiment. Teenagers should not learn to stifle their urges and curiosity, but instead they should get an education that helps them to answer questions about themselves: one that guides them through the confusing years of puberty. An education that, unlike the math equations that some of us might never use again or the science labs that seem so useless, will continue to affect us for the rest of our lives.



City's Laid-Back Dress Code is Aiding Students' Self Expression

By Catalina **Armstrong**

Dressing students has always been a controversial matter in high schools. Fashion in 2023 has progressively changed a lot over the years, and expression through clothing is very important to many students. The decision of the Iowa City Community School District to abolish the dress code policy has had a beneficial impact. The ICCSD is in charge of determining the dress code for our ICCSD schools and has worked to represent best practice in terms of respecting all body types and the viewpoints of expression in fashion.



have inspired teenagers to express themselves more in 2023 than ever. Expression through clothing includes expressing various identities and viewpoints. Society has pressed many rules and influences that young people feel they must follow to "fit in" which has caused additional stress on top of academic, extracurricular, and other responsibilities.

"Being comfortable in an environment where you often have to do things you aren't comfortable with I feel is really important," said Fitzpatrick. "A lot of students struggle with school and having another requirement of a dress code on top of that would just be too much."

A student's level of comfort with the clothing they wear to school can have a huge impact on how they perform in school. Furthermore, a study by Austin Community College found that the better people felt in their clothing at school, the better they did on assessments.

The ICCSD has made it possible for students to wear whatever they feel fits their physical appearance and personality best as long as their clothing doesn't have profanity. Elements of the dress code that are still in place are that students are not supposed to have clothes that have alcohol advertisements or marijuana on them.

Dress coding students for wearing outfits they feel secure and confident in has a big impact on their self image. Forcing

students to wear clothes that do not allow them to show who they are can have a negative effect on student's confidence and even academic success. The ICCSD and City High administration has done a successful job in making sure to support students' expression.

"We have learned that it's okay to just let people be themselves, and that it's not creating a crisis in our classrooms because somebody might choose to wear a certain garment a certain way," said Principal John Bacon.

One of the core ideas of a more laid back dress code is that everybody's bodies are different. Every body type has its own unique structure and fits into clothing pieces in its own distinct way. Therefore, schools should not have rules on dress coding students that have more skin showing than another.

"All different body types fit different clothes in different ways. And that's not really our place to be judgmental about that kind of thing," said Bacon.

Times have changed and fashion styles are developing every day. Clothing is much different than it was in the past, and peoples' expressions are too.

"In the year 2023, we want to be as inclusive and accepting of everybody as possible; with student's choice to express themselves in their clothing in the manner that they see fit," said Bacon.

THUMBS UP
THUMBS DOWN



- STARBUCKS REFRESHERS
- QUEENS OF THE COURT
- MORE PARKING
- SUMMER BREAK
- PROM
- CAITLYN CLARK EDITS
- LH JOURNALISM
- PICNICS
- CONCERTS
- MAMMA MIA



- AP TESTS
- FOOD SHORTAGE IN 2109
- HUMIDITY
- TIKTOK BAN
- NO MORE COUCH IN 2109
- INFLATION
- MET GALA THEME
- SEASONAL ALLERGIES
- CAR DAMAGE
- ADVISORY LESSONS
- WAR IN UKRAINE

City's 2023 Prom Theme: Midnight **Rose** Garden



By Wisdom **Konu**

Prom is slowly, but surely, blooming as the theme this year is rather rosy. The 2023 Prom theme at City High is Midnight Rose Garden. Here are some ideas on how you can nail the theme.



Rose comes in all shades. Pure white, yellow, pink, orange, red, lavender, plum purple, burgundy, and even green are all amiable options for an on-theme outfit. Although most colors technically fit for this theme, when thinking of roses, the more suitable shades of red and pink come to mind. Shades of dark and light greens would also fit best with the garden aspect of the theme.

For the Midnight Rose Garden theme, the naturecore or Cottagecore aesthetic also seems satisfactory. Both aesthetics revolve

around nature with the aesthetics centered on living in harmony with nature. Cottagecore has a naturalistic color palette with light green foliage, browns of natural stones and wood, straw, and flowers. Pastels are also common. Although cottagecore has been a controversial aesthetic because of its romanticism of Eurocentric farming life, it being an outlet for fantasy has been argued in opposition; where enjoyers of the aesthetic wish to incorporate it into their non-rural lives.

Fairycore, similar to Cottagecore, is another aesthetic that would coordinate nicely with the Midnight Rose Garden theme. Being another nature aesthetic, Fairycore is a fantasy-themed concept that centers predominantly around fairy and elf mythology. Color palettes of Fairycore are soft pastels and, overall, the aesthetic focuses on the beauty of nature: flowers, fairies, dresses, and femininity. In addition, classic gold and silver jewelry pairs well with any outfit for this theme.

Be the prettiest flower of the night, and come to prom with your best Midnight Rose Garden look!



CRUMBLING CLIMATE COURTENANCE



Arnone speaks on climate action at the US Capitol. PHOTO COURTESY OF MATISSE ARNONE

By Matisse Arnone

For most residents of Iowa City, it comes as somewhat of a shock to learn that the widely disliked Republican Congresswoman Representative Mariannette Miller-Meeks claims to be a champion for renewable energy in the state. Specifically, she has shown interest in Biochar use in Iowa Agriculture and recently introduced legislation to create a National Biochar Research Network. She has been quoted on how she supports an “all of the above” approach to solving challenges posed by climate change and attended COP this year as one of the 76 Republicans currently listed on the Conservative Climate Caucus. However, the bipartisanship that Miller Meeks portrays as a Republican working on Climate Solutions is not quite what it seems. The Conservative Climate caucus was formed with fossil fuel industry support and the Conservative Climate Foundation does not disclose its tax information publicly. I re-



cently got experience with this environmental shadiness firsthand after an attempt to work across the aisle on climate issues with Miller-Meeks staff. A few weeks ago, I had the opportunity to work closely with other teens from California as a part of the organization Schools For Climate Action. We were working on a draft of a Climate Education Resolution that was to be introduced into the US House by Representative Barbara Lee. They already had plenty of Democratic support in their initiative, but I was brought on to try and appeal the draft to Miller-Meeks because of her interest in climate change. Besides, what could be more bi-partisan when it comes to climate legislation than an Education Resolution? We knew that the bill was liberal going into it- it was written by Democrats- but we thought because the environment was something Miller-Meeks cared about, we would be able to work to find a compromise and turn it into something she could get behind. When we got her staffer on a call, she seemed optimistic about finding a way to work together on our Resolution. I was finally starting to get excited. Maybe it really was possible to have politicians work across the aisle on common sense climate reform.

Then Miller-Meeks staffer’s response came through and I was hit with shock and disappointment like a 5,000-ton train. “Sorry- not interested.” All of our care, time, consideration, and planning came down to that three-word response. That was all that we got back in an email from the Miller-Meeks staffer after our meeting where I had thought it had gone so well. The words cut as deep as a knife for me. Could she not see how much had gone into creating the proposal for her to not even try and work with us? We were trying to do something that would make our entire state and nation better. She proved that her claims of being climate-friendly only came into play when it suited her. Going into the meeting with her staffer, we all thought it had real potential because of the fact that we were her constituents. People from her district sharing a policy interest that came about as a result of our lived experience had to result in something special, right? But the message came back clearly about how “not interested” she really was. It was so easy to cast us aside and ignore us because of our “Iowa City liberal” ideology. Where we were from, which we had thought was a point of strength going into the meeting, ended up biting us on the tail.

This is not the way that politics has to work. Politicians are elected to serve the people they represent- all of the people they represent. We expected to have the resolution tweaked by Miller-Meeks staff, but there were policies we were willing to give up because that is what it means to compromise. We were not going to get everything we wanted from the resolution and we had accepted that because to us, working with a diverse base on such a broad issue was more important. Miller-Meeks had other ideas. She showed us her marked line in the sand that we should not cross with her and her like-minded “Conservative Climate Caucus” on one side and anyone who didn’t agree on the other. Even ideas that come from her constituents. When an elected official wins that you didn’t vote for, you still have a right to tell them how you feel about all issues on the table. They are elected to represent us, the citizens of Iowa. I will always hold firm to this idea, no matter how impactful I think I am being because that is how we maintain a fundamental part of our democracy. Everyone has the right and the responsibility to tell the people representing them how they feel about issues impacting them or vote them out of office.



2023's Met Gala: What Should Have Been

By Wisdom **Konu** and Esther **Puderbaugh**



The Met Gala is a prestigious fashion event, attended by celebrities from multiple industries, from film and television to music and social media. Guests are expected to coordinate their fashion to match the theme of the exhibit, which is generally haute couture. The event is an annual fundraising gala held for the benefit of the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Costume Institute in New York City. The gala is organized by the fashion magazine, Vogue, and the editor-in-chief of Vogue, Anna Wintour has chaired or co-chaired the Met Gala since 1995.

On May 2nd of 2022, the Met Gala theme was held in New York City and was entitled In America: An Anthology of Fashion, the second chapter of its two-part exhibition on American fashion to follow up last year's In America: A Lexicon of Fashion. Last year's theme was Gilded Glamour, White Tie. The theme Gilded Glamour pointed to the period of the Gilded Age, roughly 1870 to 1890. This year's theme has been announced as 'Karl Lagerfeld: A Line of Beauty' to honor the late Karl Lagerfeld, German fashion designer, who was known as the creative director of the French fashion house Chanel, a position held from 1983 until his death in February of 2019, and

was also creative director of Italian fashion house Fendi, and of his own nominative fashion label.

The clothing worn to the Met Gala influences fashion trends, and thus the theme of any given year has an effect on these trends. The theme is also a hot topic in the fashion community, and in public spheres. When this is coupled with Lagerfeld's problematic personal history, Karl Lagerfeld: A Line of Beauty is a poor choice of theme. Some of Lagerfeld's most memorable quotes come from his thoughts on the #MeToo Movement. At one point he said, "What shocks me most are the starlets who have taken 20 years to remember what happened." Lagerfeld's quotes on German Chancellor Angela Merkel opening up the country to migrants also landed him in hot water. "One cannot -- even if there are decades between them -- kill millions of Jews so you can bring millions of their worst enemies in their place," Lagerfeld told a talk show. Lagerfeld shared more of his thoughts on the matter with this quote: "I know someone in Germany who took a young Syrian and after four days said, 'The greatest thing Germany invented was the Holocaust.'" Lagerfeld also has a long history of criticizing women. He called model Heidi Klum "too heavy", singer Adele "a little too fat", and the late Princess Diana "stupid"; as well as stating that Coco Chanel wasn't "ugly enough" to be a feminist. Lagerfeld, a gay man, was also against gay marriage.

The choice to make the Met Gala theme something to honor the late Lagerfeld is a confusing choice given his problematic history. If they wanted to honor a late designer, there would have been better options. Multiple renowned fashion designers have



ART BY WISDOM KONU

passed, who have massively contributed to the fashion world, including legendary designers Thierry Mugler, Paco Rabbanne, Mary Quant, and Issey Miyake.

Designer Virgil Abloh passed away in the late autumn of 2021 from cancer that he had kept private. Owner and founder of luxury street-style brand, Off-White, and former artistic director Louis Vuitton menswear, Abloh's impact on fashion is undeniable. His unique vision for street style will be felt for years to come. In addition to his designing career, Abloh used his influence to fundraise for multiple charitable causes, including starting his own scholarship fund for Black fashion students.

Legendary fashion designer, Vivienne

Westwood, named the Queen of Punk, left us on December 29, 2022. She was largely responsible for bringing modern punk and new wave fashion into the mainstream fashion world. Vivienne defined the look of punk with her fashion appearing on supermodels and celebrities, influencing our current mainstream fashion. Throughout her life, Vivienne was a vocal political activist, showing that through her collections, shouting about injustice through her fashion. While it's great to honor designers who have passed away, Lagerfeld was ultimately an inappropriate and bad choice for this year's Met; and if the Met Gala were to do a theme after someone, there are a multitude of other legendary designers to pick from.

Top Five Songs to Get You Through Heartbreak

By Grace **Kirschling**

High school is a time for growth, change, and preparing teens for the real world. In your teenage years, your emotions are heightened and the smallest change may feel drastic. Failing a test may feel devastation, a break up may feel like the end of the world, but I can promise you that life goes on. Turning to music can impact the mindset immensely in this situation. I present you with my top five songs for a breakup.

"1 step forward, 3 steps back" -



SOUR - Olivia Rodrigo

This song starts out as if she is speaking to herself, reflecting on time that has passed with her partner. It seems sad, but it represents progress and growth. Though she questions the relationship, she recognizes her emotions.

"Never doubted myself so much, Like, am I pretty? Am I fun, boy? I hate that I give you power over that kind of stuff 'Cause it's always one step forward and three steps back", Rodrigo sings.

Not everyday after the event will you feel sad, or like you are missing your partner. Slowly, day by day, you'll take a few steps forward, but some days it will feel like you are taking steps backwards. It's a part of the process.

Rome wasn't built in a day.

"Exile" - Folklore- Taylor Swift ft. Bon Iver

This song is a back and forth between what seems to be post relationship point of views.

"I can see you standing, honey With his arms around your body Laughin', but the joke's not funny at all," Bon Iver sings.

To me, it feels like he has come to a realization that he made the wrong decision and is full of regret. Taylor Swift then responds by counteracting what he's saying, and it feels like she has moved on.

"I can see you starin', honey Like he's just your understudy, Like you'd get your knuckles bloody for me," Swift sings.

This song makes you wonder how the other person feels, and helps you put aside your own emotions at this time. A breakup goes both ways, whether or not you'd like to believe it.

"Good News" - Circles - Mac Miller

Where do I begin with this song? You may think I'm crazy for thinking this is a breakup song, but I feel as if it symbolizes waiting for something good to happen to you after a storm.

"I know maybe I'm too late, I could make it there some other time I'll finally discover that there's a whole lot more for me waiting," Mac Miller's lyrics read.

After a breakup, you may feel like nothing good is coming to you, you can feel flat and broken, but this song has had a tendency to create uplifting and hopeful dreams of something better waiting for you.

"With a little help from my friends" - Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club - The Beatles

Just like the title says, with a little help from your friends, and surrounding yourself with the people and things that make you happy is so crucial in a time like a breakup. The upbeat instrumental and positive lyrics still have meaning behind them.

"Would you believe in love at first sight? Yes, I'm certain that it happens all the time, What do you see when you turn out the light? I can't tell you, but I know it's mine, Oh, I get by with a little help from my friends," the lyrics read.

While coping with a change such as a breakup, it is important to find ways to let your brain release dopamine. This is because when you listen to sad music, it can release chemicals in your brain that help you to cope. Your mind is very powerful, so be kind to it, give it a little dopamine.

"I miss you, I'm sorry" - minor -

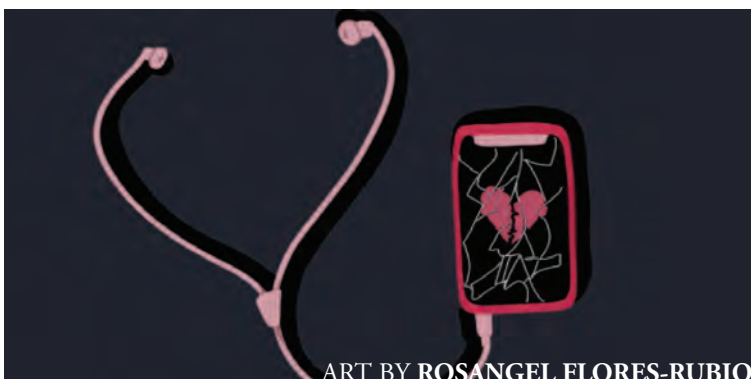
Gracie Abrams

Do NOT listen to this song if you are not willing to cry. I say this with my whole heart behind it. Gracie Abrams has a way of bringing you back to reality through her lyrics.

"You said, 'Forever, ' in the end I fought it, Please be honest, are we better for it? Thought you'd hate me, but instead you called, And said, 'I miss you', I caught it," Abrams sings.

Abrams' lyrics remind me of the feeling of waiting around, missing the person you once felt so comfortable with. Missing your ex partner is not a crime, it's an important part of the growth process. While listening to this song, I like to take time and reflect on how I have changed, and how much this person has affected me. It reminds me that it's okay to miss that person, and it's okay to grow.

Breakups are inevitable, but when it happens, it's important to find support in things around you like music, friends, and activities. Take this time to focus on yourself, work on growth and improvement. It's wonderful to take steps forward, but remember, it's okay to take a couple backwards. You can find safety, comfort, acceptance and love in so many other things. So release a little dopamine, lean on friends, take time for yourself. You've got this.



ART BY ROSANGEL FLORES-RUBIO



The Spelltacular Dolls of Mattel: What Happened to Them?

A deep dive into the sister series of Monster High.

By Wisdom Konu

Hexcellent, spelltacular, and fashionable. Created by Mattel in 2012, Ever After High, sister franchise of Monster High, was a spin-off to the series and aimed to appeal to fans of Mattel who did not find Monster High interesting. Instead, both franchises were embraced by Monster High fans. Following the same concept of Monster High, instead of the freakily fashionable monster children of famous monsters, Ever After High followed the children of characters of classic fairytale legends. But what happened to these excellent fairytale children?

Developed by Mattel, the fairytale based franchise, Ever After High follows the success of its predecessor, Monster High. The target audience for the brand was the tween demographic, ages 9-13. When it comes to the franchise's beginnings, little is known when it comes to the development; however, during a Mattel Analyst Meeting on November 13, 2013, Mattel subtly announced a franchise akin to Monster High to come out in 2013. Specific development of Ever After High started in 2012 with marketing of the new franchise beginning in late December of 2012 and the franchise finally released in July of 2013.

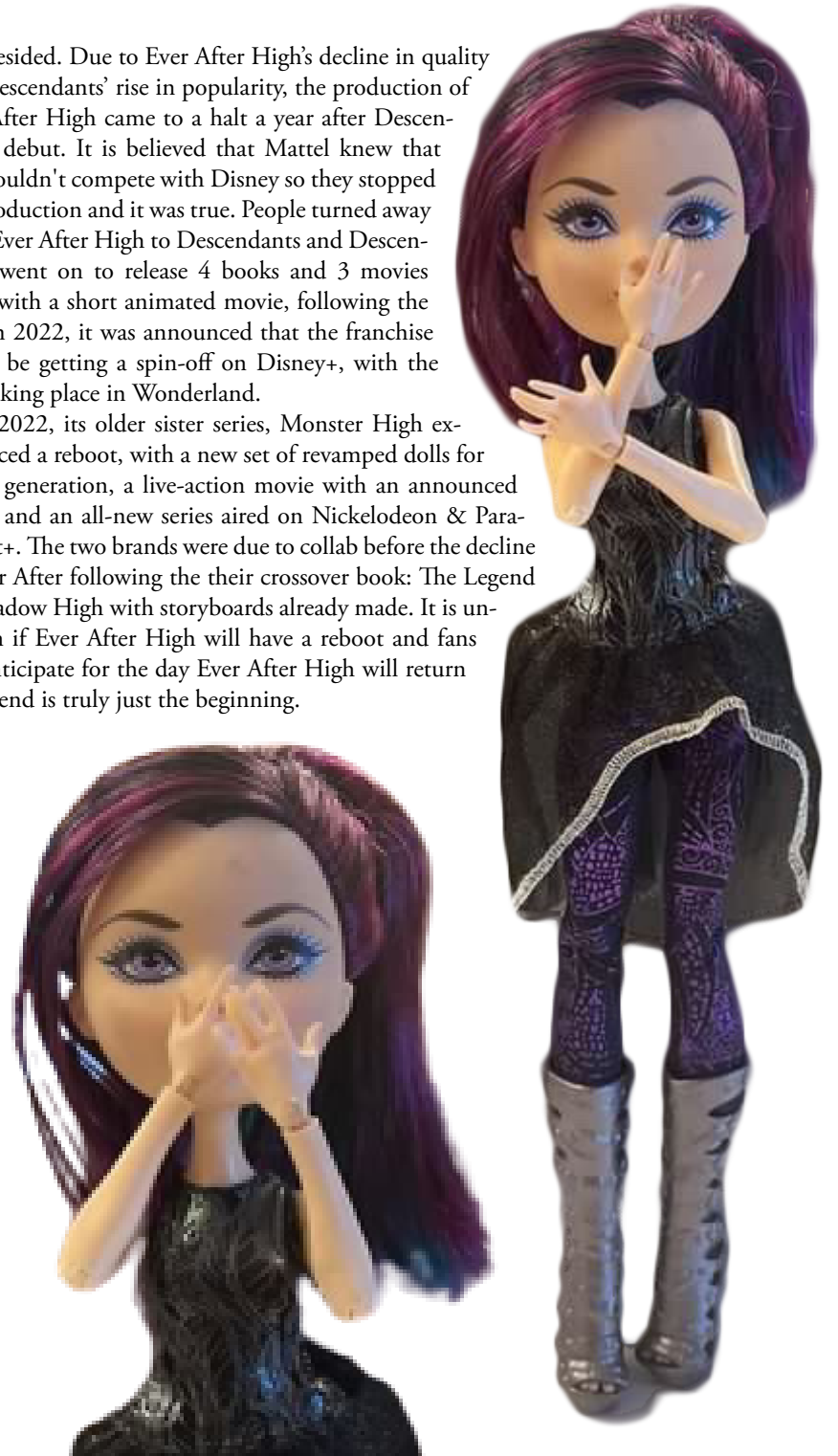
Ever After High currently has 4 sources of fiction: the cartoon, the books, the website, and the profiles. The books were created by author Shannon Hale; however, amongst the promotional material that was produced for the Ever After High dolls, the most prominent product was the Ever After High cartoon series. Released as a mix of many webisodes, each a few minutes long, and a small amount of 30 minute TV specials, the cartoon became the primary medium through which new characters and accessories were marketed. The premise of Ever After High was that the teenage children of classic fairytale characters attend boarding school where they must follow in their fairytale parents' footsteps, keeping their stories alive. Worlds such as Wonderland also exist in the fairytale world as well. The main characters are Raven Queen, who does not want to be evil like her mother the Evil Queen, and Apple White, the daughter of Snow White who wishes to live "happily ever after". The students of the school are divided into 2 groups. The royals, children of the royals and heroes of fairy tales, and rebels, children of the villains. Raven wishes to be free to create her own destiny, while Apple wants to protect her and others' own destiny, believing that Raven should become the next Evil Queen. The Royals seek the safety of continuing their stories, while the Rebels, wish the freedom afforded by rewriting the script. But there is an underlying story arc where, according to the school's headmaster, if the students do not follow their individual destinies, their stories will cease to exist and they will disappear forever.

But like its sister series, Monster High, Ever After High had a similar fate. From intricate designs and extremely posable dolls, Ever After High dolls had a decline in quality and were less intricate and posable and fans were unhappy with the newer version of the dolls. However fans believe the true fall of Ever After High came due to the emergence of a new series: Descendants.

Descendants was created by Josann McGibbon and Sara Parriott with the movies directed by Kenny Ortega. Disney's Descendants had an extremely similar concept to Ever After High, being the concept of children of fairy-tale characters. Ever After High released in 2013 while Descendants' first movie was released in 2015. Descendants follow the fairytale children of the villains: Jafar, Cruella De Vil, The Evil Queen, and Maleficent. Their children, Mal, Evie, Carlos, and Jay were the most rotten of the Isle, where the villains and their chil-

dren resided. Due to Ever After High's decline in quality and Descendants' rise in popularity, the production of Ever After High came to a halt a year after Descendants' debut. It is believed that Mattel knew that they couldn't compete with Disney so they stopped the production and it was true. People turned away from Ever After High to Descendants and Descendants went on to release 4 books and 3 movies along with a short animated movie, following the 3rd. In 2022, it was announced that the franchise would be getting a spin-off on Disney+, with the plot taking place in Wonderland.

In 2022, its older sister series, Monster High experienced a reboot, with a new set of revamped dolls for a new generation, a live-action movie with an announced sequel and an all-new series aired on Nickelodeon & Paramount+. The two brands were due to collab before the decline of Ever After following their crossover book: The Legend Of Shadow High with storyboards already made. It is unknown if Ever After High will have a reboot and fans still anticipate for the day Ever After High will return as the end is truly just the beginning.



Bratz: A Timeless Franchise

An analysis on the hyper-feminine doll brand of Mattel.

By Wisdom Konu

High fashion, bratty, and forever trending and stylish. Created by MGA Entertainment, American fashion doll and media franchise Bratz debuted in 2001 with four dolls: Yasmin, Cloe, Sasha, and Jade. The dolls featured almond-shaped eyes, glossy full lips, and glittery eyeshadow. The franchise would go on to become a big success, rivaling and eventually overcoming Barbie, the brand who reigned over the doll scene for over 50 years. Bratz reached great success with the expansion of spin-offs, including Bratz Kidz and Bratz Boyz, and a media franchise consisting of discography and adaptations into a TV series, a web series, a live-action film, and video games. But the brand would later get into legal trouble, changing the brand... What happened to these high fashion dolls?

Similar to a handful of other doll franchises, Bratz was also heavily criticized and provoked controversy in multiple areas from

their usage of stylized proportions and perceived hypersexuality. After the brand's launch in 2001, franchise distributor MGA Entertainment got entangled in a lengthy legal dispute with Mattel over the rights to its design, coming to an end in 2011, with MGA emerging victorious. But then the brand was paused and put on a production hiatus. The doll franchise was rebranded multiple times, with the dolls' first rebrand in 2010, commemorating the brand's 10th anniversary. In 2013, the franchise was given a completely new logo and branding, with the dolls being changed to have taller bodies. As a result, fans of the franchise reacted negatively to these new designs and the dolls were no longer found anywhere on shelves in the doll aisle.

But as we've seen in recent years, Generation Z's undying obsession for the past and the revival of all things Y2K has in turn revived the doll brand. The Y2K aesthetic started gaining real momentum on social media



in 2020, when quarantine caused Gen Z to resort to social media app TikTok. Also, due to their femininity and sexuality, fans of the Y2K aesthetic have turned to Bratz dolls as an inspiration for their way of life and fashion.

Due to the doll brand's rise in popularity, it has been capitalizing off of trends in media: music, film, and television. On TikTok, the official Bratz account has more than over 2.2M followers. On the page, you can find

3D recreations of moments in media that have been deemed "iconic" by fans, with their most viewed being a recreation of character Casey Becker in *Scream 1*. On their Instagram page, you can find celebrities turned into Bratz dolls, with their most recent recreation being Ice Spice. From trending fashion trends to the recreations of media, Bratz have tapped into people's desires for nostalgia and now are targeting a more mature audience, ingraining themselves into pop-culture.



Lana Del Rey: Ocean Blvd

Singer Lana Del Rey is back with her long-awaited 9th studio album.

By Esther Puderbaugh

On Friday, March 24th, listeners once again stepped into Lana Del Rey's complex musical world with the release of her ninth studio album *Did you know that there's a tunnel under Ocean Blvd*.

Ocean Blvd showcases the most authentic version of Del Rey yet. Her anxieties were explored in her 2019 album, *Norman F***** Rockwell*. Yet here they are further explored. That, along with her musings on loneliness, the existence of a god, death, the afterlife, fame, and her classic commentary on America (a given at this point in her work), makes *Ocean Blvd* a touching yet harrowing experience for the listener.

The album from the start examines Del Rey's personal philosophy. This isn't surprising given that Del Rey holds a degree in philosophy from Fordham University. Starting with the opening track, *The Grants* (one of many musical homages to her family on the album), Del Rey muses on the afterlife with the chorus "My pastor told me, 'When you leave, all you take/Uh-huh, is your memories.'/And I'm gonna take mine of you with me". With references to John Denver's *Rocky Mountain High*, Del Rey also reflects on the circle of life in her own family with the lyric "My sister's firstborn child/I'm gonna take that too with me/My grandmother's last smile/I'm gonna take that too with me". These familial references

feel like a natural continuation of the themes of *Cherry Blossom* and *Sweet Carolina*, the last two songs off of Del Rey's most recent album, *Blue Banisters*.

One of the highlights of the album, *A&W*, is a horror. *A&W* is a winding meditation on Del Rey's life starting out with a folksy guitar production courtesy of Jack Antonoff, and the lyrics "I haven't done a cartwheel since I was nine/I haven't seen my mother in a long, long time". The song also touches on rape culture with the lyric "If I told you that I was raped/Do you really think that anybody would think/I didn't ask for it?" sung in an almost whisper. In the second half of the song, we take a turn into a trap-inspired melody and production which interpolates lyrics from the 1959 song *Shimmy Shimmy Ko-Ko Bop*. The harrowing, 7 minute-long song is a highlight not just of the album but of Del Rey's career.

Del Rey continues this reflective mood with *Kintsugi*, which interpolates the Leonard Cohen lyric "That's how the light gets in". According to Del Rey, the song features her "innermost thoughts". One of the themes explored in this song is mortality with the lyrics "And I just can't stop cryin' 'cause of all of the ways/When you see someone dyin'/You see all your days flash in front you" and "I'm probably runnin' away from the feelin's I get/When I think all the things about them/Daddy, I miss them". The song's title is a reference to *Kintsugi* which is the Japanese tradition of repairing cracked or



GRAPHIC BY ESTHER PUDEBAUGH

broken pottery with golden or metallic lacquer, a metaphor that Del Rey uses for herself and her pain being a part of her and not something kept hidden.

The rambling *Fingertips* is the emotional centerpiece of *Ocean Blvd*. Del Rey shares her anxieties about the future with the lyrics "Will I die?/.../And if I do, will you be there with me, Father, Sister, Brother?" and "Will the baby be alright?/Will I have one of mine?/Can I handle it even if I do?/You said that my mind/It's not fit, or so they said, to carry a child". Del Rey once again references deaths in her family in this song. "Give me a mausoleum in Rhode Island with Dad, Grandma, Grandpa/And Dave, who hung himself real high/In the National Park sky, it's a shame, and I'm crying right now" Del Rey sings of the deaths of her grandma, grandpa, and uncle. Del Rey touches on the tragic death of

a loved one from her hometown with the lyrics "All I wanted to do was kiss Aaron Greene and sit by the lake/.../Aaron ended up dead and not me".

A personal favorite on the album is *Grandfather* please stand on the shoulders of my father while he's deep-sea fishing. In this song, Del Rey croons after God with her signature ethereal falsetto to send her signs. "God, if you're near me, send me three white butterflies/Or an owl to know you're listening" Del Rey sings. The song also addresses the public perception of Del Rey: a topic touched on throughout her career. Del Rey is reiterating her good intentions with the lyric "But I have good intentions even if I'm one of the last ones/If you don't believe me, my poetry, or my melodies/Feel it in your bones/I have good intentions even if I'm one of the last ones".

Songs like *Sweet*, *Let The Light*

In, and *Paris, Texas* provide a necessary rhythm to the album and showcase a classic stripped back "Lana" way of song-making. Many of the songs on the album feature artists other than Del Rey. However, these featured artists fit into her work and style incredibly seamlessly.

The album ends on a somewhat lighter note with *Peppers* (feat. Tommy Genesis) and *Taco Truck x VB*. *Taco Truck* is a treat for fans at the end of the album as it's an original version of one of Del Rey's fan favorite songs: *Venice B*****. As *Taco Truck* transitions into a modified, higher energy version of *Venice B*****, I can feel the smiles on the faces of the singer's fans.

The 16 song album successfully incorporates elements of her past work while stepping in a brand new hazy direction forward in her discography with *Ocean Blvd* being her most daring work yet.

Boygenius: The Record

Indie supergroup Boygenius has debuted with their album, The Record.



COLLAGE BY WISDOM KONU

By Sadie Bodzin

It's impossible to think of indie rock supergroups without Boygenius coming to mind, and that is reflected on their debut album *The Record*. Phoebe Bridgers, Lucy Dacus, and Julien Baker combine their own distinct music types to form a kind of

music that exceeds all expectations. After their debut self-titled EP, the demand for more music has been huge. Something that is very special about Boygenius as a music group is that their music clearly highlights their individual strengths as well as how cohesive they are when performing in a group. This quality can be rare to find in

other bands, but Boygenius does it effortlessly. This is especially true on the track "\$20," which was one of three lead singles. The pop-punk/rock track is different from the music the three create individually, yet it still feels so in tune to the people they are. The song begins with: "It's a bad idea and I'm all about it," and who better to sing that line than Boygenius?

The fifth track on the album, "Cool About It," hits like a bag of bricks. The song follows three different gatherings after a break up. "Once I took your medication to know what it's like," Bridgers muses. "And now I have to act like I can't read your mind / I ask you how you're doing and I let you lie." On the country-pop track "Not Strong Enough," which is a sort of Boygenius version of Sheryl Crow's "Strong Enough," Dacus ends the song with, "Skip the exit to our old street and go home / Go home alone." The music on this album is often lovelorn and vulnerable yet aggressive and exasperated at the same time. These emotions blend together so well on this album to form a messy, experimental, masterpiece that reflects how everyone feels at least sometimes.

The album includes both upbeat electric-guitar heavy jams as well as light,

introspective acoustic guitar centered tracks. "Revolution 0" is akin to Bridgers' *Punisher* with the other band members forming wistful harmonies throughout the song. "I don't want to die, that's a lie," Bridgers bluntly sings. The remarkable "Anti-Curse," which Baker takes the lead in, covers the volatile feelings of love. "An incantation like an anti-curse / Or even a blessing," Baker renders. A unique trait of Boygenius is that even if the subject matter of the song is incredibly depressing, which it is more often than not for Boygenius, it's obvious while listening to the giddy nature of their voices that the three are having fun performing and working together.

Overall, the combination of sublime lyricism and production value that Boygenius produces every time is unmatched. Both through their solo projects and as a group, Bridgers, Baker, and Dacus bring high quality music every single time. This supergroup has really lived up to the title with this album, and it is without a doubt that they will continue to create high quality music whether that be with solo projects or as a group. Indie group, Boygenius has proven that they have a lot to show & that they aren't going away any time soon, and they're definitely a force to be reckoned as a whole.



The Sexualization of Women on Social Media

How the hypersexualization of women on social media affects young women.

By Sadie **Bodzin**

In the era of social media, with TikTok present on millions of young girls' phones, the hypersexualization and exploitation of young women on social media is now more prevalent than ever before. The hypersexualization of young women has become so common and rampant on social media especially, that it is nearly impossible to enter a social media app without finding images or videos that are hypersexualized.

The unrealistic beauty standards of young women affect young girls in irreversible ways, causing teenagers to set unrealistic beauty standards for themselves. When a girl gets thousands of likes on a video or picture, a sense of jealousy can form for other girls. Although it isn't the fault of the original poster, it can spark those feelings and self image issues. Because the hyper-sexualized versions of young women on social media are everywhere, teenagers especially start to compare themselves, which can lead to body image issues and in turn, young girls start to tie their worth and value into their appearance.

The sexualization of young women in the media is often linked to low self-esteem, eating disorders, and depression. Inaccurate depictions of women in the media can result in cognitive and emotional consequences that reduce confidence and impact teenagers' abilities to maintain a positive self-image, according to the American Psychological Association. When young girls only see unrealistic and unattainable beauty standards broadcasted over social media, their self esteem lowers tremendously. Because the hypersexualization of women is prevalent everywhere these young girls go, they start to think that they will only be found attractive if they look a certain way.

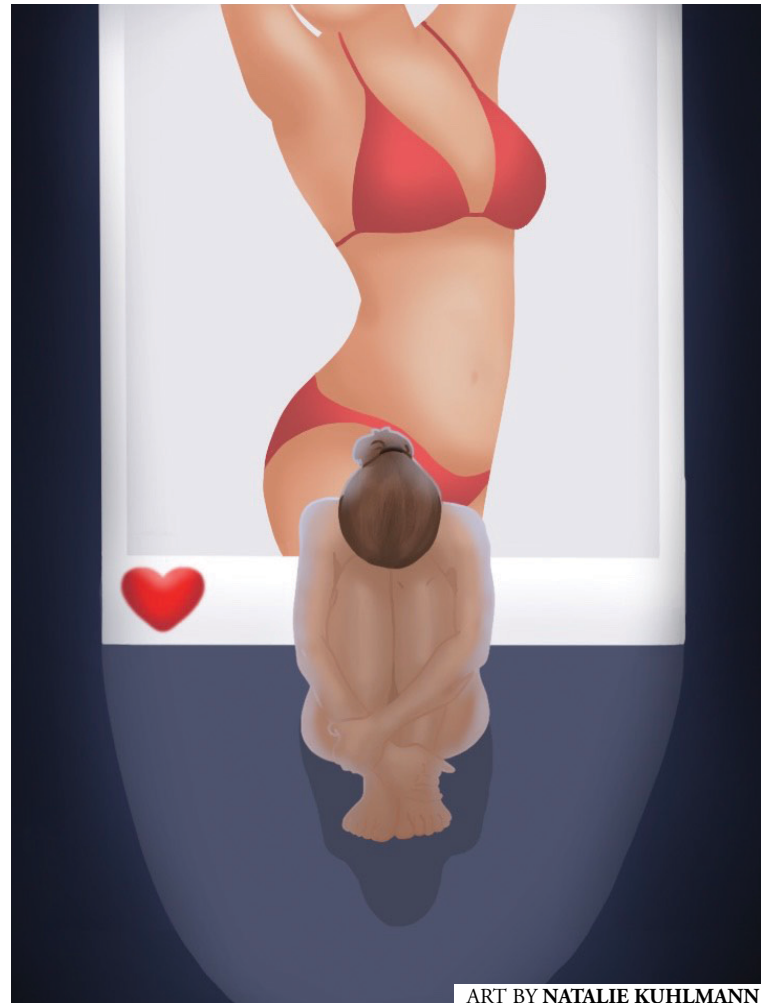
This issue is heightened with young women of color. When social media and society reflects a eurocentric standard of beauty, the idea that there is a certain way women should look is pushed even more.

Growing up without representation is something that deeply affects young women especially because of the nature in which society attributes a woman's value to her beauty. When men voice their opinions on who they find attractive and who they don't, they feed into the idea that there is only one way to be deemed beautiful and in turn cause women to resent the way they look.

The hypersexualization of women in the media may also cause women to seek out approval from men. By posting certain things on social media, some women hope to cater to a male audience. It can feel empowering when a woman gets validation from men; however, when women are put on a pedestal by men, they can begin to unhealthily crave attention from men. When society puts pressure on women to be liked by men, this causes them to act in certain ways. It's a cycle that never ends.

The constant need for validation from men causes women to turn on each other as well. The phrase "pick me girl" is thrown around a lot on social media. While it's supposed to refer to a woman who puts down other women for men, the meaning has become misconstrued. This phrase often pops up on thirst traps (a video or photograph of someone on social media that is intended to attract attention or make people who see it sexually interested in them). Again, because of the pressure society puts on young women to be liked by men, when a girl gets attention from guys, a sense of jealousy forms for other women. This causes them to attack these people for something as simple as wearing a shirt that shows their cleavage. Ironically, this can cause men to turn on these women as well. This causes young women to feel alone and for their self esteem to decrease rapidly.

Whether someone posts something intending to be sexualized or not, nobody should feel like their entire worth is tied to their appearance. These unrealistic standards that are pushed onto teenage girls to a large extent are incredibly harmful and only add



ART BY NATALIE KUHLMANN

to the list of issues that social media causes for teenagers. Internalized sexualization and self-objectification often lead to mental health and body image issues, like body dysmorphia and eating disorders, which can cause teenage girls to lose their aspirations to do well in school and end up overtaking their lives. The issues concerning the sexualization of young women and the sexualization itself aren't going to go away, but once people start to think about the things they're consuming on social media and their effects, action can be taken to protect young women.

The Problems with Final Girls

An analysis of the horror staple, final girls, reinforce the patriarchy.

By Yomi **Hemley**

The horror genre isn't shy of repeating tried and true tropes. In fact, many people often criticize the horror genre for their lack of creativity and predictability. One of the most common horror elements is the final girl trope. The final girl trope rose to popularity in the late 80s and early 90s during the slasher craze. Some of the most famous horror movies follow this pattern, such as Halloween, Scream, and Texas Chainsaw Massacre.

Final girls are usually innocent women, most likely a virgin, who are more intelligent than others in the movie. They usually are the only people to survive and most of the time are two-dimensional and appeal to the male gaze. In the early 90s, slashers would normally kill off the more promiscuous characters, punishing them and portraying them as dumb, horny, and de-

serving of their demise while the final girl survives due to her moral superiority. Many argue that this trope is misogynistic while others argue it is empowering for women. With the trope's controversy, recent horror has been trying to rewrite the trope. For example, in the film X, the innocent, expected "final girl" dies last, whilst having the real "final girl" be the promiscuous porn star.

One of the main reasons as to why so many people consider the final girls trope to be problematic is due to the way it portrays women. Certain horror films, especially early slashers, portray these final girls as caricatures of what and how women "should be" and have them appeal to men. The horror genre has always been seen as something that can only be watched or enjoyed by men as it's a more hardcore genre. This continues to paint horror films as a male dominated



PHOTO BY WISDOM KONU

genre.

While the final girl trope tends to have stereotypical plots, there is a way to do it correctly. In certain movies, the film does portray their final girl as independent and resourceful. In Ready or Not, which came out in 2019, Grace is resilient and is a fighter. You're Next (2011) is another film that depicts their final girl as intelligent and able to protect herself. While this type of portrayal can be viewed as empowering, a majority of final girls are not painted in this light.

Recently, this cliché has undergone some changes. In the beginning of the development of this trope, final girls represented damsels in distress; someone who was submissive and needed to be saved. But as the trope evolved, they've been able to fight for themselves.

A majority of the women depicted in this trope are

shown problematically, but recently, final girls can be empowering. Because of the mixed ways that final girls are portrayed, many don't know if people should still use this trope. But, the cons outweigh the pros. Many filmmakers fail at making a relatable and progressive final girl, and because of this, this trope will continue to twist the way men see women and be condescending to women if they are not the exact portrayal that horror presents them as. Even putting aside the misogyny that this trope enables, the horror genre is already incredibly predictable and repetitive, and this cliché just adds to the criticism of the genre. The loved horror genre of Hollywood has a problem and until filmmakers of the industry perfect the way to create and implement a good, non-misogynistic portrayal of a final girl, the final girl staple should be put to rest.



NEW LINEUP SPARKS GOALS

The City High boys soccer team looks to make yet another run at a state championship, but the team has run into some obstacles in some early season losses.



ABOVE: Thomas Ksobiech '23 dribbles the ball around the Dubuque Senior defender. PHOTO BY JACK ROGERS

By Ahmed Basheir

As another season is underway, Coach Jose Fajardo prepares his team for the challenges that are in the way of regaining success in the history books for City High soccer.

After the season got off to a rocky start, the City High boys soccer team looks to get back on track and achieve their goal of making it to the postseason. As they start to enter into the second half of their season, they are looking to make the changes they need to finish the season off the way they want.

"We know it'll be hard but we need to win and fix our mistakes early on in the season rather than when it's too late," captain Emmitt Hansen '23 said.

The team came into this season knowing the challenges they would have to face, including making the big step up to class 4A in soccer. The team only has 45

percent of their players returning. With that they are ranked one of the lowest in returning players in 4A. The Little Hawks have also had to adjust to a whole new starting lineup. Statistically in the past year Coach Fajardo's teams have always been led and have found success from their upperclassmen players on the team. Over the last 3 years, more than 65% of Fajardo's squads have been led by juniors and seniors.

But this season City High has looked to their underclassmen to help make an immediate impact. The vast majority of the team comes from the sophomore class. There are 8 sophomores out of the 20 currently on the team.

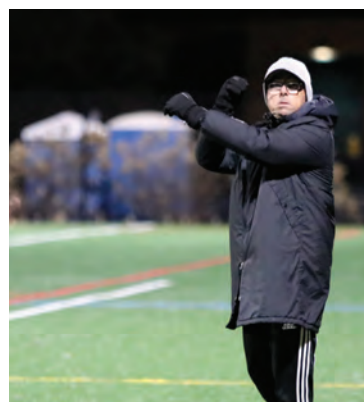
Returning players from last season like Josh Borger Germann, Tatum Born, and Jonah Bowen-Burt have already massively helped contribute for City High on the offensive side of the ball, while newer faces on the team like sophomore Jackson Lindsey and Lucas Riley have dug their way into the starting lineup after having an impressive

showing during their two preseason games. They will both pair up with Jack Dancer and Andrew Lopez to complete the back line.

"It's been a humbling start to the season, we just really need to stick together and get through the losses as a team and keep improving," Lucas Riley said.

Other new faces on the team have helped contribute all around the field. Freshman keeper Ben Borger Germann, little brother to sophomore forward Josh Borger Germann, appeared in his first varsity games during preseason where he had 2 clean sheets as he helped City prevail in both games before being named the starting goalkeeper for their first game vs Southeast Polk and continuing to start ever since. But since the games have gotten harder Ben has had to overcome adversity and keep his confidence up.

"It feels good to get all these minutes as a freshman but the important thing is focusing on winning right now," freshman keeper Ben Borger Germann said.



CHASING 400 WINS: Coach Fajardo hit 399 wins earlier in the season. He is seen here coaching against West and Dubuque Senior. PHOTOS BY AHMED BASHEIR & JACK ROGERS



Tatum Born '25 takes on the West High defender in the annual City vs West game at the University of Iowa women's soccer fields. PHOTO BY JACK ROGERS



RUNNING WITH THE MIND

Top-ranked athlete in track in field, Ani Wedemeyer opens up about her struggle with OCD and the tremendous growth she has existed within the past few years.

By Sierra Pruessner

Despite her prominent running career, running wasn't her primary sport until her freshman year of high school. For young Ani Wedemeyer ('25), gymnastics was a sport she couldn't imagine living without. She was a top athlete who loved the sport and thrived in its environment. But she was more susceptible to additional stressors that came along with gymnastics. Why? The diagnosis of OCD in her early teens proved to be a substantial component.

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, defined by Mayo Clinic, "features a pattern of unwanted thoughts and fears (obsessions) that lead you to do repetitive behaviors (compulsions)". Obsessions are repeated images, thoughts, or impulses that feel out of said person's control accompanied by intense feelings of fear, uncertainty, and/or disgust.

Ani had symptoms of OCD as early as the age of four. However, the compulsions and obsessions didn't affect her substantially until competitive gymnastics became a large part of her life. 2020 was the peak of her struggle with OCD. Stressors from the pandemic, gymnastics, and her obsessions made the period extremely difficult.

"It became disruptive when her behaviors with OCD were taking a big chunk of time out of her day. Her nighttime routine was close to an hour, and it was preventing her from doing other things," Ani's mother, Elesa said.

Elesa went on to say that they learned that acting on the impulses can supposedly "take care" of the OCD chain, but the problems will stack up over time.

The line between an obsessive personality versus a psychological disorder is the inability to silence these thoughts and engage in other activities if said person hasn't "controlled" the obsession (along with the excessive accompaniment of feelings above).

Elesa reflects on the many hours and dedication she put forth to compete in gymnastics.

"Ani loved it. It was super important to her, but I think she also regularly felt like she was missing out if she wanted to be able to compete at that level. It didn't seem like it was worth it a lot of the time, but she loved it. What do you do as a parent?" Elesa Wedemeyer said.

To be eight and balancing sports or being a kid was a trade-off. Ani's sister Iris saw the struggle.

"She was pretty much miserable during gymnastics and competition season, and she

put a lot of energy into being perfect when it's hardly ever possible to be perfect. She would be really hard on herself even as a little kid, if she wasn't successful in a meet, or on any given day; she could never just live life and be a happy kid," Iris Wedemeyer '23 said.

In October 2020, Ani was officially diagnosed with OCD after an assessment with a new therapist. Six months later, a few weeks after placing second in the regional gymnastics meet, she starts running.

A few weeks before the Junior High State track meet, 14-year-old Ani Wedemeyer made history. She steps off the track at the Northwest Junior High invitational meet, surrounded by anyone nearby. On May 11, 2021, Ani broke the South East 800m record of 2:30s (set by City High Track Alumni and Coach, Monica Mims) by almost 6 seconds. No one had been able to come close to that time for over two decades. *

"Five years ago, I was in the mindset that the only sport I would ever love is gymnastics, and I would do it forever. I'd go to college, do gymnastics there, and no other sport can make me feel the way it does," Wedemeyer ('25) said.

Once she started running the potential she existed grew exponentially, along with the leering possibility of a prominent track

career. In late April of 2021, she quit gymnastics on her own terms and got ready for the next journey ahead. This extremely big change in her life resulted in her later success in track and cross country.

"I wanted to do something that made me happy instead of making me more stressed out. My OCD can get out of hand easily, but if I can channel it, then it can help me a lot with different things, (athletics specifically)," Ani said.

Elesa views Ani's utilization of her OCD to be her "superpower".

"If you can distance yourself from the obsession and compulsion chain, you could recognize it for what it is. She's able to walk this line where the hard parts about OCD drive her to pursue excellence, but she's able to not cross over into this line with compulsion now. She's learned to finesse it in a really beautiful way. This thing that was so dark, you know is actually this beautiful?" Elesa said.

That next year Ani beat her Junior High record by 12 seconds at the Drake meet, placing third. A month later, she beats her previous record by running a 2:11.99 at the state meet and won her first state title as a freshman. She placed 3rd in the 400 running



ABOVE: Ani Wedemeyer finishing the 800 meter race at the state track meet in May 2022. PHOTO BY SIERRA PRUESSNER



ABOVE: Ani Wedemeyer celebrates with her sister Iris on achieving a state tournament qualifying ticket. PHOTO BY SIERRA PRUESSNER

57 seconds and anchored the distance medley relay with a time of 2:10 seconds. In the 4x400, she anchored running 55 seconds, helping herself to another state title. That relay earned a school record along with the 11 fastest all-time in the state of Iowa. She walked away from the state meet with two gold medals, one silver, and one bronze. **

"I would ask people to just try to understand that it's not really a choice, and it takes a lot of work to retrain your brain not to think like that. Don't get annoyed with them if they have some compulsion or something that they feel like they have to do; try to be understanding instead of judgmental, and just be supportive," Ani said.

OCD can affect people of all ages, gender, and upbringing. Experts aren't quite sure what causes OCD, but factors including environment, genetics, and other mental health disorders can be of influence.

"For people with OCD, their brain is telling them, yes, it will cause something terrible to happen if you don't act on it. Even if deep down you know it won't, you can't stop thinking about it till you do it," Ani said.

While nothing can ultimately get rid of OCD, seeking therapy and medication can reduce symptoms significantly. If you or a loved one are struggling with any of these symptoms, don't hesitate to contact your health provider, reach out to a school counselor, or search for a therapy specialist near you.

"Reading this article may be a big surprise to some people that she has struggled with OCD. I would just offer to remind people that we rarely know all of the things that any individual is managing or navigating in their day-to-day life. I'm very proud of her for taking that risk and wanting to help other people by sharing this story," Elesa said.



Athlete Profile: AMMON SMITH

By Jack Degner

Senior Ammon Smith began his running career in sixth grade. Mentored by his father who had track experience in high school, Ammon found early success in middle school.

“I started out a little faster than most 7th graders, but then I really just learned to love the sport of running.”

After Smith’s successful junior high stint, he moved onto high-school track and cross country, and Smith once again found himself performing above others.

“Sophomore year track is probably my favorite memory, we made state and got to get some early ex-

perience which helped us last year and will this year.”

Smith believes the Little Hawks are ready to compete and beat some of the top teams in the state.

“Obviously this year we want to win state, we feel like that we’re a team that’s ready to win it all.”

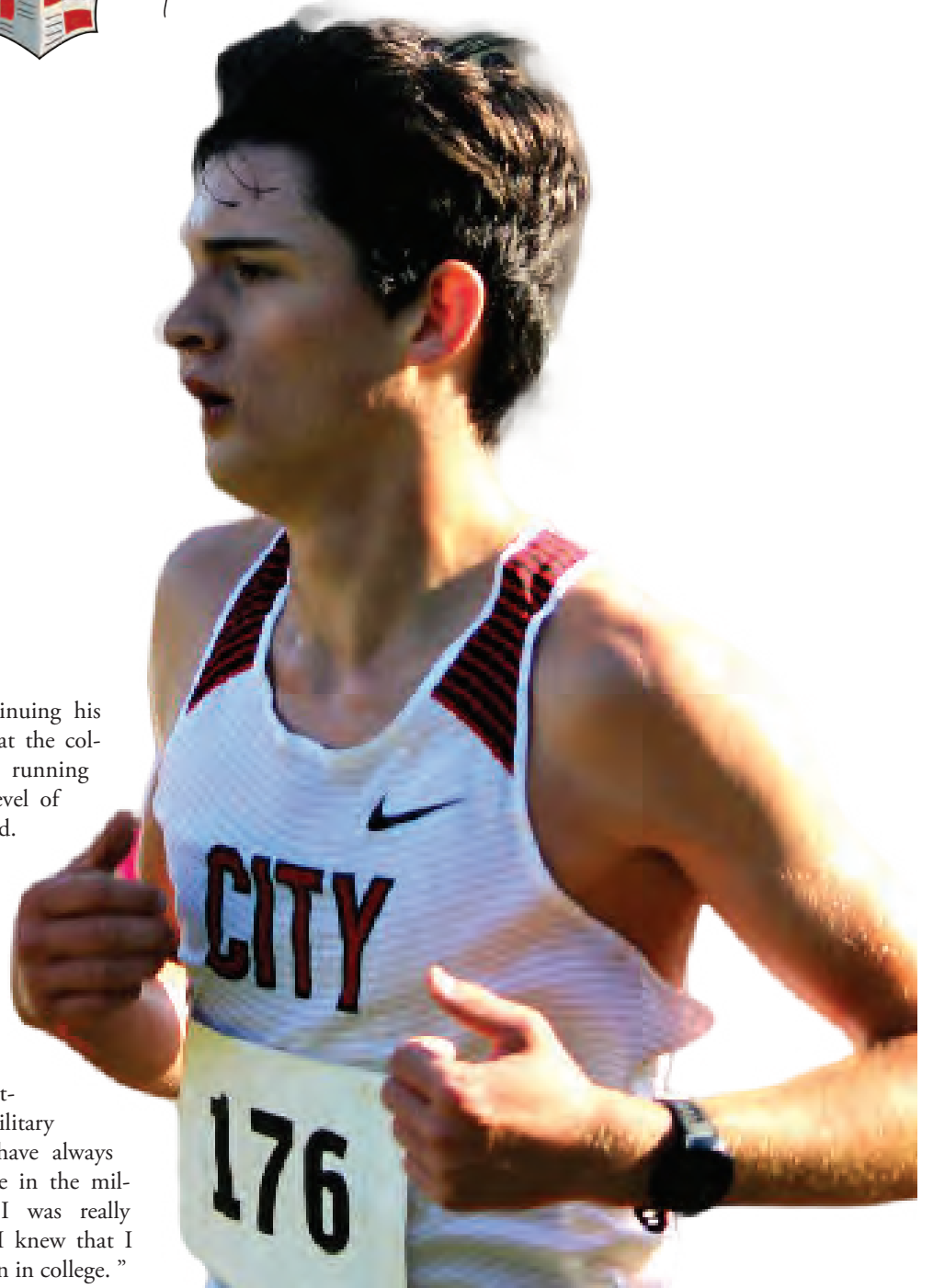
Smith is trying to be one of the fastest runners at the state meet this year, he has already run a 50.13 in the 400 this year and a 1:53.60 in the open 800 meter race. He has set goals early on to earn some major awards this year too.

“A couple personal goals for myself is to win an individual state title, and to get 5 blue standards (qualify for Drake in 5 events).”

After this year in track, Smith

will be continuing his track career at the collegiate level, running at the D1 level of track and field.

“After this season, I’m going to run track and cross country at the United States military academy. I have always wanted to be in the military since I was really young, and I knew that I wanted to run in college.”



Girls Track Wins Sprint Medley at Kansas Relays



ABOVE LEFT: City High girls track team takes a photo at Kansas University track ABOVE RIGHT: City High girls track team takes a selfie with team from Denver, Colorado PHOTOS COURTESY OF EVA REYNOLDS

By Lauren Koch

Just recently, 8 members of the City High girls track team attended the Kansas Relays at Kansas University. High school track teams from Colorado, Minnesota, Wisconsin, and other states all raced together at historic Rock Chalk Park.

The group of girls and coaches left for the meet on Wednesday, April 12, and finished the meet on the following Saturday.

This group, consisting of seniors Eva Reynolds, Safia Almabrazi, Bella Skay, juniors Sierra Pruessner, Lucy Thompson, and sophomores Ani Wedemeyer, Ruth Cloyd, Josie Leclair. The girls ran only their

best events, due to the exceptional qualifying times. The Sprint Medley Relay, ran by Reynolds, Skay, Wedemeyer, and Almabrazi finished 1st place with a time of 4 minutes and 12 seconds.

Eva Reynolds ‘23 shares her experience running at the Kansas Relays.

“The first day was really windy.

The 4x4 relay got canceled both days. I ran the 300 meter hurdles, so that day was really difficult. Ani [Wedemeyer] ran great in the open 800.”

The team also shared memories in Kansas outside of the track.

“We stayed at a hotel right in downtown Lawrence, which was really fun. We got to meet a bunch

of other athletes, and made friends with a team from Denver, Colorado”, said Eva Reynolds ‘23.

Coach Jeremy Mims, a Kansas University alumni, went alongside the girls to the tournament.

“We visited all of Coach’s favorite restaurants and breakfast places from his college years,” Eva Reynolds ‘23 explained.



LEAPING PAST THE COMPETITION

Matt Schaeckenbach talks about breaking the 43 year-old record for the indoor and overall high jump, the team and their expectations for the remainder of the season, and his future track plans after his high school career comes to an end. However, Schaeckenbach is far from done.



ABOVE: City High senior Matt Schaeckenbach attempting and clearing a high jump at the Hi Covey Relays at Ames High School. PHOTO BY JACK DEGNER

By: Thomas **Ksobiech**
 The name Matt Schaeckenbach (Class of 2023) might not be familiar to you, yet it is a name that will soon be synonymous with City High track and field legends. If you haven't heard of Schaeckenbach, it is most likely because he has chosen to be homeschooled; however, he still has a desire to participate in athletics and does so for the Little Hawks.

Throughout Schaeckenbach's four years at City, he has participated in several sports including cross country, basketball, and track. Some of his most fond memories during his time at City are when the track team goes to the Drake meet or the State Meet. Schaeckenbach commented on the feeling of being at these meetings saying, "that the atmosphere and the

guys you are with make so many wacky and fun memories."

Schaeckenbach isn't at these meets just to make fun memories and have wacky times. He has business to take care of. So far this year, Schaeckenbach has been taking care of business. Schaeckenbach competes in the 400 hurdles, the 110 highs, the shuttle, and the high jump. The first indoor meet, he jumped 6-6, won, and qualified for Drake, an invite only meet and one of the largest in Iowa. The next meet, Schaeckenbach improved on his already impressive 6-6 jump, by jumping and clearing 6-7.25 winning the event again. This was the City High indoor school record; however, this would not be the last time Schaeckenbach would break the high jump record.

The very next meet Schaeckenbach was in another

record breaking situation. Schaeckenbach originally asked for the bar to be set at 6-10.

"Jeremiah was like you should go to 610 and something because that's the school record. So yeah we moved up a quarter [of an inch]", Schaeckenbach said when elaborating about the jump.

With the bar set at 6-10.25 Schaeckenbach was now not only the indoor high jump record holder at City High, he was just the high jump record holder for the Little Hawks. No other person in City High history has had a higher jump.

Schaeckenbach believes he can go higher. When

asked about how much higher he could go, he said "I am shooting for seven feet. That's going to be my new goal. Hopefully I am doing that at the state meet because I believe the state record is seven feet. I don't know if I can get seven three (the state record) but definitely seven feet is the dream right now."

If you ask anyone on the City High track team about their goals and aspirations, it would be to win the State Championship that so narrowly eluded them last year as they placed second. With lots of key pieces returning including Schaeckenbach,

"I was shocked. I never thought I would actually break it."

Matt Schaeckenbach
 Class of '23

the team feels this is their best chance to win.

Schaeckenbach has decided to continue competing in track and field, choosing to attend Cedarville University. They are a Division 2 school located in Ohio, halfway between Columbus and Cincinnati. Schaeckenbach also has desire to compete in the Decathlon, a ten event competition that contains the 100-meter dash, long jump, shot put, high jump, 400-meter dash, 110-meter hurdles, discus, pole vault, javelin, and 1,500-meter run. The school record for the high jump at Cedarville is 7-0.25. The way that Schaeckenbach has been performing so far his senior season, leaves little doubt that one day he will be able to add the Cedarville high jump record to his already impressive collection of high jump records.

DRAKE RELAY QUALIFIERS
MATT SCHAECKENBACH - HIGH JUMP
RONNIE MAJOR - LONG JUMP
AMMON SMITH - 400M
TRUMAN THOMPSON - 800M
AMMON SMITH - 800M
AMMON SMITH - 1600M
FORD WASHBURN - 1600M
FORD WASHBURN - 3200M
DEON BROWN
SAM REW
RONNIE MAJOR
JEREMIAH MADLOCK - 4 X 200M
AMMON SMITH
JEREMIAH MADLOCK
NOAH CAREY
AYMAN NORELDAIM - 4 X 400M
FORD WASHBURN
NOAH CAREY
AMMON SMITH
TRUMAN THOMPSON - 4 X 800M
TRUMAN THOMPSON
AMMON SMITH
RONNIE MAJOR
SAM REW - DISTANCE MEDLEY



City's 7v7 Wins First Tournament

By Bobby Bacon & Charlie Firmstone

In mid-March, the City High football team paired up with local 7 v 7 team: the Fire Dragons. The team consists of 14 City players and three Burlington players. They played their first tournament on March 21 in Omaha, Nebraska and the second in Nashville, Tennessee at the 24/7 Sports National Invitational. The Little Hawks won the first tournament, and got 6th out of 34 teams in the second.

Jeremiah Madlock was awarded player of the game against Alabama Elite.

"It felt good to be recognized and get my name out there," Jeremiah Madlock '24 said. He had 7 catches and 3 touchdowns in the game he was recognized for. "I felt like I played really well and consistently all tournament."

Another top performer on

the Fire Dragons is Sam Kueter, the junior tight end/running back on the squad who helped the Dragons with their start. "I like to lead by example and set a good standard for the team," Sam Kueter '24 said.

While the Dragons were in Tennessee, they were lucky enough to visit the Tennessee Titans training facility and given a two hour long night tour of the facility.

The next challenge these Little Hawks face is on April 15 when the Fire Dragons will travel to the UNI-Dome for their next tournament. Teams in the tournament include teams from Canada, Iowa, and Missouri, in addition to other places around the country.

"It was good to see the guys get some experience under their belt and excited to see them play again," said head coach Ben Slife.



TOP: Parker Sutherland '25 and Jacob Kehres '24 run routes during the game. BOTTOM: City High's 7v7 football team pose for a photo after winning the tournament. PHOTOS BY SAM LUND



ABOVE: Hannah Cronk tees off at the Gardner Golf Club. The girls team broke 200 in the meet for the first time this year. PHOTOS BY LILI MOESSNER

Girls Golf Wins First Place at Home Meet

By Megan Swartzendruber

On April 11, 2023 @ 3:00 pm, the girls golf team had a meet at Pleasant Valley Golf Course, Iowa City. City High golfers included Haleigh Nelson '24, Hannah Cronk '24, Abigail Fredericks '23, Tully Campion '23, Olivia Knoche '23, and Olivia Neuzil '24. Their overall score was a 207, beating Dubuque Senior (216), Cedar Rapids Jefferson (222), and Cedar Rapids Kennedy (248).

SCORES

1. Haleigh Nelson - 9 Hole Low ~ 45
2. Tully Campion - 9 Hole Low ~52 (Tying with Dubuque Senior for 2nd Place)
4. Hannah Cronk - 9 Hole Low ~ 53
8. Olivia Knoche - 9 Hole Low ~ 57
9. Abigail Fredericks - 9 Hole Low ~ 58
11. Olivia Neuzil - 9 Hole Low ~ 59

SPRING SPORTS VIDEOS

Second Half Run Lifts City Soccer Over Xavier 3-0

By Bobby Bacon



SCAN FOR VIDEO

JV1 Boys Soccer Dominates in 8-1 Win Over Xavier in Season Opener

By Jack Rogers & Henry Ingersoll



SCAN FOR VIDEO

Baseline to Baseline: Ben BG

By Jack Rogers & Cal Vitense



SCAN FOR VIDEO